

Evolution of physical power sports during the Middle Ages

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Abstract

Given the periods that this volume intends to cover, there seems to be little room for Quebec. Indeed, sport only became socially and economically important in our country in the twentieth century. However, since men have lived there for millennia, sports exercises have been practiced for a very long time. Indeed, our country has the advantage of having an authentic heritage both from the point of view of sports and physical education. In its report, the Commission on Canadian Studies writes: "Canadians seem to suffer from cultural amnesia when it comes to considering this important aspect of our history and our national life" 1. Quebecers would be uncomfortable to do like too many Canadians by giving no place to studies in the history of sport. Moreover, we will treat a lot of Quebec whose sporting history is little known to historians. When we talk about physical activity in New France, we will overflow the current province of Quebec as New France extended to New Orleans. It will be much question of the Indians and a little of the French until the eighteenth century.

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I. Introduction:

The main physical activities of the Indians were hunting and fishing. They used to do it all the time with instruments they made themselves. Of these instruments, it is necessary to make a special place for bow and canoe. The Indians excelled in the manufacture and use of these objects. They traveled great distances with the canoe; they could do the same in winter by using snowshoes. We will see that the Mauricie has kept the memory of their exploits by inaugurating in 1935 the famous race of canoe between La Tuque and Trois-Rivières

In addition to enjoying the sports already mentioned, the Indians were passionate about games, whether they were lucky or dexterous. If the French loved the dance and set aside the mandates of the bishops, the Indians never missed the opportunity to show their joy, to mimic a war dance, to dance the pipe or to perform what some authors have called ballet. This chapter will conclude with an important work on the beginnings of the sport in Montreal in the nineteenth century. We see the society of the time to learn about sports. Thus was preparing the integration of sport to the culture of Quebecers.

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Physical activity in New France Games and sports jean-Paul MASSICOTTE

While it is true that in France "games of strength and skill have often been gambling games" and that "these games were forbidden as morally and economically pernicious" ¹, as early as the 17th century in New England, France, the game has been very popular. The misconduct of the inhabitants would be due to this propensity to the game which becomes a cause of disorder and "relaxation of the mores". This taste of the game is general. Among the soldiers who played the game were Montcalm and his officers who attended elegant salons. It is enough to consult the annals judicial to realize the importance of the fines and prohibitions³. There was a revealing conviction in 1679, followed by defense in 1726⁴. The intendant no longer wanted to hear about dice games and card games

It's under the name of "public games" that we find in New France, the game of ball and the game of bowling. The same author mentions the practice of the ball game in front of the episcopal palace and tells us that the bishopric opposes the noise made by the players. Massicotte describes the game: Each player with two balls, played one in turn, trying to place his own as close to a line 'on goal, and to dislodge those of the opponent.⁶ The prohibitions continue to rain. Séguin enumerates these numerous games that are often practiced in cabaret. The inventories confirm the existence of the game of billiards. On May 29, 1727, permission was given to hold billiards in the city of Quebec⁷. This game is also played at the Nicolet Seminary. Massicotte also shows us the importance of the game of checkers according to different methods. The game of chess was also practiced very early; the visit of a champion was for something⁸. Concerning the inhabitants of New France, Charlevoix writes: One plays, he observes, one makes parties of walks; summer by horse-drawn carriage, or by canoe, winter troling on the snow or skating on the ice.⁹ Once again, the inventories confirm the existence of skates in the 17th century. As a toy, the skate can be considered as a manifestation of folk art. Carriage races become forbidden near the churches; slips are in Quebec City. JCB (on nefons) points out that skates, sleds and carriages are the main sources of amusement during the winter.¹⁰ The missionaries are not without realizing that the Indians are crazy about the game. Father Jean Piéron then decides to use the game to make them meet their salvation. He invents the game from point to point¹¹. It is a card game that helps to assimilate religious truths. The Iroquois call this game: the path to reach the place where one lives always, either paradise or hell. The ethic of the Indians at the game is remarkable, their passion is unequivocal: this is what the Jesuit Relations say: The players and the patients went to his cabin to the sound of the drum and tortoiseshell that they accompanied shouts and songs in their fashion.

Those who passaoient or who wager were seated on both sides watching their players, each favoring his party with several gestures and cries according to their passion and affection. The conclusion is that the souls of both nations lost the quality of porcelain and other things they had put in play.¹² Indians therefore play a large number of games of chance and are not afraid to lose. They know the game of straw. Rochemonteix writes: ... they play together or not with straws that they also cut and which they take part in their hands.¹³ They also play flat: They also have a certain game that is like that of dice, they use black and white kernels, and take six or eight, which they roll into a dish. Jean de Brebeuf described the whole ritual that accompanies this game¹⁴, which also serves as medicine. Among the Hurons, gambling is used for the distribution of property. It is understood that as a result of success in foreign trade there will be a greater amount of goods available. Whoever wants to be recognized as a

great leader, must dispose of his property with great generosity. Among the games of skill, it is a funeral game that is very interesting, it is the game of the stick. The savages also put an end to this dismal party with a game that is the appearance of a fight. One of the chiefs who presides at the ceremony throws over the volume, in the midst of the troop of young men, or puts himself in the hands of one of the most vigorous, a stick the length of a foot that all the others endeavor to wring it from him, and that he who is the master of it endeavors to defend as best he can. He throws a similar figure among the troop of young women and girls, who do not make any effort to charm him or keep him. After this fight, which lasts a long time, and which makes a pleasant but serious spectacle, we give the price we have destined for this subject to those who have won the victory; then everyone goes home. One must be careful, in what I said, that the games entered into the exercises of religion; I have already noticed how diviners order some for the healing of the sick; here are funerals in honor of the dead.¹⁵

The most famous game of skill among the Indians is surely the Battagaway or lacrosse. Games of the same name have existed in France: it was the butt to the goal, the crosse plain and crosse omnium. These games look a lot more like the game of golf. The Indian game unfolds differently. When the Europeans entered this country, the savages of the island used to play with the palm, and they used to send the ball of a piece of wood in the shape of eighth. This peculiarity caused it to be called the Island of the Croche Wood, and later the whole neighboring country took the general name of the island at La Crosse.¹⁶ The instrument which we describe here serves to carry the ball or throw it; it is not a question of hitting like golf. This game has another feature; he is sovereign for health: Is this not worthy of compassion? Here is a poor patient who has fire in his body, and the soul on the ends of his souls, and a miserable sorcerer will order him for any cold remedy a game of lacrosse; or the sick man will sometimes have thought that he must die, or that the whole country is fighting for his health, and at the same time if he has so little credit, you will see in a beautiful field, Village against Village, which will cross the best, and bet against each other, to become more animated, the beaver dresses and porcelain necklaces. Sometimes one of these jugglers will say that the whole country is sick, and that he demands a game of lacrosse for his cure; We must not say more, it is published everywhere, and all the captains of each village give orders that all the youth should do their duty at this point, otherwise some great misfortune would welcome the whole country. The ring game is a game of Amerindian skill that is part of shooting games. A Huron from Ancienne-Lorette (near Quebec City), Max Gros-Louis, compared the Indian game to the old horseshoe game played by Canadians. He asserts that the principle of the game belongs to his own: That of Horseshoe does not seem typically Indian since the horses in America, were a European import. But only the name is imported, the horseshoe simply replaced the Indian ring, the principle of our ring game being preserved.¹⁷ Have the Canadians borrowed the principle of the game of horseshoe Indians such as Max Gros Louis says? It seems that no, a game of "Iron to throw" goes back to the eighteenth century in France and it still exists today¹⁸.

The Indian ball games are numerous and most interesting. The first game we will see could be considered as the origin of volleyball. The same author also tells us about a ball game practiced by the Abenakis: Their ball is a blown bladder that must always be held in the air, which forms a general spectacle.¹⁹ Hériot states that this The game is practiced by a group of three or four young women (girls): Until recently we played at home a ball game, with four teams and four goals arranged in the four quarters. Nowadays, very few of us still understand why this

game is sacred or what it was originally in the distant past, when it was not a simple game but one of our most important rites. This game represents the course of human life, a life that should be spent trying to catch the ball because it represents the great Spirit or Universe.²⁰ The game could be summarized as well. A girl, in the center of a circle, throws the ball in each of the four directions of the cardinal points. Each time, someone or rather all the Indians present try to attack him, and the one who succeeds gives it to the girl. The fifth time, the ball is thrown in the air and all rush to grab it. All those who were able to seize the ball during the ceremony are filled with presents.²¹ The ball game is undoubtedly an important game. It is important to know who can practice it. In the following case, it is the girls: Is a small ball exercise that is played only by girls. The ball must always be in the air, go from hand to hand and the one who drops the ball loses the game.²² There was another ball game reserved for women. This is the paired ball game: The women of some Algonkian tribes played a game called double-ball in which two balls are a little larger than our golf balls and covered with buckskin were linked together by a leather strap. The balls were thrown with a curved stick, something like a hockey stick, and the game resembled lacrosse, the aim being to get the balls through the other team's goal.

The next game we are going to talk about has been practiced by both Indians and Eskimos. We want to talk about the Tapigen. In the Montagnais-Naskapi region, boys and girls manipulate the Tapigen, a sort of complicated bilboquet, made of shins of caribou or moose. A Tapigen substitute consists of a cedar beam to which is attached a long rope and an isolated stake. This device is manipulated like a cup and ball and the success of the game announces a good hunting.²⁴ The snake of snow was one of the magnificent games of skill practiced by the Indians: the ordinary and daily exercise of the young people is none other than to draw the bow, to dart the arrow, which they make leap and slide a little bit over the pavement; play with curved sticks, which they cast over the snow.²⁵ This last game is called "snow snake", those who practice it must throw their stick or snake on a frozen ground (a "scupper" dug would be fine). The goal of the game is to reach as far as possible. Among the games of strength and skill practiced by the Amerindians, we must mention the fight. It is not a struggle to catch a stick (a wand) or a struggle to receive a ball to go to a safe place. Here is what the "little savages" do: The little savages are continually fighting: what they call playing together with a kick and a punch. I often saw them fighting in English, that is, one by one, while the others, circling around the two, looked at them without putting the *Hola*. The game was a little too outraged and always made fun of the weakest. Among the earth games, we saw the snake of snow; we will now see archery. This physical activity starts very early; it has a playful and utilitarian character: For this purpose, they are given the bow and the arrow as soon as they can hold them; they keep them for a long time like a toy, but their strength increases with age, a fun of their idleness, they make it a necessary exercise and go there in a very short time very skillful.

Another testimony confirms it: Hardly do the boys begin to walk, they practice pulling the bow; they do not fail to kill the bird they shoot. Long described a shooter that resembles the ring game: The boys are very expert at trundling a hoop especially the Cahnuaga Indians, whom I have frequently seen excel at this fun, the game is played by any number of boys who may accidentally assemble together, some driving the hoop, while others with bows and arrows shoot at it. At this exercise they are surprisingly expert, and will stop when progressing with great velocity; Some tribes rely entirely on the bow to survive (the Illinois *Kiliffinons*). The Indians are particularly

dexterous, as is the case of the Nadoueffi (at the extremity of Lake Superior). Nevertheless, they use them with so much adept, and so promptly that for a moment they fill the air. 29 The abandonment of the arc is already beginning to be reported by Weld in 1795-96-97. Have now generally left the use of bows and arrows; and surely they are found in the hand if not for fun for a few hours ... The author mentions that we still teach this art to children.³⁰ It is difficult to pass in silence a sports activity like the race. The Indians loved the race a lot. It was the case of the Illinois: There is not one who equals them in the race.³¹ M. de La Salle advised his family not to flee before the savages: As a matter of fact, if we had escaped, he would not have escaped one of us, since they ran better than us.³² The race is an important funeral game: While the body is consumed, we do races and tests man to man, the one who has the upper hand has a price that the next of kin of the deceased gives him.³³

According to Weld, Indians have greater muscle strength and stamina, but agility is not a feature of their own. Jean Amiot (a Canadian) did not give his place to the race: He provoked all the young people to the race made with snowshoes on the feet, made without racket.³⁴ It was in the eighteenth century that took place the competition the best described in a meeting between Indians and Canadians: Detroit and Canadians as famous as horses were run in Detroit on horseback in the spring, commonly, there are five hundred savages, sometimes up to one thousand five hundred; the race is half a place go and return from Detroit to the village of Poutoutamis, the path is beautiful and wide. There are posts planted at both ends, the bets are very considerable and consist of bundles of pelts against goods from France and for the use of savages. The most famous Canadian who ran and won the Indians is the name Campi; his superiority is so well-known that he is no longer admitted to the races.

Hunting in New France in the seventeenth century Jean-Paul MASSICOTTE and Claude LESSARD

In America, hunting has been practiced for several millennia, Indians are doing well before the arrival of Europeans. Indeed, according to the archaeological discoveries made on the American territory, they know the secrets from time immemorial. Remnants of prehistory concerning this activity, the arrowheads for example, still serve as landmarks in the dating of certain historical facts. Referring to it, Roger Marois divides the last periods of prehistory: he first cites that of Point Clovis which goes from the year 10000 to 7000 BC.¹ He then speaks of the plano culture of 7000 to 4500 BC.² It also mentions the Peninsula Point, which dates from 570 BC to 200 AD.³ The last two periods identified are the Meadowood (1000 BC to 800 BC). , ⁴ and superior silviculture from 1000 to 1300 AD⁵ The latest archaeological discoveries allow us to situate the beginning of hunting in New France between years 10,000 and 9000 before J.C.⁶ Throughout these 11000 years preceding the arrival of the Europeans in America, the Amerindians left us with unwritten but irrefutable evidence of their passion for hunting. However, it is only from the sixteenth century that we find manuscripts that describe this activity. Frobisher is probably one of the first travelers to report the existence of game: Nevertheless, there are deer in large quantities ... Their heads or their horns exceed enormously in length as in width those which are in our regions or in our country. In addition, their feet are as wide as those of our cattle. We measured them as less than eight inches wide. There are also hares, wolves, fish, bears, and seabirds of various kinds.⁷ Speaking of the Eskimos, he points out: Their weapons are bows, arrows, darts, and slingshots. Their bows measure a rod and are made of wood. Their bow cords look like broad tendons being attached using tendons. Their arrows consist of three pieces notched with a piece of bone and finished with other pieces of

bone.⁸ Before the need to survive and facing one of the richest reservoirs of aquatic and terrestrial fauna in the world, ⁹ Europeans are tempted to do like the Native Americans. In fact, as intendant Hocquart writes, this physical activity is a way for them to fight idleness. In the reports on the seigneuries of the districts of Quebec, Trois-Rivières and Montreal written by Gideon Catalonia, one can read expressions that are authentic: Hunting and fishing are abundant ¹⁰ Hunting and fishing They can do it at any time; ¹¹ The hunt for wild game, spring and autumn, is very abundant by the large number of bays and marshes found there; There is little eel, but game hunting is abundant on the packs.¹²

For Indians as much as for Europeans, at least during the first decades after the arrival of the latter in America, hunting is important or even necessary to live. At the time of Colbert, while Jean Talon is steward in New France, singles are deprived of their right to hunt if they refuse to marry a French immigrant during the first two weeks of their stay in Canada. This order is applied as the records show us. This is proof that the right to hunt is a necessity for the European. The documents demonstrate this to us on several occasions. It should be noted, however, that the desire of the King of France is to populate Canada and give it economic foundations powerful enough for it to come to do without the metropolis. For this reason, the European who settles in America in the seventeenth century, can not live from hunting. Which is the case for the Indian. Hunting as a daily physical activity remains the lot of the Amerindian. On the one hand, the Canadian does it for his pleasure; on the other hand, he encourages the natives to devote himself more ardently than ever to exchanging skins for barter and selling them profitably in Europe. Hunting is in this way a secondary physical activity for the Canadian. For this reason it is necessary to pay attention to the Indian who deploys all his energy as we will now show it. Hunting seems like a very hard physical exercise and it is one of the most important that the Indian practices. As Margry tells us, to be successful, you must practice hunting, know the passages, retreats, the instinct of the bestes, to bear the pain, to be patient, happy, ardent, lively, hardy, good runner; one must have good eye and good breath.¹³ The Indians have the body trained in this exercise. P. Le Clercq describes them as follows: They are all naturally well made of bodies, of a rich size; high, well proportioned and without any deformity; powerful, robust, dexterous and surprisingly agile, especially when pursuing moose. Men are taller than women who are almost all small.¹⁴ To hunt on snow, nothing is more appropriate than snowshoeing. The Indians manufacture it, it seems, by observing the foot of the momentum and it is from this observation that they make this means of locomotion of various

forms. The Indians can move quickly: in the Jesuit Relations, we read that: The Indians run on the snow with their rackets.¹⁵ They jump like deer and run like deer.¹⁶ The Indians wear snowshoes to chase the lions. moose. This prevents them from driving in the snow.¹⁷ They do the same for hunting seals, beavers, otters, moose, bears and caribou.¹⁸ The boat is often necessary To the hunter: To hunt the caribou, the primitives on the lookout waited for the band to cross the river. In canoes, they rushed to the animals and killed them with spears.¹⁹ It is not enough to say that the Indian has always hunted to conclude that hunting is a physical exercise of utmost importance to him. . To prove it, one must see it at work. We will now watch him act against the various wild animals that inhabit the American land in the seventeenth century. The one who first attracts our attention is the bear, the king of the forest at the time that concerns us. Bear hunting has a special aspect because of the strength and inconvenience of this animal. A sort of ceremonial surrounds the search for this particular game. This hunt is usually done in

groups and in winter. As the bear sleeps at this time, it is easy to pin down and surprise him without fear of reprisals. The Indians are accustomed to meet in large numbers, and when they arrive at the place, they form a great circle around him (a quarter of a league in circumference) according to the number of hunters.²⁰ They then advance in constantly tightening and everyone seeks his retreat before himself. It is rare for whites to meet in large enough numbers to hunt the bear in this way, but when they can, they never fail to adopt it.²¹

Having found it, by the footprints on the ground, the cavern or the hollow tree which serves him as shelter, they block the entrance and practice over an opening, by which they kill it inside or the more often by pulling it out. If the bear is hidden in a tree, they cut the tree with an ax. The bear attracted by the noise and seeing that his property is destroyed, comes out of his hiding place; the Indian then takes the opportunity to shoot. The Indian is very good at discovering that one or more bears have crossed a path. He studies the habits of the animal and finds ways to capture it by appealing to his strength and ability. He even tames the animal. It is a pleasure to see the Miamis from time to time bring monstrous bears to their villages, tame the race, and lead them in front of them with their hippies.²² For the Indian, the bear hunt is a milestone because it is a powerful and superior mammal. The Indian believes him endowed with divine attributes and particular psychic qualities.²³ Among the Montagnais, for example, the adolescent only becomes an adult when he has killed his first bear. He showed then that he is a man and that he masters life. It is his honor to defeat the bear, and he achieves it by cunning, science, and physical strength. The beaver hunt also requires the hunter a lot of knowledge of the lifestyle of this animal. The Indian is able to overcome two ways: the hatch and the net. The so-called trap is described in the Jesuit Relations, as well as in Charlevoix: In the spring, the beaver gets caught in the wood that he eats; the Indians are very well heard in these strokes, which come to relax, a large piece of wood falls on the animal and knocks it out. Sometimes the dogs meet him outside the hut, pursue him and take him easily.²⁴ In winter, the search for the beaver is much more subtle. It then takes a net and know its habits and customs. The Indian knows that the beaver is under the ice. Here is how he spots it and kills it: The ice is cut lengthwise, close to the beaver's hut, a crack is thrust through the crack and wood is used as a primer; this poor animal coming to eat, is entangled in these nets; being out of the water by the opening made in the ice, they knock it down with a big stick.

Skillful Indians:

Skillful Indians catch the beaver under the ice by first breaking the beaver hut. Then, These poor animals, who are sometimes in great numbers under the same toict, go under the ice ... searching for empty, hollow eyes between water and ice, to be able to breathe: what their enemies hate, they go for men on the estang or the icy river, carrying a long fight in hand, armed with a cost of a slice of iron ... and the other with a whale bone ...; they search the ice with this bone ...; taking care if it sounds hollow and if it gives some incide of its concavity, then they cut the ice with the iron slice, look if the water is not agitated ...: if the water stirs, they have a they bury him in the hole ... if they smell the beaver, they kill him with their big fight ..., and the tirans of the water, go to cure all at once, except that they have great hopes of taking others. I asked them why the beaver waited there to be slaughtered: where will he go, they said to me, his house is broken? Other places where he can breathe between water and ice are broken; he remains there in the water seeking air, yet he is knocked down. Sometimes he goes out by the hut, or by some hole,

but the dogs that are there ... have caught him well.²⁶ As for the bison, the Indian kills all the beavers he finds. Father Buteux affirms this in his travel relations: The Indians find a hut, kill everything, big and small, and males and females.²⁷ The beaver hunt is everywhere, from the Great Lakes to the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Hunting deer and deer presents great difficulties given the speed and agility of this animal. The Indian joined him even as a result of cunning and physical effort. It is placed so as not to be felt by these animals whose sense of smell is well developed. They then look for a clean place to hide their shooters. Then, they sink ... two rows of stakes ... The women and children share (then) in two bands, each of which follows a lateral direction to form a crescent behind the flock that they hunt then forward. As each stake is surmounted by a small flag that floats with the wind ... the deers, taking them ... for two hedges of hunters, cross them quickly until they give in the ambush ... the Indians hidden behind a retrenchment ... get up right away.²⁸

The Indians also face the deer by disguising themselves with skins and antlers. So that the resemblance leaves no doubt to the beast, they make the same gestures as she does. The deer, on perceiving them, hastens immediately. When he is in range, he is shot. Another way to attract deer is the one used by the Sioux. They discovered that it is easy to kill when it is in heat, that is to say since the beginning of September: The hunters, at that time, make a small whistle of the first piece of wood or cane, and when they hear whistling a deer, they answer him; this animal, believing that it is another deer that whistles, comes to them, and they kill it without difficulty.²⁹ The Indian is a great hunter because he knows the ways of living animals. For this reason, it beats even the fastest moose and deer. In front of a moose, the Indian makes use of snares and leans on the water or the snow which is within his reach. The Jesuits, in their relations, mention that the Indians surprise the moose with necks of "big leather belts" that they tend in the paths where this animal circulates regularly. They attract it to these traps by imitating the female's scream and the sound of her urine in the water.³⁰ This latter technique of approach is more often replaced by a direct pursuit in water such as this: They are going to attack this great animal which was refreshing itself in the water, going to take it on the side of the grounds, to push it further in the river. They were flying after in their little bark canoes, they approached him within reach of a javelin, he threw him a sword which was bound to him ... But, seeing these enemies ... he threw himself into the water, where he was soon beaten with swords. As he was shooting to death, they drove him back to the edge of the river and there, put him in a moment, in pieces.³¹ In winter, if the snow is thick, the Indians chase him in the race and kill him with swords when they can not come near. This can last two or three days on certain occasions. Once a child would kill them almost, because the snow coming to freeze after some small thaw, or some pluye, it hurts these poor moose, which do not go Loing without being massacred.³² To hunt the wild ox, also called buffalo and bison, the American Indians adopt a method of which explorers almost all state.

This is the enclosure system. Father Charlevoix describes it as follows: The hunters rank on four lines which form a very large square and begin by setting fire to the grass, which is then very dry; then, as the fire gains, they advance in tightening. The oxen, who fear extremely fire, always flee and are at the end so tight that they are usually killed until the last.³³ Such a hunt requires the presence of several dozens of men commanded by a captain. Hunters are usually on horseback, at least among Illinois. This kind of hunting is an opportunity for celebration and games. Joutel tells us the following scene that he experienced during his trip to the Mississippi Valley in 1687:

Those who were escorted had their pleasure at the spectacle of a savage of some of these nations who pursued an ox; but the ox, which he had wounded, seeing himself driven a little near, wished to revolt against the said savage; so that this ox and this savage ran one after the other, each in turn, and for a long time; but, the said savage having seen our people at a distance, turned and went towards the place where could be the rest of his hut, which ended the fight and shortened the pleasures of our hunters, who reported to us on their return .34 Thus conceived, hunting becomes entertainment while remaining a physical activity to provide food to the Indian. Other explorers also report races to catch the ox. This hunt is done alone occasionally but it is, it seems, the exception. Small game hunting requires less physical effort on the part of the Indian. It also requires a lot of finesse and trick. The Indian makes sure not to have to pursue this kind of animal. In this case, he must be jumped well to face the cold without moving sometimes for hours. In front of the otter, he makes use of his mass. Another way to kill this small game is this: They stay hidden at a good rifle range and stay in that position until they come out of the water. This hunt takes place more commonly in the moonlight ... The Indians also kill these animals and they take some with traps.

As for the muskrat hunt, it looks like the previous one: canoe chase, waiting for the animal to come out of the water to breathe: They kill them with their oars or kill them with arrows.³⁶ Si the Indian can not find a muskrat, he will try to catch another animal, a hare for example. To achieve this, he uses laces or his bow. Instructed by an experiment that the hares never let near in a direct line, as soon as they discover one at the shelter, the Indians surround them, advancing insensibly towards him until they arrived within range of rifle. ³⁷ They kill martens and squirrels in the same way.³⁸ The Indian also hunts the seal, preferably with a rifle. Chroniclers tell us little about hunting this animal, except that it is usually joined by canoe. There is only one man in each of these boats, and he sits with his legs outstretched, his wrists tightly wrapped, and his head wrapped in a kind of cape, which is most important. that whatever happens, the water does not penetrate it. Rousseau informs us that this boat is called kayak or umiak. It is made of a waterproof envelope of seal skin; the frame is of wood or bone.⁴¹ We have just given various descriptions of the hunting as practiced and still practiced by the Indians. It is undeniable that this physical exercise is tough. What increases the difficulty is the environment itself, the river for example to cross while the water is icy. The difficulty also comes from the ground which is often rough because the field of election of these animals is generally presented as well. Finally, the climate adds a new challenge to the hunter. One may wonder if the Indian is hunting by necessity or solely for pleasure. In short, it would be a question of whether hunting is a sports competition or only a means of survival. I think hunting gives the Indian what he needs to feed himself. The Indian cultivates;

it was from him that we learned to eat corn. The Indian could have only grown. Its substance is however more assured because it hunts. It is therefore a supplement of food that he will look for in this physical activity. Hunting is also a way for him to prove his dominion over the world around him. By hunting, the Indian invented very special techniques that he perfected over time, like our Olympic athletes who set out to break records. It seems that hunting is necessary in these circumstances but the Indian makes this event a sporting exercise of the first order. The best evidence is that Illinois and Miami, to name a few, hunt while they can live off the land. Hunting is an important and remarkable sporting exercise, as this quote by Jo Hill from an Illinois hunt of the late 17th century shows: I saw the feat of a young man of about twenty-two years ; which showed me how agile they are. They led me

to admire them just as they would interest thousands of people who are themselves trained in the race. As we returned to the fort, we saw the great meadows where we were ... A band of about sixty rabbits stood by the woods where we were preparing to enter. Several young men left after them: some on their right, others on their left. When they had reached the opposite side of the woods where we had seen them, they rushed in pursuit of the animals and reached the meadow. A number of ours followed, while others stood on the sides. They hunted the animals for half an hour. They let them go for a while on one side and then on the other, forcing them to go towards us. The most agile I mentioned above passed his comrades in the race and then managed to join the animals with a shout of victory. Later he seized several arrows in his quiver with which he killed and wounded several animals.⁴² The Illinois maintain this manner of hunting even after the arrival of the whites with their horses and their rifles. What leads us to conclude that hunting is a sport is that the Indians of Eastern Canada have never made commercial transactions with the proceeds of the hunt at this time. Their fur trade with the whites is destined in their spirit to obtain brandy to enter into communication with their gods. The intoxication is for them like an ecstasy. Hunting is generally a supplement to food, but in the way it is practiced, it is above all a sporting event.

History of boating in Mauricie * Claude LESSARD and Jean-Paul MASSICOTTE

From the beginning of the colonization of North America, the canoe was adopted by the Europeans who settled in these new lands. They were amazed by the skill of the Indians who had always used it to move on the water. It is also the most suitable vehicle for navigation on rivers filled with fast and shallow because it sinks just a few inches. The first settlers quickly learned to circulate in a canoe and were soon able to compete with the best Indian boaters. The boat became the vehicle to move. The taste of risk and competition was not there yet but it appeared as it should be. Indeed, few years passed before the boaters began to race to demonstrate their skill. The long journeys of the colonists often ended in this way. Moreover, the stories of explorers pursued by the Indians for several hours are, so to speak, the stories of the first long-distance races in North America. Thus is established a mythology of the race in canoe which is manifested especially in the nineteenth century. Between 1860 and 1880 it was customary for Indians to organize boating competitions for squaw and warriors. In 1865, a rowboat race was organized by the Yatch Club of Quebec. It is in the midst of these competitions that the marathon fever takes over Canadian athletes. For example, the 200-mile test held on the St. Lawrence River in 1914. Some cities have had famous boaters. Lévis is the city which in Quebec had the greatest number in the nineteenth century

The canoe:

The canoe was used for transportation until the mid-nineteenth century among wooden runners who used it for the fur trade of their furs. The inhabitants, along the St. Lawrence, had one to visit. The canoe was also used for fishing. It was more a transport vehicle than a kind of sports entertainment. With the nineteenth century, the opposite phenomenon occurred to the point that currently the canoe is only for sports. It still remains that the Indian led his boat with a lot of skill, as much and if not more than our athletes today. Europeans adopted this means of transport. If we wanted to cite all those who marvel at the feats of the Indians and Europeans in their canoes, we should mention almost all those who left travel notes from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century. I will content myself with pointing out what Frontenac writes in a letter to Colbert in 1673. I dare, he says, to assure you that, if

there were in Canada about twenty sailors maintained, I would be very sure of to furnish to the King, in a short time, people of the country, bolder and more skilful than one would have found in Europe, because they are born all boaters and are hardened with water as fish. These facts tell us that canoeing was a major physical activity in Canada's first two centuries of existence. It was then the time of the *coureurs de bois*. Not only the French but also the Indians participated in this epic. Canadians had unusual endurance for taking great distances in the midst of dangers of all kinds. They were extraordinary athletes in this regard. The Indians were more skillful than strong; this may be the reason for their lack of interest in long journeys; they preferred very difficult events but of little duration. With the nineteenth century, steam navigation, railways and road transport gradually took over. Canoeing continued among the Indians and Canadians who made talk of them as carriers where regular sleepers became necessary. This was the case, for example, between Quebec City and Lévis, where the Lévisians made their mark in the first half of the 19th century. The same phenomenon occurred between Trois-Rivières and Bécancour and several other places on the St. Lawrence River and its tributaries. As passing boats have been able to take over, these boaters have disappeared, with the exception of a few that still link some of the St. Lawrence Islands to the mainland below Quebec. This brings us to the age of canoeing as much sport as it is necessary to live. This era that we still know today is that of sport fishing and hunting on the lakes of the Laurentians, or that of the jobbers or these men of wood used by our Quebec mills

In the Mauricie, these three eras existed. Indeed, if Trois-Rivières was founded in 1634, it was because this place was at the mouth of a river where the Indians flocked to exchange their furs. The Mauricie and its tributaries allowed the Indian tribes to leave their homelands sometimes hundreds of miles from Trois-Rivières and to go there. Mauricie and its hydrographic network cover a territory crossed by rivers and more than 15,000 lakes. This is how the Mauricie has become a privileged place for fans of outdoor life and boating. The Mauricie was for a long time the point of meeting of the Indians of the Hudson Bay and the Outaouais, as long as Montreal refused to go to the furs of the countries of high and Great Lakes. During the 17th and 18th centuries, Trois-Rivières was an important center for the construction of canoes. The two basic materials for their manufacture, birch and cedar, were abundant near this agglomeration. Thus the construction of the canoes was centralized there. The French simplified and perfected it at the same time. In 1752, Franquet visiting Canada stopped at Trois-Rivières and visited the site there. He noted that the canoes made there were the best. As they are made, he adds, they are sent to Montreal. They are destined for the voyages of the countries of above, so much to carry the troops as the food and the goods. The worker who makes them does not want to say his secret, that is to say, the way he goes about determining curvatures and ends. The mechanized transport facilities that appeared in the early nineteenth century did not make the canoe disappear in the Mauricie. On the contrary, this improvement in transportation has in some way increased the use of the canoe since at the same time the hydroelectric industry has taken off for good and the Saint-Maurice River was the first waterway to be undertaken. harness the falls along the length. At the same time, the forest industry was transformed and took new vigor. This was the beginning of the era of pulp and paper mills. Mills were built at Trois-Rivières, Shawinigan, Grand'Mère and La Tuque. These various manufactures gave a remarkable impetus to the economic life of Mauritius. The whole thing began with the shipyards, which received a vigorous impetus, languishing until then. The real theater of woodworking was now the immense coniferous forest of the Laurentians

north of the St. Lawrence. This industrial renewal required nascent enterprises to have a detailed knowledge of the region in which they intended to establish themselves. It was then that many people from the region, Indians and Whites, were hired to visit the rivers, lakes and forests north of Trois-Rivières. As this penetration inland was impossible otherwise than by water, the canoe found a new vogue and boaters reconnected with this sporting activity. Boating increased the number of its followers, including fishing and hunting enthusiasts, and a certain emulation began between them. Races took place from time to time between friends who were challenging themselves. In Shawinigan in 1908, the newspaper *L'Industriel* tells the story of such competitions. According to the testimonies of people who lived in the Mauricie in the twentieth century, rowboat and canoe races were held on the St. Maurice, well before the start of the La Tuque-Trois-Rivières canoe race in 1934. Various sporting events paved the way for the launch of the Le Radisson Canoe Club, which was founded in Trois-Rivières in 1934. It was the same year that the international canoe race of Saint-Maurice de La Tuque started in Trois-Rivières. The Canoe Club The Radisson de Trois-Rivières was founded on April 1, 1934 by Ernest Denoncourt, a Trois-Rivières architect. This apostle of the protection of the forest and the development of beautiful Canadian nature gathered around him a number of young people driven by the desire to develop the taste of boating in the Mauricie and to enhance this physical activity by excursions on the lakes and rivers of the valley of Saint-Maurice. This club was only a sports club. Over time, social gatherings were added to this sporting activity and the place is always too big. During the first decade of its existence, the main activities of this club were mainly summer. Many were the excursions. These last events corresponded well with the goal that this club had set itself: to develop the taste of the boating and to embellish it by excursions. The race in a canoe escaped with time the influence of this club but this sports association did not form less excellent boaters. From 1934 to 1949, there were periodic trips during which more than 2,000 lakes were visited. These excursions could group 30 to 40 canoes and more than 1400 people. The Saint-Maurice and its rapids were the most frequented streams. The Radisson distinguished itself in 1945 with the Canadian Championship of the Canadian Canoeing Association; Duncan Breese, Kenneth Kerr, Richard Bergeron, Maurice Thiffault, Roland Bourdon and Jean Descôteaux were the best rowers of this club. The Radisson continued more or less regularly to develop canoeing but he left the organization of the canoe race to other people after giving impetus to the sport. In 1934, taking advantage of the tricentennial festivities of Trois-Rivières, took place the first race of La Tuque in Trois-Rivières. As this is the major event in the life of this club, we will give a lot of the following lines. Our intention is to show what this sporting activity was in its main aspects. To achieve this, we will leave aside the aspect chronological to consider some major points in order to better understand how it has evolved and lasted 42 years. After observing the number of races, we will see what was the journey and which teams participated. Finally, we will comment on the choice of dates and the quality of the boats. This major sporting event in the Mauricie region has existed since 1934. Each year, valiant boaters would have rushed down the rapids of this river. In fact, the race did not always happen. From 1941 to 1945, the war prevented, for a reason we do not know, the holding of this competition. The number of participants and the interest of the spectators forced the organizers to start again each year. It must be said that this sporting competition is a major tourist attraction for the Mauricie region. It was always held at the same time of the year, in August. The date varied quite often in the first decade from August 7 to 18. Subsequently, she was moved at the end of August. As the temperature of the water is still high

while the air outside is lower than in July, the rowers can easily hold. It would be a lot to ask them to provide such a performance in July. In September, moreover, the outside temperature can be excellent but that of the water is often cold. The end of summer is also the moment when vacationers are back to their homes. To be honest, this is the perfect time especially since boaters have had all summer to prepare themselves physically. The route of this race has always been to go down the Saint-Maurice on an area of its course. Officially, this canoe race runs from La Tuque to Trois-Rivières via the Saint-Maurice River. The journey has varied a lot. From 1938 to 1946, it began at a point in Saint-Jacques or Saint-Jean des Piles and stopped at Trois-Rivières. In 1946 and 1947, she returned to La Tuque to end the Grandes Piles. In 1948, new change. It was closed circuit 75 miles around the Shawinigan Islands in front of boulevard Saint-Maurice. The race was losing interest among fans and it was time to give it back its old form. Thus, from 1949 to 1957, the hardy boaters partly took the original route with departure to La Tuque but the race ended in Shawinigan, a distance of about 100 miles. It was in 1957 that the journey of 1934 was resumed for good, from La Tuque to Trois-Rivières for an average distance of 125 miles. So is it still today. Such a distance is not traveled in one step. For the trip La Tuque-Trois-Rivières, the distance is generally in three periods. The only exceptions are in 1934 and 1935 when the stages are two in number. When the race takes place only on one sector of the La Tuque-Trois-Rivières distance, there are only two stages, as we can see from 1949 to 1957. The distance was then 100 miles. There was only one leg from 1939 to 1948 when the distance traveled ranged from 52 to 75 miles. What to think of these various journeys? It seems that the boaters who participated in these annual competitions were all entitled to our admiration even if the distance to travel could vary a lot. When the distance to be traveled was increased, the steps or rest periods of 24 hours were increased. In short, the boaters made an average distance of 45 miles each day. This seems to be the ultimate event for trained athletes. They follow the current does one tell us, but the fact remains that to defeat opponents, each team must row hard, and will not forget this, portages are to perform a few times. The site of this competition is the Saint-Maurice which runs from north to south in a huge subhorizontal area called the Canadian Shield. The very rounded forms of this very old region can lead us to believe that the river is not very rough. In fact, gneiss and granites of the primary era had to undergo later the effects of the passage of glaciers that left streaks, riblets and sheep rocks. The post-glacial recovery of the soil was thus responsible for the many rapids and falls found on this river between La Tuque and Trois-Rivières. Under the effect of these influences, the St. Maurice River has maintained a strong flow and a stream of water that is fast despite frequent level breaks such as falls, elbows, rapids and reservoirs. This route is therefore strewn with obstacles that are often difficult to cross. The boaters enjoy a varied course. It gives the opportunity to test all the qualities expected of a perfect boater. In fact, on this course, the river is navigable upstream of Grand'Mère. Until 1932, a regular service of small tonnage vessels made it possible to connect Grand'Mère to La Tuque. In this sector, the Saint-Maurice flows in a real groove well calibrated deep 600 feet in places under the plateau. From Grand'Mère to Trois-Rivières, the watercourse is blocked several times by locks where the water rushes in rapids or falls. This is the first obstacle to Grand'Mère old woman's silhouette, followed a little lower Shawinigan lock that consists of gneiss and quartzite reinforced granulites. Other portages are needed downstream at Gabelle. We also meet rapids at the Vieilles Forges. These are the most important obstacles to navigation on the course of this race. Other smaller rapids put boaters to the test from time to time. We can say that navigation is quite easy from La Tuque to

Grand'Mère. Major difficulties appear from GrandMère to the Vieilles Forges. The descriptions given to us by the journalists of this event prove it abundantly. The water level is generally good and the Shawinigan Water and Power opens or closes its dams so that the boaters can navigate in a sufficient body of water. The most serious problem of this competition is the draye of logs or pitounes. At times, ice jams delayed the boaters to such an extent that in 1934 Jean Crete had to intervene. It is also reported that in 1962, a log of wood pierced Peterson and Sawyer's canoe. As for portages, the most famous is Grand'Mère. It is important to remember that cold weather and rain can complicate the work of boaters. In 1938 and 1939 for example, the race took place entirely in the rain. Fog is also part of the game and delays the boaters on rare occasions however. It is therefore an endurance race where the rapids test the talent and endurance of the rowers. The steps seem chosen based on the cities that are on the way: La Tuque, St. Rock Mékinac, Shawinigan and Trois-Rivières, because this race is not only a sporting event, it is also a feast for the population and a attraction for the tourist. The economic factor is important because the race causes great expenses. Thanks to the large population base at these various stages, developers find a reason to get the cities concerned the encouragement they need. This race is therefore an ideal place for the sportsman who wants to give the best of himself, and there is enough population to create an atmosphere conducive to emulation, essential to the competitor. These teams of boaters, they all consist of two members. Their number seems to have varied from 6 to 54 according to the years. French and American Canadians have also shared the composition of these teams since 1934. Some of them trained in Indians participate in the occasion, one in 1936 and three in 1938. The quality of these teams was excellent from the years 50. From this date to recent years, the rivalry of the teams has maintained a strong emulation. Boaters have always shown a lot of courage but the training methods began to take over the only physical strength when 1940 athletes experienced in boating took over the site of men, trappers, hunters and log drivers. It must be remembered, however, that the wooden men did as well as the real sportsmen because the difference in time between the winners of these two groups rarely exceeds more than two minutes. The loggers and trappers compensated for their lack of technique by their strength and the detailed knowledge they had of St. Maurice and its tributaries. It was not until 1949 that the Americans took the honors of the race for the first time. They won it for three years in a row. It was subsequently the dynasty of the Denommé brothers of La Tuque. One of them, Ovila and his mate Henry Goyette won this race four times in five attempts from 1952 to 1956. This is the date that appears Irwin Peterson, the great master of this competition in 1955, 1966, while we find him registered as a winner nine times out of twelve. The talent of this athlete is worth highlighting his wins are won with three different teammates. His American companions and compatriots from Minneapolis were among the best boaters that this region of the United States provided to the classic canoe of St. Maurice. These are Tom Estes, Gil Tinckler and Ralph Sawyer. With the departure of these men, American supremacy ended. Since then, Mauritian boaters have won much more often than their American counterparts. We would have liked to be able to tell from the time taken to cross the route, which achieved the best performance. For the La Tuque-Trois-Rivières distance, the Peterson-Sawyer duo would have had the best time of 13:45:46 in 1966 and an average of 9 miles per hour. Considering the important changes of course as we said previously, our average can not relate to all the winning boaters. The Americans do not register only by finishing first several times. They have several teams among the competitors and often good teams as in 1967 while they win six of the first seven places. Faced with this power, the French Canadians felt hurt in their pride

and since then they are better. The region's institutions and businesses compete ingenuously to sponsor a team. They go out of their pockets to provide trophies and scholarships to the winners. In this respect, we still believe that the honor of being victorious outweighs the trophy or the money. Indeed, the 1934 scholarships are only fifty dollars and go to only \$ 1,000 dollars in 1946 and \$ 1,600 in 1968. They are far from high but the number of participants still remains large since the obsession with competition and victory takes precedence over the financial aspect. In addition to the purse, a trophy is usually distributed to the winners. The holders of the first three places are the teams that are rewarded. In addition to these prizes, Jean Crête, the King of Mauricie around 1940, gave a hundred dollars to the last boatman because he considered that he had stayed longer in his boat and had much merit. Such a reward occasioned conflicts among the last who fought hard for the money. It was to avoid delays that a delay of one hour after the end of the stage was implemented. Other rewards are now awarded to the team in the most representative region, the winners of each stage and the junior team that has figured the best. The boats used by the boaters who participated in the international classics of canoe in the Mauricie varied a lot. In 1934, the Radisson Club had only one canoe at its disposal when it was founded. It was President Roland Bourdon's. From the beginning of the summer, the club bought from the Indians of Loreto. Trois-Rivières was no longer the center of the construction of this means of transportation. The first boats had all shapes and sizes. The weight varied a lot from one team to another. For these various In 1937, the leaders decided to accept only canoes of sixty pounds or more whose materials are wood and canvas. Race boats are refused. Since then, the canoes are of a weight which gives in principle the same chances of victory to all. Too bad for those who like Gerard Dufour and Bob Lemarier in 1949 use a boat of 135 pounds. Regarding the shape of the canoes, an innovation that everyone takes by surprise is this: in 1949, several American teams arrive with canoes plywood very slender at both ends. V-shaped, open on the bottom, the edges were almost perpendicular to the water. These canoes crack the water with ease and take the wave better than those of their competitors. They go fast but they are hard to keep in balance especially in steep curves. This handicap in no way harms high caliber athletes like many of the Americans who have since participated in this competition. No new regulations were put in force thereafter until 1956. That year, the leaders decided to limit the length of the boats to sixteen feet. For this purpose, it is reported that Peterson had to cut his two-inch boat to comply with the said regulations. Fiberglass canoes have gradually replaced wooden boats and canvas but we do not know when. The boaters carry very few objects with them. The fact remains that in 1934, some teams took with them more than fifty pounds of luggage, a tent, food and equipment. Canoe racing is not just a sporting event. It was until 1960, the occasion to remind the memory of the people of the Mauricie the memory of the great deeds of Jean Nicolet, Jacques Buteux, Nicolas Perrot, Radisson, Desgroseillers, La Verendrye, Jemmarais and many other Mauritian explorers who used the canoe as a means of locomotion. It is for this purpose that this race was organized in 1934 when the tercentenary festivities were in full swing. This intention was forgotten with time as much as the religious aspect. In 1934, for example, after a long night's sleep, the boaters put themselves under the protection of God by attending Mass, we blessed the canoes at the door of the church. With time, and more precisely after 1960, we stopped mingling the religious and the profane, especially since the Americans were without divine protection if they were not Catholics. Canoe racing plays an eminently important role in tourism. Bishop Albert Tessier saw this as a means of attracting tourists each year. In fact, the Mauricie became known throughout Canada and the United

States but the influx of tourists has not always been as strong as hoped. This race seems rather to have helped to unify the Mauricie because the organization forced the various municipalities of the region to work together a certain time. What better way to strengthen the links?

friendship between Mauritians and develop a certain regionalism. Celebrations of all kinds are added to this competition especially after 1958 when it takes place the day before and the day of Labor Day. In La Tuque, the festivities start on Friday night and end on Saturday morning. The same scenario is repeated in Shawinigan and Trois-Rivières the following days. In 1965, an international championship of drums and clarions was organized in Shawinigan by the Union musicale on the occasion of the passage of the race. In Trois-Rivières, the population is unfortunately distracted by the Grand Prix Automobile even if it is believed to help the popularity of the classic canoe by this other sporting event. Canoeing is not as popular as it was several decades ago because it was necessary for discoverers and men of wood to travel in virgin soil but the canoe has always seemed essential to the Canadian until the last decades to so much so that the imagination has allowed us to believe with the gallery-hunt that spirits were moving in the air in such a means of transport. The Canadian folk song is also full of reminiscences of boaters. The canoe is not only a means to move out of necessity or pure pleasure, it is also a cultural fact that ethnography presents the manifestation to us on many occasions.

History of the Jean-Paul MASSICOTTE canoe

The canoe is a vehicle whose history takes us to the heart of events that have marked our past. Indeed, even if the fact is less obvious nowadays, this means of transport was in use as much with the farmer of seigneuries than with the official and the missionary on a voyage or that with the explorer with the borders of the Rockies and Mississippi . It seems obvious to us from the documents we can consult on our past that the canoe was one of the elements of our traditional civilization. In this work this important place of the canoe during the seventeenth century will be highlighted from the documents of the time by taking as points of reference, the terminology of this word and its role in the economic life of New France. The canoe industry flourished where the fur trade took off in the 17th century, Trois-Rivières. We can also see the presence of the canoe where relations and exchanges are formed between Indians and Europeans. This is what we will demonstrate in a more particular way for the period 1620-1640. The canoe also plays a remarkable role in sports. He even enters the legend with the gallery-hunt. The term canoe appears in a very large number of Indian languages. In the Chijewyam language, the word was shaluzee. The Algonquin, on the other hand, is chiman for canoe, Kitche chiman for big canoe and appet for oar. A tribal name, that of the Missouris, has the following meaning:

use the dug out¹ canoes. From the beginning of the colony, Montreal is identified in the following forms by the Montagnais: usk ilogamo: place where the canoe is deposited; usk ulogo: receptacle for the boat. The Hurons also have their word for this boat. This is tahontaenrat which means white canoe. The Huron language also uses the

terms *ibonatoria* and *anaouites* whose meaning is related to the canoe. The Crees, the Assiniboine, the Iroquois finally have terms in their vocabulary to describe this frail boat that is the canoe. It seems that everywhere the boat is, as Clapin writes, a "little boat made of bark or a tree trunk". Since the canoe has been widely used among Indians, it is normal to think that this word was used well before the arrival of Europeans. In fact, the French word canoe is not of European origin. Next to Clapin, canoe comes from *Canoa* which is itself borrowed from the dialects of the Caribbean, indigenous people of the West Indies. With these few mentions about the use of the word canoe across Canada, we see that all the great Native American nations in our country are using this vehicle and have included it in their own language. As much as the linguistic aspect, knowing how to drive a canoe has an indisputable human value everywhere since it confers on the person with this skill the title of adult or complete man. It is Lahontan who says it in these terms: It is necessary to be a man to have the talent to run well, to hunt, to fish, to shoot a gun, to drive a boat. By virtue of this fact, we do not have to be surprised that the canoe is part of the Indian coat of arms and that it is one of the ways to indicate the distances traveled. Next to a canoe, the Indian draws three, five or ten huts according to whether he has traveled three, five or ten days. The canoe is so important to the traveler that he follows it wherever he goes. It is worn on its shoulders when a field accident makes its use dangerous for example to go from the foot of a fall to its summit or from one river to another. We take the canoe in our hands, and drag it afterwards. Usually two men are enough, one at the forward end, the other at the rear end. Most often, however, the boater will try to face the difficulty and "jump a waterfall, a jump, a cataract, that is to say, to go down in boat this dangerous precipices, following along the water and maneuvering with great skill. " In fact, the canoe is made to carry people and goods. As such, it must be able to flow on this fluid mass in the best way, as fish could say. For this reason, Pierre Boucher talks about swimming instead of rowing. "She gets so fast and has a current so hard, that going up we can only do four ... (or) five places a day swimming from morning till night". Nicolas Perrot uses the same word in 1671. Around 1935, one of the first competitors of the International Classic of canoe of the Mauricie uses the same term. It might have been thought that it had long since disappeared from everyday language. As we can see, the use of the canoe has led people to use new words. It is now important to point out the terms *travelers* and *coureurs de bois* who have been the users of the canoe throughout our continent. The traveler works on his own account; so it's not a hired person. The *coureurs de bois*, who have belonged chiefly to the French regime, "are Frenchmen or Canadians who are given this name, because they employ the whole time of their lives in the rough exercise of transporting goods in the lakes of Canada, and in all the other waters of this continent, to trade with the savages. And as they undertake voyages of a thousand leagues in a canoe, in spite of the dangers of the water and the Iroquois, it should, it seems to me, call them runners of risk, that runners of woods. Speaking of travelers and *coureurs de bois*, it is necessary to mention the canoe. This is all the more evident because the place that counted the greatest number of wooden runners and explorers, Trois-Rivières, was the one where the best canoes were built. The canoes built there are true masterpieces following Le Beau: The canoes are made of birch bark and can be considered as the masterpiece of the art of the savages. Nothing is prettier and more admirable than those fragile machines, with which, however, one carries immense loads, and whose weight does not prevent one from proceeding with much speed. We are not dealing here with the dugout canoe. in a trunk and used by locals for their domestic movements, as reported by R.-L. Séguin from the minutes of notaries between 1661 and 1746. It is

not the canoes that served as ferry between Quebec City and Lévis or between the islands downstream of Quebec and the north shore. We are talking here about the birchbark bark canoe mainly canoe made with St. Maurice birch that was used almost everywhere even in Hudson Bay. According to engineer Franquet, "it is the Trois-Rivières that bark canoes are best made". There is nothing surprising about this fact because Trois-Rivières is the main rendezvous of those who trade in 1634. The boat manufactured in Trois-Rivières is three feet long, five width, two and a half height. Its price is 300 francs. According to Benjamin Sulte, the workers did not give the secret of their work. That's why we are little informed on this point despite intensive research. Here's how the Indians build their canoes: This operation requires a lot of intelligence and skill. The pieces of bark are cut on the tree, of the length which one wishes to give to the boat, length which is ordinarily of eighteen feet. Then they are sewn together with pad. On each side of the boat are attached two battens which form the gunwale; to these slats are then attached the bars, and they serve, in addition, to support the rest of the frame, which is proportionate to the width of the bark. To give more strength to the members, we place between them small rods. The canoe is then erased so that the water can not penetrate ... The paddles of the savages whose chart I have drawn, are six feet long and one foot wide they are cut in heart. , the boat is light and fast. It is not very stable on the water but Canadians and Indians are adept at handling it and it has not been necessary to modify it. Indeed, Lafitau gives the following testimony: The Francois Canadians are so adept at parrying the Rocks, that I have many people, who liked to sault the Sault Saint-Louis better than to make the journey of Montreal on foot.⁴ Frontenac supports this testimony by saying: "They are the most adroit and the most daring in all Europe, because they are born all boaters and are hardened as fish with water" 5. The testimonies of Hennepin, Charlevoix, Peter Kalm and Margry confirm the address of the boaters. We will add that of Joe Hill: It is by their ability to steer their canoes on the great rivers of the North West that French travelers have attracted the most comments.

complimentary. Canoes passed thousands of miles each year (John Reynolds) on the water; the travelers went from Quebec to Detroit, to Outenon, and returned to Illinois.⁶ It is true that the travelers had a good reputation, it must not be forgotten that the first masters of the boat are the Amerindians. Hériot wrote: But among them, talent consists in swiftness of foot, in being skilled in the chase, in conducting a canoe with dexterity, etc ... ⁷ Nicolas Perrot tells us about the great Sioux warriors who are especially formidable on the water They have only small canoes of bark made in the shape of a gondola and war (sic) wider than the body of a man, where they can only hold two or three at most. They row on their knees, wielding rowing sometimes on one side, and sometimes on another, that is to say, giving as much to the left side, but with so much dexterity and speed, that their canoes seem to fly On the wave.⁸ To show the importance of the canoe and its place in New France, we believe that the example that follows is essential because it is located at the very beginning of our country, between 1624 and 1640 The chronicles of this time abound in proofs of its use. In 1624, thirty-five Iroquois canoes arrived on the St. Lawrence River to trade. In 1623, a fleet of 60 canoes carrying 200 Huron and Algonkins came to exchange furs at the entrance of the Richelieu. In 1624, at least 45 Huron canoes arrived to trade at the same time as 35 Iroquois canoes. In 1629, the missionaries returning from Huronia had 12 canoes at their disposal: on 17 July, the French tried to trade Indian wheat with the Indians without much success⁹. During their journey, the Hurons left a line behind their boat hoping to catch fish. According to Sagard, the Huron canoes contained a maximum of eight to nine places (twenty to

twenty-two feet long); these canoes measured one and a half feet wide (two feet and a half to four feet) and contained a maximum of five to six men. There were also smaller canoes containing two to three men, they were used for difficult voyages on narrow rivers where travelers encountered rapids and portages.

These descriptions coincide well with those made by Champlain and the Jesuits. We can conclude that the Huron canoe kept the same size between 1615 and 1650. According to Champlain, the canoe contained an average of four to five men. In 1626, Charles Lallemant writes that the canoe contains four to five men. In 1642 and 1648, the canoe still contains four men. Bressani says the Huron canoe holds three to four men, but he adds that some of them contain eight to ten. Bressani adds that in addition to men, the average canoe can carry a weight of 2,000 pounds. If Bressani was referring to beaver pelts, that means a canoe could hold four men plus 300 skins of one to two pounds each. Sagard gives identical figures for the Huron canoe: a barrel weighing about 200 pounds¹². The normal Huron canoe traveled 25 to 30 leagues in a single day, 60 to 90 miles (Sagard 1939: 101). The duration of a trip between Huronia and Quebec City was three to four weeks depending on the temperature, the location and the point of departure on the St. Lawrence River (Champlain: 3: 36, 163-169, Jer 8: 89, 10: 89, 15: 161, 16: 231, 18: 11, 17, 31: 21). At that time, there were small Huron flotillas representing a village; the canoes of this village traveled together. Sagard confirms this way of traveling, he specifies that each flotilla carried the coat of arms of a particular village. The year 1633 is particularly well documented, it reveals many aspects of the relations between French and Huron. From the beginning of the trading season, Iroquois attacked a French boat and sank it down the St. Lawrence River; two Frenchmen were killed and scalped. On June 22 and 23, the Iroquois left when they noticed the arrival of 12 canoes led by Iroquet and 12 to 14 Nipissing canoes coming to trade¹³. Towards the end of July, the Hurons arrived: Already several Huron canoes arrived at the end of July, sometimes seven or eight, sometimes ten or twelve at a time; but finally on the 28th of July they arrived about 140 all at the same time easily carrying 500 to 700 Hurons and their goods.¹⁴ In 1634, only some Huron canoes came to make the trade. According to Brebeuf, there were about eleven. Given the fact that a few Nipissing canoes came to trade, missionaries were able to go with them to Huronia. Everyone was relieved when the first canoes arrived Huron who came from Huronia on July 10, 1635. It is not known how many canoes have arrived¹⁵. Finally, on July 22, 1636, a contingent of eight to ten canoes followed by others the following week. It appears that a few canoes left in late May, as the first Huron canoe arrived in Trois-Rivières on July 15th. It was on August 19 that the Huron canoes arrived at Trois-Rivières. The contingent included only a few boats, but he carried a large quantity of goods. It was at the end of July 1638 that the first Huron canoes arrived in Trois-Rivières. On August 27, four Huron canoes managed to break through the Iroquois blockade; another followed on August 29th. The main contingent of 150 men finally arrived on 5 September¹⁶. Most canoes carried sick people. On October 3, 1638, the Huron flotilla was back in Huronia. The Hurons seemed satisfied with the traffic they had made and the conduct of the French. In 1639, the Hurons descended with 100 canoes of Indian Matches and Indians of the Petite Nation¹⁷. During the summer of 1640, the Huron canoes set off again for Quebec in small groups and at various times. Only a small group of canoes managed to get to the French posts despite the attacks. In 1640, a group of Indians settled in Trois-Rivières and Quebec. They are mostly Montagnais and Hurons. These Indians began to travel and trade along the St. Lawrence River to the Saguenay¹⁸, while the Algonquins headed for the Saint-Maurice to Lac Saint-Jean to trade with the Papinachois. They go to Lake

Mistassini to exchange furs with the Outagomois. In 1641, a delegation of 350 well-armed Iroquois arrived in Trois-Rivières at the beginning of the summer. At least 150 Iroquois posted at various locations along the St. Lawrence River to intercept Algonquin and Huron canoes. With peace negotiations broken, the Iroquois prepared to attack the Algonquin and Huron fleets carrying fur. Huron canoes were immediately captured while the others turned around to warn those who came by the Ottawa River. Every year, Huron canoes were delayed by the Indians at Allumette Island, where they had to pay a ransom in the form of pelts and corn. The Iroquois activities took on an importance never before reached along the St. Lawrence River and the Ottawa River. They established a blockade so effective that for the first time no canoe managed to pass.

In addition to destroying a small fleet of Huron canoes, the Mohawks managed to capture Father Jogues, who was trying to reach Huronia. What the Iroquois wanted was to seize the fur transported in the Huron, Algonquin and Montagnais canoes. A single event is to be noted for the year 1640: it was the arrival of 13 canoes carrying 60 Attikamègues who came by the Saint-Maurice to Trois-Rivières to trade and to spend the winter²⁰. When it came to traveling between villages in Huronia, the Indians followed trails on foot. It seems that the Hurons only used canoes to go fishing and take long trips. Catlin painted regattas that were taking place among the Algonquins somewhere on the Great Lakes. The Amerindians might have secrets to increase the speed of their canoes; Hill tells us that the Hurons are still building canoes and organizing Powwow wars in which run canoe races. The course of such a race is 34 miles, or more than 54 kilometers, of which 4 miles are run, with the 65-pound canoe on the shoulders of one (alternatively by two team-mates) .²² We have pointed out the talent of boaters for singing. In fact, they had a particular repertoire and oral tradition. Conrad Laforte perfectly identified them: Napoleon Aubin, of Swiss origin, wrote in 1835 a new one interspersed with couplets of *À la claire fontaine*, thus giving the illusion of being in a canoe.²³ The foreign travelers were struck by the songs of the boaters. The boat was therefore a device of first importance. Because of this, he has penetrated the souls of people. This is how storytellers often talk about it and what writers and artists like to talk about. We saw it in Odanak on a chair where we can see a canoe passing over the houses. We thought that this sculpture represented the legend of the *chasse-galerie*. However the following text reveals something else: on the occasion of a death, Lahontan tells us that "the savages of the Longu River burn the bodies, as I have said elsewhere, and even keep them in the canoes. " Among the Abenaki, there is always someone asked to speak to the dead. The Abenakis believe that these souls are going off in canoes, and that in the end they need time to pass over a big tree that crosses the river of the dead, they arrive safely where nothing is missing.²⁵ These few facts we unconsciously bring to this legend that we know quite well thanks to the text of Honoré Beaugrand. This legend is the gallery hunt. This is a group of loggers who are isolated in the woods (La Gatineau). They decide to go see their friends near Montreal by traveling in gallery hunting, that is to say in the air and in bark canoe. To travel in this way, they must make a promise to the devil: Satan! king of hell, we promise to deliver you our souls, if by six o'clock we pronounce the name of your master and ours, the good God, and if we touch a cross in the journey. In this condition you will transport us, through the air, to the place where we want to go and you will take us back to the Chantier.²⁶ The legend tells the adventures of the trip during which the proud ones could go to dance and return without falling into the hands of the devil . Curtis has traced several examples of the canoe presence in Native American mythology. We want to relate that of Da-tsa-thi. Da-tsa-thi, whose mother was a Cree

captive, was a great chief in the country bordering the Cree and Chipecy along Lake Athabasca to the Cree and Caribou Lakes (Reinder). He sometimes joined the Cree, most often Chipecy. He had the mania to fight. Everyone was afraid but no one could kill him. Raven's Head was called because it had fringes of raven skins, the beaks of which were tied together in pairs. People were camped near the lake and Ravenhead went to fetch some birch bark to build a canoe. During his absence, the Cree attacked the camp and when he returned with the boy who had accompanied him, they found everyone dead; even the grandmother with whom they lived. He says, "I'm going to sleep here. He places the dead in heaps and says to the boy, "While I sleep, if you see Cree coming, scream," Wolverine is coming! He slept so long that the bodies broke down near him, his power working to bring back the Crees. Finally, the boy saw a large number of approaching canoes come and he shouted:

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