CULTURES, BORDERS, AND BASQUES: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEYS ON QUEBEC'S LOWER NORTH SHORE

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In 1968, soon after returning with slim pickings from my first archaeological foray into Lake Melville's boreal forest, I heard of Jim Tuck's fabulous excavations at Port au Choix. It didn't take me long to figure out what Jim had already discovered – that the archaeological records from the interior and the coast were vastly different and that cultural elaboration and long-term survival in the Subarctic required at least seasonal maritime adaptation. In subsequent years Jim went on to excavate stratified sites in Saglek, excavated the earliest mound burial in the Northeast at L'Anse Amour, put Basque whaling at Red Bay and early English settlement at Ferryland on the New World map, and created at Memorial University one of the strongest archaeology programs in North America, bringing the archaeology and history of Newfoundland and Labrador to the attention of the entire world. My contribution to Jim's retirement celebration builds on foundations he established investigating culture history and European contact in the Strait of Belle Isle, the crossroads of Labrador, Newfoundland, and Quebec and the gateway to the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

Jim's work with Bob McGhee in the Straits (Tuck and McGhee 1975; McGhee and Tuck 1975) brought modern systematic archaeological research to an area that had already produced many surprises – Harp's early radiocarbon dates, Levesque's burial mounds, and others - but had seen little integrative research. Expanding on previous studies (Lloyd 1874; Harp 1963, 1964; Harp and Hughes 1968; Levesque 1968, 1969b, 1972, 1976) by defining and dating a series of early complexes, Tuck and McGhee created the backbone from which a broader picture of culture history has emerged from the Straits region (Pintal 1989, 1994, 1998; Plumet et al. 1994; Pintal and Martijn 2002; Levesque 2002). One of the surprising aspects of the sequence is the preponderance of early Indian cultures and the much diminished subsequent settlement by Paleoeskimo, Recent Indian, and Inuit peoples, especially along the straits north of Blanc Sablon. In fact, compared with earlier periods, the Labrador-Quebec side of the Straits seems to have been occupied only sporadically during the past 2000 years by late prehistoric Indian groups or Dorset culture, despite the presence of abundant marine mammal resources, the earlier presence of Groswater sites, and large Dorset populations in adjacent areas of Newfoundland. Another important question to emerge was the relation of Straits cultures to the peoples of the Lower North Shore, areas that for much of the 19th and early 20th centuries were included in the broader geographic entity known as part of "The Labrador."

In contrast to Newfoundland, Labrador, and the Straits, the archaeology of Quebec's Lower North Shore (LNS), a region extending 500 km from Sept-Isles to Blanc Sablon, is relatively unknown, especially the 300 roadless kilometers east of Natashquan. This coast was first visited by archaeologists in 1928 (Wintemberg 1928, 1942) and later was explored by René Levesque (Levesque 1962, 1968, 1969a, 1969b, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1976, 2002; Pintal et al. 1985). Published research on the LNS has been quite sporadic (e.g. Martijn 1974; Beaudin et al. 1987; Dumais and Poirier 1994) except in Blanc Sablon and Brador, where D. Chevrier, D. Groisin, and especially Jean Yves Pintal have worked since the mid-1970s (see citations in Pintal 1998). While contract reports contain excellent information (e.g. Chism 1980a,b, 1982; Chism and LeBrun 1981; Niellon and Jones 1984; Pintal et al. 1986; Pintal and Groison 1987; Chapdelaine and Chalifoux 1994; see other citations in Pintal 1998), they are not widely available, and little of the knowledge gained has been synthesized regionally. There is considerable need today for more research-oriented fieldwork and interpretation beyond the summaries presently available (e.g. Taylor 1964; Niellon 1996; Pintal 1998; Pintal and Martijn 2002:218-220). Consequently, an information gap has made it particularly difficult to determine the relationships between LNS cultures and those of the inner Gulf and Newfoundland-Labrador, and has limited our knowledge also of five hundred years of historic European settlement and European-Native interactions.

Although it is still largely unexplored, the LNS has a complex and diverse ethnic and historical past (Frenette 1996). Its Innu, French, Acadian, and English cultures still persist, and the region has one of the longest histories of continuous European occupation and Native contact in North America (Niellon 1996; Huxley 1984, 1987, 2001; Trudel 1978, 1980; Turgeon 1987, 1990, 1994). Absence of sustained cultural and anthropological research has created a mistaken impression of the LNS as an isolated region weak in culture, history and natural history, with few connections to adjacent regions. This parochial and unwarranted view has been fostered by scholarly neglect, fisheries decline, and political, ethnic and language divisions. However, times are changing. A variety of factors, including increased interest in regional history and culture, growth of tourism, and new prospects for a highway program and fishery recovery are creating interest among LNS residents in advancing their role in the future recreational and heritage-based economy of Atlantic Canada.

The St. Lawrence Gateways Project was initiated in 2001 to begin meeting the needs identified above. Gateways

goals are similar to those that guided earlier Smithsonian work in Labrador, combining regional surveys with selective excavation aimed at identifying cultures, boundaries and historical patterns while also investigating changes in cultures and human-environmental adaptations over time. The outer coast and islands rarely visited by archaeologists became our primary target since our aim was to identify the western limits of maritime cultures rather than to determine the eastern limits of gulf estuarine peoples, who were less likely to have occupied outer coast settings.

CULTURE AREAS AND BOUNDARIES

Vegetation zones have been an important factor in culture distributions in this region. North of Okak and Napaktok in Labrador, forest gives way to tundra and wood must be imported or collected as driftwood. While the foresttundra boundary is a significant factor in historic period Innu and Inuit culture areas (Figure 1), its correlation with Indian and Eskimo cultures over time has not been isomorphic: Maritime Archaic Indian groups regularly utilized regions north of the forest limit, just as Paleoeskimo and Inuit groups utilized wooded coastal regions as far south as Newfoundland and eastern Quebec, where their territories seem to correlate better with the limits of the harp seal and walrus distributions than with particular vegetation zones (Fitzhugh 1987). Whereas Indian culture distributions were more limited by terrestrial vegetation, Inuit and Paleoeskimos were limited by sea ice and arctic marine resources. These two parame-

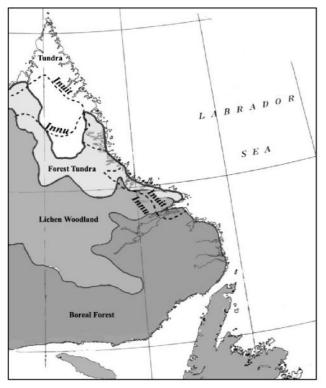


Figure 1. Vegetation zones and ethnographic culture distributions in Labrador and the eastern Quebec region ca. A. D. 1600.

ters overlap along the coast for a distance of nearly one thousand miles from Okak in the north to Natashquan in the west and southern Newfoundland in the south.

Having explored the northern part of this eco-cultural transition zone in the 1970s, I first began to search for archaeological evidence of Paleoeskimos and Inuit in the southern regions in 1982 (Fitzhugh 1983) and immediately recognized the greater complexity of this problem in the historical period due to the European contact (Clermont 1980; Taylor 1980, 1984; Auger 1987, 1991, 1993). Here Paleoeskimo and Inuit cultures faced environmental and social limits at the southern end of the forest-tundra transition that were different from those encountered by Indian groups occupying the northern forest fringe. A variety of questions presented themselves: Were Labrador Indian cultures recognizable in Quebec? Did Pre-Dorset ever reach Newfoundland? What was the western limit of Groswater, Dorset and Historic Inuit people? Were the processes and mechanisms used to maintain social and cultural boundaries at both ends of the foresttundra transition the same, or did they differ according to cultural norms or values? What could be learned about cultural and historical processes by studying how Subarctic Indian groups maintained northern boundaries in the face of harsh arctic environments and resistance from Paleoeskimo or Inuit peoples; and on the other hand how did Paleoeskimos and Inuit maintain their southern territories and limits in the face of diminished arctic maritime resources and increased Indian hostility? some Indian groups more successful than others in holding northern territories? Conversely, why were some Paleoeskimo or Inuit groups more successful than others in maintaining southern territories? And how did climate and environmental change apply to these situations? Exploring these questions is the primary reason research in Labrador and adjacent regions has been so rewarding. Culture-environmental boundary issues can be explored to greater advantage in Labrador, Newfoundland, and eastern Ouebec than elsewhere in the north due to the region's unique geographical and cultural conditions and its long archaeological record. To expand these studies to their full potential I needed data from Quebec's Lower North Shore.

LOWER NORTH SHORE ENVIRONMENT

Environmentally, there is no obvious boundary between Labrador and Quebec other than the limestone remnant in the Straits region. The eastern LNS coast most resembles the low, tundra-covered rocky islands and headlands of Labrador, backed by forested bays and rivers. However, the LNS tundra strip is narrower and the forest correspondingly thicker and more ecologically diverse, and there are fewer natural exposures, making site survey more difficult. Likewise, while most faunal resources are similar, there are differences in seasonality, resource concentration, and harvesting conditions. As in Labrador, harp seals migrate along the coast in large numbers in the

fall; ring and Harbour seals are available as, in the past, were walrus. Whales are also present but are not known to have been hunted here by native groups, and there are abundant ducks, geese, sea birds, and fish as well as strong runs of salmon and trout. Land game includes the same mammals available in Labrador, with caribou and moose being most important. Seasonality is slightly different, with sea ice, harp seals, and bird migrations appearing later in the fall and earlier in the spring. Compared to Labrador, winter ice-edge bird and seal hunting is more difficult and less productive on the LNS because the ice edge is further from shore, while in summer travel conditions are more hazardous due to fog and strong wind. Most of these conditions are matters of degree; but reduced access to the ice edge, smaller seal and walrus populations (when present before 1600) and smaller and more distant concentrations of caribou make the LNS resource pool more dispersed, more diverse and less productive than in central and northern Labrador. However, the LNS more closely resembles central and southern Labrador than Newfoundland due to its similar vegetation, geology, longer period of stable winter ice and its drier and colder winters. Although changing climates of the past 8-10,000 years probably resulted in changes in flora, sea ice and fauna, at present there is little firm evidence for environmental change having had significant cultural impact.

METHODS

The Gateways Project used methods similar to those used in previous Smithsonian Labrador studies, combining

regional sampling with more intensive study of key regions and sites (Figure 2; Appendix A). Given that contract research on the LNS has been conducted primarily in towns and mainland regions, we chose to concentrate on the more 'arctic' outer coast and islands. This facilitated the search for Paleoeskimo and Neoeskimo sites. which were most likely to be situated in outer coast locations, and for Indian occupations using outer coast maritime adaptations. It would not identify the types of seasonal coastal or riverine adaptations ethnographically documented for the Innu. Surveys were concentrated near major rivers, headlands, large islands and in coastal regions where open country or exposures facilitated site location. When found, sites were sampled to determine cultural affiliation, age, presence of structures and preservation. The 2001 survey sampled locations along the coast from Blanc Sablon to Mingan with specific attention to the Mingan Islands, Natashquan, Kegashka, Harrington Harbour, Mutton Bay, Tabatière, St. Augustine, Chécatica, St. Paul River and Havre des Belles Amours. Subsequent seasons concentrated on the region between Harrington Harbour and St. Augustine. Detailed reports on each of the four seasons (Fitzhugh 2001; Fitzhugh and Gallon 2002; Fitzhugh and Sharp 2003; and Fitzhugh, Chrétien, and Sharp 2004) are available in the files of the Québec Ministry's archaeological repository, of the Arctic Studies Center, and on the Arctic Studies Center website (www.mnh.si.edu/arctic). This paper summarizes results and preliminary conclusions.

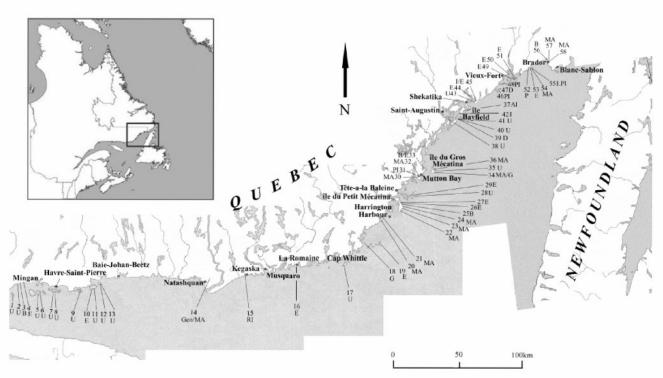


Figure 2. Sites identified by the Gateways Project 2001-2005. Codes: U, unknown; G, geological; B, Basque; E, European; MA, Maritime Archaic; PI, Prehistoric Indian, RI, Recent Indian; G, Groswater; D, Dorset; AI, Archaic Indian; I, Inuit; LPI, Late Prehistoric Indian.

SURVEYS FROM MINGAN TO BELLES AMOURS

The 2001 survey began in the Mingan Islands, whose limestone landscape is similar to western Newfoundland's. Brief inspection of these striking 'sea stack' islands revealed little evidence of prehistoric settlement, although shore-side (and therefore relatively recent) rock features, caches and tent rings are abundant. The islands, however, have several important historical sites, including a large Basque site with blubber ovens on Ile Nue (EdDa-6; Drouin 1988), the remains of the Louis Jolliet site (EdCx-1;Levesque 1971; see Niellon 1995:145) on Mingan Island, and the as-yet-undiscovered home of pioneering Quebec naturalist Henri Puyjalon on Ile á la Chasse. As Somcynski's work (1989) and local collections attest, prehistoric settlements in the Mingan region are mostly found on mainland beaches and near river mouths, and indicate a long history of Indian settlement with modified-interior adaptations (Fitzhugh 1972:158) and fairly limited maritime economies. Since the coast in this part of the LNS is very low and postglacial uplift has been ca. 150-200m and continues, most sites found near the shore date to the last 2-3000 years.

Natashquan is located on a major delta formation backed by terraces that provide excellent potential for site prospecting. Local collections contain Late Maritime Archaic stemmed points, and bones of large marine mammals have been found on marine terraces about 70m above sea level. Similarly, our brief visit to Kegashka, where Wintemberg mistakenly reported Dorset implements (Wintemberg 1928, 1942), revealed it to be an important prehistoric site locale (Chism 1980a, 1980b, 1982). Here we met Huey Stubbert and photographed the cache of 25 Ramah chert biface blanks he found about 35 years ago stacked crosswise in alternating layers (Figure 3) a metre below the surface in his back yard (Chism 1982; Chapdelaine and Chalifoux 1994; Loring 1992, 2002:176). Many of these blanks have polished adze-like facets on their bases and are probably about 1000 years old. A visit to Leslie Forman's fishing camp at the outlet of the Kegasha River, an excellent salmon stream, confirmed its



Figure 3. Huey Stubbert Ramah chert biface cache from Kegashka, showing a sample of the 25 blades he found in this arrangement in the ground.

importance as a key prehistoric site locale, with a protected harbour that may also have made it an attractive anchorage for early European explorers.

East of Cape Whittle the coast turns northeast and has a wider band of islands and protected waterways, with tundra or open woodland vegetation penetrating into the bays. Here we found a Groswater site at Seal Net Point (EcBw-1; Figure 4), a harp sealing location that has been used in the historic period as a seal factory. A test pit in a



Figure 4. Groswater artifacts excavated at Seal Point 2 (EcBw-2).

deep midden revealed an Inuit-style whalebone sled runner, corroborating historical accounts of settler adoption of Inuit winter technology (Charest 1998). Seal Net Point currently marks the western limit of Paleoeskimo penetration of the Gulf.

A few miles east of Harrington Harbour, Petit Mécatina juts like an extended finger into the Gulf, providing access to deep-water marine resources from harbours near its southern tip. One of these, Havre de la Croix, was the location of a large early 20th century summer cod-fishing settlement. Nearby in Trap Cove we found a fivesegment Maritime Archaic longhouse with meat caches and outbuildings on a 16.5 meter high boulder beach (Petit Mécatina-1, EdBt-1; Figure 5). We found similar multi-segment longhouses with adjacent cache structures and rooms at other boulder beach sites at Petit Mécatina-2, 4 (EdBt-2, 4). These structures are on boulder beaches that contain almost no soil and have very few cultural remains, unlike Maritime Archaic houses in Labrador. However, PM-1 produced some flakes of quartz, and the distal end of a Late Maritime Archaic celt. Charcoal from a similar but smaller multi-segment structure at Pointe des Belles Amours produced an age of 3930 ±90 B.P (Beta-170395, uncorr.). We have designated these

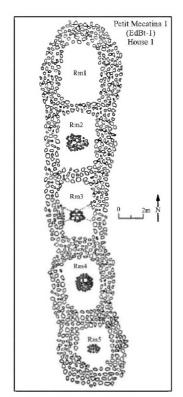




Figure 5. Petit Mécatina 1 (EdRt-1) longhouse site (view south)

Lower North Shore LMA occupations the 'Mécatina Complex' (Fitzhugh and Gallon 2002:17).

On the southeast side of Petit Mécatina is a small, deep Harbour known to the English-speaking community of Harrington Harbour as 'Hare Harbour' and to the French-speaking community of Tête à la Baleine as 'Baie des Eskimo.' On the north side of this small, narrow inlet is a prominent cliff with an over-hang that creates a dry shelter some ten metres deep (Figure 6). Basque roof tiles were eroding from the bank, and tiles were found beneath



Figure 6. Hare Harbour 1 Basque site seen from the west.

cliff rockfall and throughout the adjacent 2500 square meter area. In the years since 2001 we have returned annually to map and excavate portions of the Hare Harbour 1 site (EdBt-3) to determine its age and function, which we assumed was contemporary with Basque sites at Red Bay, Middle Bay, Mingan, and others in the western Gulf of St. Lawrence (Trudel 1978, 1980; Tuck and Grenier 1989; Turgeon 1994). It now appears that Hare Harbour dates more than a century later than these sites and represents a different phase of Basque activity, if in fact it can be considered 'Basque' at all (Herzog and Moreau 2004). Another surprising feature is the presence of Inuit soapstone vessel fragments found on the floor of the site's major feature, a workshop or cookhouse. This site is discussed in detail below.

Other historic period site s have been found near Hare Harbour 1. Hare Harbour 2 (EdBt-6), located several hundred metres east of the Basque site, has a midden packed with 19th century materials.

Nearby sites, some found by Françoise Niellon (Niellon and Jones 1984), date to the 18th century and appear to have been seal blubber rendering stations, attesting to a long historic period use of southern portions of Petit Mécatina.

In 2004, surveys near the mouth of the Netagamiou River in Chevery identified several Maritime Archaic sites including a small station on the mainland north of Harrington Harbour. The Vatcher site (EcBv-9) contained about thirty artifacts of coarse-grained quartzite in a small blowout about 16m above sea level. The collection includes tiny circular and snub-nosed endscrapers, the basal corner of a square-based biface, and a large straight-based triangular biface preform (Figure 7). Although found at a

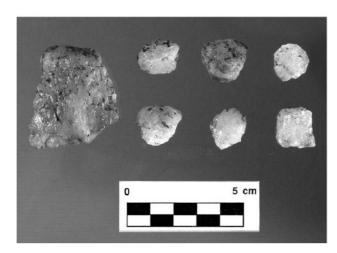


Figure 7. Artifacts from the Vatcher site (EcBv-9) include a large triangular biface, a corner of a square-based biface, and several round endscrapers.

surprisingly low elevation, the artifacts resemble finds from the Pinware River site (Harp 1963, Tuck and McGhee 1975, McGhee and Tuck 1975) dating to ca. 8-9000 B. P.

East of Petit Mécatina, raised beaches and terraces in the granite hills surrounding Mutton Bay are a locus of Maritime Archaic settlement, with later Indian sites found closer to the modern village and its shoreline. For years Mutton Bay residents collected from sites around the bay, many of which are exposed on barren rock from which the soil has been eroded, but today these collections have mostly been lost or exported. In 2001-2 we collected, tested and mapped two of the larger sites, Mutton Bay 2 and 3 (EeBs-2, 3), and excavated a portion of MB-3, but found no charcoal, diagnostic tools or definitive settlement data. In 2005 we mapped and excavated a third high MA quartz site, Mutton Bay 4 (EeBs-4), that contained similar small circular end scrapers and pièces esquillées and documented a stemmed point found years ago by local collectors from Mutton Bay 2 (EeBs-2; Figure 8). Based on the high elevation, abundance of quartz, and presence of slate and fine-grained chert, these sites probably date to ca. 7-8,000 B.P. Several local residents have collections from later sites at lower elevations near

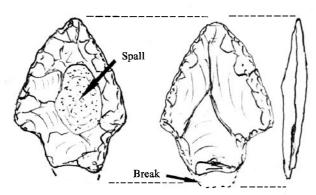


Figure 8. Stemmed point of quartz from Mutton Bay 2 (EeBs-2). (Phillip Vatcher Collection)

the shore on the east side of the Harbour that contain scrapers and notched bifaces, some of which are made of Ramah chert, that appear to date ca. 3000-1000 B.P. We were also shown a large iron fish spear with barbed sideprongs that had been found in one of the nearby rivers (Figure 9). This piece seems to be a European copy of an Inuit fish leister *kakivak*).



Figure 9. Iron fish spear found in a river west of Mutton Bay, probably inspired by knowledge of the Inuit kakivak (leister). (Michael Morency Collection)

East of Mutton Bay a seal factory and trading business operated for much of the 19-20th centuries at Boulet Harbour, which has a large annual harp seal run. Our tests for several hundred meters along the shore revealed historic materials from Basque times to the 20th century in a thick black-earth midden. Although the hundreds of years of historic period occupation pose challenges for excavation, the site's large size and deep deposits make it an important target for future research.

The town of La Tabatière has many prehistoric Indian sites that have been collected by local residents for years, and some sites have been documented professionally (Dumais 1982). Many of the collections have come from a gravel pit that held a Maritime Archaic cemetery, judging from the finds of red ocher-stained tool caches containing Ramah chert stemmed points and ground stone celts in private collections. Our efforts focused on nearby Gros Mécatina Island, where we found sites in Gaumont Harbour (GM-1; EeBr-14) and on the southern end of the island at GM-2 and 3 (EeBr-15, 16) on raised boulder beaches containing two three-segment house foundations of possible Maritime Archaic affiliation, a 9x12m multitiered stone-walled structure, cache pits, and other sites with stone foundations of unknown function and age. In 2004 we excavated a small Groswater component at GM-3 (Figure 10).

East of Tabatière an island complex shields a 60 km long series of inner passages and runs known as La Grande Rigoulette. These islands offer excellent protection for boat travel and settlement as well as access to outer coast fish and sea mammal resources. Despite seemingly ideal



Figure 10. Groswater artifacts excavated at Gros Mécatina 3-L4 (EeBr-16).

conditions, we identified few sites in the southern and central regions of the archipelago. However, in the islands east of St. Augustine, Pintal and Duguay (1987) and our surveys demonstrate strong archaeological potential. Whereas most sites on the outer coast are found in boulder beach locations that produce few artifacts, the sandy terraces of Bayfield Island promise to provide important information on several periods of Indian settlement (Figure 11). Our tests at Bayfield Island 1 TP3 (EhBo-15) recovered a small notched point (Figure 11d) associated with a charcoal sample dating to 4460±40 B.P. (B-207204, uncorr.). Pintal (1998:207) has reported two dates from other locations at this site, 2000±130B.P. and 1380±80 B.P. which are more likely associated with the notched and stemmed points and endscraper we recovered in test pit 1.



Figure 11. Test pit finds from Bayfield Island 1 (EhBo-15): notched and stemmed bifaces and an endscraper, all of fine-grained chert.

Our brief visits to Jacques Cartier Bay in 2003 and 2004 produced intriguing indications of Dorset and Inuit presence. Reports of a stone grave of an old Inuit woman led us to a site near the modern summer camp of L'Anse au Portage where local people 30-40 years ago found a skeleton and a stone lamp. According to local resident Nicholas Shattler the stone lamp was given to an American collector William Stiles. Stiles was affiliated with Frank Speck and the Museum of the American Indian (now the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian), and we hope to find this specimen in their collections. If so, this may be the only physical evidence for this local lore, because our visit to the site revealed nothing resembling an Inuit grave. We did, however, find a biface of dark Newfoundland-like chert near the village, leading us to suspect a Dorset site. This probable Dorset artifact is currently the strongest indication of a western limit of Dorset occupation on the LNS.

In 2004 we visited Canso Island at the eastern entrance of Jacques Cartier Bay and found a group of boulder caches similar to many others we had seen along the coast. However, on a large flat bedrock outcrop in the midst of the cache area were the remains of three small stone traps with slots for falling trap-doors (EhBn-7; Figure 12).

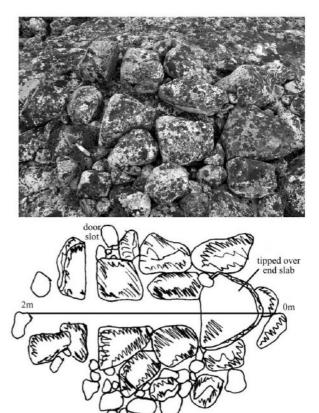


Figure 12. Trap 2 at Canso Island 1 (EhBn-7), with trap door slot at left and trap chamber running east-

This type of stone trap was used by Thule culture and Labrador Inuit until steel traps came into widespread use in the 19th century. Although the Canso traps are too small for foxes they would accommodate weasels or other small fur-bearer attracted to the meat caches. It is extremely unlikely that stone traps were ever used by Europeans or Indians, and for this reason they indicate Inuit presence.

Jacques Cartier Bay is at the eastern end of the St. Augustine island complex and marks the beginning of a 40km stretch of a bold coast with long narrow fjords, barren hills, and few offshore islands. To the east, the St. Paul River island complex begins. We found a small concentration of Dorset-like flakes of Newfoundland chert on Bilodeau Island (EhBl-1) and a small late prehistoric Indian site at Net Island Tickle (EiBl-7) but spent little time surveying here, in Vieux Fort or Middle Bay, since these areas have been surveyed previously (Martijn 1974; Fitzhugh 1982; Niellon 1986 and others).

Our final study area was the Havre des Belles Amours area. Searching its prominent beaches and terraces we found a two-segment rectangular structure similar to but smaller than those found at Petit Mécatina which we designated Pointe des Belles Amours 1 (EiBi-19). Although the room arrangement was slightly different and no diagnostic artifacts were found, a charcoal sample gave a date of 3930±90 (uncal., Beta-170395), in the Late Maritime Archaic period. We also visited Belle Amours Peninsula (EiBi-2) and its boulder beach 'village' of circular stone houses, some with multi-tiered boulder walls and excavated interiors (Levesque 1968, 1972). These structures differ from all other stone structures we had seen previously in Labrador or on the LNS, being larger than the typical boulder cache pits and having flat floor-like interiors. The structures appeared to be single family dwellings, and the 9.7m site elevation suggests dates in the 2-3000 BP range.

While waiting for weather to clear at the end of the 2001 season Clifford Hart of Lourdes de Blanc Sablon showed us a cache of Late Maritime Archaic slate celts, adzes, and gouges he found when excavating the basement of his house (EiBh-41) many years ago. All were highly-weathered blanks of tan-green Newfoundland slate similar to those from late MA sites like Port aux Choix, Twillingate, and Rattlers Bight. Hart's chalet (EiBh-47) on the mainland north of Ile du Parasseux (Levesque 1968) is an even more important archaeological location and has produced a wealth of materials turned up during road construction, including Basque, Maritime Archaic, Intermediate Indian, Groswater, Recent Indian and other periods (Fitzhugh and Gallon 1992).

RESULTS

To date, Gateways surveys have added more than 60 new site records for the Quebec LNS, mostly from areas of the coast not surveyed previously. In addition, while our excavations have been limited in scope, we have defined

and dated several new components, added seasonal and functional aspects to settlement cycles, demonstrated that the outer LNS coast has significant prehistoric and historic occupations, expanded culture area boundaries and defined a late phase of Basque exploitation with indications of Inuit interaction. These preliminary conclusions are elaborated below.

Culture Area Boundaries

One of the goals of the Gateways Project has been to investigate the western boundaries of Labrador Paleoeskimo, Inuit and Indian cultures. Some progress has been made in this area, as we have been able to demonstrate the presence as far west as Harrington Harbour and Natashquan of a Maritime Archaic culture similar to that known in Newfoundland and Labrador. Similarities are especially seen in settlement patterns, tool styles, Ramah chert and ground slate use, and the presence of red ocher burials as far west as Tabatière. Of particular importance has been the recognition of multi-room longhouses whose segments are about a metre longer and wider than Late Maritime Archaic longhouses in Labrador but which have fewer dwelling units. To date we have found dwelling structures only at LMA sites. EMA complexes dating ca. 9000-6000 BP, including one assemblage similar to the Pinware site in the Straits, are also present on high terraces at Chevery, Mutton Bay, Paul River, Vieux Fort, and Middle Bay, but none of these sites have produced houses, burial features or other structures. The transition between the Maritime Archaic period and the later Indian sequence may be found in the future at the Bayfield Island sites, one of which (BI-1, EhBo-15) has been occupied repeatedly from 4500-1500 years ago.

While no Pre-Dorset sites have been found – and are not to be expected – on the Lower North Shore, Groswater Paleoeskimos occupied the area at ca. 2500 B.P., about the same time as in the Straits and Newfoundland, and their sites are found as far west as Cape Whittle. Three sites have been found to date: Seal Net Point, Gros Mécatina 3, L2, and Hare Harbour 1. Seal Net Point has been dated to 2500±40 B.P. (B-182960, uncorr.). Although these sites are small, they document Paleoeskimo use of outer island locations during the summer season. If their winter sites are located in inner bays or mainland locations, as they are in Labrador, Groswater presence must have entailed some territorial or social accommodation with local Indian groups. Use of both Ramah chert and Newfoundland chert indicate that LNS Groswater people participated in the broader social networks of this culture that already existed in Newfoundland and Labrador. The absence of early (ca. 2800-2500 B.P.) Groswater tool styles here and in Blanc Sablon (Pintal 1994; Plumet et al. 1994) suggests that the Groswater occupation began later here than in central Labrador and may have been of short duration.

Dorset culture, which Wintemberg thought was present as far west as Kegashka, seems to have penetrated the LNS hardly at all, since no Dorset material has been found west of Bilodeau Island near St. Paul River, with possible traces seen in Jacques Cartier Bay. Why this should be so, given earlier, more western Groswater settlement, is unknown, but it parallels the absence of Middle Dorset in central and southern Labrador. The flourishing Dorset occupation in Newfoundland at this time leads one to suspect that the cause of this distribution is related to an expansion of seasonal Indian settlement of coastal regions, or to a shift of the harp seal whelping grounds away from the LNS and towards Newfoundland. Such a shift has taken place during the past decade; LNS hunters no longer find harp seals as prevalent as in earlier decades.

Labrador Inuit and European Contact

The question of Inuit penetration into the Straits and LNS has long been a subject of debate (Jenness 1965; Taylor 1964; Clermont 1980; Jordan and Kaplan 1980; Taylor 1980; Martijn 1980a,b,c; Auger 1987, 1991, 1993, 1994; Kaplan 1985). Our surveys have not detected any settlement by Thule or Labrador Inuit groups on the LNS in the form of diagnostic sod winter houses or summer tent rings. However, it would be prudent to withhold categorical statements until more work is done at some of the key harp seal hunting locations such as Chécatica and other locations where we have found large midden mounds that may reveal evidence of Inuit settlement. Nevertheless, it is beginning to appear that Inuit presence west of Blanc Sablon was limited to three types of situations: (1) brief raids and trading episodes by Inuit groups like those reported in historical literature; (2) cultural or demographic influences resulting from intercultural penetration and demographic mixing as suggested by our data from Jacques Cartier Bay and Hare Harbour, in which a few Inuit families – most likely women – were employed as servants and assistants at Basque fishing premises or by European settler groups; or (3) adoption of elements of Inuit technology like stone traps, soapstone lamps and cooking pots, dog traction, komatik sleds, and fish spears (leisters) by European groups through direct observation or indirect knowledge or transmission. The archaeological evidence we have found fits best with situations (2) and (3) and supports the ethnographic and historical contact and acculturation data already described for the eastern portion of the LNS (Trudel 1978, 1980; Turgeon 1987, 1990, 1994; Charest 1998). In this regard it is interesting that the evidence to date indicates Inuit rather than Innu influence on Basques and European settler groups for this region, which probably reflects European interest and settlement in coastal rather than interior regions.

Intermediate and Late Prehistoric Indian

To date Gateways has not produced much new evidence on post-3500 B.P. Indian prehistory of the LNS, a period that is best represented by sites and complexes from Blanc Sablon and the Straits (Levesque 1976, 2002; McGhee and Tuck 1975; Tuck and McGhee 1975; Pintal 1989, 1998) and from amateur collections and contract reports from LNS village environs. The private collections that exist in all the villages along the coast are a major resource for this time period that should be systematically documented before they are all lost or dispersed. The Bayfield Island sites appear to date to the earlymiddle part of this period, while sites like Net Island Tickle represent the later part of the prehistoric sequence. Pintal's sequence for this period in the Blanc Sablon region is a good start for the chronology of this region, but relatively few sites have been excavated to date, and the Indian cultures of 3000-1000 BP are still typologically ill-defined.

Unlike the relative continuity seen in the Maritime Archaic era, the Intermediate and Late Indian periods seem to be times of greater cultural diversity and change. These later culture groups and their material culture and settlement attributes have not yet been identified as clearly along the LNS as they have in Newfoundland and Labrador. The fact that most sites of this period are on lower terraces, and near river mouths or at other locations that also attracted European settlement, has resulted in resource losses to modern development, amateur excavation and haphazard collecting. Even though we cannot identify tightly-defined cultural or chronological groups and have little diagnostic settlement data, the large amount of Ramah chert and other exotic lithic types present in sites and private collections demonstrate that longdistance trade flourished and contacts with central and northern Labrador and western Gulf regions were frequent and influential.

The relative lack of Late Prehistoric Indian (post ca. A.D. 600) sites in the outer coast suggests a reduction in intensity and duration of seasonal maritime activity. Given the limited state of knowledge, we should be cautious about such interpretations, but the patterns suggested for the LNS parallel those in the Intermediate and Late Prehistoric Indian periods in Labrador.

Seventeenth Century Basques at Petit Mécatina

One of the most interesting results of the project has been the discovery of the Basque site at Hare Harbour (EdBt-3). Initially it appeared that this site and the Basque component at Boulet Harbour would be of interest primarily in filling out the distribution of 16th century Basque whaling stations that range from the Straits to the headwaters of the Gulf (Drouin 1988; Lalande 1989; Tuck and Grenier 1989; Turgeon 1987, 1990; Proulx 1993). However, the absence of blubber furnaces and the

presence of 17th century glass beads and clay pipes, and other materials not present in 16th century Basque sites, has led us to conclude that the Petit Mécatina Basque site dates to a later era. During the past year neutron activation studies of the Hare Harbour beads have indicated a probable occupation period between 1680 and 1730 (Herzog and Moreau 2004), more than a century after the end of the classic Basque whaling era. This finding was a greater surprise to archaeologists than to historians, who have known that a small number of Basque vessels began to return to the Gulf to fish, whale and trade after a hiatus in the 17th century (Turgeon 1994; Herzog, pers. comm..). In view of the passage of 100 years, we were also surprised to discover how similar the Hare Harbour occupation pattern is to 16th century Basque sites at Red Bay.

The Hare Harbour 1 site is located on a gently sloping beach bordered by a 100m high cliff with a 10m dry overhang at its base (Figures 7 and 13). This feature and the deep Harbour near the southern tip of Mécatina made the site distinctive, well-hidden, and close to outer coast fishing and hunting waters. Although the location would have been ideal for landing whales for butchery and rendering, the site lacks blubber ovens and only small amounts of baleen and whalebone have been found.

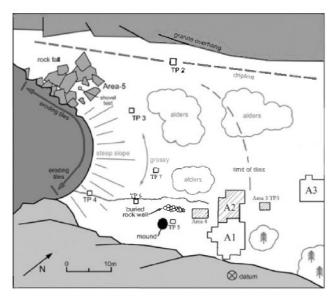


Figure 13. Map of the Hare Harbour 1 Basque settlement and excavation areas. 2002-2005.

Although Basque tiles are ubiquitous beneath the sod, their largest concentration is around the periphery of a paved structure that occupies the only relatively level space on the site (Figure 14). Excavation revealed this floor to be rectangular and roughly paved with thick slabs over an area of 4x7m. Two areas at the north end of the pavement had slabs with small circular blubber encrustations like those found on Inuit soapstone lamp platforms, but it was nevertheless a great surprise to find three fragments of Labrador Inuit soapstone vessels resting on the pavement, two of which are from D- shaped lamps, and one which is from a large rectangular cooking vessels. A large circular fire pit had been excavated 60cm below the



Figure 14. The paved workshop/cookhouse structure at Hare Harbour 1 viewed toward the north, with the open air work area at top, an external hearth excavation to left, and test pits in the bog at upper right.

paved floor near the south wall of the structure, which had been built into a bedrock wall rising 3-4m above the site. This outcrop probably supported one end of the structure's roof. Large tile fragments were found in the sod above the floor pavement; but the largest volume of tile – all extensively shattered – was found in 20-40cm thick deposit around the margins of the pavement (Figure 15), where they seem to have accumulated after falling



Figure 15. Cookhouse structure showing heavy tile concentration along east and west sides of the payement

from the roof. This distribution supports the view that a center ridge pole extended from the bedrock wall north over the long axis of the structure, with the sides of the roof sloping to west and east sides. Our reconstruction of the structure closely conforms to illustrations of Basque field stations depicted on Basque era maps and the model of the Saddle Island blubber rendering station re-created at the Parks Canada museum at Red Bay (Figure 16).



Figure 16. Museum reconstruction of Basque oil rendering station. Parks Canada Red Bay Museum.

Other than tiles, the most common artifact finds were iron spikes and nails. The larger of these, like the tile concentrations, occurred near the outer edges of the pavement and across the middle of the structure in an E-W direction (Figure 17). This pattern probably represents the fastening points of the timber frames of the superstructure.



Figure 17. Distribution and orientation of spikes and nails in cookhouse structure.

Smaller nails had a more general distribution across the floor and were often present in small clusters, probably representing joining places. There was no evidence of plank floors, and most artifacts were found directly on or between pavement slabs. Figure 18 shows the distribution of other artifact finds in the structure, which included such major classes as glass beads (large, medium, and seed varieties), clay smoking pipes, lead (fishing sinkers, sheet, shot, and sprue), iron knife blades and handles, iron bolts and shafts, ceramics (earthenware, Normandy stoneware, faience), glass (bottles, fine goblet glass), European flint (strike-a-lights), pyrites nodules, and masses of wood charcoal.

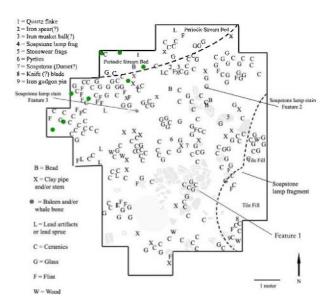


Figure 18. Distribution of artifact types in the cookhouse structure.

Many of these same materials have been recovered north of the paved structure in an outdoor work area that produced tile, earthenware and glass, beads and a small iron 'bec de corbeau' oil lamp (sometimes called a "Betty lamp") with an iron strap handle (Tuck and Grenier 1989:50). A few metres to the east we found barrel staves, planks and wooden utensils in a wet peat bog used for rough wood-working and preparing firewood. A large iron sledge hammer, iron bar stock and extensive charcoal and fire-burnt rock at the north edge of the bog suggest the presence of a blacksmith shop. Preliminary work has also been done on an underwater site extending offshore from the cove that served as the site's anchorage and shore access. A preliminary survey by Eric Phaneuf and Fréderic Savard in 2005 recorded extensive mounds of ballast rock, wood and tile, ceramic vessels, and whalebone at the top of what appears to be a wellpreserved metre-deep midden. The artifact collections from all these locations are being analyzed by Anja Herzog at Laval University.

Our investigations at Hare Harbour are still in the early stage. Nevertheless the general outline of a late17th to early 18th century Basque commercial operation is evident, with facilities that include a cookhouse, open-air work areas, a blacksmith shop and an offshore anchorage and underwater midden. The limited occurrence of baleen and whalebone and the absence of blubber ovens suggest that whaling and oil rendering were not primary activities, in contrast with 16th century Basque sites. The presence of fine glass, stoneware, beads, lead bullets and sprue, and large amounts of charcoal suggests a mix of activities that might be expected of a mission oriented to fishing, hunting, trading, and crew and vessel maintenance. The presence of Inuit soapstone vessels (Figure 19) suggests the possibility of an Inuit family or woman being present on site to assist with hunting, feeding, and

domestic chores, giving some justification for the Tête á Baleine reference to this location as "Eskimo Bay".

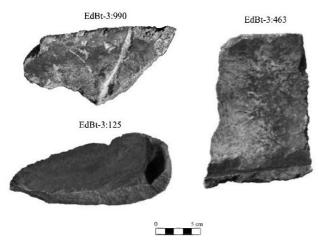


Figure 19. Soapstone vessel fragments from the floor of the cookhouse. Specimen at right is a fragment of an Inuit rectangular cooking vessel, and the specimens at left are a corner and side fragment of Inuit lamps.

CONCLUSIONS: DYNAMISM AND COMPLEXITY IN THE FAR NORTHEAST

This report has presented preliminary results that expand the efforts of Harp, Levesque, Tuck, McGhee, Grenier, and Pintal in the Straits and Blanc Sablon region and augment the considerable, but little-known, CRM archaeology efforts along the LNS. This region needs a synthesis, and our effort to explore the outer coast contributes toward the eventual goal of a broader understanding of LNS history, settlement, and cultural interactions. It is especially interesting to see archaeological evidence for cultural boundaries beginning to take shape and that patterns of Maritime Archaic, Groswater, Dorset, and Labrador Inuit distributions are starting to emerge, as they have in Labrador and Newfoundland. Many interesting differences are also noted: different types, sizes, and environmental settings of Early and Late MA sites and dwellings, with suggestions of a more restricted maritime adaptation and settlement than seen in Labrador and Newfoundland, but strong similarities in the red paint burial complex; the first finding of intermediate period Indian circular pithouse settlements like those at Belles Amours Peninsula; an abundance of Ramah chert in sites of all periods; a surprisingly late Basque occupation at Hare Harbour; and evidence of distinct modes of European-Inuit contact. Finally, one has to remark on the long record of historical archaeology for a part of the coast that began to be exploited by Europeans early in the 16th Century, where Europeans of different ethnic and national affiliations and with different economic motivations operated and have lived in association with Innu, Inuit, and other native groups for 450 years. Our knowledge of these northern regions has grown so dramatically during the period since Tuck joined the faculty of Memorial University that we can look back upon the era when

this part of the world was sometimes called the "Far Northeast" with its connotation of being so far, so unknown, and so peripheral to the then-perceived southern centers of cultural development in northern New England and eastern Canada.

In effect, this little-known section of the LNS coast appears to have been an area of ethnic, national, and economic diversity and of culture contact and transitions for thousands of years. The LNS straddles the boundary between regions where strongly maritime-based cultures to the east and north interacted with increasingly estuarineadapted groups employing mixed economies to the west and south. It is an area where a variety of adaptations were possible and apparently overlapped spatially and temporally. These factors seem to be at the root of LNS diversity and historical complexity. The flux of culture change has at least one dimension that suggests influence of changing climate and environment. Its strongest expression is the southward expansion of Groswater culture beginning ca. 2900 B.P. and its appearance in southern Labrador, Newfoundland, and the LNS ca. 2500 B.P., presumably a result of the expansion of arctic sea ice, seals, and walrus distributions. A second, weaker, climatic correlation exists with the southern expansion of Early and Middle Dorset into Newfoundland; this expansion may have been less a result of climatic cooling than the development of a more efficient maritime adaptation. The third southern movement of arctic peoples, that of the Thule/Inuit culture in the 1500s, was probably facilitated by the expansion of arctic pack ice and marine mammals occurring with onset of the Little Ice Age, by the lure of European trade and plunder, and by the withdrawal of Indian groups from the coast during the early contact period. However, each of these movements must also have required social and political accommodations with Indian groups they replaced, territorially if not seasonally. Another example of the dynamic, interconnected nature of LNS cultures is seen in the presence of Ramah chert in collections of all periods and cultures of this region, even though far from Ramah Bay and among cultures different from those of Labrador or Newfoundland. LNS peoples used considerable amounts of Ramah and managed to travel, trade, and afford whatever it took to acquire what must have been a prestigious and spiritually powerful material (Loring 2002). Understanding such complexities will be challenging, but as the regional picture of LNS culture history begins to come into focus, we can expect to find answers to these and other interesting questions.

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APPENDIX A St. Lawrence Gateways Project Site List, 2001-05

	Year	Site Name	Borden	Location	Site Type	Culture
1	2001	Ile Nue	EdDa-6	West side, Ile Nue	Rock feature	Unknown
7	2001	Ile aux Bouleaux	EdDa-52	West side of is.	Rock structure	Unknown
3	2001	Mingan Harbor Is.	No#	Mid-north shore	Tile/brick frags.	Basques?
4	2001	Jolliet House	EdCx-1	East end island	Excavation	Jolliet
5	2001	Ile Quarry	EdCw-55	East coast	Rock structure	Unknown
9	2001	Ile Niapiskau	EdCw-56	Cape Seche	Rock structures	Unknown
7	2001	lle du Havre-2		Pointe d'Enclume	Rock structure	Unknown
∞	2001	Ile du Havre-3		Pointe de Chasse	Rock structure	Unknown
6	2001	lle St. Charles W.		North Barrach Hbr.	Rock structures	Unknown
10	2001	Ile aux Sauvages		Northern peninsula	Garden clearing	European?
Ξ	2001	lle á la Chasse	EdCs-17	Puyjalon Grave	Rock structure	Unknown
12	2001	P. Ile St. Geneviev	EdCs-16	Southwest Beach	Rock structure	Unknown
13	2001	G. Ile St. Geneviev	EdCs-18	Northwest Beach	Rock structure	Unknown
14	2001	Natashquan		North of Natashquan	Whalebones	Geological/ Maritime Archaic
15	2001	Cache de Stubbert	EdCh-1	Kégashka	Artifact cache	Recent Indian
16	2001	La Romaine	NA	Romaine Beach	Eroded collections	European
17	2001	lle du Lac	EdCa-1	Southeast comer	Boulder cache?	Unknown
18	2001/2003	Pointe Sealnet-2	EcBw-2	Point south of SNP	Blowout/surface	Groswater
61	2001	Pointe Sealnet-1	EcBw-1	Point south of SNP	Seal Factory	European Settler
20	2004	Boatyard Site	EcBv-10	Chvery Boatyard area	Scatter of quartz flakes	Maritime Archaic?
21	2004	Vatcher Site	EcBv-9	Mainland of Chevery sound	Small camp/ Work location	Maritime Archaic
22	2001/2003	Petit Mécatina-2	EdBt-2	East of Havre Croix	Boulder house foundation	Maritime Archaic
23	2001/2002	Petit Mécatina-1	EdBt-I	East of Havre Croix	Long house etc.	Maritime Archaic
24	2002	Petit Mécatina-4	EdBt-4	Northeast of P.M I,2	Cache pits and floors	Martime Archaic
25	2001-2004	Hare Harbor-1	EdBt-3	L'Anse du P. Méc.	Large site	Basque
56	2002	Daniel's Harbor	EdBt-5	S. side of Daniel harbor	Stone and mortar foundation	European
27	2002	Hare Habror-2	EdBt-6	Northeastern edge of Pond on	Rock structure, House and	European
į			,	F.Mecat.	Midden	100
28	2004	Kanty Island-2	EdBs-1	South of Kanty is. Cemetery	2 Boulder pits	Unknown
59	2004	Kanty Island-1	EdBt-7	Southeastern side of Kanty Island	Tent ring/Foundation	European
30	2001/2002	Baie du Mouton-3	EeBs-3	West of Bay	Settlement site	Maritime Archaic
31	2001	Baie du Mouton-1	EeBs-1	Michael Morency	Artifact finds	Prehistoric Indian
32	2001	Baie du Mouton-2	EeBs-2	South of Reservoir	Settlement site	Maritime Archaic
33	2001/2002	Havre Boulet	EeBr-13	East of Baie Mout.	Seal hunting station	Basque and later european
34	2003/2004	Gros Mécatina-3	EeBr-16	North side on Beach pass in GM island	Caches, Boulder walls and floors	Maritime Archaic and Groswater
35	2003	Gros Mécatina-2	EeBr-15	SW end of GM island	Boulder beach structures	Unknown Prehistoric
36	2003	Gros Mécatina-1	EeBr-14	Northeast side of GM	Boulder beach structures	Maritime Archaic or Later Indian
37	2004	Bayfield Island-1	EhBo-15	West side of Bayfield Is.	Settlement site	Archaic Indian
38	2003	Bayfield Harbor-1	EhBo-17	NE end of Bayfield Harbor	Stone structure and cache pit	Unknown
36	2003	L'Anse du Portage-3	EhBn-6	West of L'Anse du Portage settlement	Lithic find location	Dorset?

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Unknown	Unknown	Inuit	Unknown	European Settler	Inuit? European?	Dockietonio Indian	ricilistoric liturali	Prehistoric Dorset?	Prehistoric Indian, European	European Settler	European Settler	European Settler	Prehistoric?	European Settler	Maritime Archaic?	Late Prehistoric Indian	Prehistoric, Basque	Maritime Archaic	Maritime archaic
Boulder pits	Rock crevice	Stone fox traps	Rock features	Summer settlement	Sod foundations/ Seal	Dook of activities	NOCK SUUCIMICS	Flake loci	Rock structure	Low sod foundation	Sod long house?	Rectangular foundations	Rock feature	Sod foundations	Rock structure	Rock structures	Settlement sites	Buried feature	Burial mounds
SE of L'Anse du Portage settlement	South of L'Anse du Portage settlement	South end of Canso Island	Southwest Mis. Is.	Mistanoque Harbor	Southeast Chéc. Ile	Mosthorn Dooch	Notinieni Deach	Northern side	Point West if Net. Island.	Southeast Side	Bussie's Cove	Bussie's Cove	South shore of Hbr.	North Point of Hbr.	East side of Penin.	North of Pte. Rocheuse	Land N. of Ile Paress.	In Brador Town	E. of Brador Town
EhBn-5	EhBn-4	Ehbn-7	EhBn-3	EhBn-2	EhBn-I	7 D:D	Pigin.	EhBl-1	EiBI-7	EiBk-50	EiBk-51	EiNk-52	EiBi-14	EiBi-20	EiBi-19	EiBi-7	EiBh-47	EiBh-4I	EiBh-59.60
L'Anse du Portage-2	L'Anse du Portage-1	Canso Island-I	Ile Mistanoque-2	Ile Mistanoque-I	Ile Chécatika	Ile Vert	IIC VCII	Ile Bilodeau	Net Is. Tickle Pt.	Ile du Vieux Fort-1	Ile du Vieux Fort-2	Ile du Vieux Fort-3	Havre du Belle Amours	Havre Belle Amours Pre.	Belle Amours Pte.	Pen. Des Belle Amours	Cliff. Hart Chalet	Cliff. Hart Home	Tumul. Brador 1,2
2003	2003	2004	2001	2001/2002	2001/2002	2001	2001	2001	2001	2001	2001	2001	2001	2001/2002	2001/2002	2001	2001	2001	2001
40	41	42	43	44	45	46	2 5	47	48	46	50	51	52	53	54	55	99	57	58