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North Dakota State Historical
Museum

Bismarck, North Dakota

February, 1953

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECONNAISSANCE IN
SOUTH-CENTRAL QUEBEC, 1950

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DURING THE SUMMER of 1950, from June through August, the authors made an archaeological reconnaissance in south-central Quebec. All traveling was done by canoe.* This work was made possible by grants from the Robert S. Peabody Foundation for Archaeology, Andover, Massachusetts and from Stephen Phillips of Salem, Massachusetts.

The survey was started at Senneterre, Quebec (Fig. 54) and carried northward by way of Lac Parent and the Bell River to Lake Mat-

* Canoe travel in south-central Quebec presents many difficulties. Without the cooperation and hospitality of the people living and working in the country, travel would be greatly restricted. We are sorry that lack of space prevents us from mentioning by name everyone that helped us. To Hal Hollingsworth and Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Thierry, we are deeply indebted for their help and thoughtfulness during our few days spent at Lake Waswanipi. Also, we wish to thank Emmett McLeod, Mr. and Mrs. George McLeod, and Mr. and Mrs. Wilfred Jeffreys, all of Lake Mistassini, for their generosity and hospitality. D. Eaton Cooter gave invaluable assistance in seeing that our equipment was taken care of and shipped home. We are sincerely grateful to Douglas S. Byers and Frederick Johnson of the Peabody Foundation for all the assistance they rendered us both before and after the trip. Both we and the Foundation wish to express our thanks to Stephen Phillips for his interest and generous help in making this trip a reality.

tagami. At this point, we began working upstream by way of the Waswanipi River to Lake Waswanipi, passing through Lakes Olga and Goeland. After spending a few days looking about Lake Waswanipi, we continued on our way to Lake Mistassini. The route took us through Lakes Puskitamika, Malouin, Lichen, and Opawica. We then ascended the Opawica River to Lakes Doda and Bras Coupé. From here, we crossed the height of land to Lac Presqu'île and continued up the Obatogamau River to Lake Muscocho. Another height of land was then crossed to reach the Chibougamau River. Then passing through Lakes Doré, Chibougamau, and Waconichi, we arrived at the Hudson's Bay Company post on Lake Mistassini. Part way up the lake, a short side trip was made in the hope of locating a flint quarry that the Indians had mentioned in 1948.

After leaving Lake Mistassini, we retraced our steps as far as Lake Chibougamau where we crossed to Lake Obatogamau and thence by way of small lakes to the Ducharme River and Lake Ashuapmuchuan. Crossing a height of land, we reached Lac Chigoubiche and the Chigoubiche River. We followed this river downstream to its junction with the Ashuapmuchuan River, and then descended to Big Bear Falls, some 12 miles from where the river

One rubbing stone (20) was found; this was made from a piece of slate-like stone. One face has a very shallow groove, that has been highly polished through use. One edge has been crudely chipped. A small chipped adze was found (25); it measures 10.5 cm. long, and 5.0 cm. wide. The bit shows polishing, probably through use. The butt has a flat and rather smooth surface, which may be the result of utilization in some manner. Near the bit end, on the flat side, there is an area which appears to have been rubbed quite smooth, perhaps through the effect of hafting.

Trade Goods. During the summer, one gun flint (15), two very small blue trade beads, and one iron fish spear (13), were found. The fish spear measures 10 cm. in length, the blade taking up 2.3 cm. of the total length.

Pottery. During the course of the survey, about 50 pieces of pottery were found on 10 sites. Of these 50 sherds, 12 show some form of decoration. The pottery illustrated in Figure 55, 22 and 24 came from sites 111 and 124 respectively; that in Figure 55, 21 and 23 came from site 136. The four pieces are decorated with incised lines, placed horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, and arranged in various combinations. On the outside surface, the color tends to be buff or light pinkish tan, but within the pottery itself, the color is in general blackish. The tempering ranges from fine to coarse particles and from small to medium amounts. Predominantly, the tempering is quartz particles, which may have been produced by crushing or may be natural beach sand.

The pottery illustrated in 18 came from site 114, test pit 2. This pottery exhibits cord markings, deeply impressed. The color is a dark brownish to black throughout. There is a medium amount of tempering, which is rather coarse. In the same test pit, three small body sherds were found which are decorated with small serpentine incised lines parallel to each other. This design is reminiscent of St. Lawrence Pseudo Scallop Shell of Ritchie and MacNeish (1949, p. 103).

Test Pits. At a few of the sites located during the summer, test pits were dug in the hope of establishing occupation levels. On site 114, test pit 2, located about 5 feet back from the bank, revealed an occupation layer about 1½ inches thick resting directly upon glacial till. The layer contained chips, one lanceolate side-

notched arrowpoint, an end scraper, pottery, and charcoal. Directly on top of the occupation layer was a 2-inch layer of turf. Grass roots from the turf extended into the occupation stratum below.

Test pit 3 was dug about 42 feet southeast of test pit 2 and 2 feet back from the bank. Here, a slightly different profile existed. A 2-inch layer of turf rested upon an occupation layer 2½ inches thick, which contained chips and charcoal. This first occupation layer was separated from a second by a 1- to 2½-inch layer of sterile sand. The second occupation layer, 2 to 4 inches thick, contained one end scraper, one pot sherd, chips, and charcoal. This last layer rested upon glacial till. The sterile sand began to pinch out a short distance back from the bank. The sand may be a flood deposit.

At site 117, a test pit produced chips, two trade beads, and a fish spear (13), as well as modern rifle cartridges in apparent confusion. The top layer, 1 inch thick, consisted of recent debris deposited by high water. Below this there was a thoroughly mixed layer of sand, charcoal, and chips. Two other test pits revealed evidence of occupation. One of these was located on the portage between Lac Bras Coupé and the Obatogamou River; the other was located on Lake Obatogamou. In both cases, a few chips were found directly beneath the duff, resting upon a white sandy-clay layer.

Quarry Site. The quarry site is located about 20 miles north of the Hudson's Bay Company's post on Lake Mistassini. There were indications that material had been chipped from the exposed surfaces of narrow veins of greyish-black quartzite that occur within the dolomitic bedrock. No definite artifacts were found in the immediate vicinity. At site 97, however, several chips of this same greyish-black quartzite were found. It is impossible to say whether the pieces from which these chips were struck came from the quarry site.

Discussion. For several reasons, a discussion of the collection must be restricted. The number of artifacts collected is small, and the sites are scattered over an extensive territory. Furthermore, nearly all of the artifacts are surface finds.

The survey was conducted for the purpose of exploring archaeologically a hitherto unexamined portion of south-central Quebec. Also, it was hoped that the geographical range of