

3.84

Opposing forces

The juxtaposition of these two people speaks volumes. Sitting Bull (left) was a prominent Sioux Indian from the western U.S. representing Native American resistance to European encroachment. Sir Walter Raleigh (right) was a prominent 16th-17th century figure who encouraged Elizabeth I to support voyages of exploration designed to exploit the wealth of the "new world."



TOPIC 3.6

Worlds Collide

Imagine you had to venture across an unknown region, as William Cormack did in 1822. How would you start your preparations?

How might First Nations and Inuit have felt about European settlement in Newfoundland and Labrador?

Introduction

The lives of Aboriginal people in North and South America underwent great change as more and more Europeans began to settle in their lands in the 1700s and 1800s. They faced social change, new diseases, unfamiliar technologies, and (often) hostility. The experience of Aboriginal people in Newfoundland and Labrador was no different. It was a time of great change for Inuit, Innu, Beothuk, Mi'kmaq, and Metis, as the European migratory fishery came to an end and was replaced by a resident fishery.

Inuit

Inuit continued to trade baleen with Europeans, mostly French, during the 1700s. However, this trade was temporarily disrupted in 1763 when Labrador became a British possession and the French were no

longer allowed to do business there. To smooth the transition for British and American merchants to take over the baleen trade, Governor Hugh Palliser attempted to negotiate with Inuit* in 1765. Although this did not eliminate all tensions between the cultures suddenly thrown together in business, it did contribute to increased European activity and settlement along the Labrador coast.

The settlement of Moravians on the northern coast of Labrador in the later part of the eighteenth century led to consistent contact between Inuit and Europeans. The Moravians, a Protestant denomination from Europe, established their first Labrador mission station in Nain in 1771. This was followed by the founding of Okak, Hopedale, Hebron, Zoar, Ramah, Makkovik, and Killinek. Inuit traded fish to the Moravians in these communities

**There were approximately 1500 Inuit living along the coast at this time.*



3.85 A family portrait

Inuit in front of their skin tent (tupik), Okak, Labrador, 1896

in exchange for European goods. As the use of these commodities became more embedded in their lifestyle, Inuit became dependent on some of these goods.

The Moravians' intent was to spread Christianity among the Inuit, but they became involved in many other aspects of Inuit life as well. They encouraged Inuit to abandon their traditional lifestyle and settle near Moravian mission stations. As a result, some Inuit traditional religious beliefs and practices were eroded. The Moravians did interact with Inuit in Inuktitut, however, and established a written form of this language. Thus, the Inuit language was preserved.

Inuit interactions with Europeans continued and increased into the mid-1800s. In some cases, this introduced European diseases to Inuit for which they had no immunity, resulting in a decline in Inuit population. In other cases, intermarriage often occurred between European men and Inuit women.

This is an example of diffusion.

● Killiniq (Killinek)
1904

3.86 Moravian mission stations in Labrador

● Ramah 1871

● Hebron 1830

● Okak 1776

● Nain 1771

● Zoar 1865

● Hopedale 1782

● Makkovik 1895

ATLANTIC OCEAN



3.87 Hugh Palliser, c. 1775

Palliser was concerned by disorder in the Strait of Belle Isle between Inuit, French, and British fishers. He spent time in Labrador trying to establish better relations with Inuit and encouraged the Moravians to establish a mission there.



3.88 Mission station Hebron, Labrador, c. 1860



3.89 Changing religious practices

Roman Catholic Procession of Montagnais and Nasquapees at the Mission of Seven Islands, by William Hind, c. 1861. Colonialism brought dramatic and far-reaching changes to Innu culture, society, and lands. The arrival of Roman Catholic missionaries at Labrador during the 1800s greatly altered Innu religious practices.

Innu

Although European nations were in Newfoundland and Labrador since the 1500s, their presence did not greatly alter Innu culture and society until the 1800s. An increased European presence in Labrador in the 1800s brought dramatic and far-reaching changes to Innu culture, society, and lands. The arrival of Roman Catholic missionaries helped marginalize Innu religious beliefs. At the same time, European traders encouraged Innu to trap furs full time and spend less time on their other subsistence activities.

Traditionally, Innu believed in maintaining a balance between all the elements of creation. They believed in spiritual beings, some of which were associated with the animals they hunted. The Kanipinikassikueu, caribou master, was the most important of these. Missionaries objected to these beliefs and traditional Innu spiritual practices, such as drum dances, and converted many Innu to Christianity. Roman Catholic priests assumed many duties in the community. In addition to performing religious ceremonies, they distributed



3.90 Donald Smith at North West River, Labrador, 1860, by William Hind

Innu trappers often traded with the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) trading post in North West River. Donald Smith (Lord Strathcona) became the Factor at North West River in 1848 and eventually was put in charge of the entire Labrador district for the HBC.

Experiencing The Arts

For more information on William Hind turn to page 640.



3.91 Effects of cultural interaction

When two cultures come into contact, both are affected. This picture (above) by J. Crawford Young shows a British officer in “Canada” wearing a caribou skin coat c. 1830. The painted coat worn by the man in the foreground was apparently acquired by a non-native owner. Note that it is similar to the Euro-Canadian coats worn by the other men in the picture. Europeans in Labrador likely also traded for and wore Innu coats.

food and European clothing. They also served as schoolteachers for Innu children, which increased the priests’ influence over younger generations.

Traders from the Hudson’s Bay Company persuaded many Innu to become trappers. In return for furs, Innu trappers obtained European foods, tools, and other supplies at trading posts. Giving up traditional caribou hunting and specializing in furs, however, made many Innu dependent on European goods for survival. The introduction of guns also changed their way of hunting. Instead of hunting being done in large groups, it became a small group or individual activity. This change weakened traditional community ties.



3.92 Intricate work

Ethnographer Dorothy Burnham suggests European styles also affected the traditional cut of Innu coats. Compare the European coats in Young’s painting with the Labrador Innu coat (right) from the late 1700s to the early 1800s. Can you see any European influence in it?

3.93 A picture of a Beothuk camp and canoe from John Cartwright's map, *A sketch of The River Exploits and The east end of Lieutenant's Lake in Newfoundland* (c. 1768).



3.94 Beothuk made use of European items to make their own tools. Shown here is a Beothuk projectile point that was created by hammering and grinding a European nail, and a European trap that was found in a Beothuk site. Beothuk took the traps apart and used the pieces to make spears.



Beothuk

Beothuk continued to face **encroachment** on their land and resources throughout the 1700s and early 1800s as English settlers moved into Notre Dame Bay and French fishing crews occupied harbours and coves on the west coast. Mi'kmaq, equipped with firearms, and allies of the French, increased their presence on Newfoundland's south coast and displaced Beothuk from their camps on the west coast. This loss of territory caused Beothuk to focus their subsistence activities on the area around the Exploits River and Red Indian Lake. It became their last refuge inland. In fall, large herds of caribou migrated through this area, which allowed Beothuk to hunt much needed meat for the winter season, particularly since their access to traditional coastal resources was now severely curtailed.

With the beginning of a commercial salmon fishery in the early 1700s, Beothuk in Bonavista Bay and to the north were soon excluded from productive salmon rivers between Cape Bonavista and Cape St. John, such as Gambo and Gander rivers. They responded by breaking down weirs, taking away nets, and killing several of the salmon catchers. It was the first time in documented history that Beothuk resorted to violence. However, after the station owner sent a large contingent of men with the intent of keeping the country "clear of the Indians," no more disturbances were recorded. Soon thereafter salmon posts were also set up in Exploits and Halls Bays. In the 1760s, when English parties arrived to erect new fishing stations in these bays, Beothuk attacked and killed them. This seems to have been the last time Beothuk made a concerted effort to protect this resource, since retaining access to salmon rivers would have been a matter of life and death. The recent capture of a Beothuk child and the killing of his mother may have incited them to take action once more, though their victory was short lived.

In addition, Beothuk were excluded from the bird

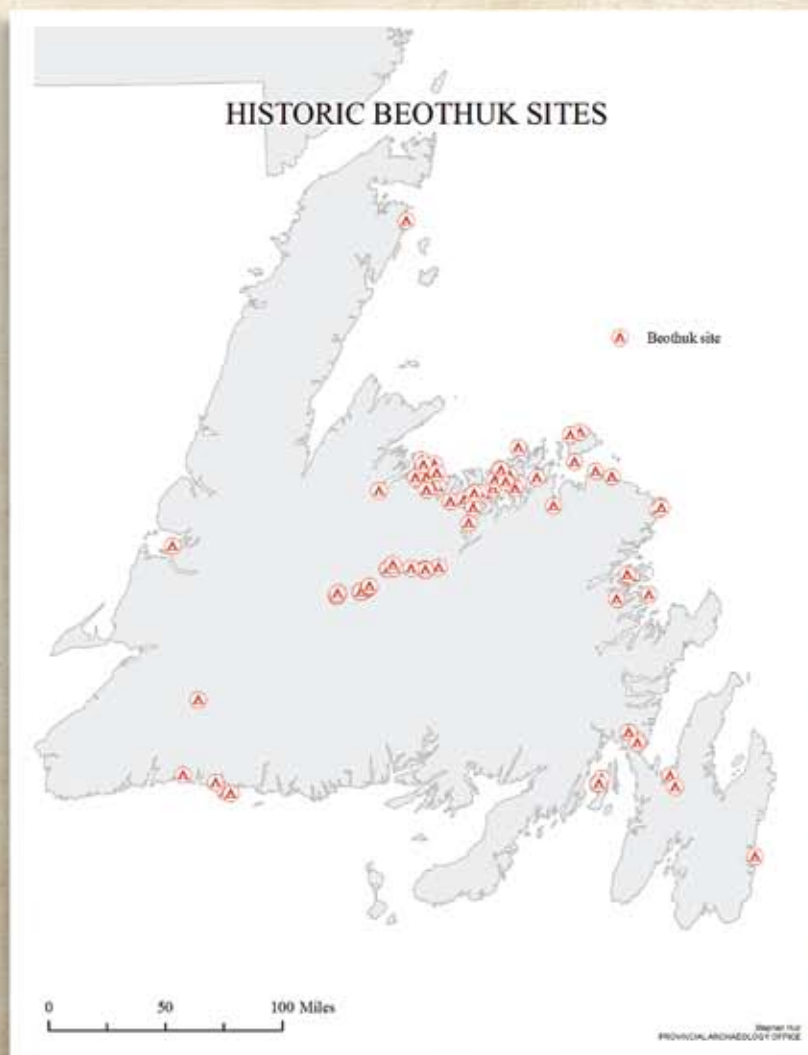
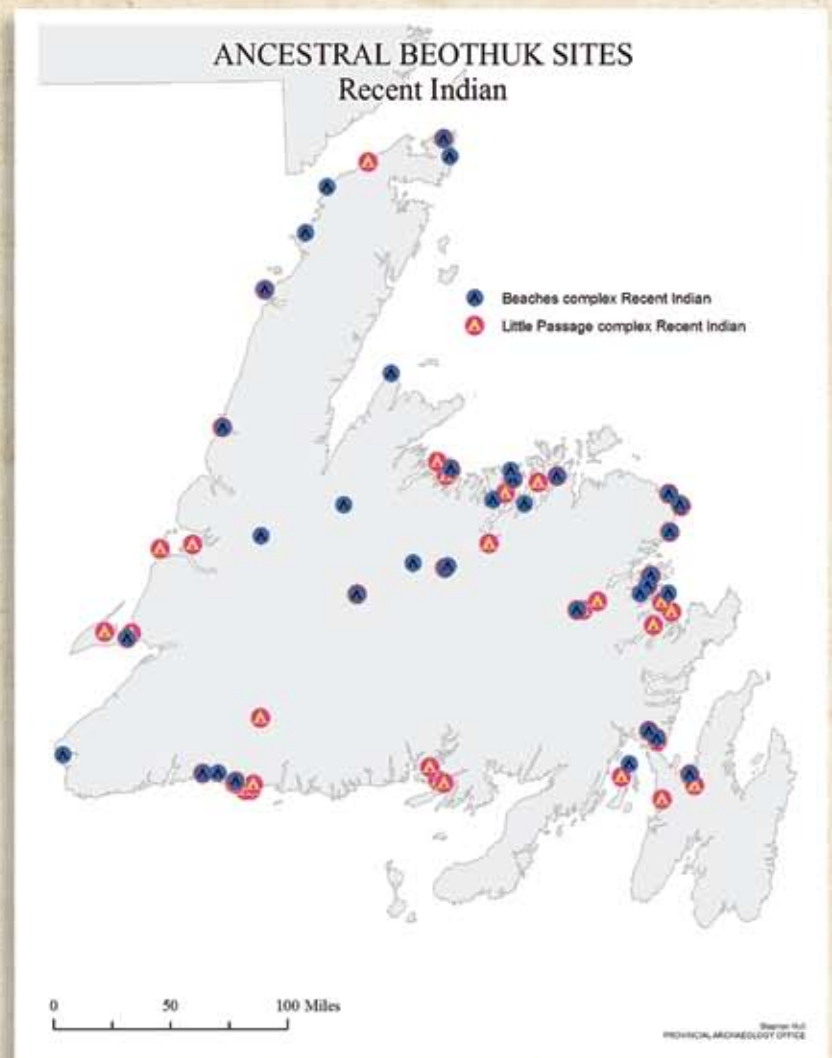
islands, where they had traditionally collected sea birds and eggs, by being shot at on sight when they ventured out in their canoes. This severely restricted their ability to find an adequate food supply in early summer. As well, Beothuk faced competition for resources in their inland refuge as Newfoundland furriers began to intrude into their territory to trap fur bearing animals.

With the continuation of persecution and encroachment by trappers, fishermen and settlers – including the violent abduction of two more children – Beothuk intermittently took revenge for the many injustices they had suffered. They pilfered fishing nets from rivers to turn them into rope, took traps set in the forest to fashion them into arrow and spear heads and sometimes cut fishing boats from their moorings. On occasion, Beothuk also ambushed fishermen. The settlers, who resented Beothuk presence and their habit of stealing equipment, never doubted their right to the country and its resources and retaliated. Many cruel acts perpetrated by the settlers have been recorded.

Towards the end of the 1700s, hostile encounters increased. Beothuk, having no firearms, were not able to adequately defend themselves. Overwhelmed by their foes and hemmed in on all sides, they were unable to hunt sufficient food and began to starve. Some historians believe that by the 1760s the Beothuk group had already decreased to about 350 members and continued to decline sharply in the decades that followed. Recorded population figures suggest a decrease to 72 in 1811, to 27 in 1819, and to 12 or 13 in 1823. A contributing factor to this decline was the transmission of tuberculosis to Beothuk by English parties who came to their camps in an attempt to appease them. In addition to causing a number of deaths, this disease also weakened many Beothuk who survived it and rendered them unable to participate in their annual round of subsistence activities.

3.95 Prehistoric Beothuk sites

The symbols on the map mark some of the areas of Beothuk activity before European contact; archaeological explorations show that Beothuk exploited every coast and major river system of the island.



3.96 Historic Beothuk sites

The map to the left shows that by the 1750s Beothuk camps and burial sites were clustered around the coast of Notre Dame Bay, the Exploits River, and Red Indian Lake. Though archaeologists have found Beothuk camp sites near Rencontre Island, the Avalon Peninsula, and in Trinity and Bonavista Bays, as marked on the map, only Bonavista Bay was used by Beothuk until c.1800. The other sites had already been abandoned in the 1600s.

(((DIMENSIONS OF THINKING)))

JUDGMENT

Whenever you examine an issue in the social sciences you ask various questions. Some of these questions relate to morality – or standards of what is considered right and what is considered wrong. For example, the story of the Beothuk raises questions such as:

- Were Beothuk justified in taking fishing nets and traps?
- Were the English justified in seeking retaliation against Beothuk who took their fishing and trapping gear?

However, these questions are secondary to a more fundamental moral issue:

- Did the English have any rights to settle and use Newfoundland's resources without making appropriate agreements with Beothuk?

Equally important are more subtle moral questions such as:

- Was it appropriate for the English to capture Beothuk in an effort to establish better relations?
- Should the English governors of the territory have done more to save Beothuk?

It is important when assessing moral issues to avoid two things: presentism (page 63) and making assessments without adequate information. Remember, examining moral issues is not just about assessing past actions. It also involves looking at past experiences and learning from them in order to improve the quality of peoples' lives today.

Making Peace with Beothuk

In the latter half of the 1700s, several governors and settlers began to realize their negative impact on Beothuk and attempted to interact with them to accommodate their needs. In 1768, Governor Hugh Palliser, appalled at the situation of the Beothuk, sent Lieut. John Cartwright to make contact. Cartwright recorded many deserted Beothuk camps as he trekked up the Exploits River, but failed to make actual contact.

Following Governor Palliser's efforts, Governor John Byron issued a proclamation commanding magistrates to charge settlers who murdered Beothuk. As historian Sir R. Bonnycastle noted: "(Byron) ... appears to have taken a lively interest in the ... Red Indians, who were ruthlessly massacred on every possible occasion by the barbarous furriers; he issued a proclamation for their protection which the lawless vagabonds on the north eastern coast cared very little about."



3.97 The handshake of friendship

John Hayward's interpretation of the painting left by Governor John Holloway to communicate with Beothuk

Experiencing The Arts

To see some of Shanawdithit's sketches turn to pages 236 and 638.

3.98 A miniature of A female Red Indian of Newfoundland by William Gosse, 1841 This is believed to be a portrait of Shanawdithit, who was given the English name "Nancy April."



3.99 Excerpt of a letter concerning the treatment of Beothuk, from *Mercantile Journal*, May 27, 1918

but we regard it as one of national importance. In our present feelings upon the subject, we cannot enter into a computation of the expenses which may attend, or the commercial benefits which may result from it. We look at it from that high ground, which dictated the abolition of the slave-trade, and which lately shook the walls of Algiers to their foundation.—If any one, coldly conversant in the relative estimates of human life, will tell us that, the blood of a Red Indian is not so valuable as that of an African or an European, let him pay a short visit to the delicate, the sensible being who is lately come amongst us, and say, if he saw her life attacked by a murderous savage, for the value of the simple raiment she has on, whether he would not rush to defend it with his own—if he would not, from the impulses of his nature, we own that we have no suitable arguments to move his philosophy, but we think the answer would be short and ready—and yet it is horrible to reflect, that at the very moment, while we set down at our fire sides, in peace and composure, many of her countrymen, in all probability, as amiable and interesting as this young woman, are exposed to all the rapine and wonton cruelty of those lawless wretches, whom Lord Chatham described as hell hounds in human form.

In 1784, John Cartwright's brother, George, proposed the establishment of a Beothuk reserve in Notre Dame Bay to guarantee Beothuk access to resources and protect them from persecution by fishers, settlers, and trappers. However, the British government was not interested and the persecution of Beothuk continued. Lieut. G. C. Pulling, who was charged with the investigation of Beothuk-settler relations in 1792, recorded that settlers shot at Beothuk in their canoes, robbed them of their furs, and wounded and killed Beothuk in their camps. The description of a 1781 raid, told in the words of the perpetrator, stands out. On another winter expedition in 1790, the men destroyed everything useful, burnt Beothuk canoes and three out of four mamateeks. Although the men maintained they did not fire a shot, Pulling doubted the truth of this claim. In his report he urged the authorities to send a peace mission to the Beothuk and to protect them, but his plan was not approved.

As a means of conciliation, several governors promoted the idea of capturing Beothuk, treating them kindly, and sending them back with presents. As a result, the capture of a Beothuk woman in 1803 led to the death of several of her kin. In an attempt to avoid this kind of confrontation, Governor John Holloway suggested leaving a painting for Beothuk that showed trade between "Indians and English."

In another attempt to contact Beothuk, Governor John Duckworth dispatched Capt. Buchan with a naval party in 1811 to a Beothuk camp at Red Indian Lake. The initial meeting appeared to go well. But when Buchan left two of his men as "hostages" while he went to get more presents, the Beothuk became suspicious of his intentions and killed the two marines.

In March 1819, a party of settlers captured Demasduit, wife of chief Nonosabasut, at Red Indian Lake. When her husband tried to force her release, he and his brother were murdered. The couple's infant died shortly afterwards. (For more information on Demasduit's capture, read the account on page 239.) Demasduit, called Mary March by the settlers, was taken to St. John's.

"The townspeople could hardly believe that this gentle, modest, and intelligent woman was one of the 'savage' Beothuk." An anonymous article in the *Mercantile Journal* reflected on the "horrible" fact that Demasduit's people were still exposed to "wanton cruelty" and argued that Beothuk had better title to the island than the English. Never before had such an admission been made publicly. A citizen's committee planned to return Demasduit to her people, but in 1820 she died from tuberculosis before she could join her kin. Capt. Buchan brought her remains to the Beothuk camp at Red Indian Lake.

In 1822, William Cormack, a naturalist and explorer, walked across central Newfoundland with a Mi'kmaw guide in an unsuccessful attempt to contact Beothuk. A year later, trappers in Badger's Bay found three starving Beothuk women. Two soon died, but the youngest, Shanawdithit, lived for five years in the household of the local Justice of the Peace on Exploits Island. In 1827, Cormack founded the Beothick Institution to gain public support for saving Beothuk. The following year, Cormack brought Shanawdithit to St. John's. With the help of drawings, she communicated much valuable information about Beothuk history and culture to him, including a list of Beothuk words. On June 6, 1829, Shanawdithit died from tuberculosis in a St. John's hospital. She was the last known Beothuk.

Settlers often gave Beothuk captives English names. The custom was to use the month they were taken as their surname.

CASE STUDY

Beothuk-Settler Interaction

“Red Injun not bad man,
if he mind to he could
kill every fisherman
without letting himself
be seen at all.”

— Statement reportedly made by a Mi'kmaw man to
James P. Howley Sr., author of *The Beothuks or Red Indians* (1915)



3.100 “Dancing Woman” from a sketch done by Shanawdithit

WITH THE EXPANSION OF THE FISHERY AND ENGLISH SETTLEMENT, continued contact between Beothuk and English was inevitable. At times this contact was peaceful, but more often it was confrontational. Written accounts from this time period detail some of these encounters. The following provide some insights into these meetings, and help shed light on why the relationship between Beothuk and English settlers unfolded as it did.

Account #1. Setting: Trinity Bay, 1612

John Guy believed that Beothuk could help the colonists obtain furs, which were a valuable commodity in Europe. To do this, Guy felt that it was imperative to establish peaceful trade relations with Beothuk. In the fall of 1612, he set sail to Trinity Bay in the hopes of making contact. He did encounter Beothuk on this trip, and goods were exchanged. The following excerpt comes from John Guy's journal (held at Lambeth Palace, London, England).

And coming together, the foremoste of them presented unto him a chaine of leather full of small perwinckle shells, a splitting knife, & a feather that stuck in his hair. The other gave him an arrow without a head. The former [Indian] was requited with a linen cap & a hand towel [and he] put presently the linen cap upon his head. ... To the other [Indian] he gave a knife. And after hand in hand they all three did sing & dance.

Account #2. Setting: Bay of Exploits, c. 1760

The following account appears in Lewis A. Anspach's *History of Newfoundland* (1818):

About the year 1760, one, Scott, with another shipmaster and a strong crew, went from St. John's to the Bay of Exploits, which was known to be much frequented by the Indians, during the summer season. Scott and his party having landed at the mouth of the bay ... Some days afterwards, a large party of Indians appeared in sight, and made a full stop, none of them showing the least inclination to approach nearer. Scott then proposed to the other shipmaster to go

among them ... They proceeded towards the Indians with part of their crew without arms. Scott went up to them with every sign of amity, that he could imagine, and mixed with them, taking several of them, one after another by the hands. An old man, in pretended friendship, put his arms around his neck; at the same instant, another stabbed Scott in the back. The war-whoop resounded, a shower of arrows fell upon the English which killed the other shipmaster and four of his companions. The rest of the party then hastened to their vessels and returned to St. John's, carrying one of those who had been killed with the arrows sticking in his body.

Account #3. Setting: Cape St. John, 1779

The following account is retold in Ingeborg Marshall's *A History and Ethnography of the Beothuk* (1996):

One of the most brutal recorded murders [of Beothuk] was perpetrated by a fisherman named Wells in the summer of 1779. On seeing a canoe in a cove near

Cape St. John, Wells fired directly at its occupants, three or four of whom fell. After landing, some of the Beothuk ran into the woods, but those who had been wounded hid behind cliffs. Wells searched them out, shot them again, and then took their canoe and contents.



3.101 A depiction by John Maunder Sr. of the capture of Demasduit (also known as Mary March) and the killing of her husband.

“The Beothuk had only done what every man ought to do, ’to come to rescue his wife from the hands of the captors and nobly lost his life in his attempt to save her.’ ”

— Excerpt from a 1829 letter to the *Liverpool Mercury*.

The letter’s author claims to have been part of the capture party. His name is signed as E.S.

Account #4. Setting: Exploits River, 1781

From *A few facts by G.C. Pulling respecting the native Indians of the Isle of Newfoundland, anno Domini 1792*, Liverpool Papers, British Library, London.

In the winter of 1781, Mr. Peyton, Mr. Miller and their headman, Thos Taylor [travelled] up the Exploits River. Mr. Pitman recollected what Peyton had told him about this “glorious expedition” as follows: “he (Peyton) and some others went in pursuit of them (the Indians). And having travelled a long way came close upon them before the Indians saw ’em ... They immediately discharged all their pieces at the Wigwams when they who were within ran out screaming some were wounded & all of course terrified.

They advanced and continued firing till they drove them away from their wigwams ... They enter’d the wigwams & took their skins & all they thought worth bringing away ... In one of the wigwams was a man which they had so crippled as not to be able to stand who had one of Peytons traps in his hand ... the wounded Indian sitting on his breach fought with the remainder of y/e Trap some little time but soon being conquer’d P-n wrested the Trap from him & beat out his brains.

This is an interesting and powerful story but there is some hidden bias in this tale of which the reader may not be aware. Whether Peyton really exhorted his men not to use violence or just said "don't indulge too easily on a shooting rampage" cannot be ascertained. While blame for the death of Nonosabasut and his brother can be spread to several people, the real reason for the conflict situation was Mr. Peyton's unwillingness to let Demasduit go with her husband. The way this excerpt begins is supporting this bias.

Account #5. Setting: Red Indian Lake, 1819

This excerpt describes the capture of Demasduit. It comes from an 1829 letter to the *Liverpool Mercury*. The letter's author claims to have been part of the capture party. His name is signed as E.S.

Mr...s [Mr. John Peyton Jr.'s] objective was to open friendly communication with the Beothuk and he exhorted his men not to use undue violence. If the Beothuk continued to avoid him he planned to take one or two of them captive. On approaching the lake, some men incautiously fired at a passing caribou ... [Beothuk] rushed from three wigwams: the last to emerge were three men, a woman, and a child. When the woman fell behind, Mr ... overtook her. She fell on her knees and begged for mercy by exposing her breasts.

Of several Beothuk in sight, three laid down their bows and came closer. One, the captive's husband, advanced with a branch of spruce and made a long oration ... He then shook hands with many of the party and attempted to take back his wife. Finding himself opposed, he brandished an axe but was disarmed. Mr ... intimated that the woman must go with him but that the Beothuk man might come also; they would both regain their liberty the next day.

When he led the captive towards one of the wigwams, her husband became furious and strove to drag her away. One of the furriers stabbed him in the back with a bayonet. The Beothuk knocked him down ... When he brandished his dagger, Mr ... fired his pistol and the Beothuk fell. Blood flowed from his mouth and nose, his eyes flashed fire, and he uttered a yell that made the woods echo ...

It was not until the captive was obliged to leave the remains of her husband that she gave way to grief and vented her sorrow in heartbreaking lamentations ... After the party had retired for the night ... Mr ... and E.S. bitterly reproached the man who had first stabbed the Beothuk. While he had acted violently, there had been no need for such a brutal response. The Beothuk had only done what every man ought to do, "to come to rescue his wife from the hands of the captors and nobly lost his life in his attempt to save her."

The captive was tied securely and the party decided to take her back so that she could be used as an intermediary in the hope of developing friendly relations.

Account #6. Setting: St. John's, c. 1828

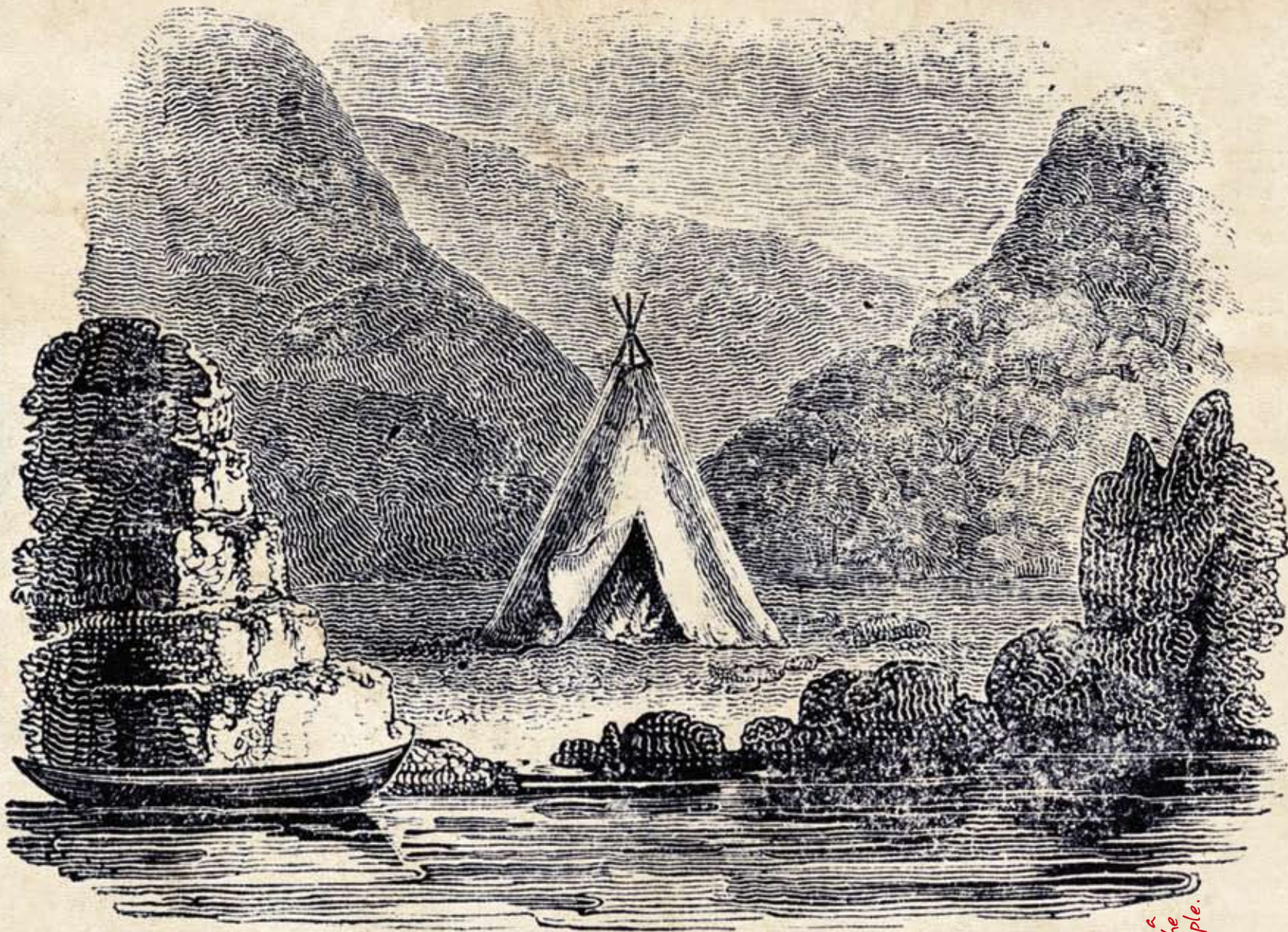
According to "Sketches of Savage Life," in *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country* (vol. 13, March 1836), William Cormack gathered information about Beothuk from Shanawdithit. He learned that:

... from infancy all her nation were taught to cherish animosity and revenge against all other people; that this was enforced by narrating, during the winter evenings, the innumerable wrongs inflicted on the Beothuks by the white men and by the

Mik-maks; that a tradition of old times told that the first white men that came over the great lake were from the good spirit, and that those who came next were sent by the bad spirit; and that if the Beothuks made peace and talked with the white men which belonged to the bad spirit, or with the Mik-maks, who also belonged to the bad spirit, that they would not, after they died, go to the happy island, nor hunt, nor fish, nor feast in the country of the good spirit, which was far away, where the sun went down behind the mountains.

Questions:

1. For each source provided, determine:
 - a. if it is primary or secondary
 - b. who created the source
 - c. what inference can be made about the limitations of the evidence we have when learning about Beothuk-English relations?
2. For each excerpt provided, determine the degree to which the interaction was hostile or peaceful. Then make an inference/summary of how each party may have viewed the situation in question. Finally, make a judgment as to whether the interaction helped or hurt Beothuk-English relations.
3. In Account #5, were the English justified in taking any Beothuk against their will? Explain your position.
4. Based on the information provided, write a brief summary which explains how the relationship between Beothuk and English became more strained over time.
5. What should we learn from the story of the Beothuk?



3.102 Home by the bay, c. 1818

An illustration of a Mi'kmaq wigwam in St. George's Bay

Mi'kmaq

By the end of the eighteenth century, Mi'kmaq throughout the Atlantic region were trading furs with Europeans, especially the French, for metal tools, wool blankets, and other manufactured goods that often replaced Mi'kmaq handicrafts and other material items. Through this early interaction, many Mi'kmaq converted to Catholicism. This ultimately drew some Mi'kmaq to the southern parts of Newfoundland, where they could access Roman Catholic priests living at the nearby islands of St-Pierre-Miquelon.

With the extinction of the Beothuk in the early 1800s, many Mi'kmaq expanded their trapping and hunting range into the interior of the island. The Mi'kmaq's knowledge of the interior soon made them valuable as guides for explorers and sportsmen, professional trappers, postal carriers, and even surveyors.*

Mi'kmaq interaction with both Europeans and Newfoundlanders of European descent increased as it became common for these people to move into areas such as Bay d'Espoir, which were traditionally inhabited

by Mi'kmaq. By 1875, there were more non-Aboriginal people living in the bay than there were Mi'kmaq. Most of the new arrivals supported themselves by logging, farming, fishing, hunting, and trapping. As a result of increased competition for traplines and hunting grounds, some Mi'kmaq moved to Conne River from other communities in Bay d'Espoir.

Intermarriages also became common, especially between Mi'kmaq women and European men. This helped erode the **migratory lifestyle** of many Mi'kmaq families, as wives often chose to remain in communities year round with their children while their husbands hunted or trapped elsewhere. At the same time, many Mi'kmaq families began to abandon their traditional wigwams in favour of wood-frame houses.

In general, Mi'kmaq had positive relationships with European settlers, and shared their knowledge of this place with Europeans. All these interactions, however, came at a price. The traditional ways of life for the Mi'kmaq slowly disappeared.

**In the 1850s, the colonial government hired several Mi'kmaq to survey a route for a telegraph line from St. John's to Port aux Basques. After the completion of the line in 1856, some Mi'kmaq were retained as repair people.*



3.103 Three Mi'kmaq women, 1859

By the 1760s, large numbers of Mi'kmaq were living at St. George's Bay, Bay d'Espoir, Codroy Valley, Bonne Bay, and other areas of southern, western, and central Newfoundland.

3.104 Journey across the island

1822 route taken by William Cormack and Sylvester Joe



3.105 The Lewis family, c. 1900

Reuben Lewis was Chief of Newfoundland Mi'kmaq.

SYLVESTER JOE

Sylvester Joe was a renowned Mi'kmaq hunter and guide who lived in the Bay d'Espoir area during the first half of the nineteenth century. In 1822, he was hired to guide William Epps Cormack on a journey across the then unmapped interior of Newfoundland.

The two men set out from Trinity Bay on Sept. 5, 1822 and emerged 58 days later on the shores of St. George's Bay. The crossing was gruelling, and it is likely that Cormack would have perished if not for Joe's knowledge of the land. The part of the interior through which they travelled was then unknown to settlers. Not surprisingly, Joe occupies a central place in Cormack's *Narrative of a Journey Across the Island of Newfoundland in 1822*. Much of the knowledge contained in this reflects Joe's knowledge and input.

Although Cormack had hoped to meet some Beothuk, he and Joe did not see any during their expedition. Nonetheless, Cormack's findings, which were facilitated by Joe, provided the basis for the later maps by the Geological Survey of Newfoundland that noted the commercial potential of the resources of the island's interior.

Training and preparation:

To accompany me in the performance, I engaged into my service, first, a Micmack Indian, a noted hunter from the south-west coast of the Island... For an undertaking involving so much uncertainty, hazard, and hardship, it was difficult to find men in every respect suited ...

September 5th: At sunset we halted... As the weather was fine, and no prospect of rain, our camp consisted merely of a fire and a bundle of spruce boughs to lie on. My Indian, Joseph Sylvester by name, at midnight rolled himself up in his blanket, and evidently slept perfectly at home ...

September 11th: In the whole of this savanna territory, which forms the eastern central portion of the interior, there rises but one mountain ... It served as an object by which to check our course and distance for about two weeks. I named it Mount Sylvester, the name of my Indian ...

Excerpts from *Narrative of a Journey Across the Island of Newfoundland in 1822* by W.E. Cormack

Or was it Joseph Sylvester? Historians disagree on the answer to this question. While Cormack's account refers to his guide as "Joseph Sylvester," other historians suggest his name was Sylvester Joe.



3.106 Catch of the day

Hunter with freshly caught harp seal, 1909
Traditionally, Labrador Metis hunted seals to provide meat for food and skin for boots.

3.107 Metis trapper and settlement system, c. 1930s

(Based on information from *Environmental archeology and cultural systems in Hamilton Inlet, Labrador; a survey of the central Labrador coast from 3000 B.C. to the present*, by William W. Fitzhugh.)

Metis

The intermarriage of Inuit women with European men resulted in descendants who later identified themselves as Labrador Metis. An early example of intermarriage occurred in 1785 when William Phippard and John Nooks (Newhook) came to Hamilton Inlet as the first English settlers, married Inuit women, and started families. Their children were accepted into the Inuit communities.

The Metis combined aspects of European with Inuit and Innu culture, and this created a lifestyle that exemplified a unique cultural expression. For example, Metis combined survival skills of Inuit on the coast with Innu trapping and inland hunting skills. They also made toboggans similar to those used by Innu for crossing the soft snow, but their main mode of transportation was the Inuit method – dogs and komatik. Unlike Innu, they did not take their families on the trapline with them.

Many Labrador Metis took part in a summer fishery, which was an Aboriginal tradition. Most fish was traded, but in the fall Metis caught fish for the family's consumption. Like all Aboriginal groups during this time period, they went to trading posts to trade their furs for European goods.

There was also some intermarriage with Innu women, and to a lesser degree Mikmaq women.

Unlike Métis in Quebec, Labrador Metis do not use an accented "é" in "Métis."



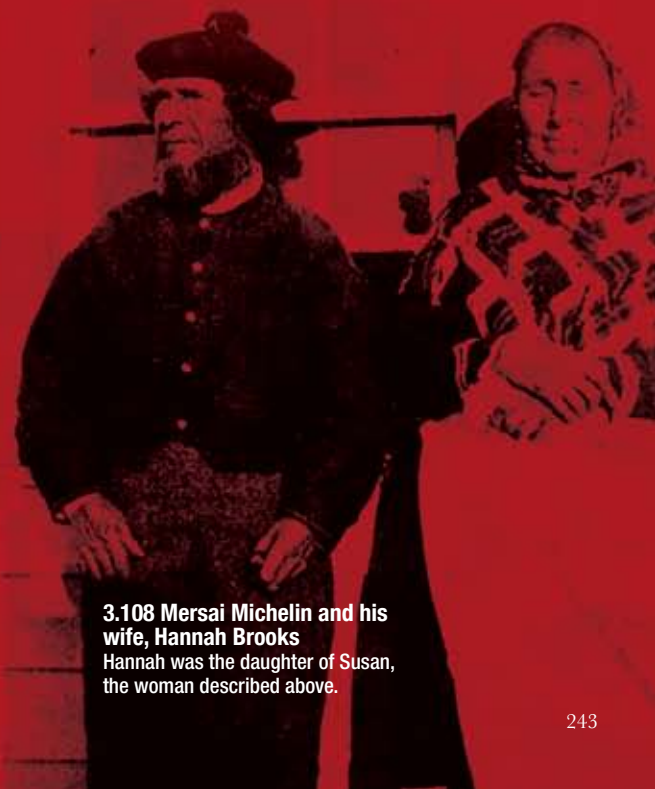
- Major Year-Round Settlements
- Minor Year-Round Settlements
- ▲ Trapping Tilts (Fall-Winter)
- ◆ Summer Fishing Camps

0 25 50 km

ONE OF THE FIRST METIS

Ambrose Brooks was an Englishman who left Europe during the Napoleonic Wars to escape being forced to fight by a press gang. In the early 1800s he settled in Hamilton Inlet and worked as a fisher and trapper. Susan, an Inuit orphan from Rigolet, ran away from her home around 1806. Susan's great-great-grand-daughter Elizabeth Goudie, in her memoir *Woman of Labrador*, says that Susan was escaping from her people because "The Eskimos there thought she had an evil spirit because her family died and they were going to cut her finger and bleed the bad blood out."

Goudie describes Brooks seeing Susan from a distance while tending his salmon nets on Pearl River. He brought her to live with a family in North West River. When Susan was 14 or 15, he "married her, but not until he taught her enough English to say the Lord's Prayer."



3.108 Mersai Michelin and his wife, Hannah Brooks
Hannah was the daughter of Susan, the woman described above.



3.109 A Metis family portrait, c. 1893
Image taken at Fox Harbour (today St. Lewis), Labrador

3.110 Interior of Mr. Brown's house, 1893

Image taken at Fox Harbour. Photographer Eliot Curwen recorded the following information when he took this picture: "(House is) 13 x 12 x 8 feet. Central iron stove held together by chain. Behind it is seen Mr. and Mrs. B's (Brown's) bed: to the right is shelf on which brother-in-law and his (Mr. Brown's) boys sleep: the girls sleep under this shelf on the floor."



Housing was influenced by both Inuit and European culture. Metis built log cabins for their families and built **tilts** along traplines. Some of the houses were partially submerged and packed in sod like Inuit winter houses. Clothing too was a combination of European and Inuit items. For example, Inuit waterproof sealskin boots were worn in spring and summer, while caribou moccasins were worn in winter.

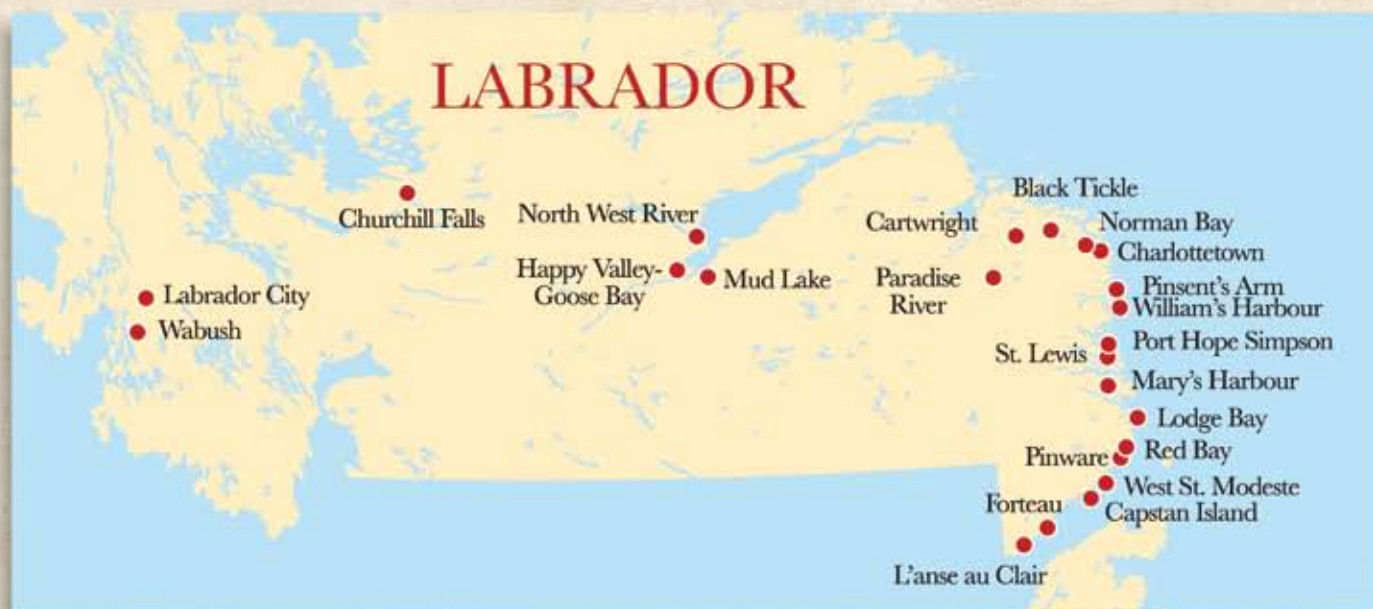
Similarities existed between the values of Labrador Metis and Inuit. They frequently displayed generosity when interacting with neighbours. Also, like most people during this time period, they believed in using everything in their environment and avoided waste. Labrador Metis adopted a unique tradition of land ownership. Fishing "berths" were near the site of traditional homesteads; traplines were respected as personal property and passed from father to a surviving son. This enabled them to

survive in a world dominated by outside commercial interests.

Most Metis were Christians, like other Aboriginals during this period. Metis worship was often non-denominational. Organized religion came in the late 1800s. Before this, Metis held services in a house in the community. The service was led by a person in the community who could read the text.

3.111 An example of a Metis family's annual round

MONTH	ACTIVITY
September-November	Family moves inland to winter home where equipment and supplies are readied for winter trapping. Family gathers red berries. Females make dickies, boots, and mitts for their families (and continue this throughout the year). Males saw wood and hunt spring duck. Some trappers may leave for their traplines at this time.
October-December	Adult males leave their family for about three months to trap. The traplines are laid out with tilts standing a day's walk apart. Women and young children hunt partridge and catch rabbits. A few breaks for the caribou hunt and Christmas might interrupt the months on the trapline.
January-March	After New Year's Day, the trappers head back for their second trip to the traplines. Women stay in the winter home and care for the family. Younger boys help by ice fishing, hunting, and trapping near the home. In March, when male family members return from trapping, they harvest wood and bring it home using a dog team.
April-June	In April and May, men hunt seals, catch spring trout, and hunt migratory birds; they also prepare for the summer fishery. The family moves to the coast for the summer fishery in June. Some families plant gardens before they go. Others plant gardens near their summer homes.
July-August	Family members spend time catching salmon, char, and trout, and picking bakeapples and blueberries. In August, family members catch cod, which are then split, salted, and dried. Some of the salmon and cod is sold to buy winter staples; the rest is kept to feed the family.



3.112 Metis communities today

Questions:

1. The indigenous peoples of Newfoundland and Labrador had extensive knowledge of "this place." Some of this knowledge was shared with European settlers. What knowledge would have been most valuable for Europeans?
2. European settlers brought ideas and technologies to Newfoundland and Labrador. Some of this knowledge was shared with the indigenous peoples. What knowledge would have been most valuable for First Nations and Inuit?
3. European missionaries worked to convert First Nations and Inuit to Christianity, and gave them European names. What was the effect of this type of interaction?