

The question might now be asked as to why the Hurons had located on the shores of Georgian Bay. Perhaps we can suggest an answer. If it be correct that they were gradually pushed out or driven across the Niagara and Lake Ontario by the Iroquois, we can readily understand that they would seek refuge in a locality where they could most effectively defend themselves, and would probably limit their retreat only by their necessities of living. The Hurons were a sedentary not a migratory tribe; they were growers of crops rather than hunters. They stopped when they came to the borders of the non-arable Muskoka and they took up territory that was in part protected by water.

A study of the traditions of the Huron-Iroquois people does not give us any information as to their intercourse with the Eskimo. We learn that in the far off days they crossed a great river and we know that about the beginning of the sixteenth century they came away from the valley of the St. Lawrence. But this great river that they crossed may have been the Ohio or the Mississippi.

The question now becomes a subject for investigation by archaeologists and ethnologists.

I have had the opportunity of reading a most interesting and well worked out paper by Dr. David Boyle, Archaeologist to the Ontario Government, on the origin of the Iroquois and kindred nations. It will appear in the forth coming report on Ontario Archaeology.¹ Mr. Boyle argues for a southern origin of these people beyond the Ohio, if not beyond the Mississippi, instead of beyond the St. Lawrence in Quebec. He brings them from the south until they come into neighbourhood with the Micmacs of New Brunswick, thus accounting for the traditions of that people recorded by Dr. Rand. Thence they came up the St. Lawrence. After many years swarm after swarm moved off to occupy the territories in which they were found at the time of Champlain. The fact that the Hurons and Petuns were skilled in the cultivation of corn, tobacco, beans, sunflowers and hemp is better explained by a southern origin than by tracing them away to the Labrador home of the Eskimo. I cannot too strongly urge you to read and study this paper when it appears in print.

We come now to the Huron Nation as it was in the early part of the 17th Century, when the French first visited them. Their old village sites can be traced through York County up into Simcoe, becoming more and more numerous as they were crowded by the limitations of the land. Only in the north are relics of French manufacture to be found, hence we conclude that the northern towns were the more recently occupied.

¹ See Annual Archaeological Report 1905 (Toronto 1906) pp. 146-158.