



Shaping the Map

Canada's shape on the map and patterns of settlement reflect the past 400 years of its history. But long before what might be called the "European discovery" of Canada in the sixteenth century, Europeans knew of its existence. About the year 1000 A.D. Scandinavians were felling timber on the east coast; in the fifteenth century, English, French, Spanish and Portuguese were fishing off the coast of Newfoundland.

Whether or not these early European visitors made contact with what was probably a small and scattered native population is not known. The Inuit, called Eskimo by the Europeans, had taken perhaps some 5 000 years to cross the desert of ice from west