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## Beothuk and Micmac: Re-examining Relationships \*

FOR MANY YEARS THE IMPACT OF the Micmac upon the Beothuk of Newfoundland has been a subject of historical controversy. Theories expounded in Micmac land claim proposals exonerate the Micmac from any share of responsibility for the sad fate of the Beothuk.<sup>1</sup> Bartels, Pastore and Upton, who have touched on the topic of Beothuk-Micmac relations, have also cast doubt upon Micmac implication in the extermination of the Beothuk.<sup>2</sup> Suggesting that the Beothuk group was small and confined to the north-eastern part of the island, these accounts have argued that the Micmacs would have had no reason to fight the Beothuk. They point out that tales of hostilities are poorly documented and were supported by the English in order to place the blame for the extinction of the Beothuk on the Micmacs. However, these conclusions were themselves based on very limited records. Indeed, part of the difficulty in examining Beothuk-Micmac relations is that documentation of interactions between these two nations before the middle of the 18th century is not extensive. Nonetheless, by using additional source material — archaeological reports, documents from both English and French archives, Micmac and Beothuk oral traditions and printed accounts — a relatively detailed reconstruction of Micmac visits to and activities in Newfoundland can be attempted. This approach allows for a more systematic examination of the development of relations between Beothuk and Micmacs in Newfoundland and suggests more extensive and lasting hostilities and transgressions than have hitherto been documented.

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- 1 Peter Usher, ed., *Freedom to live our own lives in our own land* (Conne River, 1980), pp.2-3; James O'Reilly and William Grodinsky, eds., "Consolidation of Historical Material Containing Specific References to the Use of Newfoundland by Micmacs prior to 1763 and relating to the Land Claim Submitted by Ktaquamkuk Innu Sagimawoutie and the Conne River Indian Band Council" (1982), submitted to Government of Newfoundland, St. John's, pp.19-20.
- 2 Dennis Bartels, "Micmac Use and Occupancy of Newfoundland" (1978), quoted in O'Reilly and Grodinsky, eds., "Consolidation", p.18 ; Dennis Bartels, "Time Immemorial? A Research Note on Micmacs in Newfoundland", *Newfoundland Quarterly*, LXXV, 3 (1979), pp. 6-9; Ralph T. Pastore, "Micmac Colonization of Newfoundland", paper read at the annual meeting of the Canadian Historical Association (1977), p.5 and *Newfoundland Micmacs; A History of Their Traditional Life*, Newfoundland Historical Society Publication No. 5 (St. John's, 1978), pp. 16-9; L.F.S. Upton, "The Extermination of the Beothuks of Newfoundland", *Canadian Historical Review*, LVIII (June 1977), pp.148-50 and *Micmacs and Colonists* (Vancouver, 1979), p.8.

The anthropologist Frank Speck, who collected Micmac traditions in Newfoundland in the early 1900s, recorded that the Micmacs throughout the island referred to their predecessors on the island as “Sa’qewe’ji’jk” or “the ancients” and believed that they had antedated the Beothuk.<sup>3</sup> According to this tradition, Micmacs had settled in St. George’s Bay, Burin and Conne River in prehistoric times and eventually merged with later arrivals from Cape Breton and Labrador. An extension of this idea, implied in Micmac land claims, would be that Micmacs were the original inhabitants of parts of the island of Newfoundland. That a prehistoric settlement in Newfoundland by Micmacs existed is an interesting proposition, but it has not, to date, been substantiated. Within the last two decades archaeological investigations on the Newfoundland southcoast — some of them commissioned by the Conne River Micmac band — have not located any remains which would prove prehistoric Micmac presence. Surveys and/or excavations have been conducted in Placentia and Heritage Bay, Bay D’Espoir, the Burgeo region, including Grandy’s Brook and White Bear Bay, La Poile Bay, Cape Ray and on the Port au Port Peninsula. They have consistently exposed either Maritime Archaic Indian or Paleo Eskimo materials or prehistoric Indian tools of the “Little Passage” type, originating with ancestors of the historic Beothuk.<sup>4</sup>

The absence of prehistoric Micmac remains does not preclude the possibility that Micmacs crossed the Cabot Strait in bark canoes and explored the Newfoundland coast before the arrival of Europeans. Micmacs are known to have constructed canoes for ocean travel and the convenience and speed of these craft were described by several 17th century observers who also remarked on the Micmacs’ skill as canoeists and navigators.<sup>5</sup> In fact, about 300 Cape Breton Micmacs were seen on the Magdalen Islands in 1597 and in all likelihood had made the 85 km crossing in their seemingly fragile barks.<sup>6</sup> Indian remains on the

3 Frank G. Speck, *Beothuk and Micmac* (New York, 1922), pp. 123-4.

4 Urve Linnamae, *The Dorset Culture*, Technical Papers of the Newfoundland Museum, No. 1 (St. John’s, 1975); Gerald Penney, “The Prehistory of the Southwest Coast of Newfoundland”, M.A. thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1984, p.40; Gerald Penney, “Micmac Project Report 1984: Spanish Room Survey 1984”, in Jane Sproull Thomson and Callum Thomson, eds., *Archaeology in Newfoundland and Labrador 1984* (St. John’s, 1985), p.341; Gerald Penney, “Placentia Bay Environmental Impact Study prepared for the Dept. of Development and Tourism”, unpublished Ms., St. John’s, 1985; Gerald Penney, “Results of Four Historic Resources Assessments in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1985”, in Callum Thomson and Jane Sproull Thomson, eds., *Archaeology in Newfoundland and Labrador 1985*, (St. John’s, 1986), p.66; David N. Simpson, “The Port au Port Peninsula Archaeology Project: A Preliminary Report”, in Jane Sproull Thomson and Callum Thomson, eds., *Archaeology in Newfoundland and Labrador 1983*, (St. John’s, 1984), pp. 126-41; James A. Tuck “Historic Resources evaluation of the Argentia Offshore Support Base Site”, unpublished Ms., St. John’s, 1984.

5 E.T. Adney and H.I. Chapelle, *The Bark Canoes and Skin Boats of North America* (Washington, 1964), pp. 7-13; Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* (Cleveland, 1896-1901), III, p.84 and XXXV, p.65.

6 Charles A. Martijn, “Les Micmacs aux îles de la Madeleine: visions figitives et glanures

Magdalen Islands — some of them dating back several millenia — show that prehistoric Indians were in the habit of making lengthy sea voyages.<sup>7</sup> The distance from Cape North on Cape Breton Island to Cape Ray at the most south-westerly point of Newfoundland is little more than 85 km, and it can be postulated that once Micmacs had mastered the art of building seagoing canoes, they were certainly capable of paddling across this stretch of water. Frank Speck was told of Micmacs who formerly travelled this route, breaking the trip on St. Paul's Island, called by the Micmac "Tuywe gan moniguk" or "temporary goal island".<sup>8</sup> As late as 1883, Micmacs from the band in St. George's Bay, Newfoundland, who took part in the annual pilgrimage to Ste. Anne on Cape Breton Island, travelled there in bark canoes.<sup>9</sup>

There is, however, no indisputable evidence of prehistoric Micmac presence in Newfoundland, nor are there any reliable documents which would prove that Micmacs crossed the Cabot Strait during the first 150 years of European contact (1500 - 1650). Early historic records describing natives in Newfoundland may be valid accounts of the appearance and behavior of Indians but are not specific enough to deduce whether the Indians were Beothuk, Micmacs or members of other tribes. Other accounts lack convincing clues as to the location in which the Indians were seen. Thus descriptions of Indians in the works of Crignon, Thevet and de Laet, which have been quoted repeatedly as evidence of Micmac occupancy in Newfoundland, are too vague to constitute such proof.<sup>10</sup> Equally unsatisfactory is Gosnold's report of unidentified Indians somewhere off the New England coast who were able to inform him of the location of Placentia. Although it is possible that these people were Micmacs, Gosnold's scanty information cannot be considered conclusive.<sup>11</sup> Biard's mention of "Presentic" as the Micmac name for "Newfoundland" is equally invalid. "Presentic" was

ethnohistoriques", *Les Micmacs et la Mer* (Montreal, 1986), p.166.

- 7 Moira T. McCaffrey, "La prehistoire des îles de la Madeleine: bilan préliminaire", in C.A. Martijn, ed., *Les Micmacs et la Mer*, pp.98-162; Bruce Borque and Ruth Whitehead, "Tarrantines and the Introduction of European Trade Goods in the Gulf of Maine", *Ethnohistory*, 32, 4 (1985), pp.327-41 document that Micmacs made journeys to the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence and went southward as far as New England.
- 8 Speck, *Beothuk and Micmac*, pp. 119-20. The island was also known by the Micmac name "Menegoo", meaning "island" (1597), and appears on the Bestius Map of 1600 as "Inhigo" (Charles A. Martijn, personal communication). On Thornton's "Chart of the River Canada", *The English Pilot, The Fourth Book* (Chicago, 1967), the island is marked as I. Paul.
- 9 Narcisse-Henri-Edouard Faucher de Saint Maurice, *En route sept jours dans les Provinces Maritimes* (Quebec, 1888), p.93.
- 10 Bernard G. Hoffman, "Account of a Voyage conducted in 1529 to the New World, Africa, Madagaskar and Sumatra ...", *Ethnohistory*, 10, 1 (1963), pp.13-79; Andrew Thevet, *The New found worlde, or Antarctice, wherein is contained woderful and strange things...* (London, 1568), pp.133-6; Ioannes de Laet, *L'histoire du Nouveau-Monde au description des Indes Occidentales* (A Leyde, 1640), p.36.
- 11 Samuel B.D. Purchas, *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas Pilgimes* (Glasgow, 1906), XVIII, p. 304; Pastore, "Newfoundland Micmacs", p.10; Usher, "Freedom", pp. 2-3.

actually the Micmac word for Placentia, most likely taken over from the Spanish or French, and in itself does not prove that the Micmacs ever visited the place.<sup>12</sup> References to Micmacs exchanging furs with European traders and fishing crews, for instance in the accounts of Champlain, prove nothing more than Micmac participation in trade; they certainly do not establish that the furs were procured or traded in Newfoundland.<sup>13</sup> Tantalizingly incomplete is the report of an Indian campsite in St. George's Bay, discovered by the crew of an English fishing vessel in 1594.<sup>14</sup> This camp housed about 40 to 50 people who hastily retreated when the crew landed, and left behind plucked birds and meat still roasting on spits. The probability that these Indians were Beothuk rather than Micmacs is based on several factors: Captain Whitbourne claimed in 1622 that Newfoundland's Indians lived in the western parts of that island; the flight of the Indians from approaching Europeans was a typical response of the Beothuk;<sup>15</sup> archaeological records of the region show prehistoric Beothuk occupancy;<sup>16</sup> and, according to one Micmac tradition, St. George's Bay was originally occupied by Beothuk, who were later joined and then replaced by Micmacs.<sup>17</sup>

There are no records of Micmacs coming to Newfoundland until the second half of the 17th century. Although the report by Nicolas Denys, a French eyewitness and historian, has repeatedly been quoted as evidence of Micmac migration to this island around 1650, it cannot reasonably be considered indisputable. Denys, who lived in the 1650s in Cape Breton Island, blamed the participation of the Micmacs in the fur trade for the depletion of animal stocks there and declared that "This island [Cape Breton] has also been esteemed for the hunting of Moose. They were found formerly in great numbers but at present they are no more. The Indians have destroyed everything and have abandoned the land, finding there no longer the wherewithal for living".<sup>18</sup> Several authors have extrapolated from this record that Micmacs migrated to Newfoundland.<sup>19</sup>

12 Biard, 1 July 1612, cited in Pastore, "Newfoundland Micmacs", p. 11; John Hewson, "The Name Presentic and other Ancient Micmac Toponyms", *Newfoundland Quarterly*, LXXVI, 4 (1981), p. 11.

13 H.P. Biggar, *The Works of Samuel de Champlain* (Toronto, 1933), p. 160.

14 David B. Quinn, *New American World, A Documentary History of North America to 1612* (New York, 1979), IV, p. 64; J.P. Howley, *The Beothuks or Red Indians* (Cambridge, 1915), p. 12.

15 Gillian T. Cell, *Newfoundland Discovered* (London, 1982), pp. 70, 149, 193; Howley, *Beothuks*, p. 10. At least on one occasion Micmacs were also said to have fled; men from the 'Marigold' who landed at Cape Breton in 1593 found spits on which the Indians, having retired from view, had recently roasted meat; at a second place, the natives did not approach until the men took water from one of their artificial fish ponds. Quinn, *New American World*, IV, p. 62.

16 Simpson, "The Port au Port Peninsula", p. 126.

17 Speck, *Beothuk and Micmac*, p. 122.

18 Nicolas Denys, *The Description and Natural History of the Coasts of North America (Acadia)*, ed. by W.F. Ganong (Toronto, 1908), pp. 186-7.

19 Cited in Bartels, "Micmac Use and Occupancy", p. 18; Pastore, "Newfoundland Micmacs", p. 10; O'Reilly and Grodinsky, eds., "Consolidation", p. 15.

Certainly, some Roman Catholic Micmacs moved from Cape Breton to the Sagenay-Lac St. Jean district after the resident Montagnais had been decimated by small pox epidemics; there is, however, no record of permanent migration of Micmacs to Newfoundland in the second half of the 17th century.<sup>20</sup>

The earliest document believed to refer to seasonal hunting and trapping by Micmacs who travelled to Newfoundland for this purpose is an account by John Mathewes, dated 1670, which mentions that Indians who usually came to “kill beaver and other beasts for furs” had been seen in St. Mary’s Bay in 1662.<sup>21</sup> Later developments indicate that these Indians are likely to have been Micmacs, attracted to this area after a French fort had been established in Placentia in the early 1660s. The rumour, spread among the English, that the French fort in Placentia was maintained as a defence against the Indians [Micmacs], who “come off from the Maine and molest them [the French] in their Beaver trade”, was soon recognized as a falsehood.<sup>22</sup> Rather than being fearful of Indians, the French evidently supported Micmac procurement of furs in Newfoundland and established a trade with them. A narrative by John Downing, recording the testimony of one John Aylred, who had been in Newfoundland in 1661, reads: “some Canida Indians [usually believed to refer to Micmac] are coming from the Forts of Canida in french Shalloways with French fowling pieces all spared them by the French of Canida”.<sup>23</sup> However, since Aylred did not give the location that was visited the Indians could have been Montagnais who came to the west coast, or Maliseet, or Abnaki.

An opportunity for Micmacs to get a firmer footing in Newfoundland and make territorial advances came in the wake of Anglo-French conflicts in the 1690s. As Catholics, who had in the past traded with the French, the Micmacs immediately became French allies. In 1687 three “sauvages” were included in the French census of Placentia and in 1695 a family of eleven and possibly others had

20 Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, LVI, p.77.

21 Testification by John Mathewes, dated 28 January 1670, Egerton Ms. 2395, f.471, British Library [hereafter BL]. Mathewes had been in Newfoundland in 1662 and “was sent by Captn. Pearse & Mr. Rayner ... to St. Maryes to bring one Mr. Russel ye Inhabitant their & the masters of the Indians (who came to Kill Beavers & other beasts for ffurs) before them to ffarry Land Ferryland] ... but instead of haveing y warrant obeyd a ffrench Capt. seized on mee ... was taken prisoner & soe kept for about 2 dayes when y ffrench carryed mee aboard & sett forward untill wee came nigh Pleasance fort ... from whence a shoalopp came out from y Governour wth. comand for our returne to St. Maryes in pursuits for the Indians where by Gods providence I made my escape”.

22 “Beaver trade” here meaning trapping for Beaver. “Order in Council, upon Report of the Committee For Foreign Plantations of 15 April 1675”, *Calender of State Paper of the Colonies, America and West Indies* [hereafter CSPC], 1675-1676 (London, 1893), doc. 550, p.226; “Observations in the year 1675 by me [Sir John Berry] then commanding HMS *Bristol*, in relations to the trade and inhabitants of Newfoundland”, *ibid.*, doc. 769, p.329.

23 “A Brief Narrative concerning Newfoundland” by John Downing, received 24 November 1676, Egerton Ms.2395, f. 562, BL, also to be found in Colonial Office Series [hereafter CO], 1/38, f.175, Public Record Office, London [hereafter PRO].

settled in the neighbourhood of the French fort.<sup>24</sup> Once hostilities between French and English in Newfoundland commenced, larger contingents of Micmacs followed. Indians — not only Micmacs — became an important element in d’Ilberville’s winter war in 1695/96; they were better equipped to travel overland in winter and to survive in a severe climate than were their French allies or the poorly prepared English.<sup>25</sup> The Indians’ skillful surprise attacks and cruelties to prisoners advanced the case of the French but created considerable fear among the Newfoundland English.<sup>26</sup> During the War of the Spanish Succession (1702-1713) Cape Breton Micmacs again joined forces with the French in Newfoundland in their attacks on the English and in winter penetrated through inaccessible countryside to raid English habitations in the north.<sup>27</sup> In 1705, after the arrival in Placentia of the first 25 Micmac families, the French governor, M. de Subercase, wrote that it was the intent of the Micmacs to establish themselves in Newfoundland and that the rest of their people were expected in the coming spring. Subercase also expressed his willingness to assist the Micmacs in achieving their goal.<sup>28</sup> But as the war progressed the French came to abhor the Indians’ cruel treatment of English captives and eventually advocated their departure.<sup>29</sup> Many Micmacs were not willing to return to Cape Breton Island; letters from French commanders, dated 1707 and 1708, record that 60 families wintered in Fortune Bay, that others chose to live temporarily on St. Pierre Island and that still others had “destroyed” the deer and beaver hunt

- 24 “Judgement du conseil de guerre”, 5 October 1695, MGI, F 3, Vol. 54, ptie 2, Public Archives of Canada [hereafter PAC] cited in O’Reilly and Grodinsky, eds., “Consolidation”, p. 28. A.W. Jones, *Assessment and Analysis of the Micmac Land Claim in Newfoundland* (St. John’s, 1982), p. 104, erroneously claims they were Beothuk; however, Beothuk Indians did not associate with or live in the proximity of Europeans.
- 25 Report by Christian Pollard who had fishing establishments in Ferryland and Caplin Bay, Newfoundland, dated 1697, CSPP, 1696-1697 (London, 1904), doc. 922, p.444. Pollard, an eyewitness, thought that 400 Indians were as good as 800 of their own men, because the latter were more easily fatigued, suffered from scurvy and could not travel in snow like the Indians, who would cover 20 to 30 miles in a day.
- 26 According to a biography of John Masters, unpublished Ms., Dorset Record Office, reference 2694, John Masters was murdered by Indians in 1699 in Silly Cove, Newfoundland; “Diary of a Journey which I made with M. d’Ilberville, Captain of the Navy, from France to Acadia and from Acadia to the island of Newfoundland” by Abbe Baudoin, translated by H.F. Shortis; *The Daily News* (St. John’s), 9 March 1923.
- 27 “Deposition of Frances Andrews and John Evans, St. John’s”, 29 July 1704, CO 194/22, f. 44, PRO; Lieutenant Moody to Governor Dudley, April 1705, CSPP, 1704-5 (London, 1916), doc. 1056, p. 501; Colin Campbell to Council of Trade and Plantations, 15 June 1705, *ibid.*, doc. 1185, p. 538; de Costebelle 10 November 1707, MGI C”C, Vol.5, pp.164-8, PAC, cited in O’Reilly and Grodinsky, eds., “Consolidation”, App.I, p. ll.
- 28 de Subercase, 22 October 1705, MGI C”C, Vol.4, p. 280, PAC, cited in O’Reilly and Grodinsky eds., “Consolidation”, App. I, p. 5.
- 29 Letter to de Costebelle, 6 June 1708, MGI Series B, Vol. 29, pt. 5, pp. 1136-40, PAC, cited in O’Reilly and Grodinsky, eds., “Consolidation”, App.I, p. 12.

(somewhere) in southern Newfoundland.<sup>30</sup> These documents suggest that in the early 1700s Micmac exploited resources on the south coast of Newfoundland on a regular basis and traded their furs with the French in Placentia.

Although these circumstances would not have encouraged Beothuk to come to this area, a group of what is thought to have been Beothuk Indians was met by a French officer “in the southern part of the island” in 1694. According to the officer, these Indians were “so unprepared for war that a small party could chase them away”.<sup>31</sup> The location of their principal encampment remains unknown and it is also uncertain whether Beothuk and Micmacs had contact with each other at that time, although one may speculate that each group would have been aware of the presence of the other. Around the end of the 17th century, the Beothuk appear to have ceded hunting areas between Cape Race and Fortune Bay to Micmacs. Three burials which are unquestionably Beothuk — two in Placentia Bay and one close to Burgeo, the latter including iron hatchets and glass beads — provide evidence of Beothuk presence there into the historic period and challenge the assertion that the southern region of Newfoundland was vacant and had been taken over by Micmacs without the need to displace Beothuk.<sup>32</sup> The Beothuk were evidently not in a position to enforce their claim on this territory and may have relinquished the land voluntarily in order to remain on good terms with their Micmac neighbours. This interpretation would fit with Beothuk and Micmac traditions, which agree on initial “friendly relations” between the two groups, and it would also account for the historical fact that Beothuk never regained control of this region.

After the Treaty of Utrecht (1713), the French were forced to leave their settlements in Newfoundland and their fort in Placentia, but they retained fishing rights on the “French Shore” between Cape Riche and Cape Bonavista.<sup>33</sup> When the French left, the Micmacs who had resided in Placentia and Fortune Bay, also abandoned the area. William Taverner surveyed the south coast, which had formerly been used by the French, in the winter of 1714/15. Starting from

30 de Sourdeval, 18 October 1707, MGI C”C, Vol.5, pp. 242-4, PAC; de Costebelle, 10 November 1707, *ibid.*, pp. 164-8; de Sourdeval, 30 June 1707, MGI Series B, Vol. 29, pt. 2, pp. 429-30, PAC; all letters cited in O’Reilly and Grodinsky eds., “Consolidation”, App.I, pp. 11-12.

31 Report by Governor of Placentia, de Brouillon, 25 October 1694, cited in Charles J. de la Morandière, *Histoire de la pêche française de la morue dans l’Amérique septentrionale* (Paris, 1962), I. p. 20.

32 Howley, *The Beothucks*, pp. 292-4, 333; Bartels, “Micmac Occupancy”, quoted in O’Reilly and Grodinsky, eds., “Consolidation”, p. 9; Pastore, “Micmac Colonisation”, p.5; Upton, “The Extermination”, p.150.

33 Contrary to the conditions of the treaty some Cape Breton French returned for the hunting season to Fortune Bay and Bay Despair. Report by commander of the *Ludlow Castle* via Mr. Burchett to Mr. Popple, Secretary to the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, 26 April 1725, CO 194/7, f. 269, PRO; “Some remarks on the present state of the South Part of Newfoundland”, Wm. Taverner to Lord Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, 15 February 1715, CO 194/6, ff. 47-51, 238, PRO.



Placentia and working westward, Taverner investigated many harbours, charted the coastline and questioned residents; he concluded that this coast (with the exception of Cape Ray) was “free of Indians”, apparently not just during the winter season. He thought the departure of the French from Placentia had deprived the Micmacs of encouragement to go there because they no longer had trading partners for provisions and guns and were forced to obtain their supplies in Quebec.<sup>34</sup> If Taverner’s detailed report is to be believed, Micmacs resorted — at that time — only to Cape Ray and the harbour of Anguille, a short distance to the north. This area offered an abundance of furs; the martens were the largest and finest in the world; and near the coast caribou collected together in herds of a thousand head. St. George’s Bay, which had plenty of deer and woods but lacked proper anchorage owing to the deepness of the water, showed no signs of Indian occupation, although, according to the testimony of Sr. Estienne Mousnier, Captain of the *Saint-Antonie* from Quebec, “savages” may previously have come there.<sup>35</sup> Taverner was also requested to try to bring the fur trade between the French and “the Indian Nations inhabiting the aforesaid island”, into the hands of English traders. For this purpose he hired a Canadian Indian (Micmac or Montagnais) “who spoke their language”. Although subsequent English reports do mention fur trade with “a sort of French Indians” in northern Newfoundland “where the French fish”, the northerly location of these Indians suggests that they were Labrador Montagnais rather than Micmacs.<sup>36</sup>

Information on relations between Beothuk and Micmac in Newfoundland comes largely from the oral traditions of both peoples. Micmac traditions, communicated by a number of Micmac informants at different times and in a variety of locations, relate how interactions with the Beothuk changed from amiable to hostile. They were recorded by four collectors of Indian traditions. Two of them, William Epps Cormack, an entrepreneur, explorer and founder of the Beothuk Institution, and John Peyton Jr., principal settler and later Justice of the Peace in the Bay of Exploits, gathered the data in the 1820s; the geologist and surveyor J.B. Jukes questioned Micmacs in 1839/40 and the anthropologist Frank Speck, who had a lifelong interest in north-eastern Indian cultures,

34 “Appointment of Capt. W. Taverner, surveyer of a coast in Newfoundland by the Lords Commrs. for Trade and Plantations”, 21 July 1713, CO 194/23, f. 38., PRO; Governor Dudley to Council of Trade and Plantations, 12 February 1712, CSPC, 1712-14 (London, 1926), doc. 153, p.102; Wm. Taverner’s Report to Mr. Popple (probably written in 1715), included with papers dated 1718, CO 195/6, ff. 241-61, PRO.

35 “Declaration et autres procedures du Sr. Estienne Mousnier”, 23 May 1711, MGI, Archives des Colonies, Serie G 3, Notariat, No provisoire 8/176, Notariat non/classe (Terre-Neuve), pice no. 26.

36 Instructions to Wm. Taverner, 22 July 1713, CO 324/33, f.4, PRO; Wm. Taverner to Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, 22 October 1714, CO 194/5, f. 254, PRO; Report by Capt. Taverner to Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, 10 May 1715, CO 194/23, f. 69, PRO; Commander Percy to Commissioners for Trade and Plantations, 13 October 1720, CSPC, 1720-1721 (London, 1933), doc. 260, p.172.

engaged in field work in Newfoundland from 1914 onwards and published his work in 1922.<sup>37</sup> It should be emphasized that the traditions came from Micmac informants and that the parties who collected them were clearly interested in obtaining information which reflected the events as truthfully as possible. They show a marked consensus with respect to the major point, namely a peaceful co-existence of Micmacs and Beothuk in or near St. George's Bay until disagreements turned this harmony into enmity and bloodshed. Since this change in relations — as told by Micmacs — was confirmed by a Beothuk informant, the traditions probably represent the actual events fairly accurately.<sup>38</sup> Variations of the major theme may be accounted for by local differences in the traditions and by the considerable lapse of time between when the events occurred and were recorded.

There are essentially three versions of the critical turning point. The first version comes from John Peyton Jr., who was told by an old Micmac that hostilities first erupted when a group of Micmacs, descending the river near St. George's Bay, fell in with a party of Beothuk. In their canoes the Micmacs had concealed the heads of murdered Beothuk for which they wished to collect rewards from the French.<sup>39</sup> The Beothuk, upon discovery of this treachery, invited these Micmacs to a feast at which they placed each Micmac between two Beothuk; upon a signal every Beothuk stabbed his Micmac neighbour. Cormack recorded the same tradition and said that information on these events can "only be gleaned from tradition, and that chiefly among the Micmac".<sup>40</sup> The second version is from Jukes, who first heard this story from Peyton but afterwards questioned a Micmac from the St. George's Bay band named Sulleon. Sulleon gave a confused account of the way in which the Beothuk slew the Micmacs at a feast and did not mention Micmacs possessing Beothuk heads. In addition to the gory banquet Sulleon related that a group of Roman Catholic Micmacs from Nova Scotia, who had settled in the western part of Newfoundland, "were armed with guns and hunted the country, making great havoc amongst the game," and that soon afterward a quarrel between these Micmacs and the Red Indians arose.<sup>41</sup> The Micmacs' use of fire arms could have caused the dispersal of migrating caribou herds. Such dispersion would have resulted in a poor harvest of caribou for the Beothuk whose practice was to intercept herds and drive them

37 John Peyton quoted in Howley, *Beothucks*, pp. 25, 270; Cormack, *ibid.*, pp. 26, 183; J.B. Jukes, *Excursions in and about Newfoundland During the Years 1839 and 1840* (Toronto, 1969), I, p.151; Speck, *Beothuk and Micmac*, pp. 28, 122.

38 Bishop John Inglis' diary, 1827, microfilm A713, PAC. The entries in this diary are more detailed than those in Inglis' diary sent to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, C/Can/N.S.9, doc. 57/58, United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel [hereafter USPG].

39 Howley, *Beothucks*, p. 26; Inglis mentions in his diary "2 heads"; Jukes, "Excursions", II, pp.129-30 says "the heads of some of their nation".

40 Howley, *Beothucks*, p. 183.

41 Jukes, "Excursions", II, p. 150 fn.

into fence works or traps for slaughter.

The third version, as given by Micmac informants in the early 1900s, was recorded by Speck. His account of tensions which erupted into fights between the two nations contends that, while Micmacs had camped alongside the Beothuk in St. George's Bay, quarrels arose over the destruction, by a Micmac, of a black weasel in winter-time. This act was taken as an omen of misfortune and violation of a taboo, since the animal was not in its proper or white winter hue. The incident led to the killing of a Beothuk boy and in a few days "feeling became so intense that a fight ensued in which the Red Indians were beaten and driven out". The destruction of a tabooed animal was also cited as the reason for the Micmacs' war against the Iroquois; Speck therefore referred to these traditions as "folktales".<sup>42</sup>

Regardless of the possible causes of hostilities, the traditions agree on confrontations, and show the Micmacs emerging as the eventual victors while the Beothuk were forced to retreat into the interior. Although the latter were not pursued, they continued to be terrified of the Micmacs and to shun them. Since the confrontations resulted in the Micmacs' claiming St. George's Bay as their habitat, the hostilities actually served the Micmacs' self interest and may have been deliberately provoked.<sup>43</sup> Putting these stories together one can suggest a plausible course of events. Initial disputes over the use of resources may have started the conflict which took on explosive proportions when a Beothuk boy was killed and/or when Micmacs were discovered to have decapitated two or more Beothuk. If this last incident actually occurred — and it is this author's inclination to believe that it did — and if the Beothuk retaliated by killing Micmacs at a feast, these actions could have accelerated the conflict into a lasting feud.

The Beothuk's point of view on relations with the Micmacs is poorly represented since only two Beothuk informants communicated their side of the story. One was the captive Tom June, whose testimony, paraphrased by John Cartwright in 1768, recorded that there existed "so mortal an enmity [between these two nations] that they never meet but bloody combat ensues". No mention was made of the circumstances under which this enmity arose.<sup>44</sup> The other informant, the Beothuk woman Shanawdithit, was questioned in the 1820s. Although she failed to elaborate on the factors which brought about hostilities, she told Bishop Inglis that "originally they [the Beothuk] had intercourse with the Micmacs and they could partially understand each other" and that "the Micmacs who have been visitors here [in Newfoundland] for centuries were formerly on friendly terms but their enmity has been implacable and of the

<sup>42</sup> Speck, *Beothuk and Micmac*, pp. 28, 121-2.

<sup>43</sup> A factor clearly overlooked by Upton who thought there was nothing for the Micmacs to gain by fighting, "Extermination", p. 148.

<sup>44</sup> Howley, *Beothucks*, p. 35.

deadliest character for about 150 years”.<sup>45</sup> Jukes, quoting John Peyton Jr. as his source, recorded that Shanawdithit called the Micmacs “Shannock” or “Shonack” — meaning “bad Indians” or “bad men”.<sup>46</sup> Limited as these fragments of Beothuk traditions are, they nevertheless confirm — in principle — the traditions of the development of hostilities current among Micmacs.

The exact date of the commencement of animosity is uncertain. The time frame of 150 years of enmity (as given by Shanawdithit), counting back from the 1820s, suggests friction between the two groups since about 1670. However, it is uncertain whether Bishop Inglis fully understood Shanawdithit’s manner of reckoning time. According to Peyton’s version as published by Jukes the conflict arose about “100 years ago”, that is in the 1720s. Jukes’ Micmac source, Sulleon, placed the confrontations in the early 1700s, saying that a body of Micmacs came to the western part of Newfoundland, “at the beginning of the last [18th] century” and “soon” quarreled with the Beothuk.<sup>47</sup> Thus the timing as recorded by Peyton and Jukes is similar and in view of subsequent events is likely to be correct.

Several of the accounts attribute the defeat of the Beothuk to the fact that the Micmacs had fire arms while the Beothuk defended themselves with bows and arrows. The Micmacs were certainly familiar with guns and their oral traditions, as recorded by Peyton, Cormack and Jukes, indicate that they were armed with guns in their encounters with the Beothuk.<sup>48</sup> This version was confirmed by a comment made by a Micmac to Cormack: “when several tribes [Beothuk and Micmac] were upon an equality in respect of weapons the Red Indians were considered invincible and frequently waged war upon the rest until the latter [Micmac] got fire arms”. In contrast, Speck’s informants, speaking about the same events around 100 years later, had the Micmacs conquer the Beothuk without the help of guns, though they conceded that the Micmacs “soon after” obtained such arms.<sup>49</sup>

Both Cormack’s and Speck’s Micmac informants told of the defeated Beothuk’s retreat into the interior of the country. Since the Beothuk subsisted for much of the year on coastal resources, such a retreat would have been

45 Inglis’ diary, microfilm A713, PAC.

46 Howley, *Beothucks*, p. 270, used the spelling ‘Shannock’; Jukes, “Excursions”, II, p. 130, used the spelling ‘Shannoc’; T.G.B. Lloyd, “On the ‘Beothucks’ a Tribe of Red Indians Supposed to be Extinct, which Formerly Inhabited Newfoundland”, *Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland Journal*, IV (1875), p. 29 n., had his information from Peyton and spelled the term ‘Shonack’.

47 Jukes, “Excursions”, I, p. 172, recorded in 1839 “at the beginning of the last century”, i.e. the 18th century, but in Vol. II, p. 129, he repeated Peyton’s time frame of “about a hundred years ago”; Howley, *Beothucks*, p. 270, quoted Jukes’ report but erroneously changed it to “at the beginning of the 17th century”; Speck, *Beothuk and Micmac*, pp. 27-8, 121-2, does not specify a date.

48 Howley, *Beothucks*, pp. 26 (Peyton), 183 (Cormack); Jukes, “Excursions”, I, p. 172; O.J. Millais, *Newfoundland and its Untrodden Ways* (New York, 1907), p. 217.

49 Howley, *Beothucks*, p. 152; Speck, *Beothuk and Micmac*, p. 28.

temporary; to survive, they would have been forced to find an alternative coastal habitat. It is possible that the defeated Beothuk moved into the lower reaches of Bonne Bay because Montagnais hunters saw a Beothuk camp in this location in 1720.<sup>50</sup> The harbour there, lacking good anchorage for vessels, may have been avoided by French and Basque fishing crews, which would have made it a desirable habitat for the Beothuk.<sup>51</sup> Alternatively, the defeated Beothuk may have taken refuge at the head of White Bay, which was not favoured by French fishing crews and which was within easy reach of caribou migration routes across Grand and Birchy Lakes.<sup>52</sup> It was at the northern end of Grand Lake that, about 30 years after the original fighting, Micmacs encountered Beothuk and overpowered them in a “battle”. According to Sulleon, in that encounter every Beothuk man, woman and child was put to death.<sup>53</sup> This punitive action brought the entire western region including Grand and Birchy Lakes and the access to White Bay, under the control of Micmacs.

During the second and third decades of the 18th century the Beothuk also came into conflict with the English. Since the Anglo-French wars in which the Micmacs had fought on the French side, English settlers harboured strong resentments against “Indians” and, to the majority of people, one Indian was no different from another. Thus, in conflicts with the Beothuk, the settlers did not hesitate to resort to violence if they felt their interests were at stake. At the same time, the Beothuk would have found European encroachments on their severely reduced hunting grounds and coastal habitat intolerable. Altercations with the English took place in the 1720s and 1730s and the Beothuk terminated voluntary contact.<sup>54</sup> The Beothuk’s confinement to a relatively small area would have placed considerable strain on accessible resources and made it increasingly difficult for them to secure subsistence. These circumstances may have tempted the Beothuk to attempt to reclaim from the Micmacs part of the hunting area south of the Exploits River. Or the Micmacs may have entered Beothuk territory (John Peyton Jr. claimed that Micmacs came into Beothuk country via Shannock Brook [Noel Paul’s Brook]) and met with violent resistance from the Beothuk. Whatever the cause, a Micmac tradition refers to a last fight between the two tribes at the confluence of the Exploits River and Shannock Brook in which, as before, the Beothuk were defeated. Presumably this last fight took place before or around 1750.<sup>55</sup>

50 Morandière, “Histoire de la pêche”, I, p. 22.

51 Lack of good anchorage was reported by Basque fishing crews (Selma Barkham personal communication).

52 Grant C. Head, *Eighteenth Century Newfoundland* (Ottawa, 1980), pp. 12-3.

53 Jukes, “Excursions”, I, pp. 14 fn, 172.

54 Answer to Heads of Enquiries sent by order of the Lords Commissioners for Trade and Plantations”, 19 April 1722, CO 194/7, ff. 115-6, PRO; Answer to Heads of Enquiries by Com. Beauclark, 1 October 1729, CO 194/8, f. 270, PRO; Answer to Heads of Enquiries by Com. Falkingham, 4 October 1732, CO 194/9, f. 214, PRO; Howley, *Beothucks*, pp. 50-1.

55 Howley, *Beothucks*, pp. 26, 270; Jukes, “Excursions”, II, p. 130.

Micmac tradition contends that Micmacs killed and scalped Beothuk in order to qualify for rewards from the French and this practice, if confirmed, could have exacerbated tensions between the two nations. Scholars have generally considered this tradition to be untrue because no supporting documents have been found. It has also been argued that there was no reason for the French to offer bounties for Beothuk scalps, because the “French did not use that part of their fishing shore contiguous with Red Indian territory and would not have suffered from the pilfering and other annoyances that might have led them to offer a bounty for dead Beothucks”.<sup>56</sup> Yet Beothuk actually resorted to shores where the French fished and, more importantly, offers of rewards for heads or scalps were made during war time and were not instigated by fishermen as a deterrent against pilfering. The extant records of the French fort in Placentia may not confirm receipts of scalps,<sup>57</sup> but there is ample evidence of both scalping and rewards. During the French siege of St. John’s in the 1690s, in which some Micmacs were fighting on the side of the French, an English eyewitness described how the scalp of the settler William Drew had been removed by the Indians.<sup>58</sup> In the war of the Spanish Succession (1702-1713) scalping became widely practiced in much of eastern North America. The English gave cash rewards for scalps of “French Indians”, while the French paid for scalps of “English Indians” as well as the English themselves.<sup>59</sup> In 1708 scalps from English subjects obtained by French Indians in New Hampshire were carried to Canada for rewards and in the 1750s bounties were offered and given to a Cape Breton Indian by the French at Louisbourg.<sup>60</sup> Since the Beothuk were at no time aligned with the French they could well have qualified as “English Indians”, and no one would have stopped Micmacs from taking Beothuk scalps and bringing them to the French in Louisbourg or Quebec.

The Micmacs who hunted in Newfoundland and were hostile towards the Beothuk clearly identified with the problems of their kin in other regions and were known to have carried conflicts with the English across the Cabot Strait. In 1727, when “sauvages” were condemned to death by hanging in Boston,

56 Upton, “Extermination”, p. 150; Pastore, “Newfoundland Micmacs”, p. 5; Barrie Reynolds, “Beothuk”, *Handbook of the American Indian* (Washington, 1987), XIV, p. 101.

57 Pastore, “Newfoundland Micmacs”, p. 16.

58 “Affadavit from Philip Roberts, Richard Selman and Samuel May, stated before two Justices of the Peace”, 10 January 1696/97, CO 194/1, f. 50, PRO.

59 Earl of Sunderland to Commission for Trade and Plantations, 24 May 1709, “Great indignation, too, had been aroused by the action of the French in paying a reward of 5 pound sterling to their Indians for the head of every English subject brought in by them which the savages cannot challenge without shewing the scalps”, CSPC, 1708-1709 (London, 1922), doc. 533; Governor Dudley of Mass. Bay and New Hampshire to Council of Trade and Plantations, 1 March 1709, *ibid.*, doc. 391.

60 Cited from Olive P. Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians. A Study in Imperial Race Relations. 1713-1760* (Ottawa, 1976), p. 99; Commissioners for Trade and Plantations to Governor Dudley, 8 July 1708, CO 5/912, ff. 448-51, PRO.

Micmacs took revenge by seizing a Boston vessel in Port aux Basques. The Micmacs had arrived in this harbour under French colours and threatened to take and destroy Boston ships at all opportunities.<sup>61</sup> Governor Armstrong from Annapolis Royal reported a year later that “our Indians” must be appeased and complained that with assistance from the French “several murders and robberies were committed by the Indians in this province and Newfoundland”.<sup>62</sup> In 1747/48, a party of 40 Micmacs from Isle Royale, who were wintering in Newfoundland, plundered isolated houses, captured 23 English and held them prisoner. When 12 of the prisoners were transferred to the neighbourhood of Saint John, New Brunswick, they overpowered and killed their Micmac guards and families. In retaliation, the Micmacs put the remaining Newfoundland English to death and claimed rewards for their scalps from the French in Quebec.<sup>63</sup> This incident is probably the one referred to on a “Plan of the Bay of Three Islands”, drawn in 1764, on which a river from Grand Lake to the head of White Bay bears the notation: “it was this way the Cape Breton Indians used to pass — encouraged by the French — to kill our people employed in the winters seal fishery”.<sup>64</sup> While the scalping of Englishmen does not prove that Micmacs also scalped Beothuk, the fact that they practiced scalping in Newfoundland makes it all the more likely that their own accounts to this effect were true.

Beothuk-Micmac relations in the second half of the 18th century were assessed by Lieutenant John Cartwright of the Royal Navy in 1768. Before embarking on an expedition into the interior of the island in an attempt to conciliate the Beothuk, Cartwright consulted Tom June, a Beothuk captive, who was employed in the fishery in Fogo. Although June had been captured in 1758, he apparently had visited his Beothuk family on several occasions.<sup>65</sup> June described his father’s camp at the north-eastern end of Red Indian Lake, which Cartwright

61 St. Ovide to Council, 13 November 1727, Nova Scotia, B Series, p. 548 cited in “Consolidation”, App. II.

62 Lt. Governor Armstrong to Duke of Newcastle, 17 November 1727, CSPC, 1728-1729 (London, 1937), doc. 315, p. 156.

63 E.B. O’Callaghan and B. Fernow, *Documents related to the Colonial History of the State of New York* (Albany, 1853-87), X, pp. 174-5.

64 “A Plan of the Bay of 3 Islands in Newfoundland ...”, 1764, H 3/140, Map Library, PAC; according to a notation the information on interior features was gathered from Cape Breton Indians.

65 Howley, *Beothucks*, pp. 35, 44, 59; Governor Richard Edwards to W. Keen J.P., 11 August 1758, requesting him to send the recently captured “9 year old girl” to St. John’s, GN 2, Vol. 1/2, f. 429, Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador [hereafter PANL]. It is likely that this ‘girl’ was really the boy Tom June because no other document refers to the capture of a boy prior to 1768 at which time Tom June had been employed for some time in Fogo; Howley, *Beothucks*, p. 54, believed the record of the nine year old girl (taken in 1758) concerned Oubee, a Beothuk girl who was captured in 1791, as recorded by Christopher G. Pulling, “A few facts by G.C. Pulling respecting the native Indians of the Isle of Newfoundland anno Domini 1792”, Add. Ms. 38532, ff. 28b-29b, BL.

subsequently found. However, having formed an erroneous concept of the lay of the land, Cartwright drew Grand and Red Indian Lakes on his map of this inland region as one large body of water and called it Lieutenant's Lake. While June most likely communicated that "Canadians" (presumed to refer to Micmacs) lived on Grand Lake, Cartwright recorded them as living on the western end of Lieutenant's Lake, which, in reality, would have been Grand Lake.<sup>66</sup> Other evidence, including Captain David Buchan's map and Cormack's report, both dating from the 1820s, supports the supposition that the Micmacs hunted along Grand Lake to the west and not on the western shore of Red Indian Lake, which was Beothuk territory and inhabited by them into the 1820s.<sup>67</sup> Cartwright also mapped 94 Indian houses or mamateeks which he had found in various stages of repair on his way up the Exploits River. Based on this number of houses and taking other observations into consideration, this author has estimated the Beothuk population in 1768 to have numbered about 350 individuals.

In the journal of his two-week expedition Cartwright stated that between the two nations, "reigns so mortal an enmity that they never meet but a bloody combat ensues". Cartwright thought that the two Indian groups feared each other as "mortal enemies" and therefore took care to avoid each other. Since he had consulted the Beothuk Tom June and since Micmac traditions clearly corroborate hostilities against the Beothuk, it is difficult to understand why Pastore claims that Cartwright had "no shred of evidence" and "imagined" the battles.<sup>68</sup> June's further contention that "the two nations did not see the least sign one of the other during the whole winter" may indicate that by the 1760s relations between the two tribes had stabilized to the extent that neither side went out of its way to intercept the other during the winter season when their differing lifestyles would have placed the Beothuk in the interior and the Micmacs close to the coast.

Beothuk subsistence activities centered around the interception of migrating caribou herds in the interior of the island in late fall and again in spring. In preparation for the caribou drive they assembled at places on lakes and rivers where the caribou were known to cross the water, built fence works and traps, and awaited the arrival of the herds. After the caribou were slaughtered, the Beothuk preserved their meat in storage houses and pits and for the duration of winter camped within easy reach of the meat supply. In contrast, the Micmacs' hunting and trapping in the interior of Newfoundland focussed on the procurement of furs for trade. Cormack described how one, two or three

66 Ingeborg Marshall, "An Unpublished Map made by John Cartwright between 1768 and 1773 Showing Beothuck Indian Settlements and Artifacts and Allowing a New Population Estimate", *Ethnohistory*, 24, 3 (1977), p. 235.

67 Two maps of the Exploits River and Red Indian Lake by David Buchan, dated 1820, ADD. 57703.1-2, BL; Howley, *Beothucks*, pp. 151-4, 238 and 241, Shanawdithit's Sketches I and III.

68 Pastore, "Newfoundland Micmacs", p. 18.



Micmac families trapped together over the country, travelling from lake to lake, either by canoe or on foot, from the middle of summer until the beginning of winter. Beavers were the primary quarry but the Micmacs also took otters, martens, muskrats and other creatures, usually revisiting a district every three years. After the trapping season, the Micmacs repaired to the sea coast with their furs and bartered them with French or English traders for ammunition, clothing, tea, rum and other goods. Micmacs who remained on the island assembled for the winter at or near the mouths of large rivers, where eels could be speared through the ice. Caribou were tracked down in their winter habitat close to the coast.<sup>69</sup> Others are likely to have returned for the winter to Cape Breton Island and Nova Scotia because they were not permitted to stay in Newfoundland beyond the month of October without permission, a policy introduced by Governor Hugh Palliser in 1765, in order to confine the Micmacs to “their own side of the Gulph”. In the eyes of the English the Micmacs were still “foreign Indians” and their requests to the Newfoundland government for presents or permission to settle were consistently referred to the governor at Halifax, because the Micmacs “belong to that government”.<sup>70</sup>

Neither Micmac nor Beothuk traditions nor documents from the Colonial Office correspondence mention interactions between Beothuk and Micmacs in the second half of the 18th century. Following the final defeat of the Beothuk prior to the 1750s, there may have been a hiatus in hostile encounters or perhaps in contacts altogether. For much of the 18th century Micmac groups appear to have lived on the southern and western coasts and to have confined their hunting expeditions to the hinterland of their coastal camps. Naval officers who patrolled the coast and harbours between 1715 and 1793, recorded Micmac camps at Cape Ray in 1715 and 1763, at Port aux Basques in 1726-7, at Codroy in 1768, at Anguille in 1715 and 1763, at St. George’s Bay in 1788 and 1793, at Bay of Islands in 1770, at Point Riche in 1767, and at Ferolle, Bay of St. John’s and Port au Choix in 1767 and 1788. In the south Micmacs were reported to resort to harbours west of Placentia, particularly around Fortune and Bay D’Espoir. They went trapping inland around many lakes and river systems and hunted caribou in their winter habitat in the southern part of the island. In 1764

69 Best described by William Epps Cormack in Howley, *Beothucks*, p. 152. Earlier records are not as detailed but refer to the Micmacs’ practice of living on the coast during the winter season, see “Report of native foreign Indians”, Capt. Reynolds to Governor John Elliot in 1788, CO 194/21, Vol. 1, f. 172, PRO; Capt. Ambrose Croften to Governor William Waldegrave, 10 January 1798, CO 194/40, ff. 26-27, PRO; Report by Capt. Edgell to Governor Charles Morris Pole, 28 August 1801, Pole Papers, microfilm 250.4, PANL; Rev. John Chapman’s file, C/Can/NF/3, doc. 107, p. 367, USPG.

70 Governor Thomas Graves to Commrs. for Trade and Plantations, 20 October 1763, CO 194/26, ff. 127-30; PRO. Governor Hugh Palliser to John Broom, 29 July 1764, GN 2/1/a, Vol. 3, p. 235, PANL; Governor Palliser to Lieut. Col. Pringle, and Order by Governor Palliser, 22 October 1765, *ibid.*, pp. 345-46; Governor Palliser to Hon. M. Franklin, 16 October 1766, GN 2/1/a, Vol. 4, pp. 9-10, PANL.

and 1770 Micmacs also hunted and trapped around Grand Lake and at the head of White Bay.<sup>71</sup> Although this information may not be complete, it probably portrays a fairly realistic picture of Micmac occupancy and exploitation in Newfoundland during the 18th century.

The influx of the Micmac population and their exploitation of resources was disturbing to the English settlers, particularly those who lived on Newfoundland's west coast. As early as the 1730s, settlers complained that "Indians come over ... to Cape Ray to take furs and hunt for venison which is detrimental to us ... and the fear of Indians makes it difficult to find men who will go there". They repeatedly petitioned that the government notify the Indians to depart from Newfoundland.<sup>72</sup> Initially these requests were consistently ignored but in the 1760s Governors Thomas Graves and Hugh Palliser became as anxious to expel the Micmacs as the settlers.<sup>73</sup> As former allies of the French, the Micmacs were considered a threat to the security of the colony, and their association with French priests, who had formerly visited the island but now officiated at St. Pierre, was greatly resented. The priests not only attracted Micmacs to come to confess, to be married and to have their children baptised, but also to trade their furs with French traders.<sup>74</sup> However, lengthy campaigns to prevent Micmac

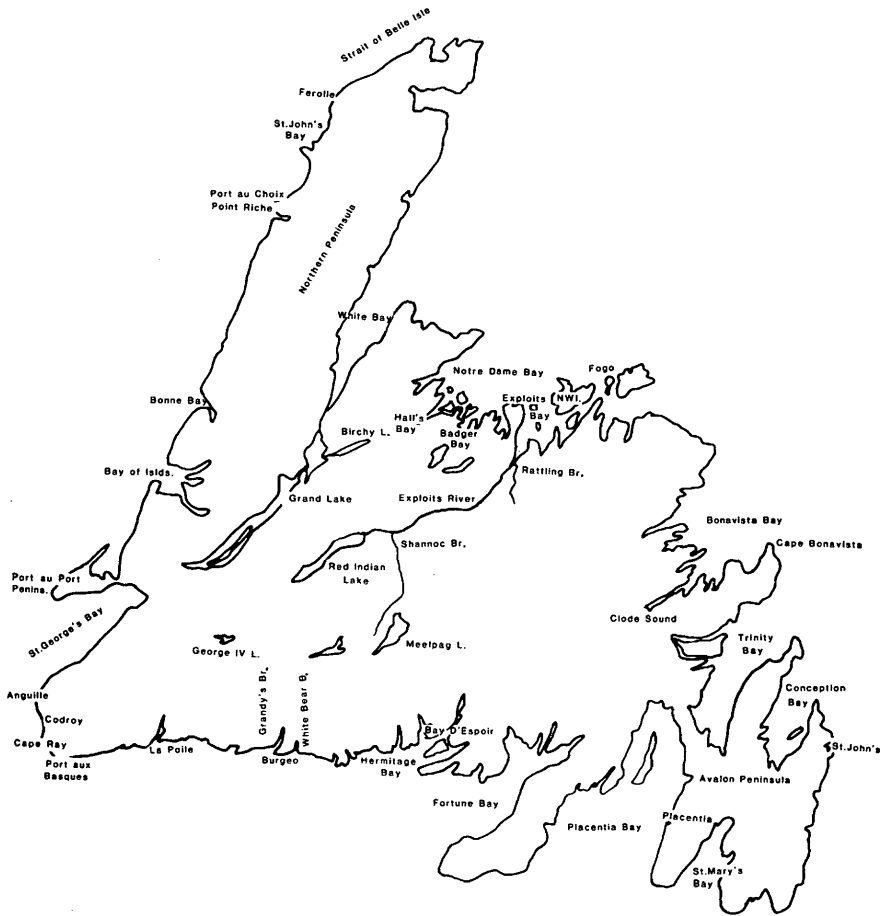
71 *Cape Ray*: "Extract of representation of the Board of Trade to his Majesty upon the State of Newfoundland", 29 February 1715/16, CO 194/26, ff. 209-10, PRO; Governor Graves to Lords Commrs. of Trade and Plantation, 20 October 1763, Graves Papers, microfilm A133, PAC. *Port au Basques*: Lt. Governor Armstrong to Duke of Newcastle, 17 November 1727, CSPC, 1726-27, doc. 789 XV, p. 402. *Codroy*: Log of HMS *Pearl*, 4-5 August 1768, Misc. Series I, Vol. 21, p. 308, British Ministry of Defence, Hydrographic Dept., Taunton, U.K. [hereafter Hydrogr. Dept.]. *Anguille*: Wm. Taverner's report on survey of the French coast, 1718, CO 194/6, f. 241, PRO; Governor Graves to Lords Commrs. for Trade and Plantations, 20 October 1763, CO 194/15, f. 102, PRO. *St. George's Bay*: "Report of native foreign Indians", Capt. Reynolds to Governor Elliot, 1788, CO 194/21, f. 172, PRO; Capt. Ambrose Crofton to Governor Waldegrave, 10 January 1798, CO 194/40, f. 19, PRO; Major Thorne to Rt. Hon. Henry Dundas, 30 June 1793, WO 1/15, ff. 84-6, PRO. *Bay of Islands*: *ibid.*; "Map of Newfoundland", Wm. Parker, 1770, 346/Ahl, Hydrogr. Dept. *Point Riche*: Governor Palliser to Earl of Shelbourne, 15 December 1767, CO 194/27B, pp. 461-5, Alberti Transcript [hereafter AT], PANL. *Port au Choix, Ferolle, Bay of St. John's*: Order from Governor Palliser to Lieut. Stanford, 16 August 1767, ADM 50/19, Admirals Journal, PRO; "Report of native foreign Indians", Capt. Reynolds to Governor Elliot, 1788, CO 194/21, Vol. I, f. 172, PRO. *Bay Despair, Fortune Bay*: Governor Palliser to Admiralty, 25 August 1766, CO 194/27B, Vol. II, p. 373, AT, PANL; Griffith Williams, *An Account of Newfoundland with the Nature of its Trade, and Method of carrying on the Fishery*, printed for Capt. Thomas Coles (Temple Bar, 1765), p. 34. *Inland*: "Map of Newfoundland", Wm. Parker, 1770, 346/Ahl, Hydrogr. Dept.; "A Plan of the Bay of 3 Islands in Newfoundland", H 3/140, Map Library, PAC; Marshall, "An Unpublished Map", p. 242.

72 Petition from Wm. Taverner to the Board of Trade, 2 February 1733, CO 194/23, f. 180, PRO; Wm. Taverner to Commrs. for Trade and Plantations, 2 February 1734, CO 194/9, f. 177, PRO.

73 Governor Graves to Lords Commrs. of Trade and Plantations, 20 October 1763, CO 194/15, f. 102, PRO.

74 "Report on the present State of Newfoundland", Will. Vaughan, 1746, Chatham Papers, MG 23

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**Map of Newfoundland**

hunting parties from coming to Newfoundland were not successful.<sup>75</sup> In 1765, in spite of orders to stay away, “a tribe of 175 Nova Scotia Indians” landed in Bay D’Espoir where they immediately dispersed themselves about the country and — to the terror of the English — began to insult and rob them on pretence of want of provisions.<sup>76</sup>

Although after 1713 the Micmacs appear to have reverted to making primarily seasonal visits for hunting and trapping in Newfoundland the possibility that some Micmacs overwintered cannot be ruled out simply because no documents have been found which report Micmac winter camps before the 1780s. At this time a Micmac ‘Sachem’ (Sachmow = Elder, later also meaning chief), according to a report given by a Micmac from the St. George’s Bay band to Captain Chapell in 1817, received “a tract of sterile land” in St. George’s Bay in payment for his services during the English-American war.<sup>77</sup> A French chart of this bay, drawn in approximately 1776, shows two native houses — presumably Micmac dwellings — close to the mouth of the river in that part of the bay, which later became the seat of one of the Micmacs’ largest and most thriving communities.<sup>78</sup> The Micmac population in this location fluctuated between 60 and 150 individuals. A major attraction in St. George’s Bay and further south towards Cape Anguille was the large quantity of eels which could be procured throughout the winter season. The furs that the Micmacs obtained were traded for muskets, powder and shot, clothing and provisions in different places, including Bay D’Espoir, the second largest Micmac settlement where as many as 200 to 300 Micmacs had gathered in 1810. The Bay D’Espoir settlement was connected with those at Codroy River and St. George’s Bay by an overland route, also used for travelling by canoe to the centre of the island and further

A 27, p. 115, PAC.

75 Governor Palliser to French Commander at St. Pierre, 25 June 1765, CO 194/27A, Vol. II, ff. 189-202, PRO; Governor Palliser to Henry Seymore Conway, 30 October 1765, CO 194/27A, pp. 198-202, AT, PANL; Governor Palliser’s order concerning Micmac, 22 October 1765, CO 194/27A, pp. 216-7, AT, PANL; Governor Palliser to Earl of Shelbourne, 15 December 1767, CO 194/27B, pp. 461-5, AT, PANL; Order from Governor Palliser to Lieut. Stanford, 16 August 1767, ADM 50/19, Admirals Journal, PRO; Log of HMS *Echo*, Capt. Reynolds, 1787-1788, Misc. Papers, Ab3k, Vol. 34, pp. 568-70, Hydrogr. Dept.; Egmont to Earl of Halifax, 30 November 1763, CO 194/26, f. 108, PRO; Instruction to Governor Robert Duff, 1775, DUF/13, f. 204, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich [hereafter NMMG].

76 Governor Palliser to Lt. Governor M. Franklin, 16 October 1766, CO 194/16, Vol. I, pp. 208-9, AT, PANL; Williams, “An Account of Newfoundland”, pp. 34-35 wrote that 300 Micmac came to Bay D’Espoir and that half of this number moved on to Michelon.

77 Edward Chapell, *Voyage of His Majesty’s Ship Rosamond to Newfoundland and the Southern Coast of Labrador* (London, 1818), p. 76; Charles Martijn, personal communication, suggests that the ‘old sachem’ may have been Jeannot Peguidalouet, the chief of the former Mirligueuche Micmac band on Cape Breton Island. This was the same band that appears to have exploited the Magdalen Islands between approximately 1720-1760; thereafter they turned their attention to southern Newfoundland exclusively.

78 “Croquis de la Rade de St. George” (1776), map collection, PANL.

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north.<sup>79</sup> When Cormack walked across Newfoundland in 1822, he was escorted by a Micmac guide, Joseph Sylvestre, who took him for the last part of their journey along this well established Indian route which ran through Serpentine, Meelpagh, Granite and George IV Lakes.<sup>80</sup>

In the 1820s about 150 Micmacs, most of whom had been born in Newfoundland, were dispersed in bands or family groups in St. George's Harbour, Flat Bay, Great Codroy River, Bonne Bay and the Bay of Islands, White Bear Bay, Bay D'Espoir near Weasel Island, Clode Sound in Bonavista Bay and Gander Bay.<sup>81</sup> They paid deference to a number of individuals in St. George's Bay but, according to Cormack, "consider Cape Breton, where the chiefs reside, as their head-quarters". Cape Breton also remained the location of their burial ground.<sup>82</sup> In their travels, some enterprising Micmacs crossed the northern part of the island and turned up on the Atlantic coast and in communities in Notre Dame Bay which had, not so long before, been a stronghold of the Beothuk.<sup>83</sup> In August 1824 a Micmac Indian made his way to Moreton's Harbour, New World Island, where he excited much curiosity among the residents, many of whom had never seen an Indian. Two years later, another Micmac arrived in Fogo Island to ask the resident minister, the Rev. John Chapman, for a Bible and a spelling book. He was the first Micmac that Chapman had seen on the island and Chapman wrote to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel that "this tribe [the Micmacs] inhabited the interior of the country, caught beaver and caribou and exchanged their furs for flour and bread in different harbours".<sup>84</sup> Micmac hunters also became familiar with the Avalon Peninsula and in 1829 Micmac scouts were consulted about the nature of the country within a 60 mile radius of St. John's.<sup>85</sup>

If additional Micmac hunting and trapping parties came to Newfoundland on a seasonal basis, they do not appear to have contributed to a growth of the Micmac groups who had made Newfoundland their home. The Newfoundland

79 Capt. Crofton to Governor Waldegrave, 10 January 1798, CO 194/40, ff.26-7, PRO; Capt. Edgell to Governor Pole, 1801, Pole Papers, microfilm 250.4, PANL; Major Thorne to H. Dundas, 26 May 1794, WO 1/15, f. 240, PRO; Log HMS *Plover*, 1815-1816, Misc. Papers, Series II, A 65, Vol. 37, Hydrogr. Dept., "Indian town [St. George's Bay] is on the starboard side of the harbour"; Chapell, "Voyage of Rosamond", p. 86; Capt. Parker to Governor John T. Duckworth, 28 September 1810, Duckworth Papers, PANL; Howley, *Beothucks*, pp. 145-51.

80 *Ibid.*, p. 237, spelled the name Joseph Silvester.

81 *Ibid.*, pp. 151-2; William Epps Cormack, "Account of a Journey across the Island of Newfoundland", *Edinburgh Philosophical Journal*, X, 19 (1824), p. 160.

82 Angus A. Johnston, *A History of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nova Scotia* (Antigonish, 1960), I, p. 360, MacEachern to Abbe Macpherson, 1819; Howley, *Beothucks*, p. 152.

83 Rev. John Clinch wrote to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, 18 December 1809, that to the alarm of the English some of the Micmacs had recently turned up in Bonavista Bay, microfilm Series C, Box 1 A/17, f. 218, PANL.

84 Rev. John Chapman's file, pp. 101-15, 367, C/Can/NF/3, USPG.

85 "Report on Newfoundland", Clark to R.W. Hay, 9 March 1829, CO 194/79, f. 207, PRO.

census from 1857 cites a total Micmac population of 157: 55 in Bay D'Espoir, 26 in Grandy's Brook, 52 in Cod Roy, 23 in Exploits Bay and one in Brigus, Conception Bay. This census fairly reflects the distribution of Micmacs in Newfoundland since the early 1800s, although the 1857 figures show a population shift into the Bay of Exploits area which had previously been inhabited by Beothuk.<sup>86</sup>

The gradual spread of the Micmacs, first as seasonal visitors and later as year round occupants, led to permanent settlements which diminished the Beothuk's territory and placed restrictions on their use of resources. It also encouraged greater mobility and an eastward extension of Micmac hunting and trapping activities into Beothuk territory, which contributed to a deterioration of Beothuk-Micmac relations. Because the authorities in England adopted a more protective policy with regard to the native Indian population in the early 1800s, governors and patrolling officers became more acutely aware of the problems that faced the Beothuk. They began to scrutinize the causes of their deplorable situation and to search for possible solutions. Within the framework of this new interest the role of the Micmacs and their interactions with the Beothuk received greater attention. In 1798, Captain Ambrose Crofton of the Royal Navy reported that the Micmacs no longer confined themselves to the southern and western regions. They knew the country well and, as they had guns, they could easily harm the Beothuk. Crofton believed that "the Micmac prove an implacable enemy to the Beothuk". Three years later, the Supreme Surrogate for Newfoundland, Captain H.F. Edgell, described the Beothuk as persecuted by the settlers and "hunted by the Micmacks" from St. George's Bay. Edgell concluded that it was "not to be wondered at should they [the Beothuk] very much decrease".<sup>87</sup> In 1808, in his report to the Board of Trade, Governor John Holloway stated that the Micmac Indians who frequent the Island of Newfoundland from Cape Breton or Nova Scotia were at "Enmity with this unfortunate Race of Native Indians" and that the Beothuk remained hidden in the interior "from Dread of the Micmacs". In response to this and other unfavourable accounts, Governor John Thomas Duckworth, in a proclamation issued in 1810, ordered the Micmacs to live in harmony with the Beothuk.<sup>88</sup> Concerned about the survival of the Beothuk and wishing to conciliate them, he sent a consignment of Marines under the leadership of Captain David Buchan into Beothuk country in the winter of 1810/11. Despite difficult travel conditions

86 Census and Return of the Population of Newfoundland, 1857, HA 747 N5, PANL.

87 Capt. Crofton to Governor Waldegrave, 10 January 1798, CO 194/40, ff. 17-34, PRO; Capt. H.F. Edgell to Governor Pole, 28 August 1801, microfilm 250.4, Pole Papers, PANL.

88 Governor John Holloway to Visc. Castlereagh, 18 November 1801, CO 194/47, ff. 61-69, PRO; Holloway to Castlereagh, 19 November 1808, GN 2/1/a, Vol. 20 p.118, PANL; Holloway to Castlereagh, 25 November 1809, CO 194/48, f. 59, PRO; Holloway's proclamation, CO 194/49, ff. 26-7, PRO; Governor John Duckworth's proclamation, 1 August 1810, CO 194/49, ff. 113-4, PRO.

caused by intense cold and heavy snow, Buchan reached a Beothuk winter settlement at Red Indian Lake, which housed about 30 people, nearly half of the remaining Beothuk population of 72. Buchan's friendly overtures did not allay the Beothuk's suspicion and fear, and during his absence, the Beothuk killed the two hostages he had left behind and fled. Buchan later attributed the rapid decline and extinction of the Beothuk to persecutions by the Micmacs as well as the English.<sup>89</sup> Captain William Parker reported in 1810 that Cape Breton Micmacs who made an annual rendezvous in Bay D'Espoir, were at open war with the aborigines and killed them whenever they could. In his opinion, these hostilities contributed to the Beothuk's reluctance to develop friendly relations with the English.<sup>90</sup> In 1815 Governor Richard Keats expressed his apprehension about the Micmacs' increasing incursions into Beothuk territory: "It is to be feared the arrival of these [Micmac] newcomers will prove fatal to the native Indians of the Island, whose Arms are the bow ... and whose number it is believed has for some years past not exceeded a few hundreds".<sup>91</sup>

Between 1810 and 1827 concern for the welfare and survival of the Beothuk was at an all time high. Though ill conceived and too late to prevent the Beothuk's demise, various ideas for rescuing the Beothuk from extinction were considered and occasionally acted upon. In March 1819 Governor Charles Hamilton gave John Peyton Jr. permission to seek out the Beothuk in their camp at Red Indian Lake, "and, if possible try and capture one of the Indians alive". The excursion ended in tragedy when the Beothuk "chief" Nonosbawsut was killed. The plan, to use his captured wife, Demasduwit (Mary March), as a good will ambassador to influence the Beothuk in favour of the English, failed when the captive succumbed to consumption before she could be returned to her people. We now know through Shanawdithit that in 1819 the Beothuk group had dwindled to 31 people, 17 of whom died within the next 4 years.<sup>92</sup> In May 1819, while Demasduwit was still in the hands of her captors, Hamilton instructed "the Tribes of Micmac, Esquimaux and other Indians ... that they are not, under any pretence, to harass or do any injury whatever to the Native Indians" and "to live peaceably with them".<sup>93</sup> One of Hamilton's officers, Captain Hercules Robinson, who patrolled the coast in 1820, spoke of a "war of

89 Howley, *Beothucks*, pp. 72-85, 226; *British Parliamentary Papers, Anthropology* (Dublin, 1968), II pp. 475-9.

90 Capt. Parker to Governor Duckworth, 28 September 1810, Duckworth Papers, PANL; Parker also described the Micmac's wasteful slaughter of birds for feathers and the destruction of excessive numbers of caribou, often taken out of season and left to rot.

91 Report by Governor Richard Keats, 10 November 1815, CO 194/56, f. 110, and 15 April 1816, CO 194/57, ff. 34-5, PRO.

92 Howley, *Beothucks*, pp. 93, 227-9.

93 *Ibid.*, pp. 93-5, 108-9, 214; Cormack's appeal to the Micmac, asking them to keep peace with the Beothuk, was not made public.

extermination" waged by the Micmacs against the Newfoundland natives.<sup>94</sup> Robinson's accusations against "the Micmacs" as a group may have been exaggerated but there is good evidence that at least some Micmacs were hostile towards the Beothuk and made no attempts to disguise their feelings. These feelings were recorded by the surgeon of the HMS *Egeria*, James Dobie, who had taken a lively interest in the fate of the Beothuk and had been told by Micmacs that they would shoot Beothuk like dogs. After extensive enquiries among Micmacs Dobie had come to the conclusion that they had always considered it a duty to murder the Red Indians. He believed that the only way to stop the Micmacs from pursuing the Beothuk would be to influence them through their priests.<sup>95</sup>

While Dobie had personally conversed with Micmacs, patrolling officers may not have had many opportunities to do so and it is difficult to gauge how far their assessments reflected the actual situation. The fears of Captains Crofton and Edgell regarding hostilities against the Beothuk seem to have been personal conclusions rather than accounts of facts. Captain Parker, on the other hand, stated that "I have made the strictest enquiries respecting the general conduct of the Canadians or Cape Breton Indians and have not failed to avail myself of every possible opportunity to gain information on that lead". In the same letter he claimed the Micmacs' open war against the Beothuk to be "a fact".<sup>96</sup> Captain Buchan presumably made every effort to be informed about the situation of the Beothuk. In the course of more than two decades of service in Newfoundland and in the context of his two excursions in search of the Beothuk he would certainly have been motivated to gather as many facts as possible. In the light of this documentation, we must reject the claim that the reports of the Micmacs' hostilities were "unsupported assertions", which originated with John or George Cartwright (in the 1760s and 1790s), implying that royal naval officers were highly prejudiced and derived their information on Beothuk-Micmac relations from books or outdated tales rather than from personal investigations.<sup>97</sup>

Even if allowances were made for bias in officers' reports, the Micmacs' increasing infiltration into Beothuk country is bound to have precipitated conflict. Those Micmacs who thought like Dobie's informants would not have hesitated to shoot at Beothuk even though others may have been less belligerent. Captain Christopher Pulling's report, written in 1791, shows that English informants did not habitually blame Micmacs for causing trouble for the Beothuk.<sup>98</sup> Pulling had been commissioned to enquire about the relationship between fishermen and furriers and the Beothuk in Bonavista and Notre Dame Bays (including the Bay of Exploits) and while his English informants readily

94 Report on Mary March by Capt. Hercules Robinson, 7 November 1820, Add. Ms. 19350, BL.

95 Surgeon James Dobie to Sir G. Cockburn, 10 September 1823, CO 194/66, f. 324, PRO.

96 Capt. Parker to Gov. Duckworth, 28 September 1810, Duckworth Papers, PANL.

97 Upton, "Extermination", p. 148; Pastore, "Newfoundland Micmacs", p. 17.

98 Pulling, "A Few Facts", ff. 18-44.



admitted their own interference with the native Indians, none of them claimed hostilities by Micmacs. Presumably, in the early 1790s, no such hostilities were known in the eastern part of Notre Dame Bay. However, about 20 years later, in 1812, English settlers from the White Bay, Halls Bay and Badger Bay area bitterly complained about the Micmacs' practices and believed them to be a threat to the Beothuk. Micmac hunters had repeatedly resorted to these bays and the area around North and South Twin Lakes, which were part of the Beothuk's hunting range, had stayed there during the winter of 1811 and in the following spring had moved to the head of White Bay where they had plundered William Gill's salmon station and subsequently crossed into Hall's Bay in the heart of Beothuk country. In view of their own negative experiences with the Micmacs the settlers' suspicion that the Beothuk may have been treated equally poorly was justified.<sup>99</sup>

Few accounts touch on the topic of how the Beothuk responded to hostilities from Micmacs. One could speculate that the scarcity of references to Beothuk retaliations reflects their relatively limited recourse to violence against Micmacs, at least after the commencement of hostilities in the early 18th century. One Micmac informant claimed that the Beothuk had "frequently waged war" upon the Micmacs before the latter had acquired fire arms and the Micmacs had believed the Red Indians to be "invincible".<sup>100</sup> This account seems to contradict the traditions of initial friendly relations between Beothuk and Micmac. It is possible that the "wars" against Micmacs were fought in other areas, or by isolated bands, or that the time frame of this account is inaccurate. Whatever the solution to this contradiction, the Beothuk's fierce sense of revenge was graphically described in the traditions of the feast in which each Micmac guest was slain by his Beothuk neighbour. Micmac traditions also contend that the Beothuk were warlike and belligerent men and there is no evidence for their mild and unaggressive disposition which has been portrayed by writers of fiction.<sup>101</sup> Once the Beothuk were beaten and dislodged by Micmacs their hostile attitude is likely to have deepened. A lasting antagonism was implied by the Micmac informant who was questioned about the Red Indians by Captain Edward Chapell, in 1817, and said "killee all men [Micmac?] dat dem see". John Peyton Jr. considered the Beothuk to be a "fierce and savage race", presumably in comparison with Micmacs and Montaganais whom he considered to be "partly civilized".<sup>102</sup> Many incidents in which Beothuk killed Englishmen are documented, including the murder of two of Captain Buchan's marines, and so is the Beothuk's practice of using the severed heads of victims as trophies in victory

99 Capt. David Buchan to Governor Duckworth, 17 July 1812, Duckworth Papers, PANL; Howley, *Beothucks*, p. 118; Cormack, "Account of a Journey", p. 160.

100 Howley, *Beothucks*, p. 152.

101 Peter Such, *Riverrun* (Toronto, 1973); Keith Winter, *Shanaditti* (Vancouver, 1975).

102 Chapell, "Rosamond", p. 71; Jukes, "Excursions", I, p. 172, II, p. 126.

feasts, a practice retained until the early 19th century.<sup>103</sup> Stories of Micmacs who lost their heads to Beothuk are rare, but exist. One was related by Ben Jore, Speck's Micmac/Montagnais informant, whose grandfather had been shot and decapitated by Red Indians near the mouth of the Exploits River. Subsequently the Beothuk stuck his head on a pole and danced around it.<sup>104</sup> One of J.P. Howley's Micmac canoe men told him in the 1880s of another Micmac hunter who was murdered at Red Indian Lake when he approached a Beothuk mamateek. His wife, who had remained hidden from view, found her husband's headless body in the deserted camp. In another version of this same incident, the wife made her way to St. George's Bay to inform her people after her husband had failed to return. The Micmacs thereupon set out in a group and, finding their dead companion in a mamateek, pursued the Red men to wreak vengeance upon them. According to Micmac lore, as recorded by Chapell, Cormack and Speck, the Micmacs' fear of the Beothuk never completely disappeared though one Micmac said to Howley, "Red Injun not bad man".<sup>105</sup> The Micmac's attitude towards the Beothuk was clearly ambivalent and ranged from traditionally fostered fear, anger and contempt to an inclination towards personal benevolence or even respect.

Several sets of records cover the last decades of the Beothuk's existence and contain direct or indirect information on their relations with Micmacs. First is the testimony of the Beothuk woman, Shanawdithit, who was captured in 1823. She was retained in the household of John Peyton Sr. and Jr. in the role of servant until September 1828 when she was transferred to St. John's where she spent several months under the tutelage of Cormack. Despite the fact that Cormack was a meticulous record keeper, none of his surviving notes refers directly to Shanawdithit's accounts of relationships with the Micmacs. Her most detailed and unequivocal description of Beothuk traditions concerning their relations with the Micmacs was recorded by Bishop Inglis, who had visited the Peytons on Exploits Island during his tour around Newfoundland in 1827. Shanawdithit had told him that while the Beothuk were originally on friendly terms with the Micmacs who had been visitors in Newfoundland for centuries, for the last 150 years the Micmacs had been implacable enemies and their enmity had been of the deadliest character.<sup>106</sup> John Peyton Jr., in whose household she lived for about five years and who would have had ample opportunity to collect information from her kept no notes, although he later related some of what Shanawdithit had told him about Micmacs to Jukes and to his son Thomas Peyton. Quoting Peyton Jr. as his source, Jukes wrote that the Red Indians in general and Shanawdithit in particular had a great dread of the Micmacs and

103 Howley, *Beothucks*, pp. 27, 80, 268, 270, 273, 274.

104 Speck, *Beothuk and Micmac*, p. 53.

105 Howley, *Beothucks*, pp. 280, 27, 152; Chapell, "Rosamond", p. 71; Speck, *Beothuk and Micmac*, p. 28.

106 Bishop Inglis' diary, 1 July 1827, microfilm A713, PAC.

when two of them came to Peyton's house she went into hiding.<sup>107</sup> J.P. Howley, after befriending the Peytons in the 1880s, quoted Thomas Peyton as having said that Shanawdithit "exhibited the greatest antipathy to the Micmacs, more especially towards one Noel Boss, whom she so dreaded that whenever he, or even his dog made their appearance, she would run screeching with terror and cling to Mr. Peyton [John Jr.] for protection". Shanawdithit called Noel Boss, "Mudty Noel" (Bad Noel), and is reported to have stated that he once fired at her across the Exploits River as she was stooping down in the act of cleaning some venison. There is, however, some uncertainty about this story as a note in Cormack's hand suggests that the shot which actually wounded her had been fired by a white man.<sup>108</sup> Although the sum total of Shanawdithit's information is meagre, her statements are unambiguous and therefore significant.

A more productive source, largely recording the situation in the 1820s, is William Epps Cormack, who had hired a Micmac as guide on his historic walk across Newfoundland in 1822 and had, over the years, met several others. He was told by Micmacs that a great portion of the interior was exclusively possessed and hunted by the Red Indians and was considered to be their territory. Its southern border ran about ten or fifteen miles to the north of the Micmac camp on George IV Lake, where the Micmacs would begin and end their travels to and from the west by canoe.<sup>109</sup> In October/November the Beothuk assembled at the "Great Lake" (Red Indian Lake) where they were accustomed to lay up their winter stock of venison; they also occupied many other northern lakes as well as the great River Exploits. In the Micmac land claim, Cormack's description (given only seven years before the death of the last known Beothuk in 1829) was cited to prove the limits of Beothuk territory, implying that the Beothuk had confined themselves to this area voluntarily since early historic or even prehistoric times.<sup>110</sup> But, as has been argued earlier, the Beothuk originally inhabited most regions of Newfoundland, including several locations on the eastern, southern and western coasts, and their confinement to the area described above was imposed on them by French and English fishermen and settlers and by Micmacs.

Notwithstanding their acknowledgement of "Beothuk territory", Micmacs frequently trespassed into Beothuk country. Micmac hunters who were familiar with this region advised Cormack of a Beothuk camp on South Twin Lake (Badger Bay Great Lake), where he subsequently found vestiges of numerous summer and winter mamateeks. The seclusion of this camp and the ample resources of the country there rendered it an attractive refuge for the Beothuk who were persistently disturbed on the Exploits River and at Red Indian Lake;

<sup>107</sup> Howley, *Beothucks*, pp. 25-26, 143, 145, 270, 296-97; Jukes, "Excursions", II, pp. 128-30.

<sup>108</sup> Howley, *Beothucks*, pp. 176, 230, 279. Noel Boss was Noel Basque pronounced Boss or Barss by the Micmacs.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152; Cormack, "Account of a Journey", p. 160.

<sup>110</sup> Usher, "Freedom", p. 13.

Cormack surmised that this location had been a “favourite place of settlement”. He further stated that the Micmacs’ practice of plundering the Beothuk of their furs was common knowledge and that Micmacs frequently went into Red Indian territory and studiously concealed the nature and object of these visits from the English. In his opinion, they jealously guarded their monopoly in the fur trade and effectually frightened the Beothuk with their fire arms. Two of the Micmacs with whom Cormack had spoken had several times “fallen in with the Red Indians and on one occasion obtained possession of their camp”. Some Micmacs had also complained to Cormack about the Beothuk’s thieving of their steel axes, which happened whenever they encamped in “Red Indian country”.<sup>111</sup>

Bishop John Inglis, having met Shanawdithit on Exploits Island, maintained an interest in the fate of the Beothuk and became a member of the Beothuk Insitution. In a letter to Cormack he expressed his concern about their survival and deplored “the sad state in which they [the Beothuk] have always lived, fired on by Micmacs, French and English”, believing that these hostilities against the Beothuk had prevented all intercourse with them. Inglis’ statement about the Micmacs’ role in the Beothuk’s destruction was probably not based on personal interviews with Micmacs but on information from local residents, including the Peytons. John Peyton Jr. evidently believed Micmacs to be guilty of harassing the Beothuk and, in 1819, reported to Governor Hamilton that they persecuted the Beothuk in the interior while the “Whites” (presumably the English) pursued them on the coast.<sup>112</sup> Since Peyton Sr. had been involved in killing Beothuk the possibility that his son blamed Micmacs to avert accusations against his family cannot be ignored.<sup>113</sup> Both Peytons, son and father, had made an expedition to Red Indian Lake in which “chief” Nonosbawsut had been killed and his wife Demasduwit taken prisoner. After her death about 10 months later, Peyton Jr. appears to have taken up the cause of the Beothuk and, according to Captain David Buchan, had shown unremitting zeal for bringing about a conciliation with them. His father, however, together with men employed by him, had previously persecuted the Beothuk on several occasions. In 1781 the father had led a raid on a Beothuk camp which was said to have resulted in many casualties. He had also been pointed out by Shanawdithit as the man who murdered a Beothuk woman in 1813/14 and in the opinion of the Justice of the Peace for Bonavista, John Bland, Peyton Sr. had rendered himself “infamous” for his persecution of the Indians. Under these circumstances Peyton Jr.’s statement to Jukes that neither “he” nor “his” men ever injured a Red Indian may theoretically have been correct, since not he but his father was reputed to be an

111 Howley, *Beothuks*, pp. 152, 176 n. 1, and 190; Cormack, “Account of a Journey”, p. 161.

112 Howley, *Beothuks*, pp. 108, 206, 295.

113 Usher, “Freedom”, p. 6; Upton, “Extermination”, p. 148; Pastore, “Newfoundland Micmac”, p. 18.

Indian killer, but one could rightfully say that his claim was misleading and that he may have been motivated to cover up his father's ugly deeds.<sup>114</sup>

While Peyton Jr. could have been biased, the many stories told by Micmacs and others are good evidence that Micmacs routinely trespassed into Beothuk territory and harassed these Indians. Indeed, their knowledge of the Exploits River in the heart of Beothuk country was generally recognised and was presumably the reason why William Cull of Fogo hired two Micmac guides in 1810, when he set out to explore the banks of this river for traces of the Beothuk. In the following winter Captain Buchan saw two Micmac canoes at the confluence of the Exploits River and Rattling Brook; they belonged to Micmacs who usually camped at Wigwam Brook (at the mouth of the Exploits River) to hunt and trap in this area. On another occasion, a Micmac group exchanged friendly gestures with a party of Beothuk across the river about half way between the coast and Red Indian Lake. The incident was originally recorded by a Micmac and later confirmed by Shanawdithit, who had been one of the Beothuk party. Speck was told of a Micmac hunter who had gone to Hodge's Mountain and had come across a lone Beothuk mamateek in which all furnishings were intact. The Micmac, Mathy Mitchel, told Howley in the late 1800s, how a group of Micmacs, his grandfather among them, had seen three Beothuk canoes poling up the Exploits River. To frighten them, the Micmacs concealed themselves and shot off their guns when the Beothuk canoes came abreast. As expected the Beothuk fled but one of their canoes, with two small children in it, drifted to the Micmacs' side of the river. Immediately the canoe touched the shore, the children were said to have disembarked and run away.<sup>115</sup> Evidently the Beothuk could still be frightened away by a gun shot, a circumstance which the English had used to their advantage and which Micmacs may also have seized upon.

Another Micmac informant recalled that his grandparents once saw a Beothuk couple on the Exploits River who fled from them, but left their small child behind in their canoe. Seeing that the Beothuk were without food, the Micmacs placed meat with the child and, from a hiding place, watched the parents' return. There is also the story of the Mitchels who allegedly met a Beothuk family, including a girl the same age as their own daughter. The Mitchels claimed that the two families stayed together for several days and, on their departure, left caribou carcasses and a gun, for which the Beothuk were truly grateful. The grandson of the Mitchels, however, labelled this tale "pure fantasy" and said that they had merely seen a deserted Beothuk mamateek at Red Indian Lake, with a fire still burning, but had not made contact with the occupants. Speck was told that a Micmac was once employed as a guide by Englishmen who wished to capture Red Indians. According to the Micmac's

114 Howley, *Beothucks*, pp. 56, 121, 245, Sketch V; Pulling, "A Few Facts", ff. 38-43; Jukes, "Excursions", II, pp. 130-1; the Peyton diaries from the early 1800s no longer exist.

115 Howley, *Beothucks*, pp. 69, 73, 84, 176, 228-9, 279; Speck, *Beothuk and Micmac*, p. 48.

account, he had gone ahead of the party to warn the Beothuk and then pretended to the English that the Beothuk had run off.<sup>116</sup> Since an expedition of this sort has not been recorded elsewhere this story is unlikely to be authentic. One important and quite clear conclusion to be drawn from the foregoing discussion is that the Micmac were able to infiltrate Beothuk territory virtually completely, that they usually had the upper hand in encounters and that at the end the Beothuk had no safe place to stay.

The author of "Freedom to live our own way in our own country" claims that some Beothuk married Micmac spouses to escape persecution by Europeans. He also claims that later these marriages were kept a tribal secret to avoid molestation of the descendents of these unions by the English.<sup>117</sup> A scrutiny of traditions and recollections on this topic, however, suggests that the Micmacs' offer of safety for the Beothuk rarely, if at all, played a role. One story, told by a Micmac, describes how Micmacs scared a Beothuk couple from their mamateek with a gunshot and pilfered a medicine bag. They then captured two women from a nearby camp but later returned them because the Micmacs experienced a food shortage in their camp and feared that the Beothuk's evil spell had caused it.<sup>118</sup> In a different incident, three Micmac hunters came upon a recently vacated Beothuk camp and decided to give chase to its occupants. During the chase, the strap broke on the snowshoe of a young woman and she was overtaken and brought back to the Micmac camp. Although she initially resisted all attempts to befriend her, after spending two years with the Micmac group she married her captor. This incident of kidnapping was quoted by Upton and others as an attempt at rescuing a Beothuk from starvation and as proof of the Micmac's kindly behaviour towards the Beothuk.<sup>119</sup>

Beothuk boys or men were also absorbed into the Micmac tribe. The Beothuk Gabriel, who took a Micmac wife, is said to have come from the interior to the Micmac settlement in the Codroy Valley, although nothing further is known about the events that led him to join the Micmacs.<sup>120</sup> A second case in which a Beothuk man wedded a Micmac woman is that of Santu Toney's parents. The anthropologist Speck devoted much time and effort to investigate the authenticity of Santu's ancestry and was satisfied that her claim was genuine. Santu related that her father was a Red Indian from Red Indian Lake who had been stained red as a baby when among his own people. When he was young, he was

116 *Ibid.*, pp. 49-51; Howley, *Beothucks*, pp. 278-79.

117 Usher, "Freedom", p. 8.

118 E. C. Parsons, "Micmac Folklore", *Journal of American Folklore*, 38 (1925), p. 100.

119 Howley, *Beothucks*, p. 285, originally recorded by Rev. Silas Rand; Upton, "Extermination", p. 150 n. 56; O'Reilly and Grodinsky, eds., "Consolidation", p. 7.

120 Harry Cuff, "I Interviewed the Great-Grand Child of a Beothuk", *Newfoundland Quarterly*, LXV, 2 (1966), p. 25. The information comes from one of Gabriel's descendants, Mrs. Richard White of Stephenville, who has produced a complete family tree in which Gabriel and his Micmac wife are shown to be her great-grandparents.

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taken by the Micmac, reared by them, and converted to Christianity. He married a Micmac woman and his daughter Santu was born around 1837. Assuming that Santu's father was eighteen at the time, he would have been born around 1819. (Since he was still alive in the 1840s he could qualify as the last known Beothuk.) According to Santu her parents were not the only Beothuk-Micmac couple and Micmac tradition, alluded to by Usher, supports this claim.<sup>121</sup> As recently as 1958 the Micmac Charlie Brake of South Branch, Codroy River, believed his grandmother to have been a Beothuk.<sup>122</sup> It is certain that in two of the three cases in which a Beothuk had joined a Micmac group and become married, the Beothuk spouse had not done so voluntarily. This suggests occasional kidnaping of Beothuk women and children and one need not therefore be surprised if the absorption of Beothuk individuals by Micmac groups has previously been kept a tribal secret.

Opinions among Micmacs on the reasons for the demise of the Beothuk vary considerably and have changed over time. In the 1830s some Micmacs believed starvation to have brought about their untimely end. Others thought Beothuk survivors had remained in the interior, since some Micmacs claimed to have seen Red Indians fishing inland and others to have observed a Beothuk woman and her son crossing a lake in a canoe in 1831.<sup>123</sup> A decade later Micmac hunters met two strange Indians, armed with bows and arrows, east of St. George's Bay. The Micmacs believed these Indians to belong to the "Red Men" who, on being discovered, fled with great rapidity.<sup>124</sup> Several Micmacs also considered it possible that the Beothuk had moved to Labrador and in 1852 Surveyor General Noad was told by some of them that the whole tribe had passed over to that coast about "25 years ago".<sup>125</sup> In the early 1900s, Micmacs questioned by Speck believed the Red Indians to have been doomed to their fate on account of their unconquerable fear of their fellow men, Micmacs as well as Europeans.<sup>126</sup> This opinion would imply that the demise of the Beothuk had been the result of their own timidity and beyond the Micmacs' control. Along the same line the spokespeople of the present day Conne River Band Micmacs do not acknowledge hostile acts against the Beothuk by their forefathers. In their opinion the

121 Speck, *Beothuk and Micmac*, pp. 58-60, 64-6; Santu's father believed his mother to have been a white person who was rescued by the Beothuk from a wrecked ship; Usher, "Freedom", p. 8.

122 This information comes from Dr. Cyril Byrne, St. Mary's University, whose grandfather worked with Charlie Brake, when Brake had been a section formen on the railroad. The information was taken down in 1958. Brake died Christmas 1976, aged 85 or 86.

123 Jukes, "Excursions", I, p. 170, recorded in 1839 that this occurred "120 years ago"; Georg Webber, *The Last of the Aborigines, A Poem founded on facts* (St. John's, 1851), p. 93 n. 9.

124 John Addy to Wesleyan Missionary Committee in London, 9 November 1841, No.2, Box 102, File 12G, doc. 23, Methodist Archives, London.

125 Howley, *Beothucks*, p. 257; Jukes, "Excursions", II, p.131; R.H. Bonnycastle, *Newfoundland in 1842* (London, 1842), p. 48.

126 Speck, *Beothuk and Micmac*, pp. 47-8.

Micmacs' presence in Newfoundland did not have a detrimental effect on the Beothuk.<sup>127</sup>

While the investigation of Beothuk-Micmac relations has produced evidence of hostilities which would have contributed to the decline of the Beothuk population, it is not possible to quantify the importance of the Micmac's role in the extinction of this unfortunate tribe. Undoubtedly other factors, discussed in previous publications, were equally important; among them the Beothuk's loss of large portions of their traditional territory, difficulties in gaining access to coastal resources that were increasingly exploited by European fishing crews, European settlements in coves and bays which had previously been inhabited by Beothuk, intrusions into the Beothuk's inland habitat by furriers and settlers who laid claim to dwindling resources and persecuted and harassed the Beothuk and the effects of diseases imported from Europe.<sup>128</sup> Nonetheless it can not be denied that hostilities between Micmac and Beothuk diminished their numbers and limited their resource base and that the Micmacs thereby contributed to the Beothuk's eventual extinction. The Micmacs themselves were, of course, also the victims of a process they could not control. Forced to move ever farther afield for subsistence and caught up in the power struggles between the French and English on North America's eastern seaboard, they were drawn into conflict over resources with the Beothuk out of necessity, not choice.

127 Usher, "Freedom", pp. 4, 41.

128 Ingeborg Marshall, "Disease as a Factor in the Demise of the Beothuk Indians", *Culture*, I, 1 (1981), pp. 71-7, and "The Beothuk", *Horizon Canada*, 2 (1985), pp. 326-31; Francoys Raynauld, "Les Pêcheurs et les Colons Anglais n'ont pas Exterminé Les Beothucks de Terre Neuve", *Recherches Amérindiennes au Québec*, XIV (1984), pp. 45-59; Frederick W. Rowe, *Extinction; the Beothucks of Newfoundland* (Toronto, 1977); James A. Tuck, *Newfoundland and Labrador Prehistory* (Ottawa, 1976); Upton, "The Extermination", pp. 133-53, and "The Beothucks: Questions and Answers", *Acadiensis*, VII, 2 (Spring 1978), pp. 150-5.