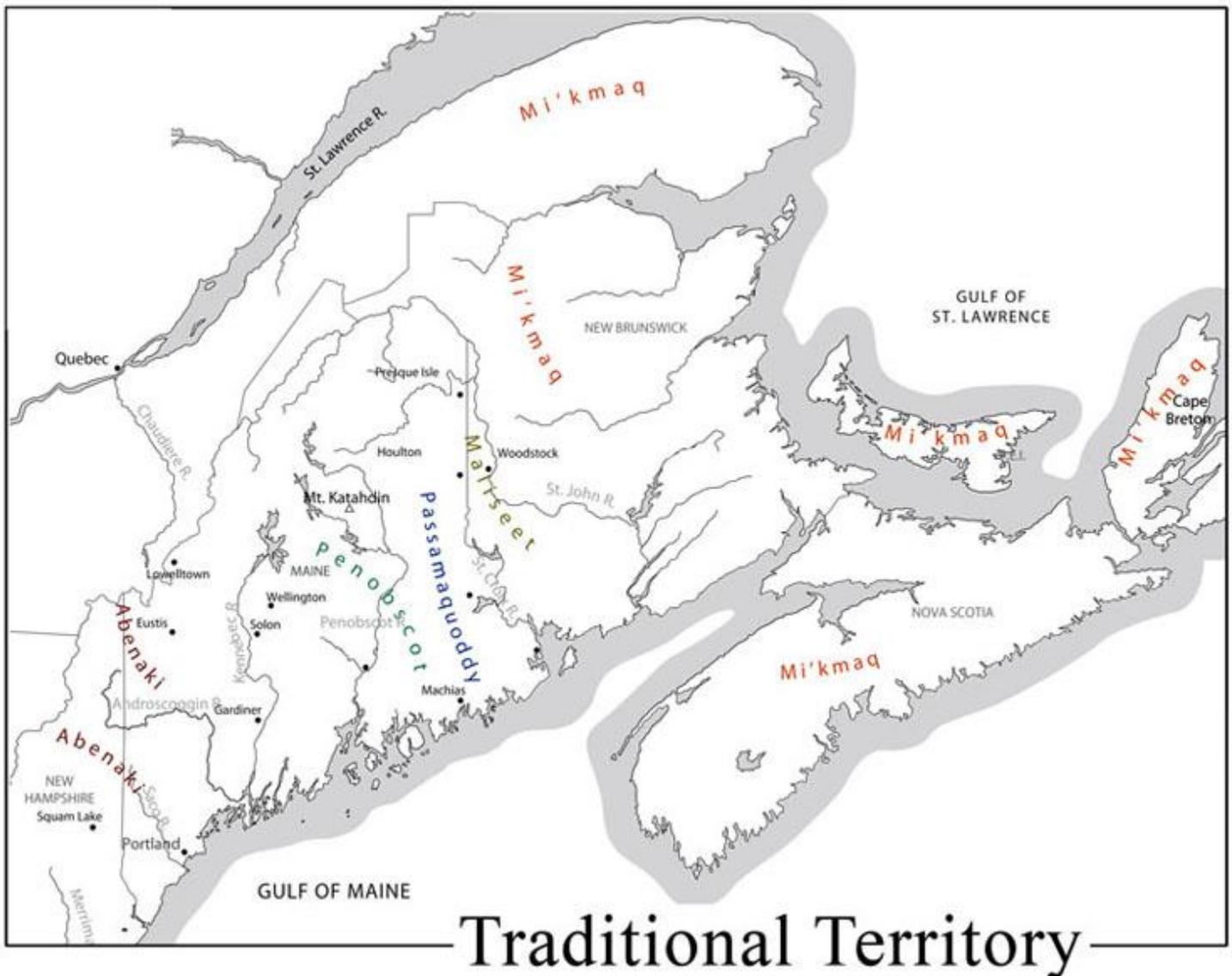


# The Arrival of the French in Kanata

francois

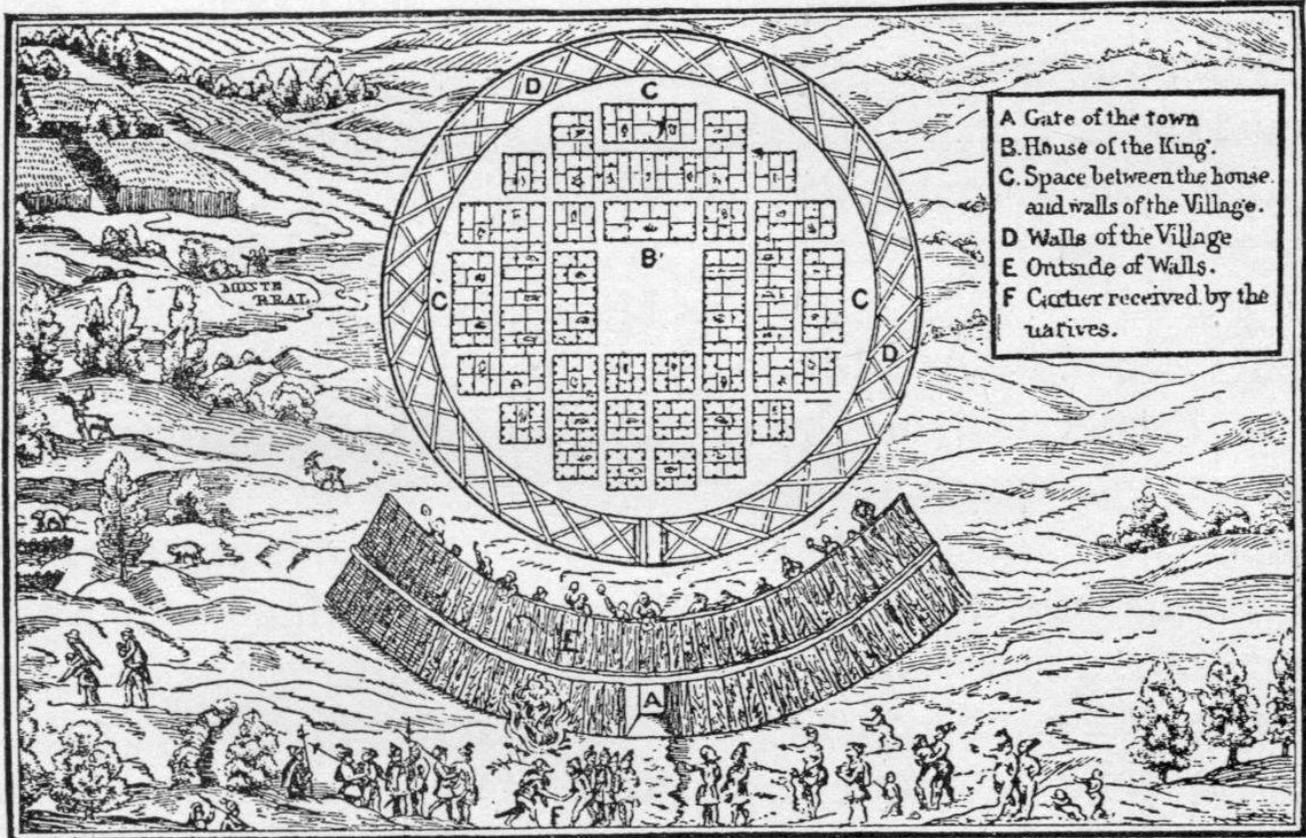
- Tales of Spanish treasure motivated the French King Francois I commission a navigator, Jacques Cartier, to undertake a voyage to the “newly found land to discover certain isles and countries” in 1534.
- Cartier explored the eastern coast of the lands of the Wabanaki Confederacy (meaning “People of the First Light” or “Dawnland” it was a confederation of the Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, Passamaquoddy, Abenaki and Penobscot Nations). FYI the Wabanaki Confederacy were close allies of the Wendat (Huron).



- Making contact with the Mi'kmaq, Cartier “discovered” the entrance to a great inland river (St. Lawrence) which Cartier hoped was a passage to Asia. Celebrating the Roman Catholic Feast of St. Lawrence, Cartier applied the name to both the river and the gulf. The first Catholic mass was celebrated in Canada June 11<sup>th</sup>, 1534 – highlighting a close relationship between Roman Catholicism and French culture in the New World.

- Erecting a large cross at Gaspé (Mi'kmaq territory) to serve as a landmark and guide-post, Cartier claimed the land in the name of King Francois I of France.
- Cartier was sent on a second voyage by the French king which saw him push further inland along the St. Lawrence river. Iroquois villages dotted the coastline, and Cartier began applying the Iroquoian word for village/community to the entire land: Kanata.
- Rumours of the treasure rich “Kingdom of the Saguenay” pushed Cartier and his men further down the St. Lawrence River until he reached a fertile island. Landing on the island, Cartier and his men approached the village of Hochelaga which the French explorer described as:

*"The said town is all in a circle... enclosed in wood, in three ranks, in the manner of a pyramid, crossed at the top, having a row perpendicular to it all". "And this town there is only one door and entrance... There is within this town roughly fifty houses, each about fifty steps long, and..."*



Ancient Hochelaga as envisioned by Giovanni Battista Ramusio in 1535. Reprinted in 1909 with English legend for *Canada: the Empire of the North* by Agnes C. Laut

- Cartier named the island's highest hill Mount Royal ("Mont Royale") after his king. After walking up to the landmark's crest Cartier saw the rapids that blocked his way any further west so he stopped.
- Wintering in North America was hard on the French, who almost died of scurvy before the Indigenous Peoples showed them a cure (boiling the bark and needles of the white pine).

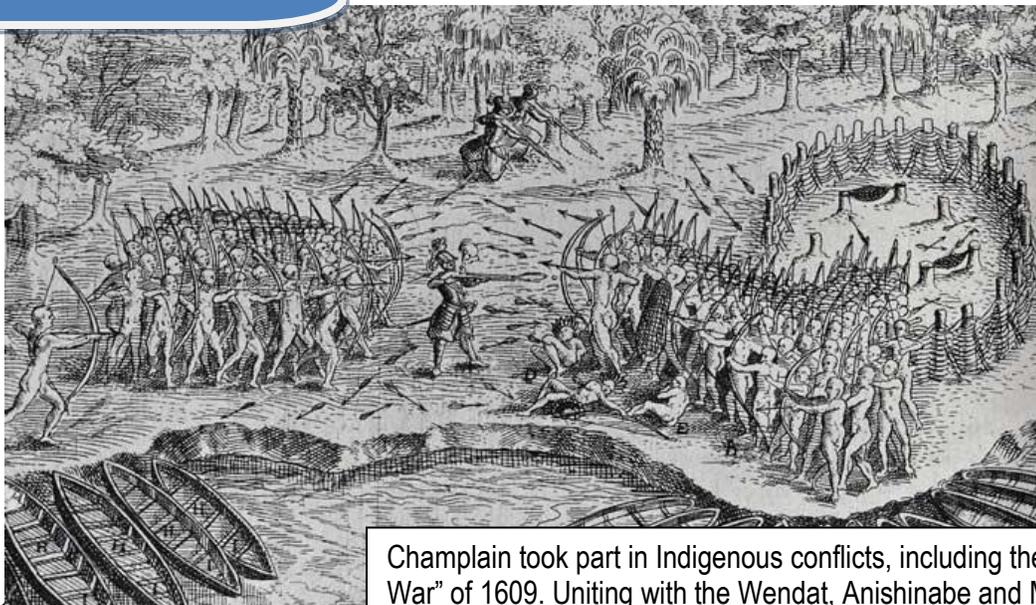
Kid-napping ten Indigenous People, Cartier returned to France where he was commissioned to undertake a third voyage to "enter deeper into these lands . . ."

- The inhospitable climate and unsuccessful attempts to find the Kingdom of the Saguenay led to France abandoning interest in Kanata, now "Canada," for 30 years. French and Basque whalers move in to harvest the waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence & Atlantic during this time.



- In 1603 Samuel de Champlain arrived in "New France" as a cartographer. Champlain began extensive explorations (forging a strong relationship with the Wendat People, allies of the eastern Wabanaki Confederacy).
- Champlain traveled inland (including the near-north of Ontario), as well as constructing forts and other settlements cementing the French claim to the area. History will record Champlain as the "Father of New France" and some in Rideau Hall claiming him as "Canada's First Governor General" making that institution the oldest Canadian office (this claim is disputed since Champlain was never appointed governor owing to the fact that he was not noble).

Fooled you! I am not really Champlain, even though most history texts say I am. This portrait is based on an engraving of Michel Particelli d'Emery (d. 1650).



Champlain took part in Indigenous conflicts, including the "Iroquois War" of 1609. Uniting with the Wendat, Anishinabe and Montagnais Peoples (Wabanaki Confederacy) against the Haudenosaunee Confederacy.

Different perspectives of a first encounter:

Read Champlain's recollection of his meeting with members of the Odawa First Nation at the mouth of the French River in 1615:

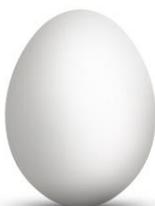
*We met with 300 men of a tribe named by us the Cheveux releves, or "High Hairs," because they had them elevated and arranged very high and better combed than our courtiers, and there is no comparison, in spite of the irons and methods these have at their disposal. This seems to give them a fine appearance. They wear no breech cloths, and are much carved about the body in divisions of various patterns. They paint their faces with different colours and have their nostrils pierced and their ears fringed with beads. When they leave their homes they carry a club. I visited them and gained some slight acquaintance and made friends with them. I gave a hatchet to their chief who was as happy and as pleased with it as if I had made him some rich gift and, entering into conversation with him, I asked him about his country, which he drew for me with charcoal on a piece of tree-bark. He gave me to understand that they had come to this place to dry the fruit called blueberries, to serve them as manna in the winter when they can no longer find anything.* H.P. Biggar, The Works of Samuel de Champlain, Volume III, p.43-45.

- This story will turn into a legend that Champlain discovered 300 Indigenous (Odawa) People picking blueberries on the coast of Lake Huron. What is another possible reason Champlain encountered 300 people with their faces painted and carrying clubs? What effect is created when we change the details to say that they were picking blueberries?

Interpretation:

- Europeans encountered established communities wherever they traveled in North America including the Wabanaki Confederacy in the east and the Wendat in the west (modern-day central Ontario)
- Cartier and Champlain spearhead the French drive inland. While other European settlements stuck to the shores of North America, the French spread along the coast of the St. Lawrence, right into the heart of the continent.
- Roman Catholicism was linked with French expansion and culture.
- Canada & New France were the same place.

Holding the instrument upside down.



- French ideas around "claiming" areas of North America were external in nature (meaning, they were interested in keeping other European trading countries out and not worry about controlling the affairs of the Interior).

Updated