

# Iroquois Settlement at Fort Frontenac in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries

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*Cartographic and documentary sources provide abundant evidence that an Iroquois village grew up in the vicinity of Fort Frontenac during the last quarter of the seventeenth century and continued to exist throughout most of the French Period (1673-1758). This paper examines these sources to assess the village and its relationship to both the fort and prevailing Iroquois settlement patterns of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.*

## Introduction

In 1673, when Count Frontenac established his fort at the mouth of the Catarqui River, on the site of present day Kingston, Ontario, his choice of location did not displace or coincide with any existing Native villages. Although the land around the eastern end of Lake Ontario near the mouth of the river was frequently visited by Iroquois and other Native groups, there is no archaeological or documentary evidence to suggest the presence of any major Iroquois villages prior to 1673. Only after the fort had been erected were Iroquois drawn to the area on a semi-permanent basis from villages which had been established a decade earlier along the north shore of the lake.

Throughout the French occupation (1673-1758), the Native village which grew up at Fort Frontenac, or Catarqui, was inhabited predominantly by Five Nations Iroquois. Even after the north shore villages had been abandoned and Algonquians had established themselves on the north side of the lake, Fort Frontenac continued to sustain an Iroquois settlement.

This paper examines this phenomenon from a number of angles. The Iroquois settlement of the north shore is first considered in order to clarify why, despite many obvious advantages, the Catarqui area was not chosen as the location for one of the north shore villages established in the 1660's. By examining cartographic and documentary sources I hope to show that environmental conditions at Catarqui failed to meet essential criteria for the establishment of Iroquois villages. The nature of the settlement around the fort is examined using both map and documentary information. Finally, information currently available on the Native settlement from archaeological sources is examined and compared with contemporary sites.

## Frontenac's Arrival On Lake Ontario

On July 12, 1673 Count Frontenac arrived on Lake Ontario. Accompanying him was a sizeable force consisting of almost four hundred men in two armed flatboats and one hundred and twenty canoes (Pritchard 1973a:25). Frontenac had originally intended to move along the north shore as far as the Cayuga village of Quinte, but shortly before he reached Lake Ontario he was met by two canoes of Indians carrying messages from his emissary LaSalle. These letters informed him that while over two hundred Iroquois from the areas surrounding Lake Ontario were prepared to meet him at Quinte, they were reluctant to do so because they feared that it might indicate that the Governor favoured the Quinte Indians above all others (Pritchard 1973a:21). After some deliberation, Frontenac resolved to investigate the land around the mouth of the Catarqui River as a suitable place to fortify, and with that in mind moved his men towards the lake in battle formation (Pritchard 1973a:23).

Before much time had passed they were met by Abbe' d' Urfe and leaders of the Five Nations, who quickly assured Frontenac that the mouth of the Catarqui River was indeed a place admirably suited to his purposes:

"They came along side the command vessel and paid their respects with many signs of happiness and trust, swearing to him the obligation they owed him for having spared them the trouble of going further and for really wishing to receive their submissions at the Catarqui River, which is a very suitable place to lodge, as they were going to show him" (Pritchard 1973 a:25).

At first glance, the confluence of the Catarqui River and Lake Ontario appeared to be an ideal location. Frontenac was pleased to find a suitable harbour and a point of land upon which to erect his fort. He also thought he had found meadows

.. of grass so good and so fine that there is none better in France' (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:112), which, had he investigated more thoroughly, he would have found to be reeds lying in the swampy bed of the river.

In order to make Catarqui the perfect setting for a new settlement all he needed was to locate

agricultural lands but, as with his hasty judgement of the 'meadows', he overlooked the shortcomings of the area:

"To make this place all I wished I had only to find lands fit for cultivation; so I was very impatient to be out of the canoe to look them over. Having done that quickly and found what I sought, I resolved to begin felling trees the next day ... " (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:112).

In his eagerness to establish a French presence on the lake, expand his personal interests and impress the assembled Iroquois, Frontenac missed, or chose to ignore, that the land in the immediate vicinity was of low quality and could barely be expected to support a community of any size.

With the clarity of vision that hindsight can provide, it is tempting to suggest that the Indian leaders, who produced the argument that a meeting with Frontenac at Quinte might be seen as favouring the Quinte Indians, had other things in mind. When they intercepted him on his way up the St. Lawrence and guided him to Cataragui they may have deliberately been trying to manipulate French activity on Lake Ontario.

The peace of the late 1660's had brought about a rapid expansion of French settlement in the up-per St. Lawrence (Thwaites 1896-1901:51:167). The Iroquois may have noted, with some consternation, the rapidity with which the French colonies strengthened and grew in a climate of peace and in areas of great fertility. Not willing to see the same happen in the fertile areas around the shores of Lake Ontario, close to their heartland, they may have devised a deliberate ruse to encourage Frontenac and his followers to an area where the possibility of establishing a thriving colony was less viable.

This suggestion presupposes that the Iroquois understood that Frontenac intended to start a settlement on Lake Ontario as a result of his 1673 visit. This is not too absurd since their spies would no doubt have informed them of the preparations for the journey and would have noticed that the supplies for the trip included a variety of military and agricultural hardware.

It is tempting to try and reverse the flow of ethnocentrism and to attribute actions and motives to Native people which they in fact never had. The Iroquois were, however, politically and militarily astute, and were more than capable of formulating and carrying out plans designed to further their own interests.

Obviously there is no reliable way of knowing whether the Iroquois tried to ensure the failure of the French establishment by peacefully suggesting

the Cataragui area. Whatever the forces influencing Frontenac were, his decision to settle in an area where the land did not have the agricultural potential to sustain a large population had lasting effects on the growth and importance of the fort and its associated Native village.

## Iroquois Settlement On Lake Ontario 1665-1673

Maps and documents from the late seventeenth century provide a comprehensive picture of the major Iroquois settlements that were frequented at the time of Frontenac's arrival on the lake. The main Five Nations villages were located south of the lake in a gently curving arc stretching from the Genesee River in the west to the Mohawk River in the east (Konrad 1981:135). Smaller peripheral settlements and hunting and fishing stations were located along strategic routes or close to important natural resources (Trigger 1963:96).

On the north shore, a series of villages occupied strategic locations; the portage between the west end of the lake and the Grand River (Quinaouatoua), the mouth of the Humber River (Teyaiaagon), the mouth of the Rouge River (Ganestiquiagon), on Rice Lake (Quintio), the mouth of the Ganaraska River (Ganaraske), close to the mouth of the Trent River (Quinte), near Carrying Place in Prince Edward County and on Hay Bay or Napanee Bay near the mouth of the Napanee River (Ganneious) (Konrad 1981:133) (Fig. 1). An eighth village (Toniata), which may be considered part of this sequence, was located somewhere in the St. Lawrence in the vicinity of Prescott, possibly on Grenadier Island (Gary Foster: personal communication; Preston and Lamontagne 1958:482). Despite heavy use of the Cataragui River as a route to the north, no major settlement existed in the area at this time.

## Factors Influencing North Shore Settlement

Although scant archaeological attention has been paid to these north shore villages, it is possible to determine some important settlement information from their reported locations. Victor Konrad has discussed them in the context of prevailing settlement patterns in Iroquoia during the seventeenth century, seeing them as 'an extension of the homeland' in a strategic, fertile and unoccupied part of the country (Konrad 1981:129). The initial impetus for the expansion to the north shore is generally regarded as a direct response to pressures from aggressors to the south during the 1660's (Konrad 1981:139). The Andastes (Susquehannock)

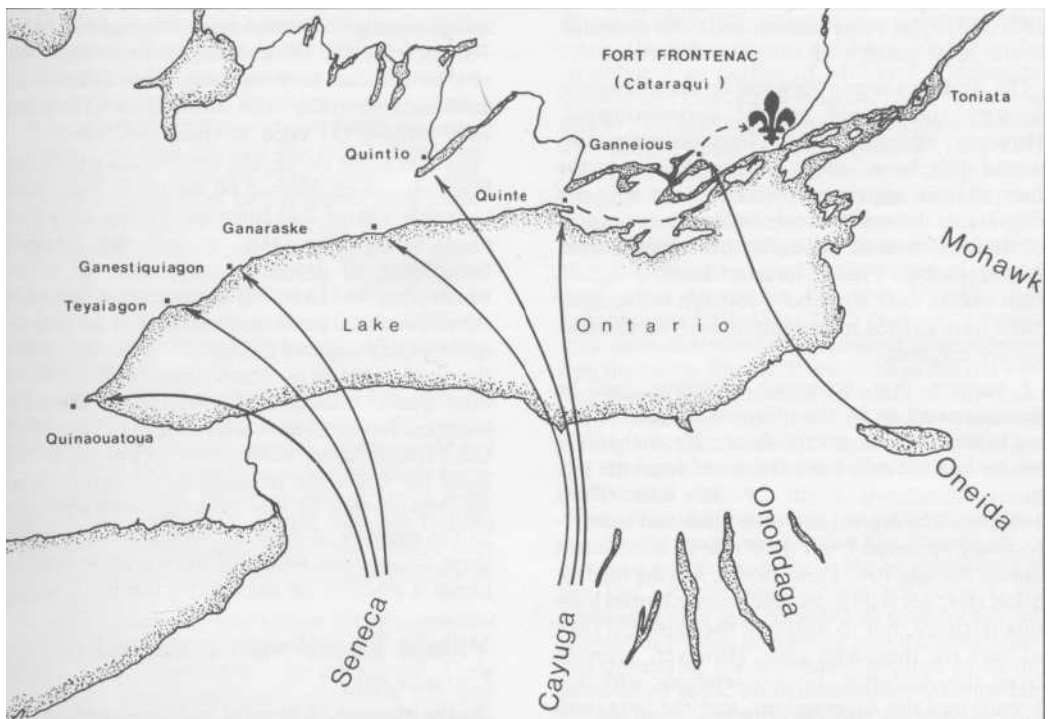


Fig. 1  
Iroquois Settlement on the north shore of Lake Ontario 1665-1701.

had been harrying the Five Nations since 1662 and were beginning to have an effect on Iroquois security and trade (Hunt 1960:134). The Seneca and Cayuga were feeling the effects of the Andastes incursions which were enough, according to Hunt, to encourage some of the Cayuga to retreat across Lake Ontario to establish the village of Quinte (Hunt 1960:140; Thwaites 1896-1901:51:257). Pritchard (1973b:136) argues that the Cayuga were so desperate for security that they solicited protection from the French by seeking French missionaries to live amongst them in their new 'refugee' colony. However, the documentary and cartographic evidence suggests that not only the Cayuga settlement at Quinte, but five, and possibly six other villages were established along the north shore at approximately the same time. Obviously, either the Andastes threat was so great that a major readjustment in Iroquois settlement occurred or some other factors must be sought to explain this rapid large scale movement of people. At the time these moves were taking place, other factors were at work which would also appear to have discouraged northern settlement. The Iroquois were recovering from the effects of the smallpox plague of 1662,

which left many dead and others weakened; the Algonquian tribes had launched a series of daring raids into Iroquoia, and the French had stepped up their military actions, culminating in attacks on Mohawk settlements in 1666 (Aquila 1977:16). Beleguered on three fronts and secure only in their subjugation of the western tribes, it seems highly unlikely that the Five Nations would risk further weakening their individual or communal defences by the fractionation of their villages, unless this was dictated by a sound need. The pattern of Iroquois life evolved in the centuries preceding European contact included efficient mechanisms for coping with endemic warfare. Villages were placed within strong palisades and located so as to take the best advantage of both good agricultural soil and defensible natural features. Despite the vicissitudes brought about by contact with Europeans, this pattern of settlement had been strengthened rather than weakened. By the late seventeenth century each of the five cantons was consolidated into a small group of major villages and some minor outlying settlements (Konrad 1981:213). Tuck has demonstrated the trend towards large villages throughout the late

prehistoric period among the Onondaga (Tuck 1971:213). The other nations followed essentially the same pattern of village coalescence.

The Andastes were a very real threat to Iroquois security and should not be underestimated. However, bifurcation of the Iroquois settlements would only have further weakened them in the face of their aggressors. Those settlers who did migrate to the north shore, furthermore, exposed themselves to the possibility of hostilities from Algonquian or French forces. Clearly a significant reason over and above concern for security must have existed to precipitate such an extraordinary response.

I suspect that economic concerns can be demonstrated to be the principle reason for the settlement of the north shore. By the 1640's beaver had virtually been extirpated from the Iroquois homelands south of the lake (Hunt 1960:76). The Huron and their allies had been effectively removed from their role as middlemen during the late 1640's and 1650's, leaving the Iroquois free, not only to assume former Huron hunting territory, but to intercept the eastward flow of furs for their own gain. However, pressure from the Andastes, uneasy relations with the French and the Algonquians, and the long term effects of warfare and disease prevented the Iroquois from fully assuming this pivotal position. While the Iroquois were otherwise engaged, the Ottawa had taken on the Huron's former role, flooding New France with huge quantities of furs, and placing themselves in the position of middlemen, controlling the west-east flow of furs from the rich harvest areas around the upper Great Lakes (Eccles 1969:105). The Iroquois needed to respond so as not to lose out completely in their struggle for a position of economic strength.

After successful French raids into Mohawk territory, the Five Nations recognized French ability to carry warfare right into the heart of their cantons (Goldstein 1969:95). Seneca, Onondaga, Cayuga and eventually Oneida all affirmed their desire for peace by 1666, although it took a French invasion under De Tracy to subdue the intractable Mohawk and seal the peace treaty (Goldstein 1969:97). Although not directly substantiated by documentary sources, it seems possible that in anticipation of this peace, groups of Oneida, Cayuga and Seneca departed their homeland to establish villages at points along the north shore of Lake Ontario, where they could effectively control the flow of furs from the north and west towards the markets of Albany and Montreal. Despite the incursions of the Andastes, the Seneca found it an economic necessity to

divide their strength between carrying on the war and pursuing the beaver hunt (Hunt 1960:141). The fur trade had become such an important part of their life that they regularly braved Andastes ambushes to trade with the Dutch (Thwaites 1896-1901:47:111 cited in Hunt 1960:139).

In order to be viable, the settlements which the Five Nations established on the north shore had to satisfy a three fold function. Firstly, they had to operate efficiently within the normal parameters of Iroquois settlement. In other words, they had to be self-sustaining and provide the physical and psychological security which Iroquois society required (Wright 1979:36). Secondly, they had to act as northern bases from which to hunt beaver and other fur bearers in the area bounded by the Ottawa River, Lake Ontario and Lake Huron. And thirdly, they had to act as toll gates by which the Iroquois could control and regulate the flow of furs from the north and west to the markets at Albany. The maintenance of these villages was crucial if the Iroquois were to retain a position of strength in the fur trade.

## Village Locations Compared to Catarauqui

In the absence of detailed archaeological information about the specific location of seventeenth century Five Nations villages along the north shore of Lake Ontario, it would be unwise to be too bold in drawing conclusions. However, a number of inferences concerning these villages can be drawn from available sources. Firstly, as stated above, they were positioned at strategic points controlling access to and from Lake Ontario. Secondly, the six most westerly villages all occur in areas where conditions and climate were such that agricultural production, as the settlers were accustomed to on the south side of the lake, was viable. Quinaouatoua, Teyaiaigon, Ganestiquiaigon, Quintio, Ganaraske and Quinte were all on or near to land of the highest quality, within the Canada Land Inventory's Class 1 for agricultural capability (Canada Land Inventory 1966: Maps 31C and 31D). Ganneious was located on or near the fertile and productive soils of the Hay Bay area. While not in the Class 1 category, these soils have few limitations on production. The only really strategic location not settled during this period was the mouth of the Catarauqui River. This area is characterized by soils of generally poor quality which exhibit poor drainage and are generally less than three feet deep (Canada Land Inventory 1966: Map 31C).

Documentary references to agriculture along the north shore are not common. M. Trouve, a

Sulpician evangelist, provides some indication of Iroquois agriculture in his letter included in Dollier de Casson's 'Summary of the Quinte Mission': "On our arrival at Quinte we were feasted as well as the savages of the place could manage. It is true that the feast consisted only of pumpkins fried with fat, and like stews, which we enjoyed. The pumpkins are excellent in this country and cannot be compared with those of Europe, indeed one might say that it is unjust to call them pumpkins. They are of great variety of shapes bearing hardly any resemblance to those of France; there are even some so hard that they must be opened with an axe when they are not cooked" (Flenley 1928:350).

Trouve's arrival at Quinte coincided with the time of year when the pumpkin (squash) harvest would have been at its height, so we should not be surprised that they formed the principle ingredient in the feast. Although not explicitly mentioned, we might also assume that the Indians were growing corn and beans since these were traditional partners in the Iroquois pattern of agriculture.

In all likelihood the north shore villages used sites which were well known as seasonal campsites prior to their adoption as larger settlements. These locations offered seasonally abundant fish and game which may not have been available in such quantity south of the lake (Konrad 1981:138; Preston and Lamontagne 1958:103, 134).

The land at the mouth of the Cataraqi River could also provide many resources and was certainly a strategic location. The French had noticed its importance prior to Frontenac's arrival on the lake:

.. it seems that one could become master of all the fur trade by making a post above the rapids and at the entrance to Lake Ontario where the Indians pass to go to their hunting grounds. By this means they would be obliged either to be satisfied with the hunting in their own country or else hand over to the French the furs they take in those northern countries which belong to the French" (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:103).

The writer makes the strategic importance of the Cataraqi area evident. It is not my intention to discuss the successes or failures of Fort Frontenac in controlling the Iroquois trade, since that has been examined in detail elsewhere (Preston and Lamontagne 1958; Konrad 1981). It is necessary to point out, however, that up to the time the fort was established at Cataraqi, and for a while thereafter, the Cataraqi River remained an important route into the interior for the Iroquois and an important avenue for the movement of furs to market.

Another factor which may have made a permanent village at Cataraqi unnecessary was that this

route was regularly used by the Five Nations (Konrad 1981:132). Since it was a well travelled route, the Iroquois may not have felt compelled to police it as parties of Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida and Cayuga all used the route to gain access to their hunting and trading territories beyond the lower Great Lakes (Konrad 1981:137). Although after the establishment of the Fort, the Iroquois increased their use of the western route around Lake Ontario, ultimately the Fort's presence had little effect on their movements as they merely stayed out of the range of French guns while traversing the area (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:158). Their frequent presence may have dissuaded other Indians from attempting the route. The northern Indians did not venture down the Cataraqi to trade on a regular basis until the Iroquois had been weakened through conflicts with the French, the Ojibwa and the Andastes during the last two decades of the seventeenth century.

The foregoing discussion has been necessary to see the Cataraqi area within the framework of Iroquois settlement prior to the establishment of the fort. If my assumptions are correct, the Cataraqi area was regarded as strategically important as a route to hunting and trapping areas, but unsuitable for settlement because of its impoverished soils. Notwithstanding this, an Iroquois village was soon thriving around the fort. Clearly some other factors encouraged the Indians to accept the disadvantages of the site.

## Native Settlement At Fort Frontenac 1675-1687

Within three years of Frontenac's arrival on the lake, Iroquois were being attracted to the fort. As part of La Salle's assumption of responsibility for the fort in 1675, he agreed:

"... to draw there the greatest number of Indians as he can to give them land to create villages and cultivate them; to teach them trades and to urge them to lead a life more like ours such as the proposer began to do with some success during this tour of command" (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:118). La Salle and Father Louis Hennepin undertook

a journey to Ganneious to convince the Oneida settled there to relocate at the fort. In Hennepin's *A New Discovery Of A Vast Country In America* he takes most of the credit for convincing some of the Indians to join them:

"While the brink of the lake was frozen, I walk'd upon the ice to an Iroquois village called Ganneious, near to Kente (Quinte), about nine leagues from the fort - in the company of Sieur de La Salle above mentioned. These savages presented us with the flesh of elks and porcupine, which we fed upon. After having discours'd them some time, we returned

bringing with us a considerable number of the natives, in order to form a little village of about forty cottages to be inhabited by them lying betwixt the fort and our House of Mission" (Thwaites 1903:47-48).

Hennepin's 'forty cottages' is probably an exaggeration. A 1682 map by Minet depicts a cluster of French settlers' houses along the shore to the south of the fort and shows six native cabins between the fort and the Recollet mission house (Fig. 2). The cabins are indicated as lying close to a spring (presumably at the top of the creek which now underlies King Street), which Konrad points out is a 'traditional locational requirement' for Iroquois settlement (Konrad 1981:139). As soon as conditions allowed, the Indians started sowing corn and peas which the French provided (Thwaites 1903:48).

In these early years the Recollet missionaries were constantly frustrated by the Iroquois seasonal pattern of hunting and fur gathering. The small acculturative and religious gains they made were soon dissipated during the hunting season through lack of positive reinforcement (Thwaites 1903:49). Notwithstanding the problems of the mission and the seasonal nature of occupation, the Native village continued to be a factor in the Cataraqi settlement until the outbreak of hostilities in the 1680's. A description of the fort by Nicolas de La Salle dated to 1682 indicates the presence of cleared land around the fort and both Native and French settlers:

"There is a good amount of land cleared and sown round about, in which a hundred paces away, or almost there is a barn for storing the harvest. There are quite near the fort several French houses, an Iroquois village, a convent and a Recollet church" (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:128).

The gains to be made from putting this land into production were so slight that the habitants were difficult to encourage.

By 1683 the area's shortcomings were beginning to be recognized. In a letter to Seignelay, Minister of the Colonies, the Intendant, de Meules expressed his dissatisfaction with Fort Frontenac's inability to sustain itself through agriculture. La Forest, who had been granted two of the islands in the mouth of the St. Lawrence, was intending to put them under agriculture to produce wheat for the fort:

"It might be wished that several would do the same; at least putting their land into production they would be able to supply us with wheat which would be a great relief and would spare us the excessive expenses which are

necessary to carry flour there ..." (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:148).

By 1685, criticism of the agricultural potential of the land around the fort was more vociferous. Governor Denonville, after visiting Cataraqi, pointed out in a memoir that the soils were useless for producing wheat, although capable of supporting the growth of peas (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:154). In a communication to Seignelay he expressed his belief that it would have been better had the fort been positioned in a location where fertile soils would have allowed the garrison to maintain itself without constant convoys of supplies (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:155). His description of the soils leaves little doubt of his feelings:

"The soil of Cataraqi is all rock, covered in the best places with a foot of earth. The reflection from this rock is so warm that wheat, which if fine in the first months comes to nothing in a short time and often fails, but peas hardly fail there" (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:155).

Despite these problems Native settlers continued to live in the vicinity of the fort. A 1685 plan indicates the presence of some Native cabins lying between the mission and the fort (Fig. 3). Presumably the attractions of the mission, the ready availability of trade goods and supplies, and the security provided by the fort's structure, outweighed the disadvantages of the location. Relationships between the Native settlers and the French were almost certainly symbiotic. The Iroquois provided a steady supply of wild game for the garrison and habitants in exchange for European goods (Thwaites 1903:74). The villagers at Quinte and Ganneious, whom Cadwallader Colden believed to be the Iroquois most well disposed to the French, also provided provisions on a regular basis (Colden 1972:63; Thwaites 1905:122).

## Native Settlement At The Fort 1687-1701

As the French sought to maintain trading relations with their native allies in the Illinois country, in the face of Iroquois aggression, relations between the French and their Iroquois neighbours took a dramatic turn for the worse. In 1687, under pressure from King Louis XIV to capture 'prisoners of war for his galleys' (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:47), and in advance of his at-tack on the Seneca, Governor Denonville had Indians at the fort and the villagers from Toniata, Quinte and Ganneious rounded up as captives. A number of influential leaders from south of

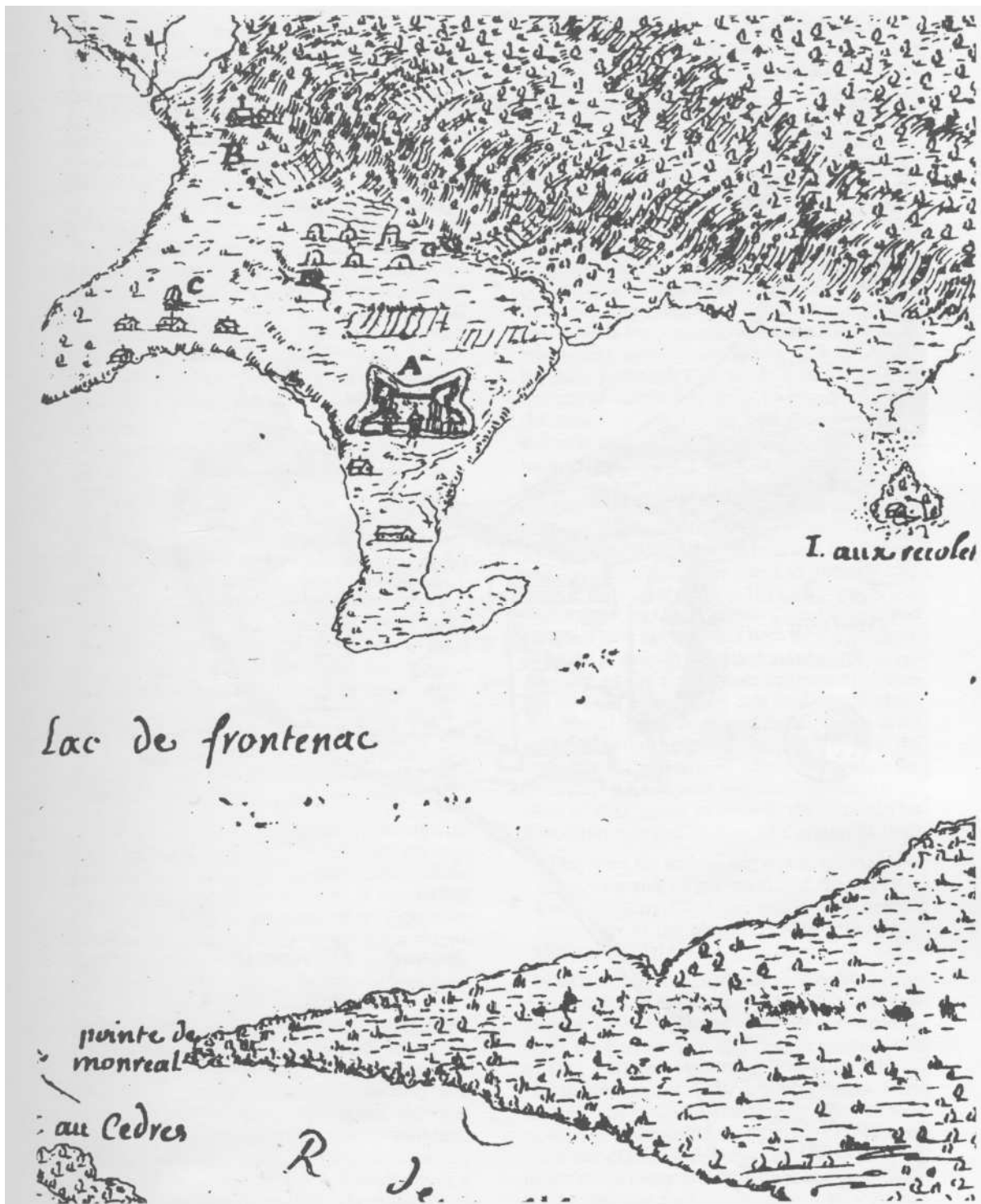


Fig. 2  
"Lac de Frontenac et Source du Saint-Laurant". P.A.C., N.M.C., H3/903 - 1682.

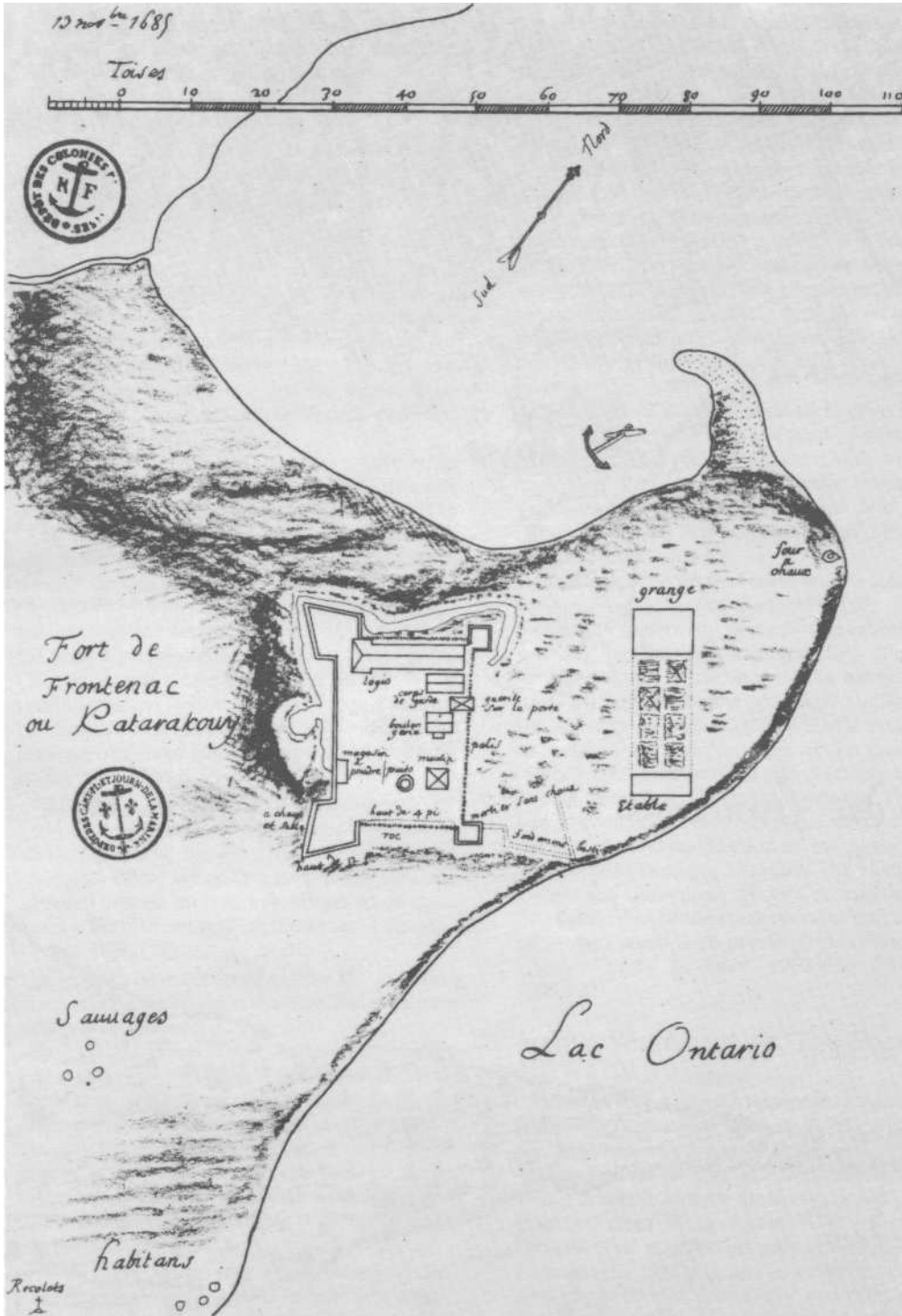


Fig. 3 "Fort de Frontenac ou Katarakouy". Archives nationales, section Outre-Mer. Depot des fortifications des colonies, Amerique septentrionale. 552c.



Lake Ontario, who had been brought north by Father Lamberville to meet with the Governor, were also treacherously impounded. Although friendly relations had existed between the Cataraqui Iroquois and the French up until this time, Denonville justified his actions by assuming that they might have warned the Iroquois south of the lake of his intended attack if they were allowed to retain their freedom (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:163).

Louis Armand de Lom d'Arch, Baron de Lahontan, was serving in the Department of Marine Forces and was at Fort Frontenac at the time of this action. He has left us a detailed description of the plight of the Indians during their imprisonment (Thwaites 1905:122-4). He was on particularly friendly terms with one of the Cataraqui villagers with whom he had once spent some time:

"I made up to one of these wretches that was about five and twenty years old, and had frequently regal'd me in his hut not far from the fort, during my six weeks service in the year of Mr de la Barre's expedition. This poor man being master of the Algonkin language, I gave him in that dismal posture that I would take care to have victuals and drink convey'd to him twice a day, and would give him letters for my friends at Montreal, in order to his being us'd more favourably than his companions. He replied that he saw and was very well acquainted with the horror that most of the French were affected with, upon the view of the cruelty they underwent and that he scorned to be fed, or us'd more civilly than his fellow prisoners" (Thwaites 1905:123).

Despite Lahontan's attempts to prevent the Indian allies of the French from torturing the captive Iroquois, some of the captives suffered abuse before being shipped to France. A few of the Christian Indians from around Fort Frontenac escaped the galleys (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:163,172), but the effects of this action clearly had a demoralizing effect on the remaining inhabitants of the north shore villages.

It seems reasonable to assume that Denonville's action effectively eradicated Iroquois settlement at the fort. By 1687 Iroquois hostility had grown to the extent that they attacked the fort and blockaded Lake Ontario throughout the next year. The Fort Frontenac garrison, imprisoned within the fort by constant Iroquois harassment, succumbed to scurvy for want of fresh food; a blow which ultimately led to the abandonment of the fort in 1689 (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:187).

The last decades of the seventeenth century were a stressful time for the Iroquois. Depleted in strength by warfare, diseases and famine, and dispirited by their losses, the effects of alcohol and their changing fortunes in the fur trade, they were no longer the force they had been at the outbreak of the war (Aquila 1977:70). In addition, fear of the military strength of the French and their Indian allies, and a lack of confidence in the support of the English left them with deep feelings of paranoia (Aquila 1977:80). The 1701 peace treaty only served to dispel some of their anxiety. Shortly after these events Denonville noted that 'the once fine villages' of the north shore were beginning to become depopulated as their former inhabitants moved south to join their kin across the lake. Although Denonville accused the Five Nations of 'compelling them' to return, no doubt the action by the French had caused them to seriously reconsider the security of their former homes (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:163). The western and northern Indians were feeling more confident in their own strength and had begun to harry the Iroquois who, as a result of their weakened state, were forced to accept others hunting and trapping in areas they had formerly considered their own (Aquila 1977:82).

Incursions by the Ojibwa (Mississauga and Saulteur) have not generally been seriously regarded as the principle reason for the Iroquois abandonment of the north shore settlements. Leroy Eid (1979:297) has argued that the Iroquois abandonment of the north shore came about as a direct response to an extended struggle between the Ojibwa and the Iroquois, which ended with the defeat of the Iroquois and the colonization of much of their former territory by the Ojibwa. This is in direct contrast to Konrad's argument that:

"They were not an invading group, for the Iroquois were still all powerful and the Algonquian speakers filled the void on the north shore only at the pleasure of the Iroquois" (Konrad 1981:142).

In all likelihood the combined pressures from the Algonquians to the north, the French to the east and the series of natural disasters combined to make the Iroquois feel that further maintenance of their northern settlements was untenable.

In the context of these events it might seem strange that Iroquois should once again choose to settle in the neighbourhood of Fort Frontenac, yet as one of their requests to the Colonies in advance of the peace treaty indicates, they had specifically requested that Fort Frontenac be re-established, that trade goods be available there and that a forge should be installed. They also expressed

their concern that should hostilities erupt with the English, they would have a safe haven of retreat (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:199).

### Native Settlement At The Fort 1701-1758

By 1702 Iroquois were once again visiting Cataraqui (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:204). The fort they returned to differed in some ways from the one they knew prior to the war. A new building had been added along the inside of the north curtain wall containing a bakehouse, a chapel, officers quarters and magazines filled with supplies for the Indian trade (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:196). Perhaps the most significant change was that the chapel was now within the walls of the fort and no longer stood in isolation along the shoreline to the south. From now on, Native inhabitants would not only look to the fort for trade, but those who had been influenced by the missionaries would look there for their religious instruction. By the turn of the eighteenth century, many Iroquois were accepting Christianity and flooding towards mission centres in Canada (Aquila 1977:86).

As early as 1687, Governor Dongan of New York had noticed the success which the Catholic missionaries were having in the Iroquois cantons, and expressed some regret that:

"(the Jesuits) ... do their utmost to draw them to Canada, to which place there are already 6 or 700 retired and more like to do to the great prejudice of the Government if not prevented" (O'Callaghan 1849-1851:1:230).

While hostilities had no doubt prevented the flow of Christian Iroquois to Fort Frontenac during the war years, they began to be attracted to the religious establishment shortly thereafter. That the missionaries were Recollets and not the more highly favoured Jesuits (Aquila 1977:86), may have affected the numbers of Iroquois settlers attracted to Cataraqui, but it is more likely that the feelings of mistrust, which Denonville's actions created, prevented a more numerically impressive migration. However, the benefits derived by direct access to French goods, the security provided by the fort and access to missionaries, appears to have provided a sufficient inducement after the consolidation of peace.

In the absence of specific accurate documents it is impossible at present to be sure of the location of the Iroquois village in the years immediately after the turn of the eighteenth century. In all probability people continued to occupy the same areas as they had before the conflict, perhaps even using the same structures. In either 1703 or 1704

that pattern of settlement was altered as a result of overt acts of aggression by Mississauga and Saulteur (Ojibwa) Indians. In a letter to Pontchartrain, Clerambault d'Aigrement mentioned that three canoes of Mississauga and Saulteur had destroyed the Iroquois village and captured, and presumably abused, some of the Iroquois residing there (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:205). In 1707 some of the same northern Indians were at the fort taunting those they had abused, boasting of their superiority and calling the manhood of the Iroquois into question. Apparently the Iroquois showed remarkable restraint in not retaliating to their tormentors, although the author of the letter does not make it clear whether this is because they were trying to act as good Christians, or that they were simply outnumbered and outfaced (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:206). By 1706 there was:

"An Iroquois village of six cabins near the fort, whose chief asked me to speak with the principal men from each cabin ..." (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:206).

In the two or three years since the northern Indians destroyed their village, six cabins, large enough that some of their inhabitants could be regarded as 'principal men', had been built.

A 1720 plan by an anonymous cartographer depicts thirteen Indian cabins in the immediate vicinity of the fort (Fig.4). Unlike earlier maps, where the Native settlement is shown some distance away, these cabins are clustered close to the main gate between the fort and the water and along the south wall. Archaeological investigations of the northwest bastion and north curtain wall have revealed a high level of compatibility between the structural remains in the ground and the information provided by the 1720 plan (Stewart n.d.). While excavations have not yet been conducted in areas where Native settlement is indicated, it seems reasonable to suggest that this map is accurate in portraying the general village location relative to the French structures. It is tempting to see the relocation of the Iroquois village as a direct response to the Algonquian incursions of the early part of the century. The original settlement may have been sufficiently far away for the French garrison to feign ignorance while the Algonquians abused the Iroquois and destroyed their village. By placing their village in a direct and prominent relationship to the fort, the Iroquois effectively ensured that any hostilities they experienced from their Native enemies came to the immediate attention of the garrison. The removal of the Recollet mission from along the shore to within the walls of the

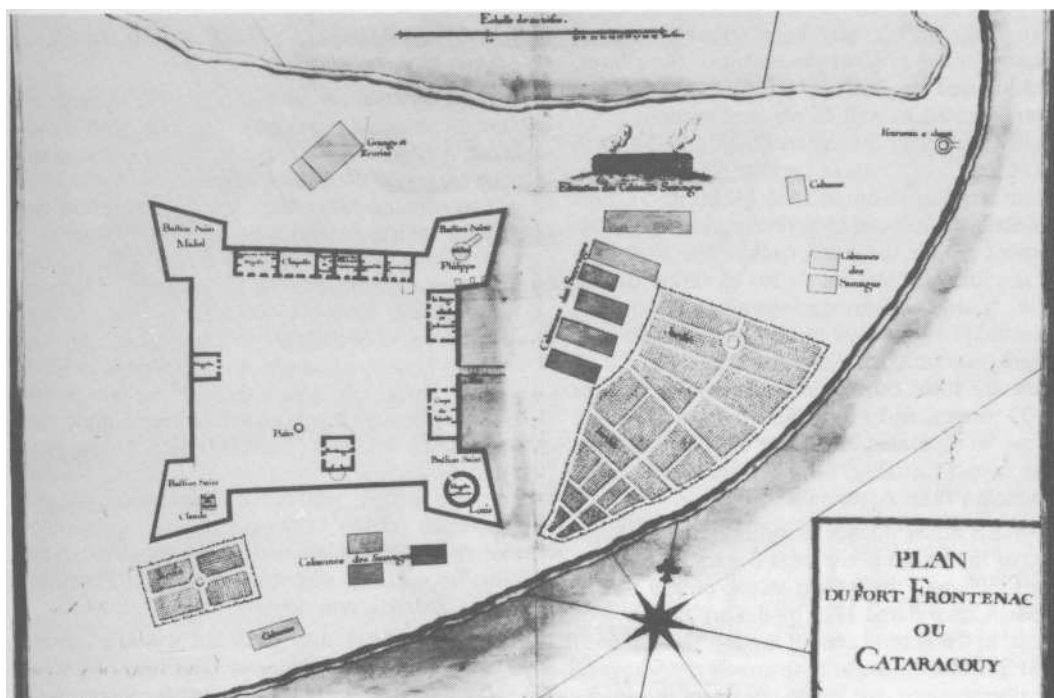


Fig. 4  
 "Plan de Fort Frontenac ou Cataracouy". P.A.C., N.M.C., H3/450 - Kingston - 1720.

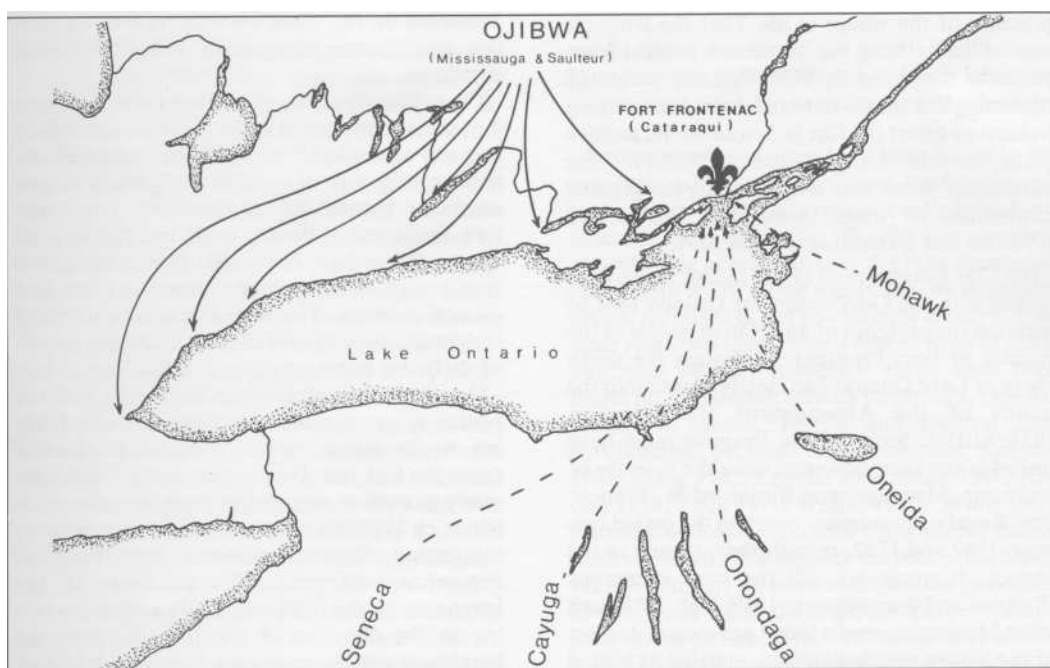


Fig. 5  
 Iroquois Settlement on the north shore of Lake Ontario 1701-1758.

fort in the 1690's may have removed another reason for the original placement of the village, and induced the Indians to look to the fort for their spiritual as well as physical succour.

After the turn of the eighteenth century the north shore of Lake Ontario rapidly became Algonquian territory (Konrad 1981:142) (Fig. 5). Fort Frontenac continued to harbour an Iroquois settlement despite these incursions. The 1720 plan of the fort provides a detailed elevation of one of the 'Cabannes Sauvages' showing vertical sides, a domed roof, twenty-one pole supports along its length, two smoke holes and a bark door. Six of these structures, ranging in length from 8.5 metres to 22 metres, and averaging 5 metres wide, are shown in a parallel alignment close to the front gate of the fort (Fig. 4). They are clearly more Iroquoian than Algonquian.

There is little evidence to indicate the continuation of the Iroquois village at Catarauqui between the 1720's and the British attack on the fort in 1758. A map dated 1725 by deLery marks 'Iroquois' in the general area of the fort (Heidenreich 1981:11), but since the map covers the whole of the northeastern part of the continent this information has to be treated with caution since it is unclear whether the Iroquois are at the Fort or merely in the general area of the St. Lawrence River mouth. More detailed maps of the fort from the mid-seventeenth century fail to show the presence of the village at all. That the Iroquois were still inhabiting the fort area is evident from concerns expressed in 1733 that the policy of restricting the traffic in brandy was encouraging Indians to desert the fort in favour of the English (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:223). The authorities' fears were confirmed by the gradual diminution of trade throughout this period (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:223).

The 1736 Enumeration of the Indian Tribes connected with the Government of Canada fails to mention the presence of any Native people in the vicinity of Fort Frontenac, although the north shore of Lake Ontario had clearly passed into the hands of the Algonquians (O'Callaghan 1855:9:1056). Some of the Iroquois must have stayed in the area, however, since the Register of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials of St. Francis, Fort Royal of Frontenac, covering the period between 1747 and 1752, records that, second to the French, Iroquois are still the most numerous (Preston and Lamontagne 1958:236). Although some Mississauga and a Sioux are recorded, most of the Native people baptised, married or buried at the mission are 'Iroquois of the Lake'.

## The Catarauqui Native Settlement And Archaeology

If we proceed on the assumption that much of the information provided by the 1720 plan is correct, it is possible to make some speculations on the nature of the Native community and aspects of its organization which may be important for future archaeological work at Fort Frontenac.

It is important to point out that some of the longhouses represented on the plan exceed the size expectations for Native 'cabannes' of this period. Based on Greenhalgh's description of the 140 houses he noticed on a visit to Onondaga in 1677, James Tuck has argued that by the late seventeenth century, longhouses had been supplanted by smaller dwellings (Tuck 1971:182). He suggests that the French term 'cabannes' indicates smaller structures than traditional longhouses, yet the elevation on the 1720 plan clearly represents a longhouse, complete with bark coverings, ridge line smoke holes and wooden support structure. Gary Warrick has remarked that:

"In the late contact period, I would suggest that European trade, capitalism and Christianity disrupted Native economic, social and political systems causing village disorganization and the virtual disappearance of longhouses" (Warrick 1984:72).

If excavations of the Native settlement at Fort Frontenac prove the veracity of the information presented on this plan, we may have to reassess our assumptions about early historic Iroquois dwellings.

The cabins are arranged in three distinct groups. The main group lies close to the front gate of the fort and consists of five longhouses in parallel formation with a sixth lying at a slightly different alignment immediately to the north. This structure, the largest of the six, might belong to a head man and may have been important to the native community as a communal meeting place and council chamber. The other two small clusters of 'cabannes' may have been used by Native people of different tribal or cultural affiliation.

The disposition of middens associated with the Native village may also have considerable bearing on the interpretation of excavated remains from the fort site. If it is true that middens are rarely more than nine metres from the house ends (Warrick 1984:29), then one can anticipate some interesting disposal patterns for the Fort Frontenac settlement. The elevation of the longhouse on the 1720 plan shows a doorway facing in the direction of the fort. Between the longhouse and the main gate there is a defensive ditch shown, large enough to warrant the use of

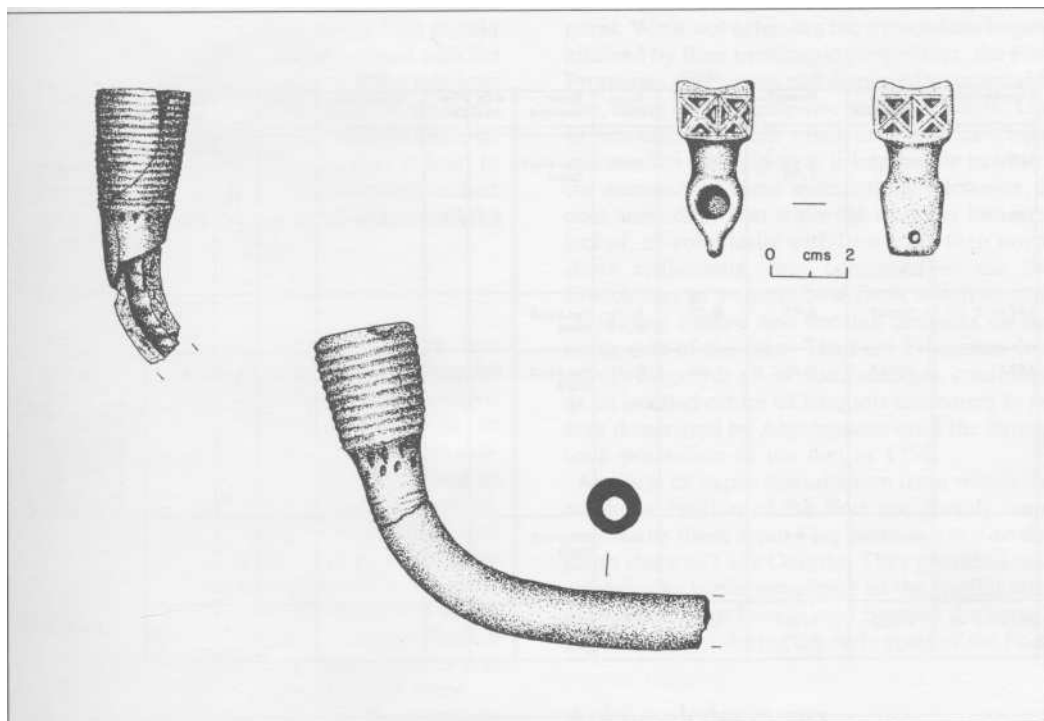


Fig. 6  
Early Historic Iroquois smoking pipes from excavations at Fort Frontenac.

a bridge. This declivity would have been a natural dumping area for refuse generated within the longhouses. Unless the Fort's commandant expressly forbade it, I think it is fair to assume that this would have been quickly used by the villagers. Rather than slowly silting up with garbage and debris generated by the Fort, the ditch may have rapidly been assumed as a major dump area by the Native settlers. We must remember that European concepts of public health were not highly developed at this time, so the issue of whether the ditch became filled with Iroquois debris, French debris, or no debris at all probably never arose. If the longhouses had two entrances, with one facing the lake, the shoreline or the garden areas may have also received some of the household effluvia. The number of distinctly Native items recovered from excavations at the fort since 1983 has been relatively small. This can be explained in a number of ways. Firstly, excavations have concentrated on the northwest bastion of the fort (mainly because this has been the most accessible area for excavation), and have not examined areas of specifically Native settlement. Secondly, by the late seventeenth century many of the material

goods which Native people were using were of European origin. It is difficult to assess which artifacts were used by Frenchmen and which by Native people.

A number of clay pipes have been found in excavations within the northwest bastion in soil layers which contained predominantly French artifacts (Adams 1985) (Fig. 6). The two complete ceramic pipe bowls found in the Fort Frontenac excavations are of a type widely used by Iroquoian people throughout the seventeenth century. Collared ring bowl pipes, with a row or rows of small punctates beneath concentric rings, have been found on seventeenth century Onondaga, Oneida, Mohawk, Seneca, Huron and Neutral sites (Cruikshank: personal communication; Kenyon 1982; Lenig 1965; Lennox 1984; Pratt 1976; Ritchie 1954; Tuck 1971; Wright 1981). While there are some noticeable variations in the precise details from site to site, (for instance the concentric bands vary in number, on some examples the punctates lie above and below the rings, and the bowl shape varies), the general level of homogeneity across a wide geographic and cultural area is remarkable. Some more precise chronological information can

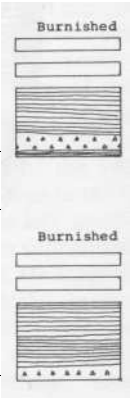
| Provenience   | Cross Section | STEM        |            |           |              | BOWL    |           |           |           |      |             |     |   |
|---------------|---------------|-------------|------------|-----------|--------------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------|-------------|-----|---|
|               |               | Diametre    | Length     | Hole Dia. | Hole Method  | Rim Ex. | Dia. Int. | Thickness | Base Dia. | Lip  | Bowl Height |     |   |
| 18T11<br>18S7 | Round         | 1.45 - 1.70 | 10.0       | 0.60      | Twisted Cord |         | 2.7       | 1.9       | 0.50      | 2.10 | Flat        | 2.8 |  |
| 19/20 Y 28    | Round         | 1.45        | 4.50       | 0.30-0.40 | Twisted Cord |         |           |           |           |      |             |     |   |
| 18S7          | Round         | 1.30        | 6.90       | 0.35      | Twisted Cord | 2.5     | 1.8       | 0.48      | 1.9       | Flat | 3.0         |     |   |
| 16/17 W 71    | Facetted      | 1.40        | <b>2.0</b> | 0.50      | Twisted Cord |         |           |           |           |      |             |     |   |
| 19/20 Y 26    | Round         | 0.70-1.50   | 10.6       | 0.50      | Twisted Cord |         |           |           |           |      |             |     |   |

Table 1  
Ceramic pipes from Fort Frontenac excavations.

be gained from a detailed analysis of these artifacts. Attributes which are good chronological indicators are the smoothly curved stems and the predominance of fluting within the smoke hole. Gracefully curved stems have been identified by James Tuck as characteristic of Late Iroquoian pipes (Tuck 1971:183). Norman Emerson noted that on the early Late Iroquoian Payne Site in Prince Edward County, only 13% of pipe stems had fluted stems formed with a twisted cord while the remainder were formed around reeds (Emerson 1967). On later sites the twisted cord method all but replaces the earlier method. All the conical ring bowl pipes from the Seneca Boughton Hill site, for instance, were manufactured using this technique (personal observation). All the clay pipes and pipe fragments from Fort Frontenac display the characteristic internal fluting produced by this technique (Table 1).

The similarities between the Fort Frontenac pipes and those found on the contemporary Boughton Hill and Rochester Junction Seneca sites which date to the period between 1673 and 1687 are particularly obvious (Rochester Museum and Science Centre Collections: personal observation). Ar

tifacts from collections from the Jamesville Pen site, in Onondaga County, New York, also contain pipes which are directly comparable to those recovered from Fort Frontenac. This is particularly significant because it has long been recognised that this site was the Onondaga Town attacked by Frontenac in 1696. The pipes were almost the only items of distinctly native manufacture recovered from the site and were the sole remnants of a once sophisticated Onondaga ceramic complex (Tuck 1971:188). The Jamesville Pen site was occupied between 1682 and 1696 and is thus contemporary with the early years of the fort. Pipes from the Onondaga Indian Hill site which was abandoned about 1681 also show considerable stylistic similarity to those from Fort Frontenac (Tuck 1971:181, Plate 42).

A number of stone pipes were also discovered during excavations at Fort Frontenac. A complete Catlinite pipe (Fig. 6) and parts of three other pipes were found in mixed contexts. Detailed analysis of these items is not complete at the time of writing, but they are more characteristic of eighteenth century rather than late seventeenth century occupations. It seems appropriate that the

few recognisable items of native manufacture found during the excavations of the Fort should relate to activities traditionally associated with the establishment and maintenance of good relations (Thwaites 1903:654). The presence of these artifacts in direct association with cultural material of French manufacture indicates that at least in the early years of the Fort, fluid relations existed between those within and those settled around the Fort.

## Summary

During the 1660's a series of villages was established by the Five Nations Iroquois along the north shore of Lake Ontario. Strategic locations were chosen which allowed the Iroquois to monitor and control the flow of furs from product source to market. Since the villages had to operate independently of the Iroquois homeland, these locations had to supply the material as well as the economic needs and desires of their inhabitants. The Cataragui area, while of great strategic importance, could not support a viable agricultural settlement, so the Iroquois relied on their frequent presence in the area to restrict and control the movement of furs by that route.

After the establishment of Fort Frontenac in 1673, Iroquois from some of the north shore villages were attracted to the fort for both economic and spiritual reasons. French supply lines to the heartland of the colony partially off-set the disadvantages of the location and made settlement in the area tenable, if not entirely ideal. The fort offered the Iroquois security in the face of hostility from their neighbours. It offered trade goods and a ready market for their produce. It also offered a centre at which they could continue the religious practices with which they had become familiar at missions in their original settlements. Maps and plans showing a Native village at Fort Frontenac indicate that in the early years, prior to the war of the 1680's, the Iroquois settlement was located in the vicinity of the mission close to a spring. In the early eighteenth century hostilities between the Algonquians and the Iroquois led to the destruction of the Iroquois village at Fort Frontenac. In response to this, and perhaps fearing further aggressive acts from their enemies, the Iroquois relocated their village to the area directly in front of the walls of the fort, between it and the lake. There, they would have been less likely to receive abusive treatment without the French garrison's knowledge.

The 1720 plan upon which much of this interpretation has been based indicates that, at least within the confines of the Fort Frontenac settle-

ment, longhouses continued to be used by the Iroquois. While not achieving the tremendous lengths attained by their prehistoric progenitors, the Fort Frontenac longhouses still displayed a respectable size, being up to twenty-two metres in length. Until excavation of areas which until now have been inaccessible take place, it is impossible to check the accuracy of these speculations. However, it does seem clear that while the Iroquois lost control of, or voluntarily withdrew from their north shore settlements, they continued to use the French fort as a secure base from which to continue their trading and hunting activities on the north side of the lake. The Fort Frontenac Iroquois village, for all its disadvantages, continued as an isolated centre of Iroquois settlement in an area dominated by Algonquians until the British took possession of the fort in 1758.

Artifacts of native manufacture from within the northeast bastion of the Fort are directly comparable to those from Five Nations sites on the south shore of Lake Ontario. They provide a rare opportunity to see something of the cordial relations which must have existed between the French and their clients during the early years of the Fort.

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