# The History and Primary Canoe Routes of the Six Chippewa Bands From the Lac Du Flambeau District

by

James K. Bokern

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Department of History

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# CHAPTER I

## AN INTRODUCTION TO CHIPPEWA COUNTRY

Currently, the Lac Du Flambeau band of the Chippewa is embroiled in a battle to maintain their 19th-century treaty rights. 1987 marks the 150th anniversary of the 1837 treaty which set the precedent for this modern confrontation. The disputed section of the 1837 treaty between the United States of America and the Chippewa Nation of Indians is Article 5: "The Privilege of hunting, fishing, and gathering the wild rice upon the lands, the rivers and the lakes included in the territory ceded, is guaranteed to the Indians, during the pleasure of the President of the United States".(1) Opponents feel that treaties from a century-and-a-half ago are unfair, dated, and threaten the rights and resources which belong to all Americans. Anti-treaty lobbies are increasing memberships and are attempting to influence government officials at all levels to overturn the rights of Indian treaties.

Using the natural resources from the southern region of Lake Superior to support their families is consistent with the traditional existence of the Lac Du Flambeau band of the Chippewa. Actually, the contest between the Chippewa and rival nations has spanned three centuries. During this three-hundred year contest for survival in the southern

region of Lake Superior, the Chippewa have been successful in establishing their control over natural resources.

Precisely when the Chippewa settled in the Lake Superior region permanently is disputed, but the ancestors of the Lac Du Flambeau and other Chippewa bands established a large settlement at Chequamegon Bay or La Pointe in the late 17th century.(2) During the late 17th and early 18th centuries, the Chippewa participated in the fur trade, acting as middlemen between the French traders and other Indian Tribes.(3) The Chippewa had established treaties and alliances with some surrounding Indian Tribes, allowing the Chippewa privileged status in the Great Lakes fur trade. In 1736 the Chippewa and Dakota (Sioux) Alliance was broken and the Chippewa of Chequamegon slowly fought their way both south and west into the interior of the Lake Superior region.(4) From 1736 to 1825 the Chippewa established their control of the western upper peninsula of Michigan, northeastern and north central Wisconsin, and the northern third of Minnesota. From 1825 to the 1870's the United States Government restricted the Chippewa in their movements by treaties, laws, and the encroachment of civilization. In the late 19th-century these Indians were limited to reservations where many of the Chippewa remain today.

Exactly when the Lac Du Flambeau band was established as an independent band at a permanent site continues to be a problem for scholars. After 1736, when the Chippewa/Dakota Alliance was broken, two distinct Chippewa economies slowly

emerged. One faction of the Chippewa continued to pursue the Lake Shore economy and remained on the shores of Lake Superior, fragmenting into smaller bands. L'Anse, Ontonagon, Keweenaw, Fond Du Lac, Grand Portage, and Chequamegon bands pursued the Lake Shore economies.(5) Other Chippewa made a slow transition from the Lake Shore economy around Chequamegon to an interior economy based on different resources found to the south and west of Lake Superior.(6) Chippewa invasion of the interior region was contested by both the Fox and Dakota Indians and only through battle did the Chippewa gain control.

The present Lac Du Flambeau band is actually a combination of at least six different historic interior Chippewa bands which were consolidated and put on reservations in the mid-19th century. These historic bands occupied the region commonly considered by fur traders, military officials, and United States Government as the Lac Du Flambeau District. For the purpose of this paper, the "Lac Du Flambeau District" will refer to the area of occupancy by these six different Chippewa bands, the Lac Du Flambeau, Trout Lake, Turtle Portage, Lac Vieux Desert, Wisconsin River, and Pelican Lake. Interior bands considered part of the Lac Du Flambeau District occupied the upper Wisconsin River basin and the eastern tributaries of the Chippewa River basin. Historic records which support the actual date of permanent occupancy by the six Chippewa bands of the Lac Du Flambeau District vary from 1745 to 1791.(7)

Once established in the interior region of Lake Superior, the Chippewa entered into a different economic cycle based on new resources. The economic resources to the south of Lake Superior were spread out over hundreds of square miles of wilderness. Access to these regions was difficult; Indians primarily used birchbark canoes, toboggans, overland trails, and portages to traverse the rugged terrain. They had to follow an annual economic cycle based on seasonal resources in order to survive. Due to changing conditions, the Chippewa had to be mobile, allowing them to gain the best possible natural resources available. These resource areas were only accessible via specific routes which were vital to the Chippewa's existence. The canoe routes, overland trails, and toboggan routes had to be direct and allow for the quickest and easiest possible transportation. Most seasonal resources the Chippewa depended upon could only be harvested for brief periods and any wasted time or energy in travel would limit their yield.

In the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries, these routes would be the primary inroads used by Europeans and Anglo-Americans entering the interior of the Lake Superior region. To avoid disaster in the rugged wilderness foreigners needed to be led by Indian guides through the interior region of Lake Superior.(8) First came the fur traders who followed the Chippewa routes to operate trading posts, contacted Indian villages, and transported their goods to fur companies on the Great Lakes or the Mississippi River. Next, missionaries

descended upon the Indians and tried to convert the Chippewa to a variety of Christian religions. Countless military expeditions from France, England, and the United States used the Chippewa trails in an attempt to control the interior region and the Indian populations. Finally, scientists entered the Lake Superior wilderness on these well-worn trails to document the land and resources. During the 19th century, most of these historic routes would be destroyed and forgotten in the wake of industrialization and the removal of natural wealth from Chippewa country.

Fortunately, the canoe routes and village sites of the Chippewa are not lost and can be retraced with accuracy, even though the land of the Chippewa has been altered and the original portage trails, blazed trees, trading posts, and villages have long since been destroyed. Outstanding records are available from the 18th and 19th centuries which describe these trails through journals and weathered maps.

The following chapters will be dedicated to establishing the history, warfare, traditional economic cycle, and methods of transportation of the Chippewa Indians who occupied the Lac Du Flambeau District. The influence of the fur trade will also be assessed, describing the impacts of the traders upon the Chippewa, while indicating possible post sites in Lac Du Flambeau.

Special detail will used to recreate precisely the primary canoe routes used by the Chippewa bands of the Lac Du Flambeau District. The actual water routes, portages, and

Indian villages which linked these interior bands along with their economic cycle will be traced in a "trip-ticket" format with illustrated maps. A trip-ticket is a narrative journal which is supported by a detailed map, used specifically to describe a route of travel. The trip-ticket approach will give excellent guidance for any persons wishing to follow these traditional Indian routes. The trip-ticket will include information from both primary and secondary sources supporting the routes as authentic. The physical characteristics of the original route will be entered whenever possible, providing travelers with landmarks and points of reference. Included at the end of each trip-ticket will be an historical review of each particular route's importance to the Chippewa.

The specific location and early history of the Lac Du Flambeau, Trout Lake, Turtle Portage, Lac Vieux Desert, Pelican Lake, and Wisconsin River bands of the Chippewa will also be presented. Evidence from primary sources will be included to support the authenticity of the Chippewa bands' historic village sites. Each Lac Du Flambeau District band had unique characteristics and adaptations which usually resulted from it geographic location, enabling it to take advantage of interior region's resources.

The last chapter will include observations concerning the interior bands of Chippewa in the Lac Du Flambeau District. The 20th century perspective included in this chapter on the status of some traditional Chippewa Indians,

village sites, and canoe routes in the tradtional Lac Du Flambeau District, may indicate the modern importance of the Chippewa history.

## CHAPTER II

## THE HISTORY OF THE LAC DU FLAMBEAU DISTRICT BANDS

An historic perspective provides the best framework for understanding the interior Chippewa bands of the Lac Du Flambeau District. Any accurate analysis of the traditional Chippewa life of these bands requires an historical structure to provide full intelligibility. The varieties and structure of the fur trade, tribal traditional economic cycles, routes traveled, and the movements of individual Chippewa bands varied with the different historical periods.

The history of the interior Chippewa bands of the Lac Du Flambeau District divides into four chronological periods: 1680-1736, 1737-1783, 1784-1824, and 1825-1870. Each period marks an important transition in the status of the Chippewa of the Lac Du Flambeau District.

The "interior region" of Lake Superior refers to a geographical area lying south and west of Lake Superior including parts of the Mississippi, Wisconsin, and Wolf Rivers watershed. In the 18th century the Lac Du Flambeau District bands occupied the interior region and established their traditional summer residence in an area of concentrated small lakes. The interior region of the Lac Du Flambeau bands includes present day counties of Vilas, Oneida, Iron, and Price.

1680-1736

Limited historical documentation supports the oral tradition of the Chippewa account of the origin and early history of the interior bands. Some 17th-century sources refer to early Chippewa activities in the Lake Superior area. In the 17th century ancestors of the Chippewa likely occupied the straits of Sault Ste. Marie, their descendents eventually occupied the Lac Du Flambeau District. Here the French encountered Chippewa and named these Indians Saulteurs, "People of the Rapids."(10) The French likely were familiar with the Chippewa due to their mutual involvement in the fur trade and the presence of the Chippewa at early Great Lakes fur fairs.(11)

In about 1680, appearing to be motivated by the fur trade, European contacts, and traditional religious prophecies; some Chippewa moved to Chequamegon (La Pointe) and began a large settlement.(12) In 1671, a French/Indian trade agreement drawn at Sault Ste. Marie initiated the Chequamegon settlement.(13) During the late 17th and early 18th centuries the Chippewa served as middlemen in the upper Great Lakes fur trade and would travel to other Indian tribes with French trade goods to barter for furs.(14) The Chippewa's position in the fur trade provided them better equipment from Europeans, enabled them to freely travel throughout most of the upper Great Lakes, and familiarized

them with all areas of the interior region. The gains in superior trade goods the Chippewa made during this period enabled them to later penetrate and control large portions of the interior region of Lake Superior.

By the beginning of the 18th century, Chequamegon had become a successful and large Chippewa settlement, with a growing population which would eventually reach 2000.(15) The Chequamegon economic base revolved around the harvest of seasonal resources from the Great Lakes area including the prime factor furs. From 1693 to 1698 and from 1718 to 1762, the French established fur trading posts in Chequamegon to help support the Chippewa's trade.(16)

Chequamegon also became the center for the dominant religion of the Chippewa, the Medewiwin. This religion fostered unity among the Chippewa and helped ease the transition from earlier communities of small bands to the large settlements brought on by the fur trade.(17) Chippewa history, culture, and education all contributed to the Medewiwin religion, fostering tribal unity based on traditional principles. In the 1690's, the Medewiwin was created at Chequamegon and was based on the concept of a supreme being, which probably came from the Europeans. Prior to the Western influence, the Chippewa religion had a polytheism base, centering on thousands of spirits known as "manitos".(18)

In 1727, the economic currents which influenced the fur trade of the Chippewa at Chequamegon began to change. At

Lake Pepin on the Mississippi the French established a competing fur post.(19) The new fur post to the southwest was not intended to compete in the Chequamegon area, but competition did result and the Chippewa lost their favored status in the fur trade. This competition caused the Chippewa to dissolve back into smaller bands and enter the interior region of Lake Superior seeking new resources and animal furs for trade.(20) By 1736 the Chippewa/Dakota alliance was broken and intertribal warfare resulted, each tribe attempting to secure the resources of the interior region and lake shore of Lake Superior.(21)

1737-1784

1737 marked the beginning of over one hundred years of battle between the Chippewa and Dakota Indians. The area of contest lay to the south and west of Lake Superior, one filled with natural resources that each tribe needed to sustain its native economy. This contest became a matter of survival, in which the Chippewa had the advantage. European technologies and geographic knowledge the Chippewa had gained from the fur trade allowed them to take large sections of territory from the Dakota and Fox Indian Nations.

During this transitionary period, two significant changes occurred in the traditional Chippewa existence. First, the Chippewa of Chequamegon pursued two different economic cycles: 1) lake shore economy and 2) interior

economy.(22) The lake shore economy was based on economic resources which were attained primarily from Lake Superior, such as fish, maple sugar, game, and gardens. The interior economy-based Chippewa bands developed new economic resources found in the hundreds of small inland lakes, extensive river systems, forests and prairies to the south and west of Lake Superior. The interior resources were wild rice, maple sugar, gardens, game, and fish. Both economies used similar resources but the harvest, usage, and yield of these resources varied between the lake shore and the interior. Neither of these native economic systems were static; the Chippewa economy was flexible and could be modified to adjust to shortages and new economic influences.

Second, the Chippewa broke into related family groups to better use new and distant resources.(23) These smaller bands chose areas which could be defended from rival Indians and economically support the Chippewa band population. Establishing a new economic lifestyle without the privileged status of middlemen in the fur trade required some adjustments. The Chippewa were flexible and demonstrated "ecological diversity" in their new area, the interior region of Lake Superior.(24)

During this period, the six different independent Chippewa bands of the Lac Du Flambeau District established their traditional residence and village sites in the interior region. From the fur trade, the Chippewa had extensive knowledge about the interior region's resources, routes of

travel, geography, and enemy tribes. The movement of the Chippewa into the interior would be a slow transition from the shore of Lake Superior.

After the break up of the large settlement at Chequamegon, the Chippewa continued to travel from the interior back to the Apostle Islands to participate in the Medewiwin and to trade.(25) The Chippewa sometimes wintered in the interior due to decreased game population along the lake shore and economic pressure from the fur trade. In late spring the Chippewa would travel back to Chequamegon for the summer and fall.(26) The summer concentration at Chequamegon may have had defensive motives, since the Apostle Islands provided good fortifications during the summer when enemy war parties were active.

1745 marks the first confirmed date of Chippewa Indians occupation of the Lac Du Flambeau area.(27) In 1852, this account came from a Chippewa historian, William Warren who wrote, History of the Ojibway People. Modern historians criticize Warren for inaccurately dating historic events of the oral traditions which he transcribed from the Chippewa.(28) The problem is probably more an issue of permanent residence versus seasonal use. The specific date of occupancy depends on the interpretation of Chippewa use of Lac Du Flambeau.

The Chippewa likely traveled and occasionally hunted through the Lac Du Flambeau District, Lac Court Oreilles, and St. Croix in the late 17th century as middlemen in the fur

trade.(29) After 1736, some of the family-based bands of Chippewa slowly moved into the interior of the Lac Du Flambeau District to form winter camps to hunt.(30) Warren's 1745 reference to the Lac Du Flambeau settlement may have been for winter camps which were not subject to attack due to restricted warfare among tribes in the winter months.(31) The area where the Chippewa wanted to establish winter camps was the game-rich area in the lower Chippewa River valley known as the "tension zone".(32) (see diagram 3-1) The tension zone received its name from modern academics, due to the numerous Indian tribes that fought for control of this important resource area.

The Chippewa could not settle the interior region until the rival Indian tribes of the Fox and Dakota had been removed. During this transitionary period the Chippewa of the Lac Du Flambeau District established transitionary summer settlements at Turtle Portage (Mercer, WI) and Trout Lake, each only one day's travel from the traditional village of the Lac Du Flambeau band.(33) In 1783, probably completed the Chippewa occupation of the Lac Du Flambeau District when the Fox were forced out of the Wisconsin River basin. The Chippewa of the Lac Du Flambeau District no longer had to fight a two-front war against the Fox and the Dakota. All the Chippewa's military energies could now be unified and concentrated in the tension zone of the Chippewa River valley. In 1784, the Chippewa of Lac Du Flambeau and Lac Court Oreilles both wintered above the junction of the

Chippewa River and the Flambeau (Manitowish) River, indicating that Lac Du Flambeau had become a summer residence.(34) On the Lower Chippewa River, most of the interior bands of the Wisconsin Chippewa would spend their late fall and winter close to the game in the tension zone and in great numbers to defend against attacks from the Dakotas.(35)

1784-1824

After the Fox had been removed, the Lac Du Flambeau District began to stabilize relative to external threats. The Dakotas did attack all portions of the interior region, including the Flambeau area, but the majority of Dakota-Chippewa battles occurred in the Chippewa River basin and to the west.(36) During this period, the Chippewa bands of the Lac Du Flambeau District established their six traditional summer villages of Lac Du Flambeau, Turtle Portage, Trout Lake, Lac Vieux Desert, Pelican Lake, and the Wisconsin River. Each band entered into a new economic cycle based on different interior subsistence resources and the fur trade.

The important events of the Lac Du Flambeau fur trade will be thoroughly assessed in a separate chapter dealing specifically with the fur trade. This section will provide an historic overview of the fur trade in Lac Du Flambeau.

From 1784-1825 the fur trade dominated the Lac Du Flambeau District. In 1763, after the Treaty of Paris the

French government lost control of the Great Lakes fur trade, and , in 1783, the Scots established the North West Company. (37) Traders set up winter posts in Lac Du Flambeau by 1790-1791. In July of 1791, Jean Baptiste Perrault met a Lac Du Flambeau trader (probably from the North West Company) named "Defund Dufault" on Lake Superior and exchanged trade goods for the winter yield of hides from Flambeau. In his narrative, Perrault describes this exchange: ". . . 'Do you wish to trade with me? How many packs have you?' 'I have 35,' he replied; 'I have one pack Otter, 5 packs of Beaver, 2 packs of Martin, 3 of bear, 1 of polecat, lynx and rats. The remainder is deer."(38) By the winter of 1790-1791, Lac Du Flambeau clearly had a well-established fur trade and enjoyed the support of the surrounding Chippewa bands. With the economic support of the fur trade, some Chippewa Indians likely became permanent residents of the Lac Du Flambeau District to hunt and trap for the traders.

By 1792, the North West Company had an established post operating in Lac Du Flambeau.(39) In 1796, a new competitor known as the X Y Company challenged the North West Company's monopoly in the Great Lakes. Until 1806, the X Y Company and North West Company operated in Lac Du Flambeau, then they merged. By 1816, the American Fur Company took over the North West Company's interests in Lac Du Flambeau,(40) signifying United States citizen's first control and contact with the Lac Du Flambeau District and fur trade.(41)

The United States would forever change the relationship

between the Chippewa and Europeans-Americans. The Chippewa suffered the same fate as other Indian tribes dealing with the United States. Scientific expeditions entered the Chippewas territory and assessed the value of extractable natural resources. After the resources of copper, iron, timber, farm land, and hydro-power had been identified, the American government and military took steps to claim these resources from the Chippewa.

1825-1870

Until the European fur market crashed in the 1840's the fur trade remained strong. In 1842, the American Fur Company failed and the Chippewa had to modify their economic cycle. The important events which dominated the Lac Du Flambeau District bands of the Chippewa were the treaties between the United States of America and the Chippewa. The Chippewa were signing over land and natural resources to the federal government of the United States in return for annuities, services, and legal privileges.

The treaty which first influenced the Chippewa was the Treaty of 1825 at Prairie Du Chien. This treaty divided eleven different Indian tribes into specific territories allegedly for the purpose of promoting peace among rival Indian nations.(42) A more likely reason for this documented division of territory was to aid the United States in claiming Indian territories as federal property. The United

States had learned from dealing with eastern tribes that land cessions would be complicated if more than one Indian could claim an area of land. The 1825 treaty established the Lac Du Flambeau District as Chippewa territory and permitted the United States government greater ease in gaining Chippewa lands during later land cessions.

The 1825 Treaty did not bring peace between the Dakota and Chippewa. The fighting lasted into the 1850's with raiding parties from both sides penetrating deep into enemy territory inflicting heavy casualties. In 1843, a letter was sent from Alfred Burnson at the La Pointe Agency to Indian Agent James D. Doty, to whom describing the Dakota-Chippewa battles, "Within two or three years past some 200 have been killed, on both sides, in this war, and many of them within sight of white mans dwellings, and in one battle on the St. Croix a white man, Mr. Aitkin, was compelled to defend himself in common with the Indians, his company."(43) This letter indicates that in 1843, the Chippewa and Dakota were still fighting over their traditional resource areas with the same aggressiveness as in the 18th century. More important to the Indian agents was that the encroaching white settlers were now being threatened by this long war.

The Indian Agents wanted to end this brutal cycle of Chippewa-Dakota warfare, but were unable to regulate the Indians. In 1843, the Indian Agent at La Pointe wrote to James D. Doty about this problem, explaining that the territory was too difficult to travel and the expense of

Indian regulation would be incredible.(44) The Indians of the Lac Du Flambeau District were not disturbed often by missionaries or government officials due to the rugged wilderness area they inhabited.(45)

In the Fall of 1832, Sherman Hall, a missionary, traveled to Lac Du Flambeau to determine whether a mission would be appropriate for these bands of the Chippewa. Hall found few Indians who were accessible in the Lac Du Flambeau District because of their seasonal migrations for economic resources.(46) The interior bands of the Lac Du Flambeau District were fluid, frequently traveling through difficult terrain to hunt and gather natural resources which were vital to their survival. If any missionary or government agency forced the bands of the Lac Du Flambeau District to remain stationary it would have led to their starvation.

The Chippewa bands of the Lac Du Flambeau District maintained their economic cycle and migrations into the 1870's before the treaties, encroaching white settlers, lumbermen, railroads, and miners controlled or destroyed the economic resources which supported this nomadic cycle.

The treaties which had the greatest impact on the Chippewa of the Lac Du Flambeau District were those of: 1837, 1842, 1847, and 1854. The 1837 and 1842 treaties both dealt with land cessions from the Chippewa to the United States. Each of these treaties gave valuable Chippewa resources to the United States: "Through the 1837 treaty, the government gained access to rich pine lands and because of this it was

referred to as the 'Lumberman's Treaty.' The 1842 treaty was referred to as the 'Miners Treaty,' since the government acquired rich mineral districts."(47) The 1847 treaty clarified the services and annuities due to the Chippewa and once again attempted to bring peace between the Dakota and Chippewa Indian Nations. The Chippewa of Lake Superior, including the Lac Du Flambeau District, were put on reservations in their final land cession to the United States in the 1854 treaty.(48)

Economically, the Chippewa were being restricted in their use of traditional natural resources. To supplement these resource losses, the United States Government guaranteed the Chippewa annuities, services, and special privileges. Unfortunately, the interior bands of Pelican Lake, Wisconsin River, and Lac Vieux Desert were not present at some treaty ceremonies and had their lands ceded without the right of annuities, services, and education from the government.(49) These bands would later have to petition for their rights under the 1837 Treaty.

The Lac Du Flambeau District bands did receive the services of farm produce and blacksmithing near Chippewa Falls. The Chippewa also were offered educational instruction, but most interior bands refused to send their children to the distant schools along Lake Superior. Originally this arrangement was beneficial to the Chippewa of the Lac Du Flambeau District, allowing for repairs and needed food during the winter when their traditional economic cycle

led them to the Chippewa River. Trouble began when the Chippewa-Dakota war continued in the tension zone a few miles south of Chippewa Falls, as a result Indian Agents wanted the Chippewa removed.(50) The Chippewa were close to losing vital services which supported their traditional economic cycle.

Annuities were distributed to the Lac Du Flambeau District bands of the Chippewa in the early fall at La Pointe. Annuities were trade goods, weapons, food, and other items which supplemented the Chippewa's economy. The annuities would have been helpful if the United States Government and its agents would have demonstrated any degree of realism in the choice, distribution, and administration of annuities.

The first problem arose about the time of annuity distribution. The early fall was the important ricing and hunting season which generated food for the difficult winter. Under the annuity system, the vital resources of the annuities now competed with the traditional resources of hunting and ricing. This administrative blunder created an imbalance in the well organized economic cycle of the Chippewa. Alfred Burnson, the Indian Agent at La Pointe, recognized this problem and described in detail the danger to the Chippewa in his district. Burnson went further to suggest a summer annuity distribution which would not conflict with the traditional economic cycle of the Chippewa.(51) Unfortunately, the insightful recommendations

of the La Pointe agent were ignored by higher ranking government agents.

The second problem with the annuities was that Chippewa fur traders often took the government payments from the Chippewa to settle old debts. One example happened at La Pointe in 1839 during one of the first annuities: fur traders gathered like vultures to collect on debts from over eight years past. The Indian Agents were gullible and easily influenced by the tough fur traders: "No. 8 is a claim for unpaid credits to the Indians thus presented 'to outstanding debts of Lac Du Flambeau, due since the year 1831, whilest I was trading under a license with said Indians, amounting to the sum of eight hundred dollars - three witnesses certify that they know the claimant, and . . . he lost money . . .."(52) The annuities became a capital gain for the fur traders who could write off business losses from long ago at the expense of the Chippewa.

The third problem with the annuities was the quality and choice of goods distributed to the Chippewa. One Chippewa indicated in a letter that the guns were so poor that "Hundreds of them are now lying useless, or being wrought up by the smiths into some other article . . .."(53) In the same letter, Burnson wrote how these guns were defective, "The first Ind. I saw in my agency had just lost the end of one finger by the hunting of one of these guns. And scores of them may be seen maimed and crippled for life by the same means; and some have lost their lives."(54) These weapons

were the most important of annuity goods and their poor quality also compromised the Chippewa's ability to gain enough food hunting.(55)

The choice of equipment distributed also limited the value of annuity payments. In an 1841 memo from Hartley Crawford to Henry Schoolcraft, these executive administrators agreed that the Chippewa of La Pointe did not need the new saddles sent that fall because the Chippewa owned no horses and traveled by canoe.(56) The saddles were then sold for one third their value and the revenue was to be redistribute to the Chippewa. The United States distribution of poor and useless equipment only gave the Chippewa a fraction of the real value of annuities agreed upon in the treaties. The promises of the United States Government confused the Chippewa who had to gain enough resources to support their families. Often the Chippewa would discard the useless items from the annuities distributions rather than carry them into the interior.

The final problem which faced the Chippewa who participated in annuity distributions was whiskey runners, usually miners who sold alcohol to the Indians on the Chippewa journey from Lake Superior to the interior.(57) All the Lac Du Flambeau District bands leaving La Pointe had to travel 45 miles up the Flambeau Trail to reach the interior region. Unfortunately, the first twenty miles of the Flambeau Trail was through one of the richest mining areas on the Great Lakes. In the late 1840's, the actions of these

whiskey runners were well documented by officials of the government trying to prevent the ambush of Chippewa:

> . . . a set of desperadoes from the mines, The lumber region, and other places, managed to smuggle in here during the summer a quantity of whiskey in bottles concealed in boxes of dry goods, & c, These they secreted until payment time. They then would be prowling about Indian camps at night with it in their pockets, and being disguised like Indians, generally managed to escape detection; consequently, there was considerable drunkenness at night. . . . I am told that many of the Indians, at different points on their routes home, were waylaid by these worse than highwaymen, and in some instances stripped of their blankets and every other article of value.(58)

Little wonder that not all of the eligible Chippewa showed up for their annuity payments in the following years. The United States' Government was clearly derelict in its duties. Confronted with incredible obstacles and hardship in the wilderness, the Chippewa adapted and excelled in this harsh environment, but in the middle and late 19th century, American encroachment broke the traditional lifestyle of the interior bands of the Chippewa. By the 1870's, the traditional cycle which the interior bands of the Chippewa had followed ended. By the late 19th century, the Chippewa of the Lac Du Flambeau District had entered into a new phase of their existence which was dictated by the demands of the United States Government.

## CHAPTER III

## CHIPPEWA WARFARE

Throughout their recorded history, the Chippewa have demonstrated a military tradition of excellence. Fighting rival Indian nations, the Chippewa usually emerged victorious. The enemies of the Chippewa varied as different Indian tribes competed for territories rich with natural resources. Our analysis of Chippewa warfare begins with an overview of strategy, tactics, and the importance of war to the Chippewa culture. Maintaining an historical perspective, the warfare of the Chippewa will be further assessed in the same time periods utilized in the previous Chapter.

The most detailed primary source on Chippewa warfare came from William Warren, a well educated Chippewa Indian who transcribed many oral traditions of his people. Much of Warren's writings dealt specifically with Chippewa warfare. The numerous accounts of battles in his text indicate the importance warfare had in the Chippewa culture. Many of the other primary sources on Chippewa warfare were the records kept by government agents, fur traders, and scientists who traveled through Chippewa country.

Due to their unique trading status in the early fur trade as middlemen, the Chippewa possessed superior weapons relative to their native enemies.(59) This technological

advantage lasted into the 19th century, when other tribes had began to obtain equal access to trade goods. The Chippewa were noted as excellent warriors, especially in the wilderness of the north woods. This wilderness superiority in combat was indicated by members of the Houghton survey in the late 1840's. ". . . in nearly all battles . . . the Chippewas were almost invincible when fighting in the woods and timbered country of the north; but that they quite invariably suffered defeat by the Sioux when they descended into the prairies and open country to fight."(60)

Most of the Chippewa wars followed classic guerrilla warfare tactics and strategies. The Chippewa ambush or surprise attacks would attempt to inflict quickly heavy casualties upon their enemy, then retreat to safety.(61) The Indian attacks often seemed intended to haze the enemy away from critical subsitence resources. Revenge was the usual motive for Chippewa attacks.(62) The Chippewa would grieve if a family member had been killed and vow revenge during the next war season. Indian warfare in Chippewa country was a vicious cycle of lethal skirmishes perpetuated by revenge.

War occurred during all seasons except winter.(63) Indian survival was difficult enough during the winter months and little time could be allocated to anything but hunting and fishing. During winter months rival bands, which fought brutally months before, sometimes entered into a short truce and interacted peacefully.(64) Once spring arrived the truce

would be broken by a grisly attack from either side.

Chippewa warfare was often brutal. It was common to have slain Indians mutilated, decapitated, or scalped; or have captives gruesomely tortured. The Chippewa and their enemies killed women and children with no apparent remorse, only sparing the lives of the defenseless if they could be taken as slaves.(65) These acts of brutality and attacks against their women and children provided the motive of revenge for the Chippewa warriors.

Status in the Chippewa bands was partially determined by a warrior's abilities in battle. Unbearable shame would fall upon a Chippewa warrior who did not effectively defend his people or avenge the death of his kin.(66)

The Lac Du Flambeau District bands and other Chippewa bands from as far away as Ontonagon would travel hundreds of miles to engage the Dakota enemy.(67) In 1828, members of the Lac Du Flambeau District bands were recorded traveling to the St. Croix River-Mississippi River junction looking for the enemy.(68) The Chippewa would also travel great distances to support other Chippewa bands (usually to the west) in areas with high enemy resistance.

Warfare was an important part of the Chippewa culture, influencing many phases of Indian life. Throughout the history of the Lac Du Flambeau District bands the nature of Chippewa warefare often changed. To better assess the military activity of these Chippewa bands the history of their warfare will be analyzed in terms of specific periods.

1670-1736

During this period, the Chippewa were allied with the Dakota nation in an alliance which supported their mutual interest in the fur trade. The Chippewa-Dakota Alliance was more military than economic. Each of these tribes had been threatened by the powerful Fox, Mascoutens, and Miamis nations.(69) The Chippewa were also supported by the French during this period due to their important status as middlemen in the fur trade. Battles occurred throughout the Great Lakes and interior region, with war parties traveling hundreds of miles to engage the enemy.

1737-1783

In 1736 the Chippewa-Dakota Alliance ended, starting immediate war between these Indians. The Chippewa forged a new alliance with the Crees and Assiniboins to the north against the Dakota nation.(70) The Chippewa were entering the traditional territories of the Dakotas and Fox to trap and set up seasonal villages. The Chippewa's actions met stiff resistance, but during this transitional period the Chippewa slowly gained control of the interior region of Lake Superior.

The Chippewa of the Lac Du Flambeau District were challenged from the west by the Dakotas and from the east by the Fox; in each area transitional villages struggled to establish Chippewa control against fierce resistance.(71)

The great battle of Strawberry Island on Lake Flambeau probably occurred during this period. Although no precise date has been established, it is likely that the Dakotas would have only ventured that deep into Chippewa country during the transitional period of 1736-1784.

After 1783, the Fox had been removed as a threat to the Chippewa, and the Lac Du Flambeau District and Lac Court Oreilles District bands unified to drive the Dakotas out of the Chippewa Valley.(72)

1784-1870

The Chippewa-Dakota (Sioux) war was the longest conflict in the recorded history of the Chippewa. As the members of the Houghton expedition suggested, the division between the Chippewa and Dakota Indians was the division between the north woods and prairie region. This region is commonly known as the tension zone and was rich with many different large game populations.(73) Diagram 3-1 and 3-2 clearly illustrates the area of conflict between the Chippewa and Dakota.

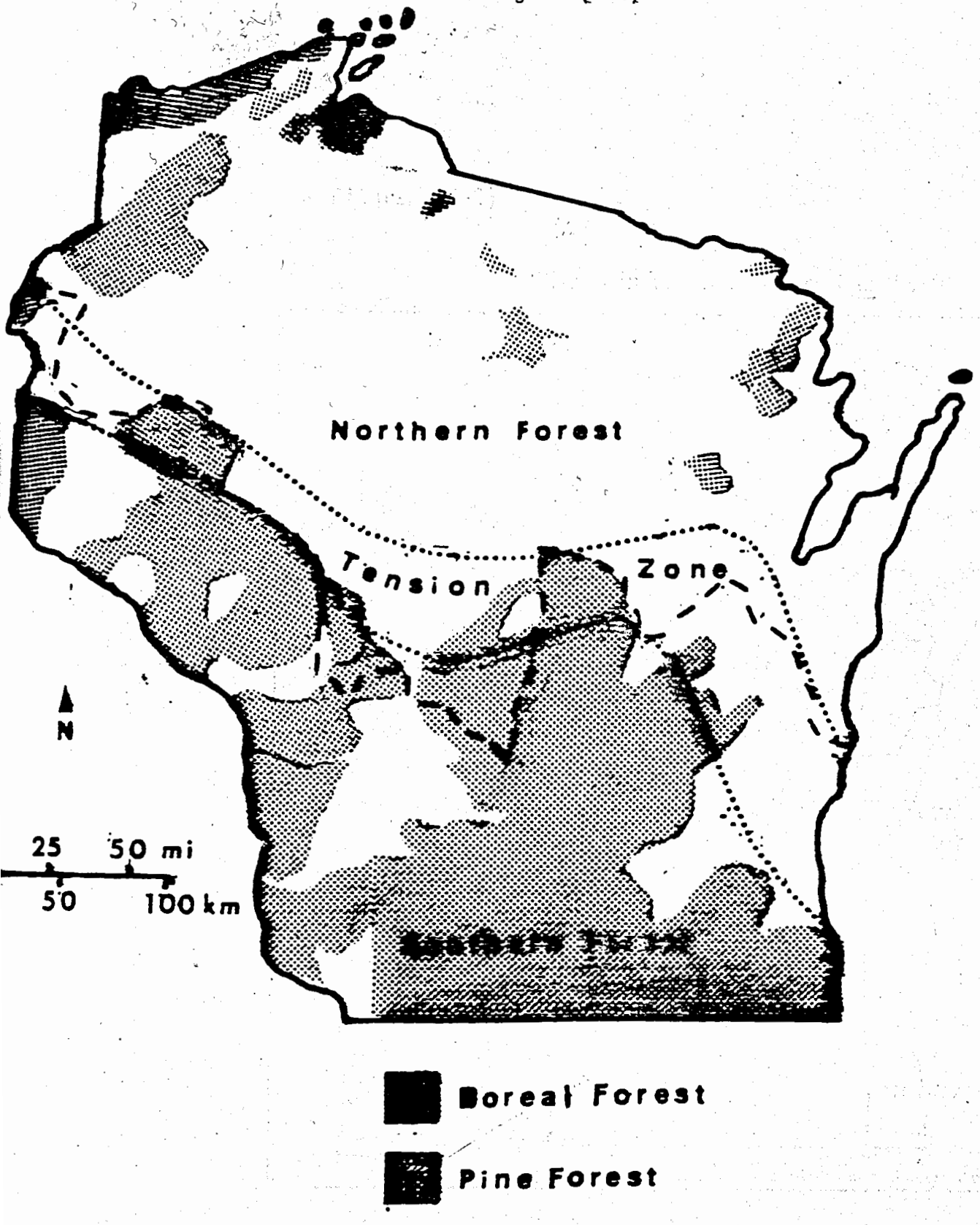
Battles occurred most frequently during the summer and fall, usually centering on valuable economic resources. The tension zone was populated by large herds of buffalo, elk, deer, and other game animals of importance. The tension zone became both a geographic and a political divider. In 1820, Henry Schoolcraft described the tension zone in his journals, "In this debatable land, the game is very abundant;

buffaloes, elks, and deer range unharmed and unconscious of harm. The mutual hostilities of the Chippewas and Sioux render it dangerous for either, unless in strong parties, to visit this portion of the country. The consequence has been, a great increase of all animals whose flesh is used for food, or whose fur is valuable for market."(74)

The hit and run tactics of the Chippewa and Dakota hazed both Indian tribes out of the tension zone to create a kind of demilitarized zone. On either edge of the tension zone, the most brutal battles took place. Warren described the intense battles on the Chippewa side of the tension zone, "Almost every bend on the Chippewa and Menominee (Red Cedar) rivers has been the scene of a fight, surprise, or bloody massacre, and one of their (Chippewa) chiefs remarked with truth when asked to sell his lands, that 'the country was strewn with the bones of their fathers, and enriched with their blood'."(75) The tension zone was only occupied effectively by the Menominee Indians who forged a peace treaty with the rival nations of the Dakotas and Chippewa to exploit the rich game resources.(76)

The battles between the Chippewa and Dakotas lasted through the 1850's until white settlements drove in between the two tribes. Enforcement of laws and the regulation of Indians became easier in the prairie regions due to increased white settlements along the Mississippi, Chippewa, and St. Croix Rivers.

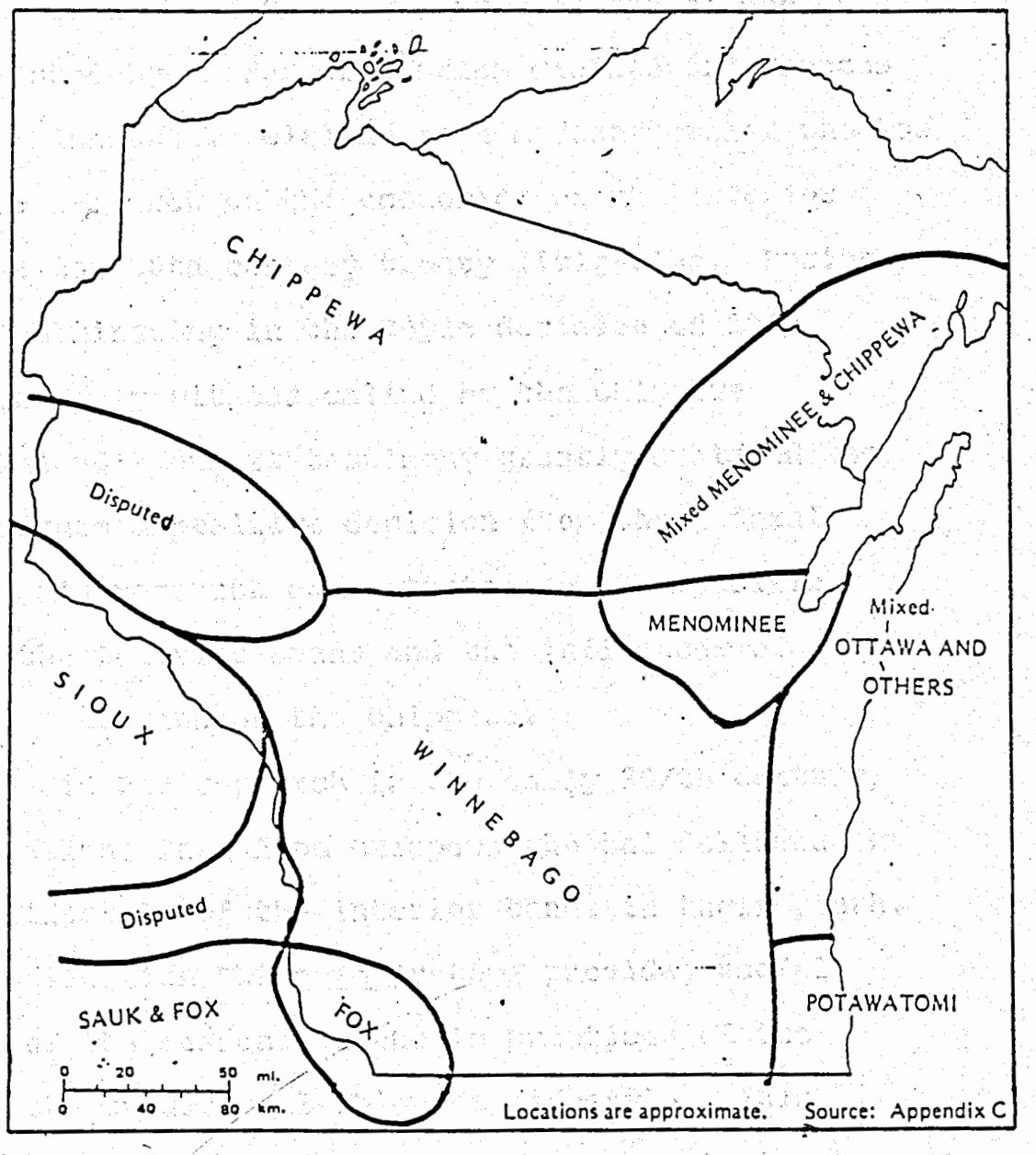
Diagram (3-1)




Major Forest Communities of
Northern Wisconsin (ca. 1840)
Adapted from Curtis; 1959

Diagram (3-2)

Wisconsin Tribal Territories, ca 1830



## CHAPTER IV

## THE TRADITIONAL ECONOMIC CYCLE OF THE LAC DU FLAMBEAU DISTRICT BANDS

The best research on Chippewa interior bands' economics has been published by professor Charles Cleland and Frances Densmore from Minnesota. Cleland is a modern scholar who has done extensive research on the economics of the interior Chippewa bands for 20th century treaty litigation. During the hearings culminating in the Doyle decision of 1987, Cleland was the only witness called by the Chippewa attorneys. Cleland's expert testimony greatly assisted the Chippewa to secure a positive decision from the federal judge. Cleland's research concentrates on the specific economics of the interior bands and the influences of Americans and Europeans on the Chippewa.

Densmore did her research in the early 20/th century, compiling excellent data from Chippewa who had followed the traditional lifestyle of the interior bands in their youth. Densmore's publication Chippewa Customs provides useful descriptions of the seasonal economic practices of the Chippewa and the traditional Chippewa lifestyle. This chapter on Chippewa economics will be divided into two categories; an overview of the general economics which influenced the interior bands in the Lac Du Flambeau District

and the seasonal activities of the traditional economic cycle which the interior bands of the Chippewa followed.

The Chippewa of the Lac Du Flambeau District did not start to inhabit the interior region below Lake Superior until the late 1730's. Prior to this period, all Chippewa were following the lake shore economy while residing at Chequamegon. The bands of the Chippewa who occupied the interior region of the Lac Du Flambeau District maintained some lake shore economic traditions which applied to the interior economy. Often the lake shore practices would be modified for more efficient gathering of interior resources.(77) For example, the interior Chippewa bands modified their means of transportation to adapt to the nomadic pursuit of scattered seasonal resources. The Chippewa of the interior region also developed new economic practices which were exclusive to their area of settlement.

For specific analysis of the Chippewa bands in the Lac Du Flambeau District, only the traditional interior economic cycle will be assessed. The lake shore and transitional economic cycles which these bands followed prior to the late 18th century will be excluded. The interior band period began when the village sites of Lac Du Flambeau, Trout Lake, Wisconsin River, Pelican Lake, Turtle Portage, and Lac Vieux Desert were summer residences and when the fall/winter hunts were typically carried out in the Chippewa River and Wisconsin River basins.

After 1736, when the large settlement at Chequamegon

began to disperse, the Chippewa formed smaller bands which modified their traditional political and economic organization. Cleland noted: "The band, as the largest political group of the Chippewa, was based on resource use. This does not mean the Chippewa used the same kinds of resources over the huge territory they occupied. In fact, ecological diversity within territory led to the development of several distinct subsistence systems with their appropriate settlement components."(78)

The Chippewa did not have rigid band territories for resource use; actually a system of resource-sharing existed between the lake shore and interior bands. "These band territories functioned to regulate the use of resources, both within the band territory and to provide a mechanism so that resources could occasionally be shared among bands. This was accomplished by means of kin linkages formed by marriage between members of different bands."(79) The smaller band structure had enough flexibility to ensure both regulation of resources and the sharing of resources in time of scarcity.

European-American intervention in the economics of the Chippewa had been important since the 17th century. From the earliest recorded history of the Chippewa to the 1840's, the fur trade had an enormous influence on the economics of these Indians. The Chippewa's status was modified throughout the fur trader period, but their economic participation in the fur trade was a vital concern to the Chippewa's economy. As the fur trade failed in the 1840's, the United States

Government began to influence the economics of the Chippewa with annuity payments. Starting in 1837, the annuity and treaty process continued the influence of the white man upon the Chippewa into the 20th century. Interior bands were effected less by American intervention and the Lac du Flambeau band was not heavily-regulated until 1874.(80)

The Chippewa gained most of their economic goods from their environment. The interior bands followed an annual cycle which was based on abundant seasonal resources. The Chippewa of the Lac Du Flambeau area continued to follow their traditional economic cycle into the 1870's,(81) and depended on traditional seasonal resources until 1900.(82) The Chippewa were fluid in their movements, covering hundreds of square miles in a year to gather important natural resources. In this situation transportation had to be direct and as quick as possible. The Chippewa of the Lac Du Flambeau District were experts in navigation and transportation; without such expertise the Chippewa of the interior would have been deprived of important resources on which their survival depended.

The economics of the Lac Du Flambeau District bands were assessed by several 19th-century observers who offered important primary documentation on the interior bands' economic activities. In 1832, Sherman Hall, a missionary, gave a detailed account of the seasonal economic activities of the Lac Du Flambeau band.

> The Indians of that band are very much scattered. In the summer they separate into small villages

> about numerous lakes in the section of the country they occupy. They leave the upper country in fall and do not return until about March. They are engage in that season for sugar making, in that business [sic]. During the time they are in deer country, they are constantly moving from place to place. About the first (of) January they commence their March to the upper country, from which time they change their encampments every second day till they reach their destination more than two months afterwards. . . . Scarcely a family remains in the Vicinity of Lac Du Flambeau during the winter.(83)

The Chippewa of the interior did not consistently follow this cycle; fluctuations occurred according to resource supply and other pressures. Sherman Hall, a La Pointe based missionary, noted economic cycle modifications in his 1832 journal, ". . . they began to leave for their fall hunts earlier than usual, and before the whole band collected near the post. They make their fall and winter hunts low down the Chippewa river."(84)

Flexibility was important due to changing resources; the Chippewa had to react to changes in fur markets, government regulations, climate, game populations, and other variables. Their economic flexibility was evidenced in a variety of activities, pursuing different resources which would support the bands population. The seasonal economic flexibility of the interior bands of the Chippewa will be assessed in greater detail in the second part of this chapter.

In 1834, James Allen, a military official traveling with Henry Schoolcraft, met Mr. Oakes, a Lac Du Flambeau fur trader. Allen's journal provides a fine primary record of the status of Oakes' fur post and the Lac Du Flambeau band. This source compliments Hall's journal well. Allen noted:

"The Indians of this department get nearly all of their goods and necessities from him (Mr. Oakes) and subsist on the resources of their country, game and fish. In the fall and winter they kill great numbers of the common red deer, which are very plenty about the Chippewa river. In the spring and summer, their subsistence is principally fish and berries, and a few furried animals."(85) This document indicates the important contribution the fur traders made in supplying trade goods to the interior bands. After the fur trade collapsed, the interior bands of the Chippewa became more dependent upon annuity goods, which were often of inferior quality.

The interior economic cycle the Chippewa followed did not always provide adequate resources to keep the Lac Du Flambeau band above the poverty level. In 1854, the Flambeau Chippewa were noted as being "naked" and "starving".(86) Interestingly, in 1855 these same Indians followed their traditional economic cycle based on nomadic travel to seasonal natural resources.(87) In the 1860's and 1870's, Jean Brunet noted that, in the fall and winter, a mile of Chippewa wigwams lined Brunet Rapids on the Chippewa River. (88) Cleland sums up the Chippewa commitment to their traditional lifestyle well, "Despite the pressures which tended to force Indians into new modes of living, the Lake Superior Chippewa clung tenaciously to their culture."(89)

**Traditional Seasonal Activities**

**SPRING**-March through mid-May.

The annual cycle of the Chippewa started in the early spring when the interior bands arrived at their sugar camps in the northern lake region near their traditional village sites. Leaving their winter camps along the Chippewa River in late December or early January, they used toboggans to travel north. Hiding in the marsh grass to avoid attack from the Dakotas, they moved up the Flambeau and Bear Rivers to their spring sites in the Lac Du Flambeau area.(90)

The best research on the seasonal economic cycles of the interior bands of the Chippewa was completed by ethnologist Frances Densmore. During the early 20th century she compiled data from traditional Chippewa who had participated in the seasonal economic cycles of the mid-19th century. Densmore called this portion of the Chippewa culture the "industrial year", and she had a seventy-four-year-old Chippewa woman named Nodinens give a complete narrative.

> When we got to the sugar bush we took the birch-bark dishes out of the storage and the women began tapping the trees. We had queer-shaped axes made of iron. . . . the men cut holes in the ice, put something over their heads, and fished through the ice. There were plenty of big fish in those days, and the men speared them. My father had some wire, and made fishhooks and tied them basswood cord, and he got lots of pickerel that way. A food cache was always near the sugar camp. We opened that and had all kinds of nice food that we had stored in fall. There were cedar-bark bags of rice, there were cranberries sewed in birch-bark makuks and long strings of dried potatoes and apples. . . . As soon as the creeks opened, the boys caught lots of small fish, and my sister and I carried them to camp and dried them on a frame. My mother had two or three big brass kettles that she had bought from an English trader and a few tin pails from the American trader. She used these in making sugar. . . . We added to our garden every spring . . . We planted potatoes, corn, and pumpkins.(91)

This narrative was nearly a complete representation of the economic activities carried out by the Lac Du Flambeau District bands in the spring.

The spring season required hard work as well as cooperation among Indian families. The Chippewa were often tired and hungry when returning to the sugar camps after their long winter marches. Food caches buried in the fall were vital for the Chippewa until they could gather enough food to start this rigorous season. The caches had to be hidden and prepared well so animals would not disturb them and also to prevent spoilage.

When the sap stopped running and all the sugar was processed, the Flambeau area Indians fished and hunted for a short period during annual spawning runs and bird migrations. Spawning runs started soon after the ice went off the lakes; the Chippewa would spear at night using torches to illuminate the water. Hunting and trapping were carried out for both food and hides, depending on game populations, the bands' food supplies and the fur market.

Planting crude gardens was important for the Chippewa, supplying both produce and storable food for caches. The gardens contained corn, beans, potatoes, and squash, and were planted in open areas where the thick growth of pine would not block out the sun. The interior bands often planted on peninsulas and islands to extend the growing season. The warm water of large lakes or circulating rivers (92) acted as a radiator and so provided enough frost-free days to harvest

corn (93) and other crops requiring longer growing seasons.(94) Potatoes were provided to the Chippewa by fur traders and proved to be an excellent addition to the Indian's diet. The potato was both storable and could grow easily in the short growing season and sandy soil of the interior region.(95)

The northern lake region was not good for hunting due to the heavy forest canopy which denied food for large game populations. The area which the Lac Du Flambeau District bands occupied was a boreal forest which best supported game populations of larger species, moose and black bear. Other large game animals such as elk and deer did enter the boreal forest but kept usually near the prairies and grasslands.96 While occupying their summer residences in the boreal forest, the Chippewa had to hunt and trap smaller animals, and fish more to compensate for small big game populations.

SUMMER-Mid-May through late August

Summer was the easiest time of year to subsist in the interior region of Lake Superior. Food from a variety of sources was plentiful, while the greatest concern was enemy war parties. The Chippewa continued to be active, working on gathering food, repairs of wigwams, building canoes, manufacturing tools and weapons, and preparing for the winter. Nodinen's narrative describes with excellent detail her summer duties as a child in a traditional 19th century Chippewa band: "There was scarcely an idle person around the place. The women made cedar-bark mats and bags for summer

use. . . . They grew in certain places and the girls carried them to the camp. We gathered plenty of basswood bark and birch bark, using our canoes along the lake and streams. We dried berries and put them in bags for winter use."(97)

The men were just as busy hunting and fishing, while taking time to repair and build important equipment. No trapping for hides took place during the summer because the animals' fur had lost its prime due to the warm weather. Fall was approaching and the Chippewa had to be prepared with proper equipment to harvest natural resources during the up coming labor intensive period. Summer was the season for war, repair, building, cultural celebrations, and preparation for the difficult months ahead.

FALL-Late August through mid-November

Fall represented the most critical season for he Chippewa. Food stores had to be established from the fall harvest, fishing, and hunting to avoid starvation and hardship during the long winter. The Chippewa's economic cycle was most flexible during this season due to the abundance of resources and the importance of large harvests. The interior bands had to decide which natural resources were most abundant, accessible, and would best suit their economic needs.

Nodinens continued her useful narrative of the traditional Chippewa interior bands economies describing the fall duties of Indian women:

> Next came the rice season. The rice fields were quite a distance away and we camped while

> we gathered rice. Then we returned to our summer camp and harvested our potatoes, corn, pumpkins, and squash, putting them in cache which were not far from the gardens.
>
> By this time men had gone away for the fall trapping. When the harvest was over and colder weather came, the women began their fall fishing, often working at this until after the snow came. When the men returned from fall trapping we started for the winter camp.(98)

Nodinens' description of the fall cycle was consistent with the Lac Du Flambeau District bands. Her narrative gives an outstanding account of the specialization of men and women participating in fall economic activities. Cooperation and specialization among band members made it possible for the Chippewa to secure enough food for the winter and early spring.

Wildrice gathering was an important part of the fall activities because the rice was a major portion of the Chippewa diet and was storable in caches. In late August, the wildrice matures and must be harvested quickly because the tops would soon fall into the water. Indians worked extremely hard during this period and attempted to gather and process as much wildrice as possible. Unfortunately, wildrice was an unreliable source of food due to fluctuations in water level caused by climatic changes and beaver dams. (99) During periods of wildrice shortages, the Chippewa depended more upon their gardens, nuts, and berries for storable goods for caches.

After the rice harvest, the women started to harvest the gardens which had been planted in the spring. If time

allowed, the women could also harvest cranberries and nuts which matured for harvest in the early fall. The food was divided and then prepared to be put in cache or transported to winter camps. The women would also fish during the late fall, while the men prepared for the fall journey down the Chippewa River to the traditional fall and winter hunting grounds.

It was possible for the Chippewa to stay in the interior during the late fall to harvest lake trout, white fish, and cisco. Each of these fish spawn in great numbers during the late fall and could be caught easily with gill nets. Trout Lake, and or many other lakes in the Lac Du Flambeau and Manitowish Waters area have large fisheries for these fall spawning fish which could help support a family choosing to winter in the Lac Du Flambeau area. After 1837, the annuity process drew the Chippewa of the Lac Du Flambeau District north to La Point; some interior bands remained longer on Lake Superior to participate in the lake shore economy and fished the fall spawning runs.(100)

Those Chippewa who made the Lac Du Flambeau area their permanent residence and did not migrate to the Chippewa River probably trapped and gained economic support from the fur traders. The Indians who trapped often had agents of the fur traders wintering in the traditional villages supplying the needed economic support for Chippewa families in the scarcity of winter.(101) The Chippewa remained flexible during the fur trade era, fishing, trapping, hunting,

trading, and traveling to gain the needed supplies to subsist.

After 1837, the annuity process competed with the traditional fall economic activities of the Chippewa. The treaties which guaranteed the Chippewa trade goods and services created a conflict of economic activities. Due to poor regulation by the United States Government many of the Chippewa were only receiving a fraction of the annuities agreed upon. Making matters worse, American miners and lumbermen frequently harassed and robbed the Indians of their valuables when traveling to La Pointe. The Chippewa tended to participate in the annuity process irregularly due to the problems of annuity distribution and conflicting economic activities in the fall.

The majority of the Chippewa traveled down the Chippewa River in late fall to an area between Chippewa Falls and the junction of the Chippewa and Flambeau Rivers.(102) This was the traditional wintering site of many interior bands from all over Wisconsin.(103) This region was easily defended against enemies due to the large concentration of interior bands. This area of the Chippewa River was near the game-rich tension zone and which would support large native populations through the winter.(104)

WINTER-Mid-November through March

Winter was the season of hardship in Chippewa country. Chippewa survival depended upon the weather, food caches, successful hunting and fishing, and good preparation.

Efficiency in all winter activities was important to conserve energy and stay warm. Nodinens commented that, "When I was young everything was systematic. We worked day and night and made the best use of the materials we had."(105) From Nodinens' narrative of the winter cycle, it is clear that organization played a critical role in the interior bands winter activities.

> . . . when the ice froze on the lakes we started for the game field. I carried half of the bulrush mats and my mother carried the other half. We rolled the blankets inside the mats; and if there was a little baby my mother put it inside the roll, cradle board and all. It was a warm place and safe for the baby. I carried a kettle, such as rice and dried berries, and we always took a bag of dried pumpkin flowers, as they were so nice to thicken the meat gravy during the winter. There were six families in our party, and when we found a nice place in the deep woods we made our winter camp.
>
> . . . We snared rabbits and partridges for food and cleaned and froze all that we did and not need at the time.
>
> . . .My father was a good hunter and sometimes killed two deer in a day. Some hunters took a sled to bring back the game, but more frequently they brought back only part of the animal, and the women went the next day and packed the rest of the meat on their backs.
>
> . . . During the winter my grandmother made lots of fish nets of nettle-stalk fiber. Everyone was busy. Some of the men started on long hunting trips in the middle of winter . . .. (106)

The narrative continued to reflect the traditional winter activities of the Lac Du Flambeau District bands. Those interior bands which chose to stay in the Lac Du Flambeau area, were likely dependent on the fur traders for support. Most of the Lac Du Flambeau District bands did migrate down the Chippewa River and wintered near the tension zone.

The rapids area of the Chippewa River had a milder climate than the northern reaches of the Chippewa's domain

and could supply a large Indian population with water and food. The river area above Chippewa Falls where the interior bands usually had their winter camps was a series of large rapids and falls. The turbulent water would stay open all year round and would allow for an easy water source as temperatures plummeted.

Close to the tension zone the Chippewa hunted the herds of deer, elk, and bison which roamed the prairies and forest edge to the south. A fur trader always had a winter post near the Chippewa side of the tension zone, providing trade goods and food to any Indian bringing hides back from the contested area. Fishing on the river provided a fair source of food; this activity was often carried out by the women while men were hunting and trapping.

Sometime in or near January, the Chippewa would split away from the large winter camp on the Chippewa River and make the journey north to their sugar camps. The Chippewa frequently just abandoned their canoes and made toboggans to transport their families' possessions. It was a long and difficult walk back to the traditional village sites of the Chippewa, but soon a new economic year would start with the sugar season.

The Chippewa were aware of both the influences of nature and the European/American influences on their economies and subsistence.(107) Cleland summarizes the Chippewa's economic approach well:

> In truth these Chippewa people were struggling, experimenting and changing. Developing new strategies

to enhance their survival as individuals and as a people. The fact that they did survive under unusually harsh conditions attests to the success of these strategies.

Understanding how the 19/th century Chippewa survived and how they used the resources of their environment to do so must necessarily start with the premise that they were not merely reacting to events devised and imposed on them by others. To the contrary, the Chippewa developed their own strategies to manipulate their culture and natural environment to try to achieve their own ends."(100)

## CHAPTER V

### THE FUR TRADE AND LAC DU FLAMBEAU DISTRICT BANDS

In the 17/th century, during either the Great Lakes Fur Fairs or at Sault Ste. Marie, French fur traders made first contact with the Chippewa. This marked the beginning of a culturally destructive relationship which would ultimately lead to modifications in the traditional Chippewa lifestyle. The fur trade was the Chippewa Indian's access mechanism to European culture. Until about 1820, the fur trade was the major European contact with the Chippewa.

The economic demand for furs in Europe created huge profits and drove the fur traders deep into Chippewa country to extract the wealth of pelts and hides. The French, English, and Americans all took their turn in the fur trade of the Great Lakes, each modifying the traditional lifestyle of the Chippewa. By the 1840's, when the fur market bottomed out the Chippewa were casualties of a war they did not understand and were unable to fight. The battles were fought at trading posts with alcohol, diseases, and strange economies which divided the Chippewa nation and altered its culture in ways that were corrosive to its traditional lifestyle.

The fur traders entered the Chippewa's country seemingly as friends, offering new economic opportunities. The

European and American fur trade of the Lake Superior region was controlled by several different fur companies. All companies, regardless of nationality or ownership, operated similarly: they acquired furs from the Indians in return for trade goods or credit. Each fur trader's duties would include operating areas of exchange or trading posts, transporting trade goods and furs between company headquarters and wilderness sites, and making the Chippewa dependent upon the fur trade and accountable for credit.

Fur traders gave food, rum, and trade goods to the Chippewa on credit for future exchanges of fur, labor, or food.(109) The standard economic measure for credit or exchange in this market economy was the plu, which was a fully-prepared beaver pelt ready for market. The plu had specific value relative to other hides and pelts to maintain consistency in fur trade transactions.(110) To satisfy these credit debts, the Chippewa had to deliver goods on the trader's terms, which allowed each fur trader greater control in this market economy. Fur traders were often a ruthless breed of men who ignored morality, government regulations, and the Chippewa's best interests to create small profits for themselves and huge profits for shareholders in the fur companies.

In the late 17th century, the Chippewa established a settlement at Chequamegon, acting as middlemen for the French traders. Traders manipulated the Chippewa with the incentives of trade goods such as alcohol, steel knives,

copper kettles, guns, traps, and other wondrous tools which would revolutionize their lifestyles. It was understood by the Chippewa that well-prepared pelts from the Lake Superior wilderness would be accepted by the French in exchange for the trade goods from Europe. The Chippewa modified their economic cycle and entered the interior region as native fur traders. Subsistence economic activities along the lake shore were supplemented by economic gains from the fur trade. As middlemen in the fur trade, the Chippewa benefited by gaining superior trade goods compared to other Indians. In the market economy of the fur trade, the margin of profit for the Chippewa was more and better trade goods compared to other Indian tribes. The Chippewa of Chequamegon eventually lost their privileged status in the fur trade. Due to economic competition from French traders in the Mississippi River region in the 1720's, the Chippewa-Dakota Alliance ended in 1736.

Familiar with the advantages of the fur trade, the Chippewa fought their way into the interior region of Lake Superior to hunt and trap furs. During succeeding years, the fur traders realized that the annual cycle which the interior bands of the Chippewa followed greatly reduced the number of pelts these Indians could trap and later trade. In an attempt to increase profits, the fur traders changed their methods of operation with the Chippewa and entered the interior region to trade.

The fur traders' investment strategy was based on

modifying the traditional Chippewa nomadic lifestyle and holding the Indian bands in the best trapping country. This business venture cost fur traders more in the short run because the Chippewa needed increased trade goods to survive in the interior lake region. Traders lived in the winter camps of each Chippewa band to provide support and establish credit for future exchanges. Outside of their economic cycle, the Chippewa soon became dependent upon fur traders for support and were subjected to a credit system which forced the Indians to trap and hunt constantly to scratch out a meager existence. Probably by 1784 and certianly by 1791, members of the Flambeau area bands took up permanent residence in the Lac Du Flambeau District, in part due to economic pressures of the fur trade. The fur traders had created a dependent Chippewa work force which would gather pelts and hides in exchange for over-priced goods and to balance credit systems that fur traders controlled.

In 1792, the North West Company established the first permanent fur post in Lac Du Flambeau,(111) although fur traders had traveled into the Flambeau region earlier.(112) The fur traders, led by Chippewa guides, followed the traditional routes that the interior bands had established. The well-worn portages and small Indian villages linked the entire lake region, allowing complete coverage of the best trapping territory.

Interior trading posts became more important, as fur traders wanted to increase profits and drive out competing

companies. From each fur post, traders would send employees called "Courir La Drouine" into the wilderness to hold the Flambeau Indians accountable for credit owed.(113) Residing in the small interior band's villages, these fur company employees would take furs, meat, wildrice, and crops to satisfy the debts incurred by the Indians. In his 1804 journal, Malhiot, a North West fur trader in Lac Du Flambeau, described the typical operation of a Courir La Drouine, ". . . he runs no risk because he arrives at the village, I suppose, with a keg of rum. He finds the Savages sober; he gets from them 10 or 11 sacks of wild rice for which he gives his keg, then leaves at once and is rid of them. . .."(114) This procedure denied the Chippewa the resources to survive and disrupted their culture due to the constant disruption into the fur industry.

This was an intentional practice implemented by fur traders buying storable foods such as wildrice, potatoes, berries, and sugar to later force the Chippewa to trap animals whose hides and fur were in demand. The Chippewa were not interested in building their material wealth and, if they had enough food and trade goods to survive, they tended to ignore the fur traders.(115) Using alcohol for exchange, the traders would buy up much of the storable food the Chippewa produced to create scarcity during the winter.(116) Animal hides were in their best condition during the colder months, and the scarcity of food gave the fur traders leverage to force the Chippewa to gather pelts and hides.

Alcohol, usually rum, was the perfect trade good for the fur traders to exchange with the Chippewa. Rum was concentrated and could be carried in small quantities to later be diluted, it was storable, and tended to be addictive to those who consumed it.

In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, two trading posts existed in Lac Du Flambeau. At the turn of the 19th century, the North West Company post and the X Y Company post were both in operation. In the late 18th century, the North West Company had established a fur trade empire in the Lake Superior region, and expanded into Lac Du Flambeau.(117) By 1796, dissidents from the North West Company had formed a rival business known as the X Y Company. The X Y Company's procedure included setting up a competing post close to a North West Company post in an attempt to undercut the "Nor'Westers" prices. Unfortunately, this competition did not assist the Indians in gaining fair prices or a better standard of living as some capitalists might suggest. To the contrary, the result was cutthroat competition which centered on the unrestricted use of rum to coerce the Chippewas into unreasonable trade.

The period of fur trade competition in Lac Du Flambeau lasted from about 1796-1805, leaving in its wake death, cultural destruction, and social turmoil. The North West post was economically allied with five remaining Chippewa bands of Lac Du Flambeau District, while the X Y Company had the support of the Lac Du Flambeau band.(118) Friction

between the two different Chippewa factions did occur, sometimes resulting in hours of combat and bloodshed.(119) In 1804, the X Y Company was bought out by the North West Company marking the end of the dangerous competition in Flambeau. Sadly, the competition continued into 1805 due to the slow delivery of news and the precedents set earlier between the Indians and fur traders. After the business consolidation of 1804, the new company abandoned the X Y Post leaving only the North West post in operation.

After the war of 1812, the United States began to exercise its new control over the Lac Du Flambeau District causing the fur trade of Lac Du Flambeau to again change ownership. The American Fur Company was controlled by John Jacob Astor and took over the southern Lake Superior fur trade in 1816 when federal legislation permitted only American traders to be licensed.(120) This legislature had forced the Northwest Company to leave the territories of the United States. By 1818, Astor's American Fur Company (also known as the Southwest Company) had moved into the abandoned North West Company post at Lac Du Flambeau and operated there until 1845, when the fur trade was abandoned throughout the Chippewa's country. (121)

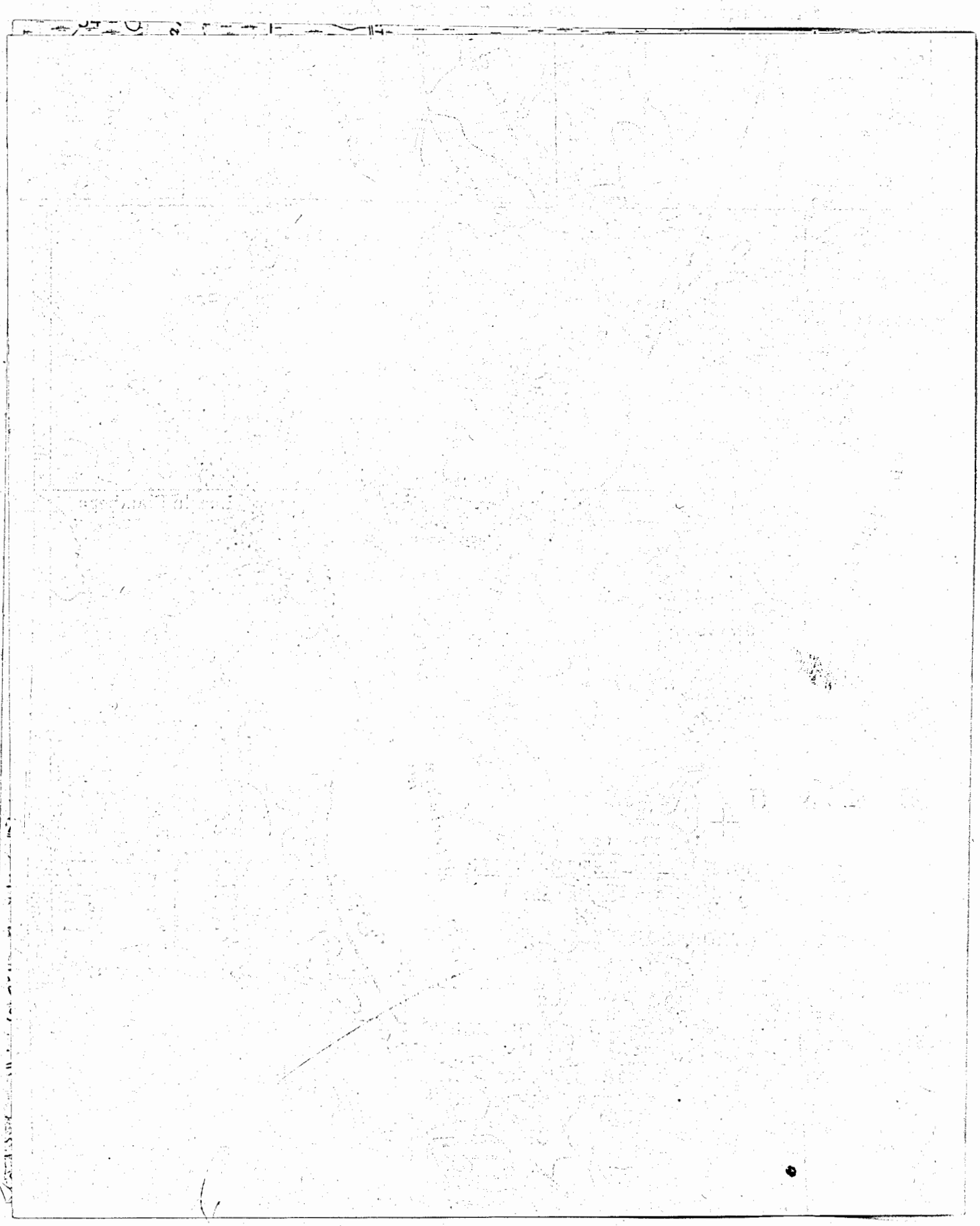
## CHAPTER VI

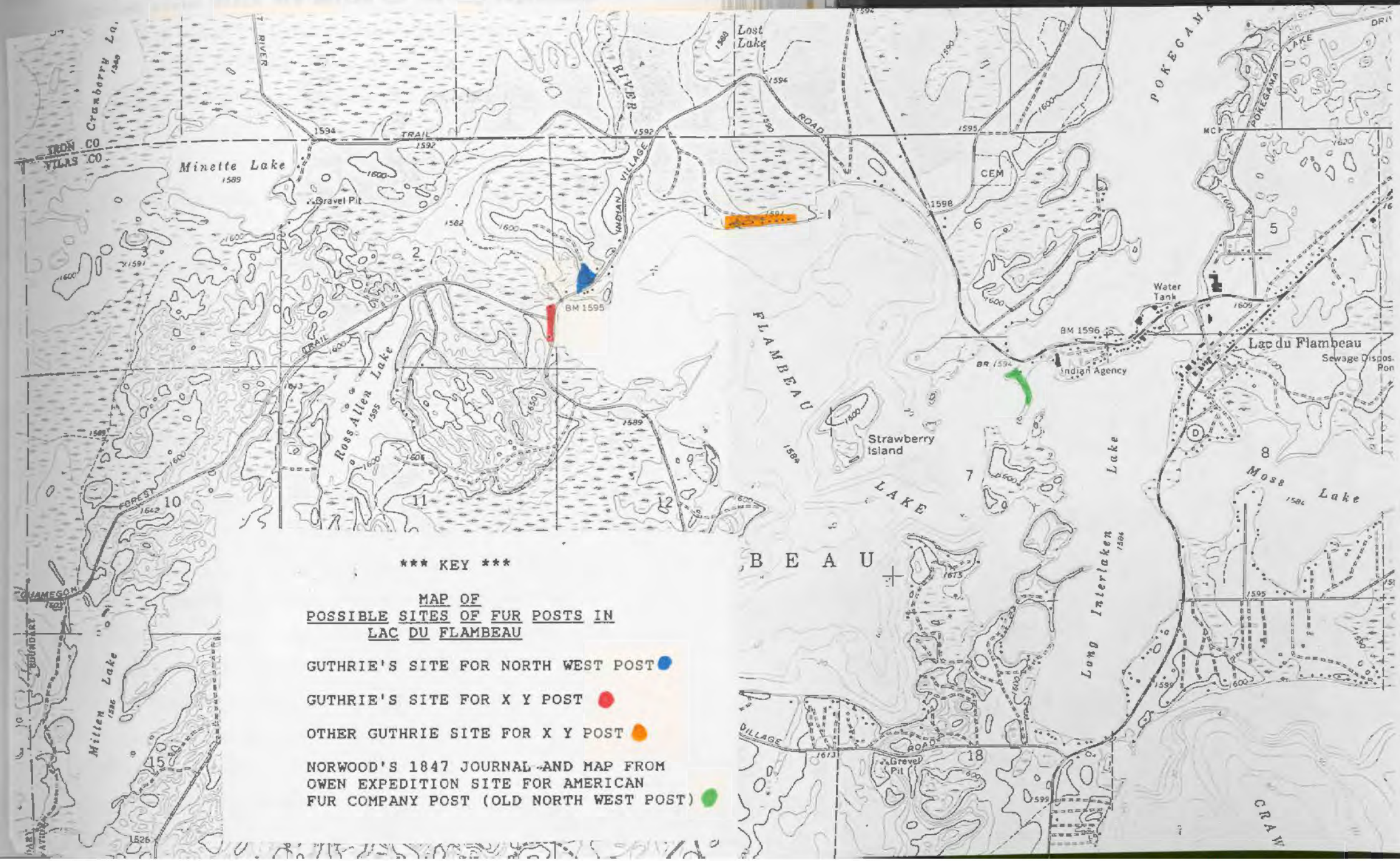
## POSSIBLE SITES OF THE FUR TRADE POSTS IN LAC DU FLAMBEAU

No record of the precise location of either the North West/American Fur Company's or X Y Company's posts has yet been found. Several primary sources however give rough descriptions of where these posts may have been located. Ben Guthrie, a long time resident of Lac Du Flambeau and noted historian, has researched the Flambeau fur trade post sites and is recognized as an authority on the history of Lac Du Flambeau. Using primary documents and conversations he had with Chippewa in the early part of this century, Guthrie has selected four possible sites which may have contained the fur trade posts of Lac Du Flambeau.

The map 6-1 of Lac Du Flambeau indicates the four possible sites as described by Ben Guthrie. The traditional Indian village of the Lac Du Flambeau Indian band was located at the mouth of the Bear River in the Northwest corner of Flambeau Lake. The red and blue sites marked on map 6-1 would have been in the village area and close to the band. Interestingly, some data suggests that one or both of the fur posts may have been located away from the traditional village of the Lac Du Flambeau Indians. The green and orange areas on map 6-1 indicate regions of the lake away from the Flambeau village which may have contained the fur trading

Diagram 6-1




*** KEY ***
MAP OF
POSSIBLE SITES OF FUR POSTS IN
LAC DU FLAMBEAU
GUTHRIE'S SITE FOR NORTH WEST POST
GUTHRIE'S SITE FOR X Y POST
OTHER GUTHRIE SITE FOR X Y POST
NORWOOD'S 1847 JOURNAL AND MAP FROM OWEN EXPEDITION SITE FOR AMERICAN FUR COMPANY POST (OLD NORTH WEST POST)
Minette Lake
Lost Lake
Ross Allen Lake
Strawberry Island
Lac du Flambeau
Indian Agency
Water Tank
Gravel Pit
Moss Lake
Long Interlaken
Miller Lake
FLAMBEAU
LAKE
RIVER
TRAIL
ROAD
VILLAGE
CEM
BM 1595
BM 1596
IRON CO
VILAS CO

posts.

The colored areas which are marked on the map represents between 100 and 250 yards, indicating that, even when estimating post locations, there is a great deal of uncertainty. The trading posts were actually large, as described by Victor Malhiot, the North West fur trader of Lac Du Flambeau in 1804: ". . . a house twenty feet square, of logs placed one on the other made by four men; 70 cords of fire-wood chopped; pickets sawn for a fort; a bastion covered; a clearing for sowing 8 kegs of potatoes. . .."(122) The North West post, as described by Malhiot, would have taken up one or two acres of land, limiting the possible sites where a fur post could have been located. The post probably would not have been built too close to the village due to the room which it demanded for operation. Water access, which was also important to the fur traders, would be limited in the area of the Indian village, due to the established Indian family sites along the lake.

The primary journals which best describe the forts' locations have differing references to the actual position of the posts. The most common references were to the North West-American post which was in operation for more than fifty years. The X Y Company would only have been in operation for a maximum of eight years and few journals refer to its location. The references in all journals allow for some speculation on the actual location of the fur posts and are worth investigating.

The greatest amount of data concerning the fur trade of Lac Du Flambeau came from Victor Malhiot's journals from 1804-05. Malhiot kept semi-daily accounts of the activities which affected the fur trade of Flambeau during the period of heavy competition with the X Y Company. Unfortunately, Malhiot did not include a map of Flambeau, nor did he ever give the precise location of either post. Malhiot did have a great interest in the status of his competitors at the X Y post, and he made many entries into his journals which document X Y activities. These entries give vague references to the X Y post's location relative to the North West post, and often refer to points of travel and the sequence of Indian contacts which further reveals some possibilities of location.

Malhiot had several entries which indicate that the distance from his post to the village of Lac Du Flambeau and the X Y post was significant enough to require lengthy travel and to deny visible contact. Malhiot was always interested in the activities of the X Y post and its fur trader, Chorette. All X Y entries by Malhiot refer to information being obtained from people traveling from the X Y post to the North West post or by Malhiot himself in travelling to the competitor's post. During the period of competition between the Flambeau fur traders, information was important and was emphasized in the journals. Malhiot would have spied on the trade and activities of Chorette if he was in a position to do so. The only reference to the location of the X Y post

from the North West post was from gun-shots which would travel great distances.(123) No other entries clearly refer to the position of the X Y post or the village of Flambeau from the premises of the North West post.

Malhiot would probably have located his North West post away from the traditional village of the Lac Du Flambeau band. The X Y Company had close ties to the Lac Du Flambeau band, while the North West post did most of its trading with the five other bands which occupied the Lac Du Flambeau District. The two economic factions of Chippewa sometimes fought one another and assaulted rival fur traders.(124)

The North West post was probably close to the water according to the many references of canoe arrivals at the post, "Thirty canoes arrived here at noon. Chorette's Savages made me a present of 3 sacks of wild rice for which I gave them a keg of rum and a brasse of Tobacco."(125) This quotation evidences three significant details of the North West post's location: first, the close proximity of the post to the water, secondly, Chorette's Indians had to travel to Malhiot by canoe, and finally, the shore near the fort had to be large enough for thirty canoes. Other references by Malhiot indicate that the X Y post was at some distance and required canoe travel, "Today I am sending 3 men to Chorette's to get my canoe."(126) Three men had to be sent to get his canoe, which logically required the third man to paddle Malhiot's vessel back. Indicating further that water travel was necessary to travel between the X Y post and North

West post.

Malhiot also made entries which suggested that the North West post was some distance from the village of Lac Du Flambeau. "A band of rascals who are camped here near the Fort have gone to camp at the village of Lac Du Flambeau, until my people come."(127) This entry indicates that there was enough distance between the North West post and the Village of Lac Du Flambeau to completely separate the two. The references to the distance to the village of Lac Du Flambeau in Malhiot's journals were similar to the X Y post references, perhaps indicating that the village and X Y post were close to one another.

The best indication of the North West post's location in Malhiot's journals was a discussion with a Trout Lake Indian named l'Outarde who had just arrived at the Fort. The conversation dealt with the return of Bazinet, one of Malhiot's men who was traveling by the Flambeau Trail portage from Lake Superior with supplies. "[l'Outarde] asked me where Bazinet was and told him he had gone to the Portage, and would not be back until tonight or tomorrow night because he was afraid to pass the village of Lac Du Flambeau in the day time lest he might be robbed:. . . [l'Outarde] re-entered a moment afterward and said to me: 'No, no, Bazinet will not be robbed,' and he at once commanded with authority three young men to go and meet him."(128)

The entry illustrates that the village of Lac Du Flambeau had to be passed when bringing goods from Lake

Superior up the Bear River. The Flambeau band's attack would suggest that the North West post was not in the village because Bazinet had to pass the village of Lac Du Flambeau to avoid ambush. When l'Outarde attempted to support Bazinet's arrival, three men had to be sent from the North West post to the village area for assistance. Since l'Outarde was a member of the Trout Lake band, he had arrived from the east, off Lake Pokegama, and encountered the North West post first. He then traveled to the village of Lac Du Flambeau, indicating that the North West Company was east of the Indian village and required some degree of travel.

In 1820, James Duane Doty traveled to Lac Du Flambeau, keeping a journal with vague comments and a poor map of his journey. The material about Flambeau is very limited but deals precisely with the status of the Southwest or American (The old North West) fur trading post. "The Company's fort stands on the north side of the lake. The lake is crooked, is four miles long and one broad."(129) This source seems rather ambiguous and not very valuable for locating the American Fur Company's Post, until Doty's map is observed. A strange entry is marked on Doty's map, a box in the northeast corner of "Lake Du Flambeau" is marked "Estab.".(130) This may refer to the establishment of the American Fur Company post of Lac Du Flambeau, illustrating the earliest map record of a fur trading post in Flambeau.

Henry Schoolcraft, in a hand-sketched map of the interior region, also placed the American Fur Company post on

the northeast corner of Flambeau Lake near the channel to Lake Pokegama.(131)

The best source available for the location of the American Fur Company post is an outstanding journal and map created by Dr. J. G. Norwood, a geologist attached to the Owen geological expedition of 1847. Norwood and other geologists operating for the American Government were state-of-the-art scientists who were attempting to assess the natural resources available in the Lake Superior region. The data and maps which these scientists accumulated were as accurate as humanly possible in the 19th century.

Fortunately, Dr. Norwood traveled through Lac Du Flambeau and entered into his records the location of the American Fur post. "The [Bear or Lac Du Flambeau] river is exceedingly crooked, its general course being S.S.E. We reached the lake in the afternoon, and, crossing its north-west arm, camped near the old trading house of the American Fur Company, now deserted."(132) Later, Dr. Norwood made another entry into his record concerning the location of his campsite near the American Fur post, "The arm of the lake, near which we encamped, is called by the Indians, Pokegoma; a name given to any lake connected with another, or with a running stream, by a very short outlet."(133)

The map which Dr. Norwood drew of Lac Du Flambeau Lake marked the American Fur Company post at the eastern most point of land near the channel in between Flambeau Lake and Pokegama Lake.(134) This site is represented in green and

enlarged on the map 6-1 of possible sites for fur posts in Lac Du Flambeau. The enlarged map clearly demonstrates the accuracy of map and journal references by Dr. Norwood concerning the location of the American Fur Company's post, the Indian village, and the Bear River. Norwood's work has proven to be accurate, and, if he did camp on the point of land on Flambeau Lake near Pokegama Lake as described in his journals and on his map, the location of the American Fur Company post would be limited to a very small area. This narrow peninsula could easily be investigated for evidence by archaeologists to determine whether or not the post actually did exist at this location.

Much of the analysis on the location of fur post sites in Lac Du Flambeau is speculative. The documents that are available only leave a few hints to the location of the North West/American post site, while no data exists which would indicate the location of the X Y post. Interestingly, the primary documents from Malhiot, Doty, Schoolcraft, and Norwood all give some support to the North West/American Post site being in the northeast corner of Flambeau Lake near the Pokegama channel.

Logistically, this location would have been favorable for fur traders because it was the most central location for all canoe routes leading to Lac Du Flambeau. From the south, the Wisconsin River canoe routes entered; whether traveling from Lake Tomahawk or the Tomahawk River, all canoes passed through Long Interlaken Lake to that peninsula of land. From

the north and east, travel from the Manitowish River basin would lead the Chippewa from Trout Lake, Spider Lake (Cross Lake), Laura Lake (White Elk lake), and Lac Vieux Desert through Pokegama Lake to the same peninsula. From the west entered the Bear River where the Lac Du Flambeau Indian village was located. Traveling from Chippewa River, the La Court Oreilles band, Turtle Portage band, and Lake Superior from the Flambeau Trail would enter Flambeau Lake. The distance here was only a mile-and-a-half from the point of land which may hold the original site of the North West/American post.

## CHAPTER VII

## THE INDIVIDUAL BANDS OF THE LAC DU FLAMBEAU DISTRICT

Six different Chippewa bands inhabited the Lac Du Flambeau District: Lac Du Flambeau, Pelican Lake, Lac Vieux Desert, Turtle Portage, Trout Lake, and Wisconsin River. Due to incomplete historic records, the nature of a nomadic existence, and their isolated villages the specific location and history of these bands is often questionable. Using available records, documents, and some conjectures, the historic status of each band will be analyzed.

Each band will be evaluated in a separate section of this chapter. The "Lac Du Flambeau District Map" and trip ticket maps from chapter nine will be used to indicate the precise location of each band. The overview of the specific interior bands will analyze their location, unique characteristics, economic resources, transportation routes, and historical background. A complete history of the Chippewa in the Lac Du Flambeau District is not intended, only a general overview of each band. Occasionally the analysis of these bands will conflict with modern academic interpretations, requiring more detailed use of evidence to support the interpretation.

### LAC DU FLAMBEAU BAND

Lac Du Flambeau (Lake of the Flame) received its name from fur traders who translated the Chippewa name Waus-wag-im-ing, meaning "Lake of the Torches". This name was applied because of the traditional practice of spearing fish by torch light in area lakes. This band had the best historic documentation of the six bands in the Lac Du Flambeau District, and became the central village for this district. The special attention and status the Lac Du Flambeau village received was probably due to its central location. Reviewing the "Lac Du Flambeau District Map" or any of the trip ticket maps in chapter nine, it is apparent that most Chippewa travel passed through, or close to, the Lac Du Flambeau band's village.

As a result of the beneficial location of the Lac Du Flambeau band, fur trading posts were established on Flambeau Lake. The other five bands in this district would travel through Flambeau Lake to trade, en route to the Chippewa River for fall hunts and to fight the Dakotas. Logistically, the Flambeau band was one of the closest bands to Lake Superior and was relatively easy to supply during the fur trade era.

After the break-up of the Chequamegon settlement Lac Du Flambeau became one of the centers of the Midewiwin religion.(135) The traditional village of Lac Du Flambeau had a Midewiwin Longhouse, which was a place of religious ceremony. All practicing Chippewa from other bands in this district would travel to the Longhouse for special Medewinin

ceremonies.

The Lac Du Flambeau area also had two different Spirit Stones which were of great religious importance. Medicine Rock is located on a peninsula of land southeast of the source of the Bear River and the traditional village of Lac Du Flambeau.(136) Today, when traditional Chippewa pass Medicine Rock, they still make offerings such as tobacco.(137) In the late 19th century, when white canoeists came too close to Medicine Rock, the Chippewa in the village would fire shots in the air to scare away the intruding visitors.(138) The other Spirit Stone is a number of associated small stones located in the Lac Du Flambeau area called the Crawling Stones, located on Crawling Stone Lake. "These are supposed to have been placed by Nenebozho (an important Chippewa religious figure) when he was being pursued by an angry bear. They enabled him to escaped."(139)

The specific location of the Lac Du Flambeau village has been accurately pin-pointed by many historical documents. The Chippewa of this village were located at the source of the Bear River on Flambeau Lake. For reference, the Lac Du Flambeau village is illustrated on every trip ticket in chapter nine and appears on the "Lac Du Flambeau District Map".

Not all of the Chippewa of the Lac Du Flambeau band lived in the village,(140) the members of this band were spread out among dozens of lakes which surrounded the traditional village.(141) Strawberry Island, on the west

side of Flambeau Lake, was often used by the Chippewa. Strawberry Island was a summer residence and garden site; this island was also the location of a major battle between the Chippewa and Dakota tribes.(142) The population of the village fluctuated as the Lac Du Flambeau band pursued natural resources during their seasonal economic activities.

Most important subsistence resources used by the Chippewa were in the vicinity of Lac Du Flambeau. Sugar camps were located throughout the lake region of Lac Du Flambeau, with some large sugar camps were located on Squirrel Lake and Pine Lake.(143) Gardens were planted on the peninsulas or islands of large lakes to extend the growing season. This phenomenon known as the "lake effect" prevented early frosts near lake shores because the lake water remained warm in the fall. This gardening practice is illustrated well on Strawberry Island of Flambeau Lake, where the Chippewa cultivated five acres of gardens in the 19th century.(144) The Bear River near the Lac Du Flambeau village provided abundant wildrice crops which supplied the majority of the storable food for this band. Many other area waters contained wildrice fields, but the Bear River had a large crop which was easily accessible. In the 1930's, Jack Messing, a white resident, found a traditional dugout canoe partially-buried on Horseshoe Bend of the Bear River. The boat was made from a cut log and scooped-out, creating a low sided, flat, two person canoe.(145) The design of the canoe would have been outstanding for harvesting wildrice in the

shallows, and the location of the cached canoe was in an area of abundant wildrice.

An 1843 census, enumerated 274 Chippewa Indians and half-breeds in 58 familes of the Lac Du Flambeau band.(146) In the 1854 treaty, the federal government chose Lac Du Flambeau to be the primary reservation for the District bands. By the early 1860's, the government established a blacksmith and other shops to help support the Chippewa; they located them in the present town of Lac Du Flambeau. (147)

PELICAN LAKE

The location and names of the Pelican Lake band have frequently been confused by modern scholars. Historical documents have referred to this band as "Le Lac", "The Lakes", and "Pelican Lake", while the Chippewa called the Pelican Lake band "Ke-chi-waub-i-jish".(148) Pelican Lake was the farthest of all interior district bands from Lac Du Flambeau, at least five days travel away. The best maps which supporting the location and status of the Pelican Lake band are "Lac Du Flambeau District Map" and the trip ticket "Eastern Route to the Wisconsin River". Scant historical documentation supports the Pelican Lake band's past, due to the isolated area this band occupied and its long distance from major settlements.

No existing document indicates the precise location of the Pelican Lake band, although white settlers in the 1880's

noted a village of Potawatomi Indians on the peninsula in the northeast corner of Pelican Lake.(149) Bob Gough, a scholar researching the nearby Mole Lake (Sokoagan) band of the Chippewa, suggests that the Potawatomi and Chippewa occasionally mixed their membership in Indian settlements.150 Potawatomi and Chippewa tribes share a common heritage and similar language, allowing for relative ease when intermixing. It is possible that the Potawatomi who occupied the northeastern peninsula of Pelican Lake inhabited the traditional site of the Chippewa due to an earlier common existence.

The band required about two days to travel from Pelican Lake to the Wisconsin River. The advantage of the Pelican Lake location was its close proximity to the Wolf River. On the east end of Pelican Lake there was a 3-1/2 mile portage to the Wolf River. This portage crossed the divide of these two important watersheds which both supplied valuable natural resources to the Chippewa.

The Pelican Lake band was fluid, constantly traveling to both watersheds to gather natural resources on which their subsistence depended. In 1839, the La Pointe Indian Agency questioned the chief of the Pelican Lake band about an incident of Chippewa killing livestock near Plover Portage (Stevens Point). The chief indicated that his band was in the area but did not participate in that illegal act, he put the blame on members of the Wisconsin River band.(151) Many historical documents confuse the Pelican Lake band and the

Wisconsin River band. The Indian Agency source indicates that the Pelican Lake band was traveling hundreds of miles along the Wisconsin River in their nomadic cycle. In 1804, Malhiot a North West Trader, also showed that the Chippewa of "The Lakes" (Pelican Lake) traveled to Lac Du Flambeau to participate in the fur trade. Indicating the extensive nomadic range of the Pelican Lake band and suggesting that this band traveled more broadly than any other of the Lac Du Flambeau District bands.

Unfortunately, little information has been found indicating the Pelican Lake band's activities on the Wolf River. Warren, a native Chippewa historian, mentions that the members of the Pelican Lake band did migrate from the Green Bay area prior to establishing their residence on Pelican Lake.(152) It is likely that the Pelican Lake band did interact with the Mole Lake band to the east. The Mole Lake band was the closest Chippewa settlement to the Pelican Lake band; Mole Lake was also famous for its large wildrice fields. The Pelican Lake band may have occasionally followed the Mole Lake band to the Peshtigo River for fall hunts and for establishing winter camps, rather than traveling twice the distance to the Chippewa River.

A questionable source, an historical marker on the Mole Lake Reservation, claims that in 1806, a large battle was fought between the Chippewa and Dakota for the wildrice fields of Mole Lake. Documents listed the casualties for the Dakota at this monumental battle at 500; if the battle was a

fraction of this proportion the Mole Lake band would have needed massive Chippewa support. It would have been logical for the Pelican Lake band to support the Mole Lake band due to their close proximity and probable dependence on common resources.

Most subsistence resources used by the Pelican Lake band were located between the Wisconsin River and Wolf River basins. Pelican Lake had wildrice along much of its shores prior to the establishment of a dam which increased the water levels and destroyed that delicate crop.(153) Other area lakes and rivers contained an abundant supply of this important storable food. A sugar camp was located at the village site in the northeast corner of Pelican Lake; in the 1920's John Artus, a local resident, observed old abandoned birchbark sugar containers grown into maple trees throughout the peninsula.(154) Although no records exist, gardens along Pelican Lake would have been established on the islands and peninsulas on the lake to protect the crops from early fall frosts.

The federal government, in an 1843 census, enumerated the Pelican Lake band at 134 Chippewa Indians and half-breeds, in 38 families.(155) In 1837, the Pelican Lake band did not sign the Chippewa treaty with the United States Government and so had to petition late for their annuities, privileges, and services.(156) After 1848, Warren noted, disease nearly destroyed the Pelican Lake band: "They have since nearly been cut off by the smallpox, and other diseases

introduced among them by the white population, which has spread over this portion of their former country."(157)

LAC VIEUX DESERT BAND

Lac Vieux Desert was the oldest known Indian site in the interior region of the Lac Du Flambeau District, and received its name from early explorers and fur traders. The French translation of the lake means "Lake of the Desert",(158) or the mongrel version "old planting-ground", while the Chippewa named this region "Kay-ye-usish" or "Ka-ta-kit-te-kon".(159) In the 1660's, the first Indians whites encountered at Lac Vieux Desert were Ottawas, the Chippewa probably did not inhabit the Lac Vieux Desert region until the mid-18th century.(160) The best maps which supports the location and area of Lac Vieux Desert band are "Lac Du Flambeau District Map" and the trip-ticket "Northeastern Routes to Lac Vieux Desert".

The location of the traditional village in Lac Vieux Desert was on South or Cow island, only in the 1880's did the Chippewa of this band move to the northeast corner of the lake.(161) The location of Lac Vieux Desert was most important because it was a intersection of five different routes of travel. Lac Vieux Desert is the source of the Wisconsin River while the Ontonagon and Brule/Monominee River sources are less than two days travel away. The major overland trail to L'Anse on lake Superior and the overland portage from Laura Lake both concluded at Lac Vieux Desert. The Laura Lake trail was a specialized portage which traveled

about 15 miles between these two lakes. This portage would allow travelers from the west to lighten their canoes by sending passengers and some packs overland to Lac Vieux Desert. This was an important portage because the upper Wisconsin River was shallow and swift before entering Lac Vieux Desert. This lake's close proximity to the watersheds which could send a traveler to Lake Michigan, Lake Superior, Wisconsin River, or Chippewa River made Lac Vieux Desert a vital link in the transportation network of the Great Lakes.

The members of the Lac Vieux Desert band used all the surrounding trails and water routes for trade, travel, and gathering natural resources.(162) The Lac Vieux Desert band, set up temporary camps throughout the multiple river basins of their area.(163) During the fur trading era, "The Ka-te-kit-te-kon Indians would go to the trading-posts of La Pointe, on Lake Superior, to Lac de Flambeau, and the Menomonee, to exchange their peltries for Indian goods. . .."(164)

In 1792, a fur trader named Perrault wintered on Lac Vieux Desert in an attempt to trade with the Chippewa. After extending credits to the Lac Vieux Desert band, Perrault was rather disappointed about his returns. "The Savages arrived for the last time, when I was poorly paid. . . . of their credits of more than 300 plus; I got from them the value of 200 plus . . .. They urged me to return, Saying that they would pay me on my return. I told them that it was unprofitable; that the portage Was too long."(165) The

problem Perrault encountered at Lac Vieux Desert was a result of the nomadic nature of this band, and that the band's travels frequently brought them to competing trading posts. Since the Lac Vieux Desert band was nomadic and relatively close to many different trading posts, no major white settlements were established, even though Lac Vieux Desert was a major intersection of travel routes.

Most subsistence resources used by the Lac Vieux Desert band were spread-out on area lakes and rivers. The Chippewa of this band traveled to obtain the quantity of wildrice necessary for their winter food and caches.(166) During the fall and winter, many of these Chippewa established hunting camps down the Wisconsin and Menomonee Rivers for pursuing the deer herds.(167) In 1840, T. J. Cram, a scientist, also noted a number of trout which inhabited the area lakes and streams, which would spawn in the fall and be easily speared.

Sugar camps abounded in the vicinity of Lac Vieux Desert. Both Cram and Perrault mention the heavy Chippewa presence around the area during sugar season. Perrault was so impressed by the maple production that he chose to make sugar himself to help off set his losses from the fur trade.(168)

Lac Vieux Desert was well known for the island gardens which produced a number of fine crops. The most important item which these large island gardens produced was potatoes. Cram noted: "The potatoes, which are of an oblong shape, and not larger than a man's thumb, are partially boiled, and

carefully peeled while hot, without breaking the pulp, then strung . . . and then hung in festoons on the ridge-pole of the wigwam, over the smoke of a fire, where they become thoroughly dry."(169) This storable food supplemented the band's winter diet and was excellent for transport and winter caches. The name of Lac Vieux Desert came from European visitors who were impressed by the gardens which Indians cultivated. In 1820, James Doty, an United States Government explorer, referred to Lac Vieux Desert as "Plantation Lake" in his journal and map.(170)

The 1843 census, enumerated a band of 53 families with a population of 213 Chippewa Indians and half-breeds in the Lac Vieux Desert band.(171) In 1837, the Lac Vieux Desert band did not sign the treaty with the United States Government, and so it later had to petition for its annuities, services, and privileges.(172) In the 1854 Treaty the Lac Vieux Desert band was forced from their traditional village and put on the L'Anse reservation. Lac Vieux Desert was more closely affiliated with the Lac Du Flambeau District bands, but the Indian agents probably chose to keep the Chippewa of Lac Vieux Desert on Lake Superior for easy regulation.(173) A number of the more traditional Chippewa of the Lac Vieux Desert band soon returned to their former home, establishing a small Chippewa community on Indian Point in the northeast portion of Lac Vieux Desert. During the winter of 1987, only one building was inhabited on Indian Point, surrounded by the skeletons of abandoned dwellings of previous Chippewa

residents.

TROUT LAKE BAND

The Trout Lake band's village site was one of the first locations Chippewa established villages in the Lac Du Flambeau District.174 In the mid-17th century Trout Lake and Turtle Portage were transitional village sites for the Chippewa of this area. After the Chippewa repelled the Fox and Dakota they gained control of the interior region and also established the traditional villages of Lac Du Flambeau, Pelican Lake, Lac Vieux Desert, and Wisconsin River. Trout Lake received its name from the abundant lake trout fishery which was rare in the interior region; the Chippewa name for this area was, "Ma-tak-e-ge-Ihik".(175)

Dozens of primary journals and maps documented the precise location of the Trout Lake band. On the southwest side of Trout Lake, at the source of the Trout River, this Chippewa band had established their traditional village. A. B. Gray, a geologist traveling to Lac Vieux Desert in 1846, made detailed notes of the Chippewa camp on Trout Lake. ". . . [we] came to Trout Lake, where our tents were pitched upon the bank, in a beautiful pine grove, a short distance above 'Kenisteno's' lodge, near the outlet of the lake.(176) The best maps supporting the location and status of the Trout Lake band are the "Lac Du Flambeau District Map" and the trip ticket map "Northeastern Routes to Lac Vieux Desert".

A specialized portage linked the Trout Lake band with Ike Walton Lake and the lower Trout River. This route was

similar to the specialized portage from Lac Vieux Desert to Laura Lake. The specialized portage allowed canoes to be lightened by sending some passengers carrying packs up the trail; the lighter canoes continued up the Trout River, fighting the shallows and swift current.(177)

Many primary journals indicated the annual economic activities of the Trout Lake band. In 1847, Dr. Norwood, a geologist, traveled to Trout Lake and observed, "There is an Indian village at Trout Lake which is only occupied, however, during the summer and fall months. They have gardens for corn and potatoes at this place, though their principal dependence for food is upon the lake, which yields them a plentiful supply of fish."(178) The fact that the village was only inhabited during the summer and fall suggests that the Trout Lake band had sugar camps in other areas. The closest area for sugar camps would have been to the northeast, near Pallet or Allequash Lakes. The nearest documented sugar camp was 2 miles north of Rest Lake on the Manitowish chain of lakes.(179)

The 1846 journal of A .B. Gray supported Dr. Norwood's observations of the great wealth of food resources in the Trout Lake village area:

> Fine fish, with delightful water, is found here; and the small patch of ground, which was but rudely cultivated, had produced excellent vegetables. Several families reside upon the its borders, and Kenisteno, the chief of the band, has his hunting grounds in this district. . . .
>
> In the bed of the river, near the shoals, we saw quantities of fresh water clam; some of them, upon the inside of the shell, displaying beautiful colors of a plenty luster. Heavy growths of wild

> rice were passed through the swamps bordering the river. . . . Observing a kind of bird rising in large numbers, one was shot, and I noticed it to be identical with the 'sora,' found at certain seasons in Virginia."(180)

The Trout Lake village site was excellent for gardens because it would avoid early frosts due to surrounding waters of the Trout River and Trout Lake. The lake contained many lake trout, cisco, and whitefish which spawned in the fall and allowed for easy capture. During the late fall and winter, the Trout Lake band went down the Chippewa River to hunt near the tension zone.

This traditional village was important to the Lac Du Flambeau District for many years. During the era of fur trade competition in Lac Du Flambeau between the North West Company and the X Y Company, the Trout Lake band was a strong supporter of the North West Company. The Trout Lake band even fought the Lac Du Flambeau band to protect Malhiot and his traders.(181) An 1843 census, enumerated the Trout Lake band with 16 families and a population of 82 Chippewa Indians and no half-breeds.(182) After the 1854 treaty, the Chippewa of the Lac Du Flambeau District were supposed to move into the Lac Du Flambeau area. The Trout Lake band defied the treaty and continued to maintain their traditional summer and fall village at the source of the Trout River on Trout Lake until the late 19th century.(183)

TURTLE PORTAGE BAND

The Turtle Portage, or Turtle Lake, band of the Chippewa probably received its name from the Chippewa totem, the

Turtle. The "Portage" portion of this band's name was a result of the village site being next to the portage trail from Turtle (Echo) Lake to Grand Portage, or Tank, Lake. The Chippewa name given to this area was "Kitche-non-ah-ge-vun".(184) The best maps which support the location and status of the Turtle Portage band are "The Lac Du Flambeau District Map" and the trip ticket maps "The Chippewa River" and "Lake Superior to Lac Du Flambeau".

The Turtle Portage band's village site was one of the first locations where Chippewa villages were established in the Lac Du Flambeau District.(185) In the mid-17th century Trout Lake and Turtle Portage were transitional village sites for the Chippewa of this area until the Fox and Dakota were repelled. Later, the traditional villages of Lac Du Flambeau, Pelican Lake, Lac Vieux Desert, and Wisconsin River were also established.

Many sources document the precise location of the Turtle Portage band. In 1847, Dr. Norwood made detailed observations on the location and status of the Turtle Portage band. "Turtle portage is an excellent one, over the plain lying between the two Turtle (Echo and Tank or Grand Portage) lakes. At the east end of it is an Indian village, inhabited during the summer months by one of the Chippewa bands."(186) The village site was on the west side of Tank, or Grand Portage, Lake, a few hundred yards northeast of the present town of Mercer, Wisconsin.

The location of the Turtle Portage band was important

because of its proximity to major travel routes. The Turtle Portage band was on the intersecting routes to the Chippewa River, Lake Superior, Lac Du Flambeau, and Lac Vieux Desert (note trip-tickets in Chapter Nine). The Turtle Portage band was close to several different watersheds, allowing for quick and easy travel throughout the Lac Du Flambeau District. During the fur trade era, the major source of supplies was Lake Superior, all voyagers traveled through the Turtle Portage band's village en route to Lac Du Flambeau. The Turtle portage village was often the campsite of voyagers, and ill-prepared travelers were often hungry and without provisions after ascending the Flambeau Trail from Lake Superior. The Turtle Lake band would trade food for rum and trade goods with the vulnerable voyagers.(187) Interestingly, the present town which occupies the Turtle Portage area is "Mercer", which means merchant or trade.

In 1846, A. B. Gray camped at the Turtle Portage site and traveled throughout the region with an Indian guide:

> Our course was southwesterly, and, after walking ten or twelve miles, returned about sunset. We passed through some beautiful valleys, and over gently undulated ridges, with heavy growths of maple, birch, hemlock, and pine . . . Upon returning our guide took us by an old wigwam and showed us a beautiful specimen of the micaceous specular iron, weighing over one hundred pounds, which, he said, came from the neighborhood of the trap range we had crossed.(188)

The mineral wealth of this region interested Gray, and he made these detailed observations for scientific analysis. Geologists Gray and Norwood wrote detailed and accurate journals that depicted the early 19th century Chippewa living

in the Lac Du Flambeau District.

The terrain throughout the Turtle Portage area was suited for traveling, fishing, sugar making, and raising gardens. Norwood indicated the Turtle Portage was only a summer residence, suggesting that sugar-making may have been carried out at some other location. Some evidence does support the possibility of sugar making in the Turtle Portage area. Gray's journal of travel through the Turtle Portage region indicated the presence of many maple groves suitable for sugar bushes. Mercer Lake, which is one lake south of the village of Turtle Portage, was named Sugar Camp Lake on earlier maps, perhaps indicating the existence of traditional sugar bushes of this Chippewa band.(189)

In late September of 1847, Dr. Norwood made these observations of the Turtle Portage band's economic activities: "At present it [the village] is deserted, the band having gone north to their winter hunting grounds. Potatoes and corn are raised at this village".(190) The Chippewa of this band probably went north to fish the fall spawning run. It is likely that the Turtle Portage band frequently went down the Chippewa River to hunt in the tension zone because one of the Chippewa River's sources was the Turtle Portage area. This allowed the Turtle Portage band the easiest travel of all Lac Du Flambeau District bands to the Chippewa River. The 1843 Census enumerated the Turtle Portage band in the Chippewa River District, not the La Pointe or Lake Superior District; which further supported the

Turtle Portage band's use of the Chippewa River.(191) The Turtle Portage band probably took advantage of its excellent location and were economically flexible, traveling down the Chippewa River and/or to Lake Superior as resources were available.

No documents indicate the location of the wildrice fields of the Turtle Portage band. It is likely that this band did harvest wildrice in the Turtle Portage area because of the abundance of modern wildrice fields in this area. The Turtle Portage area is so well-suited for wildrice that one of only two wildrice farms in the State of Wisconsin is located in this district.

Gardens were important to this band, providing storable food and transportable nourishment needed to complete the difficult Flambeau Trail when en route to Lake Superior. The gardens were located near the village on the narrow strip of land between Echo Lake and Grand Portage or Tank Lake. This particular location would help protect crops from early frosts due to the surrounding lakes.

This traditional village was important to the Lac Du Flambeau District for many years. During the time of the fur trade in Lac Du Flambeau, the Turtle Portage village was an important link in the logistical support of fur traders in Flambeau. After 1837, all Chippewa who chose to participate in the annuity distributions at La Pointe would travel through the Turtle Portage area. In an 1843 census, the Turtle Portage band was enumerated to have 16 families with a

population of 68 Chippewa Indians and no half-breeds.(192)

WISCONSIN RIVER BAND

The Wisconsin River band was the least-documented of the six bands in the Lac Du Flambeau District. The Wisconsin River band was nomadic and traveled from Plover Portage (Stevens Point) to the upper Wisconsin River during the summer and fall. The band received its name from its extensive use of the Wisconsin River for travel, trade, and gathering food. The early fur traders called this band the "Ouiseconsaint", which was an early spelling and pronunciation for "Wisconsin".(193) The Chippewa name for this band and the area they occupied was "Monse-o-ne", perhaps indicating the origin of the name for Mosinee, Wisconsin.(194)

The precise location of the Wisconsin River band is a matter of debate among local residents and scholars. Most believe incorrectly that Lake Tomahawk was the site for the Wisconsin River band's village. Only three sources found that indicated the location of the Wisconsin River band, each source will be evaluated in an attempt to precisely locate the controversial village site of this band. The best maps which indicate the two probable sites of the Wisconsin River band are "The Lac Du Flambeau District Map" and the trip-ticket "Eastern Route to the Wisconsin River". On each of these maps, the two probable locations of the Wisconsin River band are clearly marked.

The History of Lincoln, Oneida, and Vilas Counties

Wisconsin stated, "The territory in the neighborhood of Tomahawk Lake and River was occupied by a band of about 200, whose head chief in the late eighteenth century was Osh-ka-ba-wis. . . . he was next in rank to the head chief of the Lac Du Flambeau Band. . ..(195) This book was published in 1924 and was the accumulation of old stories which were finally transcribed in the 20th century. There is no documentation supporting this source, and many other citations within this text are questionable.

This source does not indicate that Lake Tomahawk was the village site for the Wisconsin band; it suggests that the site was between Lake Tomahawk and the Tomahawk River. Between Lake Tomahawk and the Tomahawk River was a well-documented Chippewa population in the present area of Minocqua, Wisconsin. The Minocqua site had the natural resources of wildrice and sugar camps and a network of trails which usually accompanied a large village.(196) On the "Lac Du Flambeau District Map", the Minocqua site is marked "Wisconsin River Band Secondary Site".

Further complicating this issue, the early 19th century name for the Tomahawk River was the Little Wisconsin River.(197) The Tomahawk, or Little Wisconsin, River would have provided a direct and portage-free route from the Minocqua site to the Wisconsin River. The Tomahawk River may have received the name Little Wisconsin due to the Wisconsin River band's use of this river.

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stated, "The Wisconsin river band numbers about two hundred Indians, and occupies the country from Grand Rapids up to Tommy-hawk Lake."(198) This source gives a region of over one hundred miles as the location of the Wisconsin River band. Grand Rapids was just south of Plover, Wisconsin, while Lake Tomahawk was near Minocqua, Wisconsin. This 1854 source came from second hand information and provides only a vague description of the Wisconsin River bands area of travel. Certainly the specific location of the Wisconsin River band could not be indicated from this source.

The best source of the Wisconsin River band's location was a hand-drawn map by Henry Schoolcraft. Schoolcraft's map located the Wisconsin River band on the west bank of the Wisconsin River above the outlet of Little St. Germain Lake.(199) This map accurately described the location of several other bands in the Lac Du Flambeau District, and would seem valid. Schoolcraft probably drew this map during his 1832 expedition into the interior region, and finally published it in the early 1850's to support Chippewa claims in the 1842 Treaty. Schoolcraft probably never traveled to the Wisconsin River village, and may have never traveled to Lac Du Flambeau.(200) The map's contents were accurate because Chippewa Indians and fur traders who had complete knowledge of the area often drew or narrative map making for government agents .(201)

The site next to the outlet of the Little St. Germain Lake would place the band close to a water course which would

lead near Sugar Camp, Wisconsin. Sugar Camp or Indian Lake was connected with the Wisconsin River by Dam Lake, Sand Lake, and several creeks. Currently, the Sugar Camp area is of great concern to many traditional Chippewa Indians in Lac Du Flambeau. These Chippewa believe Sugar Camp, Wisconsin, was their ancestors traditional sugar bush and grave site.(202) Interestingly, Schoolcraft's location of the Wisconsin River band supports modern traditional Chippewa Indians interpretations of early Chippewa populations in the Lac Du Flambeau District.

The Schoolcraft map is the most impressive of all available sources indicating the location of the Wisconsin River band. The precise location of Schoolcraft's site for the Wisconsin River band is marked on the "Lac Du Flambeau District Map" as the "Wisconsin River Band Primary Site". The two different sites for the Wisconsin River band are also marked on the trip-ticket "Eastern Route to the Wisconsin River". It is possible that the Wisconsin River band inhabited both the Minocqua site and the outlet of Little St. Germain Lake site. This band was the most fluid and least understood of all the Chippewa bands residing in the Lac Du Flambeau District. Good evidence supports each of these sites as possible locations for the Wisconsin River band, while no data found supports any Chippewa establishment on Lake Tomahawk.

Due to the controversy over the location of the Wisconsin River band, little accurate analysis can be done on

the band's economic activities. During the fall ricing season, it was noted that the Wisconsin River band had to travel throughout the upper Wisconsin River basin to obtain enough storable food for caches and winter supplies.(203) The band traveled down the Wisconsin River to gather food; in the late 1830's, members of the Wisconsin River band killed the livestock of settlers near Plover Portage.(204) The Wisconsin River band probably hunted the tension zone of the Chippewa River during the late fall due to changing game populations, encroachment of white settlers, and pressure from other Indian tribes. Sugar bushes of the Wisconsin River band may have been in the area of Sugar Camp, Wisconsin, while no data has been found to support the location of the band's garden sites.

In an 1843 census, the Wisconsin River band was enumerated to have 82 families with a population of 245 Chippewa Indians and half-breeds.(205) In 1837, the Wisconsin River band did not sign the Chippewa treaty with the United States Government and later had to officially protest its exclusion from the treaty's annuities, privileges, and services by petition.(206)

## CHAPTER VII

## CHIPPEWA TRAVEL

To survive in the Lake Superior region the Chippewa had to be experts in wilderness travel. They used a variety of specialized equipment and techniques to travel quickly throughout the interior and lake shore regions. Precise navigation was critical for a successful journey through the Chippewa wilderness, and foreign travelers had to secure an Indian guide to avoid disaster.(207) Following the proper routes across Chippewa country was difficult work; a lost traveler who was unfamiliar with the canoe trails would certainly experience extreme hardship or perish.

Canoe trails were the primary routes used by the Chippewa, fur traders, scientists, and other visitors to traverse the dense wilderness of the Flambeau area. The best means of transportation were birchbark canoes, which were light, durable, stable, and easy to repair in the wilderness. The canoe trails were the most direct route possible, using portages to integrate different river basins, land locked-lakes, and to expedite travel. Overland travel was used to a lesser degree, usually to connect distant water routes. However, Chippewa travel did change in the winter when the water routes were frozen and impassible. Using direct routes across land, and frozen swamps and water, the

Chippewa used toboggans to haul their possessions.

Three different types of canoes were used for travel in the Lake Superior region: the most common was birchbark, followed by dugouts, and then by moose-hide canoes. Each type of canoe had its advantage according to weight, durability, stability, available materials for construction, and purpose. All canoes had specialized designs for different activities. A ricing canoe was wide to catch wildrice tops, but had a low draft for operation in shallow water. Small canoes were often used in the interior region because they were light for portages and would be easier to maneuver through rapids. Great Lake canoes typically were long and wide with a high bow, to haul heavy loads of cargo and navigate turbulent waters. The variation among canoes was endless and some designs attempted to combine several characteristics to create a more versatile vessel.

The most frequent mention of travel in most journals concerned the portages, where travelers had to carry all their possessions between water routes. These portages were often over difficult terrain, as Malhiot, a North West fur trader describes:

> . . . of all the spots and places I have seen in my thirteen years' of travels, this is the most horrid and most sterile. The Portage road is truly that to heaven because it is narrow, full of over-turned trees, obstacles, thorns, and muskegs. Men who go over it loaded and are obliged to carry baggage over it certainly deserve to be called 'men'.
>
> This vile portage is inhabited solely by owls, because no other animal could find a living there, and the hoots of those solitary birds are enough to frighten an angel or intimidate a Caesar.(208)

The portage Malhiot referred to in this citation was the Flambeau Trail, a 45 mile required portage to travel from Lake Superior to the Lac Du Flambeau District.

The hardship of portages impressed many visitors to Chippewa country, but the Chippewa had adjusted to these difficulties and were specialists at portages. The Indians understood that preparation, the most direct route, and excellent physical conditioning were requirements for attempting wilderness travel. In 1846, A.B. Gray a geologist, noted the Chippewa travelers on the Flambeau Trail: "Here we found one of the bands of Indians who had got ahead of us, their packs upon the ground, their lines out, and having already caught a number of fine fish."(209) The calories which this overland exertion demanded from the travelers were enormous, and a good supply of food would ensure warmth, energy, and the quickest possible completion of the trail.

The Indians' burden was great over the Flambeau Trail, as A. B. Gray described:

> Their packs usually are very heavy, from one hundred to one hundred and fifty pounds weight, and they are obliged to take advantage of as much water travel as possible. The system of packing, too, is not confined to men alone; but their women pack equally as much, and their children, down to four years of age, in proportion. Upon our expedition I saw an old squaw over seventy years of age with a pack weighing from 80 pounds to 100 pounds, she carried the whole portage.(210)

The Flambeau Trail had long been a critical route for the Chippewa Nation and was well-known to the Lac Du Flambeau District bands.

Chippewa women frequently participated more than men in the burden of transportation across the rugged wilderness. The Chippewa women had developed special techniques which allowed them to travel with greater ease and efficiency. In 1832, James Allen a military officer, on an expedition through the Lake Superior region with Henry Schoolcraft, noted in his journals the impressive abilities of a Chippewa girl on a portage:

> The Indian women carry better than the men being less indolent, and more accustomed to it. I saw a small young Indian women, at the close of the day, carry a keg of one thousand musket ball cartridges for a distance of one mile, without resting, and most of the distance through swamp that was frequently over her knees: this too after having carried heavy loads all day, and when, with less exertion than she had made, my strongest men were exhausted. (211)

Stated simply, Chippewa survival depended upon quick and efficent transportation in the Lake Superior region.

Portage distances were measured by "pauses", which were rests taken by travelers while completing the overland journey. A pause was usually a predetermined place between six hundred yards and a half-mile apart.(212) The more difficult the terrain, the shorter the distance to the next pause. The Flambeau Trail was a 120-pause portage due to its rough terrain, it was estimated to be "only" 35 to 45 miles long. On the other hand, the 6-Pause Portage between Mercer Lake and the Manitowish River had easier terrain and covered 2-1/2 miles. The pauses along a portage were well-established, hopefully allowing travelers a dry and relatively comfortable spot to rest. Those who had the

burden of portaging canoes preferred to have a tree along the trail to rest the front of the canoe upon, suspending the canoe in the air and thereby avoiding the effort of hoisting the vessel back upon their shoulders.

Caches were frequently used to store equipment or food near portages. The end of the Flambeau Trail on Long Lake was an area of many implement caches,(213) such as canoes, paddles, and heavy or useless objects which were too burdensome to carry on the long trail.(214) The Chippewa seem to have left canoes all over the Lac Du Flambeau district, abandoning their vessels to proceed on their important journeys. Some evidence suggests that canoes filled with trade goods were actually sunk and then buried to create underwater implement caches. In the late 1970's, a dugout canoe was found by skin divers next to Strawberry Island in Lac Du Flambeau. Inside the buried vessel were traps, axes, shovels, and a mysterious white clay which was not found anywhere near the Lac Du Flambeau area.(215) The trade goods found in the dugout suggest that the boat was put in cache during the 18th or 19th century.

Local research has indicated that at least three other dugout canoes have been found in the Lac Du Flambeau region, apparently cached in the same manner. An underwater cache would be effective in preserving all non-perishable goods, hiding equipment, protecting boats from weather damage, and keeping gnawing rodents from damaging boats. Once raised from the bottom, the boats would quickly dry, be repaired, and be ready for use. In the late 1930's, Jack Messing a

white resident, found a cached dugout canoe on horseshoe bend of the Bear River in Lac Du Flambeau, the boat was in such good condition he used it for several years.(216)

Canoe travel required some specialized equipment which assisted the Chippewa in traversing the wilderness. During a portage the person who carried the canoe created a yoke by lashing the canoe paddles under the thwarts (support beams) of the canoe. The blades faced forward and the canoe was balanced on the traveler's shoulders.(217) All other goods were carried by hand or in a variety of different packs. All travelers had to carry a supply of "gum" with them to repair canoes. Gum was concentrate made from pine pitch (sap), and would be heated, and then applied on any holes in the boats.(218) The gum quickly harden to the surface of any material from which the canoe was made, allowing for quick and effective wilderness repair.

Paddles and poles were used to propel the canoes along the water routes of the Lake Superior region. Paddles were made from spruce trees and specialized to the needs of the paddler.(219) Frances Densmore, an early 20th centry Chippewa Ethnologist, noted that men and women had different styles of paddles and duties when traveling by canoe: "There were always two paddles, one for the man who sat in the front and the other for the woman who sat in the stern."(220) The paddler in the bow (front) of the canoe provided the power, while the person in the stern was responsible for steering. Poles were frequently used in rivers with shallow water

and/or rapids. The Chippewa were skilled in the use of poles; they would quickly react to rocks, shallows, and dangerous currents by pushing the canoe through navigable channels. In 1832, Allen experienced extreme hardship on the St. Croix and Boise Brule Rivers of Wisconsin; he commented with envy on the Chippewa's ability to negotiate rapids. ". . . their piloting was of no use, for my men had not the skill to follow them, or to steer a canoe as they did by means of poles."(221)

James Allen's 1832 journal was the best narrative of ill-prepared travel in the interior region of Lake Superior. Allen's comments gave an indication of the difficulty of travel in the interior region, and how the Chippewa were experts in traversing this wilderness. Allen was on an expedition throughout the region of Lake Superior with Henry Schoolcraft; at the junction of the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers, Schoolcraft and his men went ahead, abandoning Allen and his group. The result was a comedy of errors by Allen as he made his way up the St. Croix River, down the Boise Brule River, and into Lake Superior.

After a few days on the St. Croix River, Allen was overcome by his hardship and inexperience:

> It is not to be supposed that the department would require soldiers to travel through such a country as this, and encounter the extraordinary exposure and danger incident to their transporting themselves, without some provision of medical aid; and still less could it be deemed practicable for a detachment of troops to effect a journey through an unknown, wild, inhospitable Indian country, without guides of any kind to direct, or an interpreter,

> through whose means to obtain guides or necessary geographic information. But, such was my situation now . . .(222)

Allen and his men continued to have difficulty traveling but later procured the services of a Chippewa guide.

> I wished two of them, at least, to guide me to the source of the river, and that I would reward them liberally with provisions for such service, but none of the village, would consent to go, excepting one young Indian, the chief's son, who, taking a fancy for a calico shirt I was wearing, agreed to go two days' journey with me, on condition of my adding to my former liberal offer of provisions: I had little else to give them.(223)

The value of a Chippewa guide was clear Allen had literally sacrificed the shirt off his back and a wealth of provisions. Allen's disappointment the next morning was understandable after the Chippewa guide had left, taking his shirt, the provisions, and the morning's breakfast of freshly-baked bread.

Allen continued up-river, while his men became injured and exhausted from walking their canoes up the rapids. After one of their canoes had been destroyed, Allen entered into another inspired trade with a local Chippewa by purchasing a small birch bark canoe for more than twice its value in flour. After correcting a wrong turn into a different river system, the Allen expedition finally arrived at the portage into the Boise Brule River.

The 2 mile portage was easy into the Boise Brule River because they had few provisions left to weigh them down. With the anticipation of a down-stream trip, the Allen and his men continued toward Lake Superior. Unfortunately for

this expedition, their inexperience quickly led them to disaster. These men could not control their canoes in the fast current and were constantly hitting rocks. ". . . all my canoes were leaking badly; they had been so often repaired that their bottoms were nearly gummed over, and every touch of a stone knocked some of it off, and opened a leak".(224) Each canoe required one man to bail constantly to keep it afloat.

A few miles farther, all but one of Allen's canoes had sunk, and were beyond repair. The expedition had to walk out, with the exception of a few men, who paddled the last canoe and one man who had gone lame. Allen hired more Chippewa guides who promised to assist his overland expedition, but the next morning the Indians had left with the payment for guiding, and that morning's breakfast of freshly-baked bread.(225) After leaving the river, Allen's overland journey to Lake Superior would be best described as pure hell.

The misfortune of Allen and his men illustrate the need for expertise, organization, guidance, and unity when traveling in the wilderness of the Lake Superior region. The true fault of this fiasco rested with Henry Schoolcraft, who had abandoned of Allen and his men. Schoolcraft probably became frustrated with the slow travel of Allen and his greenhorns and merely went ahead. Schoolcraft's selfish and inconsiderate actions raise questions about his competency as a leader. Interestingly, Schoolcraft would later become the

superintendent of Indians in the Lake Superior area.

# CHAPTER IX

## THE TRADITIONAL PRIMARY CANOE ROUTES OF THE LAC DU FLAMBEAU DISTRICT BANDS

The network of canoe routes, portages and Indian villages that linked the Lac Du Flambeau band with their economic cycle and later served the Europeans and Americans can be retraced. Journals, expedition maps, and land surveys made by 18th and 19th century white explorers and government officals give good indications of the traditional primary canoe routes of Chippewa country. Chippewa guides led these thorough expeditions, which reinforces 19th century journals and maps as the traditional routes of the Indians. The five primary routes analyzed in this chapter do not represent all traditional canoe routes in the Lac Du Flambeau District, for secondary, and minor routes existed.

Several primary routes served the Lac Du Flambeau District bands, and some canoe trails that had different destinations used portions of the same initial trails. To avoid confusion when describing canoe trails which overlapped and intersected, a large map ("Lac Du Flambeau District Map") with color-coded routes is necessary. This map will be supplemented with specific trip-ticket maps, each to be examined regularly within the text for points of reference when reading this chapter.

A trip-ticket format will be used for developing the traditional canoe trails of the Lac Du Flambeau area. A trip-ticket describes specific routes of travel according to geographic criteria. The trip-ticket text will be supported by the Lac Du Flambeau District Map and trip-ticket maps allowing easier reading. The trip-ticket text will be divided into numbered blocks of travel, with corresponding numbers included on the trip-ticket maps to indicate the precise locations of the travel blocks. The text will include primary data from old trader and explorer journals, secondary sources such as federal survey reports, and references to maps to support the authenticity of the routes described. All references to lakes, rivers, creeks, and other geographical detail will use the modern names for consistency with the Lac Du Flambeau District Map.

The beginning of the trip-tickets may have a short narrative describing the route or any other unique information. The end of each trip-ticket will have a brief history describing the historic usage of the trail.

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**TABLE OF TRIP-TICKETS**



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**TRIP TICKET # I: Lake Superior to the Lac Du Flambeau band's Indian Village**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR THE LAKE SUPERIOR TO LAC DU FLAMBEAU INDIAN VILLAGE TRIP-TICKET



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## INTRODUCTION

The single-most important trail for the Lac Du Flambeau band of the Chippewa was the Flambeau Trail, which led from Lake Superior to Long Lake. This 120-pause portage covered about 45 miles of the toughest terrain surrounding the shores of Lake Superior. When observing the Lac Du Flambeau District Map, note that the Flambeau Trail is marked in red and travels in a southeast direction from the mouth of the Montreal River to Long lake. This portage had to go far enough to cross the watershed divide which separates the Mississippi Basin from the Great Lakes Basin. Long Lake was the best choice for the end of the Flambeau Trail because the watershed divide is only a few miles north of the lake, which leads into a chain of rivers and lakes that required few portages. The East and West Branches of the Montreal River parallel the trail but were impassible due to the steep gradient of 70 feet per mile. They either had water levels too low for travel or in high water of spring turned into

raging torrents with waterfalls, rapids, and dangerous "hydraulics" (areas of turbulent water).

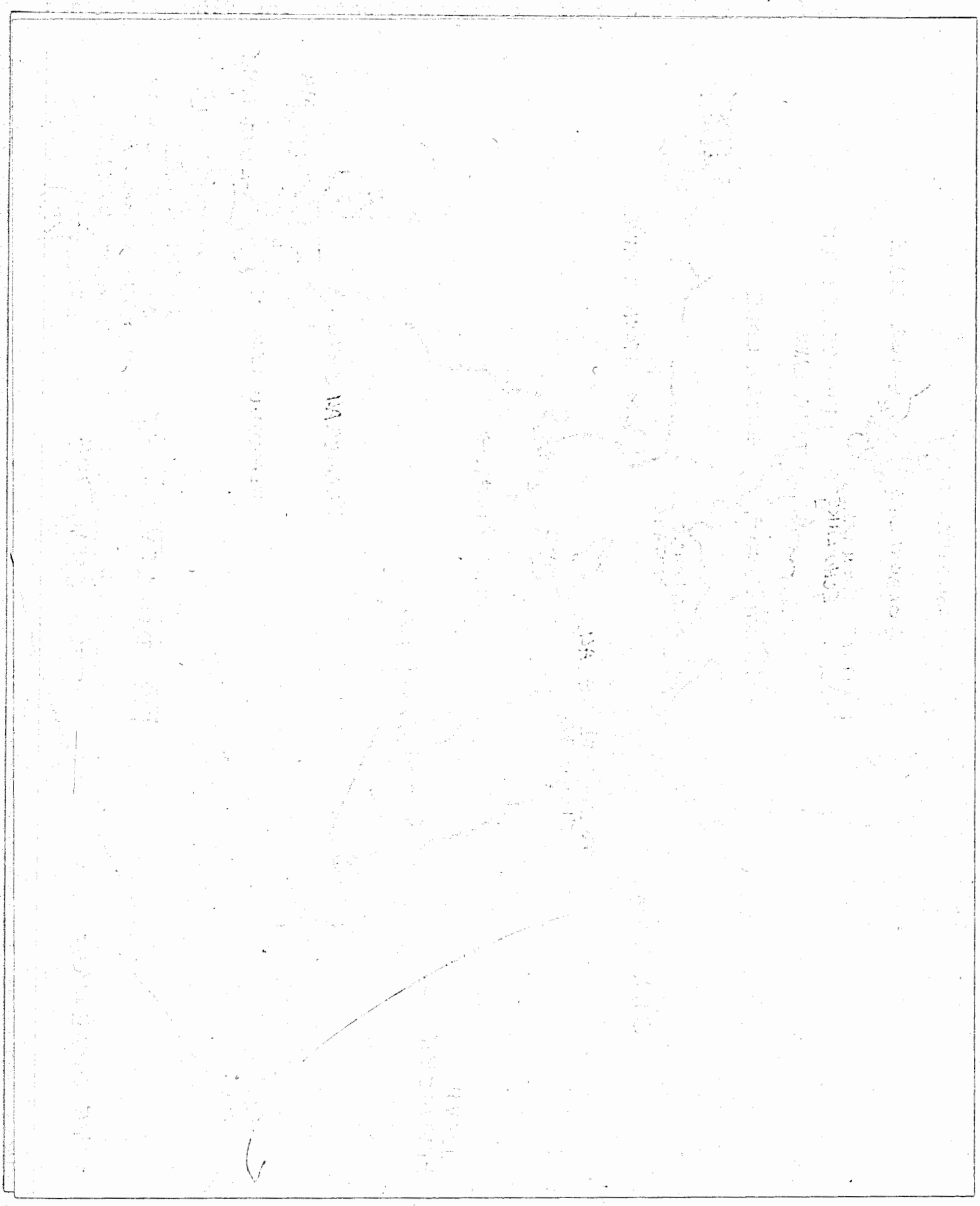
The portage of the Flambeau Trail is well-documented by numerous surveys which grid the trail with plotted survey maps. The Flambeau Trail was the most significant overland route in the historic Chippewa era and was actually sketched in on early early survey.

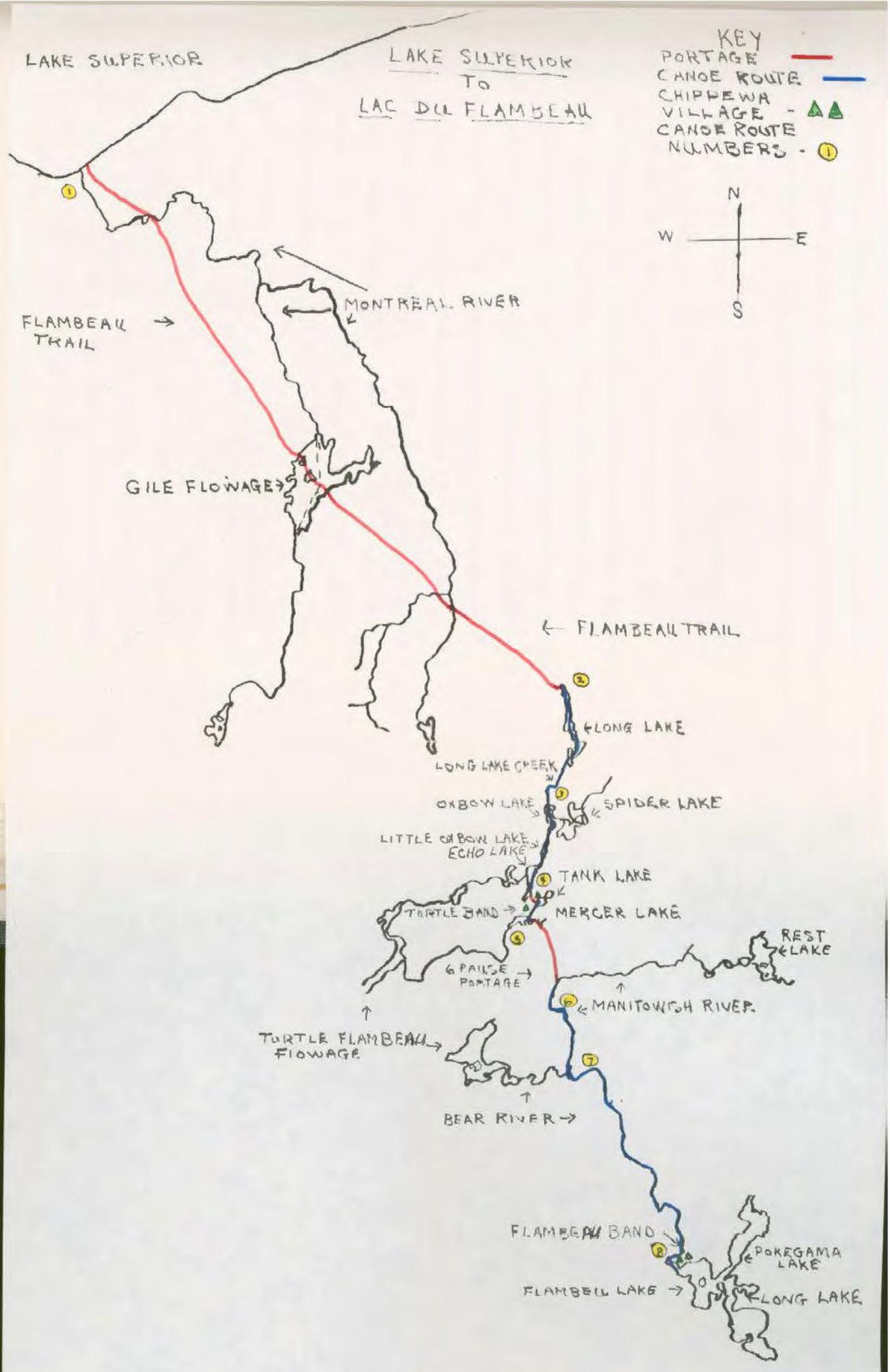
1. MOUTH OF THE MONTREAL RIVER TO LONG LAKE

The portage trail, better known as the Flambeau Trail, is located on the east side of the Montreal River on the shore of Lake Superior. The 45 mile, 120-pause trail leads up a steep hill and parallels a great waterfall on the right. Eight pauses (3-1/2 miles) later, the trail crosses the Montreal River one mile above a 79-foot waterfall. In 1847, Norwood made these observations at the 8-pause crossing of the Montreal River: "At the crossing, the trap is exposed in the bed of the river, crossing it in low range, bearing N. W. and S. E. The country ascended all the way to-day in series of ridges, with wet, and, in some instances, swampy valleys intervening."(226) (A "trap" is a geological term which refers to basalt, a dark rock formation which is very common along the trail).

The Flambeau Trail traverses the Penokie Range, one of the highest mountain ranges in the Midwest, indicating why most travelers noted they experienced difficulty traveling this route. The up-and-down grade of the Flambeau Trail also is marked by many swamps and thickly-wooded areas which

MAP FOR TRIP-TICKET #I: THE LAKE SUPERIOR TO THE LAC DU FLAMBEAU BAND'S INDIAN VILLAGE




LAKE SUPERIOR
LAKE SUPERIOR
To
LAC DU FLAMBEAU
KEY
PORTAGE
CANOE ROUTE
CHIPPEWA VILLAGE -
CANOE ROUTE NUMBERS -
N
W
E
S
MONTREAL RIVER
FLAMBEAU TRAIL →
GILE FLOWAGE →
← FLAMBEAU TRAIL
LONG LAKE
LONG LAKE CREEK
OXBOW LAKE
SPIDER LAKE
LITTLE OXBOW LAKE
ECHO LAKE
TANK LAKE
TURTLE BAND →
MERGER LAKE
REST LAKE
6 FALLS PORTAGE →
MANITOWISH RIVER
TURTLE FLAMBEAU FLOWAGE →
BEAR RIVER →
FLAMBEAU BAND
POKEGAMA LAKE
FLAMBEAU LAKE →
LONG LAKE

further impede travel. In 1846, A. B. Gray, a geologist traveling to Lac Vieux Desert, commented on the trail's general condition. "The heavy rains that had fallen recently . . . might have swollen the streams and cause the trail to appear in its worse state, but in our judgement it would be difficult to make even a passable road for horses or mules. . .."(227)

Travel over the portage took between 2-1/2 and 7 days, depending on the trail's condition, the load which had to be carried, and the motivation level of the travelers. Many camps existed along the Flambeau Trail, usually near streams, where water and game would be gathered to maintain the strength of the travelers. On the portage near the 80-pause crossing of the Montreal River, A .B. Gray noted Indians fishing along one of the many streams which the Flambeau Trail crosses. "A mile or two further we crossed a deep running stream flowing easterly, 20 feet wide, and slightly colored red, though perfectly clear. Here we found one of the bands of Indians who had got ahead of us, their packs upon the ground, their lines out, and having already caught a number of fine fish."(228)

Proper nourishment and adequate supplies were necessary to complete the Flambeau Trail. In the early 19th century, when Malhiot a North West trader first crossed the Flambeau Trail, his men were nearly starved before they arrived from Lac Du Flambeau. "How weak they are! ! * * * I gave each of them a drink of shrub, two double handfuls of flour, and two

pounds of pork and they began to eat with such avidity that I was twice obliged to take the dish away from them, and, notwithstanding this, I feared for a long while that injurious consequences would result; fortunately they all escaped with slight twinges of colic".(229)

The 80-pause crossing of the Montreal River (about 6 miles before Long Lake) and the close proximity of the watershed divide. Norwood marked this point with detail in his geologic journals:

> Montreal River is about twenty-five feet wide at this point, and three feet deep. It has been bridged in a rude manner by the engages of the American Fur Company, who have, for many years, transported goods over this route to small trading posts established among the Indians of Lac Du Flambeau. . . One mile beyond this station we reached the summit of the highlands dividing the waters of Lake Superior from those of the Mississippi.(230)

From this point, the travel is easier, crossing some rolling hills, which are covered by pine, maple, and aspen forests; passing a few ponds, the portage trail can quickly be descended to reach the north end of Long Lake.

2. LONG LAKE VIA LONG LAKE CREEK TO OXBOW LAKE

At the end of the portage on the shore of Long Lake travelers picked up canoes in a predetermined hiding place known as an implement cache. The portage ends at the northern-most portion of the lake on the west bank. Travel continuued by canoe southeasterly the length of the four mile Long Lake. In the lower southwest corner of the lake Long Lake Creek enters and would be followed for about 2 miles until Little Oxbow Lake is reached. Long Lake Creek meanders

somewhat and follows a southwesterly course; be sure to turn right in a westerly direction upon entering Little Oxbow Lake and follow the narrow channel. Failure to do so will lead a traveler into Spider Lake and north up the Turtle River.

### 3. OXBOW LAKE VIA THE TURTLE RIVER TO TURTLE PORTAGE ON ECHO LAKE

Upon entering the channel to Oxbow Lake, one's canoe should be traveling downstream, heading toward a huge swamp; after taking a sharp left turn, the channel heads south into Oxbow Lake. Once in the large portion of Oxbow Lake, one should follow the western shore, which is swamp, until a bay is reached at the southwest end of the lake. This bay marks the entrance to the Turtle River which will lead to Echo Lake. The Turtle River is about 2 miles long and has high banks on the northern end, while the southern part of the river and entrance to Echo Lake is swampy.

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**NOTE: FROM THIS POINT IT IS POSSIBLE TO PADDLE WEST AND FOLLOW ANOTHER ROUTE TO THE CHIPPEWA RIVER. THIS PRIMARY CANOE ROUTE WILL BE DISCUSSED FROM THIS POINT FORWARD IN THE CHIPPEWA RIVER TRIP-TICKET. TRIP-TICKET # I CONTINUES.**

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The portage from Echo Lake into Grand Portage, or Tank Lake, is about 1-1/4 miles south, on the east bank of the lake. Two points of land must first be passed when heading south down the eastern shore of Echo Lake. The portage trail is 400 yards southeast from the second point of land, across a wide bay.

Norwood recorded little about this section of the canoe route from Long Lake. "After leaving Portage lake [Long

Lake], we passed a series of small lakes, connected by shallow, winding streams, with numerous granite boulders in their beds, and finally entered Big Turtle Lake [Echo Lake], from which there is a a portage of about six hundred yards to Little Turtle Lake (Grand Portage or Tank Lake)."(231) To verify the authenticity of this route or note the different names of lakes, see Norwood's map of this journey.(232)

4. TURTLE PORTAGE VIA GRAND PORTAGE OR TANK LAKE AND MERCER LAKE TO 6-PAUSE PORTAGE

The portage is between 600 and 880 yards in length and heads east to Grand Portage or Tank Lake. On the trip-ticket map, the portage is marked in red; at the end of the portage trail on the shores of Grand Portage or Tank Lake was a Chippewa Indian village. This band was part of the Lac Du Flambeau District bands and was referred to as the Turtle Lake or Turtle Portage band. Both Norwood and A. B. Gray camped at the Turtle village and made extensive notes on the village, nature of the Indians, and the surrounding terrain. To continue, Grand Portage or Tank Lake must be followed in a southwesterly direction along the west bank of the lake to reach a small creek which enters Mercer Lake. The connecting creek enters on Mercer Lake's northern shore, a 400 yard southeastly route must be taken across Mercer Lake to a high bank where the 6-Pause portage begins.

5. THE 6-PAUSE PORTAGE TO THE MANITOWISH RIVER

The portage begins by heading east up a hill and then slowly drifts in a southeasterly direction. The first

portion of its 2-1/2 mile long portage is through valleys, brush, and several sandy regions until a difficult swamp is encountered in the last mile. Upon reaching the Manitowish River, an area of bog with high marsh grass must be crossed in order to launch canoes. Dr. Norwood's comments proved to be revealing on the route of 6-Pause Portage: "The trail runs through a sand barren, with the exception of the last half mile, which runs through one of the worst tamarack swamps I have ever seen. A few stunted pines, with occasional patches of coarse grass, is the vegetation supported on the high grounds. The Manidowish river at this point comes from the Northeast. . . ."(233) The Manitowish River has a northeast course for a very short period and narrows the possible beginning of 6-Pause portage considerably.

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**NOTE: FROM THIS POINT IT IS POSSIBLE TO PADDLE NORTHEAST UP THE MANITOWISH RIVER AND FOLLOW ANOTHER PRIMARY CHIPPEWA CANOE ROUTE. THIS CANOE ROUTE WILL BE DISCUSSED FROM THIS POINT FORWARD IN THE NORTHEASTERN ROUTE TO LAC VIEUX DESERT TRIP-TICKET. TRIP-TICKET # I CONTINUES.**

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## 6. MANITOWISH RIVER TO THE BEAR RIVER

Enroute to Lac Du Flambeau, a southerly direction is taken downstream. The Manitowish River travels about 5 miles to reach the mouth of the Bear River. The Manitowish River meanders so much that the actual distance to the Bear River's mouth more than doubles. The current on the Manitowish River is fairly strong; the dense weeds which cover the river bottom appear to be driven down flat with the river bed. In the last miles before the Bear River is reached the

Manitowish River enters a swamp which appears on both sides of the stream. The Bear River enters on the southern side of the Manitowish River and is easily recognized.

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**NOTE: FROM THIS POINT IT IS POSSIBLE TO PADDLE WEST AND FOLLOW ANOTHER ROUTE TO THE CHIPPEWA RIVER. THIS PRIMARY CANOE ROUTE WILL BE DISCUSSED FROM THIS POINT FORWARD IN THE CHIPPEWA RIVER TRIP-TICKET. TRIP-TICKET # I CONTINUES.**

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## 7. THE BEAR RIVER TO FLAMBEAU LAKE AND THE SITE OF THE TRADITIONAL VILLAGE OF THE LAC DU FLAMBEAU BAND

It is easy to determine whether one has chosen the proper river, as Dr. Norwood notes in his 1847 journals, "Soon after entering the mouth of the Lac Du Flambeau (Bear) River, which we ascended to the lake which it is the outlet, large boulders began to show themselves, some of them of great dimensions. One which we examined measures fifteen feet in long diameter, and twelve feet in the transverse, and stood seven feet out of the water."(234) An object of that size in a narrow stream should serve as a fine point of reference for travelers who question their direction. The paddler must fight up-stream against weak current but the meandering route limits the momentum a canoe can carry. In 1804, Malhiot described the condition of the Bear River, "with regard to the river I will never call it anything but a small stream, because in many places a mouse could cross it without wetting its belly."(235)

The distance to Flambeau Lake is about 20 miles, due to the irregular and indirect course of the Bear River. The last miles of the river are exceedingly swampy and were part

of the traditional wild rice fields of the Lac Du Flambeau band. While paddling the last half mile of the river before Flambeau Lake, notice the higher ground to the left where part of the old Indian village once existed. As you paddle closer to the lake, the frequency of Indian sites increases. All along Flambeau Lake, especially near the source of the Bear River, the traditional Lac Du Flambeau Indians set up their wigwam shelters and established one of the greatest Chippewa communities.

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**NOTE: FROM THIS POINT THREE DIFFERENT PRIMARY ROUTES LEAD FROM THE VILLAGE OF LAC DU FLAMBEAU TO THE WISCONSIN RIVER. TRIP-TICKET # I CONTINUES.**

XXX

The multiple routes to the Wisconsin River were clearly illustrated by Dr. Norwood when he was deliberating on which course best served the needs of his 1847 expedition. ". . . there are three routes from this lake [Flambeau Lake] to [the] Wisconsin river. One of them is by a chain of lakes south of this point, and leading into the Little Wisconsin (Squirrel River) through White Squirrel creek; another by way of Leech lake (Minocqua Lake), Kewaykwodo (Lake Tomahawk), and Swamp lakes (Dorthy Lake); and a third through a series of lakes towards the headwaters of the Manidowish (Trout) river, and thence, via Trout Lake and a series of small lakes, to Vieux Desert lake."(236) This detailed entry is valuable in order to establish the authentic canoe routes of the Lac Du Flambeau District bands. The three different routes to the Wisconsin River will be followed in the

following trip-tickets: Northeastern Route to Lac Vieux Desert # II, Eastern Route to the Wisconsin River # III, and Southeastern Route to the Wisconsin River # IV.

OBSERVATIONS

Historically, the Lake Superior to the Lac Du Flambeau band's Indian Village route was important throughout the Chippewa presence in the Lake Superior region. From 1680 to 1736, the Flambeau Trail was one of the key routes which linked Lake Superior with the interior region. During this period, Chippewa of Chequamegon used this route to trade for hides and pelts with other Indian tribes.

From 1737-1784, this route into the interior was critical for the Chippewa of the Lac Du Flambeau District as they established control over the interior region. The transitional village of Turtle Portage was established at this time along the Lake Superior route.

During the period 1784-1825, the Chippewa decreased their use of the Lake Superior route and remained in the interior, following their economic cycle and trapping. The fur traders used this route a great deal during this period to supply the interior posts of Lac Du Flambeau with trade goods.

The final historic period, 1825-1870, as characterized by increased use of the Lake Superior route. After the 1837 Treaty between the Chippewa of Lake Superior and the United States Government, the Lac Du Flambeau District bands had to travel to La Pointe for annuity distributions. The 1837

annuity process modified

the economic cycle of the Lac Du Flambeau District bands and motivated some to be more dependent on Lake Superior resources.

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**TRIP-TICKET # II: NORTHEASTERN ROUTE TO LAC VIEUX DESERT**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR THE NORTHEASTERN ROUTES
TO LAC VIEUX DESERT TRIP-TICKET



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## INTRODUCTION

This route to the upper Wisconsin River near Lac Vieux Desert was the route chosen by Norwood and will be supported with his and A. B. Gray's journals. The trip-ticket will have two initial routes which intersect on the Trout River

before continuing to Trout Lake and Lac Vieux Desert. One route will start from Lac Du Flambeau, while the other route will begin at the end of 6-Pause Portage on the Manitowish River. Each route is numbered in the text and on the trip-ticket map for assistance while reading.

## 1. FLAMBEAU LAKE VIA POKEGAMA LAKE TO THE WHITE SAND LAKE PORTAGE

Leaving the mouth of the Bear River and the traditional village of the Flambeau band, one travels east to the channel between Strawberry Island and a peninsula of land on the north shore of the lake. Head in between a smaller island and the furthest point south on the peninsula, then turn northeast into a bay on the left. Follow the northeasterly course for about 200 yards until the channel of Pokegama Lake is reached. The channel is short and a paddler quickly enters the 3-1/2 mile lake known as Pokegama, ". . . a name given to any lake connected with another, or with a running stream, by a very short outlet."(237) Continue in a northeasterly direction until the portage is reached at the end of the lake, in the northeast bay.

## 2. POKEGAMA/WHITE SAND PORTAGE VIA WHITE SAND LAKES TO IKE WALTON LAKE

This portion of the trip ticket can be best described by the excellent journals of Norwood.

> From the northeast shore of this lake a portage of half a mile, over sand hills, covered with small pines and elevated about thirty feet above the general level of the small lakes, which leads to Lake Wepetangok (White Sands Lake),. . . This lake is about two miles long, and our course across it

> was northeast to a small channel, four feet wide and eight yards long, which led us into another small lake (Little White Sand Lake) three-fourths of a mile long and half a mile wide, which we crossed northeast to a portage of one mile in length, leading to Mashkegwagoma (Ike Walton) lake. This portage passed over hills of the same character as those seen in the morning.(238)

If any questions possibly remain concerning the route or traditional Indian names for the lakes in Norwood's journals, check the map which the geological expedition made to submit to the 1848 Congress.(239) The portage trail from Little White Sand Lake to Ike Walton lake travels in a northeasterly direction, and follows the edge of a swamp for a while before ending in a bay on the western side of Ike Walton Lake.

### 3. IKE WALTON LAKE TO THE TROUT RIVER

From the portage, Ike Walton lake is crossed in a easternly direction just to the north of a group of islands. Continue east until shore is reached; be careful of this lake in high winds blowing from the north or south, as it has a reputation for being dangerous. The portage is on the east shore behind the northern-most point of the islands. Prepare for a long and swampy portage east to the Trout River, as was noted by Norwood, ". . . a portage of a mile and a half to the Chippewa or Manidowish [Trout] river. The trail, for nearly the whole distance, leads through swamps flooded with water almost ice cold."(240)

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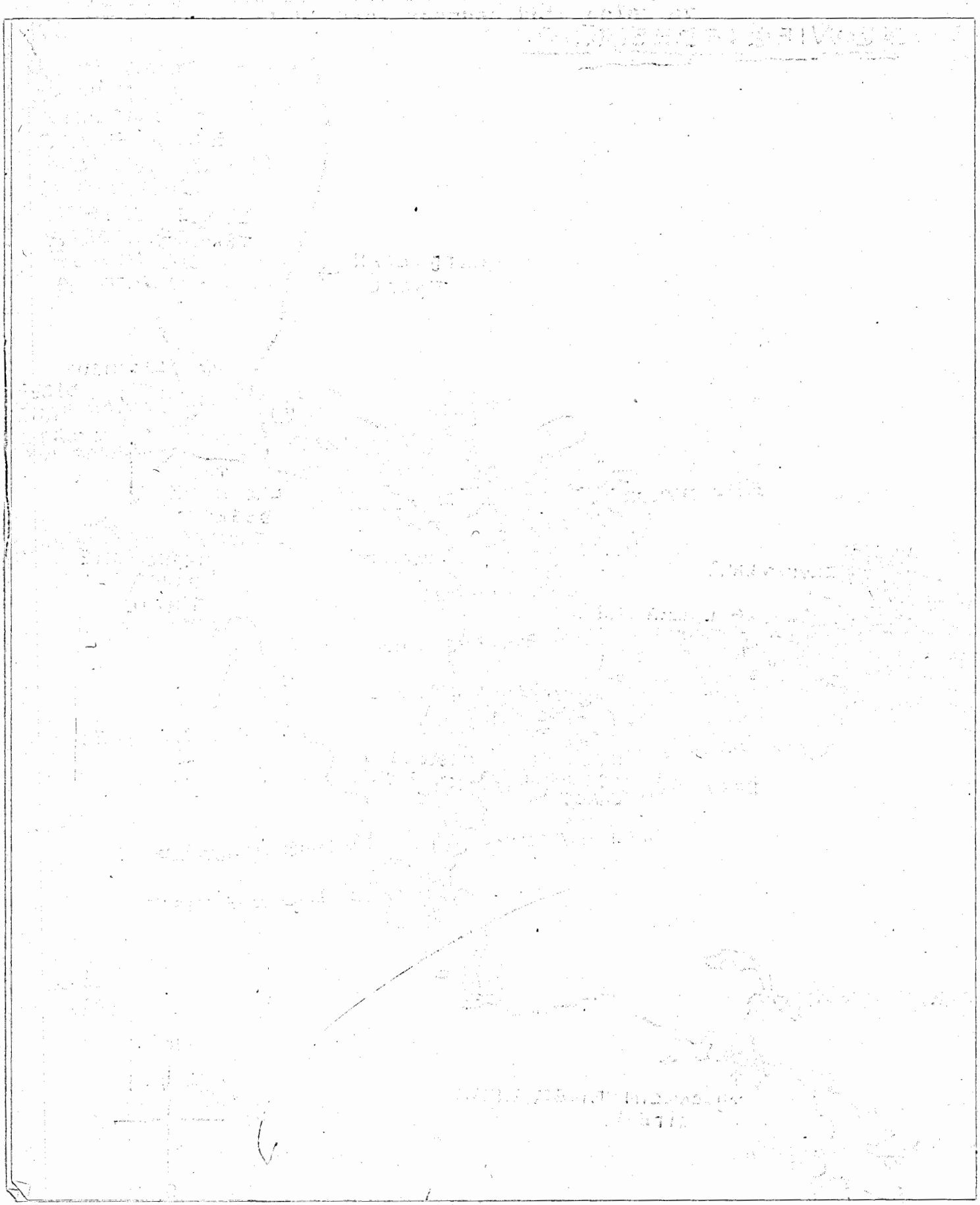
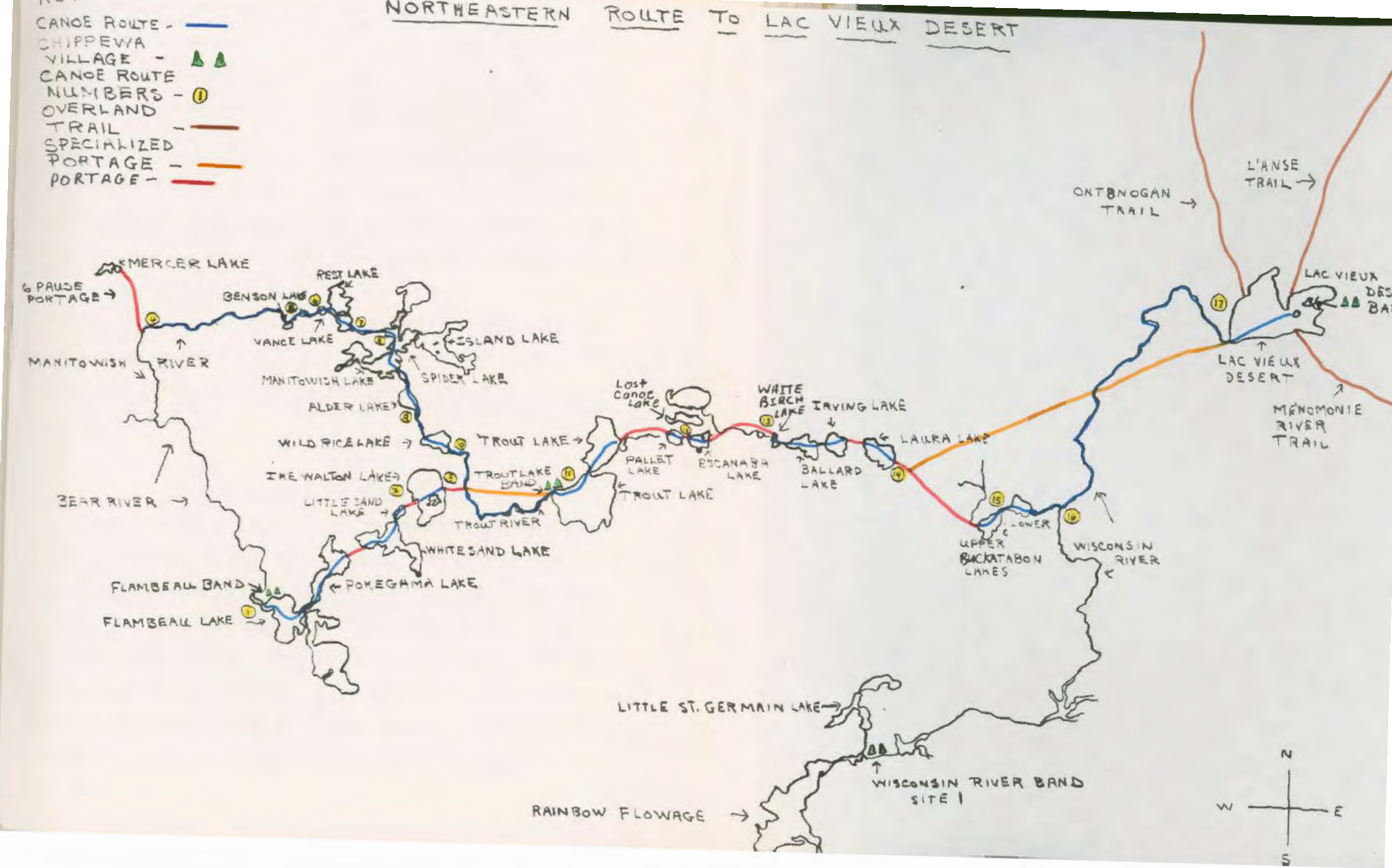
This part of the Trout River marks the intersection of the two intial routes of trip-ticket # II. The end of the Ike Walton portage intersects another northeastern route to

TRIP-TICKET # II: NORTHEASTERN ROUTE TO LAC VIEUX DESERT



# NORTHEASTERN ROUTE TO LAC VIEUX DESERT

CANOE ROUTE - ——
CHIPPEWA VILLAGE - ▲▲
CANOE ROUTE NUMBERS - (1)
OVERLAND TRAIL - ——
SPECIALIZED PORTAGE - ——
PORTAGE - ——



Lac Vieux Desert. This was an issue which Norwood addressed in his journals to clarify expedient travel for future expeditions.

> If it had not been desirable to visit Lac Du Flambeau we might have reached this point by ascending the river from 'six pause portage' through 'cross' and other small lakes; and this was the route pursued by Mr. A. B. Gray and party in 1846 . . . It is the one commonly followed by the Vieux Desert and Trout Lake Indians in passing from their villages to La Pointe, and is in every respect preferable to the one pursued by us, . . . .(241)

This alternate route of the Chippewa will be pursued next, in the trip-ticket supported by the journals of A. B. Gray and, later, Norwood. The intersection of these two routes will be noted in the trip-ticket where the Ike Walton portage enters the Trout River.

If you require information concerning travel from the mouth of the Montreal River to 6-Pause Portage refer to the trip-ticket "Lake Superior to the Lac Du Flambeau Indian Band's Village # I."

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## 4. 6-PAUSE PORTAGE TO BENSON LAKE

After launching canoes from the marsh grass of 6-Pause portage, paddlers should head northeast up-stream. No significant landmarks exist before Benson Lake. The river meanders for about 10 miles through swamps and an occasional highland. Benson Lake seems to be no more than a wide spot in the river and is shallow. The Manitowish River enters and exits on the north shore of Benson Lake; a paddler has only to keep left and maneuver around a point of marsh to continue.

## 5. BENSON LAKE TO STURGEON LAKE

The Manitowish River winds for about 1 mile to connect these two lakes. A slight rapids must be negotiated, and canoers heading up-stream usually have to get out and wade. Sturgeon Lake is shallow, and a point of land on the right must be passed before exiting the lake to the southeast.

## 6. STURGEON LAKE VIA VANCE LAKE TO REST LAKE

The Manitowish River travels for less than a mile before it enters Vance Lake from the southwest. The channel to Rest Lake is located to the northeast and is a very short distance. It will be necessary to get out and pull around a dam which was established at the outlet of Rest Lake in the late 19/th century.

## 7. REST LAKE VIA THE MANITOWISH RIVER TO STONE LAKE AND SPIDER LAKE

The outlet of the Manitowish River exits the western shore of Rest Lake. Traveling east around a point of land, a large island appears; the island should be kept on the left side of the canoe when traveling about 1 mile southeast, to the lake's inlet. The Manitowish River continues for over a mile before it enters the west shores of Stone Lake. This lake is small and could be mistaken for a wide spot in the river. Head southeast less than a mile where the channel into Spider Lake starts.

The short channel in between Stone Lake and Spider (Cross) Lake was the site for the Indian camp of White Thunder, as A. B. Gray indicated in his 1846 journals.

"In the evening we entered 'Cross' lake from the river - so called by the Indians from its shape resembling a cross in shape-and encamped upon a point of land jutting out forming one of the arms of the cross. Upon this point are two large wigwams and several acres of ground cleared and cultivated, being the summer residence of 'White Thunder', a tall and athletic looking Indian."(242) Interestingly, White Thunder was an important chief of the Lac Du Flambeau District bands and signed the 1837 Treaty.(243) Spider (Cross) Lake has been the site for several archaeological digs, and local residents even find remnants of the Indians who inhabited this area hundreds of years ago.

Gray also noted the day's of travel from 6-Pause portage in his expedition journals. "Our course up river for about 10 to 15 miles was easterly, although the stream curved around in every direction, occasionally opening into small and picturesque lakes, surrounded by high land, with excellent pineries, and narrowing again to a width barely sufficient for passage of a canoe."(244) The 1840 journals of Thomas Jefferson Cram, who also traveled along this route, reinforce the description by A. B. Gray.

8. SPIDER LAKE VIA MANITOWISH LAKE TO ALDER LAKE

Spider Lake has many bays which could confuse an unfamiliar traveler concerning the proper route. The course to Manitowish Lake lies to the south and the channel is very short. Upon entering Manitowish Lake, note the small island which resembles a large bump 100 yards on the right. Some

local residents suggest that the island was the sacred burial site for the Lac Du Flambeau band of the Chippewa. To exit Manitowish Lake, head due south in-between the inlet and the island to the river. The Trout River then travels southeast for one mile and enters Alder lake on the northeast shore.

9. ALDER LAKE VIA WILD RICE LAKE TO THE TROUT RIVER

The outlet of Alder Lake is one mile south and leads down a channel which is referred to as the Trout River. The distinction between the Trout and Manitowish Rivers is rather technical, because each occupies a different portion of the same river basin. Often these rivers were confused in early journals; the Trout River (as it is called today) was called the Plantation, Manidowish, Manitowish, and Chippewa River. On the canoe route map, the channel from Alder Lake is the Trout River and travels over 1 mile before entering the northwest shores of Wild Rice Lake. A southeastly course across Wild Rice Lake is taken for 1 mile where the Trout River enters from Trout Lake.

10. WILD RICE LAKE VIA THE TROUT RIVER TO TROUT LAKE

The Trout River flows southeast 4 miles until the portage from Ike Walton Lake enters on the right side of the river Gresham Creek enters on the left side of the river 1/2 mile before the portage trail is reached.

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**NOTE: THE ROUTE FROM LAC DU FLAMBEAU CAN BE CONTINUED FROM THIS POINT. TRIP-TICKET II CONTINUES.**

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Two routes existed at this point in the journey: one by river and the other by land. Norwood chose to take the land route

(highlighted in orange on the trip-ticket map) while his voyagers paddled upstream. "While the men were sent up river with canoe, Mr. Guerley and myself took the trail for Trout lake. The portage is an excellent one, about four miles and a half long, and passes for distance over a sandy plain supporting a few scattering pine."(245) A few miles later, the Trout River turns east and six miles remain until Trout Lake is reached. As canoeists near the lake, wide areas of the river appear with great frequency. Less than a mile before entering Trout Lake, the stream becomes narrow and swift in spots, making it easier to wade canoes the final distance to the lake.

The expedition of A. B. Gray elected not to lighten their canoes at the specialized portage near the end of the Ike Walton/Trout River portage. As a result, this expedition experienced some difficulty going up-stream against the current of the Trout River. "The river to-day, in some places, was quite shallow and rapid, with occasionally rafts of drift wood, which obstructing our passage, caused us to lighten the canoes and lift them over.".(246)

At the source of the Trout River, many Indians occupied a village which was immediately to the north. For further information concerning the location and status of the Trout Lake village, refer to Chapter 8.

## 11. TROUT LAKE VIA STEVENSON CREEK PORTAGE TO PALLET LAKE

From the mouth of the Trout River, travel parallel to

the north shore of lower Trout Lake and maintain a northeastly direction. Several islands will be noticed; be sure to keep them to the right of the canoe. A few miles of travel will bring the canoes to the channel in-between lower and upper Trout Lake; the channel is narrow and has hills on either route of travel along the portage was described well by Norwood, "The portage between Trout and Lower Rock (Pallet and Lost Canoe Lakes) lakes is about two miles and a quarter in length, and runs along the base of drift hills."(247) The portage trail was to the north of Stevenson Creek and paralleled a large swamp before entering Pallet Lake on the northeast shore.

## 12. PALLET LAKE VIA ESCANABA LAKE AND WHITE BIRCH CREEK TO WHITE BIRCH LAKE

Dr. Norwood made detailed accounts of Pallet and Escanaba Lakes in his journals:

> The lower (Pallet) lake is about half a mile in diameter. A portage of three hundred yards leads to Upper Rock (Escanaba) lake, which is one mile in its largest diameter, and contains a number of small islands . . . They derive their name from immense number of boulders which line these shores, and show themselves above the water in the shallow parts. The island in the upper one are made up almost entirely of boulders, with thin soil covering them, and supporting a few small trees.(248)

The portage from Pallet Lake to Escanaba Lake is almost 1 mile east across the lake. Once on Escanaba Lake, head east in between two large islands, the portage trail to White Birch Lake is to the left of a small creek.

The portage from Escanaba Lake through White Birch Creek to White Birch Lake was described well by Norwood:

> We had great difficulty finding the portage from this lake. It begins on the northeast shore, and is about two and a half miles long. Its course is nearly due east, passing a good part of the distance along the margins of cranberry marshes. Three small ponds were passed in the first two miles. They are connected a by small stream flowing into Upper Rock (Escanaba) lake, and which is navigable for canoes up to the second pond. From this point a portage of every thing has to be made to Lower White Elk (White Birch) lake.(249)

The portage trail entered White Birch Lake on the northeastern shore.

## 12. WHITE BIRCH LAKE VIA BALLARD AND IRVING LAKES TO LAURA LAKE

The journal of Norwood was provides exact detail of the route from White Birch Lake to Laura Lake.

> Lower Elk (White Birch) lake, where we camped, is about three quarters of a mile long, and a quarter of a mile wide. Here we found a number of deserted wigwams and the remains of a garden. . . .
>
> We crossed first White Elk (White Birch) lake, and, by a stream twenty feet wide and a quarter of a mile long, passed into second White Elk (Ballard) lake, which is about two miles long and one wide. From this we passed into third White Elk (Irving) lake, by a river ten yards wide, and three hundred yards long. This lake is nearly circular, and about one mile in diameter. It is very shallow, not having a depth of more than three feet at any point, with a mud bottom. . . .
>
> From this lake, a portage of a quarter of a mile brought us to the fourth White Elk (Laura) lake. The portage leads due east, over drift, covered with better soil than any met for several days past. It supports a tolerably good growth of sugar maple, birch, oak, poplar, and a few pines. This lake is a beautiful sheet of water, about one mile long and three-fourths of a mile wide. The bottom is covered with pebbles and the shores with boulders, some which are very large; one of them being over fifty feet in circumference.(250)

The portage from Irving Lake enters Laura Lake on the northeast shore.

## 14. LAURA LAKE TO UPPER BUCKATABON OR LAC VIEUX DESERT

The portage trail to Upper Buckatabon is on the southeast shore of Laura Lake and actually splits into two portages: one to Buckatabon Lake, and a specialized portage to Lac Vieux Desert. In 1846, A. B. Gray took the Lac Vieux Desert trail before heading to L'Anse.(251) Many travelers using this route chose to hike to Lac Vieux Desert rather than battle the long portage to Upper Buckatabon Lake and the swift current of the upper Wisconsin River.

Norwood headed south down the Wisconsin River and made the portage into Upper Buckatabon; again, his journals were the best source for this 19th-century route:

> The portage to the head waters of Wisconsin River starts due east from this (Laura) lake. In about half a mile the trail divides, the left hand branch leading directly to Vieux Desert lake, the other to a small lake which discharges its waters into the Wisconsin, about ten miles in a direct line south of Vieux Desert. . . .
>
> The portage is about six-miles long, over a high, rolling pine country, which does not afford a drop of water from the upper White Elk Lake to within a quarter of a mile of the end of the portage, where a small stream, ten feet wide, from the northwest, crosses the path. I did not reach Muscle (Upper Buckatabon) lake until sunset, and before I came in sight of it I heard the voyageurs singing and firing guns. They were rejoicing on account of having reached a tributary of the Wisconsin, and that long portages were over for this year.(252)

The portage trail enters near the inlet of a creek in the western bay of Buckatabon Lake.

## 15. UPPER BUCKATABON LAKE VIA LOWER BUCKATABON LAKE TO THE WISCONSIN RIVER

The route to the Wisconsin River was described well by Norwood:

> Muscle (Upper Buckatabon) lake, upon which we began our voyage to the Mississippi, is about, one mile long and rather more than a half broad. A small stream about one hundred and fifty yards in length, led us to another (Lower Buckatabon) lake, rather one than half a mile in diameter. It discharges its waters into the Wisconsin river, through a small creek, from one to five yards wide, running east. The creek is very shallow, very crooked, and much obstructed by drift wood, but without a rock of any description. Its whole course is through swamps bordered by sand banks, covered with pine.(253)

Once entering the Wisconsin River, expeditions like Norwood's would have easier traveling if heading south, down-stream. Those traveling north would continue to struggle in route to Lac Vieux Desert against the swift current and shallows of the upper Wisconsin.

## 16. OUTLET OF LOWER BUCKATABON ON THE WISCONSIN RIVER TO LAC VIEUX DESERT

The distance by canoe to Lac Vieux Desert is 24 miles up-stream. Not many land marks exist, and travelers should be ready to lighten their canoes and wade a great deal. The upper Wisconsin River takes a long and indirect route to Lac Vieux Desert. It will soon become obvious to any travelers who attempt this up-stream route why most chose to travel the upper Wisconsin River over land.

The Wisconsin River's source is Lac Vieux Desert; the river exits in the southwest corner of the lake. 19th century travelers would have headed northeast to the large islands and traditional village of the Lac Vieux Desert band of the Chippewa until the 1880's. For more detailed information on Lac Vieux Desert and the traditional Chippewa

village, refer to chapter 8.

## OBSERVATIONS

Historically, the Northeastern Route to Lac Vieux Desert was used frequently by certain bands in the Lac Du Flambeau District. From 1680-1736, this route was used by Chippewa fur traders who were based in Chequamegon and traded with other interior tribes. The upper Wisconsin River basin was often an area of dispute between the Chippewa and Fox, therefore little trading activity took place.

The period from 1737 to 1783 marked a period of increased fighting between the Chippewa and the Fox and Dakota. The route to Lac Vieux Desert was probably a road to war against the Fox who were repelled from the upper Wisconsin River area in 1783.

From 1784-1825, the Chippewa permanently occupied the Lac Vieux Desert area and were active in the interior fur trade. This route was used by Chippewa and traders to travel throughout the interior region to trade for hides and pelts.

The final historic period from 1825 to 1870, marked the encroachment of the white man in this area. The fur trade remained active until the 1840's, but treaties began to change Chippewa movements. The Chippewa of the Lac Vieux Desert region eventually traveled this route to Lake Superior for annuities payments at La Pointe. Interestingly, all scientific expeditions to the Lac Du Flambeau District traveled the Northeastern Route to Lac Vieux Desert for their research on north-central Wisconsin. In 1840, T. J. Cram,

1846, A. B. Gray, and 1847, J. G. Norwood, each duplicated their travel route along the Northeastern Route Lac Vieux Desert. These scientists were probably following the southern border of the rich mineral areas of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in the hope of finding more natural resources.

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**TRIP-TICKET # III: EASTERN ROUTE TO THE WISCONSIN RIVER**
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TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR THE TRIP-TICKET # III: EASTERN ROUTE TO THE WISCONSIN RIVER



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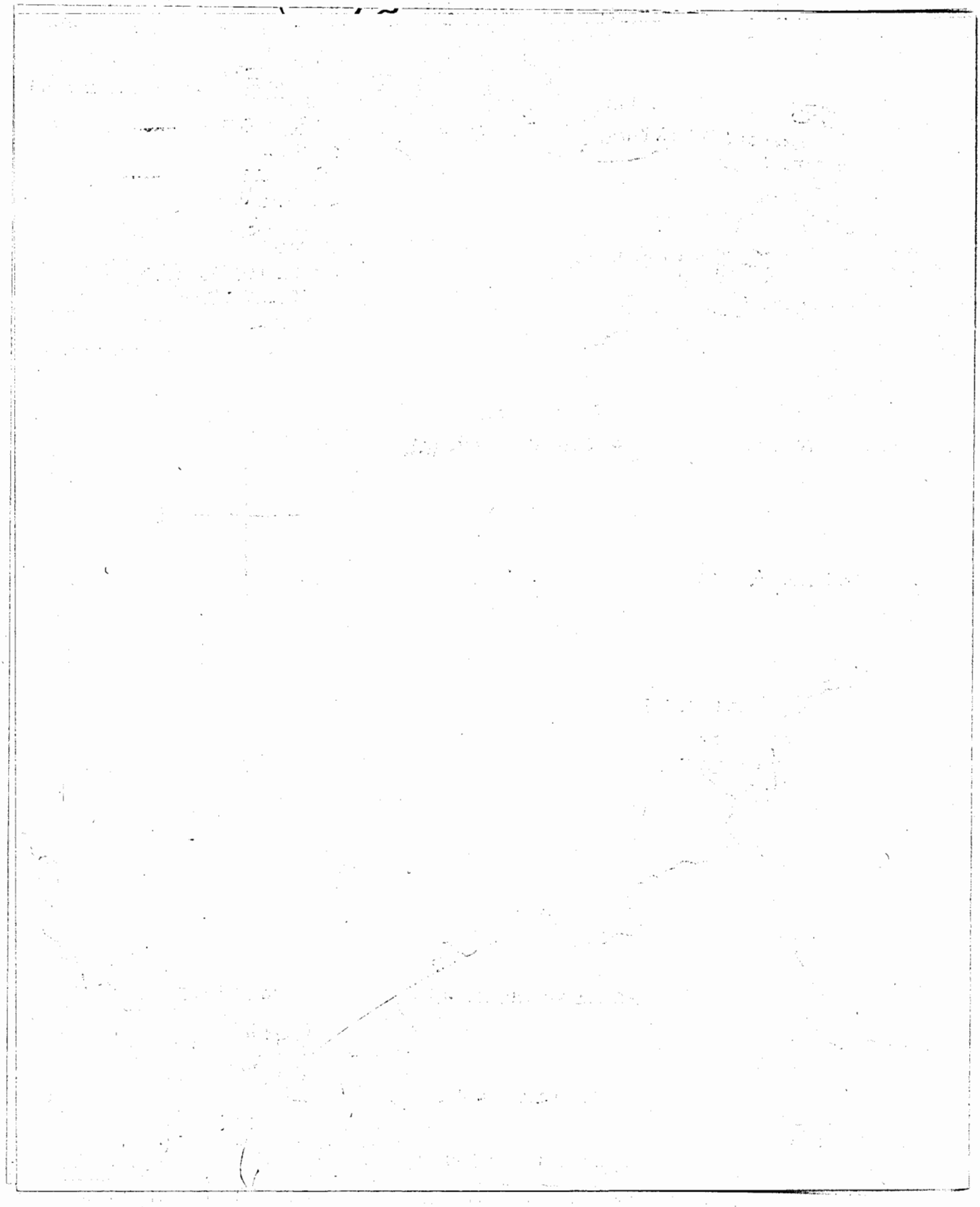
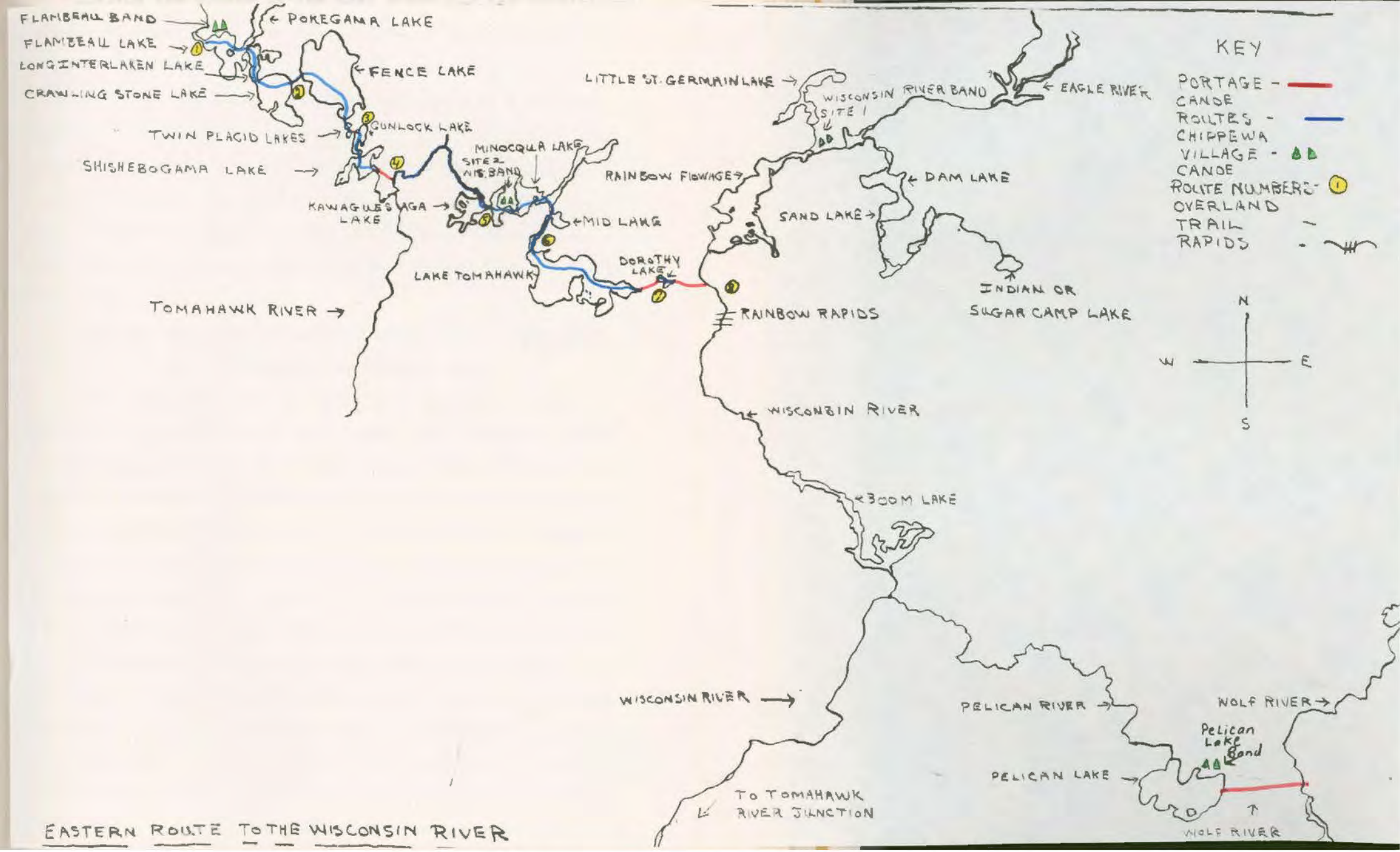
## INTRODUCTION

This route was identified by Dr. Norwood as a primary route of travel to the Wisconsin River for the traditional Lac Du Flambeau District bands. Unfortunately, no primary journals were found to provide an historic narrative of this route. This trip-ticket will contain precise directions from Lac Du Flambeau via Minocqua Lake to the Wisconsin River and is supported by the trip-ticket map, Eastern Route to the Wisconsin River.

### 1. FLAMBEAU LAKE VIA LONG INTERLAKEN LAKE

TRIP-TICKET # III: EASTERN ROUTE TO THE WISCONSIN RIVER






EASTERN ROUTE TO THE WISCONSIN RIVER

## TO CRAWLING STONE LAKE

Leaving the source of the Bear River and the traditional village of the Flambeau band, travel east to the channel between Strawberry Island and a peninsula of land on the north shore of the lake. Head due east between a smaller island and the furthest point south on the peninsula. This route will lead to a hidden channel which enters into Long Interlaken Lake. The channel makes an S-curve before the lake is exposed. Travel to the southeastern end of Long Interlaken Lake to gain access to the channel into Crawling Stone Lake.

## 2. CRAWLING STONE LAKE VIA FENCE LAKE, PLACID TWIN LAKES TO THE PORTAGE INTO GUNLOCK LAKE

Travel due east across Crawling Stone Lake to gain access into the channel to Fence Lake. The channel is about 1/2 mile long and will enter the western shore of Fence Lake. A note of warning: both Crawling Stone Lake and Fence Lake are large bodies of water and will be difficult or dangerous to paddle in high winds. Paddle along the western shore of the lake heading south 2-3/4 miles. Two peninsulas of land will be passed before the channel into the Twin Placid Lakes will be visible. The channel is due south of the last peninsula of land and enters the northern shore of the upper Twin Lake. Follow a southern route to the channel to the lower Twin Lake. Once on lower Twin Placid Lake, head east, following the northern shore until the portage trail appears. The portage is short (200 yards) into Gunlock lake and allows

easy access.

3. GUNLOCK LAKE VIA SHISHEBOGAMA LAKE TO THE TOMAHAWK RIVER

The portage trail enters Gunlock Lake on the northwest shore. Proceed south for 1 mile, then turn left, heading south-east into a large bay. At the end of this bay is the narrow outlet of Gunlock Lake which leads to Shishebogama Lake. The inlet to Shishebogama Lake enters on the northwest shore; canoeists must paddle southeast 1/2 mile to a peninsula of land. Continue southeast past the peninsula before heading east 100 yards to the portage trail. In the southeastern end of Shishebogama Lake, to the right of the portage trail, a creek flows into the Tomahawk River. This water course is not reasonable for canoe travel because it is shallow and blocked with brush and beaver dams. The portage to the Tomahawk River is 1/2-mile long and takes a southeasterly course. Be sure to stay out of the large swamp to the left and north, the portage trail parallels this swamp.

4. TOMAHAWK RIVER VIA KAWAGUESAGA LAKE TO MINOCQUA LAKE

Upon entering the Tomahawk River, canoeists must paddle up-stream in a northeasterly direction. The river meanders horribly for the initial 4 miles, and most of the Tomahawk River is surrounded by swamp. The river changes course to the southeast and meanders for another 3 miles before entering two wide areas in the river. These two wide ponds are divided by a narrows; the Tomahawk River then enters Kawaguesaga Lake on the southeast shore. Upon entering

Kawaguesaga Lake, head south paralleling the east shore 1 mile; the channel to lake Minocqua will be in a large eastern bay. When traveling through Kawaguesaga Lake keep the islands to the right of your course to Lake Minocqua.

### 5. MINOCQUA LAKE TO LAKE TOMAHAWK

Travel east across Minocqua Lake 3/4 of a mile to a narrows which continues east for 1/2 mile. The northern peninsula of land in this narrows was the secondary site for the Wisconsin River band, and is presently the location for the town of Minocqua. For further information concerning the location and the status of the Wisconsin River band, refer to Chapter 8. At the end of the narrows of Minocqua Lake is an island which should be passed on its northern tip. At this juncture, a large island is visible 3/4 of a mile away; proceed to the southern end of the island. Once at the island, head 1 mile east to the channel of Lake Tomahawk. The channel's course is south and should not be confused with the northeastern channel to another chain of lakes. The channel to Lake Tomahawk is almost 2 miles long and enters a northwest bay of the lake.

### 6. LAKE TOMAHAWK TO DOROTHY LAKE

A warning: Lake Tomahawk is a large body of water which is difficult to navigate for unfamiliar travelers, and can be dangerous in high winds. After entering the large northwest bay of this lake, proceed southeast 3/4 of a mile to a peninsula of land. Continue southeast 1/4 mile past another peninsula, maintain a southeasterly course 1 more mile to a

thin peninsula on the south side of the lake which is lined with huge boulders. Continuing a southeasterly heading travel 1/2 mile past Indian mounds point. Change course to the east and follow the north shore of Lake Tomahawk for 2 miles: the portage trail is located in a narrow eastern bay. The portage to Dorothy Lake is 2/3 of a mile long and heads east up a steep hill. The portage trail then drops down a steep bank and enters a western bay of Dorothy Lake.

7. DOROTHY LAKE TO THE WISCONSIN RIVER

Dorothy Lake is 3/4 of a mile long and is located in a deep hollow. Travelers proceed east, paddling the entire distance of the lake into the eastern bay. The portage trail to the Wisconsin River rises out of steep shores of Dorothy Lake and has an easterly course. The trail is 3/4 of a mile long and parallels a swamp to the north. The portage trail continues over rolling hills before descending into the Wisconsin River basin.

From this location, travelers may easily proceed down-stream to the Pelican River and the Pelican Lake band, or continue down the Wisconsin River to the Mississippi River. Some travelers may choose to continue up-stream past the Rainbow Flowage to the primary site of the Wisconsin River band. The possible routes from the Wisconsin River are too numerous to mention, but the Lac Du Flambeau District band's needed several access routes to this important waterway.

OBSERVATIONS

Historically, the Eastern Route to the Wisconsin River

was used frequently by certain bands in the Lac Du Flambeau District. From 1680-1736, this route was used by Chippewa fur traders who were based in Chequamegon and traded with other interior tribes. The Wisconsin River basin was often an area of dispute between the Chippewa and Fox, which limited trading activity.

The period between 1737 and 1783 marked a period of increased fighting between the Chippewa and the Fox and Dakota. The Eastern Route to the Wisconsin River was probably a road to war against the Fox who were repelled from the Wisconsin River area by 1783.

From 1784 until 1825, the Chippewa permanently occupied the Pelican Lake and the Wisconsin River areas, and were active in the interior fur trade. This route was probably used by Chippewa and traders to travel throughout the interior region to trade, hunt, and gather natural resources necessary for subsistence.

The final historic period, 1825-1870, marked the encroachment of the white man in this area. By the late 1830's, the southern range of the Lac Du Flambeau District bands had been restricted by white settlers near Plover Portage. Indian Agents at La Pointe were encouraging the Chippewa of the Lac Du Flambeau District to remain in the northern part of the Wisconsin River. The fur trade remained active until the 1840's, but treaties began to change Chippewa movements. The Chippewa of the Wisconsin River would travel this route to Lake Superior for annuities

payments at La Pointe.

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**TRIP-TICKET # IV: SOUTHEASTERN ROUTE TO THE WISCONSIN RIVER**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR THE SOUTHEASTERN ROUTE
TO THE WISCONSIN RIVER



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## INTRODUCTION

This route was identified by Dr. Norwood as a primary route of travel to the Wisconsin River for the traditional Lac Du Flambeau District bands. Unfortunately, no primary journals were found to provide an historic narrative of this route. This trip-ticket will contain precise directions from Lac Du Flambeau via the Tomahawk River to the Wisconsin River and is supported by the trip-ticket map, Southeastern Route to the Wisconsin River.

## 1. FLAMBEAU LAKE VIA LONG INTERLAKEN LAKE TO CRAWLING STONE LAKE

Leaving the source of the Bear River and the traditional village of the Flambeau band, travel east to the channel between Strawberry Island and a peninsula of land on the

north shore of the lake. Head due east between a smaller island and the furthest point south on the peninsula. This route will lead to a hidden channel which enters into Long Interlaken Lake. The channel makes an S-curve before the lake is exposed. Travel to the southeastern end of Long Interlaken Lake to gain access to the channel into Crawling Stone Lake.

2. CRAWLING STONE LAKE VIA SQUIRREL LAKE TO THE SOURCE OF THE SQUIRREL RIVER

The channel enters the northwest shore of Crawling Stone Lake; canoeists should proceed southeast 1 mile around a long narrow peninsula. Once past the peninsula, go south 3/4 of a mile to the portage trail, which is 200 yards west of a large swamp. The portage trail to Squirrel Lake is 2 miles long, the first 1-1/4 miles of the trail lies due south until a swamp redirects the trail east for the final 3/4 of a mile. The portage trail enters a 1 mile narrows which is the northern-most portion of Squirrel Lake. Squirrel Lake is 3 1/2 miles long and travelers proceed 1 mile due south until the lake widens. At the end of the narrows change directions to the southeast past a large peninsula and follow the eastern shore. Once past the large island in the middle of the lake, continue southeast 1-1/2 miles to the southern most portion of the lake where the Squirrel River exits.

3. SQUIRREL RIVER TO THE TOMAHAWK RIVER

Initially, the Squirrel River's course is east for 1-1/4 miles through a wooded area; the remaining course of this

river meanders through swamp. The Squirrel River changes direction to the north for 1-1/2 miles, before redirecting southeast for 6 miles before entering the Tomahawk River.

### 4. TOMAHAWK AND SQUIRREL RIVERS JUNCTION TO THE WILLOW FLOWAGE

The Tomahawk River meanders 7 miles through swamp to the Willow Flowage. 2-1/2 miles down-stream from the Squirrel and Tomahawk Rivers' junction, Kaubashine Creek enters from the east. Continuing southwest down-stream 4-1/2 miles, Cedar Falls is reached. The mandatory portage around Cedar Falls is short and on the left side of the river.

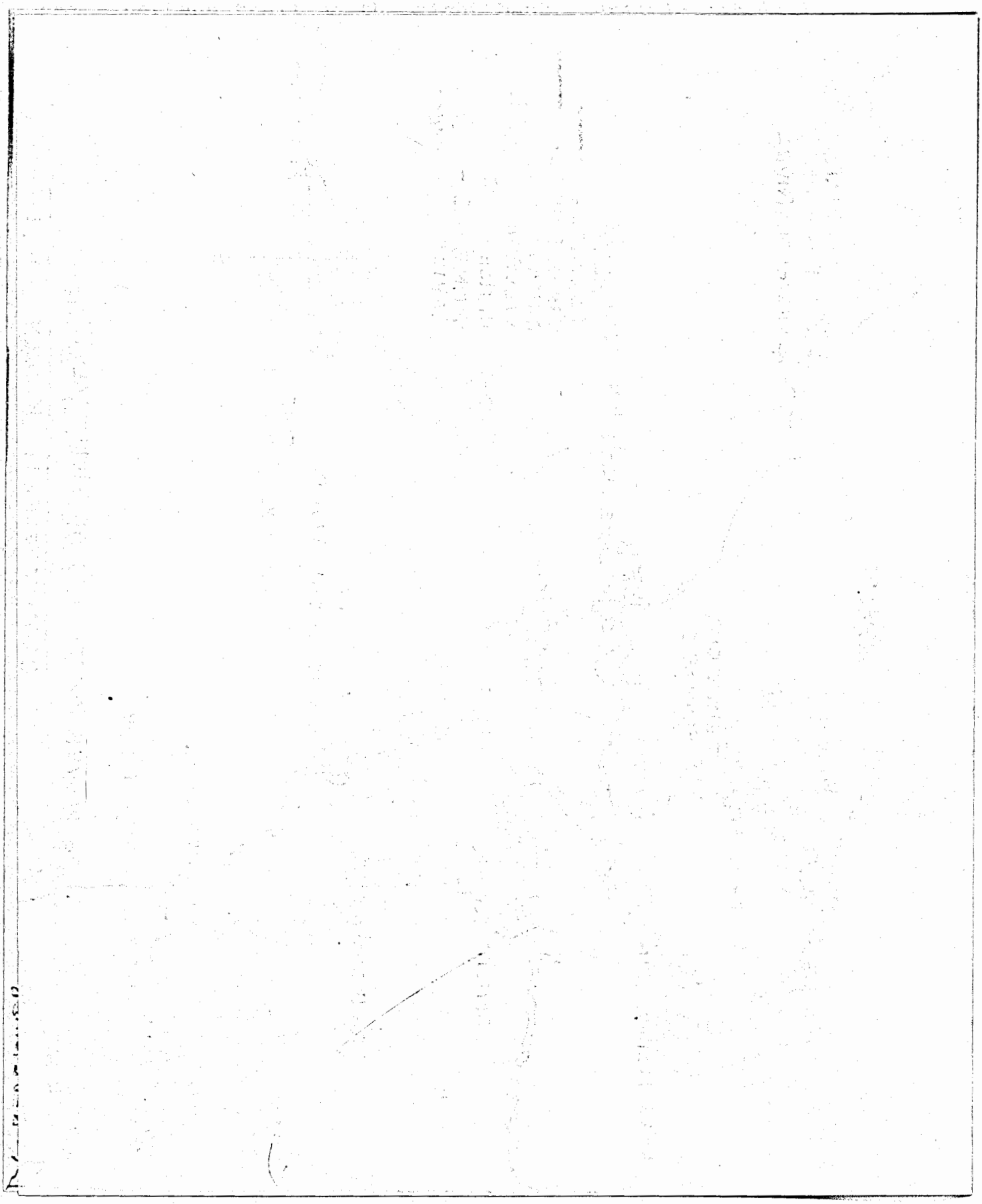
### 5. WILLOW FLOWAGE TO HALF BREED RAPIDS

The Tomahawk River enters a northeast bay of the Willow Flowage; both the inlet and outlet of the Tomahawk River are located on the eastern shore of the flowage. A note of warning: canoeists should be aware that this flowage is large, difficult to navigate, and can be dangerous in high winds. Travelers should follow the eastern shoreline for 2-1/2 miles until past a large peninsula, then change course east for over 1 mile to the dam of the Willow Flowage. Portage to the left of the dam, then continue down-stream for 5 miles to Half Breed Rapids.

### 6. HALF BREED RAPIDS TO THE OUTLET OF THE JERSEY CITY FLOWAGE

Half Breed Rapids is dangerous and should be portaged on the left bank. Those who are experienced in whitewater canoeing can attempt this rapids on either side of the

TRIP-TICKET #IV: SOUTHEASTERN ROUTE TO THE WISCONSIN RIVER




SOUTHEASTERN ROUTE TO THE WISCONSIN RIVER
← BEAR RIVER
FLAMBEAU BAND
← POKE GAMA LAKE
LONG INTER LAKEN LAKE
FLAMBEAU LAKE →
← FENCE LAKE
CRAWLING STONE LAKE →
LITTLE ST. GERMAIN LAKE →
WISCONSIN RIVER BAND SITE 1
SITE 2 WISCONSIN BAND
← SQUIRREL LAKE
SQUIRREL RIVER
TOMAHAWK RIVER
← WISCONSIN RIVER
← CEDAR FALLS
← WILLOW FLOWAGE
← BOOM LAKE
← TOMAHAWK RIVER
HALF BREED RAPIDS
← PRAIRIE RAPIDS
PELICAN RIVER
LAKE NOKOMIS →
← WISCONSIN RIVER
JERSEY CITY FLOWAGE
LAKE MOHAWKSIN
← LAKE ALICE
KEY
PORTAGE -
CANOE ROUTES -
CHIPPEWA VILLAGES -
CANOE ROUTE NUMBERS -
RAPIDS -
SPIRIT RIVER
GRANDMOTHER FALLS →
← WISCONSIN RIVER
N
W
E
S
GRANDFATHER FALLS →
TO PLOVER PORTAGE & BIG BULL FALLS

island which divides the rapids. Continue down the river for another 12 miles until Prairie Rapids is reached; this rapids has a portage trail on the right bank. Prairie Rapids is easier than Half Breed Rapids, but the first drop is shallow and may damage loaded canoes. After Prairie Rapids the river enters a north central bay of the Jersey City Flowage. Follow the bay south for 1-1/2 miles to the main body of the flowage, then travel due south 1 mile to the outlet of the Jersey City Flowage.

### 7. JERSEY CITY FLOWAGE TO THE WISCONSIN RIVER

In its final 3 miles, the Tomahawk River widens and maintains a southerly course. The Tomahawk River enters the Wisconsin River at Mohawksin Lake, forming a large body of water. From this juncture, travelers can easily proceed upstream to the Pelican River and the Pelican Lake band, or continue down the Wisconsin River to the Mississippi River. The possible routes from the Wisconsin River are too numerous to mention, but the Lac Du Flambeau District bands needed several access routes to this important waterway.

## OBSERVATIONS

Historically, the Southeastern Route to the Wisconsin River was frequently used by certain bands in the Lac Du Flambeau District. From 1680 to 1736, this route was used by Chippewa fur traders who were based in Chequamegon and traded with other interior tribes. The Wisconsin River basin was often an area of dispute between the Chippewa and Fox, which limited trading activity.

The period 1737-1783 marked an increase in fighting between the Chippewa, and the Fox and Dakota. The Southeastern Route to the Wisconsin River was probably used by the Chippewa as a road to war against the Fox, who were repelled from the Wisconsin River area by 1783.

From 1784 until 1825, the Chippewa permanently occupied the Wisconsin River area, and were active in the interior fur trade. This route was probably used by Chippewa and traders to travel throughout the interior region to trade, hunt, trap and gather natural resources for subsistence.

The final historic period 1825-1870, marked the encroachment of the whiteman in this area. The fur trade remained active until the 1840's, but treaties began to change Chippewa movements. The Chippewa of the Wisconsin River would travel this route to Lake Superior for annuities payments at La Pointe.

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**TRIP TICKET # V: THE CHIPPEWA RIVER**

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9. BABB'S ISLAND TO THE JUNCTION OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH FORKS OF THE FLAMBEAU RIVER
10. THE JUNCTION OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH FORKS OF THE FLAMBEAU RIVER TO BIG FALLS DAM
11. BIG FALLS DAM TO THORNAPPLE DAM
12. THORNAPPLE DAM TO THE JUNCTION OF THE FLAMBEAU AND CHIPPEWA RIVERS

OBSERVATION

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If more information is required concerning the travel route from the mouth of the Montreal River to Echo Lake or Bear River, refer to the trip-ticket "Lake Superior to the Lac Du Flambeau Indian Village".

xxx

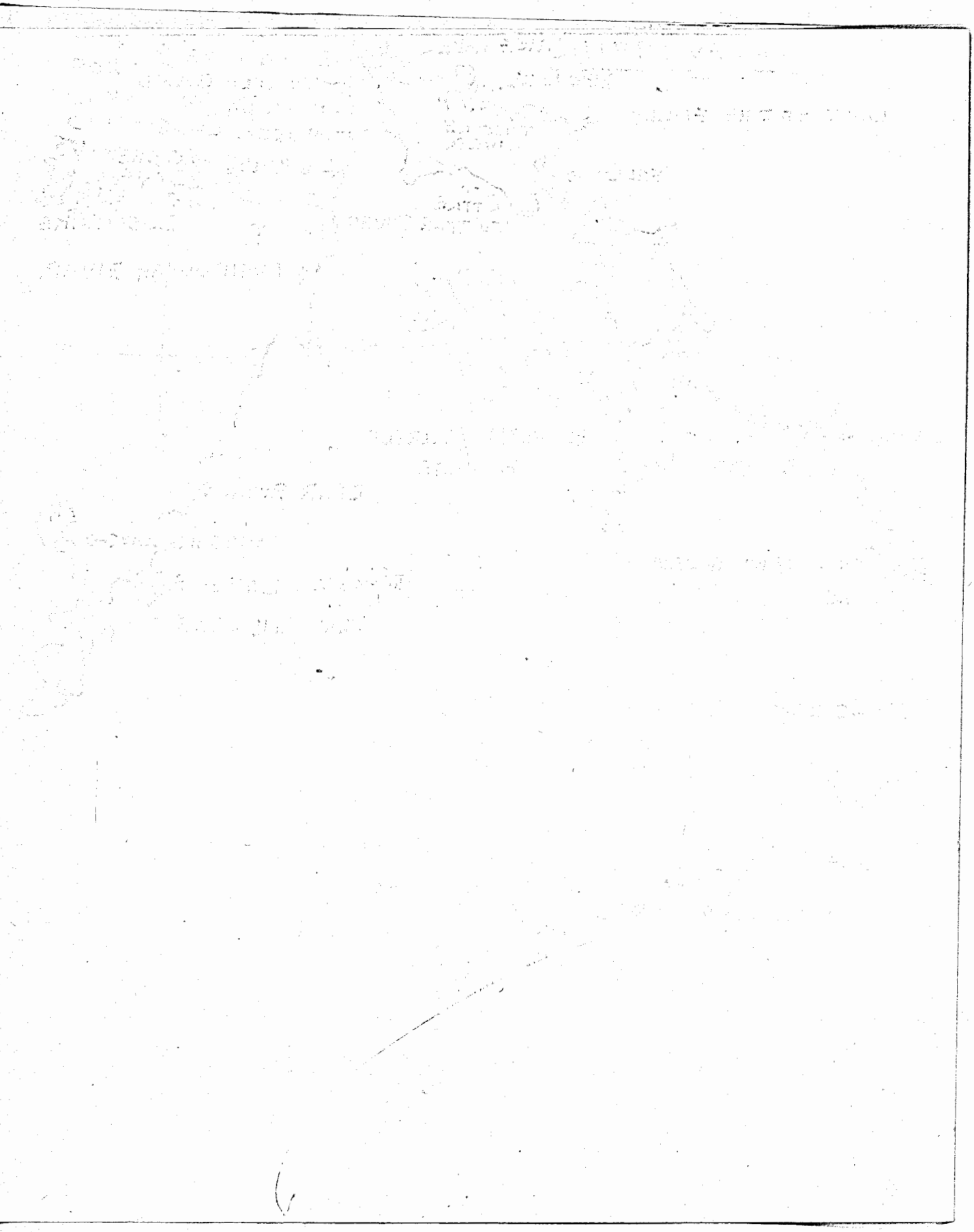
## INTRODUCTION

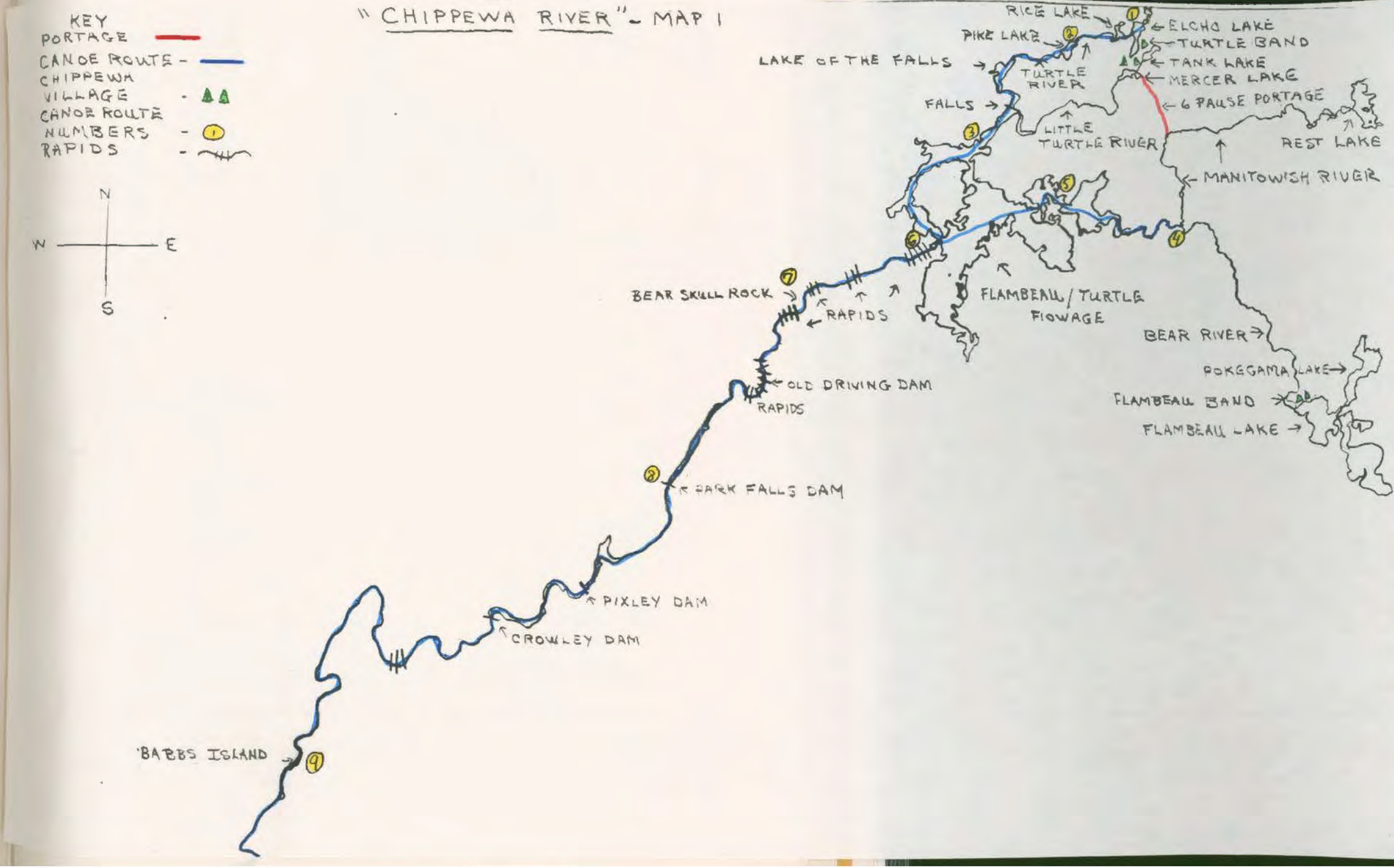
This primary route of the Lac Du Flambeau District bands, to the Chippewa River was documented by the 19/th century journals and maps of Henry Schoolcraft, A. B. Gray, Dr. Norwood, Victor Malhiot, and numerous letters from the La Pointe Indian Agency. The trip-ticket will have two initial routes which intersect at the outlet of the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage, before continuing down the North Fork of the Flambeau River to the Chippewa River. One route will start from Echo Lake, while the other route will begin at the mouth of the Bear River. Each route is numbered in the text and on the trip-ticket maps for assistance while reading.

Unfortunately, no primary journals were found to provide an historic narrative of this route. This trip-ticket will contain precise directions and is supported by two trip-ticket maps, "Chippewa River Map 1" and Chippewa River Map 2".

## 1. ECHO LAKE VIA RICE LAKE AND THE TURTLE RIVER

MAP # 1 FOR TRIP-TICKET # V: THE CHIPPEWA RIVER




"CHIPPEWA RIVER" - MAP 1
KEY
PORTAGE
CANOE ROUTE - CHIPPEWA
VILLAGE
CANOE ROUTE
NUMBERS
RAPIDS
N
W
E
S
RICE LAKE
PIKE LAKE
LAKE OF THE FALLS
TURTLE RIVER
FALLS
LITTLE TURTLE RIVER
ECHO LAKE
TURTLE BAND
TANK LAKE
MERCER LAKE
6 PAUSE PORTAGE
REST LAKE
MANITOWISH RIVER
FLAMBEAU / TURTLE FLOWAGE
BEAR SKULL ROCK
RAPIDS
BEAR RIVER
POKEGAMA LAKE
FLAMBEAU BAND
FLAMBEAU LAKE
OLD DRIVING DAM
RAPIDS
PARK FALLS DAM
PIXLEY DAM
CROWLEY DAM
BARBS ISLAND


20 MILES TO LAC COURTE OREILLES
NORTH FORK OF FLAMBEAU RIVER
RAPIDS
FLAMBEAU FALLS
WANNIGAN RAPIDS
10
SLOUGH GRUNDY
CEADER RAPIDS - 4 DROPS
PINE ISLAND RAPIDS
SOUTH FORK OF FLAMBEAU RIVER
BIG FALLS FLOWAGE
BIG FALLS DAM
11
LAKE FLAMBEAU
FLAMBEAU RIVER
CHIPPEWA RIVER
LADYSMITH DAM
RAPIDS
12
THORNAPPLE DAM
PINE ISLAND
RAPIDS
JUMP RIVER
CHIPPEWA RIVER BAND (PROBABLE SITE)
HOLCOMBE FLOWAGE
DAM
BRUNET ISLAND (RAPIDS)
DAM
TO CHIPPEWA FALLS - 25 MILES
KEY
CANOE ROUTES -
CHIPPEWA VILLAGES - ΔΔ
CANOE ROUTE NUMBERS - 1
RAPIDS
N
W
E
S

## TO PIKE LAKE

At the inlet of the Turtle River on Echo Lake head southwest less than 1 mile to the channel to Rice Lake. The Rice Lake channel is about 1/2 mile long and enters on the east side of Rice Lake. From the mouth of the channel head northwest for 1/2 mile to the end of a swampy point of land, then head due south into the Turtle River. The Turtle River meanders for about 3 miles before it enters Pike Lake on the northeast shore.

## 2. PIKE LAKE VIA THE TURTLE RIVER AND LAKE OF THE FALLS TO THE TURTLE-FLAMBEAU FLOWAGE

From the Turtle River inlet on Pike Lake, travel southwest for 1 mile to the outlet of the river. The Turtle River travels about 2 miles before entering on the northeast shore of Lake of the Falls. Head southwest down the left shore of Lake of the Falls for about 1-1/2 miles, then turn southeast around a swampy point into the bay which leads to a channel. Be careful as about 1/2 mile down the channel there is a water fall which must be portaged. The Turtle-Flambeau Flowage is only a 1/2 mile paddle away.

## 3. THE TURTLE-FLAMBEAU FLOWAGE TO THE DAM ON THE NORTH FORK OF THE FLAMBEAU RIVER

The Flambeau-Turtle flowage is very large and is covered with islands which can easily be mistaken for the shore. Many unfamiliar travelers have become disoriented and lost on this body of water. It is important to have a good map, compass, and directions to travel directly to the North Fork

of the Flambeau (Chippewa) River. If a traveler becomes lost and enters the larger portion of the flowage, navigation will become more difficult and high winds will force a traveler to head for shore.

When entering the flowage from Lake of the Falls, travel southwest for 2 miles until the lake doubles in size. This is a critical point: continue traveling southwest, do **not** go south into the larger part of the flowage. The land to the south is actually a large island which will be followed all the way to the river. Take a southwesterly course for 2-1/2 miles before the channel of the flowage turns south and travels 3 more miles to the source of the North Fork of the Flambeau River. It is easy to determine the location of the river's mouth, because the huge body of the Flambeau-Turtle Flowage is just past the river. Obviously a dam exists at the beginning of the river and a small portage is necessary.

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The outlet of the Turtle-Flambeau Flowage marks the intersection of the two initial routes of this trip-ticket. The trip-ticket text will continue its narrative at the mouth of the Bear River. It will be noted in the trip-ticket text when these two initial routes intersect and combine.

xxx

## 4. MOUTH OF THE BEAR RIVER TO THE TURTLE-FLAMBEAU FLOWAGE NARROWS

From the mouth of the Bear River, proceed west downstream; this marks the beginning of the North Fork of the Flambeau River. The river meanders almost 3 miles before widening and becoming part of the flowage. Continue in a westerly course, following the northern shore for 3 miles.

This is the narrows of the flowage, the main body of water should be visible to the south west. Be sure to have a good map and compass before attempting to traverse this body of water. Many islands and bays quickly confuses an unfamiliar traveler.

5. THE NARROWS OF THE TURTLE-FLAMBEAU FLOWAGE TO THE NORTH FORK OF THE FLAMBEAU RIVER

From the narrows proceed southwest 4-1/2 miles, weaving through islands and channels, to the North Fork of the Flambeau River. Be careful of high winds when crossing this large body of water; even moderate winds can create dangerous waves for canoes. Another word of caution: water levels fluctuate a great deal on this flowage, and possible routes of travel may change throughout the year.

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**NOTE: The route from Echo Lake can be continued from this point. TRIP-TICKET # V CONTINUES.**

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6. TURTLE DAM TO BEAR SKULL ROCK

A short portage is required; the trail is west of Turtle Dam, and be sure to put in well-away from the dam site. An old coffer dam from the logging era will still be visible down-stream of the put-in. Four rapids exist on the upper part of the North Fork of the Flambeau River and all can be run in canoes with little difficulty.

The first rapids is about 1/2 mile down stream and is to be shot on the right side. If necessary, a portage trail exits on the right side of the river. Traveling 100 yards through a small swift, the next rapids can be seen. The

portage is on an island dividing the river; the left channel is blocked by an embarrass (log jam) from the logging era. The rapids on the right is swift and short. The third set of rapids is encountered in a few hundred yards and the portage trail is on the right shore. The final set of rapids is divided by an island with the only good channel being on the left. The best portage trail is on the right side of the river and takes an indirect route due to the two courses of the river. It is about 4 miles to Bear Skull Rock and only one minor rapid must be negotiated. Bear Skull rock is easy to identify, it is a large rock with a cedar tree growing out of it, it is in the middle of the river and resembles a bear's skull.

## 7. BEAR SKULL ROCK TO THE PARK FALLS DAM

Canoeists must travel down-stream about 10 miles to reach the Park Falls Dam. Several rapids exist in the first 4 miles of travel to Park Falls; it may be necessary to get out and scout the rapids before an attempt to run them. Portages are clearly marked along shore, if any travelers doubt their abilities. In the middle of the rapids section there is an old driving dam from the logging era; this dam still partially blocks one of the river's natural channels. The remaining 5 miles is flat water which is backed up from the dam.

## 8. PARK FALLS DAM TO BABB'S ISLAND

The portage around the dam is 1/4 of a mile long and is located on the left shore of the river. The river from Park

Falls Dam to the Pixley Dam travels 7 miles and has fluctuating river currents according to water releases from the dam. The portage route past Pixley Dam is short and located on the west bank. Traveling 5 miles downstream the Crowley Dam is encountered; the portage trail is on the left shore. Continuing down-stream 3 miles, a 1/2-mile-set of The remaining 5 miles is flat water which is backed up from the dam.

## 8. PARK FALLS DAM TO BABB'S ISLAND

The portage around the dam is 1/4 of a mile long and is located on the left shore of the river. The river from Park Falls Dam to the Pixley Dam travels 7 miles and has fluctuating river currents according to water releases from the dam. The portage route past Pixley Dam is short and located on the west bank. Traveling 5 miles downstream the Crowley Dam is encountered; the portage trail is on the left shore. Continuing down-stream 3 miles, a 1/2-mile-set of easy rapids must be traversed before continuing another 7 miles to Babb's Island.

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**NOTE: It is necessary to switch trip-ticket maps from "Chippewa River Map 1" to "Chippewa River Map 2". TRIP-TICKET # V: CONTINUES.**

xxx

## 9.BABB'S ISLAND TO THE JUNCTION OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH FORKS OF THE FLAMBEAU RIVER

Six miles below Babb's Island there are 1-1/2 miles of easy rapids, 3 miles further is Wannigan Rapids. The main channel for Wannigan Rapids is located in the center of the

river, a portage may be advised. Flambeau Falls is 1/2 mile farther down-stream; this rapids is the most difficult encountered thus far, the portage trail on the right shore should be used. At the junction of the North and South Forks of the Flambeau River, the amount of water and current increases significantly. The difficulty of travel through rapids also increases from this point forward. The South Fork of the Flambeau River was an unreliable route of travel for the Lac Du Flambeau District bands. The South Fork has many difficult rapids and often does not have enough water for canoe travel.

## 10. THE JUNCTION OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH FORKS OF THE FLAMBEAU RIVER TO BIG FALLS DAM

Cedar Rapids is 3-1/2 miles down-stream and has four different pitches (drops). The first drop of Cedar Rapids has a good channel between two rocks in the middle of the river. Those who choose to portage will find the trail on the left shore, near a high river bank. The second, third, and fourth pitches of Cedar Rapids are in a 1-1/2 miles long stretch of river, with a variety of open channels, depending on water levels. Portaging should not be necessary. Two more minor rapids will be encountered in the next 1-1/2 miles; these rapids can be dangerous during high water and may require a portage. Continue down-stream 4 miles to the Big Falls Dam and portage from the left shore.

## 11. BIG FALLS DAM TO THORNAPPLE DAM

Traveling down-stream 4-1/2 miles to the main body of

Lake Flambeau, continue 1 mile southwest to a long peninsula. The dam is almost 2 miles southwest of the peninsula, and the portage is to the right. The portage trail is 1/4 of a mile long and ends in front of an island in the river. Continue down-stream 5 miles; the river remains wide to Ladysmith Dam. A short portage is located to the left of Ladysmith Dam; the river is swift after the put-in for the next 1/2 mile. The distance From the Ladysmith Dam to the Thornapple Dam is 10 miles. The only point of navigational interest is a slight rapids 6 miles down-stream from the Lady-Smith Dam. The short portage around Thornapple Dam is located on the left bank.

## 12. THORNAPPLE DAM TO THE JUNCTION OF THE FLAMBEAU AND CHIPPEWA RIVERS

Three an one-half miles down-stream of Thornapple Dam are the Pine Islands, these two large islands are nearly 1 mile in length and splits the Flambeau River. Immediately down-stream of Pine Islands, there is a small rapids where the river narrows. After 2 miles of flat water, three easy rapids are spread out over the next 2 miles of the Flambeau River. After the third rapids, the Flambeau River widens and is divided by an island 1/2 mile long. From the end of this island, the junction of the Flambeau and Chippewa Rivers is only 1/4 of a mile away.

From this location, travelers could easily proceed down stream to Brunet Rapids, the tension zone, or continue down to the Mississippi River. Some travelers may choose to

continue up-stream to the Lac Court Oreilles bands of the Chippewa. The routes from the Chippewa River are numerous, and were critical for linking the traditional Lac Du Flambeau District bands with important resources, other Chippewa bands, and as roads to war.

## OBSERVATIONS

Historically, the Chippewa River route was used frequently by most bands in the Lac Du Flambeau District. From 1680 to 1736, this route was used by Chippewa fur traders who were based in Chequamegon and traded with other interior tribes. The Chippewa River basin was an area of intense trading activity between the Chippewa and Dakota.

The period from 1737 to 1783 marked an increase in fighting between the Chippewa, and the Fox and Dakota. The Chippewa River was used by the Lac Du Flambeau District bands as a road to war against the Dakota. All interior Chippewa bands were attempting to establish the lower Chippewa River as a winter camp to hunt and trap in the game rich-tension zone.

From 1784 until 1825, the Chippewa permanently occupied the upper Chippewa River area, and were active in the interior fur trade. This route was used by most interior Chippewa bands and traders for travel to winter camps near the tension zone to trade, hunt, trap and gather natural resources for subsistence.

The final historic period, from 1825 to 1870, marked the encroachment of the white man in this area. The fur trade

remained active until the 1840's, but treaties began to change Chippewa movements. After the Treaty of 1837, the United States Government established a black smith shop and farm for the Chippewa at Chippewa Falls. The location of these government services and goods were helpful, and complemented the traditional economic cycle of the interior bands of the Chippewa. The Chippewa would travel south to the Chippewa Falls area in the fall and winter to hunt, these governmental services would be best utilized during this period. In the 1840's and 1850's, encroaching white settlers were threatened by the on-going war between the Chippewa and Dakota tribes. As a result the interior bands of the Chippewa were slowly forced out of the Chippewa River area and onto reservations.

## CONCLUSION

This marks the end of the trip-ticket description of the five primary canoe routes used by the traditional Lac Du Flambeau District bands. These routes effectively linked the Chippewa with every major watershed within the interior region. If any modern adventurers wish to follow these traditional canoe routes, Chapter 9 will provide valuable guidance.

## CHAPTER X

## FINAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE HISTORY AND TRADITIONAL CANOE ROUTES OF THE LAC DU FLAMBEAU DISTRICT BAND'S

The traditional canoe routes of the Lac Du Flambeau District Chippewa are of great historical importance. Indian tribes, colonial powers, fur traders, explorers, the territory and state of Wisconsin, and the United States have benefited from these traditional routes which covered Chippewa country like a spider web. Canoe routes were the first highways, and serviced all inhabitants of Great Lakes area for over three centuries.

The Chippewa canoe routes represent a heritage and tradition nearly exclusive to the state of Wisconsin. Never before defined in a systematic documented manner, these primary canoe routes of the Lac Du Flambeau District bands illustrate this heritage. To better understand three centuries of Wisconsin history these canoe routes must be identified with the greatest possible accuracy. The research on the traditional canoe routes of the Chippewa must be done now, while the best resources are still available. The altering of the land of Chippewa country, passing of generations, and loss of manuscripts and maps will soon conceal this chapter of history.

Additional canoe routes exist throughout other districts

of the Lake Superior area which would be much easier to identify than those in the Lac Du Flambeau District, the most difficult of all the regions. The Lac Court Orielles, Mole Lake, St. Croix, Ontonogan, Lake Chetec, Bad River, and other Chippewa bands have similar heritages, with the great quantities of documents available to support the identification of the traditional routes used by them.

The described canoe routes of the Lac Du Flambeau Chippewa represent only their primary routes. Throughout northern Wisconsin numerous other secondary trails and water-routes assisted the Chippewa in transportation, communication, warfare, hunting, and gathering other subsistence resources. The Chippewa Indians were semi-nomadic and quite flexible relative to the availability of resources. The canoe routes could not be static; as conditions demanded the Chippewa had to alter them to travel to different areas. Competition from the Fox, Dakota, and other Indian tribes, encroaching white settlers, and changes in the environment would cause the Chippewa to modify their routes of travel.

Chippewa did traveled throughout Wisconsin on canoe routes and over portages which connected most lakes, rivers, and streams. Away from the primary routes of the Chippewa, there is an amazing portage between Star Lake and Plum Lake, near Sayner, Wisconsin. The Star Lake portage is by far the most beautiful of more than two hundred different portages examined by the author. Traveling from Plum Lake the 1/2

mile portage is flanked by an eagle's nest to the east. The canopy of mature maples is so thick that little sunlight can penetrate; the forest floor is dark and vacant except for the trunks of huge trees. When portaging, the canoe which rests upon your shoulders limits your vision, and all that is visible is a carpet of thick vegetation that is so soft you can tread through it in your bare feet. As the traveler nears the end of the portage trail, a large birch tree that grows in a perfect arch facing Star Lake becomes visible. Local residents relate, that the Chippewa bent the tree as a sapling in a traditional method of marking the portage. The arched sapling was easier to see than a blaze upon a tree-trunk from a tomahawk and would stand for generations to mark this traditional portage.

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237 Ibid., p. 93.

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239 Ibid., Map.

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243 The Institute For The Development Of Indian Law, Treaties Agreements Chippewa Indians, p. 68.

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## Illustration Footnotes

3-1 Charles E Cleland, "Economic Change Among The Lake Superior Chippewa During The Nineteenth Century", (paper presented to the Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa, Odana, Wisconsin, 1 June 1985), p. 13.

3-2 Jeanne Kay, "The Land of La Baye: The Ecological Impact Of The Green Bay Fur Trade, 1634-1836," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, Madison, 1977), p. 271.

## Selected Bibliography

Sources included in this select bibliography are limited to research which applied directly to the thesis topic. Many other government documents, maps, books, and journals were analyzed during the research of this thesis, but were not included in the bibliography because of their limited value.

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