

## THE LAND OF THE NEUTRALS

Meanwhile the Iroquois, selling their furs to the English and Dutch traders at Albany had acquired fire-arms. They were no longer dependent upon the Attawandarons for weapons of war. The Neutrals now had grim reason to regret their hostility to the French who might have better equipped them for the unequal struggle. Desperately as they defended their villages, in those terrible days of 1650, flint was no match for powder and bullet. In a succession of disastrous battles, the Attawandarons were wiped out; and those warriors who escaped death in battle were burned at the stake or incorporated into the fighting forces of the Five Nations.

The Iroquois had conquered and desolated the land between the lakes, but they seem to have made no effort to occupy it. From time to time it was traversed by Indian hunting parties; but for the most part it was an unpopulated, heavily timbered wilderness, where wolves and foxes, bear and deer and game birds of many sorts abounded.

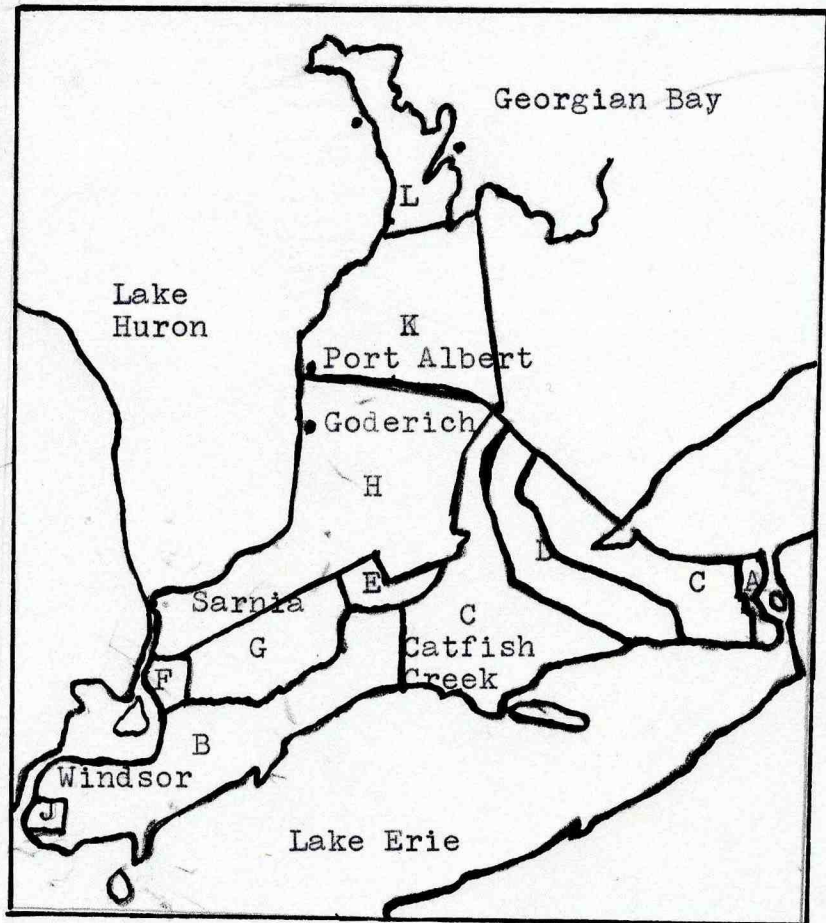
During the latter half of the seventeenth century a number of French travellers, explorers and missionaries, skirted the lake front of the country, but seldom traversed the interior. Joliet in 1669 passing down from the upper lakes landed at or near Kettle Creek and crossed overland to Burlington Bay, meeting en-route La Salle, who returned with him to the east. Dollier de Casson and Galinee, who descended the Grand River to Lake Erie and wintered at the site of Port Dover in 1669, continued their journey westward along the shores of the lake and up the Detroit River. They noted that as a result of the destruction of the Neutrals by the Iroquois eighteen years before, their journey could now be made in safety. La Salle was the first to navigate Lake Erie in a ship. Having in 1679 built his vessel, the Griffon, on Cayuga Creek, he, accompanied by Friar Hennepin, launched and sailed her up the lake and on to Lake Michigan. She was lost on the return voyage, laden with furs. Tonty, Du L'hut and Cadillac were among the other early explorers of this shore.

It was a rich land, empty of people, waiting for those who in God's good time would seek homes there. For a century and a half after the extermination of the Neutral nation the country slumbered. Occasional hunting parties of Senecas or other Iroquois from their villages east of the Grand River penetrated the forest to the west in pursuit of game. A transient trader now and then passed along the shore or followed the forest paths and Indian trails between the French posts now established at Niagara and Detroit. For the most part solitude and silence reigned. Quebec was captured by the British. Then at the close of the American Revolution the woodsman's axe rang out along the Niagara and the Long Point Settlements, where the United Empire Loyalists were hewing out new homes. On May 21st 1803, Colonel Talbot landed at Port Talbot having received a grant of 5000 acres in Dunwich township. Colonel Baby had previously been granted South Yarmouth township which Talbot had preferred. Soon afterward settlers began their battle with the forest. Daniel Rapelje and David Mandeville came from Long Point and built their log houses, the former at the top of the hill on the first lot in Yarmouth, the latter below in the valley on the Southwold side of the townline. Roads were unknown. John Bostwick is reported to have first blazed the line of what was afterward the Talbot Road in 1804. In 1811 Mahlon Burwell was appointed registrar of land titles for Middlesex, which at that time included Elgin County. He settled near Port Talbot where the townline between Southwold and Dunwich is crossed by the Talbot Road, and here the first registry office was established. But there was little work for a registrar as yet. Colonel Talbot performed all the duties of that office as far as the settlers were concerned with pencil and map; entering the settler's name upon his lot, after the latter had passed inspection and satisfied the head of the settlement of his loyalty, moral character and general fitness. In case a transfer of land for failure to perform settlement duties or other cause became necessary, a piece of India rubber cleared the place on the map and a fresh name took its place.

From "The Talbot Regime" by C. O. Ermatinger.



INDIAN SURRENDERS - WESTERN ONTARIO



Map showing the areas covered by Indian treaties of surrender of lands to the white men.

- (A) Surrender of 1781 - Mississauga Chippewas.
- (B) May 19, 1790 - Walpole Island Band.
- (C) December 2, 1792 - Mississauga Chippewas.
- (D) Cession from Crown to Six Nations Iroquois.
- (E) September 7, 1796 - London Surrender - Chippewas.
- (F) September 7, 1796 - Sombra Township by Walpole Island Band.
- (G) March 9, 1819 - Chippewas of Caradoc.
- (H) July 10, 1827 - Chippewas of Sarnia Band.
- (J) August 13, 1833 - Wyandots (Hurons) of Anderdon.
- (K) August 9, 1836 - Chippewas of Saugeen.
- (L) October 30, 1854 - Chippewas of Saugeen.



## INDIAN SURRENDERS - WESTERN ONTARIO

The map accompanying this article is an original, due to the generous help of the staff of the Surveyor-General of Canada.

Key to the map:

Area (A) - The surrender of May 9, 1781, by the Mississauga Chippewas.

The War of the American Revolution ended, really, on October 19, 1781 when Cornwallis surrendered to the rebels at Yorktown, Virginia. The formal treaty ending the war was not signed until September 3, 1783, but Detroit was not surrendered to the United States till July 11, 1796 and Niagara till August of the same year. At the cessation of hostilities, Fort Niagara, still in British hands but on the American side of the river, was the focal point of a settlement of British Loyalists and Six Nations Indians. Some provision had to be made for all of these, so, on May 9, 1781 the Canadian governor, Haldimand, secured by treaty with the Mississauga Chippewas the strip along the western shore of the Niagara River which now comprises the townships of Niagara, Stamford, Willoughby and Bertie.

Area (B) - The surrender of May 19, 1790 by the Chippewas, Ottawas, and Pottawatomies of the Chenal Ecarte (Walpole Island Band).

The townships of Tilbury West, Tilbury North, Rochester, Maidstone, Sandwich, Anderdon, Malden, Colchester, Gosfield, Mersea, Tilbury East, Romney, Dover, Chatham, Camden, Orford, Howard, Harwich, Raleigh, Yarmouth, Malahide, Aldborough, Dunwich, Southwold, Westminster and Delaware.

Area (C) (D) and (C) - The surrender of December 2, 1792 by the Mississauga Chippewas.

Area (D) - In 1793, out of the territory secured by the Crown in the above surrender of December 2, 1792, the Crown ceded to the Iroquois of the Six Nations: (To recompense them for their loss of the Mohawk Valley in New York State as the result of their alliance with the British during the American Revolution) a strip of land on both sides of the Grand River from its source to its mouth.

Area (E) - The surrender of September 7, 1796 by the Chippewas.

The townships of London, North Dorchester and North Oxford.

Area (F) - On the same day as the foregoing treaty - September 7, 1796 - but by a separate surrender, the Chippewas, Ottawas and Pottawatomies of the Chenal Ecarte (Walpole Island Band) surrendered to the Crown.

"The Shawanes Township" consisting of the present townships of Sombra in Lambton County and the Gore of Chatham in Kent County.

Area (G) - The surrender of March 19, 1819 by the Chippewas of Caradoc.

The townships of Dawn, Euphemia and Zone, Mosa, Ekfrid, Caradoc, Lobo, Adelaide, the southernmost concesssions of Enniskillen, most of Brooke, and the southeasterly third of the present township of Warwick.

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Area (H) - The surrender of July 10, 1827, by the Chippewas of the Sarnia Band.

The townships of Moore, Sarnia, Plympton, the greater (northerly) part of Enniskillen, the northerly two-thirds of Warwick, Bosanquet, Biddulph, East Williams, West Williams, McGillivray, Stephen, Colborne, Goderich, Hullett, McKillop, Stanley, Tuckersmith, Hay, Osborne, Ashfield, West Wawanosh, East Wawanosh, Morris, Mornington and Wallace.

Area (J) - The surrender of August 13, 1833 by the Wyandots (Hurons) of Anderdon.

The township of Anderdon in Essex County.

Area (K) - The surrender of August 9, 1886 by the Chippewas of Saugeen.

Area (L) - The surrender of October 30, 1854 by the Chippewas of Saugeen.



## INDIAN SURRENDERS - WESTERN ONTARIO

### INDIAN LANDS GIVEN UP

In North American pre-history, all of Canada, with the exception of the northerly tundras, and British Columbia, was occupied by the most numerous and most extensive Amerindian language stock - the Algonkian (Algonquian). From the Abenkis of Nova Scotia to the Blackfoot of the Rocky Mountain foothills the inhabitants spoke various dialects of one root language and, even today, a Chippewa of Ontario can make himself understood, if not readily, on the plains of Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Then in probably the 1200s or 1300s an intrusion occurred from the Gulf States; Iroquoian peoples of a different ethnic background and speaking a wholly different tongue, moved northward to escape inter-tribal warfare with their fellow-Iroquoians. This invasion swept as far northwards as the full length of the St. Lawrence River.

Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York State and all of Southern Ontario became occupied by these new people. Those of us who have passed through the Ontario public and secondary school systems are familiar with the wars between the Six Nations of New York and the Hurons of the Lake Simcoe area, but it was never pointed out to us that these two groups were close kin-folk. The Six Nations were simply labelled the "Iroquois" and the others the "Hurons".

The Five Nation Confederacy which occupied the territory between the Niagara peninsula and the Hudson River were simply five Iroquoian nations - the Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga and Seneca. However, "simply" is hardly the word to describe their political alliance. They were, in fact, the first of all the world's people to form a League of Nations for the promotion of peace!

Their confederacy was the product of the political genius of two men - Hiawatha of the Mohawks and Dekanawida of the Onondagas. Sometime in the late 1300s or early 1400s - certainly before the "discovery" of North America by the European, these two men met each other and discovering that they were of one mind politically, devoted their lives to bringing their immediate neighbors together into one political unit. Each tribe was to be autonomous in purely local affairs and with their general interests subservient to an all-embracing Council of Sachems, or Senators, who were not "chiefs" in the ordinary sense of the word.

Before the coming of the white man, and the trade wars which he initiated among the native peoples, there is no record of enmity between the Five Nations and the Hurons. The Hurons, of course, were not really Hurons at all. This was only a nickname given them by the French after the European invasion of North America - their name for themselves was "Wyandot" - the "One People".

By the time Samuel de Champlain arrived in the St. Lawrence in 1603, the Five Nations had withdrawn, largely to the Mohawk Valley in New York State, to be replaced in the Quebec area by the Montagnais and other Algonkian peoples. The Five Nations, however, - in touch with the Dutch at the eastern end of the Mohawk Valley, had become entrepreneurs in the valuable trade in furs with Europe. They traded in pelts with the Wyandots, who in turn had purchased them from the Chippewas of the north shores of Lakes Superior and Huron.

The Ottawa River, after a portage from the Georgian Bay area, had been for many years the chief route of the Iroquois for their fur trade with the northern tribes. This route, of course, had to pass Montreal. The French fortified the Island in an attempt to stop this Iroquois trade with the Dutch and their English successors at Albany and thus the French and the Five Nations came into open conflict.



## INDIAN SURRENDERS - WESTERN ONTARIO

When Champlain decided to invade the Five Nations territory to punish the Mohawks for their refusal to trade with Montreal rather than with Albany, he invited the Wyandots and Chippewas to accompany him as allies. Some of the chiefs of these latter nations foolishly accepted this alliance and henceforth the Five Nations of New York were bitter and implacable enemies of the Wyandot nations.

By 1650 the Five Nations had driven the Wyandots from Huronia and then turned on the Petuns, or Tobacco Nation, living along the north shore of Lake Erie in what is still tobacco country, destroying them, too, as a nation. After that came the turn of still another Iroquoian community, the Attiwandarons, or Neutrals, who lived in the western extremity of the peninsula with one of their main urban complexes centered at Port Franks on Lake Huron in the present Lambton County.

By the earlier proclamation of George III, made on October 7, 1763, before the States had seceded from their allegiance to the British Crown, that Crown acknowledged the title of the Amerindians to their native lands. The new United States recognized these rights in theory but not in practice, giving rise to the long series of broken treaties and Indian wars which blacken the history of the country south of the border.

### THE WALPOLE ISLAND BAND SURRENDER OF MAY 19, 1790.

On this date, and for the sum of £1200, the Chippewas, Pottawatomies and Ottawas of the Chenal Ecarte Band surrendered to the Crown an immense strip of what is now Southwestern Ontario, bordered on the south by Lake Erie from the mouth of Catfish Creek in Elgin County to the Detroit River. The Wyandots of Anderdon Township in Essex County were also signatories to the surrender but without shadow of right.

These Wyandots (Hurons) were actually refugees from the destruction of Huronia by the Six Nations in the 1600s who had settled eventually on the American side of the Detroit River across from Amherstburg. At the conclusion of the Jay Treaty in 1790, by which Michigan and Ohio were acknowledged to be American territory, these Wyandots, anxious to live under the Union Jack, were permitted by the Walpole Island Band (of the Chenal Ecarte) to reside in what is now Anderdon Township. They signed although they were at no time, then or later, in legal possession of the land they occupied.

The boundaries of this surrender, as listed therein, are as follows: "Beginning at the mouth of Catfish Creek, commonly called the Riviere Chaudiere on the north side of Lake Erie--and from thence running westward along the border of Lake Erie and up the Strait (the Detroit River and Lake St. Clair) to the mouth of a river known as the Chenal Ecarte and up the main branch of the said Chenal Ecarte to the first fork in the south side, then on a due east line (now what is known as the Base Line south of Wallaceburg, running to Thamesville) until it intersects the Riviere a la Tranche (The Trench, now the Thames) and up the said Riviere a la Tranche to the northwest corner of the said Cession granted to His Majesty in the year 1784, then following the west boundary of the said tract being a due South direction until it strikes the mouth of the said Catfish Creek being the first offset". The surrender was signed at L'Assomption (now Sandwich) in the district of Hesse.

This surrender included, of course, what is now the Canadian shore of the Detroit River, settled by Quebecois after the founding of Detroit in 1701. These early French had no treaty with the Indians, they had merely occupied and surveyed their farms along the river front. The British, who took over after the fall of Quebec, had a totally different Indian policy which recognized the Indians as lawful possessors of aboriginal land.