

**GRADE THREE SOCIAL STUDIES  
RESOURCE MANUAL: SUPPLEMENT  
PART 2 -  
NATIVE STUDIES**

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B. Ed., University of Lethbridge, 1975  
Dip. Ed., University of Lethbridge, 1982

A One-Course Project  
Submitted to the Faculty of Education  
of The University of Lethbridge  
in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree

**MASTER OF EDUCATION**

**LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA**

December, 1988

**NATIVE STUDIES**  
**RESOURCE MANUAL**

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**December 1, 1988**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Indian Tribes

INT 1	Mistatin: Indians of the Plains
INT 2	The Blackfoot (Oracle)
INT 3	Blackfoot Sacred Paintings
INT 4	The Blackfoot (Indians of Canada)
INT 5	The Micmac
INT 6	The Cree
INT 7	Montagnas and Naskapi
INT 8	The Ojibwa

### Games

GAM 1	String Games
GAM 2	Lacrosse
GAM 3	Indian and Eskimo Games

### Native Contributions

CON 1	Contributions to Present Day Life
CON 2	Contributions to the English Language

### Transportation

TRA 1	Travois
TRA 2	Bark Canoes

### Clothing and Shelter

CLS 1	Indian Eskimo Clothing
CLS 2	Moccasins
CLS 3	The Wigwam
CLS 4	Cradle Boards

### Food

FOO 1	Indian and Eskimo Uses of Fire
FOO 2	Indian and Eskimo Fishing Techniques
FOO 3	Buffalo Hunting
FOO 4	The Buffalo Hunters

### Legends

LEG 1	False Face Curing Society
LEG 2	Northwest Coast Indians: Masks
LEG 3	Indian Rattles
LEG 4	The Indian Culture

### Additional Information

ADD 1	Basic Background Information
ADD 2	Programs and Services (Federal)
ADD 3	Constitutional Reform
ADD 4	Self Government

Indian Tribes

# *Mistatin*

INT  
1

the buffalo hunter

**Indians of  
the Plains**



# The land, the people, the life

## Cover

Mistatin is an imaginary Indian man of the Plains. He might be one of the men pictured in these pages. He might have been a buffalo hunter and a warrior.



*The map shows the general areas where some of the Plains tribes lived.*

The Plains Indians lived on the vast flatlands that extend eastwards from the foothills of the Rocky Mountains to the valley of the Mississippi River. From central Alberta, Saskatchewan, and western Manitoba, the plains stretch south almost to the Gulf of Mexico. On the rolling eastern prairies grew tall grasses, such as blue stem and wild wheat. The high, level western plain was covered with a short grass called grama grass.

There are no mountain ranges on the plains, no large lakes, and only a few rivers. Trees grow mainly along the banks of the rivers and streams.

In the north, winters are long and cold, with snow and blizzards. The wind seems never to stop blowing. Winters can be just as severe in the south, but usually they are shorter.

In the 1700s there may have been as many as 30 000 Plains Indians living in Canada. Several of the main groups are shown on

the map. Each group in Canada spoke a dialect of one of three major language families — Algonquian, Siouan, and Athapaskan.

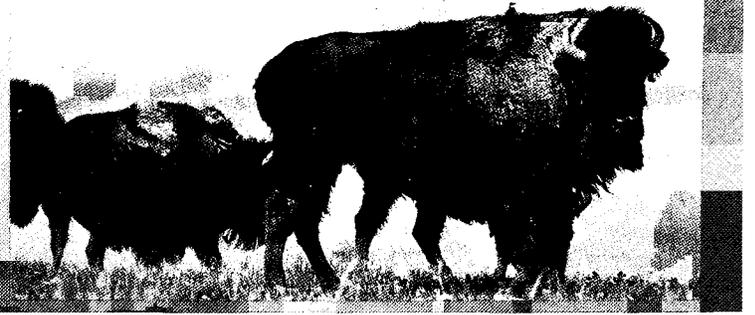
The Indians who lived on the western high plains were mainly hunters of the large herds of buffalo that until a century ago grazed on the short grasses. The people moved often, to follow the animals. The Indians who lived on the eastern rolling prairies farmed in the river valleys. They usually lived in permanent lodges in small villages.

In the 1500s the Spanish conquerors brought horses to Mexico. Little by little, either through trade or through capture, horses made their way northwards from one Plains group to another. By the late 1700s even the most northerly Plains groups had horses and were expert riders.

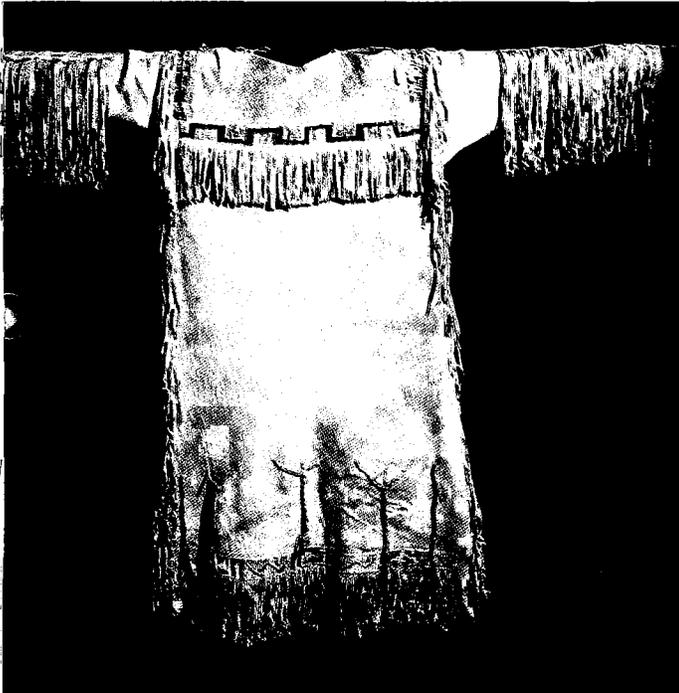
Once there were horses, some eastern prairie farmers left the crops to become hunters. Some Cree, Ojibwa, Sarcee, and Sioux Indians from the north and the east moved into the plains to follow the buffalo herds.

The horse brought changes to the life of the Plains Indians. Then in the late 1800s the Canadian Pacific Railway pushed its way across the prairies. With the railway came the end of the old way of life.

# Indians of the Plains



## Clothes



*Woman's dress decorated with porcupine quills and fringe.*

Plains Indians wore clothes made of deer, elk, or antelope hide. To protect their feet from the rough ground, they wore moccasins with hard soles, usually made of buffalo hide. In cold weather they wrapped a robe of buffalo hide around their shoulders.

A man hunting buffalo on horseback, or out on a raid in summer, often wore a breech-clout, leggings that reached to the hips, and moccasins. The leggings were attached by thongs to the belt of the breech-clout. A knife and a small bag hung from the belt. Sometimes men added a hide shirt to the outfit. In later years, shirts for ceremonial occasions were elaborately decorated, and feather head-dresses were worn.

Women wore dresses made of deer, antelope, or elk hide, knee-high leggings, and moccasins. Children were usually dressed in much the same way as their parents, though in summer they often went naked.

Plains Indians decorated their clothes with fringes and dyed porcupine quills. Plants and minerals were mixed with grease to make dyes. Buffalo robes were painted with scenes from the life of the wearer — past wars, hunts, and dream experiences. After the Europeans arrived, Plains Indians used coloured beads to decorate clothes. As time went on, they began to make their clothes from European cloth.



# Shelters

Western Plains Indians lived in tipis. The tipi, which is perhaps the best-known dwelling of the North American Indians, was cone-shaped and usually measured about four metres in diameter. It was ideally suited to the wandering life.

The frame was made of lodgepole pine poles, often more than seven metres long. Three or four poles were propped against each other to cross at the top. Then fifteen or twenty additional poles were set round the first group to complete the frame.

The covering for the frame was made of buffalo hide. It took about fourteen hides to cover the frame from the ground up to a level just below the point where the poles crossed. Wooden pegs or stones held the bottom of the covering in place.

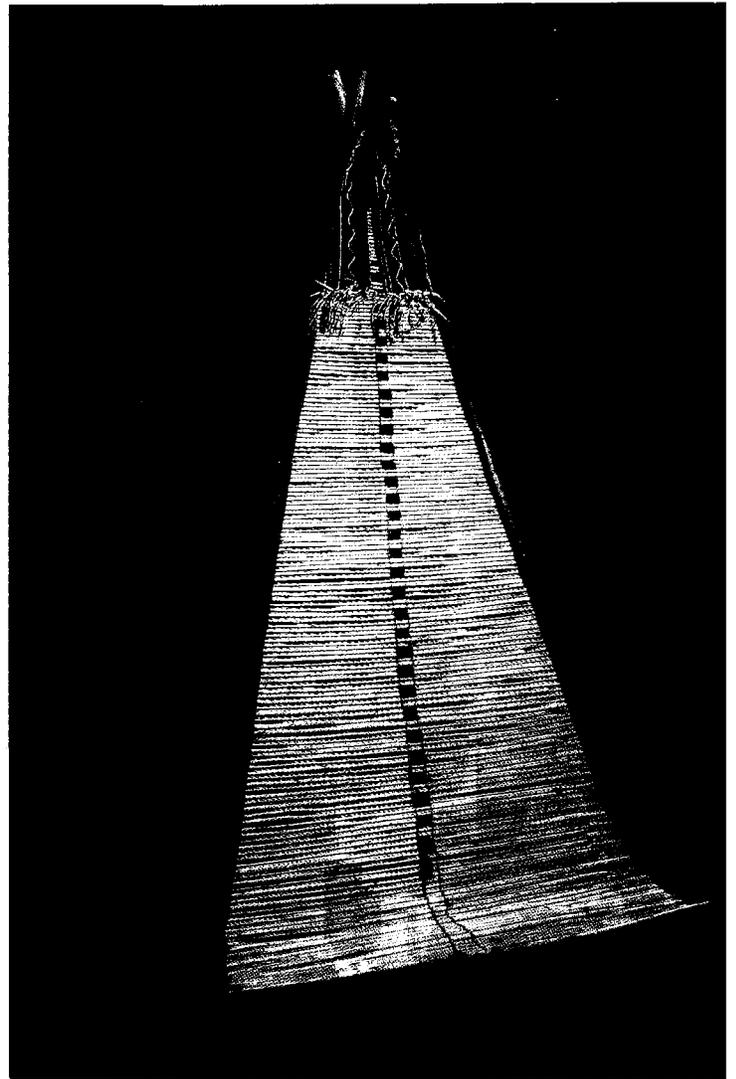
Sometimes an extra layer of buffalo hide was hung inside the tipi, from partway down the covering to the ground. This inside curtain directed cold drafts upwards and helped to keep out the dampness.

Two flaps of hide, one on each side of the opening at the top of the frame, acted as a sort of chimney. Each flap was attached to a long pole, which rested on the ground outside the tipi. When a fire was lit inside, someone positioned the flaps to catch the wind, so that it would carry the smoke away from the tipi.

Inside the tipi, people sat on the ground, leaning against backrests made of willow twigs laced together with thongs. Their beds were furs spread on the ground. Parflèches, shields, bows and arrows, and cases for head-dresses were hung from the tipi poles.

*The hunter carries a pronghorn antelope. He is greeted by an old warrior who wears a buffalo robe painted with stories of battles and hunts. A woman adjusts the smoke flap on the tipi.*

*Inset photograph shows a model of a tipi. Smoke flaps are open at the top.*



*Backrest made of willow rods for use in the tipi.*

Tipis were usually put up by the women. Often they were arranged in a semi-circle, so that the doorway of each tipi faced the rising sun. Sometimes a string of dewclaws was hung on the door flap, so that the claws would rattle when someone entered or left the tipi.

On the eastern prairies, where the Plains Indians farmed, dwellings were usually dome-shaped lodges built partly underground, and covered with layers of packed earth. Each lodge sheltered forty or more people, and was built to last as long as ten years.

# Sharing the work

Plains Indian families cared about one another. Children were always welcome in the tipis of their relatives. They spent a great deal of time with their grandparents. Often when an older woman's husband died, a granddaughter went to live with her.

Children were taught early to behave and obey the rules, although discipline was gentle. Older children helped and protected their younger brothers and sisters.

Most Plains Indians liked to have children around them. If a child died, parents hoped that they would soon have another. Sometimes they adopted a child that reminded

them of their own. If a mother or a father died, an uncle or an aunt of the children tried to make up for the loss. Often a widower married a sister of his earlier wife, or a widow married a brother of her husband.

Sometimes there were more women than men in a group. Then elders, chiefs, and leaders might have two or three wives, who were usually sisters.

Men and women shared the work. Women prepared the hides that were to be used for tipi coverings, clothes, and bags. Often they decorated their clothes and bags with dyed quills, and later on with European beads. Women put up the tipis and took them down. They picked berries and wild greens. They dug up the roots of wild plants. They prepared the food and cooked it.

Spring

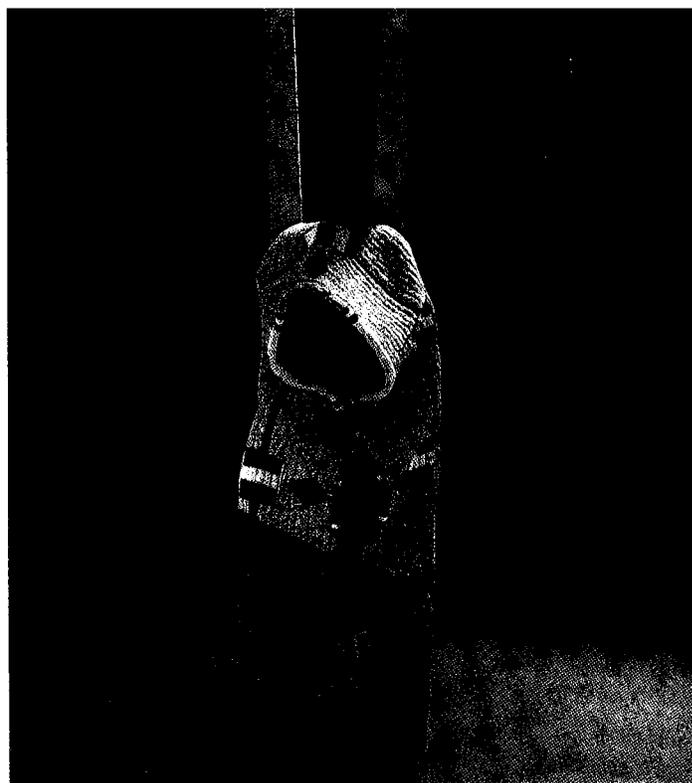


Summer



Men were the hunters and warriors. They made raids on other groups, often to try to capture horses. Men made weapons and tools and cut up the carcasses of the animals they hunted. They painted tipi coverings with scenes depicting brave actions in battle or special skills in hunting.

Parents taught their children the skills they would need when they were adults. Boys soon learned that bravery on the hunt and in battle was important. Often two unrelated boys became close friends and lived part of the time in each other's tipi. When they were grown, they became warriors and fought the same enemies. A boy's name was usually changed several times while he was growing up. Each new name represented something he had done or something that had happened to him.



*Cradle-board with bead decoration.*



# Hunters of the buffalo

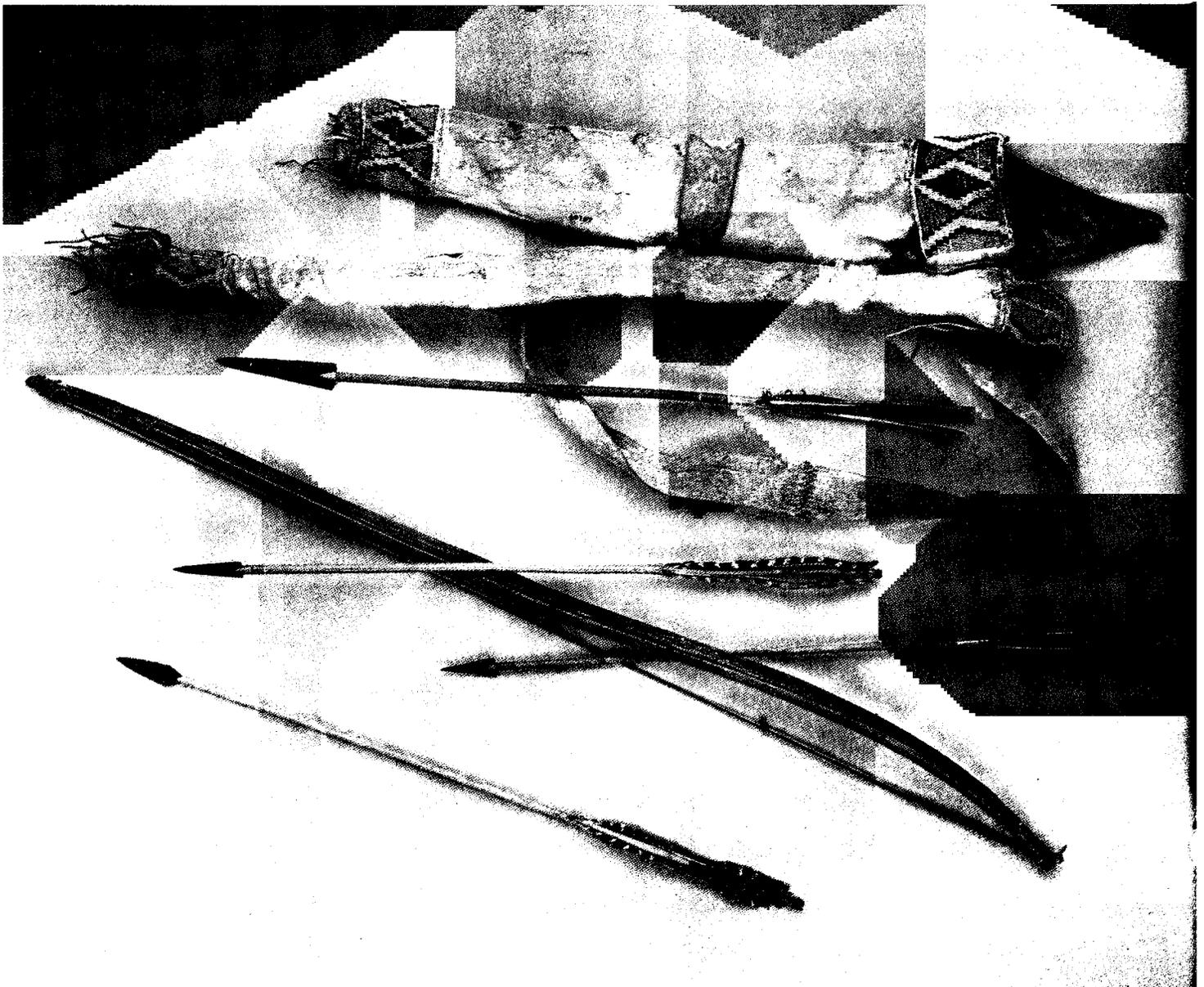
Although western Plains Indians hunted elk, deer, and antelope, the buffalo was their mainstay. Its meat was their chief food. Most of its parts, for example, its hide, sinews, and bones, were used to fill some need in the daily life.

In summer, when many bands came together at one encampment, the buffalo hunt was carefully planned. No one was allowed to hunt

alone, in case a buffalo herd might be scared away. The group's survival depended on a successful hunt.

One method of hunting buffalo was to drive herd into a pound through a long, funnel-shaped, fenced passage. Hunters shouted and waved blankets to stampede the herd into the wide end of the passage. Then people standing along the fence took up the shouting to keep the animals moving towards the pound. Once the buffalo were trapped in the round enclosure, hunters could get close enough to kill many of them with spears or with bows and arrows. Sometimes hunters drove a herd of buffalo over a steep cliff.

*Bow, arrows, bow case, and quiver.*



Once they had horses, Plains Indians soon became expert riders. A few mounted hunters could surround a herd of buffalo and kill many of them with bows and arrows. Sometimes a small group of mounted hunters killed 500 or more buffalo at one time.

Plains Indians also hunted buffalo in autumn, winter, and spring. Then a man might hunt alone, or sometimes just a few men might

hunt together. Plains Indian groups had different tricks for attracting buffalo. The Assiniboin, for example, disguised themselves in buffalo robes and imitated the bleat of a buffalo calf. That might bring a buffalo cow within range of their arrows. Some hunters disguised themselves in wolf skins, since buffalo were not afraid of wolves and would let them come very close to a herd.



*These hunters use guns instead of bows and arrows to kill buffalo.*

# Preparing the food

Buffalo meat was the main food of the Plains Indians, and most of the carcass was eaten in one way or another. The ribs were often roasted as a treat for the hunters. The liver, the heart, the kidneys, and the tongue were cooked soon after the carcass was butchered. The bones were cracked open so that the marrow could be extracted.

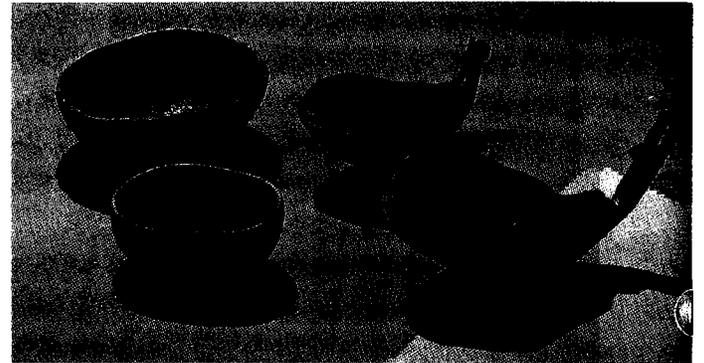
Often the meat was boiled in a buffalo stomach suspended on four short sticks. The stomach was filled with water, to which red-hot stones were added to bring it to a boil. Indian women also used buffalo meat in soup and in stews.

Plains Indians ate elk, deer, and antelope meat as well. They picked chokecherries,

service berries, and buffalo berries, which were something like cranberries. They dug up wild turnips and camas bulbs and baked them in hot ashes. Eastern Plains Indians grew corn, and traded some of it to the buffalo hunters.

Meat was also preserved for later use. Some was cut in strips, which were smoked or dried in the sun. Some was pounded and mixed with fat and sometimes berries to make a food called pemmican. Pemmican was nourishing and easy to carry, especially when hunters or warriors went on a long journey.

*Wooden bowls and horn spoons.*



*One woman boils meat in a buffalo stomach. The other pounds dried meat to make pemmican.*



# Insights

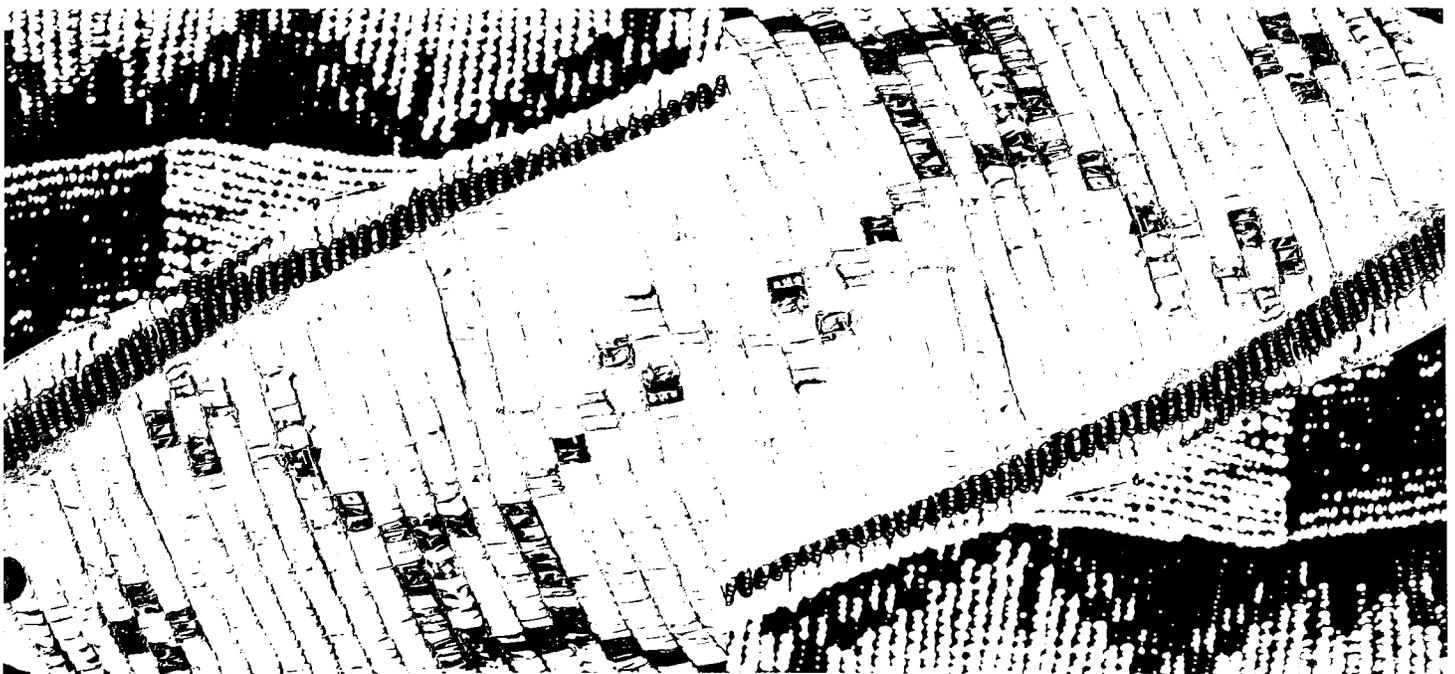
This is a supplementary section in which you will find more details about the lives of the Plains Indians, and two of their legends.

Before the arrival of Europeans, Canadian Indians had no formal written language. What they had was a long tradition of storytelling. Tales handed down from generation to generation kept their history alive. Indians remain proud of their past and are determined that their old ways will be remembered.

The Europeans who first went to the Plains left a few records. Some kept diaries. Some

occasionally painted or sketched what they saw. Because the Europeans did not always understand the ways of the Indians, the records were often misleading.

European visitors to the Plains collected some Indian clothes, utensils, weapons, and other items. Some of those objects that still exist are now in museums, where they can be viewed and studied.





## **A common language**

Because Plains Indian tribes spoke many different dialects and languages, it was often difficult for one tribe to communicate with another. To solve the problem, the Plains Indians invented a sign language. They had a system of hand and arm movements that explained what they wanted to say. Almost all Plains tribes came to understand the system, and later on so did the Europeans.

In addition, some tribes used smoke signals to send messages to their people. The amount of smoke allowed to rise from a fire, and the intervals between rising puffs, formed a code. People who knew the code could interpret the messages.

## **A new baby**

Because Plains Indians loved children, they often welcomed the birth of a new baby with a celebration. In many tribes the umbilical cord became a keepsake. It was placed in a bag, which was tied round the baby's neck.

A mother usually carried her baby on a cradle-board. When the mother had work to do, she set the cradle-board on the ground.

## **Young women and young men**

When a girl was approaching womanhood, she had to leave her family and live in a tipi with an old woman for four days. There she worked hard all day long, obeyed special rules, and learned many secrets. When the four days had passed, the young woman was led back to her family. In later years the custom was for the parents of the young woman to hold a feast and give presents to

relatives and friends. Although boys and girls in a family played together when they were young, once they reached adolescence they were no longer permitted even to speak to one another.

Most Plains Indian boys looked forward to the time when they would be allowed to go on a raid or ride in a war party. To prepare themselves, they played war games and trained themselves to be strong, so that they would be able to endure hardship.

## **Pastimes**

In the busy lives of the Plains Indians there was also time for amusement. Young children played with small toys and dolls as their mothers worked. Older children spun tops, played a ring-and-pin game, and wrestled with each other. Boys in their teens played games that imitated their fathers' skills in war and in hunting.

Athletic contests were popular. There were horse races, and horse shows in which the riders performed amazing stunts. A really expert rider could slide under the belly of a horse at full gallop and come up the other side without falling off.

Many Plains Indians were excellent archers. In one contest the archer shot several arrows at a target in quick succession. The object was to keep as many arrows as possible in the air. Even when they took time to aim carefully, some Plains Indians could get twelve arrows into the air before the first one struck the target.

As was true of most Indian groups, the Plains people enjoyed various forms of gambling. Sometimes they even bet their favourite ponies. Dice were usually plum stones or bits of wood or bone.

Perhaps the most beloved pastime was listening to stories on a winter evening. There were stories about battles and hunts, and there were legends about spirit heroes and people who were changed into animals. Some stories told about tricks that had been played. Some told of problems that had been solved by clever thinking or great courage. Every story had a lesson, so that Plains Indian children grew up with a strong feeling of pride and an understanding of all living things.

## Old men

No matter how brave and skilful they were, some warriors were killed before they reached middle age. Those who survived gained many honours. Some became the old men of the tribe. They were the elders, the ones who kept old customs alive by telling and retelling stories of the past.

Try to picture a Blackfoot camp on the northern plains about two hundred years ago. It is a cold, dark night. As you walk through the camp, flurries of snow lash your face. Horses tied to their masters' tipis stamp their feet. The door flaps of the tipis are pulled tight, but the glow of the fire inside shines through.

The sound of laughter draws you to one tipi. You lift the door flap. There are so many people gathered in the tipi that you can hardly squeeze your way in. Opposite the door, on the far side of the fire, sits an old man.

The old man remembers many things. He remembers raids of fifty years ago. He remembers legends that are hundreds of years

old, which he heard when he himself was a boy. He always retells the legends exactly as he heard them.

For a moment after the laughter dies down, the old man is silent. He watches the firelight flickering over the faces of his listeners. Then he speaks. . .

## The first moccasins

Once, long ago, there was a great chief. Although he was very powerful, there was one problem he could not solve. Whenever he walked on rough ground or stepped on stones, the soles of his feet felt pain.

Many times the great chief asked his medicine man for help, and at last the medicine man found an answer. He had some of the women weave a long, narrow mat of reeds. Wherever the chief went, four boys went before him unrolling the mat for the chief to walk on. The chief was very pleased, until one day the boys placed the mat on some sharp flints — and once again the chief felt stabs of pain.

The angry chief told the medicine man to cover all the earth with a mat thick enough to protect his feet. He threatened to put the medicine man to death if he had not accomplished this task before the next full moon.

The frightened medicine man could think of no way to fulfil the chief's request. Then one day he noticed some women cleaning a buffalo hide that was stretched out on the ground. Suddenly an idea came to him, and before long there were paths of buffalo hide stretching in every direction. The chief was very pleased and for a long time walked in comfort wherever he went.



Then one day the chief saw a beautiful girl walking near one of his paths of hide. As he stared at the girl, he wandered off the path — right into a clump of sharp thorns. The medicine man heard the chief's scream of pain from his tipi in the village and came running. This time the chief's threat struck terror in the medicine man. He was to be put to death at noon the next day.

The medicine man went off to spend the night on the plain, hoping that a friendly spirit might come to him with advice. And indeed soon after the medicine man fell asleep, a vision came to him. As soon as the medicine man wakened, he ran back to his tipi and set to work.

When the chief's men arrived to fetch him the next day at noon, the medicine man came out of his tent with a smile on his face. All the people gathered round thought that he was very brave to go to meet his death with a smile on his face. None of them noticed that he carried a bundle in his hands.

When he came before the chief, the medicine man asked if he might show him something. Then the medicine man knelt on the ground and placed a slipper of hide with a hard sole on each of the chief's feet. Looking up, he said, "For you, my chief, the earth will always be covered with hide." The chief was delighted and immediately cancelled the sentence of death.

And that is how moccasins came to be.

## Hunters of the buffalo

The buffalo, properly known as the American bison, adapted to life on the plains thousands of years ago. Its head was slung low on its body, so that it could graze without bending. It needed no shelter, for its thick, shaggy coat kept it warm even through the worst blizzards. Its sharp horns provided protection against other animals.

The buffalo was a big animal. A bull's mass could be as much as a thousand kilograms. It was strong enough to knock down a tree just by pressing against it.

The Indians of the western plains were dependent on the buffalo. They ate its meat and used its hide for tipi coverings, bull boats, and shields. In fact, they used almost every part of the buffalo carcass in one way or another. The bones were fashioned into scrapers, knives, arrowheads, hammers, and hoes. The sinews were made into bow strings and thread for sewing. The horns were shaped into spoons, cups, and clubs. Even the beard was used to decorate clothing and weapons. And the tail became a whip or a fly-swatter.

The tribes of the western plains followed the buffalo herds. The farming tribes of the eastern prairies waited for the herds to come close to their settlements. If the herds were later than usual, and the food supply was low, the people of the eastern prairies performed the white-buffalo dance. Women dressed in white robes imitated the movements of young buffalo. As they danced, songs and prayers were offered to beg the buffalo spirits to lead the herds to the settlements and save the people from hunger.

This is an age-old legend of the white buffalo.

## The white buffalo

Many years ago a group of hunters was returning empty-handed from a long search for the buffalo. As the unhappy hunters travelled wearily home, a beautiful maiden, dressed all in white, suddenly appeared before them. "I come from the buffalo," she said, "and I have a message for all your people."

The hunters hurried on towards their camp. The beautiful girl kept pace with them, no matter how fast they went. As they approached the camp, the chiefs came out to meet them, but the girl would not speak until the whole camp was assembled. When all the men, women, and children were gathered together, she spoke to them very gently but very clearly.

"You have lived peacefully with the land for many years and you have killed the buffalo only when you needed food. In return, I bring you this sacred pipe, which will be a symbol of peace for all people."

Standing in the midst of the people in her shining white robe, the beautiful maiden explained how the pipe was to be used and cared for. Then she smoked the pipe and offered it to the people. After everyone had blown a puff of smoke up to the great sky spirit, the girl began to walk across the plain.

As the people watched, they saw her change into a white buffalo calf. Then they knew that her gift to them was indeed very sacred. Soon a large herd of buffalo came close to the camp. The hunters went out to the herd, and brought back buffalo meat to feed the hungry people.

Over the years since that magical time many copies of the first pipe have been made. Each one is handled very carefully and kept just as the beautiful maiden instructed.



## Skills and crafts

Plains Indian men painted pictures on their tipi coverings, their buffalo robes, and their shields. The pictures, which were formed of stick figures and outline shapes, described important events in the men's lives. On containers used for storing food or clothes, the women painted patterns of straight lines, zigzags, triangles, and rectangles.

The painting on a shield was considered special and sacred, because usually it depicted something that a warrior had learned in a vision. A warrior believed that the painting on his shield was the best protection he could have in battle. As he painted the picture, he sang a sacred song and allowed no one to interrupt him.



## Adornment

Most Indian men and women of the Plains liked to decorate themselves and their belongings. When they went to war, men painted not only their own bodies, but the bodies of their horses as well.

Women wore jewellery, particularly bracelets made of antelope teeth. Shell decorations were prized because the shells had to be obtained through trade with North Pacific Coast Indians.

Many people wore their hair in braids. Some men shaved off their hair right back to the crown.

## Powers of the shaman

Some Plains Indian men received special knowledge and power from the spirits. They often became shamans, or medicine men. They were able to discover what was making a person sick, and then to cure the patient.

Shamans had other powers as well. They were able to find out where an enemy was. They could find things that had been lost or stolen. And they could keep outsiders from putting a spell on a member of their band.

## A dance of gratitude

In late spring or early summer, Plains Indian tribes held an important ceremony that Europeans later called the Sun Dance, although it had nothing to do with sun worship. The ceremony was meant to give thanks to the spirits.

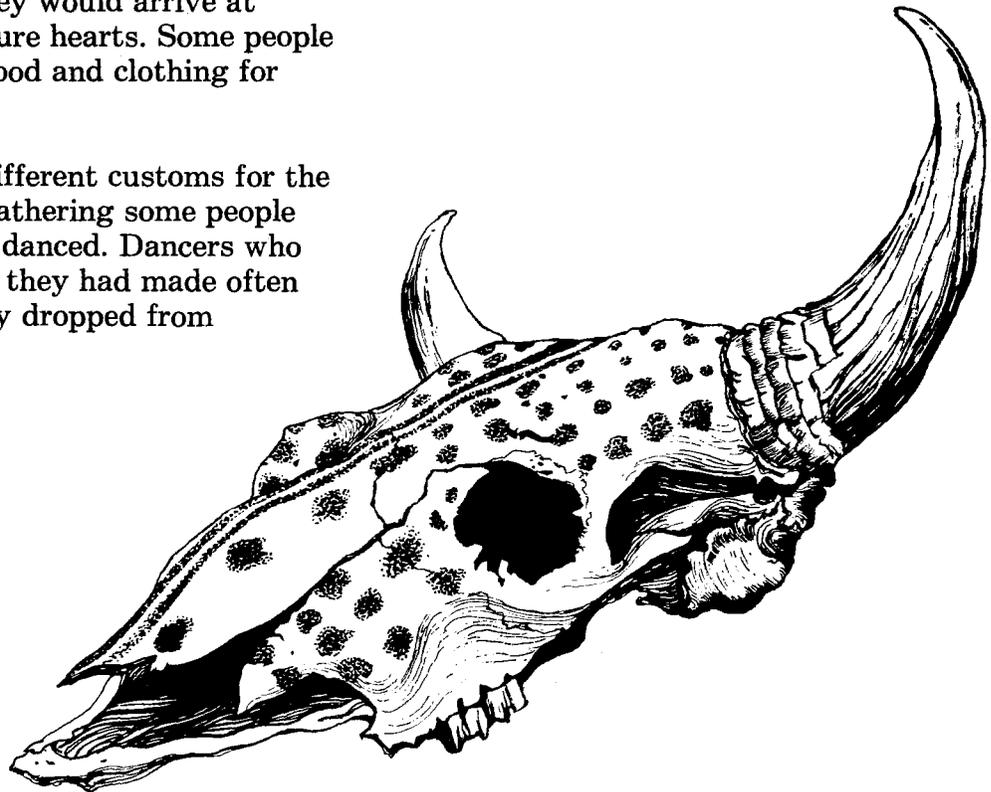
The Sun Dance was held in a “lodge” built round a tall pole. Eagle feathers and grasses, which represented the nest of the great eagle spirit, were placed at the top of the pole. The entrance to the lodge was in the south wall, and on the north wall was hung a decorated buffalo skull. The skull was a symbol of the people’s trust in the great spirit that brought herds of buffalo across the plains each spring.

Plains Indians had great respect for this ceremony. Before they gathered at the lodge, they fasted so that they would arrive at the Sun Dance with pure hearts. Some people brought offerings of food and clothing for the needy.

Different tribes had different customs for the Sun Dance. At each gathering some people watched, while others danced. Dancers who wanted to fulfil a vow they had made often kept moving until they dropped from

exhaustion. Others stared at the top of the pole as they danced, until they fell into a trance and received a vision.

Some Plains Indians considered it important to endure physical pain, so that the spirits would send them visions. At their Sun Dance, a young man might have slits cut into the flesh of his chest. A wooden skewer was pushed into each slit. Rawhide cords were fastened to the skewers and then tied to the top of the centre pole. As the man danced, the skewers pulled at his chest, causing him great pain. The dancer stared at the sacred feathers and went on dancing without crying out until the skewers were ripped out of his chest.



# The community



*Early type of Blackfoot headdress.*

At the time of the arrival of Europeans there were many Plains Indian tribes living on the prairies. Each tribe was divided into bands, which were made up of groups of families. There might be several hundred people in a band, living in thirty to forty tipis. A band was led by a chief and a number of councillors, who had power only as long as the people trusted them. A chief had to have a good war record, he had to be able to communicate his ideas, and he had to be generous to the needy.

In late spring and summer the bands of a tribe gathered together at a large encampment on the plains. There were sometimes several thousand people in one encampment. Each band had its own place. Tipis were arranged in a huge circle round the central lodge, where the chiefs and councillors met to make plans, especially for community buffalo hunts.

As winter approached, the large herds of buffalo moved away. Then the encampments broke up. Bands went off to seek shelter from the harsh winter winds and to hunt in small groups. This was particularly true in the north, where most bands wintered in the foothills and the river valleys of the Rocky Mountains.

# Travel and transportation



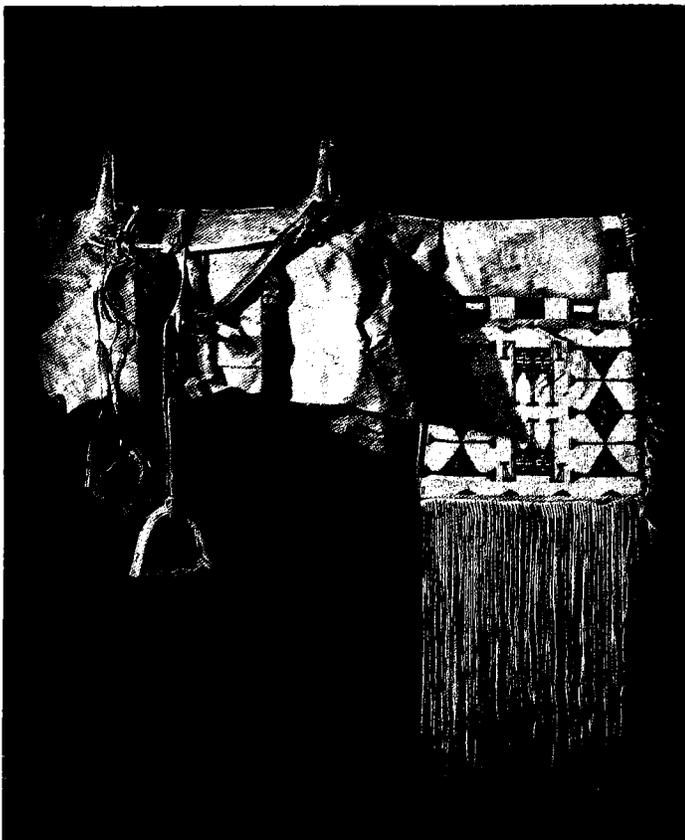
In the early days, Plains Indians had to walk wherever they went, and walking was sometimes difficult. Although the plains were fairly level, the ground was rough and hard. When snow and ice came to the northern plains, people travelled on snowshoes, but they seldom used toboggans.

To transport their belongings, Plains Indians used the travois. A dog could pull a travois with a load of as much as twenty kilograms. Once the Plains Indians had horses, they made a larger travois, often using tipi poles for the framework. A horse could pull a much heavier load.

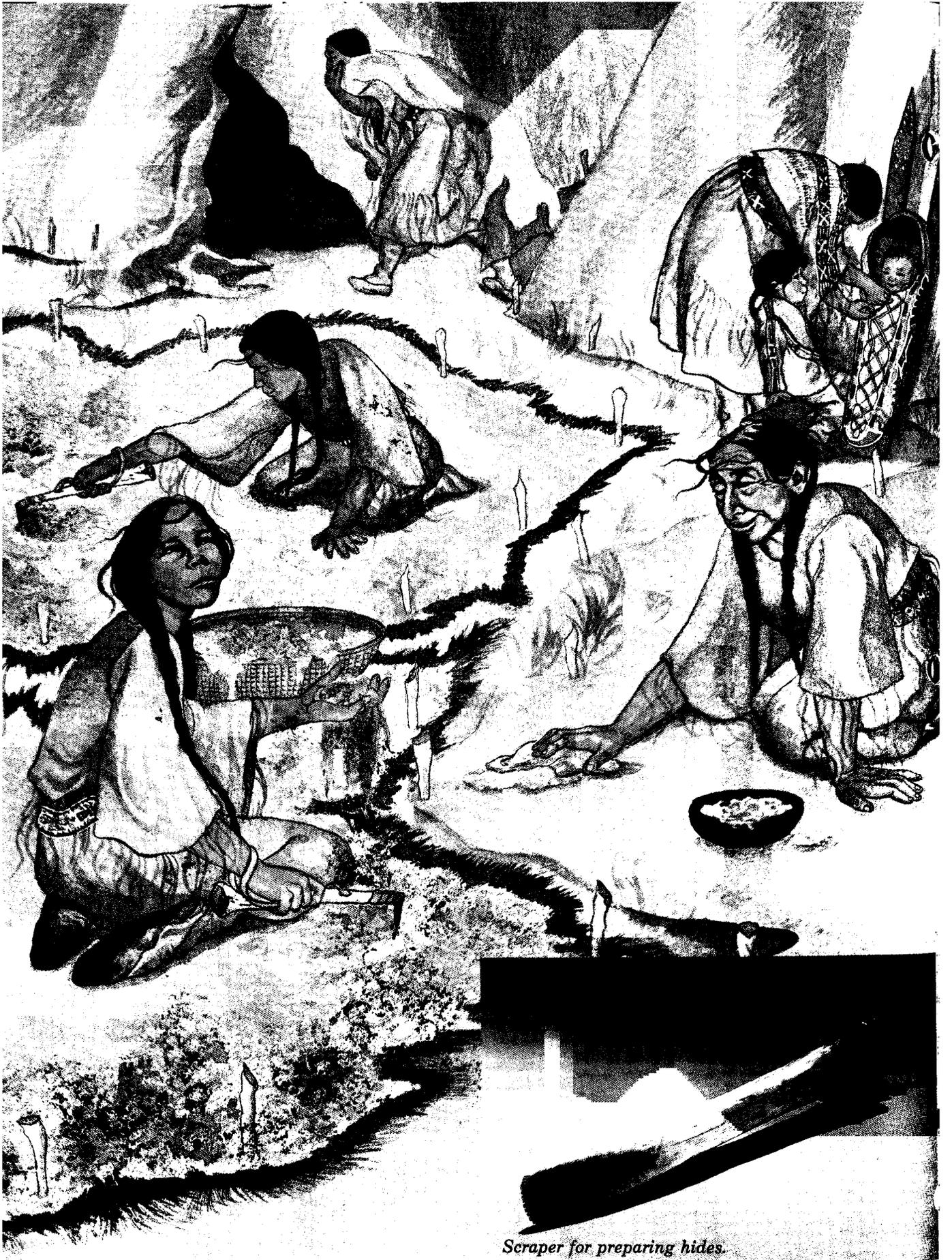
Plains hunters and warriors ranged over vast areas, and often took their families and their possessions with them. The women, too, rode horses. They used a special saddle with a high pommel at the front and the back.

Plains groups made a boat called a bull boat. It was shaped like a large round bowl and was made of buffalo hide stretched over a wood frame. Paddles were used to propel it over the water.

*Indians in bull boats collecting firewood on the banks of the Missouri River.*



*Woman's saddle with beaded and fringed saddle bags.*



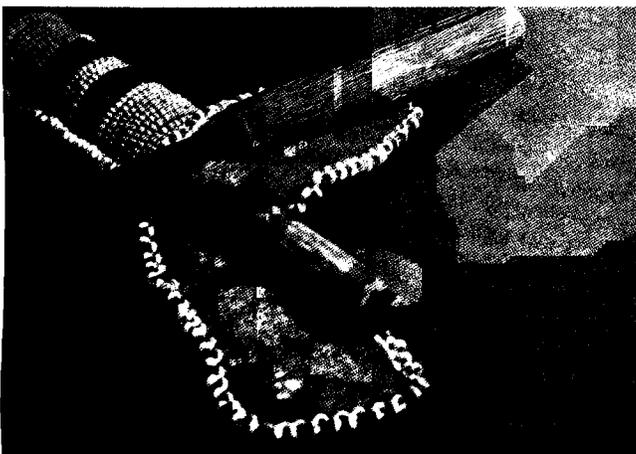
*Scraper for preparing hides.*

# Skills and crafts

The buffalo not only provided most of the food of the Plains Indians, but it also supplied the raw materials for tools, clothes, shelters, and containers. And a great deal of skill went into the fashioning of these much-needed objects.

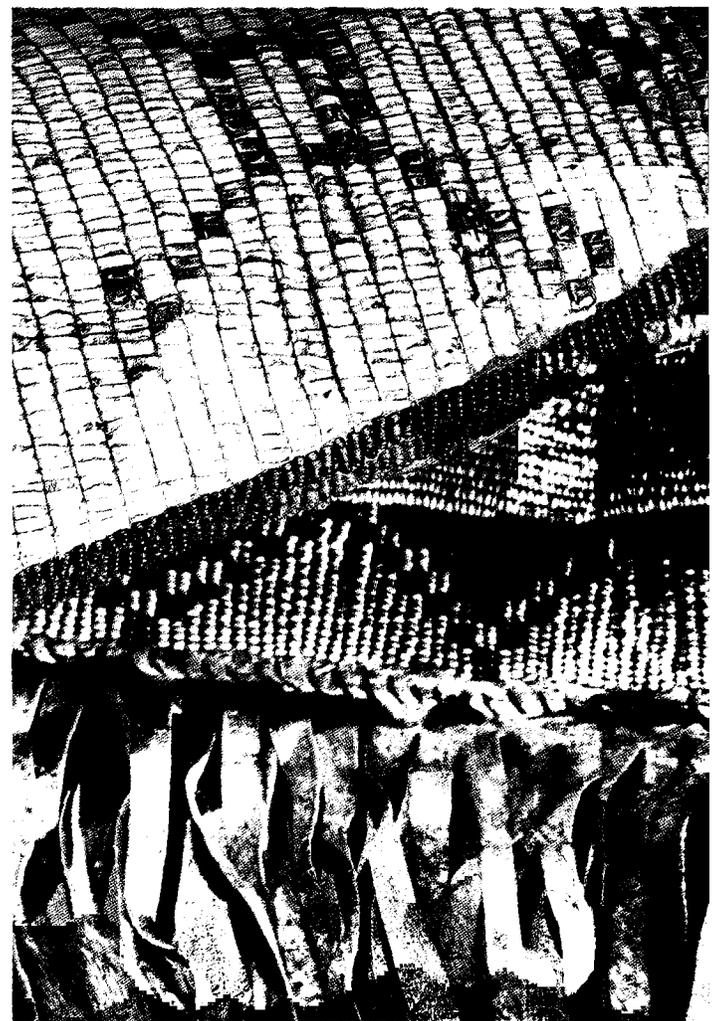
After the men had butchered a buffalo carcass, the women took over the job of curing the hide. Using a scraper made of buffalo bone, they cleaned off all the bits of flesh, and sometimes the hair on the outside of the skin as well. They stretched the hide on the ground, so that the sun would dry and stretch it. They treated the hide with a mixture of buffalo fat and brains to soften it and then they dried it again. They rubbed the hide with rough stones to smooth the surface, and then they pulled it back and forth over a strand of twisted sinew to soften it still more. Once the hide was fully cured, it was ready to be put to several uses.

*women at work on buffalo hides.*



Most Plains Indian groups made tools and weapons of wood, bone, or stone, and many made cooking vessels of hide. Wood was carved into cradle-board backs. Red soapstone was formed into ceremonial pipes. Bone handles for tools were shaped and polished to fit the hand. Often everyday articles were beautifully decorated.

When the Europeans brought metal to the Plains, the Indians used it for knives and arrowheads. When coloured beads came to the Plains, the Indians adapted their quillwork and painting designs to beadwork.



*Moccasin with geometric quillwork design, and beaded tobacco bag.*

*Awls and beaded case.*

# Beliefs and rituals

Religious beliefs and rituals played an important part in the lives of the Plains Indians. Special spiritual powers helped a man to achieve a respected position in the society. And one way of acquiring spiritual power was the custom known as the “vision quest”.

As a Plains youth approached manhood, he went off by himself to a lonely place for several days. There he fasted and prayed for a guardian spirit to come to him. The spirit might be that of an animal. It might come to the youth in a dream, or in a trance brought on by loneliness and lack of food and water.

The spirit taught the youth sacred songs and told him how to dress and how to behave. That knowledge was important for the young man’s future success in the hunt and in war. It might bring him fame as he grew older.

Some youths failed in their vision quests. Then they tried to gain respect by being especially brave and by enduring hardships without complaint.

The Plains Indians had many ceremonies and dances. Some were performed to ensure a successful hunt or raid. Others were meant to honour the great spirit who had created all things. Before taking part in a sacred ritual, people had to purify themselves in a steam bath or in sacred water. Some Plains Indians smoked a “holy” pipe before they performed certain rituals. Only after smoke had been blown as an offering to the spirits could the ceremony begin.

*Medicine bundle.*





*A warrior raises his shield to the spirits.*

Before going into battle, warriors prayed for help and protection from the spirits. They also believed that spiritual powers lay in the designs painted on their shields. Until the time for battle, the shields were kept covered. Among some Plains Indian groups special rituals accompanied the uncovering of shields.

*Ceremonial drum and rattles.*





## The Plains today

Although they no longer hunt buffalo, once the mainstay of life, many of today's Plains Indians are still farmers and cattle ranchers, either on reserves or in western farming communities.

*A Plains headdress, nowadays worn mainly during ceremonial dances and rituals celebrating the heritage of the Indians.*



# Glossary

**breech-clout:** The breech-clout of the Indians was a piece of soft hide that was pulled up between the legs and wrapped over a belt at the waist.

**dewclaw:** incomplete claw on the feet of some animals, including the buffalo

**parflèche:** bag for storing pemmican or other dried food

**pemmican:** food made of dried meat, grease, and sometimes berries, pounded together

**pommel:** knob on a saddle

**pound:** circular area enclosed by a fence

**ritual:** traditional pattern for performing a ceremony, particularly a religious one

**shaman:** person with special powers who acts as a religious leader or a healer

**sinew:** tough tissue that joins muscle to bone

**travois:** carrying device, made of two long poles crossed over an animal's shoulders, with a frame or net bag stretched between the poles near the ground

**umbilical cord:** cord that connects a baby to the mother's body until the baby is born

**vision:** something that is seen, perhaps only in the imagination, but that seems real

## Acknowledgements

Buffalo, pages 1, 10, Stockphotos Inc./Masterfile; herding cattle, page 24, Ted Grant/Masterfile; "The first moccasins," pages 12-13, adapted from *Fireside Book of North American Folktales*, by Allan A. Macfarlan, with the permission of Stackpole Books.

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ISBN 0-669-95036-x

Printed in Canada

4 3 2 1

## Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data

Cass, James.

Statins, the buffalo hunter

(Native peoples of Canada series)  
ISBN 0-669-95036-X

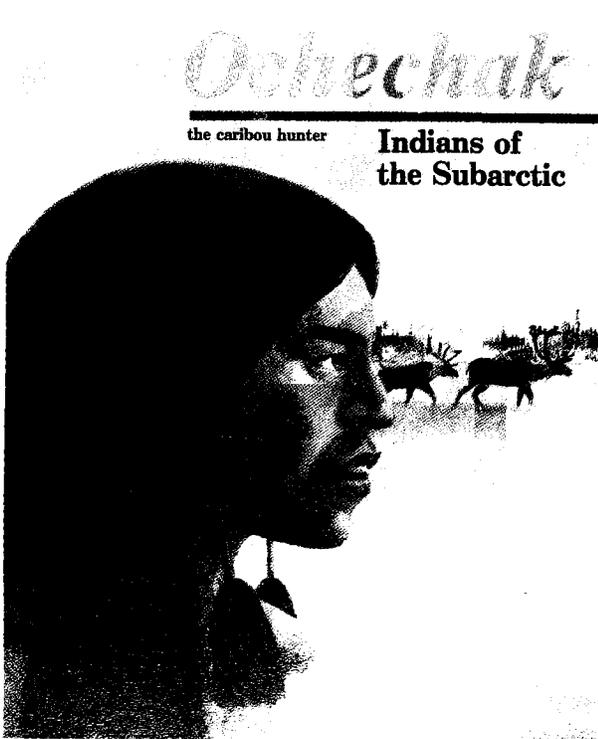
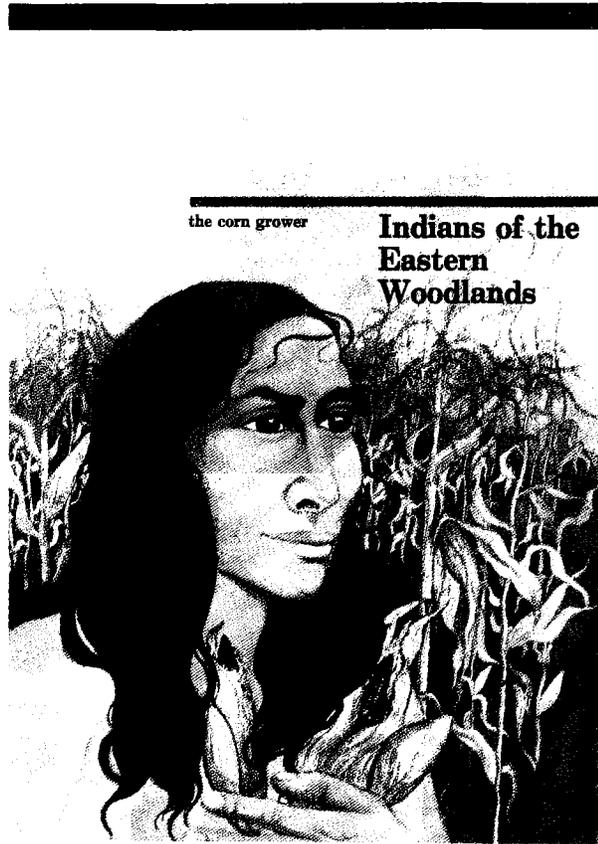
I. Indians of North America - Great Plains. I. Royal Ontario Museum. II. Title. III. Series.

878.G73C37 1983

978'.00497

C83-098948-X

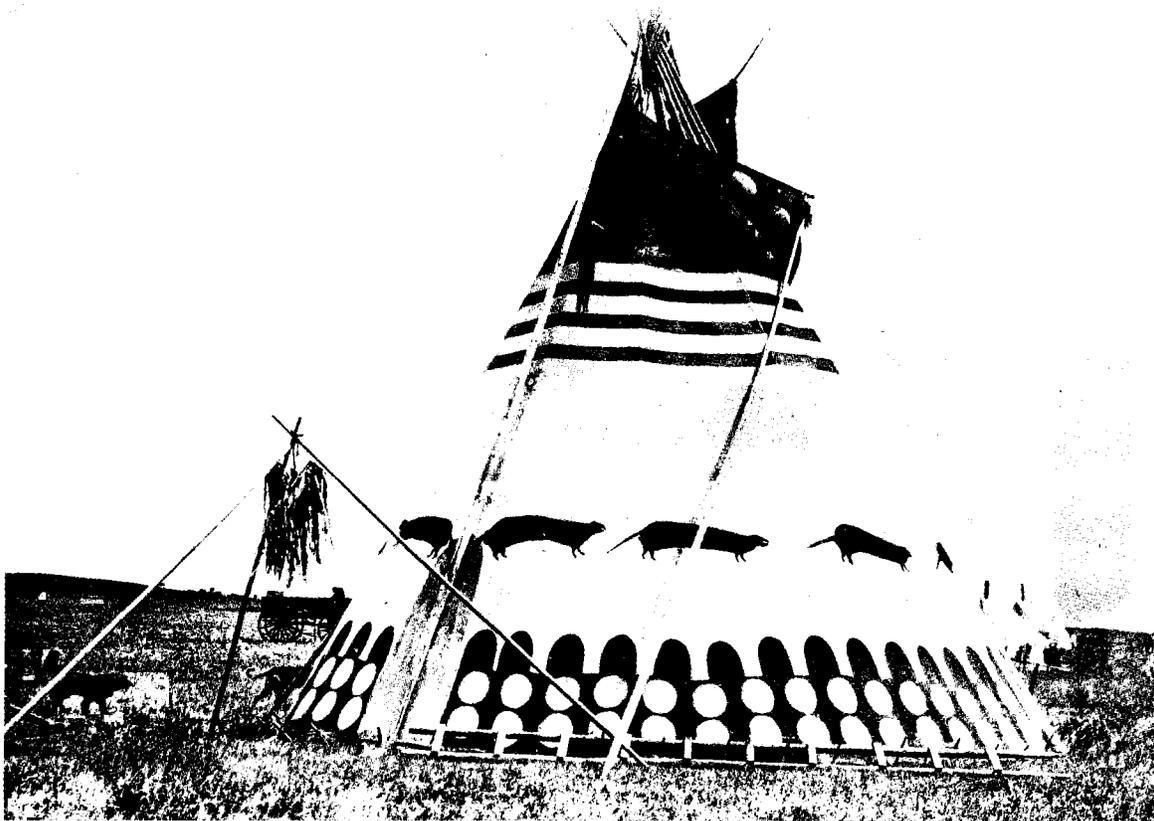
All the scenes in this book are reconstructed. The illustrations reflect changes that European goods and methods brought to the lives of the Plains Indians over a period of time.



# Oracle

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## THE BLACKFOOT



*Tipi*

*NMC 58569*

The Blackfoot were the strongest and most aggressive Indians on the Canadian Plains during the middle of the eighteenth century. In the early 1700s they had occupied the Saskatchewan Valley, about 643.74 km east of the Rocky Mountains. Before 1750 the Blackfoot had acquired horses and guns and had expanded their territory; at the height of their power it extended from the Rocky Mountains into what is now Saskatchewan, and from the northern Saskatchewan River almost to the upper Missouri River in the present-day United States.

The term "Blackfoot" refers to three tribes which formed a loose confederacy or "nation": the Siksika or Blackfoot proper, the Pikuni or Peigan, and the Kainah or Blood. Each tribe was independent, but members of all three spoke a common language of the Algonkian language family. They were further united by similar customs, a tradition of common origin, and by frequent intermarriage between members of the different tribes. They did not wage war on each other; in fact they helped one another in battles against common enemies.



*Buffalo hunting on horseback, Diamond Jenness*

NMC 81456

The name, "Blackfoot", is a translation of what they called themselves, *Siksikauwa*, which may refer to the moccasins they wore which were either painted black or darkened by Prairie fires.

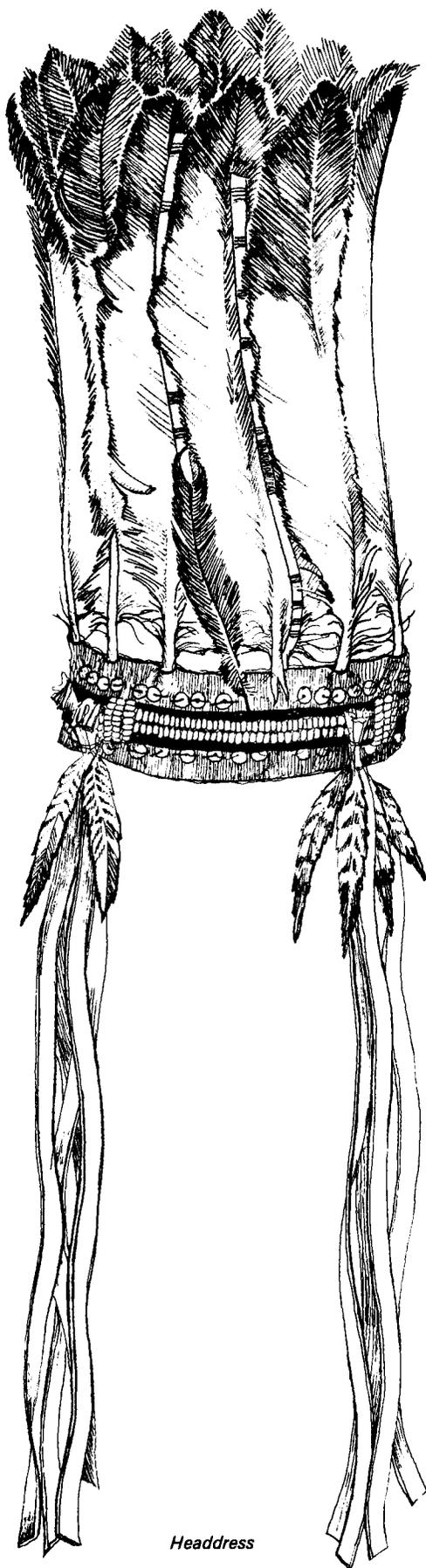
The Blackfoot economy was based primarily on hunting. The most important game animals were bison, or buffalo, which roamed in vast herds over the plains of North America. Buffalo provided the Blackfoot Indians with much of what was needed in everyday life. The meat was sun-dried, or pounded fine and mixed with fat and dried berries to form pemmican. Both the sun-dried (or jerked) variety and the pounded mixture could be kept for months. The skins of the buffalo were used as cloaks and bed coverings. Scraped skins were made into shields and meat bags, and sinews were used for lines and ropes. Bones were fashioned into knives and arrowheads and awls which were used for sewing. Even the stomach of the animal was cleaned out and used as a container and the horns were carved into cups.

The Blackfoot Indians, who lived in tipis throughout the year, camped in small groups during the summer and fall. This was the time of the most intense hunting activity, as well as a time for ceremonies and other social activities. The great summer buffalo hunt involved the co-operation of many people for a whole herd might be driven down a funnel-shaped runway over a cliff. Once the Blackfoot obtained breechloader guns, around 1870, it was easy for a group of mounted hunters to encircle a herd, get it moving and then shoot the animals as they dashed for freedom.

During the winter the Blackfoot broke up into many small bands which wintered separately in sheltered river valleys. In late October or early November the band chief chose a campsite in a broad river valley, protected from winds and snow by the high, natural walls of the valley itself. The valley floor provided grass for the horses. They relied on dried meat for food, hunting buffalo, deer and other animals when they could. When spring came they gathered turnips, bitterroot, camas root and other plants. Because the buffalo bulls did not reach their prime until June, only smaller animals were hunted in the spring.

Each band had a chief. When all the bands of the tribe camped together, a head chief was selected. The head chief was chief in peace time only, passing his authority to a war chief in times of trouble or danger. The band chiefs formed a tribal council. Several military societies were also found in each of the Blackfoot tribes and the leaders of these societies sat on the tribal council. Members of the military societies policed the camps, organized buffalo hunts, and guarded the tribe when it was on the march. There were also dancing societies with social and religious functions.

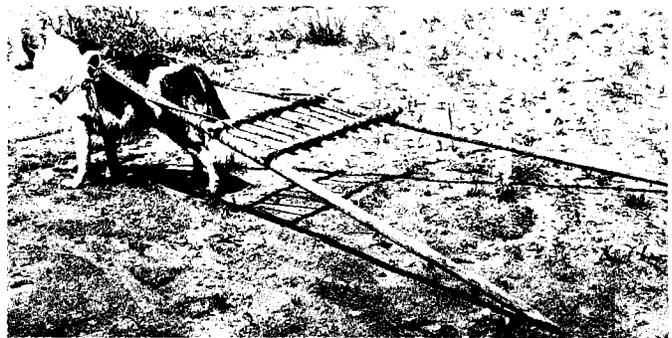
Warfare was almost a way of life for the Blackfoot Indians. Before the white settlers arrived they fought the Cree and the Assiniboine. Whenever a party was getting ready for an expedition a feast was held, religious sacrifices were offered, and vows were made that were later fulfilled at the annual Sun Dance. Warfare among Plains Indians increased as horses were obtained, usually



Headdress

through raids on other Indian groups. Heroic deeds on these mounted raids brought great prestige to the men and those who achieved prestige through warfare were allowed to wear feathers in a head-dress. A train of plumes hanging to the feet was the highest honour that a man could win.

In order to become successful horsemen, hunters and warriors, Blackfoot boys were urged to go on vision quests. They spent days in isolation, without food, in order to obtain, through a vision, a guardian spirit which would help them in life. The spirit would instruct the young Indian in battle tactics and in the use of medicines. Soon after a young man returned home, he made certain articles given him in his dream according to the instructions he had received from the spirit. These made up the contents of his personal medicine bundle. Medicine bundles included objects such as feathers wrapped in skin or cloth, stone pipes, skins of animals and birds, or roots and rocks. Each object represented a blessing bestowed upon a Blackfoot through a vision. The Blackfoot were a religious people, and believed that the blessing could be retained for mankind by handing down the objects in the bundles from generation to generation. Unless a Blackfoot relinquished these sacred objects, which were regarded as symbols of power, he retained the power until death. And if a medicine bundle was lost or captured by the enemy, the power was not permanently lost, for the one who had possessed the power could remake the bundle.



Dog with travois

NMC 62763

The introduction of the horse and the gun changed many aspects of Blackfoot culture. They had traditionally travelled on foot, either swimming across rivers or using tub-like boats made of willow twigs and bison hides. They either carried their belongings or transported them on a travois, which was a platform suspended between two poles lashed to the shoulders of a dog. After horses were acquired, the Blackfoot became more mobile and it was easier for them to search out the buffalo. Wealth came to be measured in terms of the number of horses owned. A man with many horses could, for example, have additional wives or he could buy membership in one of the societies or, he could buy sacred objects or sacred songs.

The Blackfoot believed in the existence of a Great Spirit, who was the creator of all things. The power of the Great Spirit was believed to pervade the air, earth and sky and the spirit's residence was believed to be the sun. The most important Blackfoot ceremony was the annual Sun Dance, which was held in mid-summer when the tribe camped together. During the Sun Dance (which was forbidden by law in 1921) a person who had overcome a time of crisis fulfilled the vows he had made to dance the Sun Dance in thanksgiving. The Sun Dance included many rites as does, for example, the celebration of Christmas. Some of the rituals involved the use of sacred buffalo tongues from the great summer buffalo hunt. The climax of the Sun Dance came on the fifth day, when a medicine lodge was built. Its most sacred feature was the great central pole which was loaded with offerings to the Great Spirit. During the ceremonies, young men danced, fasted, and tortured themselves to secure blessings from the supernatural. Some of them might undergo a rite that caused intense physical pain and left permanent scars. This rite involved putting sharp wooden skewers through the muscles of the back or chest. Lines fastened to the skewers were tied to the sacred pole. By straining until his flesh tore away, the warrior finally freed himself. While doing this he sang and danced, showing no evidence of pain.

By 1880 the Blackfoot had come a long way from their stone-age culture. At the height of their power, around 1830, their total population may have exceeded 10,000. But smallpox epidemics between 1836 and 1857 reduced the population. By the early 1880s the buffalo on the Plains had been killed almost to extinction and many Blackfoot died of starvation. Since then, many people of the Blackfoot tribes have become farmers and cattle-herders. Today the members of the three Blackfoot tribes live on three reserves in Alberta and one reserve in Montana, U.S.A. As of December 31st, 1976, their total population registered in Canada was 2,762.

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*Text: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man*

*Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
Marion Ritchie  
National Museum of Man*

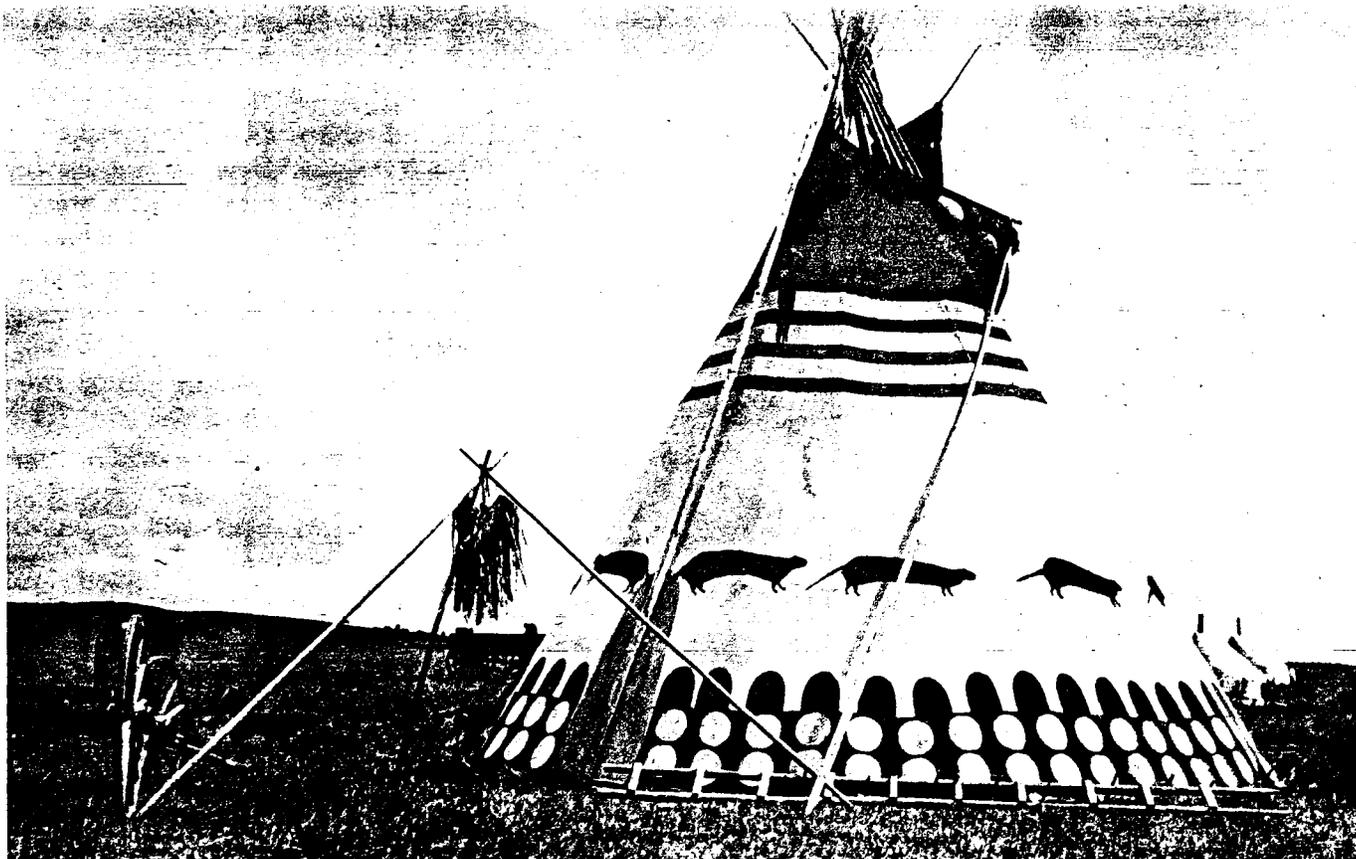
*Published under the authority of: The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.*

*Catalogue No. R34-2/6-1979  
ISBN 0-662-10269-2  
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS-5107-006-EE-A1*

*Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français.*

## Blackfoot Sacred Paintings

Ted J. Brassler



*An Otter painted tipi among the Northern Blackfoot, rear view. Notice the associated medicine bundle hanging on a tripod behind the lodge. NMC 58569*

"That 's the place where the beavers were making their lodge, and Scabby Round Robe was sitting where we are now". We were standing on a windswept hill, overlooking the confluence of the Crowfoot Creek and the Bow River, on the Blackfoot Reserve in Alberta. From a distance I heard a truck passing on the Trans-Canada Highway. Pointing out the various features of the landscape, Joe Poor Eagle was telling me the legend of Scabby Round Robe, who had spent a winter here with the beavers. In the course of that winter the beavers had taught him sacred songs, later added to the ritual of the Beaver Medicine Bundle, and they had given him the Beaver design to be painted on his tipi.

Together with native old-timers, I have visited several of the places mentioned in the myths and traditions of the three Blackfoot tribes: the Blackfoot proper, the Blood and the Piegan. These places are unmarked by the government's Historic Sites Branch but are certainly worth marking, if only to help Indian kids in their search for identity. Many details would have remained unknown to me if I had been satisfied with the stories as told in the comfort of a tipi or the hosts' living rooms - details that reveal an astonishing memory of the traditional way of life and the ancient relationship with the natural environment, as told to my informants when they were young, say, the first decades of this century.

Looking through tradition-oriented eyes, one sees the Plains region as vastly different from the endless monotony experienced by most tourists along the highway.

Six years ago, I chose Blackfoot traditional culture as a subject of study because of the urgency: life on and around the four Blackfoot reserves (three in Alberta, one in Montana) has been changing for several decades, but the rate of change is accelerating. Although the native population is increasing, only a handful of elderly people are left who are well versed in the old traditions, and few if any of the middle-aged or younger people are capable of succeeding them in the performance of rituals, in the accurate recounting of myths, or in the manufacture of traditional paraphernalia. A most complex and rich interpretation of the environment is on the verge of disappearing completely. Even the most basic, most important ceremonies of the annual ritual cycle are being performed in a drastically abbreviated form. Most younger Blackfoot Indians have great difficulty in understanding the language spoken by their grandparents.

Whereas other ethnologists, working mainly with the Montana Blackfoot, have adequately recorded the major aspects of traditional culture, a vast amount of traditional lore and custom has remained unknown, particularly where the Canadian Blackfoot tribes are concerned. Reviewing the existing possibilities, I decided to focus my interest upon the art style, symbolism and ritual functions of Blackfoot painted tents, or "tipis". The painted tipis and their associated medicine bundles are central to a network of cultural aspects: the arts, religion, mythology and sociology. As such, these painted tipis provide a key to "understanding" these aspects.

Until recently, the consensus among students was that only about fifty different tipi paintings existed among the Blackfoot. I have recorded well over one hundred, each painting with its own name, a distinct origin myth, ritual of transfer, and history of former owners. Of course, particularly on the early paintings, my notes are fragmentary and will remain so, their last owners having died long ago. In order to acquire information concerning tipi paintings that no longer exist, as well as to trace changes in art development, I have searched most archives in Canada and the United States for early photographs. The result has been fascinating, both for me and for the many elderly Indians to whom I showed these early pictures. The photographs helped to bring back memories that otherwise would never have been tapped. However, my research was not restricted to "memory culture" alone. In the course of these years I have been able to attend and participate in the painting of tipis, their ritual transfer to new owners, and their pitching in the annual summer camps. Sufficient knowledge has thus been acquired for me to summarize the functions of these colourful tents in Blackfoot society.

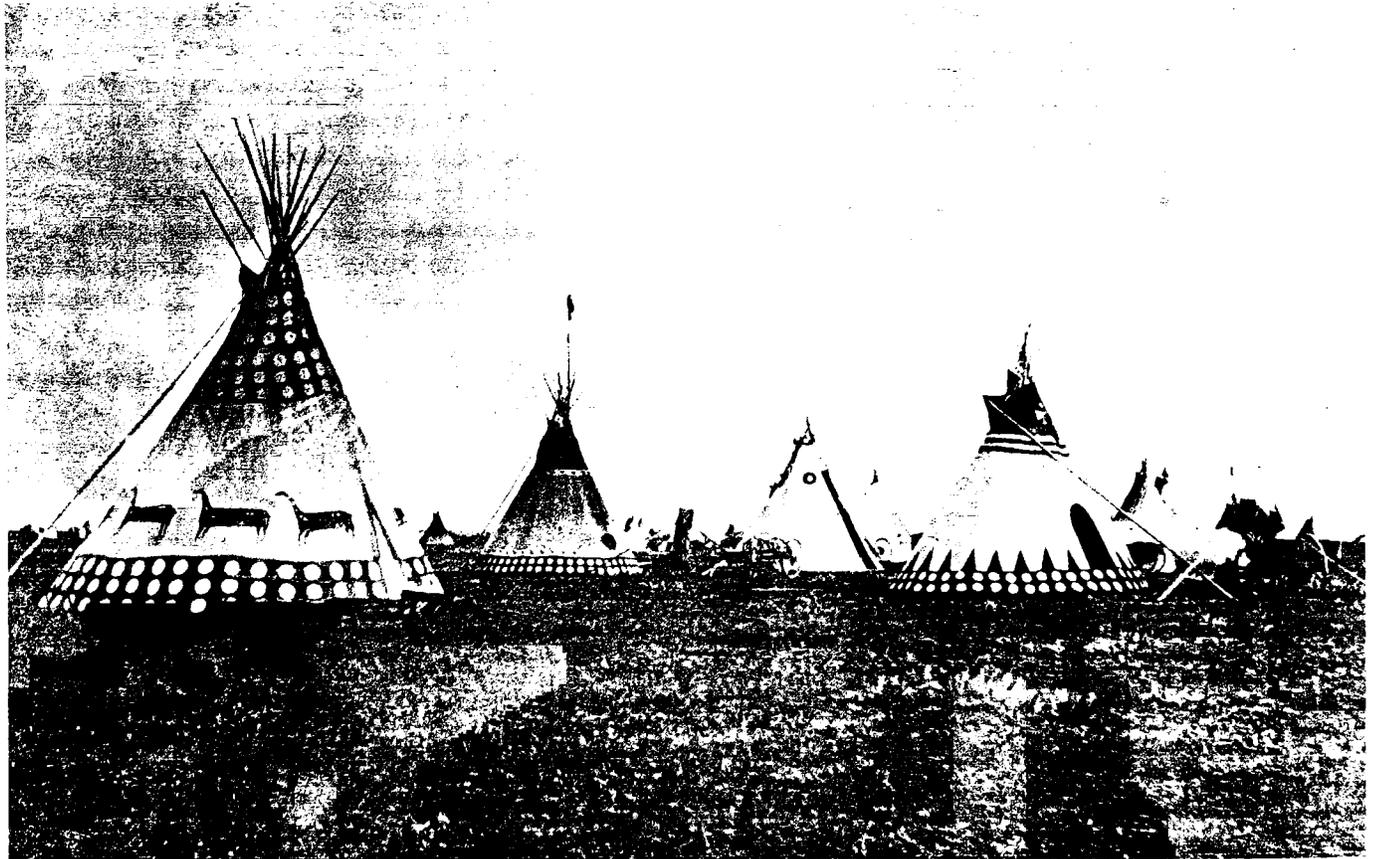
The paintings on Blackfoot tipi covers were either pictographic or symbolic in nature. Pictures of the former type decorated the so-called "war lodges", portraying the war exploits of the tipi owner and those of his closest friends. For obvious reasons war lodges are seldom seen nowadays; service in the white man's wars rarely stimulated the Indians to paint a new war lodge. The following is therefore restricted to the symbolic paintings on the "sacred" lodges. They are considered sacred because the painted designs and associated medicine bundles originated in visions or other mystic experiences of the

original or first human owner. Only the rightful owner is permitted to decorate his tipi with these paintings.

Several of these tipi designs are of a very simple form, consisting of a monochrome coloured surface, bands circling around the cover, numerous discs painted all over the cover, or various other geometric patterns. Most impressive are the larger than life-size pictures of animals and birds. Usually depicted in pairs, these animals represent the mythical giver of the sacred tipi and his wife. The representation of the throat, heart, kidneys and leg joints on these animal figures refers to their spiritual nature. These

internal parts of the body were regarded as the residence of spiritual power in any living being. The most essential part of the tipi's transfer ritual takes place when the new owner is being painted at the joints of his shoulders, wrists, knees and hips, that is when the "power" is transferred to him.

A disc or door-shaped design painted on the outside of the tipi cover at the rear symbolizes the entrance to the residence of the represented animal spirits. Behind this painting, inside the lodge, the owner has his seat, his medicine bundle is stored there, and an altar is laid out there on the ground during rituals. The convergence of animal spirit's



*Camp of the Blood tribe, Blackfoot Nation, 1890s. An Antelope painted tipi in the foreground. NMC 41982*

residence and owner's seat is perhaps the most visual reference to the belief that the human owner represents, if not is, the original spirit owner of the sacred tipi. Certainly he is believed to control the powers of that spirit through the associated ritual and sacred songs. In these two features - picturing of the joint-marks and the spirit door at the rear of the lodge - ancient artistic and spiritual traditions of circumboreal origin survive among the Blackfoot.

Most of these sacred tipis have geometric designs painted at the top and around the base, serving as a conventional frame for the vision-derived pictures. The symbolic meaning of these conventional designs is to be found in the tribal mythology, and is also expressed in the major rituals of these people. The framing or incorporation of the visionary's symbols by those of the community reflects and confirms the acceptance and incorporation of the individual's religious experience within the religious system shared by the members of his group. That this is not merely an impressionistic interpretation becomes clear from a survey of the integrative mechanisms that play a role in the creation of such a sacred lodge.

A widespread and well-known aspect of North American Indian religion is the individual's effort to acquire a guardian spirit through a vision. Among the Blackfoot such an experience was frequently characterized by certain features: the visionary was invited to enter a painted tipi inhabited by a couple who expressed pity for him. Though the couple appeared in human form, they were the spiritual masters of a certain animal species. They communicated

some of their sacred power to the visionary by instructing him in certain songs, a ritual, and the preparation of the associated paraphernalia - the medicine bundle. Finally, these guardian spirits might allow their protégé to copy their tipi painting on his own lodge. Thus, the sacred tipi usually is not an entity in itself but, at least originally, was part of a ritual complex.

So far, the event would be meaningful to the concerned individual only, experienced as something different from everything else known to him. Always afraid of ridicule, no Blackfoot Indian would dare to create a ritual complex based on a vision only. Acting as agents of tribal conformity, experienced traditionalists were consulted first. The usual result was a ritual closely resembling other Blackfoot rituals of that type and associated with a painting in the distinct tribal art style. The vision painting, referring to the individual's experience, was framed within conventional designs, referring to similar experiences that had long since become the common heritage of the group.

The origin of most of these painted tipis goes back many generations. The frequent ritual transfer of these lodges and medicine bundles was encouraged by the belief that owning sacred property increased a man's prestige and social standing. Due to the high costs of transfer rituals, painted tipis and medicine bundles circulated almost exclusively among the well-to-do families.

Admittedly, this is a highly simplified sketch of only the major aspects of Blackfoot sacred lodge lore. The more fascinating details will be published later.

# WESTMINSTER LIBRARY INDIANS OF CANADA

THE BLACKFOOT

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On an October day in 1754, Anthony Henday noted these words in his Journal "...I told him what I was sent for, and desired him to allow some of his young men to go down to the Fort with me, where they would be kindly received, and get guns etc. But he answered, it was far off, and they could not live without Buffalo flesh... The chief further said they never wanted food, as they followed the Buffalo and killed them with Bow and Arrows..." So reported Anthony Henday to his Hudson Bay Employers who had sent him out in an effort to convince the powerful Blackfoot peoples to trade at the Company's eastern based forts. At this time, the French traders had penetrated the West with telling effect upon the English Company's trade.

In any case, the view expressed by that unnamed Blackfoot chief is typical of the Blackfoot attitude which can, perhaps, be

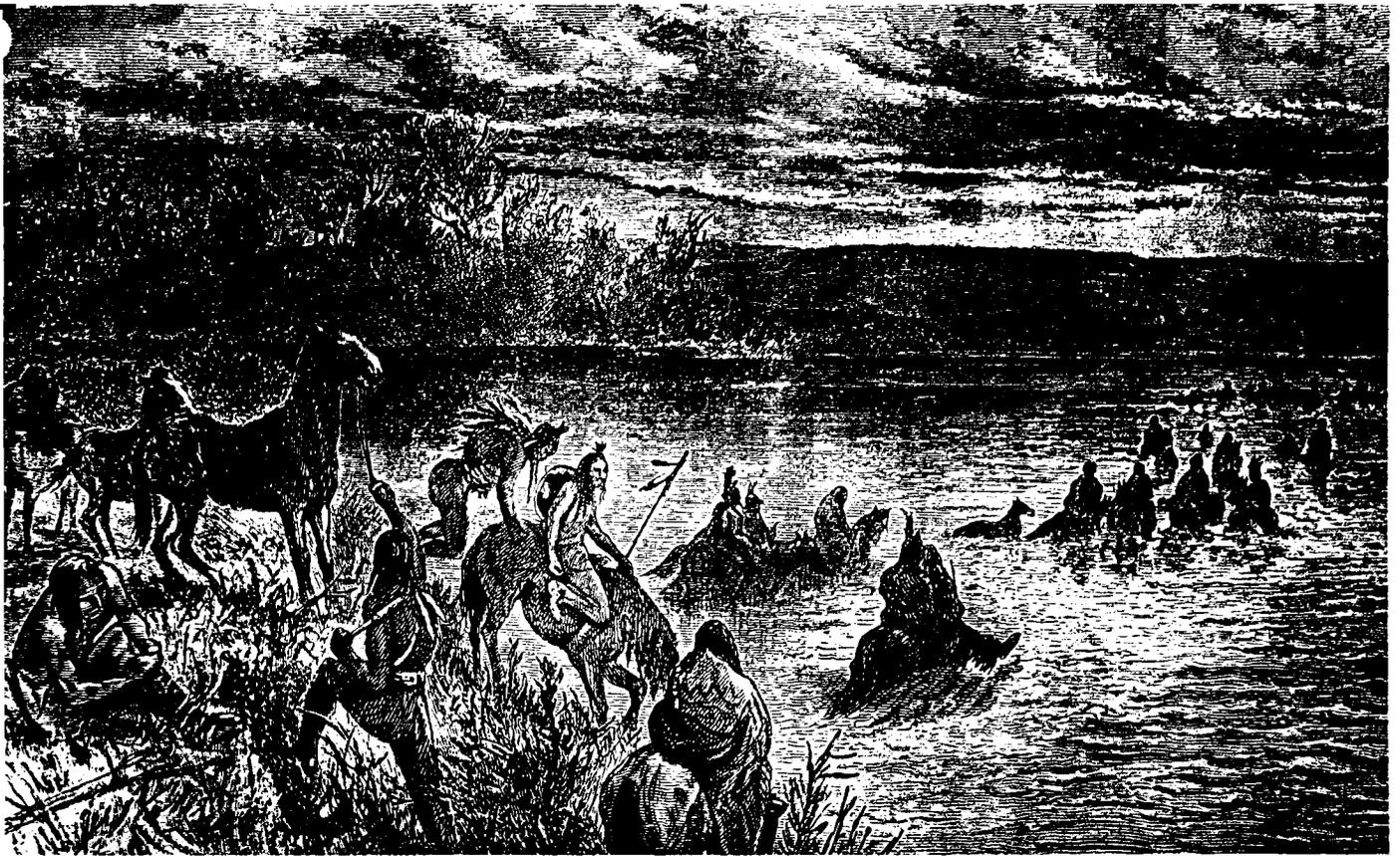


described as self-assured independence. For the Blackfoot, a formidable fighter and hunter, was also generally feared by other Indian tribes. And, in fact several lesser tribes joined with them to form a Blackfoot Confederacy. Chief among these Indian groups, were the Blood and Piegan tribes.

The way of life of the Blackfoot was not greatly different from that of other plains tribes and some of their customs, the Sun Dance being a case in point, seems probably to have been adapted from the Cree enemies' "Thirst Dance". Also, like the Assiniboine, they had sweat houses for purposes of purification. (The one shown on these pages is without the skin covering that contained the steam.) And, since they lived off the herds of Buffalo, they also built their tipis from Buffalo hides.

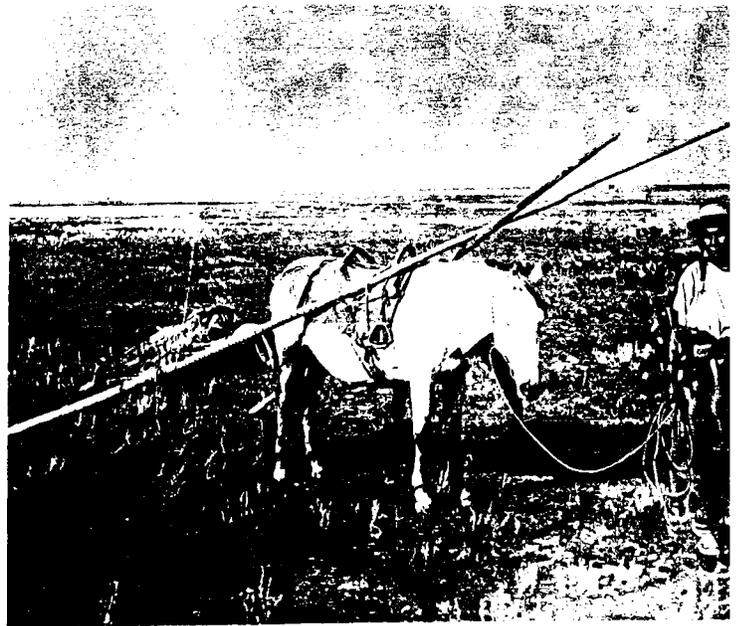
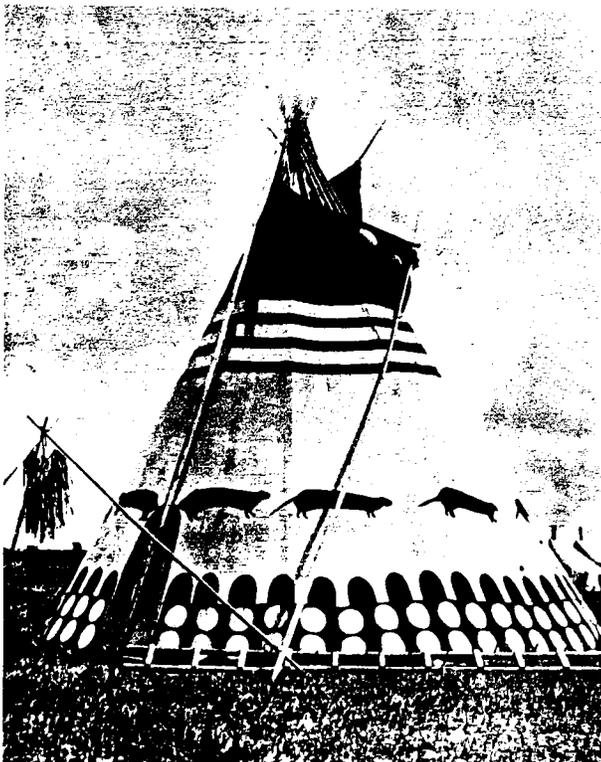
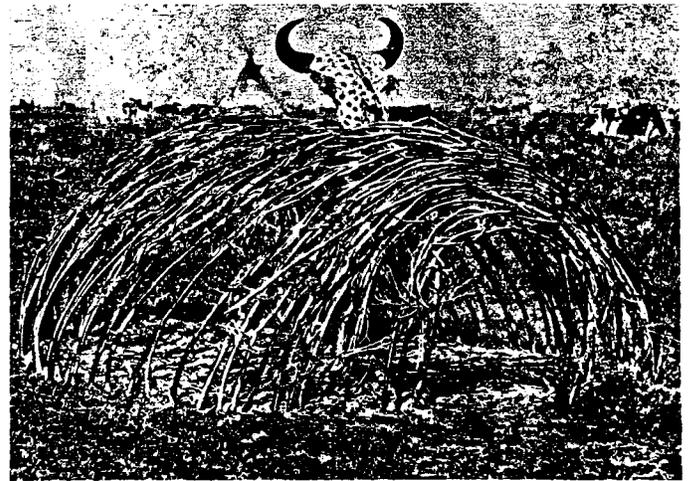
As warlike and as feared as the Blackfeet were, they rarely bothered to start wars with their neighbors. Of course, once aroused they would retaliate by raiding and sometimes destroying an enemy camp.

One warlike activity which they did not consider to be an act of war was the stealing of horses. Frequently, the poorer and often younger members of Blackfoot society would set out on horse-stealing expeditions. Normally, each man would leave camp with two pair of moccasins, buckskin shirt, leggings, blanket roll, pemmican, knife, and likely a short bow and quiver of arrows. With only these assets the party would set out on foot for some distant enemy camp and would hope, without engaging in any battle or scalp taking, to return within a few weeks or months with a catch of horses. Successful raiding parties considered themselves to be rich men and would share their "stolen" property with relatives and sponsors. While white society might look upon these activities as little short of banditry, Indian society regarded it as honorable and worthy of its young men who, in fact, learnt the art of good soldiering on these expeditions. However, once it became apparent that the White man and not the Indian was going to dominate the western plains the Blackfoot, forever adaptable, gave up many of these pursuits and set about learning how to live in the company of the white settler.



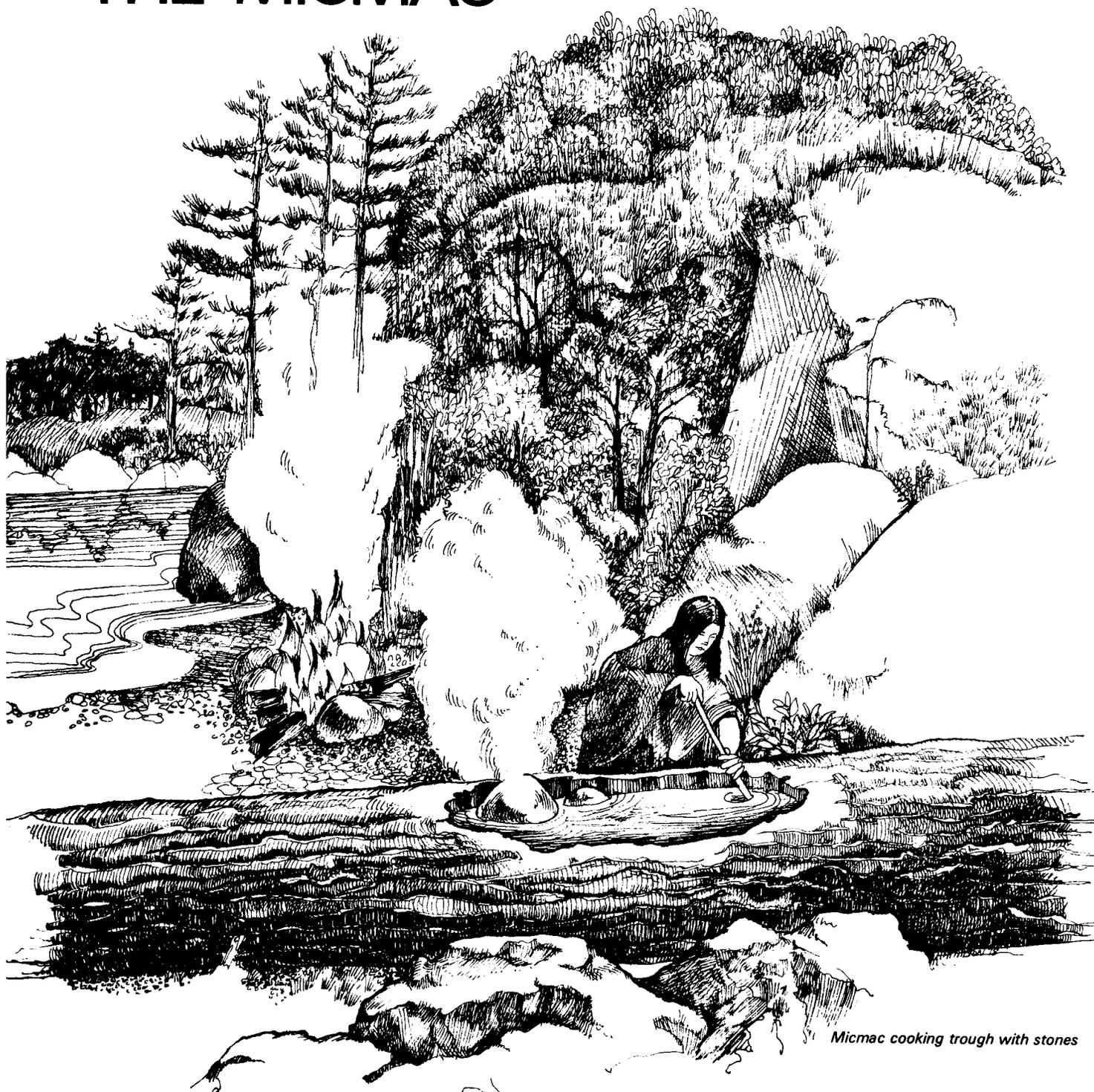
Top: Blackfoot crossing a river from 1881 sketch by Sydney Hall; Top Right: 1878 photograph taken of a sweat lodge at a Sun Dance; Bottom Right: N. Caple & Co's 1880 photograph showing woman and travois near Gleichen, Alberta; Bottom Left: Tipi of Boy Chief, Blackfoot Indian; Page 14: Photograph of Bear Shield, Blackfoot Warrior taken in 1878 by G. T. Anderton.

Photographic material courtesy Glenbow Foundation Calgary





# THE MICMAC



*Micmac cooking trough with stones*

The Micmac Indians are the first known inhabitants of what is now Nova Scotia. They are Algonkian speakers who were once widespread in eastern Canada. When the white man arrived in North America the Micmac, whose population is estimated to have been between 3,000 and 3,500, were distributed throughout what is now the province of Nova Scotia, including Cape Breton Island; their population extended into the northern part of present-day New Brunswick, and into Prince Edward Island. In the mid-sixteenth century they expanded their territory as far as the Gaspé district of modern Québec and to Newfoundland.

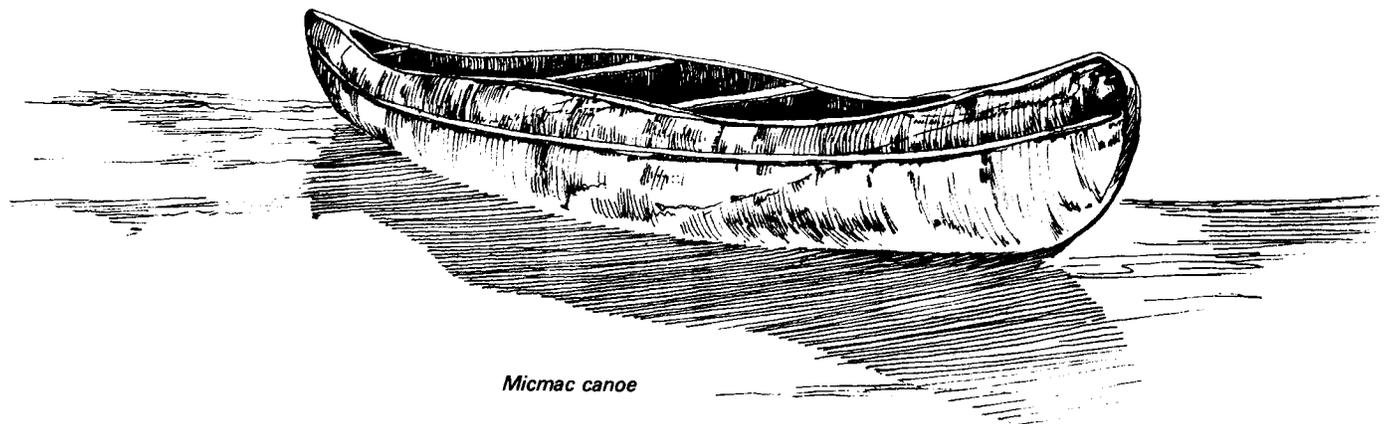
At that time, a district chief and local chiefs made up the political system. The district chiefs planned the seasonal movements of the people and also confirmed and reassigned hunting territories. They designated work for their immediate relatives, their wives, children and escorts. The escorts were young men who hunted with, and learned from, the chief. The district chiefs also had the responsibility of providing their people with hunting dogs, canoes and provisions for expeditions, especially when the weather was bad.

The local chiefs made decisions at the Council of Chiefs which met at specified times of the year to discuss peace and war. To become chief a man had to display his ability and courage both in hunting and in war; he

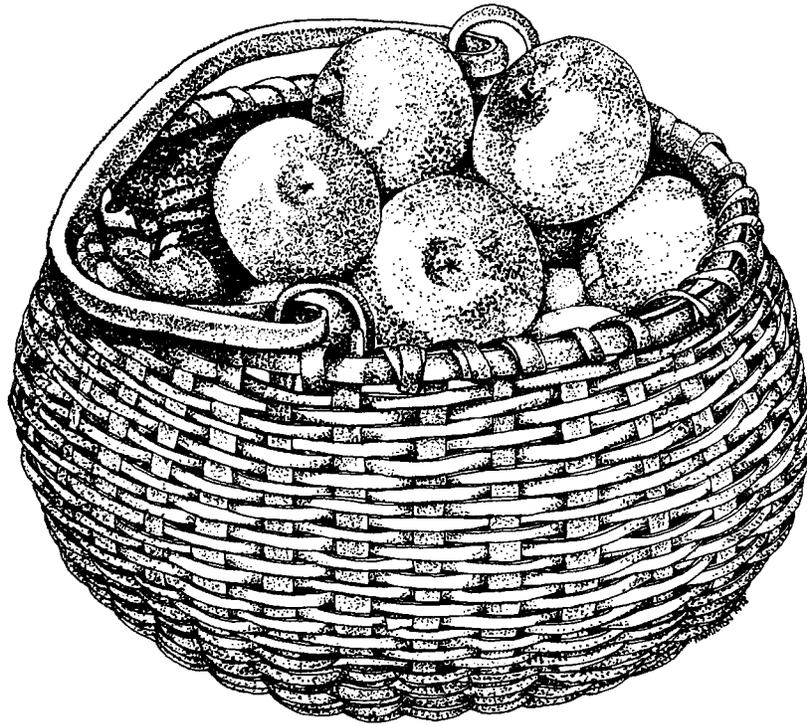
also had to be generous to his people. To gain power and authority, the chiefs practiced polygamy, which resulted in the fathering of many children. Children were considered a man's wealth.

Men of special ability among the Micmac Indians led warriors into battle against the Algonkian tribes to the south, the Iroquoian tribes then in the St. Lawrence Valley, and the Eskimo and Montagnais to the north. They also fought against the Beothuk in Newfoundland, whom they helped to exterminate. Before battle Micmac warriors held mock fights in which they argued for and against the tactics of their war parties. In war, victories were celebrated with feasts and dances. Male prisoners were usually killed, but women and children captured in battle were taken into the tribe.

Marriage was a solemn affair. For one year before the marriage, the prospective groom lived with the parents of his future bride, serving them. Micmac law allowed divorce when husband and wife no longer had affection for each other or when the wife could not have children. Funerals were elaborate, with many ceremonies. The dead were wrapped in birch bark rolls and placed in a sitting position in shallow graves. Their personal implements were either burned or buried with them for use in the after-life.



*Micmac canoe*



*Micmac splint basket*

As was the custom with other Algonkian Indians, Micmac youths probably fasted in order to obtain through dreams and visions the guardian spirit which would bring them luck throughout their lives. Special shamans or medicine men performed rituals which were believed to help cure disease.

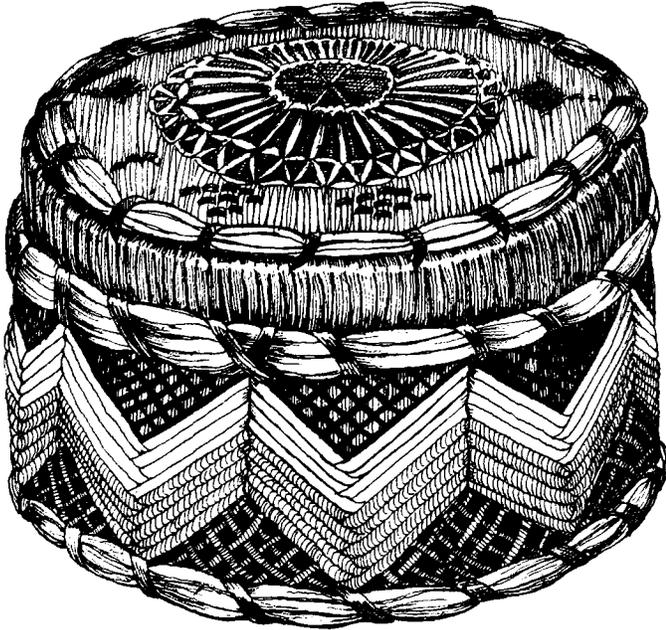
The Micmac economy was traditionally based on hunting, gathering and fishing. In winter the Indians lived in the woods, where they stalked moose and caribou on snowshoes, killing them with spears or arrows. Smaller animals such as porcupine also formed part of their winter diet. In the spring the Micmac people moved to the seashore to gather shellfish and to fish for salmon, bass and trout at the mouths of the rivers. They also hunted seals and porpoises off the coast from their birch bark canoes.

Birch bark was an important material in Micmac society. They lived in wigwams covered with birch bark; they used birch bark for their canoes and fashioned household utensils, such as food containers and storage baskets, from it. To cook, they made large wooden troughs, added water and hot stones, and thus boiled their food.

Individuals belonged to one of several bands; Micmac social organization was not particularly complex. Each band had a defined territory of its own, and band

members seem to have had distinctive symbols which they not only tattooed on their bodies, but also painted or quilled onto their clothing, using porcupine quills. These symbols were also carved or painted on ornaments, canoes, snowshoes and other personal belongings. Even today, Micmac beadwork, leatherwork and basketry can be identified by traditional designs.

It was the early explorers and missionaries who first reported that the Micmac embroidered coloured quills and moose hair onto their clothing and other personal items. Vegetable dye was used to colour porcupine quills and moose hair, which decorated birch bark baskets. This embroidery technique is not much used today. It was very popular, however, with the European settlers at the beginning of the 19th century, so the Micmac craftsmen began to decorate more and more of their birch bark baskets with quills. The quilling was done simply for decorative purposes; impressive both in colour and design it represented the excellent quality of craftsmanship prevalent at the time. Since today there are some Micmac doing research into basket techniques as well as studying the traditional application of porcupine quills, there may yet be a renaissance of this ancient art. In the quill boxes being made today chemical dyes have replaced natural dyes, and most of the traditional geometric designs and stylized flower motifs have been replaced by floral patterns.



*Micmac quillwork box*

Sweet hay or sweet grass was another popular material for making baskets. It was gathered in the early summer, and although a few baskets were made entirely of sweet grass, it was more usually used as a decorative edging. Other grasses, reeds and bulrushes were also used by the Micmac before the arrival of the Europeans.

The newest form of basket work is commonly known as wood splint basketry. Its origin is believed to be European, although it is not known for certain. Splints are made from ash and maple trees. They are usually left in the natural state, but may be dyed. The weaving is generally done in a straight in-and-out pattern, but the earliest baskets in the 1800s were more intricate. Some

resembled flowers, others the prickly look of the porcupine; still others were done in a star effect. Today's splint baskets come in many shapes. They include decorative ones, such as the cup and saucer, and more useful types such as button, apple, and potato baskets.

The aboriginal customs of the Micmac Indians began to disappear when Europeans entered the area. Many members of the tribe became farmers and eventually intermarried with French colonists. They became faithful allies of the French, continuing this association throughout the wars of the 17th and 18th centuries. The descendants of the Micmac (who live on reserves) numbered 8,092 as of December 31, 1975. They occupy several small reserves in the Maritime Provinces, in Québec, Prince Edward Island and in Newfoundland. In Conne River, Newfoundland, ninety percent of the total population is Micmac. Other Micmac families are found at Glenwood (which is near Gander), around Gander Bay, and in the western part of the island.

\_\_\_\_\_ Tawow. Canadian Indian Cultural Magazine Vol. 5. No. 2.

Jenness, Diamond. *Indians of Canada*, National Museum of Canada, Bulletin No. 65. Ottawa: 1955.

Wallis, W.D. and Wallis, R.S. *Micmac Indians of Eastern Canada*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1955.

*Text: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man  
Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
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*Published under the authority of: The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.*

Catalogue No. R34-2/11-1979

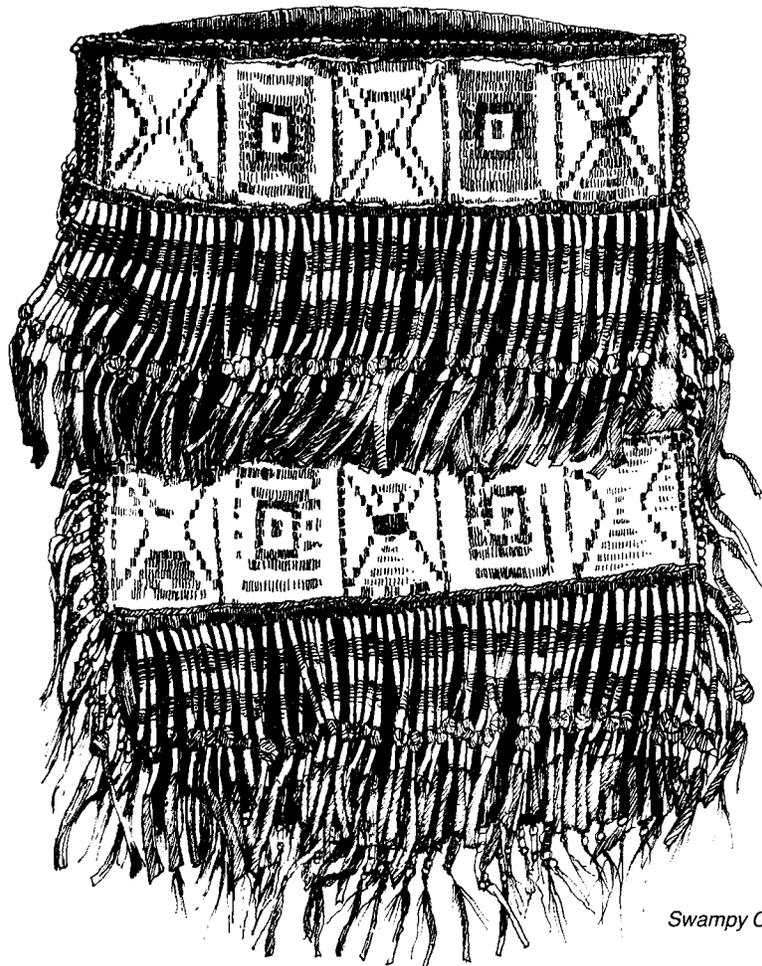
ISBN 0-662-10264-9

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS-5107-011-EE-A1

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# THE CREE



*Swampy Cree Pouch*

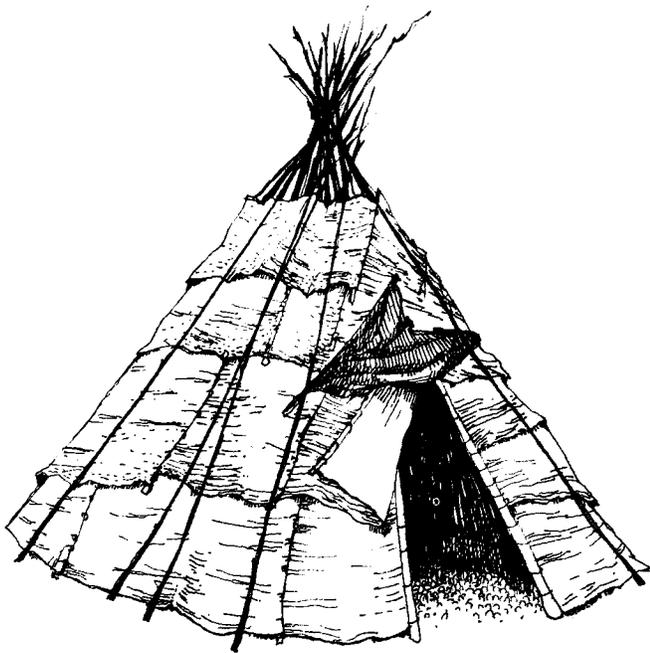
The Cree language belongs to the widespread Algonquian family, which is represented in every province of Canada except British Columbia. The Cree people originally lived in what is now Ontario and Quebec. After contact, when they obtained horses and guns, they expanded westward and northward, and by the middle of the eighteenth century they were also living in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta as far to the north and west as the Peace River. Their homeland occupies a huge geographical area which includes parts of southern Canada as well as the north. Much of their traditional

territory is densely forested and liberally strewn with lakes, streams and muskeg.

The Woodland Cree lived almost entirely by hunting and fishing. They hunted caribou, moose, beaver and bear, and, when big game was absent, they relied heavily on hare which they caught in snares made of willow bark. In the spring and autumn they sought migrating geese and ducks, and in the winter their diet was supplemented with grouse and ptarmigan.

Some Crees of the northeastern woodlands were drawn out onto the treeless plains by the prospect of plentiful herds of buffalo, and came to be known as "Plains Cree". Their culture took on many characteristics of other Plains tribes, for the buffalo were central to their way of life, supplying food, hides for clothing and lodge coverings, and bone for tools.

In the last century, when big game was severely depleted in some areas, the Cree faced great difficulties. During years when hare were also scarce, people sometimes died from starvation. Fear of cannibalism entered the legends of the tribe, many of which tell about *Windigos* – human beings transformed into man-eating supernatural giants through their eating of human flesh.



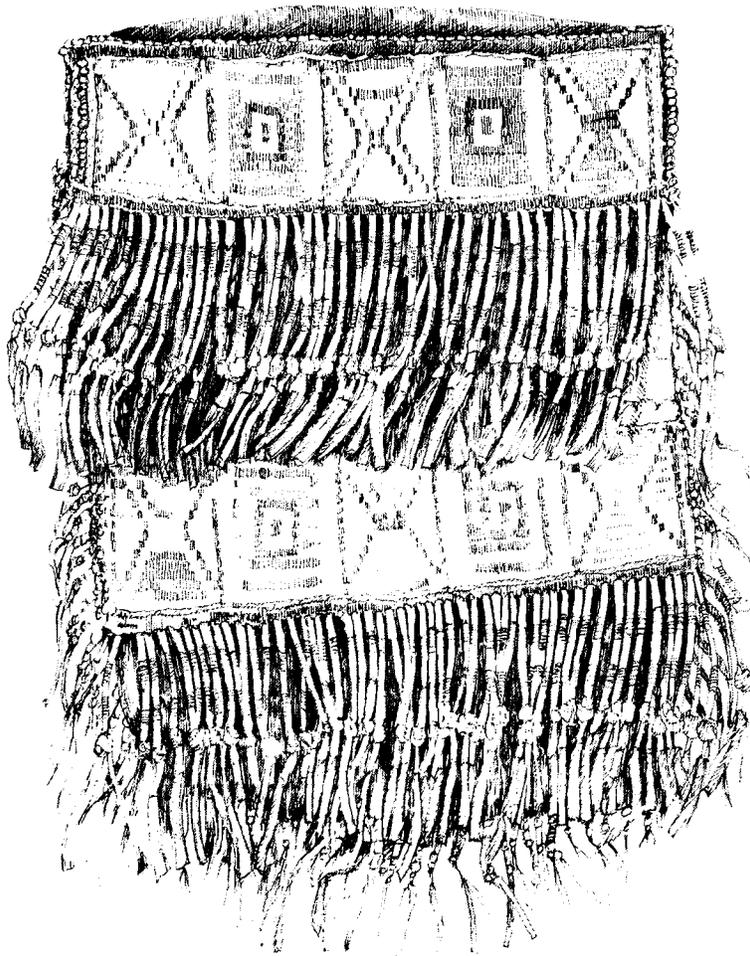
*Birch bark wigwam*

The Cree placed great importance on supernatural powers. To ensure success in the hunt, numerous taboos and rituals were practised to please the spirits of the animals. Youths fasted in seclusion to receive visions from the spirit world which would bring them success in life and thus in the hunt. Cree hunters carried medicine bags containing magical objects to help them in the chase.

The Cree people traditionally lived in small bands made up of related families. Their shelters were conical or dome-shaped wigwams covered with either hides or bark. Where available, birch bark was used for shelters and for making storage containers. Cooking vessels of European manufacture were used by the Cree once they were obtained through the fur trade. Trade blankets, cloaks of woven hare skin and caribou fur coats were worn for warmth. In pre-contact times, clothing, tools, weapons, canoes and shelters were all made from natural materials obtainable within the Cree environment.

As traders, missionaries and settlers made their way into Cree territory, the Indians suffered greatly because they lacked immunity to European diseases. Epidemics such as those in 1784 and 1838 drastically reduced the Cree population and may have slowed Cree expansion into the west. At a time when new developments were undermining the Indian economy, the Cree were weakened by smallpox, influenza and tuberculosis.

The Cree had sustained themselves for many centuries by hunting and trapping over a wide geographical area, but the sudden encroachment of non-Indians into their hunting territory and the elimination of game by commercially-inspired hunting and trapping irreversibly disrupted their way of life. The impact of these changes was the greatest on the prairies where buffalo, still roaming in great herds in the 1860s, were virtually extinct by 1880. Ravaged by disease and lacking an alternative livelihood, the Cree population declined steadily until the 1940s when improved medical services arrested the trend.



## THE CREE ORACLE

### PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH 3

Pine bark should read spruce bark

### PAGE 2, PARAGRAPH 5

Should read:

With the introduction of guns and horses they expanded northward and westward, so that by the middle of the 18th. century, they controlled what is now northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan (as far as the Churchill River), all of present day Alberta and the valley of Slave River.

### PAGE 3, PARAGRAPH 2

Should read:

The Cree Indians were a marginal people who required large tracts of land to ensure a livelihood by hunting and trapping. They became the victims of an almost ceaseless encroachment on their hunting grounds, and a steady decrease in the supply of game.

## ORACLE SUR LES CRIS

### PAGE 2, PARAGRAPHE 3

Écorce de pin devrait être remplacé par écorce d'épinette

### PAGE 2, PARAGRAPHE 5

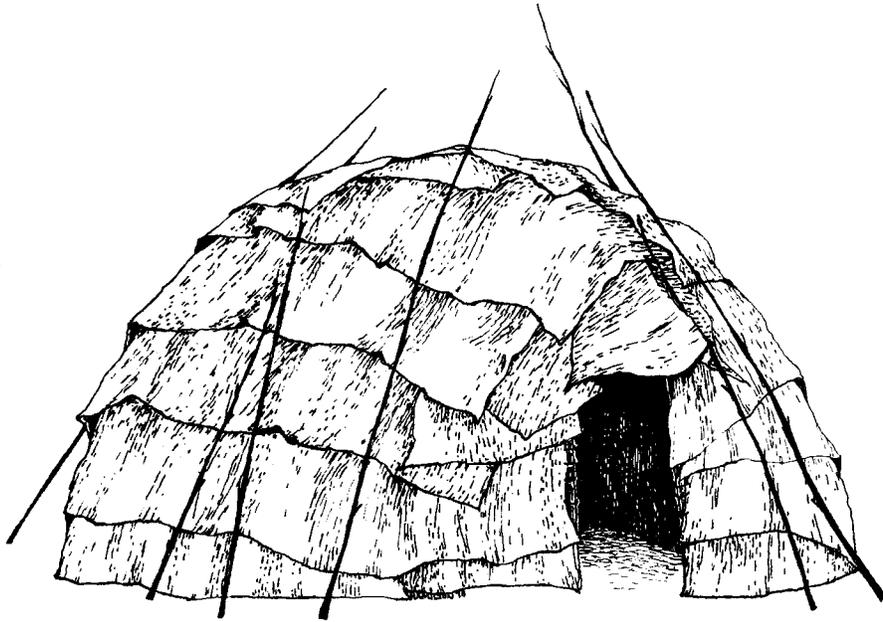
On devrait lire:

Avec l'introduction des fusils et des chevaux, ils agrandirent leur territoire au nord et à l'ouest et au milieu du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, ils occupèrent ce qui est maintenant le nord du Manitoba et de la Saskatchewan (jusqu'à la rivière Churchill), l'ensemble de l'Alberta et la vallée de la rivière des Esclaves.

### PAGE 3, PARAGRAPHE 2

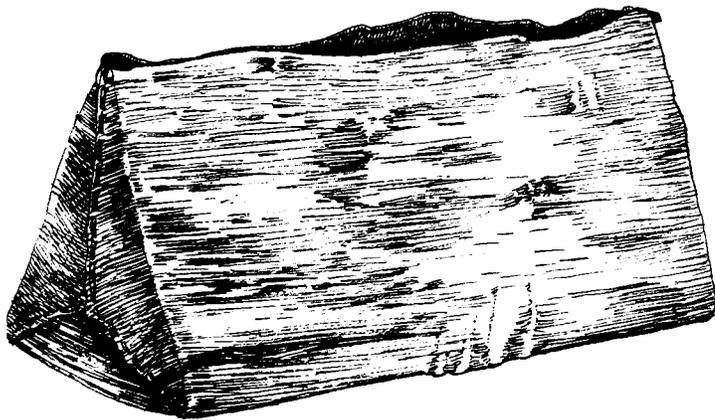
On devrait lire:

Les Cris étaient un peuple marginal qui avait besoin d'immenses territoires de chasse et de piégeage pour assurer sa subsistance. Ils devinrent les victimes d'un empiètement presque continu de leurs territoires de chasse et d'une diminution constante du gibier.

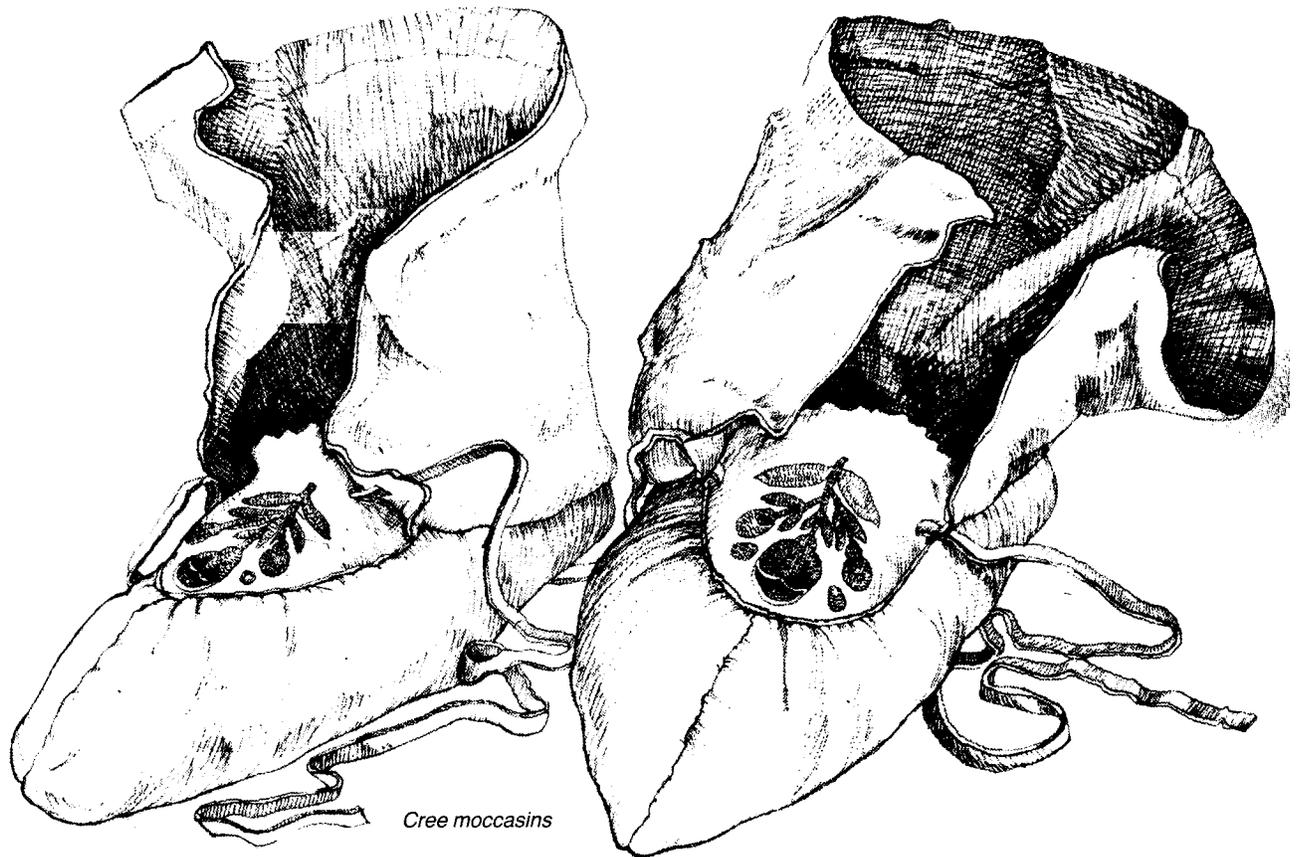


*Dome shaped wigwam*

Today, the 55,000 people who speak Cree constitute well over one third of the speakers of all fifty-three indigenous Canadian languages. Their numbers, along with the recent support for native language and culture, are likely to ensure the survival of Cree as a language. In 1979, according to the designation of Indian bands by linguistic affiliation, there were over 95,000 registered Cree Indians in Canada. Whether they speak the Cree language or not, and whether they live on or off a reserve, these Cree people face many challenges in their efforts to improve their situation within Canadian society.



*Cree birch bark and spruce root container*



Cree moccasins

Denig, Edwin T. *Five Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri: Sioux, Arikaras, Assiniboines, Crees, Crows*, ed. John C. Ewers. Norman, Okla.: 1930.

Jenness, Diamond. *Indians of Canada*. National Museum of Canada, Bulletin 65. Ottawa: 1955.

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Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
Marion Ritchie  
National Museum of Man

Published under the authority of: The Honourable J.C. Munro, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, and the Honourable Francis Fox, Minister of Communications, 1982.

Catalogue No. R34-2/4-1982 revised  
ISBN 0-662-10257-6  
Indian and Northern Affairs Catalogue Number: QS 5107-004-EE-A1

Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français.

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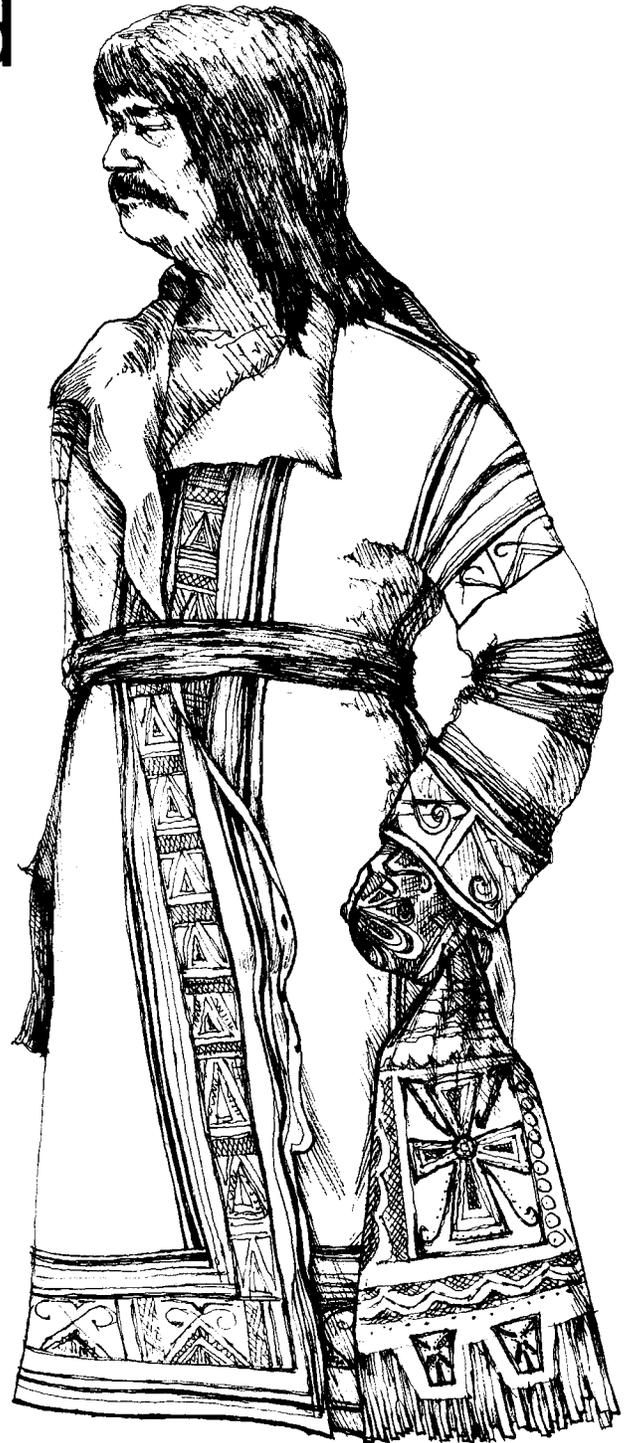
## MONTAGNAIS and NASKAPI

The Montagnais and Naskapi Indians live in a vast area on the Labrador peninsula in eastern Canada. Their dialects are mutually intelligible; their customs so similar that it is often difficult to distinguish one tribe from the other. They are both Algonkian speakers; and both are nomadic peoples who once lived exclusively by hunting and fishing. In the past, clubs, spears, and bows and arrows were used to hunt as well as in warfare against neighbouring peoples.

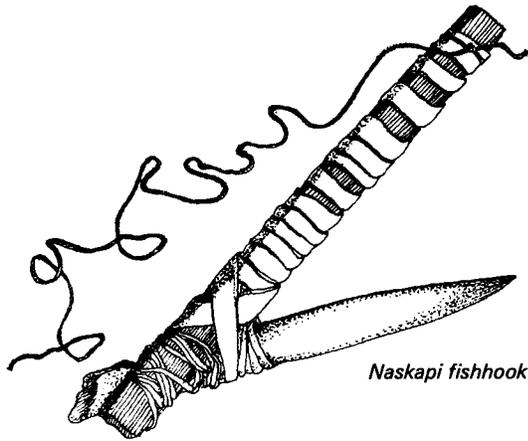
Many of the differences between the Montagnais and the Naskapi are related to their environment. The Montagnais territory is a well-watered woodland with plenty of moose, whereas much of the Naskapi territory is open plateau covered with grasses and lichens, the natural feeding ground for herds of barren-ground caribou.

Before the mid-nineteenth century, the Montagnais roamed a huge square bounded on one side by the North Shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence between the St. Maurice River and Sept-Îles, and on the other by the height of land which separates the waters flowing into the St. Lawrence from those flowing into James Bay. They lived in conical wigwams covered with birch bark. In the winter they hunted moose; in the spring they moved down the rivers to spear salmon and eel and to harpoon seals.

The Naskapi lived in an even larger area; they roamed the entire Labrador peninsula east of a line from Sept-Îles to Lake Nichikun, and of a second from Lake Nichikun to Ungava Bay. . . with the exception of a narrow belt along the coast from Ungava Bay to the Strait of Belle Isle, which was controlled by the Eskimo, their traditional enemies. The Naskapi lived in wigwams covered with caribou skins. They hunted caribou from mid-summer to early spring, when some Naskapi moved to the coast and others fished in the many inland lakes and rivers; they also hunted hare, porcupine and other small game.



*Naskapi Indian with coat, mittens and pouch*



*Naskapi fishhook*

Neither the Montagnais nor the Naskapi had true tribal organization. They lived in a number of small bands whose members were related to each other by marriage. They possessed separate hunting territories, but had no strong leaders. Even though certain people were named as Chiefs, they had little or no authority, and in times of war a general council of warriors directed battle plans.

Both groups traced descent on each side of the family. A prospective groom lived with his future in-laws and served them for a year before taking his wife back to live with his family. The bride was usually married without any ceremony, and without much consideration for her wishes.

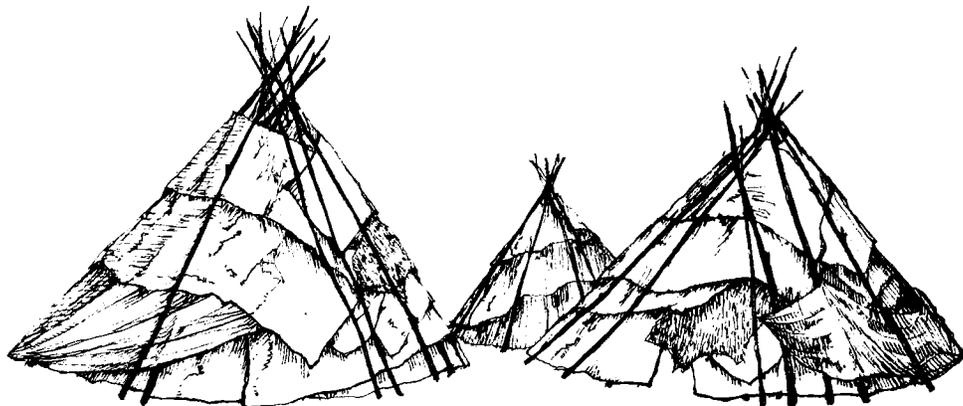
The Montagnais and Naskapi were very religious. They believed in many supernatural beings, including a great sky god to whom they occasionally offered smoke from their pipes. They also believed that animals have souls and they tried not to offend the animals, observing

various taboos, because they depended on them for their food supply. As among other Algonkian groups of eastern North America, visions and dreams played a significant role. Boys fasted so that they would receive dreams and visions that were believed to bring them luck. They trusted that the guardian spirits acquired in dreams and the power of their shamans would protect them from evil spirits and shield them from the sorcery of their fellow men.

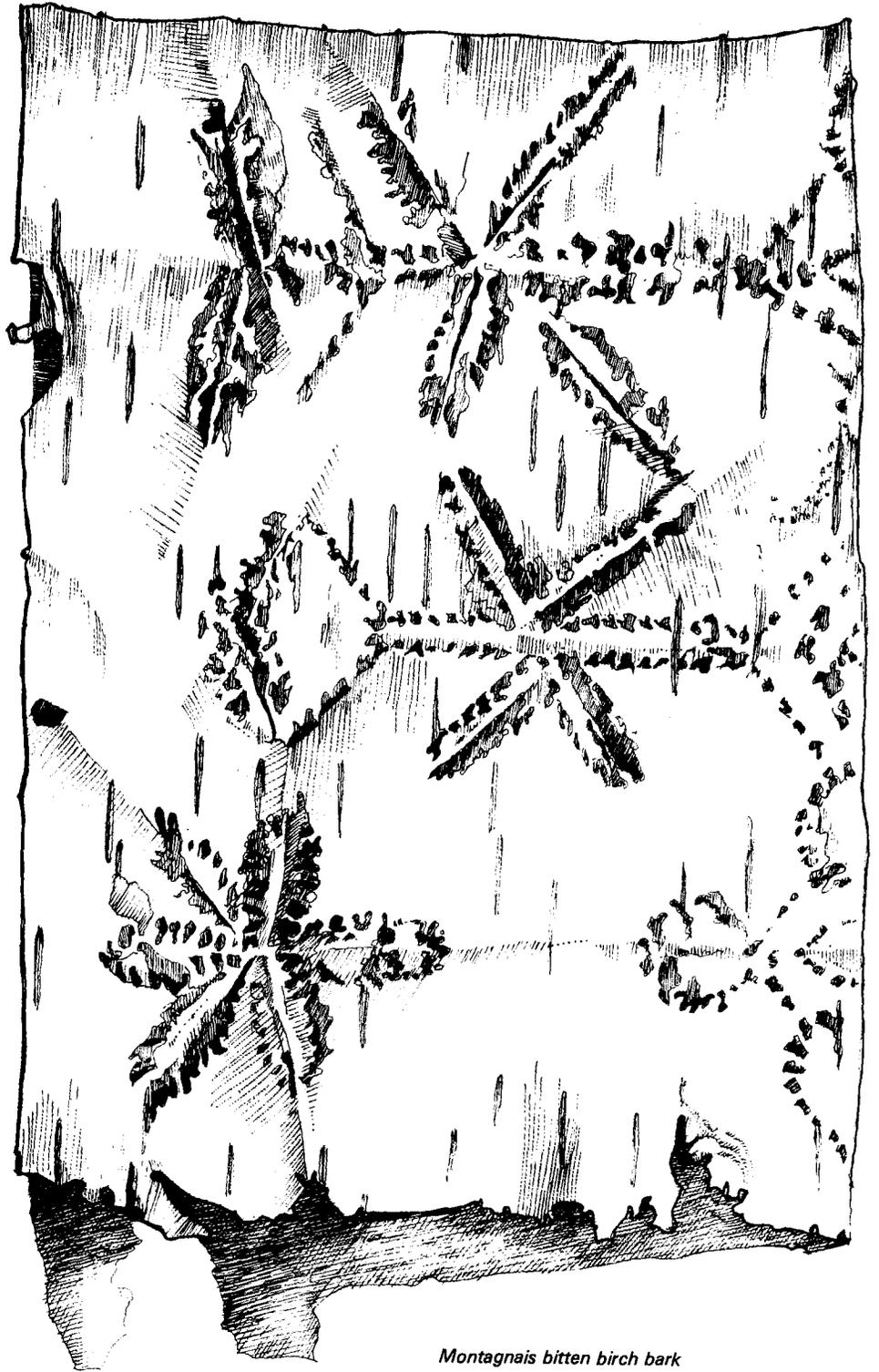
The Montagnais and Naskapi were some of the first Canadian Indians to come into close contact with Europeans, although in certain regions they have remained less influenced by them than have other native peoples. This was partly due to the rugged and inhospitable nature of their land, which isolated them. When Europeans entered the area however, they reduced game stocks through the indiscriminate use of firearms so that the natural balance was changed and traditional boundaries altered. For a while the Indians were successful in the fur trade, but this success was weakened when white men encroached on their best trapping and hunting grounds.

Many natives of the interior were urged by missionaries to settle on the coast, but they contracted various lung afflictions, such as tuberculosis, which were aggravated by the damp sea air. Measles and other diseases introduced by Europeans helped to reduce their population, too, for the Indians had no immunity to these diseases.

The combined population of the two groups now numbers around 3,000. Many of the remaining Montagnais and Naskapi still live by hunting and trapping — exchanging pelts at trading posts for manufactured items.



*Birch bark and skin wigwams*



*Montagnais bitten birch bark*



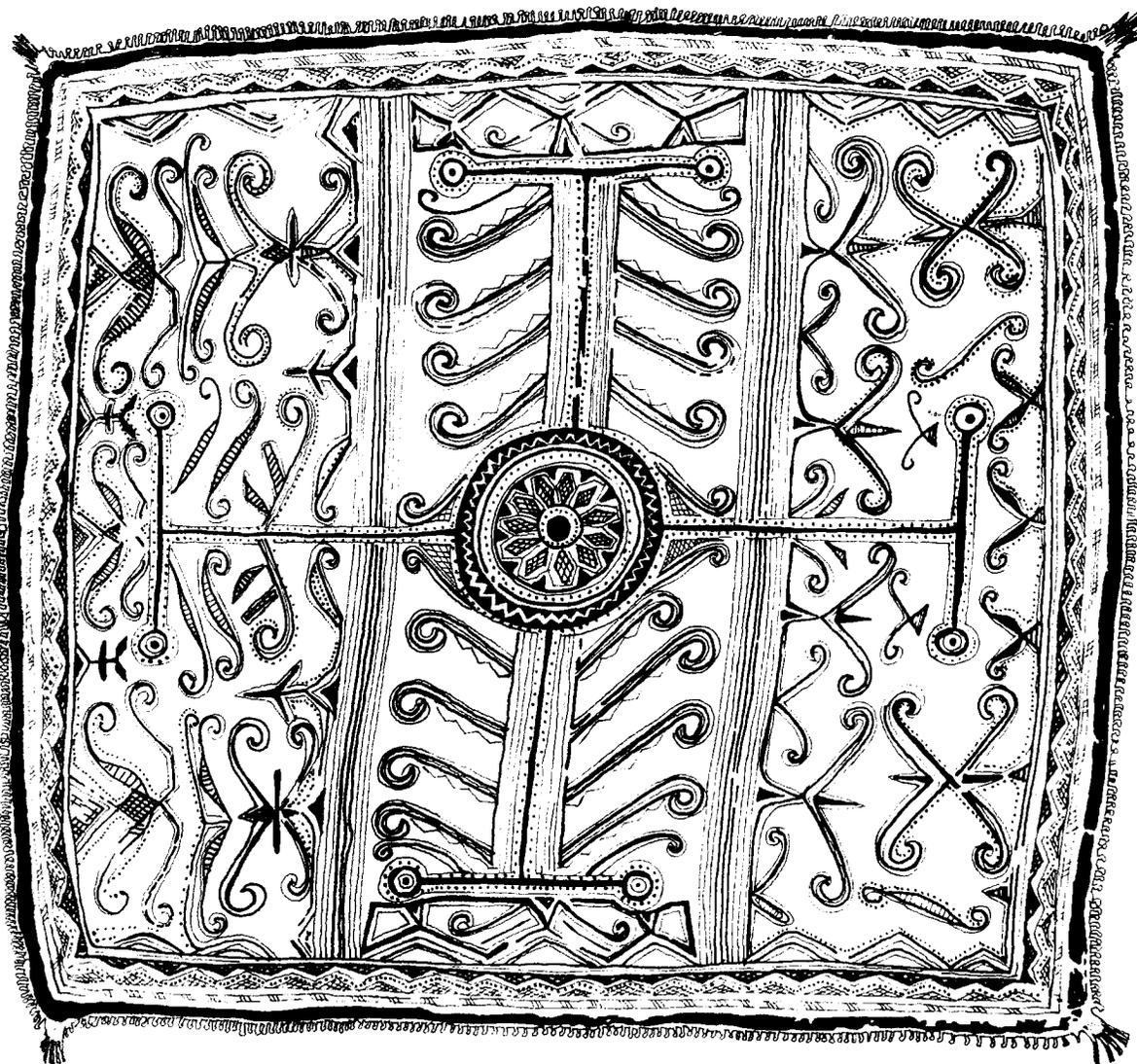
*Montagnais fishing spear*

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Painted skin, Naskapi

Text: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man  
Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
Marion Ritchie  
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Published under the authority of: The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.

Catalogue No. R34-2/7-1979

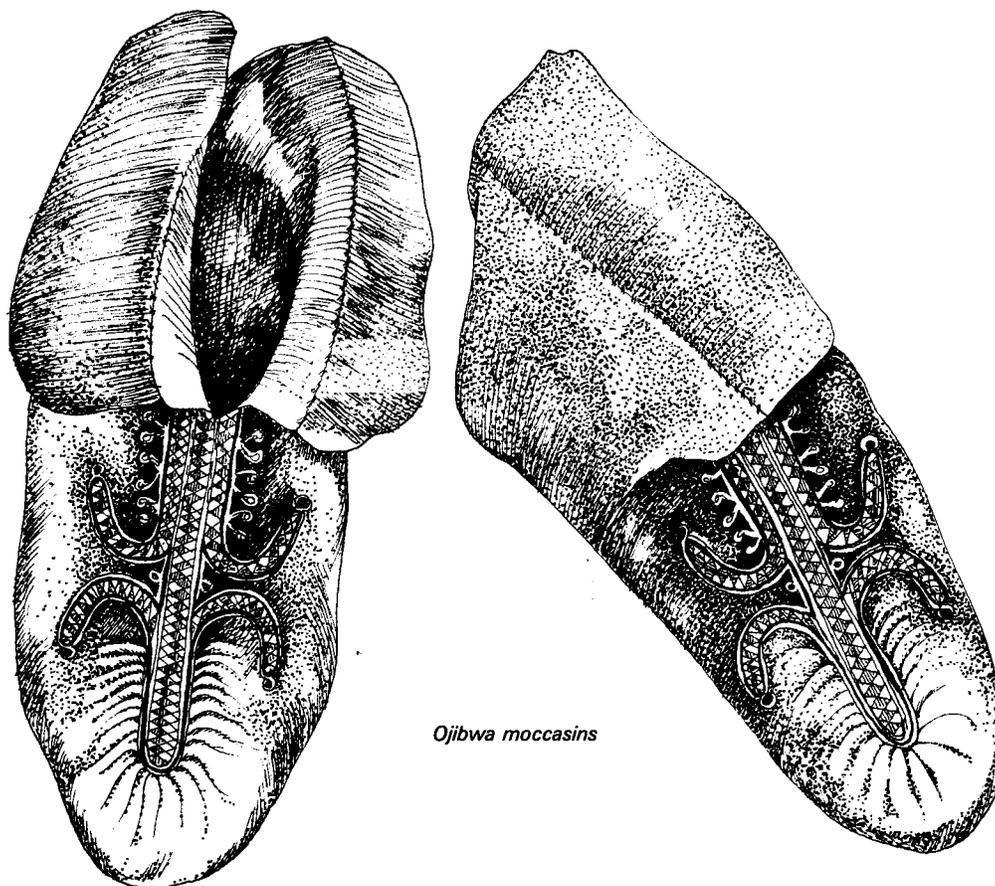
ISBN 0-662-10260-6

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS-5107-007-EE-A1

Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français.

# oracle

## THE OJIBWA



*Ojibwa moccasins*

The Ojibwa Indians once roamed the northern fringes of the Great Lakes. Shortly after the Europeans arrived in North America, the Ojibwa expanded their territory west into Wisconsin and Minnesota, and onto the Plains; other Ojibwa moved to the southeast into what is now southern Ontario.

The Ojibwa (whose name may mean "people whose moccasins have puckered seams") speak several closely related dialects of the Algonkian tongue; linguistically they are allied to the Potawatomi, Ottawa, and Algonquin Indians. In the 1700s, at the time of their greatest

distribution, they are believed to have numbered as many as 25,000. Various groups of Ojibwa have been called Chippewa, Saulteaux (so-called because of their meeting place, which was at the falls, [sault] of Sault Ste. Marie), Bungi or Mississauga (meaning "people of the large river-mouth").

Most Ojibwa lived in a land of forests, lakes and rivers. They were so numerous, and occupied such a large territory, that they may be separated into several distinct groups or tribes including the Ojibwa of the Lake Superior region, the Mississauga of Manitoulin Island

and of the mainland around the Mississagi River; the Ottawa of the Georgian Bay area; and the Potawatomi of the region west of Lake Huron within the boundaries of present-day Michigan (of whom some moved across into Ontario in the 18th and 19th centuries). Lakes Superior and Huron are the major lakes in the area. Winters are long and cold, with snow and ice for six months of the year.

The Ojibwa economy was based on hunting, fishing and the gathering of wild plants as they depended to a considerable degree on vegetable foods. In the late summer they gathered vast quantities of wild rice (especially in Wisconsin, Minnesota and the Kenora area of Ontario), which grew in the shallow waters around the shores of lakes. The wild rice was gathered from canoes. Using a stick to bend the stalks over the canoe, they took a second stick and beat the stalks so that the grain fell into the bottom of the boat. The rice was winnowed and then dried for use during winter. It was stored in birch bark containers.

Many kinds of mammals were hunted in the forests with bows and arrows, snares, and deadfalls. Every winter the families scattered through the woods to hunt caribou and moose. In spring and summer they looked for beaver and smaller game, and caught suckers, pickerel and pike. In the fall, after they had harvested the wild rice, they speared the larger fish — trout, whitefish and sturgeon — that spawned in that season close to shore. At night the Ojibwa fished with a torch held near the water, which attracted the fish. Migrating waterfowl were hunted during the spring, as were many other kinds of birds, such as grouse, quail, and passenger pigeon.





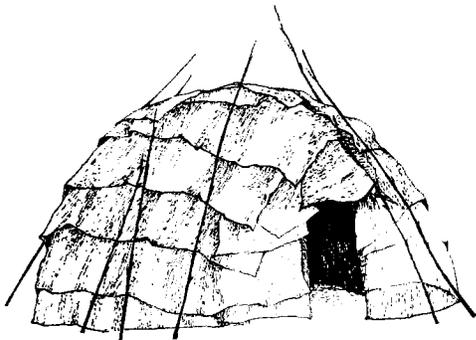
*Wild rice gathering*

During the summer and fall, the Ojibwa lived in large village encampments. They built dome-shaped wigwams, or conical tipis which they covered with birch bark or rush mats. Larger lodges which housed several families, were also built. During the winter, Ojibwa villages broke up into small groups composed of several related families. These groups spread out across the land to hunt, using snowshoes and toboggans in deep snow.

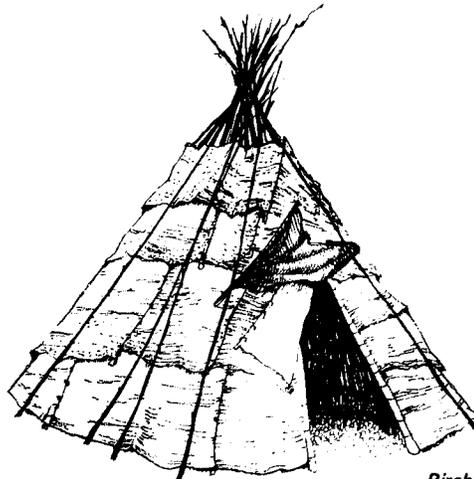
The Grand Medicine Society or *Midewiwin* of the Ojibwa was a secret religious society, whose members, *mede*, were the doctors or medicine-men of the community. The members of this secret society, which did not exist anywhere else in Canada except among some neighbouring Cree, exercised great influence upon the Ojibwa. Extensive use was made of wild plants to treat the sick, such as the application of balsam gum to wounds. The most important event of the year was the annual celebration of the Society, which was open to both men and women. People who had received visions from the supernatural were initiated into the Society in an elaborate, highly dramatic ceremony which was held during the summer. The initiate was "shot" with invisible projectiles which it was believed would bring him supernatural power. The Ojibwa ascribed a soul and special power to every tree and stone, and believed that their medicine-men, through the favour of the spiritual world, could attach this power to humans.

The world of the Ojibwa was peopled by many superhuman beings. Some spirits were thought to be unfriendly and the Ojibwa were afraid that such a spirit might be enlisted by another person in acts of witchcraft.

There have been many changes in the culture of the Ojibwa people in over 300 years of Indian-White contact. The Ojibwa joined the fur trade, supporting the French in their struggle against the English. Many served Canada in the First and Second World Wars and the Korean War. Today they live on reserves, or they have moved into the industrial world of contemporary times, though many still hunt moose and trap fur-bearing animals.



*Dome shaped wigwam*



*Birch bark wigwam*



*Modern Ojibwa housing*

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*Text: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man  
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*Published under the authority of: The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.*

*Catalogue No. R34-2/3-1979*

*ISBN 0-662-10256-8*

*Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS-5107-003-EE-A1*

*Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français.*

Games



# STRING GAMES

Ancient peoples throughout the world have spent many of their leisure hours amusing themselves by making figures and playing games with a string looped around their fingers. The popular game of cat's cradle, for example, in which a simple closed loop of string is used with two players constructing a series of figures in turn, requires a considerable degree of dexterity. It is one of the games played by the Eskimo in northern Canada.

The Eskimo and Indians also make dozens of string figures portraying animals and other familiar objects. Many of the figures, which include The Two Brown Bears, The Two Mountain Sheep, a Brown Bear Issuing from a Cave, The Two Brown Bears and their Cubs, The Dog Dragging the Sled, The Little Old Man, and Two Men Hauling on a Sled, are made so that they move, one popular figure depicts a caribou moving across the tundra. Some figures are so complicated that two persons are needed to make them, the string is looped around one or two objects, usually the index fingers of the other person, or sometimes the player uses his own foot. Two such complex figures, A Man Sliding Across the Ice and The Arctic Tern, appear over a very wide area. The movements of The Arctic Tern are so intricate and difficult that natives of the MacKenzie delta thought it was a trick.

While at work on string figures, many of the Eskimo recite a chant. When they are making a string figure of a fox, the Eskimo of the MacKenzie delta chant the following: the fox ...

pounding  
beside the lake  
beside the lake.

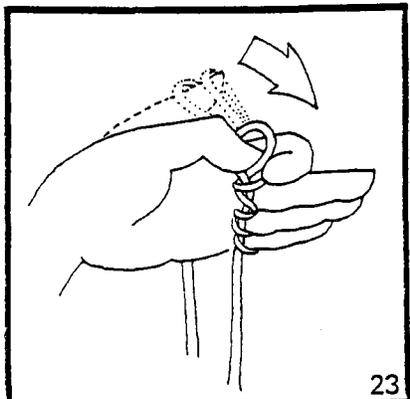
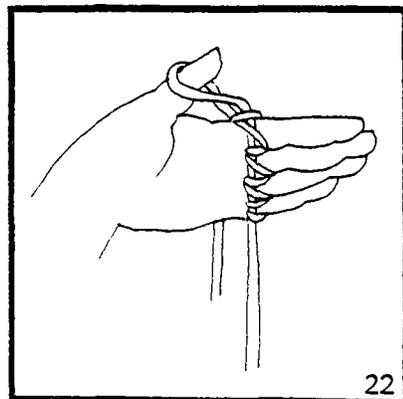
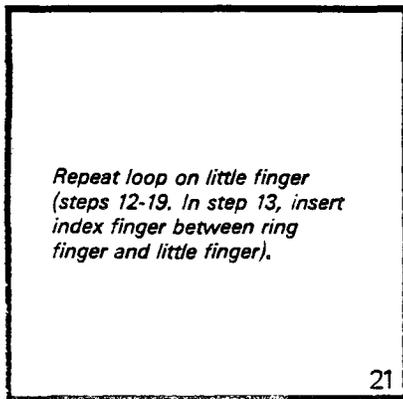
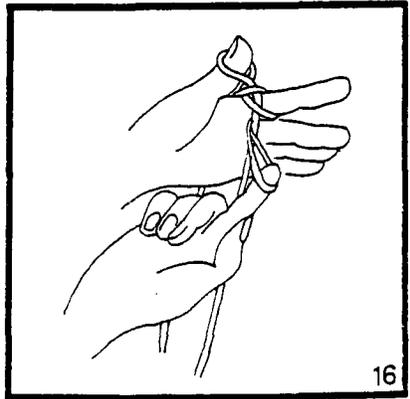
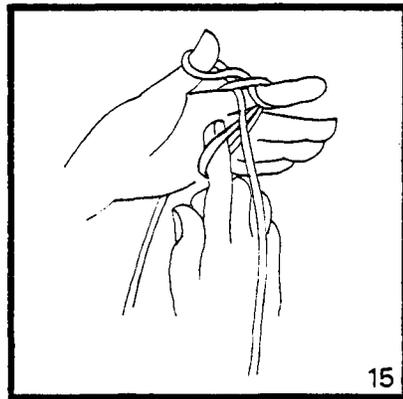
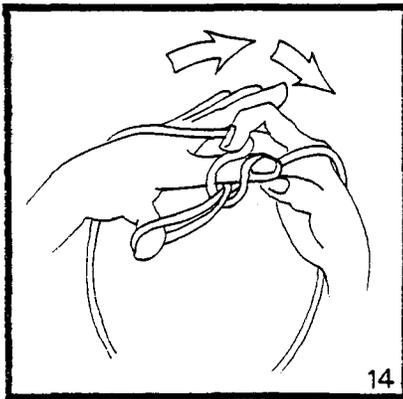
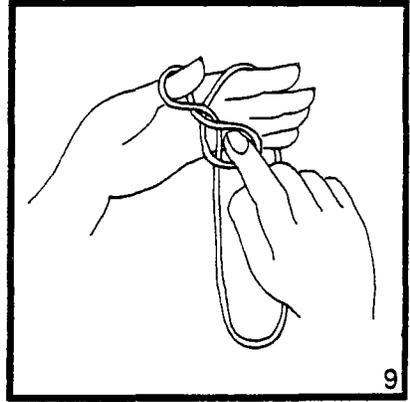
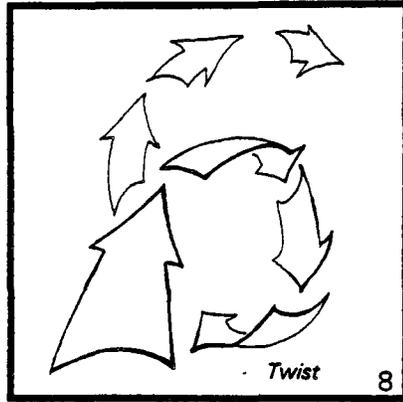
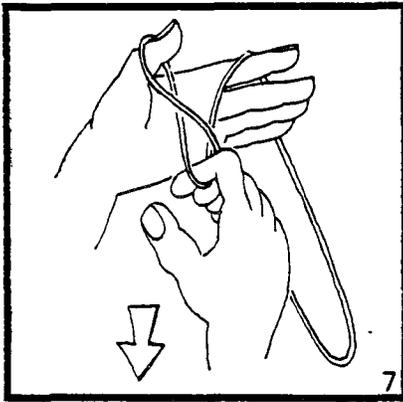
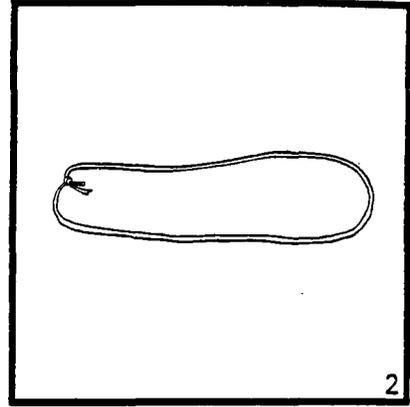
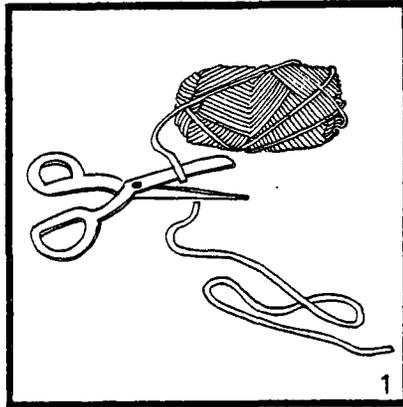
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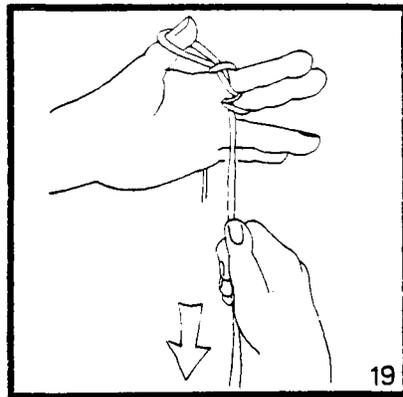
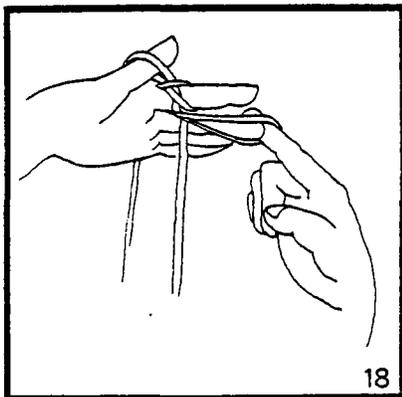
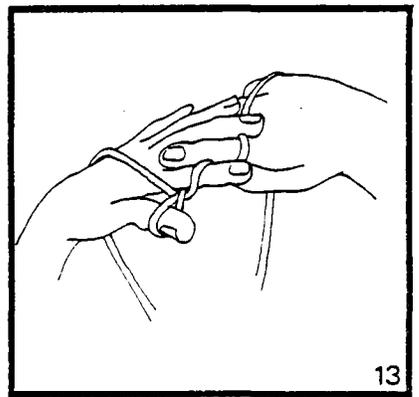
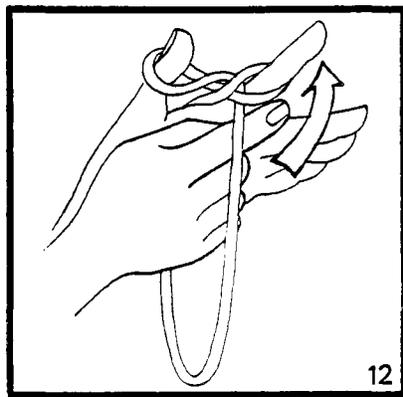
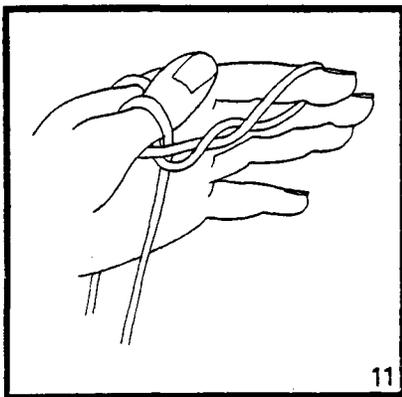
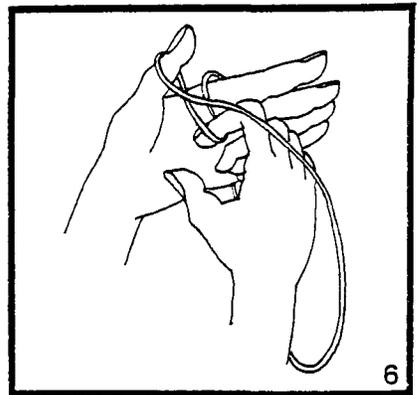
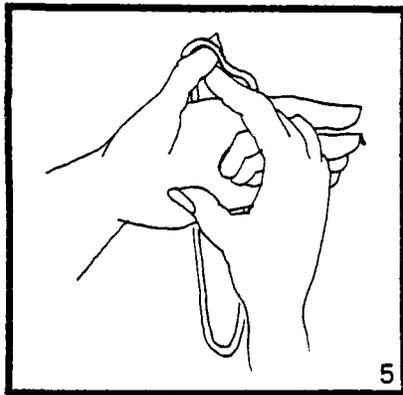
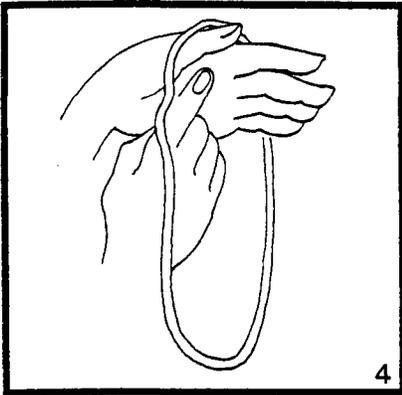
The fox likes to look for eggs.



*String figure by Mrs. Finlayson, F.W. Waugh, 1916 - Long Lake, Ontario  
NMC 36650*

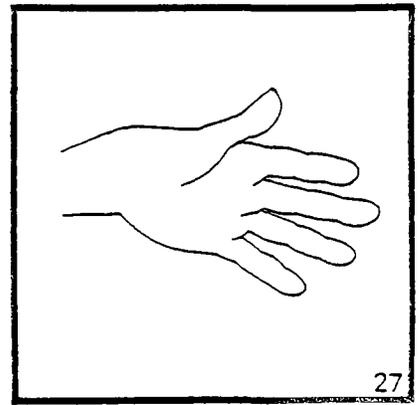
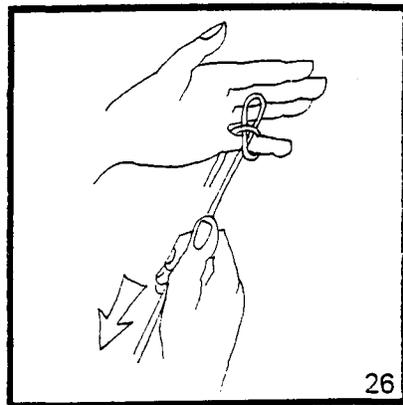
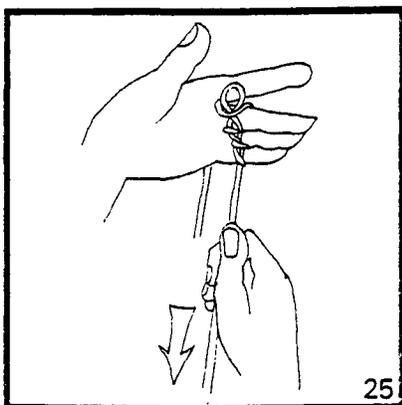
# The Mouse





*Repeat loop on ring finger (steps 12-19. In step 13, insert index finger between middle and ring finger).*

20



The Eskimo are very conservative in their attitude towards string figures. Some names and methods of construction are the same throughout the entire Eskimo territory and there are many stories and superstitions associated with making the figures. The Eskimo of the Hudson Bay area, for example, thought they could catch the sun in the string playing cat's cradle, and thus prevent its disappearance in the autumn. The Eskimo on the west coast of Hudson Bay believed that boys should not play cat's cradle because their fingers might become tangled in harpoon lines when they were grown men; adults, however, enjoyed playing the game. Some Eskimo believe in a spirit of string figures, which becomes the guardian spirit of a shaman. The spirit of string figures was supposed to show its presence by making a strange sound like the crackling of dry skins. It was thought that the spirit could make string figures with its own intestines, or with an invisible cord. The Eskimo were sure they could drive the spirit away by making special string figures themselves.

Many string figures illustrate legends and refer to mythological beings. Under the influence of the Europeans, however, many of the beliefs about string figures have disappeared among the Eskimo and the Indians. Adults continue to teach the figures and tricks to their children, and the white man has also found enjoyment in learning to do these games and figures. The intricacy of many figures cannot be learned in a short while, however and much sharing of leisure time is necessary to practise. This element of culture cannot be handed down like a song or a rifle; it requires a winter of long nights in which to sit together and practise.

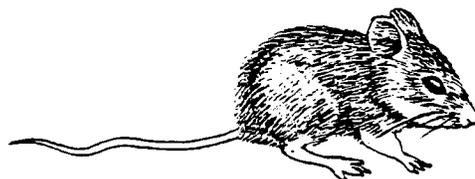
Anthropologists have studied the distribution of various string figures, for it is one way in which they find out about the movements of the aboriginal Americans. It is believed that the Eskimo spread from the west to the east for various reasons. Several string figures portraying animals are made by the Eskimo in both western Canada and Greenland. Animal figures exist only in the west though, and this suggests that these people spread from west to east with those remaining in the west retaining their knowledge of string figures from earlier times.

Haddon, K. *Cat Cradles from Many Lands*. New York: Longmann, Green and Co., 1912.

Jenness, Diamond. *Eskimo Folklore, Part B: Eskimo String Figures*. Report of the Canadian Arctic Expedition 1913-18, Vol. 13. Ottawa. 1924.

Patterson, T.T. *Eskimo String Figures and their Origin*. Acta Arctica, Einar Munksgaard, Copenhagen: 1949.

Rousselière, G.M. *Les jeux de ficelle de Arviligjuarmiut*. Musées nationaux du Canada, Bulletin 233, Ottawa: 1969.



*Text: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man*

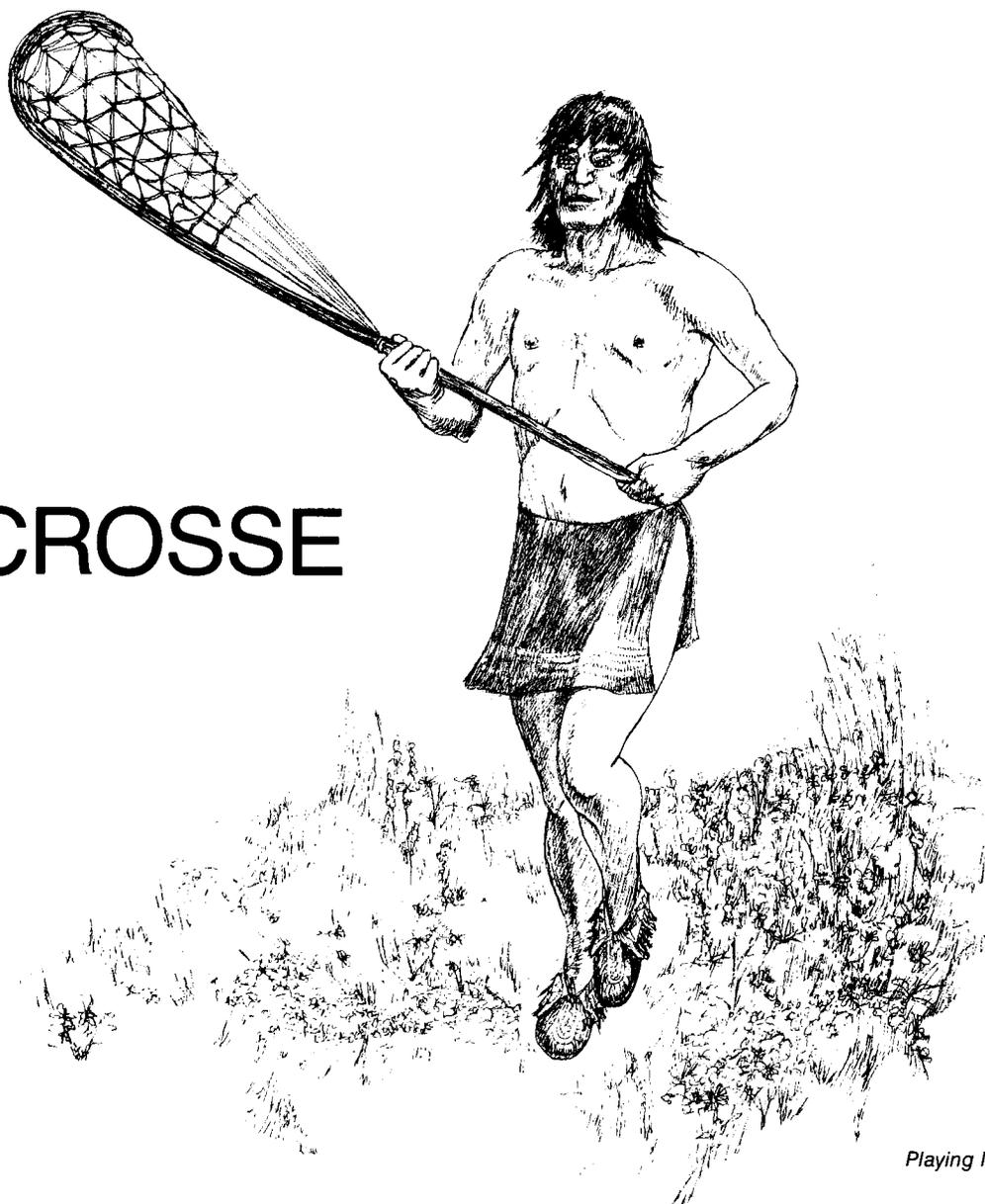
*Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
Marion Ritchie  
National Museum of Man*

*Published under the authority of: The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.*

*Catalogue No. R34-2/15-1979  
ISBN 0-662-10268-1*

*Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS-5107-015-EE-A1*

*Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français.*



# LACROSSE

*Playing lacrosse*

Of all the team sports played in North America before Europeans arrived, relay racing and lacrosse have become the most well known. Lacrosse originated with several North American Indian groups, including the Iroquois and the Algonquian tribes of the Great Lakes region. The game was played by two opposing teams, all members having a netted racket or stick.

The stick or racket used to play lacrosse was made of hardwood with an oval space formed at one end. They varied in size, but were usually about one metre long. Because the curved stick looked like a bishop's crozier, the French explorers called it *lacrosse*, giving this demanding sport its modern name.

Lengthwise, the racket was strung with twisted squirrel skin or hemp. The netting was traditionally made of *wattup* (an Ojibwa word meaning "the small roots of spruce trees"), which was also used for sewing birch bark canoes. *Wattup* was eventually replaced by rawhide.

The object of the game was to throw and catch a ball with the racket in such a way that the ball could be thrown through a goal being defended by the opposing team. The original ball was about the size of a tennis ball, although it differed slightly from tribe to tribe. Deerskin or rawhide, stuffed with hair and stitched with sinew, was used by many of the tribes, but the Ojibwa and Potawatomi (at the mouth of the Detroit River) used a heavy wooden ball, generally containing a knot, while other tribes used improvised balls made from the bark of pine trees.

Lacrosse, which the Ojibwa called *baggataway*, originated as an outdoor sport. It was played on fields 457 to 792 metres or more in length, depending on the number of players, so that the opposite goals might even be in different villages. The ability to run and the skilful use of the netted racket, were essential features of the game. A player holding the ball in his racket was allowed to run with it until chased down by an opponent. The player would then try to pass the ball to a teammate in the open field, all the while trying to advance towards the goal. When the game was played on horseback, as in the Plains, the goals were extremely far apart.

The continuous running made lacrosse a very fast sport; it has even been called the fastest game on two feet. Because of the speed, and the use of rackets, it was also a heavy contact sport. Some games ended in, or were interrupted by, brawls or even battles. Serious injuries among both participants and spectators were common. Brawls were intensified by the enormous size of some of the Indian teams, which could well include the entire young adult population. In many cases war paint was worn, and on one occasion, the game was even used by Chief Pontiac as a prelude to a pitched battle against the garrison of Fort Michilimackinac. The game, apart from being played for pure amusement, was a means of quickening and strengthening the body and was thus a preparation for close combat in tribal warfare. Lacrosse, however, meant different things to different people; for the

Iroquois it was sometimes a religious ritual. The referees were revered medicine men, and their decisions were final. Women standing along the sidelines provided encouragement and prodded the men with switches.

Lacrosse was formally adopted by the European settlers in Canada around 1840, when the Montreal Lacrosse Club was formed, and the Canadian Lacrosse Association was founded in 1925. Canadian players developed an indoor form of the sport, which is called box lacrosse. It is played with smaller sticks, six-man teams, and rules similar to those of hockey.

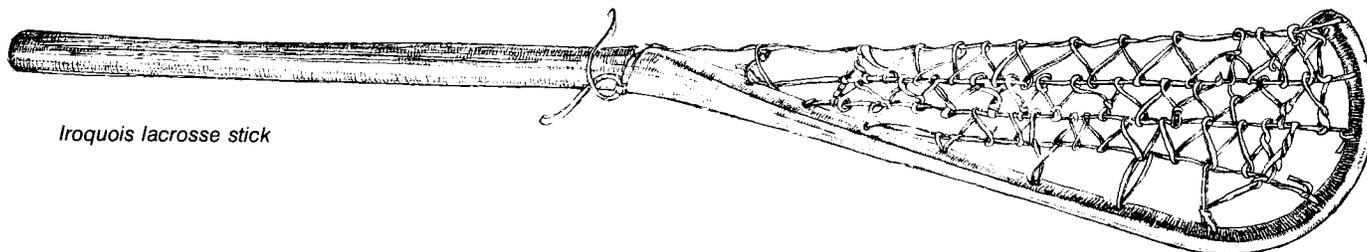
Today a regulation rubber ball has replaced the old wads of moosehide or other forms of ball, and these rubber balls have been clocked at speeds of 169 kilometres an hour – 24 kilometres faster than the fastest baseball pitches. This greater speed results from the extra leverage provided by the use of a racket in throwing the ball.

Lacrosse has become popular in a few other countries, including the United States, Britain and Australia, where the game is played outdoors by ten-man teams. It is then called field lacrosse. Basically the game – as far as we know – has remained the same as when it was the exclusive property of the Indians.



*Ojibwa lacrosse stick*

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*Iroquois lacrosse stick*

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 Marion Ritchie  
 National Museum of Man

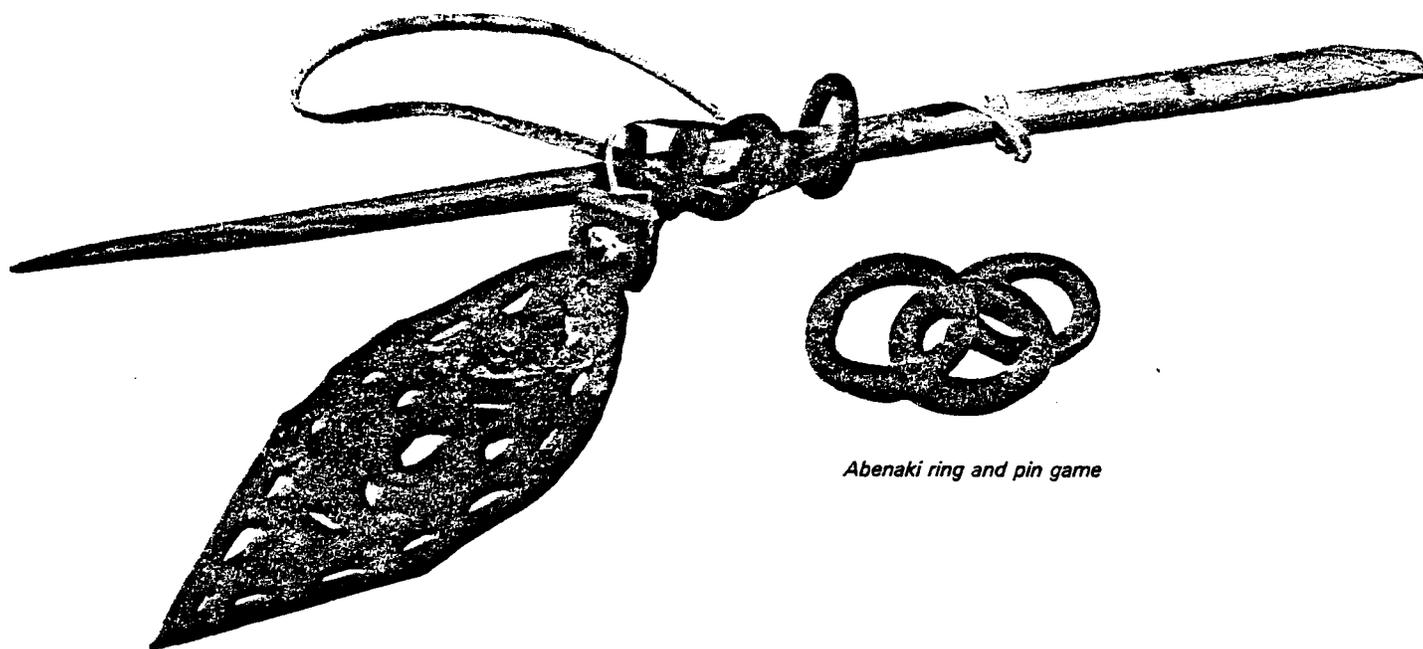
Published under the authority of: The Hon. John C. Munro,  
 Minister of Indian Affairs and  
 Northern Development, and  
 the Hon. Francis Fox, Minister  
 of Communications, Ottawa, 1963.

Catalogue No. R34-2/26-1983 revised  
 ISBN 0-662-10279-7  
 Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number:  
 QS-5107-026-EE-A1

Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français



# INDIAN AND ESKIMO GAMES



*Abenaki ring and pin game*

All was not toil in the North America of pre-European times. The Indians liked to sit and smoke, gamble, or play games. They made dolls and toys (such as tops) for their children, and taught them their future work through many of their games.

Of the games that required special toys or implements, one of the most common was hoop-and-pole, played by the children in winter. It was a game that taught skills necessary for the hunt and the battle. The hoop was usually made of willow or ash wood and had a diameter of some 381.0 mm, while the pole was a .61 m or .91 m long stick. Sometimes the children bowled their hoops along the ground at random, then threw their sticks through them; sometimes they flung the hoops into the

air and tried to catch them on their sticks as they fell. In one version, the hoop was covered with rawhide, woven so that a small hole or "heart" was left open in the centre. When a player speared the heart, he chased his opponents until he hit one with the hoop. That person then rolled it back, shouting "There is a buffalo returning to you". In another form of game, the hoop was held in the hand, with outstretched fingers in the centre. The player tried to catch a small dart thrown by his opponent between his fingers without being injured. In a variation of this game, an arrow was flung. Other outdoor games included lacrosse, a form of spear-throwing called snow-snake, which was played in winter on the snow, and various athletic contests between men, such as wrestling, running and archery.

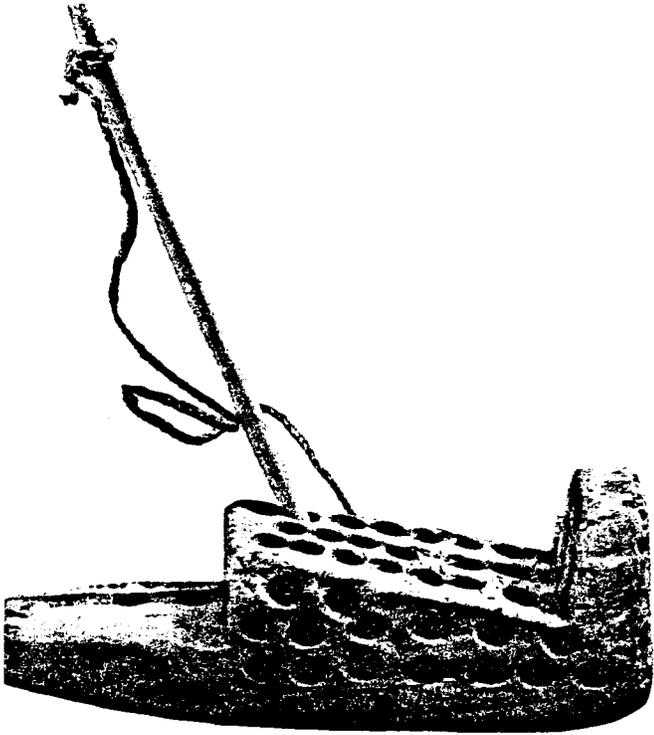


*Iroquois (Cayuga) cornhusk doll*

For indoor amusements there were quieter ways to spend the leisure hours. People enjoyed juggling and playing cat's cradle and ring-and-pin, which was quite widespread in North America. This game was played with a pointed stick of wood or bone (the pin) which was tied by a string of skin or sinew to an object with one or more holes in it (the ring). Players swung the ring upward and caught it on the pin by inserting the tip of the pin into a hole in the ring. The game was played in many variations, with different forms of rings and pins, and according to differing rules. It is sometimes called cup-and-ball. The Copper Eskimo usually made the ring (or cup) by drilling a hole in the bone from the flipper of the bearded seal. Holes were pierced in both ends of it and in the side of the larger end. The peg was a short, pointed stick of bone, which had to be inserted in one of these holes once for each finger and toe of the player, and then one last time before the game was over. The Eskimo of Baffin Island made rings in the form of bears by carving bone or ivory. They then drilled rows of holes in the ends and sides of the carving. The player was required to insert the bone pin in the proper order, which was sometimes given in a chant while he played. Men and women of all ages enjoyed this game. Some people claimed it belonged to the spring because it hastened the rising of the sun.

Ring-and-pin games were widespread in Canada, though some forms of it were more elaborate than others. Some Plains tribes, for example, used five or six deer-foot bones which were perforated and strung on a strip of skin. A broad flap of skin pierced with holes dangled from one end, and at the other hung a sharp bone or wooden pin. A player's score depended on the number of deer-foot bones he could catch at one time on the pin. The highest score was given for catching the skin flap at the end. Athapaskans and Algonkians of the boreal forest had an identical form of the game, but only the women played it.

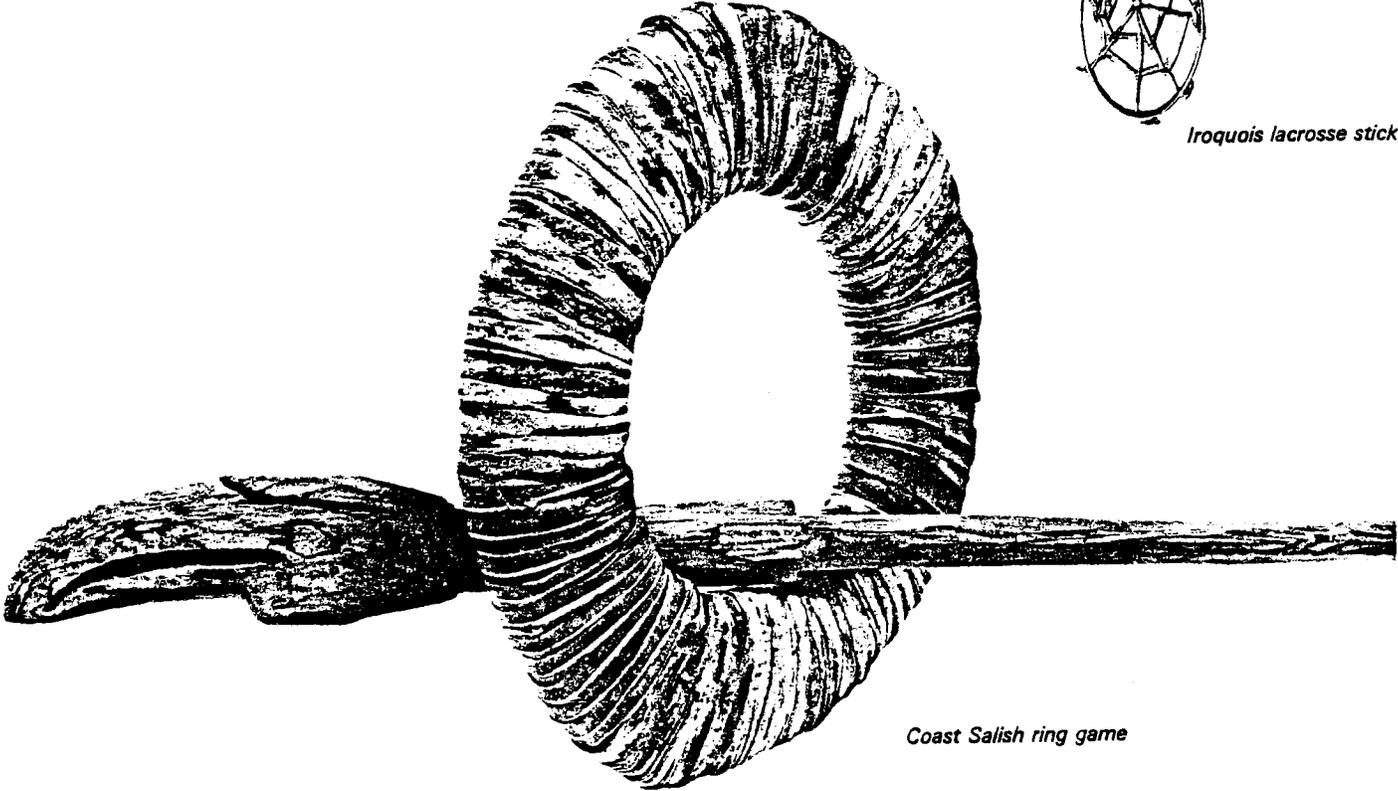
The ring-and-pin game is popular in various parts of the world today, and contemporary sets are produced commercially in Mexico and several other countries.



*Labrador Eskimo ring and pin game*



*Iroquois lacrosse stick*



*Coast Salish ring game*



*Snowsnake*

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*Text: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man*

*Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
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*Published under the authority of: The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.*

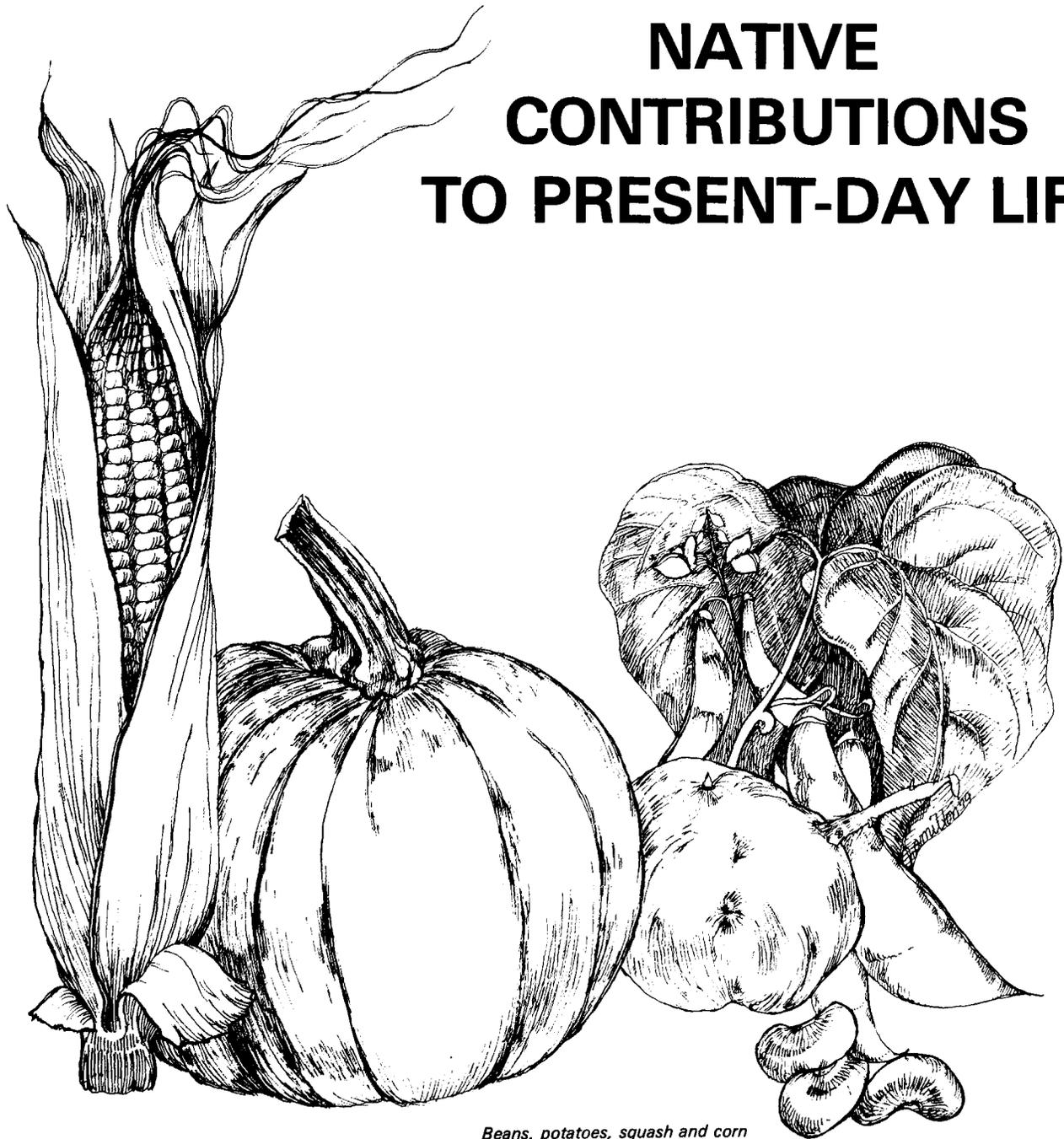
*Catalogue No. R34-2/14-1979  
ISBN 0-662-10267-3*

*Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS-5107-014-EE-A1*

*Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français.*

## Contributions

# NATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO PRESENT-DAY LIFE



*Beans, potatoes, squash and corn*

The Indians and Eskimo have made a great number of contributions to present-day life. The noted anthropologist, Harold E. Driver, in *Indians of North America*, states that exchanges between Europeans and New World peoples initiated a "most dramatic and far-reaching cross-fertilization of cultures".

One of the most important contributions by American Indians was in the growing of food plants. Indians not only showed the earliest settlers new kinds of plants to grow but they also taught them the associated techniques of planting and cultivating. After the exploration of the Americas by Europeans, over 50 new kinds of edible plants were introduced to the Old World. Today, plants first domesticated by New World Indians furnish almost half the world's total food supply. Two of these, which originated in the New World — corn (maize) and potatoes — are, along with rice and wheat, the most important food staples we have today.

The potato, first domesticated by the Andean Indians of South America, has an interesting history. It was introduced to Ireland by the early 1600's, and within the next 50 years had become the most important food source in that country. The potato was later re-exported, this time from Ireland to North America, where it was called the "Irish" potato. The blight on the Irish potato crop in 1845 resulted in the potato famine, which initiated the immigration of many Irish people to North America.

Other important staple foods originating in the New World include *cassava* or manioc (now a staple in parts of Africa and the source of tapioca), the kidney bean and the lima bean. European settlers also found many other new vegetables and fruits which have since spread all over the world, including the American sweet potato, peanuts, squash, pumpkins, avocados, chili peppers, tomatoes, pineapples, artichokes, cacao (the source of cocoa), chicle (for chewing gum), and various beans. The introduction of many of these foods has played a part in the striking growth in world population since the mid 1600s.

European settlers learned to make many new dishes from the Indians — succotash (made from corn and lima beans), cornbread, hominy, tamales, tortillas and toasted cornflakes are only a few. The settlers also learned how to make maple syrup. The turkey, which has become a popular festive food in North America, and the guinea pig, used today in laboratory experiments, were domesticated by New World Indians. The turkey is believed to have first been domesticated in Mexico, where it was prized as food; the guinea pig comes from the South American Indians.

Cotton was the leading textile fibre in the New World, whereas in Europe it was flax (linen). Today whenever we put on a cotton garment, it is usually made from cotton of American Indian derivation (although cotton had been domesticated in the Old World, especially Egypt). Sisal (agave fibre) once used by Mesoamerican Indians as a clothing material, is still made into rope.

Tobacco was first grown in tropical parts of the Americas, but its use spread to the Indians of most of North and South America. It did not however, reach the Eskimo in pre-European times. The Indians used tobacco in pipes, cigars, cigarettes, and as snuff. The plant was introduced to Europe in 1558, when it was taken to Spain as a medicine. In 1586 Sir Walter Raleigh introduced smoking tobacco to the English court and the



Tobacco

custom spread quickly among the English people. By the year 1700 the use of tobacco had encircled the globe. It was re-introduced to America from Siberia at Alaska, where the Eskimo finally discovered nicotine.

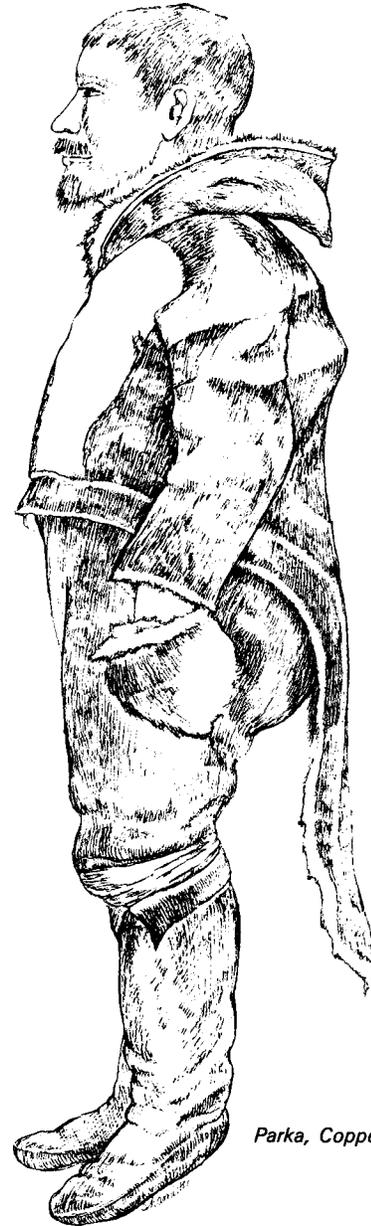
Over 50 drugs used in modern medicine were discovered and used by American Indians. Some of these include cocoa (for cocaine and novacaine), curare (a muscle relaxant used in anaesthetics), inchona bark (the source of quinine, which is used to treat malaria), cascara sagrada (a laxative), datura (a pain reliever), witch hazel (for muscular aches and pains), and ephedra (used in clearing nasal passages and sinuses).

Many Indian and Eskimo inventions were adopted by the immigrants to the New World. Dugout canoes were used by the early traders in western North America and birch bark canoes of Algonkian origin were used by white men in the north. Indeed, the early birch bark canoes were the prototypes for boats made today of canvas or fiberglass. Canvas and fiberglass models of the Eskimo kayak (the narrow hide-covered boat of the far north) are also being made both for functional use and for sport. The Eskimo use of the dogsled was imitated until recently when it began to be replaced by the snowmobile. Toboggans and snowshoes were adopted from northern Athapaskan and Algonkian Indians, and the hammock, invented as a sleeping place by Indians of the tropical forests of South America, has become popular throughout North America.

Many forms of Indian and Eskimo clothing were borrowed by European settlers. Frontiersmen adopted such Indian items of dress as moccasins, leggings and buckskin shirts, finding them well-suited to life in the wilderness. Contemporary house slippers owe their inspiration to the Indian moccasin and the warm yet fashionable parka owes its origin to the Eskimo.

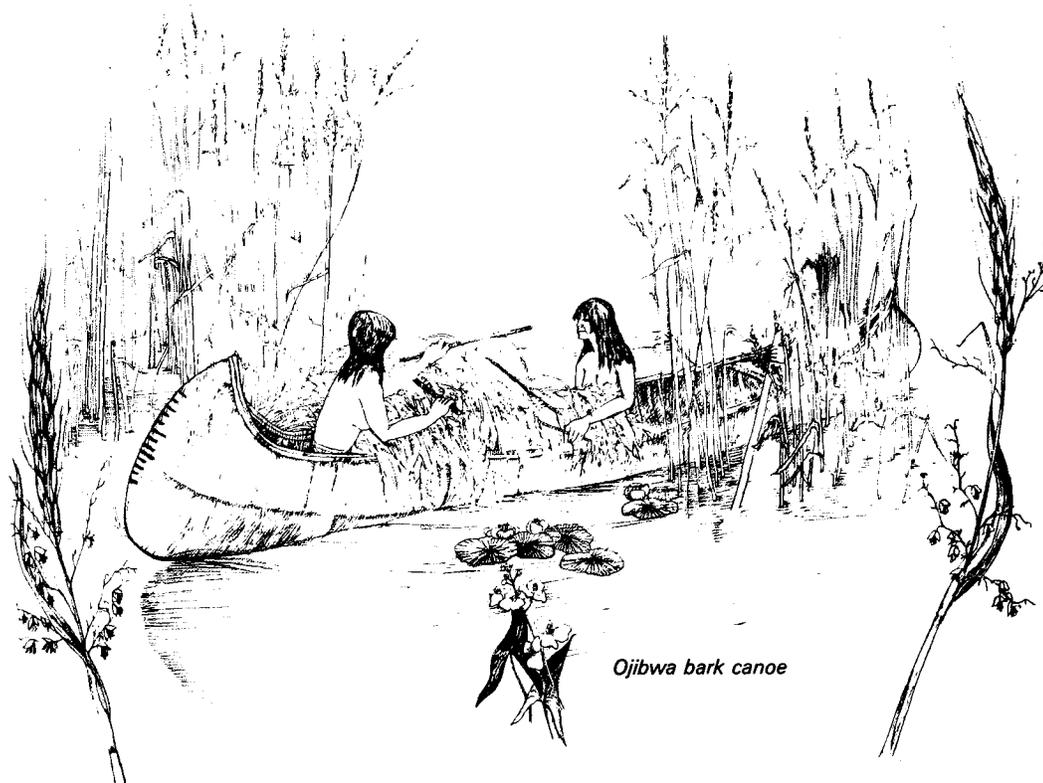
Indians were the first people to become familiar with the properties of rubber. They made enema syringes and tubes of rubber, hollow rubber balls and waterproof fabrics. Columbus actually took rubber samples back to Europe, but it wasn't until about 250 years later that its commercial potential was realized.

Indian methods of survival helped the early explorers and traders, and Indian camping and woodcraft knowledge has been borrowed by such organizations as the Boy Scouts and the Girl Guides, which were inspired, in great part, by the lessons of Indian life. Then too, many Eskimo techniques of survival under rigorous Arctic conditions were taught to members of the Armed Forces during and after the Second World War.



*Parka, Copper Eskimo*

Indian languages have given to new North American cultures literally thousands of place names, names for familiar objects as well as many common expressions. Indians and Eskimo have long been popular subjects in sculpture and painting and native Indian and Eskimo arts and crafts are known all over the world. Popular games, such as lacrosse, have been learned from the Indian people and many songs, stories, poems and books have been written about Indians and the Eskimo.



Ojibwa bark canoe

When the contemporary world is faced by exploding population, air pollution, over-crowding, shortages, and the disappearance of the wilderness, many conservationists recall the ways of Indian cultures which lived more in harmony with nature. As Stewart Udall wrote in *The Quiet Crisis*:

It is ironical that today the conservation movement finds itself turning back to ancient Indian land ideas, to the Indian understanding that we are not outside of nature, but of it . . . from this wisdom we can learn how to conserve the best parts of our continent. In recent decades we have slowly come back to some of the truths that the Indians knew from the beginning: that unborn generations have a claim on the land equal to our own; that men need to learn from nature, to keep an ear to the earth, and to replenish their spirits in frequent contacts with animals and wild land. And most important of all, we are recovering a sense of reverence for the land.

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Text: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man

Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
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Published under the authority of: The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.

Catalogue No. R34-2/5-1979  
ISBN 0-662-10258-4

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS-5107-005-EE-A1

Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français.



## Indian and Eskimo Contributions to the English Language

The English and French speaking peoples of Canada have adopted many North American Indian words in everyday speech. In addition to the selection of names of animals, food and other items listed further on, there are thousands of native terms that appear on the maps of the provinces and territories of Canada. (Newfoundland is an exception as there was hardly any verbal contact with the local Beothuk before they were exterminated.)

The names of some of the provinces and territories reveal their Indian origins: Manitoba probably derives from the Cree word meaning "strait of the spirit"; Saskatchewan is Cree in origin also, meaning "swift moving river" or "running of the thaw"; Ontario is Iroquian in origin meaning "grand body of water"; Quebec is probably Algonkian in origin, describing the narrow passage of water at Cape Diamond where Quebec City is located; and Yukon is a word derived from a local Athapaskan language meaning "great river". These words were brought into common usage by the settlers and were established by the time of Confederation.

The name for the capital of Canada, Ottawa, derives from the Algonkin tribe's term "to trade", referring to the active role of these Indians in controlling trade on the Ottawa and Gatineau Rivers. Toronto, the provincial capital of Ontario, likely comes from a Huron word meaning "a place of meeting".

The name for Canada itself is usually attributed to Jacques Cartier who heard the term when he sailed up the St. Lawrence River in 1536. The Indian people spoke of "kanata". It referred however to their settlements, not to the whole area as Cartier thought.

The majority of adopted words come from the Algonkian languages which are and were spoken in the eastern part of the country at the time of European contact. As the fur trade developed and the voyageurs and explorers moved westward, they depended on their Indian guides to find their way across this vast country. The guides were Algonkian speakers, primarily from the Ojibwa and Cree tribes. These people could communicate with others speaking Algonkian languages, as far west as the Rockies. This language similarity across the country facilitated travel as the guides could obtain valuable advance information on travel routes. Both the English and French speakers adopted Algonkian words such as: caribou, moccasin, manitou, toboggan, tomahawk, totem and wapiti.

On the west coast the Chinook jargon developed with the mixing of European languages with Chinook, Nootka, and other west coast languages about the lower Columbia River. There were six different linguistic stocks on the West Coast so that a common language was needed by the sea traders who plied the coast for sea otter pelts.

It should be pointed out that a simplicity of material culture does not imply a simple language. English and French appear straightforward when compared to some of the intricate native dialects. A selection of English words with Indian origins are the following:

- BABICHE:** Thong of leather made from the skins of various animals. Derivative of the Micmac word *ababiche*, a string, or cord. The same word is used in French.
- CARIBOU:** This name for the American reindeer (*Rangifer caribou*) has come into English from French Canadian and is generally considered to be Algonkian in origin. It probably derives from the Micmac word *halibu* which refers to the caribou's habit of shovelling the snow with its forelegs to find food.
- CHIPMUNK:** The name for the striped ground squirrel (*sciurus striatus*) probably comes from the Ojibwa word for squirrel, *atchitamon* meaning head first, in reference to its movement down a tree trunk.
- CISCO:** A name applied to any of several varieties of whitefish from Central and Northern Canada. It appears to be a shortening of the French Canadian word, *ciscoette*, from the Ojibwa *siskawet*.
- KAYAK:** A small watercraft composed of a wooden frame covered and decked-over with skin. It generally has individual cockpits for one to three occupants who usually sit with outstretched legs and use a double-bladed paddle. The name is derived from the Inuit word *qakag*.
- MANITOU:** Among the Algonkian speaking Indians a supernatural being that controls nature

- or an object that possesses supernatural powers. In Ojibwa, *manito*. The same word appears in French, and as in English often is used as the name of a place.
- MOCCASIN:** The soft heelless shoe of the North American Indian is called *mockasin*, *mawhcasun*, and *makisin* in various eastern Algonkian dialects. The same word is used in French (spelling is different).
- MOOSE:** This large North American mammal (*Alces americanus*) inhabits Canada and the Northern United States. It appears on the reverse side of most Canadian quarters. The name derives from several eastern Algonkian dialects, such as the Virginia Indians' *moos* and the Ojibwa *mons*, meaning "he who strips or eats off" (trees and shrubs).
- MUKLUK:** Derived from the Yupik Eskimo word *makhlaq* meaning bearded seal used on the bottom of a boot. The mukluk is a knee-high boot worn in the winter by the Eskimos and Indians of the Northwest Territories and the Yukon. It has come to refer to any boot similar in shape.
- MUSKEG:** This word for low, wet land or bog comes from such words as the Ojibwa *maskeg*, and the Cree *masak*, Algonkian words meaning "swamp".
- PAPOOSE:** From a related word in Algonkian dialect for an infant or child — *papeisses*, *pappoos*, and *poupous*.
- PEMMICAN:** This was the famed Indian food of the Prairies prepared from pounded meat mixed with grease and stored in skin bags. The word comes from the Cree *pimikkan* which means "a bag filled with grease and pounded meat".
- RACCOON:** The word for this well-known animal (*Procyon lotor*) comes from such southeastern Algonkian words as *aroughcun*, *arathcoon*, and *rahaughcum*, meaning "he scratches with hands".
- SKUNK:** The name of this little animal (*Mephitis mephitis*) originated from such words as the Abenaki word, *segankw*, Ojibwa *shikag*, and Cree *sikak*.
- SQUASH:** The plant of the *Curcubita* is derived from Algonkian words such as *squonter-squash* or *askootasguash*. It was one of the many plants that were originally cultivated by the Indians. The translation of the word is "the green thing that may be eaten raw".
- TOBOGGAN:** This is the runnerless sled invented by the Algonkian speaking Indians of north-eastern Canada. The word comes from the Micmac *tubagun* or *tabagan*. The same word is used in French.
- TOMAHAWK:** This word for an Indian axe or hatchet comes from the Algonkian words such as the Micmac, *tomehagen*. The same word appears in French.
- TOTEM:** This word originated from *otem* in the Algonkian dialect. The Ojibwa *totain* signifies what particularly belongs to one "tribe, village, family, relations and crest". Totem poles carved on the Northwest coast are famous around the world. The same word is used in French.
- WIGWAM:** This word for an Indian dwelling comes from eastern Algonkian dialects such as Micmac *wigwom* and the Ojibwa *wikiwa*. The Siouan word of the Plains is *teepee*. Wigwam is a French word as well.

In addition to words, many phrases have been incorporated into the English language that draw upon Indian cultures for their inspiration. These phrases include "to go on the warpath", "bury the hatchet", "run the gauntlet", "smoke the peacepipe" and "happy hunting ground". The expression "low man on the totem pole" is a humorous form of indicating someone's lowly position in a hierarchy, not at all relevant in actual totem poles. Indian maxims and proverbs include: "It is not enough for a man to know how to ride, he must know how to fall" and "He who does not speak is not heard by God". As a final thought there is the maxim: "Never make a judgement on another person until you have walked a mile in his moccasins."

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Jenness, Diamond *Indians of Canada*, National Museum of Canada, Bulletin 65, Anthropological Series No. 15, 1960.

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*Text: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man*

*Design: Marion Ritchie  
National Museum of Man*

*Published under the authority of: Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.*

*Catalogue No. R34-2/21-1979  
ISBN 0-662-10274-6*

*Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS 5107-021-EE-A1*

*Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français.*

Transportation

oracle

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# TRAVOIS



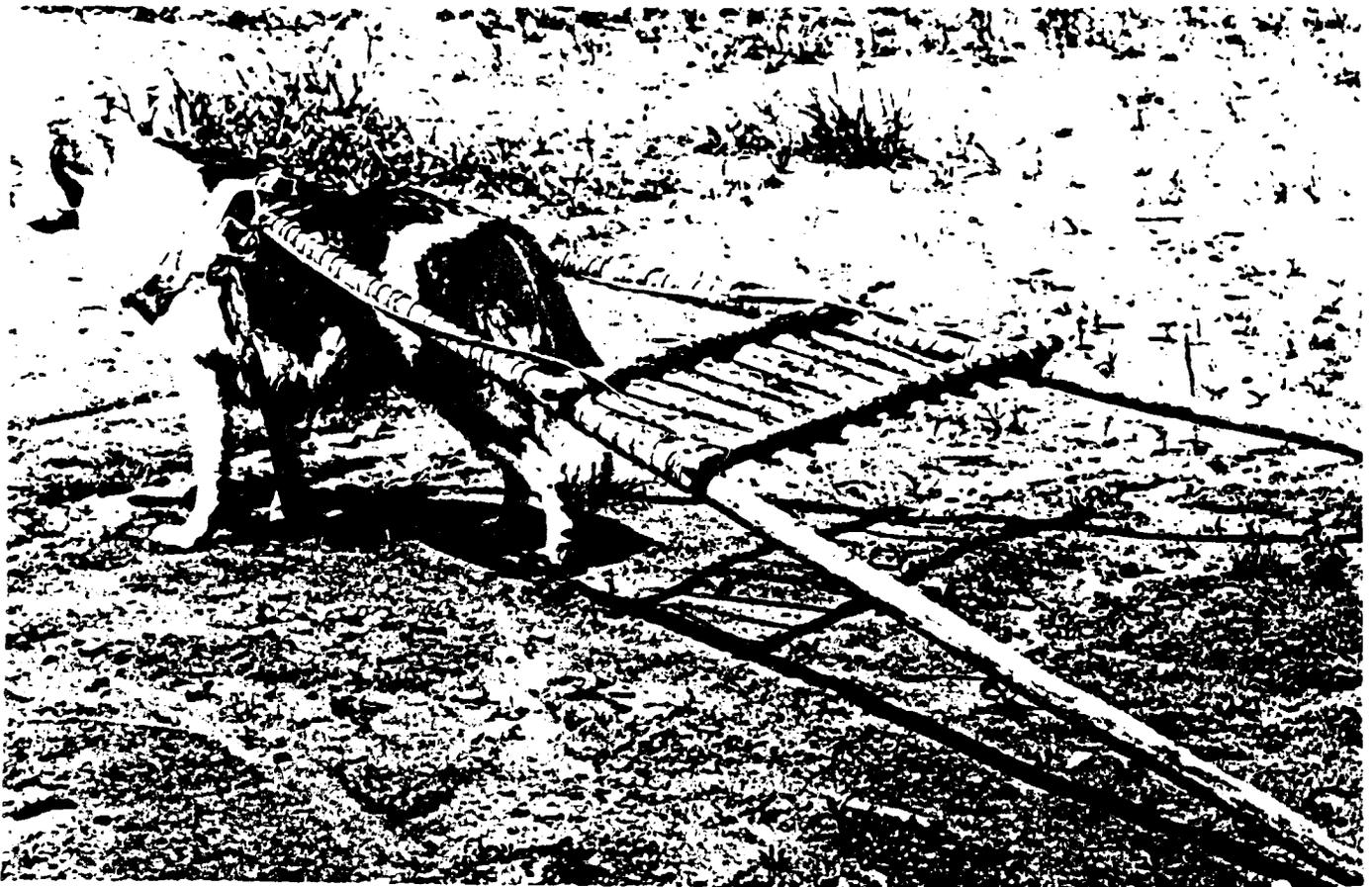
*Horse with travois* NMC 4197

The travois, which is seldom, if ever, used today, was a year-round means of transportation for the Indians of the northern Plains and of the Prairies of North America. Before Europeans introduced the horse, it was the only method used by the Indians of the Prairies for carrying their things over land, other than back-packing by humans or dogs.

The travois was made by setting two long poles at an angle to one another so that at one end they could be lashed together over the shoulders of a dog; the other ends dragged on the ground behind the dog. A frame of sticks, or a hoop woven with leather thongs, was fastened between the poles near the centre, providing a handy platform on which a load could be lashed. The load was then dragged along by the dog. A hunter could carry up to a quarter of a buffalo on a travois and a woman could bring in a heavy load of firewood.

When horses were acquired by the Indians, larger travois were built for horses to pull. Tents and other possessions, and even women and children, could be transported by horse-drawn travois. Dogs continued to pull the smaller travois of pre-European times, until eventually more modern means of transportation, such as the car and the snowmobile, were adopted.

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Lowie, Robert H. *Indians of the Plains*, American Museum Science Books, Garden City, New York: Natural History Press, 1954.



*Dog with travois* NMC 62763

*Text: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man*

*Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
Marion Ritche  
National Museum of Man*

*Published under the authority of: The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.*

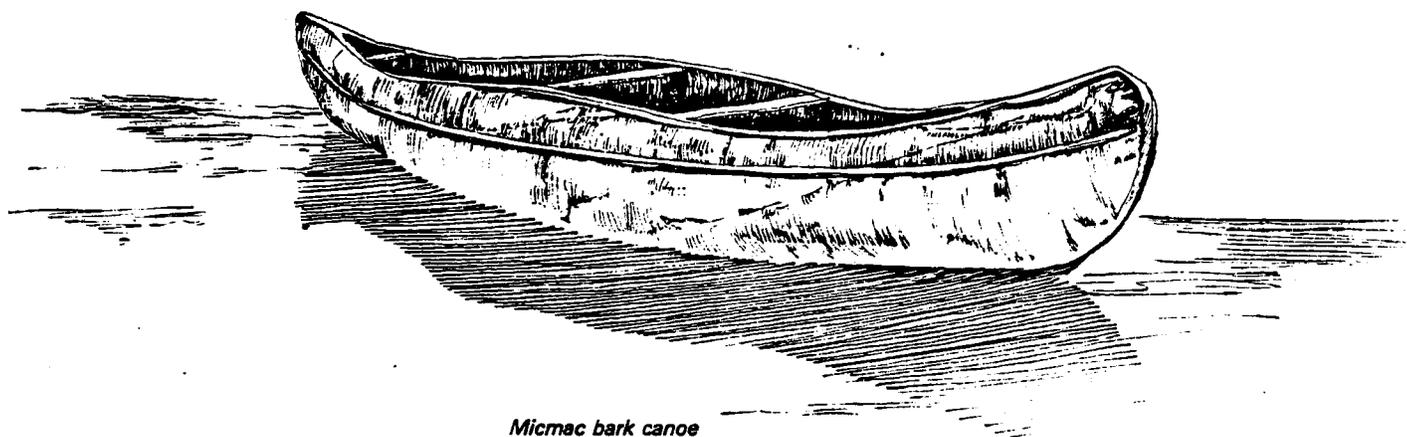
*Catalogue No. R34 2/25-1979  
ISBN 0-662 10278-9*

*Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: OS 5107-025 EE-A1*

*Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français*



# BARK CANOES



*Micmac bark canoe*

Since his arrival in the New World, the white man has admired the bark canoe of the North American Indian. It is one of the finest forms of watercraft ever to be developed and is well suited to inland waterways. The traditional bark canoe was lightweight and a 4.20 meter canoe weighing some 22.68 kg could easily be carried over the many portages of central and eastern Canadian forests. The canoes were also quite strong, and although susceptible to damage from rocks, could carry large loads in very shallow water. They were easily manoeuvred by one man with a single-blade paddle and therefore ideal for the fast streams and frequent shoal waters found in the woodland areas. Some, specially built, were sturdy enough for the rough waters of the bays along the Atlantic coast.

Nearly all Algonkian, Iroquoian and Athapaskan-speaking Indians made bark canoes and their use was widespread throughout Canada and the Great Lakes region. Birch bark was the most common kind of bark in use but others, such as spruce bark and elm bark were also utilized. The bark was removed from large trees early in the summer. It was taken off in a single sheet, which was

then rolled and carried back to camp. The construction of an ordinary canoe required the continued labour of a man and a woman for about two weeks. The bark was unrolled and flattened on the ground, and then a wooden building frame in the form of a outline of the canoe was weighted in place so that the shaping could begin. This was done by bending the exposed bark up around the building frame to form the sides, which were held in position by stakes driven into the ground all around. The stakes provided a temporary means of supporting the bark in the desired position whilst the gunwales and ribs were prepared. The gunwales and ribs, as well as the special stem piece, had to be steamed or soaked, bent into shape, and allowed to dry. Then the gunwales and stem piece were lashed to the bark, with roots from spruce or jack pine trees.

When the gunwales were attached and completed, the stakes were removed, and an inner lining of strips, usually from the cedar tree just beneath the bark, were prepared and the ribs inserted with their ends tucked under the inner gunwale. The ribs shaped the hull of the canoe while holding the inner lining in position, and also

gave the hull considerable strength. Then all the seams and joints were caulked with pine or spruce gum or pitch to make them watertight. The canoe cover was often ornamented with a scraped design or a drawing indicating ownership. The extreme lightness of the birch bark canoe was some compensation for its fragility. In any case, a damaged canoe could be patched in a few hours with a piece of birch bark, a few threads of spruce root, and a little spruce gum.

Europeans quickly adopted the canoe for their own use, so that it became familiar all over the North American continent. Early fur traders travelled by canoe, and it played an important part in the exploration and opening up of the New World. In fact, the canoe is still used for conveying prospectors, surveyors and explorers into regions beyond the reach of the railway or other forms of transportation. However, the supply of suitable bark declined in many areas and canvas was used as a substitute for many years. Though modern tools were introduced at all stages of development of the manufacturing process, the basic design survived. Today that basic design is used for modern canoes made of fiberglass or

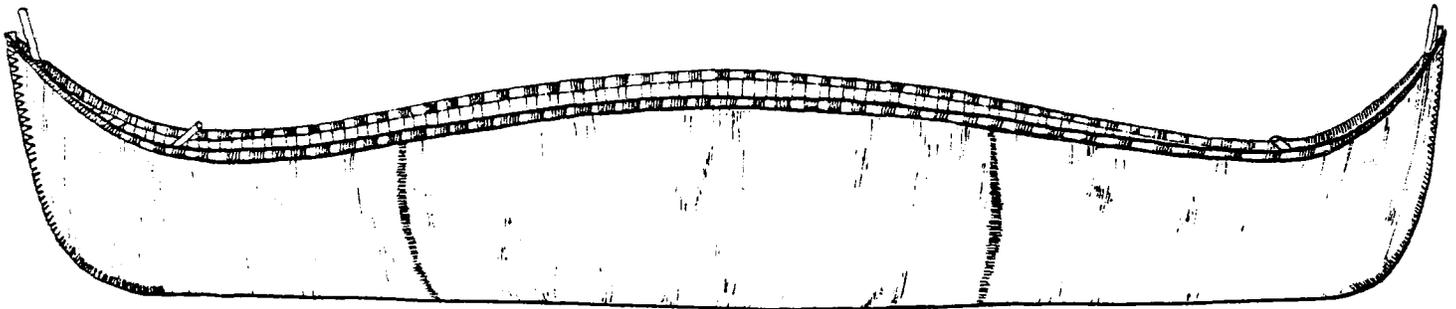
lightweight metal, and there are still a few Indians making birch bark canoes.

Of all archaic watercraft, the canoe and Kayak share the distinction of having survived in modern form all over the world.

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Ritzenthaler, Robert Eugene. *The Building of a Chippewa Indian Birch-Bark Canoe*, Bulletin of the Public Museum of the City of Milwaukee, Vol. 19 No. 2. Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1950.



*Beothuk bark canoe*

*Text: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man*

*Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
Manon Ritchie  
National Museum of Man*

*Published under the authority of: The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.*

*Catalogue No. R34-2/27-1979  
ISBN 0-662-10290-0*

*Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS-5107-027-EE-A1*

*Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français.*

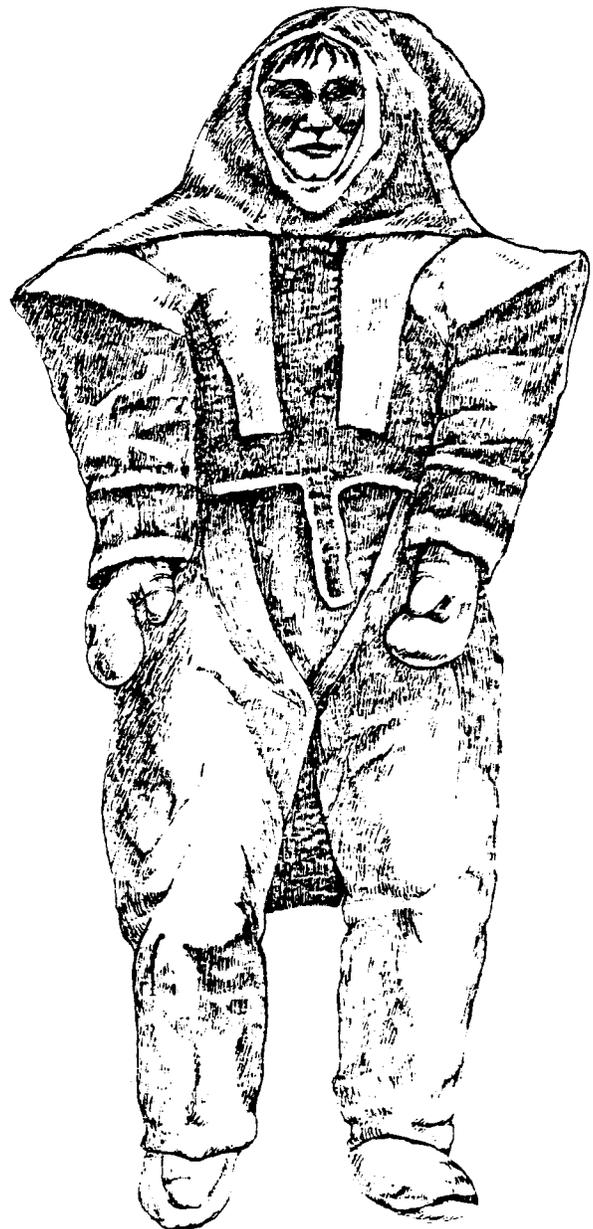
Clothing and Shelter

## INDIAN AND ESKIMO CLOTHING

Before widespread availability of European-fashioned dress, clothing of the North American Indian varied according to the climate and the availability of material. Yet it was generally of the same basic type throughout what is now Canada. Men's clothing consisted of a breechcloth (a sort of apron) of deer or elk skin tied around the waist, and moccasins. Leggings or trousers, semi-tailored shirts, and fur or hide cloaks were added for warmth in the winter. Women usually wore a long slip made from the skin of a deer or mountain sheep, supported by shoulder straps. Separate sleeves were added in cold weather and moccasins, leggings and a robe were added in winter.

### ARCTIC:

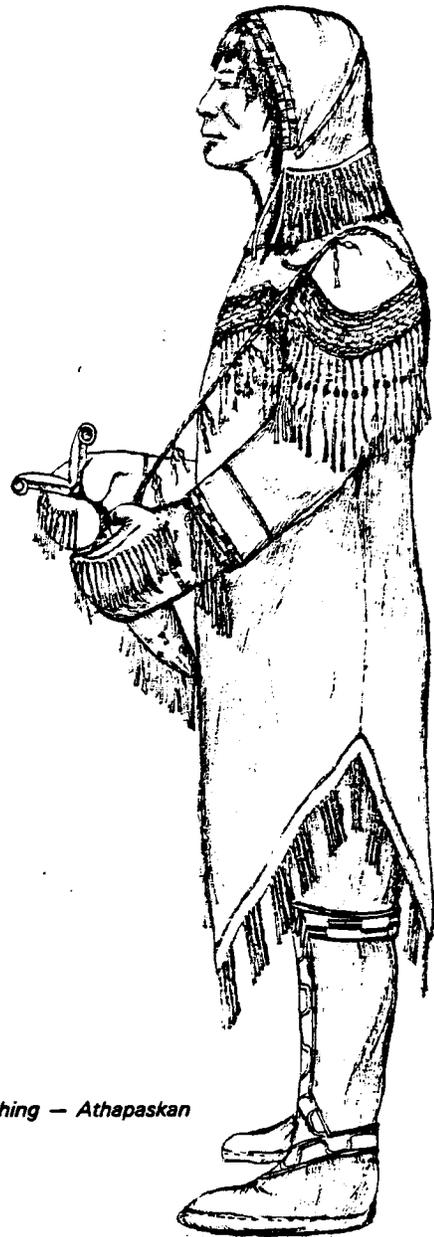
The Eskimo wore clothes which the women made from caribou hide. They also dressed in sealskin, a warmer, lighter and more flexible material than caribou. Sometimes polar bear fur or other northern furs were used. In winter both men and women have always worn the well-known parka, which consists of two hides sewn together at the sides, with sleeves and a hood. The parka is pulled on over the head. Men and women wore fur trousers, which seem to have originated by sewing two leggings together. They were made of two pieces, with a joining seam down the middle in front, exactly like men's trousers today; both garments are in fact derived from the same Asian source. Inner garments similar in cut to the outer ones, but made of lighter fur, were also worn by men and women in winter. In the summer only the lighter, inner garments were worn. Fur stockings and fur boots were necessary and grass was sometimes stuffed into the boots for extra insulation. Mittens were worn everywhere, as protection against the cold, and to protect the hunters' hands from injuries. Snow goggles of wood, or more rarely ivory, with one or two slits to see through, were a necessity in the spring and were used everywhere to prevent snow blindness.



*Woman's clothing — Copper Eskimo*

## NORTHWEST COAST:

Shredded cedar bark was used for clothing in this area, although sometimes no clothing or a minimum of clothing was necessary because of the warm climate. In summer men wore breechcloths and women wore skirts and robes. Furs and hides were added as cloaks in cold weather. Elaborately decorated blankets of cedar bark and woven goat or dog hair were worn by people of status during ceremonies. Moccasins and leggings were known and were worn occasionally when the Indians were traveling to the interior. As protection against rain, cone-shaped hats of woven spruce root were used and waterproof capes of tightly woven cedar bark were worn on the body. The northern Tlingit made use of tailored garments of buckskin with leggings and moccasins. Men and women of high rank were fond of decoration. They wore ear and nose pendants of shell, bone, copper or the claws of animals. Strings of beads made of stone, bone or shell were wound around the neck and hung down to the waist. Both sexes could be tattooed on the face, chest, front of legs, or back of arms. The designs were inherited crests which only the owners used. Red, black, and white pigment mixed with grease were applied to the bodies of both men and women for ceremonies, depicting the inherited crests.



*Man's clothing — Athapaskan*



*Woman's clothing — Haida*

## THE SUBARCTIC:

Moose and caribou hides, and beaver and rabbit fur were the main materials used. Rabbit skins were made into robes, and leggings and moccasins were sometimes in one piece. The Hare Indians were named such because of their frequent use of the skins and meat of the hare, in addition to the caribou. Shirts and dresses of most people in this region were semi-tailored, with either fitted sleeves or sleeves added by tying them to the shoulders with a thong. Some of the most northerly tribes substituted trousers for breechcloths. Undergarments, worn in the winter, were often made of strips of rabbit skin woven together to form a soft material. Hats and mittens were also worn. Clothing was often beautifully decorated with porcupine quills, paint, seeds or birdquill. Both men and women wore their hair long.

## THE PLAINS:

The basic material for clothing was deer or moose hide. In summer the men wore a breechcloth tied to the waist, and moccasins with hard soles and soft uppers. Leggings and a semi-tailored shirt were sometimes added in winter. The leggings were tied to the waist and looked very much like trousers. The shirt was made from two skins, cut or sewn together with shoulder flaps serving for sleeves. Buffalo robes were worn for warmth. The women wore more clothes than the men. Their main garment was a tube-shaped dress made from two deer or moose hides sewn together. Moccasins, which were the same type as those worn by the men, were also worn in winter. Leggings were added.

Fringe, tufts of horse hair, or animal claws and teeth decorated their clothes, which were often very ornate. Porcupine quilling, which was a most valued decoration, was replaced by very beautiful beading (done with tiny glass beads) after contact with European traders. Both men and women generally wore their hair long and braided.



*Man's clothing — Huron*



*Blackfoot headdress*

## EASTERN WOODLANDS:

The people of this region wore clothing similar to that of the Plains Indians, except that the women usually wore skirts rather than one-piece dresses. Most clothes were made of tanned deerskin, although fur robes were worn for extra protection in winter. Men wore breechcloths, shirts, leggings and moccasins. Skin robes were added in winter. Clothing and personal items were ornamented with designs, originally made with porcupine quills and later, after the arrival of the white man, with trade beads.



*Tattooing of face — Central Eskimo*

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Kock, Ronald P. *Dress Clothing of the Plains Indians*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1977.  
Spencer, R.F. and Jennings, J.D. *The Native Americans*, New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1965.

*Text: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man*

*Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
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*Published under the authority of: The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.*

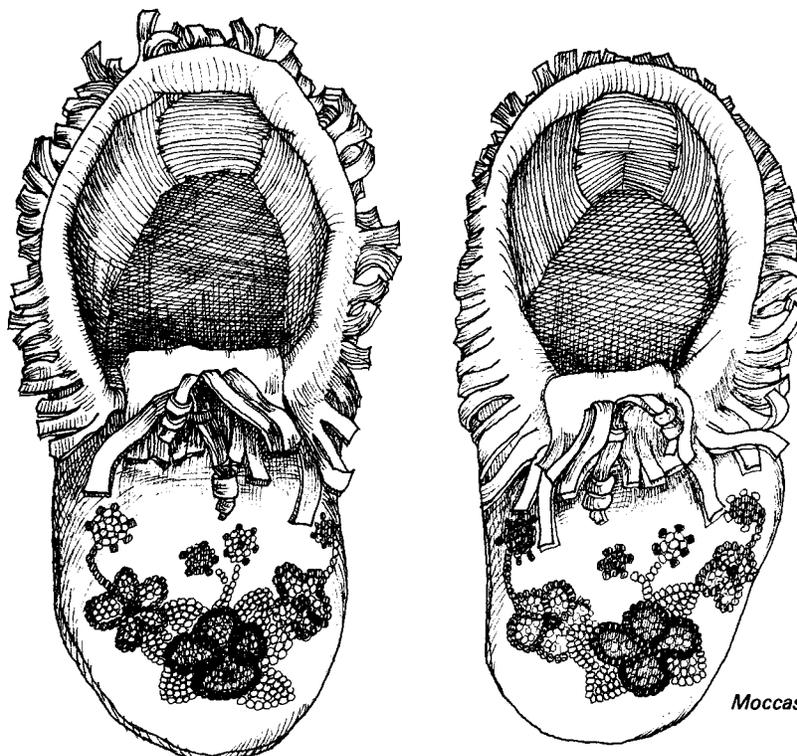
*Catalogue No. R34-2/2-1979  
ISBN 0-662-10255-X*

*Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS-5107-002-EE-A1*

*Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français.*



# MOCCASINS



*Moccasins, Eastern Woodlands*

Moccasins are a type of shoe worn by the Indians and the Eskimo of northern North America. They are made of soft animal skin, such as deerskin, with the hair left on the skin for winter moccasins. Each tribe had its own distinctive style. The Blackfoot Indians, in fact, got their name from the moccasins they wore, which were either painted black or blackened by burnt Prairie grasses.

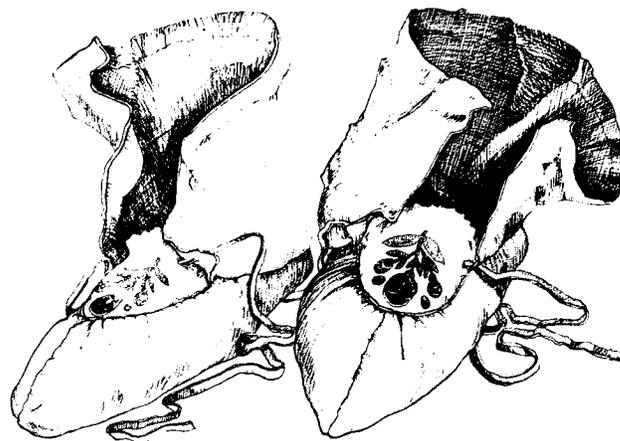
Moccasins may be ankle-length or they may extend to the hip. The word itself is Algonkian, meaning a low, puckered and instep-patched, heelless shoe. It often had an additional flap that could be brought up to cover the ankle. There are two basic types of construction, soft-soled and hard-soled. Both the sole and the upper part of soft-soled moccasin are made of a single and continuous piece of buckskin, resulting in a shoe with a very flexible sole that goes very well with snowshoes. These moccasins were characteristic of the Indians of the vast Subarctic area of Canada and of the Indians of the Pla-

teau area, the Prairies, and the Eastern Woodlands. The hard-soled type of moccasin is made in two pieces; a buckskin upper part is sewn to a heavier and stiffer piece of hide which forms the sole. This kind of shoe was used by the Eskimo in the Arctic and by United States Indians of the Great Basin and the Southwest. The Eskimo of central Canada and the Indians of the Plains and Prairies used both types.

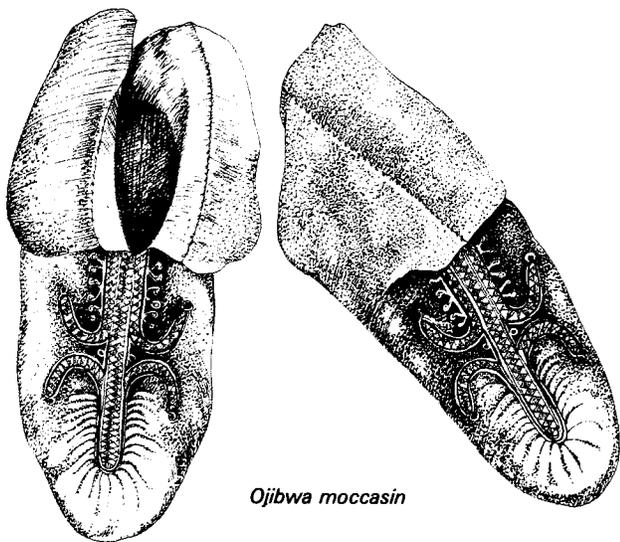
Because each tribe cut its moccasins in a different way, the Indians of the Plains and Prairies believed they could tell a man's tribe from his footprints. Patterns of decoration, carried out with porcupine quills or with moose hair embroidery, also varied from one tribe to another, and were useful in helping to identify tribal affiliations. The glass beads that are seen on many moccasins in museums were received in trade by the Indians after European settlers arrived in North America.

Moccasins have become very popular with North Americans, and many Indian groups make them especially for sale. One such group, Peigancrafts Ltd., on the Peigan Reserve in Alberta, was transformed from an arts and crafts project to a moccasin-making factory in the fall of 1975. Peigancrafts' moccasin slippers are made of shearling with rabbit fur trim and beadwork decoration. They are cut and sewn in the factory, which has a staff of eleven full-time employees, with 25 additional part-time workers; the vamps are hand-beaded by crafts people who work at home.

Another group, the Battleford Native Handicrafts Co-op Ltd., employs 13 Indians full-time, but much of the work is done by over 200 producers living on the 19 Indian reserves near North Battleford, Saskatchewan. The producers are particularly concerned with keeping Indian crafts as traditional as possible, and the people at the Co-op have been involved in researching old designs.



James Bay Cree moccasin



Ojibwa moccasin

Text: *Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man*

Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
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National Museum of Man

Published under the authority of: The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.

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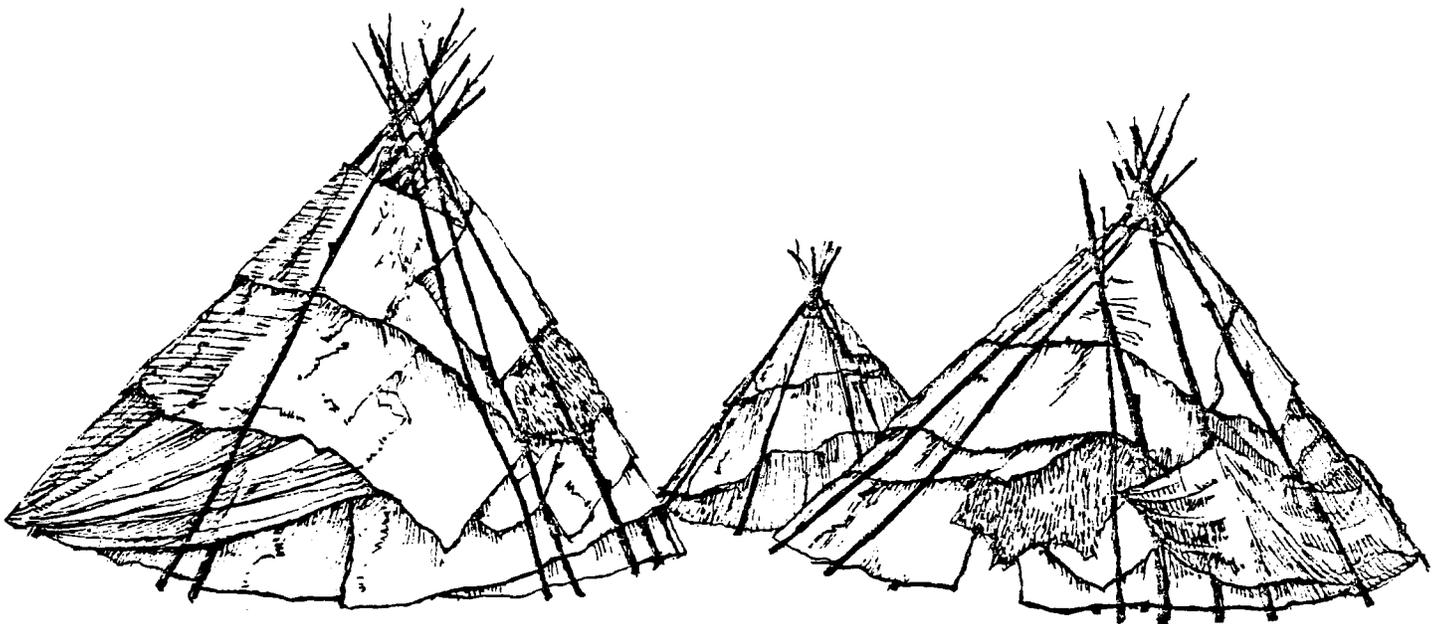
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Catalogue No. R34-2/24-1979  
ISBN 0-662-10277-0

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS-5107-024-EE-A1

Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français.

## THE WIGWAM



*Birch bark and skin wigwams*

The wigwam was the most characteristic house of the Algonkian Indians, who lived in the Great Lakes region of North America. It differed from the tipi, which resembled a cone and was tilted so that its open top provided ventilation without letting in the rain. There were also conical Algonkian wigwams.

A wigwam was built with long, straight poles; willow poles were considered especially suitable. Pairs of poles were set vertically in the ground and bent over to form a series of arches. Horizontal poles were then firmly tied to the arch poles in order to form a dome-shaped framework.

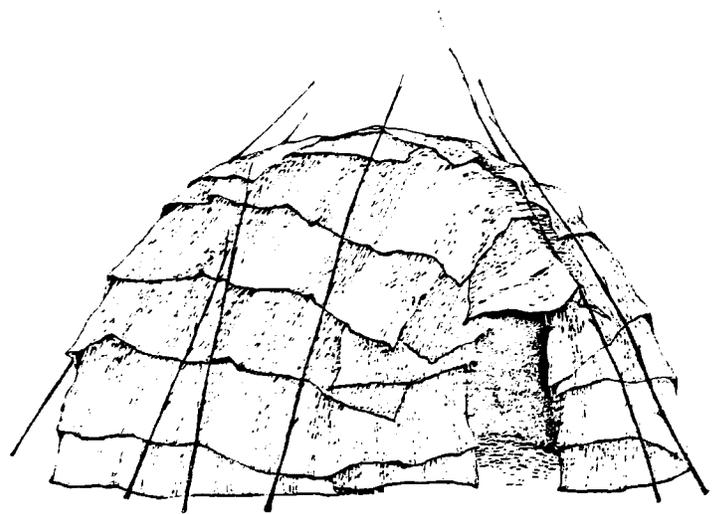
The framework was covered with either bark, woven or sewn rush mats, or with hides. Each of these coverings had its advantages and its disadvantages. Skin coverings were wind resistant, non-inflammable and easy to roll up for a move. When skins got wet, however, it took at

least twenty-four hours for them to dry. Bark was rain-proof, but became brittle when the weather was cold and had to be warmed before it could be rolled or unrolled. Skillfully woven rush mats shedded rain and provided protection against the cold. They were, however, heavier and bulkier to transport than rolls of bark.

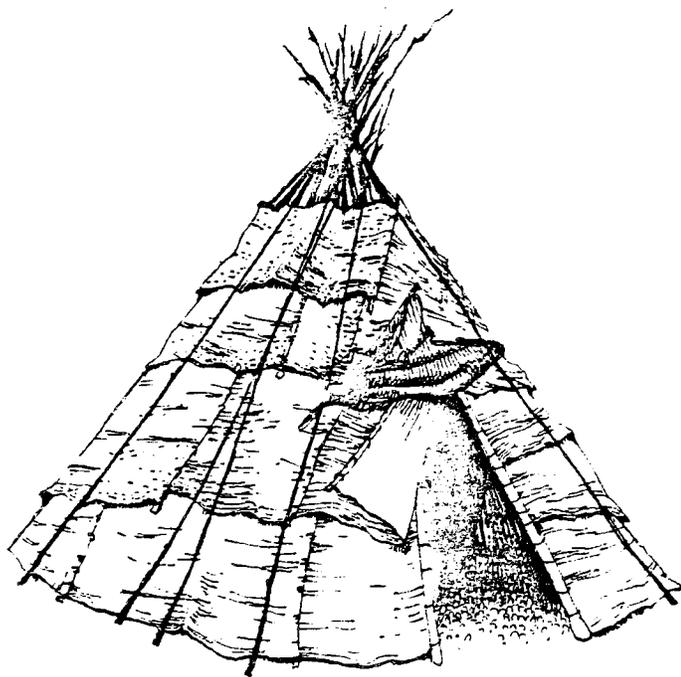
Wigwams varied in size and shape. Single families usually lived in a small, round wigwam; larger social groups, such as extended families (where, for example, a son and his family might be living with his father's family) built larger, elongated models. It was usual for a wigwam to be around 3.05 m to 3.60 m in diameter and 2.44 m or 3.05 m high. The floors were strewn with the needles from the fir tree to keep away the dampness; often a covering of soft animal skins, such as sealskins and deerskins, or rush mats was placed over the fir needles for the people to rest on.

The wigwam was a very suitable type of house for the Great Lakes Algonkian Indians. Because the economy of these Indians was based on hunting wild animals and gathering plants, they often had to move their camp sites. When moving camp, they stripped the wigwam coverings from the framework of poles and carried them from place to place. The pole framework was left standing, as trees for a new framework could be found at the next camp site.

In some parts of the northern Yukon, suitable poles were hard to find, so coverings and poles were carried from camp to camp. The covers of the northern dome-shaped houses were sometimes made of sphagnum moss, which has excellent insulating properties.



*Dome shaped wigwam*



*Birch bark wigwam*

Today the Indian people live in houses much the same as those of other Canadians; but wigwams were used until quite recently, and can still be seen standing in a few regions. A housing program, developed by Indian and Government representatives, which will enable Indian bands to plan, build and manage their own housing on reserves, was announced by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs in September, 1977.

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Jenness, Diamond. *Indians of Canada*, National Museum of Canada, Bulletin 65, Ottawa: 1955.

*Text: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man  
Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
Menon Ritchie  
National Museum of Man  
Published under the authority of: The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern  
Affairs Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of  
State, Ottawa, 1979.*

*Catalogue No. R34-2/30-1979  
ISBN 0-662-10283-5  
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS-5107-030-EE-A1  
Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français.*



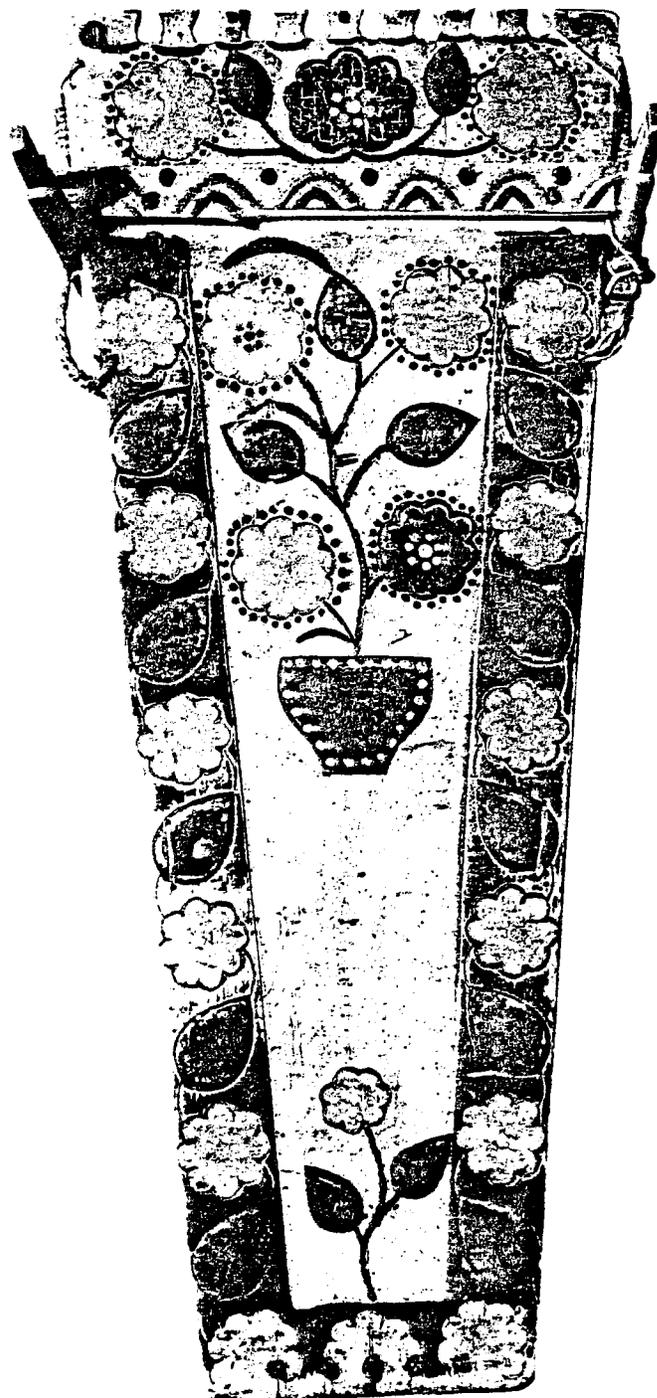
# CRADLE BOARDS

Most of the aboriginal peoples of North America used cradle boards to carry their babies until they were weaned and able to walk. The use of the cradle board ensured that the baby was always with his mother and could be fed whenever he was hungry. The resulting mother-child relationship was among the warmest to be found in any society. The baby was safe and snug as he travelled on his mother's back while she moved about from place to place. When she was working he was suspended from a tree or propped against a wall where she could keep a watchful eye on him.

Indian babies wore no clothing. They were wrapped in some soft covering, such as the inner bark of trees, fur, or smooth animal skin, and then strapped or laced onto the boards. Moss, or a similar absorbent material, was placed beneath the babies as a sort of diaper. Once a child had learned to crawl, the cradle board was used to protect him from the many hazards that were to be found in and around his home — such as open fires, streams or marshes, dogs, and the cold. When he was old enough to walk, and had learned to avoid dangerous situations, he was released from the cradle.

The cradles were either flat or slightly hollowed-out troughs made from various materials. The Salish of British Columbia used finely woven cedar basket cradles; some of the Subarctic tribes used sewn birch bark; and others, for example the people of the Eastern Woodlands, used single flat boards. The Plains people used stiffened rawhide.

The Coast Salish, Nootka and Kwakiutl Indians of the Northwest Coast attached a soft pad, usually of cedar bark, to their hollowed-out wooden cradles. The pad was used to bind the baby's head to the board. The resulting slow pressure eventually flattened the child's forehead. This head deformation, which was considered a mark of beauty, was reported by many of the early explorers of the area. The practice of binding the baby's head to the cradle board was also widespread in the Plateau. The resulting deformation was so severe in one Plateau tribe that the people were known as Flathead Indians.



*Iroquois cradleboard  
NMC 71645*



*Cradle for flattening child's head, Northwest Coast  
NMC 102574*



*Iroquois cradleboard  
NMC 36071*



*Copper Eskimo child in mother's parka  
NMC 38978*

The Eskimo counterpart to the Indian cradle board was the extra large hood on the mother's parka. The baby was carried in the hood, which was closed off at the bottom by a strap fastened around the mother's waist.

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*Text: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man*

*Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
Marion Ritchie  
National Museum of Man*

*Published under the authority of: The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.*

*Catalogue No. R34-2/22-1979*

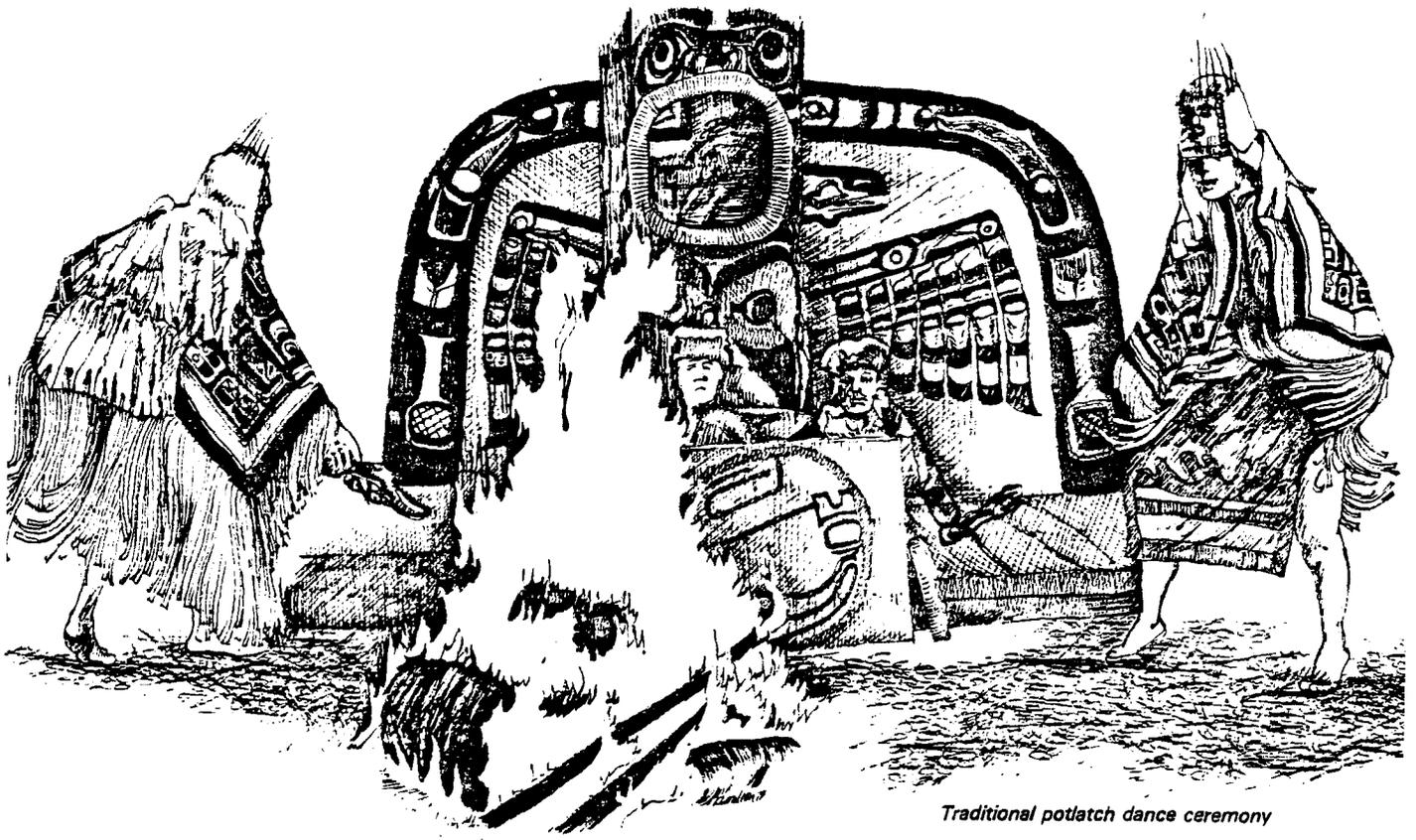
*ISBN 0-662-10275-4*

*Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS-5107-022-EE-A1*

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Food

## INDIAN AND ESKIMO USES OF FIRE



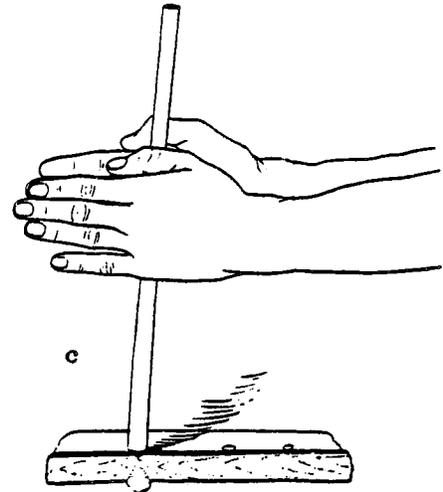
*Traditional potlatch dance ceremony*

Besides being a source of light in pre-historic times, fire was used to frighten wild animals, to provide heat, and for cooking meat. In more recent times, North American Indians used it for many other purposes, such as for baking bread, firing pottery and hollowing out logs for making canoes and large feast bowls.

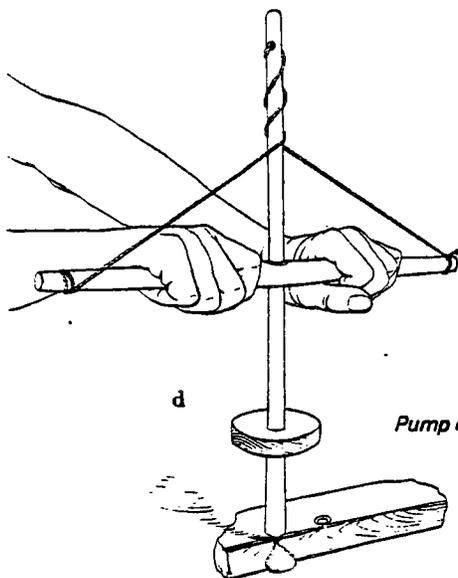
Because the Indians travelled about so much, one of their main difficulties was starting a new fire after each move. Most of the early techniques involved friction to

ignite prepared timber and start a fire; two pieces of wood were rubbed until enough heat was generated. In some Athapaskan tribes, and among most of the northern Algonkian, the bow drill was used. It consisted of a spindle of white ash or slippery elm, with a hearth of dry basswood. The string for the bow was made of the inner bark of moosewood or leatherwood tree. In only a few instances was the bow drill found south of the present-day border between the United States and Canada. The Iroquois on both sides of the border used

what is called the "pump drill" for ceremonial fires. It was usually made of well-seasoned slippery elm, and consisted of an upright shaft approximately 1.22 m long and 2.54 cm in diameter, with a small wheel set upon the lower part to give it momentum. A string attached to a bow about .91 m in length was set in a notch at the top of the shaft. The lower part rested on two pieces of punk wood; when ready, the string was coiled around the shaft by turning it with the hand. The bow was then pulled downwards, thus uncoiling the string and revolving the shaft towards the left. By the momentum given to the wheel the string was drawn up again. This alternate revolution was continued until sparks appeared. For ordinary occasions a drill consisting of a spindle which was twirled between the hands was used.



*Hand drill for making fire  
NMC J2437*



*Pump drill for making fire  
NMC J2437*

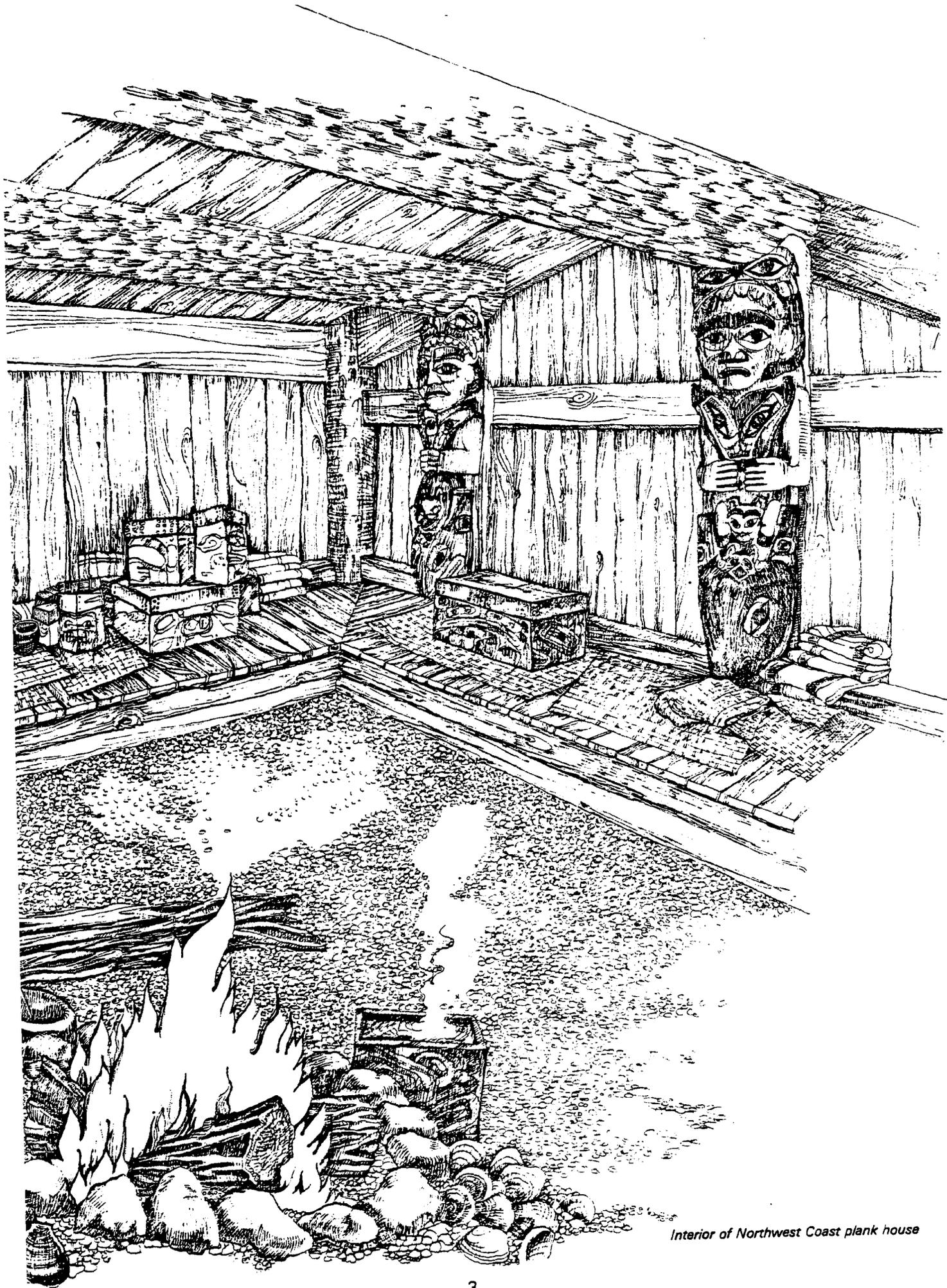
A few types of stone — pyrites and some flints — were used to start fire in pre-historic times. This strike-a-light technique is also called the percussion method in contrast to the friction methods that were generally in use in North America at the time of European contact. Other fire-making techniques used by the Indians included the fire plow, in which the end of a stick was rubbed vigorously back and forth in a groove. Also used was the fire saw; a dry spot in a fallen ironwood tree was selected, and a stick of the same wood cut and then rubbed back and forth across the tree by two people.

Fire was also used to fell trees for making dugout canoes and household utensils. One method was to tie saplings around the tree to form a small, scaffold-like structure. Sods were piled on, water was poured over, and a fire built below. By alternately hacking with stone axes and burning, the tree was finally cut through. Sometimes wet rags were used for dampening the trunk and localizing the action of the fire.

Fire was very important in food preparation. While most of the foods used by the Iroquois seem to have been boiled, such methods as baking on a flat stone, roasting or cooking in the red-hot embers and broiling on spits or sticks into the ground before the fire, were also common. Pits of suitable size were often dug in the side of a convenient bank or clay deposit. A fire was then built, the coals removed, and corn squash, roots and other foods baked by covering the pit with ashes. Archaeologists often come across the remains of such pits.

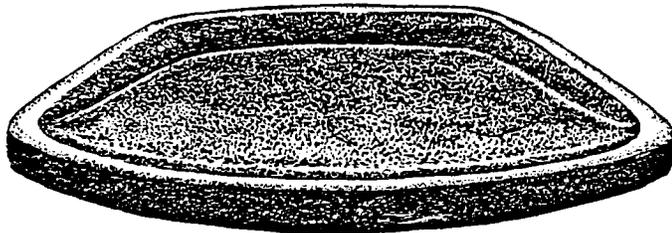
Two boiling techniques were used. One was direct-fire boiling, which involved placing a cooking vessel containing liquid near a fire. The other technique was stone boiling, in which heated stones were immersed in a liquid. Both methods were widespread in Canada, although direct-fire boiling was much more common in the Arctic, where stone vessels were the rule, and in the Prairies, where pottery cooking utensils were used. In the western Sub-arctic and the Northwest Coast (where inflammable vessels of wood, bark, basketry and hide were used) stone boiling dominated. In the other regions there were large areas where both types of cooking were known and used, but as pottery became more and more common, stone-boiling tended to be replaced by the direct fire method.

The softening effect of hot water on wood was also known. It was used to widen the beam of a new canoe (which was filled with water into which hot stones were placed). Spreaders were then driven in from gunwale to gunwale. The Kwakiutl were able to soften small pieces of wood by using a method that came close to the steam box of the modern boatwright. They also made molds in which steam-softened pieces of wood were put and left to set in the desired form.



*Interior of Northwest Coast plank house*

The Eskimo lighted their winter dwellings with stone lamps which burned oil from the blubber of sea mammals, or in the case of the inland Eskimo, from the fat of the caribou. The coastal Eskimo also used these lamps for cooking, fashioning their cooking pots from soapstone. In the summer months they cooked outdoors, using driftwood for their fires, or the fuels supplied by their treeless homeland — heather, dwarf willow, and the creeping dryas. They made fire in two ways; by striking lumps of pyrites together, or by friction with a thong drill. Although both fire-making techniques were widely used throughout North America, the blubber lamp was the Eskimos' own creation.



*Kudlik*



*Eskimo with bowdrill*

NMC 39674

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*Text: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man*

*Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
Marion Ritchie  
National Museum of Man*

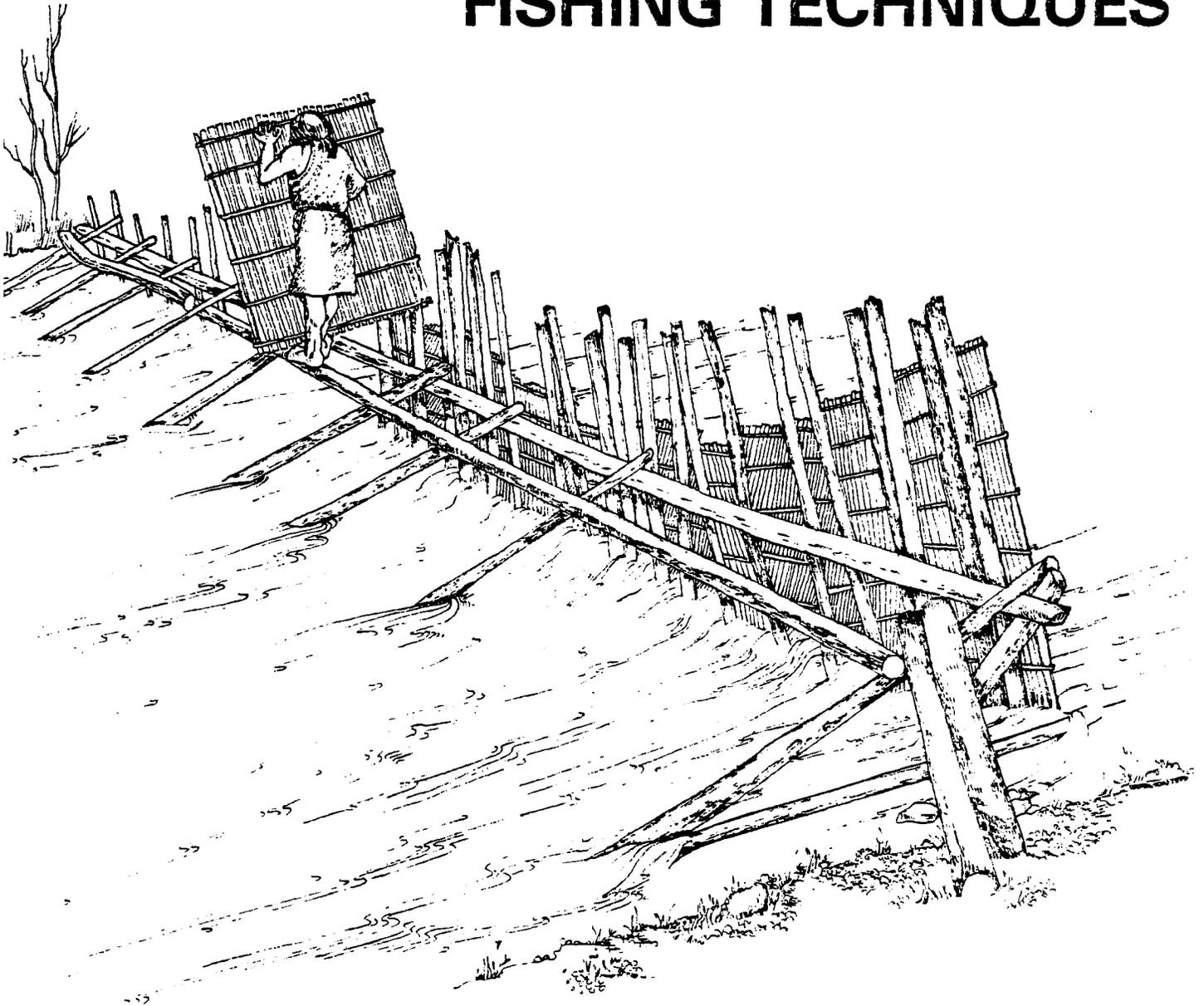
*Published under the authority of: The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs of Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.*

*Catalogue No. R34-2/32-1979  
ISBN 0-662-10285-1*

*Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS-5107-032-EE-A1*

*Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français.*

# INDIAN & ESKIMO FISHING TECHNIQUES

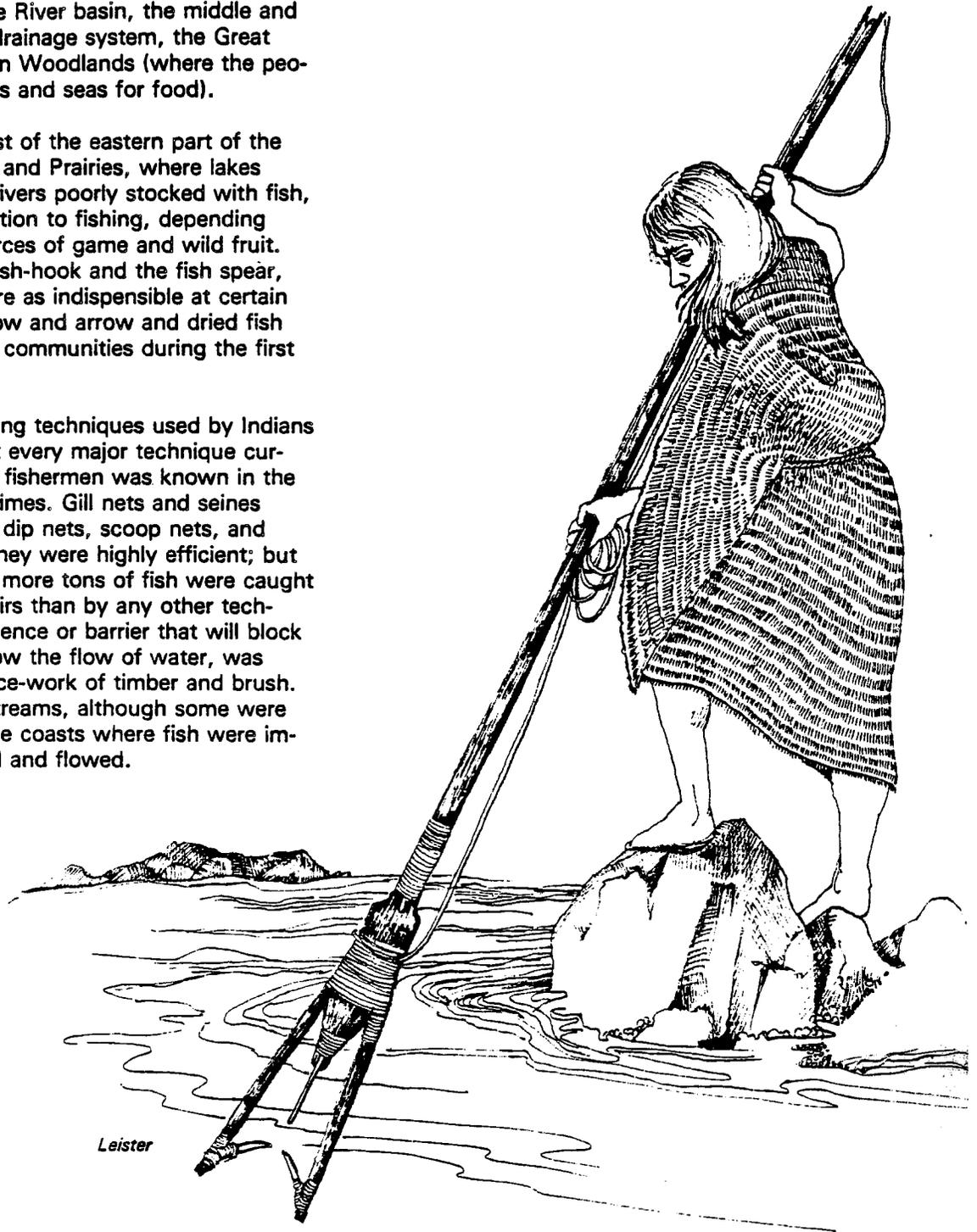


*Building a fish weir — Northwest Coast*

Fishing was practised by aboriginal Indians throughout North America. It played a dominant role in the cultures of the Northwest Coast, in the lower part of the Yukon River Valley, around several large inland lakes — such as Great Slave Lake, Great Bear Lake, and Lake Winnipeg — and in a few other lake or coastal areas. It was also important in the Mackenzie River basin, the middle and lower parts of the Yukon drainage system, the Great Lakes area, and the Eastern Woodlands (where the people also looked to the rivers and seas for food).

In the Great Basin, on most of the eastern part of the Plateau, and on the Plains and Prairies, where lakes were few and the muddy rivers poorly stocked with fish, the Indians paid little attention to fishing, depending more on the greater resources of game and wild fruit. Elsewhere in Canada the fish-hook and the fish spear, the net, trap and weir, were as indispensable at certain times of the year as the bow and arrow and dried fish was a staple food in these communities during the first two months of winter.

There were numerous fishing techniques used by Indians and Eskimo; in fact almost every major technique currently used by commercial fishermen was known in the America of pre-European times. Gill nets and seines were rare, but a variety of dip nets, scoop nets, and rakes were widely used. They were highly efficient; but it has been estimated that more tons of fish were caught every year in traps and weirs than by any other technique. A weir, which is a fence or barrier that will block the passage of fish yet allow the flow of water, was usually made out of a lattice-work of timber and brush. Most weirs were built in streams, although some were built on the tidelands of the coasts where fish were impounded as the tide ebbed and flowed.



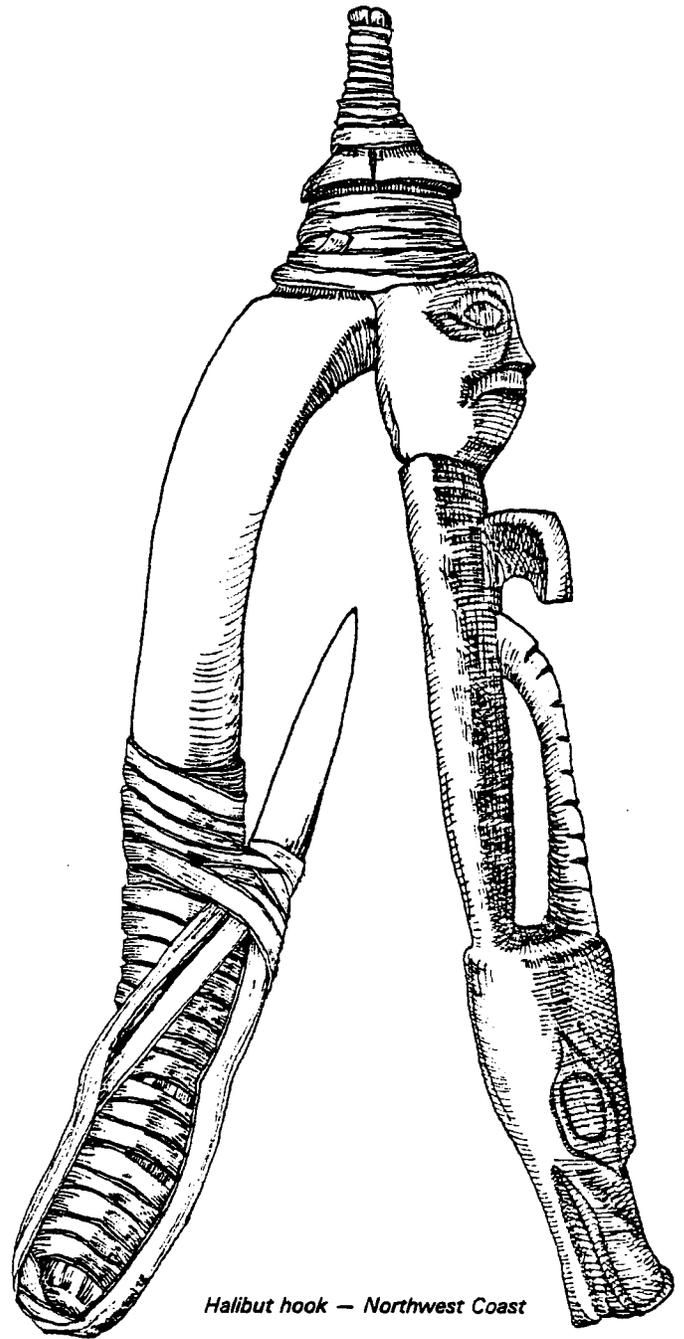
*Leister*

Nature herself probably suggested the idea of making artificial weirs, for there are many natural traps, like that at Hagwilget on the Bulkley River in northern British Columbia. Here, a few narrow openings in a rocky canyon let the migrating salmon through and it was in these openings that the Indians placed their basket traps; they also plied their nets and spears in the swirling waters below. The Kwakiutl and Salish Indians on the east coast of Vancouver Island built dams of stones in the shape of large horseshoes along the banks of tidal rivers to impound the salmon when the tide went out. The use of hooks was widespread especially for the larger species of fish, such as cod and halibut, salmon, the mighty sturgeon and some types of trout. Clams, mussels, and other molluscs added variety to their diet, and were so abundant they could easily be collected at almost any time of year.

Other varieties of fish also "ran" annually. Herring and smelt schooled in great numbers offshore to spawn along the beaches and eulachon (candlefish) ran in the lower courses of the larger rivers from the Fraser northward. The eulachon was prized for its oil and fat; a wick could be inserted after the fish had been dried, and it could be burned as a source of light. None of these species equalled the salmon in importance however, except that great mammal, the mighty whale which the Nootka Indians of Vancouver Island hunted bravely from dug-out canoes.

Most Indians on the west coast used single-piece fish-hooks. Fish spears were found in most areas. In the Arctic, Subarctic and Northwest Coast a special three-pronged spear, called a leister, was used. In some areas the Indians fished from canoes at night, using a torch to attract the fish. Fish were also snared, clubbed, poisoned, and shot with arrows; but these techniques were relatively restricted.

In the economy of the Northwest Coast the most important fish was undoubtedly the salmon. Five species were caught during their annual "runs" upstream, though in the north, where salmon did not migrate in such large numbers, the Haida and the Tlingit depended more on halibut. If a sudden flood destroyed the traps and weirs before the salmon arrived, the village would be faced with a shortage of food; but if the run was abundant, there would be a large surplus. Each man kept whatever fish he had caught at the weirs, but no family was allowed to go hungry, for the Indians realized that every man had his unlucky days, and that accident and sickness attacked the strongest and ablest hunter, making him dependent for a time on his fellow men. The *pot-latch* functioned in part as a way of distributing the salmon from a successful village to a village in which the "run" had failed.

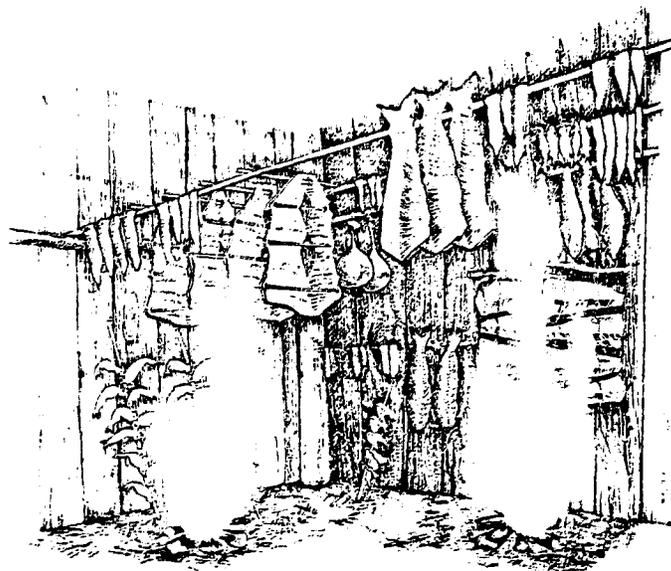


*Halibut hook — Northwest Coast*

Fishing represented a seasonal activity amongst most fishermen in North America, forming one part of an annual cycle which included hunting, gathering and/or agriculture. Fishing through the ice was important in the winter in some areas, whereas the use of nets and traps was usually practised in summer.

In most areas the fish were dried, primarily as a method of preserving them. But drying fish also makes them a better source of protein (a fresh fish usually contains 15 to 20 percent protein, whereas a dried fish usually contains 50 to 90 percent). Salmon was easy to preserve. The fish could be smoke-dried so that it would keep for a considerable time, despite the humid climate. It was this wealth of food that allowed a dense aboriginal population to nurture itself in a rugged terrain, resulting in the elaboration of Northwest Coast Indian culture to a point where it ranks among the highest native civilizations in the New World.

Today many Indians and Eskimo particularly in the Mackenzie Basin and along the Northwest Coast, have jobs in modern commercial fisheries. Their knowledge of the waters and the habits of the fish have helped them to achieve success in the fishing industry. Many have found the demands of their new jobs similar to those of their native way of life, but more profitable.



Interior of smokehouse — Northwest Coast

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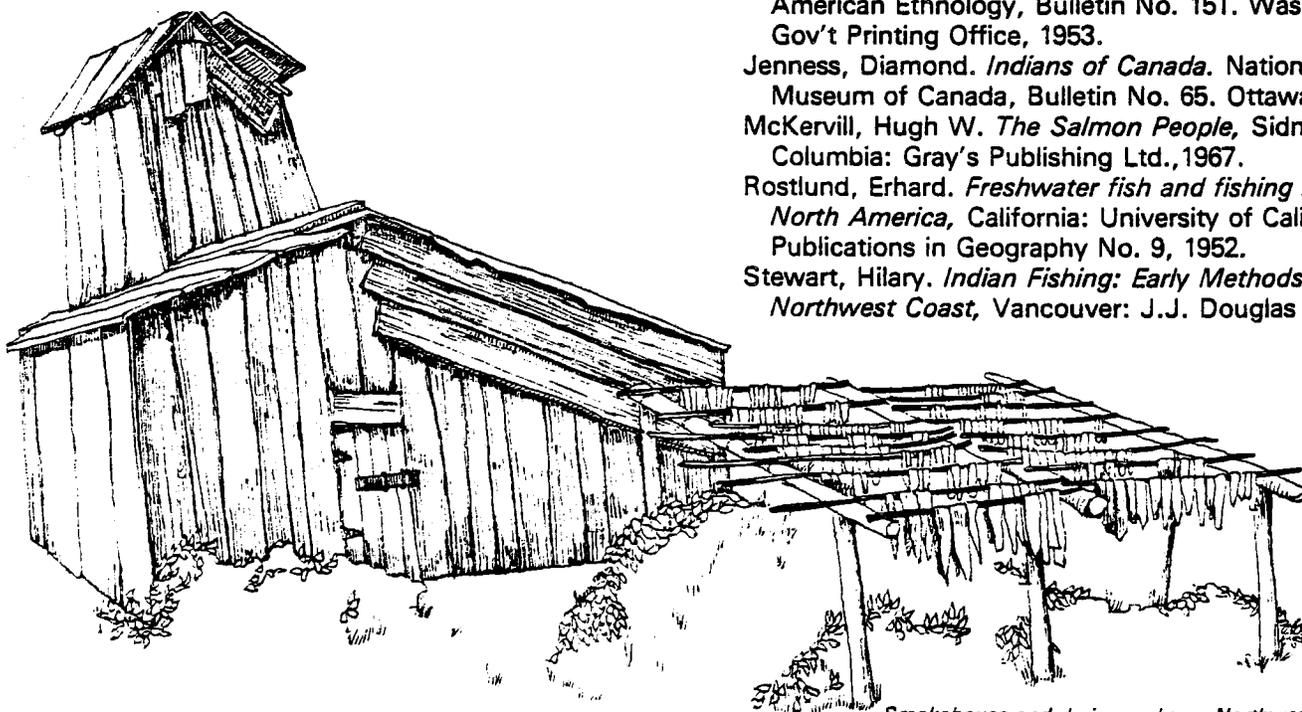
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Smokehouse and drying racks — Northwest Coast

Text: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man

Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
Marion Ritchie  
National Museum of Man

Published under the authority of: The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.

Catalogue No. R34-2/1-1979  
ISBN 0-662-1054-1

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS-5107-001-EE-A1

Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français.



# BUFFALO HUNTING

Before Europeans arrived in North America, the Prairies and Plains supported seemingly endless herds of bison, which are usually referred to as buffalo. The herds were huge, and millions of great shaggy buffalo grazed and roamed over the grasslands. In the Eastern Woodlands and in the boreal forests of the Subarctic however, there were several woodland species of buffalo which were so solitary in their habits that they had to be hunted individually.

On the Plains and Prairies the large herds were hunted during the months of June, July and August, when the meat was at its best. A number of communal techniques (used for other game animals as well) were required, often involving the entire village. All of the techniques called for the herding of the buffalo and the stampeding of the herd in a desired direction. On the Prairies the long grasses were set on fire on all sides of the herd except that side on which the waiting hunters lay in



*Buffalo hunting on horseback NMC 81456*

ambush. As the buffalo fled the flames, they were quickly shot with arrows. On the Plains, buffalo were often herded into an enclosure or stampeded over a cliff. These two techniques could be combined by building an enclosure, or corral, at the base of a slope and driving the buffalo downhill into the trap. The enclosure was made by putting up walls of sticks and brush to form a circle, leaving an opening on one side from which long, straight walls extended which gradually diverged from the enclosure. Men and women would line up as extensions of these walls, waving robes or blankets to hasten the buffalo along the path to the corral. If the cliff was high enough, the enclosure was not necessary as the buffalo were injured or killed by the drop. These techniques were used by the Cree, Assiniboine, Blackfoot, Gros Ventre, Crow and other tribes.

Driving buffalo required careful co-operation by all the participants, and the fate of the entire village usually depended upon the success of the hunt. Elaborate rituals, closely linked with religious rites, were performed in preparation for the event, and everyone was instructed to carry out his tasks in such a way that the buffalo would not detect the hunters until it was too late to escape. Members of special warrior societies policed the hunt, and anyone who broke the rules and thereby endangered the success of the drive was severely punished.

New techniques became important with the introduction of the horse, for these drives were even more effective when the hunters were mounted. On horseback they could surround the buffalo herd, make the animals mill about, and shoot them one by one with bows and arrows.

Individual techniques were also highly developed on the Plains and Prairies. A skillful hunter could stalk a buffalo and sneak within range of his bow to make a kill. Often such hunters disguised themselves with a wolfskin until close enough to shoot. The Arapaho and Assiniboine hunted buffalo during the winter months on snowshoes; they were able to run down the buffalo because the

animals floundered in the snow. Several men would often co-operate in that kind of chase.

The importance of the buffalo to the people of the Plains and Prairies cannot be overestimated. No part of the animal was wasted. The meat was roasted or boiled and eaten on the spot by the villagers and their dogs, or else it was carefully preserved to make it last through the winter. It kept its nutritive value for months and even years. The skins were tanned and made into clothing, blankets and lodge coverings and untanned skins were used in making saddles and bridles, thongs and other bindings. The animals' horns were fashioned into spoons and drinking cups, the bones into scrapers and other implements, and the brains and liver were used in the tanning process. Even the sinew was used for sewing, and the feet and hoofs boiled to make glue for attaching arrow heads to their shafts. Halters and ties were plaited from the long hair of the head and shoulders, and the tail was used as a fly swat. Buffalo dung was gathered and used as fuel for cooking fires.

The buffalo was the mainstay of the plains tribes; it can be said that it was the centre of their existence. It seems that nowhere else in North America was there such a complete reliance on a single species of animal. Even the Indians of the eastern margins of the Plains and Prairies considered the buffalo a major source of food to supplement their agricultural activities.

Buffalo hunting is known to have been a major activity for at least 10,000 years in the Plains, and the Indians had probably developed a suitable ecological balance between the size of the herds and their hunting.

With the introduction of the rifle however, the increased killing power of both Indians and white men (with their market for hides) exerted more pressure upon the herds, already imperiled by changes in the climate, than they could bear. Today there are only a few small herds left out of the millions of buffalo that roamed the plains up to the 1870s.



*Buffalo hunting on snowshoes*

NMC 71-5483

Catalogue No. R34-2/16-1979  
ISBN 0 662-10269-X

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS 5107 016 EE A1

Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français

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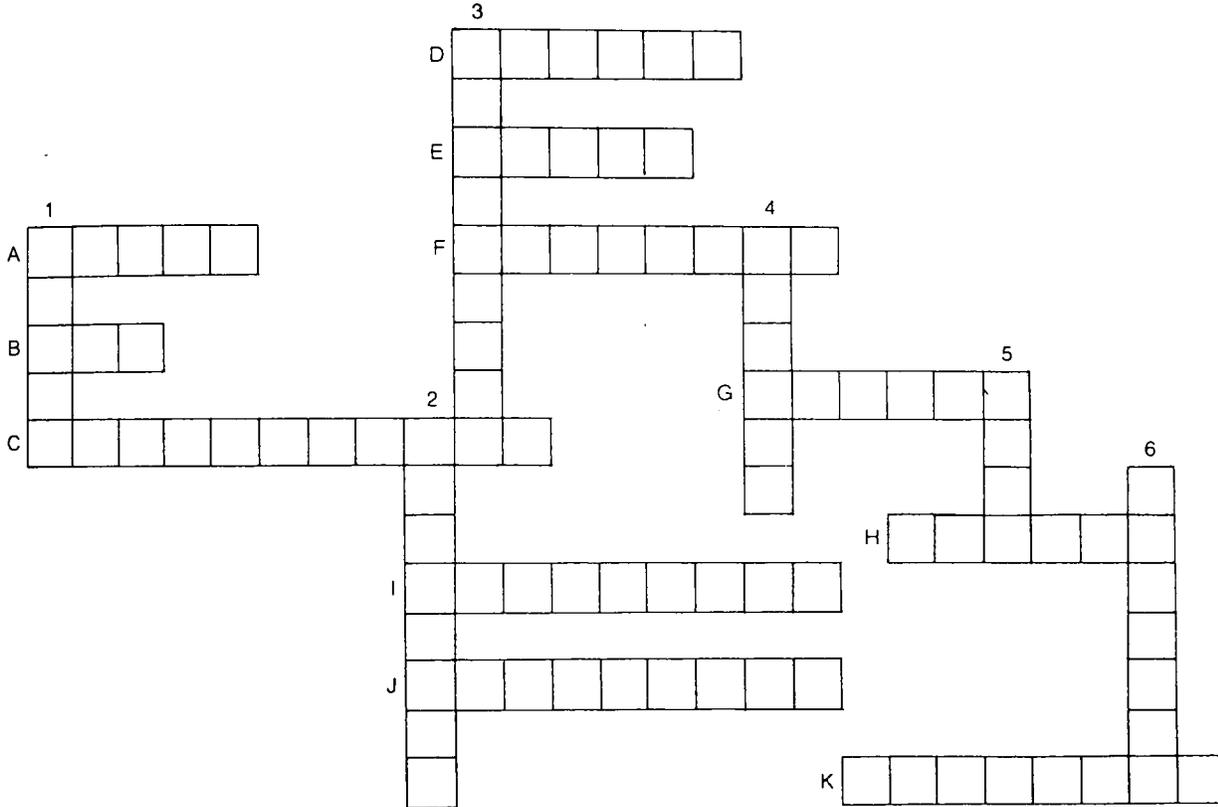
Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
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Published under the authority of The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.



# THE BUFFALO HUNTERS

## Crossword Puzzle



**Across**

- A. Animal hunted by the Plains Indians.
- B. Tool used for piercing holes in skin.
- C. Tool used to clean hides.
- D. Tribal gathering
- E. Strip headpiece.
- F. Ball and stick game.
- G. Charm used to bring luck in the hunt, war games and daily life.
- H. Arrow case.
- I. Footwear made of skin.
- J. Rod used in wargames.
- K. Piece of furniture made of sticks.

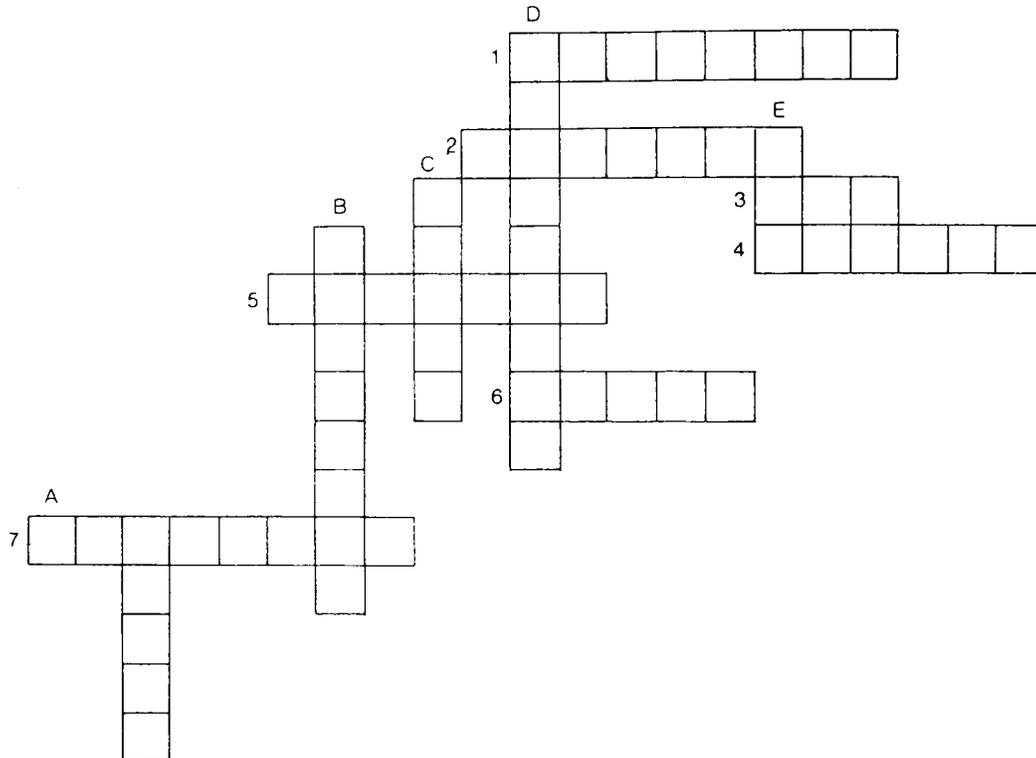
**Down**

- 1. Decorative objects obtained from fur traders.
- 2. Dried meat mixed with berries and fat.
- 3. Case used for storing food and clothing.
- 4. Knife case.
- 5. Dwelling of the Plains Indian.
- 6. Vehicle of transportation pulled by dog or horse.



## LES CHASSEURS DE BISON

### Mots croisés



#### De gauche à droite

1. Viande séchée, pilée mélangée à du gras ou des graisses et des baies.
2. Il servait à transporter le tipi, les objets de maison, les hommes ou femmes malades
3. C'est habituellement avec cette arme que l'Indien des Plaines chassait.
4. C'est l'animal qui transforma la façon de vivre des Indiens des Plaines.
5. Dans le tipi on s'en servait comme sorte de chaise.
6. Une des coiffures de l'Indien des Plaines qui n'est pas faite de plume.
7. Les femmes l'utilisaient pour nettoyer les peaux.

#### De haut en bas

- A. Une sorte d'aiguille faite d'os. On s'en servait pour percer les trous dans les peaux avant des les coudre.
- B. Le soulier des Indiens.
- C. C'est l'animal sur lequel reposait la vie de ces Indiens.
- D. C'est dans ce genre de sac que les Indiens des Plaines transportaient leur pemmican.
- E. Récipient pour peinture et teinture. Aussi, récipient de cérémonie pour les objets précieux.

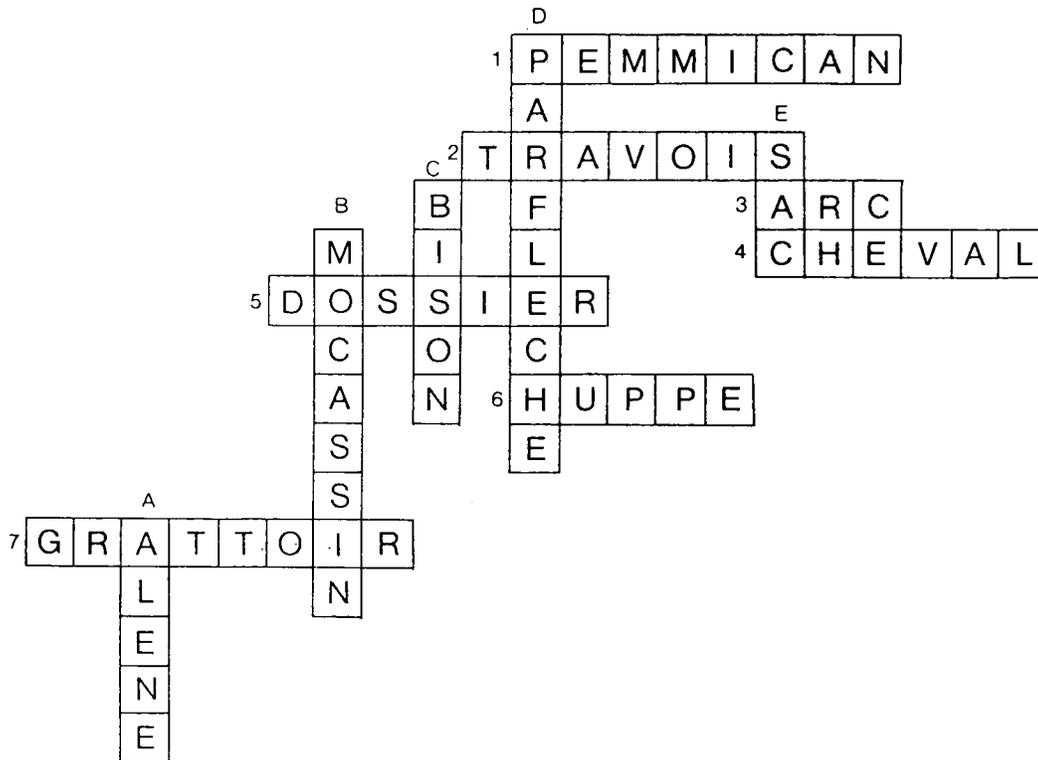




## LES CHASSEURS DE BISON

## Feuille de réponses

### Mots croisés



### Lectures suggérées

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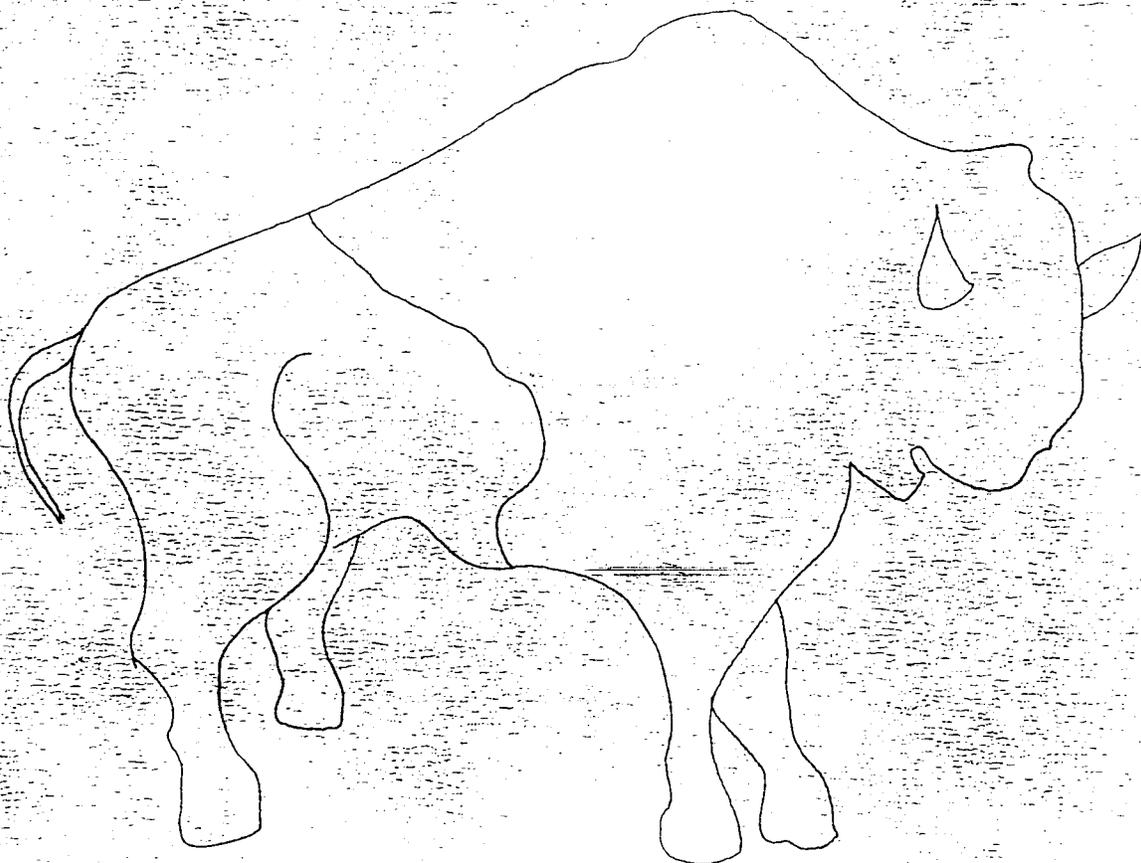
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## THE BUFFALO HUNTERS

### Answer Sheet

## LES CHASSEURS DE BISONS

### Feuille de réponses



### Some uses of the Buffalo.

**SHELTER** - tipi cover, bedding.

**CLOTHING** - robes, caps, moccasins, shirts, breech-cloths, leggings, sinew for thread.

**FOOD** - most parts eaten raw, boiled, or roasted, as jerky (sun dried); as pemmican (pounded with fat and berries.)

**TOOLS** - Hammer, horn ladles, bone needles and awls, skin parfleche.

Also for making weapons, drum covers, rattles etc.

### Quelques usages du bison

**ABRI** - couverture de tipi, literie.

**VÊTEMENTS** - capes, chapeaux, mocassins, chemises, bandes-culottes, mitasses; les tendons servaient de fil.

**NOURRITURE** - on mangeait la viande crue, bouillie ou rôtie; ou salée et séchée au soleil, ou pilée avec du gras et des baies pour en faire du pemmican.

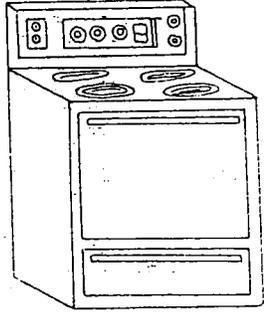
**OUTILS** - marteaux, louches en corne, aiguilles en os, alènes, parfleches en peau.

On fabriquait aussi des armes, des dessus de tambours, des crécelles et autres.

## THE BUFFALO HUNTERS

Draw the matching picture

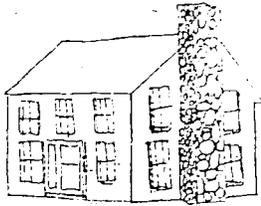
We cook on this: Nous utilisons ceci:



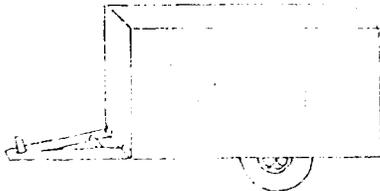
We wear these: Nous portons ceci:



We live in this: Nous habitons dans ceci:



We use this: Nous utilisons ceci:



## LES CHASSEURS DE BISONS

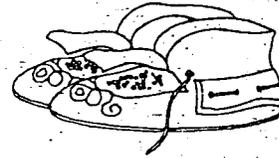
Dessinez l'image correspondante

The Indians cooked on: Les Indiens utilisaient:



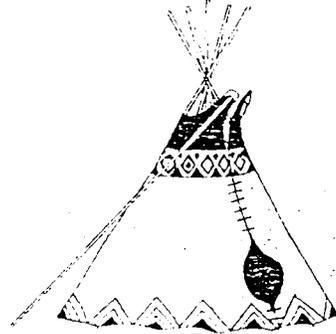
Name \_\_\_\_\_ *Cooking fire*    *Feu à cuisson*    Nom \_\_\_\_\_

The Indians wore: Les Indiens portaient:



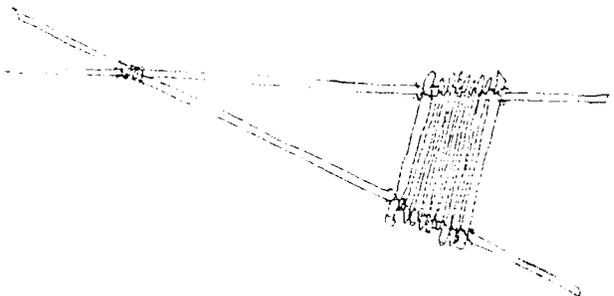
Name \_\_\_\_\_ *Moccasins*    *Mocassins*    Nom \_\_\_\_\_

The Indians lived in: Les Indiens habitaient dans:



Name \_\_\_\_\_ *Tipi*    Nom \_\_\_\_\_

The Indians used: Les Indiens utilisaient:

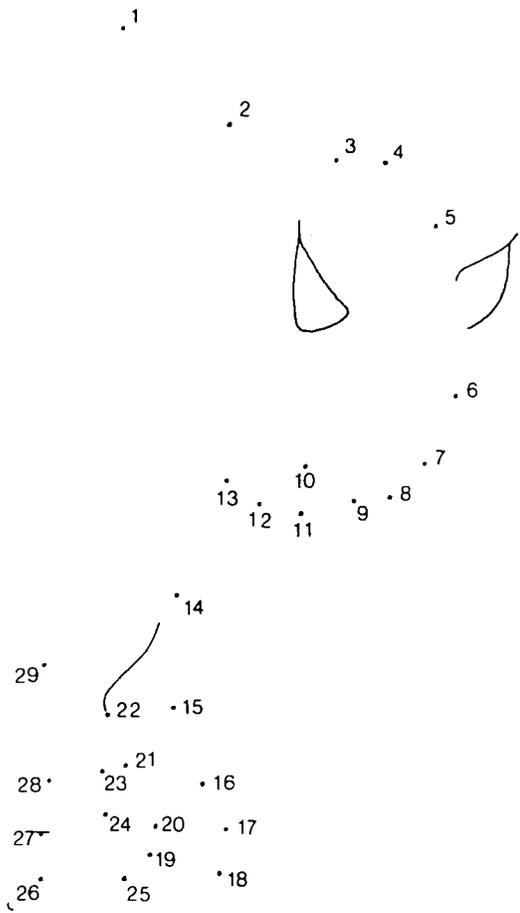
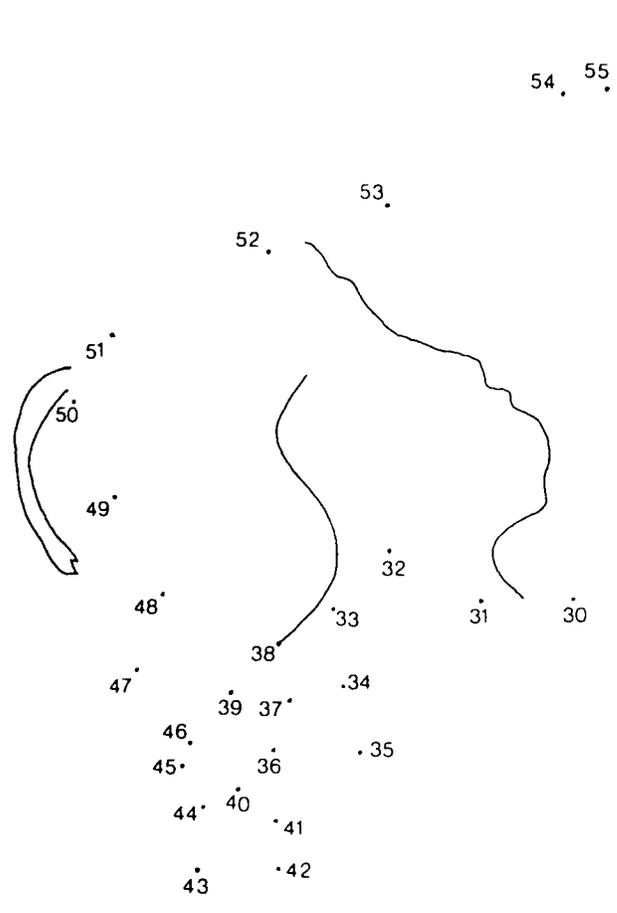


Name \_\_\_\_\_ *Travois*    Nom \_\_\_\_\_

National Museum of Man Musée national de l'Homme  
National Museums of Canada Musées nationaux du Canada

THE BUFFALO HUNTERS  
Follow the dots

LES CHASSEURS DE BISONS  
Reliez les chiffres



Make a list of the ways this animal was used by the Plains Indians.

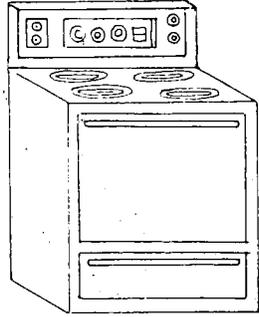
Comment cet animal était-il utilisé par les indiens des plaines.

Handwriting lines for the student's response.

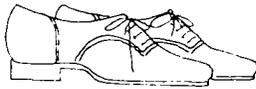
## THE BUFFALO HUNTERS

Draw the matching picture

We cook on this: Nous utilisons ceci:



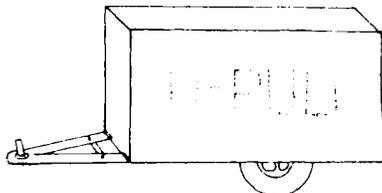
We wear these: Nous portons ceci:



We live in this: Nous habitons dans ceci:



We use this: Nous utilisons ceci:



## LES CHASSEURS DE BISONS

Dessinez l'image correspondante

The Indians cooked on: Les Indiens utilisaient:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Nom \_\_\_\_\_

The Indians wore: Les Indiens portaient:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Nom \_\_\_\_\_

The Indians lived in: Les Indiens habitaient dans:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Nom \_\_\_\_\_

The Indians used: Les Indiens utilisaient:

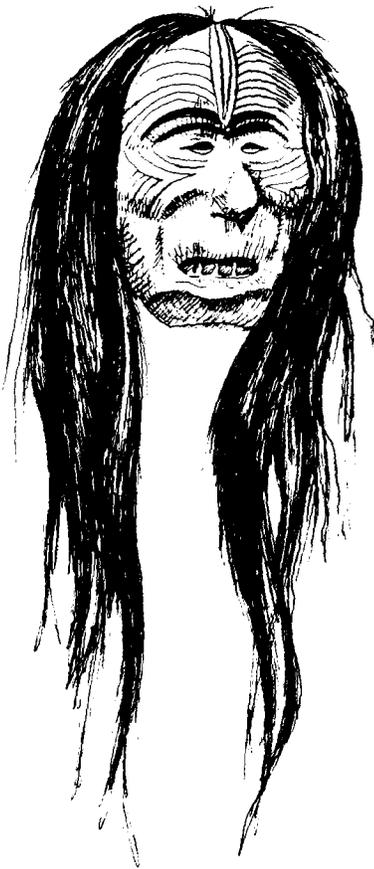
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Nom \_\_\_\_\_

## Legends



# FALSE FACE CURING SOCIETY





The Iroquois of the eastern Great Lakes area made a wide variety of masks. The most famous are the corn husk masks of the Husk Face Society and the carved wooden masks of the False Face Society. The grimacing False Faces, which were used by the Iroquois in the curing rites of the False Face Society, are especially notable. The masks are wooden portraits of several types of mythical beings or apparitions that appeared in dreams, who, the Iroquois say, lived only a little while ago in the far rocky regions at the rim of the earth or wandered about in the forests.

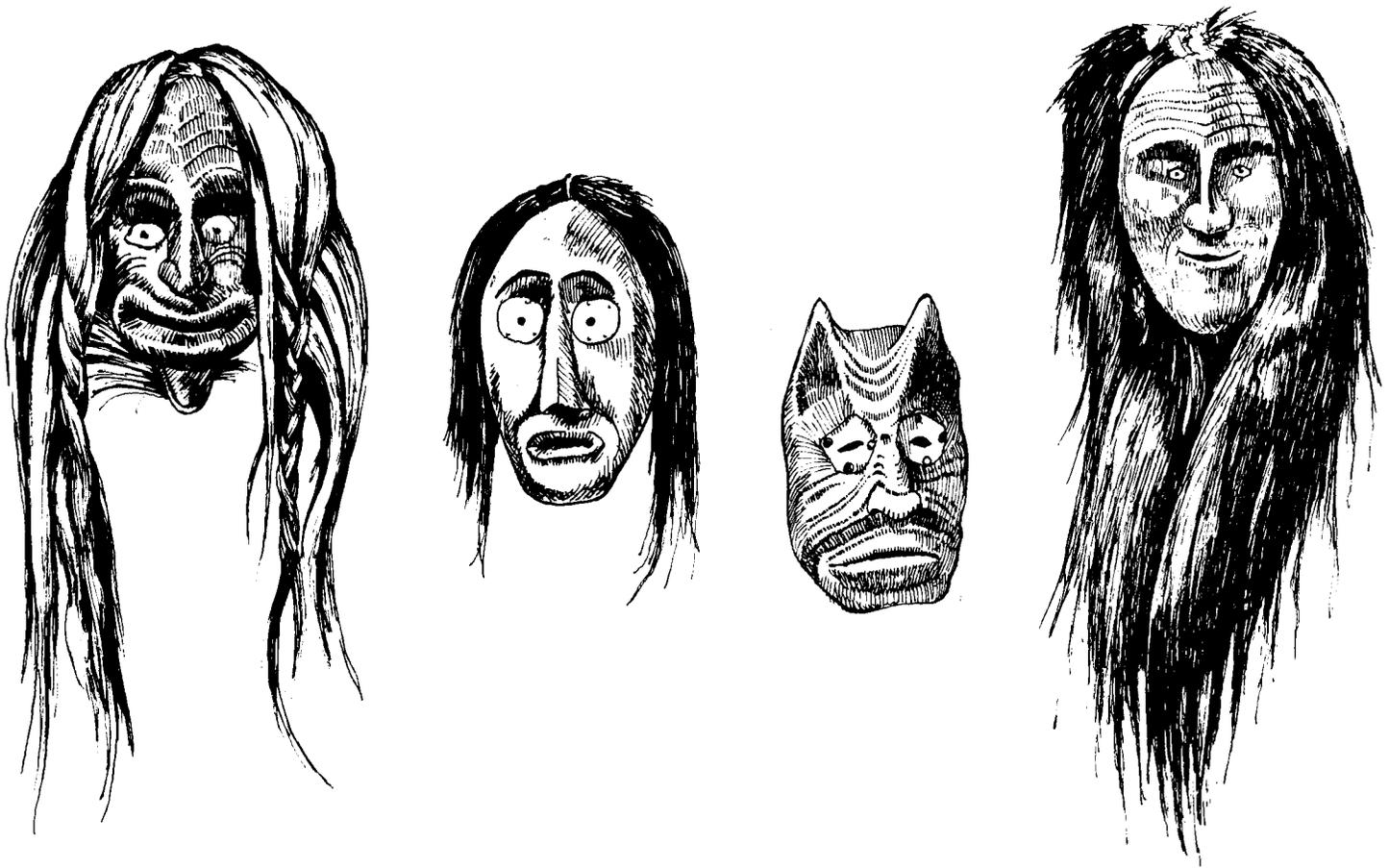
Most of these masks, which are "fed" with tobacco to keep their spirit alive, are painted red or black. They have deep-set eyes which are set off by gleaming metal eye-plates and large, bent noses. The arched brows are deeply wrinkled and sometimes divided above the nose by a lengthwise crease. The mouth is the most variable feature, and runs through a whole range of expressions depending on mood, function, and locality. Sometimes it is pursed as if for whistling; sometimes it is puckered with conventionalized tongue and spoon-like lips, which may be funnel-shaped to imitate blowing ashes in curing rites. Or the mouth may reveal the teeth or have a protruding tongue. Other masks have large, straight, distended lips which may be twisted up at one corner with

an accompanying bent nose, or both corners may turn down in a distorted arrangement producing a frightening effect. A series of wrinkles usually heightens the distorted look and cheek bones are sometimes suggested. A prominent chin, common to some masks, is used as a handle for adjustment by the wearer.

The faces are framed by long hair usually cut from black or white horses' tails, which fall on either side from a central part. Before the Europeans introduced horses, corn husk braids, or tresses of buffalo mane served as hair.

The significance of the masks to the Iroquois lies not in their artistic value, but in their power. The beings they represent instruct people to carve likenesses of themselves. They say that supernatural power to cure disease will be conferred on the human beings who make the masks when they feed the masks, invoke the beings' help while burning tobacco and sing a curing song.

The False Face Society is just one of the many curing societies found among the Iroquois. And though it was not necessarily the most important, it is the best understood of all the societies because of intensive research. Members of the society put on the false faces to visit



the lodge of a sick man who has declared himself in need of a cure. With their masks on, and shaking rattles made of turtle shells, the members who are to effect the cure, creep towards the sick man's home speaking a nasal "language". They scrape their rattles against the door, and enter the house, continuing to shake the rattles. Then ashes and tobacco are used in a ritual meant to drive away the cause of the patient's illness. Anyone who is cured becomes a member of the society, or a man or a woman may join if he or she has a dream signifying that it is necessary to become a member. Most curing ceremonies were traditionally held in private in order to achieve the best effect but public ceremonies were held at the Midwinter festival for people who had been cured before. This was considered essential in order to prevent disease from reappearing. Ashes were sprinkled over the people to drive away the demons of disease.

The importance of the false face masks can be understood by describing how they are made. To reinforce the life in the masks, the faces are carved from a living basswood tree but maple, pine, or poplar may also be used. The mask is cut free from the tree only when nearly finished. During the carving, prayers are said to the spiritual forces which are supposed to be repre-

sented by the mask and tobacco is burned before the mask in order to please its spirit. The particular form of the spirit is revealed to the carver through prayers and the burning of tobacco. If the mask is begun in the morning, it is painted red; if its is begun in the afternoon, it is painted black. This is in accordance with the belief that the first False-Face made a daily journey following the path of the Sun; thus his face would appear red in the morning as he came from the east and black in the afternoon as he looked back from the west. Red masks are thought to have more power. There is also a divided mask, painted half red and half black, for a being whose body is torn in two. To the Indian, he stands at the middle of the sky looking south, his red cheek to the east (which suggests life) and recalls the divided body of a patient who may be paralyzed.

The False Face Curing Society was an integral part of the Iroquois belief system. The society always tried to cure as many patients as it could so that they would become new members, for this form of group participation was said to increase its effectiveness as more people became involved in the curing ceremonies. Carvings of False Face masks are made for sale to collectors and museums today, although these are not considered to have spiritual forces.



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*Text: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man*

*Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
Marion Ritchie  
National Museum of Man*

*Published under the authority of: The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.*

*Catalogue No. R34-2/29-1979  
ISBN 0-662-10282-7  
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS 5107-029-EE-A1*

*Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français.*

Northwest Coast Indians:

MASKS



*One-horned mountain goat dancer from 'Ksan*



National Museums  
of Canada  
National Museum  
of Man

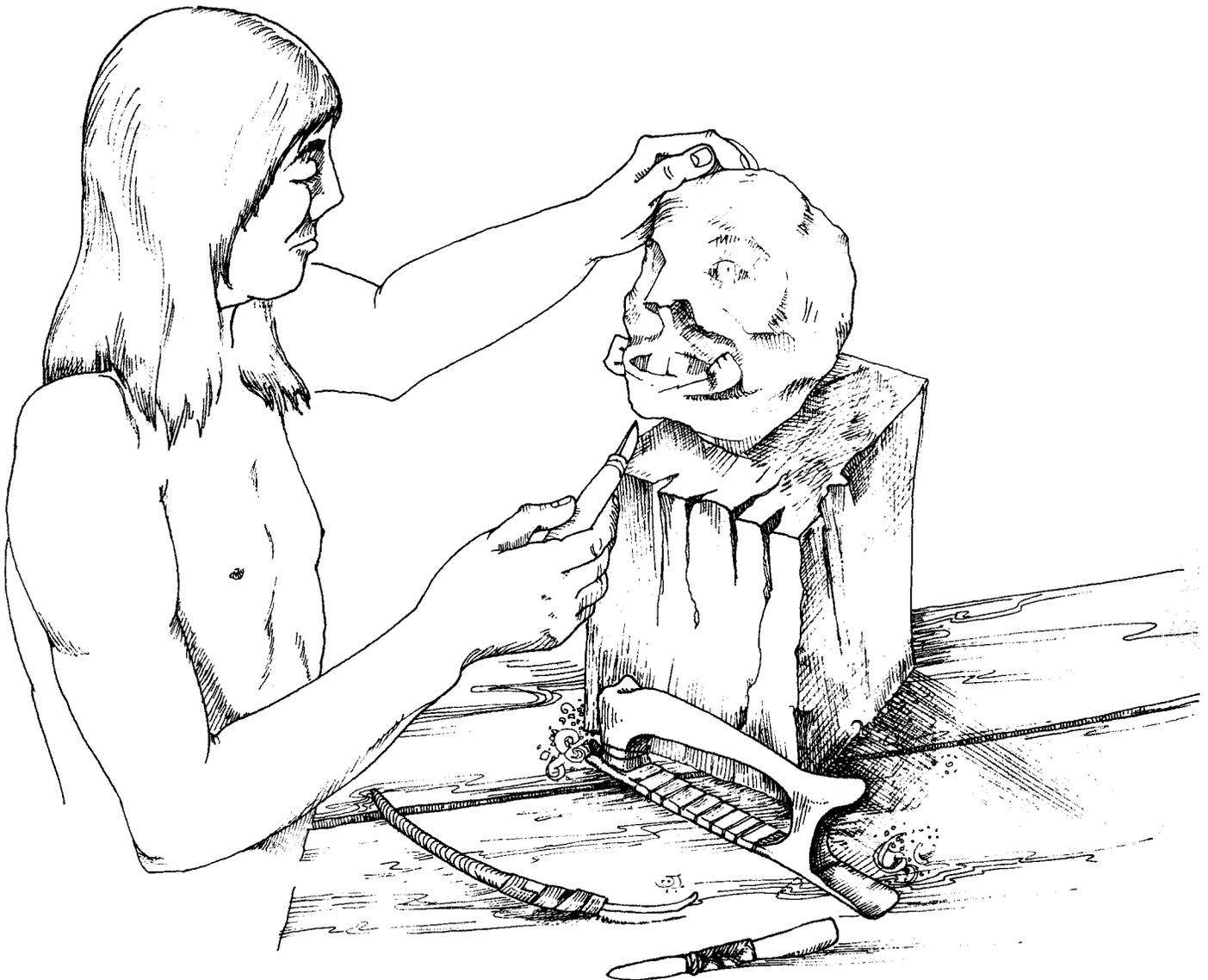
Musées nationaux  
du Canada  
Musée national  
de l'Homme

Canada

From the artistic standpoint masks offer the greatest sculptural variety of Northwest Coast art. The masks, whether depicting human or animal figures, give a glimpse of the supernatural world which was mirrored by the Indian people when they wore them at their ceremonies. The sea, rivers, and forests were inhabited by spirits that took various forms. A face was provided for every object in the material world, whether animate or inanimate; elements such as the sun, moon and wind were portrayed with human faces. The painting on the masks and their themes, ranging from detailed realism to supernatural monsters, are executed in a style that has been compared favourably with the great art of Ancient Egypt and China.

These are three main categories of masks. The clan masks were representations of the clan or crest animals and were worn at feasts and potlatches. The Secret Society masks were worn only at the time of the winter initiation dances. Shaman masks belonged to the men and women who functioned as the media of communication between the people and the spirit world. Each shaman carved his own set of masks: the meanings were known only to him and they were buried with him.

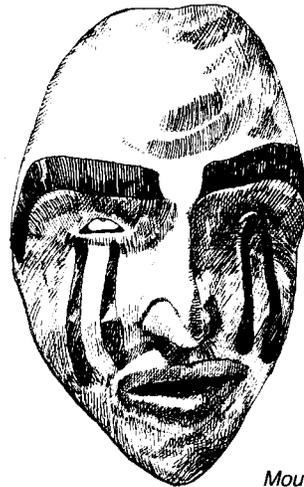
Mask making was an important activity by the time the Europeans arrived in the late 1700s. It was a recognized specialty and the artists worked with tools fitted with blades of stone or shell. Beaver teeth were used for the fine



*Man carving beaver mask*



*Beaver mask*



*Mourning mask*



*Swaixwe mask*

carving and dogfish skin for the final sanding. The woods used were red or yellow cedar, spruce, hemlock, maple and alder wood. Most masks were worn over the face, but some were made to be worn on the forehead. Once metal tools were introduced by the fur traders, the carvers were able to work at greater speed and produce more pieces, though the style remained basically unaltered. There are two known examples of stone masks, collected in the last century from two different villages. There is no documentation as to how they were worn or for what occasion but they still invoke a sense of power even to the uninitiated. The “blind” mask (eyes shut) in the National Museum of Man, Ottawa, fits over the “sighted” mask, which is in the Musée de l’Homme, Paris. Often the exact significance of the mask was lost or was known only to the owner.

In the post-contact period, commercial paints replaced the old natural dyes and pigments, but the traditional colour selection remained the same. The old colours were red ochre (red), charcoal (black), clam shells (white), and copper oxide (blue-green). These materials were ground up and mixed with an oily base of salmon roe or other fish eggs squeezed through a cedar bark sack.

Designs similar to the motifs that people painted on their faces were applied to masks in the northern part of the

coast. In the southern area, particularly among the Kwakiutl, the painted areas emphasized and complemented the sculpted forms. The carvings were decorated with fur, human hair, inlaid abalone shell and other shells, sea-lion whiskers, feathers and copper. Other items were used for special effects: for example black or white china door knobs were used for eyes that appeared and disappeared behind moving eyelids. Movable parts on the masks were common and reached their ultimate form in the transformation mask; painted canvas and leather thongs, cleverly integrated into the mask, allowed the wearer to startle the audience when the outer mask would split apart to reveal another, different inner face. Simple ties held most light masks in place, while the larger, heavy ones required a head cap, shoulder supports or a stick strapped to the waist.

Among the most important of the traditional ceremonies were the winter dances performed in the great communal plank houses where the whole village participated as either dancers or spectators. The masked dancers brought to life the native mythology which varied among the different coastal tribes. The dramas were skillfully presented with humorous interludes when fool masks appeared and reduced the tension of the performances.

Fine realistic portrait masks were the specialty of the Haida, Tlingit and Tsimshian in the northern area. On



Human face mask

Vancouver Island the Nootka have been associated with the wolf mask since Captain Cook collected the first ones in 1778. Their Kwakiutl neighbours specialized in fantastic bird monsters and supernatural beings associated with a cannibal spirit. A mask that was unique to the Salish in the south but which spread to other areas was the Swaixwe, a mythical sky bird who came down to earth and lived in the lakes up the Fraser River. It was worn by men called healers who danced in the stalk-eyed masks at curing, birth, naming and marriage ceremonies.

People of high status had special privileges, one of which was the exclusive right to wear certain family masks and to perform the dances associated with them. During the funeral rites for an important chief, dancers wore masks that had been owned by the dead man and members of the family wore mourning masks.

To-day there are many native craftsmen creating masks in the Northwest Coast style. Many of these are comparable in design and execution to the museum pieces collected in the last century. The Gitksan carvers of the

'Ksan Carving School at Hazelton on the Skeena River are still carving masks of the One Horned Mountain Goat of Temlaham, featured in their origin myth of long ago.

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Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
Marion Ritchie  
National Museum of Man

Published under the authority of: The Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and  
the Minister of Communications, Ottawa, 1985.

Catalogue No. R34-2/12-1985 revised  
ISBN 0-662-10265-7  
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS-5107-012-EE-A2

Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français.

## INDIAN RATTLES

What was the first toy you ever played with? It was probably a rattle.

All over the world rattles have existed in one form or another for thousands of years. They were very important to the Canadian Indian.

Medicine men shook special rattles in ceremonies and healing rituals. Rattles were used as musical instruments during tribal dances and ceremonies and as an accompaniment to singers, much as they are used in music with a Latin beat.

Indian rattles were made from whatever material was available: buffalo horns, wood, turtle shells, gourds, rawhide and elm and birch bark. But the basic principle was the same--noise was created by shaking or banging a hollow container with pebbles or seeds inside.

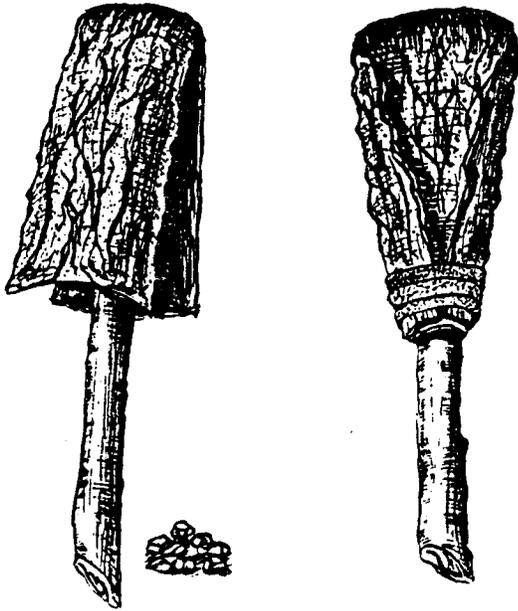



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The most beautiful and elaborate Indian rattles were carved out of cedar by the West Coast Indians. They would carve a solid block of cedar, much in the same manner that they made totem poles. Then it was split carefully in half and hollowed out. The handle was part of the carving and was also split. Small holes were made along the joining edges through which a thin strip of hide was passed, and the two halves were tied together. The rattle was often decorated with figures. The carved details were often painted with colours made from earth pigments and copper. The carvings represented figures from dreams, legends and tribal mythology. Such rattles were sacred objects which were handled with great respect.

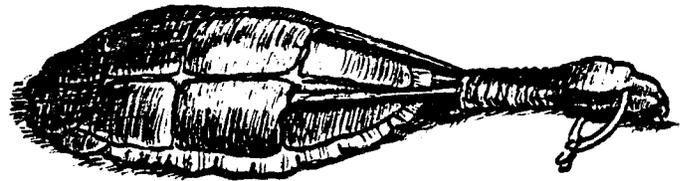
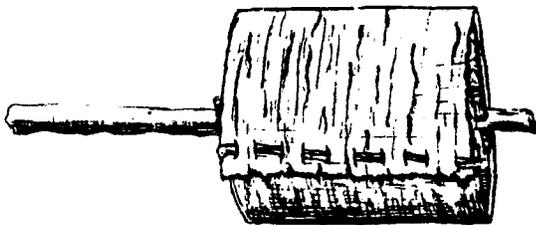
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One of the simplest rattles was made by the  
quois. A branch formed the rattle handle and the  
rattle itself. A foot long strip of elm bark  
is softened in the centre and then folded, bringing the  
edges together. This made a pebble container into which  
stick handle was inserted. The rattle was held to-  
gether with a wrapping of wet sinew or rawhide.

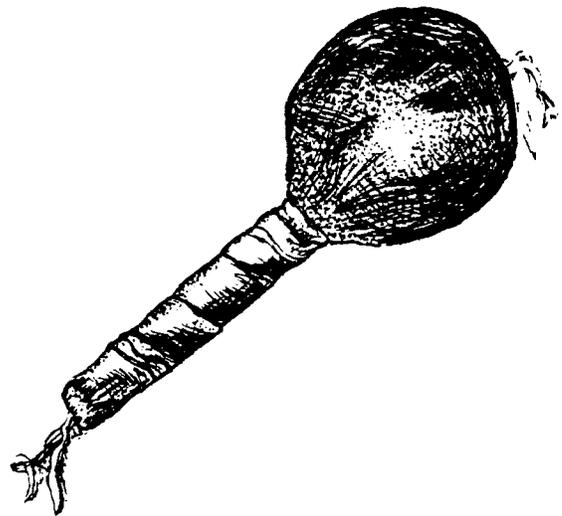


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The Ojibwa and other woodland tribes often made  
rattles from birch bark. A strip of birch bark was soaked  
in water and bent into a cylinder. Then it was stitched  
together with strands of spruce root. Two circular  
pieces of wood, held in place with small wooden pegs,  
closed the open ends of the cylinder. A stick handle  
was pushed through a small hole in each end and  
secured in place by wooden pegs.



The Iroquois *False Face Society* used a turtle shell  
rattle in its rituals. Once the dead turtle had decayed  
and dried out, it was scooped out. Pebbles were  
dropped into the cavities under the leg skins and the  
skins were sewed back together again. Two slits were  
made in the top of the shell and one in the bottom part.  
A sliver of wood was laid into each slit. The slivers  
extended along the neck, two on the upperside and one  
on the underside. The slivers and neck were wrapped  
together in buckskin, forming a handle. A buckskin  
thong was sometimes passed through the eye sockets  
and knotted to form a loop, so that the rattle could be  
hung up.



Plains Indians often made rattles from buffalo  
hide. The rattle was made by filling a wet rawhide bag  
with wet sand and moulding it to the desired shape.  
Then it was set aside. After it was dry, the sand was  
poured out and the hardened rawhide would keep its  
new shape. A few pebbles were put inside. The neck  
was then closed and plugged tight.

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# THE INDIAN CALENDAR

Before Europeans arrived in North America, the Indians and the Eskimo recognized the phases of the moon for counting months. They had not however developed systems of counting and writing suitable to the development of a calendar such as that in use today. The first tribal calendars were often notched sticks on which the long, dark days of winter were counted.

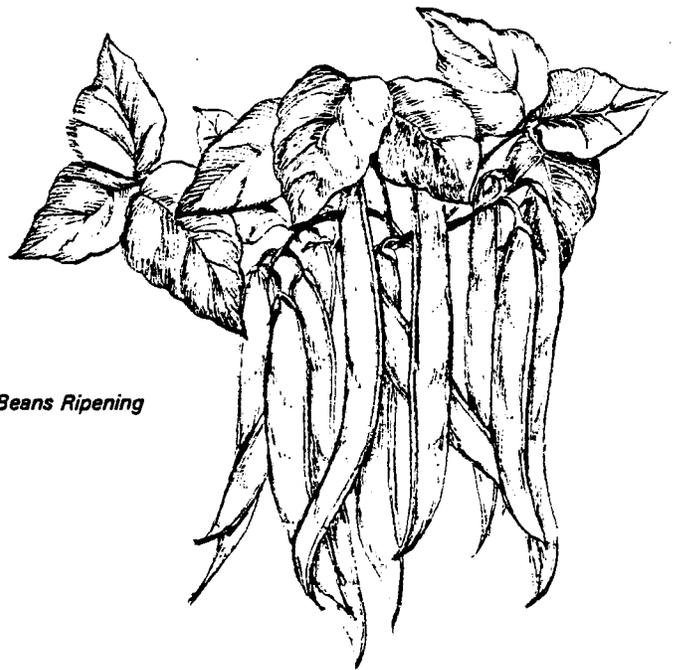
Most tribes divided the year into lunar months, which were named for significant economic or religious events.

The Haida of the Northwest Coast of what is now British Columbia divided the year into twelve lunar months, which were adjusted periodically, because the lunar year is shorter than the solar year. The position of the sun's rays was noted each morning at dawn; it was traced in charcoal on the floor of the house so that in the course of a year, a line was formed. According to the Nootka people, a moon began with the appearance of the first quarter, not with the dark of the moon, as in our system.

Simple calendars consisted of lunar months which were named; these names were passed on orally to each new generation. The moon count was of a descriptive nature, with the name of each month referring to natural phenomena, such as fish runs, flights of waterfowl and the like.

Hunting and gathering societies lived in different camps at different times of the year in order to take advantage of as many economic resources as possible. The combined movements of such a society are called the annual cycle. It was in connection with such annual cycles that lunar months were often named. Even among peoples lacking a concept of counting by the moon, however, yearly changes in the seasons were observed, and usually quite closely studied. Agricultural societies, in contrast, often divided the year into periods important to the growing of the crops, so that planting, cultivating, and harvesting seasons were emphasized. Such divisions might be marked by large ceremonies and feasts. The summer and winter solstices were usually regarded as significant and ceremonies were often held to mark

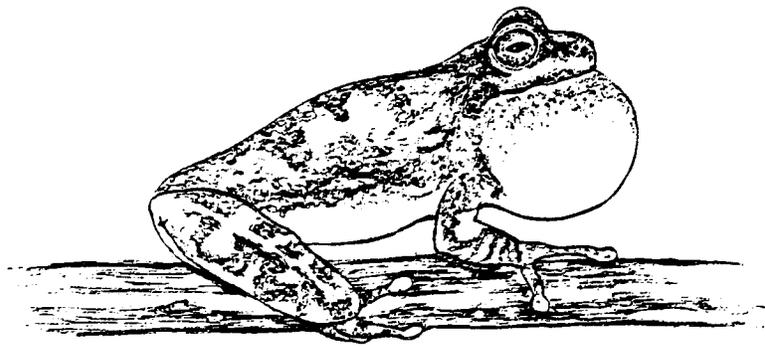
them. Such considerations, which are behind the development of most of the calendars in the world, played an important role in the formation of our own.



*Beans Ripening*

The Iroquoian year had twelve months based on the appearance of new moons. When there was a year with thirteen moons, the extra moon was included in one of the winter months. The whole system depended on the movement of the group of seven stars, the Pleiades. The new year began when these stars reached their zenith in the northern sky, usually in late January: the first moon following marked the new year.

The setting of the Pleiades in April was a signal to women that the planting season should begin. The spring and summer months were the busiest for both ceremonial and subsistence activities. When the Pleiades rose again in August it was time to harvest the crops.



*Frogs Peeping*

Each stage of the agricultural year was marked by one or more ceremonies.

Approximate time	Name of period	
December-January	Gaya'da-gó: wah	Big Doll
January-February	Ganráhtahgah	Late Falling Leaves
February-March March-April	Ganoskwaótha' Ganóskwaótha'- gó: wah	Frogs Peeping Many Frogs Peeping
April-May	Ganá'gaht	Prepare Corn Hills
May-June	Hyeikhneh	Berries Ripening
June-July	Hyeikhne-gó: wah	Many Berries Ripening
July-August August-September	Iskhné: ha' Iskhne-gó: wah	Beans Ripening Many Things Ripening
September- October	Sa:khné: hat	Almost Mature
October-November	Sa:khne-gó: wah	Everything Mature
November- December	Jotho:'	Cold



*Late Falling Leaves*



*Berries*

Jenness, Diamond. *Indians of Canada*, National Museum of Canada. Bulletin 65, Ottawa: 1955.  
 Speck, Frank G. *Midwinter Rites of the Cayuga Long House*, Philadelphia: University of Penn. Press, 1949.  
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Text: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada with the assistance of the National Museum of Man

Illustrations and Design: Susan Hamilton  
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Published under the authority of: The Hon. J. Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Hon. John Roberts, Secretary of State, Ottawa, 1979.

Catalogue No. R34-2/18-1979

ISBN 0-662-10271-1

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada Catalogue Number: QS-5107-018-EE-A1

Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français.

Additional Information



# nformation

## BASIC INFORMATION ON ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

This material provides basic, background information on Canada's aboriginal peoples and subjects of concern to them. Topics include:

- \* Canada's Aboriginal Peoples 1
- \* Demographic and Cultural Characteristics 5
- \* Social and Economic Conditions 9

Published under the authority of the  
Hon. Bill McKnight, P.C., M.P.,  
Minister of Indian Affairs and  
Northern Development,  
Ottawa, 1987.

QS-6036-010-BB-A1  
Catalogue No. R6-1/1-1987  
ISBN 0-662-55337-3

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## CANADA'S ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

### Indians

Canada's first inhabitants crossed the Bering Strait from Asia. By the time the Americas were discovered by Europeans, this Indian population had developed cultures and linguistic groups that varied as widely as the terrain that was now their home. The Indians of the wide prairie interior led a nomadic existence suited to the requirements of hunting the migratory buffalo. The bounty of the sea, on the other hand, allowed the Pacific Coast Indians to establish permanent villages where they had the leisure to become expert in the carving of cedar and stone. Equally distinct were the cultures of the Woodland people, the tribes of the British Columbia interior plateau, the farming tribes of southern Ontario, and the hunters of the southern barren lands.

What all of these cultures shared, however, was a deep spiritual relationship with the land and the life forms it supported.

Contact with Europeans grew over a long period of time from the first Norse seamen through successive waves of other European fishermen. In addition to fishing, these expeditions engaged in trade and bartering for furs with the Woodland Indians of the Maritimes. Eventually, as fur products gained favour in Europe, the fur trade intensified and led to the founding of permanent settlements at Quebec and Louisburg. From that point on, virtually no aspect of Indian life remained untouched by contact with Europeans. The repercussions of the fur trade and the devastating effect of new diseases had an enormous impact on the spiritual and material well-being of the Indians. Indeed, some historians have estimated that within a 200-year period, Indian populations were reduced by 95 per cent.

At the conclusion of the Seven Years' War ending French rule in Canada, the articles of capitulation stated that the former Indian allies of the French should be neither penalized nor

disturbed in their possession of lands. Three years later, in the Royal Proclamation of 1763 setting out the boundaries of the newly-acquired province of Quebec and those of the American colonies, Indian rights were more clearly defined. The proclamation specifically declared a huge area of the country to be "Indian territory" so that purchases or settlements of that land were forbidden without special leave from the Crown. Thereafter, it was accepted policy that while title to the land mass of Canada was vested in the Crown, aboriginal peoples had a right to use and occupy the land. No settlement of land could be undertaken, therefore, until the Indian rights had been surrendered in negotiation between the Crown and aboriginal occupants.

Following this, treaties initiated by European settlers were entered into by the Crown and various groups of Indians in order to clear lands of Indian title. Initially, lump sum cash payments were made for these land surrenders; eventually, however, the Crown undertook to set aside reserves and provide benefits to those surrendering title.

The year 1830 is generally considered the beginning of an ordered system of Indian administration in Canada. From that date, Indian settlement on reserves began under government guardianship. There followed various experiments in acculturation, the passage in Upper and Lower Canada of acts to protect Indians and their lands, and the negotiation of additional treaties for the surrender of Indian lands desired by the government for settlement purposes. The term Treaty Indians, still in usage today, refers to the descendants of persons who signed such treaties.

By 1876, the Canadian Parliament passed its first consolidated Indian Act. It was about this time that the distinction between status and non-status Indians was formulated. Status Indians were and are those registered with the federal government as Indians according to the terms of the Indian Act. Non-status Indians are native people who identify themselves as Indians, but are not registered for the purposes of the Indian Act.

A key provision of the 1876 act was "enfranchisement", a concept that had been a feature of a previous act and one that reflected the government-of-the-day's desire to assimilate Canada's Indian population. Enfranchisement was a process whereby an Indian person gave up Indian status for a variety of reasons. Indeed, a 1933 amendment compelled enfranchisement for those Indians meeting the qualifications set out in the act.

Important changes made to the Indian Act on June 28, 1985 have eliminated all forms of enfranchisement. Persons who were enfranchised, and their children, are now eligible to be registered as persons with status within the meaning of the Act.

In addition, discrimination on the basis of sex and marital status is no longer permitted. By the 1985 amendment, Canada's Indian Act has been brought into accord with the provisions of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms assuring equality of treatment to men and women. As a consequence, women and children who had status and band membership and lost it because of sexual discrimination are now eligible to have both restored; the children of those entitled to the restoration of rights are eligible to be registered as well.

An additional amendment gives Indian bands a statutory right to determine band membership.

#### Métis

The Métis, who are not registered as Indians under the Indian Act, are descendants of European fur traders and aboriginal women. The Métis were most prominent on the Prairies where they developed a lifestyle that combined the hunting traditions of nomadic Indians with the more settled ways of European newcomers. Over the years they played a major role in the development of Canada's West.

There is no universally accepted definition of the term Métis, but rather two differing approaches to definition. According to one approach, all persons who are of mixed aboriginal and non-aboriginal ancestry, and who identify themselves as Métis, may be considered as Métis, regardless of where they or their ancestors resided in Canada.

The other approach describes as Métis those persons whose ancestors inhabited western and northern Canada and received land grants and/or scrip, and other persons of aboriginal ancestry who identify themselves as Métis and are recognized as Métis by the Métis community.

## Inuit

The ancestors of the Inuit are said to have crossed the Bering Strait over 15,000 years ago. For generations they existed entirely from their surroundings, living according to nature's schedules and the migratory habits of wildlife.

Inuit culture, as a whole, existed in isolation from European contact until the middle of the 19th century. Over the next hundred years, whalers, fur traders, missionaries and the military all had an effect on the Inuit's traditional lifestyle. By the early 1950s, the federal government sought to act upon a 1939 Supreme Court ruling that its power to make laws with respect to "Indians, and Lands reserved for the Indians" extended to the Inuit as well.

In order to deliver services to the Inuit, the federal government established health centres and schools at many existing trading posts in the North. Through the 1950s and 60s, 700 or more groups of Inuit relocated into 40 permanent settlements. Life in the settlements, however, led to a partial abandonment of their traditional ways of living. As a result, the original hunting and trapping economy gave way to a mixed economy that was comprised of a hunting and trapping base supplemented by social assistance and wages.

## DEMOGRAPHIC AND CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

Aboriginal ancestry was reported by almost half a million Canadians in the 1981 Census. Within this larger group, which is about two per cent of the total population, one can identify status Indians, non-status Indians, the Métis and the Inuit.

According to Statistics Canada and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) sources, the growth rate of this population between 1971 and 1981 was higher than that of the total Canadian population, and is expected to be so until the next decade. A factor that will influence the growth of the status Indian population is the June 28, 1985 passage of Bill C-31, which removed discriminatory sections from the Indian Act. Re-instatement and first-time registration provisions will affect not only numbers but also the age-sex and the on/off-reserve location distribution of this population.

Canada's aboriginal peoples are not homogeneous. Among Canadian Indians there are 10 major linguistic groups, comprising some 58 dialects, who live within six recognized cultural regions. It should be noted that there is not an exact correlation between the cultural regions and these linguistic groups. Of the 10 major linguistic families, the 1981 Census reported that the Algonkian languages were the most commonly spoken native Indian languages. The Inuit, a quite distinct people, speak Inuktitut and related dialects.

The statistics that follow are from the 1981 Census, except where indicated.<sup>1</sup> It should be acknowledged, however, that aboriginal associations in Canada have serious concerns about the 1981 Census and its results.

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada. Canada's Native People. Ottawa: June, 1984. Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Research Division. A more recent census was undertaken in June 1986. Initial information from this is expected to be made public later in 1987. At the time of publication, however, only the 1981 Census figures were available.

## Status Indians

### Population

The 1981 Census placed the status Indian population at 292,705. More recent projections from INAC for 1986 place the total at 374,200 or 1.5 per cent of the total Canadian population.

### Location

According to the 1981 Census, the largest concentrations of status Indians were in the Prairies, British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec. Close to one-fifth of status Indians are said to live in major urban areas of 100,000 or more persons.

In 1982, according to INAC sources, there were 2,252 Indian reserves divided among 577 Indian bands. Almost one-third of Indian bands were geographically classified as urban, while one quarter were located in remote or special access zones; the remainder were classified as rural. Almost half the population lived in bands numbering less than 1,000 persons.

### Language

A native language was reported as the mother tongue of 46.6 per cent of status Indians on reserves. Of the remainder, 46.4 per cent reported English as their first language while 1.8 reported French.

Of status Indians living off-reserve, 18 per cent reported a native language as their mother tongue. English was cited as the first language of 71.9 per cent; 4.6 per cent reported French.

Fourteen per cent of all native people spoke a language at home that was not their mother tongue. Those with a native mother tongue were most likely to adopt another language.

## Non-Status Indians

### Population

In the 1981 Census, 75,110 persons identified themselves as non-status Indians.

### Location

Largest concentrations were in Ontario (34.7 per cent), British Columbia (25.4 per cent), the Prairies (24.7 per cent), and Quebec (7.7 per cent). Seventy per cent of this population reported residence in an urban area.

### Language

A native language was reported as the mother tongue of 9.5 per cent of the non-status Indian population. Of the remainder, 79.5 per cent claimed English while 6.6 per cent claimed French.

## Métis

### Population

In the 1981 Census, 98,260 individuals identified themselves as Métis.

### Location

Fully two-thirds lived in the prairie provinces (66.2 per cent). The next highest concentration was in Ontario (12.9 per cent). An urban area was reported as the home of 60 per cent of Métis.

### Language

A native language was reported as the mother tongue of 13.9 per cent of this population. Of the remainder, 75 per cent claimed English and 8.9 per cent claimed French.

## Inuit

### Population

The 1981 Census identified 25,390 individuals as Inuit; a more recent projection from INAC placed the total for 1985 at 28,000.

Location

Largest concentrations were in the Northwest Territories (63 per cent) and Northern Quebec (19.2 per cent). Inuit communities are situated mainly in the Mackenzie Delta, along the Mainland Coast of the Northwest Territories, along the shores of Hudson and Ungava Bays, and in settlements on the Arctic islands.

Language

Inuktitut was claimed as the native language of 73.8 per cent of the Inuit. Of the remainder, 24.2 per cent claimed English as their first language while 0.9 per cent claimed French. The Inuit are the most likely of all aboriginal people to use a native language in the home.

General:

The average number of children for ever-married aboriginal women was 3.8, considerably higher than the 2.5 for other ever-married women. The aboriginal groups with the highest fertility rates were status Indians on reserves, with an average of 4.8 children, and the Inuit with 4.6 children.

Because aboriginal people have more children, and because their current life expectancy is lower than for other Canadians, young people make up a much larger proportion of the aboriginal population. As a consequence, this population is experiencing higher dependency ratios than the total population of Canada.

The infant mortality rate for status Indians and Inuit was 16 per 1,000 live births in 1981, compared with eight in the non-aboriginal population.

The average Indian age of death was still well below that of the total Canadian population, 45 as opposed to 65 for males, and 48 as opposed to 71 for females.

## SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The 1981 Census collected valuable information on the socio-economic conditions of Canada's aboriginal peoples. This data, combined with additional material from INAC and other federal departments, provides statistical evidence of the relatively poor socio-economic conditions of many aboriginal people compared with other Canadians.

### Education

Comparison of data on educational attainment between the aboriginal and reference populations<sup>1</sup> should be considered in the light of their age distribution profiles. A much larger proportion of the aboriginal population is of school age and, consequently, future figures may show a marked improvement.

According to INAC customized data based on the 1981 Census of Canada, only 26 per cent of status Indians 15 years and older had completed high school or gone beyond it compared with 52 per cent of the reference population. While almost the same proportion of those in their major wage-earning years (25 to 64) in both populations claimed to have reached the 9 to 13 grade level, 57 per cent of the reference population had progressed past this level as opposed to only 32 per cent of status Indians.

Additional census data reveals that this disparity in attainment levels between status Indians and the reference population was owing to the unfavorable experience of on-reserve Indians who, with the Inuit, had less formal education than other aboriginal groups. Both numerically and proportionally, high school completion was more common among Indians off-reserve than on-reserve. Non-status Indians, on the other hand, had the lowest proportion with low levels of attainment and the highest proportion with university degrees.

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<sup>1</sup>"The reference population" is a term employed by statisticians; in this material it refers to all Canadians minus registered (status) Indians.

For all aboriginal groups, there were more people who had not gone beyond Grade 5 than there were people who had completed university.

### Employment

Employment patterns are an important indicator of social and economic well-being. The data on labour force activity reflects a significantly disadvantaged situation for Canada's aboriginal peoples.

For instance, the overall participation rate for status Indians (46 per cent) was 19 per cent lower than that of the reference population (65 per cent). And, once again, the picture was brighter for Indians living off-reserve than for their on-reserve counterparts.

Unemployment rates also provided evidence that joblessness was a more serious problem for the aboriginal population than for Canadians generally. The unemployment rate for male and female status Indians 15 years old and over was two-and-a-half times that of the reference population.

Because participation and unemployment rates are not entirely appropriate indicators for Indians living on-reserve, an employment rate has been developed that identifies the proportion of individuals in the population 15 years of age and older who are employed. This measure revealed that only 38 per cent of status Indians were employed compared with 60 per cent of the reference population. The greatest disparity between the two groups was found among persons 15-25 years old where the Indian employment rate (29 per cent) was only half that of other Canadians (57 per cent).

While participation rates for Métis and non-status Indians appear to be higher than for their registered counterparts, other employment characteristics are common to both groups. Aboriginal people are twice as likely as other Canadians to be seasonally employed with the great majority of occupations being of the general labour or service industries varieties.

### Income

In 1980, aboriginal incomes were approximately two-thirds of the non-aboriginal average: \$8,600 versus \$13,100. Non-status Indians had the highest incomes at \$9,900, followed by the Métis (\$9,500), off-reserve status Indians (\$8,800), the Inuit

(\$8,300), and on-reserve status Indians (\$7,100). Because the average 1980 employment incomes of full-time, full-year aboriginal workers were approximately four-fifths of that received by other Canadians, it may be concluded that part of the difference in total incomes reflects the lower rate of full-time, full-year work among aboriginal people.

These low income levels, coupled with high levels of unemployment and higher dependency ratios resulted in a per capita income for aboriginal people that was substantially lower than that of other Canadians. In 1980, 78 per cent of status Indians lived in economic families where the average income per person was less than \$5,000; this compares with 5 per cent for other Canadians. More than 26 per cent of registered Indians over 15 had no personal income in 1980 compared with less than 15 per cent of the reference population.

Factors that may have influenced the employment opportunities and thus the earning capacities of the aboriginal population are educational levels, proximity to places of employment, access to employment information, discrimination, health, and availability of transportation. While there are no data on most of these factors, it is likely that they would have had a disproportionately large impact on the aboriginal population.

It should of course be noted that for those aboriginal people who pursue traditional ways of life in addition to working for wages, income-in-kind may be a more important factor than is generally the case for other Canadians. This type of compensation is not, however, reflected in the income statistics.

#### Government Transfers

The high use of government transfers by aboriginal people is indicative of the generally poor economic and employment prospects that they face.

The proportion of aboriginal income in the form of government transfer payments, such as Family Allowance, Old Age Security, Guaranteed Income Supplement, Unemployment Insurance, and cash welfare payments was double that for other Canadians. One third of status Indians who had income in 1980 cited such transfers as their major source of personal income, compared with less than one-fifth of other Canadians. Taking into account those Indians over 15 who had no income in that year,

51 per cent of all status Indians over 15 either had no income or identified government transfers as their major single source of income. This compared with 28 per cent for other Canadians. Among status Indians this situation was found to be the case to a significantly greater extent for those living on-reserve.

Data on non-status Indians convey a different picture: non-status Indians obtain a larger share of their income from wages and salaries than do any other aboriginal group.

### Housing

The 1981 Census revealed that while aboriginal people were more likely than other Canadians to live in single houses, they were less likely to own them. Furthermore, the quality of these houses was generally inferior to the housing stock that accommodated the reference population.

For instance, while 1 in 15 non-aboriginal homes required major repairs, the proportion for aboriginal homes generally was 1 in 6. For status Indians on reserves, the proportion rose to 1 in 4. In addition, aboriginal homes had a greater tendency to be overcrowded, lack indoor bathroom facilities, and have inefficient heating systems.

The data further indicated that while the housing of off-reserve Indians was generally inferior to the reference population, it was superior to that accommodating those Indians living on reserves.

### Human Costs

In 1981, status Indian children in care represented six per cent of children 16 years of age and under on reserves and Crown lands, while only one per cent of non-aboriginal children found themselves in the same situation. While data provided by INAC would seem to indicate that the number of children in care is declining, the figures continue to underline the difficulties experienced by aboriginal families generally. Such statistics bear witness to the human costs of a standard of living far below that enjoyed by most Canadians.

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# Information

## RENSEIGNEMENTS GÉNÉRAUX SUR LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES

On trouvera dans les pages qui suivent des renseignements d'ordre général sur les peuples autochtones du Canada et les questions qui les touchent. Ce document comprend trois parties:

*	Les peuples autochtones du Canada	1
*	Caractéristiques démographiques et culturelles	5
*	Situation socio-économique	9

Publié avec l'autorisation de  
l'hon. Bill McKnight, c.p., député,  
ministre des Affaires indiennes  
et du Nord canadien,  
Ottawa, 1987.

QS-6036-010-BB-A1  
N° de catalogue R6-1/1-1987  
ISBN 0-662-55337-3

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## LES PEUPLES AUTOCHTONES DU CANADA

### Les Indiens

Les premiers habitants du Canada sont venus d'Asie par le détroit de Béring. Quand les Européens ont découvert les Amériques, ils y ont rencontré des cultures et des groupes linguistiques aussi différents les uns des autres que les territoires où ils s'étaient implantés. Dans les prairies de l'intérieur, les Indiens menaient une existence nomade adaptée aux exigences de la chasse au bison migrateur. Sur la côte du Pacifique, la richesse de l'océan leur avait permis d'ériger des villages permanents où ils avaient tout le loisir de s'initier aux secrets de la sculpture sur cèdre et sur pierre. Ailleurs, les habitants des forêts, les tribus du plateau intérieur de la Colombie-Britannique, les agriculteurs du sud de l'Ontario et les chasseurs des plaines méridionales avaient aussi leur propre culture.

Cependant, toutes ces cultures différentes avaient en commun une profonde relation spirituelle avec la terre et les espèces qu'elle fait vivre.

Les premiers contacts avec les Européens se firent très graduellement, d'abord avec les Vikings puis avec les vagues successives de pêcheurs venus d'autres pays du Vieux Continent. Ces derniers se livrèrent bientôt au commerce des fourrures avec les Indiens des forêts des Maritimes. Avec le temps, l'engouement de l'Europe pour les fourrures entraîna une intensification de ce commerce et la création d'établissements permanents à Québec et Louisbourg. Désormais, la présence des Européens allait marquer la vie indienne dans tous ses aspects ou presque. Le commerce des fourrures et les maladies importées d'Europe ont eu un effet dévastateur sur le bien-être spirituel et matériel des Indiens. Certains historiens vont même jusqu'à affirmer qu'en 200 ans, les populations indiennes ont été décimées dans une proportion de 95 p. 100.

À la conclusion de la Guerre de Sept ans, qui mettait fin au régime français au Canada, les termes de la capitulation précisaient que les anciens alliés indiens des Français ne devaient être ni pénalisés ni brimés dans la possession de leurs terres. Trois ans plus tard, les droits des Indiens furent définis avec plus de clarté dans la Proclamation royale de 1763 établissant les frontières de la province de Québec, nouvellement acquise, et celles des colonies américaines. La Proclamation désignait spécifiquement comme "territoire indien"

une énorme superficie où il était dès lors interdit d'acheter des terres ou de s'établir sans une permission spéciale de la Couronne. Peu à peu s'imposa le principe que si la Couronne était investie du droit de propriété du territoire du Canada, les peuples autochtones avaient le droit d'occuper ce territoire et d'en faire usage. Il était donc impossible de s'établir sur des terres tant que les droits des Indiens n'avaient pas été cédés par voie de négociation entre la Couronne et les occupants autochtones.

Par la suite, sur l'initiative de colons européens, la Couronne et divers groupes d'Indiens conclurent des traités par lesquels ces derniers acceptaient de céder leurs droits sur les terres qu'ils occupaient. Les cessions se firent d'abord contre versement de paiements en espèces, mais la Couronne en vint bientôt à établir des réserves et à accorder des avantages aux Indiens qui renonçaient à leurs droits.

De l'avis général, 1830 marque le début de ce qu'on peut appeler un système ordonné d'administration indienne au Canada. À partir de cette date, les Indiens commencèrent à s'installer dans des réserves sous la tutelle du gouvernement. Vinrent ensuite diverses tentatives d'acculturation, l'adoption par le Bas-Canada et le Haut-Canada de lois visant à protéger les Indiens et leurs terres, puis la négociation de nouveaux traités concernant la cession de terres indiennes que le gouvernement désirait ouvrir à la colonisation. L'expression Indiens assujettis aux traités, toujours en usage aujourd'hui, désigne les descendants de ceux qui ont signé de tels traités.

En 1876, le Parlement canadien adopta sa première Loi unifiée sur les Indiens. C'est à peu près à cette époque que fut établie la distinction entre Indiens inscrits et non inscrits. Les Indiens inscrits sont ceux qui sont inscrits auprès du gouvernement fédéral en tant qu'Indiens au sens de la Loi sur les Indiens. Les Indiens non inscrits sont des autochtones qui se disent Indiens mais qui ne sont pas inscrits comme tels au sens de la Loi.

Une des dispositions clé de la Loi de 1876 est l'"émancipation", notion qui figurait déjà dans une loi antérieure et qui reflétait le désir du gouvernement de l'époque d'assimiler la population indienne du Canada. L'émancipation était un processus par lequel une personne pouvait renoncer au statut d'Indien pour différentes raisons. D'abord facultative, elle devint en 1933 obligatoire pour tous les Indiens répondant aux critères énoncés dans la Loi.

Les importants changements apportés à la Loi sur les Indiens le 28 juin 1985 ont éliminé toute forme d'émancipation.

Toute personne émancipée, ainsi que ses enfants, a désormais le droit d'être inscrite comme Indien au sens où l'entend la Loi.

En outre, toute discrimination fondée sur le sexe et l'état matrimonial est dorénavant interdite. Dans sa forme modifiée de 1985, la Loi sur les Indiens est en effet conforme aux dispositions de la Charte canadienne des droits et libertés et garantit donc le même traitement aux hommes et aux femmes. En conséquence, les femmes et les enfants qui, pour des motifs de discrimination sexuelle, ont perdu leur statut d'Indien et leur droit d'appartenance à une bande peuvent maintenant être réintégrés dans leurs droits; les enfants des personnes admissibles à cette réintégration peuvent eux aussi être inscrits.

En vertu d'une disposition supplémentaire, les bandes indiennes peuvent légitimement décider de l'appartenance à leurs effectifs.

#### Les Métis

Les Métis, qui ne sont pas inscrits en tant qu'Indiens au sens de la Loi, sont les descendants de trafiquants de fourrures européens et de femmes autochtones. À l'origine, ils se retrouvaient surtout dans les Prairies et leur culture particulière combinait les traditions nomades des chasseurs indiens avec les moeurs plus sédentaires des Européens. Au cours des ans, ils ont joué un grand rôle dans le développement de l'Ouest canadien.

Il n'y a pas d'acceptation universelle du terme "Métis"; on en donne plutôt deux interprétations différentes. Selon la première, toute personne d'ascendance mixte, c'est-à-dire autochtone et non autochtone, qui s'identifie comme Métis peut être considérée comme tel, peu importe où elle ou ses ancêtres aient résidé au Canada.

Selon la seconde, est considérée comme Métis toute personne dont les ancêtres ont habité le nord ou l'ouest du Canada et y ont reçu des terres ou des titres, ou toute autre personne d'origine autochtone qui s'identifie comme Métis et est reconnue comme tel par la collectivité métisse.

#### Les Inuit

Les ancêtres des Inuit auraient traversé le détroit de Béring il y a plus de 15 000 ans. Durant des générations, les Inuit ont assuré leur subsistance à partir des seules ressources de leur milieu, en accord avec les lois de la nature et les habitudes migratoires du gibier.

Jusque vers le milieu du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle, leur civilisation a échappé à tout contact avec les Européens. Pendant cent ans, elle allait subir ensuite l'influence des commerçants de fourrures, des baleiniers, des missionnaires et des militaires. Au début des années 1950, le gouvernement fédéral a entrepris de concrétiser une décision rendue en 1939 par la Cour suprême selon laquelle son pouvoir de légiférer à l'égard des "Indiens et des terres réservées aux Indiens" s'étendait également aux Inuit.

Désireux d'offrir des services aux Inuit, le gouvernement fédéral a institué des cliniques sanitaires et des écoles dans de nombreux postes du Nord. Durant les années 1950 et 1960, plus de 700 groupes d'Inuit se sont établis dans une quarantaine d'agglomérations permanentes, ce qui les a amenés à abandonner en partie leur mode de vie traditionnel. La chasse et la trappe, fondements de leur économie depuis des temps immémoriaux, ont été remplacées par une économie mixte où la rémunération salariale et l'aide sociale complètent ces deux activités.

## CARACTÉRISTIQUES DÉMOGRAPHIQUES ET CULTURELLES

Lors du recensement de 1981, près d'un demi-million de Canadiens ont mentionné une ascendance autochtone. Parmi ce groupe, qui représente environ 2 p. 100 de la population totale, on retrouve les Indiens inscrits, les Indiens non inscrits, les Métis et les Inuit.

Selon Statistique Canada et le ministère des Affaires indiennes et du Nord canadien (MAINC), cette population a connu entre 1971 et 1981 un taux de croissance supérieur à celui de l'ensemble de la population canadienne, tendance qui devrait se maintenir jusqu'à la prochaine décennie. L'un des facteurs qui influenceront la croissance de la population d'Indiens inscrits est l'adoption, le 28 juin 1985, du projet de loi C-31, qui élimine certains articles discriminatoires de la Loi sur les Indiens. Les dispositions relatives à la réintégration et à l'inscription initiale modifieront non seulement le compte global, mais également la répartition selon l'âge et le sexe et la proportion d'Indiens vivant à l'intérieur ou à l'extérieur des réserves.

La population autochtone du Canada n'est pas homogène. Les Indiens se répartissent en dix groupes linguistiques principaux, comprenant environ 58 dialectes, et ils habitent dans six régions culturelles reconnues. Il est important de préciser qu'il n'existe pas de corrélation exacte entre ces régions culturelles et les groupes linguistiques. Selon le recensement de 1981, les langues algonquiennes sont de toutes les langues indiennes celles qu'on parle le plus couramment. Les Inuit, qui constituent un peuple tout à fait distinct, parlent l'inuktitut et des dialectes qui s'y rattachent.

Les statistiques qui suivent proviennent du recensement de 1981, sauf indication contraire.<sup>1</sup> Soulignons cependant que les associations autochtones du Canada entretiennent de sérieuses réserves à l'égard des résultats de ce recensement.

<sup>1</sup> Statistique Canada. Populations autochtones du Canada. Ottawa, juin 1984. Ministère des Affaires indiennes et du Nord canadien, Division de la recherche. Un nouveau recensement a été entrepris en juin 1986, dont les premières données devraient être rendues publiques au courant de l'année 1987. Au moment de publier ces lignes, toutefois, seules les données du recensement de 1981 étaient disponibles.

## **Indiens inscrits**

### Population

Selon le recensement, il y avait 292 705 Indiens inscrits en 1981. D'après des projections plus récentes du MAINC pour 1986, le total s'élèverait à 374 200 Indiens, soit 1,5 p. 100 de la population canadienne totale.

### Répartition géographique

Selon le recensement de 1981, les Indiens inscrits sont surtout concentrés dans les Prairies, en Colombie-Britannique, en Ontario et au Québec. On estime que près du cinquième d'entre eux vivent dans les grands centres urbains de 100 000 habitants ou plus.

En 1982, selon le MAINC, 577 bandes indiennes se répartissaient entre 2 252 réserves. Près du tiers des bandes peuvent être qualifiées d'urbaines, tandis qu'un quart d'entre elles habitent des zones éloignées ou difficiles d'accès; les autres sont qualifiées de rurales. Près de la moitié de la population appartient à des bandes regroupant moins de 1 000 personnes.

### Langue

Parmi les Indiens inscrits habitant des réserves, 46,6 p. 100 mentionnent une langue autochtone comme langue maternelle; 46,4 p. 100 mentionnent l'anglais comme première langue, contre 1,8 p. 100 pour le français.

Parmi les Indiens inscrits habitant à l'extérieur des réserves, 18 p. 100 mentionnent une langue autochtone comme langue maternelle; 71,9 p. 100 mentionnent l'anglais comme première langue, contre 4,6 p. 100 pour le français.

Quatorze pour cent de tous les autochtones parlent à la maison une langue qui n'est pas leur langue maternelle. Ceux dont la langue maternelle est une langue autochtone sont les plus susceptibles d'adopter une autre langue.

## **Indiens non inscrits**

### Population

Au moment du recensement de 1981, 75 110 personnes se sont identifiées comme Indiens non inscrits.

### Répartition géographique

Les plus fortes concentrations se retrouvent en Ontario (34,7 p. 100), en Colombie-Britannique (25,4 p. 100), dans les Prairies (24,7 p. 100) et au Québec (7,7 p. 100).

Soixante-dix pour cent des Indiens non inscrits déclarent habiter une région urbaine.

### Langue

Chez les Indiens non inscrits, 9,5 p. 100 mentionnent une langue autochtone comme langue maternelle, tandis que 79,5 p. 100 mentionnent l'anglais et 6,6 p. 100, le français.

## Métis

### Population

Au moment du recensement de 1981, 98 260 personnes se sont déclarées Métis.

### Répartition géographique

Les deux tiers des Métis habitent dans les provinces des Prairies (66,2 p. 100). La plus forte concentration se retrouve ensuite en Ontario (12,9 p. 100).

Soixante pour cent des Métis déclarent habiter une région urbaine.

### Langue

Parmi les Métis, 13,9 p. 100 mentionnent une langue autochtone comme langue maternelle, tandis que 75 p. 100 mentionnent l'anglais et 8,9 p. 100, le français.

## Inuit

### Population

Le recensement de 1981 établissait le nombre d'Inuit à 25 390; selon une projection plus récente du MAINC pour 1985, la population inuit serait de 28 000 personnes.

### Répartition géographique

Les plus fortes concentrations d'Inuit se retrouvent dans les Territoires du Nord-Ouest (63 p. 100) et dans le nord du Québec (19,2 p. 100). Les collectivités inuit sont surtout situées dans le delta du Mackenzie, sur le littoral continental des Territoires du Nord-Ouest, le long des côtes des baies d'Hudson et d'Ungava et dans les îles de l'Arctique.

Langue

L'inuktitut est mentionné comme langue maternelle par 73,8 p. 100 des Inuit; 24,2 p. 100 mentionnent l'anglais comme première langue, contre 0,9 p. 100 pour le français.

De tous les autochtones, les Inuit sont les plus susceptibles de parler une langue autochtone à la maison.

Autres statistiques:

Les femmes autochtones non célibataires ont en moyenne 3,8 enfants, ce qui dépasse de loin la moyenne de 2,5 enregistrée chez les autres femmes non célibataires. Les groupes autochtones présentant les plus forts taux de fertilité sont les Indiens inscrits vivant dans des réserves, avec une moyenne de 4,8 enfants, et les Inuit, avec 4,6 enfants.

Comme les autochtones ont plus d'enfants et que leur espérance de vie actuelle est inférieure à celle des autres Canadiens, les jeunes constituent une proportion beaucoup plus grande de leur population. On constate donc chez eux un taux de dépendance plus élevé que celui de l'ensemble de la population canadienne.

Le taux de mortalité infantile chez les Indiens inscrits et les Inuit était de 16 pour 1 000 naissances vivantes en 1981, comparativement à 8 pour 1 000 dans la population non autochtone.

Chez les Indiens, l'âge moyen au décès est encore nettement inférieur à la moyenne nationale, soit 45 ans au lieu de 65 dans le cas des hommes, et 48 ans au lieu de 71 dans le cas des femmes.

## SITUATION SOCIO-ÉCONOMIQUE

Le recensement de 1981 a permis de recueillir des informations très utiles sur la situation socio-économique des peuples autochtones du Canada. Après analyse de ces informations et d'autres renseignements obtenus du MAINC et d'autres ministères fédéraux, il appert que de nombreux autochtones vivent dans des conditions socio-économiques relativement difficiles par rapport aux autres Canadiens.

### Éducation

Dans toute comparaison de données sur le niveau d'éducation des autochtones et de la population de référence<sup>1</sup>, il convient de tenir compte des couches d'âge. Une proportion beaucoup plus grande de la population autochtone est d'âge scolaire, de sorte que les chiffres futurs pourraient dénoter une nette amélioration.

Selon les données du MAINC extrapolées du recensement de 1981, seulement 26 p. 100 des Indiens inscrits de 15 ans ou plus ont terminé leurs études secondaires ou fait des études postsecondaires, comparativement à 52 p. 100 de la population de référence. Chez les personnes qui sont dans leurs principales années de vie active (de 25 à 64 ans), la proportion de celles qui déclarent avoir de 9 à 13 ans de scolarité est à peu près la même dans les deux populations, mais 57 p. 100 de la population de référence a dépassé ce niveau, comparativement à 32 p. 100 seulement des Indiens inscrits.

D'autres données du recensement révèlent que cette disparité est due à la situation défavorable des Indiens des réserves; en effet, la formation scolaire est sensiblement moindre chez ces derniers, comme chez les Inuit, que dans les autres groupes autochtones. Numériquement et proportionnellement, plus d'Indiens hors réserves que d'Indiens habitant les réserves terminent leurs études secondaires. Par ailleurs, c'est chez les Indiens non inscrits que, proportionnellement, on retrouve le moins de faiblement scolarisés et le plus de diplômés universitaires.

<sup>1</sup> Expression employée par les statisticiens. Dans le présent document, la "population de référence" désigne l'ensemble des Canadiens moins les Indiens inscrits.

Dans tous les groupes autochtones, on trouve plus de gens qui n'ont jamais dépassé la cinquième année que de gens qui ont terminé l'université.

### Emploi

La physionomie de l'emploi constitue un important indice du bien-être social et économique. Or, les données relatives à l'activité de la main-d'oeuvre indiquent que les autochtones du Canada sont particulièrement désavantagés.

Par exemple, le taux général d'activité des Indiens inscrits (46 p. 100) est inférieur de 19 p. 100 à celui de la population de référence (65 p. 100). Dans ce domaine aussi, la situation des Indiens hors réserves est plus enviable que celle des Indiens des réserves.

Les données montrent également que le chômage frappe plus durement les autochtones que les Canadiens en général. Ainsi, le taux de chômage des Indiens inscrits de 15 ans ou plus est deux fois et demie plus élevé que celui de la population de référence.

Dans le cas des Indiens des réserves, les taux d'activité et de chômage peuvent être des indices trompeurs; aussi préfère-t-on maintenant s'en remettre à un taux d'emploi, qui détermine la proportion d'individus âgés de 15 ans ou plus qui ont un emploi. Ainsi, il apparaît que 38 p. 100 seulement des Indiens inscrits ont un emploi, comparativement à 60 p. 100 de la population de référence. C'est chez les 15 à 25 ans que la disparité est la plus grande entre les deux groupes, le taux d'emploi des Indiens (29 p. 100) n'étant que la moitié de celui des autres Canadiens (57 p. 100).

Si les taux d'activité des Métis et des Indiens non inscrits semblent plus élevés que celui des Indiens inscrits, d'autres caractéristiques de l'emploi sont communes aux deux groupes. Par exemple, les autochtones ont deux fois plus de chances que les autres Canadiens d'avoir un emploi saisonnier, la grande majorité des occupations se retrouvant dans les secteurs des services ou du travail manuel.

### Revenu

En 1980, le revenu moyen des autochtones représentait environ les deux tiers du revenu moyen des non-autochtones, soit 8 600 \$ par rapport à 13 100 \$. Les Indiens non inscrits disposeraient du revenu le plus élevé, soit 9 900 \$, suivis par les Métis (9 500 \$), les Indiens inscrits hors réserves (8 800 \$), les Inuit (8 300 \$) et les Indiens inscrits vivant dans les réserves (7 100 \$). Étant donné que les autochtones employés à plein temps toute l'année ont gagné en 1980 un revenu équivalent aux quatre cinquièmes de celui des autres

Canadiens, on peut conclure que la différence entre les revenus moyens s'explique par le fait que les autochtones sont proportionnellement moins nombreux que les autres Canadiens à travailler à plein temps toute l'année.

Quand on ajoute à cette faiblesse du revenu un fort taux de chômage et un rapport de dépendance plus élevé, on comprend que les autochtones aient un revenu par habitant nettement inférieur à celui des autres Canadiens. En 1980, 78 p. 100 des Indiens inscrits faisaient partie de familles économiques où le revenu moyen par personne était inférieur à 5 000 \$, contre 5 p. 100 des autres Canadiens. Plus de 26 p. 100 des Indiens inscrits âgés de 15 ans ou plus n'ont eu aucun revenu personnel en 1980, comparativement à moins de 15 p. 100 dans la population de référence.

De nombreux facteurs ont pu influencer sur les possibilités d'emploi, et donc de revenu, des autochtones, notamment le niveau d'éducation, la proximité des lieux de travail, l'accès à l'information concernant l'emploi, la discrimination, l'état de santé et les possibilités de transport. Il n'existe pas de données sur la plupart de ces facteurs, mais il est probable qu'ils ont eu un impact démesuré sur la population autochtone.

Il convient bien sûr de préciser que pour les autochtones qui continuent de pratiquer certaines activités traditionnelles en plus de travailler pour un salaire, le revenu en nature peut être plus important que ce n'est le cas pour les autres Canadiens. Ce type de rémunération n'est toutefois pas considéré dans les statistiques relatives au revenu.

#### Transferts gouvernementaux

Le grand usage que font les autochtones des transferts gouvernementaux est un indice de la pauvreté des perspectives économiques et des possibilités d'emploi qui s'offrent à eux.

La proportion du revenu autochtone que représentent les paiements de transferts gouvernementaux, comme les allocations familiales, la pension de vieillesse, le supplément de revenu garanti, l'assurance-chômage et les versements d'aide sociale, est deux fois plus élevée que chez les autres Canadiens. Un tiers des Indiens inscrits qui ont eu un revenu en 1980 ont indiqué que ces transferts constituent leur principale source de revenu personnel, contre moins d'un cinquième des autres Canadiens. Si on tient compte des Indiens de 15 ans ou plus qui n'ont eu aucun revenu cette année-là, 51 p. 100 de tous les Indiens inscrits de 15 ans ou plus n'ont eu aucun revenu ou ont mentionné des transferts gouvernementaux comme leur plus importante source de revenu, contre seulement 28 p. 100 des autres Canadiens.

Chez les Indiens inscrits, c'était plus particulièrement le cas de ceux qui habitent dans les réserves.

La situation est bien différente chez les Indiens non inscrits, qui tirent d'un salaire une plus grande partie de leur revenu que tout autre groupe autochtone.

### Logement

Selon le recensement de 1981, les autochtones ont plus de chances que les autres Canadiens d'habiter une maison unifamiliale, mais sont moins susceptibles d'en être propriétaires. De plus, leurs logements sont généralement de moindre qualité que ceux de la population de référence.

Par exemple, la proportion de logements ayant besoin de réparations majeures est d'un sur 15 chez les non-autochtones, tandis qu'elle est d'un sur six chez les autochtones en général, et d'un sur quatre chez les Indiens inscrits vivant dans des réserves. En outre, il arrive plus souvent que les maisons des autochtones soient surpeuplées, qu'elles manquent d'installations sanitaires intérieures et que le chauffage soit déficient.

Enfin, les logements des Indiens hors réserves sont généralement inférieurs en qualité à ceux de la population de référence, mais supérieurs à ceux des Indiens des réserves.

### Coûts humains

En 1981, chez les Indiens inscrits, la proportion d'enfants placés était de 6 p. 100 de la population des 16 ans et moins dans les réserves et sur les terres de la Couronne, contre seulement un pour cent des enfants non autochtones. Les données fournies par le MAINC sembleraient indiquer que le nombre d'enfants placés diminue, mais n'en continuent pas moins de mettre en lumière les difficultés que connaissent les familles autochtones en général. Les statistiques témoignent de ce que coûte en misère humaine un niveau de vie de beaucoup inférieur à celui dont bénéficient la plupart des Canadiens.

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# nformation

## FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

The following material provides basic, background information on Canada's aboriginal peoples and subjects of concern to them. Topics include:

- \* Federal Programs and Services 1
- \* Overview of Federal Expenditures 5
- \* Aboriginal Economic Development 7

Published under the authority of the  
Hon. Bill McKnight, P.C., M.P.,  
Minister of Indian Affairs and  
Northern Development,  
Ottawa, 1987.

QS-6036-020-BB-A1  
Catalogue No. R6-1/2-1987  
ISBN 0-662-55338-1

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## FEDERAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

A wide range of federal government programs and services is provided to aboriginal peoples. As citizens, they benefit from all federal programs, including universally available ones such as Family Allowance, Old Age Security and Unemployment Insurance. In addition, there are specific programs that are intended either to fulfill Canada's constitutional and statutory obligations to status Indians and the Inuit, or to address the socio-economic conditions experienced by aboriginal peoples generally. Of programs in this latter category, some are also available to status Indians living off-reserve, non-status Indians and the Métis. As of January 1985, 106 programs were being delivered by 11 federal departments.

### Services for Status Indians

Federal programs for Indian reserve communities include direct services in the fields of education, health, social assistance, housing, community infrastructure, justice, culture, band government and economic development. More than half of the dollar value of these programs is administered by the bands themselves. A short description of federal objectives and/or activities in each field should provide a sense of the scope of the services provided. Neither the list of areas nor the description of the implied activities is exhaustive.

#### Elementary, Secondary and Post-secondary Education

In the area of education the federal government provides for, or purchases, a full range of elementary and secondary educational services for school-age Indian students residing on reserves or Crown lands. These services are provided in federal, provincial or band-operated schools, and include the provision of teachers, instructional supplies, administrative and para-professional support, and curriculum development services. In addition, the government seeks to ensure that eligible Indians have access to programs of financial assistance and instructional support to encourage participation in post-secondary education.

#### Health

The federal government funds a range of health services to Indians including community health services, environmental

health and surveillance, non-insured health benefits, the National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program, hospital services, and capital construction. Responsibility for delivery rests with Health and Welfare Canada (HWC).

#### Social Assistance and Welfare

Social assistance provides funds to single persons or heads of families to meet basic needs, including food, clothing and shelter, as well as special needs such as travel expenses, burials and the replacement of goods lost in fires. The welfare function provides a broad range of including child welfare, adult care, and individual and family care. Services and assistance are provided through agreements with different levels of governments and/or voluntary and private service organizations.

#### Housing

Housing programs provide support to individuals and bands in obtaining adequate housing by furnishing subsidies toward construction and renovation, as well as training, management, and technical assistance to bands. This support is provided through a variety of programs administered by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) and by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC).

#### Community Infrastructure

Financial assistance is provided for the construction, operation and maintenance of basic community capital facilities, such as schools, water, sanitation, electrification and roads systems, community buildings, fire protection facilities, and special services such as flood and erosion control.

#### Law Enforcement/Justice

INAC provides support to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) for an on-reserve RCMP Special Constable Program. Under this program, the constable, who is accountable to the local RCMP detachment, provides policing services relating to the enforcement of the Indian Act, by-laws of a non-civil nature and other federal statutes except the Criminal Code. Other INAC-funded policing arrangements include independent police forces and the Ontario Indian Constable Program, which is co-funded under a federal-provincial agreement with Ontario's Ministry of the Solicitor General. Under this program, band councils select constables, who are trained and equipped by the Ontario Provincial Police, supervise their enforcement of by-laws, and are consulted on the policing of their reserves. In

other initiatives in this area, the Solicitor General funds programs to improve native policy and programs in the criminal justice system through research, demonstration projects and information dissemination, and the Department of Justice Canada (JUS) supplies para-legal services to native defendants, and assists native people to enter the legal profession.

#### Culture

Through a wide range of programs administered by INAC and the Secretary of State (SOS), the federal government funds the establishment of cultural/education and friendship centres, the development of native political lobby associations, the promotion of traditional and contemporary art forms and traditional languages, and the adaptation of modern communication tools for native use.

#### Band Government

Programs in this area assist bands and their organizations to develop and implement institutions of government and to carry out community-based development planning. In addition, funding is available to enable Indians to consult with government on various policy and program issues.

#### Economic Development

INAC and the Department of Regional Industrial Expansion (DRIE) support a number of programs designed to address substantial unemployment and undeveloped resources, and to reduce dependency.

Since the mid-1960s, the proportion of Indians living off-reserve has nearly doubled and by 1980 had reached about 30 per cent. Although the federal government provides some services directly to off-reserve Indians, such as non-insured health benefits, its view is that provincial governments should provide to this group the same basic services provided to other provincial residents. Some provinces, however, have traditionally considered Indians to be a federal responsibility wherever they reside. Although the provinces, in practice, will usually provide needed services, certain services such as welfare and child care are only available to Indians after 12 months' continuous residence off-reserve.

#### Services for Inuit

Although the federal government delivers some services directly to Inuit in the Northwest Territories, most are delivered by the territorial government, which receives over 80 per cent of its revenues in transfers from the government of Canada.

Similar services are provided to the Inuit of northern Quebec by the government of Quebec and by the elected local government bodies established as a result of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement of 1975. The federal government contributes a share of the funding for these services. In Labrador, the government of Newfoundland exercises primary responsibility for administering services to Inuit under a cost-sharing agreement with the federal government.

### Federal Programs for Non-status Indians and the Métis

These groups may access a number of the federal programs that have been developed to address the special needs of aboriginal peoples. Examples include:

- 1) the Rural and Native Housing Program (CMHC), which assists in providing adequate housing for aboriginal peoples in all areas of Canada;
- 2) the Native Friendship Centres Program (SOS), which helps migrating and resident aboriginal people adjust to the urban environment;
- 3) the Native Law Students Program (JUS), which assists aboriginal people to enter the legal profession;
- 4) the Native Courtworkers Program (JUS), which supplies para-legal services to aboriginal defendants;
- 5) the National Indigenous Development Program, of the Public Service Commission Canada (PSC), which is designed to improve the representation of indigenous people at middle and senior levels in the Public Service;
- 6) the Northern Careers Program (PSC), which provides training and career development opportunities for native northerners in designated Public Service positions;
- 7) the Native Internship Program of Employment and Immigration Canada (EIC), which provides summer jobs to native students in EIC offices;
- 8) the Native Economic Development Program (DRIE), which is designed to foster business and economic development among Canada's aboriginal peoples; and
- 9) the Special Agricultural and Rural Development Agreements (Special ARDA) (DRIE), which are designed to improve the income and employment opportunities of disadvantaged people, particularly those of native ancestry, living in rural and remote areas.

OVERVIEW OF FEDERAL EXPENDITURES

Federal spending on aboriginal programs has risen steadily over the last decade both in real dollar terms and as a share of federal program expenditures. Only national debt charges have grown at a faster rate.

In real dollars, expenditures in this sector have increased by 76 per cent since 1975-76, a growth rate roughly three times that of the increase in the aboriginal population for the same period; in absolute dollar terms the rate of increase over the decade was 265 per cent.

These figures illustrate the priority that the federal government assigns to programs for aboriginal peoples. In 1986, despite a very difficult fiscal situation, expenditures were in the neighbourhood of \$2.8 billion. Although fiscal restraint is an ongoing priority, the Prime Minister has indicated that current expenditure levels for this sector will be maintained. The following table shows estimated federal expenditures for 1985-86 by department. Although a large number of federal departments and agencies deliver programs and services to aboriginal peoples, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada is responsible for the majority of the funds.

**Approximate Federal Expenditures  
for Aboriginal Peoples, 1985/86**

<u>Department</u>	<u>\$ Millions</u>
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada	2,044
Health and Welfare Canada	324
Regional Industrial Expansion	56
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation	78
Secretary of State	51
Employment and Immigration Canada	182
Other departments/agencies	50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>2,785</u>

Most federal direct expenditures for aboriginal peoples are for the provision of basic services--such as education, health and social services--to status Indians living on-reserve and Inuit. The following table summarizes federal spending by program area.

Approximate Federal Expenditures for  
Aboriginal Peoples by Program Area, 1985/86

<u>Program</u>	<u>\$ Millions</u>
Education	595
Housing and Community Infrastructure	410
Health	342
Social Services	345
Economic and Employment Development	346
Transfers to Territorial Governments	312
Administration	97
Band Government	140
Native Claims	45
Miscellaneous	153
<b>TOTAL</b>	<hr/> 2,785

As citizens, aboriginal peoples also benefit from all federal programs including Family Allowance, Old Age Security and Unemployment Insurance. Benefits received by aboriginal people from these programs are not included in the figures listed above.

### ABORIGINAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Although the provision of economic development assistance to aboriginal peoples is not new, interest in both the concept and in the development of improved mechanisms has increased markedly since the release of the 1983 Report of the Special Committee on Indian Self-Government in Canada (the Penner Report). The Committee's report argued that self-government would be meaningful only if its foundation was a viable economic base developed under aboriginal control at the community level.

The federal government's commitment to this view was expressed in a statement made by the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada, to the 1985 First Ministers' Conference. At that time, the Prime Minister indicated that self-government and aboriginal economic development were mutually supportive endeavours and committed his government to pursuing both concurrently.

Economic development assistance is now available to aboriginal Canadians under a variety of federal government programs. Some of the most significant are the Native Economic Development Program (NEDP), the Economic Development Program of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), INAC's Inuit Economic Development Program, the Special Agricultural and Rural Development Agreements (Special ARDA), and the Northern Development Agreements. A brief description of these programs follows. It should be noted, however, that aboriginal peoples also benefit from other federal economic development programs intended to apply to all Canadian citizens.

The Native Economic Development Program, which is administered by the Department of Regional Industrial Expansion (DRIE), is available to all Métis, Inuit, status and non-status Indians. The program provides direct financial assistance for viable business and economic development initiatives. It also plays a coordinating role within government to improve the access of aboriginal peoples to other federal programs, and to advise on how those programs can be of maximum benefit to aboriginal enterprises. Financial assistance is provided under several program elements including aboriginal economic and financial institutions, and special projects. The latter includes funding for the establishment, acquisition or modernization of viable aboriginal business enterprises, and for selected

training, innovation and marketing initiatives. The operation of NEDP is overseen by the Native Economic Development Board, which is composed of 20 members appointed by Order in Council. The majority of members are aboriginal people and all have extensive experience in the fields of business and aboriginal economic development.

INAC's Economic Development Program, which has existed since the late 1940s, currently provides advice, assistance, funds and training in the areas of business development, employment and employability development, and institutional development support. Access to the program's funding is through departmental regional and district offices across the country; applicants to the program include Indian and Inuit individuals, corporate entities, institutions and band councils. The main activity areas of the program have recently undergone dramatic shifts to reflect the findings of an internal departmental task force. The task force, which was organized in 1985 to report on the most appropriate role for the department in fostering Indian economic development, recommended that increased emphasis be placed on: entrepreneurial market participation, removing structural barriers to Indian economic growth, business skills development, institutional development, and better interdepartmental coordination of government economic development support programs.

The Inuit Economic Development Program, which is administered under INAC's Northern Program by the government of the Northwest Territories, provides economic assistance to the Inuit in the form of loans, bank loan guarantees and contributions. Application for loans are reviewed by the Eskimo Loan Fund Advisory Board, while applications for bank loan guarantees and contributions are processed by the federal and territorial governments. The program is designed to assist Inuit business and economic development activities by supporting, among other initiatives, cooperatives, capital construction and special projects.

The overall objective of the **Special ARDA Program**, which operates pursuant to federal-provincial-territorial agreements, is to improve the income and employment opportunities of disadvantaged people, particularly those of native ancestry, living in rural and remote areas. At the present time, Special ARDA agreements are in effect in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Yukon and the Northwest Territories. Each agreement provides assistance for commercial undertakings, primary producing activities and social adjustment measures. The most active program element concerns commercial undertakings, which provides assistance in the establishment, expansion or acquisition of small business. The operation of

Special ARDA is overseen by advisory committees made up of representatives of native organizations and federal, provincial and territorial governments. With a majority or equal representation on each committee, native representatives have been able to influence program guidelines so that they better suit the needs of each region.

The **Northern Development Agreements**, concluded with Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, cover all northern residents including those of native ancestry. The agreements, which, like Special ARDA, fall within DRIE's responsibilities at the federal level, provide for an array of programs designed to increase participation by local residents in the economic development of their region, and encourage the orderly and economic use of natural resources.

The federal government's continuing commitment to aboriginal economic development is clear. In a speech made to the Inuit at Kuujjuaq in northern Quebec, Prime Minister Mulroney emphasized that Canada had an obligation as a nation "to bring opportunities and jobs, to bring health care, to bring proper housing, to bring human dignity" to Canada's aboriginal citizens.

For further information on this material, please contact:

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# Information

## PROGRAMMES ET SERVICES FÉDÉRAUX DESTINÉS AUX AUTOCHTONES

On trouvera dans les pages qui suivent des renseignements d'ordre général sur les peuples autochtones du Canada et les questions qui les touchent. Ce document comprend trois parties:

* Programmes et services fédéraux	1
* Vue d'ensemble des dépenses fédérales	6
* Développement économique des autochtones	9

Publié avec l'autorisation de  
l'hon. Bill McKnight, c.p., député,  
ministre des Affaires indiennes  
et du Nord canadien,  
Ottawa, 1987.

QS-6036-020-BB-A1  
N° de catalogue R6-1/2-1987  
ISBN 0-662-55338-1

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## PROGRAMMES ET SERVICES FÉDÉRAUX

Les autochtones ont à leur disposition un grand nombre de programmes et de services fédéraux. D'abord, en tant que citoyens canadiens, ils sont admissibles à tous les programmes fédéraux, y compris ceux d'application générale comme les allocations familiales, la sécurité de la vieillesse et l'assurance-chômage. En outre, des programmes ont été créés spécialement pour eux, soit en exécution des obligations constitutionnelles et législatives du Canada à l'égard des Indiens inscrits et des Inuit, soit pour trouver une solution aux problèmes socio-économiques des populations autochtones en général. Dans cette dernière catégorie, certains programmes s'adressent aussi aux Indiens inscrits habitant hors des réserves, aux Indiens non inscrits et aux Métis. Au mois de janvier 1985, on comptait 106 programmes administrés par 11 ministères fédéraux.

### Services destinés aux Indiens inscrits

Les programmes fédéraux destinés aux réserves indiennes comprennent des services directs dans les domaines de l'éducation, de la santé, de l'aide sociale, du logement, des équipements collectifs, de la justice, de la culture, de l'administration des bandes et du développement économique. Plus de la moitié des fonds consacrés à ces programmes sont administrés par les bandes elles-mêmes. On trouvera ci-après une courte description des objectifs ou des activités du gouvernement fédéral dans chaque domaine. Sans être exhaustive, elle donne une bonne idée de l'étendue des services offerts.

#### Éducation primaire, secondaire et postsecondaire

Le gouvernement fédéral pourvoit lui-même à l'éducation primaire et secondaire des Indiens d'âge scolaire résidant dans les réserves ou sur les terres de la Couronne, ou encore il achète à leur intention les services d'éducation nécessaires. Offerts dans des écoles qui relèvent du gouvernement fédéral, des provinces ou des bandes elles-mêmes, ces services comprennent l'engagement d'enseignants, la fourniture de matériel pédagogique, le soutien administratif et paraprofessionnel et l'élaboration des programmes d'enseignement. Le gouvernement veille en outre à ce que les Indiens admissibles aient accès à des programmes d'aide financière et de soutien pédagogique pour les inciter à faire des études postsecondaires.

### Santé

Le gouvernement fédéral finance de nombreux services de santé destinés aux Indiens: santé communautaire, hygiène et surveillance de l'environnement, prestations non prévues par les régimes publics de santé, Programme national de lutte contre l'abus de l'alcool et des drogues chez les autochtones, services hospitaliers et aménagement d'installations. Ces services relèvent tous de Santé et Bien-être Canada (SBC).

### Aide sociale et bien-être

Dans le cadre de l'aide sociale, des fonds sont mis à la disposition des célibataires ou des chefs de famille pour subvenir à des besoins vitaux comme la nourriture, le vêtement et le logement, ou à des besoins particuliers comme les frais de déplacement, les enterrements et le remplacement de biens perdus dans des incendies. Sous le volet du bien-être sont regroupés des programmes d'aide aux enfants et aux adultes, ainsi qu'aux particuliers et aux familles. Tous ces services sont assurés par le biais d'ententes avec différents paliers de gouvernement ou avec des organismes privés de bienfaisance.

### Logement

Différents programmes de logement aident les particuliers et les bandes à se loger convenablement, grâce à des subventions à la construction ou à la rénovation et à des services de formation, de gestion et d'assistance technique. Ces programmes sont administrés par le ministère des Affaires indiennes et du Nord canadien (MAINC) et par la Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement (SCHL).

### Équipements collectifs

Le gouvernement fédéral accorde une aide financière pour la construction, l'exploitation et l'entretien des équipements collectifs essentiels (écoles, aqueducs, égouts, réseaux électrique et routier, immeubles communautaires, services d'incendie, etc.) et pour des services spéciaux, comme la lutte contre les inondations et l'érosion.

### Services policiers/Justice

Le MAINC aide la Gendarmerie royale du Canada (GRC) à mettre en oeuvre son Programme des gendarmes spéciaux dans les réserves: le gendarme, qui relève du détachement local de la GRC, veille à l'application de la Loi sur les Indiens, des règlements de nature autre que civile et des autres lois fédérales, à l'exception du Code criminel. Le MAINC prend aussi des arrangements avec des forces de police indépendantes et, en vertu d'une entente fédérale-provinciale, il finance le programme des agents indiens de

l'Ontario conjointement avec le ministère du Solliciteur général de cette province. Suivant ce programme, les conseils de bande choisissent des agents, qui sont entraînés et équipés par la Sûreté provinciale de l'Ontario, surveillent leur travail et sont consultés sur les activités policières dans leurs réserves. Par ailleurs, le Solliciteur général du Canada finance des recherches, des projets pilotes et des activités d'information afin d'améliorer les politiques et les programmes de justice pénale destinés aux autochtones. Enfin, le ministère de la Justice (JUS) offre des services parajudiciaires aux autochtones appelés à se défendre en cour et vient en aide à ceux qui aspirent à pratiquer le droit.

#### Culture

Par le biais de nombreux programmes administrés par le MAINC et le Secrétariat d'État (SE), le gouvernement fédéral finance l'établissement de centres culturels, éducatifs et d'accueil, la création de groupes de pression autochtones, la promotion des langues ancestrales et des arts traditionnels et contemporains et l'adaptation des moyens de communication modernes aux besoins des populations autochtones.

#### Administration des bandes

Les programmes mis en oeuvre dans ce secteur ont pour objet d'aider les bandes et leurs organisations à se doter d'institutions gouvernementales et à planifier elles-mêmes leur développement. En outre, des fonds sont mis à la disposition des Indiens pour leur permettre de tenir des consultations avec le gouvernement sur toutes sortes de questions liées aux politiques et aux programmes.

#### Développement économique

Le MAINC et le ministère de l'Expansion industrielle régionale (MEIR) financent des programmes destinés à combattre un chômage substantiel, à favoriser la mise en valeur des ressources et à réduire l'état de dépendance des autochtones.

Depuis le milieu des années 1960, la proportion des Indiens qui vivent à l'extérieur des réserves a presque doublé et, en 1980, elle atteignait environ 30 p. 100. Si le gouvernement fédéral fournit certains services directement aux Indiens hors réserves, par exemple des prestations non couvertes par les régimes d'assurance-santé, il est d'avis que les gouvernements

provinciaux devraient leur offrir les mêmes services de base qu'aux autres résidents de la province. Cependant, certaines provinces ont toujours considéré que les Indiens relèvent de la compétence fédérale, où qu'ils habitent. En pratique, les provinces fournissent habituellement les services requis, mais certains comme le bien-être social et les soins à l'enfance ne sont offerts aux Indiens qu'après 12 mois consécutifs de résidence à l'extérieur des réserves.

### Services destinés aux Inuit

Le gouvernement fédéral fournit directement certains services aux Inuit des Territoires du Nord-Ouest, mais la plupart sont offerts par le gouvernement territorial, dont les recettes consistent à plus de 80 p. 100 en transferts reçus du gouvernement canadien. Les Inuit du Nouveau-Québec reçoivent des services semblables du gouvernement du Québec et des administrations locales qui ont été élues au lendemain de la Convention de la Baie James et du Nord québécois signée en 1975. Le gouvernement fédéral contribue au financement de ces services. Au Labrador, c'est le gouvernement de Terre-Neuve qui assume principalement la responsabilité des services offerts aux Inuit, dans le cadre d'une entente de partage des coûts avec le gouvernement fédéral. Signalons enfin que les Inuit du Nouveau-Québec et du Labrador ont aussi accès à bon nombre des services offerts aux Indiens inscrits des réserves.

### Programmes fédéraux destinés aux Indiens non inscrits et aux Métis

Ces groupes peuvent avoir accès à un certain nombre de programmes fédéraux mis en oeuvre pour répondre aux besoins particuliers des autochtones, dont les suivants:

- 1) le Programme de logement pour les ruraux et les autochtones (SCHL), qui contribue à améliorer les conditions de logement des autochtones de toutes les régions du Canada;
- 2) le Programme des centres d'accueil autochtones (SE), destiné à faciliter l'adaptation des autochtones au milieu urbain;
- 3) le Programme des étudiants en droit autochtones (JUS), destiné aux autochtones qui aspirent à pratiquer le droit;

- 4) le Programme d'aide parajudiciaire aux autochtones (JUS), qui offre des services parajudiciaires aux accusés;
- 5) le Programme national de perfectionnement des autochtones (Commission de la Fonction publique - CFP), qui vise à accroître la représentation des autochtones aux niveaux intermédiaires et supérieurs de la Fonction publique;
- 6) le Programme des carrières du Grand Nord (CFP), qui offre des possibilités de formation et de perfectionnement aux autochtones en leur réservant certains postes dans la Fonction publique;
- 7) le Programme des stagiaires autochtones (Emploi et Immigration Canada - EIC), qui offre des emplois d'été aux étudiants autochtones dans les bureaux d'EIC;
- 8) le Programme de développement économique des autochtones (MEIR), destiné à favoriser la création d'entreprises et le développement économique chez les autochtones du Canada;
- 9) les Ententes spéciales ARDA (aménagement rural et développement agricole) (MEIR), qui visent à améliorer les perspectives d'emploi et de revenu des personnes défavorisées, en particulier celles d'ascendance autochtone, qui vivent en milieu rural et dans les régions éloignées.

## VUE D'ENSEMBLE DES DÉPENSES FÉDÉRALES

Les dépenses fédérales consacrées aux programmes des autochtones ont augmenté régulièrement au cours des dix dernières années, tant en dollars réels qu'en proportion des dépenses totales au titre des programmes fédéraux. Seuls les frais du service de la dette nationale ont augmenté plus rapidement.

En dollars réels, les dépenses dans ce secteur ont augmenté de 76 p. 100 depuis 1975-1976, soit un taux de croissance à peu près trois fois supérieur à l'augmentation de la population autochtone durant la même période; en dollars absolus, les dépenses ont augmenté de 265 p. 100 en dix ans.

Ces chiffres montrent toute l'importance que le gouvernement fédéral accorde aux programmes destinés aux autochtones. En 1986, malgré une situation financière très difficile, il leur a consacré pas loin de 2,8 milliards \$. Même si la modération financière demeure une priorité constante, le Premier ministre a fait savoir que les dépenses dans ce secteur seraient maintenues à leurs niveaux actuels.

Le tableau qui suit donne une ventilation par ministère des dépenses fédérales engagées en 1985-1986. Un grand nombre de ministères et d'organismes fédéraux offrent des programmes et des services aux populations autochtones, mais c'est évidemment au ministère des Affaires indiennes et du Nord canadien que revient la plus grande part des budgets consacrés aux autochtones.

Dépenses fédérales approximatives  
au titre des autochtones, 1985-1986

<u>Ministère</u>	<u>millions de \$</u>
Affaires indiennes et du Nord canadien	2 044
Santé et Bien-être Canada	324
Expansion industrielle régionale	56
Société canadienne d'hypothèques et de logement	78
Secrétariat d'État	51
Emploi et Immigration Canada	182
Autres ministères ou organismes	50
	<hr/>
TOTAL	<u>2 785</u>

Les dépenses fédérales consacrées aux autochtones servent en majeure partie à offrir des services essentiels (éducation, santé et services sociaux, par exemple) aux Indiens inscrits vivant dans les réserves. Le tableau qui suit résume les dépenses fédérales par secteur de programmes.

Dépenses fédérales approximatives au titre des  
autochtones par secteur de programmes, 1985-1986

<u>Secteur</u>	<u>millions de \$</u>
Éducation	595
Logement et équipements collectifs	410
Santé	342
Services sociaux	345
Développement économique et emploi	346
Transferts aux gouvernements territoriaux	312
Administration	97
Administration des bandes	140
Revendications autochtones	45
Divers	153
	<hr/>
TOTAL	<u>2 785</u>

En tant que citoyens canadiens, les autochtones bénéficient aussi de tous les programmes fédéraux, y compris les allocations familiales, la sécurité de la vieillesse et l'assurance-chômage. Les prestations versées aux autochtones dans le cadre de ces programmes ne sont pas comprises dans les chiffres donnés plus haut.

## DÉVELOPPEMENT ÉCONOMIQUE DES AUTOCHTONES

L'aide au développement économique des autochtones n'est pas un phénomène nouveau, mais la publication en 1983 du Rapport du Comité spécial sur l'autonomie politique des Indiens au Canada (le rapport Penner) a suscité un intérêt croissant pour cette question et pour la mise en place de meilleurs mécanismes. Le Comité soutient que l'autonomie politique n'a de sens que si elle peut s'appuyer sur une base économique viable contrôlée par les autochtones à l'échelle de leurs collectivités.

Le gouvernement fédéral est entièrement de cet avis, comme l'a affirmé le Premier ministre du Canada, le très honorable Brian Mulroney, à l'occasion de la Conférence des premiers ministres de 1985. Le Premier ministre a alors déclaré que l'autonomie gouvernementale et le développement économique des autochtones étaient étroitement liés et a engagé son gouvernement à poursuivre ces deux objectifs de front.

Les autochtones peuvent obtenir une aide au développement économique par le biais de différents programmes fédéraux, dont les plus importants sont le Programme de développement économique des autochtones (PDÉA), le Programme de développement économique du ministère des Affaires indiennes et du Nord canadien (MAINC), le Programme de développement économique des Inuit, du même ministère, les Ententes spéciales ARDA (aménagement rural et développement agricole) du ministère de l'Expansion industrielle régionale (MEIR), et les Ententes de développement du Nord. On trouvera ci-après une brève description de chacun de ces programmes. Signalons toutefois que les autochtones profitent aussi d'autres programmes fédéraux de développement économique qui s'adressent à l'ensemble des Canadiens.

Le Programme de développement économique des autochtones, administré par le MEIR, s'adresse à tous les Métis, Inuit, Indiens inscrits et non inscrits et accorde une aide financière directe à la création d'entreprises et aux initiatives de développement économique considérées comme viables. Il joue également un rôle de coordination au sein du gouvernement afin d'améliorer l'accès des autochtones aux autres programmes fédéraux et de les conseiller sur la façon de tirer de ces programmes le maximum d'avantages pour leurs entreprises. Le Programme comprend différents volets, dont ceux des institutions financières et économiques autochtones et des projets spéciaux. On entend par projets spéciaux la création,

l'acquisition ou la modernisation d'entreprises commerciales viables et différentes initiatives de formation, d'innovation et de commercialisation. C'est le Conseil de développement économique autochtone, composé de 20 membres nommés par décret, qui supervise l'exécution du Programme. La majorité de ses membres sont autochtones et tous ont une grande expérience des affaires et du développement économique autochtone.

Le Programme de développement économique du MAINC, qui existe depuis la fin des années 1940, met à la disposition des autochtones des conseils, de l'aide, des fonds et des services de formation dans les domaines suivants: création d'entreprises, développement de l'emploi et des perspectives d'emploi, aide à la mise en place d'institutions. Les fonds disponibles sont accordés par l'entremise des bureaux régionaux et des bureaux de district que compte le MAINC à la grandeur du pays; les requérants peuvent être des particuliers, des personnes morales, des institutions ou des conseils de bande, indiens ou inuit. Le programme a connu une réorientation majeure à la suite des travaux d'un groupe de travail ministériel mis sur pied en 1985 pour faire rapport au ministère sur la meilleure façon de favoriser le développement économique des Indiens. Le groupe de travail recommandait d'insister davantage sur la présence des entrepreneurs sur les marchés, l'élimination des obstacles structurels à la croissance économique, le perfectionnement des compétences en affaires, la mise en place d'institutions et la coordination interministérielle des programmes gouvernementaux d'aide au développement économique.

Le Programme de développement économique des Inuit est administré par le gouvernement des Territoires du Nord-Ouest et relève du Programme des affaires du Nord du MAINC. Il fournit une aide économique aux Inuit sous la forme de prêts, de garanties de prêts bancaires et de contributions. Les demandes de prêts sont examinées par le Conseil consultatif des prêts aux Esquimaux; les demandes de garanties de prêts bancaires et les contributions sont traitées par les administrations fédérale et territoriale. Le Programme appuie la création d'entreprises et des initiatives de développement économique telles que la formation de coopératives, l'aménagement d'installations et différents projets spéciaux.

Les Ententes spéciales ARDA sont des ententes fédérales-provinciales-territoriales qui ont pour objet d'améliorer les perspectives d'emploi et de revenu des personnes défavorisées, en particulier celles d'ascendance autochtone, qui vivent en milieu rural et dans les régions éloignées. À l'heure actuelle, des ententes de ce genre sont

en vigueur en Colombie-Britannique, en Saskatchewan, au Manitoba, au Yukon et dans les Territoires du Nord-Ouest. Chacune prévoit une aide aux entreprises commerciales, aux activités primaires de production et aux initiatives d'adaptation sociale. Le volet le plus important est celui des entreprises commerciales, qui prévoit une aide financière à la création, l'expansion ou l'acquisition de petites entreprises. Ce sont des comités consultatifs composés de représentants des organisations autochtones et des gouvernements fédéral, provinciaux et territoriaux qui veillent à l'application des Ententes. Leur représentation étant majoritaire ou égale à celle des non-autochtones, les autochtones ont pu diriger l'élaboration des lignes directrices de façon à adapter le programme aux besoins de chaque région.

Les Ententes de développement du Nord conclues avec l'Alberta, la Saskatchewan et le Manitoba s'adressent à tous les résidents du Nord, y compris les personnes d'ascendance autochtone. À l'échelon fédéral, elles relèvent de la compétence du MEIR, comme les Ententes spéciales ARDA. Elles recouvrent toutes sortes de programmes destinés à accroître la participation des résidents au développement économique de leur région et à favoriser une mise en valeur ordonnée et rationnelle des ressources naturelles.

De toute évidence, le gouvernement fédéral est toujours déterminé à assurer le développement économique des autochtones. Dans une allocution prononcée devant les Inuit à Kuujuaq, au Nouveau-Québec, le Premier ministre Mulroney a insisté sur le fait que le Canada avait l'obligation, en tant que nation, d'offrir des débouchés et des emplois à ses autochtones, de leur fournir des soins de santé, de leur assurer un logement adéquat et de préserver leur dignité humaine.

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# Information

## A RECORD OF ABORIGINAL CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM

The following material provides basic, background information on Canada's aboriginal peoples and subjects of concern to them. Topics include:

- \* The Aboriginal Constitutional Process 1
- \* Milestones in Aboriginal Rights 7

Published under the authority of the  
Hon. Bill McKnight, P.C., M.P.,  
Minister of Indian Affairs and  
Northern Development,  
Ottawa, 1987.

QS-6036-040-BB-A1  
Catalogue No. R6-1/4-1987  
ISBN 0-662-55340-3

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## THE ABORIGINAL CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESS

On March 26 and 27, 1987, Canada's First Ministers met to discuss aboriginal constitutional matters. Representatives of Yukon and the Northwest Territories and four national aboriginal associations also attended as participants. This was the final First Ministers' Conference (FMC) required by section 37.1 of the Constitution Act, 1982 on aboriginal rights. It was not successful in reaching agreement on a constitutional amendment on aboriginal self-government.

The constitutional process that has led to this final conference began with the proclamation of the Constitution Act, 1982, which contained important provisions that specifically related to aboriginal peoples:

- \* Section 25 provided that the guarantees contained in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms would not be interpreted so as to abrogate or derogate from aboriginal, treaty or other rights or freedoms;
- \* Section 35 recognized and affirmed existing aboriginal and treaty rights (subsection 35(1)) and included in the definition of "aboriginal peoples of Canada" the Indians, Inuit and Métis (subsection 35(2)); and
- \* Section 37 provided for a process whereby proposals for additional rights for aboriginal peoples would be examined by First Ministers. It specified that:
  - a) a First Ministers' Conference was to be convened within one year (subsection 37(1)) to discuss the definition of the rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada to be included in the Constitution of Canada; and
  - b) representatives of aboriginal peoples (subsection 37(2)) and the governments of the Northwest Territories and Yukon (subsection 37(3)) were to be invited to participate in discussing agenda items that directly affected them.

By these latter two sections, the Constitution Act, 1982 made an important distinction between existing rights of aboriginal peoples, and additional rights that might be included in the Constitution as a result of discussions held pursuant to section 37.

From the outset, however, sections 35 and 37 have been subject to differing interpretations by governments and aboriginal associations. In the view of governments, the existing aboriginal rights that were given protection by section 35 related to traditional use and occupancy of land such as hunting, fishing, gathering and trapping, or rights that now exist or may be acquired through land claims agreements. The section did not revive or restore aboriginal and treaty rights that had already been lost by the date of proclamation of the Constitution Act, 1982. By contrast, the aboriginal leaders held the view that the protection offered extended to a full range of rights that they argue aboriginal peoples had exercised in the past and which continue to exist.

As a consequence of these divergent views of section 35, governments and aboriginal groups have approached the process set out in section 37 with differing priorities. While governments have regarded "the section 37 process" as a means of identifying and protecting new rights to be acquired by aboriginal peoples through formalized negotiations at the highest level, aboriginal groups have seen it as one of restoration and clarification of rights.

The first of the FMCs mandated by section 37 of the Constitution Act, 1982 was held March 15-16, 1983. This conference, which was preceded by extensive consultations between governments and aboriginal representatives, resulted in an Accord signed by the federal government and all provinces except Quebec. Aboriginal representatives and leaders of the territorial governments were also signatories to this Accord in order to indicate their agreement with its content.

The 1983 Accord incorporated three achievements:

- a) it established an agenda for future conferences;
- b) it provided for a subsequent FMC within one year, and established a mandatory and continuing preparatory process for ministers and aboriginal representatives; and
- c) it provided for a resolution for amendments to the Constitution that were ultimately proclaimed in June 1984 as the Constitution Amendment Proclamation, 1983.

The effect of these amendments was as follows:

- \* to confirm that the constitutional recognition of treaty rights includes those rights of the aboriginal peoples that exist by way of land claims agreements or may be so acquired (subsection 35(3));
- \* to guarantee existing aboriginal and treaty rights recognized by subsection 35(1) equally to male and female persons (subsection 35(4));
- \* to make a commitment to the effect that before any further amendments were made to provisions of the Constitution directly relating to aboriginal peoples, aboriginal leaders would be invited to participate in an FMC to discuss the proposed changes (section 35.1); and
- \* to make constitutional provision for two further FMCs to be held by April 17, 1985 and by April 17, 1987 respectively (subsection 37.1(1)).

On the basis of the Accord, an intensive preparatory process was undertaken during the period leading to the 1984 FMC. Working groups were organized around a four-point agenda that represented a consensus on a workable portion of the agenda contained in the Accord. The items included in this shortened version were: equality rights, aboriginal title and rights, treaties and treaty rights, land and resources, and aboriginal self-government.

Although the items dealing with equality rights and section 35 issues were explored intensively, self-government emerged as the pivotal issue. It became evident by the conclusion of the process leading to the FMC that participants considered self-government as the key item.

As a result, various participants proposed a range of options to deal with the self-government issue, from constitutional recognition of an inherent and unqualified right to aboriginal self-government to recognition of the right only after its full definition. The challenge facing the 1984 FMC was to find a workable consensus.

Although no agreement resulted from the conference (held March 8-9, 1984), a clarification of positions did occur. The federal government presented a draft resolution containing a proposed constitutional amendment of a non-justiciable nature that would

commit governments to the establishment of institutions of aboriginal self-government in accordance with the terms of federal and provincial legislation. Aboriginal representatives, on the other hand, sought immediate entrenchment of self-government as a right, a proposal unacceptable to a majority of provinces and the federal government, who felt that such a right could have unknown consequences and should not be left to be defined by the courts.

A further intense preparatory process was undertaken leading to the 1985 FMC. As negotiations continued, it became clear to federal officials that the wide diversity of aboriginal communities, coupled with the provincial consensus on the unacceptability of a general undefined right of aboriginal self-government, called for a flexible process that could be tailored to reflect individual community aspirations while providing for substantive participation by the provinces.

To reflect this understanding, federal Ministers, at a federal-provincial ministerial meeting in December 1984, tabled a proposal that would become the core of the federal amendment tabled at the 1985 FMC. Under this proposal, the rights of the aboriginal peoples to self-government that were contained in agreements negotiated between governments and the aboriginal peoples concerned would be given constitutional protection. Each level of government would negotiate within its own authority under the Constitution, and the rights contained in agreements with representatives of aboriginal communities and groups would have the same constitutional protection as rights contained in treaties and land claims agreements. In the federal government's view, many different forms of self-government would be possible under this proposal and indeed would be necessary to respond to the differing requirements of aboriginal communities across Canada.

At that same meeting, a number of governments argued that parties should be working on practical, non-constitutional initiatives that would benefit the aboriginal peoples. While concurring in this, the federal government declared that constitutional recognition of aboriginal self-government rights, subject to definition through negotiations, would create the necessary framework for the process, and would pave the way to such practical community-level discussions.

At the FMC held April 2-3, 1985, the Prime Minister acknowledged the importance of self-government, and elaborated on the significance that constitutional recognition for the principle could confer:

"Constitutional protection for the principle of self-government is an overriding objective because it is the constitutional manifestation of a relationship, an unbreakable social contract between aboriginal peoples and their governments."

To give effect to this view, the federal government tabled a proposal that was similar to that tabled at the December 1984 meeting, a proposal that it considered a realistic compromise given the divergent views of aboriginal associations and some provincial governments.

Although agreement was not ultimately achieved at this conference, an unprecedented level of consensus was reached. Seven provinces appeared ready to support a modification of the federal draft proposed by Saskatchewan if the aboriginal associations at the table agreed. Two of these associations did not. The Assembly of First Nations stated that it could accept nothing less than entrenchment of an inherent and unqualified right to self-government; the Inuit Committee on National Issues withheld its approval because provinces would have a mandatory role in the negotiation and constitutional protection of self-government agreements, and because of its desire to have the commitment of governments to negotiate these agreements placed in the Constitution as opposed to a political accord.

A subsequent ministerial meeting was convened in June 1985 to address various versions of the federal proposal after a period of reflection and consultation; this meeting, too, failed to agree on a proposal for an amendment. For its part, the federal government declared that despite the inability to reach consensus, it would be proceeding, within its existing authorities, with community-level negotiations aimed at providing concrete examples of self-government.

Since June 1985, multilateral and bilateral discussions have continued as governments have attempted to ensure a thorough discussion of all perspectives on a full range of constitutional issues. This process has resulted in considerable clarification and detailing of positions, and led all participants to conclude that aboriginal self-government would be the pivotal issue of the 1987 FMC. The challenge, however, continues to be the requirement to bridge the range of views that still exists on this issue. Aboriginal associations continue to argue for constitutional recognition of a free-standing right to aboriginal self-government, while most governments still favour recognition of a right which is given content through negotiation. To meet these various concerns, the federal government has advocated strengthened recognition

of the right to aboriginal self-government while continuing to insist that the detailed enforceable content of those rights be set out in negotiated agreements. The process envisaged by the federal government is a tripartite one, in which both orders of government and the aboriginal peoples are committed to the principle of self-government. It should be noted that any amendment that may result from the constitutional process mandated by section 37.1 is not to be construed so as to derogate from any existing aboriginal or treaty rights aboriginal peoples may have under subsection 35(1).

The 1987 FMC was the last conference in the constitutionally-mandated process that began with the proclamation of the Constitution Act, 1982. Unfortunately, it too was unsuccessful in reaching a constitutional amendment on aboriginal self-government. Nevertheless, the federal proposal made at the 1987 FMC remains on the table and could serve as the basis for further discussions. However, for any constitutional amendment on aboriginal self-government to succeed, it must meet the requirements of the Constitution's amending formula.

### MILESTONES IN ABORIGINAL RIGHTS

Contemporary negotiation of aboriginal and treaty rights takes place against a long historical record of treaties, constitutional enactments, land claims settlements and landmark decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada.

#### **Maritime Treaties: 1725-1794**

Several "Treaties of Peace and Friendship" were entered into with Indians in the Maritimes over this period. The Indians did not cede land by these treaties.

#### **Royal Proclamation of 1763**

The proclamation, which set out the boundaries of the newly-acquired province of Quebec and those of the American colonies, reserved specific lands for the use of Indians, and established a process that required the consent of those Indians affected before the Crown could acquire clear title to their lands in the future.

#### **Land Treaties: 1764-1923**

Treaties were the instruments used by the Crown to clear lands of aboriginal title so that settlement or resource development could proceed. Initially lump sum cash payments were made for these land surrenders; eventually, however, the Crown set aside reserves and provided benefits to those surrendering title. Principal areas not covered by treaties are most of British Columbia, Yukon, Quebec and the central and eastern Arctic. The last treaty was signed in 1923, with additional bands adhering to older treaties until 1956.

#### **Constitution Act, 1867**

Section 91(24) gave the Parliament of Canada jurisdiction over "Indians, and Lands reserved for the Indians." It did not, however, define the term "Indians".

#### **Indian Acts: 1876-1951**

First adopted by Parliament in 1876 and last completely revised in 1951, the Indian Act is the major piece of federal

legislation dealing with Indians. The current act establishes an administrative and legal framework for Indians, and defines "Indian" on the basis of ancestry and inclusion in earlier registration lists.

#### **Constitutional Recognition of the Inuit: 1939**

In a decision known as Re Eskimos, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in April 1939 that the term "Indians" in section 91(24) of the Constitution Act, 1867 included Eskimos, now known as the Inuit. This ruling brought the Inuit within federal jurisdiction.

#### **Calder, 1973**

Calder, 1973 involved an application by the Nisga'a Indians for a judicial declaration that they held aboriginal title to lands they occupied in British Columbia. Although the Nisga'a lost their case on other grounds before the Supreme Court of Canada, the Court split evenly on the question of whether aboriginal title still existed or had lapsed. Subsequently, a federal policy for the settlement of comprehensive and specific claims was announced in 1973.

#### **Comprehensive Claims Settlements**

Three claims agreements have been signed since the federal government's policy statement in 1973:

- \* the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (1975);
- \* the Northeastern Quebec Agreement (1978); and
- \* the Inuvialuit Final Agreement (1984).

In these agreements, which are modern, more complex versions of treaties, aboriginal title has been surrendered in exchange for specific rights and benefits.

#### **Constitution Act, 1982**

This enactment contained three sections that relate specifically to aboriginal peoples:

- \* Section 25 provided that the guarantees contained in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms would not be interpreted so as to abrogate or derogate from aboriginal, treaty or other rights or freedoms;

- \* Section 35 recognized and affirmed existing aboriginal and treaty rights (subsection 35(1)) and defined "aboriginal peoples of Canada" to include the Indians, Inuit and Métis (subsection 35(2)); and
- \* Section 37 provided for a process whereby proposals for additional rights for aboriginal peoples would be examined by First Ministers by specifying that:
  - a) a First Ministers' Conference would be convened within one year (subsection 37(1)) to discuss constitutional matters affecting aboriginal peoples (subsection 37(2)); and
  - b) representatives of aboriginal peoples (subsection 37(2)) and the governments of the Northwest Territories and Yukon (subsection 37(3)) were to be invited to participate in discussions on agenda items affecting them.

The First Ministers' Conference that was mandated under section 37 of the Constitution Act, 1982 was held March 15-16, 1983.

#### Constitution Amendment Proclamation, 1983

This enactment, which was proclaimed as part of the Constitution on June 21, 1984, gave effect to the constitutional Accord reached when First Ministers met March 15-16, 1983 under the terms of section 37 of the Constitution Act, 1982. The Accord, which was agreed to by the federal government and nine provinces, was also signed by representatives of both territorial governments and the four national aboriginal associations. Constitutional changes made by the Constitution Amendment Proclamation, 1983 include:

- \* constitutional recognition of rights acquired through both future and existing land claims agreements (subsection 35(3));
- \* equal guarantee of existing aboriginal and treaty rights to men and women (subsection 35(4));
- \* constitutional commitment that before effecting any further amendments to provisions of the Constitution dealing with aboriginal peoples, aboriginal leaders would be invited to participate in a constitutional conference with First Ministers to discuss the proposed change (section 35.1); and

- \* provision for two further FMCs to be held by April 17, 1985, and by April 17, 1987, respectively (subsection 37.1(1)). (The Accord also provided for a subsequent FMC to be held by March 16, 1984, although this meeting was not guaranteed in the Constitution Amendment Proclamation, 1983.)

Two First Ministers' Conferences have been held since the constitutional Accord was reached in March 1983. These took place March 8-9, 1984, and April 2-3, 1985, and provided valuable insights into the issues discussed and the positions of participants. The final meeting mandated by subsection 37.1(1) was held March 26-27, 1987.

#### **Penner Report, 1983**

The Report of the Special Committee of the House of Commons on Indian Self-Government (commonly known as the Penner Report) was tabled in the House of Commons in 1983. It recommended a new relationship with Canada's aboriginal peoples based on self-government.

#### **Cree-Naskapi (of Quebec) Act, 1984**

This act set in place the self-government arrangements for the Indians of Quebec who were parties to the first modern land claims agreements, the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement of 1975 and the Northeastern Quebec Agreement of 1978.

#### **An Act to Amend the Indian Act "Bill C-31", 1985**

This act, which was passed by Parliament June 28, 1985, eliminated provisions of the Indian Act that were sexually discriminatory and allowed for reinstatement of certain band members. It also provided for Indian control of band membership.

#### **Sechelt Indian Band Self-Government Act "Bill C-93", 1986**

This act, which was proclaimed October 9, 1986, is the first self-government legislation to be approved by Parliament since the community-based negotiations began. It has allowed British Columbia's Sechelt Band to assume control over their lands, resources, health and social services, education and local taxation. The government of British Columbia has stated its intention to enact companion provincial legislation.

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# Information

## LA RÉFORME CONSTITUTIONNELLE ET LES AUTOCHTONES

On trouvera dans les pages qui suivent des renseignements d'ordre général sur les peuples autochtones du Canada et les questions qui les touchent. Ce document comprend deux parties :

- \* Les autochtones et le processus constitutionnel 1
- \* L'évolution des droits des autochtones 7

Publié avec l'autorisation de  
l'hon. Bill McKnight, c.p., député,  
ministre des Affaires indiennes  
et du Nord canadien,  
Ottawa, 1987.

QS-6036-040-BB-A1  
N° de catalogue R6-1/4-1987  
ISBN 0-662-55340-3

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LES AUTOCHTONES ET LE PROCESSUS CONSTITUTIONNEL

Les premiers ministres du Canada se sont réunis les 26 et 27 mars dernier pour discuter des questions constitutionnelles intéressant les autochtones. Des représentants du Yukon et des Territoires du Nord-Ouest et de quatre associations nationales d'autochtones ont aussi participé aux délibérations. Il s'agissait de la dernière des Conférences des premiers ministres (CPM) sur les droits des autochtones exigées par l'article 37.1 de la Loi constitutionnelle de 1982. Les parties en cause ne sont pas parvenues à une entente sur une modification de la Constitution concernant l'autonomie gouvernementale des autochtones.

Cette dernière conférence s'inscrit dans un processus constitutionnel qui a débuté avec la promulgation de la Loi constitutionnelle de 1982. Cette loi renfermait d'importantes dispositions se rapportant expressément aux peuples autochtones:

- \* L'article 25 stipulait que les garanties contenues dans la Charte canadienne des droits et libertés ne pouvaient porter atteinte aux droits ou libertés ancestraux, issus de traités ou autres, des peuples autochtones du Canada.
- \* L'article 35 reconnaissait et confirmait les droits existants, ancestraux ou issus de traités, des peuples autochtones (paragraphe 35(1)) et précisait que "peuples autochtones du Canada" s'entend notamment des Indiens, des Inuit et des Métis (paragraphe 35(2)).
- \* L'article 37 établissait un processus qui permettrait aux premiers ministres d'examiner des propositions visant à conférer des droits additionnels aux peuples autochtones. Il prévoyait expressément que:
  - a) une Conférence des premiers ministres devait avoir lieu dans l'année (paragraphe 37(1)) et porter sur la définition des droits des peuples autochtones à inscrire dans la Constitution du Canada; et
  - b) des représentants des peuples autochtones (paragraphe 37(2)) et des gouvernements des Territoires du Nord-Ouest et du Yukon (paragraphe 37(3)) devaient être invités à participer aux travaux portant sur les questions à l'ordre du jour qui les intéressaient directement.

Par ces deux derniers articles, la Loi constitutionnelle de 1982 établissait une distinction importante entre les droits existants des peuples autochtones et les droits additionnels qui pourraient être inscrits dans la Constitution consécutivement aux délibérations prévues à l'article 37.

Dès le départ, toutefois, les articles 35 et 37 ont été interprétés différemment par les gouvernements et par les associations autochtones. De l'avis des premiers, l'article 35 ne protégeait que des droits liés à l'utilisation et à l'occupation traditionnelles des terres, tels des droits de chasse, de pêche, de cueillette et de piégeage, ou des droits existants ou susceptibles d'être conférés par des accords sur des revendications territoriales. Il ne ranimait ni ne restaurait les droits ancestraux et issus de traités qui avaient déjà été perdus au moment de la promulgation de la Loi constitutionnelle de 1982. Les dirigeants autochtones, par contre, soutenaient que la protection de l'article 35 s'appliquait intégralement à tous les droits que, selon eux, les autochtones avaient exercés dans le passé et qui continuaient d'exister.

Étant donné ces divergences de vues, il n'est pas étonnant que les gouvernements et les groupes autochtones aient abordé le processus prévu à l'article 37 avec des priorités différentes. Les gouvernements y ont vu un moyen de cerner et de protéger les nouveaux droits qu'acquerraient les peuples autochtones par la voie de négociations officielles au plus haut niveau, tandis que les groupes autochtones y ont vu un moyen de restaurer et de clarifier des droits.

La première des CPM exigées par l'article 37 de la Loi constitutionnelle de 1982 s'est déroulée les 15 et 16 mars 1983. Précédée de consultations exhaustives entre les gouvernements et les représentants autochtones, elle a abouti à un accord signé par le gouvernement fédéral et toutes les provinces, à l'exception du Québec. Les représentants autochtones et les chefs des gouvernements territoriaux l'ont également signé pour signifier qu'ils en agréaient la teneur.

L'accord de 1983 se signalait par trois importants progrès:

- a) il établissait le programme de travail des conférences futures;
- b) il prévoyait la tenue d'une autre CPM avant l'expiration d'un délai d'un an et instituait un processus préparatoire permanent et obligatoire à l'intention des ministres et des représentants autochtones; et

- c) il prévoyait une résolution concernant des modifications constitutionnelles qui ont finalement été sanctionnées en juin 1984 sous le nom de Proclamation de 1983 modifiant la Constitution.

Ces modifications ont eu pour effet:

- \* d'inclure parmi les droits issus de traités, reconnus par la Constitution, les droits existants issus d'accords sur des revendications territoriales ou ceux susceptibles d'être ainsi acquis (paragraphe 35(3));
- \* de garantir également aux personnes des deux sexes les droits ancestraux ou issus de traités reconnus par le paragraphe 35(1) (paragraphe 35(4));
- \* de créer un engagement de principe selon lequel aucune autre modification ne pourrait être apportée aux dispositions de la Constitution touchant directement les peuples autochtones sans que les dirigeants autochtones ne soient invités à participer à une CPM pour en discuter (article 35.1); et
- \* de prévoir dans la Constitution la tenue de deux autres CPM, au plus tard le 17 avril 1985 et le 17 avril 1987 respectivement (paragraphe 37.1(1)).

La CPM de 1984, prévue par l'accord de 1983, a été précédée de préparatifs intenses. Des groupes de travail ont été constitués pour étudier un ordre du jour en quatre points qui, de l'avis général, représentait une partie réalisable du programme de travail établi par l'accord de 1983. Les éléments de cet ordre du jour abrégé étaient les suivants: droits découlant de l'égalité, titres et droits autochtones, traités et droits issus de traités, territoire et ressources, et autonomie gouvernementale autochtone.

Si les droits relatifs à l'égalité et les questions découlant de l'article 35 ont été étudiés en profondeur, c'est l'autonomie gouvernementale qui s'est imposée comme l'élément central des discussions. Il était clair à la fin de l'étape préparatoire que ce serait là le sujet principal de la CPM.

Diverses options ont alors été proposées, depuis la reconnaissance dans la Constitution d'un droit inhérent et absolu à l'autonomie gouvernementale jusqu'à la reconnaissance de ce droit seulement après qu'il aurait été pleinement défini. Il s'agissait donc pour les participants à la CPM de 1984 de parvenir à un consensus.

La Conférence (tenue les 8 et 9 mars 1984) n'a débouché sur aucune entente, mais elle a permis de clarifier les positions. Le gouvernement fédéral a présenté un projet de résolution contenant une modification constitutionnelle à caractère non justiciable qui engagerait les gouvernements à la mise sur pied d'institutions par lesquelles s'exercerait l'autonomie gouvernementale des autochtones, conformément à la législation fédérale et provinciale. Les représentants autochtones voulaient pour leur part la consécration immédiate du droit à l'autonomie gouvernementale, une proposition que le gouvernement fédéral et une majorité des provinces jugeaient inacceptable, estimant qu'un tel droit non défini pourrait avoir des conséquences imprévues et qu'il ne fallait pas laisser aux tribunaux la tâche de le définir.

La CPM de 1985 a fait elle aussi l'objet de préparatifs intenses. À mesure que les négociations avançaient, il est apparu aux représentants fédéraux qu'étant donné la grande diversité des collectivités autochtones et l'opposition des provinces à un droit général et imprécis à l'autonomie gouvernementale, il fallait un processus assez souple pour laisser s'exprimer les aspirations propres à chaque collectivité tout en permettant une participation substantielle des provinces.

C'est dans cette optique que les ministres fédéraux ont déposé, lors d'une réunion ministérielle fédérale-provinciale tenue en décembre 1984, une proposition qui allait devenir le noyau de la modification présentée par le gouvernement fédéral à la CPM de 1985. Selon cette proposition, les droits afférents à l'autonomie gouvernementale qui seraient contenus dans des accords négociés entre des gouvernements et des populations autochtones seraient garantis par la Constitution. Chaque ordre de gouvernement négocierait dans les domaines de compétence que lui confère la Constitution, et les droits contenus dans des accords conclus avec les représentants de collectivités et de groupes autochtones recevraient la même protection constitutionnelle que les droits contenus dans les traités et les règlements de revendications territoriales. De l'avis du gouvernement fédéral, cette formule ouvrait la porte à diverses formes d'autonomie gouvernementale, ce qui était essentiel si on voulait répondre aux besoins propres à chacune des collectivités autochtones du Canada.

Au cours de la même réunion, un certain nombre de gouvernements ont fait valoir que les parties devraient se pencher sur des initiatives pratiques qui profiteraient aux peuples autochtones sans qu'interviennent nécessairement des

considérations d'ordre constitutionnel. Bien que d'accord avec cette proposition, le gouvernement fédéral a déclaré que la reconnaissance dans la Constitution de droits afférents à l'autonomie gouvernementale, sous réserve de leur définition par voie de négociation, établirait le cadre nécessaire et ouvrirait la voie à des initiatives de ce genre menées à l'échelle des collectivités autochtones elles-mêmes.

À la CPM de 1985, qui s'est déroulée les 2 et 3 avril, le Premier ministre a reconnu l'importance de l'autonomie gouvernementale et souligné ce que pourrait signifier la reconnaissance de ce principe dans la Constitution:

"La reconnaissance dans la Constitution du principe de l'autonomie gouvernementale m'apparaît être un objectif primordial parce qu'elle constitue la manifestation la plus solennelle de l'établissement d'un lien, d'un contrat social indissoluble entre les autochtones et les gouvernements."

Dans cet esprit, le gouvernement fédéral a déposé une proposition semblable à celle présentée à la réunion de décembre 1984, proposition qui constituait à son avis un compromis réaliste étant donné les divergences de vues des associations autochtones et de certains gouvernements provinciaux.

La CPM de 1985 n'a pas non plus abouti à un accord, mais elle a toutefois permis de dégager un consensus sans précédent. Sept provinces semblaient disposées à appuyer une modification du projet fédéral proposée par la Saskatchewan à condition que les associations autochtones présentes soient d'accord. Mais deux de ces associations ne l'entendaient pas ainsi. L'Assemblée des premières nations a fait savoir qu'elle n'accepterait rien de moins que des négociations sur un droit inhérent et absolu à l'autonomie gouvernementale; le Comité inuit sur les affaires nationales s'est quant à lui gardé d'approuver la proposition parce que les provinces joueraient obligatoirement un rôle dans la négociation et la garantie constitutionnelle des ententes relatives à l'autonomie gouvernementale, et parce qu'il souhaitait que l'engagement des gouvernements à négocier ces ententes soit inscrit dans la Constitution plutôt que dans un accord politique.

Après une période de réflexion et de consultations, une nouvelle réunion ministérielle a été convoquée en juin 1985 pour étudier différentes versions de la proposition fédérale; là encore, les participants n'ont pu convenir d'une modification. Malgré l'absence de consensus, le gouvernement

fédéral a déclaré pour sa part qu'il irait de l'avant et qu'il tiendrait, dans sa sphère de compétence, des négociations avec les collectivités autochtones afin de fournir des exemples concrets de l'autonomie gouvernementale.

Des discussions multilatérales et bilatérales se poursuivent depuis juin 1985, les gouvernements voulant que soient examinés à fond tous les points de vue sur toutes les questions constitutionnelles en cause. Ce processus a permis de préciser et d'étoffer considérablement les positions, et tous les participants sont maintenant convaincus que l'autonomie gouvernementale des autochtones serait le principal sujet de discussion à la CPM de 1987. Le défi reste toutefois le même, c'est-à-dire concilier les diverses opinions qui existent sur ce sujet. Les associations autochtones continuent de revendiquer la reconnaissance constitutionnelle d'un droit inhérent à l'autonomie gouvernementale, tandis que la plupart des gouvernements préféreraient la reconnaissance d'un droit dont l'exercice serait déterminé par voie de négociation. Conscient de ces différentes préoccupations, le gouvernement fédéral préconise une reconnaissance plus forte du principe de l'autonomie gouvernementale des autochtones tout en continuant d'insister sur le fait que les droits découlant de ce principe doivent être énoncés expressément dans des ententes négociées. La démarche envisagée par le gouvernement fédéral est tripartite, c'est-à-dire qu'elle suppose l'adhésion des deux ordres de gouvernement et des peuples autochtones au principe de l'autonomie gouvernementale. Il convient de signaler qu'aucune modification susceptible de découler du processus constitutionnel prévu par l'article 37.1 ne portera atteinte aux droits existants, ancestraux ou issus de traités, que peuvent avoir les peuples autochtones en vertu du paragraphe 35(1).

La CPM de 1987 constituait la dernière des conférences prévues dans le processus constitutionnel qui a débuté avec la promulgation de la Loi constitutionnelle de 1982. Malheureusement, elle n'a pas permis non plus de parvenir à une entente sur la façon de modifier la Constitution au chapitre de l'autonomie gouvernementale des autochtones. Néanmoins, la proposition formulée par le gouvernement fédéral à cette occasion pourrait servir de point de départ lors de discussions ultérieures. Toute modification de la Constitution à cet égard ne saurait d'ailleurs être un succès si elle ne respecte pas les exigences de la formule d'amendement.

## L'ÉVOLUTION DES DROITS DES AUTOCHTONES

Les négociations actuelles sur les droits ancestraux et les droits issus des traités ont comme toile de fond une longue suite de traités, de textes constitutionnels, de règlements de revendications territoriales et de décisions marquantes de la Cour suprême du Canada.

### Traités des Maritimes: 1725-1794

Durant cette période, plusieurs "traités de paix et d'amitié" ont été conclus avec les Indiens des Maritimes, sans qu'il y ait cession de terres.

### Proclamation royale de 1763

Cette proclamation établissait les frontières de la province de Québec nouvellement acquise et celles des colonies américaines, réservait certaines terres à l'usage des Indiens et établissait une démarche exigeant le consentement des Indiens concernés avant que la Couronne puisse acquérir un titre incontesté sur leurs territoires.

### Traités sur les terres: 1764-1923

La Couronne a eu recours à des traités pour libérer des terres du titre foncier indien afin d'y permettre la colonisation ou la mise en valeur de ressources. À l'origine, les cessions de terres se faisaient contre versement de paiements en espèces, puis la Couronne en est venue plus tard à établir des réserves et à accorder des avantages aux Indiens qui renonçaient à leur titre. Les principales régions non touchées par des traités sont la plus grande partie de la Colombie-Britannique, du Yukon et du Québec, ainsi que le centre et l'est de l'Arctique. Le dernier traité a été signé en 1923, mais d'autres bandes ont adhéré à des traités antérieurs jusqu'en 1956.

### Loi constitutionnelle de 1867

Le paragraphe 91(24) plaçait "les Indiens et les terres réservées aux Indiens" sous l'autorité législative du Parlement du Canada. Il ne définissait toutefois pas le terme "Indien".

### Lois sur les Indiens: 1876-1951

La Loi sur les Indiens, qui a été adoptée par le Parlement en 1876 et entièrement révisée pour la dernière fois en 1951, est la plus importante loi fédérale s'appliquant aux Indiens. Sa version actuelle établit un cadre administratif et juridique à l'intention des Indiens et elle définit un Indien en fonction de l'ascendance et de l'inscription sur une des listes antérieures.

### Reconnaissance constitutionnelle des Inuit: 1939

Dans une décision connue sous le nom de "Re Eskimos", la Cour suprême du Canada a jugé, en avril 1939, que le terme "Indiens" figurant au paragraphe 91(24) de la Loi constitutionnelle de 1867 incluait les Esquimaux, maintenant appelés Inuit. Ce jugement a eu pour effet de placer les Inuit sous la compétence fédérale.

### Affaire Calder: 1973

Dans l'affaire Calder, les Indiens nishgas tentaient d'obtenir des tribunaux une déclaration reconnaissant leur titre de propriété sur les terres qu'ils occupaient en Colombie-Britannique. La Cour suprême du Canada les a déboutés pour d'autres motifs, mais elle a rendu un jugement partagé sur la question de savoir si leur titre existait bel et bien ou s'il était expiré. Une politique fédérale concernant le règlement des revendications globales et particulières était annoncée plus tard la même année.

### Règlements de revendications globales

Trois accords sur des revendications globales ont été signés depuis que le gouvernement fédéral a fait connaître sa politique à ce sujet en 1973:

- \* la Convention de la Baie James et du Nord québécois de 1975
- \* la Convention du Nord-Est québécois de 1978
- \* la Convention définitive des Inuvialuit de 1984.

Par ces conventions, qui constituent des versions modernes et plus complexes des traités d'autrefois, le titre autochtone a été abandonné en échange de droits et d'avantages spécifiques.

### Loi constitutionnelle de 1982

Trois dispositions de cette loi se rapportaient expressément aux peuples autochtones:

- \* l'article 25 stipulait que les garanties contenues dans la Charte canadienne des droits et libertés ne pouvaient porter atteinte aux droits ou libertés ancestraux, issus de traités ou autres, des peuples autochtones du Canada;
- \* l'article 35 reconnaissait et confirmait les droits existants, ancestraux ou issus de traités, des peuples autochtones (paragraphe 35(1)) et précisait que "peuples autochtones du Canada" s'entend notamment des Indiens, des Inuit et des Métis (paragraphe 35(2)); et
- \* l'article 37 établissait un processus qui permettrait aux premiers ministres d'examiner des propositions visant à conférer des droits additionnels aux peuples autochtones; il prévoyait expressément que:
  - a) une Conférence des premiers ministres devait avoir lieu dans l'année (paragraphe 37(1)) et porter sur les questions constitutionnelles qui intéressent les peuples autochtones (paragraphe 37(2)); et
  - b) des représentants des peuples autochtones (paragraphe 37(2)) et des gouvernements des Territoires du Nord-Ouest et du Yukon (paragraphe 37(3)) devaient être invités à participer aux travaux sur les questions à l'ordre du jour qui les intéressaient directement.

La Conférence des premiers ministres exigée par l'article 37 de la Loi constitutionnelle de 1982 a eu lieu les 15 et 16 mars 1983.

#### Proclamation de 1983 modifiant la Constitution

Ce texte, qui est devenu partie intégrante de la Constitution le 21 juin 1984, a donné effet à l'accord constitutionnel conclu par les premiers ministres lors de leur conférence des 15 et 16 mars 1983, tenue conformément à l'article 37 de la Loi constitutionnelle de 1982. L'accord, auquel ont adhéré le gouvernement fédéral et neuf provinces, a aussi été signé par les représentants des deux administrations territoriales et des quatre associations nationales d'autochtones. La Proclamation de 1983 modifiant la Constitution comprend les éléments suivants:

- \* la reconnaissance constitutionnelle des droits issus d'accords sur des revendications territoriales ou ceux susceptibles d'être ainsi acquis (paragraphe 35(3));

- \* la garantie que les droits existants, ancestraux ou issus de traités, s'appliquent également aux personnes des deux sexes (paragraphe 35(4));
- \* l'engagement de principe selon lequel aucune autre modification ne peut être apportée aux dispositions de la Constitution qui concernent les peuples autochtones sans que les dirigeants autochtones ne soient invités à participer à une conférence constitutionnelle avec les premiers ministres pour en discuter (article 35.1); et
- \* la tenue de deux autres CPM, au plus tard le 17 avril 1985 et le 17 avril 1987 respectivement (paragraphe 37.1(1)). (L'accord prévoyait aussi qu'une autre CPM devait avoir lieu avant le 16 mars 1984, mais celle-là n'était pas garantie par la Proclamation de 1983 modifiant la Constitution.)

Deux Conférences des premiers ministres ont eu lieu depuis l'accord constitutionnel de mars 1983. Elles se sont déroulées respectivement les 8 et 9 mars 1984 et les 2 et 3 avril 1985 et ont permis d'approfondir les questions en jeu et de préciser les positions des participants. La dernière rencontre exigée par l'article 37.1 a eu lieu les 26 et 27 mars 1987.

#### **Rapport Penner: 1983**

Le rapport du Comité spécial de la Chambre des communes sur l'autonomie politique des Indiens (communément appelé rapport Penner) a été déposé à la Chambre en 1983. Il recommandait d'établir avec les peuples autochtones du Canada de nouvelles relations fondées sur l'autonomie gouvernementale.

#### **Loi sur les Cris et les Naskapis du Québec: 1984**

Cette loi a institué des mécanismes d'administration autonome à l'intention des Indiens du Québec avec lesquels ont été conclues les premières ententes sur des revendications territoriales de notre époque, soit la Convention de la Baie James et du Nord québécois de 1975 et la Convention du Nord-Est québécois de 1978.

#### **Projet de loi C-31 de 1985: Loi modifiant la Loi sur les Indiens**

Adoptée par le Parlement le 28 juin 1985, cette loi a aboli certaines dispositions de la Loi sur les Indiens qui laissaient libre cours à une discrimination fondée sur le sexe, a permis à certains membres exclus d'être réintégrés dans leur bande et a accordé aux Indiens le pouvoir de décider de l'appartenance à leurs bandes.

**Projet de loi C-93 de 1986: Loi relative à l'autonomie  
gouvernementale de la bande indienne sehelte**

Promulguée le 9 octobre 1986, cette loi est le premier texte législatif concernant l'autonomie gouvernementale à être approuvé par le Parlement depuis le début des négociations avec les collectivités autochtones. Elle a donné à la bande sehelte de la Colombie-Britannique le pouvoir de lever ses propres taxes et d'administrer elle-même ses terres, ses ressources, ses services de santé, ses écoles et ses services sociaux. Le gouvernement de la Colombie-Britannique a fait part de son intention d'adopter une loi provinciale correspondante.

On pourra obtenir plus de renseignements en s'adressant au:

**Bureau des relations fédérales-provinciales**

Philippe Doré  
(613) 957-5323

**Ministère des Affaires indiennes et du Nord canadien**

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# nformation

## ABORIGINAL SELF-GOVERNMENT: WHAT IT MEANS

The following material provides basic, background information on Canada's aboriginal peoples and subjects of concern to them. Topics include:

* Aboriginal Self-Government	1
* Treaties	4
* Comprehensive Claims	8

Published under the authority of the  
Hon. Bill McKnight, P.C., M.P.,  
Minister of Indian Affairs and  
Northern Development,  
Ottawa, 1987.

QS-6036-030-BB-A1  
Catalogue No. R6-1/3-1987  
ISBN 0-662-55339-x

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### ABORIGINAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

For Canada's aboriginal peoples--Indian, Inuit and Métis--self-government answers two deeply felt needs: to regain control over the management of matters that directly affect them and to preserve their cultural identity.

Before Europeans settled in Canada, aboriginal peoples were self-governing. Colonial regimes, however, reduced much of the authority of aboriginal political systems. With the proclamation of Indian lands legislation in 1868 and the first Indian Act in 1876, the Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs assumed further control over Indians and their lands. Although this control has been gradually eased over recent decades, Canada's aboriginal peoples are seeking to regain full responsibility for their own affairs.

Today, aboriginal peoples claim self-government as a right and seek to give it effect within the framework of the Canadian constitution. In their view, aboriginal self-government is necessary for the achievement of the changes that they desire, and constitutional recognition is required to protect their special rights from administrative and legislative action.

The federal government believes that aboriginal peoples should have institutions of self-government that meet their unique requirements. This belief reflects a recognition that self-government in various forms is a basic element of our democratic system. From federal and provincial governments to village, town and city councils and regional governments, Canadians operate an array of forms of government. As Prime Minister Mulroney said at the 1985 First Ministers' Conference (FMC):

"In Canada, we assume that we can participate in the charting of our destinies, in determining how we are represented, in holding our representatives accountable. But the Indians, Inuit and Métis peoples do not feel they have the same degree of participation."

Acknowledging the emphasis aboriginal peoples place on constitutional entrenchment of their special rights, the Prime Minister declared that constitutional protection would establish "an unbreakable social contract between aboriginal peoples and their governments." Because the 1985 FMC was

unable to agree on acceptable wording for a constitutional amendment on aboriginal self-government, the federal government decided to pursue a "two-track" approach. This meant that, while constitutional discussions continued, a concurrent process of community-based negotiations would also be initiated to develop a range of self-government arrangements and institutional models.

Since 1985, the federal government has been pursuing a number of these non-constitutional initiatives to demonstrate its commitment to aboriginal self-government, and to gain experience of what it means in practical terms. These initiatives have been predicated on the view that self-government, in its application, must be flexible enough to take into account the differing requirements of aboriginal communities across Canada. Consequently, negotiations to advance it have been community-based, conducted at a practical level and tailored to specific circumstances.

For example, some Indian communities have indicated a desire to pursue an entirely new relationship with the federal government, one that would remove them from the constraints of the Indian Act. These communities have offered proposals relating to such items as structures and institutions of self-government; membership; and jurisdiction over land, resources and the environment, language, culture, education, health, social services, child welfare and economic development. The accommodation of rights of non-aboriginals and federal responsibilities have also been considered in such proposals.

A concrete example of such negotiations is the Sechelt Indian Band Self-Government Act of 1986, the first self-government legislation to be approved by Parliament since the community-based negotiations began. This will allow British Columbia's Sechelt Band to assume control over their lands, resources, health and social services, education and local taxation.

Other communities have expressed a preference for developing more autonomy and self-sufficiency within the Indian Act. To respond to this desire, the federal government has implemented alternative funding arrangements that will permit band governments and tribal councils to take on increased responsibility for program delivery. In addition to this, the band governments will be responsible for maintaining an adequate standard of service and for financial accountability.

The federal government is also committed to participating in negotiations led by provincial governments to define and implement self-governing arrangements for off-reserve aboriginal peoples.

Based on its position that provincial governments have the primary responsibility for Métis, the federal government, at the June 1985 ministerial meeting that followed the FMC, agreed to participate in self-government negotiations that are initiated by the provinces and the aboriginal associations.

Tripartite negotiations with aboriginal peoples living off-reserve have been undertaken in a number of provinces. While at an early stage, these trilateral discussions are helping to define aspirations for self-government and should contribute to a better understanding of what self-government would mean for aboriginal peoples who are not living on reserves.

Various proposals for self-governing arrangements have been or are being developed across the country. Because each reflects the aspirations of an individual community, none is necessarily a model for others. All of them, however, bear witness to the deep interest aboriginal communities have in assuming greater control over their affairs.

Work on community-based, self-government initiatives is not a replacement for the constitutional process. On the contrary, it complements and informs it by providing concrete examples of how self-government may be implemented. It also puts into action the federal government's commitment to advancing aboriginal self-government and the interest many aboriginal Canadians have in this goal.

## TREATIES

The process of dealing with aboriginal title and rights through formal agreement began shortly after contact was established between Europeans and the Indian peoples of North America. The first agreements, concluded during a period of continual warfare between England and France, were intended to secure the neutrality or assistance of the Indian nations in exchange for a commitment not to impede them in their traditional pursuits. Several of these treaties of peace and friendship were concluded by the Crown and various Maritime Indian tribes up until the end of the 18th century.

Over time, however, treaty-making came to serve other purposes. As the colonial powers became more established, treaties became the instruments used by the Crown to clear lands of aboriginal title, so that settlement or resource development could proceed. The turning point in this evolution was the Royal Proclamation of 1763, which established a process to be followed in the acquisition by the Crown of clear title to Indian lands. Following the Proclamation, the Crown concluded a number of land-cession agreements with the Indians of present-day southern Ontario so that land would be available for the settlement of United Empire Loyalists, and for the Crown's military allies, the Iroquois. In these treaties, title was conveyed to the Crown in exchange for lump-sum payments, and after 1818, for annuities. It was not until the Robinson Treaties of 1850, concluded to clear aboriginal title in areas of northern Ontario, that provision was also made for reserves and the freedom to hunt and fish on unoccupied Crown land. The 14 Douglas treaties of 1850-54, on Vancouver Island, also provided for hunting and fishing rights.

In 1867, the British North America Act (now the Constitution Act, 1867) gave jurisdiction over "Indians and Lands reserved for the Indians" to the Government of Canada. In the years following Confederation, the federal government undertook a process of clearing aboriginal title to facilitate the construction of a railway to the west coast, and the expansion and consolidation of Canada through settlement. In the resulting "numbered treaties", the Indians surrendered all title to the lands covered, and in return, received tracts of land for reserves. In addition to the provision of reserve lands, benefits common to many of the western treaties included annuities, gratuities, schools, hunting and fishing rights,

gifts of agricultural implements and cattle, annual cash payments for ammunition and twine, and clothing, flags and medals. These "numbered treaties" encompassed most of the provinces of Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and the Mackenzie District of the Northwest Territories. Treaty No. 8 covered the northeast corner of British Columbia, northern Alberta, northwestern Saskatchewan and southeastern MacKenzie Valley, while two treaties signed in 1923, covered the area south and east of Georgian Bay.

It should be noted that aboriginal peoples have a different perspective from the federal government on the spirit and intent of treaties. They argue that the negotiations surrounding the treaties were far more comprehensive than is provided for within the written text of the treaty documents. In their view, treaties are a collection of mutual guarantees, political and social compacts and a protocol for dealing between nations.

Modern comprehensive claims agreements have followed the pattern established by treaty-making, although they are much more complex than treaties. Three such agreements have been signed since the federal government's comprehensive claims policy was announced in 1973:

- \* the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (1975);
- \* the Northeastern Quebec Agreement (1978); and
- \* the Inuvialuit Final Agreement (1984).

Since 1982, existing aboriginal and treaty rights have been recognized and affirmed by subsection 35(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982. As a result of the constitutional amendments of June 1984, "treaty rights" includes rights that now exist by way of land claims agreements or may be so acquired.

Chronology of Major Treaties since 1850:

- 1850 - Robinson Superior Treaty - with Ojibway Indians of Lake Superior
- Robinson Huron Treaty - with Ojibway Indians of Lake Huron
- 1850-54 - Douglas treaties with Indians of Vancouver Island
- 1871 - Treaties 1 and 2 - with Chippewa and Cree Indians - southern Manitoba and southeastern Saskatchewan
- 1873 - Treaty 3 ("Northwest Angle Treaty") - with Saulteux Tribe of Ojibway Indians - northwestern Ontario/southeastern Manitoba
- 1874 - Treaty 4 - with Cree and Saulteux tribes of Indians - southern Saskatchewan and portions of Manitoba and Alberta
- 1875 - Treaty 5 - with Saulteux and Swampy Cree tribes of Indians - central and northern Manitoba
- 1876 - Treaty 6 - with Plain and Wood Cree and other tribes of Indians - central Saskatchewan and Alberta
- 1877 - Treaty 7 - with Blackfeet and other Indian tribes - southern Alberta
- 1899 - Treaty 8 - with Cree, Beaver and Chipewyan Indians - northern Alberta, northwestern Saskatchewan, northeastern British Columbia, southeastern Mackenzie Valley
- 1905-06 - Treaty 9 ("James Bay [Ontario] Treaty") - with Ojibway and Cree Indians - central northern Ontario
- 1906 - Treaty 10 - with Chipewyan, Cree and other Indians - northern Saskatchewan and a portion of Alberta
- 1921 - Treaty 11 - with Slave, Dogrib, Loucheux, Hare and other Indians - Mackenzie Valley and southeastern Yukon

- 1923 - Chippewa Treaty; Mississauga Treaty - portions of Ontario east and south of Georgian Bay
- 1956 - Last "adhesion" to a treaty (Treaty 6; see above)
- 1975 - James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement - with Cree Indians and Inuit of Quebec - northwestern and northern Quebec
- 1978 - Northeastern Quebec Agreement - with Naskapi Indians of Schefferville - portion of north central Quebec
- 1984 - Inuvialuit Final Agreement - with Inuit of Western Arctic - northern portion of western Northwest Territories

### COMPREHENSIVE CLAIMS

Present federal policy on the settlement of comprehensive claims is primarily a result of the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in Calder, 1973, in which the Nisga'a Indians of British Columbia asserted aboriginal title. In Calder, the Supreme Court split evenly on the substantive question of whether the Nisga'a Indians continued to have unextinguished aboriginal title. Later that year, a federal policy for the settlement of comprehensive claims was announced.

The 1973 policy statement acknowledged the existence of continuing aboriginal interest arising from traditional use and occupancy of certain lands. Furthermore, it recognized that this interest had not been dealt with by treaty nor did any specific legislation exist that took precedence over it. Since any settlement of claims based on these criteria could include a variety of terms including protection of hunting, fishing and trapping rights and social and economic benefits in exchange for the release or extinguishment of the general and undefined aboriginal title, such claims came to be called comprehensive claims.

The comprehensive claims policy of 1973 was reaffirmed with modifications by a 1981 policy statement. Pursuant to this, three claims settlements have been negotiated:

- \* the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (1975);
- \* the Northeastern Quebec Agreement (1978); and
- \* the Inuvialuit Final Agreement (1984).

As a result of concerns expressed by aboriginal groups with claims policy, the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development established the Task Force to Review Comprehensive Claims Policy in July 1985. The report of the Task Force, known as the Coolican Report, was released in March 1986 and provided an impetus for further consultations and a re-consideration of the comprehensive claims policy. This re-consideration was also timely because of the legislative and policy initiatives taken since the release of the 1981 policy statement. For instance, existing aboriginal and treaty rights had received constitutional recognition and affirmation, and further discussion of the rights of aboriginal peoples was

under way in the First Ministers' forum. In addition, the federal government had expressed policies on aboriginal self-government and the fostering of aboriginal economic opportunity.

The re-assessment that followed release of the report led to the revised comprehensive claims policy announced December 18, 1986. Following is a summary of the policy under headings that reflect its highlights.

#### **Commitment to Negotiate**

The federal government remains committed to negotiation rather than litigation to settle claims in those areas of Canada where aboriginal title has not been dealt with or superseded by law.

#### **Aboriginal Rights**

The new policy explicitly acknowledges that only land-based rights, encompassed in the term aboriginal title, are subject to negotiation in the comprehensive claims process. Other rights that may exist will remain unaffected by the process unless explicitly identified as part of the negotiations. In addition, the government will consider two alternatives to achieving certainty of title:

- 1) the first would involve cession of the aboriginal title claimed throughout all of the settlement area, but without a requirement for the use of the terminology of extinguishment, together with a grant back of some rights in specified areas; and
- 2) the second would involve cession by the aboriginal group of the aboriginal title to certain specified lands within the claimed area; aboriginal title would remain undisturbed in other lands selected by the claimant group.

These changes responded to aboriginal concerns that the language of extinguishment was inconsistent with the affirmation of existing aboriginal rights in section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982, and that blanket extinguishment might adversely affect any aboriginal rights that may not be related to land, and were not under negotiation.

#### **Self-Government**

In recognition of the fact that the settlement of claims and questions of authority and control over aboriginal lands are

related, the new policy allows for the negotiation of a broader range of self-government matters. These negotiations must, of course, be consistent with the government's policy on aboriginal community-based self-government, respect existing constitutional principles and government practice, and take account of the movement toward public government and devolution north of 60. As a matter of policy, the negotiation of self-government, however, is not to lead to the constitutional entrenchment of a right to aboriginal self-government. That result may only be achieved through the constitutional process currently involving First Ministers' Conferences.

#### **Decision-Making for Natural Resources**

In the expectation that settlements would recognize a particular aboriginal interest in environmental matters, the December 1986 policy allows for aboriginal groups to negotiate membership on management boards and other agencies of public government with decision-making powers in the area of renewable resources.

#### **Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Interests**

The current mandate of all federal negotiators explicitly requires that the legitimate interests of third parties, who have utilized settlement areas, and the public, be respected. Regarding the interests of aboriginal peoples during the process of claims settlement, an opportunity will be provided to them to consider the implications of a proposed development and to identify, where appropriate, the conditions under which such activities should proceed. These interim protection measures will be agreed to for a specific period at the outset of negotiations.

#### **Sharing Benefits from Non-Renewable Resources**

As with the previous policy, sub-surface rights, in defined areas, may be granted to aboriginal groups as a way to provide them with an opportunity to gain revenues from the development of such sub-surface resources. In addition, the federal government is now prepared to assign to them a percentage of the Crown's royalties derived from the extraction of resources in the entire settlement area. This will include not only the royalties from terrestrial resources, but also from non-renewable resources extracted from offshore areas that form part of the claims settlement area. The exact percentage to be

made available will depend on other components of the settlement agreement including the monetary compensation. Limits may be placed on these agreements with respect to their duration and the amounts involved.

### **Negotiating Process**

The federal government has promised that reviews of formal comprehensive claims submissions will be completed within one year of submission: in cases of rejection, the reasons will be given in writing. To improve the negotiating process, the status of claims currently under negotiation is being reviewed. For future claims, negotiating sessions will be structured by means of framework agreements that specify the options for the clearing of title to the land and will establish a schedule to be followed in the conduct of the negotiations. Final agreements will be accompanied by implementation plans.

The federal government believes that these very significant changes respond to the most important of the priorities expressed by aboriginal peoples during the consultation process. In addition, they reflect the federal government's commitment to the fair and just settlement of aboriginal claims.

For further information on this material, please contact:

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# Information

## L'AUTONOMIE GOUVERNEMENTALE DES AUTOCHTONES: CE QU'IL EN EST

On trouvera dans les pages qui suivent des renseignements d'ordre général sur les peuples autochtones du Canada et les questions qui les touchent. Ce document comprend trois parties:

* L'autonomie gouvernementale des autochtones	1
* Les traités	4
* Les revendications globales des autochtones	8

Publié avec l'autorisation de  
l'hon. Bill McKnight, c.p., député,  
ministre des Affaires indiennes  
et du Nord canadien,  
Ottawa, 1987.

QS-6036-030-BB-A1  
N° de catalogue R6-1/3-1987  
ISBN 0-662-55339-x

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## L'AUTONOMIE GOUVERNEMENTALE DES AUTOCHTONES

Pour les populations autochtones du Canada, c'est-à-dire les Indiens, les Inuit et les Métis, l'autonomie gouvernementale répond à deux besoins profonds: reprendre en mains la gestion des affaires qui les touchent directement et préserver leur identité culturelle.

Avant que les Européens ne s'établissent au Canada, les autochtones se gouvernaient eux-mêmes. Sous le régime colonial, toutefois, leurs institutions politiques ont perdu beaucoup de leurs pouvoirs. Avec la proclamation en 1868 d'une loi sur les terres indiennes et l'adoption en 1876 de la première Loi sur les Indiens, le surintendant-général des Affaires indiennes a commencé à exercer une plus grande emprise sur les Indiens et leurs territoires. Bien que cette emprise se soit graduellement relâchée au cours des dernières décennies, les peuples autochtones du Canada veulent maintenant retrouver la pleine ma<sup>^</sup>trise de leurs propres affaires.

Aujourd'hui, les peuples autochtones revendiquent l'autonomie gouvernementale comme un droit et tentent de la faire reconna<sup>^</sup>tre dans la Constitution même. À leurs yeux, l'autonomie gouvernementale est essentielle à la réalisation des changements qu'ils souhaitent, et seule sa reconnaissance dans la Constitution peut garantir la protection de leurs droits particuliers contre toute ingérence administrative et législative.

Le gouvernement fédéral estime que les peuples autochtones doivent pouvoir disposer d'institutions qui répondent à leurs besoins particuliers, l'autonomie gouvernementale, dans ses diverses formes, constituant à son avis un élément fondamental de notre régime démocratique. Les Canadiens se sont dotés de nombreuses formes de gouvernement, depuis les conseils municipaux ou régionaux jusqu'aux administrations provinciales et fédérale. Comme le disait le Premier ministre Mulroney à la Conférence des premiers ministres (CPM) de 1985:

"Alors que la majorité d'entre nous tient pour acquis que nous pouvons influencer sur notre destinée en choisissant ceux qui nous représentent et en exigeant d'eux qu'ils rendent des comptes, les Indiens, les Inuit et les Métis, eux, n'ont pas le même sentiment de participation à notre société."

Reconnaissant l'importance qu'attachent les peuples autochtones à la consécration de leurs droits particuliers dans la Constitution, le Premier ministre déclarait alors que cette protection constitutionnelle établirait "un contrat social indissoluble entre les autochtones et les gouvernements".

Comme les participants à la CPM de 1985 ont été incapables de s'entendre sur le libellé d'une modification constitutionnelle concernant l'autonomie gouvernementale des autochtones, le gouvernement fédéral a décidé d'adopter une double démarche. Les discussions constitutionnelles se poursuivraient et, simultanément, on amorcerait des négociations avec les collectivités elles-mêmes afin d'élaborer différents modèles d'institutions et différents mécanismes d'administration autonome.

Depuis 1985, le gouvernement fédéral a donc entrepris un certain nombre d'initiatives en dehors du cadre constitutionnel, afin de bien démontrer son attachement au principe de l'autonomie gouvernementale des autochtones et d'acquérir une certaine expérience pratique du domaine. Ces initiatives se fondent sur la notion que l'autonomie gouvernementale doit être assez souple dans son application pour tenir compte des besoins propres aux différentes collectivités autochtones du Canada. C'est pourquoi les négociations se déroulent au niveau des collectivités mêmes, se préoccupent de détails pratiques et sont adaptées aux circonstances particulières à chacune.

Certaines collectivités indiennes, par exemple, ont manifesté le désir d'établir avec le gouvernement fédéral des rapports entièrement nouveaux qui les affranchiraient des contraintes de la Loi sur les Indiens. Elles ont présenté des propositions visant notamment la structure et les institutions de l'autonomie gouvernementale, l'appartenance aux bandes, la compétence à l'égard des terres, des ressources et de l'environnement, la langue, la culture, l'éducation, la santé, les services sociaux, le bien-être de l'enfance et le développement économique. La considération des droits des non-autochtones et les responsabilités fédérales ont aussi été abordées.

La Loi relative à l'autonomie gouvernementale de la bande indienne sechelte de 1986 offre un exemple concret de ce que peuvent donner les négociations avec les collectivités autochtones; il s'agit de la première loi concernant l'autonomie gouvernementale à être approuvée par le Parlement depuis le début de ces négociations. Grâce à elle, la bande sechelte de la Colombie-Britannique pourra lever ses propres taxes et administrer elle-même ses terres, ses ressources, ses services de santé, ses écoles et ses services sociaux.

D'autres collectivités préfèrent jouir d'une plus grande autonomie sous le régime de la Loi sur les Indiens. Pour répondre à leur souhait, le gouvernement fédéral a institué de nouveaux mécanismes de financement qui permettront aux administrations des bandes et aux conseils de tribu d'assumer une plus grande part de responsabilité dans la mise en oeuvre des programmes fédéraux. En outre, les administrations des bandes devront veiller elles-mêmes à la qualité des services offerts et rendre compte de l'utilisation des fonds.

Le gouvernement fédéral s'est aussi engagé à participer aux négociations menées par les provinces en vue d'élaborer et de mettre en place des mécanismes d'autonomie gouvernementale à l'intention des autochtones qui vivent hors des réserves.

En ce qui concerne les Métis, le gouvernement fédéral est d'avis que la responsabilité première à leur égard incombe aux provinces; ce principe établi, il a accepté, lors de la réunion ministérielle qui a fait suite à la CPM en juin 1985, de participer aux négociations engagées entre les provinces et les associations autochtones au sujet de l'autonomie gouvernementale.

Dans un certain nombre de provinces, des négociations tri-partites ont été entreprises avec des populations autochtones habitant hors des réserves. Bien qu'elles soient encore peu avancées, ces discussions trilatérales contribuent à définir les aspirations des autochtones et devraient aider à comprendre ce que signifie l'autonomie gouvernementale pour ceux d'entre eux qui ne vivent pas dans les réserves.

Divers mécanismes d'autonomie gouvernementale ont été élaborés ou sont en cours d'élaboration dans tous les coins du pays. Comme chacun reflète les aspirations d'une collectivité particulière, aucun ne constitue nécessairement un modèle pour les autres. Tous témoignent toutefois de l'énorme intérêt que portent les collectivités autochtones à la prise en mains de leurs propres affaires.

Les négociations en cours avec différentes collectivités autochtones ne remplacent pas le processus constitutionnel. Au contraire, elles le complètent et l'étoffent en fournissant des exemples concrets de ce que peut être l'autonomie gouvernementale dans la pratique. Enfin, elles montrent tout l'intérêt que de nombreux autochtones portent à l'autonomie de leur peuple et le sérieux avec lequel le gouvernement fédéral entend servir leur cause.

## LES TRAITÉS

La conclusion d'ententes formelles concernant les titres et les droits ancestraux des autochtones a débuté peu après les premiers contacts entre les Européens et les populations indiennes de l'Amérique du Nord. Les premières ententes, conclues à une époque de guerre continuelle entre l'Angleterre et la France, avaient pour but d'obtenir la neutralité ou l'aide des nations indiennes, en échange d'un engagement à ne leur nuire d'aucune façon dans leurs activités traditionnelles. Plusieurs de ces traités de paix et d'amitié ont été signés par la Couronne et diverses tribus indiennes des Maritimes jusqu'à la fin du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle.

À la longue, toutefois, la pratique des traités en est venue à servir d'autres fins. À mesure que les puissances coloniales ont affermi leur emprise sur le nouveau continent, la Couronne a eu recours aux traités pour libérer des terres du titre foncier indien afin d'y permettre la colonisation ou la mise en valeur de ressources. Un point tournant a été atteint avec la Proclamation royale de 1763, qui instituait un processus par lequel la Couronne pouvait acquérir un titre incontesté sur les terres indiennes. C'est ainsi qu'elle a conclu par la suite un certain nombre de traités avec les Indiens de ce qui est aujourd'hui le sud de l'Ontario, libérant des terres à l'intention des Loyalistes et de ses alliés militaires, les Iroquois. En échange, la Couronne versait généralement des paiements forfaitaires et, après 1818, des annuités. Ce n'est qu'avec les traités Robinson de 1850, conclus afin de libérer du titre foncier indien certaines régions du nord de l'Ontario, que sont apparues également des dispositions concernant l'établissement de réserves et la liberté de chasser et de pêcher sur les terres inoccupées de la Couronne. Les 14 traités Douglas de 1850-1854, qui concernent l'île de Vancouver, accordaient aussi des droits de chasse et de pêche.

En 1867, l'Acte de l'Amérique du Nord britannique (appelé maintenant Loi constitutionnelle de 1867) a placé "les Indiens et les terres réservées aux Indiens" sous l'autorité législative du gouvernement fédéral. Après la Confédération, le gouvernement a entrepris de libérer des terres pour construire un chemin de fer vers la côte ouest et pour favoriser l'expansion et la consolidation du Canada par la colonisation. Dans les "traités numérotés" qui ont été conclus par la suite, les Indiens ont cédé tous leurs droits sur les terres visées et ont obtenu des réserves en retour. Bon

nombre des traités conclus dans l'Ouest leur ont accordé aussi des avantages tels que des annuités, des gratifications, des écoles, des droits de pêche et de chasse, des dons de bétail et d'instruments aratoires, des paiements annuels pour l'achat de munitions et de ficelle, des vêtements, des drapeaux et des médailles. Ces "traités numérotés" ont couvert la plus grande partie des provinces de l'Ontario, du Manitoba, de la Saskatchewan et de l'Alberta, ainsi que le district de Mackenzie dans les Territoires du Nord-Ouest. Le Traité n°8 visait le nord de l'Alberta, le nord-ouest de la Saskatchewan, le sud-est de la vallée du MacKenzie et l'extrémité nord-est de la Colombie-Britannique, tandis que deux traités signés en 1923 s'appliquaient à la région située au sud et à l'est de la baie Georgienne.

Il faut observer que les peuples autochtones considèrent l'esprit et l'intention des traités d'un point de vue différent de celui du gouvernement fédéral. Ils font valoir que les négociations qui ont abouti à ces traités couvraient un domaine beaucoup plus vaste que ce qui est écrit dans les documents eux-mêmes. À leurs yeux, les traités constituent un ensemble de garanties mutuelles, des pactes politiques et sociaux et un protocole régissant les rapports entre nations.

Aujourd'hui, les revendications globales des autochtones font l'objet d'ententes qui suivent le modèle établi par la pratique des traités, bien qu'elles soient beaucoup plus complexes que ces derniers. Trois ententes de ce genre ont été signées depuis que le gouvernement fédéral a fait connaître en 1973 sa politique sur les revendications globales:

- a) la Convention de la Baie James et du Nord québécois de 1975
- b) la Convention du Nord-Est québécois de 1978
- c) la Convention définitive des Inuvialuit de 1984

Le paragraphe 35(1) de la Loi constitutionnelle de 1982 reconnaît et confirme les droits existants - ancestraux ou issus de traités - des peuples autochtones du Canada. À la suite des modifications apportées à la Constitution en juin 1984, les "droits issus de traités" comprennent maintenant les droits déjà conférés, ou susceptibles d'être conférés, par des accords sur des revendications territoriales.

Chronologie des principaux traités conclus depuis 1850

- 1850 - Traité Robinson du lac Supérieur - avec les Ojibwas du lac Supérieur
- Traité Robinson du lac Huron - avec les Ojibwas du lac Huron
- 1850-1854- Traités Douglas avec les Indiens de l'île de Vancouver
- 1871 - Traités n<sup>os</sup> 1 et 2 - avec les Chippewas et les Cris du sud du Manitoba et du sud-est de la Saskatchewan
- 1873 - Traité n<sup>o</sup> 3 ("Traité signé à l'extrémité nord-ouest du lac des Bois") - avec la tribu ojibwa des Saulteux du nord-ouest de l'Ontario et du sud-est du Manitoba
- 1874 - Traité n<sup>o</sup> 4 - avec les Cris et les Saulteux du sud de la Saskatchewan et de certaines parties du Manitoba et de l'Alberta
- 1875 - Traité no 5 - avec les Saulteux et les Moskégons du centre et du nord du Manitoba
- 1876 - Traité n<sup>o</sup> 6 - avec les Cris des Plaines et des Bois et d'autres tribus indiennes du centre de la Saskatchewan et de l'Alberta
- 1877 - Traité n<sup>o</sup> 7 - avec les Pieds-Noirs et d'autres tribus indiennes du sud de l'Alberta
- 1899 - Traité n<sup>o</sup> 8 - avec les Cris, les Castors et les Chippewas du nord de l'Alberta, du nord-ouest de la Saskatchewan, du nord-est de la Colombie-Britannique et du sud-est de la vallée du Mackenzie
- 1905-1906- Traité n<sup>o</sup> 9 ("Traité de la Baie James [Ontario]") - avec les Ojibwas et les Cris du centre-nord de l'Ontario
- 1906 - Traité n<sup>o</sup> 10 - avec les Chippewas, les Cris et d'autres Indiens du nord de la Saskatchewan et d'une partie de l'Alberta

- 1921 - Traité n<sup>o</sup> 11 - avec les Esclaves, les Plats-côtés-de-chien, les Loucheux, les Lièvres et d'autres Indiens de la vallée du Mackenzie et du sud-est du Yukon
- 1923 - Traité des Chippewas; Traité des Mississaugas - visent des parties de l'Ontario situées à l'est et au sud de la baie Georgienne
- 1956 - Dernière "adhésion" à un traité (Traité n<sup>o</sup> 6; voir ci-dessus)
- 1975 - Convention de la Baie James et du Nord québécois - avec les Cris et les Inuit du nord-ouest et du nord du Québec
- 1978 - Convention du Nord-Est québécois - avec les Naskapis de Schefferville - vise une partie du centre-nord du Québec
- 1984 - Convention définitive des Inuvialuit - avec les Inuit de l'Arctique occidental - vise la partie septentrionale de l'ouest des Territoires du Nord-Ouest

## LES REVENDICATIONS GLOBALES DES AUTOCHTONES

La politique actuelle du gouvernement fédéral en ce qui concerne le règlement des revendications globales découle principalement de la décision rendue par la Cour suprême du Canada dans l'affaire Calder en 1973, où les Nishgas de la Colombie-Britannique prétendaient être propriétaires en titre de leurs terres. La Cour n'a pu trancher sur le fond de l'affaire, à savoir si le titre autochtone revendiqué était frappé d'extinction ou non, la moitié des juges se prononçant en faveur et l'autre moitié contre. Une politique fédérale concernant le règlement des revendications globales était annoncée plus tard la même année.

Cette politique reconnaissait aux autochtones des droits acquis découlant de l'occupation et de l'utilisation continues de certaines terres. En outre, elle reconnaissait que ces droits n'avaient pas été touchés par des traités et qu'aucune mesure législative spécifique n'avait préséance sur eux. Étant donné que tout règlement de revendications fondé sur ces critères pourrait comprendre diverses conditions, dont la protection des droits de chasse, de pêche et de trappe et l'octroi d'avantages socio-économiques en échange de l'abandon ou de l'annulation d'un titre autochtone général et plutôt vague, on en est venu peu à peu à parler de "revendications globales". La politique de 1973 a été réaffirmée, avec certaines modifications, par un exposé de politique publié en 1981. Trois règlements sont intervenus depuis :

- ° la Convention de la Baie James et du Nord québécois de 1975
- ° la Convention du Nord-Est québécois de 1978
- ° la Convention définitive des Inuvialuit de 1984

Comme des groupes autochtones avaient fait part de certaines inquiétudes au sujet de la politique, le ministre des Affaires indiennes et du Nord canadien créait en juillet 1985 le Groupe d'étude de la politique des revendications globales. Publié en mars 1986, le rapport de ce groupe d'étude, appelé Rapport Coolican, a donné lieu à de nouvelles consultations et à un réexamen de la politique de règlement des revendications globales. Un nouvel examen était particulièrement opportun en raison des initiatives législatives et gouvernementales prises depuis l'exposé de politique de 1981. Par exemple, les droits existants, ancestraux et issus des traités, avaient été

reconnus et confirmés dans la Constitution, et d'autres discussions étaient en cours sur les droits des peuples autochtones dans le cadre des conférences des premiers ministres. En outre, le gouvernement fédéral avait adopté des politiques spécifiques sur l'autonomie gouvernementale des autochtones et l'amélioration de leurs perspectives économiques.

La réévaluation qui a suivi la publication du rapport s'est traduite par l'annonce, le 18 décembre 1986, d'une nouvelle politique des revendications globales, résumée ci-après sous des rubriques correspondant à ses principaux éléments:

### Engagement à négocier

Le gouvernement fédéral entend toujours régler par voie de négociation plutôt que par voie de litige les revendications visant des régions du Canada où le titre autochtone n'a pas été touché ou annulé par la loi.

### **Droits des autochtones**

La nouvelle politique reconnaît explicitement que seuls les droits fonciers, compris dans l'expression "titre autochtone", peuvent faire l'objet de négociations dans le processus de règlement des revendications globales. D'autres droits qui peuvent exister ne seront pas touchés par le processus à moins d'être expressément inclus dans les négociations. En outre, le gouvernement envisagera deux mécanismes distincts pour établir avec certitude les titres de propriété:

- 1) le premier mécanisme supposerait la cession du titre autochtone pour l'ensemble du territoire revendiqué, sans toutefois utiliser la terminologie de l'extinction, ainsi que la rétrocession de certains droits dans des régions désignées;
- 2) le second supposerait la cession par le groupe autochtone du titre de propriété de certaines terres désignées à l'intérieur du territoire revendiqué; ailleurs, le titre autochtone resterait intact.

Ces changements répondent à des préoccupations exprimées par les autochtones: à leurs yeux, la terminologie de l'extinction est incompatible avec la confirmation de l'existence de droits ancestraux à l'article 35 de la Loi constitutionnelle de 1982, et l'extinction intégrale pourrait avoir des conséquences fâcheuses sur des droits ancestraux qui sont peut-être sans rapport avec la propriété des terres, et qui n'étaient pas inclus dans les négociations.

### **Autonomie gouvernementale**

Étant donné le lien qui existe entre le règlement des revendications et les questions de compétence et de contrôle sur les terres autochtones, la nouvelle politique permet de négocier un plus large éventail de questions se rapportant à l'autonomie gouvernementale. Ces négociations doivent, bien entendu, être conformes à la politique du gouvernement concernant l'autonomie gouvernementale au niveau des collectivités autochtones, respecter les principes constitutionnels et les pratiques gouvernementales existants, et tenir compte de la tendance à la cession des pouvoirs et à l'autonomie administrative des populations vivant au nord du 60<sup>e</sup> parallèle. Cependant, elles ne peuvent pas mener à la reconnaissance constitutionnelle d'un droit à l'autonomie gouvernementale des autochtones. Ce résultat ne peut être obtenu que par la voie du processus constitutionnel mis en marche dans le cadre des conférences des premiers ministres.

### **Pouvoirs de décision à l'égard des ressources naturelles**

Étant donné que les règlements de revendications territoriales reconnaîtraient sans doute aux autochtones un droit de regard particulier sur les questions d'environnement, la politique de décembre 1986 laisse la possibilité aux groupes autochtones de négocier une représentation aux offices de gestion et autres organismes publics ayant des pouvoirs de décision dans le secteur des ressources renouvelables.

### **Intérêts des autochtones et des non-autochtones**

Tous les négociateurs fédéraux ont reçu pour mandat explicite de veiller à ce que soient respectés les intérêts légitimes de la population en général et des tierces parties qui ont utilisé les territoires faisant l'objet de revendications. En ce qui concerne les intérêts des autochtones, ces derniers auront la possibilité pendant le processus de règlement d'étudier les répercussions de tout projet de développement et, le cas échéant, de déterminer les conditions de sa mise en oeuvre. Ces mesures provisoires de protection seront convenues pour une période déterminée au tout début des négociations.

### **Partage des avantages tirés de ressources non renouvelables**

Comme le prévoyait la politique antérieure, on pourra, dans des régions déterminées, accorder des droits sur

le sous-sol aux groupes autochtones afin de leur permettre de profiter financièrement de l'exploitation des ressources du sous-sol. En outre, le gouvernement fédéral est maintenant disposé à leur attribuer un pourcentage des redevances que la Couronne retire de l'extraction de ressources dans l'ensemble du territoire revendiqué, à la fois les ressources terrestres et les ressources non renouvelables extraites de régions extracôtières qui font partie du territoire revendiqué. Le pourcentage exact dépendra d'autres éléments de l'entente, et notamment de l'indemnisation en espèces. On pourra limiter la durée de ces ententes de même que les montants en cause.

### Processus de négociation

Le gouvernement fédéral a promis de terminer l'examen de chaque revendication globale officielle dans l'année qui suit sa présentation: les motifs de rejet, le cas échéant, seront donnés par écrit. Afin d'améliorer le processus, on fait actuellement le point sur l'état d'avancement des négociations en cours. Dans le cas des revendications futures, les séances de négociation se dérouleront suivant un calendrier établi et respecteront les modalités d'ententes-cadres où seront précisées les options retenues pour déterminer qui est propriétaire en titre d'un territoire. Les accords définitifs seront accompagnés de plans de mise en oeuvre.

De l'avis du gouvernement fédéral, ces changements très importants répondent aux principales priorités exprimées par les peuples autochtones durant le processus de consultation. Ils montrent en outre toute l'importance qu'attache le gouvernement fédéral au règlement juste et équitable des revendications autochtones.

On pourra obtenir plus de renseignements en communiquant avec :

Demandes de renseignements du public  
(819) 997-0380