

Voyageurs National Park



Canoe Manned by Voyageurs Passing a Waterfall.
Frances Anne Hopkins, artist, 1869.
(Courtesy of National Archives of Canada)

Special History: The Environment and the Fur Trade Experience in Voyageurs National Park, 1730-1870

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July, 2000

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Midwest Region
National Park Service

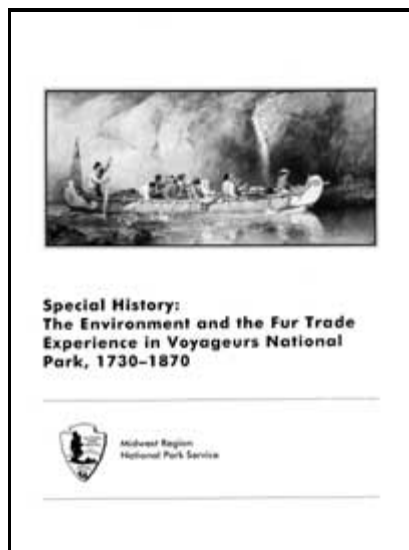


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Shooting the Rapids.
Frances Anne Hopkins, artist, 1879.
(Courtesy of National Archives of Canada)

Introduction

As the fur trade spread northwestward from the Great Lakes and Hudson Bay in the eighteenth century, an organized system of transportation and supply formed over a 3000-mile canoe route between Montreal and Fort Chipewyan on the shores of remote Lake Athabaska. The "Voyageur's Highway" that threaded this vast northern wilderness included some 120 exhausting portages, 200 treacherous rapids, and 50 lakes large enough that stormy weather could imperil even the big "Montreal" canoes. At Rainy Lake, on the present boundary between Minnesota and Ontario, voyageurs on the eastward journey from the interior met crews on the westward journey from Montreal, exchanged cargoes, and turned around. This epic journey was repeated annually over a span of decades. Traversing the border lakes country in what is now Voyageurs National Park, the French-Canadian voyageurs paddled up to 16 hours a day, made encampments, traded with Indians, and sometimes met death and a lonely burial.

The purpose of this study is to investigate written records of the fur trade and glean information that will be of use to those who manage and interpret

Voyageurs National Park. The fur trade covered a vast territory, but it left behind few lasting physical traces. The infrastructure for this sprawling international commerce consisted of no more than a few wilderness outposts and a far-flung system of waterborne transportation. Most of what we know about the fur trade experience comes from the traders' own written accounts—translated, edited, and interpreted by fur trade historians who have sifted diligently through these materials over the past one hundred years and more. This report is based on a review of the historical literature and a selective reading of most of the extant primary source material for information specific to the Rainy Lake Region.

Voyageurs National Park was authorized in 1971 and established in 1975. Its purpose is to preserve "the outstanding scenery, geological conditions, and waterway system which constituted a part of the historic route of the Voyageurs who contributed significantly to the opening of the Northwestern United States" (P.L. 91-661). The national park encompasses an environment of lakes, wetlands, and upland forest of approximately 218,059 acres. The park area includes four large lakes (Rainy, Kabetogama, Namakan, and Sand Point) and more than two dozen smaller ones.

Perhaps the essential words in the park's enabling legislation are "part of the historic route." The park's terrain is a representative portion of a much greater historical geography. The voyageurs' travels through what is now Voyageurs National Park were generally part of much larger journeys. Rainy Lake was a transportation hub and a strategic crossroads in the fur trade, as will be explained in subsequent chapters.



Figure 1. Canoe Routes through the Rainy Lake Region
([click on map for enlargement in a new window](#))

In this report, "the Rainy Lake Region" refers to all that area from the north shore of Lake Superior westward to Lake of the Woods and the Red River. Voyageurs National Park encompasses a part of the Rainy Lake Region ([Figure 1](#)). All of the major fur trading companies that operated in the area had posts near the outlet of Rainy Lake in the vicinity of what is now Fort Frances, Ontario and International Falls, Minnesota. Historic activities

surrounding these posts give the Rainy Lake Region much of its historical significance, but the posts themselves were situated a few miles outside of the park boundary. The origin and present condition of these posts may be briefly described:

- **Fort St. Pierre.** This small wintering post was built by the French in 1731. Currently there is a reconstruction of this post at Pithers Point. Although an archaeological survey was conducted at Pithers Point in the late 1950s, the exact site of the post is not confirmed.
- **North West Company Post.** This post was used as a relay point for cargoes moving between the interior and Montreal. No drawing or plan of the post is known. There is a Heritage Foundation commemorative plaque at the presumed site of the post on private property near the Red Dog Inn Hotel, located on Keating Avenue and River Drive in Fort Frances, Ontario.
- **Hudson's Bay Company Post.** This post was built subsequent to the North West Company post and continued to serve as a store until 1923. Plans, drawings, and photographs of this post have been collected to assist with interpretation of this site, which is similarly marked with a Heritage Foundation commemorative plaque. Some archaeological survey was done at the site in the 1980s. The site is now occupied by offices of the paper mill in Fort Frances, Ontario.
- **American Fur Company Post.** This post was located on the south bank of the Rainy River near the Hudson's Bay Company post. The exact location has not been determined and there is no site interpretation.
- **Bourassa's Fort.** This small outpost was built by the French and later re-established by the British in the early 1800s. Archaeological survey was done in the mid-1990s, establishing its precise location on the west shore of Crane Lake. Nothing remains of the post that is visible to the untrained eye.

Besides occupying these posts, fur traders frequently came to shore on their watery passage through what is now Voyageurs National Park ([Figure 2](#)). Traveling westward, the fur traders entered the park either on the Namakan River or through Little Vermilion Narrows. Usually, they portaged across what they called "New Portage" (now Bear River) from Namakan Lake to Rainy Lake, thereby shortening their route and avoiding a portage around Kettle Falls. From the east edge of the park to the east end of Rainy Lake was a journey of one or two days. If conditions were favorable they could traverse the length of Rainy Lake in another day. More often, it took a day and a half or two. In the two to four days that they traveled through the park, the fur traders made the kinds of stops that were typical of their journey as a whole: to have a meal or smoke a pipe, to daub fresh pitch on the canoes, to dry out wet clothing and other goods in the sunshine, to trade with Indians, and to camp overnight or wait out a storm. Fur traders also went on shorter trips from the post for purposes of trading, hunting, and fishing.

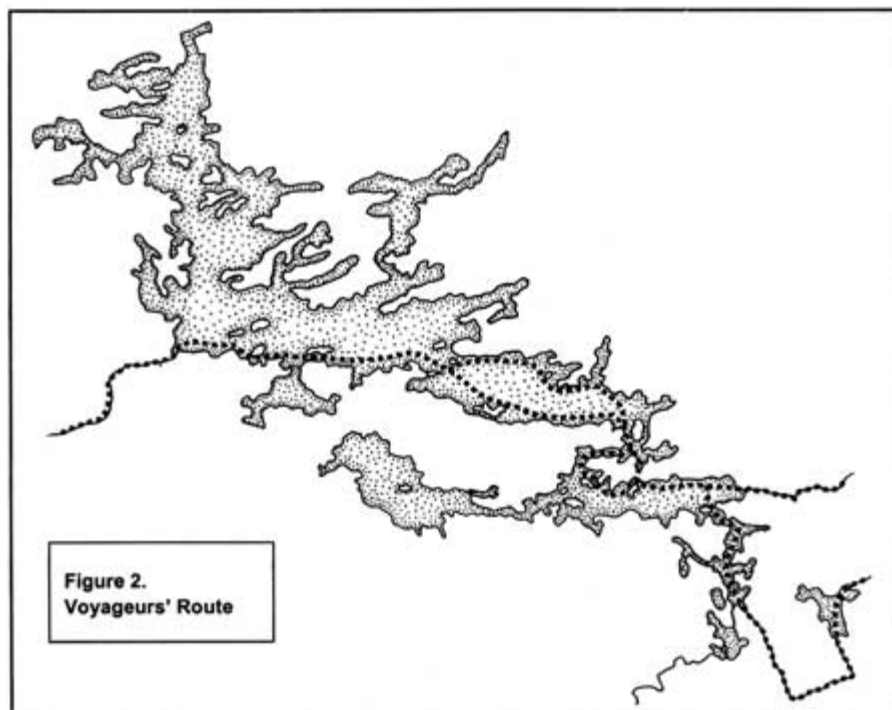


Figure 2. Voyageurs' Route
(click on map for enlargement in a new window)

In addition to archaeological investigations conducted by various agencies at four out of five of the fort locations noted above, the National Park Service (NPS) initiated archaeological investigations in Voyageurs National Park in 1979-1980. Several archaeological sites have been recorded relating to native use and occupation, logging camps, and the brief gold rush era. Sites featuring items of the fur trade include locations at Sand Point and on nearby islands in Sand Point Lake. Artifacts of the fur trade are also found on the shoreline of Rainy Lake from Kettle Falls to Soldier's Point. To date, the NPS has taken a conservative approach toward investigating these sites. Fur trade artifacts found within the park include such items as brass buttons, brass kettle fragments, a frizzen from a trade gun, muskrat spears, offset awls, a lock plate from a trade gun, spoons, and a fire steel. Some items date to an early period. A French clasp knife was probably manufactured between the 1730s and the 1760s, and an English razor bears the name of a London manufacturer of 1774-1797. With the limited amount of testing done at these sites to date, it is difficult to determine whether items were lost or discarded by fur traders or Indians, and what kinds of activity occurred at each site. Although maximum lake levels in Voyageurs National Park are higher today than they were in the fur trade era, many archaeological sites around the lake shores are on a gradient that extends both above and below the high water mark. Moreover, some inundated sites may still possess a high degree of integrity. One of the aims of this study is to provide a digest of historical documentation that will assist archaeologists in a new phase of archaeological investigation focused on potential fur trade sites.

Although the environment in Voyageurs National Park has changed markedly since the fur trade era, it still bears a strong resemblance to the wild landscape known to the voyageurs. The modern park visitor sees forested uplands, rocky lakeshores, grassy portages, labyrinthine waterways, and big waters relatively clear of vessels. Although summer homes may be seen in some areas, and resort development is conspicuous in the vicinity of Kettle Falls and the entrance to Black Bay, most of this landscape evokes a feeling of desolation and stark beauty comparable to how the land appeared in the fur trade era. And although water levels in the major lakes are now regulated by dams and the flora and fauna have been altered by logging and other human land use activities, forest composition and species diversity are more characteristic of the fur trade era than they are elsewhere in the surrounding region. Nevertheless, natural resource managers have an incomplete understanding of environmental conditions during the fur trade era--both in terms of how the environment differed from the present and how it was altered by the heavy harvest of beavers and other fur bearers.

The National Park Service (NPS) intended this special history study to have relevance for cultural and natural resource managers and interpreters on the park staff. Although each of these three staff groups is primarily concerned with different resources, park management increasingly aims at an interdisciplinary, holistic approach in defining cultural and natural resources and the stories that are imbedded in them. With that aim in view, the material in this report is organized by subject area with the hope that each staff group will benefit from having its subject area treated in a separate chapter and the subject chapters included together in a single report. If members of the park staff will consider more than the subject chapter that is pertinent to their staff group, then the interdisciplinary aim of this special history study will be met.

The report is organized in four chapters. The first chapter provides a chronological overview of the fur trade in the Rainy Lake Region as background for the rest of the report. The second chapter focuses on the fur trade experience, and is aimed at highlighting the kinds of factual detail and primary source material that will be of most interest to interpreters on the park staff. The third chapter is concerned with the material culture of the fur trade and is directed primarily toward cultural resource managers. The fourth and last chapter attempts to provide some historical perspective on environmental conditions in the fur trade era, and is intended to serve primarily the park's natural resource managers.

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Red River Expedition at Kakabeka Falls, Ontario.

Frances Anne Hopkins, artist, 1877.

(Courtesy of National Archives of Canada)

Chapter One The Rainy Lake Region in the Fur Trade

Geography of the fur trade

Historians of the fur trade have shaped their material around three major themes. First, historians have interpreted the fur trade as an object of imperial rivalry, first between England and France and later between Britain and the United States, as these nations competed for possession of the North American continent. Second, historians have interpreted the fur trade as an incubus for three of North America's early corporate giants: Hudson's Bay Company, North West Company, and American Fur Company. Third, and most recently, historians have treated the fur trade as a system of cultural exchange between Europeans and Indians. For all three of these interpretive

frameworks, geography provides essential context.

Geography was important to the fur trade in various ways. First, the physical geography of North America—the system of lakes and rivers, the Rocky Mountain cordillera, the deep indentation of Hudson Bay—determined the main outlines of expansion and competition between the great fur trade rivals. As the fur trade penetrated thousands of miles into the interior of the continent, transportation became a major component of the business. Goods were moved almost entirely by water: by ship between Britain and Hudson Bay, by large canoe between Montreal and Grand Portage via the St. Lawrence and Ottawa rivers and the Great Lakes, by lighter canoe through the maze of lakes and rivers of the Canadian Northwest, by keelboat and steamboat on the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. Interior waterways formed the highways of commerce throughout the fur trade era, and the lay of the land funneled this commerce into a few main channels. As historian Daniel Francis has remarked, the rivalry between the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company "was not really between two commercial enterprises at all; rather it was a rivalry between two great geographic possibilities. Would the resources of the western hinterland flow southeastward across the Great Lakes and down the Ottawa River to Canada? Or would they take the shorter route north and east through the stunted forest of the Shield to the swampy shores of Hudson Bay?" [1] To these two possibilities could be added a third. If the political history of North America had been different, the furs might have moved southward through the Mississippi Valley. The Rainy Lake Region was contested terrain in the fur trade largely because it was a key to all three geographic possibilities ([Figure 3](#)).

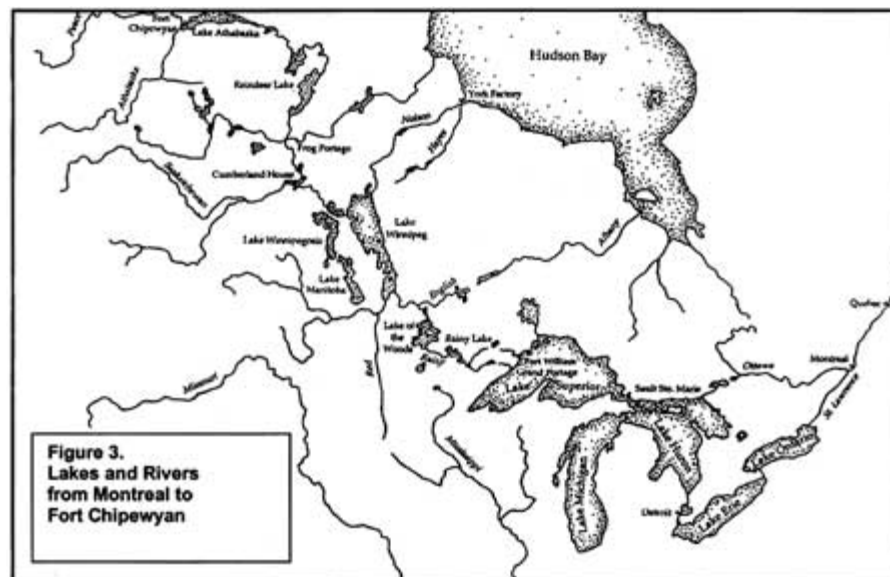


Figure 3. Lakes and Rivers from Montreal to Fort Chipewyan.
([click on map for enlargement in a new window](#))

The geography of natural environments also affected the fur trade. The abundance, diversity, and commercial value of fur-bearing species varied widely across North America. Beavers were abundant nearly everywhere when Europeans first arrived, but the fur trade soon reduced their numbers in the East. Other fur-bearing species had a more restricted range; marten, for example, were abundant in the north but less common in the Rainy Lake Region and nonexistent farther south. Moreover, individual animals of any

fur-bearing species grew denser, richer coats wherever the winters were most severe. Thus, the fur trade was drawn to the northern latitudes, the interior of the continent, and finally to the mountains—all those places where the best pelts were to be found. Due to effects of climate and environment, the richest fur country in North America centered on Lake Athabaska. It was the great prize, the "El Dorado of the Canadian fur trade." [2] While fur traders plied their industry all the way from the Atlantic seaboard to California, the great fur trading enterprises—the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company—organized themselves around the problem of extracting furs from this remote interior in the Canadian Northwest.

To reach the Athabaska country, it was necessary to develop extensive networks of posts. The posts served not only as centers for trade, but as points of supply for the voyageurs on their long journeys to and from the Athabaska country. Some posts, such as those below the outlet of Rainy Lake, grew crops of grain and vegetables to feed their own personnel as well as the crews of voyageurs passing through. The posts also employed hunters and fishers who augmented the store of agricultural produce with game and fish. All posts, however, relied to a varying degree on trade with Indians to procure their supply of food stuffs. Thus, the fur trade involved not only the exchange of European goods for furs, but a significant exchange of European goods for game, fish, and other provisions as well. In this latter exchange, variations in the natural environment were critical. The Rainy Lake Region, for example, was noted as an important source of wild rice for the provisioning of forts and birch bark for the construction of canoes. On a larger scale, the southward flow of furs from the Athabaska country was matched by a northward flow of pemmican to feed the northern posts. One historian has described the northern plains, with its large numbers of bison, as "the pantry of the northwestern fur trade." [3]

The geographic distribution of native peoples across North America also had a crucial bearing on the fur trade. Indian peoples accomplished most of the actual hunting and trapping for the fur companies. They formed an indispensable labor supply. Some groups, such as the Cree and Chipewyan who inhabited the area around Hudson Bay, were excellent and willing hunters and trappers. Other groups, such as the Huron and Iroquois who came from the Lower Great Lakes country, were more interested in serving as traders, or "middlemen," traveling between French and English settlements and Indian groups located farther west. The Ojibwe filled yet another role, hunting and trapping as well as provisioning the posts with native foods. Capable hunters and fishers of the north country, they also gathered wild rice and—in the nineteenth century—raised a

Carver describes the Indians at Grand Portage in 1767

Here we found the king of the Christenoes and several of his people encampd who was glad to see us, (and several tents of the Assinipoils which I mentioned before was a revolted band from the Naudowessee and speak their language. These two nations seemd much connected together by fraquent intermarrying and inhabit the country between the Chipeways teretories on Lake La Plue and Lake Winipeek and trade chiefly to Hudson's Bay, but came here in search of traders from Michilimackinac with a design if possible to git some of them to go into their country and winter with them. The reason they give for their coming here after

limited amount of corn and vegetables which they traded to the Europeans. Their homeland, which stretched from Michigan to northwestern Ontario, was at the northern limit of Indian agriculture. [4] With their relatively broad subsistence base, the Ojibwe were considerably more numerous than the thinly scattered Cree who inhabited the forest country to the north. For all of these reasons the Ojibwe were especially important to the fur trade.

traders is that they say that at Hudson's Bay they are forced to give much more for their goods than for those they purchase of traders from Michilimackinac or Montreal.

—*The Journals of Jonathan Carver*, p. 130.

Shifting tribal territories were another important aspect of the geography of the fur trade. Many Indian groups were in motion in this era, moving westward to occupy better fur trapping country or to escape the fury of the Iroquois, who sought to dominate the fur trade in the Lower Great Lakes Region. Generally aware of this movement, fur traders took an avid interest in the Indian population and cultures wherever they went, since their Indian trading partners were as important as the fur resources themselves in determining the profitability of any district. Indeed, the fur traders' post journals and correspondence generally contain more information about Indian peoples than they do about the abundance and diversity of fur bearers and other wildlife. As will be discussed below, Ojibwe are generally thought to have moved into the Rainy Lake Region in the early 1700s. [5]

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Canoes in a Fog, Lake Superior.
Frances Anne Hopkins, artist, 1869.
(Courtesy of Glenbow Museum)

Chapter Two The Fur Trade Experience in the Rainy Lake Region

The fur trade experience is the subject of an abundant historical literature. With the exception of Grace Lee Nute's several works published in the 1940s and 1950s, however, there is little that focuses on the Rainy Lake Region. This chapter draws from primary sources to demonstrate how the fur trade experience in the Rainy Lake Region either exemplified or differed from the fur trade experience elsewhere. The main purpose of this chapter is to guide interpreters and other NPS staff to primary source materials that could be used to enrich Voyageurs National Park's interpretive program.

The chapter is organized around two themes: trade and transportation. Trade was at the heart of fur trade society. It brought together Indians and non-Indians and encouraged them to bridge an enormous cultural divide. Trade also entailed competition between rival companies and highlighted significant

differences between company cultures. Trade often occurred when people encountered one another on the move, but mostly it took place at the trading post; therefore, day-to-day life around the post is covered under the theme of trade. Reminiscences and travel diaries provide considerable information on trade, but post journals are the best source for details on this theme.

Transportation was nearly as prominent in the fur trade experience as trade itself. For the semi-nomadic Ojibwe, canoe travel was integral to their aboriginal way of life; the fur trade only encouraged Indians to make longer trips such as that of John Tanner and his family from the Rainy Lake Region to Michilimackinac as described in *A Narrative of Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner* (1830). For European and American traders, however, the adaptation to canoe travel formed one of the most distinctive aspects of their experience. Reminiscences about the fur trade usually make reference in the title to travel, and sometimes even to canoe travel, as in John J. Bigsby's *The Shoe and Canoe, or Pictures of Travel in the Canadas* (1850). Depending on the period within the fur trade era and the person's position within the fur trade company, some traders spent nearly their entire time traveling. Even those traders who occupied posts for most of the year traveled locally on a frequent basis and made long journeys once a year or more. Post journals are useful sources of information on transportation, but the many published diaries and reminiscences are the richest source for this theme.

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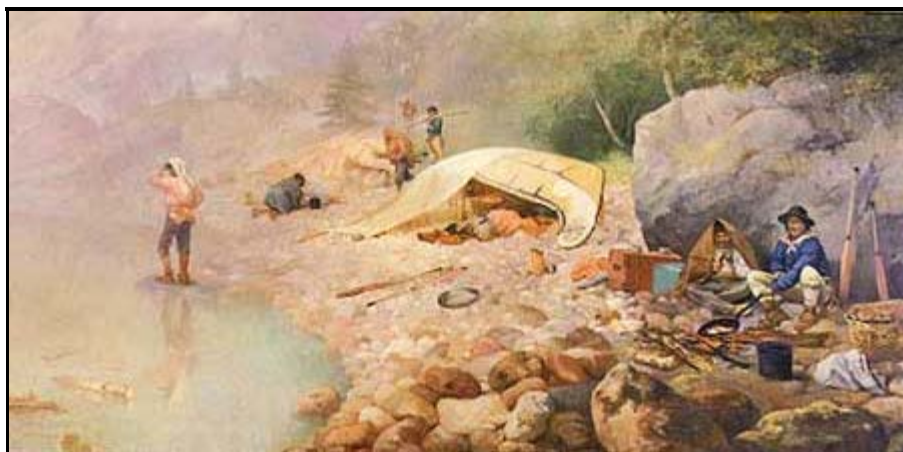
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Voyagers at Dawn.

Frances Anne Hopkins, artist, 1871.

(Courtesy of National Archives of Canada)

Chapter Three Material Culture

This chapter examines the documentary record for what it reveals about the material culture of the fur trade. Its target audience is cultural resource specialists who manage Voyageurs National Park resources relating to the fur trade. Its purpose is to supplement existing knowledge about the fur trade experience within the park as revealed by archeological investigation, and to assist future archeological studies.

The University of Minnesota conducted an initial archeological survey of Voyageurs National Park in 1977, and the NPS undertook more extensive work in 1979 and 1980. These investigations have yielded a considerable amount of information about Indian occupation of the area in late prehistoric and historic periods. Prehistoric sites date from the Archaic period down to the Terminal Woodland period. Relatively few sites are associated with the fur trade era. There is a paucity of sites dating from about 1600 to about 1730, leading investigators to speculate that Indian use of the national park area was at a low point during the 17th and early 18th centuries compared to the previous fifteen centuries. There are several sites with some material

dating from about 1730 to 1870. Historic sites mostly date from post-1870 and are predominantly associated with Ojibwe occupation or lumbering.

Some sites within the park have yielded artifacts associated with the fur trade. In some cases, it is not clear whether the artifacts reflect sites of actual encounters or habitations during the fur trade era or whether the artifacts were lost or discarded at a later time. For example, Jesuit trade rings were found together with items of English and American manufacture at Sand Point, and Ojibwe probably occupied this site during the French period as well as later in the fur trade era. Items of English manufacture were found on islands near Sand Point, but the collection of other material from these sites suggests that they date from a later period. Ojibwe occupation sites dating from the historic period are concentrated around Black Bay, Moose Bay, the west end of Kabetogama Lake, Crane Lake, Sand Point Lake, and perhaps Kettle Falls. Some of these occupation sites possibly date back to the fur trade era. Numerous local artifact collections contain significant numbers of artifacts from the fur trade era, suggesting that there are many more sites remaining to be officially recorded.

Archeological investigation is complicated by the fact that water levels have been altered since the fur trade era. Dams constructed in the early 1900s at Kettle Falls, between Namakan and Rainy lakes, and at International Falls, Minnesota, below the outlet of Rainy Lake, raised water levels in all four major lakes in Voyageurs National Park. No doubt many archeological sites connected with the fur trade are to be found along historic portages or lake shores that now lie under water. Archeologists have investigated submerged canoe wrecks or their sunken cargo in various rapids in the Boundary Waters, but no such underwater investigations have been made within the park.

The fur trade was fundamentally concerned with the exchange of products. Europeans brought to this exchange goods such as guns, blankets, brass, and liquor, while Indians traded furs, skins, isinglass (a gelatin derived from sturgeon bladders used as a clarifying agent and glue), and other animal products, as well as food stuffs such as wild rice, fish, and pemmican. Many of these items were so perishable as to disappear entirely from the archeological record, while other items could have a long life perhaps even being passed from generation to generation. Since the trade involved great distances, items changed hands and moved around extensively. Yet the system was such that trade goods were seldom stockpiled or amassed in large quantities. There were exceptions. Indians sometimes cached their products rather than trading them immediately in order to await more favorable conditions for travel or barter. As the pelts accumulated at each trading post, the trader pressed and wrapped the pelts in canvas for shipment by canoe. These packs of so-called "made beaver" (a unit of measure equal to one prime beaver skin) were occasionally lost in canoe accidents. Similarly, European goods were wrapped in assorted bales and transported by canoe to the trading posts. Occasionally such cargoes sank to the bottom of a lake or river with an errant canoe. Many fur trade artifacts, together with the remains of actual canoes themselves, have been recovered through underwater archeology. These sites are concentrated below treacherous rapids or waterfalls. None is known to exist within the relatively calm waters that flow through Voyageurs National Park, although cargoes might have been lost at such treacherous locations as Kettle Falls and Brule Narrows.

Besides the exchange of goods, the fur trade involved an elaborate system of transportation and supply. European and American traders sought to develop efficient routes for travel and the movement of goods. While their transportation system generally made use of natural waterways, some efforts were made toward improving these routes, particularly along portages, which they often described as "roads." Place names, landmarks, and improvements made along such "roads" were all part of the cultural landscape of the fur trade.

Finally, the fur trade drew thousands of Europeans and Americans into the North American interior far in advance of permanent white settlement, and this population required habitations. These wilderness installations varied in size and duration. In general, they can be classified into four tiers. In the first tier, there were a few major depots where goods were stockpiled for distribution: the Hudson's Bay Company's York Factory and Albany Factory, the North West Company's Grand Portage and Fort William, and the trading center known as Michilimackinac that passed from French to British to American control. From these depots, goods were distributed to a second tier of establishments known as posts, forts, or houses. (These three terms are used interchangeably below.) These posts could have a population of a few dozen men and their families. They might be comprised of a post and stockade as well as outlying residences, livestock barns, vegetable gardens, and cultivated fields. Post traders often sent their subordinates to occupy satellite posts, usually described as subposts or outposts. This third tier in the system consisted of smaller, more ephemeral establishments that were typically dependent on the larger post for provisions. In the fourth tier were camps of various kinds. Where there was competition from other traders, as at Rainy Lake, men were sent to occupy overnight camps, or "watching tents," where they could hail Indians and direct them to the post. Watching tents are mentioned repeatedly in the Rainy Lake post journals, but there is no evidence that they consisted of anything more than a canvas shelter. To help with provisioning the post, the traders also established fishing and hunting camps. In addition to these various habitations belonging to Europeans and Americans in the fur trade, Indians occupied their own camps. White and Indian habitations sometimes overlapped, as when both groups used the same fishing places or Indian groups camped in the vicinity of the post.

This chapter discusses the material culture of the fur trade as it was expressed in products of the trade, transportation, and habitations.

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Canoe Party around Campfire.
Frances Anne Hopkins, artist.
(Courtesy of National Archives of Canada)

Chapter Four The Natural Environment in the Fur Trade Era

Voyageurs National Park was established for the purpose of preserving "the outstanding scenery, geological conditions, and waterway system which constituted a part of the historic route of the Voyageurs who contributed significantly to the opening of the Northwestern United States." Pursuant to this congressional mandate, the National Park Service manages the natural resources in Voyageurs National Park with the goal of approximating as nearly as possible the natural conditions that prevailed during the fur trade era. Natural resource managers have acquired data on past natural conditions from various sources including studies of pollen and charcoal layers found in lakebed sediments, faunal bone counts recovered from archeological sites, and limited use of historical documents. No systematic study of historical sources has heretofore been done. The purpose of this chapter is to

familiarize natural resource managers with the breadth and depth of information about the environment that can be gleaned from historical documents. The chapter addresses four topics: climate, flora, fauna, and fisheries.

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**Special History:
The Environment and the Fur Trade Experience in
Voyageurs National Park, 1730-1870**

Endnotes

Chapter 1

¹ Daniel Francis, "Traders and Indians," in *The Prairie West: Historical Readings*, edited by R. Douglas Francis and Howard Palmer (Edmonton: Pica Pica Press, 1985), p. 58.

² Eric W. Morse, *Fur Trade Canoe Routes of Canada: Then and Now* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), p. 19.

³ Arthur J. Ray, "The Northern Great Plains: Pantry of the Northwestern Fur Trade, 1774-1885," *Prairie Forum*, vol. 9, no. 2 (Fall 1984), pp. 263-280.

⁴ Tim E. Holzkamm and Leo G. Waisberg, "Agriculture and One 19th-Century Band: 'They Hardly Ever Loose Sight of Their Field,'" *Papers of the Twenty-Fourth Algonquian Conference*, edited by William Cowan (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), pp. 407-408.

⁵ The best description of this fluid geography of territories is Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

⁶ Nellis M. Crouse, *La Vérendrye, Fur Trader and Explorer* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1956), pp. 6-8.

⁷ Crouse, *La Vérendrye*, p. 8.

⁸ Crouse, *La Vérendrye*, p. 9.

⁹ Historian E. E. Rich states that the post had existed since 1713, and was "transformed into a strong fort" in 1717. E. E. Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1870*, vol. 1 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1960), p. 515.

¹⁰ Crouse, *La Vérendrye*, p. 9; historian David Lavender cites "perennial warfare between the Sioux and Ojibwas" in *Winner Take All: The Trans-Canada Canoe Trail* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1977, p. 170.

¹¹ Grace Lee Nute, *Rainy River Country* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1950), p. 6. Also see, Pierre Gaultier de Varrenes de La Vérendrye, *Journals and Letters*, edited by Lawrence J. Burpee (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1927).

¹² Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company*, vol. 1, p. 518.

¹³ Lavender, *Winner Take All*, p. 186.

¹⁴ Louise Phelps Kellogg, *The French Régime in Wisconsin and the Northwest* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1925), pp. 336-337. Also see Rhoda R. Gilman, "The Fur Trade in the Upper Mississippi Valley, 1630-1850," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 58 (Autumn 1974), pp. 3-18.

¹⁵ Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company*, vol. 1, pp. 520-523.

¹⁶ Jacques Legardeur de Saint-Pierre, *Officer, Gentleman, Entrepreneur*, trans. and ed. by Joseph L. Peyser (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1996); W. J. Eccles, "La Mer de l'Ouest: Outpost of Empire," in *Rendezvous: Selected Papers of the Fourth North American Fur Trade Conference, 1981*, edited by Thomas C. Buckley (St. Paul: North American Fur Trade Conference, 1984), p. 8.

¹⁷ Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company*, vol. 1, p. 524.

¹⁸ Gilman, "The Fur Trade in the Upper Mississippi Valley, 1630-1850," pp. 8-9. Harold A. Innis notes, "Contact with the Northwest country inland from Grand Portage appears to have continued with little interruption throughout the war period. Statements with considerable authority claim that French and English traders went to Rainy Lake in 1761 and remained until 1763." *The Fur Trade in Canada* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), p. 188. Duncan M'Gillivray, in his "Sketch" of the North West Company, writes: "Montreal was taken in 1760 and in the Spring of the following year some English & French traders sent goods to Lake Superior, and a few went even as far north as the Rainy lake where they continued until 1763 when the Post at Michilimackinac was taken by the Indians; who from affection to their ancient allies the French, and instigated by some traders who as well as the savages were unwilling to recognize the Capitulation, made between the French and English commanders, made war on all the posts occupied by the British from Niagara to La Baye—Sir Alexander Mackenzie says the trade did not recommence until 1766." Quoted in "Some Account of the Trade Carried on by the North West Company," in *Report of the Public Archives for the year 1928*, ed. by Arthur G. Doughty (Ottawa: F. A. Ackland, 1929), p. 59.

¹⁹ Kellogg, *The British Régime in Wisconsin and the Northwest*, pp. 103.

²⁰ Kellogg, *The British Régime in Wisconsin and the Northwest*, pp. 103-104; E. E. Rich, *The History of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1870*, vol. 2, (London: The Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1959), pp. 28-29. Note that French and British traders working in the Upper Mississippi Valley at this time tended to return east or south each summer to exchange their furs for new supplies. See Rhoda R. Gilman, "The Fur Trade in the Upper Mississippi Valley, 1630-1850," *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 58 (1974), p. 9.

²¹ W. Stewart Wallace, ed., *Documents Relating to the North West Company* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1934), pp. 2-3.

²² Alexander Henry, *Travels & Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories*, edited by James Bain (Toronto: George N. Morang & Company, 1901).

²³ Quoted in Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North West Company*, p. 5.

²⁴ Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North West Company*, pp. 5-7. Innis cited in Wallace.

²⁵ Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North West Company*, pp. 9-11.

²⁶ Wallace, *Documents Relating to the North West Company*, pp. 13-15.

²⁷ Gregg A. Young, "The Organization of the Transfer of Furs at Fort William: A Study of Historical Geography," *Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society Papers and Records* 2 (1974), pp. 30-31.

²⁸ Lavender, *Winner Take All*, p. 245. It is possible that the post was already eight or nine years old in 1787.

²⁹ Lavender, *Winner Take All*, pp. 244-245.

³⁰ Young, "The Organization of the Transfer of Furs at Fort William," p. 32. Young provides an excellent discussion of the number of days required on each leg of this complicated relay system.

³¹ Lavender, *Winner Take All*, p. 245; Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, pp. 200-201.

³² Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, p. 258.

³³ Gordon Charles Davidson, *The North West Company*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1918), p. 69. On the Hudson's Bay Company's strategy in pushing south, see Harry W. Duckworth, "The Madness of Donald Mackay," *The Beaver* 68, no. 3 (1988), pp. 25-42; and John Jackson, "Inland from the Bay," *The Beaver* 72 no. 1 (1992), pp. 37-42.

³⁴ John McKay, Lac La Pluie Post Journals for 1793-1794, 1794-1795, 1795-1796, and 1796-1797, Hudson's Bay Company Archives (HBCA), B.105/a/1-4.

³⁵ Nute, *Rainy River Country*, pp. 15-16; A. M. Johnson, "Hudson's Bay Company on Rainy River, 1793-95," *The Naturalist* (1961), pp. 9-14.

³⁶ Francis, "Traders and Indians," p. 59.

³⁷ Francis, "Traders and Indians," p. 59.

³⁸ Francis, "Trades and Indians," p. 60.

³⁹ Sylvia Van Kirk, "Fur Trade Social History: Some Recent Trends," in *The Prairie West: Historical Readings*, p. 80.

⁴⁰ Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976), p. 51.

⁴¹ E. E. Rich, *The Fur Trade and the Northwest to 1857* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1967), pp. 206-207.

⁴² Rich, *The Fur Trade and the Northwest to 1857*, p. 207.

⁴³ Davidson, *The North West Company*, pp. 76-78, 89. See also Sir Alexander Mackenzie, *Journals and Letters*, edited by W. Kaye Lamb (Cambridge: Hakluyt Society Extra Series No. 41, 1970).

⁴⁴ Grace Lee Nute, "Posts in the Minnesota Fur-Trading Area, 1660-1855," *Minnesota History* 11 (December 1930), p. 357.

⁴⁵ Nute, *Rainy River Country*, p. 17.

⁴⁶ Nute, "Posts in the Minnesota Fur-Trading Area, 1660-1855," p. 360.

⁴⁷ Nute, *Rainy River Country*, p. 20.

⁴⁸ Rich, *The Fur Trade and the North West to 1857*, pp. 209-235.

⁴⁹ The turmoil was described in a number of tracts, some more propagandist than others. For a checklist of these contemporary accounts, see W. S. Wallace, "The Literature Relating to the Selkirk Controversy," *Canadian Historical Review* 13 (March 1932), pp. 45-50. See also Rich, *The Fur Trade and the Northwest to 1857*, chapters 11 and 12.

⁵⁰ Nute, *Rainy River Country*, p. 21.

⁵¹ Nute, *Rainy River Country*, p. 21.

⁵² Grace Lee Nute, ed., *Documents Relating to the Northwest Missions, 1815-1827* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1942), p. xiii.

⁵³ Rich, *The Fur Trade and the Northwest to 1857*, pp. 227-235.

⁵⁴ John S. Galbraith, "British-American Competition in the Border Fur Trade

of the 1820s," *Minnesota History* 36 (September 1959), pp. 241-242.

⁵⁵ Galbraith, "British-American Competition in the Border Fur Trade of the 1820s," pp. 242-245.

⁵⁶ David Lavender, "Some American Characteristics of the American Fur Company," in *Aspects of the Fur Trade: Selected Papers of the 1965 North American Fur Trade Conference*, edited by Dale L. Morgan et al. (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1967), pp. 33-34.

⁵⁷ Lavender, "Some American Characteristics of the American Fur Company," pp. 36-37.

⁵⁸ Lavender, "Some American Characteristics of the American Fur Company," p. 36. Lavender also cites the American predisposition against monopoly as a factor in the different organization of the fur trade south of the international border.

⁵⁹ Galbraith, "British-American Competition in the Border Fur Trade of the 1820s," pp. 245-246. On the survey of the international boundary, see also William E. Lass, *Minnesota's Boundary with Canada: Its Evolution since 1783* (Minnesota Historical Society Press, St. Paul, 1980).

⁶⁰ Galbraith, "British-American Competition in the Border Fur Trade of the 1820s," p. 245.

⁶¹ Galbraith, "British-American Competition in the Border Fur Trade of the 1820s," p. 244.

⁶² Rhoda R. Gilman, "Last Days of the Upper Mississippi Fur Trade," in *People and Pelts: Selected Papers of the Second North American Fur Trade Conference*, edited by Malvina Bolus (Winnipeg: Peguis Publishers, 1972), pp. 112-116.

⁶³ Gilman, "Last Days of the Upper Mississippi Fur Trade," pp. 120-121.

⁶⁴ Nute, "Posts in the Minnesota Fur-Trading Area, 1660-1855," p. 369.

⁶⁵ Gilman, "Last Days of the Upper Mississippi Fur Trade," p. 126.

⁶⁶ Gilman, "The Fur Trade in the Upper Mississippi Valley, 1630-1850," p. 18.

⁶⁷ Robert A. Trennert, "William Medill (1845-49)," in Robert M. Kvasnicka and Herman J. Viola, eds., *The Commissioners of Indian Affairs, 1824-1977* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), pp. 31-35.

⁶⁸ Gilman, "Last Days of the Upper Mississippi Fur Trade," p. 127.

⁶⁹ Arthur J. Ray, "Some Conservation Schemes of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1821-1850: An Examination of the Problems of Resource Management in the Fur Trade," *Journal of Historical Geography* 1 (1975), p.

50.

⁷⁰ Ray, "Some Conservation Schemes of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1821-1850," pp. 57-58. For a recent overview of Indian conservation practices in the fur trade, see Shepard Krech III, *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1999), pp. 173-209.

⁷¹ Ray, "Some Conservation Schemes of the Hudson's Bay Company, 1821-1850," pp. 63-65.

⁷² Quoted in Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, pp. 330-331.

⁷³ Jack Manore, "Mr. Dawson's Road," *The Beaver* 6 (February/March 1991), p. 6.

⁷⁴ Manore, "Mr. Dawson's Road," p. 6.

⁷⁵ Manore, "Mr. Dawson's Road," p. 7.

⁷⁶ Manore, "Mr. Dawson's Road," p. 8.

⁷⁷ Tom Thiessen notes of "Journal" of Colonel Thomas Scott, November 23, 1871, Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

Chapter 2

¹ Henry, *Travels and Adventures*, p. 240.

² John McKay, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1793-1794, Hudson's Bay Company Archives (HBCA), B.105/a/1, fo.5.

³ Roderick McKenzie, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1819-1820, HBCA, B.105/a/7, fo. 37.

⁴ Roderick McKenzie, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1819-1820, HBCA, B.105/a/7, fo. 36.

⁵ Francis, "Traders and Indians," p. 64.

⁶ Quoted in Francis, "Traders and Indians," pp. 63-64.

⁷ Frederic Damien Huerter, "Narrative," Selkirk Papers, National Archives of Canada (NAC), Reel 4, p. 3324.

⁸ Anonymous, Lac La Pluie Journal for 1837-1838, HBCA, B.105/a/20, fo.2-3. Henry Youle Hind reported in the late 1850s that some 500 to 600 Indians attended the grand medicine ceremony some years, while the number of Indians trading at the fort could reach 1500. Henry Youle Hind, *Narrative of the Canadian Red River Exploring Expedition of 1857 and of the*

Assiniboine and Saskatchewan Exploring Expedition of 1858, (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1860), p. 83.

⁹ Francis, "Traders and Indians," p. 65.

¹⁰ Gilman, "Last Days of the Upper Mississippi Fur Trade," p. 126.

¹¹ John McKay, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1793-1794, HBCA, B.105/a/1, fo.5-fo.7.

¹² John McKay, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1796-1797, HBCA, B.105/a/4, fo.10d-fo.11.

¹³ See, for example, Friedrich Von Graffenreid, *Sechs Jahre in Canada, 1813-1819*, (Bern: Ib Haller sche Bucher, 1891), p. 10. Typescript from a handwritten translation by Elsbeth Glocker in Tom Thiessen's possession.

¹⁴ John Cameron, Lac La Pluie District Report for 1825-1826, HBCA, B.105/e/6, fo.4d-fo.6d.

¹⁵ John McLoughlin, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1823-1824, HBCA, B.105/a/9, passim.

¹⁶ Donald McPherson, Lac La Pluie District Report for 1816-1818, HBCA, B.105/e/1, fo.10.

¹⁷ John Cameron, Lac La Pluie District Report for 1829-1830, HBCA, B.105/e/9, fo.4d-10.

¹⁸ John McKay, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1793-1794, HBCA, B.105/a/1, fo.10-fo.11.

¹⁹ Donald McPherson to Lord Selkirk, May 14, 1817, NAC, Selkirk Papers, Reel 4, p. 3423.

²⁰ For a study of Indian use of liquor during the fur trade, see R. C. Dailey, "The Role of Alcohol among North American Indian Tribes as reported in The Jesuit Relations," *Anthropologica*, vol. 10, no. 1 (1968), pp. 45-57. For a focus on liquor in trade ritual, see Bruce M. White, "A Skilled Game of Exchange: Ojibway Fur Trade Protocol," *Minnesota History*, vol. 50 (Summer 1987), pp. 229-240.

²¹ Van Kirk, "Fur Trade Social History: Some Recent Trends," pp. 71-72; and Jennifer S.H. Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980).

²² Graffenreid, *Sechs Jahre in Canada*, 1813-1819, p. 10.

²³ Nute, ed., *Documents Relating to Northwest Missions, 1815-1827* pp. 123-124.

²⁴ Gates, ed., *Five Fur Traders of the North West*, (St. Paul: Minnesota

Historical Society, 1965), p. 206.

²⁵ McLellan, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1806, NAC, Selkirk Papers, Reel 9, p. 9259.

²⁶ Duncan M'Gillivray, *The Journal of Duncan M'Gillivray of the North West Company*, Ed. Arthur S. Morton. (Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada, Ltd., 1929), p. 8.

²⁷ John McKay, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1796-1797, HBCA, B.105/a/4, fo.7.

²⁸ Lord Selkirk Papers, NAC, Reel 5, p. 15.

²⁹ Masson, *Les Bourgeois de la Compagne du Nord-Ouest*, (New York: Antiquarian Press, Ltd., 1960), p. 309.

³⁰ John McLoughlin, "The Indians from Fort William to Lake of the Woods," Ed. Richard H. Dillon. *Amphora*. 8 (Spring-Summer 1971), p. 15.

³¹ John Cameron, Lac La Pluie District Report for 1825-1826, HBCA, B.105/e/6, fo.4.

³² John McLoughlin, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1822-1823, HBCA, B.105/a/8, fo.14d.

³³ John Cameron, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1826-1828, HBCA, B.105/a/12, fo.1-1d.

³⁴ John Cameron, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1824-1825, HBCA, B.105/a/10, fo. 3d.

³⁵ John Cameron, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1826-1828, HBCA, B.105/a/12, fo.6-6d.

³⁶ John McKay, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1793-1794, HBCA, B.105/a/1, fo.13-15.

³⁷ Robert Logan, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1818-1819, HBCA, B.105/a/6, fo.5d-8d.

³⁸ Donald McPherson, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1817-1818, HBCA, B.105/a/5, fo.5.

³⁹ Donald McPherson, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1817-1818, HBCA, B.105/a/5, fo.11-12.

⁴⁰ John Francis McDermott, *A Glossary of Mississippi Valley French, 1673-1850*, (St. Louis: Washington University Studies, New Series, Language and Literature No. 12, 1941), p. 66.

⁴¹ Masson, *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest*, p. 28.

- ⁴² John McLoughlin, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1823-1824, HBCA, B.105/a/9, fo. 39.
- ⁴³ Nicholas Garry, "Diary of Nicholas Garry," in *Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, Second Series—Vol. VI (Ottawa: James Hope & Son, 1900), p. 126.
- ⁴⁴ Anonymous, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1837-1838, HBCA, B.105/a/20, fo.7.
- ⁴⁵ Gates, ed., *Five Fur Traders of the Northwest*, p. 229.
- ⁴⁶ John McLoughlin, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1822-1823, HBCA, B.105/a/8, fo.11d.
- ⁴⁷ John Cameron, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1829-1830 and 1830-1831, HBCA, B.105/a/14 -15, passim, quote on fo.5d.
- ⁴⁸ John Cameron, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1824-1825, HBCA, B.105/a/10, fo.19d.
- ⁴⁹ John Emslie, "Journal of Expedition to Fort Garry, 1870," Microfilm Collection, NAC, p. 5.
- ⁵⁰ Gates, ed., *Five Fur Traders of the Northwest*, p. 200; Garry, "Diary of Nicholas Garry," p. 120; Delafield, *The Unfortified Boundary*, Robert McElroy and Thomas Riggs, eds. (New York: n.p., 1943), p. 424.
- ⁵¹ Ballantyne, *Hudson's Bay; or Every-day Life in the Wilds of North America*, (Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1848), pp. 239-240.
- ⁵² Grace L. Nute, *The Voyageur*, (New York and London: D. Appleton, 1931), p. 27.
- ⁵³ Garry, "Diary of Nicholas Garry," p. 122.
- ⁵⁴ Donald McKay, Journal kept by Donald McKay on a trip to Rainy Lake in 1792, HBCA, B.3/a/93b, fo. 10-10d.
- ⁵⁵ William Sinclair, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1834-1835, HBCA, B.105/a/19, fo.9.
- ⁵⁶ James Evans, Diary, 1839, Minnesota History Center (MHS), Manuscript Collection P489, Box 6, p. 4.
- ⁵⁷ Gabriel Franchere, *Narrative of a Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America*. Trans. and ed. J. V. Huntington. (New York: Redfield, 1854), pp. 334-335.
- ⁵⁸ John L. Bigsby, *The Shoe and Canoe Canoe, or Pictures of Travel in the Canadas*. 2 vols. (London: Chapman and Hall, 1850), p. 242.

⁵⁹ Garry, "Diary of Nicholas Garry," p. 123.

⁶⁰ Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land: The American West as Symbol and Myth* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950); Hans Huth, *Nature and the American: Three Centuries of Changing Attitudes* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1957); Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind*, 3d ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982); Leo Marx, *The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964).

⁶¹ Delafield, *The Unfortified Boundary*, p. 426; Bigsby, *The Shoe and Canoe*, p. 270; Sir George Simpson, *Narrative of a Journey Round the World during the years 1841 and 1842*, 2 vols. (London: Henry Colburn, 1847), p. 35; Garry, "Diary of Nicholas Garry," p. 124; Ballantyne, *Hudson's Bay; or Every-day Life in the Wilds of North America*, p. 237; quotation in M'Gillivray, *The Journal of Duncan M'Gillivray of the North West Company*, p. 9.

⁶² The conspicuous exception in the area of landscape appreciation is John Bigsby, who wrote lyrically about the landscape's most wild aspects. For example, Bigsby wrote of Rainy Lake: "The [northeast] horn is remarkable for the pure, smooth, porcelain whiteness of its granite hills, which are often very high, and gleam through their scanty clothing of pine in a beautiful and singular manner, while the dark forests of cypress at their feet greatly heighten the general effect....At a place where a lofty cascade falls into the lake with a loud roar, this kind of scenery is quite melodramatic. It presents a somewhat new combination of colours in landscape—white rocks, black foliage, and blue lake." Bigsby, *The Shoe and Canoe*, p. 264.

Chapter 3

¹ Mark J. Lynott, Jeffrey J. Richner, and Mona Thompson, "Archeological Investigations at Voyageurs National Park: 1979 and 1980," Midwest Archeological Center Occasional Studies in Anthropology No. 16 (Lincoln: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Midwest Archeological Center, 1986), pp. 283-285; Jeff Richner, comments supplied to author on draft, February 22, 2000.

² Jeffrey J. Richner, interview with Ted Catton, October 1, 1999.

³ See Robert C. Wheeler, Walter A. Kenyon, Alan R. Woolworth, and Douglas A. Birk, *Voices from the Rapids: An Underwater Search for Fur Trade Artifacts 1960-73*, Minnesota Historical Archaeology Series No. 3, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1975).

⁴ Lavender, *Winner Take All*, p. 245; Young, "The Organization of the Transfer of Furs at Fort William: A Study of Historical Geography," p. 33. The arrival of a Montreal canoe at Rainy Lake Fort, with its large 11-man crew, is mentioned by Roderick McKenzie in the Lac La Pluie post journal for October 3, 1819. See Roderick McKenzie, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for

1819-1820, HBCA, B.105/a/7, fo. 37.

⁵ For example, Alexander Henry the Elder mentions buying canoes from Ojibwe at the Forks on the Rainy River. *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories*, p. 240. Also see John McKay, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1795-1796, HBCA, B.105/a/3, fo. 29. On April 13, 1796, McKay wrote, "The Indians making small canoes. I cannot get them to go hunt Beaver. they say; they have more profit from making large Canoes for the Canadians then hunting Beaver in the spring."

⁶ John D. Cameron, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1829-1830, HBCA, B.105/a/14, fo. 46. Also see Donald MacPherson's letter to Lord Selkirk of October 13, 1817, in Lord Selkirk Papers, NAC, Reel C-4, p. 4128. MacPherson informed Selkirk of his intention to build as many canoes at the fort as possible in the coming spring, provided that a canoe builder could be sent from the Red River colony. He noted that there was enough bark and wattape in store for eight north canoes.

⁷ Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal* (London: R. Noble, 1801), pp. xlvii-xlviii.

⁸ Nute, *The Voyageurs*, p. 25. Sir George Simpson provides the following description of canoe construction: "The outside is formed of the thick and tough bark of the birch, the sheets being sewed together with the root of the pine-tree split into threads, and the seams gummed to make them air-tight. The gunwales are of pine or cedar of about three inches square; and in their lower edges are inserted the ribs, made of thin pieces of wood, bent to a semicircle. Between the ribs and the bark is a coating of lathing, which, besides warding off internal injury from the fragile covering, serves to impart a firmness to the vessel." Simpson, *Narrative of a Journey Round the World*, Vol. 1, p. 14. See also a classic work on canoes, Edwin Tappan Adney and Howard I. Chapelle, "the Bark Canoes and Skin Boats of North America," Smithsonian Institution, United States National Museum, Bulletin 230, Washington, 1964.

⁹ Quoted in Davidson, *The North West Company*, pp. 216-217.

¹⁰ Young, "The Organization of the Transfer of Furs at Fort William: A Study of Historical Geography," pp. 32-34.

¹¹ Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1837-1838, HBCA, B.105/a/20, fo. 37.

¹² Davidson, *The North West Company*, p. 217.

¹³ Nute, *The Voyageur*, p. 26; David Szymanski, comments to author on draft, February 28, 2000. The most detailed study on this subject is the two-volume work by Tim Kent, *Birchbark Canoes of the Fur Trade*. It is the best-researched source available concerning all aspects of canoe design, construction, and use. The reference is from Theodore Karamanski, comments to author on draft, June 12, 2000.

¹⁴ William Sinclair, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1834-1835, HBCA, B.105/a/19, fo. 9.

¹⁵ John McKay, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1793-1794, HBCA, B.105/a/1, fo. 14d.

¹⁶ Donald MacPherson, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1817-1818, HBCA, B.105/a/5, fo. 12d.

¹⁷ Mrs. G. Scott, "Pioneer Days of Fort Frances," March 1941, Provincial Archives of Ontario [hereafter PAO], RG 16, Series 16-87, File 15-2.

¹⁸ Robert McKenzie, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1819-1820, HBCA, B.105/a/7, fo.67.

¹⁹ Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada*, pp. 84-85.

²⁰ W. J. Eccles, *The Canadian Frontier 1534-1760* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1969), p. 137.

²¹ Davidson, *The North West Company*, pp. 220-221.

²² John McKay, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1793-1794, HBCA, B.105/a/1, fo. 7d.

²³ White, "A Skilled Game of Exchange: Ojibway Fur Trade Protocol," pp. 229-240.

²⁴ White, "A Skilled Game of Exchange: Ojibway Fur Trade Protocol," p. 235.

²⁵ "Inventory of the Fur Trade, Fort Lac La Pluie, North West Co., October 1816," copy provided by Tom Thiessen.

²⁶ Lac La Pluie Account Book for 1818-1819, HBCA, B.105/d/1, fo. 39d.

²⁷ Lac La Pluie Account Book for 1822, HBCA, B.105/d/8, fo. 3d.

²⁸ John McKay, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1795-1796, HBCA, B.105/a/3, fo.37-39.

²⁹ Joseph D. Winterburn, "Lac La Pluie Bill of Lading, 1806-1809," *Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society, Papers and Records*, Vol. 9, 1981, pp. 8-9.

³⁰ Winterburn, "Lac La Pluie Bill of Lading, 1806-1809," p. 11.

³¹ Gilman, "The Fur Trade in the Upper Mississippi Valley, 1630-1850," p. 13.

³² Bela Chapman Letterbook, MHS, Henry H. Sibley Papers, M164, Roll 17, pp. 20-28.

³³ Jonathan Carver, *Three Years Travels through the Interior Parts of North-*

America (Philadelphia: Key & Simpson, 1796), p. 131.

³⁴ Henry, *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories*, p. 240.

³⁵ John McKay, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1793-1794, HBCA, B.105/a/1, fo. 3-5.

³⁶ John D. Cameron, Lac La Pluie District Report for 1825-1826, HBCA, B.105/e/6, fo.4.

³⁷ Tim E. Holzkamm, Victor P. Lytwyn, and Leo G. Waisberg, "Rainy River Sturgeon: An Ojibway Resource in the Fur Trade Economy," in *Aboriginal Resource Use in Canada: Historical and Legal Aspects*, edited by Kerry Abel and Jean Friesen (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1991), p. 121.

³⁸ John McKay, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1795-1796, HBCA, B.105/a/3, fo. 37.

³⁹ John McKay, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1795-1796, HBCA, B.105/a/3, fo. 38d.

⁴⁰ La Vérendrye, *Journals and Letters of Pierre Gaultier de Varennes de la Vérendrye and his sons*, p. 55; Lease, October 22, 1748, De La Vérendrye Papers, A-L399, Minnesota Historical Society.

⁴¹ Arthur Dobbs, *An Account of the Countries Adjoining to Hudson's Bay in the North-west Part of America* (Toronto: S. R. Publishers Limited Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1967), p. 33. Also see the footnote on the lake's nomenclature in Elliott Coues, editor, *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest* (New York: Francis P. Harper, 1897), p. 18.

⁴² Carver, *Three Years Travels through the Interior Parts of North-America*, pp. 71-72.

⁴³ Bigsby, *The Shoe and Canoe, or Pictures of Travel in the Canadas*, p. 264.

⁴⁴ Garry, "Diary of Nicholas Garry," p. 125.

⁴⁵ Coues, ed., *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest*, p. 19.

⁴⁶ Bigsby, *The Shoe and Canoe*, p. 271.

⁴⁷ Gates, ed., *Five Fur Traders of the Northwest*, p. 104. The reference is by John MacDonell in 1794.

⁴⁸ Delafield, *The Unfortified Boundary*, p. 420.

⁴⁹ Lac La Pluie Journal for 1819-20, HBCA, B.105/a/7, fo. 20d, October 2, 1819.

⁵⁰ Lac La Pluie Journal for 1824-1825, HBCA, B.105/a/10, fo. 6, January 22, 1825.

⁵¹ Peter Jacobs, *Journal of the Reverend Peter Jacobs* (New York: Peter Jacobs, 1857), p. 30.

⁵² Delafield, *The Unfortified Boundary*, p. 421.

⁵³ Stephen H. Long, *The Northern Expeditions of Stephen H. Long: The Journals of 1817 and 1823 and Related Documents*, edited by Lucile M. Kane, June D. Holmquist, and Carolyn Gilman (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1978), pp. 217-218.

⁵⁴ Justus A. Griffin, "From Toronto to Fort Garry: An Account of the Second Expedition to Red River," *Evening Times* (Hamilton, Ontario, 1872), p. 33.

⁵⁵ Long, *The Northern Expeditions*, pp. 217-218.

⁵⁶ Alexander Henry the Younger made note of it in his journal of 1800, edited and published by Elliott Coues in 1897. Coues, ed., *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest*, p. 18. Coues erred in construing this portage to be Gold Portage between Kabetogama Lake and Black Bay. See his footnotes 20 and 21, pp. 17-18.

⁵⁷ Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal*, p. lv.

⁵⁸ Garry, "Diary of Nicholas Garry," p. 125.

⁵⁹ Long, *The Northern Expeditions*, p. 217.

⁶⁰ S. J. Dawson, *Report of the Exploration of the Country between the latter place and the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan*, (Toronto: John Lovell, 1859), p. 81.

⁶¹ Jacobs, *Journal of the Reverend Peter Jacobs*, p. 30.

⁶² Tom Thiessen notes on "Journal of John Louis Hubert Neilson," NAC, MG 29 E, vol. 37, June 27, 1871; "Diaries of Josiah Jones Bell," PAO, microfilm, August 7, 1870. G. L. Huyshe referred to "New Portage" in *The Red River Expedition* (New York: MacMillan and Co., 1871), pp. 132-133.

⁶³ Mary Graves, comments to author on draft, February 22, 2000.

⁶⁴ Coues, ed., *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest*, p. 17. See also Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal*, p. lv.

⁶⁵ Charles Whittlesey, "Valley of the Rainy Lake," Western Reserve Historical Society [hereafter WRHS], p. 56. Coues writes that Sand Point Lake was named for Pointe de Sable, which Henry Alexander the Younger noted in his journal of 1800. Coues, ed., *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest*, p. 17.

⁶⁶ Coues, ed., *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest*, p. 19.

⁶⁷ Gates, ed., *Five Fur Traders of the Northwest*, p. 202.

⁶⁸ Delafield, *The Unfortified Boundary*, p. 421.

⁶⁹ International Boundary Commission, *Joint Report Upon the Survey and Demarcation of the Boundary between the United States and Canada from the Northwestern Point of Lake of the Woods to Lake Superior* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1931), pp. 385-386. On lob sticks, see Nute, *The Voyageur*, p. 67.

⁷⁰ Mary Graves, comments to author on draft, February 22, 2000.

⁷¹ Long, *The Northern Expeditions*, p. 217.

⁷² Garry, "Diary of Nicholas Garry," p. 123.

⁷³ Note that a 1916 survey and report for the International Joint Commission found two buildings belonging to Harry Smith at this location. Adolph F. Meyer and Arthur V. White, *Report to International Joint Commission relating to Official Reference re Lake of the Woods Levels* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1917), p. 21.

⁷⁴ John Emslie, "Journal of Expedition to Fort Garry, 1870," Microfilm Collection, NAC.

⁷⁵ Griffin, *From Toronto to Fort Garry*, pp. 31-32.

⁷⁶ Garry, "Diary of Nicholas Garry," p. 123.

⁷⁷ Lord Selkirk to Donald McPherson, February 22, 1817, NAC, Lord Selkirk Papers, Vol. 10, p. 3189 (Reel 4).

⁷⁸ Garry, "Diary of Nicholas Garry," pp. 121-123.

⁷⁹ James Anderson, "Journal of a Trip," [1850], Microfilm Collection, NAC.

⁸⁰ S. J. Dawson, *Report on the Red River Expedition of 1870* (Ottawa: Times Printing and Publishing Co., 1871), passim.

⁸¹ Hind, *Narrative of the Canadian Red River Exploring Expedition of 1857 and of the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan Exploring Expedition of 1858*, p. 217.

⁸² Huyshe, *The Red River Expedition*, pp. 132-133.

⁸³ Mary Graves, comments to author on draft, February 22, 2000.

⁸⁴ Davidson, *The North West Company*, p. 238.

⁸⁵ Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal*, p. lvi.

⁸⁶ Jeff Richner, comments to author on draft, February 22, 2000.

⁸⁷ Nute, *Rainy River Country*, p. 8.

⁸⁸ Daniel Williams Harmon, *A Journal of Voyages and Travels in the Interior of North America* (Toronto: The Courier Press, Ltd., 1911), p. 19.

⁸⁹ Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal*, p. lvi.

⁹⁰ John McKay, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1793-1794, HBCA, B.105/a/1, fo.1.

⁹¹ Henry, *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories*, p. 20.

⁹² Franchere, *Narrative of a Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America*, p. 335.

⁹³ Gates, ed., *Five Fur Traders of the Northwest*, p. 205.

⁹⁴ Gates, ed., *Five Fur Traders of the Northwest*, pp. 214, 218.

⁹⁵ John McKay, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1795-1796, HBCA, B.105a/3, fos. 4d, 5d. McKay noted that the chimneys had to be rebuilt each year as they would usually burn up before the winter was over. But he recorded a new method of construction. "I place the 4 uprites 2 fast farther from one another, then I realy mean to Build the Chimney then I tie the cross bars as in other Chimney of this kind only stronger to support the Clay which is a foot on every square from the uprites then when the Clay is dry which becomes as hard as stones I take away the uprites from the Chimney and if I chose may hawl out the crossbars; then the Chimney stands without a bit of wood in her—and when those holes are filled up with well worked Clay that is occasioned by taking away the crossbars; and the Chimney washed with clean Clay about as thick as water grease. it will have all the appearance of a stone Chimney well pasterd." (Fo. 11).

⁹⁶ Nute, ed., *Documents Relating to Northwest Missions, 1815-1827*, p. 124.

⁹⁷ Garry, "Diary of Nicholas Garry," p. 126. Roderick McKenzie referred to the moose skin as "parchments." See Roderick McKenzie, Lac La Pluie Journal for 1819-1820, HBCA, B. 105/a/7, fo. 39.

⁹⁸ Huyshe, *The Red River Expedition*, p. 137; George Adshead, Journal, Manitoba Provincial Archives.

⁹⁹ G. Scott, "Pioneer Days of Fort Frances," PAO, Record Group 16, Series 16-87, File 15-2.

¹⁰⁰ Gates, ed., *Five Fur Traders of the Northwest*, p. 206.

¹⁰¹ Elizabeth Knudson Steiner and Robert Alan Clouse, "Historical Research and Archaeological Investigations Relating to the Bourassa Site on Crane Lake, Minnesota," Archaeology Department, Minnesota Historical Society, 1994, *passim*.

¹⁰² Nute, "Hudson's Bay Company Posts in the Minnesota Country," *Minnesota History* 22 (Summer, 1941), p. 275.

¹⁰³ Lord Selkirk to Donald McPherson, March 6, 1817, Selkirk Papers, NAC, Reel 4, p. 3234.

¹⁰⁴ Nute, "Hudson's Bay Company Posts in the Minnesota Country," p. 275.

¹⁰⁵ Roderick McKenzie, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1819-1820, HBCA, B.105/a/7, fo.20d.

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¹⁰⁷ Gerald Robert Vizenor, ed., "Clement H. Beaulieu's Sketch of the Fur-Trade Around Lake Superior," in *Escorts to White Earth, 1868 to 1968: 100 Year Reservation* (Minneapolis: Four Winds, 1968), p. 67.

¹⁰⁸ Clarissa Headline and Milton N. Gallup, "The Diary of an Early Fur Trader," *Inland Seas: Quarterly Journal of the Great Lakes Historical Society* 19, no. 2 (Summer 1963), pp. 114-118.

¹⁰⁹ John McLoughlin, Lac La Pluie District Report for 1822-1823, HBCA, B.105/e/2, fo.4.

¹¹⁰ Lac La Pluie Account Book, HBCA, B.105/d/67, fos. 1d-2.

¹¹¹ James Anderson, "Journal of a Trip," NAC, p. 94. Possibly this plant was the wild grape.

¹¹² Donald MacPherson, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1817-1818, HBCA, B.105/a/5, fo.10; Robert Logan, Lac La Pluie Journal for 1819-1820, HBCA, B.105/a/6, fo. 25d; Roderick McKenzie, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1819-1820, fo. 21.

¹¹³ Roderick McKenzie, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1819-1820, fo. 70d.

¹¹⁴ Delafield, *The Unfortified Boundary*, p. 422.

¹¹⁵ Donald MacPherson, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1817-1818, HBCA, B.105/a/5, fo.4.

¹¹⁶ Roderick McKenzie, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1819-1820, HBCA, B.105/a/7, fo.39.

¹¹⁷ J. D. Cameron, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1824-1825, HBCA, B.105/a/10, fo.6.

- ¹¹⁸ Jacobs, *Journal of the Reverend Peter Jacobs*, p. 30.
- ¹¹⁹ Mackenzie, *Voyages from Montreal*, p. lv.
- ¹²⁰ Jacobs, *Journal of the Reverend Peter Jacobs*, p. 30.
- ¹²¹ James Anderson, diary, NAC, p. 94.
- ¹²² Ballantyne, *Hudson's Bay; or Every-day Life in the Wilds of North America*, pp. 240-242.
- ¹²³ Delafield, *The Unfortified Boundary*, p. 421.
- ¹²⁴ Jacobs, *Journal of the Reverend Peter Jacobs*, p. 30.
- ¹²⁵ Henry, *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories*, p. 240.
- ¹²⁶ John MacDonell, Journal (transcription). Manuscripts Collection, Minnesota Historical Society, p. 103.
- ¹²⁷ Coues, ed., *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest*, p. 17.
- ¹²⁸ John McLoughlin, Lac La Pluie Post Journal for 1823-1824, HBCA, B.105/a/9, p. 94.
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- ¹³⁰ Graffenreid, *Sechs Jahre in Canada*, p. 116.
- ¹³¹ Mrs. G. Scott, "Pioneer Days of Fort Frances," March 1941, PAO, RG 16, Series 16-87, File 15-2.
- ¹³² Garry, "Diary of Nicholas Garry," p. 125; Delafield, *The Unfortified Boundary*, pp. 419-421.
- ¹³³ John Irvine, *Report on the Red River Expedition of 1870* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1871), pp. 8, 14; Huyshe, *The Red River Expedition*, Appendix F.
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¹⁴⁷ Franchère, *Narrative of a Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America*, p. 336.

¹⁴⁸ Frederick Ulric Graham, *Notes of a Sporting Expedition in the Far West of Canada, 1847* (London: Hermione Graham, 1898), p. 23.

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¹⁵⁰ Holzkamm and Waisberg, "Agriculture and One 19th-Century Ojibwa Band: 'They Hardly Ever Lose Sight of Their Field,'" p. 408.

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¹⁵⁴ Josiah Jones Bell, *Diaries*, Ontario Provincial Archives, Toronto.

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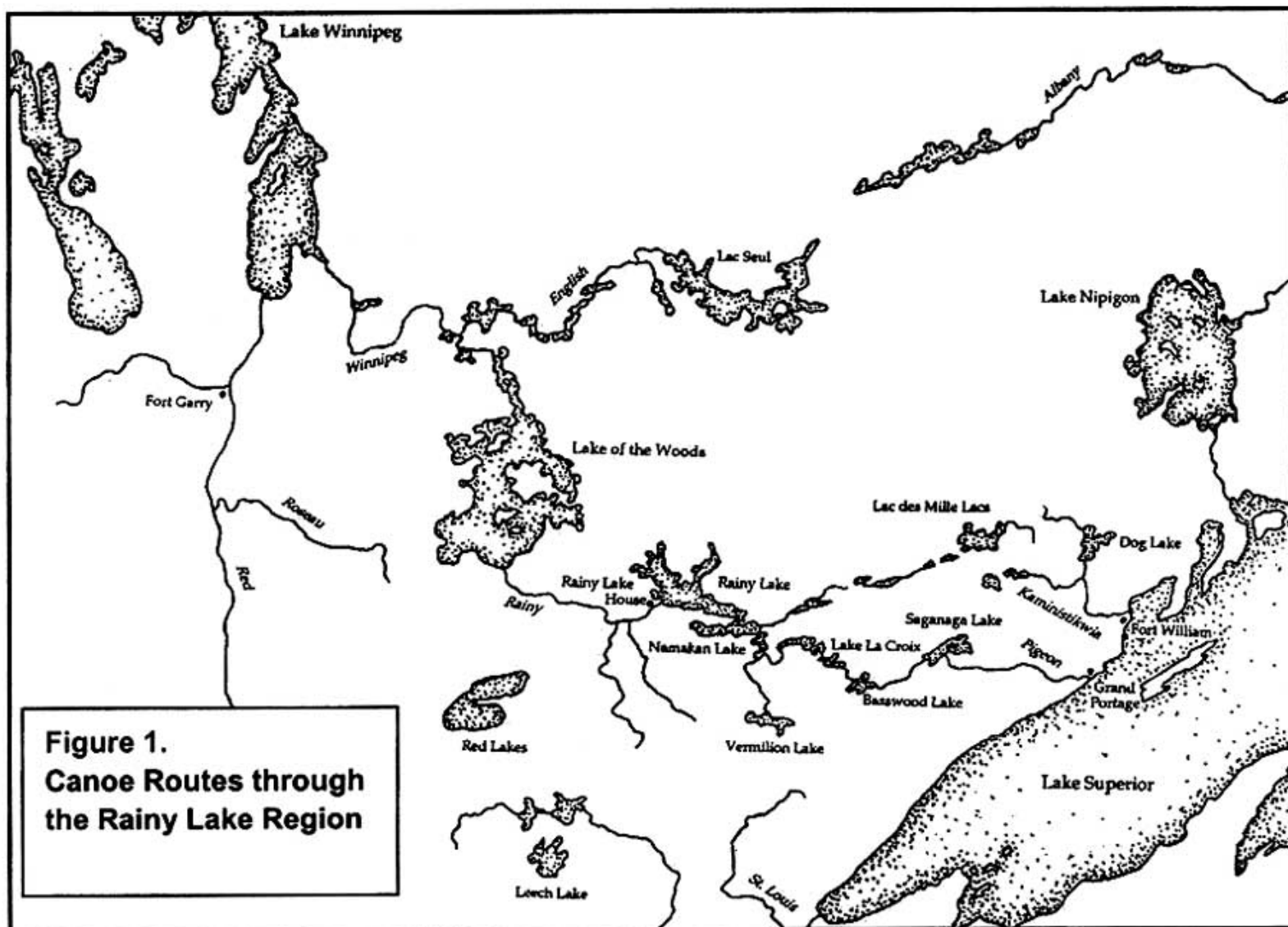
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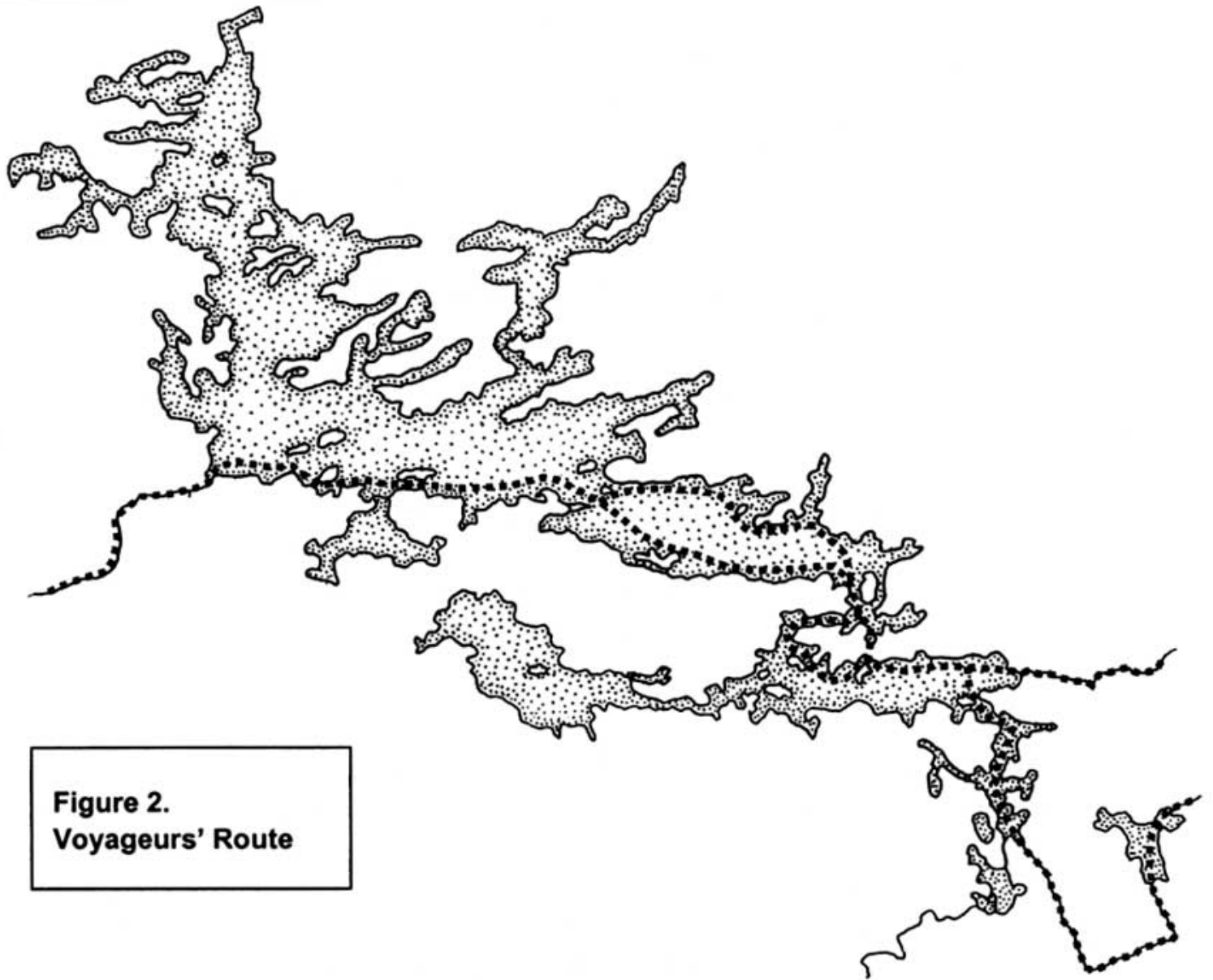


Figure 2.
Voyageurs' Route

