

On the Frontier

Newsletter of the Frontier Living History Group

Date – June / July 2010

ARTICLE INDEX



Page 1, 2

Fur Trade Canoes

Pages 3

Loading boats

Pages 4

Lachine To Grand Portage, 1802

Important information

Victorian Police's –

Re-enactors Guide Booklet

http://www.police.vic.gov.au/retrieveme dia.asp?media_id=36984&status=active

UP COMING EVENTS



In 2010

September

Southern Cross Free Trappers Camp at Beaver Creek

September 17th – 20th. Spring Rendezvous with friends at Beaver Creek, Whorouly.

An extended single weekend – Friday 17th through to Monday 20th.

Contact : John Fowler

Ph: 03 5753 4455

Email: chookster@vfowler.com



See our new Video photo slide show on our website at

<http://frontierslivinghistory.tripod.com/frontiers1.htm>

Fur Trade Canoes

Canoe Types

Several different types of canoes were used. They differed mostly in length and the number of men they could carry along with the trade goods or fur pelts.

Canot du Maitre (Montreal Canoe) were the largest of the voyaging canoes.

On the trip from Montreal to Grand Portage, a large canoe was needed. First, to handle the dangerous waters of the Great Lakes and second the large cargo of trade goods and provisions going out and the fur pelts coming back.

This canoe was 30-40 feet long and was manned by 8-16 voyageurs. Empty, it could weigh more than 200 lbs., but could still be carried by a group over the portages as necessary.

Here is a description of the contents of a Montreal Canoe as it leaves Montreal for Grand Portage:

- Sixty packages of merchandise and provisions weighing 90 to 100 lbs. each, placed on either side of the canoe to make a balanced load.
- Eight men. Each man was allowed one bag of personal belongings weighing 40 lbs.
- Total weight 8000 lbs or 4 tons.



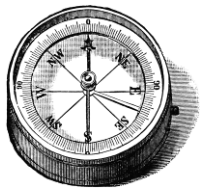
Grand Portage Rendezvous Days. Loading Montreal Canoe with four tons of trade



Montreal Canoe - National Museum of Man - Canadian Museum of Civilization Ottawa.



25' birchbark fur-trade canoe "THE QUEBEC" built for the regatta in honor of the Prince of Wales in 1860; it features the tribal Algonquin bow profile rather than the usual fur-trade end ; photo Rick Nash , 1972



On the Frontier

Newsletter of the Frontier Living History Group Date – June / July 2010

Canot du Nord (North Canoe)

This canoe was used most often between the remote outposts and Grand Portage.

It was about 18-22 feet in length and was manned by 2-6 voyageurs. This canoe was often light enough to be carried by two men.

The contents of the North Canoe would be mostly fur pelts and the personal belongings of the men while heading to Grand Portage. Some food provisions would also be included.

On the return trip, the contents would consist of trade goods and some provisions. A typical list of contents in addition to the men and their personal gear would include:

- Merchandise (trade goods including cloth, blankets, beads, etc.), 5 bales at 90 lbs. each.
- Canal tobacco for trading, 1 bale.
- Kettles for trading, 1 bale.
- Guns for trading, 1 case.
- Iron works for trading, 1 case.
- New twist tobacco for trading, 2 rolls.
- Leaden balls for the guns, 2 bags.
- Leaden shot for the guns, 2 bags.
- Flour for trading, 1 bag.
- Sugar for trading, 1 keg.
- Gunpowder, 2 kegs.
- High wine, 10 kegs containing 9 gallons each, for trading.
- Total weight 3000 lbs. or 1½ tons.



Peter Rindisbacher (1806-1834)
*Two of the Companies Officers
Traveling in a Canoe Made of Birchbark
Manned by Canadians, c. 1823*
Watercolour and pen and ink,
21.5 x 26.8 cm
National Gallery of Canada (23007)

Patterned on Ojibway and Algonquin styles, the eight-metre North Canoe was built of birch, birchbark, white cedar, and spruce. In fur trade use it would carry about two tons of freight, two passengers, and six paddlers.

Moving in "brigades" of three or four, these vessels averaged thirty miles (forty-eight kilometres) each day, including overland portages. A run to the Pacific or Arctic from Fort William (Thunder Bay) could take three months - with an equally long haul back to the Great Lakes the next season.



25' birchbark fur-trade canoe "THE QUEBEC"

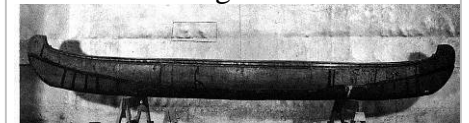
The Bastard Canoe was about 28 to 33 feet in length and had a capacity between that of the Montreal Canoe and the North Canoe.

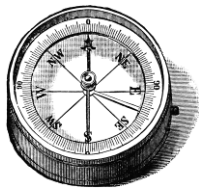
The term "Bastard Boat" refers to a hybrid boat and canoe North of Montreal. It reaches 10 m and transported from June to August men. A smaller version also exists. It measures between 5.4 and 7.3 m and accommodate 2 to 4 men.



Thomas Burrowes
*Upper Rideau Lake; Canoe en Route to
Bytown; Westport in the Distance, after
1832*
Watercolour and pen and ink
Archives of Ontario (33)

The smallest voyaging canoe was the **Half-Sized or 16 -Piece Canoe**. It usually was about 18 to 24 feet in length.

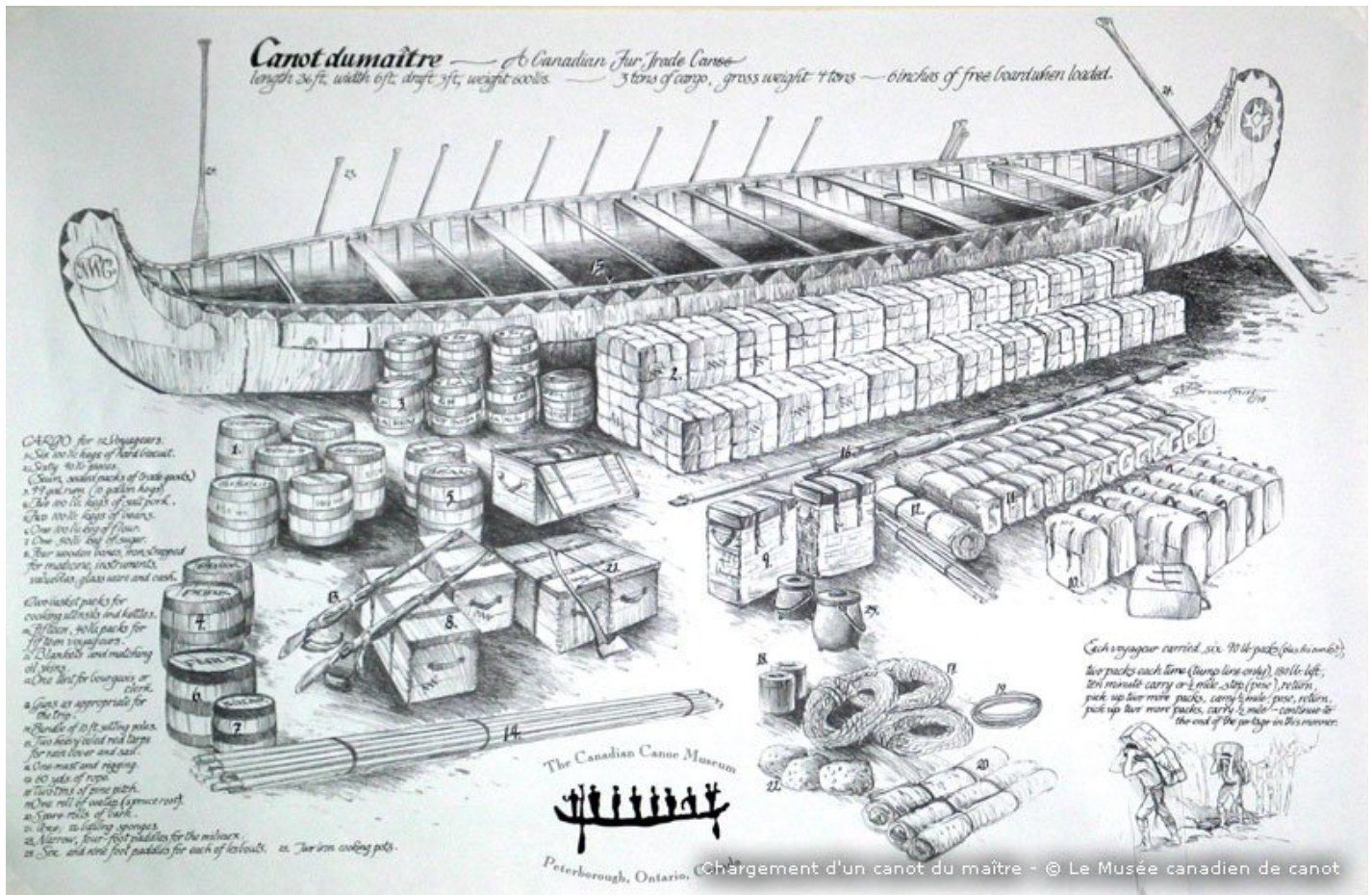




On the Frontier

Newsletter of the Frontier Living History Group

Date – June / July 2010



Loading boats

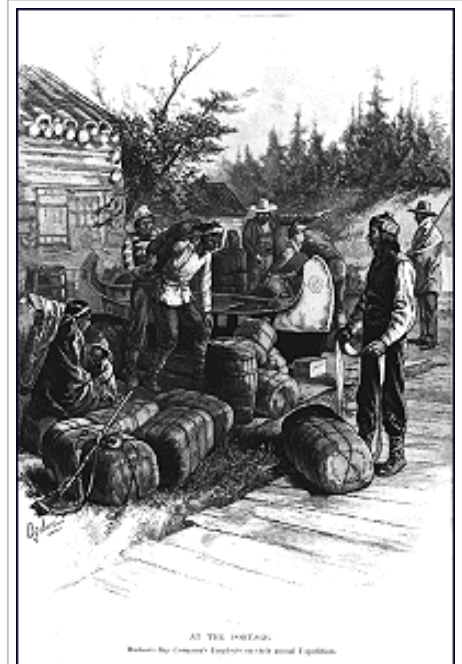
On both sides of the canoe are willing goods and trade goods and canoeing.

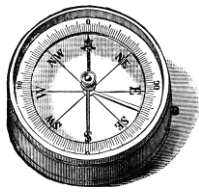
Basically, *large-poles* 3 to 4 inches in diameter along the vessel to distribute the weight of the crew and cargo.

In addition to a cargo of trade goods or furs, the boat contains other items: canvas (to protect from rain), a sail, a hatchet, rope, a kettle, a sponge scoop and a repair kit for canoe (bark, roots and gum).

We place the powder, balls, rum and other valuables in watertight casks, dry goods is transported in bundles. furs and blankets are compressed for easy shipping and to save space.

It is important to maintain the weight of bales to about 90 lbs (40 kg) to facilitate the porting, in which passengers must unload and reload the canoe, and to balance a boat fully loaded.





On the Frontier

Newsletter of the Frontier Living History Group

Date – June / July 2010

LACHINE TO GRAND PORTAGE, 1802

A list* of the contents packed into a Montreal Canoe by the North West Company for its journey west in a brigade of such vessels. At Grand Portage on Lake Superior much of this material would be transferred to smaller North Canoes and transported further into western or northern Canada.

Canoe no. 25

19 bales of merchandise

1 bales of black tobacco

of plug tobacco

Chewing tobacco

of N.W. Twist

of bellmouthed pails

of copper pails

of tin pails

1 of hams

of jewelry

Kegs of salt

of grease

2 of powder

of white sugar

of brown sugar

1 of lard

20 of High Wines

of rum

of spirits

1 of beef

2 of butter

2 of alcohol

1 of port

of Madeira

- 1 of cheese
- of raisins
- of figs
- of prunes
- 2 caskets of merchandise
- 2 crates of iron
- 3 of hats
- of knives
- of guns
- of traps
- of soap
- 1 macaron (?) of High Wines
- of spirits
- of rum
- of mix
- 1 packet of iron
- of steel
- 1 bag of shot
- of bullets
- of peas
- of corn

Total: 64 pieces

Names of the 9 voyageurs *[sic]*

Food supplies, i.e.:

- 8 bags of ship's biscuits
- 2 of peas
- 200 pounds of lard

Ship's gear, i.e.:

- 1 axe
- 1 tin plate
- 1 stove
- 2 tarpaulins

Ship's gear, i.e.:

- 5 fishing lines
- 1 pail
- 1 awl
- 1 roll of bark
- 6 bales of wattap
- 1 trammel
- 12 to 18 pounds of gum

Detail of garments worn by voyageur paddlers and the Simpsons in 1830.



Canadian Museum of Civilization (K98-32)

The Hudson's Bay Company Governor is wearing a wool frock coat and a low beaver top hat. Frances Simpson is dressed in a maroon wool cloak and a silk bonnet with a net covering. Such clothing was sufficiently fashionable for persons of high status yet still practical for travelling long distances by canoe.

Web Sources :

- <http://www.squeedunk.com/canoe.htm>
- http://www.travelpod.com/travel-photo/geriatricgypsy/grand_portage/1159708200/2006-loading_montreal_canoe5.jpg/tpod.html
- <http://www.civilization.ca/cmc/exhibitions/hist/canoe/can01eng.shtml>
- <http://www.tfo.org/emissions/rendezvous/voyageur/fr/univers/savoirfaire/science/navigation.html>