

## 2.3 Algonquin History in the Ottawa River Watershed

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The history of the Ottawa River watershed is inseparable from the history of the Algonquin Nation. Though their territory was once considerably more extensive, the Algonquin heartland has always included the entire length of the Ottawa River, from its headwaters in north-central Quebec to its outlet near Montreal. At present, there are ten federally recognized Algonquin communities, with a total population of approximately 8-10,000<sup>1</sup> (for more detailed information on these communities, see Appendix F). Nine of the Algonquin communities are in Quebec. Proceeding from northwest to southeast, these are the Abitibiwinni, Timiskaming, Eagle Village (Kebaouek), Wolf Lake, Long Point (Winneway), Kitcisakik (Grand Lac), Lac Simon, Mitcikinabik Inik (Algonquins of Barriere Lake) and Kitigan Zibi (River Desert) First Nations. In Ontario, members of the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan (at Golden Lake) First Nation make up the only recognized Algonquin community, though three other Ontario First Nation communities, Wahgoshig, Matachewan and Temagami, are of at least partial Algonquin descent.

Compared to First Nations in most other parts of Canada, the ten Algonquin communities have very little reserve land. By far the largest parcel is the River Desert Reserve belonging to the Kitigan Zibi Algonquins. Consisting of approximately 43,000 acres, it is located near Maniwaki, Quebec. The Timiskaming First Nation has a Reserve of approximately 5,000 acres at the head of Lake Temiskaming, Quebec, very close to the Ontario border. This Reserve, originally some 69,000 acres in size, was set apart by the Province of Canada in the period 1851-53, as was the River Desert Reserve. The Algonquins of Pikwakanagan Reserve at Golden Lake consists of approximately 1,750 acres near Renfrew, Ontario. The Algonquins of Lac Simon have about 800 acres near Val D'Or, Quebec, and the Abitibiwinni have about 225 acres near Amos, Quebec, as well as a joint share (with Wahgoshig First Nation) of Abitibi Indian Reserve #70 near Matheson, Ontario. The Kebaouek (Eagle Village) First Nation reside on a 53-acre parcel on Lake Kipawa, which was purchased from a third party and set apart as a Reserve in 1975, and the Mitcikinabik Inik (Algonquins of Barriere Lake) occupy a 59-acre reserve on Rapid Lake in the Réserve Faunique La Vérendrye, which was created in 1961. The Wolf Lake, Long Point<sup>2</sup> and Kitcisakik First Nations have no reserve lands at all.

The historical outline that follows does not purport to be exhaustive. It is only intended to provide a broad picture of Algonquin history in the Kichisipi valley. In their own language, Algonquin people call themselves *anishinabeg*, which carries both the general meaning of "human being", and the specific meaning of "real (i.e. Indian) people". Though use of their language, the *anishinabemowin*, has declined considerably in communities such as Timiskaming, Kitigan Zibi and Pikwakanagan, it is still very much alive in interior communities like Kitcisakik and Rapid Lake. Most Algonquin communities have inaugurated programs to promote language retention or use.

Historically, the *anishinabemowin* was spoken very widely. Various dialects are still spoken today not only by Algonquins, but by Ojibway (also known as Chippewa and Saulteaux), Odawa (Ottawa) and Potawatomi people, among others. The fact that the language was so widespread, however, has caused considerable confusion when interpreting historical records. As will be seen below, although the First Nations of the Ottawa River watershed are today called Algonquins, this is not necessarily how they were known in the three centuries following contact with Europeans. Early French observers generally confined the term *Algommequin* (Algonquin) to the various bands living along the Lower Ottawa River

<sup>1</sup> There are also some communities on the Ontario side which assert Algonquin identity but are not recognized by the federal government. These include Beaverhouse, as well as a number of groups associated with the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan land claims negotiations.

<sup>2</sup> The Long Point First Nation occupies 91 acres of settlement lands at Winneway under a lease agreement involving the government of Quebec, the Oblates, and Canada.

drainage, whose descendants now belong mainly to the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan (at Golden Lake) and Kitigan Zibi (River Desert) First Nations. Those *anishnabeg* living in the Upper Ottawa Valley and northeastward towards the headwaters of the river, by contrast, were known by several different tribal and group names, including *Nipissings*, *Timiskamings*, *Abitibis*, *Têtes de Boules* and *gens des terres*. By the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, however, as the French moved further inland, they used the generic term *Algonquin* for all groups they encountered who spoke the same language (ie. Ojibway, Potawatomi, etc.).

### 2.3.1 Algonquin Origins

Algonquin people believe they have always lived in the Ottawa Valley, an understanding which is reflected in their traditional stories. The anthropologist Frank Speck collected a number of these Algonquin legends, including the following narrative about the pursuit of a giant beaver, when carrying out fieldwork at Timiskaming Reserve in the summer of 1913.

#### *Wiskedjak Pursues the Beaver*

*Wiskedjak was traveling about looking for adventures. He never succeeded in anything he tried to do. He never did well and was always hungry. In his travels he came to Kiwegoma "Turn-back-lake" (Dumoine Lake). Now he even had no canoe, but he was a great swimmer. When he came to Kiwegoma, he found it even too big to swim, so he started to walk around it. He wanted to hunt beaver. On one side of the lake, he came to a round, high mountain that looked like a beaver-lodge. In front of it he found deep water, just as there is in front of a beaver lodge. And a little way off shore was a little island with many grasses; just as the beaver provides a winter supply of greens for himself near his lodge, so this island he supposed to be the beaver's winter supply and the mountain his lodge. Wiskedjak wanted to get this great beaver, but did not know how to get at him. Then he thought of draining the lake, so he went way around to the lower end and broke away the dam so that the water would run off. Soon the water began to go, and Wiskedjak lingered about, waiting for it to get low enough to get at the beaver. Pretty soon he took a nap. When he woke up, it was rather late and he hurried back to the mountain only to find that the beaver had gone. Now he thought the beaver might have escaped over the dam with the water, so he started back, and sure enough he saw the beaver going over the dam. "Now", said he, "I lost my beaver". He followed hard after him and had lots of trouble to keep up. He followed him past Coulonge River and Pembroke Lakes. But when the beaver reached Calumet chutes, he was afraid to go through and took to the portage. Then Wiskedjak saw him and chased him harder over the portage. When he got to the lower end, he lost sight of the beaver and started back up river (Ottawa River). When he got to the upper end of the portage, he saw fresh tracks. "Well", said he, "there has been somebody here. I wonder if I could trace him. We might have something to eat". Then he followed the track to the lower end of the portage where he had already been, but nobody was there. So he went back to the upper end of the portage and there saw more fresh tracks leading to the lower end. These he followed to where he had been twice before, but saw no beaver. He then discovered that they were his own tracks he had been following and gave it up. The tracks back and forth can be seen plainly today imprinted on the stone of Calumet portage, which the Indians call Wiskedjak tracks (Speck 1-3).*

Dr Speck's informant, Ben McKenzie, who had been raised as a member of the *Kiwegoma Anishnabeg* or Dumoine Band (now the Wolf Lake First Nation), told Speck that he had learned the stories from elders of that band when he was a young man. Since Ben McKenzie was born in 1847, his traditional education would have taken place in the 1860s.

Wiskedjak (Wisakedjak), also called Nenabojo (Nanabush), was the great culture hero of the Anishnabeg (Cuoq 1886: 442). Often personified as the Canada Jay (still known popularly as the Whisky Jack), this trickster-transformer also features prominently in the legends of the neighbouring Cree and Ojibway. Elders would tell these stories in cycles, generally in the wintertime, as a way of

providing the youth of the band with spiritual and moral direction. In the story above, Wiskedjak drains Grand Lac Dumoine in order to hunt a giant beaver, whose lodge had taken the form of a very large mountain. The French trader and explorer Nicolas Perrot (1644-1717) recorded an analogous story in his memoirs, which he obtained from the Nipissing and the Amikwa (literally, "beaver people"), both of them *anishnabe*-speaking groups living to the west of the Algonquins. They told Perrot that a giant beaver (from whom the Amikwa claimed descent) had entered the French River from Lake Huron, creating a series of dams as it traveled eastward through Lake Nipissing and along the Ottawa River. These eventually turned into rapids and portages. The last dam the beaver built became the Calumet rapids, at which point the beaver died, and was buried to the north of Calumet Lake, in a mountain in the shape of a beaver (Perrot 36-37 and Blair 62-63). This would have been the mountain featured in Ben McKenzie's story.

The Jesuit historian P. F. X. de Charlevoix, who traveled through the great lakes region in 1721, tells a similar story about Amikwa origins, though he gives the great beaver's final burial place as a mountain on the north shore of Lake Nipissing (De Charlevoix 417-418). Charlevoix and Nicolas Perrot, as it turned out, had heard only the second half of the story. The first part, which the surveyor Robert Bell collected in 1891 from Joseph Misabi, an Ojibway from the French River, directly links the story Ben McKenzie told Frank Speck to the legend recounted by Nicolas Perrot two centuries earlier. In ancient times, Joseph Misabi recounted to Bell, Kitchigami (Lake Superior) was the pond of the great beaver, the *Manitou Amik*. His dam was at the outlet where the Sault Ste Marie rapids (*Bawating*) now exist. Here he lived for many years until one day Nenabozho (Wiskedjak) decided to hunt him. The cunning trickster sent his wife to the outlet to break the dam, which would lower the water and, he hoped, frighten the great beaver into leaving his lodge. But the beaver was too clever, and escaped before Nenabozho could find him. Angry at his wife for failing to stop the beaver, Nenabozho kicked her through the air, which turned her into stone. She landed on the north side of Lake Superior, forming the hill called Gros Cap. In the meantime, the great beaver *Manitou Amik* hurried along the north channel of Lake Huron and turned up the French River, tearing up the rocks through the back action of its feet and forming a long series of dams, now rapids. He passed through Lake Nipissing and on down the Ottawa River, ending up at the big island, where the Ottawa joins the great Noddaway River (the St Lawrence). Here he stopped and was turned to stone like his wife, forming a large hill (Montreal Mountain) ("Nenabozhoo Hunts the Manitou Amik").

This story can be interpreted in a number of ways. On one level, it can be taken as a myth of national origins. Though the beaver's final resting place varies, the sites all fall within the historic range of the eastern *anishnabeg*, basically between the north shore of Lake Huron and Montreal. But there is a core of even deeper historical truth to the legend. Giant beavers, along with many other now-extinct megafauna, inhabited North America between 10 and 12,000 years ago. Their remains have been found in various locations, including Ontario. Moreover, the story of the trickster-transformer draining Lake Superior or Dumoine Lake in pursuit of the beaver, who then creates rapids and portages as it flees to the east, evokes the natural history of the great lakes basin and the Ottawa River watershed in the aftermath of the last great ice age.

With the retreat of the Wisconsin glacier, an enormous glacial lake (which geologists have dubbed Agassiz) covered virtually all of Manitoba, and parts of Saskatchewan, North Dakota, Minnesota and Ontario for much of the period between 15,000 and 8,000 years ago. This lake first drained southward into the Mississippi, then southeastward into what became the Lake Superior basin, and finally due eastward into another glacial lake called Barlow-Ojibway, which covered present northeastern Ontario and northwestern Quebec. The remains of the northern glacier, however, prevented Lake Barlow-Ojibway from draining into James Bay, and a great mass of glacial debris blocked the southward flow of water into what is now the Ottawa River. Over a period of about two thousand years, the northern ice gradually melted. The waters of Lake Barlow-Ojibway eventually cut through the debris blocking the flow to the south and about 8,000 years ago, the whole lake abruptly (in geological terms) emptied into James Bay. Further to the east, when the vast Laurentide ice sheet

began retreating from the Ottawa Valley, also about 15,000 years ago, the valley was immediately flooded by salt waters from the Atlantic Ocean, forming an inland sea. There was a rich diversity of marine life within this Champlain Sea (as geologists named it), including some of the largest mammals on earth, such as the Bowhead Whale (the skeleton of one was found at Pembroke in the 1970s). The earth's crust eventually adjusted to the immense weight of the glacier and the sea drained, a process which ended about 10,000 years ago, being replaced for a few more thousand years by an enlarged, but gradually reducing, version of the Ottawa River, fed by fresh water from glacial lakes Agassiz and Barlow-Ojibway.

It was during this period between 10,000 and 8,000 years ago that the first tangible signs of human occupation appear in what is now the Ottawa River watershed. Though the archaeological evidence is often very difficult to find (because of the problem in identifying the original shoreline of the Champlain Sea and Lake Barlow-Ojibway), it appears that mobile groups of hunter/gatherers entered the region and began exploiting the available resources, which would have included animal species like caribou and beaver. It may in fact be this ancient history of the draining of lakes and the emergence of rivers that is recorded in myths like Ben McKenzie's story of Wiskedjak and the giant beaver.

For the period beginning about six thousand years ago, the evidence of human occupation is much more abundant. For example, archaeological excavations carried out for many years on Allumette Island and nearby Morrison Island by the late amateur archaeologist Clyde Kennedy (and others) have turned up an enormous variety of artefacts, which include stone and bone tools as well as native copper implements originating on Lake Superior. The people who inhabited these sites appear to have followed a seasonal round of hunting, fishing and gathering, and they were clearly integrated into long-distance trading networks. In addition to Lake Superior copper, the materials they were using to manufacture tools included quartzite from Manitoulin Island and Vermont, and chert from various locations between the north shore of Lake Ontario and the southern shores of Lake Huron. Though archaeologists are reluctant to speculate about ethnic continuity, the lifestyle of these Shield Archaic people was remarkably similar to that of the Algonquins encountered by the first Europeans. When coupled with the oral history, there is little reason to suppose they are not the same people (Clermont, Chapdeleine and Cinq-Mars).

### 2.3.2 The Algonquin Sense of Place

As the anthropologist Frank Speck discovered when collecting Algonquin legends, Wiskedjak's adventures are always located within the territory of the band whose member is telling the story. In Ben McKenzie's story of the giant beaver, he refers specifically to the Dumoine and Coulonge Rivers, "Pembroke lakes" (i.e. lower and upper Allumette lakes), and the Calumet chutes or rapids. The larger river, down which Wiskedjak finally proceeds, says Dr Speck, was the *Kichi sipi*, literally "big river". This has always been the Algonquin name for the Ottawa River, an obvious reference to its length and breadth. Samuel de Champlain and other early French explorers identified the band who occupied the immediate vicinity of the Allumette lakes and Calumet portage, and whose summer village on Morrison Island Champlain visited in 1613, as the *Kichesipirini* (Kichi sipi irini), literally "big river people". Exactly three centuries later, Frank Speck was told that the bands living along the Ottawa were still known as the *Kichi sipi anishnabeg*, "big river people".<sup>3</sup> The Algonquin name of the river has survived (in translation) as "Grand River" or "Grande Rivière", a term first recorded by the Sulpicians Dollier de Casson and Bréhant de Galinée on the map legend illustrating their 1669-70 voyage of discovery through part of the great lakes. That particular name for the river was still in common use among European traders and settlers in the 18th and 19th centuries.

<sup>3</sup> The Algonquin terms *irini* (now "inini") and *anishnabeg* are synonyms. Both are still in use today. The Timiskaming Algonquins call themselves *Saugeen Anishnabeg* while the Algonquins of Barriere Lake call themselves *Mitcikinabik inik*.

The Ottawa River takes its rise about 250 kilometers north of the present cities of Ottawa and Gatineau in Lac *Capimichigama*; also known as Lac Travers or Cross Lake (its full *anishnabe* meaning is “crossing from one watershed to another”). From *Capimichigama*, which is within the traditional territory of the Algonquins of Barriere Lake, the Ottawa flows westward, then southward, then southeastward for about 1200 kilometers, before joining the St Lawrence River near Montreal. Unlike modern geographers, however, Algonquin people never used the same name for an entire watershed. They confined the term *Kichi sipi* to the lower part of the river, from *Matawang*, now Mattawa (which means “where the river divides”), down to Lake of Two Mountains<sup>4</sup>. The uppermost sections of what is now called the Ottawa, which are really a continuous series of linked river expansions, had many different names. The best known of these upper sections is *Temiskaming Sagahigan*, literally “deep water lake”, which forms part of the current boundary between Ontario and Quebec. But even that name applied only to the northernmost, and widest, portion of present Lake Temiskaming. The section below the narrows was known, appropriately enough, as *obawjewanong Sagahigan*, or “narrowed-current lake”. That part of the same river flowing from modern Lac des Quinzes into the head of Lake Temiskaming (called the Quinze River in Quebec) was known as *wanaweia sipi* or “dirty water river”. Algonquin names for other prominent sections of the watershed include *Kichi Saki* or “big-outlet” (for Grand Lac Victoria), and *Mitcikinabikong*, or “place of the stone fence or weir”, which was translated directly into French as Lac Barrière.

Apart from Mattawa, almost none of the Algonquin place names on the Lower Ottawa have survived in common usage. Instead, for over three hundred years, names such as the Long Sault, Chaudiere, Lac des Chats, Calumet, Allumettes, Des Joachims and Dumoine have reflected the long history of French exploration and trade in the valley. Some of these place names, like Des Joachims and Dumoine, are obviously of European origin. The original Algonquin name of the Dumoine River (still used by elders of the Wolf Lake and Eagle Village First Nations) is *aginagwasi sipi*. As with Lake Barrière, however, many other French toponyms turn out to be literal translations of their original Algonquin names. This process dates back to the very beginning of upriver exploration, as evidenced by the writings of Samuel de Champlain, the first European to record the features of what he called the “Rivière des Algommequins” or Algonquin River. On 31 May 1613, after paddling through what is now the Lake of Two Mountains, Champlain and his companions “passed a rapid which is called by the inhabitants *Quenechouan*. It is full of stones and rocks, and the water flows through them with great swiftness”. The word *Quenechouan* (*Kinodjivan*) means “long rapid” in Algonquin, and this 20 kilometre stretch of the river (eventually submerged by the Carillon and Grenville canals) was known ever after as the Long Sault.

On 4 June 1613, Champlain came across a wide deep basin where “the water whirls around to such an extent, and in the middle sends up such big swirls, that the Indians call it *Asticou*, which means ‘boiler’ (Biggar 268).<sup>5</sup> He dubbed this feature the “Sault de la Chaudière”, a name which still applies to the famous rapids between the cities of Ottawa and Gatineau. Champlain also described the traditional ceremony which he witnessed at the falls on his return journey a week later, as performed by the Algonquin canoe party which was accompanying him back to Quebec:

*Having carried their canoes to the foot of the fall, they assemble in one place, where one of them takes up a collection with a wooden plate into which each puts a piece of tobacco. After the collection, the plate is set down in the middle of the group and all dance about it, singing after their fashion. Then one of the chiefs makes a speech, pointing out for years they have been*

<sup>4</sup> There are multiple theories about the origins and meaning of the word “Mattawa”; please refer to Chapter 5.2: A History of Mattawa for another example.

<sup>5</sup> The word *Asticou* must be a misprint in the original text, because the Algonquin word for small cauldrons or boilers (plural) is *Akikok*. The missionary J.A. Cuoq says that the full name for the Chaudiere Falls is *Akikodjivan*, which means “place where the water falls into stone basins whose rounded form resembles a boiler” (Cuoq 31).

*accustomed to make such an offering, and that thereby they receive protection from their enemies; that otherwise misfortune would happen to them, as the devil persuades them [...] When he has finished, the orator takes the plate and throws the tobacco into the middle of the boiling water, and all together utter a loud whoop.*

Shortly before arriving at the village of the *Kichi Sipi* Algonquins, Champlain passed a set of dangerous rapids, which are identified on the map of his travels as the “sault des Calumets”, also described as “the Calumet stone rapids, which are like alabaster”. This too is a translation of an Algonquin term, *Opwagani pawatik* or “pipe rapids”. The stone at that place, so Ben McKenzie told Dr Frank Speck in 1913, was “suitable for making pipes and was there sought by the Indians for that purpose”. The trader and explorer Pierre Esprit Radisson had made the same observation in the summer of 1660. The Calumet rapids, he said, were “so called because of the stones that are there very convenient to make tobacco pipes”. In the *anishnabe* language, both tobacco (*n’asema*) and the calumet or pipe (*opwagan*) are animate objects, which reflects their centrality in the culture of the Algonquins (and other North American tribes). Tobacco was always an important part of Algonquin ceremonies, as Champlain had observed at the Chaudiere Falls, and all feasts, funerals, games and councils of peace or war involved the ritual smoking of the calumet. Champlain took part in one such ceremony when meeting with Chief Tessouat and the *Kichisipirini* at Morrison Island. Algonquin people also used the pipe as a measure of time and distance, a custom they passed on to French-Canadian settlers and voyageurs. Thus, the word *Nijopwagan* (“deux pipes”) meant the time it took to smoke two pipes, which was approximately an hour (Cuoq 1893: 142 and Grant 77).

It might seem strange that the *Kichi sipi*, or “great river of the Algonquins”, is now known as the Ottawa River. But use of the latter name can be traced to the later 17th century. When Pierre Radisson passed the Calumet rapids in 1660, he was traveling with a large flotilla of canoes from the upper great lakes that were going down to Montreal to trade. Most were “Ottawak” (as Radisson called them) and other closely related groups. In the 17th century, the *Odawa* (Ottawa) occupied the arc of land between eastern Lake Huron, the Bruce Peninsula, the Manitoulin Island chain and the Straits of Mackinac. There are still large numbers of Odawa people living on Manitoulin Island and in northern Michigan to this day. It has generally been argued (following the Recollet missionary Gabriel Sagard) that the word *Odawa* (Ottawa) is a contraction of the Huron word *Ondatawwat*, meaning “Cheveux Relevés” or “raised hairs”. Samuel de Champlain met three hundred members of a nation he called the “Cheveux Relevés” on his second trip inland in the summer of 1615. They were gathering blueberries near the mouth of the French River. However, it is also possible that *Odawa* is derived from *atawe*, the *anishnabe* word for trader. According to Champlain and later observers, trading was an important part of the “Cheveux Relevez” way of life.

Whatever the origin of their name, the *Odawa* lived on Lake Huron, not in the Ottawa Valley. It was their predominant role as middlemen in the fur trade in the second half of the 17th century, not their place of residence that led Montreal traders and government officials to start calling the Algonquin River the River of the *Odawa*. The trader Nicolas Perrot, who came to Canada in 1660, and spent much of his career in the upper great lakes, uses the latter term consistently in his memoirs, and he was joined by other French historians and mapmakers. It should be pointed out, however, that the English spelling “Ottawa” is much closer to the original Indian usage than its current French equivalent. As the 19th-century missionary linguist J.A. Cuoq explains, the word *Odawa* was never pronounced “Outaouais”.<sup>6</sup>

### 2.3.3 Algonquin, French and Iroquois

<sup>6</sup> “Qu’on continue donc à écrire *Ottawa*, comme on prononce, et non pas *Outaouais*, comme on ne prononce pas, et comme on n’a jamais prononcé” (Cuoq 1886 : 311). The source of the error was the substitution of “ou” for the vowel sound written as “8” (as in “huit”) in early French orthography of the word *8ta8ois*. The English “w” is much closer to the actual sound.

Samuel de Champlain first encountered *Algommequins* (Algonquins) in 1603 at Tadoussac, where they and their *Montagnais* and *Etchemin* (*Maliseet*) allies were celebrating a victory over their traditional enemies, the Five Nations Iroquois. For the Algonquins, this was certainly not their first meeting with the people they called *Wemitigojiwak* ("wooden ships"). They had already been trading with the French at Tadoussac for several years, and may well have had earlier encounters with Basque and Breton fishermen who had been active in the St Lawrence estuary for some two hundred years. The exact origin of the word Algonquin is unclear, but it seems to have been a name applied by outsiders. One suggestion is that it derives from the Maliseet term *elakomwik*, meaning "they are our relatives (or allies)". Champlain and early missionaries like the Recollets and Jesuits applied the name most commonly to a number of *anishnabe*-speaking bands then living in the Lower Ottawa Valley, who appear to have functioned as a trade and military alliance. The largest of these groups were the *Kichisipirini* or "Big River people", who had their main village on Morrison Island, and who probably consisted of more than one traditional band. Other related bands included the *Waweskarini* (literally *wawashkesh irini* or "deer people"), also known as the "Petite Nation des Algonquins", whose traditional lands were along the Rouge, Petite Nation and Lièvre Rivers immediately west of Montreal; the *Matouweskarini* ("Madawaska people"), whose territory lay along the river of that name, which flows into the Ottawa near modern Arnprior; the *Kinouchebiriiniouek* (*Kinozhe sipi iriniwag* or "Pike river people"), who probably inhabited the Bonnechere River drainage near Renfrew; and the *Onontchataronon*, also known as the people of Iroquet, after one of their chiefs, who lived along the South Nation River in what is now eastern Ontario.

The territory of these lower Algonquin bands extended no further up the Ottawa than Deep River. Their nearest neighbours to the west were the *Nipisiriniens* (*Nipising irini*), another group of related bands who had their main summer village on the north side of Lake Nipissing (which Champlain visited in 1615) and whose territories extended over a considerable area in all directions from that lake, including parts of northeastern Georgian Bay, the Mattawa River drainage, and adjacent portions of the Ottawa River watershed. The southernmost winter encampments of the *Nipisiriniens* or Nipissings were close to the villages of the Iroquois-speaking Huron Confederacy in modern Simcoe County. Famed for their religious prowess (the Huron called them "sorcières"), the Nipissings operated an extensive trading network in conjunction with their Huron allies. The Jesuits often classed them as Algonquin because they spoke that language, but until the mid-17th century, they were not always on the best of terms with *anishnabe* neighbours such as the *Kichisipirini*.

There were other bands living to the north, whose existence the early Europeans were only dimly aware of, and who may or may not have been part of the Algonquin alliance. Champlain was told of a group called the *Otaguotouemins* (*Kotakoutouemi*) whose territory extended inland from the rugged country between Deep River and Mattawa, and who seldom came out to the main river. The derivation of that name is obscure, but the same territory was occupied in the 19th century by what is now the Wolf Lake (formerly Dumoine) First Nation.<sup>7</sup> And the Jesuit Relation for 1640, drawing on the lost memoirs of the interpreter and trader Jean Nicolet de Belleborne (who spent the 1620s among the Nipissings), mentions several additional groups, among them the *Timiscimi* (Timiskamings) and *Outimagami* (Temagami). But early eyewitness accounts of these and other groups are lacking because, other than Nicolet and perhaps one or two others, no French people travelled on the Upper Ottawa north of Mattawa prior to 1670. Apart from Champlain's voyages, details of the Algonquin way of life in the first half of the 17th century are surprisingly rare. Even though Jesuit and Recollet missionaries travelled through the southern parts of Algonquin territory over the following years on their way to and from Huronia, they left little information about the inhabitants. The names of some of the bands ("Big River people", "Madawaska River people") suggest that Algonquin territorial organization was based on watersheds, which was certainly the case two hundred years later. The bands also maintained their boundaries zealously. As Champlain and others noted, the *Kichisipirini* levied tolls on the Hurons, Nipissings, and

<sup>7</sup> It has recently been suggested that these people were ancestral to the modern Algonquins of *Kitcisakik* (Grand Lac), though that doesn't seem to fit with Champlain's territorial description (Chamberland et al.).

any other groups passing up and down the river by Allumette Island. So too did the Nipissings within their own territories. Each band had one or more “Captains”, a word the French translated literally from the *anishnabe* word *Okima*, meaning Chief. While these chiefs were chosen for their leadership abilities (and usually for their spiritual powers), the bands were not organized hierarchically (unlike European societies). Chiefs could not coerce members to do their bidding, and what powers they had were only exercised during the summer gathering period, when the various families came together to take part in communal activities.

Though the Algonquins were sometimes described as nomadic, this was only by comparison with the more sedentary Iroquois and Huron. Generally speaking, families remained within their band’s territory, following a seasonal round of resource harvesting activities. During the winter, they lived in the bush in extended families, hunting large game like moose and deer, and trapping fur-bearing animals, particularly beaver, which was valued both for its pelt and flesh. Though fishing took place year-round, it was most productive between spring and fall. Champlain mentioned that Muskrat Lake (near Cobden) was an important fishery for all the people in the surrounding area, and that the Nipissings took great quantities of sturgeon, pike and carp, some of them of enormous size, from both their lake and the (aptly-named) Sturgeon River. The Nipissings and the Algonquin bands along the Lower Ottawa also practised a form of slash and burn agriculture. Champlain saw cornfields at Muskrat Lake and peas, beans and squash, as well as corn, growing on Allumette Island. However, he noted that the soil was relatively poor, and that the Algonquins, unlike the Hurons, relied more on hunting than on tilling the soil.

Living as they did on a major water route between the Atlantic coast and the interior of North America, the Nipissings and Algonquins were intimately involved in inter-tribal trade. Their closest economic relations were with the Hurons, who traded corn and cornmeal, wampum and fish nets with both the Nipissings and Algonquins in exchange for furs and dried fish. The Nipissings and Algonquins in turn secured pelts (in addition to their own fur harvest) from Ojibway, Cree and other people living as far away as Lake Superior and James Bay. It was along these existing trade routes, using the same transportation systems, that European goods first made their way inland. In the later part of the century, French traders came inland themselves. But they discovered (as Champlain had earlier found out) that in order to do business, they had to follow Indian customs. This meant treaties of peace and military alliance, because only friends could trade.

Over the course of the 17th century, many of these Algonquin bands were considerably affected both by European diseases (particularly smallpox), and by ongoing warfare with the Five Nations Iroquois, who were gaining a military advantage by obtaining firearms from Dutch and English colonists on the Atlantic coast. Every summer, marauding canoe parties of *Matchi Nottaway* (“bad Snakes”, as the Algonquins called the Iroquois) would harass people, both native and European, living on or near the Ottawa and St Lawrence Rivers. As a result, some of the lower Algonquins, particularly the Matouweskarini, the Onontchataronons and the Kichesipirini, whose hunting grounds lay directly along the Iroquois warpath, began spending their summers at Trois Rivières, or at the new French settlement of Ville Marie on Montréal Island (founded in 1642), though they still returned upriver in the wintertime. The Upper Ottawa Valley between Deep River and Lake Temiskaming also became increasingly unsafe. By 1650, the Iroquois had destroyed the Huron Confederacy and were launching attacks on the Nipissings, who sought temporary safety in the interior, some of them fleeing along their habitual trade routes as far as northern Lake Superior. Other Nipissings and Algonquins, however, remained in their traditional territories. They simply avoided the Lower Ottawa in the summer, instead using a parallel route to Trois Rivières and Montreal that took them along the Upper Ottawa from the north end of Lake Temiskaming and across to the headwaters of the Lièvre and St Maurice Rivers.

The modern Algonquins of *Kitcisakik* and other interior communities have retained oral history about the Iroquois attacks, but such raids must have been relatively rare. In contrast to the Hurons, whose year-

round villages were easy targets for the Iroquois, Algonquin people only came together in sizeable numbers in the summertime. Except for vulnerable sites like Allumette Island and the mouth of the Sturgeon River on Lake Nipissing, most Algonquin villages would have been difficult to reach. The Iroquois used heavy elm canoes which were really only suitable for major waterways like the Lower Ottawa, unlike the lightweight bark canoes of the *anishnabeg*, which were adapted to the difficult rivers of the Shield (Coyne 10-11). Moreover, the Iroquois hardly ever raided north of the Ottawa or St Lawrence in the winter, because subsistence was so difficult. As the 17th-century Sulpician historian Dollier de Casson pointed out, game was scarcer in these regions than in their own country, and the Iroquois were poor fishermen (De Casson 76).

Throughout the latter half of the century, there were several truces or interludes of peace (accompanied by a profitable trade in furs), interrupted by frequent outbreaks of war. Though the Five Nations had better access to firearms, the conflict was not all one-sided. By the mid-1660s, French, Algonquin, Nipissing, Huron and Abenaki warriors were carrying the war to the main Iroquois villages in the Finger Lakes region of present upstate New York. In 1666, they captured and burned all the villages of the Mohawks, the easternmost of the Five Nations. The ensuing peace treaty in 1667 would limit Iroquois attacks for more than a decade. In the years that followed, the Iroquois took advantage of the peace to establish a series of villages along the north shore of Lake Ontario between modern Toronto and Gananoque, which made it easier for them to trade with the French settlements on the St Lawrence. This general northward movement, however, had unintended consequences. One of the conditions of the Treaty had required the Iroquois Confederacy to allow Jesuit missionaries into their villages. The result was a net population loss, particularly for the Mohawks, because the Jesuits eventually persuaded most of their converts to relocate to the Montreal region. Many of the new arrivals, who the Algonquins and Nipissings called *niina Nottaway* or "our Snakes" (which was also their name for the Hurons) settled at the Jesuit mission of *Kentake* or La Prairie on the south shore of the St Lawrence, which was moved somewhat later to what is now *Kahnawake*. By the mid-1670s, other Iroquois had joined a Sulpician mission to the Christian Hurons and Algonquins, located at what is now the intersection of Atwater and Sherbrooke Streets at the foot of "La Montagne" or Mount Royal (*Kanasetake* in Iroquois). Though these new arrivals were now French allies, they maintained close connections to their original villages (so much so that the French would later accuse them of carrying on contraband trade with the Dutch and English).

During the peaceful decade, French influence expanded enormously in the North American interior. French traders and missionaries flooded into the *pays d'en haut* or "upper country" (basically the area between the Ohio valley and the upper Great Lakes) and large trading parties from the interior Nations made annual summer visits to Montreal by way of the great lakes and the Ottawa or St Lawrence Rivers. By 1673, there were Jesuit missions at Sault Ste Marie and Michilimackinac and French trading posts as far north as *Piscotagemy* (Nighthawk) Lake, near modern Timmins, Ontario. Angry at French expansion, however, and urged on by the English authorities in New York, the Iroquois Confederacy broke the peace in 1680, ushering in another two decades of intermittent war. The westernmost Iroquois Nations, the Seneca, Cayuga and Onondaga, launched annual attacks on the French allies living to the north and west, with the ultimate aim of destroying the St Lawrence River colony once it had been isolated (Jennings 172-185). As in the 1640s, the *anishnabeg* of the Ottawa Valley and adjacent areas adopted various strategies to stay out of the line of fire. In 1682, 300 *Nipisiriniens* arrived at Montreal, and asked Governor le Febvre de la Barre for land as a temporary place of refuge "from the fury of the Iroquois". It is possible that these Nipissing arrivals included Timiskamings, because in August of 1684, forty warriors of the Nipissings and Timiskamings and 72 warriors of the Algonquins accompanied the Governor on an expedition against the Iroquois villages in upstate New York.

Despite Iroquois harassment, the fur trade in the Upper Ottawa Valley continued to flourish. By 1683, Montreal merchants had opened direct trade with the Nipissings and Timiskamings, establishing a post at Matabitchuan on the southwest side of Lake Temiskaming. The Chevalier de Troyes visited

this post in the June of 1686, on his way with a company of French soldiers to attack the Hudson's Bay Company posts on James Bay. On the expedition's return in September, the Chief of the Timiskamings guided them back to Montreal. In 1689, the eastern Iroquois launched a major attack on Lachine, killing or capturing both French settlers and the residents of Indian missions on Montreal Island. That same year, western Iroquois warriors also destroyed the French trading post on Lake Temiskaming. But the tide slowly began to turn against the Confederacy. In 1691, "domesticated Indians" helped ward off an attack on Montreal by English and Iroquois forces. According to the Jesuit historian Charlevoix, one of the leaders was the Timiskaming Chief "La Routine...at the head of a large party of his nation of Algonquins". In 1696, Odawa, Algonquin and Nipissing warriors - almost certainly including Timiskamings - accompanied Governor Frontenac on an expedition south of Lake Ontario, where they helped to destroy the Oneida and Onondaga villages. The Confederacy was also attacked from the west by the *anishinabe*-speaking Nations of the upper great lakes, including the Odawa, Ojibway and Potawatomi. According to Ojibway oral history, their war parties eventually drove the Iroquois out of what is now southern Ontario. By March of 1701, Onondaga ambassadors at a conference with the French Governor in Quebec were complaining that Algonquins and Nipissings were hunting near Fort Frontenac (Kingston), on lands that the Iroquois had always considered their own. Although historians still disagree over the extent to which the Iroquois Confederacy was weakened, these reverses certainly encouraged the Five Nations to seek an accommodation with France and her Indian allies. At the great Peace Treaty brokered by the French at Montreal in 1701, the Five Nations and their enemies agreed to end hostilities. The Indian Nations in the French alliance promised to return Iroquois prisoners, and the Five Nations agreed to remain neutral in case of further war between England and France. Algonquins, Nipissings and Timiskamings were among the Nations present at the Treaty council (Havard 210-214).

### 2.3.4 Algonquin People in the 18th Century

With the passing of the Iroquois threat in 1701, the various bands of the Algonquin Nation would have undisturbed possession of the Ottawa River watershed for more than a century. Several decades of close contact with French officials and missionaries, however, together with the population decline caused by the Iroquois wars and epidemical diseases, had brought about changes in their social organization. This was particularly true for the Algonquins living along the Lower Ottawa. Many descendants of the *Weskarini*, *Onontchataronon* and other groups, who had been attending French missions since the 1630s, now spent their summers at the mission of La Montagne (*Kanasetake*), though they still returned to their hunting areas in the *Kichisipi* valley at other times of the year. These were the people that the French usually referred to as Algonquins. In their own language, they called themselves *Omamiwininiwak* or "downriver people" (Cuoq 1886: 298). In 1696, the Christian Huron and Iroquois and some of the Algonquins moved to Sault-au-Récollet on the north side of Montreal Island. The remaining *Omamiwininiwak* Algonquins moved their summer village to Sainte Anne du Bout de l'Isle (now Sainte Anne de Bellevue) at the western tip of the Island.

These mission villages were genuinely multi-ethnic, partially as a result of a century of warfare and disease. All Indian tribes adopted prisoners that they did not kill, which was an effective way of replenishing their populations. The most prominent example of this practice were the member Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy. According to the Jesuit historian Pierre Charlevoix, two-thirds of the Iroquois population by the mid-1660s consisted of captive Hurons, Neutrals and others. In the case of the *Omamiwininiwak*, while the core of the population were people of Algonquin origin, their numbers also included former captives (or their descendants) from the Iroquois Confederacy, *Mahicans* (Loups) and other New England tribes, and even Europeans from the English and Dutch settlements.

There were other groups of *anishnabeg* who had been visiting Montreal from up the Ottawa River at regular intervals since the early 1680s. The majority of them were known to the Algonquins (and to the Odawa and Ojibway) as *Otickwagamik* or "last water people". These were the groups that the French called Nipissings (Cuoq 1886: 314). They were closely connected to the Timiskamings, who were also

making frequent visits to Montreal in this period, and who were sometimes known to the Algonquins as *Nopiming daje inini* (literally, inland people/gens des terres) and *Machakandiby* (round heads/Têtes de Boule). Those terms were also applied to the various Algonquin-speaking bands living along the Upper Ottawa. At some point in the 1690s, the Nipissings and Timiskamings had established a summer village on l'Île aux Tourtes (Pigeon Island), directly opposite Ste Anne de Bellevue, where several French merchants were located. These merchants, who belonged to the extended d'Ailleboust and Guillet families, had formerly operated several posts on the Upper Ottawa, including Fort Coulonge and the *fort des français* on Lake Temiskaming. French officials had refused to reopen the Temiskaming trade after the Iroquois sacked the post in 1689, mainly because other Montreal merchants had complained (rightly) that it diverted canoe parties that would otherwise have come down to the St Lawrence colony to trade. In 1704, the Sulpicians opened a new mission at Ste Anne, and one or two years later the local Seigneur, Philippe de Rigaud (then the Governor of Montreal) built a fort and trading post on Isle aux Tourtes, which became known in the *anishnabe* language as *Aouanagassing*. Unlike the *Omamiwininiwak* Algonquins, however, the Nipissings and Timiskamings were not really Christians. The parish registers for the Sulpician mission show numerous infant baptisms, but even as late as 1720, most adult Nipissings and Timiskamings (including the Timiskaming Chief *Routin*) remained unbaptized. Thus, it was not religion that attracted them to the Montreal region, but rather the pragmatic benefits of the French alliance, which included gifts from the Crown, the services of blacksmiths and other tradesmen, and continued access to trade goods.

In 1717, the King of France granted the Seminary of Saint-Sulpice a new seigneurie on the north shore of the Lake of Two Mountains because the Sulpicians were anxious to move their Indian missions away from the perceived bad influence of European settlers. By 1721 they had persuaded the 150 Iroquois, Huron and Algonquin warriors and their families then living at Sault-au-Récollet, as well as the Algonquins from Ste Anne du bout de l'Isle, to relocate. The Algonquins formed one village, the Iroquois and Hurons another. The Iroquois dubbed the new Mission *Kanesatake*, the Mountain, in memory of the original mission on Montreal Island. The Algonquins called it *Oka*, or pickerel (walleye), presumably because of the fishery there. The Nipissings and Timiskamings at Île aux Tourtes, however, did not join the new mission, because their practical requirements were now being met elsewhere. In 1720, Governor de Vaudreuil reopened the Temiskaming trade. He did so in order to retain the loyalty of the Timiskamings and Nipissings who, as it turned out, had also been trading with the English merchants of the Hudson's Bay Company on James Bay for over twenty-five years. The concession holder, the Ste Anne merchant Paul Guillet, was not allowed to trade along the Lower Ottawa River, but he did have the right to go to Lake Nipissing or Manitoulin Island to get corn or other provisions.

The original licence Guillet received from the Governor authorized him to trade with "the Indians of the said post of Temiskaming" as well as "those of the same nation" on Lakes Wanapitei, Temagami, Kipawa, Barriere and Abitibi. All of these places are within the area mapped in 1725 as the Timiskaming fur trade district, which extended on the west from the entrance to the French River at Lake Nipissing, to the Lièvre River in the east. Wanapitei Lake is just west of the Sturgeon River, which flows into Lake Nipissing, as does Lake Temagami, which has another outlet which drains eastward into the Ottawa River system. Lakes Kipawa and Barriere are also part of the Ottawa watershed. There are modern First Nations associated with all of these lakes (as well as other lakes in the same region). And the members of these First Nations are all *anishnabeg*, though those living in Ontario are now called Ojibways, and those in Quebec are called Algonquins. A testament to the importance of the fur trade in the Upper Ottawa Valley is the fact that the trading location Paul Guillet established in 1720 (now the Fort Témiscamingue National Historic Site) was occupied continuously until the early 1900s, when its business was transferred to the nearby town of Ville Marie.

Even after the reopening of the Temiskaming trade, many Nipissings continued to come down to Montreal at regular intervals. So did at least a few of the Timiskamings. By 1736, the *Otickwakamik* or Nipissings had established a small summer village at Oka, adjacent to those of the Algonquins and the Huron-Iroquois, though they also maintained their longstanding village at the mouth of the Sturgeon

River on Lake Nipissing. All of these groups sided with France during the Seven Years War (1756-1763). They were part of an alliance known as the Seven Nations (or Seven Council Fires) of Canada, which also included the Christian Iroquois, Huron and Abenaki. The Nipissings, who considered themselves the senior members of the alliance, were renowned for their ferocity as warriors. As the westernmost members, they also acted as intermediaries between the neighbouring great lakes confederacy (which included the Odawa and Ojibway Nations, among others), the rest of the Seven Nations, and the French. The Nipissings and Algonquins were the last to abandon the French colony as British forces descended on Montreal in the summer of 1760. In August, at a treaty council held at Swegatchy or Oswegatchie (now Ogdensburg, New York), the Seven Nations<sup>8</sup> agreed to remain neutral. In September of that year, shortly after the surrender of New France, the Seven Nations met in council with the British and their Iroquois allies. Under the terms of the resulting Treaty of Kahnawake, the Seven Nations (including the Algonquins and Nipissings) agreed to join the Six (formerly Five) Nations Iroquois in one large alliance in the British interest. The parties promised one another mutual support in time of war, and, among other measures, the British agreed to protect Indian rights to their villages and hunting grounds, and promised a free and open trade with English-speaking merchants.

Not all of France's former allies were in favour of peace. The Indian nations of the Ohio valley and Great Lakes regions, who were angry that Anglo-American settlers had spilled across the Allegheny Mountains into territories protected by Treaty, attacked British outposts in the spring and fall of 1763. Under the leadership of the Odawa chief Pontiac, the hostile tribes captured the important British fort of Michilimackinac at the straits between Lakes Huron and Michigan, as well as a number of smaller posts. They also laid siege to the British garrison at Detroit for several months in 1763-64, though they were ultimately unsuccessful. The British relied on the Seven Nations of Canada, particularly the Nipissings, to act as peace emissaries, advising the hostiles of the definitive Peace Treaty with France, signed in February of 1763, and the terms of the 1760 Treaty at Kahnawake. British officials had already been developing legislation to deal with the territory recently acquired from France, but it was the crisis provoked by the Pontiac War that spurred the Crown to issue a Royal Proclamation on 7 October 1763. This famous Proclamation (still part of the Constitution of Canada) banned non-native settlement not only in the continental interior but on all unceded Indian land within the colonies, and ordered unauthorized settlers removed. Colonial governments were forbidden to pass patents or warrants of survey for unceded lands. If an Indian Nation was prepared to dispose of land within an area open for settlement, such land could only be ceded to the Crown at a public meeting called for that purpose. Private purchases by third parties were strictly forbidden. At the Treaty of Niagara held in July and August of 1764, which formally ended the Pontiac War, British officials formally read out the terms of the Royal Proclamation, and it thereby became part of the Treaty relationship between the Crown and the Indian Nations. Algonquins and Nipissings attended the Niagara Treaty Council as members of both the Seven Nations and the Great Lakes Confederacies.

The Royal Proclamation of 1763 also created three new colonies within former French territory in North America. One was the Province of Quebec (the others were East and West Florida). Quebec's boundaries were not very extensive. They included the St Lawrence valley, parts of present eastern Ontario and the Lower Ottawa Valley between Lake Nipissing and Montreal. Unlike the Anglo-American colonies to the south, however, Quebec was not a settlement colony, nor was it intended to be one. Few Anglo-Americans, apart from a handful of merchants, came north after the War, and the French-speaking population was largely confined to the seigneuries along the St Lawrence. The Ottawa Valley was off limits to most residents of the province. Even fur traders required a pass to travel above Carillon. The Algonquins and Nipissings, as well as the other *anishnabeg* living both within and outside the boundaries of the Province, considered that the land was theirs. The trader Alexander Henry found this out in September of 1761, when he was on his way from Montreal to Michilimackinac. Traveling on Lac des Chats near present Arnprior, he met a party of Algonquins who were traveling to Lake of Two

<sup>8</sup> For a detailed discussion of the fluctuating membership of the Nine (later Seven) Nations of Canada, see Jean-Pierre Sawaya, *La Fédération des Sept Feux de la Vallée du Saint-Laurent*. Québec: Septentrion, 1998.

Mountains with their hunt. Henry learned that these people, “claim all the lands on the Outaouais, as far as Lake Nipissing; and that these lands are subdivided, between their several families, upon whom they have devolved by inheritance. I was also informed that, they are exceedingly strict, as to the rights of property, in this regard, accounting an invasion of them as an offence, sufficiently great to warrant the death of the invader” (Henry 22-23). The Algonquins and Nipissings enforced their tenure in a number of ways. In the early 1770s, for example, angry that traders were bringing liquor into their hunting grounds, young men from the two villages began stopping canoes arriving at Lake of Two Mountains and emptying out the offending casks.

Quebec did not become a settlement colony until after the American Revolutionary War, but even then, there was little pressure on the Ottawa Valley. In 1774, the province’s boundaries had been extended all the way to the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, ostensibly to provide civil government for several interior French enclaves (like Detroit), but also as a way for Imperial officials to keep Anglo-American settlers away from the Indian Nations. That policy, however, turned out to be a primary cause of the Revolution, as Anglo-American “liberty boys” refused to recognize either Imperial or Quebec authority. By the end of the War, thousands of Loyalist refugees had fled north to Quebec and were searching for land to replace the properties they had lost south of the new border. Beginning in 1780, the Imperial Crown entered into a series of treaties for lands in what was then Quebec. This treaty-making process would continue for another one and a half centuries, eventually covering almost all of what is now Ontario, as well as much of western and northern Canada. To the extent that records have survived, these early land cession treaties were negotiated in accordance with the principles of the Treaty alliance, and the rules codified in the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and subsequent statutes and regulations. Early agreements in 1783 and 1784 covered parts of present eastern Ontario between Gananoque and Carillon. One of the participants was an Algonquin Chief from Lake of Two Mountains. But there was little interest in any other portions of the Ottawa Valley, which were considered far too remote for settlement. Most Loyalists took up land in the Eastern Townships, or along the upper St Lawrence River and the north shores of Lakes Erie and Ontario. It was agitation from English-speaking settlers in the latter regions that led the British government to divide Quebec in 1791 into the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada.

By the later 18th century (and quite probably earlier), the people of the Ottawa River watershed known variously as Algonquins, Nipissings, Timiskamings and Têtes de Boule had developed dual identities. Many of them, particularly along the Lower Ottawa, were Christians, with strong ties to the Algonquin and Nipissing mission villages at Lake of Two Mountains (Oka). But these very same people also belonged to traditional bands which had numerous members who were not Christian and who rarely (if ever) visited Lake of Two Mountains. These traditional bands occupied the watersheds of the various rivers flowing into the Ottawa on both sides, such as the Quinze, the Montreal, the Mattawa, the Petawawa, the Madawaska, the Dumoine, the Coulonge and the Gatineau. As an example, the present members of the Wolf Lake (formerly Dumoine) First Nation, can trace their ancestry in almost equal parts to non-Christian *anishnabeg* living on the upper Dumoine and Kipawa Rivers in the 18th century, and to *Otickwagamik* (including several prominent Chiefs) from the Nipissing village at Lake of Two Mountains.

For most of the year, the members of these traditional bands lived in their hunting grounds. Even the Christians only resided at Lake of Two Mountains between June and (at the latest) September. Over the course of the other nine or ten months, they shared the same seasonal round as their fellow band members. The Nipissings in particular, who lived the furthest up the valley, were frequently absent, only coming to the mission village at two or three year intervals to have their children baptized. The seasonal round of resource harvesting activities is largely reflected in their names for the months of the year, as can be seen in the following lunar calendar provided by J.A. Cuoq (1821-1898), a Sulpician missionary from Lake of Two Mountains (Cuoq 1893: 140).

**Table 2.1**      **Algonquin Calendar**

Algonquin name	Meaning	Month
<i>Kenozitc kizis</i>	Long moon month	January
<i>Akakwidjic kizis</i>	Groundhog month	February
<i>Nika kizis</i>	Goose month	March
<i>Kawasikototc kizis</i>	Breaking up of the ice month	April
<i>Wabikon kizis</i>	Flower month	May
<i>Otehimin kizis</i>	Strawberry month	June
<i>Miskwimin kizis</i>	Raspberry month	July
<i>Otakakomin kizis</i>	Blueberry month	August
<i>Kakakone kizis</i>	Hulling corn (harvest) month	September
<i>Namekos kizis</i>	Trout month	October
<i>Atikameg kizis</i>	Whitefish month	November
<i>Piticipipon kizis</i>	Beginning of winter month	December

The anthropologist Frank Speck obtained the identical calendar from residents of the Timiskaming Reserve in 1913. According to Dr Speck, there were very slight differences in the calendar used by the neighbouring *Tima'gami anicena'bi* (Temagami First Nation) in Ontario. There, February was *Mako'ns gizis* or "little cub month" and May was *Name'bin gizis* or "Sucker spawning month". The period from late November to February, shown as "winter" on the calendar, was the primary hunting and trapping season. October and November were prime fishing months, when first trout, then whitefish, spawned. Geese (and other migratory waterfowl) were usually hunted in March, on their return northward. Berries of various kinds were gathered in June, July and August. The reference to "corn hulling" (September) shows that the Algonquins still practised agriculture.

According to the ethnological literature, Algonquin and other *anishnabeg* (such as the Ojibway) were organized in bands, and the band, not the tribe or nation was the land-holding group. At the time of his 1913 fieldwork, Frank Speck found that the traditional Algonquin way of life had declined considerably over the previous half-century, as the pressure of settlement and resource development had led many Band members to take up farming and logging. Nevertheless, he was able to obtain considerable detail about life in previous generations. He also discovered that the bands living both to the east and west of Timiskaming were much more traditional. In his report, published in 1915, Dr Speck states that extended families were the building blocks of Algonquin bands. And land use was the key to Algonquin social and political organization. Watersheds were the basic unit of traditional land management, serving as boundaries for family, band and tribal territories. Rivers and lakes were the "highways" Algonquin people used to travel around their territory.

### 2.3.5 Algonquin People in the 19th Century

The development pressure that Frank Speck mentioned in a report was a product of the 19th century. Until about 1803, the government of Lower Canada had respected Indian title (as the government of Upper Canada would continue to do). The government would not issue patents or warrants of survey for

lands that were still in the possession of their Indian proprietors. But around the time of Philemon Wright's settlement of Hull Township, which was the first serious development in the Ottawa Valley, local authorities changed their attitude. The Algonquins and Nipissings had objected to the presence of settlers, but Wright later claimed that government officials had helped him assert his title. In fact, there was a division of authority within the colonial administration. The settler government was responsible for lands and resources. But Indian Affairs was an Imperial responsibility, and Indian Department officials were not answerable to the government of Lower Canada. Particularly after 1820, as settlement and lumbering slowly proceeded up the Ottawa Valley, the Algonquins and Nipissings of Lake of Two Mountains lodged continuous protests with the Indian Department, who would convey their complaints to the local executive, who would generally ignore the protests. The Algonquins and Nipissings did, however, make their own arrangements with local settlers, requesting and receiving rental payments, particularly for islands in the Ottawa River. For almost thirty years, the Indian Department acknowledged the validity of those rents, and even collected them on occasion. But the government of Lower Canada refused to recognize them, and proceeded to survey and patent lands without consideration for Indian claims. This process accelerated when Lower and Upper Canada were combined in 1840 to form the Province of Canada.

Beginning in the late 1840s, a number of Algonquins and a few of the Nipissings moved their summer residence from the mission village at Oka to *Kitigan Zibi* (River Desert), a tributary of the Gatineau River which had always been part of their winter hunting grounds, and began petitioning the government of the province of Canada for title. Oblate missionaries also urged the government to set aside these lands as an Indian Reserve, and this was done by statute and executive order in the period 1851-53. That reserve came to be known as *Maniwaki*, or "Mary Land" in the *anishinabe* language. The Oblates also pressed simultaneously for the creation of a reserve at the head of Lake Temiskaming, where they hoped to form a mission for the many traditional bands who lived on the Upper Ottawa and in the neighbouring Hudson's Bay Company territory. What is now the Timiskaming Indian Reserve would also be created by statute and executive order in 1851-53.

But although the government styled the reserves at River Desert and Timiskaming as places of residence for all the Nipissings and Algonquins, as well as other bands in the Upper Ottawa Valley, this solution was overwhelming rejected by the majority of Algonquin-speaking people. For the most part, the only people who had settled at River Desert and Timiskaming by 1900 were members of traditional bands whose hunting grounds already included those reserves, or who lived in the immediate neighbourhood. Even after 1851, the Algonquins and Nipissings of Lake of Two Mountains continued to press for protection of their traditional territories and to have reserve lands set aside at Oka. And if that was not possible, then they wanted Calumet and neighbouring islands on the Ottawa River set apart as a reserve for them.

Beginning in the 1860s, in response to the overwhelming wave of settlement and resource development which was then sweeping over the Ottawa Valley, individual Algonquin and Nipissing bands began to press for reserve lands within their own traditional territories. In the 1840s, for example, the Algonquin Chief Pierre Shawanepinesi was petitioning for a reserve for his band in Bedford Township north of Kingston. Land was set aside to become an Indian Reserve, but was then withdrawn due to lumbering interests. Other Nipissings and Algonquins wanted a reserve around their summer village at Golden Lake on the Bonnechere River, within winter grounds that they had been occupying since at least the late eighteenth century. These lands would later become the Golden Lake Indian reserve. Most bands, however, were not as successful. After 1867, the *anishnabeg* of Grand Lac and Barriere Lake petitioned the government of Canada for reserve land at their respective localities and began clearing land. So did the Algonquin people who lived along the Kipawa River drainage, including ancestors of the Eagle Village and Wolf Lake First Nations, who began clearing land both on Kipawa Lake and at nearby Grassy Lake in the early 1870s. But none of these groups succeeded in having their land and resource rights protected. Apart from the Algonquins living on the Reserves at Timiskaming, River Desert and Golden Lake, the governments of Canada, Ontario and Quebec, like the colonial governments

that preceded them, consistently treated Algonquin people as squatters on their own land. Up to the present time, the Algonquins have never signed a land treaty, pursuant to the Constitution of Canada, for the Kichisipi watershed or the remainder of their traditional territories.