Geography 3610

Cultural Landscapes

Final Project

Imperial Influence on 1820's Newfoundland: Cormack and his dreams of a colony

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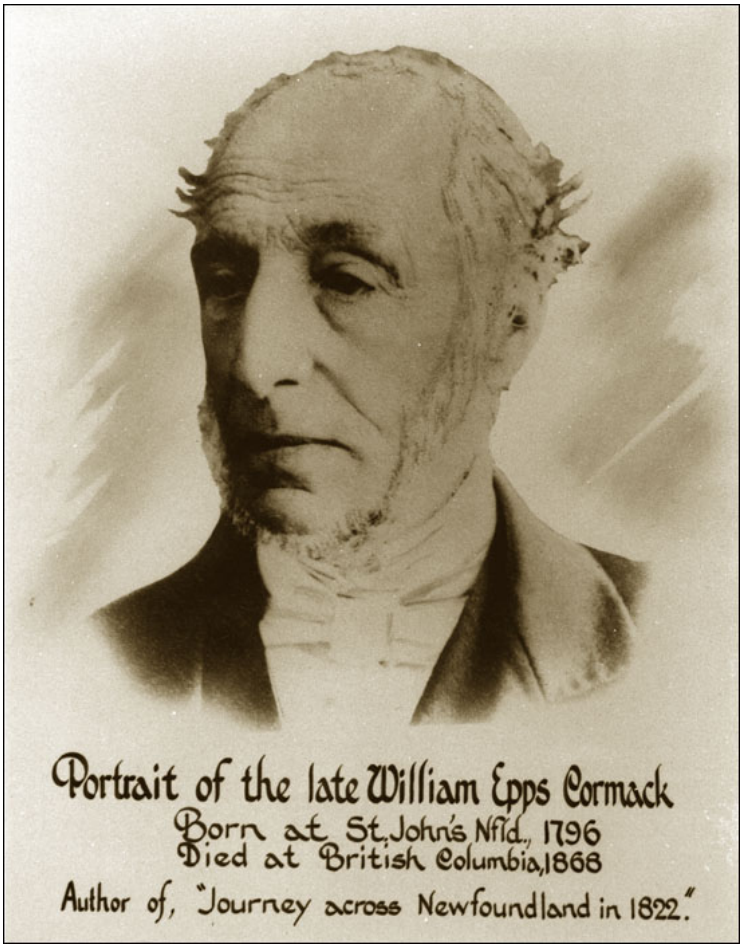
The landscape of Newfoundland in 1820's was a vital time of change for the island. It was during this time that William Epps Cormack (5 May, 1796 – 30 April, 1868) set out to explore the interior of this New-founde-land, and to be the first European to trek across the island.



"*William Epps Cormack was born in Newfoundland of Scottish parents and educated at the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow in Scotland in the fields of botany, geology and minerology… He travelled all over the world and dabbled in such ventures as transporting immigrants from Scotland to Prince Edward Island, growing tobacco in Australia, raising horses and cattle in New Zealand, mining in California, Agriculture in British Colombia and other endeavours*."[15] He had a vast imperial background, and brought many of those Eurocentric visions with him on his expedition, with visions of agricultural development on the small swaths of good land which Cormack found. As Declan Cullen put it, in his dissertation on colonial reconstruction and the commission of government, "*The island's interior is less well known and more forbidding to Newfoundlanders than the sea, which has provided a livelihood for generations of Newfoundlanders*."[12] and prior to Cormack's trip through the interior, no European had a certain idea of what lay hidden among the vast forests and bogs in the interior of the island.

The interactions with the Beothuk

It has been postulated that the indigenous peoples suffered after the encounter in March 1819, where John Peyton Sr. and Jr., along with a band of armed furriers encroached upon the Exploits river, then frozen, into the territory of the Beothuk people, until they reached the Red Indian Lake. Upon the group's excursion, they came across three Beothuk wigwams, and in doing so, about a dozen Beothuk people escaped into the woods or across the frozen lake. One of the women who was attempting to flee,

> "*threw herself down, exposing her breasts in a gesture of supplication, and was captured; this was Demsaduwit. As she was dragged back to the main party of settlers, one of the Indians, later identified as her husband Nonosbawsut, followed at a distance by another, approached the group brandishing a club. An elaborate but mutually incomprehensible exchange of words followed, though the intent of the Indian, release of the woman, must have been obvious. A desperate scuffle followed between Nonosbawsut and the furriers; in the mêlée one of the furriers stabbed Nonosbawsut with a bayonet, shots were fired, and he fell mortally wounded.* ***It is a plausible conjecture that his death removed the most experienced and decisive leader of the surviving Beothuks, sealed the enmity between the two competing peoples, and hastened the disintegration of the remnants of the tribe.*** *Peyton's party examined the encampment, identified the stolen property (including kettles, knives, axes, fish-hooks, fishing-lines, and nets), and returned to the coast, their captive several times attempting to escape."*[23]

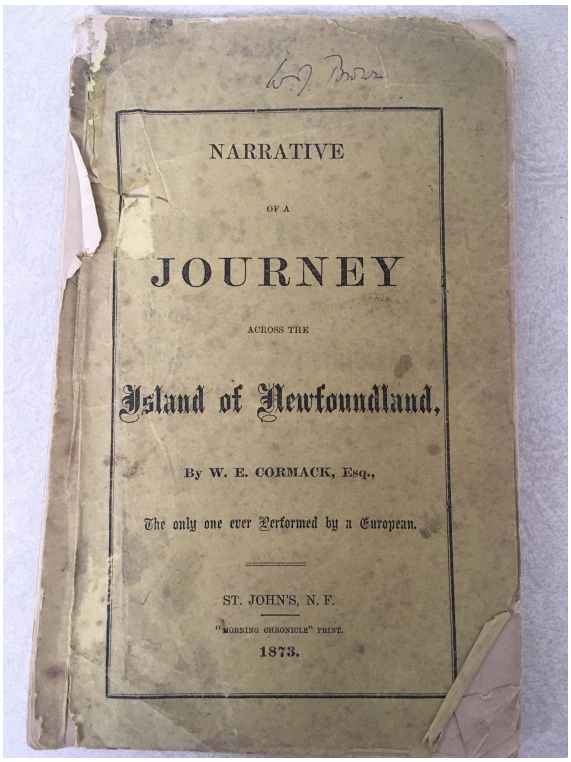
Demasduwit was then taken to Twillingate where she was taken in by John Leigh, the Anglican missionary. John Leigh and John Peyton Jr. brought Demasduwit to school in St. Johns by a schooner. She stayed in St. John's where she presumed the Anglicized name Mary March. "*Gentle, intelligent, and tractable, Demasduwit is said to have evinced particular attachment to her captor, Peyton Jr. He and other members of the party were absolved of the killing of her husband by a grand jury at St John's on 25 May, which found that there was "****no malice on the part of Peyton's Party to get possession of any of [the Indians] by such violence as would occasion Bloodshed.***"[23] John Leigh was eager to return Demasduwit to her community, and there were a 'number of attempts' to get her back to her fellow indigenous peoples. After many failed attempts, she was brought back to Twillingate. In the care of John Leigh, she permitted "*him to continue the compilation of a vocabulary of the Beothuk language from*

information derived from her."[23] Proceeding this, in September 1819, "*Buchan arrived in Notre Dame Bay aboard the Grasshopper with instructions to take the captive inland during the winter freeze-up when travel would be easier; and in late November Demasduwit was brought aboard the vessel to be in readiness for the execution of the new plan.* ***But, her health now greatly deteriorated, she succumbed to tuberculosis at Ship Cove, near Botwood, on 8 Jan. 1820***."[23] This begins the urgent clamber of the imperial governing bodies to find out more information about the Beothuk people in the 1820s.

> "*Buchan decided to salvage what he could of the situation and on 21 January, accompanied by John Peyton Jr, he led a party of 50 marines and some furriers up the Exploits to return Demasduwit's body to Red Indian Lake.* ***Covertly watched by the Beothuks (including Demasduwit's niece Shawnandithit)*** *the party arrived at the empty winter encampment on 9 February. There the body, carefully arrayed, was left with gifts in one of the wigwams, and the expedition returned by a longer route to the coast*."[23]

William Epps Cormack and the Planning of his Journey

This is an analysis of: "*Narrative of a Journey across the Island of Newfoundland – By W. E. Cormack, Esq., - The only one ever performed by a European*." as well as Cormack's second expedition through the interior, and the letters involving the Beothuk Institution, Shawnandithit and Cormack, and in doing so, relates Cormack's imperial view of the island to concepts in: colonization, resource extraction, vernacular subsistence living, as well as indigenous and local seasonal subsistence knowledge, contrasting coasts and interiors, along with the varying perspectives between indigenous, local and imperial parties, as well as its significance as a crucial time in the Anthropocene.


NARRATIVE

OF A

JOURNEY

ACROSS THE

Island of Newfoundland,

By W. E. CORMACK, Esq.,

The only one ever Performed by a European.

ST. JOHN'S, N. F.

"MORNING CHRONICLE" PRINT.

1873.

William Epps Cormack invited an indigenous man to accompany him on the journey. He 'tried his fidelity' by making a preliminary trip (of ~150 miles) from St. John's to Placentia, and back (via Trinity and Conception Bays), depicted by 'the Trail Walk' in the below illustration. The other man, he had hoped to employ, was only described as one fitted for the excursion:

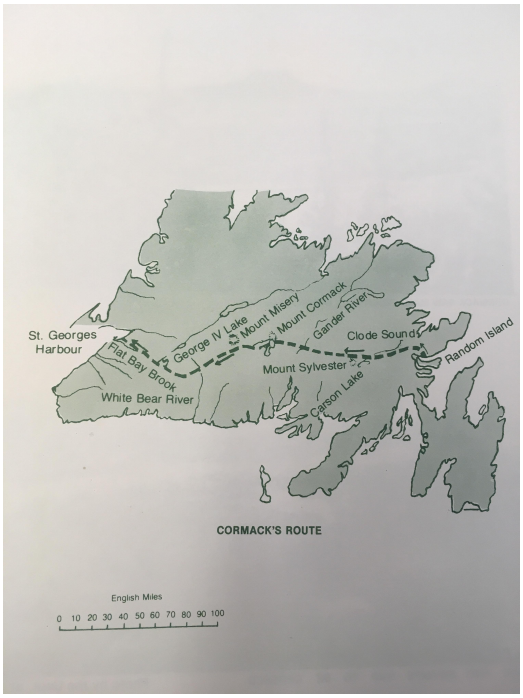
> "*I engaged into my service, first, a Micmack Indian,* ***a noted hunter from the south-west coast*** *of the Island,* ***and next a European, whom I thought fitted****…I thereby also ascertained the necessary equipment for my intended expedition; and discovered that it would* ***be impossible to travel in the totally unknown interior****,* ***until subsistence could be there procured****, the supply of which is extremely precarious until the berries are ripening, and the wild birds and beasts have left their birth-places to roam at large and are likely to fall in the traveller's way*."[1]

Before the expedition even began, it was crucial for Cormack to understand the vernacular knowledge of not only subsistence living-lifestyles, but also the knowledge of seasonal changes which peoples like his Mi'kmaq guide kept. It was paramount that they travel at the proper time of the year in order to obtain enough supplies along their journey to sustain themselves the entire way across.

Heading out for the Expedition

However, this trio-plan was short-lived, as imperial understanding of the landscape and the 'risks' involved in the journey prevented the European from joining: "*It is necessary to mention* ***that the chief Government authority was opposed to the project****, -- and with which he was made acquainted, -- of obtaining a knowledge of the interior of the country. In consequence of this,* ***I was deprived of the services of the European,*** *who was, unfortunately for me, a Stipendiary by local appointment*."[1] (August 29th, 1822) The government authority assumed the knowledge of the interior of the island was less valuable than the work that could be done along the coasts by said European, who turned out to be:

"***Charles Fox Bennett, then twenty-nine, later to become Prime Minister of Newfoundland*** *(1870-1874), was to have gone with Cormack, but he had to cancel out at the last minute because of his duties as a stipendiary magistrate.*"[16] Thus, this imperial view caused Cormack and 'his Indian', to venture out as a duo, along with a small local party to sail them from St. John's to Bonaventure. The image to the right depicts Cormack's route through the interior. They all set out on the adventure, from the 'most important district' on the island:



> "*On the 30th of August we sailed past Conception Bay, the most populous and important district in Newfoundland.* ***It was in this Bay, according to history, that the first settlement of the New-found-land was attempted by the English in 1620*** *-- through Sir George Calvert (father of Lord Baltimore) who had obtained a grant from Charles I of the south-east part of the island*."[1] (August 30th, 1822)

Sir George Calvert was a public servant in England, knighted in 1617, and made secretary of state in 1619.[2] In 1621, Sir George Calvert obtained the colony of Newfoundland from William Vaughn, and sent 12 men to begin a settlement near Ferryland.[2] 22 more colonizers were sent to Newfoundland in 1622.[2]

"*Calvert on 7* ***April 1623 procured a royal charter for his plantation, officially styled "the province of Avalon,"*** *a name, according to Lloyd in his State Worthies, adopted "in imitation of old Avalon in Somersetshire, where Glastonbury stands, the first-fruits of Christianity in Britain, as the other was in that part of America*."[2]

This procurement of Avalon took place 40 years after Sir Humphrey Gilbert's 'Ceremony of Possession', in which he "*had delivered unto him (after the custom of England) a rod [small twig] and a turf of the same soil.*" in St. John's, a coastal city.[3] Sir George Calvert's official charter represents another 'Ceremony of Possession' which transformed the island, and still holds solid today, in 2018, in the **official toponomy** of the Eastern '*Avalon Peninsula'*. Cormack was leaving the Eastern portion of the island where the tendrils of colonization first attempted to take root through the introduction of foreign species of plants and animals when those settlers first arrived in 1621. Calvert reached Newfoundland in July of 1627 after resigning from English service, becoming a Baron through Ireland, and finally reaching his new Avalon.[2]

Sir George Calvert

"Sir George pitched upon Port-de-Grave, a harbour on the west side of the bay, as the spot best suited to his purpose, there being in its immediate vicinity an extensive tract of flat prairie land. It is said he was of great expense and pains ***to introduce European animals, plants****, &c. He was lost at sea in returning to England, and the scheme was abandoned." Some shrubs and small fruits grow here that have not been met with any where else on the Island,* ***and were no doubt originally brought by Sir George.*** *Mill-stones were until lately in existence at a spot where there had apparently been a mill; but it is supposed the mill was never finished.*"[1] (August 30th, 1822)

Cormack also begins the excursion with paying homage to some of the first attempts at colonization, which set the tone for the rest of the journey.

> "***The Point of Grates is the part of North America first discovered by Europeans. Sebastian Cabot landed here in 1497, and took possession of The Newfoundland,*** *which he discovered in the name of his employer, Henry VII of England. He recorded the event by cutting an inscription, still perfectly legible, on a large block of rock that stands on the shore.*"[1] (August 30th, 1822)

Cormack even nods to the first European to rest their dominating eyes on the *New-founde-land,* claiming they were the first to incite a 'ceremony of possession' in 1497 near that area.

As the two continue along, they reach an island whose toponomy reflected the vernacular naming of the local seabirds: "***Baccalao Island**, formed of a horizontally stratified rock, apparently gritty slate, is famous for the numbers of sea fowl that frequent it in the breeding season**, principally the puffin, called on this coast the Baccalao or Baealieu bird**."*[1] (August 30th, 1822) Upon this island, the locals exhibit vernacular ways of subsistence living, as the '*Eggers*' use boats and small schooners to obtain eggs to supplement their diet, which was looked down upon:

"*The Island has one landing-place only, on its east side, and no resident inhabitants**; but is visited by men in boats and small schooners called Eggers**, who carry off cargoes of new laid eggs**…The end of the profession of these men will be the extermination of the sea fowl of these parts for the sake of a cruelly-begotten temporary subsistence…** Penguins, once numerous on this coast, may be considered as now extirpated, for none have been seen for many years past.*"[1] (August 30th, 1822)

The imperial view of the practice of taking those eggs assumed the locals would destroy the population, as they are assumed to have done with the other extinct species of seafowl (without considering other environmental factors, or if the local people could enable conservation methods and vernacular 'management' schemes).

The next day, Cormack and his party arrived in Bonaventure, and attempted to gain some local knowledge of the interior: "*None of the inhabitants here or in the vicinity, as at other parts of Newfoundland, could give any information about the interior**, never having been further from the salt water than in pursuit of animals for their furs, and for wood-stuff to build vessels and fishing boats.**"*[1] (August 31st, 1822) This solidifies the imperial idea that Newfoundland's interior was 'Terra incognita' or the French 'la terres inconnues' which meant the unknown land, or the land not yet mapped, which in turn, reiterated the thought that it was also 'Terra nullius' or nobody's land. As confirmed by John R. Gillis in the Human Shore, Seacoasts in History Interview, he notes that "*The British, Dutch and French were **satisfied with alongshore or riverine enclaves** that gave them access to inland resources by virtue of trade without the expense of territorial conquest."*[4] Thus, it would have been unlikely that the local European colonizers would have much knowledge of the interior. "'***Nature,'** or rather a **landscape that was modified according to other cultural ideals of resource use**, was interpreted by colonial Europeans, particularly Protestant planters, as **res nullius** (literally 'empty space'), **wild and 'unimproved***.'"[10] Thus, Cormack deemed all others who have trekked through the interior of the island, before him, as uncivilized, regardless of the evidence of indigenous land use in an organized and useful manner.

Cormack frequently documents the rough geological layout of the areas he visits, noting minerals and soils, along with hills and valleys. He mentions many flora and fauna as well, particularly noting the raspberries, blueberries, strawberries and partridgeberries.[1] He also documents the subsistence lifestyles of the locals, such as those in Bonaventure who harvest both the land and small crops to create a relatively balanced diet. They were also able to obtain clothing and other items by trade:

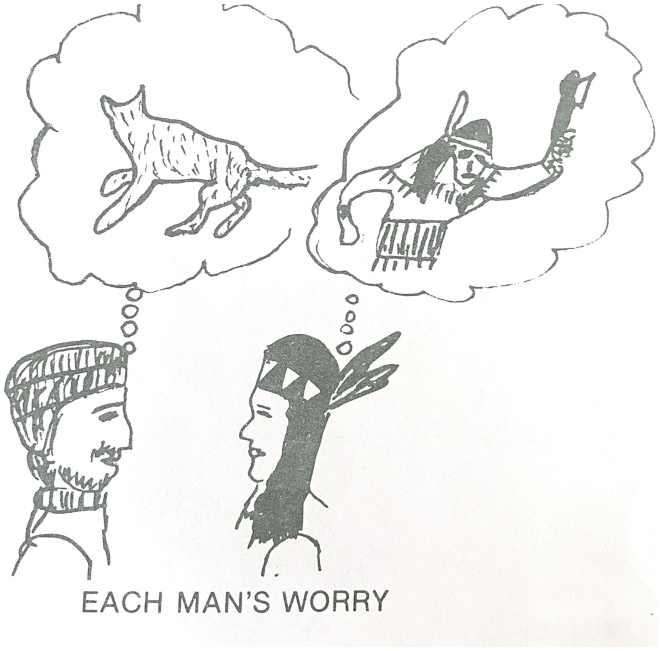
> "*The inhabitants of Bonaventure, about a dozen families, gain their livelihood by the cod fishery. They cultivate only a few potatoes, and some other vegetables, which were of excellent quality, **amongst the scanty patches of soil around their doors; obtaining all their other provisions, clothing, and outfit for the fishery, from merchants in other parts of Trinity Bay, or elsewhere on the coast**, not too far distant, giving in return the produce of the fishery, viz., cod fish and cod oil… The merchants import articles for the use of the fisheries from Europe and elsewhere to supply such people as these, who are actually engaged in the operations of the fishery. **The whole population of Newfoundland may be viewed as similarly circumstanced with those of Bonaventure**."*[1] (August 31st, 1822)

The ‘whole population of Newfoundland’ was considered to be those of European descent working in the fishery. Yet, these were not just fishermen. As John Gillis mentions in his book: *The Human Shore: Seacoasts in History*, “***It was when gardening was combined with gamekeeping that humankind learned to live with nature in ways that were sustainable over very long periods***.”[5] This is the ‘overlap between gamekeepers and gardeners’ which is often ignored by prehistorians.[5] This type of gardening to support their seasonal subsistence lifestyle was similar to the locals of Ireland: “*In the nineteenth century, Achill’s curraghs and yawls were used* ***in seasonal subsistence fishing by a Catholic community of landless tenants to supplement their potato- and dairy- farming***.”[10] All of these peoples had a respect for what the land could provide, and chose to supplement their diets by their own hands.

While continuing on, Cormack and his party came upon an island of which they deemed to be uninhabited, but they also noticed certain remnants of local vernacular practices: “*The appearance of both sides of the Sound or gut correspond so remarkably, that it might be inferred Random Island is a break off from the main island.* ***There are no inhabitants here, but fishermen of the neighbouring parts come hither in spring for the rinds of the fir tree, Pinus balsamea, which they peel off, spread and dry in the sun, and afterwards use chiefly to cover the piles of cod fish to protect it from the wet weather and dew -- in the process of curing****.”*[1] (September 3rd, 1822) Using local materials, the fishermen were able to protect their catch from the harsh conditions of the Eastern portion of the island.

Leaving the Coast Behind

It was now time for the party to split up, and Cormack and his guide were left to be truly on their own through their trek through the interior.



"My travelling equipments being landed, ***the boat with the party which brought my Indian left us*** *on her return to Bonaventure. On her disappearance into the gloomy gut, and when the reports of our farewell guns were no longer echoed to each other along its windings,* ***an abyss of difficulties instantly sprang up in the imagination between the point where we stood and the civilized world we had just quitted, as well as between us and the centre of the Terra Incognita.*** *That we might be eaten up by packs of wolves was more than probable to the farewell forebodings of the inhabitants we had last seen, if we should escape the Red Indians. My Indian was also at this juncture sensibly affected;* ***contrasting no doubt the comforts and plenty he had of late experienced; to the toils and deprivations that were before us, the nature of which he could foresee.****"*[1] (September 5th, 1822)

This was such a key moment in the transition from comfort and European ways of living, the third part of the trek was entitled: '**Depart from the sea coast'**, highlighting the importance of the coasts as a place of resource extraction, of colonization and Eurocentric ways of life. This confirms the importance of coasts in the evolution of society, politics, economics and local ways of life, as put by John Gillis: "*Where communities practiced shell fishing****, both the very old and the young were able to make substantial contributions to the common good****. Along land edges, mastery of the* ***environment demanded a higher level of cooperation*** *than that necessary among agrarian populations."*[5] This transition zone, with the last views of the seacoast, was a vital section of the Eastern portion of the journey.

The duo trekked about 2 miles from the coast, and as they set up camp for the night, it is the first time Cormack refers to his guide by name, now that the rest of his European party has departed: "*At sunset we halted, and bivouacked beneath the forest. As the weather was fine, and no prospect of rain, our camp consisted merely of a fire and a bundle of spruce boughs to lie on.* ***My Indian, Joseph Sylvester by name, at midnight rolled himself up in his blanket, and evidently slept perfectly at home.***"[1] (September 5th, 1822) It was interesting to note that though his Mi'kmaq guide had a 'Westernized' name, yet they also laid on the same traditional boughs, similar to many indigenous peoples all across Northern America's Boreal forest, where he seemed to still be comfortable and 'at home'.


BEDDING DOWN

As they continue on their journey, Cormack describes the forests, marshes and transition zones between. He notes that there are not the common trees seen on mainland Canada, nor many provisions in the forests. He notes the native flora, fauna and animals,

> "*There being* ***neither browse, grass, nor berries in any quantity in the pine forest****, even traces of any kind of* ***game are seldom seen.*** *Hence the* ***necessity of carrying a stock of provisions*** *to last while travelling through such woods, yet a heavy load prevents expedition and observing much of the natural condition of the country… sometimes the titmouse followed us, chattering and fluttering, shewing* ***that their retreats were never before invaded by man***."[1] (September 9th, 1822)

Cormack also reveals that he feels that his trek is of such great importance, any other indigenous person who may have travelled across the island had not, in fact, 'invaded' the retreats of the wildlife. This is reiterated shortly after, when he claims that no 'civilized' man had been through these parts: "*It is impossible in an unknown country, and one into which for centuries admission was in a manner denied,* ***to reconcile oneself with certainty as to who are fellow occupants around.*** *Aborigines might* ***have wandered*** *from the more central parts of the island to our neighbourhood and espy our fire from a*

distance and steal upon us unawares. ***No civilized being had been here before, nor was any now expected.***"[1] (September 9th, 1822)

The imperial view of the interior of the island had been that there were no permanent dwellings, therefore there were not enough remnants from settlements to provide evidence of previous occupation and therefore claim to land ownership. Previous indigenous peoples would have normally erected temporary shelter, usually carrying everything along with them. Cormack and his guide built such a shelter that evening: "*After supper, each when disposed rolls himself up in his blanket and reposes on his* ***fragrant bed of boughs,*** *placing the soles of the feet near the fire.* ***This precaution the Indian strictly adheres to, as a preservation of health****, the feet being wet all day*."[1] (September 9th, 1822)

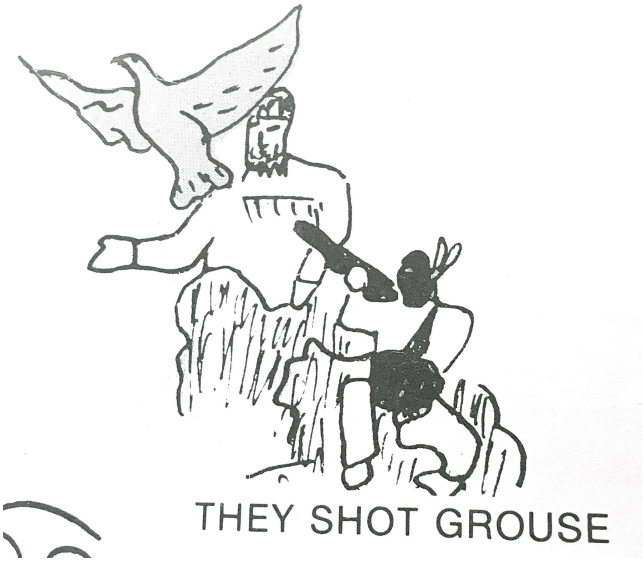
This passage was interesting because it is extremely similar to the use of terminology of 'bed' that Dr. Elizabeth Yeoman and Elizabeth Penashue used to translate Elizabeth's Innu diaries of **her** trek across Labrador. They also came to use the word 'bed' to describe the boughs on which they laid to sleep, as there was no translation of the indigenous word.

Joseph Sylvester had local knowledge of the interior of the island, which he learned by fellow indigenous peoples: *"The roaring of a cataract of some magnitude was heard in the north-east. From the position and course of this stream, we inferred that it was a branch of the river which runs into Clode Sound, in Bonavista Bay:* ***and my Indian supposed, from his recollections of the reports of the Indians concerning Clode Sound River, that canoes could be brought up from the sea coast to near where we were****."*[1] (September 10th, 1822) However, the imperial use of the term canoe would have likely been Cormack's imperial understanding of vernacular watercraft: "***The word 'canoe'*** *entered the English lexicon via Caribbean Arawak term denoting* ***double-ended wooden dugout boats crafted from longs,*** *but was eventually* ***extended to include double-ended birch-bark watercraft indigenous to North America****. That British maritime officials on Achill, intimately familiar in a professional capacity with boat types and traits,* ***chose to use a term from colonial America to describe boats that were neither double-ended, nor constructed of wood or bark, implies that the status of Achill islanders as non-British ''others'' was foremost in their minds in assessing the worth of the curraghs*** *so commonly found on Achill.*"[10] The action of reducing the indigenous watercraft to the colonialist term also shows the status of the indigenous found in the interior of the treacherous island.

The two explorers were still on the eastern portion of the island, and in the transition zone where they were connected with the sea coast by the winding rivers across the landscape. As they leave the Eastern portion of the island, the landscape changed drastically in front of them:

*"The features of the country then assume an **air of expanse and importance** different from heretofore. The trees become larger and stand apart; and we entered upon spacious tracks of rocky ground entirely clear of wood.*

***Everything indicated our approach to the verge of a country different from the past**... We soon found that we were on a great granitic ridge, covered, **not as the lower grounds are** with crowded pines and green moss, **but with scattered trees**, and a variety of beautiful **lichens or reindeer moss,** partridge berries, Vaccinium Vuxifolium, and whortleberries **loaded the ground**.*



*The Xytosteum villosum, a pretty erect shrub, was in full fruit by the sides of the rocks; grouse**, Tetrao albus, the indigenous game bird** of the country, rose in coveys in every direction, and snipes from every marsh. The birds of passage, ducks and geese, were flying over to us to and fro from their breeding places in the interior and the **sea coast**; tracks of deer, of wolves fearfully large, of **bears,** foxes, and martens, were seen everywhere."*[1] (September 10th, 1822)

Entering the Interior of Terra Nullius

This is the final part of the journey to the interior. The duo take a final look back at the sea coast and the magnitude of the **ecotone**: "*the place where two or more ecosystems join, producing exceptionally dynamic and abundant conditions*"[4] This ends the third part of the journey: *"**On looking back towards the sea coast, the scene was magnificent.** We discovered that under the cover of the forest we had been uniformly ascending ever since we left the salt water at Random Bar, and then soon arrived at the summit of what we saw to be a great mountain ridge that **seems to serve as a barrier between the sea and the interior**. The black dense forest through which we had pilgrimaged **presented a novel***

***picture**, appearing spotted with bright yellow marshes and a few glossy lakes in its bosom, some of which **we had passed close by without seeing them**.*"[1] (September 10th, 1822)

The duo reached the first true views of the interior of the *New-found-land* and noticed a stark transformation from the landscapes of the shores that was all that was familiar to Europeans.:

> "***In the westward**, to our inexpressible delight, **the interior broke into sublimity before us**. **What a contrast did this present to the conjectures entertained of Newfoundland!** The hitherto **mysterious interior** lay unfolded below us, a boundless scene, emerald surface, a vast basin. The eye strides again and again over a succession of northerly and southerly ranges of green plains, marbled with woods and lakes of every form and extent, a picture of **all the luxurious scenes of national cultivation**, receding into invisibleness. The **imagination hovers in the distance,** and clings involuntarily to the undulating horizon of vapour, far into the west, until it is lost. A **new world** seemed to invite us onward, or **rather we claimed the dominion and were impatient to proceed to take possession.**"*[1] (September 10th, 1822)

In Cormack's eyes, the land was wild and unkempt, reflecting the imperial view of nature: "***Primitiveness, omnipotence, and tranquillity** were stamped upon everything so forcibly, **that the mind is hurled back thousands of years**, and the man left denuded of the mental fabric which a knowledge of ages of human experience and of time may have reared within him*."[1] (September 10th, 1822) Cormack noted the bounty which Mother Earth had provided them at this time of year, and reaffirmed the confidence he had for himself and his guide:

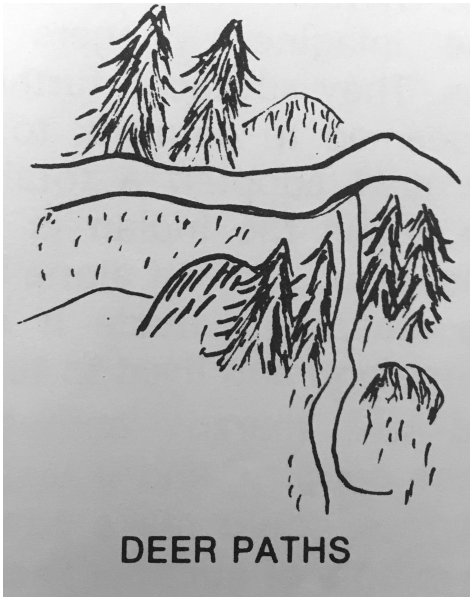
> "*…land berries were ripening, game birds were fledging, and beasts were emerging to prey upon each other. **Everything animate or inanimate seemed to be our own**. We consumed unsparingly our remaining provisions**, confident that henceforward, with our personal powers, which felt increased by the nature of the objects that presented themselves, aided by what now seemed by contrast the admirable power of our fire-arms, the destruction of one creature would afford us nourishment and vigour for the destruction of others. There was no will but ours**. Thoughts of the aborigines did not alter our determination to meet them, as well as everything living, that might present itself in a country yet untrodden, and before unseen by civilized man.*"[1] (September 10th, 1822)

Indigenous Use of the Interior

Upon further investigation of the lands, it is noted that there are networks of waterways all across the land: "*The great exterior features of the **eastern portion** of the main body of the island are seen from these commanding heights**. Overland communication** between the bays of the east, north and south coasts, it appears, **might be easily established**.*"[1] (September 10th, 1822) This reinforces the likelihood that the aboriginal peoples frequented the interior, possibly by following the waterways, and reaffirming their use of the land. However, Cormack did not acknowledge this indigenous use of the land, and instead offered new imperial toponomy to a landmark: "*To the southward of us, in the direction of Piper's Hole, in Placentia Bay, one of these conical hills, very conspicuous, **I named Mount Clarence, in honour of His Royal Highness, who, when in the navy, had been in Placentia Bay**.*"[1] (September 10th, 1822)

More order among the wilderness came about while the two were on their journey. Along with the connecting rivers, they also viewed paths made by animals through the woods, natural guidelines they could use, made by the Caribou:

*"One of the most striking features of the interior are the innumerable deer paths on the savannas. **They are narrow and take directions as various as the winds, giving the whole country a chequered appearance**. Of the millions of acres here, there is no one spot exceeding a few superficial yards that is not bounded on all sides by deer paths. We however met some small herd only of these animals, the savannas and plains being in the summer season deserted by them for the mountains in the west part of the island. **The Newfoundland deer, and there is only one species in the island, is a variety of the reindeer, Cervus tarandus, or Carriboo**; and, like that animal in every other country, it is migratory, always changing place with the seasons for sake of its favourite kinds of food. Although they migrate in herds, they travel in files**, with their*



heads in some degree to windward, in order that they may, by the scent, discover their enemies the wolves*; their senses of smelling and hearing are very acute, but they do not trust much to their sight. This is the reason of their paths taking so many directions in straight lines; they become in consequence an easy prey to the hunter by stratagem.* ***The paths tend from park to park through the intervening woods, in lines as established and deep beaten as cattle paths on an old grazing farm***."[1] (September 11th, 1822)

Cormack managed to tie the forest landscape to an agriculture landscape. He compares the cattle paths on a farm, which are trodden down out of necessity due to a confined space, with the winding paths animals use to navigate the various marshes, lakes, and landscapes, which remain on the landscape due to their necessity for navigation.

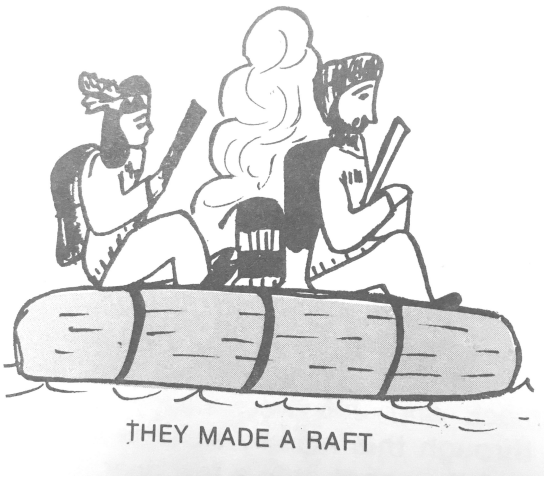
We see the imperial view of the landscape by Cormack's reaction to the evidence of indigenous land use and admitting the indigenous peoples have been using this unknown land. They even managed to come up with their own method of conservation:

"*The beaver, Castor fiber. -- Owing to the presence of* ***the birch tree, Betula nigra****, all the brooks and lakes in the basin of the interior have been formerly and many are still inhabited by beavers,* ***but these have in many places been destroyed by Indians****…On account of the value of its* ***skin the beavers are the chief object of chase with the Indians****. These* ***people having made themselves acquainted with the different spots throughout the Island where these valuable animals abound most, hunt over these places alternately and periodically, allowing the beavers three years to regenerate****."*[1] (September 11th, 1822)

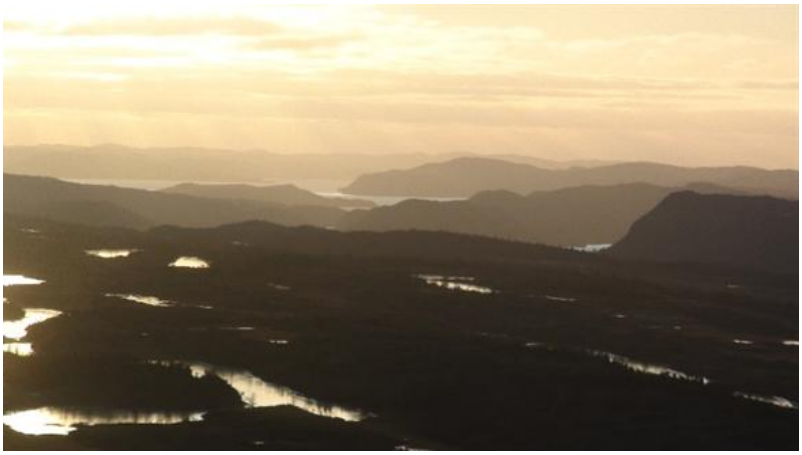

FISHING WITH FAKE FLY

The land was so bountiful, Cormack noted that the sport fishing of these rivers was unmatched by any he had encountered: "*The trout are so easily caught in the rivulets in the interior, they being unacquainted with enemies, as to take the artificial fly, merely by holding out the line in the hand without a rod.* ***No country in the world can afford finer sport than the interior of this island in the months of August and September****. The beasts of the chase are of a large class, and the cover for all game excellent."*[1] (September 11th, 1822)

In order to travel across the landscape, they made rafts to traverse the aquatic vistas: "***We accomplished this by fastening together three or four trunks of trees with withes, and held up a thick bush for a sail, and were blown over.*** *There was of course considerable risk to our accoutrements attending this primitive mode of navigation."*[1] (September 11th, 1822) Using the materials in the woods, they built a small vernacular watercraft and managed to make it across, despite the riskiness. Cormack retained his imperial view of the landscape, referring to the windswept trees as "…***the havoc displayed is awful***. *Such parts were almost impassable."*[1] Though, within the havoc, he also noted order and history: *"There are extensive districts remarkable for abundance of berries towards the centre of the island, which attract great numbers of black bears.* ***The paths or beats of these animals throughout their feeding grounds are <u>stamped with marks of antiquity seemingly co-eval with the country</u>.*** *The points of rocks that happen to project in their way are* ***perfectly polished from having been continually trodden and rubbed."***[1] (September 11th, 1822) Throughout the wildness that Cormack sees, he recognizes the beaten down paths that stand the test of time. These are the marks of the animals that owned the landscape. In this same area, solidified with history, Cormack decides to commemorate his guide: *"**I named it Mount Sylvester, the name of my Indian**. The bed of granite, of which Mount Sylvester is a part, is exposed in a remarkable manner to the northeast of that pap near Gower Lake. Here are displayed the features of the summit of an immense mountain mass, as if just peeping above the earth…"*[1] (September 14th, 1822)



Despite these grand embedded local symbols of indigenous land use, Cormack then returns to his imperial view of the landscape, and how it could be shaped for settler use: "***This province of savannas, although of no territorial value at present,*** *is destined to become a very important*

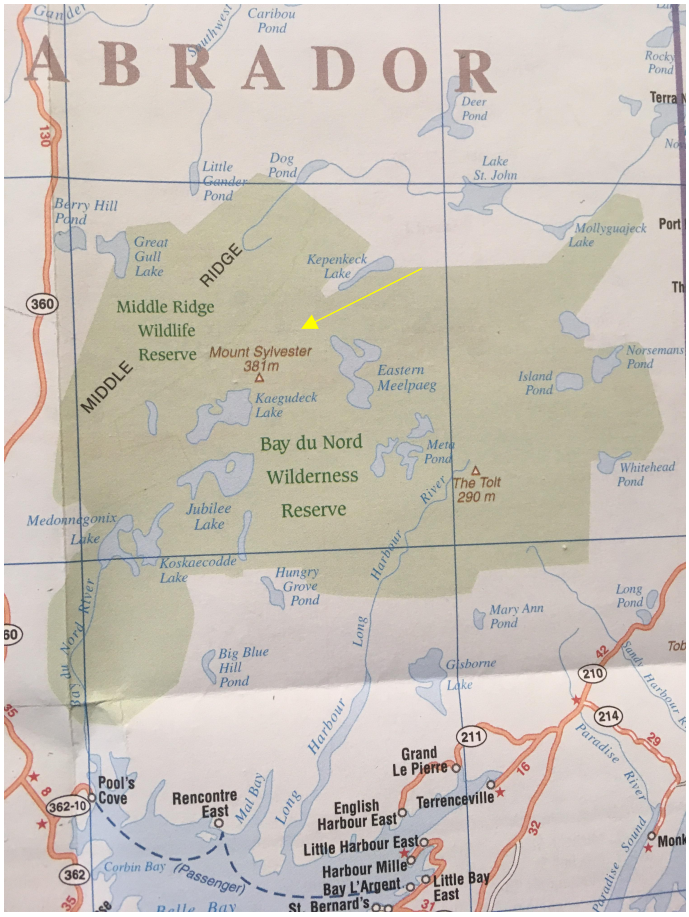


integral part of Newfoundland. Judging from their countless paths, and from the size and condition of the few deer we met, ***it is already seemingly amply stocked with that kind of cattle of which no part of North East America possesses so peculiar a territory.*** *"* [1] (September 14th, 1822)

This area is located in the Bay du Nord Ecological Reserve, which constitutes 2895 km^2 of 'wilderness environment' which was officially designated in 1990.[7] This area boasts a 15000 Middle Ridge Caribou herd that branches out into the Middle Ridge Wildlife Reserve.[7] It is known to be "*the largest protected river system in the province, and the largest Canada goose habitat in Newfoundland*".[7] These great lands were utilized by the Mi'kmaq peoples, whose evidence of forest or bush burning is seen by the European as destruction: "*Roots of large trees, with portions of the trunks attached, and lying near, are sometimes seen occupying* ***evidently the original savanna soil on which they grew, but are now partially, or wholly covered with savanna fires, originating with the Indians, and from lightning, have in many parts destroyed the forest;*** *and it would seem* ***that a century or more must elapse in this climate before a forest of the same magnitude of growth can be reproduced naturally on the savannas.*** *"* [1] (September 14th, 1822) This method of soil and forest regeneration is not understood by the Europeans to be anything other than destruction. If they decided to occupy the landscape, it is likely they would adopt forestry policies that avoid forest fires, regardless of their importance to the regeneration and lifecycle of forest ecosystems. Modern forest fire management takes this into consideration when assessing the potential risks and rewards from a fire, as seen from Canadian policies:

> *"Wildland fires present a challenge for forest management because they have the potential to be at once harmful and beneficial. They can threaten communities, destroy vast amounts of timber resources, resulting in costly losses. However,* ***wildland fires are a natural part of the forest ecosystem and important in many parts of Canada for maintaining the health and diversity of the forest****. In this way, prescribed fires offer a valuable resource management tool for* ***enhancing ecological conditions and eliminating excessive fuel build-up. Not all wildland fires should (or can) be controlled****. Forest agencies work to harness the force of natural fire* ***to take advantage of its ecological benefits while at the same time limiting its potential damage and costs****."*[8]

It has only been within recent decades that there has developed a true understanding of the importance of 'managing' fires on the landscapes, and the value in the vernacular knowledge which the indigenous peoples held on the topic. As Cormack and his guide continue travelling through the interior of the partially burnt landscape, he notes that the interior is much more bountiful than the **sea coast**: "*Wild currants, gooseberries and* ***raspberries*** *were plentiful in many places; the latter****, as in all other parts of North America, only where the woods have been recently burnt.*** *The berries here* ***are much superior to the berries of the same species near the sea coast.*** *They appear to grow for little immediate purpose; as the quantity which the bears, foxes, and the birds fatten upon is comparatively inconsiderable to that produced*."[1] (September 14th, 1822) The toponomy that Cormack bestowed upon this mountain remains on maps to this day, as seen from this excerpt from MapArt Publishing Corporation:



Reaching the Central Portion of the Island

Beyond this area, Cormack and his guide came across the first signs of human life in the interior, proving they were clearly not the first to trek through:

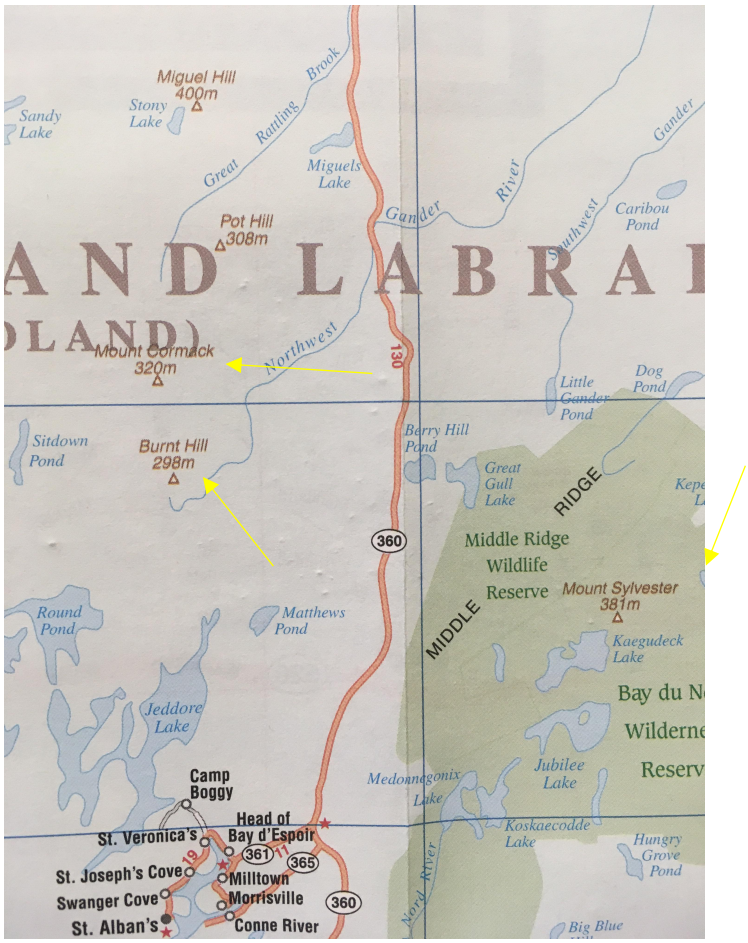
> "*Our attention was arrested twice by observing* ***the tracks*** *of a man on the savannas. After a scrupulous and minute examination,* ***we concluded that one of them was that of a Mickmack or mountaineer Indian, who had been hunting here in the preceding year, and from the point of the foot being steep that he was going, laden with furs, to the Bay of Despair.*** *The* ***other track*** *was on the shores of Gower Lake,* ***of an Indian who had passed by this season apparently from***

the Bay of Despair towards Gander Bay. We saw no traces however of the Red Indians. *The print of a foot remains distinct on the soft surface of the savannas for years or longer.* ***Any track of course differing from those of the deer, in their usual undisturbed walks, is detected by the eye at once***."[1]

Using his guide's vernacular knowledge, they were able to decipher the activities of the persons who left the signs of having passed through these lands at some point.

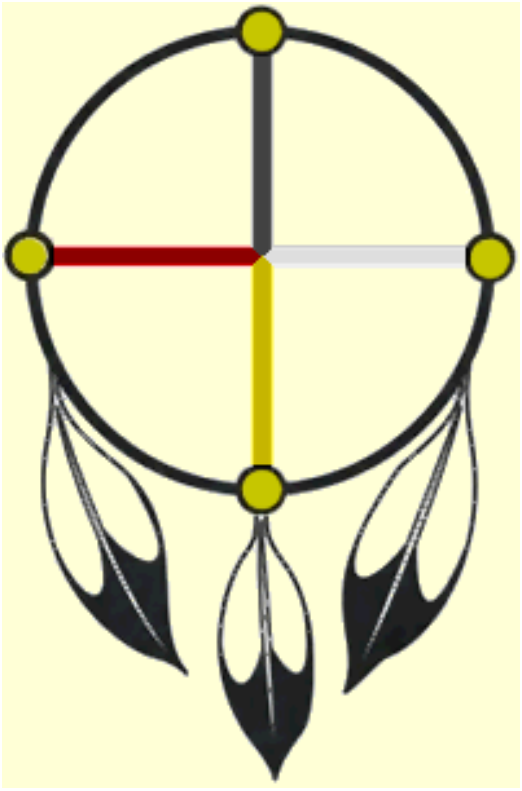
After this section of the journey, the passages skip ahead to October, where Cormack and his guide reach the center of the island. This area was particularly special, because it evoked strong visuals of colours and representations could be made with this momentous geological formation. It was so striking, Cormack and his guide remained there for two days to observe it.

"***A hilly ridge in the westward, lying northerly and southerly***, *which had been in view several days, and about the centre of the Island, on our near approach bore an aspect different from any we had yet seen, appearing of a bright brown colour along the summit -- bristly and castellated. The rocks for some miles to the eastward were often of various colours, and impregnated with iron, and the shores of the lakes presented remarkable coloured stones, resembling pieces* ***of burnt clay and broken pottery****... The conspicuous points were the large angular blocks of quartz rock, lying on out goings of the same, ranged along the summit. This rock was very ponderous, owing to much disseminated*



iron pyrites, the oxidation of which, externally, gave it the brown colour. ***The fresh fracture exhibited a metallic reddish grey****. The mineralogical appearances here were altogether so singular that* ***I resolved to stop a day or two to examine them****… The other rocks were,* ***noble serpentine -- varying in colour to black green to a yellow,*** *and* ***from translucent to semi-transparent****, in strata nearly a yard wide --* ***steatite, or soap stone****, verde antique diallege, and various other magnesian rocks.* ***Sterile red earthy patches,*** *entirely destitute of vegetation, were here and there on and adjacent to the ridge, and on these* ***lay heaps of loose fragments of asbestos****, rock wood, rock cork, rock leather, rock horn, rock bone, and stones light in the hand, resembling burnt clay*."[1] (October 7th, 1822)

This may be referring to 'Burnt Hill' which can be found on a modern map of Newfoundland, and it is important to note that near Burnt Hill, there lies a 'Mount Cormack', as seen from the above excerpt from MapArt Publishing Corporation.



The colours of *burnt clay and broken pottery* (red), the noble serpentine (black-green to a yellow), steatite or soapstone having translucent to semitransparent appearance (white).

A version of the Mi'kmaq medicine wheel represents the cycles appearing in nature: from the cycle of day and night, to the seasons, to the cycle of life. The four colours represent "*the four races of man, of which Native Americans were aware long before the arrival of Europeans*."[9] The **White in the East,** the Yellow in the South, **the Red in the West,** the Black in the North.

"*Because the circle represents the passage of the sun and the seasons, discussion of the Wheel usually starts in the East direction, where the sun rises, and travels in a clockwise direction*. This also applies to moving around any circle during a ceremony.* ***The East, then, is seen as a direction of beginnings,*** *including infancy (the beginning of life) and spring (the beginning of a new year.)* ***The West is seen as a direction of endings and is the direction the spirit travels when it leaves this Earth***."[9]

Cormack is sitting in the center of the island, surrounded by this vast landscape and reflecting. He is gathering vernacular knowledge to bring back to the imperial world. The intention of the journey was to find the Beothuk peoples, who had been driven off their lands in the East and Central. The East is where the European settlers first set ashore and erected their permanent structures. The Beothuk and other indigenous peoples were driven into the Western portions of the island. The White, new beginning slowly consumed the island, as depicted here with the monumental journey of the first European to the interior of the elusive land. The Red Indians, driven back, further and further into the West, into the direction of endings, and the direction in which their souls went, as they were slaughtered and eliminated by the outsiders.

In this area, Cormack was informed by his guide that the area was used traditionally by indigenous peoples for special minerals to be carved for later use and refers to these indigenous peoples as similar to 'the ancient of the old world' who were able to use the 'incombustible nature of the magnesia minerals.'[1]:

> "*At one lake in particular**, which I in consequence denominated Serpentine Lake**.... It is known to the Mickmack Indian by the Indian name for it, or Stone Pipe Lake, from their procuring here verd antique, and other magnesian rocks,** out of which they carve or chisel tobacco-pipes, much prized by them.*"[1] (October 7th, 1822)

However, he still decided to rename the area Serpentine Lake in order to better describe the topography to the imperial members of Eurocentric society, instead of using the indigenous representations and significance of the landscape. Near this newly crowned lake, they found even more signs of indigenous land use:

> *"In the woods on the margin of Serpentine Lake **we found an old birch-rind canoe of the Mickmack Indians, the same as those used by those people at the sea coast**. It had been brought up from the Bay of Despair at the south coast of the Island, by them of the Cod Roy River, which runs through this and intervening lakes… Here then **is a route of the Indians by which the centre of the Island may be approached with the same canoe, and close by are the sources of rivers that flow to the north coast**."*[1] (October 7th, 1822)

Here, Cormack admits that the indigenous peoples make great use of the interior river and lake systems in order to navigate across the interior. Though he may have been the *first European* to disturb the wildlife in the forest, he was **most definitely not the first man**. Continuing on through these indigenous lands, Cormack consistently alters the toponomy and names landmarks with personal ties: "*This interesting ridge and district, which forms the centre nearly of Newfoundland,* ***I designated in honour of an excellent friend and distinguished promoter of science and enterprise -- Professor Jameson, of Edinburgh -- Jameson's Mountains****."*[1] (October 7th, 1822) This toponomy is not found on an official map of the island.

Throughout the journey of the interior, Cormack also admits that the imperial assumption was that the Beothuk occupied the entire interior of the island. *""…****we had not yet seen a trace of the Red Indians.*** *It had been* ***supposed that all the central parts of the Island*** *were occupied by these people...* (October 10th, 1822) This was clearly not so. It was at this time that Cormack reminisced on the journey thus far:

> "*It was now* ***nearly five weeks since with my Indian I left the sea coast****, and was just halfway to St. George's Bay. We had for some time past* ***felt severely the effects of continued excessive exertion, of wet, and of irregular supplies of food.*** ***<u>My Indian, and only companion, complained much of the never-ending toil, and would willingly have gone out to the sea,</u>*** ***if I had yielded to his wish****. But with me it was "now or never"; and I had apprehensions of being overtaken by the winter ere we could reach St. George's Bay. To keep my Indian at the toilsome task, I had sometimes to encourage him by promises of future reward, sometimes to excite his emulation by* ***allusions to the fame of the Indian hunters for enduring fatigue and hardships beyond what the white man could bear****; and again to picture* ***the shame consequent*** *on his leaving me in the country to perform alone what we had set out to do together.* (October 10th, 1822)

Through the rough adventure, both men admit to being exhausted and worn down from the journey. The Mi'kmaq guide was not used to the subsistence lifestyle while continually travelling. Joe Sylvester had grown used to the Eurocentric lifestyle and would rather be deployed to sea instead of enduring the hardships of the interior. He had been away from his original traditional lifestyle, but still retained a wealth of knowledge which helped Cormack immensely, to understand the context to the island and terra incognita.

Over the next couple days, Cormack and his guide were to learn much more about the indigenous ways of the interior…

> *"Soon afterwards, to my great delight, there appeared among some woody islets in front, which precluded the view of the other side of the lake,* ***a small canoe with a man seated in the stern, paddling softly towards us, with an air of serenity and independence possessed only by the Indian.*** *After a brotherly salutation with me, and the two Indians kissing each other, the hunter proved to be unable to speak English or French. They,* ***however, soon understood one another, for the stranger, although a mountaineer from Labrador, could speak a little of the Mickmack language, his wife being a Mickmack. The mountaineer tribe belongs to Labrador,*** *and he told us that* ***he had come to Newfoundland, hearing that it was a better hunting country than his own, and that he was now on his way hunting from St. George's Bay to the Bay of Despair to spend the winter with the Indians there****. He had left St. George's Bay two months before, and expected to be at the Bay of Despair in two weeks hence. This was his second year in Newfoundland; he was accompanied by his wife only."*[1] (October 12th, 1822)

They had come across a Labradorean mountaineer who took the travelling duo back to his camp to enjoy some company and hospitality: *"My Indian told him that* ***I had come to see the rocks, the deer, the beavers, and the Red Indians, and to tell King George what was going on in the middle of that country****. He said St. George's Bay was about two weeks walk from us if we knew the best way, and invited us over with him in his canoe to rest a day at his camp, where he said he had plenty of venison, which was readily agreed to on my part."*[1] (October 12th, 1822) It was during this time that Cormack reveals the King's reasons for sending him on the journey through the interior. While resting with this family, Cormack makes note of the vernacular watercraft used by the indigenous peoples:

"*His canoe was similar to those described to have been used by the ancient Britons on the invasion by the Romans.* ***It was made of wicker-work, covered over outside with deer skins sewed together and stretched on it, nearly the usual form of canoes, with a bar or beam across the middle, and one on each end to strengthen it. The skin covering, flesh side out, was fastened or laced to the gunwales, with thongs of the same material.*** *Owing to decay and wear it requires to be renewed once in from six to twelve weeks.* ***It is in these temporary barks that the Indians of Newfoundland of the present day navigate the lakes and rivers of the interior.*** *They are easily carried, owing to their lightness, across the portages from one water to another, and when damaged easily repaired.*"[1] (October 12th, 1822)

Cormack describes the watercraft used by the indigenous peoples to navigate the waterscapes of the interior of the island. This was strikingly similar to the Irish curraghs that were used by the locals of Ireland before the British fishing fleets took over: "*Similar in some respects to Welsh coracles, Irish curraghs (or currachs) were small boats used on rivers and in coastal waters. These were traditionally paddled (and later rowed) vessels constructed of a* ***single animal hide stretched over a wicker basket-like framework****... Lightweight, cheap to make, and well-suited to rocky shallows and rough seas, these early nineteenth-century curraghs were ubiquitous along the western coast of Ireland*."[10] After examining the similarities between North American indigenous watercraft, and the early European indigenous watercraft, Cormack then proceeds to describe the camp of his hosts, where they and his guide get along wonderfully:

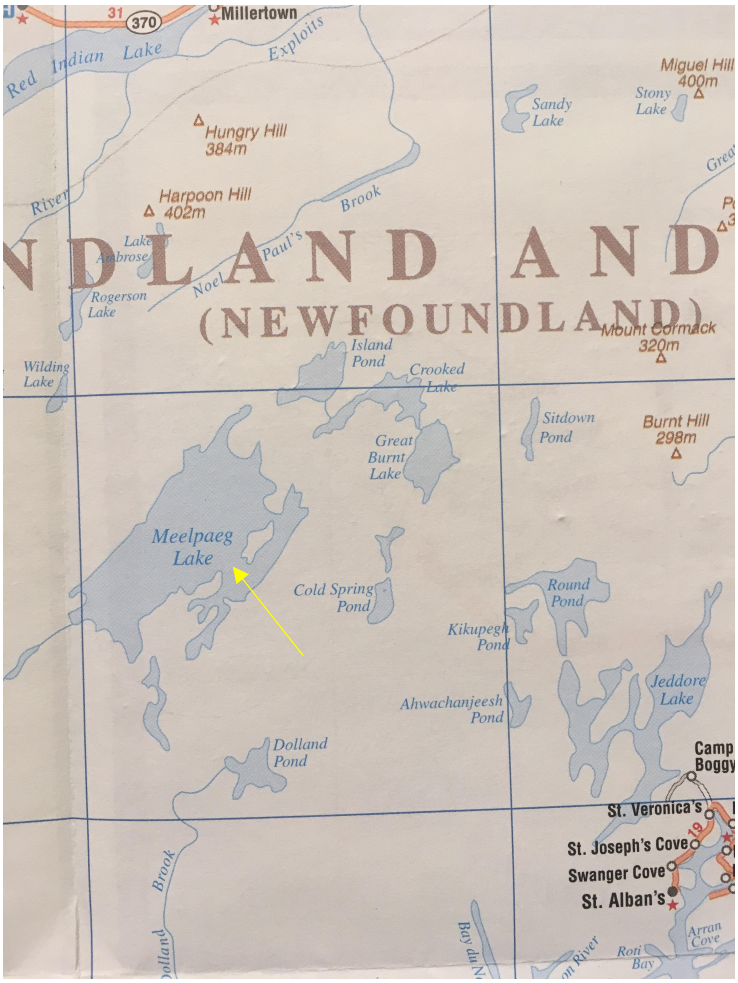
"*His* ***wigwam*** *(Mi'kmaq word for home) was situated in the centre of a wooded islet at which we arrived before sunset...* ***It was occupied by his wife, seated on a deer skin, busy sewing together skins of the same kind to renew the outside of the canoe we had just found, which required it.*** *A large Newfoundland dog, her only companion in her husband's absence, had welcomed us at the landing-place with signs of the greatest joy. Sylvan happiness reigned here.* ***His wigwam was of a semicircular form, covered with birch rind and dried deer skins, the fire on the fore ground outside****. Abundance and neatness pervaded the encampment. On horizontal poles over the fire, hung quantities of venison stakes, being smoked dry. The hostess was cheerful, and a supper, the best the chase could furnish, was soon set before us on sheets of birch rind****. They told me to "make their camp my own, and use everything in it as such."*** *Kindness so elegantly tendered by these people of nature in their solitude, commenced to soften those feelings which*

had been fortified against receiving any comfort except that of my own administering… ***My Indian entertained them incessantly until nearly daylight with stories about what he had seen in St. John's.*** *Our toils were for the time forgotten. The mountaineer had occupied this camp for about two weeks, deer being very plentiful all around the lake.* ***His larder, which was a kind of shed, erected on the rocky shore for the sake of a free circulation of air, was in reality a well-stocked butcher's stall,*** *containing parts of some half-dozen fat deer, also the carcasses of beavers, of otters, of musk rats, and of martens, all methodically laid out.* ***His property consisted of two guns and ammunition, an axe, some good culinary utensils of iron and tin, blankets, an apartment of dried deer skins to sleep on and with which to cover his wigwam -- the latter with the hair off; a collection of skins to sell at the sea coast, consisting of those of beaver, otter, marten, musk rat, and deer, the last dried and the hair off; also a stock of dried venison in bundles.*** "[1] (October 12th, 1822)

The indigenous couple was very welcoming of the duo, who were able to learn about their vernacular watercraft, their methods of harvesting wildlife, and the temporary infrastructure that is erected, such as the 'larder' and the wigwam, which are obviously uses of the island's interior landscape. Cormack notes the couple's possessions, which were items of value to Europeans, such as utensils, weapons and other items like blankets. He was also able to learn that the couple sells some of the skins they harvest at the sea coast, in order to trade for these items.

The duo also obtained information about the Beothuk territory, their seasonal nomadic movements, as well as being gifted a rough map to guide them the rest of the way through the interior.

"The Red Indians' country, or the waters which they frequented, we were told by the mountaineer, lay six or seven miles to the north of us, but at this season of the year these people were likely to be farther to ***the northward at the Great Lake of the Red Indians****; also, that about two weeks before there was a* ***party of Mickmack hunting at the next large lake to the westward, about two days walk from us,*** *and that the deer were very plentiful to the westward.* ***He*** *also described the nature of the country****, and made drawings upon sheets of birch-rind of the lakes, rivers, mountains, and*** *woods that lay in the best route to St. George's Harbour...* ***This lake, called Meelpegh, or Crooked Lake, by the Indians, I also named in honour of Professor Jameson****."*[1] (October 12th, 1822)



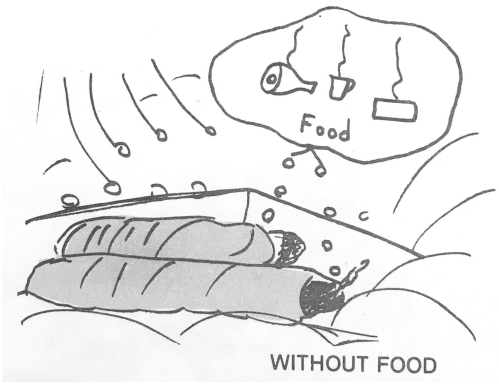
It was after they parted from the Labradorean mountaineer that Cormack decided to change the toponomy of the local area once again, from an indigenous name to one (which he already payed homage to) of personal ties, once again. However, his efforts to honour his friend Professor Jameson did not remain, as the original toponomy of the Mi'kmaq people remains to this day, as seen from the above excerpt from MapArt Publishing Corporation.

This art installation represents that indigenous toponomy and knowledge has always been a part of this land. The piece was place over existing graffiti which was found at the abandoned military base in Red Cliff, Newfoundland. The artist wishes to remain anonymous but has given permission to use this piece as a visual representation of the importance of preserving indigenous knowledge, despite of the history of imperial and colonial attempts to supress this knowledge.

Upon leaving the mountaineer, Cormack reveals he too had a 'Western' name: "***We left the veteran mountaineer (James John by name)*** *much pleased with our having fallen in with him. He landed us from his canoe on the south shore of the lake, and* ***we took our departure for the westward, along the south side***."[1] (October 14th, 1822) Immediately, instead of heading in towards the Beothuk territory, Cormack and his guide head south instead, towards the western portion of the interior.

Pursuing the South-Western Route to the Shore

As the seasons began to change, the duo suffered through bad weather, with little provisions, and the imperial view of these hardships led Cormack to apply a commemorative toponomy to the area:



> *"In the morning three feet of snow covered the ground in the woods, and on the open ground it was deeper. Our provisions were exhausted, nor could we get*

through the snow to look for game. ***Weakened and miserable, we looked anxiously for a change of wind and thaw****… Our fire was buried again and again by the snow from the trees, and we were as likely to be killed while standing up as lying down, by the trees that crashed and shook the ground around us all night, we lay still wrapped in our blankets amidst the danger, and providentially escaped unhurt. The birch had attained a pretty large size in this sheltered spot, under the lie of a hill,* ***which I called Mount Misery****.”*[1] (October 16th, 1822)


SNOW CONTINUED

Continuing on from this unfortunate situation, they came upon a herd of caribou and proceeded to come across marten traps set by indigenous peoples, which was mentioned by the Labradorean mountaineer James John:

“The snow having shrunk a foot at least, ***we left our wretched encampment****, and after a most laborious walk of six or eight miles through snow, thickets, and swollen brooks, and* ***passing many deer, scraping holes in the snow with their hoofs to reach the lichens underneath,*** *without however being able to get within shot of them, we not only reached the lake to the westward****, but to our great joy also discovered, in consequence of meeting with some of their marten traps****, the encampment of the Indians of whom we had been told by the mountaineer.”*[1] (October 18th, 1822)


DEER SCRAPING FOR FOOD

This is an example of another indigenous use of the landscape to erect traps and provide for their subsistence lifestyle. This same day, they came across the inhabitants of the encampment, who could only speak a little French and their native language. It was necessary for Joe Sylvester to be the translator for Cormack, and they partook in the vernacular practices of the indigenous peoples, welcoming the newcomers into the inner part of the encampment. They reiterated that Cormack had been the first European to trek through the interior. It was interesting to note that Cormack’s guide was

still remaining independent from his fellow indigenous peoples, perhaps due to his conditioning of living in a Eurocentric society for too long:

"*The party were encamped in one large wigwam, or kind of hut. We entered with little ceremony, my Indian kissing them all -- male and female.* ***None of them could speak English, and only one of them a little French****. A deer skin was spread for me to sit on, at the innermost part of the dwelling. My Indian interpreted, and introduced me in the same particular terms as before. They were Mickmacks and natives of Newfoundland, and expressed themselves glad to see me in the middle of their country, as the first white man that had ever been here.* *The Indian amongst his fellows is a purely self-dependent being --* ***an innate power of self-denial raises him above dependence upon others****, and keeps him beyond their interference even in distressing wants, which yields mental triumph and glory. Want implies inability in the hunter.* ***I observed these people bestow, and my Indian receive attention, with seeming indifference****. He smoked the pipe given to him with the same composure as after a feast, although starvation and unconcealable hunger were depicted in his countenance… They told us that we might reach Saint George's Bay in about ten days; that they had left that place in the middle of the summer, and had since then been hunting in the western interior, -- several weeks latterly having been spent at this lake, where deer were plenty; and that they intended in a few weeks hence, before the lakes and rivers were frozen over, to repair to White Bear Bay, to spend the winter****, that place having been always celebrated for immense herds of deer passing by in the winter season.*** ***<u>The Indian idea of a road is to Europeans little else than a probability of reaching a distant place alive;</u>*** *and I foresaw, from their report, much*

*suffering before we could reach St. George's Bay… In the woods around the margin of this lake the Indians had lines of path equal to eight or ten miles in extent****, set with wooden traps, or dead falls, about one hundred yards apart, baited for martens, which they visited every second day. They had two skin canoes in which they paddled around the lake to visit their traps and bring home their game****. The Red Indian country we were told was about ten or fifteen miles northward of us, but that at this time, as the mountaineer had likewise informed us,* ***these people were all farther to the northward, at the Great Lake, where they were accustomed to lay up their winter stock of venison****."*[1] (October 18th, 1822)

The aboriginal idea of a path is getting from point A to point B alive, while the European idea imagines beaten down paths to safely navigate a landscape. Cormack learned more details about the vernacular practices of trapping and how the indigenous set up structures in order to capture their food. He also noted the 'canoes' that they used in order to travel to the traps and also to transport their food home. It was also at this time that it was reiterated that the Beothuk were much further northward, and they were not heading in the right direction in order to come across them.

"*They are composed of Mickmacks, joined by some of the mountaineer tribe from the Labrador, and a few of the Abenakies from Canada. The Esquimaux, from Labrador, occasionally, but seldom, visit the Island****… They all follow the same mode of life -- hunting in the interior, from the middle of summer till the beginning of winter in the single families, or in two or three families together. They go from lake to lake, hunting all over the country, around one before they proceed to the next… they proceed in or carry their canoes with them; otherwise they leave these, and build others on arriving at their destination****. The hunting season, which is the months of September and October, being over,* ***they repair to the sea coast with their furs, and barter them for ammunition, clothing, tea, rum, &c., and then most of them retire to spend the winter at or near the mouths of the large rivers, where eels are to be procured through the ice by spearing, endeavouring at the same time to gain access to the winter paths of the deer.*** *A great division of the interior of Newfoundland is exclusively possessed and hunted over by Red Indians, and is considered as their territory by the others.* ***In former times, when the several tribes were upon an equality in respect of weapons, the Red Indians were considered invincible, and frequently waged war upon the rest, until the latter got fire-arms put into their hands by Europeans****. The Red Indians are even feared yet, and described as very large athletic*

men. They occupy the Great or Red Indian Lake, and many other lakes in the northern part of the Island, as well as the great River Exploits. ***Along the banks of this river, and at the Great Lake, they are said to have extensive fences or pounds, by which they ensnare deer, and thus procure regularly in every fall a supply of venison for winter provisions****."* [1] (October 18th, 1822)

Cormack was able to learn about the subsistence way of life on the interior of the island from this group of indigenous peoples. He learned about the various tribes, their methods of nomadic living, and how the influence of Europeans with firearms greatly harmed the island's population. He also learns about more structures that the Beothuk erected upon the landscape in order to better trap their food. Cormack relates the Beothuk ochre which they used on their skin to the indigenous Britons who pursued similar activities. It is likely this relation that reinforced the idea that the present (1800s) indigenous peoples were far underdeveloped than the 'modernized' present Britons.

*"****They also stated that the Red Indians use the same kind of skin canoes in the interior as they themselves do, and that they paint themselves all over.*** *The ancient Britons painted their bodies blue at the period they used canoes of a similar description in the interior of the Island.* ***The tribes, exclusive of the Red Indians, have no chief in Newfoundland, but there are several individuals at St. George's Bay to whom they all pay a deference****. The Mickmacks, although most of them born in this Island, consider Cape Breton, where the chiefs reside, as their head-quarters…* ***<u>These people might be rendered useful if some of the leaders were noticed by the British Government</u>****. Had this been earlier done it might have saved that tarnish on humanity, the butchery of the interesting aborigines, the Red Indians, by Englishmen…The most important subject to the Indians at present, connected with His Majesty's Government, relates to beaver-hunting****. They are most anxious that King George, as they call His Majesty****, should make a law to prevent the hunting of beavers in the spring season.*** *They acknowledge the practice of hunting them then,* ***and also that the practice will soon destroy them altogether, as the animals are then with young****. But they cannot desist of their own accord, being by nature hunters. They state that a considerable traffic has been carried on in venison between some of the Indians at White Bear Bay and the* ***French at the Island of St. Peter's****."* [1] (October 18th, 1822)

Cormack had figured if the Europeans could have noticed the organization and knowledge that the indigenous leaders had, the peoples may have been spared (and likely enslaved). Cormack imagined using whatever remnants of indigenous peoples on the island in order to exploit, as Raj Patel puts it, cheap nature, cheap work, cheap care, and cheap lives.[18] The British governors could exploit the cheap resources of the island such as seafood, forestry, and mining, and Cormack envisioned using the indigenous peoples to be 'rendered useful' by being exploited through cheap lives and cheap work. The women of the indigenous groups would be the ones taking care of the indigenous workers who were injured while working under these governors, and the profits from these operations could be maximized, as seen in other colonial conquests such as island of Madeira, where the indigenous peoples were exploited.[18] However, before this could take place, the majority of the population was slaughtered. The remaining indigenous peoples of this time were dealing with imposing legislation that threatened their ability to gain food and furs from beavers in the spring season. This was a type of enclosure that was beginning on the island even before the interior had been scouted out. Cormack also mentions the island of St. Pierre, and due to the island remaining a French colony, it retains its French name to this day. The duo learned more about these indigenous groups, such as their religious affiliations and methods of navigating through the forest.

> "***The Indians find their way through the forests by marks with which they are familiar***. *Thus moss grows on the north not the south side of the trees; the tops and branches of trees have an inclination for stretching to the south-east; wind-fallen trees point to the northward, &c.* ***They have a call or toll for every kind of beast and bird to bring them within shot*** *-- for the deer an outward snort, to imitate the stag; for the beaver a hiss, &c.; for the otter a whistle, &c.* ***They are Roman Catholics, but their religious ceremonies, of which they are observant, consist of a combination of that church and their own primitive ceremonies blended together, to suit their convenience and tastes...*** *They had in their* ***possession a French manuscript of sacred music, given to them they said, by the French Roman Catholic clergyman at the Island of St. Peter's****, whom they consider their confessor, and endeavour to see once in two years*." [1] (October 18th, 1822)

It is clear that these peoples have been influenced by various religious interference and have adopted their own ceremonies that combine vernacular knowledge, with the new influence.

Cormack and his guide leave the group of indigenous peoples and continue on through the interior: "***The western territory is entirely primitive****… lichens occupy every station, on the peat, among the other plants, and on the bare rock… Neither reptile nor serpent of any kind had yet fallen under our notice, nor had the Indians ever seen or heard of any noxious animal being in the island.* ***It may therefore be concluded that there are none of this class, common on the neighbouring islands and continent, here****."*[1] (October 27th, 1822) They note this island to be much safer than the neighbouring islands and the mainland, as there were no venomous creatures lurking in the unknown interior. This led Cormack to consider the potential of the island:

> "***Were the agriculturalists of the coast to come here, they would see herds of cattle, fat on natural produce of the country, sufficient for the supply of provision to the fisheries****, and the same animal fit, with a little training, to draw sledges at the rate of twenty miles an hour.* ***Nature has liberally stocked Newfoundland with herds, finer than which Norway and Lapland cannot boast****… These natural herds are the best adapted for this climate and pasture; and it is evident on witnessing their numbers, that all that is required to render the interior, now in waste, at once a well-****stocked*** *grazing country, could be done through the means* ***of employing qualified herdsmen, who would make themselves familiar with, and accompany these herds from pasture to pasture,*** *as is done in Norway and Lapland with the reindeer there, and in Spain with the sheep.* ***When taken young these deer become very domestic and tractable****.* ***Were the intelligent resident inhabitants of the coast, who have an interest in advancing the country internally, to adopt a plan for effecting this object, under their own vigilance, benefits and comforts now unthought of could be realized****."*[1] (October 27th, 1822)

Cormack envisioned agriculturalists setting up on the island here they could also support a partially subsistence lifestyle, or even domesticate the wild caribou. Cormack imagines the potential of the landscape to be shaped by imperial-approved land-use. He refers to the lands as 'well-stocked' which is a Eurocentric viewpoint on which to reduce all the various organisms to a stock country of which could be harvest. He believes those living at the coasts were missing a greater opportunity with better agricultural land and many species to hunt, and some with the ability to be domesticated in order to reinforce the Eurocentric concept of livestock, and further entrench Eurocentric land use onto this new colony.

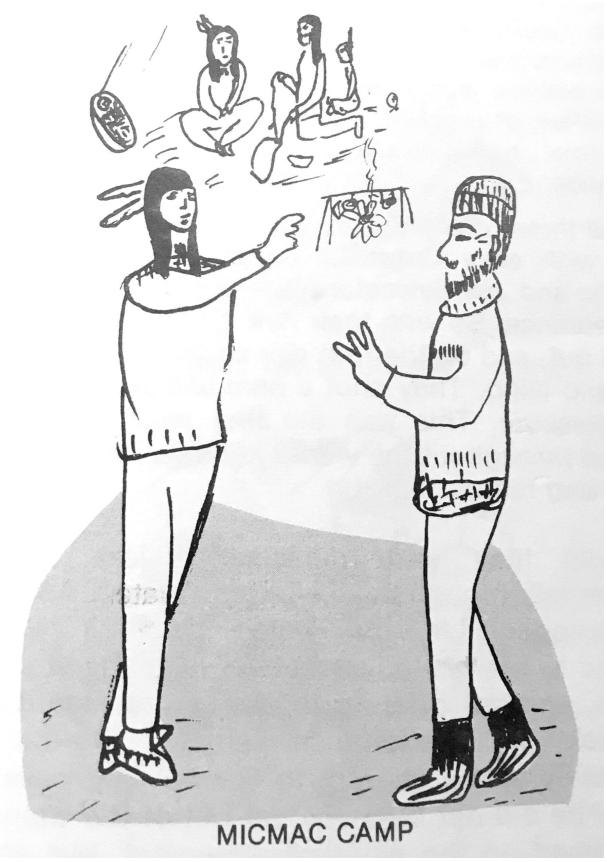
It was during this leg of the trip that Cormack's guide brought them well away from the Beothuk territory, and Cormack would not be able to inform the King about 'the Red Indians' of the interior after this journey: "*... Ever since we left the last party of Indians, my Indian disputed with me about the course we should pursue,* ***he obstinately insisting upon going to the southward. Perhaps he had a secret desire not to pass too near the Red Indian country, or he may have heard that some of his tribe were encamped in the direction he was inclined to go****. As a separation might have led to serious consequences, I submitted from necessity*."[1] (October 27th, 1822) In spite of the avoidance of the Beothuk people, Cormack and his guide continued their way towards Bay St. George. Cormack understood that Joe Sylvester's vernacular knowledge of the landscape, and his ability to communicate with indigenous peoples was much too valuable to lose in pursuit of the Beothuk people. It was along this trail that Cormack continually named more landmarks using personal toponomy: "***As we advanced westward the aspect of the country became more dreary, and the primitive features more boldly marked….*** *Those birds seemed as if they had congregated to take flight before the lake was frozen over.* ***I named this lake in honour of a friend at the bar in Edinburgh, 'Wilson's lake****'."*[1] (October 28th, 1822) This toponomy was not found on a modern day map.

Cormack and his guide then came upon a fourth group of indigenous peoples. At first, they were wary of trusting the strangers in the distance, but as they seemed to pose no immediate threat, they were welcomed by another group of Mi'kmaq:

"*Drawing near to a mountain-ridge, higher than any we had yet crossed, and which from appearance we supposed might be* ***the last between us and the sea coast,*** *we had great satisfaction in discovering smoke rising from a wood on the opposite side of a lake near the foot of it... On reaching the lake****, the party encamped seemed to distrust us, not venturing to show themselves openly on the shore.*** *After a time, however, they were convinced by our appearance, gestures, and the report of our guns,* ***<u>that we were not Red Indians nor enemies</u>****. A canoe was then launched and came across to us. The canoe was of the kind already described, of wicker-work, covered with skins, and paddled by two pretty Indian girls. I unceremoniously saluted them in the Indian*

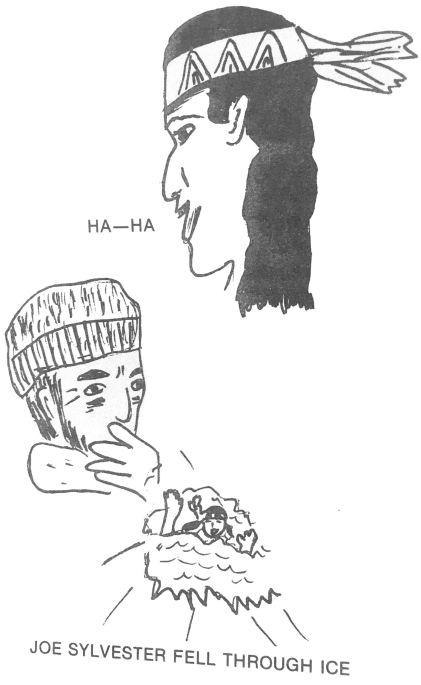
TWO INDIAN GIRLS

manner and we accompanied them to their camp. They were of a party of Mickmack Indians, encamped at this lake because deer and firewood were plentiful. One man only belonged to this encampment, and he was out hunting when we arrived. ***None of the party understood a word of English; my Indian however explained****... This small party consisted of eight individuals -- one man, four women, and three children; one an infant, was strapped or laced to its cradle, and placed upright against the side of a wigwam, as any piece of* ***domestic furniture might be****... As every hour was precious towards the final accomplishment of my object****, I proposed to my Indian host to accompany me to St. George's Bay****; my offer was agreed to, and a stipulation made to set off in two hours. In the absence of this Indian, who told me his name was Gabriel, his family --* ***consisting, as already observed, of females and children -- were to provide for themselves.*** *For this purpose two guns and ammunition were left with them. One of the young women was a capital shot; during our halt with them she left the camp and shot a fat deer close by.*"[1] (October 28th, 1822)


MICMAC CAMP

Cormack referred to the vernacular lacing around the child as reminding him of a cradle-type object, resembling "domestic furniture". Cormack was determined to reach Bay St. George quickly, therefore he requested Gabriel, his local indigenous host to accompany himself and Joe Sylvester in order to reach the coast quicker. He also learned that certain women of the group were well skilled in defense and had the ability to provide for their families while one of their men were gone.

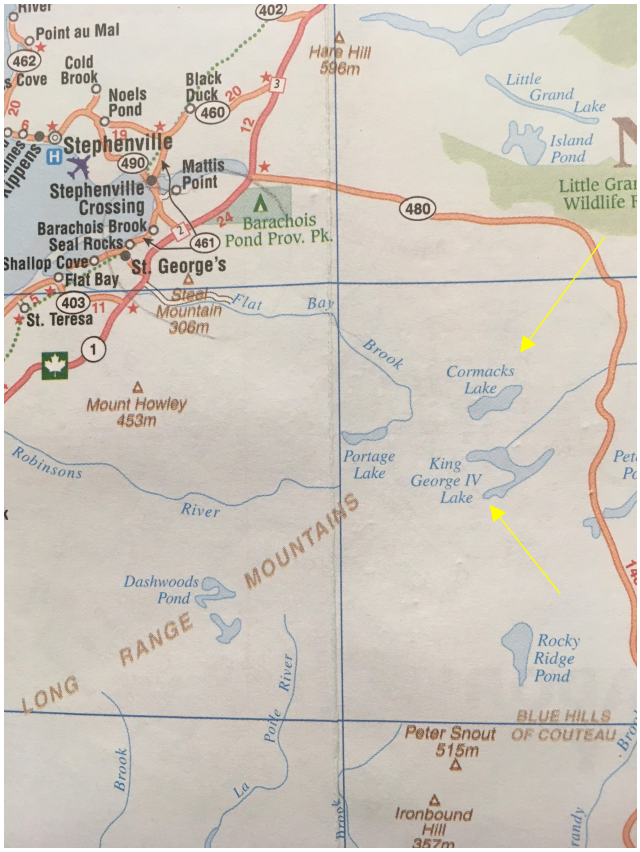
The newest guide to accompany Cormack and Joe was *Gabriel.* This was an opportunity for Cormack to understand an important cultural practice for the indigenous peoples of the land:



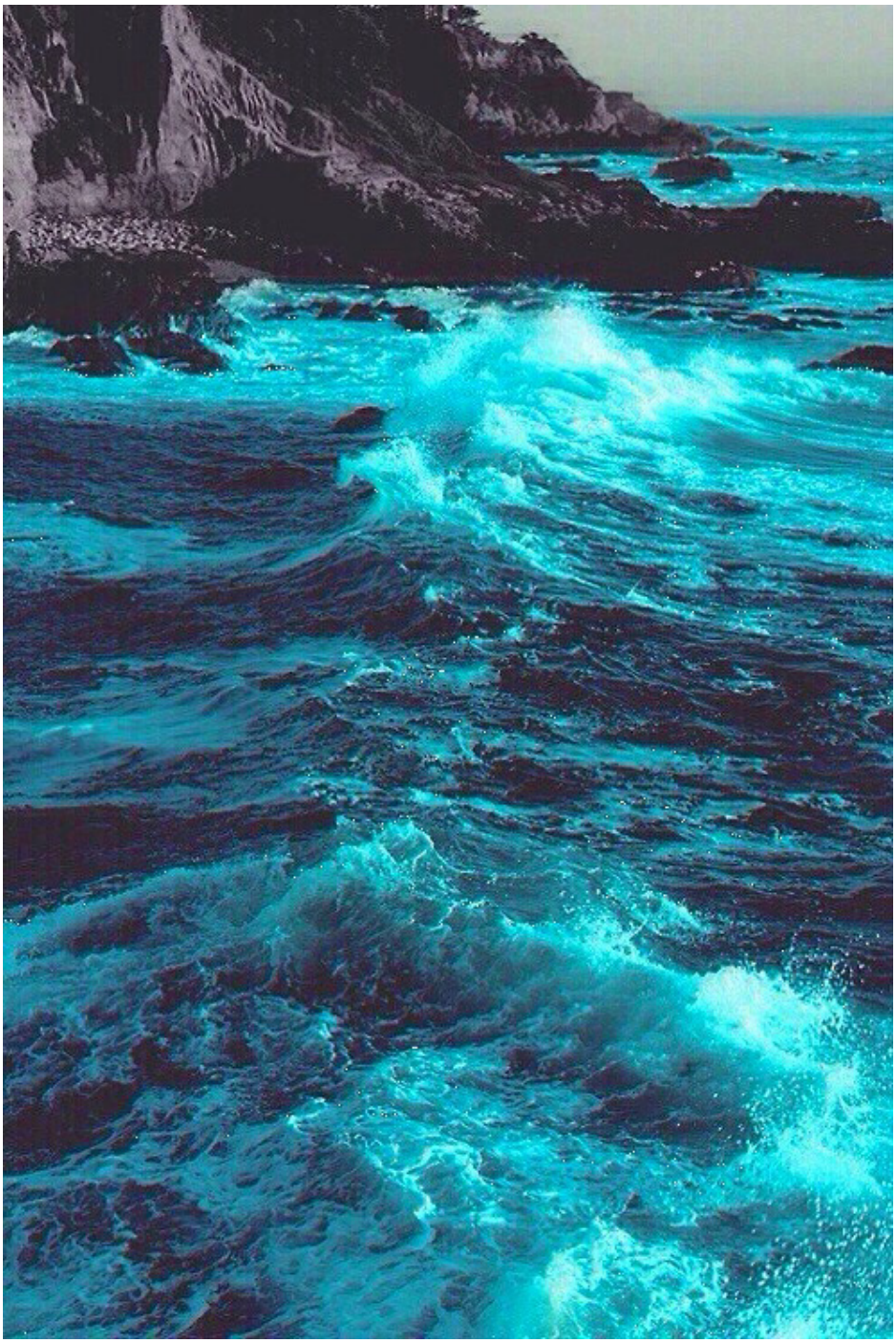
"*When we were crossing a lake on the ice my Indian fell through and* ***with great exertion saved himself****. While he was struggling* ***my new friend Gabriel stood still and laughed;*** *Joe did not look for assistance, nor did the other evince the least disposition to render any, although he was, compared with my position on the lake, near to him. Upon my remonstrating with Gabriel about his manifesting a want of feeling towards Joe,* ***when perishing, Joe himself replied to me, 'Master, it is all right; Indian rather die than live owing his life to another.' The other had acted in sympathy with the self-dependent sentiment."***[1] (October 30th, 1822)

This was in stark contrast to a Eurocentric reaction of assisting another party member, if it is possible.

Cormack and his two guides continued their journey, and before reaching the western coast, he named another landmark: **"***The distance to St. George's Harbour is twenty-five miles or upwards, which part of the journey must be performed on foot, because no waters of any magnitude intervene.* ***I named the lake in honour of His Majesty George the IV****."*[1] (October 31st, 1822) after an imperial figure, the King. This toponomy can still be found to this day, as seen from the following excerpt from MapArt Publishing Corporation. Close to this area, Cormack's contributions are memorialized through the toponomy of Cormack's lake which is found on the modern day map of the interior of the island.



The First Glimpses of the Shore



It was in this area that Cormack learned about the cooperation between tribes of indigenous peoples: "*We encamped at night at the southern extremity of* ***what is said by my Indians to be the most southern lake of the interior frequented by the Red Indians,*** *and through which was the* ***main source branch of the River Exploits****. At the same lake, the Micmacs and the Indians friendly with them commence and terminate their water excursions from and to the west coast.* ***They here construct their first skin canoes upon entering the interior,*** *or leave their old ones upon* ***setting off on foot for the sea coast.***"[1] (October 31st, 1822) This area was a vein to the heart of the interior, which the indigenous peoples used to navigate the interior of the Western portion of the island. Not long after the trio discovered this area, they came upon the first glimpses of the **sea coast on the other side.**

"*In the evening (1st November) about eighteen miles west of George the Fourth's lake, from the summit of a snowy ridge which defines the west coast,* ***we were rejoiced to get a view of the expansive ocean and St. George's Harbour…*** *all was now however accomplished,* ***and I hailed the glance of the sea as home, and as the parent of everything dear****. There was scarcely any snow to be seen within several miles of the* ***sea coast****, while the mountain range upon which we stood, and the interior in the rear, were covered*."[1] The mild sea coast had not been encapsulated by snow as the interior had, and they were ecstatic to head to the coasts once again. Cormack described it as the 'parent of everything dear' much like the parent of humanity.

Beaches

The wise old sea
mounts the shore, and retreats

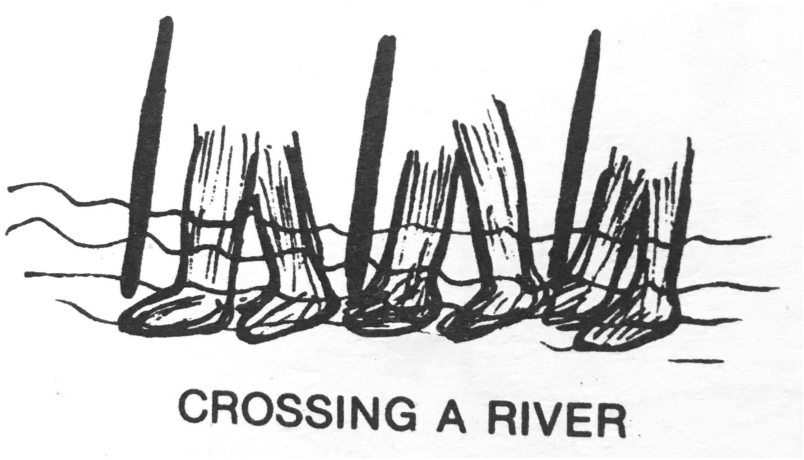
I look
down across the sand
and see the place
where, a billion years ago,
I crawled ashore

By: Ab Stockwood (1984)[6]

"*This range may be about two thousand feet above the level of the sea, and the snow-capped mountains in the north-east are higher... It threatened rain, and sun was setting;* ***but the sight of the sea urged us onward."***[1] (November 1st, 1822) This excitement reinforces the idea that humans really did prefer the seacoasts over interiors for the ease of subsistence living, and the access to transportation that it provided both in and previous to these times. As John Gillis illustrates, "*It was in this narrow ecotone between land and sea that hunter-gatherers flourished and developed the first coastal societies that exhibit common characteristics all around the world."*[5]

Reaching the French Shore

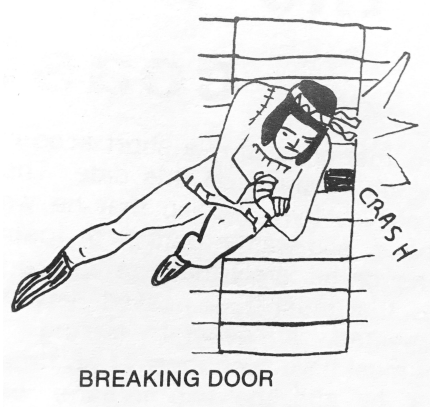
Using the guides' vernacular knowledge of navigating difficult landscapes, they were able to conquer vicious waters along their journey towards the coast. "*We then,* ***by means of carrying a large stone each on our backs in order to press our feet against the bottom, and steadying ourselves by placing one end of a pole, as with a staff or walking-stick, firmly upon the bottom of the lawn*** *or lee side****, to prevent the current from sweeping us away, step after step, succeeded in fording the river,*** *and encamped by a good fire, but supperless, in the forest on the banks of the river*."[1] (November 1st, 1822)



After travelling through the rough terrain, they came upon the western lands. They were much different than the rest of the island, with some species of flora and fauna similar to those on the mainland:

> "*Upon the immediate banks of Flat Bay River, there is some good birch, pine, and spruce timber. The* ***soil and shelter are even so good here*** *that the ground spruce (Taxus Canadensis)-bearing its red berries,* ***constitutes the chief underwood, as in the forests of Canada and Nova Scotia****. In the afternoon we reached St. George's Harbour.* ***The first houses we reached, two in number, close to the shore, belonged to Indians.*** *They were nailed up, the owners not having yet returned from the interior after their fall's hunting.* ***The houses of the European residents lay on the west side of the harbour,*** *which is here about a mile wide, and near the entrance;* ***but a westerly gale of wind prevented any intercourse across***."[1] (November 2nd, 1822)

Due to heavy winds, the trio decided to break into the indigenous peoples' home, "*The winter stock of provisions of this provident man named Emanuel Gontgont, the whole having been provided at the proper seasons,* ***consisted of six barrels of pickled fish, of different kinds, viz.: young halibuts and eels, besides dried cod fish, seal oil in bladders, and two barrels of maize or Indian corn flour****."*[1] (November 2nd, 1822) and it was here that Cormack took note of the possessions of the indigenous peoples of the West coast. It was interesting to note that this indigenous person had a French name, unlike all those encountered thus far. "*It seemed remarkable* ***that the provisions were entirely free from the ravages of rats and other vermin****, although left without any precaution to guard against such. There was a* ***potato and turnip field close to the house****, with the crops still in the ground, of which we availed ourselves, although now partly injured by frost*." [1] (November 3rd, 1822) The indigenous peoples of the area also employed some gardening to supplement their subsistence lifestyle. They also used methods of pickling their foods in order to preserve them as well. Despite having a 'house' built, and having food stored away, the imperial view of their situation was still to be astonished that it was not decrepit and rotten after the owners were away in the interior. This is similar to the "*Protestant attitudes towards the Irish-speaking native population on Achill as recorded in nineteenth-century documents varied from charitable to exploitative, but government officials appointed to the island were frequently* ***condescending, in one instance describing local tenants as having "all the virtues and vices of semi-barbarians***."[10]



BREAKING DOOR


COMFORT AND FOOD

It wasn't long before the owners of the homes came back, and upon realizing their home had been raided their first suspicion was that the strangers were there to rob them: "*Instead of appearing to notice with displeasure his door broken open and house occupied by strangers****, he merely said, upon looking round and my offering an explanation, 'Suppose me here, you take all these things.'***"[1] (November 4th, 1822) It is likely these peoples had been pillaged many times before prior to Cormack's

arrival, reiterating the struggles of invasion that these people have suffered throughout time. The shoreline infrastructure was an easy target for a passing stranger.

Ending the Official Journey

The trio left the indigenous peoples and headed across the water towards the European homes:

"*We crossed the harbour,* ***and were received by the residents*** *-- Jersey and English, and their descendants --* ***with open arms****. All European and other vessels had left this coast a month before, so that there was* ***no chance of my obtaining a passage to St. John's, or to another country.****"*[1] (November 4th, 1822) Cormack was attempting to figure out a way back to the city after completing his trek across the interior. With the main objective of crossing the interior being complete: "*After a few days* ***I parted with my Indians*** *-- the one, who had* ***with painful constancy accompanied me across the Island, joining his countrymen here to spend the winter with them****, and return to his friends at the Bay of Despair in the following spring;* ***the other, having renewed his stock of ammunition and other outfits, returned to his family which we had left in the interior****."*[1] (November 4th, 1822) It was time for Cormack to part ways with his party members, and find his own way back to the East Coast, or beyond. His recent host headed back to return to his family, and Joe decided to remain on the west coast with the indigenous peoples for the winter. Cormack then reflected on his adventure, and noted how rugged volunteers were necessary to get through to the other side:

> "*The toil and deprivations were such* ***that hired men, or followers of any class, would not have endured them****. At St. George's Bay, as at all other parts of Newfoundland except the towns, the country* ***is nearly as destitute of paths and roads as at the time of the discovery of the Island****; the intercourse* ***between the settlements, being by water****, during bad weather is entirely suspended.*"[1] (November 4th, 1822)

There is now a piece of work in progress to preserve the knowledge and story of Joseph Sylvester. Cormack has proved to be a significant figure in obtaining knowledge about the interior of the island, as well as its culture. It turns out, his guide Joseph Sylvester is actually a relative of our current Mi'kmaq Chief Mi'sel Joe. Chief Mi'sel Joe is in the process of writing the story of Cormack's 1822 journey from Joseph Sylvester's perspective and granted permission for this tidbit of information to be included in this report. It is fascinating to see **Joe's relative turning out to be an important figure in obtaining knowledge about the interior of the island, as well as preserving the Mi'kmaq culture**.

-------Keep your eyes peeled for this publication!!! -------

Cormack decided to remain in the community for some time with a local man named Mr. Phillip Messervey in order for him to heal from the rough journey to the coast. He noted that the only method of travelling between communities on this western coast was by boat, which is susceptible to weather. He also noted that this area seemed to be a trading hub for much of the west coast, with the ability to trade with ships travelling to and from Halifax as well as St. John's, as well as the fact that indigenous and French peoples worked together, teaching about vernacular local knowledge, as well as official methods of ship-building, in order for all peoples to utilize the aquascape's resources.

"***Their chief occupation is salmon fishing and furring; a little cod fish is also cured… They possess four schooners, three of them being built by themselves and one by the Indians, in which most of the male inhabitants make one voyage annually, either to Halifax, Nova Scotia, or to St. John's, Newfoundland, to dispose of their fish and fur***. *Some of*

> *them **barter their produce** with trading vessels from Canada and New Brunswick, or with the vessels of any other country that may come to the coast, receiving provisions and West Indian produce. **They all cultivate potatoes, and some keep a few cows.** The harbour is six or seven miles in length. **On the east side the soil is good**; red, white, and blue clays are found here. Along the banks of the **several rivers which flow into the harbour, are strips of good land;** some good pine spars and birch timber fit for shipbuilding are also to be found there.*"[1] (November 4th, 1822)

Cormack surveys the landscape and views its usefulness with resources such as timber and land, as well as various species to enable subsistence living. He also notes that this harbour is especially safe from the dangers Wreckhouse winds that often affect the modern ferry leaving the south-west coast.

> "*St. George's Harbour, although barred, may be entered by vessels of any burthen. There is no other ship harbour between Cape Ray and Port au Port; but there is good anchorage in the roadstead between Cod Roy Island and the main Island near Cape Anguille. **None of the other harbours can be entered even by small craft when the wind blows strong westwardly.** The trade and pursuits of the **inhabitants of the other parts of St. George's Bay**, and, it may be observed, **of all the other parts of the French Shore, are very similar to those of the other parts of St. George's Harbour**.*"[1] (November 4th, 1822)

During his stay on this coast, Cormack learns the value for the goods which are procured in this region, and he recommends that their type of payment scheme should be put in place on the east coast as well: "*The usual mode of paying servants on the west coast is, **allowing them one-third of the fruits of their industry, salmon, fur, or otherwise, the employer providing diet**. **The principle is well worthy of imitation on the east coast.** St. George's Harbour, locally called Flat Bay, as well as the estuaries of all the rivers on the west coast, **is famous for abundance of eels. The Indians take them in great quantities by spearing in the mud, and pickle them for winter use.** *"[1] (November 4th, 1822) The subsistence diet of the peoples on the western portion of the island is similar to the indigenous Irish peoples who relied on eels as well to supplement their diet and lifestyle: "*Elvers, therefore, provided not only an important supplement to the diet of Gloucester consumers but also, in times of crisis, a vital staple. The same was also true of Moreau's 'country people', for whom elvers provided not only an important seasonal income but also an important part of their diet."*[10] The Irish fishery was enclosed by

British governors who decided the profitable salmon fishery was at risk due to these Irish harvesters. Similarly, Cormack saw potential for the exploitation of the fishery on the western portion of the island:

> "***This fishery, were it pursued, would succeed that of the salmon in the order of season, and the process of curing is similar. Herrings might likewise be caught to supply and suit any demand and market, as they are of all sizes****. Whale and seal also abound in their respective seasons, but none are killed.* ***The British residents on the French Shore feel very insecure in the enjoyment of their Salmon fishery and in any extension of their property****, by reason of the peculiar tenure in regard to the French****. A satisfactory solution of the mystery as to their rights has not yet been communicated to them, although they have made repeated applications at headquarters at St. John's.* ***But the French are at present friendly disposed to them, although their rights are treated as a mere sufferance****. There is here neither clergyman, school-master, church nor chapel. Yet during my short stay, there was one wedding (****an Indian couple, Roman Catholics, married by a Protestant resident, reading the Church of England service from a French translation****) and four christenings, celebrated by the same person, with feasts and rejoicings suitable to such events.*" [1] (November 4th, 1822)

However, it was noted that the French presence on these shores would require the British to enforce their ownership of the entire island and push them out, which would obviously have consequences with the indigenous peoples who have forged relationships with these French people (which my family belongs to, as I am descended from indigenous and French ancestry).

> "*Large stretches of Newfoundland's coast were under French control until 1904.* ***The French Shore was a significant issue in nationalist Newfoundland politics. The 1904 Anglo-French Convention saw France renounce its rights in Newfoundland*** *(gained under the Treaty of Utrecht, 1763) French nationals could* ***continue to fish but not to use or settle on the shore****. Britain agreed to pay financial compensation to French outfitters with premises on the Treaty Shore and also ceded to France an area of land in West Africa*."[12]

The remaining families were considered to be of lesser status than the European families along the new British Shore. "*The common English term for a sailor, 'jacktar', became 'jackatar' or 'jack'o'tar' in Newfoundland and took on a new meaning…* ***There was yet another group, of mixed French and Mi'kmaq descent****: these were colloquially, and no doubt often derisively****, termed jackatars****. They lived*

mostly on St. George's Bay, where the principal settlement was Sandy Point. Their darker skin distinguished them to some extent from their neighbours, though even descendants of English and Irish on the east coast were by 1840 sufficiently brown, to one observer, to merit the description 'copper-coloured'."[13] My family hid their indigenous roots, as did many of their fellow community members, for fear of torment and ridicule. My grandmother obtained her official indigenous status before she passed away in 2010, and was ecstatic and appreciative that her roots were finally recognized.

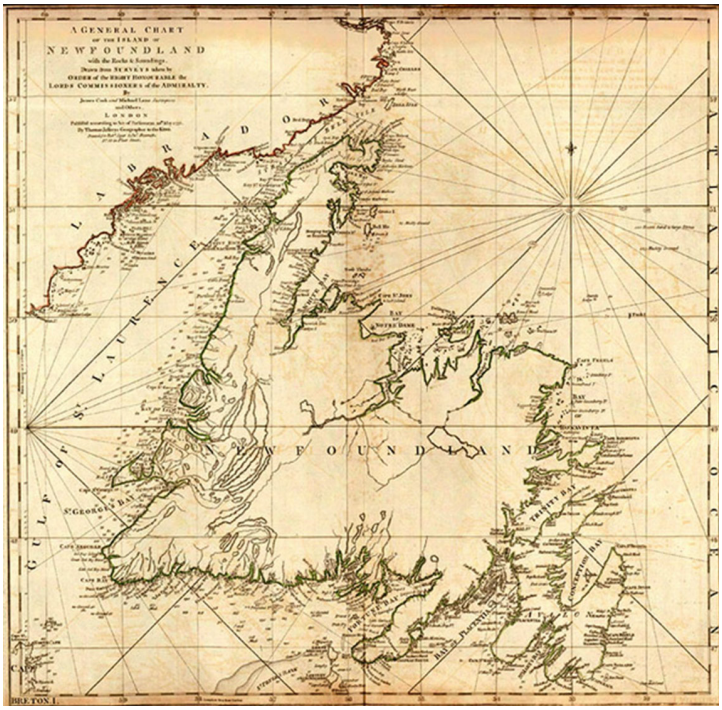
Despite the need to keep their history hidden, my father practiced many traditional ways of subsistence living with his family. He recalls using handmade nets at low tide to catch fish at high tide, he also recalls catching smelts with nets in the winter under the ice with his father. Along the shores in the summer, my father and his father would bring lanterns along the shore and use the light to draw the trout to the shore. He also remembers harvesting eels with his father, much like the traditional families of the prior century. My father fondly remembers hunting, trapping and berry-picking, looking for blueberries, 'marshberries' (or wild cranberries) and gooseberries. He would help cut wood to stay warm in the winter, and help his father build vernacular watercraft in the summers. My father recalls his father dreaming up an idea of what he'd want his boat to look like. Without blueprints, or any plan, he'd make a boat appear out of his own mind, reinforcing the importance of vernacular knowledge passed down from generations and generations past.

Cormack's Journey to 'Civilization'

As Cormack proceeded on his route, he came across more inhabitants of the shore, who utilized the excellent soil to grow a variety of crops to supplement their subsistence, seasonal lifestyle:

> "*The inhabitants at the Barasway rivers were now* ***in their winter houses under the shelter of the woods, having recently left their summer residences at the shore****. Like the people at St. George's Harbour, they are industrious and frugal; the extent of their salmon fishery and furring has been already noticed…* ***Some of the residents have well-stocked farms, the soil being good. Oats, barley, potatoes, hay, &c., are produced in perfection, and even wheat. As evidence of the capabilities of portions of Newfoundland for agricultural purposes***..."[1] (November 17th, 1822)

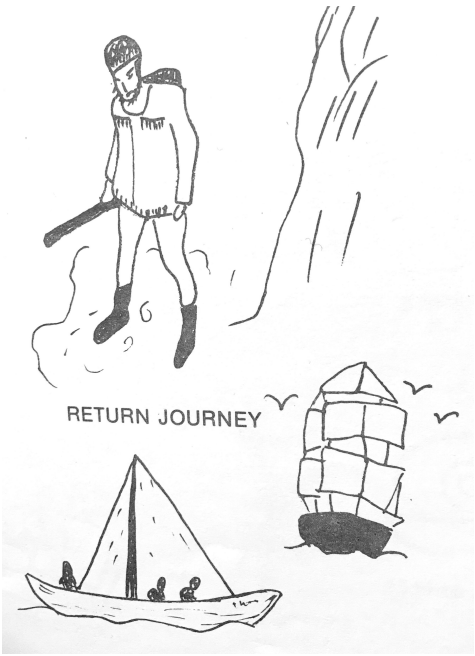
This reinforces Cormack's vision of bands of agricultural development along this wild and barely utilized shore. He later came upon a resident of the southwest coast who proved the ability to procure a fulfilling life on these shores. This resident was a poignant member of the community, and even remembers Cook when he was surveying the island's coast. "*James Cook surveyed most of the province from 1763-1767, charting areas unknown to the British at the time*."[23] His chart is found below:



"*The **stock** on it consisted of six milch cows, besides other cattle; the dairy could not be surpassed in neatness and cleanliness, and the butter and cheese were excellent; **the butter made**, exclusive of what was kept for her comparatively numerous domestic establishment, **was sold, part to the residents at other places in the bay, and part to trading vessels that come to the coast in summer**. The cellar was full of potatoes and other vegetables for winter use. She was also an experimental farmer, and exhibited **eight different kinds of potatoes**, all possessing different qualities to recommend them. Of **domestic poultry** there was an ample **stock**. **Mrs. Hulan, although not a native, had lived in St. George's Bay upwards of sixty years, and remembers the celebrated navigator, Cook, when he surveyed the coast.** She is indefatigably industrious and useful, and immediately or remotely related to, or connected with, the whole population of the bay, over **whom she commands a remarkable degree of maternal influence and respect."***[l] (November 17th, 1822)

Upon departing from Mrs. Hulan's, two young men offered to escort Cormack to the next port where he could catch a boat, instead of him attempting to trek through the treacherous southwest coast.

"***A light skiff or punt is therefore the safest mode of conveyance along this horrific coast in the inclement season of the year****; for here and there between the cliffs* ***there is a spot of beach with a ravine well known to the inhabitants,*** *at which, although far apart in the event of being overtaken by bad weather, a skiff can run ashore, and the crew at the same instant jumping out, haul her up beyond the reach of the surf.*"[1] (November 20th-22nd, 1822)



He learned that the important vernacular knowledge of spots to land small boats was necessary to traverse these dangerous coastal waters along cliffs and jagged rocks. Upon reaching the next port, "*The inhabitants, as at the Barasway rivers, were in their winter houses in the woods, and their boats laid up for the winter. I, however,* ***soon obtained a volunteer*** *in the principal resident, named Parsons,* ***to convey me as soon as the weather would permit in his skiff round Cape Ray****, and* ***to the next place where a boat could be procured****.*"[1] (November 23rd, 1822) he could employ the assistance of Parsons, and was able to gain more knowledge about the vernacular practices of the French on the southwest shore, which was called 'the central point of French fisheries in summer'. "*Many square rigged vessels are here* ***loaded with dried cod fish for France****;* ***and hundreds of batteaux brought from France in the fishing ships*** *scatter from hence in all directions* ***over the fishing grounds.****"*[1] (November 23rd, 1822) The French word for boat was used to describe the French vernacular watercraft, as opposed to reducing them to just 'boats', much like was done with the vernacular indigenous watercraft, when reverted to 'canoes'. There was more respect for the French terminology as opposed to the indigenous languages and terms, reinforcing the legitimacy of official languages over traditional, local ones.

As Cormack continued along the coast, he learned of some communities which had families who owned servants and were able to catch seafood for their subsistence lifestyle.

"*Great Cod Roy River is about six miles south of Cod Roy Island… There reside here five* ***families with their servants,*** *amounting to twenty-eight souls. They catch about forty barrels of salmon annually, which,* ***with herring, and a trifling cod fishery, are their chief means of***

> ***subsistence**. Coal is found on the south bank of Great Cod Roy River, six or seven miles from the sea**. The land between Cod Roy and where the coal occurs is low and flat; so that in the event of the coal being raised, it could be conveyed by means of a railroad from the mines to the shipping.** There were at this time ten Indian families encamped for the winter on the banks of Great Cod Roy River, about ten miles from its mouth. **The chief attraction for the Indian here is the abundance of eels and trout**."[1] (November 28th, 1822)

Despite the obvious need of the land for the fish and eels, Cormack observed that the land could be exploited for coal, and the landscape transformed with the construction of a railroad in order to gain access to the resources, regardless if the landscape served as an integral part of the local's diet. Cormack's vision of shaping the landscape in order to satisfy imperial resource needs reflects the modern day exploitation of the oil resources off the coast of West Africa, despite the need to access the waters for the subsistence lifestyle of many community members.[14] Before leaving the western portion of the island, the potential for development on this side of the island is presented:

> "***The soil in St. George's Bay is the best**, and at the same time **forms the most extensive tract of good soil any where on the coast of Newfoundland.** It is a low flat strip nearly the whole length of the Bay, lying between the sea shore and the mountains in the rear, interrupted only by Cape Anguille, which juts into the sea... **Iron pyrites of various forms occur in abundance on the west coast, particularly at Port au Port and that neighbourhood**... coal is reported to exist at other places on this coast, besides being at the Barasway and Cod Roy Rivers**. The Indians say it lies exposed in such abundance on the surface of the earth near the mouth of a brook on the west side of Port au Port that they have made fires of it on the spot; and this is an excellent harbour for shipping. Verde antique, of a dark green colour, spotted or mottled with white, is found at the north of Port au Port on the bed of what is called the Coal river, a few miles from the sea, and brought down in pieces by the Indians for the manufacture of tobacco pipes**. **The natural productions of the west coast, viewed in relation to the neighbouring countries are well deserving the attention of Canada in particular**. **Coal and the other valuable minerals are here in abundance, and may be considered at the very threshold of that country by means of steam navigation,** to the extension and support of which that material so directly contributes. **Iron is probably to be found in more profitable forms** than pyrites. By means of steamships**, the***

> ***countries bounding on the Gulf and River St. Lawrence could defy foreign aggression*** *and command* ***an extension of commerce****."* [1] (November 28th, 1822)

Not only was there potential for agricultural development, but also mining development, transportation, trade and defense. This was Cormack picturing the ideal Eurocentric landscape over this wild and undeveloped land. The Iron Pyrite is very rich in the area. As a young child, I would visit my grandmother's house on the Port au Port Peninsula in West Bay. The path leading from the house went down through the woods to the shoreline. I would often find iron pyrite amongst the various beach rocks in this area, and it brings back vivid memories of spending time with my family in nature.

The Southern Shore

After acquiring all of this valuable knowledge, Cormack continued to head towards the south coast. This is where he came upon the American territory along the southeast coast: *"Having slept the previous night in the winter house of one of the families at Little Cod Roy river, we to-day walked round Cape Ray,* ***here leaving the French Shore and entering upon American Newfoundland, or that division of the coast on which the Americans have a right of fishing and of drying their fish.*****"**[1] (November 29th, 1822) They came across a resident along Cape Ray whose summer home was located on the Cape, while:

> *"... a person of the name of Wm. Windsor, with his family. We found him* ***in his winter hut*** *in a spruce wood two or three miles to the eastward of the Cape.* ***The most perfect contentment, cheerfulness, poverty, and hospitality were the characteristics of the monarch of Cape Ray.*** *His resources, through the means of fishing,* ***enabled him to procure a sufficiency of coarse biscuit, molasses, and tea, by which, together with fowling, he supported his family****."* [1] (November 29th, 1822)

During the stay in a summer home of a Port aux Basques winter resident, it was noted that *"... on the west coast of Newfoundland****, there is neither Scotchman, Irishman, nor rat to be met with****; nor, it is said, has any member of these European families taken up an abode west of Fortune Bay****."* [1] (November 29th, 1822) It was striking to see the notation of Scotsman, Irishman and Rodent together, implying their status among imperial society during this time.

By December, Cormack finally reached the southwest tip of the island, and made it into Channel-Port aux Basques, where he parted ways with the guide from Cod Roy:

> *"Port au Basque, the nearest harbour to Cape Ray on the East, about twelve miles distant therefrom, we reached by boat from the Barasway. It had a fine open entrance, and good anchorage, and is sufficiently capacious for any number of ships to ride in safety.* ***The rendezvous for fishing vessels, small craft and boats, is a long narrow passage, immediately adjoining the west side of the harbour, formed by a chain of Islands which lie close along the coast, and is called Channel****. Four families reside here during the summer, pursuing the cod fishery at that season, and the furring in winter. A small safe basin called Little Bay, with a narrow entrance, adjoins Port au Basque immediately on the East. There are no summer residences here,* ***but two persons engaged in the cod fishery at the Dead Islands in summer were encamped in the woods for the winter. They undertook to convey me in their little skiff to Dead Island,*** *the next harbour to the east****; and in consequence, I here parted with my faithful and daring attendant, Parsons, from Cod Roy.*** *"*[1] (December 5th, 1822)

Cormack was fortunate to obtain assistance from the persons camping in the woods of Little Bay. It is interesting to note that the proper French toponomy of "Port aux Basques" named after the French whalers of the Basque region of the Pyrenees Mountains of France and Spain, as well as the old French "Isle-aux-Morts" are the ones that have survived to today, in order to commemorate the French influence on the west coast- despite the American influence over history. The island's toponomy reflects its *"...oddly layered record of Portuguese, French, Spanish, and Basque names*" as noted by George Story, and it is seen with the toponomy that has persisted to modern day.[11] At Isle-aux-Morts, Cormack sees the value in the local fishery, and why it is so enticing to the Americans:

> "*Dead Island - Reached this place from Little Bay. The harbour, here called Pass, is fit for any ships, and like Channel, is a narrow passage between a string of Islands and the main Island.* ***Port au Basque and Channel, and the Dead Island or Pass, are both excellent stations at which to carry on the American fisheries****. The fishing grounds in the vicinity of Cape Ray are probably the best on the Newfoundland coast for the resort of fishermen from a distance, they being peculiar in this important point,* ***that the cod are always to be found in abundance upon them, and caught at all seasons when the weather is not too boisterous,*** *and then the*

neighbouring harbours mentioned afforded shelter to the fishing craft. The ***fishery may be commenced here six weeks or a month earlier than at any other part of the coast****, and* ***continued in the fall of the year until Christmas****. Many industrious fishermen within a hundred miles eastward, do not leave these grounds until the end of December.* ***The cod caught in October, November, and December is called winter fish.*** *At Fortune Bay to the eastward, on the same coast, winter fish is caught by means of the smaller boats in the months of January, February, and March, in deep water close to the shores. The winter-caught fish is of a better quality than that taken at any other season.* ***It is allowed to remain in dry salt during the winter, and dried in the first warm weather in spring; being then sent to a foreign marke****t, it arrives at an early season of the year, when there is no other newly-cured fish to compete****, and brings fifty per cent. or upwards more than the fish dried in the preceding year****. There is no winter fish caught at Newfoundland except at the south-west coast. At the Dead Islands three families reside in summer,* ***whose chief pursuit is the cod fishery****. These Islands are composed chiefly of mica slate****. I was here fortunate in finding a very respectable industrious inhabitant, named Thomas Harvey, still occupying his summer house at the shore, and his fishing boat or shallop not yet dismantled for the winter****. Although no ordinary remuneration was equivalent to the risk at this inclement season on so dangerous a coast,* ***Harvey unhesitatingly manned and provisioned his boat to enable me to reach Fortune Bay.*** *It would have been impossible without the probability of being either frozen or starved to walk along this coast at this season of the year****, it is so indented with deep bays and rivers, and in a manner uninhabited and unexplored****."*[1]
(December 7th, 1822)

Cormack admits he would have likely died trying to head back to Fortune Bay along the treacherous coast, and once again, luck was on his side. Without his guide to show him the vernacular methods of travelling, he would never be able to get through the wilderness.

Harvey brought Cormack along the coast and he was able to observe the many small islands lining the southern coast:

"*We now got under weigh, with a fair wind, cheerfully passing by Harbour* ***le Cou, uninhabited****; **Garia**, with one resident family in summer; **Indian Island**, with one resident family; **La Poile**, a noble deep bay with two resident families; and reached **Grand Brit**, a good little harbour with two entrances, the west being the better, and where reside two families in summer, **whose habitations were now locked up and deserted**.*"[1] (December 11th, 1822)

Resettlement A Listing of Resettled and Abandoned Communities of the Burgeo-LaPolie District			
Bay of Chaleur South Coast Settled by 1836 Abandoned after 1911	**Cinq Cerf** (Sinq Cerf) South Coast Settled after 1845 Abandoned 1911	**Coppett**, Coppett Harbour South Coast Settled mid 1800's Abandoned by 1951	**Deer Island** (Bear Island) White Bear Bay Settled 1830's Abandoned by 1954
Garia (Garia Harbour) South Coast Settled by 1835 Abandoned after 1911	**Grand Bruit** - LaPolie Settled by 1830's Abandoned 2010	**Grandys** Passage South Coast Settled by 1869; Abandoned after 1921	**Hare Harbour** (Hare Bay) South Coast
Hiscocks Point South Coast Settled by 1857 Abandoned by 1921	**Hunt's Island** - Burgeo Settled by 1830's Abandoned - - -	**Indian Harbour**, La Poile Bay French use before 1800 Settled early 1800's Abandoned after 1951	**Irelands Island** (Irelands Eye), LaPoile Bay Light station Settled 1890 Abandoned after 1980
La Hune (Cape La Hune) La Hune Bay Settled by 1836 Abandoned 1963	**Locks Cove** (Bob Lock Cove) Hare Bay (South Coast) Settled 1856 Abandoned 1956	**McDougalls Gulch** (and Wreckhouse), railway sidings near Port aux Basques Settled by 1900 Abandoned 1966	**Mosquito, Bonne Bay** Settled early 1800's Abandoned 1935
North Bay (and East Bay) La Poile Bay Settled by 1857 Abandoned 1968	**Osmond** (Osbornes) Southwest Coast Settled late 1890's Abandoned after 1966	**Pooles Island** (Flat Island) Bonne Bay (South Coast) Settled 1872 Abandoned by 1911	**Red Island aka Bear Island** South Coast Settled 1820's Abandoned after 1951
Richards Harbour South Coast Settled by 1836 Abandoned 1966	**Round Harbour** La Poile Bay Settled in 1850's Abandoned after 1921	**Seal Island Harbour** South Coast Settled 1822 Abandoned after 1901	**West Point** LaPoile Bay Settled early 1800's Abandoned after 1969
White Bear Bay Settled by early 1800's Abandoned after 1901	**Wreck Island** South Coast Settled 1850 Abandoned 1893	**Cain's Island, Petites, Brazils, and Mulls Face Bay (called Moonsface locally)**	

These communities were not flourishing during the 19th century, however after Cormack's exploration, the population of fishermen and families grew along this coast. "***In 1884, eighty-two percent of Newfoundland's labour force*** *of 53,000 people was in the fishery. That year, the volume of salt cod peaked at 1.5 million quintals, while its export value also peaked at $5.5 million.* ***From the 1880s onward, the industry went into decline, and so did the fortunes of the producers connected to it****."*[12] However, even before, but especially after confederation in 1949, many of these tiny fishing communities were resettled. *"...a struggle was waged to* ***diversify its economy, widen the economic base, and modernize the structure of production*** *- all with the goal of creating new jobs for the growing population. That struggle - ultimately unsuccessful - Alexander argued,* ***ended in the financial collapse***

of 1933 and Newfoundland's loss of independence."[12] The collapse of the fishery in the late 20th century aided more of these communities to revert to containing so many more '*habitations that are now locked up and deserted'*. The provincial government continues to push residents of smaller communities to consider resettlement, despite the historical and cultural significance of these outport communities.

> "*Having passed the night at* ***Cingserf,*** *we set off again with a fair wind; touch at and pass through amongst the Burgeo Islands…* ***In the evening we reached the Rameo Islands, the east extremity of that portion of the Newfoundland coast at which the Americans have a right of fishing and of curing fish****. There are only two resident families here.* ***The Americans have****, by the treaty of Ghent,* ***a right of fishing and curing their fish in common with British subjects, on the coast between Cape Ray and the Rameo Islands****, an extent of about seventy-five miles."*[1] (December 13th, 1822)

There is an unquestioned need for vernacular knowledge in order to navigate this dangerous southern coast. With threats from hidden rocks and strong currents, vernacular understanding of the coastal landscape is crucial to avoid disaster on these fishing grounds:

> "***Thousands of valuable lives have been lost by shipwreck, particularly to the eastward of Cape Ray, in consequence of most dangerous currents and sunken rocks that exist here, being unnoticed upon any chart; and until the colonists themselves take up the cause of humanity, it is not likely these dangers will for a long time be made known or a light-house erected on that coast****. The residents here, as at St. George's Bay, and at most of the north and west harbours of the Island, have both summer and winter houses. They retire to the residences or* ***huts in the woods on the setting in of the winter****, for facility of firewood and shelter; the labour attending the conveyance of fuel* ***to their summer residences at the shore****, which are exposed to every inclemency of the weather, being very great.* ***They sometimes remove to a distance of thirty miles and even farther to the sequestered woods at the heads of bays and harbours, and on the banks of rivers, taking with them their boats, furniture, and provisions, and re-appear at the coast in the month of April.*** *The habits and imperative performances of the beaver for preservation of self and kind****, are at least equally perfect with those of the European settlers or Indians on the coast.*** *Each have their summer and winter abodes, and respectively provide for their retirement, &c.* ***Sea fowl and birds of passage*** *resort to the south-west coast in great*

numbers in the fall of the year; and during that season, as well as in winter, ***constitute a considerable portion of the provisions of the inhabitants****."*[1] (December 13th, 1822)

The residents of the south coast also live a **bicoastal lifestyle**, as depicted by John Gillis in his Seacoast in History interview, where they head to the summer residences along the shore in the summer and head into the interior during the winter.[4] The residents of the island take their belongings with them, which reduces the amount of possessions each person can acquire.

Cormack notes that several mainland animals such as squirrels and raccoons were not found on the island of Newfoundland. He makes reference to a species of 'penguins' that once thrived on the islands' coast near Ramea, however, they are now extinct, and human influence was to blame. This may have been referring to the 'Great Auks' which were flightless birds that had a similar coloration to penguins. They were harvested by the European fishermen, and it is presumed to have led to their decline.[22]

"***Neither squirrel, porcupine, or racoon have been met with on the Island****. Penguins were once numerous at this coast, their breeding place having been the Penguin Islands, about fifteen miles north-east from Rameo Islands.* ***They have been extirpated by man****, none having been seen for some years past. Halibuts abound more at the south-west coast than elsewhere. The young, in the fall, is one of the finest fishes on these coasts****; but its excellence seems to be little known except to the fishermen and their families.*** *It may be cured in several ways."*[1] (December 13th, 1822)

Cormack also refers to the halibut resource as having potential for development, as it was only known to local peoples.

After assessing the islands of the south-west coast, Cormack headed towards Baie D'Espoir, and notes that the other small settlements are quite similar to those listed thus far. "*Having been wind-bound one day in Richard's Harbour, a favouring breeze now carries us to the Bay of Despair, and* ***in sight of the whaling and cod fishery establishment of Messrs. Newman, Hunt & Co., of London.*** *The few inhabitants, and their pursuits, between Rameo and the Bay of Despair, are similar to those farther to the westward.*"[1] (December 16th, 1822) Cormack felt like he had finally returned to 'civilization' upon reaching this commercial fishery infrastructure. He began winding down his remarks of the first trek through the interior: "*Here ended a* ***four months' excursion of toil, pleasure, pain, and anxiety****, succeeded by the* ***delight of being again restored to society, which was enjoyed with the gentlemen and families of the mercantile establishments*** *at the Bay of Despair and Fortune Bay.*"[1] (December 16th, 1822)

Instead of sailing to St. John's in mid-December, Cormack heading right on to England: "*It was impossible to reach St. John's, and I took passage at Little Bay, in Fortune, by the ship "Duck," sailing on the 28th December, and arrived in Dartmouth, in England, on the 10th February, 1823*."[1] (1822) This concludes Cormack's first journey through the interior of the island, being 'the first European man' to do so.

The Capture of Shawnandithit, her sister, and Doodebewshet

Post-expedition, Cormack was insistent on preserving what remained of the great Beothuks. Following his expedition, and the failure to locate the Beothuk people, the capture of Shawnandithit's aunt Demasduwit ignited a new fire for the search for the elusive Beothuk. Letters regarding the capture of Shawnandithit, her sister, as well as her mother Doodebewshet were included in the 'Narrative of a Journey Across the Island of Newfoundland in 1822'.

> *June 23rd, 1823. "Last week there were brought to this town* ***three Red Indians so called****, who are the aboriginal inhabitants of this island. They are all females and their capture was accomplished in the following manner.* ***In the month of March last*** *a party of men from the neighbourhood of Twillingate were in the country hunting for fur. The party went two and two in different directions. After a while one of these small parties* ***saw on a distant hill a man coming towards them****. Supposing him while at a distance* ***to be one of their own party, they fired a powder gun to let their friend know their where-about.*** *The Red Indian generally runs at the report of a musket, not so in the present instance, the man quickened his pace towards them.* ***They now, from his gait and dress, discerned that he was an Indian, but thought that he was a Micmac and still felt no anxiety****. Soon they found their mistake and ascertained that the stranger was one of the Red Indians.* ***He was approaching in a threatening manner with a large club in his hand****. They now put themselves in a posture of defence and beckoned the Indian to surrender. This was of no use, he came on with double fury,* ***and when nearly at the muzzle of their guns one of the men fired and the Indian fell dead at their feet****.* ***As they had killed the man without any design or intention, they felt deeply concerned, and resolved at once to leave the hunting ground and return home.*** *In passing through a droke of woods they came up with a wigwam which they entered, and took three Indian females,* ***which have been since found to be Mother and her two daughters.*** *These women they brought to their own homes****, where they kept them till they could carry them to St. John's and receive the Government reward for bringing a Red Indian captive.****"*[1]

After being unable to communicate with the Beothuk man, the Europeans shot him in order to protect themselves from a possibly violent stranger. The men felt they had done something wrong and decided to retreat out of the indigenous territory. However, they captured three indigenous women and took them

to St. John's for a reward in April of 1823, depicting that the goal of the governing peoples was to remove the peoples from their homes and bring them into St. John's for examination.

> ***"The parties were brought to trial for killing the man, but as there was no evidence against them, they were acquitted****. The women were first taken to Government House and by order of His Excellency the Governor, a comfortable room in the Court house was assigned to them, as a place of residence, where they were treated with every kindness. The mother is far advanced in life, but seems in good health.* ***Beds were provided for them but they did not understand their use, and slept on their deer skins in the corner of the room.*** *One of the daughters was ill,* ***yet she would take no medicine****.* ***The doctor recommended Phlebotomy*** *and a gentleman allowed a vein to be opened in his arm to show her that there was no intention to kill her, but this was to no purpose, for when she saw the lancet brought near her own arm, both she and her companions got into a state of fury; so that the Doctor had to desist. Her sister was in good health. She seemed about 22 years of age."*[1]

The European men were not held accountable for the murder of the indigenous man, similar to the lack of persecusion for the death of Shawnandithit's uncle, and the Europeans attempted to do what they could to help the captured women. Among these women were *Shanawdithit*, her sister, and her mother *Doodebewshet*. The indigenous women did not understand the imperial use of a bed and preferred to sleep on animal skins on the floor. The imperial assumption was that a lobotomy would make the women more docile and easier to deal with. However, the indigenous women refused to take medicine or be operated on by doctors, as they did not trust these imperial strangers, even if those 'medical professionals' thought they meant no harm at the time.

> ***"If she had ever used red ochre about her person, there was no sign of it in her face. Her complexion was swarthy, not unlike the Micmacs; her features were handsome; she was a tall fine figure and stood nearly six feet high, and such a beautiful set of teeth, I do not know that I ever saw in a human head. She was bland, affable and affectionate****. I showed her my watch she put it to her ear and was amused with its tick. A gentleman put a looking glass before her and her grimaces were most extraordinary, but when a black lead pencil was put into her hand and a piece of white paper laid upon the table, she was in raptures.* ***She made a few marks on the paper apparently to try the pencil; then in one flourish she drew a deer perfectly****, and what*

is most surprising, ***she began at the tip of the tail****. One person pointed to his fingers and counted ten; which she repeated in good English; but when she had numbered all her fingers, her English was exhausted, and* ***her numeration if numeration it were was in Beothuck tongue****.* ***This person whose Indian name is Shanawdithit****, is thought to be the wife of the man who was shot.* ***The old woman was morose, and had the look and action of a savage****. She would sit all day on the floor with a deer-skin shawl on,* ***and looked with dread or hatred on every one that entered the Court house****. When we came away, Shanawdithit, kissed all the company, shook hands with us and distinctly repeated good bye."*

Shawnandithit proved to be extremely intelligent and adaptable to new circumstances. She was emotive and quickly learned to draw, count and speak a few English words. The Europeans figured out that Shawnandithit's husband was the man who was shot in the woods, and she was now in St. John's with her sister and mother. Shawnandithit's mother was hardened by the atrocities seen in her past, where she remained looking furious at her captors and other Europeans who came to gawk at them. Shawnandithit, on the other hand, was enthusiastic and able to process her surroundings, acting with much appreciation and curiosity.

*June 24th. – "****Saw the three Indian women in the street. The ladies had dressed them in English garb, but over their dresses they all had on their, to them, indispensable deer-skin shawls; and Shanawdithit thinking the long front of her bonnet an unnecessary appendage had torn it off and in its place had decorated her forehead and her arms with tinsel and coloured paper.*** *GRASSHOPPER, ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUNDLAND. 28th June, 1823."*[1]

Many of the residents of St. John's were fascinated to see the Beothuk women as they travelled along the street. The women took articles they thought to be beautiful such as coloured paper and tinsel, and also took many useful tools such as hatchets and pots. Even the elderly woman was also determined to get her share of the articles which they were to take back to their home with them.

July 23rd, 1823. "*Sir, I beg leave to acquaint you for the information of the Governor that* ***I left the three Indian women on the 12th instant at Charles' Brook and that they appeared perfectly happy at our leaving them.*** *I called there again on the 14th instant,* ***when I gave them a little boat, at which the young woman was much pleased, and gave me to understand that she***

should go to look for the Indians and bring them down with her. *I am sorry to add the sick woman still remained without hopes of her recovery. I have the honour to be, Sir, Your most obedient, humble servant, (signed) JNO. PEYTON, Jr. Copy (sgd) P. C. LEGEYT, Secretary."*[1]

The Decline of the Beothuk People

Jumping ahead a couple of years to, *June 29th, 1825* and analyzing an *'extract of a disputation from R. A. Tucker, Esq. Administering to the Government of Newfoundland, to R. W. Horton, Esq'.*

"***You are doubtless aware that three of the Aborigines of this Island were brought to St. John's about two years ago, and two of them died very shortly after their return to the Bay of Exploits, the third, a woman about 18 or 19 years of age is still alive****, and from the person under whose charge she has since continued I understand that* ***she has acquired a sufficient knowledge of the English language to communicate that information respecting her tribe which we have so long been desirous to obtain****.* ***She states that the whole number of her tribe did not exceed fifteen persons in the winter of 1823, and that they were obliged by the want of food to separate into three or four parties.*** *Of these fifteen,* ***two were shot by some of our settlers, one was drowned and three fell into our hands, so that only nine at the utmost remain to be accounted for,*** *and Mr. Peyton (the person in whose house the Native Indian resides) tells me that from the circumstance of his* ***not being able to discover the most distant trace of any of them for the two last winters he is convinced that they must all have perished.*** *If such be the fact,* ***this woman is the sole survivor of her race and of course whatever curiosity may be felt regarding it can be gratified by her alone.***"[1]

We learn that the Beothuk peoples have been reduced down from a group of approximately 2000 to just 15 in the winter of 1823, until 3 more peoples met their end. With three women captured and 2 of them perishing later, there were only 9 other Beothuk left in the interior of the island. Over the two prior years, no traces of these peoples could be found, and Shawnandithit was presumed to be the last remaining survivor of the great Beothuk people of Newfoundland.

*"****It must also I conceive be interesting to learn from her what notions they had of a Supreme Being, to examine into the present state of her mental faculties and to try how far they are***

> ***susceptible of improvement by education***. *Regarding her therefore in these and in many other particulars as an object of considerable interest, I have been irresistibly compelled by my feelings to draw your attention to her.*"[1]

Based on Shawnandithit's ability to quickly show the capacity to be educated by imperial standards, it was emphasized that time should be invested in teacher her how to communicate fully in English. The Europeans desired to 'improve' the indigenous woman's condition by being able to communicate with her, and obtain vital information about the Beothuk people.

> *"After remaining a few weeks in St. John's the women were sent back to Exploits with many presents in the hope that they might meet and share them with their people.* ***They were conveyed up the river Exploits some distance by a party of Europeans and left on the bank with some provisions, clothing, &c., to find their friends as they best might.*** *Their provisions were soon exhausted, and not meeting any of their tribe, they wandered on foot down the right bank of the river,* ***and in a few days again reached the English habitations.***"[1]

The indigenous women were brought back to their territory, however could not be reunited with any remaining members of their community. **Without finding the rest of their group, Shawnandithit's mother and sister perished not long after returning to a European settlement**. Shawnandithit was allowed to reside with Mr. Peyton, and she there assumed her 'Western' name Nancy, or Nance.

> ***"When the old woman died he took Shanawdithit into his house where she acted as a kind of servant, doing, however, pretty much as she liked.*** *An old woman, Mrs. Jure, of Exploits Island, whom I met in 1886, and who resided with the Peyton family at the same time as Nancy, gave me the following particulars concerning her.* ***Nance, as she was familiarly called,*** *was swarthy in complexion but with very pleasing features, rather inclined to be stout but of good figure.* ***She was bright and intelligent, quick to acquire the English language, and of a retentive memory. She was very pert at times, and when her mistress had occasion to scold her, she would answer very sharply, "what de matter now Missa Peyton, what you grumble bout."*** *At times she got into sulky fits or became too lazy to do anything. When such moods were upon her* ***she would go off and hide in the woods for days together, only returning when the sulks had worn off, or when driven back by hunger****...* ***She was very ingenious at carving and could make combs out***

of deers' horns and carve them beautifully. She would take a piece of birch bark, double it up and bite with her teeth into a variety of figures of animals or other designs, i.e. to say when the bark was again unfolded, the impressions thereupon would be such."[1]

Shawnandithit – the Final Beothuk

Shawnandithit proved to be quite knowledgeable and resorted running away to the 'wilderness' where she could get away from the Eurocentric lifestyle she was being led into, whenever she got 'in trouble' or it became too much for her. She demonstrated creative ability when making carvings and designs representing her former community symbols.

"I have seen myself, a Micmac Indian perform this same feat*... According to Mr. Peyton,* ***she exhibited the greatest antipathy to the Micmacs, more especially towards one Noel Boss, whom she so dreaded that whenever he, or even his dog made their appearance, she would run screeching with terror and cling to Mr. P. for protection.*** *She called this man Mudty Noel ("Bad Noel").* ***She stated that he once fired at her across the Exploits River, as she was stooping down in the act of cleaning some venison****.* ***In proof of this she exhibited the marks of gunshot wounds in her arms and legs; one slug passing through the palm of her hand****.* ***Mr. W. E. Cormack, to whom she also showed these marks, confirms this statement.*** *"*[1]

Even though there was shared vernacular knowledge of creative expression between Beothuk and Mi'kmaq, Shawnandithit demonstrates that the introduction of firearms to the indigenous peoples cause the upmost extreme competition and resulted in the mass injury and murder of her people as well. "*Cormack thought of creating a 'Beothuck Institution'* ***with its first objective being 'that of bringing about a reconciliation of the Aborigines, to the approaches of civilization****.' Cormack proposed this and it was unanimously resolved at the first meeting to make Bishop Inglis of Nova Scotia the Honorary Patron of the Institution and Professor Jameson of Scotland an Honorary Vice Patron."*[15]

Cormack's Second Journey Through the Interior

As Cormack prepared undertake a second expedition to the interior of Newfoundland, Cormack wrote to John Peyton*: "...I assure you it gives me sincere regret that you cannot join me in my intended visit to the Red Indians this fall… My object this fall will only to be to see some of them,* ***leave a favourable impression with them of the friendly disposition of some white people.*** *If this is done and they are not molested for a year afterwards, we will be likely to have a friendly interview with them with some confidence existing between the parties…* ***Should Joseph Sylvester come your way, if he knows where to find the Indians I would like very well he would travel with me again****…"*[15] Cormack wished to be granted the ability to travel with his original guide once again, who proved to be strong throughout the journey. "*By the mid 1820's it was well known that the Beothuck tribe had dwindled drastically. It was even feared the tribe was reaching a point of extinction. Cormack was anxious to discover if this was so.* ***In 1827, he planned another trek into the heart of the interior of the island, this time farther to the northward, the area already known to be Beothuck territory.*****"**[15] Cormack obtained three volunteers to accompany him on his trek to find the Beothuk peoples: "*My party consisted of three Indians, whom I procured from among the other different tribes, viz****. an intelligent and able man of the Abenakie tribe,*** *from Canada;* ***an elderly Mountaineer from Labrador****; and an adventurous* ***young Micmack, a native of this island****, together with myself…* "*On the 30th of October 1827, we entered the country at the mouth of the River Exploits, on the north side, at what is called the Northern Arm.*"[17]

Cormack's recollection of the second journey took place at a Beothuck Institution meeting where he revealed his expedition and the knowledge he obtained:

> "*Pursuant to special summons, a meeting of this Institution was held at St John's on the 12th day of January 1828; the Honourable A.W. Desbarres, Vice-Patron, in the chair. The Honourable Chairman stated, that the primary motive which led to the formation of the Institution,* ***was the desire of opening a communication with, and promoting the civilization of, the Red Indians of Newfoundland****; and of procuring, if possible,* ***an authentic history of that unhappy race of people, in order that their language, customs and pursuits, might be contrasted with those of other tribes of Indians and nations****;--that, in following up the chief object of the institution, it was anticipated that* ***much information would be obtained respecting the natural productions***

***of the island**; **the interior of which is less known than any other of the British possessions abroad**.*"[17]

The vernacular local knowledge of the indigenous peoples was clearly valuable to the imperial governors of the colony, who knew very little about the true potential of their asset.

While Cormack and his party were at the east end of Badger Bay-Great Lake, they came across a **'portage'** which was known as 'the **Indian Path',** where they "*…found traces made by the Red Indians, evidently in the spring or summer of the preceding year**. Their party had had two canoes; and here was a 'canoe-rest', on which the daubs of red-ochre, and the roots of trees used to fasten or tie it together appeared fresh**. A canoe-rest is simply a few beams, supported horizontally, about five feet from the ground, by perpendicular posts."*[17] The group came across indigenous infrastructure that signified the indigenous peoples had recently passed through the area: "***Among other things which lay strewed about here, were a spear-shaft, eight feet in length, recently made and ochred; parts of old canoes, fragments of their skin-dresses,*** *&c. For some distance around, the trunks of many of the birch, and of that species of spruce pine called here the Var (_Pinus balsamifera_),* ***had been rinded****; these people using the inner part of the bark of that kind of tree for food.* ***Some of the cuts in the trees with the axe were evidently made the preceding year.*** *Besides these, we were elated by other encouraging signs. The traces left by the Red Indians are so peculiar, that we were confident those we saw here were made by them*."[17] These signs were giving the party hope, as it had seemed they had been through this area in the previous year. However, it is heartbreaking to know that it is likely this group was too late to find those Beothuk peoples. As the group headed eastward, they came across *"...**the remains of one of their villages**, where the vestiges of eight or ten winter "**mamateeks" or wigwams**, each intended to contain from six to eighteen or twenty people, are **distinctly seen close together**."*[17] The Beothuk people erected their shelters very close together, and did not have fencing nor showed signs of having private land ownership, like much of Europe at the time. Instead, this setup was similar to '**the commons'** of early Europe, before they were swallowed up by privatization of land "*Between 1725 and 1825 nearly four thousand **enclosure acts appropriated more than six million acres of land, about a quarter of cultivated acreage to the politically dominant landowners… It got rid of open-field villages and common rights** and contributed to the late eighteenth century's crisis of poverty*."[19] The group also came upon the remains of some summer wigwams along with the winter ones. *"Every winter wigwam*

has ***close by it a small square-mouthed or oblong pit, dug into the earth, about four feet deep, to preserve their stores…"***[17] These were even more signs that the Beothuk people made use of the landscape in ways that were similar to the practice of gardening.

The group continued on to Hall's Bay and questioned the three English families who were settled there about the Beothuk peoples: "***Indeed we could hardly have expected any; for these, and such people, have been the unchecked and ruthless destroyers of the tribe, the remnant of which we were in search of***."[17]

Five days later, the group were south of White Bay, and in sight of the lands east of the Bay of Islands.

> "*The deer were migrating from the rugged and dreary mountains in the north to the low mossy barrens and more woody parts in the south; and we inferred,* ***that if any of the Red Indians had been at White Bay during the past summer, they might be at that time stationed about the borders of the low tract of country before us,*** *at the 'deer-passes', or were employed somewhere else in the interior, killing deer for winter provision*."[17] For two days, the group examined the landscape from high points on the hills, in an attempt to see traces of smoke from Beothuk camps. "*We now determined* ***to proceed towards the Red Indians' Lake****, sanguine that,* ***at that known rendezvous, we would find the objects of our search***."[17]

As the trek continued, it wasn't until ten days later that the group saw

> "*the ravages of fire, which we saw in the woods for the last two days, indicated that man had been near…* ***No canoe could be discovered moving on its placid surface in the distance****… We approached the lake with hope and caution;* ***but found to our mortification that the Red Indians had deserted it for some years past****. My party had been so excited, so sanguine, and so determined to obtain an interview of some kind with these people, that,* ***on discovering, from appearances every where around us, that the Red Indians--the terror of the Europeans as well as the other Indian inhabitants of Newfoundland—no longer existed,*** *the spirits of one and all of us were very deeply affected.* ***The old mountaineer was particularly overcome.*** *There were every where indications that* ***this had long been the central and undisturbed rendezvous of the***

tribe, where they had enjoyed peace and security*. But these primitive people had abandoned it,* ***after having been tormented by parties of Europeans during the last thirteen*** *years. Fatal rencounters had on these occasions unfortunately taken place*."[17]

This was the first true sign that the Beothuk people had been exterminated and represents a crucial moment in history. *"...****surveying the various remains of what we now contemplated to have been an unoffending and cruelly extirpated people****. At several places, by the margin of the lake, are small clusters of winter and summer* ***wigwams in ruins****."*[17] Geographers Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin *"...argue that the beginning of the Anthropocene should be placed in 1492, the year when the colonization of what would become the Americas resulted in the genocide of Indigenous peoples*."[20] 1827 represents a date of similar significance, where the genocide of the indigenous peoples ended and there were no longer signs of remaining Beothuk peoples on the island of Newfoundland. All that was left during this time were the summer and winter homes of the peoples, laid in wreckage.

Cormack noted that there was a wooden building for drying and smoking meat which was still in good condition, and a small log-house in 'dilapidated condition' which was thought to have been a 'store-house'. "*The wreck of a large handsome birch-rind canoe, about twenty-two feet in length, comparatively new, and certainly very little used, lay thrown up among the bushes at the beach.* ***We supposed that the violence of a storm had rent it in the way it was found, and that the people who were in it had perished; for the iron nails, of which there was no want, all remained in it***."[17] It was likely that the remaining Beothuk people suffered from starvation and/or disease which caused them to meet their end.

The group came across wooden infrastructure for the preservation of the dead:

"***These are of different constructions, it would appear, according to the character or rank of the persons entombed****. In one of them, which resembled a hut, ten feet by eight or nine, and four or five feet high in the centre, floored with squared poles, the roof covered with rinds of trees, and in every way well secured against the weather inside and the intrusion of wild beasts, there were two grown persons laid out at full length on the floor, the bodies wrapped round with deer-skins.* ***One of these bodies appeared to have been placed here not longer ago than five or six years.*** *We thought there were children laid in here also. On first opening this building, by removing the posts which formed the ends, our curiosity was raised to the highest pitch; but what*

added to our surprise, was the ***discovery of a white deal coffin, containing a skeleton neatly shrouded in white muslin****. After a long pause of conjecture how such a thing existed here, the idea of 'Mary March' occurred to one of the party, and the whole mystery was at once explained… In this cemetery were deposited a variety of articles, in some instances the property, in others the representations of the property and utensils, and of the achievements, of the deceased… There were two small wooden images of a man and woman****, no doubt meant to represent husband and wife; a small doll, which we supposed to represent a child*** *(for 'Mary March' had to leave her only child here, which died two days after she was taken) several small models of their canoes; two small models of boats; an iron axe; a bow and quiver of arrows were placed by the side of 'Mary March's' husband; and two fire-stones (radiated iron pyrites, from which they produce fire, by striking them together) lay at his head; there were also various kinds of culinary utensils, neatly made, of birch-rind, and ornamented; and many other things, of some of which we did not know the use or meaning.*"[17]

It is likely that this was the gravesite of Shawnandithit's family, as Shawnandithit had described to Cormack "*how the body of Demasduwit was placed with that of Nonosbawsut in a sepulchre by her people*."[23] Cormack believe to have found the sepulchre which Shawnandithit spoke of:

"*His tribe built this cemetery for him, on the foundation of his own wigwam, and his body is one of those now in it. The following winter, Captain Buchan was sent to the River Exploits, by order of the local government of Newfoundland, to take back this woman to the lake where she was captured, and, if possible, at the same time, to open a friendly intercourse with her tribe. But she died on board Captain B.'s vessel, at the mouth of the river. Captain B.,* ***however, took up her body to the lake;*** *and not meeting with any of her people,* ***left it where they were afterwards likely to meet with it.*** *It appears the Indians were this winter encamped on the banks of the River Exploits, and observed Captain B.'s party passing up the river on the ice. They retired from their encampments in consequence; and, some weeks afterwards, went by a circuitous route to the lake, to ascertain what the party had been doing there. They found 'Mary March's' body, and removed it from where Captain B. had left it to where it now lies, by the side of her husband."*[17]

Thus, the remaining members of the Beothuk community, including Shawnandithit herself, were able to reunite the bodies of Shawnandithit's family before they too suffered fatal conditions. Cormack notes

that the Beothuk always showed respect for their dead, "*and the most remarkable remains of them commonly observed by Europeans,* ***at the sea-coast,*** *are their burying-places.* ***These are at particular chosen spots; and it is well known that they have been in the habit of bringing their dead from a distance to them****. With their women, they bury only their clothes*."[17] which is just another piece of local indigenous knowledge that was crucial to obtain before it was lost due to the butchering of their peoples.

On the north side of the lake, the group came across 'deer fences' which were approximately a ½ mile apart, and led into to the water. "*The Red Indians make these fences to lead and scare the deer to the lake, during the periodical migration of these animals****; the Indians being stationed looking out, when the deer get into the water to swim across, the lake being narrow at this end, they attack and kill the animals with spears out of their canoes.*** *In this way they secure their winter provisions before the severity of that season sets in… It was melancholy to contemplate the gigantic, yet feeble efforts of a whole primitive nation, in their anxiety to* ***provide subsistence****, forsaken and going to decay…* ***There must have been hundreds of the Red Indians, and that not many years ago, to have kept up these fences and ponds****. As their numbers were lessened so was their ability to keep them up for the purposes intended;* ***and now the deer pass the whole line unmolested****."*[17] The fences erected by the indigenous peoples were used to make subsistence living easier, rather than to delineate personal property, as is the common European use. As they continue on, Cormack noted that there were other remains '*of different kinds peculiar to these people met with about the lake.*'[17]

It was noted that, one night while the group was camped along the infamous Beothuk territory, the indigenous members of the party were extremely uneasy: "*A large fire at night is the life and soul of such a party as ours, and when it blazed up at times, I could not help observing,* ***that two of my Indians evinced uneasiness*** *and want of confidence in things around,* ***as if they thought themselves usurpers on the Red Indian territory****.* ***From time immemorial none of the Indians of the other tribes had ever encamped near this lake fearlessly, and, as we had now done, in the very centre of such a country****; the lake and territory adjacent having been always considered to belong exclusively to the Red Indians, and to have been occupied by them."***[17] Cormack notes the monumental fact that they were the first to be camping on the Beothuk territory. Since the beginning of European history, these peoples were conquerors of the interior of the island, preventing colonization from spreading deep into the woods

beyond the shores, in fear of these great savage beings. Now, for the first time, these woods have gone quiet and the lands are no longer walked upon by Beothuk people.
"*We infer, that the few of these people who yet survive, have taken refuge in some sequestered spot, still in the northern part of the island, and where they can procure deer to subsist on*."[17] This concluded the second expedition around the Beothuk territory, and the group figured there were little to none of the remaining community members attempting to survive deep in the woods.

Remarks from the Institution

Cormack concluded that the institution which was founded with the goal of protecting the indigenous peoples of the island had failed at that mission:

> *"...as a member of an* ***institution formed to protect the aboriginal inhabitants of the country*** *in which we live, and to prosecute inquiry into the moral character of man in his primitive state, I can, at this early stage of our institution, assert, trusting to nothing vague,* ***that we already possess more information concerning these people than has been obtained during the two centuries and a-half in which Newfoundland has been in the possession of Europeans****. But it is to be lamented that now, when we have* ***taken up the cause of a barbarously treated people, so few should remain to reap the benefit of our plans for their civilization***."[17]

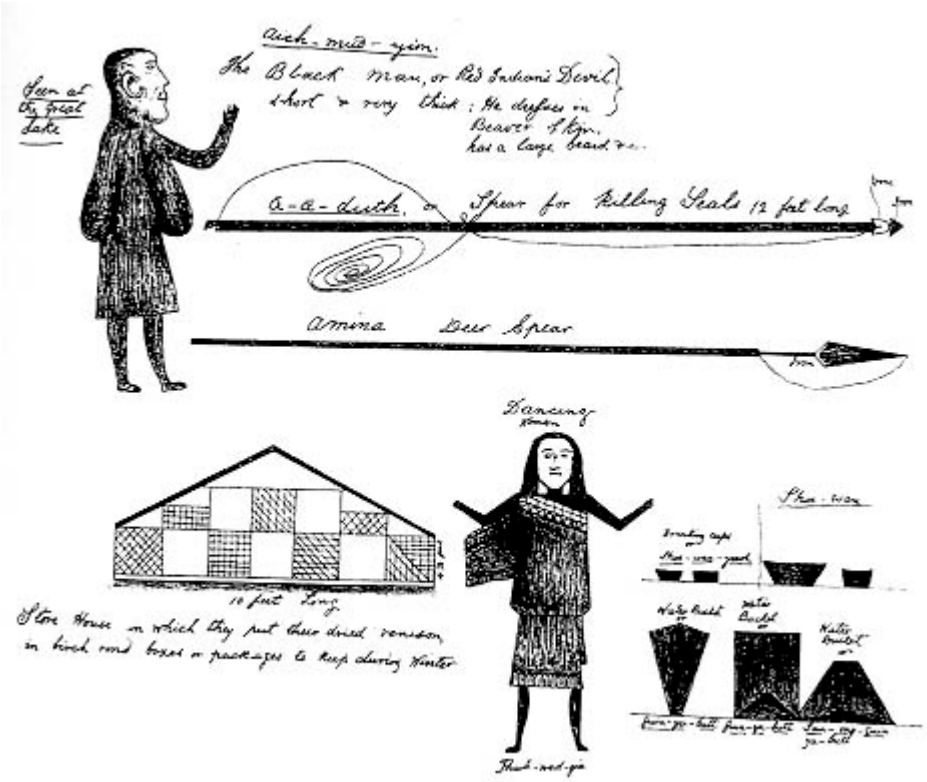
He continued with suggesting that a dialog should be opened with the remaining indigenous peoples of the island in order to avoid previous disasters. "*The institution and its supporters will agree with me, that, after the unfortunate circumstances attending past encounters between the Europeans and the Red Indians, it is* ***best now to employ Indians belonging to the other tribes to be the medium of beginning the intercourse we have in view****; and indeed I have already chosen three of the most intelligent men from among the others met with in Newfoundland to follow up my search.*"[17]

The second expedition was able to result in "*the acquisition of several ingenious articles****, the manufacture of the 'Boeothicks', some of which we had the good fortune to discover on our recent excursion;--models of their canoes, bows and arrows, spears of different kinds****, &c.* ***and also a complete dress worn by that people.*** *Their* ***mode of kindling fire*** *is not only original, but as far as we at*

present know, ***is peculiar to the tribe****."*[17] Armed with this information *'together with a short vocabulary of their language consisting of 200 to 300 words, which I have been enabled to collect'*, Cormack was able to prove the Beothuk people to be a distinct group of indigenous peoples, unique from any other previously discovered.[17]

A.W. des Barres, Chairman and Vice-Patron of the institution recommended: "*that the measures recommended in the president's report be agreed to****; and that the three men, Indians of the Canadian and Mountaineer tribes, be placed upon the establishment of this institution, to be employed under the immediate direction and control of the president; and that they be allowed for their services such a sum of money as the president may consider a fair and reasonable compensation****: That it be the endeavour of this institution to collect every* ***useful information respecting the natural productions and resources of this island,*** *and, from time to time, to publish the same in its reports: That* ***the instruction of 'Shawnawdithit' would be much accelerated by bringing her to St John's****, &c.: That the proceedings of the institution, since its establishment, be laid before his Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, by the president, on his arrival in England.*"[17] The imperial decision was to remain involved in 'Indian Affairs' and continue to manage and dictate the movement of indigenous peoples on the island of Newfoundland.

The End of an Era, since time immemorial



Shawnandithit remained with Mr. Peyton until 1828 when the "Beothuck Institute," at the request of Cormack, the institution's President, had her brought to St. John's.

She then resided with Cormack until he left the island in 1829. While with Cormack, she sketched scenes involving the interactions between Beothuk peoples and British peoples, as well as depicting Beothuk 'artifacts'.
Shawnandithit was then admitted to the care of Mr. Simms, 'Attorney-General of the Colony', and she died in June, 1829.

The 1820's were a significant decade of change on the island of Newfoundland. It was during this time that the first European scouted out the interior for imperial use. It was also during this time that the Beothuk peoples met their end, and towards the end of the decade, the final remnant, Shawnandithit also met her end. This is the time where imperial governing exterminates their biggest threat to the exploitation of the interior. Cormack aided in the understanding of the interior landscape and altered the imperial assumption that the interior was dominated by Beothuk people. Without them, Britain is able to make use of the full landscape of the island. Cormack aided in separating Shawnandithit from her fellow community members, and though he was encouraging his fellow Europeans to learn about the Beothuk people, this ultimately led to her passing alone, separated from her home and community.

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IMAGES

Image 1: **William Epps Cormack:** Courtesy of Archives and Special Collections, Queen Elizabeth II Library, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, NL. http://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/newfoundland-interior.php

Image 2: Taken by Kelly Young: "Narrative of a Journey across the Island of Newfoundland – By W. E. Cormack, Esq., - The only one ever performed by a European." At the Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Rare Collection, Queen Elizabeth II Library, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, NL.

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Image 5: Calvert, George, 1st Baron Baltimore. Dictionary of Canadian Biography. http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/calvert_george_1E.html

Image 6: Scott Leslie/Minden Pictures. See: https://www.gettyimages.ca/detail/photo/atlantic-puffin-group-on-cliff-baccalieu-high-res-stock-photography/102330982

Image 8: Taken by Scott Martin: "Windy Day at the Beach" Hickman's Harbour, Random Island. July 9th, 2000 http://nfinteractive.com/galleries/70photos_rand_isle/page6.html

Image 14: Exploring one of Newfoundland's last frontiers. February 14, 2012. Bay du Nord Wilderness Reserve. https://janicesadventures.wordpress.com/tag/wilderness-reserve/

Image 15,16,20,29: Taken by Kelly Young: MapArt Publishing Corporation. 2018. Map of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Image 17: Mi'kmaq Spirit. Mi'kmaq Sprituality – The Medicine Wheel. http://www.muiniskw.org/pgCulture2b.htm

Image 21: Anonymous. 2018. We Were Here Installation. Located at abandoned military base in Red Cliff, Newfoundland.

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Image 35: Mike Strizic. 2015. Meet Chief Mi'sel Joe. Adventure Canada. http://blog.adventurecanada.com/meet-chief-misel-joe/

Image 37: Dr. Olaf Janzen. 2018 *Newfoundland Surveys (1763-1767).* James Cook 250. http://jamescook250.org/ch-1-eastern-canada/newfoundland-surveys-1763-1767/

Image 39: Newfoundland Grand Banks Site. Genealogical & Historical Data. Resettlement. *A Listing of Resettled and Abandoned Communities of the Burgeo-La Polie District*
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Image 40: Liam Herringshaow. 2009. Penguins of Newfoundland. Old Lost Sea.
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Image 42: Narrative of a Journey across the Island of Newfoundland – By W. E. Cormack, Esq., - The only one ever performed by a European.

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