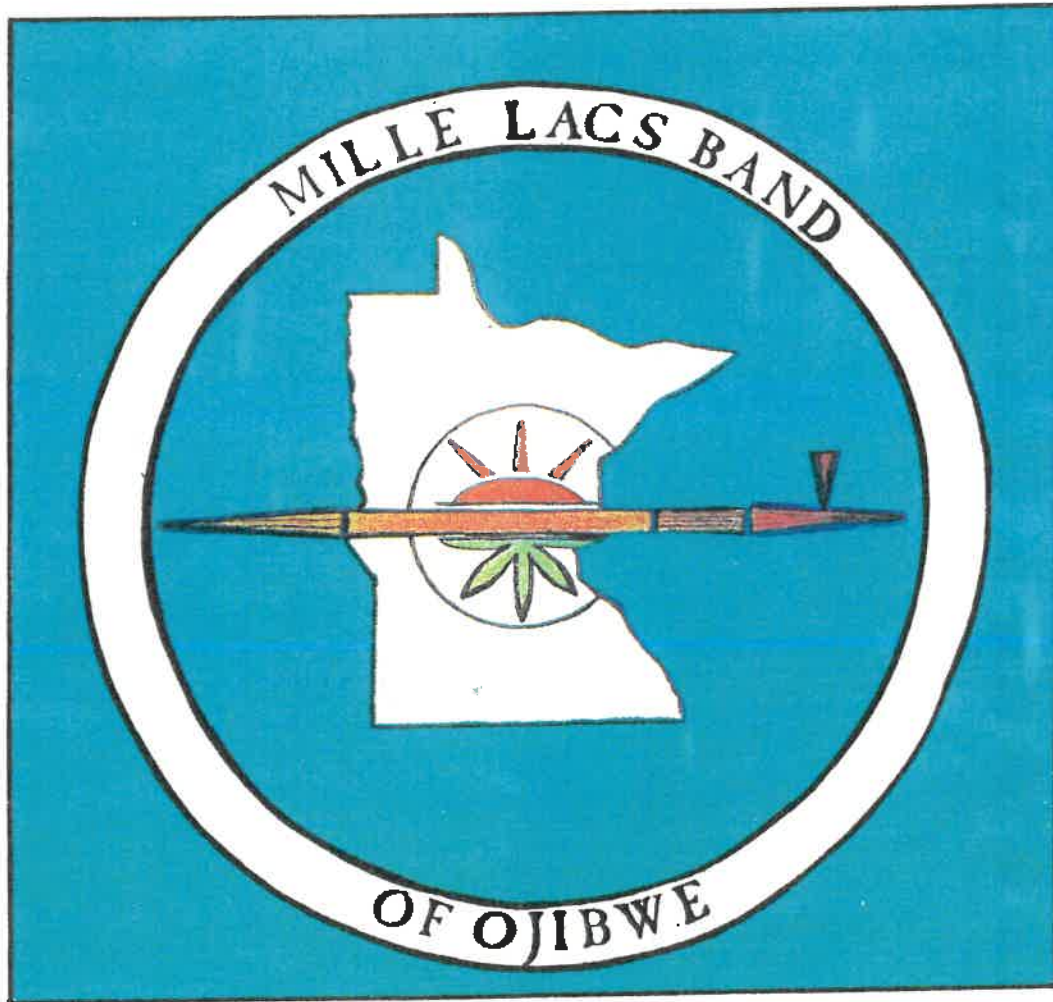


A SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE MILLE LACS OJIBWE

1640-1993

NON-REMOVABLE AND SELF-DETERMINED



Prepared for the:
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Introduction and Acknowledgments

Under Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) contract #92-C-2763, U.S. West Research, Inc. (USWR) undertook the arduous task of researching and writing an interpretive social study of the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe. This study covered the history of these Ojibwe people from pre-contact to the 20th century, with the bulwark of research and writing placed on their history from 1800 to the present. MHS required that this study rely to some extent on existing scholarship (historical, ethnographic and archaeological), but for the most part, MHS hoped that fresh archival research, and a series of oral histories conducted specifically for this project, would unearth new pertinent material and add to the existing body of history regarding the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe.

In September, 1991, as principal investigator for USWR, I accepted and undertook this challenging project. Originally, MHS expected that a project of this nature could be completed in just six months. However, it was quickly determined, that, based on available archival resources and the number of oral histories to be conducted, a more realistic research effort would be at least one year. As it turned out, an additional four months was needed to complete this formidable undertaking.

Many authors and scholars have written in general terms about one aspect or another about the culture and history of the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe. But until recently, little had been written specifically about their long history, with the exception of Roger and Priscilla Buffalohead's Against the Tide of American History: The Story of the Mille Lacs Anishinabe (1985). Though the Buffaloheads' work is scholarly in scope, it was intended as an educational text and not a comprehensive examination. It lacked thorough archival research in collections such as those at the National Archives, Washington, D.C. and the Federal Records Centers at Kansas City, Missouri and Suitland, Maryland. The Buffaloheads' text also lacked oral histories with band members geared at answering specific historical questions regarding their recent history. When I first proposed researching and writing this study of the Non-Removable Mille Lacs, I argued that these archival and oral history resources were critical to understanding the history of any tribe or band, and should be pursued in the project. Fortunately, during the contract negotiation, MHS agreed with this

assessment, and the study that follows is a product of that conclusion.

I trust and hope that the following study of the Non-Removable Mille Lacs meets these demands and makes a lasting contribution to Ojibwe historiography. Based as much as possible on a tribal perspective, it first describes the historical culture of the Ojibwe, including their relationships with non-Ojibwe peoples, such as the Sioux people, and their contact and interaction with the French, British and Americans. The remaining portion of the study focuses on and interprets the 19th and 20th century history of the Mille Lacs people, first as a nascent group of Ojibwe bands named the Mississippi Ojibwe, and then later as federation of bands from Vineland, Cove, Isle, Danbury, and Sandy and East Lakes that collectively became known as the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe. Wherever possible, their history has been delineated against a background of general Indian policy history, as well as national, state, and local historical events. Treaty and land issues, cultural integration and persistence, as well as contemporary issues, such as hunting and fishing treaty rights are also discussed throughout the text.

Historical Research

Written and oral historical research for this project took place in several stages. First, upon award of the contract, I met with MHS staff and representatives of the Mille Lacs people at the Ft. Snelling History Center to discuss the project in general and to set guidelines. After this discussion, I made a general survey of the available files, documents and manuscript collections for the project located at the Minnesota Historical Society Library and the MHS Archival Research Center. A similar survey was made in the collections of the University of Minnesota as well. Thereafter, I conducted a field reconnaissance of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe Reservation to familiarize himself with the terrain and environment of the various reservation areas.

After the initial research and meetings, I and other USWR staff members, began conducting necessary background research in secondary and primary source materials concerning Ojibwe history and culture. This stage of the project included research in archival and library collections at the Minnesota Historical Society Library, University of Minnesota Library, and the Wisconsin State Historical Society Library in Madison. These libraries provided the basic resource knowledge for this project, which included:

- Archaeological survey material and reports.
- General ethnographic material pertaining to the Ojibwe.
- Historical material pertaining to the Mille Lacs Ojibwe.
- Manuscript collections.
- Treaty materials related to the Mille Lacs Ojibwe.
- Congressional hearings, serial set information and other government documents.
- Regional newspaper material.
- Federal Indian policy history sources (articles and books).
- Unpublished dissertations and theses.
- Annual Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.
- National Archives Microfilmed Roll Document Collections, Crow Wing Agency, 1835-1840; Sandy Lake Agency, 1849-1851; Chippewa Agency Emigration, 1850-1859; and Chippewa Agency, 1824-1881.

Once this material was collected and photocopied, it was assembled in a bibliographic manner, properly filed, and later archived. A register for the photocopied documents was developed for easier access to this material.

After this initial stage of research, I set out to collect archival material at various scholarly institutions, starting with the Kansas City Federal Record Center, Missouri. Five days spent in research there produced a number of important documents and vital information for this project. However, this research trip was not exhaustive, and certainly more time and research could have been spent there uncovering other relevant documentation. However, because of the constraints of time and budget, this material had to be left unexplored. Below is a sample of the research resources in the Kansas City Federal Area Record Center that yielded important information to me:

Federal Area Record Center, Kansas City, Missouri.

- White Earth Agency, Pre-Consolidated Chippewa Agency, and Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1889-1954. 400+ Boxes (186 ft.). Records including general correspondence, ledgers and accounts for individual Indians, census data, council proceedings of negotiations between Chippewa Indians and the United States in 1889, and records concerning births and deaths, heirship, tribal enrollment, unpaid annuities, tribal delegations, forestry, grazing and land issues.

After the Kansas City research trip, a six-day research trip was planned and made to Washington, D. C. to conduct a research in a number of institutions. Given the limitations of time and budget allowances, the primary objective of this research trip was to collect as much hard copy data from pertinent record groups at the National Archives, and other nearby federal institutions as possible. This research trip only touched upon the available documentation on the Mille Lacs Ojibwe and in no way should be considered exhaustive. Below is only a partial list of the research areas that yielded critical documentation:

National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Record Group 75. Bureau of Indian Affairs.

- Central Classified Files:
 - Letters Received by CIA. 1880-1906.
 - White Earth Agency Records. 1907-1936.
 - Consolidated Chippewa Agency Records. 1907-1939.
 - Irregular Shaped Items-310, Number Ten, 1880-1906.
 - Special Case Files. 1880-1906.

Record Group 46. Special Committee on Indian Affairs, Sen 83A-F9.

- General Records, 1907-1939.

Federal Area Record Center, Suitland, Maryland.

Record Group 123. United States Court of Claims.

- Depositions of Various People. July-August 1909. Box 2172.

Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Because of the limitations of time and budget, a number of institutions that could yield potential information were neither visited, nor researched thoroughly. They include:

- National Archives, Cartographic Division, Alexandria, Virginia.
- Department of the Interior Library, Washington, D.C.
- Smithsonian Institution.

In addition to carrying on archival research at the National Archives and elsewhere, conducting oral histories with members of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe was vital component to this project. Written documents and other historical materials

neither provide all-inclusive avenues to understanding the past, nor do they always relate the most fascinating story. A person with first hand knowledge of events can not only add valuable information to the standard understanding of the past, but their recorded voice may in fact enliven the subject once again for future generations.

This contract called for a number of oral histories designed to generate specific historical information concerning the history of Mille Lacs Ojibwe. Essentially, the oral histories produced by the project were to supplement and complement already existing knowledge gathered from different resources. In fact, however, they produced primary information that could not be gathered through traditional historical methods. This material was vital to this project and may prove useful to many other disciplines and to future researchers as well.

A well-practiced and viable oral history methodology was used during the project, which was designed to be efficient, reasonable, and appropriate to the subject and constraints of the project's budget. With an approved list of informants and the help of Joyce Wedll, Director of the Mille Lacs Indian Museum and Historic Site, in contacting and arranging the interviews, I completed eleven oral histories with community members from Vineland, Isle, Sandy Lake, East Lake and Danbury. Originally, these oral histories were scheduled to be conducted in early 1992, but due to unexpected project delays, they were not conducted until August and October, 1992.

The oral histories for this project focused on the personal recollections of individuals as their experiences related to the history of the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe. Subjects discussed included: daily community life, as well as social, educational, governmental, and economic activities of band members from the 1930s to the present. The final oral history work product included a set of bound transcripts of each interview (word for word) with a biographical data sheet, a summary of the interview (subjects covered and vocal quality), and an index.

Writing Phase

Once the secondary and primary research was completed (May, 1992), and the oral histories completed (October, 1992), writing for this study began in earnest. The writing phase included:

- Synthesizing secondary and primary materials gathered from available written records while preparing manuscript.
- Analyzing oral history information for incorporation into text.
- Note taking, drafting, composing, revising, and editing for effective style and content.
- Footnoting and annotating bibliographic work.
- Developing Mille Lacs Ojibwe chronology.

By the end of the writing phase, this manuscript (350 pages), covering all of the broad topics outlined in the Request for Proposal, far exceeded the original report specifications contracted by MHS (200 pages). After the text of each of the following chapters, the reader will find a summary note on sources used by the writer and a chronological time line of significant events or turning points in the time period under study.

Finally, even though these ponderous pages may seem comprehensive in scope, perhaps because of their bulk, much still remains to be written about the history of the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe. I hope that this study is a beginning to that research effort and not an end. The Mille Lacs people deserve to have their history well-researched and publicized, so they and we alike can learn from their extraordinarily intriguing past that merited them the rubric Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe.

Acknowledgments

No one ever produces a history of this magnitude without obligating themselves to others for their kindness, cooperation, support, suggestions, and other forms of help.

First, I would like to acknowledge the help and support I received in this work from a number of individuals connected directly to this project. Of course, my appreciation must go to MHS project manager Rachel Tooker, who gave me enough free rein to accomplish the scholarly goals I set out for this project—yet who maintained pressure on me, when my objectives conflicted with MHS's tight scheduling demands. Thanks must certainly go to Joyce Wedll, the Director of the Mille Lacs Indian Museum and Historic Site, who truly facilitated my work by arranging and scheduling all the oral histories for this project. Next, I especially

want to thank the Ojibwe people and other interviewees, who openly shared with me and my tape recorder their personal recollections. These special people include: Marge Anderson, Tribal Chairwoman of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe, Don Wedll, Mille Lacs Commissioner of Natural Resources, Brenda Boyd, Tribal Archivist and Oral Historian, Doug Sam, Joseph Nayquonabe, Julie Shingobe, Joyce Wedll, James Clark, Jessie Clark, Albert Churchill, Sr., and Mabel Albino. Without their knowledge, insights, candor, and sharing nature, the last few chapters of this manuscript could not have been written.

Second, I owe special thanks to all the librarians, archivists, and other personnel working at the various archives, libraries and repositories who helped me locate critical material. They are too numerous to mention individually, nevertheless, these people are a credit to the following institutions: Minnesota Historical Society Library and Archives, Wisconsin State Historical Society Library and Archives, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives, Cass Lake, Bureau of Indian Affairs Area Office, Federal Area Records Centers at Kansas City, Missouri and Suitland, Maryland, and the National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Finally, thanks go to several U.S. West Research, Inc. staff members and other researchers, who worked diligently on this project and brought it to final fruition. They include: Doug Connell for his excellent microfilm research, Mary Kay Schmidt for her exceptional document abstracting, as well as her skilled transcribing of oral histories; and Analisa Lee for her competent editing of some very difficult oral histories. Finally, special appreciation goes to Elizabeth A. Butterfield for her research, writing, editing, and bibliographic work on the latter chapters, as well as her management and organization of the final project deliverables.

Nevertheless, in spite of all these wonderful people, I alone am responsible for any errors of fact or interpretation in the chapters that follow.

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Chapter One

Anishinabe — "First and Original People"

Introduction

The Mille Lacs band of Ojibwe call themselves the Anishinabe or the "first and original people." It is a name that Ojibwe from Michigan to Minnesota use to denote their traditional roots and tribal heritage. The social-cultural roots of the Mille Lacs band of the Anishinabe peoples lie deep in the oral traditions of these Indian peoples. As a group, the Anishinabe existed long before European contact in the mid-seventeenth century and prior to their occupation of the Mille Lacs area of northern Minnesota in the mid-1700s.

Like all history, the history of the Mille Lacs band of Ojibwe can be seen by tracing critical events, crises, turning points and watershed periods in their past. But to truly understand the social history of the Mille Lacs band of Anishinabe, one must also understand their cultural heritage: where they lived, how they lived and why they came to the Mille Lacs area. A truly accurate representation of Mille Lacs history also requires a different definition of history, one that, as a first rule, relies on and respects Anishinabe oral tradition, not just written documents.

Indian oral tradition is the voice of its people; Indian culture is predominately an oral culture with elders of the tribe using traditional storytelling in a number of interconnected ways. Storytelling can communicate to the group behavior that is acceptable and unacceptable within the group or towards the environment around them. Oral traditions tell the Anishinabe and other Indian groups how they should treat each other and the world around them. At the same time, oral tradition narrates important historical events from their past that shaped and created the Anishinabe people.

What historical information is derived from oral sources is limited but the skepticism of the scholar. All too often this rich resource has been either ignored or considered unreliable. In fact, it is not easy for a non-Indian to accept storytelling as a legitimate form of historical record since the credibility of the

written word is so strong in the non-Indian culture. Non-Indians clearly tend to believe what is written over what is spoken. But Indian tradition can best be uncovered by the traditional means in which they are recorded—orally and in stories. Only by uncovering Indian oral traditions can one avoid a distortion of Indian history. Ignoring it creates an enormous and perhaps uncrossable gulf of understanding between Indian and non-Indian cultures.

Though an historical perspective on Indian history is best revealed through oral accounts, it remains difficult to piece together an accurate narrative history of any band or tribe simply because there are few gathered or recorded accounts of a tribe's past. The surviving Indian oral accounts of events and ways of life are largely accounts recorded by missionaries, early traders, travelers and others of the dominant culture. Since these accounts are recorded by non-Indians, they consequently carry with them a certain cultural bias. Because most missionaries, traders, and travelers could not speak the Anishinabe language with any facility, the subtleties and rich complexities of Indian oral traditions are not represented; the accounts that we have are at best summaries or imperfect translations of the Indian perspective. In some cases, the account even provides misleading or even false information about Indian peoples and their history.

William W. Warren's History of the Ojibway People

Ironically , to understand the cultural history of the Mille Lacs band of Anishinabe culture before first European contact, we must turn to a written account that describes Anishinabe oral traditions—William W. Warren's History of the Ojibway People (1847). Fortunately, it is a resource that is reliable to some degree.

William W. Warren was a bicultural mixed-blood son of an important trader to the Anishinabe living in Wisconsin and Minnesota in the early 1800s. Writing during the winter of 1852-1853, Warren based his book largely on stories he gathered from tribal elders. Since he understood and spoke the Anishinabe language fluently, and since he was part Anishinabe himself, his account is one that historians and anthropologists alike confidently use to describe early Anishinabe history. Unfortunately, Warren placed little emphasis on the social, economic and religious life or other cultural elements of the Anishinabe. Instead, he wrote mostly about the major political events and wars.¹

Nevertheless, Warren's History of the Ojibway People and his early newspaper articles on the subject matter are an excellent place to begin the history of the Mille Lacs band of Anishinabe. There are passages in these works by Warren that narrate the history of the Anishinabe before European contact as well as descriptions of the central religious rite in Anishinabe life—the Midewiwin or Grand Medicine Society. Through the stories associated with the Midewiwin, we glimpse at the origin and growth of the early Anishinabe. "In the mind of the Chippewa Indian," wrote the noted ethnologist Frances Densmore, "a history of the tribe is contained in the rite and traditions of the Midewiwin (Grand Medicine Society)." At one time in the very distant past, the Anishinabe lived in a great town, which suffered the "ravages of sickness and death." At this time, the Great Spirit granted them this rite "wherewith life is restored and prolonged."² Contained in the Midewiwin is the cosmic tradition of how the forefathers of the Anishinabe came to arrive at Madeline Island, a place they called Mo-ning-wun-a-kaun-ing.³ The history of the Mille Lacs band of the Anishinabe therefore begins with their long migration to Mo-ning-wun-a-kaun-ing, aeons before they encountered non-Indians.

Pre-Contact Anishinabe Westward Migration and Settlement Pattern

According to Anishinabe oral tradition recorded by Warren, the "original people" attained their present-day geographical location through a series of migrations. Starting from the Atlantic Ocean near the mouth of the St. Lawrence River, the tribe moved toward the west. This first journey westward, was, as we will see in the unfolding history of the Anishinabe, just one move in a series of westward migrations.

The reason or reasons for this first migration are uncertain and shrouded in the

¹ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984, p. XV.

² Frances Densmore, Chippewa Customs (Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 86, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1929), reprinted edition, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1979, p. 8.

³ Frances Densmore, Chippewa Customs (Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 86, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1929), reprinted edition, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1979, p. 8.

deepest psyche of the Anishinabe people.⁴ According to the Midewiwin, the "original people" were living along the great salt water of the east, when "the great Megis (sea shell) showed itself above the surface of the great water, and the rays of the sun for a long period were reflected from its glossy back. It gave warmth and light to the An-ish-in-aub-ag (red race). All at once it sank into the deep, and for a time our ancestors were not blessed with its light." Death once again daily visited the wigwams of the people. When it appeared again, this time on the "great river which drains the waters of the Great Lakes [St. Lawrence]," the people began to follow it westward. At its new location, the great Megis once again reflected back the rays of the sun, and blessed the Anishinabe with "life, light, and wisdom." Each time they followed the Megis to a new location, they pulled down the Me-da-we lodge, which was not erected again until they reached their new home.⁵

Thereafter, the Anishinabe followed the shining vision of the Megis, "which repeatedly appeared to them in the western sky to guide their way through the Great Lakes watershed."⁶ First, they ascended the St. Lawrence River where they occupied villages where Montreal, Canada now stands. From here, they migrated westward to an unknown second location. Next, they moved to Wow-a-yat-turong (Detroit area), then on to Pin-ud-a-wun-gosh-ing (location on north shore of Lake Huron) and then finally to Bow-e-ting (Sault Ste. Marie). Here, they split into two groups and migrated in different directions.⁷

One group migrated along the northern shore of Lake Superior to Grand Portage near the Pigeon River, scattering westward into the thick hardwood forests. The second group, the main body, followed the southern shoreline of Lake Superior to Madeline Island or Mo-ning-wun-a-kaun-ing. Every step of the way, they battled with their foes which they called the O-dug-aum-eeg or "other people" (Fox

⁴ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984, p. 82.

⁵ Frances Densmore, Chippewa Customs (Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 86, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1929), reprinted edition, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1979, p. 8.

⁶ Melissa L. Meyer, "Tradition and the Market: The Social Relations of the White Earth Anishinaabeg, 1889-1920," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1985), p. 21.

⁷ William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 56-57.

Indians) and the A-boin or "roasters" (Dacotah Sioux), who were called this because of their practice of taking prisoners and burning them at the stake.⁸ Finally, they reached Madeline Island and established a village at Point Sha-ga-waum-ik, a place of relative safety from these tribes. According to Anishinabe tradition, they lived at Mo-ning-wun-a-kaun-ing, a large central village on Madeline Island, long before the white man appeared and at a time when they had "nothing but the bow and arrow, sharp stones and the bones of animals, wherewith to kill game and fight their enemies."⁹

According to Anishinabe estimates as translated by Warren, the Anishinabe established this village sometime around 1500 A.D.¹⁰ They lived a tenuous agricultural village life on Madeline Island growing corn, pumpkins and potatoes. The Anishinabe also took advantage of the excellent fishing that Lake Superior offered and participated in occasional hunting parties to the lake shore for such game as moose, buffalo, deer and elk.¹¹

While living at Mo-ning-wun-a-kaun-ing or Madeline Island, their foes the Fox and Dacotah Indians continued to besiege them. At this time, the Fox Indians occupied the country between Lake Superior and the Mississippi River and had villages on the headwaters of the Wisconsin, Chippewa and St. Croix Rivers. Their allies, the Dacotahs, had villages from the Mississippi River to the Lake of the Woods, including villages at Yellow Lake, Knife Lake, Mille Lacs, Leech Lake and Sandy Lake. The alliance of the Fox and Sioux Indians halted the westward advance of the Anishinabe along the south shore of Lake Superior. On several occasions, according Anishinabe tradition, large war parties of Fox and Sioux

⁸ William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 58-63.

⁹ William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 56-57; and William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984, p. 96.

¹⁰ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984, p. 90.

¹¹ William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 58-63.

Indians attacked the Anishinabe strongpost at Mo-ing-wun-a-kaun-ing. The Anishinabe defeated these war parties each time.¹²

These conflicts took place long before the coming of Europeans to the area. In fact, according to oral tradition, an elder Anishinabe prophesied the coming of the white man, long before the coming of the missionaries and fur traders. According to William W. Warren, the elder prophesied:

that the white spirits would come in numbers like the sand on the lake shore, and would sweep the red race from the hunting grounds which the Great Spirit had given them as inheritance. It was prophesied that the consequence of the white man's appearance would be, to the An-ish-in-aub-ag, and "ending of the world."¹³

Elders even described the first encounter with non-Indians to William A. Warren. They told Warren:

While living in their large and central town at La Pointe, a principal and leading Me-da-we priest, whose name was Mas-se-wa-pe-ga dreamed a dream, in which he beheld spirits in the form of men, but with white skins, and with their heads covered they approached him with their hands extended and with smiles on their faces. This dream he told to the principal men of the Ojibways, over a grand sacrificial feast to his dream spirit. He informed his people that the white spirits he had seen in his dream, resided toward the rising sun; and that he would go and search for them.¹⁴

The significance and power of dreams to the Anishinabe was very important in earlier times. Wisdom and knowledge came to each individual in his or her dreams and they very often tested their dreams to learn of their own strength. By

¹² William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 58-63.

¹³ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984, p. 117.

¹⁴ William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 65.

possessing "some representation of a dream subject" the Anishinabe believed they "could at any time secure its protection, guidance and assistance."¹⁵ Mas-se-wa-pe-ga's dream was a powerful dream, which could not be ignored. With a companion, Mas-se-wa-pe-ga went in search of the white spirits. After a long journey through the Great Lakes, they eventually found the "white" men instead. The non-Indians cordially welcomed him and his companion, giving them presents of an "axe, a knife, beads, and a small strip of scarlet cloth" that Mas-se-wa-pe-ga brought safely back to his people.¹⁶ These simple gifts of European tools, weapons and personal items foreshadowed an adoption of European technology that dramatically changed the course of Anishinabe material culture. This encounter truly brought an "end of the world" as they once knew it.

Anishinabe oral tradition relates that around 1620 or so, a sudden evacuation of the village on Madeline Island took place, sending families back on their track of former migration to resettle at Bo-we-ting (Sault St. Marie).¹⁷ This sudden evacuation took place, according to oral tradition, for one of two reasons.

One tradition states that dispersion from the island was a consequence to their first encounter with non-Indians and the lure of European material culture and power of their firearms. After the first visit of Mas-se-wa-pe-ga to the Europeans, subsequent visits by the Anishinabe took place. Soon the Indians established a viable trading relationship with the French through other Indian tribes such as their cousins the Huron Indians and the Anishinabe resettled at Bo-we-ting (Sault St. Marie) to be closer to the resources provided by the non-Indians.¹⁸

¹⁵ Frances Densmore, Chippewa Customs (Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 86, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1929), reprinted edition, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1979, pp. 78-79.

¹⁶ William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 65-67.

¹⁷ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984, pp. 108-109.

¹⁸ William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 65-67; and William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984, pp. 108-109.

The second traditional account holds that an evil spirit clenched the people in starvation, even cannibalism. Elders stated to Warren that "these evil practices were carried on to such an extent, that the Che-be-ug, or "souls of the victims," were at last heard nightly traversing the village, weeping and wailing . . . [that the nightly weeping] caused this sudden fear and panic. . . . [and] from that time, the Ojibways considered the island as haunted, and never resided on it till after the first old French traders had located and built their trading establishment thereon."¹⁹

Whichever tradition holds true, the Anishinabe left Mo-ing-wun-a-kaun-ing before the arrival of Europeans there. Their dispersal from the island and contact with Europeans and the introduction of guns and trade goods brought dramatic changes in Anishinabe life. These changes are described in the next chapter. But first let us look to village life on Madeline Island before 1620 so that we may better understand the dramatic change brought on by the cultural and technological exchange of material goods with the Europeans.

Predictably, there are no written records to indicate how the Anishinabe lived before the coming of the French. Nevertheless, a rough composite of their lifestyle can be drawn from Warren's History of the Ojibway People. The following is a composite summary of life in the Anishinabe village of Mo-ing-wun-a-kaun-ing drawn on oral tradition recorded in Warren's historical account.

Life in Mo-ing-wun-a-kaun-ing²⁰

Daily life centered on the family, the village, and acquiring food. All the materials necessary for daily survival came from the surrounding natural environment, gifts of the benevolent spirits of the earth, sky, water, and animal worlds. Bark wigwams formed a village that covered two-to-three miles in length and width. During the day, men left the island to hunt along the shores of Lake Superior. Bone spears, moose and buffalo rib knives, and limber bows armed

¹⁹ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984, pp. 110-111.

²⁰ William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 56-63; and William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984, pp. 96-99.

with stone-headed arrows aided hunters in their quests for moose, bear, deer, elk, buffalo, beaver, otter, and muskrat. These weapons also offered protection from the tribe's traditional enemies, the Fox and Dacotah, who claimed the land where the Anishinabe hunted.

The Anishinabe were self-sufficient, although it is likely they traded with neighboring groups, even their enemies the Fox and Dacotah. While the men were hunting or trading, women prepared food in clay pots. A meal might include corn (Mun-dam-in) and potatoes from the village gardens, or meat from a previous hunt. The village women skillfully produced pottery for cooking and storage needs and also manufactured deer, elk, buffalo, and beaver skins into clothing and blankets.

Families sometimes fished in the evenings with nets made from cedar and basswood bark and natural plant fibers from the waters of Lake Superior or from streams that emptied into the Lake. At other times, they focused on religious activities and village matters. Individuals received civil and political assignments according to familial totems. Members of the Loon and Crane families, for example, carried out governing functions, while the Bear clan defended the tribe. Villagers shared their food and possessions with each other, and activities focused on the common good of the village. A sick individual was isolated, for example, and cared for by a medicine man. If the sick one died of a contagious disease, the villagers burned his home, clothing, and possessions to ensure that the disease did not spread.

The Me-da-we lodge was a central focus of religious life and the Midewiwin was practiced in its purest and most original form. An Anishinabe worshiped the one Great Spirit individually, but also claimed the protection of a guardian or dream spirit that appeared to the individual during fasting. The tribe believed in life after death and used copper for sacred medicinal or ornamental purposes. They also offered sacrifices of meat and garden produce to the spirits as gifts of thanks.

Notes on Chapter Sources:

Information in this chapter is mostly derived from William W. Warren's History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, St. Paul:

Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984; and newspaper articles by Warren, such as "Answers to Inquiries Regarding Chippewas," Minnesota Pioneer, 5 December 1849; "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946).

Principal secondary accounts consulted include: Roger and Priscilla Buffalohead, Against the Tide of History: The Story of the Mille Lacs Anishinabe (1985); Edmund Jefferson Danzinger, Jr. The Chippewas of Lake Superior (1979) and Frances Densmore, Chippewa Customs (1929).

Chapter Two

Making Strangers into Relatives

Introduction

It is at Bo-we-ting (Sault Ste. Marie) circa 1640s that written records first pick up the history of the Anishinabe or Chippewa as many non-Indians learned to call them. The written record describes the emergence of the Chippewa as a tribal people in the early 1600s and their westward expansion and settlement across present-day upper Michigan, northern Wisconsin and finally into northern Minnesota in the early-1700s. There is insufficient information from written and oral history sources to recognize individual family groups or leaders in any great detail; nor are there historical records describing daily life and seasonal activities. Scant as the data is, however, it does provide us with an outline of how these people arrived here in Minnesota.

After their emergence as a distinct people called the Saulteurs in the 1640s, with a culture based on mutuality, reciprocity and alliances, they accelerated their growth by participating in the French fur trade as suppliers and later as middlemen. During the period under discussion, roughly 1640 to 1771, the Saulteurs came into contact with many other groups of Indian and non-Indian peoples. They reached a "middle ground" of cultural accommodation and understanding with some of these groups. With groups, such as the Hurons and the French, they successfully built beneficial alliances, which they sealed through feasting, celebrations, gift exchanges and inter-marriage. These inter-tribal alliances were based on common Saulteur conceptions of suitable ways of acting and inter-acting with one another that the Saulteurs developed to maintain and solidify their own group behavior. These alliances made strangers into relatives.

With other groups, such as the Sioux Indians, the Saulteurs attempted similar alliances. At one time, the Saulteurs and Sioux bonded together through inter-tribal marriage and were commercial partners in the fur trade and they were treated as relatives. Together in a mutually beneficial relationship, they exploited the rich fur-bearing territory of northern Minnesota. However, this alliance lasted but a short while. It ended when the Sioux violated certain Chippewa

behavioral precepts regarding kinship behavior. The Chippewa no longer enjoyed a "middle ground" of interaction with the Sioux; nor were the Sioux treated as relatives anymore. The Chippewa-Sioux alliance and commercial relationship deteriorated rapidly into open hostilities. Thereafter, tensions and group dynamics between the two groups centered on possession of the rich fur-bearing territory of northern Minnesota and a period of Chippewa expansion began. Without the cooperation or consent of the Sioux to exploit these resources, the Sioux were treated as competitors, foreigners and therefore enemies. From 1721 to 1771, the Chippewa and Sioux openly fought over control of the fur trade in northern Minnesota. It resulted in the Chippewa driving the Sioux from their villages at Sandy Lake (1721) and Mille Lacs (1748). At this point, the Chippewa reached the height of their expansion into this sector of the northern Minnesota woodlands.

The central theme of this chapter is therefore a history of the emergence and evolution of these Chippewa people and the root causes, history and breadth of westward expansion of Chippewa from a small core group called the Saulteurs living on the banks of the St. Mary's River to the Chippewa living in present-day Minnesota a five hundred miles away. It will describe how Chippewa groups came to inhabit the Sandy Lake, Mille Lacs Lake, and St. Croix River area by 1771. Many historians, anthropologists and other scholars have tread along this historical path in the past. Few have sufficiently explained the early chronological development and movement of these Southwestern Chippewa groups.

Saulteurs or Proto-Chippewa

There is little dispute among most scholars that circa 1640s, a group of proto-Chippewa peoples lived near Sault Ste. Marie. The French called these people the "Saulteurs" or "People of the Rapids" because they seasonally took advantage of the abundant fishing near the rapids of the St. Mary's River. The Saulteurs were one of several bands that visited this area during the summertime. Other bands included the Nouquet, Marameg and Outchibou.¹ Comprised of about 150

¹ W. Vernon Kintz, The Indians of the Western Great Lakes, 1625-1760 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1965,) pp. 317- 318; Edmund Jefferson Danzinger, Jr. The Chippewas of Lake Superior (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), p. 26; and Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D.

members or so, the Saulteurs sometimes united with these neighboring groups during the summer months for defense and other reasons. But when winter came, the Saulteurs migrated westward in search of other sources of food and shelter.²

For a time, the Saulteurs and other bands held close kinship ties with one another and like later Chippewa society, the principles of "reciprocity" and "group solidarity" strongly operated among them. According to historian Rebecca Kugel,

Group solidarity represented a value of crucial importance to the Ojibwe; it was what enabled the people to survive. Living at a subsistence level and in a harsh environment, the Ojibwe understood they needed the efforts of the entire group to provide themselves with food, clothing and shelter. Through the principles of sharing and reciprocity, the Ojibwe expended much human energy to insure that solidarity. In particular, the principle of reciprocity so central to relations, was also directed at enhancing in-group cohesiveness.³

The political ethos of these proto-Chippewa groups, according to Kugel, also reflected the idea of "mutuality." According to Kugel,

Ideally, political decisions were reached through an unhurried discussion of issues by all members of a village. Coercive behavior in politics, as indeed, in all aspects of life, was abhorrent to the Ojibwe. They recognized the potential of social disruption if one group attempted to force its view on another unwilling segment. If cool, dispassionate debate could not achieve consensus, dissenting Ojibwe left the village and settled elsewhere.⁴

Though the Saulteurs and other bands acted independently of each other through
dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 21-22.

² W. Vernon Kinietz, The Indians of the Western Great Lakes, 1625-1760 (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press), 1965, pp. 317- 318; and Edmund Jefferson Danzinger, Jr. The Chippewas of Lake Superior (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), p. 26.

³ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 16-17.

⁴ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 17.

their civil and war leaders, they often cooperated periodically with one another.⁵ The Saulteurs extended the "principle of mutuality" to outsiders, such as the Nouquet, Maramég and Outchibou. Kugel states that:

Friendly relations with outsiders were established through alliances that were initiated and sustained by reciprocal acts. Gift exchanges accompanied the creation of alliances. Marriages between allied peoples frequently occurred, and they, too, were accompanied by elaborate distribution of gifts. The intimate acts of eating together and exchanging personal possessions, symbolized all that was best in human relations. The metaphorical allusion of eating from the same dish used in establishing alliances was based on the expectation that acts of this kind made strangers into relatives.⁶

Cooperation in defense, close kinship ties through inter-marriage, and a cultural understanding of mutuality, reciprocity and group solidarity created a "common conception of suitable ways of acting" or what historian Richard White has termed a "middle ground" between these independent bands.⁷ According to White's thesis:

The middle ground depended on the inability of both sides to gain their ends through force. The middle ground grew according to the need of people to find a means, other than force, to gain the cooperation or consent of foreigners. To succeed, those who operated on the middle ground had, of necessity, to attempt to understand the world and the reasoning of others and to assimilate enough of that reasoning to put it to their own purposes.

By the very early 1600s or so, the Saulteurs and neighboring groups had already found a middle ground amongst themselves and held a common conception of suitable ways of interacting with one another. In years to come, this common conception evolved into an Anishinabe cultural perspective on life and group

⁵ Melissa L. Meyer, "Tradition and the Market: The Social Relations of the White Earth Anishinaabeg, 1889-1920" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1985), p. 23.

⁶ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 18.

⁷ Richard White, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 50-52.

solidarity which they passed down through oral tradition. As time passed, it evolved to meet the demands of changing times and circumstances and became better defined. Importantly, it became the basis from which the Anishinabe judged their interaction with other Indian groups, such as the Huron and Sioux, and non-Indians, such as the French and later the Americans.

Introduction of the Fur Trade and Emergence of Proto-Chippewa

In the early 1600s, with the arrival of the Wyandot or Huron Indian traders at Sault Ste. Marie as agents of the French fur empire, the middle ground between the Saulteurs and neighboring groups solidified and accelerated to take advantage of the fur trade. Previous to European contact, the Wyandot had been great traveling traders. They established a far-flung commercial system and routes of travel into the interior long before the arrival of the French. The Sault Ste. Marie bands were one of several western bands they visited annually before contact with non-Indians. Now, acting as "Indian entrepreneurs," and as middlemen in the French fur trade, the Wyandot Indians ventured into the "wilderness, visiting western tribes and exchanging French manufactured goods for pelts they delivered to French merchants at Montreal." The Wyandot traders included "French trade goods in their westbound cargoes—knives, hatchets, brass kettles, awls, beads, textiles including blankets and vermilion, a bright red cosmetic paint valued by many Indians."⁸ The trade in European goods established by the Wyandots initiated a long-term trading alliance between Chippewa and French peoples as well.

The Sault Ste. Marie bands, who gathered on the shores of the St. Mary's River to share its fishing bounty, now gathered yearly with the Wyandot and their Indian allies to exchange pelts of fur for French trade goods. At this point, the Sault Ste. Marie bands extended the principle of mutuality to the level of diplomatic relations. In order to accommodate the Wyandot traders and to cement relations between the two groups, the Sault Ste. Marie bands participated in and eventually adopted the Huron celebration of the Feast of the Dead, or Fete des Morts. The Feast of the Dead involved a number of symbolic reciprocity gift exchanges that fostered alliance building among kin-linked groups. These gift exchanges "expressed and produced a commonality of interest among the gathered peoples."

⁸ Arrell Gibson Morgan, The American Indian: Prehistory to the Present (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), pp. 127-128.

This action on the part of the Saulteurs naturally increased social interaction between the Sault Ste. Marie bands and the Wyandot and established a middle ground between them. For a time thereafter, the Sault Ste. Marie bands adopted the Feast of the Dead as a means of effective diplomacy with other bands and tribes, for a time, making the strangers that participated into relatives.⁹

The profitable economic relationship that the Saulteurs and the other nearby groups enjoyed with the Wyandot traders and the opportunities offered by the French fur trade accelerated the coalescence of the proto-Chippewa people around Sault Ste. Marie into a tribe. The individual bands became exogamous, patrilineal clans, according to Harold Hickerson, and in turn, "these new kin groups became the building blocks of a community formed by the previously autonomous peoples." For instance, at this time, the Bear (Nouquet) and Catfish (Marameg) clans, some of the original clans of the Chippewa, emerged among the Sault Ste. Marie bands. At the same time, the independent peoples named Nouquet or Marameg gradually amalgamated into the Saulteur group. By 1670, they disappeared from the historical records altogether.¹⁰

A corollary historical force related to the French fur trade also united the peoples around the St. Mary's River into one group. Defense from the the Naud-o-waig or "Adders", a derogative term for the Iroquois Indians who lived south of Lake Ontario in present-day upstate New York, brought them together as well.

By 1650, the Iroquois Indians had exhausted the fur resources in their own territory, forcing them to push westward in search of new hunting ranges to replenish their supplies. In an attempt to gain access to the western fur trade of the Wyandot, the Iroquois Confederacy blockaded the St. Lawrence Valley settlements from access to the interior fur trading tribes and openly attacked any tribe allied with the French. When this plan failed, the Iroquois used intimidation tactics and brute military force to gain access to the furs held by the western tribes. These tactics turned the western tribes into refugees and certainly against the Iroquois in their bid to establish a fur trading empire.¹¹ Though

⁹ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 21.

¹⁰ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 22. An exogamous group is one in which men and women marry outside the group they were born into, while a patrilineal clan is one that determines descent and inheritance through the male line.

even this plan failed too, for a time, no western tribe was safe from Iroquois war parties. As a consequence, many fled for fear of their lives.

Though some Sault Ste. Marie bands reportedly fled to Chequamegon Bay at this time, along with other refugee groups, they were few in number. The majority of Saulteurs continued to frequent the fisheries along the St. Mary's River. It is near the St. Mary's River, in the year 1662, that the Saulteurs inflicted a major blow on a Iroquois war party and changed the fearful attacks of the Iroquois on the Saulteurs or Proto-Chippewa people.

In what has been described by one historian as one of the most "glorious and bloody events in Chippewa history," the Chippewa ambushed a large Iroquois war party on the shores of Whitefish Bay. The Chippewas call this place Nadoueuigoning or "the place of the Iroquois bones." It is now known locally as Iroquois Point.¹² The Battle of Iroquois Point and the common defense against and defeat of the Iroquois united the St. Mary's River people as much as the infrequent Feast of the Dead celebrations. The defeat of the Iroquois lessened the danger to the Sault Ste. Marie bands of attack from the Five Nations of the Iroquois. The defeat of the Iroquois allowed the Saulteurs to turn their attention away from the East and toward the West and the formation of alliances with the French and tribes living to the west of them.

Fur Trade Economy and Lifestyle

By the time the Saulteurs defeated the Iroquois, their subsistence level economy had been altered by the introduction of a few trade items from the French. For many years previous to the 1662, the exchanges between Saulteurs and Wyandots were limited because the Iroquois prevented easy access and a full exchange of goods. Though Wyandot and their allies including the French eventually defeated the Iroquois, the Iroquois wars left the Wyandot prostrate in the process. The enfeebled Wyandot no longer had sufficient manpower to act as the middlemen in the trade. Starting in 1670s, to fill the void left by Wyandot, Frenchmen spread out from their St. Lawrence Valley settlements and began to occupy and establish fur-trade posts at strategic points around the Great Lakes. These French fur traders

¹¹ Arrell Gibson Morgan, The American Indian: Prehistory to the Present (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), p. 128.

¹² Edmund Jefferson Danzinger, Jr. The Chippewas of Lake Superior (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), pp. 34-35.

opened relations with the Saulteurs and radically changed the equation. Now, the Saulteurs could trade directly with the French. Not long thereafter, they became a major economic supplier of furs for the French trading empire.

As a consequence of this direct trade, after the 1670s, the Saulteur people became more dependent on the trade goods that the French provided. The adoption and pursuit of European trade goods changed the economic basis of Saulteur life considerably. Saulteur hunters modified their traditional economic pursuits substantially in order to meet the demands of the trade. One historian aptly described the changes Saulteur or Proto-Chippewa underwent this way:

The availability of white men's metal guns, hatchets, knives, traps, kettles, awls, needles, multicolored blankets, and clothing—as well as their tasty wines and brandies—lured more and more natives to the hunt for bear and beaver. Soon the Indians were not just engaged in the fur trade; they depended on it. Accordingly, Indian material culture was revolutionized and certain habits of life were altered. Men ceased to hunt just for immediate food needs. As game grew scarce, winter trappers ranged farther and farther from their homes for the choicest pelts.¹³

According to some historians, the fur trade impacted the Saulteur in another significant way. The Saulteur wished to play the middlemen role in the French fur trade. To fulfill their role as middlemen, the Saulteur formed and lived in large settlements containing members of earlier totemic villages and their language became the "lingua franca of the western Great Lakes."¹⁴ As these settlements grew, the need for more hunting and trapping territory grew proportionately.

The fur trade was part of a larger middle ground cultural accommodation between the French and the Saulteurs. At times, the middle ground between the two groups strained under mutual Algonquian-French misperceptions of the intentions and cultural perspectives on certain social, religious, political and economic situations of one another.¹⁵ Nevertheless, the French nor their

¹³ Edmund Jefferson Danzinger, Jr. The Chippewas of Lake Superior (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), p. 31.

¹⁴ Barbara Wyatt, ed., Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin, Vol. 1, (Madison: Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), p. 2-1.

Algonquian allies the Saulteurs were never powerful enough to dictate or impose their own system of values on one another. Instead, they accommodated each other by gift giving, inter-marriage and other forms of reciprocity, mutuality and alliance building. The Saulteurs eventually became ever more dependent on French trade goods and its alliance with the French, but the Indians never needed French manufactured goods in order to survive. Therefore, the French never held enough economic power to dictate to the Saulteurs. As much as they may have hated it, the autonomy of Saulteurs forced the French into maintaining a middle ground with them throughout most of their relationship.

Chippewa-Sioux Commercial Alliance

By 1662, from the core group of the Saulteurs on the St. Mary's River, the Chippewa or Ojibwa, as some people began to call them, emerged and began to migrate. These Chippewa formed into two distinct branches of the tribe: the Northern Chippewa who migrated north and westward of Lake Superior; and the Southwestern Chippewa, who migrated in substantial numbers westward along the shores of Lake Superior.¹⁶

This Chippewa settlement pattern was a natural and direct outgrowth of the French fur empire. In the 1670s, the French attempted to bring in more and more tribes into the French fur trading orbit. As fur resources depleted in one area, the French and their Indian allies sought out new resources in order to meet the demands of the trade. Soon Frenchmen, like Marquette and Hennipen and others pushed into the upper Mississippi River valley in search of new hunting areas and new tribes to bring into the French alliance.¹⁷

In the upper Mississippi River valley, the French encountered a major problem. Though the Chippewa sought to extend their hunting territory from the eastern

¹⁵ For a history of the middle ground relationship between the French and other Algonquian groups see Richard White, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

¹⁶ Timothy G. Roufs, The Anishinabe of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (Phoenix: Indian Tribal Series, 1975), map one, unpaginated; and Edmund Jefferson Danzinger, Jr. The Chippewas of Lake Superior (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), p. 27.

¹⁷ Arrell Gibson Morgan, The American Indian: Prehistory to the Present (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980), p. 129.

end of Lake Superior into the Mississippi river area, the Sioux Indians or Naud-o-wa-se-wug ("like unto the adders" a variant of their name for the Iroquois) living there prevented them from doing so. Hostilities existed between the two Indian groups for a long time, the roots of which are buried in the past. Warfare between the two had gone on since at least 1669 and/or even earlier according to Chippewa tradition,¹⁸ and neither party could gain an advantage through force. Sioux-Chippewa hostilities prevented the Chippewa from expanding into the upper Mississippi Valley, which also forestalled the French from exploiting this rich fur-bearing land as well.¹⁹

To resolve this problem, in 1679, Daniel Greysolon, Sieur Duluth, one of many French explorers busy probing the Mississippi River valley to lay claims to the lucrative fur-bearing land, pushed westward of Lake Superior on a mission to negotiate a peace between Sioux and other tribes.²⁰ Duluth's mission to negotiate an alliance between the Sioux and the Chippewa succeeded. In this alliance, the Chippewa promised to move to Chequamegon Bay and supply French trade goods to Sioux. In exchange, the Sioux promised to allow the Chippewa to hunt and trap unmolested in the woodlands of Wisconsin and Minnesota. To strike a middle ground between the two groups and to bond the two groups together, the Chippewa celebrated a Feast of the Dead with their "new-found allies" the Sioux. Of course, as noted beforehand, mutual celebrations of this nature were very significant to the Chippewa. They expressed a commonality of interest among the gathered peoples, much as similar celebrations in the past with neighboring groups living on the St. Mary's River. In a sense, their enemies now became their relatives.²¹

¹⁸ Harold Hickerson, "Ethnohistory of Chippewa of Lake Superior," in Chippewa Indians III (New York: Garland Publishing Company, 1974), pp. 12-13; and Newton Horace Winchell, The Aborigines of Minnesota (St. Paul: Pioneer Company Printer, 1911), p. 523.

¹⁹ Harold Hickerson, "Ethnohistory of Chippewa of Lake Superior," in Chippewa Indians III (New York: Garland Publishing Company, 1974), pp. 12-13.

²⁰ Newton Horace Winchell, The Aborigines of Minnesota (St. Paul: Pioneer Company Printer, 1911), p. 524; William W. Folwell, A History of Minnesota Vol. 1, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1956), pp. 22-23; and Roy W. Meyer, History of the Santee Sioux: United States Indian Policy on Trial (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), p. 6.

²¹ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 25.

The Chippewa-Sioux alliance benefitted both groups. The alliance gave the Sioux reliable access to French trade goods, while it presented the Chippewa with new opportunities to harvest furs. Critical to the continued expansion of the French fur trade empire, this alliance also paved the way for the Chippewas "to migrate to the Chequamegon and Keweenaw peninsulas on the south shore of Lake Superior from their ancient residences in the Sault Ste. Marie vicinity, and also westward on the north shore."²² After 1679, a large contingent of Saulteurs moved to Chequamegon Bay and resettled into a large village there.²³ They chose moving to game-rich country over remaining in an over-exploited one around Sault Ste. Marie. This migration of people along with Duluth's negotiations brought these two disparate groups into closer contact and altered the inter-tribal of these two tribes immensely.

Cultural Reordering of Chippewa Society

The settlement of Chequamegon Bay (or resettlement of the area according to Chippewa oral tradition) by the Saulteurs gave birth to the Chippewa of Wisconsin and Minnesota. It provided a new socio-cultural setting for these kin-related and clan-related groups. Instead of living in separate villages, they now congregated into a single village. The segments of populations from the various politically autonomous villages around Sault Ste. Marie, who previously tended to follow the individual interests of the clans, now had to form an integrated tribal society based on the common interests of one village.

To provide the needed solidarity, the Midewiwin or Great Medicine Society arose according to anthropologist Harold Hickerson. The Midewiwin provided for a common Chippewa heritage, one "which all the people and all the clans shared." It departed from previous religious practices, like the Feast of the Dead, in three ways. First, it occurred at regular intervals. Second, membership to the Midewiwin was open to all village members. And third, it developed a tribal tradition, stressing oral narratives that described "a series of Ojibwe trials and migrations westward, once again stressing the people's common experience."²⁴

²² Harold Hickerson, "Ethnohistory of Chippewa of Lake Superior," in Chippewa Indians III (New York: Garland Publishing Company, 1974), p. 17.

²³ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 26.

²⁴ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-

Tribal unity developed, according to one historian

. . . paradoxically, as an expression of the solidarity of the village. If the Feast of the Dead can be seen as a means of treating alliances with outsiders, the Midewiwin can be understood as a means of sustaining alliance among insiders, within the tribal group itself. The Midewiwin stressed the unity of the village/tribal whole over its clan parts by drawing upon the beliefs and values of the proto-Ojibwe past.²⁵

This latter point would become especially important in later chapters in the history of the Chippewa.

Establishing a Middle Ground with the Sioux

At first, the Chippewa remained in the Chequamegon Bay area and did not establish villages between Lake Superior and the Mississippi River. Content to act as the middlemen between the French and the Sioux, the Chippewas entered Sioux territories and traded French goods in "exchange for furs that the Sioux had hunted, and also for rights to hunt in regions normally used and occupied by their Sioux allies."²⁶ By 1695, approximately 300 Chippewas were living at Chequamegon Bay, where they took advantage of the fisheries of Lake Superior and the French Fort and trading post at Madeline Island.²⁷

But the Chequamegon Bay village grew too large and Chippewas slowly pushed out into the interior and into Sioux territory, choosing the St. Croix River as a first outlet of expansion. At first the Sioux and Chippewa intermingled freely here and accommodated the presence of each other. They encamped together and learned each others language. Soon the St. Croix River area appeared secure enough that

1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 27.

²⁵ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 29.

²⁶ Harold Hickerson, "Ethnohistory of Chippewa of Lake Superior," in Chippewa Indians III (New York: Garland Publishing Company, 1974), pp. 18-23.

²⁷ Barbara Wyatt, ed., Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin, Vol. 1, (Madison: Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), pp. 2-1 to 2-3.

several Chippewa lodges permanently relocated from Chequamegon Bay to the upper St. Croix River. At this point, the Chippewa and Sioux began to intermarry, which again was an integral part of the Chippewa alliance system. For Algonquians, "marriage was an alliance between families that concerned many more people than the marital partners. Not only did property move into the hands of the bride's family, but kinship relations were established that enabled both families to call on their relatives for aid and protection."²⁸

Inter-tribal marriages included prominent leaders of these lodges. For instance, the head of an important Catfish totem family living in one lodge on the St. Croix died without male issue—a serious problem for a patrilineal society. However, the problem was solved when his daughter married a Sioux chief. Their Chippewa-Sioux marriage produced two sons, who both inherited their father's wolf clan totem. The eldest son was O-mig-aun-dib (Sore Head). According to Warren, this is how the wolf clan became one of the Chippewa's clan totems.²⁹ This peaceful coexistence, intermarriage of tribes and a viable middle ground relationship lasted for several years.

Bad Relatives

The Sioux may have made good commercial allies, but the Chippewa soon learned that they made bad relatives. Sometime just before 1695, they learned this lesson, which has been relayed through time via Chippewa oral tradition. According to this tradition, the following series of events led to this discovery.

It all started when a dispute occurred at a mutual Chippewa-Sioux tribal occasion, whereupon a Sioux warrior seriously injured a mixed-blooded Chippewa-Sioux. The injury was not fatal, but the Sioux warrior added insult to injury when he sardonically stated at the time of the injury that "he only wished to let out the hated Ojibway blood which flowed in [the victims] veins."³⁰

²⁸ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 164-165 and 171; and Richard White, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 69.

²⁹ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 164-165 and 171.

Now, for a society based on strong kinship ties, group solidarity and mutuality, this kind of behavior could not be tolerated. When the offense went unpunished by the man's Sioux kin relatives, they violated the Chippewa conception of intermarriages among allied peoples. Intergroup welfare and dynamics, as well as Chippewa perceptions of the nature of alliances sealed through the Feast of the Dead, were tested by this inaction. This violation of universal Chippewa political ethos based on mutuality could not be overlooked nor unavenged. To do so, would break the personal bonds between all kin-related groups and Chippewa society solidarity would vanish.

The situation called for blood revenge. For Algonquians, like the Chippewa, there were:

two kinds of killings—deaths at the hands of enemies and deaths at the hands of allies. The appropriate response depended on the identity of the group to whom the killer belonged. If the killer belonged to an allied group, then the dead were raised and covered. If the murderers refused to do this, then the group became enemies and the price appropriate to enemies, blood revenge, was exacted.³¹

Though no death occurred, the offense seriously breached Chippewa common conception of suitable ways of acting. In their eyes, the inaction could not go unavenged.

When the Sioux kin of the injured party did nothing, the offended mixed-blood called on his Chippewa brothers and relatives at Chequamegon Bay to avenge this wrong. It was their collective responsibility to do something. Their duty was to identify and punish the group held responsible for the act, whether it be "family, kin, village or nation."³² Therefore, the mixed-blood induced his Chippewa relatives to form a war party and attack a large Sioux encampment (300 lodges) on the south shore of the St. Croix River near its outlet on the Mississippi River.

³⁰ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 165-171.

³¹ Richard White, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 80.

³² Richard White, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 77.

With "cunning and guile," according to Warren, the mixed-blood Chippewa deceived his Sioux relatives into believing they came to visit on friendly terms. Instead, the Chippewa surprised the sleeping Sioux encampment near Prescott, Wisconsin. Therein, they massacred several hundred Sioux.³³

From this time onward, the Sioux never fully reoccupied the territory along the eastern drainage of the St. Croix in Wisconsin.³⁴ The violation of Chippewa norms and behavior and the ultimate use of force to right what the Chippewa considered wrong behavior on the part of an ally and relative fractured the continuity of Sioux-Chippewa middle ground position. The break in relations came a few decades later.

With the break in the amicable Chippewa-Sioux trading alliance, the French acted immediately to seek a rapprochement in order to protect their trade route to the Sioux. In 1695, the French explorer Pierre Charles Le Seur constructed a fort on the Isle of Pelee near the head of Lake Pepin. Ostensibly, the French erected this fort to keep the peace between the Chippewa and Sioux. Ultimately it did little to facilitate French-Sioux peace at this time, but instead it acted as a place of direct trade between the French and Sioux, thereby circumventing the Chippewa. Fort Le Seur lasted only a year or more, but five years later, in 1700, Le Seur tried to establish Fort L'Huiller on the Blue Earth river in the heart of Sioux country to trade directly with the Sioux. It failed also after a year or more. Both forts did not prevent the rising tide of "occasional" difficulties between the Chippewa and Sioux that interrupted the flow of trade, causing losses to French traders.³⁵ But apparently, for the next two decades at least, there were no major hostilities between the warring groups.

³³ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 165-171.

³⁴ A number of years after this incident, the Chippewa attacked another Sioux village in the St. Croix area at a place the Sioux called White Bear Lake, causing them to "evacuate forever their former haunts and hunting grounds, about the St. Croix, or Folle avoin country." "They seldom thereafter," according to Warren, "pitched their lodges for any length of time east of the Mississippi river." The reason for this second attack on the Sioux living in the St. Croix area could not be determined or even confirmed by the author. William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 80.

³⁵ Newton Horace Winchell, The Aborigines of Minnesota (St. Paul: Pioneer Company Printer, 1911), pp. 527-529.

Beginning of Chippewa Expansion

Though all-out warfare did not break out between the Chippewa and the Sioux, conflicts over territorial hunting rights occurred, as each party became "full-fledged economic competitors, both needing the hunting grounds they had shared" for a time.³⁶ Individual hostilities happened and reprisals made necessary. Now individual trapping became a dangerous activity and hunting and trapping by bands for protection became the norm. As a consequence of this hostile atmosphere, warrior leaders within Chippewa society began to usurp power in the community over their civil leadership counterparts. One warrior leader who emerged at this time was Bi-aus-wah. His father was a principle leader at Chequamegon Bay from the Loon clan. Bi-aus-wah, who adopted his father's name, gained his reputation against the Odugamies (Fox Indians), who the Chippewa drove out of the St. Croix and Chippewa river valleys in Wisconsin in the early 1700s.³⁷

Bi-aus-wah led the invasion route in Sioux country. From Chequamegon Bay, expansion occurred first along the Lake Superior shoreline to the St. Louis River. Using this inland riverway, the Chippewa easily entered into the rich trapping territory that they coveted from the Sioux. However, the Sioux village at Sandy Lake guarded this gateway into Sioux territory and the Mississippi drainage. Therefore, to gain access to the fur-rich interior, this Sioux village on the headwaters of the Mississippi River had to be challenged and then eliminated.

The exact pretext for attacking Sandy Lake is uncertain. There could have been another transgression against the political ethos of the Chippewa, similar to that which happened on the St. Croix. However, neither Warren or other sources provides any detail on Chippewa reasoning for this attack. The exact date of when the Chippewa-Sioux battle over Sandy Lake took place is also entirely uncertain. At first Warren stated that it took place circa 1729,³⁸ but he later estimated that it

³⁶ Edmund Jefferson Danzinger, Jr. The Chippewas of Lake Superior (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), p. 36.

³⁷ William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 72-73.

³⁸ William W. Warren, "Answers to Inquiries Regarding Chippewas," Minnesota Pioneer, 5

occurred as early as 1721.³⁹

Bi-aus-wah led the attack on the Sioux village. According to Warren, Bi-aus-wah:

. . . collected a general war party at Fond du Lac, to march against the then Sioux village of Sandy Lake. Warriors from all the bands of the Ojibways joined him, and he led a train of warriors that reached a great distance as they marched in file. They attacked Sandy Lake and drove the Sioux from its possession. Bi-aus-wah with a large body of his people pitched their lodges on the Islands of Sandy Lake, and from this point they yearly increased their conquests in western, northern and southern directions. . . .It is from this point that the future war parties started, that drove the Sioux from Leech, Winnipeg, Cass and Red Lakes, also from Mille Lac and Gull Lake.⁴⁰

As Warren stated, the attack on Sandy Lake was the tip of the spearhead of Chippewa expansion. Though the Sioux village at Sandy Lake lay on the frontier of their territory, the defeated Sioux did not give up this territory readily. Over the next decades, the Sioux attacked the Chippewa Sandy Lake village several times and twice nearly depopulated it. But the Chippewa were not to be denied their foothold into this area and the valuable fur-bearing ecological zone beyond it. To extend their foothold, however, they needed an extra advantage over the Sioux—alliances and superior weaponry.

Chippewa Alliance Building and the Outbreak of Warfare

The attack on Sandy Lake led to an off again and on again inter-tribal feud between the two groups to determine control of the fur trade. Little is known about

December 1849, Newspaper Transcripts, Sept.-Dec. 1849, Box 1, Willoughby M. Babcock Manuscripts (P 941), Minnesota Historical Society p. 16.

³⁹ William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 72-73.

⁴⁰ William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 72-73.

the initial hostilities between these groups because of a lack of written documents and Indian oral tradition. That each group eyed one another warily is certain. Bi-aus-wah, the Sandy Lake leader, collected his people together in the fall and winter in a large body in order to provide security against sudden attacks. His fall and winter hunting camp several times encountered Sioux winter camps in the woods. Fortunately, wiser civil leaders prevailed over the voices of warriors. No battles occurred. On these chance encounters, a short term of peace and fellowship occurred as the two groups exchanged presents and ransomed captives.⁴¹

Though the Chippewa drove the Sioux from their settlement on Sandy Lake, it is unlikely that they permanently lived there. The Mdewakanaton Sioux ⁴² lived only forty miles south of Sandy Lake at Mille Lacs Lake—a distance not sufficient to prevent hostilities from reoccurring. The Chippewa probably lived a safe distance east of Sandy Lake, probably in the Fond du Lac region.

Ostensibly, after the first battle over Sandy Lake, the French stayed out of this inter-tribal feud and did not try to negotiate a peace. But, in 1727, the French again attempted to circumvent their Chippewa fur trading partners by constructing a fort on Lake Pepin to trade directly with the Sioux. At this time, the French erected Fort Beauharnois on the west side of Lake Pepin to trade with the nearby Sioux. Fort Beauharnois enjoyed a meager success and the French abandoned the fort altogether ten years later, when they learned of the Sioux massacre of the French Verendrye exploration party at Lake of the Woods.⁴³

Scholars mark the massacre of members of the Verendrye party in 1737 by the

⁴¹ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 188-189.

⁴² The Sioux Nation can be broken into seven major bands. They are "Tetons in the West, the Yanktons and Yanktonais or middle Sioux, and the Mdewakantons, Wahpekutes, Sissetons, and Wahpetons in the East." For information on the Sioux see Gary Clayton Anderson, "Early Dakota Migration and Intertribal War: A Revision," Western Historical Quarterly Vol. XI, no. 1 (January 1980): 18; and Roy W. Meyer, History of the Santee Sioux: United States Indian Policy on Trial (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), pp. 10-11.

⁴³ The explorations of Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, Sieur de La Verendrye during 1729-1730 west of Lake Superior opened up much new trading areas for the French. Harold Hickerson, "Ethnohistory of Chippewa of Lake Superior," in Chippewa Indians III (New York: Garland Publishing Company, 1974), pp. 39-43.

Sioux as a turning point in French-Sioux relations as well as in Chippewa-Sioux relations. After the massacre, the French were more willing to supply aid to the Chippewa, giving them an advantage in the form of weapons. Prior to the Verendrye massacre, the French sparingly supplied the Chippewa with guns. But after the massacre and when King George's War (1739-1748) broke out between the French and the British, the French armed all their Indian allies, including the Chippewa. The French presented guns and trade goods to the Chippewa to induce them to shed their blood for the French and against the British. Of course arming the Chippewas also gave them a distinct advantage over their enemies, allowing them to expand their territories further to the west.

Unlike the Iroquois and Hurons who sided with one colonial party or the other during King George's War, the Chippewa did not meddle in these European conflicts for empire in North America.⁴⁴ Instead of participating in King George's War, in 1741-1742, the well-armed Chippewa, in alliance with the Crees, Assiniboine and their allies to the northwest, decided to attack the Sioux in several campaigns and drive them away from the woodlands of northern Minnesota.⁴⁵

They began their attacks in 1741, when in concert with their Cree allies, they killed large numbers of Sioux in several war campaigns. A year later, the Chippewa and their Cree and Assiniboine allies to the northwest planned an all out surprise attack of such magnitude as to "drive the Sioux entirely from the country west of Lake Superior." This plan for territorial conquest of the northwoods proved unsuccessful because apparently the Sioux prepared for the foray.⁴⁶

Battle for Mille Lacs Lake Or Not?

For several winters after this all-out assault failed by the Chippewa and their

⁴⁴ William W. Warren, "Answers to Inquiries Regarding Chippewas," Minnesota Pioneer, 5 December 1849, Newspaper Transcripts, Sept.-Dec. 1849, Box 1, Willoughby M. Babcock Manuscripts (P 941), Minnesota Historical Society, p. 23.

⁴⁵ Harold Hickerson, "Ethnohistory of Chippewa of Lake Superior," in Chippewa Indians III (New York: Garland Publishing Company, 1974), pp. 44-47.

⁴⁶ Harold Hickerson, "Ethnohistory of Chippewa of Lake Superior," in Chippewa Indians III (New York: Garland Publishing Company, 1974), pp. 45-47.

allies, relative peace existed between the Sioux and Chippewa. But, in 1748, another sanguinary conflict related to kinship responsibilities of the Chippewa shattered the tranquility of peace —resulting in the an all out Chippewa assault on the Sioux living at Mille Lacs.

Most sources agree that circa 1748, Sioux territory extended as far as Mille Lacs Lake. But whether a battle between the Sioux and Chippewa took place there at approximately this date is still a debatable point. The scholars who believe such a contest took place give credence to William W. Warren's account, which describes the circumstances that led to the battle.

Warren states that prior to the taking of Mille Lacs by the Chippewa, the Sioux and Chippewa were at peace with one another for several years and that inter-tribal marriages even took place. But strife between the two tribes erupted, when a rivalry developed between a Chippewa and Sioux man over a Sioux woman. The Sioux lover killed the Chippewa suitor and later his four brothers over the matter. To avenge these murders, the father of the slain, a man well respected by his people, spent several years thereafter gathering support for a war party to admonish the Sioux living at Mille Lacs.⁴⁷ The social compact of the Chippewa, —based on mutual aid and defense—required that they avenge the deaths of these kinsmen.

According to oral tradition, at an appointed day, a large war party Chippewa gathered at Fond du Lac, two-days journey from the Sioux village at Mille Lacs. Once gathered, they followed a well-trodden path between Fond du Lac and Mille Lacs. At the time, the Mdewakanaton Sioux inhabited two villages at Mille Lacs—one situated along the shore of the lake and the other probably sited on Shakopee Lake a short distance south. In a three-day pitched battle, the Sioux evacuated these important villages. Those Sioux who survived the battle either moved out onto the plains, or removed to new villages positioned near the junction of the Mississippi and Rum rivers.⁴⁸ In 1766, Jonathan Carver, the English traveler, noted three bands of Sioux living there and Chippewa accounts place

⁴⁷ Roger and Priscilla Buffalohead, Against the Tide of History: The Story of the Mille Lacs Anishinabe (Cass Lake: Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, 1985), p. 16; and William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 157-158.

⁴⁸ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 158-162.

them there until about 1770.⁴⁹

According to one Sioux scholar, the expulsion of the Sioux from their "traditional homes around Mille Lacs Lake" was the "most important event of the eighteenth century" for the Sioux and:

its effects were of immense significance to the Santee Sioux. The battle is the most readily identifiable event in the process by which they were transformed from a typical tribe of the Eastern Woodlands culture to a people at least on the margin of the Plains Indian culture, to which the western Sioux became thoroughgoing converts.⁵⁰

Notwithstanding, it should be pointed out that some scholars believe that either the engagement at Mille Lacs never took place, or that the Sioux had already vacated the area for the most part and that they removed southwest to the Minnesota River Valley prior prior to this date. These scholars see inconsistencies in Warren's account and furthermore archaeological surveys of the area have not turned up evidence of any pitched battles.⁵¹ Other scholars believe that, by 1748, the French had lured the Mdewakanaton Sioux from Mille Lacs Lake to the area around Fort Beauharnois.⁵² One scholar, Gary Clayton Anderson, even depicts Warren's recounting of Chippewa oral tradition as "campfire tales" and "legends," stating that a number of inter-related factors affected Sioux population movements, such as European trade, changing

⁴⁹ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 162; and Jonathan Carver, Esq. Travels Through the Interior Parts of North America in the Years, 1766, 1767, and 1768 reprint edition (Minneapolis: Ross and Haines, Inc, 1956), unpaginated map.

⁵⁰ Roy W. Meyer, History of the Santee Sioux: United States Indian Policy on Trial (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), pp. 13-14.

⁵¹ Patrick Nunnally, "Traces of the Past at Kathio Historic District," Roots Volume 20, No. 2 (Spring 1992): 8-9; Roy W. Meyer, History of the Santee Sioux: United States Indian Policy on Trial (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), p. 14.

⁵² William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 156-157; and Roy W. Meyer, History of the Santee Sioux: United States Indian Policy on Trial (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), p. 13.

ecological patterns and migratory cultural traits and not simply a single encounter.⁵³

Whether the clash at Mille Lacs took place or not, the result was that by the end of the 1740s, the Chippewas held supremacy over the Mille Lacs Lake area. These areas were poorly defended, isolated and not essential to the sustaining area of the Sioux.⁵⁴ Notwithstanding this point, domination of the Mille Lacs area did not go uncontested. The battle at Mille Lacs Lake began another series of conflicts between the two tribes that led to the systematic retreat on the part of the Woodland Sioux from lands north and west of Mille Lacs.

Sioux Counterattack, 1748

Daily loss of life at the hands of overwhelming numbers of invading Chippewa, and the pitched battle at Mille Lacs compelled the Sioux to make efforts to check the further advance of the Chippewa. Drawing from various Sioux bands to the south and west, in 1748, the Sioux launched a counterattack. Setting out in large war parties, they divided and advanced in three different directions. These warrior groups set out to attack Chippewa and their allies strongholds at Sandy Lake, Rainy Lake and the Red River river country. However, all three military strikes failed to dislodge the Chippewa and their allies to the northwest. In actuality, the Sioux lost additional ground. In a fight at Cut-Foot Sioux Lake, the Chippewa soundly defeated the Sioux, obliging them to abandon their village at Leech Lake. This last battle solidified the Chippewa's hold onto an area surrounding Leech and Winnibigoshish Lakes in present-day north-central Minnesota.⁵⁵

Chippewa Consolidation of Gains

After the battle of Cut-Foot Sioux Lake, a general era of peace descended amongst

⁵³ Gary Clayton Anderson in his article "Early Dakota Migration and Intertribal War: A Revision," Western Historical Quarterly Vol. XI, no. 1 (January 1980): 17-19.

⁵⁴ Gary Clayton Anderson in his article "Early Dakota Migration and Intertribal War: A Revision," Western Historical Quarterly Vol. XI, no. 1 (January 1980): 26-27.

⁵⁵ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 183-185.

the Sioux and Chippewa. In 1750, the French reoccupied Fort Beauharnois and once again began trading directly with the Sioux. However, with the outbreak of the French and Indian (1755-1763), the French abandoned the fort once again. Having lost this contest for North America with the British, French influence and power in the affairs of the Chippewa-Sioux diminished rapidly. By 1766, when the British explorer Jonathan Carver mapped the area, the Chippewa occupied a tightly defined area in northeast Minnesota and northwest Wisconsin with villages at Chequamegon Bay, Fond du Lac, Sandy Lake and in the St. Croix River Valley. The nearest Sioux villages were on the Rum River near its confluence with the Mississippi—a relatively safe distance away. Carver's map of the region called the three Sioux bands living there the "River bands of the Naudewefsee."⁵⁶ The proximity of these villages to Mille Lacs probably prevented the Chippewa from living permanently in the former Sioux village sites there.

This relative tranquility that existed between the Chippewa and Sioux since 1750 or so, shattered in 1768, when the Sioux made a concerted attempt to dislodge the Chippewa from Sandy Lake and elsewhere. The rationalization for this attack is stated in Warren's History of the Ojibway People. It is derived from an account given to Esh-ke-bug-e-coshe, a prominent Chippewa, as transmitted to him by his grandfather Waus-e-ko-gub-ig (Bright Forehead), a distinguished war chief at Sandy Lake.⁵⁷ According to the Chippewa version:

The M'de-wak-anton Dakotas, being at last obliged, from the repeated incursions of the Ojibways, to evacuate their grand villages at Mille Lacs and Knife Lake, now located themselves on Rum River. Smarting under the loss of their ancient village sites, and their best hunting grounds and rice lakes, they determined to make one more united and national effort to stem the advance of their troublesome and persevering enemies, and drive them back to the shores of Lake Superior.

Having for some years past been enjoying an active communion with the French traders [probably at Fort Beauharnois], they had become supplied with fire-arms, and in this respect they now stood on the

⁵⁶ Jonathan Carver, Travels Through the Interior Parts of North America in the Years 1766, 1767, and 1768, third edition, (Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, Inc., 1956), map.

⁵⁷ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 223 and 227.

same footing with the Ojibways, who had long had the advantage over them, or having first reached by the whites.⁵⁸

To surprise the Chippewa at Sandy Lake, they used a northern circuitous route that took them north of Sandy Lake. Thereafter, they descended down the Mississippi River by canoe to Sandy Lake.⁵⁹

After initial success against outlying Chippewa hunters and rice-gatherers, and after capturing thirty women prisoners who had been berry-picking, the Sioux finally reached the village of Sandy Lake. However, the Chippewa discovered the Sioux before they could put their surprise plan of attack into action. In a pitched battle, the Sandy Lake Chippewa repulsed the Sioux assault. Defeated, the Sioux warriors retreated downstream taking the wives, daughters and sisters of the Chippewa they had captured earlier. By fortunate circumstance, a Chippewa war party returning from a their own foray into Sioux country discovered the situation. They ambushed the Sioux war party near the confluence of Crow Wing and Mississippi Rivers and rescued their women. "Having suffered a severe loss," according to Warren, "the Dakota warriors returned to their villages, and for fear that the Ojibways would retaliate, by making a similar incursion into their country, the M'de-wak-anton section of the tribe evacuated the Rum River country, and moved to the Minnesota River."⁶⁰

Sioux fears of retaliation were not unfounded. Almost immediately, a war party of Chippewa led by No-kay attacked a Sioux village on the St. Peters river with some success.⁶¹ In counter retaliation for this act, several Sioux war parties attacked the Chippewa in indecisive skirmishes along the Elk river.⁶²

⁵⁸ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 223.

⁵⁹ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 224-232.

⁶⁰ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 224-232.

⁶¹ William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 83-84.

⁶² Newton Horace Winchell, The Aborigines of Minnesota (St. Paul: Pioneer Company Printer, 1911), p. 539.

Failing to succeed in their own efforts, the Sioux sought an alliance with the Odugamies (Fox Indians), who were still enemies of the Chippewa. In 1771, together they attempted a direct attack the Chippewa living on the St. Croix river. However, at St. Croix Falls, they were significantly defeated by a force of three hundred Chippewa warriors, which included sixty warriors from Sandy Lake.⁶³

The Battle of St. Croix Falls marks a significant point in Chippewa history for two reasons. First, the Chippewa successfully defended their territory from Sandy Lake to the St. Croix River from direct assaults by their enemies, thereby further consolidating their hold on the area. The Sioux, who once were considered allies and relatives by the Chippewa, were now the enemy from whom the Chippewa defended this region against. Second, it is likely that a small contingent warriors from a village of Mille Lacs participated in this important conflict. This is the first indication that the Chippewa expanded southward from either Sandy Lake or Fond du Lac to settle at Mille Lacs.

The next chapter will first describe Ojibwe way of life at Mille Lacs, Sandy Lake and on the St. Croix river in the late 1700s, and how they filled the vacuum left by the departure of the Sioux from the area. This next chapter will narrate the "middle ground" diplomatic relationship between the Ojibwe in these villages and the British and American powers as well.

Notes on Chapter Sources:

Information in this chapter is once again mostly derived from William W. Warren's History of the Ojibway People, introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984; and several newspaper articles by Warren, such as "Answers to Inquiries Regarding Chippewas," Minnesota Pioneer, 5 December 1849; "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946).

⁶³ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 242-247; and William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 87-88.

Principal secondary accounts on Chippewa history consulted include: Edmund Jefferson Danzinger, Jr. The Chippewas of Lake Superior (1979), W. Vernon Kinietz, The Indians of the Western Great Lakes, 1625-1760 Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1965 Arrell Gibson Morgan, The American Indian: Prehistory to the Present Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980, Harold Hickerson, "Ethnohistory of Chippewa of Lake Superior," in Chippewa Indians III New York: Garland Publishing Company, 1974, and Richard White, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815 New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 50-52.

Additional information on Chippewa culture came from two recent and key dissertations. They are: Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986) and Melissa L. Meyer, "Tradition and the Market: The Social Relations of the White Earth Anishenaabeg, 1889-1920" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1985).

For important historical resources on the Sioux perspective of their conflict with the Chippewa see Gary Clayton Anderson, "Early Dakota Migration and Intertribal War: A Revision," Western Historical Quarterly Vol. XI, no. 1 (January 1980), and Roy W. Meyer, History of the Santee Sioux: United States Indian Policy on Trial Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967.

Chippewa Historical Chronology: 1640s-1771

1640s	Proto-Chippewa peoples called Saukteurs emerge as a group near Sault Ste. Marie. Introduction of French fur trade by Wyandot traders.
1662	Defeat of the Iroquois by Saukteurs at Whitefish Bay.
1679	Alliance between Chippewa and Sioux arranged by Daniel Greysolon, Sieur Duluth. Chippewa migrate in numbers to Chequamegon Bay.
1695	Mixed-blood induces Chippewa relatives to attack Sioux encampment on St. Croix River.
1695	Pierre Charles Le Seur constructs a fort on the Isle of Pelee

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- near the head of Lake Pepin.
- 1721 Chippewa-Sioux battle over Sandy Lake.
- 1737 Massacre of members of the Verendrye exploration party by Sioux. French abandon Fort Beauharnois.
- 1739-1748 King George's War. Arming of the Chippewa.
- 1741-1742 Chippewa and Cree allies attack Sioux in indecisive conflicts.
- 1748 Chippewa successfully attack Sioux villages at Mille Lacs
Sioux counterattacks result in their defeat at Cut-Foot Sioux
Lake. Chippewa thereafter occupy Sandy Lake. Sioux remove
to villages on Rum River at confluence with Mississippi.
- 1750 French reoccupied Fort Beauharnois.
- 1755-1763 French and Indian war. French abandon Fort Beauharnois
once again.
- 1766-1767 Jonathan Carver explores area.
- 1768 Sioux march against Chippewa at Sandy Lake and are
defeated. Battle at confluence of Crow Wing and Mississippi
Rivers. Sioux remove from the Rum River country to the
Minnesota River country.
- 1768-1771 Chippewa occupy village at Mille Lacs.
- 1771 Battle of St. Croix Falls and defeat of Sioux-Fox alliance.

Chapter Three

Living Amongst the Ojibwe in the *Pays d'en Haut*

Introduction

In 1771, the Ojibwe living along the Mississippi River, on Mille Lacs Lake and along the St. Croix River lived what can be best described as a seasonal round lifestyle. Their immediate physical environment and the changing seasons dictated their types of shelter, clothing worn, food resources, modes of transportation and social activities. This seasonal round way of life reflected Ojibwe village needs in the late 1700s. Against this background, the relationships of the various Ojibwe bands with one another, with other tribes, and with non-Indians, such as the British, will be discussed in the following chapter.

To begin this chapter, we will start with describing Ojibwe seasonal way of life as it existed for the Mississippi Bands of the Ojibwe in the late 1700s, starting in the season of fall. Though the Ojibwe had acculturated European manufactured goods (guns, brass kettles, woolen blankets, etc.) from the fur trade into their life, at this time, Ojibwe lifeways based on the environment and the seasonal changes varied little since pre-contact times.

Seasonal Round Lifestyle

Fall time was ricing time. With the changing of the leaves, the various Ojibwe family groups living in their summer villages on Sandy Lake, Mille Lacs Lake and elsewhere, left their encampments for village ricing camps to begin a year of hard work starting with ricing each autumn in the northern inland lakes. Each village had its own ricing area. It is likely that the Sandy Lake people used present-day Minnewawa Lake to the south,¹ while the Mille Lacs people used the various lakes along the Rum River, such as present-day Ogechie, Shakopee

¹ J. Wm. Trgygg, "Composite Map of United States Land Surveyors' Original Plats and Field Notes," Sheet 13, Minnesota Series, Ely, Minnesota, 1966; and Harold Hickerson, "The Southwestern Chippewa: An Ethnohistorical Study," American Anthropologist Vol. 64, no. 3, part 2 (June 1962): 36.

and Onamia Lakes. It is not specifically known which lakes the St. Croix bands used during this time, but most likely used the sheltered lakes and streams near their village at Yellow Lake. The Ojibwe considered these ricing grounds as common property, although individual families may have had particular areas they used regularly.²

Traditional harvesting of wild rice is hard work that involves the cooperative work of many individuals. Wild ricing combines several processes to obtain the nutritional grain kernel, including tying, knocking, drying, parching or scorching, hulling, winnowing, and finally storage.³

The grain matures in the latter part of August or in September and for more than a month, pairs of Ojibwe harvest the rice by birchbark canoe. First, these persons:

go to the rice fields in their canoes and tie the standing stalks into small bunches. When the grain is sufficiently mature, two persons, generally women, go together into the fields to garner the seed. The stalks are usually so close together in the harvest field that it is impossible to use a paddle, so the canoe is pushed along by a pole. As the harvesters pass among the rice, standing 4 or 5 feet above the water, one of the women reaches out, and, by means of a stick, pulls a quantity of the stalks down over the side of the canoe. Then with a similar stick held in her free hand she beats the fruit head, thus knocking the grain into the bottom of the canoe. In this way the grain on both sides of the path is gathered . . . The grain is then taken out, dried or cured, its tenacious hull is thrashed off, and, after being winnowed, it is stored away for future use.⁴

During the rice harvesting season, the Ojibwe consumed the wild rice daily and it

² Harold Hickerson, "The Southwestern Chippewa: An Ethnohistorical Study," American Anthropologist Vol. 64, no. 3, part 2 (June 1962): 35.

³ For a detailed account of each stage of traditional rice harvesting see various chapters in Thomas Vennum, Jr., Wild Rice and the Ojibway People (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1988).

⁴ Albert Ernest Jenks, "The Wild Rice Gatherers of the Upper Lakes" in Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology Washington, D.C: Government Printing Office, 1900, pp. 1056-1057.

was the main staple in the diets of the people living in the ricing camps. Rice not consumed during the season was secreted away by each family, along with other goods that they did not wish to bring along on their winter hunt.⁵

Sometime around October-November, when the first snowfall came, the Ojibwe prepared to go to their wintering-ground. Together as a village, they left their temporary ricing camps on the inland lakes behind and the rendezvoused at a given location with other village groups. For instance, the Sandy Lake and Mille Lacs villagers usually rendezvoused with the Pillager or Leech Lake Ojibwe at Gull Lake or the confluence of the Crow Wing and Mississippi rivers.⁶ While, the St. Croix bands rendezvoused mostly likely along the southern portion of the St. Croix River.

Once together, the Sandy Lake, Mille Lacs and Leech Lake villagers formed into large hunting bands for defensive reasons and migrated westward in search of meat on their favorite, yet very dangerous hunting grounds along the Long Prairie River.⁷ According to Warren, "larger animals, such as buffalo, elk, deer, and bear," had by this time decreased near their home villages. Therefore, the Ojibwe were obliged to "search further into the surrounding country for the game which formed the staple of life."⁸ The Long Prairie River country provided the game resources they sought.

Using a system of transport by stages, between "fifty to a hundred light birch bark wigwams" along with a considerable quantity of luggage, which probably included blankets, clothing, brass cooking kettles and wooden eating utensils, flintlock guns with powder and bullets, steel axes, were carried out on to the prairie west of the Crow Wing River by the women of each band. Typically, some women of the band set out at daybreak with a load of goods on their backs "aided by a burden strap across the forehead." They marched until two o'clock in the afternoon or so, when they would stop, build a scaffold and deposit the bundles of

⁵ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 266.

⁶ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 263 and 266.

⁷ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 263 and 266.

⁸ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 263.

goods and then return to the encampment at night. The next day, fresh loads were carried forth to the new encampment, until by stages, all their goods were forwarded. Each day and along each stage of the way, women worked at transporting these goods and erecting their winter wigwam lodges, while the men pursued big game in large hunting bands.⁹ It was a tedious, trying and tiring method of transporting goods in the wilderness. Without horses or other beasts of burden, it was the only method of transportation across land.

In 1771 and for sometime afterward, plenty of game roamed in the Long Prairie River country for the Ojibwe to track and kill. One hunter reportedly "killed in one day's hunt, starting from the mouth of Crow Wing River, sixteen elk, four buffalo, five deer, three bear, one lynx, and one porcupine."¹⁰ While the men hunted and brought game down, the women who remained in camp spent their days preparing the game meat for the days ahead and their trip back to their inland villages. Preparation included cutting the venison, elk, buffalo and other big game carcasses into manageable slices and hanging these slices over fires to smoke and dry them. This dried smoked meat supplied critical food to their life cycle. The territory along the Long Prairie river played an important part in the winter sustaining area of the Sandy Lake and Mille Lacs people, while the area near confluence of the Snake and the St. Croix Rivers southward played an equally important part in the winter seasonal hunting grounds of the St. Croix River bands.

Migrating out onto the winter hunting grounds along the Long Prairie River or the lower St. Croix, Snake, Willow and Rush river area was a particularly dangerous activity because these winter hunting spots were also the favorite hunting grounds of the Warpeton or Sisseton and Mdewakanton Sioux. This area between the Long Prairie and the Rush River was an area ideally suited for big game, containing stretches of prairie broken by large pockets of forests, where big game took shelter against the bleak cold prairie winds of winter. Large Sioux groups followed the game from their prairie haunts eastward and pitched their winter lodges in these wintering grounds, while the Ojibwe migrated from the

⁹ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 263; and George I. Quimby, "A Year with a Chippewa Family, 1763-1764," Ethnohistory Vol. 9, no. 3 (Summer, 1962): 228 and 232.

¹⁰ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 263.

opposite direction into the area.¹¹

The migrations of the Ojibwe and Sioux into the same wintering ground presented a danger, especially when there was inter-tribal warfare. Apparently during interim lulls of peace, instead of living in fear of each other in the midst of plenty, the Sioux and the Ojibwe worked out a customary agreement to suspend hostilities during the winter months. "The pipe of peace," according to Warren, "was smoked each winter at the meeting of the two grand hostile hunting camps, and for weeks they would interchange friendly visits, and pursue the chase in one another's vicinity, without fear of harm or molestation."¹²

By the middle of February, the winter hunt ended and the village bands separated and slowly move back to their respective village sites. Again through a system of stage transport, the women of the village transported their lodges, baggage, and with an estimated 4,000 lbs. of dried game meat per seven-member family back to their homes.¹³ Once near their village areas, the women busied themselves seeking sustenance from nearby sugar bushes.¹⁴ These sugar bushes were sometimes miles from their village sites. For instance, the Mille Lacs band traditionally exploited sugar bushes all along the southern shore of Mille Lacs Lake from present-day Cove, Minnesota too immediately south of Isle, Minnesota.¹⁵

Management of sugarmaking belonged to the women in the band. The only role the men played was to cut and supply enough wood for the fires for boiling. Women selected the proper time to tap the running sap and then slashed the maples and inserted cedar spiles to draw off the tree's sap. Oval birchbark

⁸ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 266-267.

⁸ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 266-267.

¹³ This calculation is based on the amount a typical Chippewa family in Michigan carried each winter at this time. George I. Quimby, "A Year with a Chippewa Family, 1763-1764," Ethnohistory Vol. 9, no. 3 (Summer, 1962): 228.

¹⁴ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 264.

¹⁵ J. Wm. Trgygg, "Composite Map of United States Land Surveyors' Original Plats and Field Notes," Sheet 13, Minnesota Series, Ely, Minnesota, 1966.

baskets of various sizes woven with basswood fibers served as containers for the collected sap. Ojibwe women made these baskets by folding "birchbark sheets at the ends and perforating the folds to leave no holes in the construction save the ones at the end where the folds were overlapped." The women then poured the collected sap into kettles and boiled it down into maple sugar, syrup and other related sugar maple items. From February until the late spring, families subsisted primarily on the maple sugar with the dried meat they brought back from their winter hunts. An average family of seven to eight people produced approximately "1,600 pounds of maple sugar and 36 gallons of syrup in one month." They also consumed 300 pounds of maple sugar during the month as well. Dependence on sugar bushes and game as major food resources in the spring months lasted well into the twentieth century.¹⁶

While the women busied themselves in the sugar bush, the men hunted and fished for food. They also trapped for beaver, raccoons, wolves and other valuable fur-bearing animals in the nearby woodland for the fur trade. Allowing for the winter to thicken the coats of these animals made the pelts more valuable at this time of year. To acquire pelts, the men branched out into small hunting parties and in different directions.¹⁷ Success or failure in trapping and hunting depended on weather conditions and fresh fallen snow aided in tracking the prey.

When the snow and ice melted and the trapping season ended, and having survived another winter, the various family groups gathered again in their respective villages. They amused themselves with recreation, ball-playing, such as the game of Baug-ah-ud-o-way played with a bat and wooden ball (lacrosse), racing, and naturally courtship. Spring time was also the season for trading with non-Indians. Because no traders wintered near the villages of Sandy Lake, Mille Lacs and St. Croix in 1771, many hunters set out in their birchbark canoes loaded down with skins for faraway trading posts, with some men traveling as far away as Sault Ste. Marie. At the trading post, they bartered "their pelts for new supplies of clothing, ammunition, tobacco, and firewater."¹⁸

¹⁶ Michael Loftus, "A Late Historic Period Chippewa Sugar Maple Camp," Wisconsin Archaeologist Vol. 58, no. 1: 71-76; and George I. Quimby, "A Year with a Chippewa Family, 1763-1764," Ethnohistory Vol. 9, no. 3 (Summer, 1962): 228.

¹⁷ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 264.

¹⁸ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 264.

Spring time also was a season for religion—a favorite time for the Midewiwin. Persons wishing to be initiated into the Grand Medicine Society began preparing for it during the previous winter. Warren aptly describes initiation into the Midewiwin in the following passage. The person wishing initiation:

collects and dries choice meats; with the choicest pelts he procures of the traders, articles for sacrifice, and when spring arrives, having chose his four initiators from the wise old men of his village, he places these articles, with tobacco, at their disposal, and the ceremonies commence. For four nights, the medicine drums of the initiators resound throughout the village, and their songs and prayers are addressed to the master of life. The day the ceremony is performed, is one of jubilee to the inhabitants of the village. Each one dons the best clothing he or she possesses, and they vie with one another in the paints and ornaments with which they adorn their persons, to appear to the best advantage within the sacred lodge.¹⁹

Amusements, merrymaking, gaiety and religious rites did not distract all members of the village. For spring time was also the proper time to end mourning for relatives lately lost at the hands of the Sioux and to think of revenge. According to custom, there were two ways, they could "wipe the paint of mourning from their faces."

The first is through the medium of the Meda, or grand medicine, which, to an Indian, is a costly ordeal. The next way is to go to war, and either kill or scalp, an enemy, or besmear a relic of the deceased in an enemy's blood. This custom is one of their grand stimulants to war . . .²⁰

Warren believed that this Ojibwe mourning custom motivated war parties more often than revenge or glory.²¹ Whichever motivation proved valid, by the late

¹⁹ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 265.

²⁰ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 264.

²¹ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 264.

spring and into the summertime, small individual war parties gathered to venture out into the wilderness to seek out unsuspecting the enemies of the Ojibwe. These war parties should not be confused with the larger inter-village attacks on the Sioux, that resulted in entire Sioux villages being decimated in one fell swoop by a hundred warriors or more, such as happened at Sandy Lake and Mille Lacs. Warriors from two or more villages formed these latter strikes, and usually, far greater expectations motivated them than relief from customary mourning responsibilities.

But the "occasional" attack on the enemy or to defense against an enemy war party, during the summer, the men of the village daily hunted for fresh game. "When game was in poor supply or unavailable because of warfare," the men and boys of the village fished in nearby inland lakes as a "stopgap subsistence activity." One scholar has argued that the Southwestern Ojibwe did not depend on fish as a steady dietary item at this time.²² Yet, it is highly unlikely for the Ojibwe to ignore an available protein-rich food resource in the midst of their sustaining area, especially since their forebears the Saulteurs extensively fished the shores of Lake Superior at Bo-we-ting (Sault Ste. Marie).

Notwithstanding, during the summer time while the men hunted and fished, the women of the village enjoyed a season of rest and amusement. They spent their time mostly tending gardens and "making their lodge coverings and mats for use during the coming winter, and in picking and drying berries."²³ This rest period was much-needed for soon autumn arrived and their arduous seasonal tasks began over.

As the above text suggests, the used a wide range of territory with differing environments as a sustaining area for their hunting-gathering culture. During each season, economic activities, settlement patterns, and the general way of life adapted to meet the dictates of these changing conditions. Hunting and gathering food sources for survival preoccupied the attention and mindset of the Ojibwe. In 1771, trapping for fur trade played only a small role in their lives. It had not yet become a determining economic force in their daily lifeways.

²² Harold Hickerson, "The Southwestern Chippewa: An Ethnohistorical Study," American Anthropologist Vol. 64, no. 3, part 2 (June 1962): 15.

²³ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 264.

Ojibwe of the Mississippi

Starting around 1771 or perhaps a little later, the Ojibwe of the Mississippi emerged as a recognized community of villages and sub-villages that occupied and used the upper Mississippi River area. According to one source, in Minnesota "the Mississippi Bands actually constituted several villages, including Sandy Lake (Aitkin County), Gull Lake (Crow Wing County), Mille Lacs Lake (Mille Lacs County), and the St. Croix River (Snake River Tributary in Pine County) . . .[and] also probably included Chippewas living in villages on the Yellow River, and eastern tributary of the St. Croix in Burnett County, Wisconsin."²⁴ Another source suggested that the Mississippi Bands consisted of Gull Lake, Crow Wing, Rabbit Lake, Sandy Lake and Mille Lacs bands of villages.²⁵

For the purposes of this part of the study, the Mississippi Bands will include three groups: (1) those living along the Mississippi River (Sandy Lake, Rabbit Lake, Gull Lake, Crow Wing and Swan River), (2) the Mille Lacs Lake group living along the southern shore of the lake and (3) those groups living along river drainages west of the shoreline of the St. Croix River (Snake River, Knife River, Pokegama Lake and Tamarack River) to Mille Lacs Lake.

The various villages of the Mississippi Bands of the Ojibwe held close kinship and clan ties with one another and their cousins to north along Lake Superior. They cooperated with one another on inter-village hunting parties and during times of warfare. For instance, the Sandy Lake and Mille Lacs villages hunted together each winter.²⁶ Because of this close interaction of villages, often times, disease passed from village to village readily, such as in 1820 when a small pox epidemic infected and nearly depopulated the villages of the St. Croix and Sandy Lake bands.²⁷ When disease or frequent attacks by Sioux war parties did nearly

¹⁸ Harold Hickerson, "Ethnohistory of Chippewa of Lake Superior," in Chippewa Indians III New York: Garland Publishing Company, 1974, pp. 4 and 6.

²⁵ William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 53.

²⁶ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 345.

²⁷ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger

decimate a particular village band, Lake Superior Ojibwe reinforced the ranks. The "richness of the hunting grounds, and facilities of obtaining a plentiful and easy livelihood," drew these Ojibwe into the Mississippi country.²⁸

Though related to one another by kinship ties, each village possessed autonomy in their affairs and each had their civil and warrior leaders.

Living Amongst the Ojibwe in the *Pays d'en Haut*

Initially, after the British defeated the French in the French and Indian War, the Ojibwe held no love for the British, especially after Pontiac's Rebellion failed. The British had not acted as fathers and brothers to the Indians like the French. Instead, the Ojibwe and other tribes saw them as merciless enemies. There appeared to be no hope for accommodation on a middle ground. Still, the British had not reduced the Indians to subjects and they had not treated them as a conquered people. Instead, the British attempted to build an infrastructure for alliance based on the old French model of gift giving and handing out medals to Indian leaders. Imitating this part of the French system worked for the British. With it the British established a diplomatic middle ground with the Indians in which each group understood the other group's intentions. Unlike the French, they failed to establish a "cultural" middle ground with the Ojibwe—the heart of French Indian policy. The British made little progress toward this objective. The British feared Indian-white contact and restricted it, even among their traders. They enjoyed little face to face contact with Indians. As long as they practiced this policy, they acquired little knowledge of Ojibwe customs and secured little appreciation, loyalty and cooperation beyond formal diplomatic relations.²⁹

In time, a new middle ground did form in the *Pays d'en Haut*, a term the French used to describe the region around the Great Lakes and beyond. This middle ground relied on the same resources that enlivened French Indian policy—trade and human contact of a wide assortment of people with the Ojibwe. Contact

Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 335.

²⁸ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 344 and 348.

²⁹ Richard White, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 269-271, 275, 289, 308-309, and 314-319.

between the two groups included a mix of reciprocity, profit and politics, but through it the British gained some social position among the Ojibwe. In the 1790s, their social position rose following the entry of trappers and fur traders into the country of the Ojibwe of the Mississippi.³⁰

Before the coming of these fur entrepreneurs, the Ojibwe of the Mississippi traded for European goods on a limited basis. Trade occurred on periodic annual visits to either Chequamegon Bay, Sault Ste. Marie and/or Mackinaw.³¹ Though the Ojibwe became acculturated to the material goods of Europeans, prior to 1784, the Mississippi Ojibwe were not dependent on this manufactured items. The distances and arduous journey from the Upper Mississippi River to even Chequamegon Bay, and the impassable terrain and the limited waterways, precluded all but one annual expedition in the spring time. On this annual trip large quantities of pelts could not be efficiently transported by canoe to the trading centers. Similarly, on the return trip, the Indians could bring back only a few trade items beyond the powder, ammunition and guns and blankets needed for the coming year.

Starting in 1784, this limited trading relationship changed forever. In this year, a trader named Michel Cadotte (younger brother of John Baptiste Cadotte) wintered on the Namekagon River, a branch of the St. Croix river and traded directly with the interior bands in the *Pays d'en Haut*. On the Namekagon, Cadotte secured the trade with the St. Croix bands before they reached Chequamegon Bay, which proved very profitable.³² Others soon followed and penetrated even deeper into the *Pays d'en Haut*. For instance, three years later, an unknown trader wintered on the Crow Wing River in the heart of the Ojibwe Mississippi country. Here, he intercepted the Ojibwe Indians as they came back from their winter hunting expedition out onto the prairie.³³

From these traders and perhaps others, a committee of British merchants in

³⁰ Richard White, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 323-324, 335-336 and 339.

³¹ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 288.

³² William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 300.

³³ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 266.

Montreal "representing northwest trading interests," learned of the reported bounteous fur-bearing area of the Upper Mississippi. Notwithstanding this knowledge, the risk of attack by the Sioux with the fear of the Ojibwe pillaging their trade goods, prevented and deterred independent traders from pursuing the trade in this region of the *Pays d'en Haut* in any large numbers.³⁴ These British merchants concluded that the only way to exploit this rich area was to organize a large enough expedition to overcome these difficulties and to find someone to lead it. That man was John Baptiste Cadotte II, the son of the influential trader of the same name, who carried on the fur trade throughout the Lake Superior region from a depot at Sault Ste. Marie.³⁵

In 1793, the Montreal merchants enlisted John Baptiste Cadotte II, who then formed a large expedition to trade directly with the Mississippi Bands of the Ojibwe. Supported by British capital, Cadotte led a "large party, consisting of traders, 'coureurs du bois,' trappers, and a few Iroquois Indian, who had assumed the habits and learned to perform the labor, of Canadian 'voyageurs,' to accompany him on an expedition to these dangerous regions." From Sault Ste. Marie, Cadotte's expedition traveled along the southern shores of Lake Superior and up the St. Louis River to a series of rapids and falls that blockaded any further progress. Portaging their goods and equipment around these obstacles, they poled themselves further upstream until they reached the Savanna River. They proceeded westward up the Savanna River until they reached Sandy Lake via another portage.³⁶ Cadotte entry into the Sandy Lake village of the Ojibwe opened up the Crow Wing country to direct British fur trade.

Reaching Sandy Lake in late fall, Cadotte's force of trappers joined the Ojibwe on their winter hunt. Drifting down the Mississippi River to the fork of the Crow Wing River, they entered the winter-hunting grounds used by the Ojibwe of Sandy Lake, Leech Lake and Mille Lacs. Once there, the Ojibwe and Cadotte's men scattered along the Long Prairie River—each group setting up separate winter

³⁴ Harold Hickerson, "The Southwestern Chippewa: An Ethnohistorical Study," American Anthropologist Vol. 64, no. 3, part 2 (June 1962): 17; and William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 280-288.

³⁵ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 220-221.

³⁶ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 280-288.

quarters. Generally for the Ojibwe, this was a time for killing large game animals for their winter meat supply. Yet, throughout that winter, the Ojibwe carried on an "active barter of furs for their merchandise" with the traders, while Cadotte's trappers in small parties pursued beaver as well.³⁷ The Ojibwe killed larger than normal quantities of beaver and other fur-bearing animals to have sufficient pelts to trade.

Despite a harrowing encounter with the Sioux, who also wintered in the area,³⁸ the Cadotte party succeeded in exploring and exploiting the Mississippi country for the British. Cadotte's commercial voyage demonstrated to the British that the area's rich peltry could be systematically exploited in spite of Sioux threats. Cadotte also succeeded in establishing a cultural middle ground with the Ojibwe as well. His willingness to winter with the Ojibwe convinced the Ojibwe to allow the British to establish fur trading posts in their midst. With a trading post so near, the Ojibwe need not go so far to acquire British trading items.

In 1796, only a few years after the Cadotte wintered with the Mississippi Bands of the Ojibwe, the Northwest Fur Company built a stockaded fur trading post on peninsula on the west shore of Sandy Lake near present-day Brown Lake. The Sandy Lake village lived northeast of them on the north shore of the lake. From this date onward, the Ojibwe of the Upper Mississippi were "constantly supplied with resident traders and their former periodic visits to Sault Ste. Marie and Mackinaw ceased almost entirely."³⁹ The Sandy Lake trading post became part of the Fond du Lac Department of the Northwest Fur Company, and the Department's territory included the St. Croix River region as well.⁴⁰ Like the French before them, the British accommodated the Ojibwe and their customs in their effort to exploit the rich fur-bearing territory held by them. The trading

³⁷ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 280-288.

³⁸ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 280-288.

³⁹ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 288 and J. Wm. Trgygg, "Composite Map of United States Land Surveyors' Original Plats and Field Notes," Sheet 13, Minnesota Series, Ely, Minnesota, 1966.

⁴⁰ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 291-292.

relationship between the two powers engendered a new "cultural middle ground" position, which continued until the British lost the War of 1812 and removed from the area.

Massacre at Cross Lake, Retribution and General Peace

The ramifications of the Ojibwe decision to allow the British to construct a fur trading post in their territory came swiftly and it came from their enemies the Sioux. The British trading post at Sandy Lake upset the delicate balance between the Sioux and the Ojibwe, eventually making it dangerous again to winter along the Long Prairie River. Enjoying superior firepower and supplies, the Ojibwe now held the advantage over their Sioux counterparts. The Ojibwe took more than their share of meat and pelts for the trade, leading to overexploitation of the mutual hunting grounds of these two tribes and bitter feelings between the two tribes.

For several winters after the establishment of the Sandy Lake post by the Northwest Fur Company, the Sioux tolerated the situation and continued to approach the Ojibwe each winter to establish a temporary peace so they could mutually hunt the area's abundant winter game in peace.⁴¹ By 1800, the Sioux had had enough. They aggressively moved to deter the Ojibwe from exhausting the game reserves in their favorite hunting grounds.

That winter the Sioux did not establish the customary temporary peace. Instead, they "kept a wary watch over the movements" of the Ojibwe looking for a chance to strike a sudden blow against them. While the Sandy Lake and Mille Lacs Bands united with other groups, such as the Pillager Bands from Leech Lake, they were in no danger of attack by the Sioux.⁴² However, that year after chase, when the Sandy Lake and Mille Lacs band separated from the Pillagers, the Sioux saw their opportunity. Warren described the situation this way:

At Crow Wing the Pillager and Sandy Lake camps, as usual, parted company, and moved in different directions. The Dakotas followed the smaller camp, which led towards Mille Lacs and Sandy Lake,

⁴¹ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 344-345.

⁴² William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 344-345.

and at Cross Lake, thirty miles northeast of Crow Wing, they fell on the Ojibways, and destroyed nearly the entire camp. The Ojibways, perfectly unaware that the enemy was on their tracks in such force, as it was not the season of the year when they usually carried on their warfare, had leisurely moved their camp from place to place, without taking any precautions to guard against sudden attack or surprise.⁴³

Over two hundred men, women and children who were camping at Sa-aub-gum-aw or Cross Lake were annihilated. Fortunately, for the Mille Lacs, many of their families had departed from the main camp the previous day for their village and were unharmed. Also some women from Sandy Lake escaped because in using a system of transport by stages, they had left early that morning to carry large quantities of meat to the next camp ground.⁴⁴

Though a terrible blow to the Sandy Lake village, their numbers were soon replaced by other warriors from northern Lake Superior. Subsistence opportunities in the north were grim compared to the more favored southern areas and their northern relatives willing refilled the ranks of their southern cousins.⁴⁵

A few years after the massacre at Cross Lake, the Ojibwe at Sandy Lake recovered sufficiently to seek retribution against the Sioux. Their leader was Ka-dow-aub-e-da or Broken Tooth of the Loon clan. Together with Ba-be-sig-aun-dib-ay or "Curly Head" another important leader of the Mississippi Ojibwe bands and Esh-ke-bug-e-coshe or Flat Mouth, a Pillager chief, they planned an inter-village attack on Sioux. Curly Head and his band from Gull Lake lived on the frontier edge of the Ojibwe winter hunting ground. He and his band had relocated from Lake Superior directly to the vicinity of Gull Lake near Crow Wing to be nearer to this

⁴³ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 344-345.

⁴⁴ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 344-347. Given that the battle occurred 30 miles northeast of Crow Wing and the description of the land, it is likely that the massacre occurred on a peninsula of land between Upper and Lower Mission Lake and not at present day Cross Lake.

⁴⁵ Harold Hickerson, "The Southwestern Chippewa: An Ethnohistorical Study," American Anthropologist Vol. 64, no. 3, part 2 (June 1962): 30.

plentiful hunting ground. Once there, his group, whose descendents became the Gull Lake band, experienced several attacks from the Sioux. Each time, his band successfully repulsed the assaults, until they eventually held the Crow Wing country against their enemy.⁴⁶ Gathering at Gull Lake in the late fall, a daring and unlikely time of attack, the Sandy Lake, Gull Lake, Leech Lake and probably Mille Lacs Lake Ojibwe ambushed the unprepared Sioux at present-day Long Prairie, Minnesota. The combined forces of the villages numbering one hundred and sixty warriors severely punished the Sioux for their surprise attack at Cross Lake.⁴⁷

Fearing starvation that winter because warfare prevented them from hunting along the Long Prairie River, the Sioux asked for an immediate general peace. After sending messengers, the two tribes met near the junction of the Platte and Mississippi Rivers. Here a large party of Sioux from the Sisseton, Warpeton and Mdewakanton bands met the Sandy Lake and Mille Lacs Ojibwe. They formally sealed the peace by smoking the peace pipe with the Sandy Lake and Mille Lacs Ojibwe who also desired peace. Still, the Pillager band were noticeably absent from the peace talks. Open hostilities between the Pillager and the Sioux continued for many years to come.⁴⁸

The defeat handed to the Sioux at Long Prairie by the Ojibwe marked the turning point in Sioux power over the region. Though the Sioux continued to kill Ojibwe in small ambushes, they never again amassed forces sufficient to attack the Ojibwe in significant numbers as they had at Cross Lake.

According to Warren:

From this event may be dated the final evacuation of the Long Prairie River country by the Dakotas. Enticed by the richness of the hunting grounds, they would sometimes return, in force, but after suffering repeated blows at the hands of the Mississippi war-chiefs, . . . , they

⁴⁶ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 348-349.

⁴⁷ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 351-354.

⁴⁸ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 359.

eventually gave up possession and all claim on the country⁴⁹

Ojibwe of the St. Croix Region

The Ojibwe of the St. Croix region experienced the same problems with the Sioux after 1771 as their cousins at Mille Lacs and Sandy Lake. Though after the Battle of St. Croix Falls (1695), the St. Croix band had settled in villages along the St. Croix river at Rice Lake (circa 1702) and Yellow Lake (circa 1742) north of the Namekagon River,⁵⁰ the Ojibwe struggled with their enemies the Sioux and their allies the Fox Indians over a winter hunting territory south of the Snake River. During the middle and later part of the eighteenth century, Ojibwe and Sioux winter hunting camps encountered one another along the lower St. Croix, Snake, Willow and Rush rivers in this territory. Each winter, they smoked the peace pipe so each group could successfully hunt for big game. Invariably, when spring and summer time came, the peace terms were forgotten as individual Sioux and Ojibwe war parties set out to ambush one another. During this time, noted civil and war leaders included Mons-o-man-ay, Waub-ash-aw, Bi-a-jig, Shosh-e-man (Snow Glider) and his son No-din of the Awause clan, and Buffalo and his son Ka-gua-dash of the Bear clan.⁵¹

Beginning in 1784, the playing field between these two groups changed slightly, when Michel Cadotte and other traders wintered among them. Resident traders encouraged small game hunting as well as large game hunting. The Ojibwe and the Sioux became competitors for the limited fur-bearing animals inhabiting the area south of the Snake River. The introduction of the resident trader caused Ojibwe hunters in the St. Croix region to change their hunting habits dramatically toward the pursuit of furs over game—so much so, that they willing trapped for furs even during times of open warfare.

For instance, the Cross Lake massacre in 1800 and the Long Prairie River massacre of 1802 did not prevent the Ojibwe of the St. Croix region from seeking

⁴⁹ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 354.

⁵⁰ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 171.

⁵¹ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 327-335.

furs. In 1803-1804, fur trader named Michel Curot described the Yellow Lake Ojibwe "penetrating south to deer and beaver hunting grounds in the Snake River vicinity during a time of war, despite their fear of the Dakota and actual alarms of enemies lurking in their neighborhood. [And] at one point they were described as living in a fortified camp on Snake River."⁵²

Because of the danger, the St. Croix Ojibwe hunters, as well as those at Sandy Lake and Mille Lacs, hunted in large groups for protection. Fortunately, this risk in hunting was "sufficient to limit the exploitation of game, so that these regions, as long as warfare continued, remained well stocked and attractive to the hunter."⁵³ The dangers of warfare limited the killing of game animals in another way. Because of the danger, Ojibwe women, many children and elderly remained in their home villages instead of going out on the hunt. The transportation system by stages depended on the labor of these individuals, so lesser amounts of game meat and peltry for the trade were transported during hostilities.⁵⁴

Since Ojibwe hunters could not carry large quantities of goods out of the hunting grounds without their family labor units, the Ojibwe decided to establish fortified villages in the interior. For instance, by the fall of 1804, Yellow Lake Ojibwe had migrated to the Snake River country as a village to be closer to their winter hunting territory that lay southward. That fall they cached rice at Cross Lake on the Snake river, a clear indication that they intended to return in the spring. Thomas Connor, a Northwest Fur Company trader, followed them to the Snake River and built a post nearby to service the Indians.⁵⁵ The movement of Yellow Lake band members to the frontier edge of their former winter hunting grounds was very similar to the establishment of the Gull Lake band on the edge of the Sandy Lake winter hunting ground.

⁵² Harold Hickerson, "The Southwestern Chippewa: An Ethnohistorical Study," American Anthropologist Vol. 64, no. 3, part 2 (June 1962): 26.

⁵³ Harold Hickerson, "The Southwestern Chippewa: An Ethnohistorical Study," American Anthropologist Vol. 64, no. 3, part 2 (June 1962): 27.

⁵⁴ Harold Hickerson, "The Southwestern Chippewa: An Ethnohistorical Study," American Anthropologist Vol. 64, no. 3, part 2 (June 1962): 25 and 33-34.

⁵⁵ Harold Hickerson, "The Southwestern Chippewa: An Ethnohistorical Study," American Anthropologist Vol. 64, no. 3, part 2 (June 1962): 36.

Under the Authority of the "Long Knives," 1805-1818

Although the United States assumed sovereignty over the upper Mississippi country under Jay's Treaty (1794), Americans did not fully lay claim to the area until 1805, when Lieutenant Zebulon M. Pike explored the headwaters of the Mississippi and took official possession of it. Besides exerting United States influence in the area for the first time, Pike's primary objective was to bring British traders of the Northwest Company under United States control. By 1805, under the leadership of Cuthbert Grant, the Northwest Company operated posts at Cedar Lake (a few miles northeast of Brainerd), Sandy Lake, and Grand Rapids north of Sandy Lake. Pike's accomplishments were "disappointingly meager" in this regard. They politely greeted him, but almost ignored him.⁵⁶

A secondary objective of Pike's mission was to bring the Indians who inhabited the Mississippi country under the purview of United States power. Ojibwe leaders from Gull Lake and Sandy Lake met with Pike. In council, he explained the "nature of his visit and told the Ojibwe they were now all children of a "Great Father" in Washington. It was moreover the "Great Father's" desire that his Ojibwe make peace with their ancient enemies, the Sioux." He asked them to go to St. Louis for a council with General James Wilkinson. Yet, no Ojibwe leader accepted his offer. The Ojibwe simply accepted the medals and flags from the "Long Knife," a Ojibwe term for a citizen of the United States. There is no indication that the Ojibwe were in the least impressed by this event or accepted the authority of the United States in their affairs.⁵⁷ The presence of British power in the form of trading posts in their territory impressed them more than Pike's small expeditionary force.

Besides, their meeting with Pike is instructive in a different way. Unlike the French and the British before them who used the master metaphor of "Great Father" to establish a middle ground, Americans did not see this middle ground

⁵⁶ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 349-350; and W. Eugene Hollon, The Lost Pathfinder: Zebulon Montgomery Pike (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1949), pp. 73-88.

⁵⁷ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 349-350; and W. Eugene Hollon, The Lost Pathfinder: Zebulon Montgomery Pike (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1949), pp. 73-88.

position between themselves and the Indians. Americans did not see the Ojibwe as their equals, but used the expressed term "children" to denote the future relationship with the "Great Father."

But until America exerted greater authority in the area, the question of any type of relationship with the Ojibwe was a mute point. Even the British could not exert any great authority over the Ojibwe of the Mississippi. Until 1812, the British exerted only some influence over the Mississippi country and Indian matters through their trading post system.

When the War of 1812 between the British and the Americans broke out, the British sent agents to the principal villages of the Ojibwe living on the waters of the Mississippi and elsewhere to enlist them in the war effort. It is only then that the British learned that they could not take advantage of their alliance with the Mississippi Ojibwe. They "firmly withstood every effort made by the British to induce them to enter into the war," and according to Warren, "it is thus they have succeeded in holding their own in numbers, and in fact, gradually increasing, while other tribes, who have foolishly mingled in the wars of the whites, have become nearly extinct."⁵⁸

With the defeat of the British and the signing of the Treaty of Ghent (1814), American authority eventually came to the area. In 1820, Colonel Joseph Snelling laid the cornerstone on Fort Snelling—the first in this part of the wilderness and the only American military outpost north of Prairie du Chien. In the wake of the building Fort Snelling, civil authority followed. In 1819, Lawrence Taliaferro was appointed as Indian agent for the tribes in the Mississippi country.⁵⁹ Alongside military and civil authority came American commerce. In 1818, the Astor Fur Company succeeded the defunct Northwest Fur Company and commenced their operations and sent outfits to cover the Lake Superior country, including the Mississippi country.

The imposition of American military, civilian and economic power on the region occupied by the Mississippi Bands ended an era of Ojibwe-European congeniality in which they enjoyed "true kindness, sympathy, charity, and respect for his

⁵⁸ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 369.

⁵⁹ Howard R. Lamar, ed., The Reader's Encyclopedia of the American West (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1977), p. 397.

sacred beliefs and rites." For the French and somewhat for the British, the metaphor of the middle ground worked. The French and British trappers and traders were replaced by men of different temperament—men "whose chief object was to amass fortunes . . . They were of the Anglo-Saxon race, and hailed from the land of the progressive and money-making "Yankee."⁶⁰

The inter-relationship of the Ojibwe and American fur trapper during the early years is the subject of the next chapter. The entry of British resident fur traders had started to impact the seasonal lifestyle of the Ojibwe to a degree. However, after 1818, Ojibwe-American contact disrupted the seasonal round pattern even more—upsetting the social-ecological balance in Ojibwe life forever. American traders and trappers acted differently than their French and British counterparts. As will be seen, Ojibwe-American relationships eventually led to greater Ojibwe dependence on the trade goods, even greater alteration of their traditional hunting practices, over exploitation of resources and consequently greater friction with the Sioux as they rivaled with one another for the limited resources of the headwaters of the Mississippi.

Notes on Chapter Sources:

Again, a considerable amount of detail for this period in Ojibwe history can be derived from William W. Warren's History of the Ojibway People, introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984.

Principal secondary accounts on Ojibwe history consulted include: Harold Hickerson, "The Southwestern Chippewa: An Ethnohistorical Study," American Anthropologist Vol. 64, no. 3, part 2 (June 1962), and Richard White, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815 New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Additional information on Ojibwe seasonal round lifestyle and various aspects of it such as ricing or sugarmaking, please consult George I. Quimby, "A Year with a Chippewa Family, 1763-1764," Ethnohistory Vol. 9, no. 3 (Summer, 1962);

⁶⁰ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 385.

Thomas Vennum, Jr., Wild Rice and the Ojibway People St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1988; Albert Ernest Jenks, "The Wild Rice Gatherers of the Upper Lakes" in Nineteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology Washington, D.C: Government Printing Office, 1900; and Michael Loftus, "A Late Historic Period Chippewa Sugar Maple Camp," Wisconsin Archaeologist Vol. 58, no. 1.

Ojibwe Historical Chronology: 1771-1820

- 1784 Michel Cadotte (younger brother of John Baptiste Cadotte) winters on the Namekagon River, a branch of the St. Croix river and traded among the interior bands in the *Pays d'en Haut*.
- 1787 An unknown trader winters on the Crow Wing River in the heart of the Ojibwe Mississippi country.
- 1793 John Baptiste Cadotte II forms and leads a large party, consisting of traders, coureurs du bois, trappers, and a few Iroquois Indian to the Crow Wing River country.
- 1796 Northwest Fur Company builds a stockaded fur trading post on the west shore of Sandy Lake on peninsula near present-day Brown Lake. From this date onward, the Ojibwe of the Upper Mississippi are supplied with resident traders and their former periodic visits to Sault Ste. Marie and Mackinaw cease almost entirely.
- 1800 Sioux ambush Sandy Lake villagers at Cross Lake. Over two hundred men, women and children who were camping at Sa-aub-gum-aw or Cross Lake were annihilated.
- 1802 Ojibwe retaliate for Cross Lake ambush. One hundred and sixty Ojibwe warriors severely punished the Sioux at Long Praire for their surprise attack at Cross Lake.
- 1804 Yellow Lake Ojibwe migrate to the Snake River country to be closer to their hunting territory to the south.
- 1805 Lieutenant Zebulon M. Pike explores the headwaters of the Mississippi and takes official possession of it for the United States.

- 1812 War between the British and the Americans. Ojibwe of Mississippi remain neutral.
- 1818 Astor Fur Company succeeds the defunct Northwest Fur Company and sends outfits to cover the Lake Superior country, including the Mississippi country.
- 1819-1820 Cornerstone of Fort Snelling laid and United States officially assumes control over the Mississippi country. Lawrence Taliaferro appointed as Indian agent for the tribes in the Mississippi country.

Chapter Four

An Easily Governed and Tractable People

Introduction

No other period of history profoundly affected and changed the Ojibwe living along the Mississippi and St. Croix rivers as the years from 1820 to 1855. A number external historical forces propelled the Ojibwe along a tumultuous path of social, economic, political and cultural change and adaptation to new conditions. The entrance of the power and people of the United States into the region set these changes in motion and impacted Ojibwe society in every regard. By 1820, the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe reached the pinnacle of power and exercised hegemony throughout the region. However, by 1855 or so, they struggled against an onslaught of American traders, missionaries, government officials, lumbermen, and settlers to maintain a position of authority as well as control of their land base and economic resources. The Ojibwe's inter-relationship with these individuals adversely affected Ojibwe economic and environmental resources as well as Ojibwe society and culture as a whole. Their continual and internecine struggle with the Sioux added to the burdens pressing upon Ojibwe society as well.

Because these external historical forces occurred in a brief span of a few decades, and because they happened so swiftly and are interconnected in so many ways, it is difficult to confine them into a single running chronological narrative. This chapter begins with the very important relationship between the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe and the American Astorian fur traders, which established a boom and bust cycle in their economic pattern. This resulted in a breakdown of Ojibwe village cohesiveness and indebtedness and dependence on the trading system. In the wake of the impact of traders, the next consequential relationship with Americans faced by the Ojibwe was with the United States government. Unlike their relationship with the French and British, the Ojibwe failed to establish a "middle ground" alliance with the United States government officials that was based on "mutuality" between themselves and the Ojibwe. Instead, the Ojibwe slowly lost a measure of political and then military control to the United States. This loss of control stemmed from a series of treaties and land cessions between

the Ojibwe and the United States in the years 1825, 1837, 1842, 1847 and 1855, allowing the United States to establish government agencies and military posts deep within Ojibwe territory. Themes related to the Ojibwe-American government relationship include not just Ojibwe land cessions to the United States; but also a gradual erosion of Ojibwe political and economic independence through the treaty system, and a nascent movement underway to remove the Ojibwe west of the upper Mississippi River.

Along with examining the Ojibwe people's relationship with the federal government, the narrative includes sections pertaining to Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe relations with other groups of Americans. These groups include missionaries and eventually an influx of lumbermen and settlers into the region.

Finally, this chapter embodies an examination of the final conflicts and peace agreements between Ojibwe and Sioux. Periods of open warfare between the two tribes occurred from 1838 to 1841 and in 1850. Bloodshed between the two Indian groups did not cease until the United States government intervened.

The impact of the above relationship culminated into the transformation of the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe people. In 1820, they started out as a hunter-gatherer society, enjoying a cultural inter-village tribal identity based on interaction between villages that acted along the lines of a traditional seasonal round lifestyle. This society used a large sustaining area that stretched from the St. Croix River on the east to the Long Prairie River in the west. By 1855, however, the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe metamorphosed into a individual village subsistence farming society utilizing a limited seasonal round lifestyle and holding a simple village political identity. Their sustaining area had shrunk to a much smaller and immediate reservation territory surrounding their individual villages.

Trappers and Treaties: An American Presence is Felt

Starting in approximately 1818, American traders and trappers of the Astor Fur Company for the first time appeared in the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe territory. One might think that the appearance of this new fur trading enterprise in their territory should have alarmed the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe. However, it did not. The reason their appearance did not cause them concern was because

initially, the Ojibwe could not tell the difference between the Astorians and their predecessors from the North West Fur Company. Wisely, the Astor Fur Company followed the "example of the Northwest Company in hiring as traders, men whom they found already in the country, holding influential positions among the Ojibwe, and in some cases connected with them by marriage." The Astor Fur Company simply assumed the role in the Indian trade that the Fond du Lac Department of the Northwest Company held before them. As a result of previous tradition, the Ojibwe felt comfortable with this relationship and freely worked and inter-married with Astor Fur Company traders and trappers. However, there was indeed a subtle difference between the Astor Fur Company and the North West Fur Company. The British company considered themselves agents of alliance for their country, whereas the American company did not. The Astorians had little or no sense of the social and reciprocal nature of alliance building with the Ojibwe. Their only interest in the Ojibwe appeared material in nature.¹

Having not initially perceived this subtle difference in relationship and character, the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe did not hold back from extending a welcome to them. They soon became fast and willing partners with the Astorians. Together, the Ojibwe and their Astorian partners harvested an untold number of animals from the rich fur-bearing region that stretched from the St. Croix River to the Mississippi River and beyond. In time, as their relationship progressed, the material standard of living of the Ojibwe increased dramatically as more flintlocks, implements, utensils, cloth and other American goods were obtained by them. The population of the villages increased as well. Ojibwe from the game-depleted eastern villages in Wisconsin and the Lake Superior region migrated westward to access this rich area. Only one barrier prevented the Ojibwe from harvesting these furs freely—the presence of the Sioux. However, the arrival of American authority in the region settled that problem for a time.

For two hundred years or more, the Ojibwe and their ancestors from Bo-we-ting (Sault Ste. Marie) had made alliances with outside groups, such the French and the British. They learned coexistence and accommodation through a "middle ground" position based on a certain cultural acceptance of each other's ways. But

¹ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 382-383; and Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 117.

previous experience did not prepare them for the arrival of American authorities. United States policy did not entertain the concept of mutuality and reciprocity as a basis for interaction and alliance with strangers. Instead, United States policymakers dictated "amalgamation and imperial benevolence" seeking to make Indians "one with the Americans and culturally indistinguishable from them."² In time, the Ojibwe concept of mutuality and reciprocity conflicted with American policy.

With the construction of Fort Snelling in 1820, American military and civil authority theoretically arrived in the area. However, American influence was not exerted until five years later, when the United States entered into a treaty at Prairie du Chien with the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe, as well as other tribes in the Old Northwest. In 1825, the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe lived in robust, virile, and vigorous communities. They saw themselves as equals to the Americans and dealt with them as one sovereign people seeking an alliance with another. They were at the height of their territorial expansion, controlling more than enough land and resources to live upon. They wanted nothing from the United States government other than perhaps a military alliance against their enemy the Sioux, whose war parties still plagued their western frontier causing upheavals in Ojibwe society. In 1825, when the Americans approached various Mississippi-St. Croix leaders to discuss a peace treaty with the Sioux, the Ojibwe's decided to listen. The record is not clear, but perhaps the Ojibwe thought they eventually could enlist the Americans as allies.

On the other hand, the Americans did have specific objectives in mind when they asked the Ojibwe and other tribes to gather at Prairie du Chien for a council. With the inevitable approach of American settlement to this region of the country, United States policy makers had three related objectives in mind. Their first objective was to promote peace and harmony between the Sioux and tribes on their border, which included the Ojibwe. Their second objective, to partition the land among the various tribes in the region, naturally followed their first objective. Their third objective looked to the future. By delineating individual tribal boundaries, United States policymakers hoped to obtain land cession treaties from these tribes in the future, which in turn, could then be sold to the advancing American frontiersmen, lumbermen and settlers.³

² Richard White, The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 471-472.

³ William W. Warren, "Answers to Inquiries Regarding Chippewas," Minnesota Pioneer, 5

William Clark and Lewis Cass were sent as United States envoys to meet and deliberate with the tribes over these matters at Prairie du Chien. Their central mission was to "remove all cause of future difficulty," between the Sioux and the tribes along their border.

Not surprisingly, the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe approached their first treaty with the Americans in the same way they had with the French and British. Traditional conceptions of mutuality and reciprocity served them well in previous alliances, and they saw no reason to alter their perceptions or alliance building technique. The Americans seemed to understand these conceptions. During the council proceedings, the Americans provided presents of tobacco and fed them well with cattle—a symbolic gesture of great importance to the Ojibwe.⁴ In turn, the Ojibwe agreed to "eat and drink from the same dish as the Sioux"⁵ and to affirm a perpetual peace with the Sioux.⁶ But beyond the sharing of food, there were no other signs that the Americans understood or would accommodate the Ojibwe society's conceptions of mutuality and alliance-building.

Instead, American policymakers fostered an attitude of dictated "amalgamation and imperial benevolence." The American attitude became clear in the final treaty document. Several treaty articles specifically outlined their relationship with the Ojibwe and the other tribes. According to the treaty, the Ojibwe and the other tribes were to acknowledge "the general controlling power of the United States" and to recognize that the United States may take "whatever measures it deemed proper" to effect the objects of the treaty.⁷ These treaty articles did not depict a "middle ground" between two sovereign powers. Instead, they indicated that the United States, unlike the British and the French, wished to subjugate and

December 1849, Newspaper Transcripts, Sept.-Dec. 1849, Box 1, Willoughby M. Babcock Manuscripts (P 941), Minnesota Historical Society, p. 31.

⁴ Peter Lawrence Scanlan, Prairie du Chien: French, British, American, (Menasha, Wisconsin: Collegiate Press, 1937), pp. 159-160; and No Author, "Proceedings of a Council with the Chippewa Indians," Iowa Journal of History and Politics, Vol. IX (1911): 413 and 420.

⁵ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 110.

⁶ Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with the Sioux, Etc., 1825," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), p. 181.

⁷ Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with the Sioux, Etc., 1825," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), pp. 180-181.

not accommodate the Ojibwe. Whether or not the Ojibwe perceived this attitude is not known. Because United States demonstrated little military power in the region, these treaty articles did not threaten the powerful Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe. However, if the full intent of these measures were understood by the Ojibwe, they certainly must have created an aura of suspicion regarding American motives.

When the Prairie du Chien treaty council concluded, the Ojibwe and the Sioux present agreed to a boundary line demarcating their hunting territories. This intertribal boundary line stretched from the Chippewa River on the southeast to the Red River on the northwest. The two tribes also agreed to allow reciprocal hunting in each other's territory with the permission of the other tribe. This latter arrangement by far was the most important accomplishment of the treaty. It codified and reflected a traditional winter hunting arrangement that already existed between the Sioux and the Ojibwe and was practiced by them during peaceful times.⁸

Despite the good intentions of the treaty proceedings, full delegations with authority representing Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe bands did not attend this council. This rendered the treaty of doubtful obligation until they reaffirmed it a year later in 1826 at Fond du Lac.⁹ It is not even known with certainty which Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe leaders were at Prairie du Chien during the proceedings. Three Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe leaders who were at the council are Na-guon-a-be (The Feather or Feather's End) from Mille Lacs and Naudin (The Wind) and Pay-ai-jig (One Who Stands Alone) from Snake River or the St. Croix District.

Na-guon-a-be, of the wolf clan, was an important civil chief at Mille Lacs. He was a direct descendent of the Sioux-Ojibwe intermarriages from the first Ojibwe villages along the St. Croix River.¹⁰ It was fitting that he should attempt to bring peace between the Sioux and Ojibwe. In 1823, Lawrence Taliaferro appointed Na-

⁸ Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with the Sioux, Etc., 1825," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), pp. 180-181.

⁹ At the proceedings of the Treaty of Fond du Lac, the Ojibwe agreed to the terms of the Prairie du Chien Treaty. Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with the Chippewa, 1826," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. One, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903, p. 191.

¹⁰ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 49, 165 and 335.

guon-a-be as a chief in the Ojibwe nation of the Mississippi, and it is likely that Taliaferro brought Na-guon-a-be to Prairie du Chien as part of the Ojibwe delegation. Naudin and Pay-ai-jig from Snake River, both stated later that they were at Prairie du Chien during the council proceedings.¹¹ Significantly, Naudin later witnessed the surveying of boundary between the Ojibwe and Sioux hunting grounds. After the Prairie du Chien Treaty, Naudin traveled to Washington, D.C. with Lawrence Taliaferro to visit the "Great Father" "across the mountains," which greatly impressed him.¹²

The Treaty of Prairie du Chien was effective in demarcating an Ojibwe-Sioux hunting boundary line. It prevented large open hostilities between the Ojibwe and the Sioux from 1825 to 1837 and resulted in "relative" peace between the Ojibwe and the Sioux.¹³

Furs for Food or Alcohol

Of course, peaceful relations allowed the Ojibwe to hunt with greater security. During this interim of peace, the Ojibwe still exhibited caution in hunting and trapping beaver. However, at least, they did not face open fear of direct assault on their home villages by the Sioux. Without the anxiety of open attack, the Ojibwe hunted in smaller groups, rather than the traditional large inter-band mode utilized previously for protection. Small individual hunting parties were more mobile and therefore more successful in hunting. These factors caused a fur trade boom in the Upper Mississippi-St. Croix region that lasted into the 1830s. Unfortunately, by 1837 or so, the Ojibwe had exploited their territory to the point of game exhaustion.¹⁴

¹¹ Newton Horace Winchell, The Aborigines of Minnesota St. Paul: Pioneer Company Printer, 1911, p. 743; and No Author, "Proceedings of a Council with the Chippewa Indians," Iowa Journal of History and Politics, Vol. IX (1911): 409, 413, 415, and 420.

¹² No Author, "Proceedings of a Council with the Chippewa Indians," Iowa Journal of History and Politics, Vol. IX (1911): 410-411; and "Report of Miles M. Vineyard," 31 March 1838, Letters Received by CIA, Crow Wing Agency, 1835-1840, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 249).

¹³ The Ojibwe and Sioux smoked a peace pipe at Ft. Snelling in 1827, but general hostilities apparently sporadically occurred from 1827-1838. William W. Warren, "Sioux and Chippewa Wars," Minnesota Chronicle and Register June 3 and 10, 1850, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 4 (October 1946): 96-97.

While game and furs were plentiful and while relations with the Sioux were good, the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe prospered. Their villages grew to the point that new villages formed. For instance, by 1820 or so, offshoot communities from Sandy Lake sprouted at Rice Lake to the south and Pokegama Lake to the north.¹⁵ By 1829, the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe founded a new community at Rabbit Lake as well.¹⁶

However, the American fur trade eventually exacted a high price on Ojibwe society. Each winter, the ever-increasing Ojibwe population went out in search of deer, elk, and other large game, as well as furs. With the beaver and other fur-bearing animals they managed to kill, Ojibwe bartered for non-food items, much as they had done with the French and the British traders. They relied on these manufactured goods, but they were not dependent on them. But as each winter passed, the region's large game reserves dwindled to the point of exhaustion.¹⁷ As large game animals diminished in the region, the Ojibwe concentrated greater effort on hunting beaver to trade for provisions for their families to make it through the winter. As each year passed, they became ever more dependent on providing for their families by trading furs rather than by putting meat on the table.

Dependency on exchanging furs for food put the Ojibwe at the mercy of the vagaries of the American capitalist economic system. In the 1820s and 1830s, the

¹⁴ Harold Hickerson, "The Southwestern Chippewa: An Ethnohistorical Study," American Anthropologist Vol. 64, no. 3, part 2 (June 1962): 27-29.

¹⁵ Harold Hickerson, "The Southwestern Chippewa: An Ethnohistorical Study," American Anthropologist Vol. 64, no. 3, part 2 (June 1962): 36.

¹⁶ Harold Hickerson, "The Southwestern Chippewa: An Ethnohistorical Study," American Anthropologist Vol. 64, no. 3, part 2 (June 1962): 37. There are several theories of why the Ojibwe fragmented into new villages from larger, older villages at this time. Hickerson thought that new permanent villages were "founded by people of old settled villages at locales where they had been setting up encampments to prosecute more profitably hunting and trading." Later, new smaller villages perhaps split from parent villages because they were determined to raise crops rather than depend on the hunt and less dependable wild rice harvests. They moved to new fertile land to cultivate these crops. Harold Hickerson, "The Southwestern Chippewa: An Ethnohistorical Study," American Anthropologist Vol. 64, no. 3, part 2 (June 1962): 38-40.

¹⁷ Harold Hickerson, "The Southwestern Chippewa: An Ethnohistorical Study," American Anthropologist Vol. 64, no. 3, part 2 (June 1962): 26-27.

Astorians held a trade monopoly with the Ojibwe. This meant that the Astorians could easily take advantage of Ojibwe by "gouging the Ojibwe with high prices and shoddy poor quality goods" and by trading at a "price three times above that ever asked by the French and the English."¹⁸ As a consequence of these monopolistic tendencies, the Ojibwe were forced to over-hunt their territory in order to purchase provision. But as the game and fur supplies dwindled, the Ojibwe found himself in a very difficult economic position. They could "neither hunt enough to feed and clothe their families, nor, alternatively could they trap enough furs to purchase goods for their support."¹⁹ To meet this situation, the trader extended credit to the individual Ojibwe hunter in order to get his family through the winter. Extending credit to the Ojibwe caused even greater difficulties. For each winter that the hunt failed, the Ojibwe had to borrow more on his account with the trader to procure provisions, taking him deeper into debt.

Besides dependency on trader provisions and their credit system, the Ojibwe started to become dependent on the alcohol which obliging traders brought into Mississippi-St. Croix country. Prior to the institution of the American trading system, alcohol was infrequently consumed and when it was drunk it was done in a community manner. To contain the adverse social affects of drinking, Ojibwe communities set up social safeguards to drinking. Village monitors and guardians policed the village affair, disarming any troublesome individuals who might hurt themselves or others. However, in the 1820s and 1830s, alcohol became readily accessible even to the individual Ojibwe. Social safeguards were dropped, thereby creating situations with violent and deadly consequences causing social disruptions that progressed incrementally.²⁰

In addition to directly disrupting the economic and social stability of Ojibwe families and society, the fur trade hurt the social cohesiveness of the Ojibwe in an

¹⁸ William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), pp. 382-383; and Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 117.

¹⁹ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 116.

²⁰ In Ojibwe communities guardians appointed to supervise the activities sometimes included women, who remained sober while the men drank. Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 120-121.

indirect manner. Unlike the traditional winter hunt for buffalo, elk and deer, which mandated entire villages and families to seek the winter meat supply together, hunting for small game, such as fur-bearing animals, required the intensive work of compact groups of individual hunters. Now, kin-related family groups from individual villages hunted in areas closer to their villages. Hence, there was little need to form into inter-band groupings. The annual inter-band winter hunt became a thing of the past, especially when the buffalo disappeared from the prairie west of the Mississippi River. No longer sharing a mutual winter social-hunting pattern, bands and villages became isolated from one another.

By the mid-to-late 1830s, the fur trade boom cycle went bust. A general depression nationwide in the late 1830s, coupled with cutthroat competition and the collapse of the world fur market caused the crash.²¹ The demise of the fur trade did not come immediately, but flush times were clearly over by 1835 or so.²² The bust in the fur trade held more than immediate economic consequences for the Ojibwe. The bust also caused ripples in their relationship with their neighbors the Americans and the Sioux.

Treaty of St. Peter (1837)

By the time the Ojibwe fur trade went bust, segments of American settlement were already fast approaching the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe territory. United States policymakers realized that land cessions treaties with tribes needed to be made in order to accommodate this expanding frontier. With this objective in mind, in 1837, they arranged a land cession treaty council with the Ojibwe.

Whereas during the Prairie du Chien Treaty (1825) and the subsequent Fond du Lac Treaty (1826), the Ojibwe met with United States officials as equals and from a position of strength, by 1837, the state of affairs of the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe were not in good shape. In the interim years, the Ojibwe had all but exhausted their hunting territory of large and small game. They owed a considerable debt to

²¹ Edmund Jefferson Danzinger, Jr. The Chippewas of Lake Superior (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), p. 71.

²² The Ojibwe continued to barter furs for trade goods and revenue up to around 1860. United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1860 Washington, D.C.: George W. Bowman, 1860, p. 50.

the traders for provisions, and they faced increasing social deterioration due to social and domestic violence caused by alcohol. Because of these reasons, they were willing to negotiate the sale of their pine land east of the Mississippi River to the United States.²³

The treaty negotiations began near Fort Snelling on July 20, 1837 and lasted for nine days. Wisconsin Territorial Governor Henry Dodge represented the United States in council with the various Ojibwe bands. All six of the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe villages were represented at the proceedings by both civil or warrior chiefs. They included representatives from four divisions of the Mississippi-St. Croix bands. They were: 1.) the Gull Lake, Swan River and Red Cedar Lake villages; 2.) the Sandy Lake villages; 3.) the Mille Lacs villages; and 4.) the St. Croix villages, which included those at Knife and Pokaguma Lake, and along the Snake and St. Croix Rivers:²⁴

Gull Lake and Swan River

Chiefs

Pa-goo-na-kee-zhig (Hole in the Day)
Songa-ko-mig (Strong Ground)

Warriors

Wa-boo-jig (White Fisher)
Ma-cou-da (Bear's Heart)

Red Cedar Lake

Chiefs

Mont-so-mo (Murdering Yell)

Warriors

none

Sandy Lake

Chiefs

Ka-nan-da-wə-win-zon (Le Brocheux)
We-we-shan-shis (Bad Boy or Big Mouth)

Warriors

Na-ta-me-ga-bo (Man that Stands First)
Sa-ga-ta-gun (Spunk)

²³ The area of land that the United States desired was actually the Chippewa and St. Croix river areas, which were rich in pine resources. No Author, "Proceedings of a Council with the Chippewa Indians," Iowa Journal of History and Politics, Vol. IX (1911): 409.

²⁴ No Author, "Proceedings of a Council with the Chippewa Indians," Iowa Journal of History and Politics, Vol. IX (1911): 436-437.

Mille Lacs**Chiefs**

Wa-shask-ko-kone (Rats Liver)

Wen-ghe-ge-she-guk (First Day)

Warriors

Ada-we-ge-shik (Both Ends of the Sky)

Ka-ka-quap (The Sparrow)

Snake River**Chiefs**

Naudin (The Wind)

Sha-go-bai (The Little Six)

Pay-ajik (The Lone Man)

Na-quana-bie (The Feather)

Warriors

Ha-tau-wa (no translation)

Wa-me-te-go-zhins (Little Frenchman)

Sho-ne-a (Silver)

St. Croix River**Chiefs**

Pe-zhe-ke (The Buffalo)

Ka-be-ma-be (Wet Month)

Warriors

Pa-ga-we-we-wetung (Coming Home Hollowing)

Kis-ke-ta-wak (Cut Ear)

Together these villages numbered some 1,300 persons with the Snake River and St. Croix villages having the largest population. Statistics for individual villages follow:²⁵

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>Total</u>
Snake River and St. Croix villages	161	212	288	661
Mille Lac villages	66	82	104	252
Gull Lake and Swan River villages	55	72	119	246
Sandy Lake village	<u>42</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>184</u>
	324	425	594	1,343

²⁵ These statistics are derived from data collected in 1839 from annuity rolls and may not be entirely accurate for 1837 because of Ojibwe losses during the 1838 outbreak of hostilities with the Sioux. United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1839 Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1839, p. 488. The Snake River Band was divided into two bands and number approximately forty men. One band spent their summers at Lake Pokegama and the other band spent their summers on a small lake twenty miles upstream, which undoubtedly was Knife Lake. Interspersed with the Snake River band were elements from Yellow Lake. William W. Warren, History of the Ojibway People, with an Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), p. 172.

The representatives from these villages, as well as those from Leech Lake and Fond du Lac, arrived at the council site near Fort Snelling first. However, they refused to give any definite opinions on land cessions to Territorial Governor Dodge until the Ojibwe chiefs and warriors from Lac du Flambeau, La Coudreille and La Pointe came. Nevertheless, while they awaited the arrival of these bands, the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe impressed upon Governor Dodge that their traders had been supporting them and that without their aid they could not get through each winter. Pe-she-ke (The Buffalo) from St. Croix stated: "We have not much to give the traders, as our lands and hunting grounds are so destitute. Do us a kindness by paying our old debts." The Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe also felt that mix-blood Ojibwe (offspring of trader-Ojibwe inter-relations) be given consideration as well in the treaty language. Several mixed-blood Ojibwe present at the proceedings spoke up, including Sha-go-bai (Little Six) from Snake River and Wash-ask-ko-kowe (Rats Liver) of Mille Lacs, whose father was Miles M. Vineyard, United States sub-Indian agent in the area.²⁶

When the Lac du Flambeau, La Coudreille and La Pointe bands finally arrived five days after the negotiations started, the proceedings began in earnest. Governor Dodge placed a map before the gathering and described the boundaries of the territory in question. He stated to them that it was "very destitute of game, and of little value for agricultural purposes, but that it abounds in pine timber, which their great father the President of the United States, wished to purchase it from them for the use of his white children..."²⁷ He offered them a sum of \$800,000 in the form of annuity payments for twenty years. This broke down into \$40,000 in goods and money. The Ojibwe could have one half of the annuity in either goods or money, or they could have all in goods if they choose. In addition to this amount, the territorial governor offered \$3,000 a year for twenty years to pay for economic and educational assistance from the United States of America. This assistance would be in the form of blacksmith shops, teacher-farmers along with agricultural implements, seed and the possibility of schools.²⁸

²⁶ No Author, "Proceedings of a Council with the Chippewa Indians," Iowa Journal of History and Politics, Vol. IX (1911): 416-418.

²⁷ No Author, "Proceedings of a Council with the Chippewa Indians," Iowa Journal of History and Politics, Vol. IX (1911): 422-423.

²⁸ No Author, "Proceedings of a Council with the Chippewa Indians," Iowa Journal of History and Politics, Vol. IX (1911): 429-430; and Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with the Chippewa, 1837,"

After a day's additional deliberation, the gathered Ojibwe agreed to sell their pine land for \$800,000 in annuity payments and goods for the land and timber, but under four conditions. First, they wished to hold on to that which they felt sustained their lives—"the streams and lakes where we fish, and the trees from which we make sugar" as well as the oak trees. Second, they wanted the privilege to continue to hunt on these lands. Third, they wished to provide for the "numerous" mix-bloods in their midst by sharing the proceeds of the treaty agreement with them and by finding land for them. Fourth, they again requested that the United States pay their debts to the traders.²⁹

Governor Dodge assented to all four requests, including giving them an additional \$70,000 to pay their debts to the traders. The final signed treaty stipulated the following items be paid annually for twenty years: \$9,500 in money, \$19,000 delivered in goods, \$3,000 for blacksmiths, \$1,000 for farmers, and \$2,500 in provisions and tobacco for administering the annuity payments. These amounts add up to \$35,000 a year or \$700,000. The remaining \$100,000 was paid outright to the mix-blooded Ojibwe, instead of providing them land as the Ojibwe requested.³⁰

Immediately following the 1837 Treaty, the United States attempted to establish a civil presence deep within Ojibwe country. As early as 1836, the Office of Indian Affairs recommended that an agent be selected and posted on the Crow Wing River who had the ability to speak the Ojibwe tongue, who was familiar with their culture and who possessed the ability to "exercise a degree of influence over them that would at once promote the welfare of the Indians and carry into effect the views of the government..."³¹ They had selected Miles M. Vineyard as that agent, a man who was closely related to the Mille Lacs villagers.³² In 1838, the

Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), pp. 364-365.

²⁹ Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with the Chippewa, 1837," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), pp. 364-365.

³⁰ Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with the Chippewa, 1837," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), pp. 364-365.

³¹ H. Dodge to C.A. Harris, 13 December 1836, Letters Received by CIA, Crow Wing Agency, 1835-1840, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 249).

³² M.M. Vineyard to Henry Dodge, 15 March 1838, Letters Received by CIA, Crow Wing Agency, 1835-1840, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 249). Miles M.

United States planned to build the Crow Wing sub-agency near the confluence of the Mississippi and Crow Wing rivers. However, Vineyard did not get the chance to establish an agency at Crow Wing.

The idea of a sub-agency at Crow Wing was discontinued when major Ojibwe-Sioux hostilities broke out.³³ Thereafter, the government moved its sub-agency to Sandy Lake. Full American presence in the area did come until after 1847, when Fort Gaines was established on the Mississippi River.³⁴

Ojibwe-Sioux Hostilities Open Again

After more than eighteen years of relative peace, fighting between the Ojibwe and the Sioux began again in 1838. Beginning about 1835 or so, tensions began to mount between the two tribes as each tribe faced increasing hunger due to the exhaustion of game in their area. In the winter 1837, smoldering hostilities between the group were set ablaze, when a Warpeton Sioux war party killed five relatives of Hole-in-the-Day (I), an important leader of the Gull Lake band during this time of relative peace. The following year, Hole-in-the-Day (I) in retaliation massacred three lodges of Warpeton Sioux at Lac Qui Parle, also under a "semblance of peace and good will."³⁵

Vineyard was not actually the first agent to serve the Ojibwe here. As early as July 1836, William Clarke, Superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis, recommended that a sub-agency be established for the Ojibwe residing on the waters of the Upper Mississippi. This sub-agency would hold jurisdiction over that part of the tribe that resided between the Mississippi and the St. Croix Rivers. However, the first agents of the Crow Wing Agency were unreliable and not good examples for the neighboring Ojibwe. The first agent, William Dallum lasted but a few months before he resigned, while his successor, William Sinn, died of overintoxication of liquor. William Clark to Unknown Person, 28 July 1835; and William Dallam to Lewis Cass, 27 January 1836; H. Dodge to C.A. Harris, 16 November, 1836, Letters Received by CIA, Crow Wing Agency, 1835-1840, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 249).

³³ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1850 Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1850, p. 56.

³⁴ Captain John Pope, "Map of the Territory of Minnesota: Exhibiting the Expedition of the Route to the Red River," Army Corps of Engineers, 1849.

³⁵ William W. Warren, "Sioux and Chippewa Wars," Minnesota Chronicle and Register 3, 10 June, 1850, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 4 (October 1946): 97-98; and Harold Hickerson, "The Southwestern Chippewa: An Ethnohistorical Study," American Anthropologist

Despite this incident, the Ojibwe travelled to Lake St. Croix for their first annuity payment under treaties with the United States unsuspecting any trouble with the Sioux. After the annuity payment, they learned the consequence of not heeding caution. A large Sioux war party, who may have also been provoked by an attack by the Pillager band of Ojibwe, attacked the unsuspecting Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe on their way home. Nearly seventy to one hundred Ojibwe, mostly defenseless women and children from Mille Lacs and Snake River bands, were massacred. One attack occurred somewhere along the Rum River which nearly decimated Mille Lacs band completely. The other attack came near present-day Stillwater as the Snake River band were returning home from Lake St. Croix.³⁶

Over the next five years, open warfare existed between the Ojibwe and Sioux once again and no one was safe in the area. War parties from both tribes were sent out. For instance, in May of 1841, a large Sioux war party unsuccessfully attacked the Ojibwe at Pokaguma Lake, but did manage to kill stragglers in the area. In retaliation, the Ojibwe raised a war party of one hundred and sixty men from Lake Superior, St. Croix and Mille Lacs and attacked the Sioux village on the Mississippi River led by Little Crow, killing some twenty Sioux men.³⁷

Fortunately, these hostilities came to end in 1843, when the United States intervened between the two warring tribes. On August 2, 1843 at Fort Snelling, the Sioux and Ojibwe voluntarily signed a formal treaty of peace witnessed by government officials. Its terms were simple, that all future hostilities would be arbitrated by the United States and that reparations would be made by the offending party. This arrangement restrained both parties for a while and peace was restored.³⁸

Vol. 64, no. 3, part 2 (June 1962): 37.

³⁶ William W. Warren, "Sioux and Chippewa Wars," Minnesota Chronicle and Register 3, 10 June, 1850, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 4 (October 1946): 99; Samuel W. Pond, The Dakota or Sioux in Minnesota as They Were in 1834 with an Introduction by Gary Clayton Anderson, (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1986), pp.134-135; and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1850 Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1850, pp. 56-57.

³⁷ William W. Warren, "Sioux and Chippewa Wars," Minnesota Chronicle and Register 3, 10 June, 1850, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 4 (October 1946): 100; and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1841 Washington, D.C.: Blair and River Printers, 1841, p. 331.

Praying for Food

While fending off external assaults by enemies such as the Sioux, Ojibwe culture also faced internal disruption stemming from provisions of the 1837 Treaty. One provision of the treaty stated that the United States would provide farming assistance and schools if they so desired. Outsiders, such as missionaries and government officials came to their villages to fulfill this treaty obligation. However, the presence of outsiders near their villages was not always amiable, and in some cases they eventually caused social dislocation to the Ojibwe community. At the same time, the annuity system, inherent in the treaty system, began to undermine Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe society as well. The combination of these forces disrupted Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe society as much as their warfare with the Sioux.

By the time of the signing of the Ojibwe-Sioux Peace Treaty in 1843 at Fort Snelling, there were at least two missions already in this part of Ojibwe country—one was at Sandy Lake and the other at Pokaguma Lake. Frederic Ayer was the first missionary to establish a mission among the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe. He came in 1831 to Sandy Lake, when William A. Aitkin, a resident trader there, invited him there to teach. Later, Ayer established the Pokaguma Lake mission.³⁹

Ojibwe society judged outsiders like missionaries in two ways: "foreigners could be either allies or enemies. . . . Prospective allies demonstrated their good will and desire for alliance by behaving in a certain manner. Specifically, they exchanged gifts with the Ojibwe and shared food."⁴⁰ The initial behavior of the missionaries, giving gifts of seed and tools, indicated to the Ojibwe that the missionaries were their allies. The Ojibwe also saw them as agents of the United

³⁸ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1843 Washington, D.C.: Blair and River Printers, 1843, p. 10 and 120; and William W. Warren, "Sioux and Chippewa Wars," Minnesota Chronicle and Register 3, 10 June, 1850, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 4 (October 1946): 102-103.

³⁹ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 106.

⁴⁰ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 68.

States government and they wished to continue their alliance with the United States, so they tolerated the missionaries amongst them.⁴¹ But after the missionary's first visitations to Ojibwe homes and gift-giving, they began to wane out their welcome among the Ojibwe. The missionaries did not see that reciprocity was an on-going process. When the missionaries withheld gifts of food in order to get the Ojibwe to labor on the farms they established for them or to get the Ojibwe to attend church, the Ojibwe quickly realized that the missionaries were not like-minded people.⁴²

By 1843, however, the Ojibwe saw the missionaries in a different manner. Literally ignoring their religious message, they instead opted to seek their technological aid instead. With game becoming ever more scarce and their acquisition of new hunting territory blocked by the Sioux; with Ojibwe society being disrupted by land sales and growing alcohol abuse; and with trader's debts piling up again due to the American Fur Company's trade monopoly, some Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe turned to farming as the only escape from their dire situation. Of course, the avenue to farming was through cooperation with missionaries and the United States government.⁴³

The Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe expressed an interest in farming as early as the 1837 Treaty. Provisions in this treaty provided for hiring farmers and supplying the Ojibwe with implements of labor, grain or seed, and "whatever else may be necessary to enable them to carry on their agricultural pursuits."⁴⁴ However, at that time, they were not ready to fully make the transition from a hunting-gathering-bartering economy to one based on subsistence farming. This point is emphasized by the inclusion of an article in the 1837 Treaty granting them the "privilege of hunting, fishing, and gathering wild rice upon the lands, the rivers and the lakes included in the territory ceded" to the United States.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 122-124.

⁴² Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 68-100 passim.

⁴³ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 121-124.

⁴⁴ Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with the Chippewa, 1837," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), p. 365.

⁴⁵ Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with the Chippewa, 1837," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties

Nevertheless, the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe were ready and willing to accept some farming aid in order to enlarge their "seasonal farming operations" and and to produce food to "take the place of the diminishing game in the Ojibwe diet."⁴⁶

The first Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe to take full advantage of missionary help was the community at Pokaguma (a.k.a. Pokegama) Lake that drained into the Snake River. This village suffered from all the problems facing the Ojibwe hitherto mentioned or alluded to, including scarcity of game, social and domestic violence due to alcohol, vulnerability to attacks by the Sioux, and future encroachment of lumbermen and settlers who were rapidly advancing toward their territory.⁴⁷ In 1837, under the direction of Frederic Ayer, a mission and a school were opened on the west shore of Pokaguma Lake. However, the price for agricultural aid was religious conversion and in time, a few Ojibwe converted in order to receive this aid and develop a more reliable food resource than the "hunt." Notwithstanding this development, the majority of the Ojibwe still did not wish to become "praying" Indians, but wished to maintain their traditional ways.⁴⁸

The conversion of some Ojibwe to Christianity caused immediate disruption to community life and conflicts between the "pagan" and "christian" Ojibwe soon broke out. The non-Christian majority physically harassed the missionaries and the "praying" Indians by looting their property, trampling their fields, or killing their farm animals. The traditional Ojibwe also verbally abused the Christianized Indians, pressuring them to give up Christianity and to "return to traditional religious practices and expressions."⁴⁹

Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), p. 365.

⁴⁶ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 125.

⁴⁷ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 127-128.

⁴⁸ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 127-132; and J. Wm. Trygg, "Composite Map of United States Land Surveyors' Original Plats and Field Notes," Sheet 8, Minnesota Series, Ely, Minnesota, 1964.

⁴⁹ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 130-131; and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1843 (Washington, D.C.: Blair and River

These conflicts subsided after 1839, when the government appointed a farmer to the area under the provisions of the 1837 Treaty. The resident government farmer opened a demonstration farm on the southern shore of Pokaguma Lake for the Ojibwe. Along with help from other non-Indians, the farmer cleared enough land for some forty Indian families for agricultural purposes. Now, the non-Christian Ojibwe could acquire this aid without any attached religious baggage. The government farm at Pokaguma Lake succeeded in attracting the attention of other neighboring Ojibwe villages. Ojibwe from Mille Lacs and the St. Croix villages shared in the harvest of corn, vegetables and potatoes from the government farm, as well as supplies of flour and pork. They also took back to their villages corn, beans, pumpkin, squash, beet, turnip and other kinds of seeds. Given this successful farming venture, the Mille Lacs people requested that either a missionary or a government farmer reside with them, so they could acquire farming aid too.⁵⁰

American Annuity System

Besides the presence of missionaries and government farmers in their villages, the influence of America was also felt in the form of annual annuity payments. The first annuity payment was made at Lake St. Croix. However, after the Sioux attack on the Ojibwe after the first payment, the annuity distribution site was moved to La Pointe, which was deep within Ojibwe country and safe from Sioux attack.⁵¹ One historian described the annuity payment system at La Pointe this way:

Each Chippewa family came forward as its name was called from the roll and was identified by the band chief. Adults and children got point blankets which they spread out on the ground to hold other

Printers, 1843), pp. 182-184.

⁵⁰ J. Wm. Trygg, "Composite Map of United States Land Surveyors' Original Plats and Field Notes," Sheet 8, Minnesota Series, Ely, Minnesota, 1964; United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1843 (Washington, D.C.: Blair and River Printers, 1843), pp. 182-184; and Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 132-133.

⁵¹ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1850 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1850), pp. 55-56.

items. For the man, those items included broadcloth for pants, calico or linsey-woolsey for shirts, a comb, knife, gun, and lead for bullets; for the woman, a comb, dressmaking items (material, thread, thimble, needles, scissors), and tin plates. Flour, pork, and other food staples were also issued to adults. For the children there was cloth and a variety of other necessities. Families then tied up the corners of their blankets and packed them off. Cash payments to the Chippewas often ended up in the pockets of traders, who were permitted by the BIA to settle their accounts at the annuity ground.⁵²

After 1838, annuity payments became a part of Ojibwe economic lifestyle. The first few payments did not interrupt the seasonal lifestyle of the Ojibwe. The government conveniently distributed them between June 1st and August 30th. By June 1, the Ojibwe had finished their spring hunts and shortly after August 30th, some Ojibwe began to gather wild rice and go on their fall hunts.⁵³ But as time passed, the annuity payment became the focus of the Ojibwe economy and less and less hunting, fishing and ricing took place as a result. These cash annuity payments replaced the credit system supplied by the Astorians and soon found their way into the pockets of the traders. The Ojibwe became dependent not only on the payments, but also on government agents, who eventually took over the political, social and economic function of the traders.⁵⁴ The Treaty of 1837, and subsequent treaties for that matter, eventually created a cyclical hybrid economic lifestyle for the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe, wherein the Ojibwe eeked out a living waiting for each year's annuity payment. Ultimately, they became ever more dependent on receiving government payments in one form or another.

More Treaties, Land Cessions, and Annuity Payments

Additional treaty cessions fueled the adoption of an annuity-based economy by the Ojibwe. In 1842, at the La Pointe Agency, the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe, along

⁵² Edmund Jefferson Danzinger, Jr. The Chippewas of Lake Superior (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), p. 80.

⁵³ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1838-1839 (Washington, D.C.: Blair and River Printers, 1838), p. 61.

⁵⁴ Edmund Jefferson Danzinger, Jr. The Chippewas of Lake Superior (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), p. 79.

with other Ojibwe bands ceded additional lands to the United States. This time the cession included all their lands between Lake Superior and the Mississippi River, including Isle Royale. These lands were ceded to the United States for \$780,000 to be paid in installments of money, goods and services over twenty-five years.⁵⁵

At this time, three separate groups of individual villages comprised the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe. They were the Crow Wing, Sandy Lake, and the Mille Lacs/St. Croix River group.⁵⁶ According to the 1843 annuity payment, they numbered approximately 1700 people and increase of approximately 400 persons since the 1839 annuity census figures, which amounted almost a 28 % increase in band population. This increase in population occurred at Sandy Lake (+ 122 %) and at Crow Wing (+ 177 %). While overall the Mille Lacs/St. Croix group were the largest Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe group with a population of 686 men, women and children, overall its population had declined (- 25 %) since the 1839 annuity census. The increase in population at Sandy Lake and Crow Wing can be accounted for by an influx of individuals from the eastern bands, while the decline in the Mille Lacs/St. Croix groups can be most likely be accounted for by Sioux depredations. These statistics are outlined below.⁵⁷

1843 Village Statistics from Annuity Payments

<u>Mille Lacs/St. Croix Group</u>		<u>Crow Wing Group</u>	
Mille Lac (two bands)	151	Crow Wing (four bands)	506
Yellow Lake	131	Gull Lake	57
Po ka gum o (two bands)	153	Red Cedar Lake	52
Snake River	172		622
St. Croix Lake	79		
	686		

⁵⁵ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1842 (Washington, D.C.: Blair and River Printers, 1842), p. 35; and Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with the Chippewa, 1842," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), pp. 401-403.

⁵⁶ Apparently, as early as 1848, Mille Lacs and Pokaguma had close ties. See Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 160.

⁵⁷ Edmund Jefferson Danzinger, Jr. The Chippewas of Lake Superior (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), p. 79.

Sandy Lake Group

Sandy Lake (two bands)	278
Rice River (Lake)	<u>132</u>
	410

Comparison of 1839 and 1843 Population Statistics

<u>Village Group</u>	<u>1839 Population</u>	<u>1843 Population</u>	<u>± %</u>
Mille Lacs/St. Croix Groups	913	686	- 25 %
Crow Wing Group	246	682	+ 177 %
Sandy Lake Group	<u>184</u>	<u>410</u>	+ 122 %
Totals	1,343	1,778	

Five years after the 1842 La Pointe Treaty, the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe again became a party to another land cession to the United States. In 1847, at Fond du Lac, they and other Ojibwe ceded their former hunting grounds between the Mississippi and Long Prairie Rivers for \$17,000 paid immediately in one lump sum and an additional \$46,000 for schools, blacksmiths and laborers. The \$17,000.00 in cash amounted to almost \$282,540.00 in today's dollars—a substantial sum of money. This land was ceded for a home for the Winnebago Indians who were presently being transferred there to live between the Ojibwe and the Sioux and act as a buffer between the two tribes.⁵⁸

Sioux Troubles and Government Intervention

With the Winnebago between the Sioux and the Ojibwe, and with the presence of American soldiers at Fort Snelling, the Ojibwe and the United States government assumed future aggression from the Sioux was impossible. However, with no

⁵⁸ Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with Chippewa of the Mississippi and Lake Superior, 1847," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), p. 421. The calculations are based on the consumer price index (CPI) of today compared with the 1842 CPI. Using the formula $1629 \div 98 = 16.62 \times \$17,000.00$ we arrive at the figure \$282,540.00. John J. McCusker, How Much is That in Real Money: A Historical Price Index for Use as a Deflator of Money Values in the Economy of the United States (Worcester: American Antiquarian Society, 1992), pp. 327 and 332.

apparent cause, in February 1850, a war party of Sioux broke the peace between the two tribes once again. That spring they first attacked some Ojibwe on the Crow Wing River, killing the son of Wa-boo-jig (White Fisher) a prominent Gull Lake Ojibwe Chief. Then, in March, another Sioux war party attacked a group of Ojibwe who were engaged in sugaring at Apple River, a stream that empties into the Mississippi on the Wisconsin side. Here they killed fourteen "defenseless old men, women and children."⁵⁹

The fear of another series of attacks and reprisals between the Ojibwe and the Sioux caused fear and turmoil along the frontier. However, American government officials quickly interceded and alleviated the threat. They called together a conference at Fort Snelling between the two tribes in order to renew the peace established by the 1843 Fort Snelling Treaty. After both sides orated their views on the recent and past hostilities, government officials judged and determined that reparations were due to the Ojibwe for the Apple River incident. A sum of money was remitted to the relatives of the Ojibwe's slain, which appeared to satisfy all involved.⁶⁰ The United States arbitration between the Ojibwe and Sioux clearly indicated that a "middle ground" position had ceased between the United States and the Ojibwe. The Ojibwe now viewed Americans as their "protectors" and not as their equals.

Removal of St. Croix Ojibwe

The United States did protect the Ojibwe from further attacks and government officials also tried to protect the Ojibwe from other Americans too. In 1848, Minnesota became a separate territory and lumbermen and settlers soon arrived in Mississippi-St. Croix territory east of the Mississippi River within Minnesota. Intercourse with these individuals eventually led to trouble and disputes over land and timber between the Ojibwe and the Americans, as well an illicit trade in intoxicating liquors. In the 1830s and 1840s, the St. Croix bands received some

⁵⁹ William W. Warren, "Sioux and Chippewa Wars," Minnesota Chronicle and Register 3, 10 June, 1850, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 4 (October 1946): 95 and 106; and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1850 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1850), p. 72.

⁶⁰ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1850 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1850), p. 48.

preparation for this advancing frontier from missionaries and government farmers, but these efforts had stopped. The school and mission at Pokaguma Lake was abandoned in 1846 and thereafter St. Croix country became thickly settled with Americans. Depredations upon the property of the settlers became frequent occurrences as the Ojibwe resisted this advancing settler encroachment on their hunting and fishing territory. As one agent stated: "These evils are growing; and it is to be feared that if not checked, they will in time assume a more serious form."⁶¹

Responding to this ineluctable situation, United States policy makers entertained ideas of removing the Mississippi-St. Croix out of harms way of the fast approaching American civilization. The 1850 Annual Report for the Commissioner of Indian Affairs spelled out the rationale for this removal. It stated:

Since the treaties of 1837 and 1842, with the Chippewas, a considerable portion of those Indians have continued, by sufferance, to reside on the ceded lands east of the Mississippi river, in Wisconsin and Minnesota, where they have for some years been brought into injurious contact with our rapidly advancing and increasing population in that quarter. . . . To remedy this unfortunate state of things, it was determined at an early period of the present year, to have these Indians removed northward to the country belonging to their tribe. . . . Efforts should therefore be made, at as early a period as practicable, to concentrate them within proper limits, where, with some additional means beyond those already provided, effective arrangements could be made to introduce among them a system of education and the practice of agriculture and the simpler mechanical arts.⁶²

With these thoughts in mind, in 1850, President Zachary Taylor issued an order for the removal of the Ojibwe from east of Mississippi River. Government officials began with the St. Croix bands, who lived on lands partly in Wisconsin and partly in Minnesota—lands that they had ceded in the 1837 Fort Snelling Treaty.⁶³

⁶¹ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1846 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1846), p. 258.

⁶² United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1850 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1850), pp. 4-5.

At this time, there were approximately 800 St. Croix Ojibwe, who were known collectively as the Mun-o-min-ik-a-she-ug, or "rice-makers." They lived in five areas: Upper St. Croix, Yellow and Rice Lakes, and along the Namekagon and Snake Rivers. According to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs Annual Report,

since the sale of their country [in 1837], they have become the most miserable and degenerate of their tribe. Living altogether among the prairies, which of late years have been so much resorted to by the whites, their deterioration, through the agency of intoxicating drinks, has been rapid, and almost without parallel. Murders amongst themselves have become of frequent occurrence; and quarrels arising in drunken brawls, have caused feuds between families, which have grown so serious, that small war parties have been fitted out against one another. During the past few years a number of whites have also been murdered, and a most aggravating case of homicide occurred the past summer.⁶⁴

Apparently, the situation at these villages became so bad, that some Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe shunned them completely. For example, in early 1850, Naudin's (a.k.a. Nodin) Snake River band (number unknown) and Mun-o-min-ik-ash-an's Snake River band (50 men, women and children) voluntarily migrated to Mille Lacs Lake, so as not to be associated with the disruptive Ojibwe groups. Other St. Croix Ojibwe migrated to Lake Superior to separate themselves from the troublesome situation.⁶⁵

After President Taylor's order to remove them, the question arose as to where to remove them. The logical place to remove them was Mille Lacs. With an overall population decline there and a plentiful supply of fish and wild rice and extensive maple groves, it seemed to be the ideal place. However, government officials did

⁶³ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1852 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1852), pp. 4-5.

⁶⁴ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1850 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1850), pp. 54-55.

⁶⁵ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1850 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1850), p. 55; and J.S. Watrous to Alexander Ramsey, 25 May 1851, Letters Received by CIA, Sandy Lake Agency, 1849-1851, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 767).

not want them there for a number of reasons. First, their orders were to remove them west of the Mississippi River and Mille Lacs was clearly east of that destination. Second, they felt that because white settlement and lumberman had already invaded the nearby country of Mille Lacs, they would again be exposed to the vices of American civilization. Third, they thought that the Ojibwe might return to their former country to easily from the Mille Lacs area.⁶⁶

Removing them to Sandy Lake was also a possibility. However, in 1850, that village was not doing as well as Mille Lacs. Numbering about 300 men, women and children,⁶⁷ Sandy Lake village offered few natural advantages, such as rice and fish. According to one report,

the "occasional flooding of their fields by the Mississippi River has discouraged them, and their farm for two years past has been discontinued. For two years their rice crops have failed, and the majority of this band have passed their winters in the vicinity of Crow Wing and Fort Gaines, on ceded lands, hunting and begging for a living.⁶⁸

So when the removal order came in the summer of 1850, Agent J.S. Watrous informed the appropriate Ojibwe leaders that they would be removed to the Crow Wing country. In the summer of 1851, Mun-o-min-e-kay-shein (Rice-Maker) of the Snake River band (56 families), Pi-a-gic's (a.k.a. Pay-ajik or The Lone Man) of the other Snake River band (20 families) and Cad-wa-dash's (a.k.a. Kay-gwa-daush or The Attempter) of the Yellow Lake band (25 families) met at the mouth of

⁶⁶ J.S. Watrous to Alexander Ramsey, 25 May 1851, Letters Received by CIA, Sandy Lake Agency, 1849-1851, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 767); J.S. Watrous to Alexander Ramsey, 20 September 1851 with attached roll of Chippewa Indians from the St. Croix Valley; and "Journal of J.S. Watrous, May 12-22, 1851, "Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency Emigration, 1850-1859, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 168) and William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 52-53.

⁶⁷ William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 52-53; and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1850 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1850), p. 56.

⁶⁸ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1850 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1850), p. 56.

the Snake River. Numbering about 400 people, they removed to Fort Gaines on the Mississippi River below the Crow Wing River. Here they were given rations of flour and pork to subsist on until that November, when they would go out on their fall-winter hunt.⁶⁹ Not all the St. Croix people removed to Crow Wing as expected. The Rice Lake band of the Sandy Lake group, led by I-aub-an (a.k.a. I-auh-bah), did not join with the rest of the St. Croix bands west of the Mississippi, but instead removed his band eastward to Fond du Lac.⁷⁰

There is no indication or evidence in the documents regarding any hardships caused by the removal, nor any Ojibwe protests lodged against this removal. Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Alexander Ramsey was pleased with the removal process, but felt that the Ojibwe who failed to migrate were unduly influenced by the "inclination of the white population, who are their neighbors, by the cupidity of their traders, and by the acts of malicious and interested persons."⁷¹

During the removal, the federal government decided to transfer its Indian agency from La Pointe to the Crow Wing area, since the majority of the Ojibwe now lived there. The agency was temporarily transferred to Sandy Lake for a short while, but only to entice the Ojibwe living there to move westward. Later the agency was

⁶⁹ J.S. Watrous to Alexander Ramsey, 25 May 1851, Letters Received by CIA, Sandy Lake Agency, 1849-1851, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 767); J.S. Watrous to Alexander Ramsey, 20 September 1851 with attached roll of Chippewa Indians from the St. Croix Valley; and "Journal of J.S. Watrous, May 12-22, 1851," Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency Emigration, 1850-1859, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 168) and William W. Warren, "A Brief History of the Ojibwas," Minnesota Pioneer 11, 18, 25 February, 4, 11, 25 March, and 1 April 1851, reprinted in Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XII, no. 3 (July 1946): 52-53.

⁷⁰ J.S. Watrous to Alexander Ramsey, 25 May 1851; J.S. Watrous to Alexander Ramsey, 20 September 1851; J.S. Watrous to Alexander Ramsey, 20 September 1851 with attached roll of Chippewa Indians from the St. Croix Valley; and "Journal of J.S. Watrous, May 12-22, 1851," Letters Received by CIA, Sandy Lake Agency, 1849-1851, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 249); and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1850 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1850), p. 56.

⁷¹ Alexander Ramsey to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 26 December 1851, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency Emigration, 1850-1859, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 168).

removed to the Crow Wing river, west of the Mississippi.⁷²

The agency was relocated at Crow Wing in order to supervise the Ojibwe in the "arts and ways of civilization" and to supervise and distribute the annuities to the Ojibwe. Government officials used the presence of military and civil authorities to extend and secure control over the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe and to make them culturally identical to Americans.⁷³ According to one government official, the Ojibwe under the Crow Wing Agency were:

anxious to learn: many of them have adopted the dress of whites. All of their women make their dresses after the pattern of the white women. A large proportion of their children wear long dresses, or coats and pants. A portion them of this tribe are prepared to receive instruction in labor. Let their instructors be farmers, carpenters, wheelwrights and blacksmiths; put the boys in the various shops; to learn the use of tools, let them make cradles, sleds, miniature wagons, anything, that will please them, or excite their attention, until they can be gradually brought under restraint. . . .learn them to wash, bake, knit, make soap and candles; to reside in houses, sleep on bedsteads, eat at tables, on plates, with knives and forks; in fact, gradually civilize them. . . .⁷⁴

They also used the distribution of annuities to acculturate them as well. As one official said: "You can induce an Indian to change his customs with provisions sooner than in any other way, or by any other means."⁷⁵ They still timed the annuity payments, so that the distribution of goods did not interfere with their fall

⁷² J.S. Watrous to Alexander Ramsey, 20 September 1851, Letters Received by CIA, Sandy Lake Agency, 1849-1851, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 249); and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1852 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1852), pp. 37, 39, 48 and 60.

⁷³ J.S. Watrous to Alexander Ramsey, 20 September 1851, Letters Received by CIA, Sandy Lake Agency, 1849-1851, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 249); and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1852 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1852), pp. 37, 39, 48 and 60.

⁷⁴ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1853 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1853), pp. 301-302.

⁷⁵ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1853 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1853), p. 302.

hunts, which were still far more valuable to the Ojibwe.⁷⁶

Farming Failures and the 1855 Treaty

Government officials clearly wished for the Ojibwe to become yeoman farmers. But wishing it was simply not enough. With good intentions, the government cleared substantial amounts of land and issued horse teams, tools, and seed, so the removed Ojibwe from the St. Croix country might take up farming.⁷⁷ However, over the coming years, the Ojibwe at Crow Wing, Sandy Lake and Mille Lacs faced trial after trial that defeated their education as farmers. First, in 1850, Ojibwe farming efforts were interrupted by additional troubles with the Sioux.⁷⁸ Second, two years later in 1852, the Sandy Lake demonstration farm was completely lost due to heavy rains that overflowed the banks of the Mississippi. The other demonstration farms elsewhere did not do well either.⁷⁹ By 1853, the Gull Lake Ojibwe farmed only about 30 acres of land, and the Ojibwe cultivated similar acreage of corn, potatoes, rutabagas and other crops at Sandy Lake and Mille Lacs as well.⁸⁰

In addition to these trials, clearly many Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe simply refused to pick up the hoe to farm. Even though seed was furnished, prairie land was broken, ploughed, and fenced, many of the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe naturally resisted giving up their former life of hunting and gathering for the

⁷⁶ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1853 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1853), pp. 295-296.

⁷⁷ J.S. Watrous to Alexander Ramsey, 25 May 1851, Letters Received by CIA, Sandy Lake Agency, 1849-1851, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 767); J.S. Watrous to Alexander Ramsey, 20 September 1851 with attached roll of Chippewa Indians from the St. Croix Valley; and "Journal of J.S. Watrous, May 12-22, 1851," Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency Immigration, 1850-1859, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 168); and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1850 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1850), p. 56.

⁷⁸ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1850 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1850), p. 70.

⁷⁹ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1852 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1852), p. 47.

⁸⁰ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1853 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1853), pp. 299-300.

sedentary life of subsistence farming.⁸¹ And naturally, internal conflicts and tension arose in each village over which survival strategy the community should pursue. Communities split widely between those Ojibwe who wished to survive by supporting themselves through farming and maintaining a friendly alliance with the United States and those that did not. The former group was led by the aging traditional civil authority in the villages who sought accommodation with the Americans. On the other hand, younger warrior leaders wished to pursue the band's traditional hunting and gathering lifestyle. They advocated opposition to farming, an end to the alliance with the Americans and perhaps even armed resistance. They believed that the United States only "respected displays of force" and they wanted to remind the United States that "not all Ojibwe were acquiescent old men who could be repeatedly persuaded to sign land cession treaties."⁸²

The Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe civil leaders won the argument in most of the villages. Powerless to resist, let alone, overcome the cultural onslaught of American power and presence among them, Ojibwe civil leadership decided to concede more land to the United States in hopes of finding a permanent home and enough land to make a living at subsistence farming along with some seasonal hunting, fishing, wild ricing and maple sugaring.

In the winter of 1855, the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe sent a ten member delegation of civil leaders to Washington, D.C. to negotiate a new treaty with the United States. The Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe delegates were:

- Pug-o-nka-ke-shick (Hole-in-the-Day, II) of the Gull Lake band
- Petud-dunce (Rat's Liver) of the Mille Lacs band
- Show-baush-king (a.k.a. Shaw-bosh-kung or He That Passes Under Everything or The Man That Goes Through) of the Mille Lacs band
- Mun-o-min-e-kay-shein (Rice-Maker) of the Snake River band that moved to Mille Lacs
- Que-we-sans-ish (Bad Boy) of the Gull Lake band
- Wand-e-kaw (Little Hill), band affiliation unknown
- I-awe-showe-we-ke-shig (Crossing Sky), band affiliation unknown
- Mah-yah-ge-way-we-dung (The Chorister), band affiliation unknown

⁸¹ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1852 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1852), p. 47.

⁸² Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 164 and 184.

- Kay-gwa-daush (The Attempter), (a.k.a. Cad-wa-dash or Kay-gwa-daush) of the Yellow Lake band that moved to Crow Wing
- Caw-caug-e-we-goon (Crow Feather), band affiliation unknown

Official government policy toward the Ojibwe at these treaty negotiations now centered on a multi-faceted acculturation approach. First, let the Ojibwe select small tracts of land for a reservation, "sufficient when adequately cultivated to support them independent of their annuities." Second, confirm them title to these reservations so that the Ojibwe "for the first time since their intercourse with the government commenced, that they have land which they can call their own, without the constant fear of soon being called upon to remove from it." Third, and finally, break for them sufficient land on these reservations "to give them a practical illustration of the advantage of the white man's method of cultivating the soil" and "to furnish them with just sufficient help to teach them when, how, and what use to make of seed."⁸³

All of these items were incorporated in some way in the Treaty of 1855. The Mississippi Ojibwe territory was broken into six small separate reservations near lakes where the bands presently were concentrated. They were: Mille Lacs Lake, Rabbit Lake, Gull Lake, Pokagomon Lake, Sandy Lake and finally Rice Lake. At each of these locations, the land was reserved and set apart for the resident Ojibwe there. In exchange for the former territory, the United States compensated the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe with \$10,000 of goods and useful articles, \$50,000 to pay their accumulated debts with traders, \$10,000 to mix-bloods for services rendered to the bands, an annuity payment of \$20,000 per annum for twenty years of which \$2,000 per year could be used for the improvement of the welfare of the Ojibwe, \$5,000 for the construction of road from the mouth of the Rum River to Mille Lac, and a reasonable amount of land to be ploughed and prepared for cultivation in suitable fields at each of the reservations.⁸⁴

The ultimate result of the civil leader's negotiations was a treaty ceding, selling, and conveying all their land in the Territory of Minnesota to the United States in return for a permanent homeland, money, and provisions to help acculturate the Ojibwe into the mainstream of America as independent yeoman farmers.⁸⁵

⁸³ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1855 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1855), p. 51.

⁸⁴ Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with the Chippewa, 1855," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), pp. 513-515.

An Easily Governed and Tractable People

Did the Mississippi St. Croix bands of Ojibwe turn into independent farmers overnight? After the treaty negotiations, Hole-in-the-Day, II of the Gull Lake, who probably was most closely associated to the younger warrior groups because of age, tried to take the farming route and set a laudable example. Upon returning from Washington, D.C., Hole-in-the-Day, II promptly built a frame house and cultivated a sixty-acre farm with the assistance of white labor that he hired. In addition to this farm and home on the east bank of the Mississippi, Hole-in-the-Day, II established a ferry across the Mississippi River at Crow Wing, making it easier to reach the Crow Wing Agency. He also planned to lay out a town on a section of land as well. He was very proud of his accomplishments and admonished the Ojibwe who failed to follow his example. "This, my brethren," chided Hole-in-the-Day, "is the result of my farming; while you have been wandering, pursuing the uncertain chase, I have been laboring; you are poor, I am rich; I have no fears for the winter, as I have sufficient [food] to carry me through; profit by my example."⁸⁶

But Hole-in-the-Day, II and a few other Ojibwe who may have followed his example were the exception and not the rule. The majority of Ojibwe did not employ laborers to assist them in farming or building a house. Instead, they continued to hunt and gather on their former territory as they had in the past. Conflicts now frequently occurred between Mississippi Ojibwe and settlers on land outside their new reservation boundaries. Though quite a few Ojibwe adopted the dress of the whites, most of the men and women still wore the stroud, leggins, and blankets. And, instead of spending their annuity money on agricultural pursuits or American clothing, many men squandered their money supporting whiskey dealers. This latter activity led to conflicts, disputes, and depredations with newly arrived settlers.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with the Chippewa, 1855," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), p. 513.

⁸⁶ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1855 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1855), p. 51; and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1857-1858 (Washington, D.C.: William A. Harris, Printer, 1858, pp. 342-344.

⁸⁷ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1855 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1855), p. 51; and United States, Report of the

By 1859, the Ojibwe failed miserably to adopt the independent farmer culture. Part of the reason for the failure was the government's fault. First, the United States failed to adequately prepare the Ojibwe for a life of agriculture and it neglected to keep its promise to cultivate demonstration fields at each of the reservations. After the 1855 treaty, government farmers cultivated only sixty acres upon two of the smallest reservations, Rabbit Lake and Mille Lacs. Hole-in-the-Day's farm was by far larger than the government farming efforts at these two reservations! This was in part due to a lack of appropriations to carry out this task.⁸⁸

Second, the entrance of American settlement due to the Treaty of 1855 also meant unregulated trade and dealings with the Ojibwe, especially by individuals peddling ardent spirits. Whereas, before the 1855 Treaty, traffickers in whiskey sold the alcohol illicitly in the countryside, whiskey dealers could now legally sell to the Ojibwe on the newly ceded lands near each reservation and in newly formed towns, like Crow Wing. Before 1855, the Indian agent and troops at Fort Gaines tried to prevent these illegal sales on Indian land, and to intercept Ojibwe and traders who bought whiskey in Morrison County and then brought it up the Mississippi to reservations. Now, the Indian agent had no recourse whatsoever. By 1858, there were five whiskey shops in Crow Wing alone, just five miles from the agency. The Ojibwe nicknamed Crow Wing as "Whiskey City" because of the number of saloons there. The increased annuity payments from the 1855 Treaty allowed the Ojibwe to purchase whiskey directly from these merchants.⁸⁹

By 1858, only three years after the signing of the treaty, the evils of dependence on the annuity payment system, which brought open trade and traffic in whiskey, became clearly evident. It was also evident that leadership in traditional Ojibwe

Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1857-1858 (Washington, D.C.: William A. Harris, Printer, 1858, pp. 342-344.

⁸⁸ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1858-1859 (Washington, D.C.: William A. Harris, Printer, 1859, p. 394; and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1856-1857 (Washington, D.C.: Cornelius Wendell, Printer, 1857), p. 600.

⁸⁹ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1856-1857 (Washington, D.C.: Cornelius Wendell, Printer, 1857, p. 599; and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1857-1858 (Washington, D.C.: William A. Harris, Printer, 1858), p. 342; and Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 173.

society had also broke down. Band members, most likely associated with the warrior societies, turned away from the advice and leadership of their elder civil leaders, who they felt betrayed by the Treaty of 1855. As one historian wrote:

Traditionally, the Ojibwe political system worked to mitigate the influence of warriors. They were perceived as young and inexperienced, rash, hot-headed, and inclined to be coercive in interpersonal relations. They lacked the very qualifications that leaders ought to possess: the patience acquired with age, the ability to think deliberatively and coolly, the wisdom to consider what would be best for the whole community and to put the community good above personal interest of all kinds.⁹⁰

Now forced to give up the hunt for farming by the decision of the elder civil chiefs in ceding their land base to the United States, many refused to follow the civil leaders. Instead, they turned to alcohol to escape the betrayal and the entire situation it would seem. J.W. Lynde, the Indian agent at Chippewa Agency at Crow Wing described the situation thus.

The Mississippi band, in the immediate vicinity of the agency, from their contiguity to white settlements, have suffered under the influence of ardent spirits, smuggled into their country by depraved and lawless white men, to an extent quite beyond my powers of adequate description. The diseased and emaciated appearance, bowed frames, and impaired constitutions of the middle aged men, present a spectacle of wretchedness that urges immediate remedy and careful watchfulness. By constant dissipation in the past, the influence and paternal advice hitherto extended among their people by the experienced chiefs and head-men of their tribes is every year becoming less effectual. Their young men witness the rapid degeneracy of those to whom they once listened and looked up to for a rule of action, and, stimulated by a desire to distinguish themselves, they form combinations and scouting parties, the effect of which is to distract and render more difficult any system of control by habits of industry and civilization so imperatively demanded for their future welfare.⁹¹

⁹⁰ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 168-169.

The despondent response of the younger Ojibwe contrasted with the hopefulness of their elders for a better future based on American promises of adequate land for farming and security of title to that land base in the 1855 Treaty. Notwithstanding this hope, before the ink was even dry on the 1855 Treaty, American Indian affair officials discussed ways of concentrating the Mississippi Ojibwe living on six separate reservation onto one reservation far away from the adverse impacts of the advancing American frontier.⁹² The Mississippi-St.Croix Ojibwe, who were a proud, defiant inter-band people who acted together in times of peace and war, a people feared by their friends and enemies alike, were now almost a broken people—a people separated into individual reservations, a people whose society was in disarray, and a people at the mercy of the vagaries of federal Indian policymakers. By 1860, they were in the eyes of government officials an "easily governed and tractable people."⁹³

Notes on Chapter Sources:

This chapter is based largely upon primary correspondence, reports and documents written during the time period 1820-1860. Primary works consulted for this chapter include: Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1820 to 1860; Letters Received by Commissioner of Indian Affairs (CIA), Crow Wing Agency, 1835-1840, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 249); Letters Received by Commissioner of Indian Affairs (CIA), Sandy Lake Agency, 1849-1851, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 767); and J. Wm. Trygg, "Composite Map of United States Land Surveyors' Original Plats and Field Notes," Minnesota Series, Ely, Minnesota, 1964-1968.

However, some secondary accounts on Ojibwe history were used. They are: William W. Warren, "Sioux and Chippewa Wars," reprinted from Minnesota

⁹¹ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1858-1859 (Washington, D.C.: William A. Harris, Printer, 1859), pp. 393-394.

⁹² United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1859-1860 (Washington, D.C.: George W. Bowman, Printer, 1860), pp. 439.

⁹³ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1859-1860 (Washington, D.C.: Cornelius Wendell, Printer, 1860), p. 425.

Chronicle and Register June 3 and 10, 1850, Minnesota Archaeologist Volume XII, no. 4 (October 1946): 95-107; William W. Warren, "Answers to Inquiries Regarding Chippewas," Minnesota Pioneer, 5 December 1849, Newspaper Transcripts, Sept.-Dec. 1849, Box 1, Willoughby M. Babcock Manuscripts (P 941), Minnesota Historical Society; Harold Hickerson, "The Southwestern Chippewa: An Ethnohistorical Study," American Anthropologist Vol. 64, no. 3, part 2 (June 1962); Edmund Jefferson Danzinger, Jr. The Chippewas of Lake Superior Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990; and Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986).

Other important secondary material centered around the various treaties that the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe concluded with the United States. These include: Peter Lawrence Scanlan, Prairie du Chien: French, British, American, Menasha, Wisconsin: Collegiate Press, 1937; No Author, "Proceedings of a Council with the Chippewa Indians," Iowa Journal of History and Politics, Vol. IX (1911): 408-437 and Charles J. Kappler, Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. One, Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903.

Ojibwe Historical Chronology: 1820-1855

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| 1825 | Prairie du Chien Treaty signed by Mississippi-St. Croix bands and other Ojibwe, which demarcated Ojibwe-Sioux hunting boundary line and establishes peaceful relations between Sioux and Ojibwe. |
| 1826 | Fond du Lac Treaty signed by Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe bands and other Ojibwe, that reaffirms commitments made by Ojibwe under Prairie du Chien Treaty. |
| 1837 | Mississippi-St. Croix bands and other Ojibwe sign Treaty of St. Peter selling pine lands east of Mississippi River to United States in exchange for annuity payments in cash and goods. |
| 1838-1843 | Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe receive first annuities from Treaty of St. Peter at Lake St. Croix. Returning home from annuity payment, members of Mille Lacs and Snake River bands ambushed near Rum and St. Croix Rivers killing many. Situation escalates into war that lasts until 1843. |

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- 1839 Annuity payment moved to La Pointe Agency.
- 1842 La Pointe Treaty signed by Mississippi-St. Croix bands and other Ojibwe ceding lands between Lake Superior and the Mississippi River.
- 1843 Ft. Snelling Treaty between Sioux and Ojibwe signed establishing peaceful relations.
- 1847 Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe bands and other Ojibwe sign Treaty of Fond du Lac ceding their former hunting grounds between the Mississippi and Long Prairie Rivers for lump payment and additional monies for schools, blacksmiths and laborers.
- 1848 Minnesota Territory established.
- 1848 Winnebago Indians are removed to live on former Ojibwe hunting grounds between the Mississippi and Long Prairie Rivers to separate the Sioux and Ojibwe and keep peace between the two groups.
- 1849-1850 Troubles between Sioux and Ojibwe occur at Apple River and Territorial Governor Alexander Ramsey officiates another treaty between the two groups at St. Peter, which reaffirms the 1843 treaty.
- 1850 President Taylor issues an order for removal of the Ojibwe. Thereafter settlers start to arrive.
- 1851 Removal of St. Croix River and Snake River bands of Ojibwe to Gull Lake and Crow Wing area. Other bands migrate to Mille Lacs and elsewhere, rather than face removal.
- 1852 Chippewa Agency moved from La Pointe to Sandy Lake temporarily and then on to Crow Wing River.
- 1853 First annuities distributed to Mississippi Ojibwe at Crow Wing
- 1855 Treaty of 1855 negotiated in Washington, D.C. Treaty by delegation of elder civil chiefs from Mississippi Ojibwe bands. The ultimate result of the negotiations was a treaty ceding, selling and conveying all their land in the Territory of Minnesota to the United States. Mississippi Ojibwe territory is broken into six small separate reservations. Land reserved and set apart for Ojibwe are at Mille Lacs Lake, Rabbit Lake, Gull Lake, Pokagomon Lake, Sandy Lake and Rice Lake. In

exchange for their former territory, the United States compensated the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe with goods and articles, paid their accumulated debts to traders, and to mix-bloods for services rendered to the bands, and compensated the bands with annuity payments for twenty years.

Chapter Five

"Tell the Mille Lacs What Danger They Are In"

Introduction

By 1856, most of the Mississippi Ojibwe bands¹ seemed as though they were an "easily governed and tractable people," whose society was in disarray and whom the federal government could easily manage and concentrate onto one reservation far away from the adverse impacts of the advancing American frontier. However, one band, the Mille Lacs band, defied this logic and distinguished themselves from the other Ojibwe bands. They maintained a military and political alliance with the United States and they actively resisted the onslaught of the American frontier. In the end, unlike the other Mississippi Ojibwe bands, they held onto their reservation lands—but only by a tenuous thread of technical language in one treaty.

This chapter will concentrate on how they managed to accommodate to the adverse affects of the advancing American frontier that they and other Mississippi Ojibwe faced during the years 1856 to 1875. Prior to 1862, the Mille Lacs band struggled with adapting to American agricultural techniques and the confines of reservation life. To complicate their situation, they also confronted and defied lumbermen who attempted to trespass on their lands. Mille Lacs civil elders maintained their alliance with the Americans and their leadership role among "farmer" Indians. Supported by government agents, they strived to accept and accommodate American culture and economy. They competed for support and power with the "blanket" Indians and younger warrior society factions, who advocated resistance to the Americans. The younger warrior groups saw their elders as untraditional and a disgrace to their race.

This factional dispute came to a head in 1862, during the Hole-in-the-Day, II uprising. The Mille Lacs bands openly supported the Americans against Hole-in-the-Day, II and were rewarded for their alliance and loyalty with a promise that

¹ Because the St. Croix River and Snake River bands of Ojibwe were removed to Gull Lake and Crow Wing area in 1851, in this chapter and/or the following chapters, I will refer to the Mississippi-St. Croix Ojibwe only as the Mississippi Ojibwe.

they could hold their reservation in perpetuity. However, this promise turned out to be an empty promise. In the three treaties negotiated in the 1860s (1863, 1864, and 1867), the Mississippi Ojibwe ceded title to their reservations and agreed to remove to a new reservation at White Earth with one group exempt from this fate—the Mille Lacs Ojibwe bands. "Owing to the heretofore good conduct of the Mille Lacs Indians," they were not compelled to remove so long as they did not in "any way interfere with or in any manner molest the persons or property of the whites." For more than a decade, even though American officials told them differently, the Mille Lacs band lived under the impression that they had not ceded away their lands by signing the 1863 treaty and they could remain on their reservation as promised by government officials from the Indian Commissioner to President Abraham Lincoln. Nevertheless, in 1875, at a council with American officials, Shaw-bosh-kung and other elder civil leaders finally comprehended that they had ceded away title to their lands to the United States by a mistake. Thereafter, the shadow of removal lay over their heads and any misbehavior on their part endangered their right to remain on their ceded reservation lands. By 1875, removal became an inevitability.

Mississippi River Ojibwe

In 1856, the Mississippi River Ojibwe were comprised of groups living at Crow Wing, Gull Lake, Rabbit Lake, Pah-kay-go-mah (a.k.a. Pokegama) Lake, Sandy Lake, Mille Lacs Lake and some straggling groups of St. Croix River bands, mainly at Yellow Lake and Snake River.² Because of the limitations of time and space, this study will concentrate mainly on the history of the Mille Lacs, Sandy Lake, as well as the St. Croix bands who eventually return to parts of their former haunts along the Snake and St. Croix Rivers in Minnesota. The other bands, namely Crow Wing, Gull Lake, Rabbit Lake, Pah-kay-go-mah Lake, will be mentioned occasionally, but only as their history that interacts with the main story line of the other communities.

² The St. Croix River band stragglers suffered from an epidemic of small pox, and eventually moved from this area as a result. D. B. Herriman to W.A. Gorman, 10 November 1853; W.A. Gorman to Paul Beaulieu, 3 December 1853; D. B. Herriman to W.A. Gorman, 25 March 1854; Dr. T.T. Mann to W.A. Gorman, 20 April 1854; D.B. Herriman to W.A. Gorman with Abstract Showing Ojibwe Bands, 29 May 1854, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1854-1855, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 150).

In 1855 or so, there were five bands living at Mille Lacs Lake and four bands living at Sandy Lake. They received their annuities at the Chippewa Agency at Crow Wing. A list of the bands at Mille Lacs Lake and Sandy Lake, their chiefs and band population totals, based on annuity payments, follows:³

<u>Mille Lacs Bands</u>	<u>Band Totals</u>	<u>Amount of Goods Received</u>
Nay-go-nay-be	175	\$1,773.88
Kitche Nodin	95	\$962.96
Muk-koo-day	121	\$1,226.50
Pe-dud	72	\$729.80
Mah-no-me-ne-kay-she	<u>125</u>	<u>\$1,267.00</u>
Total	588	\$5,960.14

<u>Sandy Lake Bands</u>	<u>Band Totals</u>	<u>Amount of Goods Received</u>
Kuh-nun-dah-waw-win	149	\$1,510.30
Ke-way-din-e-goun-abe	60	\$608.18
Nay-mung-ay-ahsh	103	\$1,044.00
Nay-gon-e-gah-bo	<u>35</u>	<u>\$354.70</u>
Total	347	\$3,517.18

The population of these two village bands included almost half the population of all the Mississippi Ojibwe, which was 2,206 in 1854.⁴ Throughout the 1850s and into the 1870s, these people continued their seasonal round lifestyle based on hunting, fishing, ricing, sugaring, growing limited amounts of vegetables horticulturally, and conducting limited trapping and trade in furs. But as time progressed, American encroachment into the country bordering their reservation and even into their reservation lands, hindered their enjoyment of these resources.

Ojibwe-Lumbermen Conflicts

Lumbermen were the first Americans to impact the economic resources on the Mille Lacs Reservation and elsewhere. The previous chapter discussed the

³ D.B. Herriman to W.A. Gorman with Abstract Showing Ojibwe Bands, 29 May 1854, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1854-1855, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 150).

⁴ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1855 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1855), p. 53.

disastrous results of Ojibwe-lumberman contact along the St. Croix River. Many of the Snake River Ojibwe band leaders, such as Nay-go-nay-be (a.k.a. Na-qua-na-bie), and Kitche Nodin (a.k.a. Naudin) and Mah-no-me-ne-kay-she (a.k.a. Mun-o-min-e-kay-shein) moved to Mille Lacs Lake from the St. Croix river area to avoid this contact. Their negative experiences prepared the Mille Lacs bands for this advancing frontier.

The first wave of lumber frontiersmen arrived in the Mille Lacs Lake area in the fall of 1847. At that time, Daniel Stanchfield led a timber crew up the Rum River searching for timber reserves to exploit. North of present-day Princeton, Stanchfield discovered rich stands of pine stretching for miles on each shore of the river. These stands held millions of feet of lumber, enough that "seventy mills could not cut in as many years."⁵ Canoeing up the west branch of the Rum River, Stanchfield reached the "rice lakes" or present-day Ogechie, Shakopee, and Onamia Lakes, which were on the Mille Lacs Reservation. In his remembrances, he described his encounter with the Mille Lacs people.

When the exploring party came to the Rice Lakes, eight miles from Mille Lacs, the squaws had tied the rice together for threshing, and therefore the canoe could not pass through and had to be taken to the shore. We walked to Mille Lacs . . . Here we found a band of Indians . . . They had planted small gardens, and seemed like half-civilized people. We were treated as braves and given plenty of game, corn, and potatoes.

On the shores of Rice lakes, which we had passed, many Indians were encamped. In the lakes, for more than six miles, they were gathering the wild rice. I had never seen that article of food before, and desired to know how it was harvested and prepared for food. When the rice is ready for gathering, it is made into bundles by drawing two or three straws around a bunch and tying them. They make lines or rows of these bunches across the lake; and each family has from two to five rows. Each has a canoe with a blanket spread in the bottom to hold the rice. The canoe is run between two rows by two squaws, and they pull the tops of the bunches of rice over the side of

⁵ David Stanchfield, "History of Pioneer Lumbering on the Upper Mississippi and Its Tributaries, with Biographic Sketches," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. IX (April 1901): 327-335.

the canoe and pound them with a stick. In this simple way they secure large quantities of this nutritious grain. After it has been winnowed, it is prepared for packing by heating it in camp kettles over a fire until it is parched. The grain then is put into packages for storage, and it will keep for years. The packages, which the Ojibways call mokuks, are made of birch bark, and are pitched like a canoe. they hold from a half bushel to one bushel, and are stored away in the ground for winter, being covered with leaves and old bark.⁶

In addition to observing the harvesting of wild rice, Stanchfield also noted their extensive springtime sugaring activities along Mille Lacs Lake and Rum River. Upon leaving the area, Stanchfield gave the Ojibwe presents, which no doubt endeared the outsider to the Mille Lacs people.⁷

Stanchfield's crew failed to take advantage of the rich pine lands he discovered and later moved on to timberland elsewhere. After hearing the news from Stanchfield's report, other lumbermen rushed to the area to make their fortunes. In 1849-1850, the Rum River Lumber Company formed and established operations on the Rum River. Apparently unconcerned with the viability of the "Rice lakes" as a source of food for the Ojibwe, they constructed a dam on land at the Rum River outlet to Mille Lacs Lake. These types of dams were used in the spring time to create a high water flood to wash the logs downstream to the Mississippi River. However, raising the water in Ogechie, Shakopee, and Onamia Lakes destroyed Ojibwe ricing, which the Mille Lacs Indians depended on for sustenance and income.⁸ Despite this unfavorable situation, apparently trouble over the lumbering techniques did not erupt until 1855, when some lumbermen furnished

⁶ David Stanchfield, "History of Pioneer Lumbering on the Upper Mississippi and Its Tributaries, with Biographic Sketches," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. IX (April 1901): 327-335.

⁷ David Stanchfield, "History of Pioneer Lumbering on the Upper Mississippi and Its Tributaries, with Biographic Sketches," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. IX (April 1901): 327-335.

⁸ The Mille Lac bands annually gathered some three to five thousand bushels of wild rice from these lakes that was worth four to five dollars a bushel. Francis Huebshmann to D. Morrison, 12 August 1856, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1856-1857, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 151); United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1855 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1855), p. 53.

liquor to several young Mille Lacs Ojibwe. Difficulties ensued, leaving one Indian and two lumbermen dead.⁹ This kind of debauchery and murder had devastated many of the Mississippi Ojibwe and was the kind of situation that the Mille Lacs Lake elders hoped to prevent among their young people.

Shortly after this incident the Ojibwe signed the 1855 Treaty, creating the Mille Lacs Reservation. The dam site became part of the reservation land designated by treaty to the Mille Lacs band. The Mille Lacs Ojibwe civil leaders, perhaps to rid their territory of the bad influence of the lumbermen, or perhaps to assert their rights under the 1855 Treaty, threatened to raise the gates on the dam and release the water. The lumbermen vehemently protested the situation to the territorial government, stressing that the dam was not on Indian land, and that it was critical to the logistics of floating their logs down the Rum River.¹⁰

Though the Mille Lacs Ojibwe civil leaders were within their right to remove the dam, the Chippewa Agency Indian agent negotiated an amicable agreement for the lumbermen. The Mille Lacs Ojibwe agreed to leave the dam alone for five years and that the lumber company pay the Mille Lacs people \$1,000 each year for damages to their rice beds. The June agreement was signed by most of the Mille Lacs civil leaders, including Sha-go-bai, Shaw-bosh-kung (a.k.a. Show-baush-king) and Mah-no-me-ne-kay-she. The Mille Lacs won a victory in the matter, giving them a semblance of power over their affairs, property, and lands.¹¹

Settler Conflicts

Whereas title to the reservation protected the Mille Lacs band in the case of trespass, living on a reservation inhibited their activities as well. Before the establishment of the reservation, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe roamed the surrounding

⁹ W.A. Gorman to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 16 February 1855; and W.A. Gorman to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 9 March 1855, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1854-1855, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 150).

¹⁰ Lumbermen to Governor and Council of Minnesota Territory, 29 May 1855, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1854-1855, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 150).

¹¹ Agreement between W.A. Gorman and Mississippi Chippewa Bands, 20 June 1855, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1854-1855, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 150); and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1855 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1855), p. 53.

territory at will to hunt and conduct gathering activities. Now with a boundary line limiting these activities, young warriors and hunters who left the reservation to engage in these activities were considered trespassers by the Americans. Mille Lacs civil leaders tried to control trespassing on American settler property by encouraging their young men to give up hunting in exchange for farming, but failed.

After the 1855 Treaty, settlers migrated and bought land in Ojibwe's former territory. Thereafter, they frequently fussed each time they saw an Ojibwe "off the reservation," and hunting on their former territory outside the reservation. Oftentimes, young Ojibwe men did get into trouble, especially after the first road was constructed to the Mille Lacs reservation and beyond to Leech Lake in 1856.¹² This road gave greater access to the reservation and conflicts seemed to increase in frequency.

For instance, in the spring of 1857, several members of the Mille Lacs band, in a drunken spree, set afire a building on the Rum River, killed some settlers' cattle, and committed other types of depredations.¹³ In September of that year, five Mille Lacs Indians were arrested and another killed for simply being outside the reservation boundaries. Another group of Ojibwe were accused by a settler of camping on private property along the north branch of the Sunrise River, firing off guns, burning haystacks, and polluting streams.¹⁴ In October, a group of unidentified Ojibwe robbed a surveyor of his supplies and equipment fifty miles north of St. Paul.¹⁵ In February and in May of 1859, several Mille Lacs Ojibwe, under the direction of a warrior named Wau-de-na (a.k.a. Wadena), killed several cattle in Benton County.¹⁶

¹² William McAbay to George W. Manypenny, 10 November 1855, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1856-1857, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 151).

¹³ William P. Dole to Clark W. Thompson, 5 April 1861, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1864-1865, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 154) and George W. Bratt to W.P. Dole, 7 January 1862, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1862-1863, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 153).

¹⁴ W.I. Cullen to J.W. Denver, 4 September 1857; and Statement of James Burns about Indian Outrages on North Branch of Sunrise River, 4 September 1857, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1856-1857, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 151).

¹⁵ J.W. Denver to J.R. King, 10 December 1857, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1856-1857, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 151).

¹⁶ J.W. Lynde to W.J. Cullen, 5 April 1861, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1858-

Chippewa Indian Agent, D.B. Herriman, thought that the problems occurring off the reservation with settlers were caused by the fact that the Mississippi Ojibwe were being forced to depend on agricultural pursuits for a livelihood before they were prepared and before ground was even broken and plowed for them. He stated:

Naturally a hunter, he still follows the chase; wearied and hungry, he finds a settler's cabin, a surveyor's tent, or a lumberman's camp; applies for provisions, is, perhaps, misunderstood; or finds it unguarded, takes what he wants; bad feelings are engendered, and the whole tribe denounced for the act of a single Indian.¹⁷

More likely, it was frustration on the part of young warriors over unfulfilled treaty promises, irregular annuity payments, and neglected requests to address their grievances about these matters and others. According to one historian, "they defiantly killed cattle, pilfered settlers' cabins and traders' stores, intimidated lumbermen and surveyors."¹⁸

Even though many young members of Mille Lacs band took part in these depredations, the majority of the Mille Lacs people appeared to be living in the traditional mode of life based on the seasonal round. They also used the traditional transportation system of hauling goods by stages. In March of 1862, when Indian Agent L.C. Walker made his report, he described the Mille Lacs people:

Their habits are roving, unsettled and marauding always changing from place to place with no villages nor permanent homes. They live in tents or wigwams built chiefly of birch bark or woven ____ leaves, these they fetch or take up with little ceremony, the squaws doing all the work, packing the tents, household stuff and all their little world of goods upon their backs, travel all day and pitch their tents again at

1861, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 152). Wadena would later become an important twentieth century Mille Lacs chief.

¹⁷ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1857-1858 (Washington, D.C.: William A. Harris, Printer, 1858), p. 343.

¹⁸ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 184.

night. They sometimes travel in families of two or three but usually alone. They remain sometimes days or perhaps weeks upon the shore of a lake, always catching fish in abundance which forms their principle staple of food. They also collect large quantities of rice from some of the lakes, which is another important article of food among them, but they soon become tired and weary of existing too long in one place, and so move from lake to lake or settle for awhile upon the bank of some favorite river. And these traits of character habits and mode of life will apply to all the Indians under my charge.¹⁹

Farmer and Blanket Indians

The Ojibwe, especially the younger warrior factions, were not ready to take the white man's path and depend on agricultural pursuits for their livelihood. They desired to follow a seasonal round lifestyle of hunting, maple sugaring, wild ricing, and gathering other fruits of the land for sustenance instead. Some Ojibwe, under the leadership of civil chiefs wanted to farm in the white man's way. In advocating farming, they sought a political and cultural "middle ground." To them it was important to accommodate to American culture and to maintain an alliance with the Americans.

At Mille Lacs Lake, the civil leaders were anxious that stipulations in the 1855 Treaty for agricultural aid be implemented so they could undertake an American agricultural lifestyle.²⁰ The Mississippi bands wanted houses and cattle purchased.²¹ Shaw-bosh-kung, the most important civil leader at Mille Lacs Lake summarized the civil leaders' position. He stated "we have made up our minds to live in a different manner—we will follow the ways of the white man."²²

¹⁹ Lucius C. Walker to C.W. Thompson, 22 March 1862, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1862-1863, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 153).

²⁰ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1855 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1855), p. 53.

²¹ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1860 (Washington, D.C.: George W. Bowman, Printer, 1860), p. 50.

²² Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), p. 184.

In 1856, land was finally cleared, broken, and planted at the Mille Lacs Reservation for Shaw-bosh-kung and his supporters. However, farming proved more difficult than it initially seemed to the Mille Lacs people. That first year, their crops failed when in late July swarms of grasshoppers swept the entire countryside and ate their crops. That year was even more difficult for Shaw-bosh-kung and his supporters because they also lost half of their usual crop of rice as well. These untimely and regrettable occurrence caused a hard winter for them and discouraged the new farmers immensely.²³ The following years proved a little better. By 1862, the Mille Lacs people cultivated only thirty-five acres of corn and potatoes and no acreage was reported at Sandy Lake.²⁴

The failure of farming at Mille Lacs Lake and Sandy Lake undoubtedly caused rising popularity for the warrior leaders, which threaten the leadership of the civil chiefs at these villages. However, though their farms had failed, the center of support for "farmer" Indians and civil leadership among all the Ojibwe still rested with the Mille Lacs and Sandy Lake bands. Support and power for the "blanket" Indians and warrior societies centered among the Leech Lake, Gull Lake, and Crow Wing Ojibwe.²⁵

Tension between the two factions of Ojibwe grew with each year. Supported by the government agents, "farmer" Indians endeavored to attain the arts of white civilization and to accept and accommodate American culture and economy. Whereas, "blanket" Indians regarded the "farmer" Indian as untraditional and a disgrace to their race. The government countenanced and supported the "farmer" Ojibwe, seeking to turn them into independent thinking farmers and not as a member of a tribe. Indian policymakers axiomized that "agricultural

²³ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1856-1857 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1857), pp. 557 and 599.

²⁴ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1862 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1863), p. 70.

²⁵ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 185-187; and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1862 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1863), p. 70. Support for farming at these two villages may be related to the fact that many of the bands at these villages had come from the Snake River and St. Croix River. They had witnessed firsthand the invasion of settlers and the power of the United States, and their leadership had gone to Washington as well. Perhaps, they saw the futility of resisting such overwhelming power and therefore sought to accommodate to American culture in order to survive.

improvements must be the basis of Indian civilization." So firmly did they believe in this policy, that they sought to gather all the Ojibwe on one reservation in order to concentrate agricultural improvements and to gradually substitute purchases of agricultural goods for the annuity payments of money that each treaty stipulated.²⁶ Indian Bureau officials also recommended that annuity payments be made directly to the Ojibwe on their reservations in order to avoid the allurements and exposure to the damaging results of the whiskey traffic that existed at Crow Wing.²⁷

The tension between "farmer" and "blanket" Ojibwe factions rose to the surface in 1862, and the inevitable conflict came to a head during the 1862 Sioux Indian uprising.

"Threatened" Ojibwe Uprising of 1862

On August 17, 1862, "crowded together and starving, unable to hunt or maintain their way of life, lied to and cheated by the Indian agents and traders," the Sioux Indians of Minnesota rebelled against these conditions. Within a matter of weeks, some 1,400 people, both Indians and settlers, were dead before the uprising was quelled.²⁸ The Sioux uprising came at a time when the United States was involved in a civil war and the Minnesota frontier was especially vulnerable because most able-bodied men were off fighting for the Union cause.²⁹

Taken by surprise, American officials and settlers feared that the Mississippi Ojibwe, who suffered from many of the same conditions, would join the Sioux in a general uprising against the United States. Rumors flew that Hole-in-the-Day, II of Gull Lake was in direct communication with the Sioux and a ringleader in that rebellion; and that it was a Southern conspiracy plot to draw Union soldiers away from the battlefields of the South. In anticipation of an Ojibwe attack, American

²⁶ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1860 (Washington, D.C.: George W. Bowman, Printer, 1860), p. 43.

²⁷ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1861-1862 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1862), pp. 680-681.

²⁸ Judith Rosenblatt, ed., Indians in Minnesota, 4th ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), pp. 21-22.

²⁹ While the Sioux uprising is a critical event in Minnesota-Indian relations, this narrative will be confined to the essential facts as they affect the history of the Mississippi Ojibwe.

officials strengthened the troops at Fort Ripley to protect the settlements. Fueled solely by rumor, the Americans sent troops to arrest Hole-in-the-day, II at his farm as a "necessary measure to prevent a general outbreak."³⁰

Since Hole-in-the-Day, II had successfully taken the farming route and set an example for his band members, it is not clear why the Americans suspected treachery from him. The only basis for their suspicion rests in the fact that Hole-in-the-Day, II was an outspoken leader of the Ojibwe on many issues that affected his band, such as fraud in annuity payment system. When Hole-in-the-Day, II discovered the troops advancing toward his place, according to one account, he immediately:

fled to his house, situated upon the river some two miles above [Fort Ripley], and embarking with his wives in canoes, had well nigh gained the opposite bank before the arrival of the troops. He refused to comply with their demand that he should return, and on gaining the opposite shore turned and fired upon them. This fire was promptly returned, but with no other effect than to exasperate Hole-in-the-Day.³¹

There is no indication or proof that Hole-in-the-Day, II was aware of the Sioux uprising, which appeared to have started spontaneously. Notwithstanding this, when troops tried to arrest him, he clearly overreacted as much as government officials had in suspecting conspiracies between the Sioux and the Ojibwe—who had been enemies for centuries!

Reacting to this unwarranted attack by American troops, Hole-in-the-Day, II sent runners with tobacco offerings to all the Mississippi Ojibwe bands "advising them that war had begun, and that they must at once kill all the whites upon the various reservations, seize the property of the traders and others, and join him at his camp at Gull Lake."³²

³⁰ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1862 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1863), pp. 14-15.

³¹ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1862 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1863), pp. 14-15. Another account indicates that the soldiers fired first. Deposition of John Morrison, 29 July 1909, pp. 174-175, Box 2172, Record Group 123, United States Court of Claims, Federal Record Center at Suitland, Maryland.

³² United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1862 (Washington, D.C.:

When the runner and his message reached Shaw-bosh-kung's village on the shore of Mille Lacs Lake, the people held a council to decide whether or not to go to war with Hole-in-the-Day, II. At this time, the Mille Lacs people could muster approximately 700 able-bodied men for a war party. According to Nah-she-ke-we-ga-bow, village after village decided not to follow Hole-in-the-Day, II's warpath and they immediately let their decision be known to Hole-in-the-Day, II. If they had decided to go on the warpath, there most assuredly would have been a massacre of the soldiers who manned Fort Ripley.³³

While waiting for messengers from the other Ojibwe villages, Hole-in-the-Day, II took a defensive position. He assembled some 300 warriors at his Gull Lake village and waited for an expected attack from the soldiers at Fort Ripley. At the same time, Hole-in-the-Day, II's band took nearby American settlers and their families captive and held them as hostages. They also raided the Gull Lake Agency, driving the livestock to Gull Lake and killing them for supplies. However, the Americans perceived Hole-in-the-Day, II's actions as the prelude to an attack on the settlements and they reacted accordingly. Scores of settlers fled the area, imagining that "every clump of timber and ravine along the line of their flight had hostile Indians lying in wait to slaughter them" and additional troops were dispatched from Fort Snelling to meet the "non-existent" threatening advance of the Hole-in-the-Day, II's forces.³⁴ By now, the situation had escalated to total warfare.

Government Printing Office, 1863), pp. 16-19; and George W. Sweet, "Incidents of the Threatened Outbreak of Hole-in-the-Day and Other Ojibways at Time of Sioux Massacre of 1862," Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society Vol. 6: 401-408; and Deposition of Bud-ub-e-ge-shig, 4 August 1909, p. 280, Box 2172, Record Group 123, United States Court of Claims, Federal Record Center at Suitland, Maryland.

³³ Deposition of Nah-she-ke-we-ga-bow, 30 July 1909, pp. 263-264; and Deposition of John Morrison, 29 July 1909, pp. 174-175, Box 2172, Record Group 123, United States Court of Claims, Federal Record Center at Suitland, Maryland.

³⁴ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1862 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1863), pp. 16-19; George W. Sweet, "Incidents of the Threatened Outbreak of Hole-in-the-Day and Other Ojibways at Time of Sioux Massacre of 1862," Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society Vol. 6: 401-408; and Deposition of John Morrison, 29 July 1909, pp. 170-171, Box 2172, Record Group 123, United States Court of Claims, Federal Record Center at Suitland, Maryland.

Fortunately, more collected minds prevailed. Prisoners were released unharmed and a council was arranged between Hole-in-the-Day, II's band and the Americans. At the council, Hole-in-the-Day, II protested that he did not start the trouble. He and his people had taken up arms because "troops had been sent against him," and that he had been fired upon first. He also aired grievances that many of Ojibwe shared, stating that "he did not war, but only his rights; that he could not get his rights by peaceable means; that the government agents had been stealing from them; that they had brought new traders into the country with whom the agent was in partnership, and with whom the agent insisted they should do all their trading. That the agent had put annuity goods into these traders' stores to be sold to the Indians." Notwithstanding these arguments, the Americans informed Hole-in-the-Day, II that military force would be used against him and his followers if he did not disband his warriors peacefully, restore any stolen goods, and disperse to their homes. Rather than take up arms against the Americans, the majority of his followers abandoned Hole-in-the-Day, II's side. Without the help of the Mille Lacs bands, they realized their position was futile. Thereafter, they disbanded their war camp and unconditionally submitted rather than risk war. To address their grievances, the Minnesota legislature appointed a commission to proceed to the reservation to negotiate a peace, but this action was negated when it was learned that the Ojibwe had surrendered their arms.³⁵

Mille Lacs Role in the Uprising

Few Mississippi Ojibwe bands actually joined Hole-in-the-Day, II's uprising other than his own band. The Mille Lacs Ojibwe clearly did not support him. Prior to the incident, they wished to accommodate the Americans and maintain a friendly alliance with them, so they could acquire agricultural goods and instructions. During the Hole-in-the-Day, II incident, they clearly chose to continue along this path.

Commissioner of Indian Affairs, William P. Dole, who was in the area at the time of the Hole-in-the-Day, II incident, learned of their support first hand. During

³⁵ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1862 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1863), pp. 16-19; and George W. Sweet, "Incidents of the Threatened Outbreak of Hole-in-the-Day and Other Ojibways at Time of Sioux Massacre of 1862," Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society Vol. 6: 401-408.

the incident, Indian Commissioner Dole sought to hold a council with the Mille Lacs band to secure their friendship and split them off from the forces of Hole-in-the-Day, II. Instead of a mere council with a few chiefs and headmen, the Mille Lacs leaders arranged for some 700-750 warriors to march to Fort Ripley to highlight their support for the Americans. Carrying flags, drums, and singing as they proceeded to the gate of Fort Ripley, they made an impressive demonstration of support before Indian Commissioner Dole. During the council, the Mille Lacs leaders notified Commissioner Dole that they "condemned the movements of Hole-in-the-Day, II, and told their young men, if any of them joined him, they should never be permitted to return to the band again." They also offered to help the Americans against their traditional enemies the Sioux as well. Important civil leaders in these negotiations were Mille Lacs leaders Shaw-bosh-kung (a.k.a. Shaw-bos-kunk), Rag-y-doss, and Quickigishrick.³⁶

After listening to these elder civil leaders, Indian Commissioner Dole told them to go back to their reservation and that he would send a recruiting officer there to enlist those who wished to go fight the Sioux. In appreciation for not joining the uprising, Dole promised that they would be protected by the United States and that in return for being good to the whites they would never loose their lands. According to the interpreter, Indian Commissioner Dole gave them a paper to "show that no one will molest you on your reservation at Mille Lacs." This paper told the Mille Lacs Indians that they could "stay there without being molested if it was a thousand years."³⁷ No doubt, Dole's promise of perpetual ownership of

³⁶ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1862 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1863), pp. 17, 73, 79-80, and 86; and Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 193-194; Deposition of Bud-ub-e-ge-shig, 4 August 1909, pp. 281 and 283, 290-291, Box 2172, Record Group 123, United States Court of Claims, Federal Record Center at Suitland, Maryland; and Deposition of John Morrison, 29 July 1909, pp. 170-171 and 183-184, Box 2172, Record Group 123, United States Court of Claims, Federal Record Center at Suitland, Maryland.

³⁷ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1862 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1863), pp. 17, 73, 79-80, and 86; and Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 193-194; Deposition of Bud-ub-e-ge-shig, 4 August 1909, pp. 281 and 283, 290-291, Box 2172, Record Group 123, United States Court of Claims, Federal Record Center at Suitland, Maryland; and Deposition of John Morrison, 29 July 1909, pp. 170-171 and 183-184, Box 2172, Record Group 123, United States Court of Claims, Federal Record Center at Suitland,

their land indicated to the Mille Lacs elder leaders that they had made a wise choice in supporting the American cause and earned them respect in the eyes of their people.

Thereafter, the Mille Lacs reservation increased its position as the center for Ojibwe civil leadership. The Hole-in-the-Day, II uprising underscored the political factionalism between the "farmer" and "blanket" Ojibwe. Civil leaders from Gull Lake and other Mississippi Ojibwe villages who did not support Hole-in-the-Day, II fled to Mille Lacs Lake. Afterwards, many civil leaders from Gull, Pokegama, and Rabbit Lakes agreed "among themselves to move and settle down permanently with the Mille Lackers." Que-we-sans-ish or Bad Boy of Gull Lake was one of their spokespersons. Overall, the civil leaders feared any association with Hole-in-the-Day, II. For instance, after the uprising, Bad Boy's band, as well as the Mille Lacs and Sandy Lake bands, refused to come to Crow Wing for their annuity payments. Instead, they received them on the Mille Lacs Reservation. Bad Boy, especially did not trust Hole-in-the-Day, II and hoped that his band would not be punished for the "foolish" uprising that Hole-in-the-Day, II had started.³⁸

The Treaty of 1863 and the Broken Promise

Bad Boy's hopes were dashed in early spring, when American officials opened new treaty negotiations with the Mississippi Ojibwe. Although there was little damage done by the threatening attitude of Hole-in-the-Day, II's uprising, American officials treated the incident as if total warfare had broken out. They also treated the Mississippi Ojibwe as the losers in the undeclared and unfought war.

During the winter of 1862, the Americans summoned the Mississippi Ojibwe to Washington, D.C. to negotiate a new treaty. Thereafter arrangements were made for the Mississippi Ojibwe to go to Washington, D.C. in the spring of 1863. Senator Henry M. Rice³⁹ negotiated the treaty for and on the behalf of the Mississippi Maryland.

³⁸ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 199-201; and Bad Boy (Gull Lake Chief) to Commissioner of Indian Affairs Dole, 15 October 1862, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1862-1863, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 153).

Ojibwe in Washington, D.C. and Robert Morrison, Paul Beaulieu, and Peter Roy acted as interpreters.⁴⁰ A party of some forty-two Mississippi Ojibwe from Mille Lacs Lake, Sandy Lake, Gull Lake and Pokegama Bands came to Washington, D.C. for the negotiations. Six Mille Lacs Ojibwe leaders came, including the Pedu-dance (Rats Liver), who had been at the Prairie du Chien Treaty (1925), Shaw-bosh-kung (The Man That Goes Through), Mun-o-min-e-kay-shein (Rice-Maker) formerly of the Snake River band, Mose-o-man-nay (a young leader at this time), Te-dah-hah-mo-say, and Wa-say-wa-gwon-abe.⁴¹

Before settling down for negotiations, the Mississippi Ojibwe delegation first met with the President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, who took time out his busy schedule prosecuting the civil war to visit with the Ojibwe. According to Shaw-bosh-kung:

The President took hold of our hands and promised us faithfully and encouraged us, and he said we could live on our reservation for ten years, and if you are faithful to the whites and behave yourselves [and are] friendly to the whites you shall increase the number of years to 100; and you may increase it to a thousand years if you are good Indians, and through our good behavior at the time of the war (we were good and never raised hands against the whites) the Secretary of the Interior and the President said that we should be considered good Indians, and remain at Mille Lacs so long as we want to.⁴²

³⁹ Henry M. Rice came to the territory of Minnesota in 1839 as the post sutler at Fort Atkinson. Thereafter, he engaged in the fur business and later negotiated treaties with the Ojibwe, Winnebago, and Sioux Indians, which opened land to white settlers. He was elected to the United States Senate in 1858 and served until March 3, 1863. Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1949 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1950), p. 1733.

⁴⁰ Deposition of John Morrison, 29 July 1909, pp. 175-177, Box 2172, Record Group 123, United States Court of Claims, Federal Record Center at Suitland, Maryland.

⁴¹ Deposition of Me-she-ke-ge-sheg, 28 July 1909, pp. 201 and 203; and Deposition of John Morrison, 29 July 1909, pp. 176-177, 184-185, and 188-189, Box 2172, Record Group 123, United States Court of Claims, Federal Record Center at Suitland, Maryland; and "Testimony given in Washington, D.C. by Representatives of Mille Lac Band in 1897" Typescript, Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians, n.d.

⁴² Council Minutes with Mille Lac Chippewa, 23-25 February 1875, pp. 6-7, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1875, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 162).

After visiting with President Lincoln, the Mississippi Ojibwe began their negotiations with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in the old Patent Office building. Altogether, the Ojibwe delegation was in Washington, D.C. for seven weeks and had four different meetings with the Indian Commissioner. During the negotiations, Indian Commissioner Dole renewed his promise to the Mille Lacs band. Dole told Shaw-bosh-kung that "he was a friend of the white people, that he was one of his best friends. Therefore he promised him him he would make them a permanent home at Mille Lacs Reservation."⁴³

In the Treaty of March 11, 1863, however, the Americans insisted that title to the reservations at Gull Lake, Mille Lacs Lake, Sandy Lake, Rabbit Lake, Pokegama Lake and Rice Lake created under the 1855 Treaty be ceded to the United States for a considered payment. Furthermore, for the safety of the citizens of Minnesota and supposedly for the benefits of the Indians as well, all the Ojibwe were to be removed and concentrated onto one large reservation near Lake Winnibigoshish. Provisions in the treaty also addressed the settlement of claims for depredations to settlers, totalling \$20,000.00; it appointed a board of visitors to attend annuity payments to see that the Ojibwe were not cheated; and the treaty contained elaborate plans to build each chief a two-story log house with pine floors, shuttered windows, brick or stone chimneys, and fireplaces.⁴⁴

In regard to the Mille Lacs band, the explicitly stated that, "owing to the heretofore good conduct of the Mille Lacs Indians," they were not compelled to remove so long as they shall not in "any way interfere with or in any manner molest the persons or property of the whites." The Mille Lacs band interpreted this statement as the promised protection for their reservation made by Indian Commissioner Dole and President Lincoln, and signed the document based on this assumption. However, government officials concluded that the Mille Lacs band had ceded their title to their lands. They no longer owned the land they were living on. In the government's eyes, in deference to their good conduct during the

⁴³ Deposition of Me-she-ke-ge-sheg, 28 July 1909, pp. 201 and 203; and Deposition of John Morrison, 29 July 1909, pp. 176-177, 184-185, and 188-189, Box 2172, Record Group 123, United States Court of Claims, Federal Record Center at Suitland, Maryland; and "Testimony given in Washington, D.C. by Representatives of Mille Lac Band in 1897" Typescript, Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians, n.d.

⁴⁴ Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with Chippewa of Mississippi and the Pillager and Lake Winnibigoshish Bands, 1863," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), pp. 642-644.

Hole-in-the-Day, II uprising, the Mille Lacs band were allowed to remain on lands only as a temporary measure.

Upon learning of all the conditions of the treaty, many Ojibwe objected to its bias in favor of the Americans. For instance, Hole-in-the-Day, II questioned why they should give up good homes for poor ones. Hole-in-the-Day, II protested that there was not enough arable land on the new reservation to "raise food for our families, to say nothing of game, to which, for many years, we must still look in a greater or less degree for subsistence." He also pointed out that whiskey traders would succeed even better in this remote location away from American authority.⁴⁵ The Mille Lacs band were dissatisfied that many amendments regarding the payments of settler claims and appointment of a board of visitors were never explained to them in Washington, but it never occurred to them that they had ceded title to their reservation.⁴⁶ They did not realize that an omnimous shadow of illegitimacy hung over their right to occupy their lands.

Staying Out of Trouble

Meanwhile, the Mille Lacs band went about their business of trying to make a living on their reservation and staying out of trouble. The Mille Lacs bands incurred the "enmity of many of their neighbors" because they had sided with the United States and obtained a special proviso in the 1863 Treaty against their removal.⁴⁷ The Mille Lacs bands feared that they would retaliate in some way and thereby jeopardize their relationship with the Americans. For a time, they wished to avoid the company of the Gull Lake bands and expressly wanted their annuities delivered to their reservation so they could avoid any confrontation. Nevertheless, after much coaxing by the Indian agents, on November 6, 1863, during their hunting season, the various Mille Lacs bands came to Gull Lake Agency to receive their annuity payment. At this time, 675 Mille Lacs persons were listed on the annuity roll. A general per capita payment of \$7.00 was distributed to each individual, while ten chiefs received an extra \$640.00 in sums

⁴⁵ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1863 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), pp. 328-331.

⁴⁶ Peter Roy to Henry M. Rice, 30 April 1863, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1862-1863, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 153).

⁴⁷ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 200-205.

from \$5.00 to \$150.00 dollars per leader.⁴⁸

Avoiding trouble with the Gull Lake band was one thing. However, avoiding trouble with Americans was another matter. The Mille Lacs band discovered that it was not easy to stay out of trouble with the American authorities, especially when settlers and lumbermen closed in on the Mille Lacs reservation. As early as December of 1863, they ran into trouble for hunting off the reservation on land in nearby Isanti, Anoka, and Chisago counties. Their presence frightened the people living there, who still held horrifying memories of the Sioux uprising. Even though the Mille Lacs Lake hunting parties committed no depredations, these Minnesota citizens petitioned authorities to remove Mille Lacs bands. The Indian agent endeavored to keep them on their reservation, but found it impossible to do so, because there are no hunting grounds upon them and that the Mille Lacs people derived as much income from furs as they collected from their annuities. The Indian agent thought that troubles would continue until the Indians were removed to a new reservation.⁴⁹

Meanwhile, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe tried to isolate themselves on the reservation to avoid any troubles. Once again, they requested to have their annuities distributed at Mille Lacs Lake, instead of at Crow Wing. In August, 1864, Shaw-bosh-kung pointed out to government officials that it was a hardship to go back and forth to Crow Wing, especially when this time could be better employed during the critical fall hunting and fishing season. Shaw-bosh-kung also directed their attention to the whiskey dealers at Crow Wing, which stated his people wished to avoid. A petition signed by forty-five Mille Lacs chiefs and headmen stated similar arguments. This petition argued that many of the people were too old and crippled to walk to Crow Wing and that "half of our people come back worse off than before we went [and] without a dollar of money." Furthermore, it stated that the whiskey dealers "bring it to us and follow us on the road, get us drunk and take everything we have." Washington officials busy with prosecuting the war against the South did not want to contend with additional troubles on the Indian

⁴⁸ Clark W. Thompson to William P. Dole, 28 October 1863; Report of Board of Visitors to William P. Dole, circa November, 1863, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1862-1863, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 153); and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1863 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), pp. 342-343 and 475-476.

⁴⁹ A.C. Morrill to C.W. Thompson, 5 January 1864, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1864-1865, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 154).

frontier, so they acquiesced to this demand. Washington quickly directed the Chippewa Agency to make the next payment at or near Mille Lacs Lake.⁵⁰

Threatened Removal

While the Mille Lacs bands may have been satisfied with the Treaty of 1863, the other Mississippi Ojibwe were not and asked to renegotiate many of its provisions. In 1864, the Treaty of 1863 with the Mississippi Ojibwe was renegotiated with Hole-in-the-Day, II of Gull Lake and Mis-qu-a-dance of Sandy Lake acting for and on the behalf of the Mississippi Ojibwe. Signed on May 7, 1864 and proclaimed as law on March 20, 1865, the new treaty was virtually the same as the Treaty of 1863, except for an increase in the monetary values and a few minor deviations. Several Ojibwe leaders were given fee title to sections of land. Hole-in-the-Day, II was given a section of land on the southeast side of Gull Lake. Mis-qu-a-dance, the Sandy Lake leader, was also given a section of land on the former Sandy Lake Reservation, and Shaw-bosh-kung was given a section of land on the ceded Mille Lacs Reservation.⁵¹

The 1864-1865 Treaty did not change the status of the Mille Lacs bands. They were still protected with a clause assuring the Mille Lacs band they would not be removed unless they molested the persons or property of settlers. Nevertheless, while the Mille Lacs people made every effort to avoid trouble with settlers and whiskey dealers with other Indians, government officials busied themselves with making plans to remove them and all the Mississippi Ojibwe to a new reservation area. It was suggested that the Mille Lacs people be removed to the Red Lake area—a country devoid of maple sugar trees, wild ricing areas, and lakes for fall fishing—a land very inhospitable to their way of life. In November, 1865, the Mille Lacs people learned of these removal plans, which came as a complete shock to them. They heard rumors from outsiders but learned of no specifics until

⁵⁰ Mille Lacs Chief Shaw-bosh-kung to C.W. Thompson, 21 August 1864; Clark W. Thompson to William P. Dole, 24 August 1864; and Petition of Mille Lac Chiefs and Headmen, 1864, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1864-1865, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 154); and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1864 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1865), pp. 434-435.

⁵¹ Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with Chippewa of Mississippi and the Pillager and Lake Winnibigoshish Bands, 1864," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), pp. 660-662.

November. They discussed the removal, and at first, they appeared resigned to their fate. All they asked for was to be allowed to remove themselves when the time came, instead of having it contracted. Little did they know that a contractor had already been selected.⁵²

By December 1865, government officials decided to remove the Mille Lacs band the following summer. By then, strong opposition to the removal had built up in the community. The Mille Lacs people expressed strong objections to the removal plan and protested that the entire matter had been done without consulting them whatsoever. The Mille Lacs people thought they had assurances from the government in the 1863 and 1864 Treaties that they would not be removed if they caused no trouble. Displeased and dissatisfied with the order for removal and their continued friendly alliance with the United States, they held a council on the matter. In council, they authorized a delegation to be sent to Canada in the early spring to make arrangements to settle there. Apparently, they would rather switch their allegiance to the British, than be removed to a country that they found totally unsuitable. They also feared that they may end up in Sioux territory, where they would be surrounded by a "greatly fortified enemy population."⁵³

The issue of removal split the civil leadership faction at Mille Lacs Lake, creating strong dissensions. Some advocated accommodating the Americans and compliance with the removal plan. These "farmer" Indians saw it as a tactic for borrowing time in order to gather their shattered communities and to re-organize against the Americans. They also saw removal as an opportunity to "experiment with agriculture under optimal conditions." But strong anti-warrior leaders, such as Shaw-bosh-kung and Bad Boy, "refused to accept any plan for removal." They broke with the other civil leaders. They suggested resistance and allied themselves with the warrior or "blanket" Indian faction.⁵⁴ Shaw-bosh-kung and

⁵² Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with Chippewa of Mississippi and the Pillager and Lake Winnibigoshish Bands, 1864," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), pp. 660-662; and Henry Bantling to D.N. Cooley, 30 November 1865, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1866-1867, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 155).

⁵³ Henry Bantling to D.N. Cooley, 22 December 1865, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1864-1865, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 154); and Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 227-228.

⁵⁴ Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-

other Mille Lacs headmen immediately requested that a delegation go to Washington, D.C. to see the President and the Secretary of the Interior about the matter. Government officials denied this request.⁵⁵

Meanwhile, government officials began carrying out the provisions of the 1864-1865 treaty to remove the Mississippi Ojibwe to a new reservation. In the spring of 1866, the site of the new agency at Leech Lake was selected and the erection of the buildings proceeded. The Chippewa Agency at Gull Lake was removed to Leech Lake in anticipation of the removal of most of all the Ojibwe in Minnesota to this location.⁵⁶

With the Leech Lake agency in place, the Mille Lacs people expected the removal orders that summer. However, the feared removal order that the Mille Lacs Indians expected were delayed until land could be properly prepared for them on the new reservation, and until the Indians selected sites for themselves. In 1866, none of the 2,166 Mississippi Ojibwe were removed that year. Interestingly, though federal Indian policymakers wished to make the Ojibwe into independent farmers, while they awaited removal, the federal government made little or no efforts to teach them to be agriculturists. They continued to practice their traditional horticultural techniques on their old reservations, cultivating gardens ranging from half an acre to three acres. In their gardens they raised potatoes, corn, turnips, squashes, pumpkins, melons, and other garden vegetables that grew during the summer months.⁵⁷

1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986), pp. 230-232.

⁵⁵ John Johnson to Major Bantling, 20 December 1865, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1866-1867, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 155).

⁵⁶ In 1870, the Gull Lake Agency was closed permanently and the buildings sold to private interests. The buildings of the old Gull Lake Agency were no longer required for Indian purpose because the agency had been moved to Leech Lake and because most of the Mississippi Ojibwe, with the exception of the Mille Lacs bands, had been moved far away. The closing of the Gull Lake Agency meant that the Indian agent was forced to travel a great distance in order to observe conditions at Mille Lacs. As time progressed, Indian agents neglected the Mille Lacs band and only visited them on such occasions as when there was a problem on the reservation. J.L. Wilson to E.S. Parker, 13 April 1870; Avery Atchison to E.S. Parker, 16 June 1870; and Avery Atchison to CIA, 23 July 1870, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1870, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 157).

⁵⁷ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1866 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1867), pp. 59 and 293.

Treaty of 1867 and the Issue of Removal

By February of 1867, a decision to remove the Mille Lacs Lake and Sandy Lake Ojibwe had not been made. Newly appointed Chippewa Indian Agent Major Joel B. Bassett, clearly wished to have them removed and strongly advocated this position. Bassett wrote that "in view of the numerous complaints constantly being made by people who live in their vicinity I deem it important to both the Indians and whites that they be removed to their new reservations."⁵⁸ Thereafter, he traveled with a number of Mississippi Ojibwe leaders to Washington, D.C. for yet another treaty negotiation. The 1867 Treaty clarified the reservation boundaries (which eventually becomes White Earth Reservation) and other provisions outlined in the 1864 Treaty. The Treaty of March 19, 1867 removed all the Mississippi Ojibwe with no stated exemption for the Mille Lacs people. Shaw-bosh-kung appeared to be the only Mille Lacs leader at the treaty negotiation. Even though the document did not include the phrase from previous treaties stating that the Mille Lacs people could continue to live on their 1855 Treaty reservation if they behaved themselves, Shaw-bosh-kung was cajoled into signing the document.⁵⁹

Removal
Treaty 1867

Returning from the 1867 Treaty negotiations, Major Bassett stressed the point that the Mille Lacs people should remove along with the other Mississippi Ojibwe as soon as possible. He asked for "immediate action" because "there is constant danger of difficulty growing out their depredations on the settlements and their difficulties with the lumbermen on Rum River." Furthermore, he stated that "so much complaint has been made that the legislature of the State of Minnesota have memorialized the President for their immediate removal."⁶⁰ Despite Major Bassett's report, there is no record of any depredations committed by the Mille Lacs bands during 1866.

⁵⁸ J.B. Bassett to Lewis Bogy, 8 February 1867; and J.B. Bassett to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 23 March 1867, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1866-1867, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 155).

⁵⁹ Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with Chippewa of Mississippi, 1867," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), pp. 752-754.

⁶⁰ J.B. Bassett to Lewis Bogy, 8 February 1867, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1866-1867, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 155).

With the imminent removal of the Mississippi Ojibwe, government officials continued to take a lackadaisical attitude toward teaching the Mississippi Ojibwe farming techniques. Since the Ojibwe were very soon to be removed from their present reservation, the Indian agent did not deem it "advisable to expend very much beyond what was necessary to plant the ground heretofore in cultivation." In 1867, however, it appeared as though the Mississippi Ojibwe were competent farmers and removal to a less fertile area, to be trained as agriculturalists, seemed a bit ridiculous. For instance, in 1867, they harvested 700 acres of corn and potatoes. The Ojibwe depended on the harvest from these crops because heavy rains and high water in the lakes and streams inundated and destroyed the rice crop they depended on for winter sustenance.⁶¹

Major Bassett continued to press for the removal of the Mille Lacs band, believing that they could not survive on their reservation without trespassing upon lands owned by settlers who were "constantly complaining to him of depredations committed upon their property."⁶² It is clear that Bassett treated the Mille Lacs groups differently than the other Mississippi Ojibwe and they recognized this fact. Me-no-me-ne-kay, Shaw-bosh-kung, and Mo-se-mone (a.k.a. Mou-zoo-mau-nee), and other Mille Lacs leaders complained about this treatment. The Mille Lacs band petitioned that they received less money and fewer annuities and that they wanted their annuity payments at Mille Lacs. They reminded government officials that they were well behaved, stating that "six years ago when we went down to Washington, if we would behave ourselves as we have done before that, we should be let alone on the land we had before occupied for hundred years or a thousand years or as long as we do not commit any depredations." They felt that the Mississippi Ojibwe who committed depredations, namely Hole-in-the-Day's Gull Lake band, were treated better than they were and they questioned why they should continue their good behavior if they are not listened too.⁶³

⁶¹ Beyond these crops and the failed wild rice crops, in 1867, the Mississippi Ojibwe sustained themselves on 115,000 pounds of maple sugar. Other economic resources of the Mississippi Ojibwe included 199 horses, 71 cattle, income from furs trapped (\$40,000), and lumber sawed on their reservations and of course their annuity payments from various treaty concessions. United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1867-1868 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1867), pp. 341, 387, 391-393.

⁶² George W. Dubois to Bishop Whipple, 29 September 1867, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1866-1867, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 155).

⁶³ Me-no-me-ne-kay, et al to Secretary of Indian Department, 2 December 1867, Letters

Despite their wishes and the expressed assurances given to them by Commissioner of Indian Affairs Dole in 1862,⁶⁴ Indian Agent Bassett did not give up trying to have them removed. In the fall of 1867, Bassett was given discretion to remove the Mille Lacs band with the other Mississippi Ojibwe.⁶⁵ According to Major Bassett, the Sandy Lake, Pokegama and Rice Lake Mississippi Ojibwe bands preferred removal to Oak Point. Bassett hoped that the Mille Lacs bands might follow their relatives to Oak Point and he expected to remove them by early spring 1868.⁶⁶ Meanwhile, Bassett attempted to use the annuity payments of the Mille Lacs bands to lure them to at least to make a visit to the Oak Point country to see the area. Two Mille Lacs bands took the opportunity. The other bands refused to take the bait.⁶⁷

Bassett's eagerness to remove the Mississippi Ojibwe was tempered by the fact that the various treaties stated that the Ojibwe did not have to remove until land was cleared for them for farms and houses built for the chiefs of the various bands.⁶⁸ But by the spring of 1868, time was running out on the Mille Lacs bands. Mille Lacs leaders needed to decide whether or not to continue their resistance to removal.

The Mille Lacs people reacted to the pressures of removal in different ways. Some members simply capitulated under the pressure. By April, 1868, an unknown group of Mille Lacs members expressed a willingness to remove if they could remove themselves.⁶⁹ In July, others agreed to remove from Mille Lacs once

Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1866-1867, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 155).

⁶⁴ H.B. Whipple to O. Browing, 21 September 1867, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1867-1868, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 156).

⁶⁵ C.E. Mix to J.B. Bassett, 14 October 1867, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1867-1868, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 156).

⁶⁶ J.B. Bassett to N.G. Taylor, 29 October 1867, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1868-1869, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 156).

⁶⁷ J.B. Bassett to H.B. Whipple, 12 December 1867, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1866-1867, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 155).

⁶⁸ C.E. Mix to Algeron S. Paddock, 11 January 1868, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1868-1869, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 156).

⁶⁹ A.S. Paddock to CIA, 15 April 1868, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1868-1869, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 156).

land was prepared for them.⁷⁰ However, other Mille Lacs band members gambled that they might avoid removal altogether if they adopted Christianity. In July, 1868, acting along on this thought, Min-ke-shiek requested that a church be built at Mille Lacs Lake for them.⁷¹

End of Removal Threats?

By the end of 1868, all factors pointed to the swift removal of the Mille Lacs band. Their fate was all but sealed until an incident on a July afternoon changed the state of affairs abruptly. On that day, several Pillager Indians assassinated Hole-in-the-Day, II, creating very unsettled conditions. Soon thereafter, Ojibwe Indians gathered around the Leech Lake Agency waiting for the arrest of the culprits for Hole-in-the-Day, II's murder. For a time, rumors flew that there was the potential for another outbreak among the Ojibwe.⁷²

To meet the seriousness of the situation, Major General Alfred H. Terry of Civil War fame left for Fort Ripley on August 19th to make a show of force. Major General Terry met with all the Mississippi bands and listened to their complaints about Indian Agent Bassett and about the poor condition of their annuity goods. The Mille Lacs people specifically complained to Terry about reduced annuity payments the previous year from \$10.00 to \$6.75 per capita. Terry believed that the Mille Lacs people were not required to remove to either the White Earth or Oak Point reservations. In "consideration of the fidelity to the whites which they manifested in 1862," Terry stated that they were "permitted to remain where they now are, so long as they give no annoyance to settlers." Nevertheless, he also noted that about one hundred Mille Lacs people had already gone to the White Earth Reservation, even though the preparations required by treaty were incomplete. After investigating the situation, Major General Terry concluded that no additional troops were necessary at Leech Lake, Crow Wing, or Fort Ripley. However, for the protection of the Indians and to quiet their grievances, Terry suggested a Department of the Interior investigation of the Chippewa

⁷⁰ J.B. Bassett to N.G. Taylor, 25 July 1868, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1868-1869, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 156).

⁷¹ Min-ke-shiek to Bishop Whipple, 20 July 1868, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1868-1869, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 156).

⁷² Alfred H. Terry to W.A. Nichols, 25 August 1868, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1868-1869, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 156).

Agency.⁷³

That September Commissioner of Indian Affairs Nathaniel G. Taylor traveled to Mille Lacs Lake and held a conference with the Mille Lacs and Gull Lake bands of Ojibwe there. Wa-bash-kunk (a.k.a. Shaw-bosh-kung) spoke for the Mille Lacs people, while Bad Boy represented the views of the Gull Lake bands. Some Gull Lake band members wished to remove only after the land was prepared for them, while others did not wish to remove at all, stating that the treaty to remove them was extorted from them by terror at the close of the Hole-in-the-Day, II hostilities. The Mille Lacs band member stated they had faithfully lived up to their treaty agreements (not interfering with the whites) and that they were anxious to remain at Mille Lacs Lake. They also protested against the reduced annuity payments and informed Taylor that they wished their annuity payments hereafter to be made at Mille Lacs. Furthermore, they stated:

that some of them are gardening and trying to farm and would have their children educated, their lands cultivated and raise stock—in short become civilized white men if the Government would help them, give them utensils, stock and send them teachers.⁷⁴

After the council, Indian Commissioner Taylor felt there would be no further difficulties with the Ojibwe, and he recommended kind and liberal treatment, and faithful performance of treaty stipulations on the part of the government as the solution to their problems.⁷⁵

After the Indian Commissioner's visit, many Mississippi Ojibwe availed themselves of removing and establishing new homes either at White Earth Reservation or Oak Point. In fact by November, about one-half of the Mississippi Ojibwe had migrated to these newly established reservation areas.⁷⁶

⁷³ Alfred H. Terry to W.A. Nichols, 25 August 1868, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1868-1869, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 156).

⁷⁴ Nathaniel G. Taylor to Charles E. Mix, 20 September 1868, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1868-1869, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 156).

⁷⁵ Nathaniel G. Taylor to Charles E. Mix, 20 September 1868, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1868-1869, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 156).

⁷⁶ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1868 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1868), p. 301.

However, the majority of the Mille Lacs bands of the Mississippi Ojibwe continued to resist removal, desiring a permanent home for their people at Mille Lacs Lake. They wrote Indian Commissioner Taylor that they wished to send a three-man delegation (Shaw-bosh-kung, Pe-du-dance and Monse-o-ma-nay) to Washington, D. C. to make this arrangement. This petition of urgency for a winter council was signed by all the chiefs at Mille Lacs Lake.⁷⁷

Indian Agent Bassett did not concur with their desire to meet with the Commissioner. On November 20, 1868, Major Bassett assessed the situation this way.

The Mille Lacs bands of Mississippi Indians manifest a strong desire to remain on their old reservation at Mille Lacs. Should they be gratified in this respect but little can be done for them by way of aid in cultivating the soil. The great extent of territory over which the Chippewas of this agency are scattered, the difficulty of access to the summer homes of each little community, have always been a fatal obstacle to success in agriculture. The gathering of these people on reservations chiefly adapted to farming, and the establishing of laws over them, constitute, it seems to me, the first step towards civilization.⁷⁸

Though the Mille Lacs people wanted a resolution to their problem and a clarification of title to their Mille Lacs homeland based on previous treaties, Indian Commissioner Taylor disappointed them by declining to meet them in a winter council.⁷⁹

Settler Troubles Continue

By 1869, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe had certainly lost their military power, but they

⁷⁷ Mille Lac Leaders to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 14 November 1868, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1868-1869, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 156).

⁷⁸ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1868 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1868), p. 301.

⁷⁹ Peter Roy to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 19 January 1869, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1868-1869, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 156).

had effectively claimed some political power under the articles and obligations of various treaties. Though they had not met with Indian Commissioner Taylor during the winter of the 1868-1869, later reports from the Department of Interior indicated that all the complaining about forced removal may have worked in their behalf. The 1869 report of Commissioner of Indian Affairs Ely S. Parker, who was a Seneca Indian, specifically stated that with the exception of the Mille Lacs band, all the Mississippi Ojibwe were to eventually remove to the White Earth Reservation. Commissioner Parker was entrusted with the new "peace policy" of the Grant administration, which emphasized fair and upright dealings with Indians and faithful observing of treaty agreements. Parker, recognized that the Mille Lacs people by treaty were permitted to remain on the land during good behavior as stated in the 1863 and 1864 treaties.⁸⁰

Regardless of this change in Washington policy, starting in 1869, the Mille Lacs people found it ever more difficult to avoid inadvertent trouble with settlers, who conspired and attempted to claim entry to the Ojibwe's land and natural resources. Often times, they falsely petitioned government officials contending that the Mille Lacs people had committed depredations against them in order to have the band removed to the White Earth Reservation. In the next decade, they encountered false accusations by settlers who coveted their land on more than one occasion.

Of course, the Mille Lacs band wished to avoid all trouble with settlers. To avoid trouble with boundaries, the Mille Lacs band requested that the boundaries of their reservation be clearly defined to prevent any such conflicts. They desired a permanent boundary line so they might settle and build their homes and improve their holdings with some security. Apparently the Mille Lacs band and the settlers were confused over the boundary. They wished to travel to Washington to discuss their boundary with the Indian Commissioner.⁸¹

At the same time, settlers residing contiguous to the Mille Lacs Reservation

⁸⁰ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1869 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1870), pp. 38 and 424; and Robert Winston Mardock, The Reformers and the American Indian (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1971), p. 53.

⁸¹ D.E. Goulding to Senator Ramsey, 3 December 1869, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1868-1869, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 156); and Joseph Roberts to Alexander Ramsey, 27 December 1869, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1870, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 157).

began a long series of complaints against the Mille Lacs band. They requested and pressured federal officials to reconsider their removal to the White Earth Reservation. For instance, in February, 1870, Jonas Adams of Isanti County made complaint against the Mille Lacs people alleging their "roving propensities, drunkenness, and general misconduct, detrimental to themselves and annoying to the whites, who, for this reason, desired their removal."⁸² Government officials acted quickly to investigate. In June, 1870, Chippewa Indian Agent George Atcheson investigated the situation. He visited Princeton, Minnesota, where many people accused the Indians of roaming off their reservation, drinking, gambling, begging, and generally preventing an influx of settlers into their community because of their behavior. Next, Atcheson visited the Mille Lacs chiefs and voiced the settler's concerns. Shaw-bosh-kung spoke for the group. He told Atcheson that only one band goes among the settlements and that band was led by Mo-zo-mo-nay (a.k.a. Mou-zoo-mau-nee). The Mille Lacs chief told Atcheson that he should not blame the Mille Lacs people for the actions of Mo-zo-mo-nay's band, and that the Mille Lacs people did not want to remove. In the end, Atcheson wrote in his report that "these complaints of general misconduct were not without foundation; but in no case was evidence produced to show actual interference with or molestation of the persons or property of the whites, which alone under the treaty would be just cause of their removal." Atcheson ended his report with a portentous ancillary comment that he was "convinced that the best interests of this band demand an early removal to the reservation at White Earth."⁸³

Surveying and So-Called "Settlers"

However, in 1870, the final surveying of the Mille Lacs Reservation surfaced as a more significant event in the eyes of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. By 1870, T.43 N., R.27 W., where the main Mille Lacs villages were located, had already been surveyed five years earlier. The 1865 survey indicated that there were two Indian villages with log cabins and cultivated fields. One was on Shaw-bosh-kung peninsula,

⁸² Alexander Ramsey to E.S. Parker, 24 January 1870, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1870, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 157).

⁸³ George Atcheson to E.S. Parker, 30 June 1870, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives; and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1869 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1870), pp. 38 and 424.

approximately where the present-day village now stands. The other village was north of the mouth of Rum River along the shoreline of Mille Lacs Lake. In 1870, Minnesota Governor Horace Austin ordered that the public survey be extended over the remaining portion of the Mille Lacs Reservation—T. 42N., R. 25, 26, and 27 W. and the area platted. The 1870 survey indicated several other areas of occupation. There were three maple sugaring orchard areas along the south shore of the lake surrounding present-day Cove, Minnesota. Here, on the Bayview peninsula, a Mille Lacs leader named Ka-ga-do-sha claimed a 20 acre cultivated area. East of Cove and Bayview, Mille Lacs Indians lived and cultivated land on Malone Island north of present-day Isle, Minnesota. These Ojibwe also had an extensive maple sugar orchard to the southeast. All of these sites were linked together with trails.⁸⁴

Once it became known that the final surveying of the Mille Lacs Reservation had been completed, so-called "settlers" began to make pre-emptive claims on the reservation. Entries were made under the 1854 scrip and pre-emptive claims regulations.⁸⁵ For instance, as early as January, 1871, inquiries were made to the Chippewa Indian agency on the question of whether or not Americans could pre-empt land and cut timber on the Mille Lacs Reservation now that it had been surveyed.⁸⁶ That question was never answered, but apparently it did not matter. By March, lumbermen by the droves had invaded the Mille Lacs Reservation to cut timber; and by the end of springtime, one company's loggers had cut 2-3 million feet of logs on the reservation.⁸⁷ The Mille Lacs Ojibwe quickly recognized that this was a land grab on the part of lumber interests. The invading Americans had selectively claimed pine lands, in preference to the hardwood lands which were more suitable for agriculture. All evidence indicates that these pre-emptive claims for agricultural lands were made by lumber interests. These companies employed gangs of six to thirty-six men to make

⁸⁴ J. Wm. Trgygg, "Composite Map of United States Land Surveyors' Original Plats and Field Notes," Sheet 13, Minnesota Series, Ely, Minnesota, 1966; and E.P. Smith to E.S. Parker, 17 July 1871, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁸⁵ E.P. Smith to E.S. Parker, 17 July 1871, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁸⁶ J.P. Bardwell to N.R. Clum, 9 January 1871, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁸⁷ E.P. Smith to E.S. Parker, 31 March 1871; and E.P. Smith to E.S. Parker, 1 May 1871, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

improvements on the land, demonstrate these improvements to the land office, and then transfer their titles to their employers. The Ojibwe recognized that the "parties had only come to cut timber and put up a few log shanties, which could not be intended as homes; that they had not seen any families upon the reservation."⁸⁸

Without an Indian agent nearby to see that the Mille Lacs people received justice, these so-called "settlers" simply encroached upon the land of the Mille Lacs Reservation, filing false pre-emptive claims. According to the Mille Lacs people:

We paid very little attention to these structures because we knew that they could not be used as dwellings, but we were surprised to learn some years afterwards that the land upon which the log sheds were built had been disposed of to the settlers residing thereon. As a matter of fact no settlers had occupied the land, and therefore we did not know that our rights to it had been taken from us until some of our people were driven from their homes by the men who claimed the land.⁸⁹

Now that the reservation had been surveyed and platted, there was clearly a problem of whether or not the reservation was open to settlement or not. Chippewa Indian Agent Edward P. Smith (who later became Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1873-1875) recognized this problem, but believed that the Mille Lacs bands still had rights to the reservation and that they were due remuneration for the stumpage already cut. Though the Ojibwe had specifically stated they did not want to remove; that they did not want their land opened for settlement and logging. Indian Agent Smith ignored their wishes and invited Washington officials to delay opening the reservation until provisions were made for their removal to the White Earth Reservation.⁹⁰

While these lumbermen caused trouble on the Mille Lacs Reservation, some Mille Lacs band members also caused trouble off the reservation. For instance, in

⁸⁸ United States, House of Representatives, "Mille Lac Indian Reservation in Minnesota," House Executive Document 148, 48th Congress, 1st session, pp. 4-5.

⁸⁹ "Testimony given in Washington, D.C. by Representatives of Mille Lac Band in 1897" Typescript, Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians, n.d.

⁹⁰ E.P. Smith to E.S. Parker, 31 March 1871; and E.P. Smith to E.S. Parker, 1 May 1871, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

February 1871, during the Ojibwe hunting season, a settler's cow was shot either intentionally or accidentally. Nevertheless, the cow's owner blamed the Mille Lacs band member for the shooting. Other sundry charges were made against the Mille Lacs band, such as not staying on their reservation, killing deer out of season, camping on settler's lands, and outright thievery. Fear and distrust of the Indians generally scared the local citizenry. According to the settlers, the very presence of the Mille Lacs bands prevented the general settlement of the country. The fact that several trading stores scattered in the area sold whiskey to the Indians also caused many problems.⁹¹

Marauding on the part of the Mille Lacs bands was not serious. There was not enough room on the reservation to hunt, so the Ojibwe hunted off the reservation in Isanti and Becker counties.⁹² Though many of the charges against the Ojibwe were no doubt true, none of them were serious enough to cause the forced removal of the 979 Mille Lacs Indians living on the reservation in 1870.⁹³ Nevertheless, federal troops were at the ready in case of any trouble.⁹⁴

Nevertheless, depredations on the part of the Mille Lacs and the lumbermen fueled additional efforts to remove the Mille Lacs bands. Though Indian Agent Smith accepted that settler complaints were exaggerated and/or provoked to force the removal of the Mille Lacs bands, in September, 1871, he sought to convince them to remove. Smith held a council with the Mille Lacs leaders to iron out the difficulties. He verified that the timber interests in nearby Princeton, Minnesota were indeed filing illegal pre-emptive claims and thereafter the so-called "settlers" were moved off the reservation. Notwithstanding his action, Smith sensed that removal of the Ojibwe was inevitable. He recommended four solutions: 1.) settlers with false claims should be forced to relinquish them; 2.) hold the Indians accountable to the trespassing laws of the state; 3.) enforce laws regarding the sale of whiskey to the Indians; and 4.) bring the discussion of removal of the Mille Lacs bands to the White Earth Reservation before Congress

⁹¹ W. Fletcher to Adjutant General of Dakota, 23 February 1871, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1870, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 158).

⁹² E.P. Smith to E.S. Parker, 31 March 1871, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁹³ J.P. Bardwell to E.S. Parker, 5 April 1871, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1870, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 158).

⁹⁴ E.P. Smith to E.S. Parker, 31 March 1871, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

during the next session. In his annual report for 1871, Agent Smith stated that Mille Lacs Ojibwe still reserved the right of "occupancy during good conduct towards the whites." Furthermore, he wrote: "there have been complaints against them for trespassing in the adjoining country. For the most part, this trespass has been the violation of the game laws of the State. Unfortunately for these Indians, their reservation is rich in pine lands, which makes them the prey of lumber dealers, and a strong pressure is kept up on all sides to secure their early removal."⁹⁵ Even reformer and humanitarian Bishop Henry Benjamin Whipple acknowledged the encroachment of non-Indians on the Mille Lacs Reservation as a major problem. But, Whipple also respectfully suggested that the Mille Lacs band should be removed by offering them suitable inducements and a liberal appropriation for their removal.⁹⁶

Finally, in September, 1871, the local land office received instructions regarding the rights of the Mille Lacs band to the reservation. They were to notify the public that the reservation is not open to settlement, that the Mille Lacs Ojibwe still own the land, and that no further entries could be made until instructed by the General Land Office in Washington, D.C. In addition to these instructions, the Minnesota District Attorney was instructed to prosecute trespassers on the reservation, and the tracts given to the state of Minnesota under survey were also called into question and asked to be relinquished to the Mille Lacs band as well.⁹⁷ Of course these actions caused considerable consternation among the claimants and eventually caused several law suits to be prosecuted.

⁹⁵ E.P. Smith to Governor Austin, 3 September 1871, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1870, National Archives, Microfilm Publication: (M234-Roll 158); E.P. Smith to H.R. Clum, 13 November 1871, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives; and United States, House of Representatives, "Mille Lac Indian Reservation in Minnesota," House Executive Document 148, 48th Congress, 1st session, pp. 5-7.

⁹⁶ George Whipple to Columbus Delano, 13 May 1871, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives; and George Whipple to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 22 November 1871, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1870, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 158).

⁹⁷ Willis Drummond to Taylor Falls Land Office, 1 September 1871; E.P. Smith to H.R. Clum, 1 September 1871; A.T. Akerman to B.R. Cowen, 11 September 1871; W.W. Cunter to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 21 September 1871; Horace Austin to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 27 September 1871, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

Renewed Removal Pressures and Reverse Migration

Even though the Mille Lacs bands could not be forced to remove from the reservation, throughout the remainder of the 1870s, even the most sympathetic government officials to their cause expressly thought that they should be removed to White Earth Reservation to live with the other Ojibwe. Nothing was done for them while they remained on the Mille Lacs Reservation. The following are statements to this effect.⁹⁸

Of the Mille Lacs band of the Mississippi Chippewas, only about twenty-five have been persuaded as yet to remove to White Earth. Chippewa Indian Agent Edward P. Smith (1872).

Nothing what ever is being done to improve the conditions of that portion of the Mille Lacs Indians still residing in the vicinity of the lake bearing that name. No class of Indians under my charge appear more manly and noble than these, and I am profoundly impressed with the moral obligation of the Government to adopt immediately measures for their eduction and civilization. They hold their present territory by the most feeble tenure. Chippewa Indian Agent E. Douglas (1873).

The Mille Lacs are located around a lake of the same name, on land ceded in 1863, reserving the right of occupation during good behavior. Nothing has been done for them beyond the payment of their annuities, in cash and goods, which payment is in itself a source of demoralization, leading directly to indolence and intoxicification. Nothing can be done for them until they are removed to White Earth, or until the fee of the Mille Lacs is restored to them. . . . All efforts to induce them to remove to White Earth have as yet been of no avail. Commissioner of Indian Affairs Edward P. Smith (1874).

By 1872, there were 868 Mille Lacs people remaining on the Mille Lacs Reservation. But the deteriorating conditions due to neglect on the part of the federal government, along with the pressure to remove took its toll. Several Mille

⁹⁸ United States, House of Representatives, "Mille Lac Indian Reservation in Minnesota," House Executive Document 148, 48th Congress, 1st session, p. 7.

Lacs bands decide to migrate. However, instead of migrating to the White Earth Reservation, these bands began a reverse migration back to their former territory on the Snake River. In 1872, fed up with the situation on the Mille Lacs Reservation, about one hundred Ojibwe from Mille Lacs settled on government land near Pine City, Minnesota. These Ojibwe purchased and paid for this land themselves. Another one hundred band members were expected to move there as well in the following year. By 1874, over 300 Snake River band members had relocated to the Pine City area. Led by Mosouse (a.k.a. Moose) and Au-bun-nay (a.k.a. Obinwa), these Snake River Ojibwe were thereafter not subject to removal to White Earth Reservation. Their migration left only about 650 Mille Lacs band members lingering on the Mille Lacs Reservation.⁹⁹

The Snake River Ojibwe correctly assessed they could avoid removal to the White Earth Reservation by buying their own land. But the purchase of this land and their migration back to the Snake River country complicated their relationship with the United States. For instance, they failed to receive their annuity payments for 1873 and 1874, until they formally complained about it. Prior to 1874, they had received only a few bags of poor flour and barrels of pork. They also registered other concerns with government officials. They pointed out to government officials that they were entitled to annuity payments in money and not in goods, stating quite frankly that they could purchase the same goods cheaper on the open market. They also grumbled that the annual trip to the Mille Lacs Reservation to receive their annuities was a difficult one and that every year some members were killed due to intoxication. They wanted their payments made at nearby Brunswick, Minnesota instead. Finally, they griped that the local whites were not treating them very well since their return. They needed an Indian agent nearby to help them in these situations.¹⁰⁰

It was true that the local citizenry were not enthused about their presence back in the St. Croix River region. Due to the peddling of whiskey among the Snake River

⁹⁹ E.P. Smith to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 30 December 1872, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1872, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 159); and Headmen of Snake River Ojibwe to Indian Department, 30 March 1874; and S.E. Tallman to E.P. Smith, 24 November 1874, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1874, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 161).

¹⁰⁰ Headmen of Snake River Ojibwe to Indian Department, 30 March 1874; and S.E. Tallman to E.P. Smith, 24 November 1874, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1874, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 161).

Ojibwe, some settlers feared an outbreak of violence, such as the Hole-in-the-Day, II incident.¹⁰¹ One citizen wrote:

serious difficulties are brewing with the whites now on the St. Croix River from the fact of the Indians camping near the settlers and with whiskey obtained from this place, holding high carnival, night after night, also from their wanton destruction of deer, killing many for their skins alone, which the whites are prosecuted from killing any by the game laws.¹⁰²

Meanwhile, the Mille Lacs bands had their own problems with annuity payments. Like the Snake River bands, the Mille Lacs band members also grumbled about receiving annuity goods instead of money payments. In addition to this problem, in 1874, they questioned why their payments were delayed and then made on the north shore of Mille Lacs Lake instead of near their villages. Finally, they wanted to know why their annuity payments were reduced from \$10.00 per capita to \$5.00 per capita. These delays and underpayment caused suffering and wasted hunting time among the Mille Lacs band members.¹⁰³

Washington, D.C. Council of 1875

In February 1875, to answer these and to discuss questions regarding their reservation rights and forced removal, Mille Lacs leaders requested a council with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Smith. The Indian Commissioner, who had been their agent at the Chippewa Agency (1871-1873) granted their request. The Mille Lacs band sent a delegation of leaders from the five bands remaining on the reservation. They were Shaw-bosh-kung, Mo-no-min-i-ka-see

¹⁰¹ Headmen of Snake River Ojibwe to Indian Department, 30 March 1874; and S.E. Tallman to E.P. Smith, 24 November 1874, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1874, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 161).

¹⁰² William a. Bentley to E.P. Smith, 17 August 1874, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1874, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 161).

¹⁰³ Joseph Roberts to E.P. Smith, 7 May 1874; E. Douglas to E.P. Smith, 18 May 1874; E. Douglas to E.P. Smith, 16 June 1874; Lewis Stowe to E.P. Smith, 12 October 1874; H.H. Sibley to Major Stowe, 7 December 1874; and Lewis Stowe to H.H. Sibley, 17 December 1874; Lewis Stowe to E.P. Smith, 23 December 1874; and H.H. Sibley to CIA, 23 December 1874, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1874, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 161).

(Rice Maker), Mo-zu-min-ee (Walking Iron), My-e-gance (The Wolf), and Wa-we-ya-cum-ig.¹⁰⁴

At this council, Shaw-bosh-kung spoke for the other Mille Lacs bands. For two days, they held forthright discussions with Commissioner Smith about the conditions at Mille Lacs Lake and the title to their lands. In these discussions, Shaw-bosh-kung set out the Mille Lacs band's position and pleaded their case. He stated that they had supported the Americans during the Hole-in-the-Day, II crisis and since then they had not committed any wrongs against the Americans. Shaw-bosh-kung declared:

It is true. I am getting to be an old man, and I know a good deal of the world. . . . You have already seen us, how poor we are. We sit around our fireplaces and hold down our heads, and we think if any one should see how poor we are, he would have pity on us. Now we find ourselves in a good place [Mille Lacs Reservation]. If we are to get a living that is the place. My friends and my people all wish to be plainly told, so that they know what to do.

I do not think you can find any wrong, any sin, or any stain of blood on our hands. We have clean hands and clean hearts. We have done no wrong to the pale faces. We have talked among ourselves and said, let us be at peace with the whites and perhaps the whites will look upon us poor as we are and help us and we will do nothing wrong to the whites and will be friendly to them. . . . At Mille Lacs the chiefs and head men never raised their arm against the whites. We have kept ourselves free from the blood of the whites. Our children not only love your children, but our women love your women. . . . I know the whites would not do us wrong because I never did anything against the whites, and so I expect the whites to have mercy on us. We have taken your hands firmly and friendly.¹⁰⁵

Commissioner Smith was direct in his reply. Smith stated that he knew that the delegation was there to regain title to their reservation, but that his hands were

¹⁰⁴ Council Minutes with Mille Lac Chippewa, 23 February 1875, p. 1, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1875, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 162).

¹⁰⁵ Council Minutes with Mille Lac Chippewa, 23 February 1875, pp. 3-4, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1875, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 162).

tied. He explained to them that they had signed away their title to the Mille Lacs Reservation in the 1863-1864 Treaty and that they have "no ownership in the land." He further stated to them that they had property rights on the White Earth Reservation. He explicated that for many years the government has told Shaw-bosh-kung's people they would have to make a living some other way than to hunt and fish. He encouraged them to remove to White Earth Reservation where they could make a comfortable living there farming.¹⁰⁶

Shaw-bosh-kung replied; what about the promises made by President Lincoln, the Secretary of the Interior and Commissioner Dole in 1863, that they would have their lands for a thousand years? He sardonically added that perhaps the "man that was to talking to us was only a coach driver and not the Commissioner."¹⁰⁷ Commissioner Smith rationalized that there was a difference between "what a man says and what he puts down in writing." That it "did not make any difference what the Commissioner, or the Secretary, or the President said to you; if it is not on that paper [referring to the 1863 Treaty], then you have no title to your lands." Smith furthermore averred that only Congress could give their land title back to them.¹⁰⁸

Thereafter, Commissioner Smith warned them that the Mille Lacs band could only remain on the land as long as they behaved themselves. He cautioned them to control and prevent their young men from getting drunk and being mischevious for the "conduct of a few young men like that will be taken for the conduct of you all. . . . Now I tell you of these thing just to show you the dangerous position you are in, and how liable you are at any time."¹⁰⁹

By the second day of the council it was clear to Shaw-bosh-kung that Commissioner Smith would not help them regain title to their reservation. Thereafter, Shaw-bosh-kung and the others were resigned to the fact that would

¹⁰⁶ Council Minutes with Mille Lac Chippewa, 23 February 1875, pp. 4-6, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1875, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 162).

¹⁰⁷ Council Minutes with Mille Lac Chippewa, 23 February 1875, pp. 6-7, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1875, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 162).

¹⁰⁸ Council Minutes with Mille Lac Chippewa, 23 February 1875, pp. 8-9, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1875, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 162).

¹⁰⁹ Council Minutes with Mille Lac Chippewa, 23 February 1875, pp. 10-11, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1875, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 162).

never get clear title to their reservation. They could only remain at Mille Lacs Lake if they continued to not interfere with the Americans. Thereafter, Shaw-bosh-kung pushed the point that many of them were trying to take the white man's path. He described their small houses and asked for agricultural assistance stating:

If there is any assistance given to us to work with at Mille Lacs how careful we would be to improve. Even now without assistance many of us are working, and have gardens, but we want to live so that nobody can find fault with us.¹¹⁰

Commissioner Smith warmheartedly retorted:

There is no man at Mille Lacs who knows better how to take care of himself than Shaw-bosh-kung. He has land and a house, and has had oxen and young cattle but they are all gone. He is not to blame for it. He did not know how to take care of these oxen and keep them from getting sick. It is a pretty hard thing for an Indian to come out of his blanket and begin to get a living out of the ground, and it cannot be done unless he has some one with him to show him how.¹¹¹

Thereafter, Commissioner Smith offered assistance to band members in the form of oxen so they could clear some land at Mille Lacs, but forewarned that "we cannot do much for Indians who do not own the land on which they live."¹¹²

In their parting exchange, Shaw-bosh-kung and Commissioner Smith dolorously outlined the predicament before them:¹¹³

¹¹⁰ Council Minutes with Mille Lac Chippewa, 25 February 1875, p. 9, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1875, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 162).

¹¹¹ Council Minutes with Mille Lac Chippewa, 25 February 1875, pp. 9-10, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1875, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 162).

¹¹² Council Minutes with Mille Lac Chippewa, 25 February 1875, pp. 10-14, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1875, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 162).

¹¹³ Council Minutes with Mille Lac Chippewa, 25 February 1875, pp. 15-17, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1875, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 162).

Shaw-bosh-kung:

I do not know why it is the Mille Lacs Indians, men, women and children should feel so strong an attachment to the lake but if we should hear at any time that a removal was to be made we should feel very bad.

Commissioner Smith:

I understand that. I know that very well. That is your homeland, the place where you want to stay, and if your lands had not been sold, I do not see any reason why you should go except that. I think it would be better for you to go to White Earth. More can be done for you there than anywhere else.

Shaw-bosh-kung:

I do not understand how it is impossible for you to alter the treaty that you have made. You are like a spirit. You can do everything.

Commissioner Smith:

The trouble is Congress is made up of white men, and they see the things white men see and not what the Indians see. If you look through all these laws [pointing to several books] you will find that every time Congress has taken some land from the Indian, but has never given him any. . . . So if you should propose up in Congress to give a little land back it would be so unheard of a thing they would all open their eyes in astonishment. . . . When you go back tell the Mille Lacs what danger they are in, and caution their young men to behave themselves.

These last words of warning perhaps reverberated in their minds on the train trip back to Minnesota. Removal now seemed an inevitability.

Notes on Chapter Sources:

Once again, this chapter is based largely upon primary correspondence, reports and documents written during the time period 1855-1875. Primary works consulted for this chapter include: Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1855 to 1875; Letters Received by Commissioner of Indian Affairs (CIA), Chippewa Agency, 1854-1875, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Rolls 150-162); Depositions of Various People, July-August 1909, Box 2172, Record Group 123, United States Court of Claims, Federal Record Center at Suitland, Maryland; Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives; United States, House of Representatives, "Mille Lac Indian Reservation in Minnesota," House Executive Document 148, 48th Congress, 1st session; and J. Wm. Trygg, "Composite Map of United States Land Surveyors' Original Plats and Field Notes," Minnesota Series, Ely, Minnesota, 1964-1968.

Only a few accounts on Ojibwe history were used in the writing of this chapter. They are: David Stanchfield, "History of Pioneer Lumbering on the Upper Mississippi and Its Tributaries, with Biographic Sketches," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. IX (April 1901) 327-335; George W. Sweet, "Incidents of the Threatened Outbreak of Hole-in-the-Day and Other Ojibways at Time of Sioux Massacre of 1862," Collections of the Minnesota Historical Society Vol. 6: 401-408; Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986) and Charles J. Kappler, Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 1 Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903.

Ojibwe Historical Chronology: 1856-1875

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|------|--|
| 1856 | Conflicts with lumbermen on the Rum River resolved. |
| 1862 | On August 17, 1862, the Sioux Indians of Minnesota openly rebelled against adverse conditions on their reservations. |
| 1862 | Hole-in-the-Day, II of the Gull Lake band is confronted by American troops, who suspect that he will lead a general outbreak of the Ojibwe against the Americans. The Hole-in- |

the-Day uprising takes place in a few tense weeks but no deaths occur. Mille Lacs bands refuse to join Hole-in-the-Day, II's cause and openly support the Americans. For their loyalty to their allies the Americans, Commissioner of Indian Affairs William P. Dole promises them that they may hold their lands in perpetuity as a reward for their loyalty.

- 1863 On March 11, 1863, treaty concluded with Ojibwe of Mississippi, whereby they cede reservation lands at Gull Lake, Mille Lacs Lake, Sandy Lake, Rabbit Lake, Pokegama Lake and Rice Lake for lands in lieu of elsewhere, annuity payments, houses, oxen and tools, agricultural and other kinds of aid. Clause in Treaty states that "owing to the heretofore good conduct of the Mille Lacs Indians," they were not compelled to remove so long as they shall not in "any way interfere with or in any manner molest the persons or property of the whites."
- 1864 On May 7, 1864, treaty concluded with Mississippi Ojibwe that is similar to March 11, 1863 treaty, except for increases in monetary values and fee patented lands to certain Ojibwe chiefs, including a section of land for Shaw-bosh-kung of Mille Lacs. Treaty is not ratified and signed by President until March 20, 1865. This treaty includes phrase protecting the right of the Mille Lacs Indians to continue to occupy their reservation as long as they do not commit depredations on Americans.
- 1865 General Land Office surveys T.43 N., R.27 W., where the main Mille Lacs villages are located. This GLO survey indicated that there were two Indian villages with log cabins and cultivated fields. One was on Shaw-bosh-kung peninsula, approximately where the present-day village now stands. The other village was north of the mouth of Rum River along the shoreline of Mille Lacs Lake.
- 1865 December of 1865, government officials begin to discuss the removal of the Mille Lacs Indians along with the other Ojibwe. Mille Lacs band protests and sends delegation to Canada to look into resettlement there. Removal orders placed on hold until farming areas can be prepared for Ojibwe on White Earth Reservation.
- 1866 Spring of 1866, Chippewa Indian Agency moved from Gull Lake to Leech Lake.
- 1867 On March 19, 1867, a treaty is signed between the United States

and the Mississippi Ojibwe in Washington, D.C. It called for the cession of all the Ojibwe lands in the State of Minnesota for land which eventually becomes the White Earth Reservation. For this land cession, the Ojibwe received annuities, land for farming, schools, mills, houses, cattle, and agricultural assistance. This treaty does not include phrase protecting the right of the Mille Lacs Indians to continue to occupy their reservation as long as they do not commit depredations on Americans.

- 1867 Government Indian agents press for the removal of the Mille Lacs bands with other Ojibwe bands to White Earth Reservation.
- 1868 In July, 1868, Hole-in-the-Day, II is assassinated by Pillager Ojibwe. Rumors fly that another Ojibwe outbreak will take place. Major General Alfred H. Terry dispatched to investigate and to make a show of force. Terry suggests an investigation of the Indian agency by the Department of the Interior.
- 1868 In September, 1868, Commissioner of Indian Affairs Nathaniel G. Taylor meets with Mille Lacs bands in council to discuss removal. Taylor recommended kind liberal treatment and faithful performance of treaty stipulations on the part of the government as the solution to their problems, but is non-committal about removal issue.
- 1869 Mille Lacs bands ask government to clearly define the boundaries of their reservation lands so they can avoid trouble with settlers and others.
- 1870 In 1870, the General Land Office surveys the remaining portion of the Mille Lacs Reservation—T. 42N., R. 25, 26, and 27 W. The 1870 survey indicated several areas of occupation by Mille Lacs bands at present-day Cove, Minnesota and Malone Island north of present-day Isle, Minnesota.
- 1871 Lumber interests from Princeton, Minnesota attempt a land grab on ceded Mille Lacs Reservation lands by filing false entry papers. Chippewa Indian Agent Edward P. Smith moves so-called "settler" off of reservation lands but recommends that Mille Lacs bands be removed to White Earth Reservation.
- 1872 Snake River bands living at Mille Lacs Lake buy land at Pine City, Minnesota near the Snake River and migrate there. By 1874, over 300 Ojibwe are living in this vicinity. They are led by

Mosouse (a.k.a. Moose) and Au-bun-nay (a.k.a. Obinwa).

1875

In February 1875, Mille Lacs leaders hold a council with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Edward P. Smith. They are warned that they will soon be removed.

Chapter Six

"No People On Earth Can Prosper Under Such Circumstances"

Introduction

The years 1876 to 1901 in Mille Lacs Ojibwe history were years of both prosperity and desperation. In the face of timber trespassers, invading settlers, and broken promises and neglect by the federal government, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe people managed to enjoy a traditional seasonal lifestyle that succeeded in carving out a bountiful living from their limited reservation lands. Netting fish from the lake, taking deer from the woods, harvesting grain from the wild rice beds, picking berries from the parkland openings, tapping sap from unlimited maple sugar groves, and growing vegetables in their small garden plots, the Mille Lacs people fed themselves well. If left unhindered, this almost paradise, this sustaining area, this reservation, may have provided an idyllic setting for them if other people had not coveted it. Unfortunately, others desired the fruitful land.

From the beginning, the Mille Lacs people were forced to defend their paradise against the avarice and legal manipulations of lumbermen and settlers desirous of the land resources at Mille Lacs. These Americans had an unfair advantage in influencing government officials. They convinced officials that the Mille Lacs people did not need all of the reservation for their needs and that the unused portions be opened to the public domain. Furthermore, they persuaded government representatives and others that for their own good, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe should be removed and corralled with other Ojibwe people further northwest on to the White Earth Reservation.

Against this constant and unceasing assault to whittle away their rights to the Mille Lacs Reservation, the Mille Lacs people ably defended themselves. They reported and protested this trampling of their rights and dispossession to government officials from the halls of Congress to President's Rutherford B. Hayes and Grover Cleveland.

But when our government ignored the Ojibwe's persistent outrage against timber trespasses, destruction of their wild rice beds, sugar groves, and other elements of

their natural environment they needed for sustenance, the Mille Lacs people took matters into their own hands. Thereafter, they physically intimidated lumbermen and settlers, destroying their property and at one point they even destroying the main logging dam on the Rum River. These actions clearly jeopardized their right of occupancy to the reservation during their good behavior, but they had little choice and they were willing to risk everything in order to hold onto their land.

But, considering the odds against them, resistance was futile. The Mille Lacs people confronted overwhelming numbers against them, including lumbermen, settlers, Christian Indian reformers, avarice congressmen, and ethnocentric government officials who saw the salvation of the Mille Lacs people in terms of removal to the White Earth Reservation. Nevertheless, with the help of only a few friends, such as Joseph Roberts, who lobbied Congress on their behalf for a resolution preventing the dispossession of their lands, they successfully resisted and defended their homeland from 1876 to 1884.

Notwithstanding this resolution, 1884 became the turning point of their struggle. In that year, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs decided that the Mille Lacs people did not need all of their 61,000 acre reservation. From this point onward, alienation of their lands begins. After 1889, dispossession accelerates. In October 1889, the Chippewa Indian Commission, authorized by the infamous Nelson Act of 1889, exacts a signed document from the hands of the Mille Lacs and Snake River people giving up their occupancy rights to the Mille Lacs Reservation in exchange for land allotments on the White Earth Reservation.

Thereafter, government officials acted swiftly to declare the Mille Lacs Reservation no longer a reservation and opened it to public domain and homesteading. Within a decade, settlers, mostly of Scandinavian heritage, filtered onto the former reservation, taking whatever lands remained from previous exploitations by lumber interests. Within a short period of time, no Mille Lacs Ojibwe could call a piece of property his own and ironically, now the Mille Lacs Ojibwe were viewed as trespassers in their own homeland.

From 1876 to 1900, the Mille Lacs people opposed and repelled all efforts by government officials and others to induce them to voluntarily remove from their homeland. But, in 1901, the sheriff of Mille Lacs County, acting on the requests of local citizens, swiftly ejected about one hundred Ojibwe from their homes because

title to these lands now belonged to American settlers. If only government officials had acted so swiftly in the past when the Mille Lacs people asked them to physically remove trespassers on their reservation. Truly, no people on earth could prosper under such circumstances. With the threat of physical violence and forced removal looming and the consequences of loosing all their property, some Mille Lacs people were ready to leave their homeland.

The following chapter outlines the travesties of injustice against the Mille Lacs people as well as their resistance to voluntary removal during this part of their history.

Old Habits Die Hard

In February, 1875, Indian Commissioner John O. Smith warned Shaw-bosh-kung, the head chief of the bands, that the Mille Lacs people were in danger of loosing their reservation lands. Smith cautioned Shaw-bosh-kung that his young men must behave themselves or the tenuous thread by which they continued to have occupancy rights on the reservation would be broken. Considering the consequences, Mille Lacs Ojibwe should have made efforts not to go off their reservation and chance causing any annoyance to their American neighbors. However, throughout the late 1870s, government reports commented on how the Mille Lacs Ojibwe continued in their old habits and lifestyle of hunting, fishing, gathering, and living off traditional food sources, such as wild rice and maple sugar.

This reluctance to become American yeoman and pursuit of Ojibwe traditional lifestyle convinced government officials that they should be removed to the White Earth Reservation, where it might be inculcated in them. For instance:

Those living at Mille Lacs subsist by hunting and fishing, living after their old customs. (Chippewa Indian Agent Lewis Stone, 1876)¹

The remainder of the . . . Indians under my charge live at Mille Lac Lake, Snake River, . . . A few have adopted the customs of the white man, and work in the lumber and woods in winter, as laborers; but most of them are making no progress toward civilization. All of

¹ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1876 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1876), p. 84.

these ought to be removed to this [White Earth] reservation.
(Chippewa Indian Agent Lewis Stone, 1877)²

The larger portion of the Mississippi bands still remaining on the White Oak Point Reservation and at Mille Lacs are in a deplorable condition, and subjects of annoyance to the white people surrounding them. (Chippewa Indian Agent C.A. Rufee, 1878).³

Those residing at Mille Lacs should be removed as speedily as possible without an infraction of existing treaties. (Chippewa Indian Agent C.A. Rufee, 1879).⁴

Timber Trespassing Begins Again

At the same time that the Mille Lacs Ojibwe should have been controlling their behavior, the American lumberman increased their pressure in opening up the reservation and exploiting its valuable pine lands. They used legal and illegal means to enter and claim reservation land and then strip it of its tall timber.

In 1872, one lumberman tried to sign a contract with tribal members for the pine to sell him the timber cutting rights on the reservation. Indian Agent Edward P. Smith thought the idea a good one. Believing that the proceeds could be used to clear farming land for the Mille Lacs Ojibwe, he recommended the timber contract be approved.⁵ Apparently, however, the Mille Lacs bands disagreed and this contract was never approved. Failing legal means, lumbermen simply illegally cut timber and risked discovery. Timber trespasses that were discovered and reported were quickly shut down, but assuredly, not all were trespasses were discovered each year.⁶ Notwithstanding these trespasses, in the 1870s, the real

² United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1877 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1877), p. 129.

³ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1878 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1878), p. 80.

⁴ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1879 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1879), p. 193.

⁵ A.H. Wilder to E.P. Smith, 8 November 1872; and E.P. Smith to CIA, 8 November 1872, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

threat to the Mille Lacs Ojibwe came not from lumbermen, but from the federal government.

In March of 1877, Secretary of the Interior Zachariah Chandler, pressured by timber interests, began reviewing the history and treaty terms of the Mille Lacs Reservation to see by what rights they held title to the Mille Lacs Reservation, when they had ceded it in the 1863 Treaty.⁷ Fortunately, after this review, Chandler concluded that the Mille Lacs Ojibwe had rights of occupancy and that they could not be forcibly ejected from their lands. Unfortunately, Chandler also determined that the Mille Lacs Ojibwe did not have exclusive right to the lands. Therefore, Chandler opened the reservation for pre-emption claims.⁸

Chandler's ruling was a scandalous affair and a truly injustice act on his part. He had not consulted the tribe or other officials regarding the matter. Nevertheless, Chandler's ruling open the door a crack to the dispossession of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe's lands. Immediately, a land grab by timber interests quickly occurred on the Mille Lacs Reservation. In two years time, local land offices had registered entries. These entries snatched away over 23,000 acres of land of the 61,000 acre reservation. The land grab did not end until May of 1879, when Secretary of Interior Carl Schurz canceled all the entries.⁹

Petitioning President Hayes

The Mille Lacs band strongly objected to the timber trespasses and were greatly relieved when Secretary Schurz cancelled the entries. Not wishing to endure similar crisis in the future, they took measures into their own hands. In early 1880, they bypassed the Commissioner of Indian Affairs and wrote directly to President Rutherford B. Hayes for help. In their petition, the Ojibwe leaders

⁶ J.H. Baker to J.A. Williamson, 3 July 1876; and J.A. Williamson to J.H. Baker, 13 July 1876, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁷ Z. Chandler to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 27 January 1877, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁸ Z. Chandler to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1 March 1877, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁹ United States, House of Representatives, "Mille Lac Indian Reservation in Minnesota," House Executive Document 148, 48th Congress, 1st session, p. 9.

reminded President Hayes that the Mille Lacs band had faithfully helped the Americans in 1862, during the Hole-in-the-Day incident. Because of this assistance, they informed Hayes that their American allies, at the time, promised they could inherit their "home on the beautiful and to us lovely Mille Lac [Lake] forever; or so long as we behaved ourselves well towards our white neighbors."¹⁰ They desired President Hayes to uphold this promise.

Furthermore, they stated that they needed his protection against further plundering of their reservation. They grumbled to the President, that their agent did not help them and they wanted a new treaty to protect their pine lands against the timber interests. "As matters now stand and in view of what has been done and the efforts that are now being made to drive us from our home and rob us of the little valuable timber we have;" they wrote "we are continually laboring under great fear and are much distressed, for fear that bad men may prevale (sic) against us and succeed in robing (sic) us of our most valuable lands." They finished by asking for an investigation and the chance to defend themselves if they are ever being charged with any misconduct. All the Mille Lacs civil leaders signed the petition, including their head chief Shaw-bosh-kung (a.k.a. Shob-osh-kung), and leaders from the other villages, such as Mose-o-ma-na (a.k.a. Mou-zoo-mau-nee, Mo-zo-mo-nay), Mag-nuay-way-aush, Wau-we-yea-com-ick, Na-quau-nay-bee, Mh-ing-gonic, Pe-dud, and Kay-quay-do-say, a warrior leader.¹¹

In May, 1880, in support and defense of the Mille Lacs band, the citizens of nearby Morrison County to the west, signed a petition asking that federal government deal with the Mille Lacs Indians honorably; and stating that they have been well-behaved since 1862; and that they felt their was a plot to steal the Ojibwe's timber. These settlers feared trouble if whites were allowed to take the timber.¹²

¹⁰ Joseph Roberts to Carl Schurz, 15 January 1880; and Mille Lac Leaders to R.B. Hayes, 22 March 1880, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹¹ Joseph Roberts to Carl Schurz, 15 January 1880; and Mille Lac Leaders to R.B. Hayes, 22 March 1880, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹² N. Richardson, et al. to Carl Schurz, 15 May 1880; and Petition of Citizens of Morrison County, Minnesota, 26 May 1880, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

Deaf Ears of Federal Officials

The Mille Lacs letter to President Hayes and the Morrison County petition had little effect on the government's intention to remove the Mille Lacs bands to the White Earth Reservation eventually. In 1880, R. E. Trowbridge, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, outlined the government's intention to remove them and the reasons why he thought they should be removed. As a result of their close contact with lower elements of American society in the Brunswick area, Trowbridge believed that the Ojibwe living at Mille Lacs Lake should be spared this immitigable future. He wished to remove them to the White Earth Reservation for their own good. He described the conditions of the Mille Lacs and Snake River bands in this manner:

The Mille Lacs are on a fine tract of land, which can never be their own (their only title to it being the privilege of occupancy during good behavior) and which is coveted and trespassed on by the whites.

The branch of the Mille Lacs at Snake River are on small tracts of land purchased by themselves at government rates, in the neighborhood of Brunswick, Minn., near the Northern Pacific Railroad. All of these Indians are in close contact with whites, have free access to liquor, and are grafting on to barbarism and all the degradation of which civilization is capable. Wretched, poverty-stricken, drunken, debauched, and diseased, it might almost be questioned whether they are not even now beyond hope. . . . The settlements and lumber camps must be relieved of the demoralizing presence of those whom they have demoralized, and it becomes the imperative duty of the government to give these Indians a new home where they will be out of the way of the whites, and where they will have an opportunity for and encouragement in a better mode of living. Fortunately there is no question as to the place to which they should be removed, the White Earth Reservation being ample, both in size and resources, to accommodate all the Indians in Minnesota.¹³

¹³ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1880 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880), pp. XL-XLI.

Traditional Ojibwe Paradise

The Snake River branch of the Mille Lacs may have become "wretched, poverty-stricken, drunken, debauched, and diseased" due to closer contact with Americans, as Indian Commissioner Trowbridge's annual report suggests—although even that depiction of the Ojibwe may be questionable. Government officials and others who wished to remove the Mille Lacs Indians to White Earth often played upon the poverty of the band in their reports, while those individuals who thought they were being unfairly treated often overemphasized the better qualities of their lifestyle. It is hard to distinguish which picture of the condition of the Snake River Ojibwe was closer to the truth. Notwithstanding, the Ojibwe bands living along the wooded banks of Mille Lacs Lake exhibited many of the positive and negative facets of this picture of the Snake River Ojibwe.

In the early 1880s, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe lived a traditional lifestyle of hunting, fishing, and gathering resources on their reservation. They supplemented these natural resources through cash and trade goods from annuity payments. They also exercised limited trade with settlers and lumbermen, and also performed some day labor at lumber camps and on nearby farms. An examination of a number of factors (traditional lifestyle, population growth, economy, housing, etc.) indicates that certainly the Mille Lacs bands suffered from the failings of their environment and their traditional lifestyle. However, by no means were they "wretched, poverty-stricken, drunken, debauched, and diseased."

In the 1880s, the Mille Lacs men, women, and children held a strong sentimental attachment to their reservation lands and Mille Lacs Lake. Their leader Shawbosh-kung elucidated upon this sentiment to government officials in the past. Government offers of rations, oxen, plows, wagons, and everything to begin farming at White Earth Reservation could not persuade the Mille Lacs Ojibwe to remove. The Ojibwe reasoned that they had an inexhaustible supply of fish, adequate game, sufficient wild rice, and other nourishments. Why should they remove? They did not want to go "on the prairie, where there are none of these things, and where [they] must plow and work for a living." Besides which, they would "feel very bad" if they were forced to remove from the beautiful wooded shores of Mille Lacs Lake.¹⁴

¹⁴ Council Minutes with Mille Lac Chippewa, 25 February 1875, pp. 15-17, Letters Received by CIA, Chippewa Agency, 1875, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Roll 162); and Rev. Joseph A. Gilfillan, "The Ojibways in Minnesota," Minnesota Historical Society

Documents indicate that the Ojibwe used practically the entire reservation area for some activity or another and sustained themselves on a combination of fish, game, rice, and maple sugar. It is no wonder that they objected to the entry of lumbermen and settlers on their reservation.

By the 1880s, fish became the mainstay of the diet of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. Because the entrance of Americans in the area drove game away, hunting for larger game, such as moose, elk, deer and other animals by the Ojibwe had given way to harvesting Mille Lacs Lake for its rich bounty.¹⁵ In addition to year-long fishing on Mille Lacs Lake, the Ojibwe supplemented their diets each fall with the annual wild rice harvest. The Mille Lacs Ojibwe depended on rice as a major staple in their diet, culling and gleaning some 2,000 bushels of rice or more annually in the 1880s. They gathered wild rice from the "rice lakes" or present-day Ogechie, Shakopee, and Onamia Lakes, which were traditional areas used by the Ojibwe for many, many, years.¹⁶ In addition to ricing, the Mille Lacs bands also harvested maple sap each spring from their many sugar bushes scattered throughout the reservation. Each year, they tapped the sugar maples to make a variety of products that they either used for personal consumption or they traded to others. Thousands of acres of maple trees stood on their reservation, which allowed the Ojibwe to produce about twelve tons of maple sugar products annually, that sold at 10¢ per pound. In Township 43, Range 28 alone, which was actually west of their legal reservation boundaries, Shaw-bosh-kung's camp generally made about four tons of maple sugar each year.¹⁷

General individual and village settlement occurred along the entire south lakeshore, as well as along mouth of the Rum River. They lived in scattered groups of families, but there were also three main camps along the south shore of Mille Lacs Lake.¹⁸ The first camp was Shaw-bosh-kung's camp (Lots 1, 2, 3, 4,

Collections, Vol. 9 (1897): 56-57.

¹⁵ Rev. Joseph A. Gilfillan, "The Ojibways in Minnesota," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. 9 (1897): 56-57.

¹⁶ D.H. Robbins to Gus H. Beaulieu, Circa 1900, 310-Irregular Shaped Items, Number Ten, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹⁷ D.H. Robbins to Gus H. Beaulieu, Circa 1900, 310-Irregular Shaped Items, Number Ten, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹⁸ D.H. Robbins to Gus H. Beaulieu, Circa 1900, 310-Irregular Shaped Items, Number Ten, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

Sec. 33, Township 43 N., Range 27 W.). It was described as a twelve acre area of land that had been cleared and plowed by the federal government, sometime in the past. The camp was surrounded by a meadow, with a few standing buildings and a large burying ground nearby.¹⁹ The second camp or village was Mo-zo-ma-nay's camp (Lots 2, 3, Sec. 15, Township 42 N., Range 26 W.). This camp was near Cove, Minnesota and it was more substantial at this time than Shaw-bosh-kung's camp. Considered the "main general encampment," it consisted of a thirty-five acre clearing with twenty acres fenced and cultivated. Twenty log houses, including a large building made of hewed logs that was used as a council house, made up Mo-zo-ma-nay's encampment, who lived nearby.²⁰ A third camp was located just east of present-day Isle (Sec. 2, Township 42 N., Range 25 W.). The Ojibwe had a clearing of eight acres and a small village of log houses here.²¹

In 1880s, thirteen individual bands comprised the Mille Lacs and Snake River bands. The heads of these bands and their population totals follow:²²

<u>Band Leader</u>	<u>Approximate Band Population</u>
1. Shaw-bosh-kung (a.k.a. Shah-baush-kung)	113
2. Mo-zo-ma-nay (a.k.a. Mozomonay)	96
3. Wah-omg-ance (a.k.a. Wah-eeng-anse)	72
4. Pedud	30
5. Nay-quan-ay-be	86
6. Mayn-way-way-aush	35
7. Wah-we-yea-cumig	67
8. Gu-yah (??)	84
9. Mah-je-ke-wis	33
10. Nub-im-ay-aush	51
11. Way-yow-aub	54

¹⁹ D.H. Robbins to Gus H. Beaulieu, Circa 1900, 310-Irregular Shaped Items, Number Ten, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

²⁰ D.H. Robbins to Gus H. Beaulieu, Circa 1900, 310-Irregular Shaped Items, Number Ten, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

²¹ D.H. Robbins to Gus H. Beaulieu, Circa 1900, 310-Irregular Shaped Items, Number Ten, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

²² "List of Chippewa at Mille Lacs about 1880." Roberts: Mille Lacs Chippewa, FE 96.C6, R6, Minnesota State Archives, Minnesota Historical Society.

12. Ayn-dus-p-keshig	47
13. Monzonee	47

Traditional Ojibwe Men's and Women's Lifestyle

Previous to the 1880s, home life centered on moving about with the seasons and living winter and summer in birch bark wigwams. By the 1880s, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe began to live in a variety of permanent homes. Some lived in one-room log cabins and even had a few out buildings on their property, such as log barns. Others lived in improved framed houses with full barns for storing hay, ponies, a few cows, and draft animals, such as oxen.²³ Despite this veneer of adopted American living style, nearly every family put up an old style birch bark wigwam in front of each log or frame structure and passed the summer there, returning to the log house when cold weather set in. According to one source, in the summer "they properly prefer the wigwam for its greater coolness, better circulation of air and its greater cleanliness."²⁴

The role of men in Ojibwe society changed considerably from the 1820s to the 1880s. Thoughts of preparing to hunt big game on the prairie, such as buffalo and elk, or protecting their family and villages from yearly attacks of warring Sioux parties, no longer occupied their daily lives. Instead, in the 1880s, men divided their time between yearlong hunting for deer, winter trapping of muskrats and other small game for furs, working in lumber camps as log drivers, and hay making.²⁵

Mille Lacs Ojibwe men still went on annual winter hunts. However, now, their hunting grounds were only a few miles from their winter homes. In a month's time, they usually brought back only a meager \$100.00 worth of furs apiece during the winter.²⁶ According to one contemporary source:

²³ D.H. Robbins to Gus H. Beaulieu, Circa 1900, 310-Irregular Shaped Items, Number Ten, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

²⁴ Rev. Joseph A. Gilfillan, "The Ojibways in Minnesota," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. 9 (1897): 62.

²⁵ Rev. Joseph A. Gilfillan, "The Ojibways in Minnesota," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. 9 (1897): 70-71.

²⁶ Rev. Joseph A. Gilfillan, "The Ojibways in Minnesota," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. 9 (1897): 70-72.

When the cold weather begins in November each family usually starts off ten or twenty miles for a prolonged hunt. They stay out usually till January 1st, when the severe weather drives them home to their winter quarters. Very often a family claims a certain spot as their hunting ground, and they go to it year after year, and it is understood that no other family is to intrude on their territory. Of course they take the children and everything with them; and during the time they always live in birch bark wigwams.²⁷

After the harsh winter, men looked forward to lighter yearly activities surrounding hay making and working in logging camps. Mille Lacs men, did not take up conventional agriculture, probably because the soil and the low, flat, marshy landscape was unsuitable for agriculture and because they did not have the training or farming implements for agriculture. Instead, they began to cut and put up thousands of tons of marsh or wild hay each year. This marsh hay grew abundantly and with the lumber camps to the south on the Rum, Knife, and Snake Rivers, there certainly was a high demand for this wild grass.

Ojibwe marsh hay meadows were scattered throughout the Mille Lacs Reservation, ranging from twenty acres to one-hundred or more acres. For instance, an Ojibwe named Mac-a-na-by had one of the largest meadows (Sec. 13, Township 42 N., Range 26 W.) and annually put up 200 tons of it. And on the upper reaches of the Knife River, Ojibwe meadows extended a distance of three miles (Secs. 22, 26, 27, 35, Township 42 N., Range 25 W.). From these meadows, they stacked 400 tons of marsh hay in one year. Annually, however, all the Mille Lacs bands cut upon the various meadows on the reservation about 2,000 tons of hay. Half of this marsh hay was used to feed their own ponies, cows, and oxen. The other half was traded or sold to lumbermen on the Rum, Knife, and Snake Rivers for approximately \$5.00 per ton. This money was an important means of subsistence during the winter and spring months.²⁸

Besides hunting and hay making, Mille Lacs men earned wages as hired out labor at lumber camps. They excelled at using the axe and during the spring log

²⁷ Rev. Joseph A. Gilfillan, "The Ojibways in Minnesota," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. 9 (1897): 72.

²⁸ D.H. Robbins to Gus H. Beaulieu, Circa 1900, 310-Irregular Shaped Items, Number Ten, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

drive they worked the rivers particularly well and became expert log-drivers.²⁹

The role of women in Ojibwe society had not changed much from the 1820s. Women led a harsh existence and their life contrasted sharply with that of the men. To women fell the exhausting tasks of tilling small gardens of potatoes, corn, and other garden variety vegetables and fishing in the summer; wild ricing and fishing in the fall; and maple sugaring in the spring.

Clearing by the 1880s, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe women were not farmers in the sense that they grew the majority of their own food. Nonetheless, women in the Mille Lacs bands each had small plots of land fenced and cultivated, ranging in size from two to fifteen acres. From these plots they harvested untold quantities of fresh vegetables, which they stored away in root cellars until they were needed.³⁰

Besides tending gardens, during the summer, women netted fish from Mille Lacs Lake, which was probably abundant with walleyes, northerns, yellow perch, and other varieties of fish. Since fish provided one of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe's staple foods throughout the year, this was a very important task. Each morning, the women jumped into their canoes, paddled out onto the lake and drew in their nets that they had set the previous night. Each summer day's catch was consumed immediately. But as fall and then winter approached, the women began to lay up a supply of fish, so no one would suffer from hunger during the winter. Each day, they took an unlimited quantity of fish, which they hung up to freeze dry for winter use. In front of every home on the lake at that season was a "rude frame, with thousands of fish hung on rods driven through the tails, the winter's supply of food."³¹

Besides the seasonal tasks of wild ricing, sugaring, tilling gardens; and fishing, Mille Lacs Ojibwe women faced daily food preparation, including gathering wood

²⁹ Rev. Joseph A. Gilfillan, "The Ojibways in Minnesota," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. 9 (1897): 107.

³⁰ D.H. Robbins to Gus H. Beaulieu, Circa 1900, 310-Irregular Shaped Items, Number Ten, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives; and Rev. Joseph A. Gilfillan, "The Ojibways in Minnesota," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. 9 (1897): 62-63, 65-67, 70-71, 80, 83.

³¹ Rev. Joseph A. Gilfillan, "The Ojibways in Minnesota," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. 9 (1897): 62-63, 65-67, 70-71, 80, 83.

for the fires. Besides cooking fish, hot bread, wild rice, ducks, venison, potatoes, boiled corn, and making tea—a great luxury to the Ojibwe—they industriously maintained the household, made mats from rushes that grew in the lakes, tanned deerskins, and made beadwork or deerskin moccasins to wear and/or sell. In addition to these tasks, they seasonally gathered raspberries, blueberries and cranberries.³² All these exhaustive labor tasks took a heavy toll of the women. According to one source, when journeying between seasonal camps:

. . .they trudge along with a heavy, plodding tread, devoid of all beauty of motion. . . .Their heavy gait, I have accounted for in my own mind, by the heavy packs and burdens which for generations they have had to bear. Many of the women have packed, all their lives, burdens of two hundred pounds. . . .On a journey the woman packs the birch bark for the wigwam, the rush mats to sleep on, the cooking utensils, the food. Sometimes, I have seen the woman invert a heavy canoe, weighing 80 or 100 pounds, over her head, and carry it for miles and miles over all the portages, while her husband took the light traps.³³

The bounteous nature of all the natural resources harvested by the men and women made the Mille Lacs Reservation area unique. One investigator of life at Mille Lacs found that "from all the sources, furs, wild rice, venison, etc, the Indians of Mille Lacs got hold of a great deal more money in the course of a year than the average white farmer."³⁴ If this were wholly or even partly true, one wonders why the federal government tried to force the Mille Lacs Ojibwe to be farmers!

If one looks at population statistics, one can see that the Mille Lakes people had reached a homeostatic state with their environment. From 1878 to 1884, population statistics indicate that the Mille Lacs and Snake River Ojibwe had static growth. Statistics, for the Mille Lacs and Snake River Ojibwe bands varied widely because of neglect by the federal government in taking proper yearly censuses. However, they do suggest that the Ojibwe had reached an

³² Rev. Joseph A. Gilfillan, "The Ojibways in Minnesota," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. 9 (1897): 62-63, 65-67, 70-71, 80, 101.

³³ Rev. Joseph A. Gilfillan, "The Ojibways in Minnesota," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. 9 (1897): 58-59.

³⁴ Rev. Joseph A. Gilfillan, "The Ojibways in Minnesota," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. 9 (1897): 72.

environmentally compatible population/sustaining area ratio of under a 1,000 individuals for their land use style.³⁵

<u>Year</u>	<u>Mille Lacs</u>	<u>Snake River</u>	<u>Total</u>
1878	579	368	947
1879	--	--	838
1880	525	250	775
1881	no data	no data	no data
1882	--	--	865
1883	--	--	894
1884	--	--	894

However, life at Mille Lacs Lake also had its darker side and not all life there was an environmental paradise. At times there were frequent scarcity of specific food resources, perhaps because of a bad winter's hunt, a failed rice crop; or inadequate fish supplies. It was a life dependent on nature. Often nature did not cooperate fully with their expectations or their needs, and Mille Lacs men, women and children went hungry. But for centuries, these Ojibwe people endured the vagaries of living off the land and they were use to it.

In addition to the whims of nature, in the 1880s, the Mille Lacs people faced a sinister social adversary. Whiskey and gambling. Perhaps because of more time on their hands, due to the lack of major enemies in their life like the Sioux, excessive drinking by Ojibwe men became a major problem at Mille Lacs, resulting in drunken fights of band members and sometimes mortality.

Prior to the 1880s, only the middle-aged and old men of the village were allowed to drink liquor. It was done in an orderly way. The drinkers would be "ranged [in] rows, and some of the young men were there to keep order, and if any of the

³⁵ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1878 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1878), p. 288; United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1879 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1879), p. 340; United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1880 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880), p. 246; United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1882 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1882), p. 336; United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1883 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1883), p. 274; and United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1884 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1884), p. 292.

drinkers became obstreperous, one of the younger attendants would silence him. . . . But by the 1880s, young men were also allowed to partake in the process. With even the young men drinking, women were given even another heavy burden to carry. They were forced to take over the role of supervising the ritual drinking at Mille Lacs. In the 1880s, it was a "common sight to see the women gathering up all the guns and knives, and taking them away into the woods to hide them, the men being about to engage in a drunk, and they being anxious that none should be killed."³⁶

Excessive drinking and gambling particularly occurred during annuity payments. According to a contemporary source, during one payment, the following occurred:

When the payment was made at Mille Lacs this year,. . . the Indians were all camped. They danced every evening before the payment for joy that it was to be. As soon as the money began to be paid, blankets were spread upon the ground in scores of places, right close to the paying-booth, and almost the entire population seemed at once to be engaged in gambling. Some had cards, some used the bullet and moccasin game. Even those who seemed to be almost dying were flourishing the cards. It seemed more universal there than elsewhere, because there is no mission at Mille Lacs. Within the next two days, four (as I remember) died of drinking pain-killer or something of that sort, and two became totally blind from lemon extract that had wood alcohol in it; notwithstanding the labors of the missionary with each one individually, many days beforehand, warning and entreating them not to touch liquor in any form and not to gamble.³⁷

Practically every Mille Lacs Ojibwe camp had a burying ground for interring these victims of over-intoxication, as well as other deceased band persons. In the 1880s, reportedly, there were burial grounds near or at the following places:³⁸

³⁶ Rev. Joseph A. Gilfillan, "The Ojibways in Minnesota," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. 9 (1897): 93.

³⁷ Rev. Joseph A. Gilfillan, "The Ojibways in Minnesota," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. 9 (1897): 122-123.

³⁸ D.H. Robbins to Gus H. Beaulieu, Circa 1900, 310-Irregular Shaped Items, Number Ten, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

Lots 1, 2, Sec. 13, Township 44 N., Range 28 W.

Lots 1, Sec. 28, Township 43 N., Range 27 W.

Lots 1, 2, 3, 4, Sec. 33, Township 43 N., Range 27 W.

Lots 1, 2, 3, Sec. 17, Township 42 N., Range 26 W.

Paradise it was not. But in the 1880s, it was the closest thing the Mille Lacs people had to paradise. It soon became paradise lost.

Parcelling Out the Reservation

The Mille Lacs Reservation was not abruptly taken from the Mille Lacs people. It slowly slipped from their grasp in a tangle of manipulations by lumbermen, government pretexts, and broken promises.

In May 1882, land entries questions regarding the Mille Lacs Reservation were raised once again by lumber interests and the actions of federal officials created a quagmire of land title problems once again. This time, Secretary of the Interior Henry Moore Teller reviewed the matter. Unquestionably, the Mille Lacs bands had occupation rites to the land guaranteed by treaty. But, Teller asked whether or not they could occupy all or just the part of the reservation they were using. He rationalized that the government's responsibility was to reserve what areas the Mille Lacs bands needed. If they did not need certain lands or were not using the land, they he could open up the remaining land on the reservation for settlement. Teller ordered that the land entries cancelled by Secretary Schurz in May of 1879, to be reinstated if the land was not presently or in the past used by the Ojibwe.³⁹

In the mean time, Teller sent Indian Inspector George M. Chapman to the Mille Lacs Reservation to determine what lands the Ojibwe actually occupied and acres fenced for farming purposes. Taking a very ethnocentric view of the reservation, Chapman concluded that the Mille Lacs bands had no villages, no fixed habitations (with the exception of some on the Snake River), and lived in wigwams scattered along the lakeshore. To Chapman, the Mille Lacs had no real farms and made their living on their low, flat, swampy land, partly timbered by subsisting on wild rice, fish, and game. He reported that the Mille Lacs band

³⁹ H.M. Teller to Hiram Price, 10 May 1882, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

used approximately 7,436 acres of the the 61,000 acre reservation or roughly twelve per cent. Because of their nearness to lumber camps, which added to the "barbarism, debauchery and disease" among them, he recommended that they be removed to the White Earth Reservation as soon as possible.⁴⁰

Chapman clearly ignored the thousands of acres of meadows of marsh hay from which Mille Lacs men cut and put up tons and tons of hay each year. Chapman also did not recognize traditional Indian uses of the land. Traditional uses included fishing and hunting areas, wild ricing, maple sugaring, and gathering berries and such. If traditional Indian uses of the land are taken into account, then practically every foot of the reservation was utilized by the Ojibwe in one way or another. Every square foot of the reservation was needed as a sustaining area for the Mille Lacs Ojibwe people.

Of course reopening the land on the Mille Lacs Reservation brought a flood of land entries and lumbermen back onto the reservation. Minnesota's state and national representatives were prepared to act immediately upon Teller's reinstatement of the land entries cancelled by Secretary Schurz in May of 1879. Minnesota State House of Representative Dwight May Sabin and Minnesota Congressman William Drew Washburn had already hired crews to cruise the reservation for sections with high yields of pine timber. Congressman Washburn employed David H. Robbins, one of the earliest so-called "settlers" on the Mille Lacs Reservation, to perform this task. However, word that land entries were again reinstated on the reservation by Secretary Teller reached Sabin first. Sabin immediately telegraphed his men at the Taylor Falls land office to begin making entries. Seven men worked all night and made entries upon practically the entire reservation. Eventually, Sabin sold his interests to Weyerhauser and the Foley-Bean Company, and later became a United States Senator from Minnesota (1883-1889).⁴¹

Like previous lumbermen, who came in the 1850s and 1870s, lumbermen from the Weyerhauser and Foley-Bean and other lumber companies who operated in the area. built dams on the Rum River to float their logs to sawmills downstream. These dams created a high water flood to wash the logs downstream to the Mississippi River. Naturally, these dams raised the water in Ogechie, Shakopee, and Onamia Lakes and not only destroyed Ojibwe ricing beds there, which the

⁴⁰ George M. Chapman to Secretary of the Interior, 25 August 1882, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁴¹ Deposition of David H. Robbins, 6 August 1909, pp. 6-8, Box 2172, Record Group 123, United States Court of Claims, Federal Record Center at Suitland, Maryland.

Mille Lacs Indians depended on as a very important source of food and income, but also the rising water destroyed many of the marsh meadows that the Ojibwe hayed in order to feed their livestock and sell to the lumbermen on the Rum, Knife, and Snake Rivers. In November, 1882, Mille Lacs Ojibwe leaders reported this destruction and the land grab to government officials in a petition. They recounted these outrages, and stated that they would rather be killed than leave their homes.⁴² Once again, their protests against these violations of their property rights to government officials fell on deaf ears.

Besides unreceptive government officials, Mille Lacs band members also faced a ethnocentric philosophy from Minnesota Christians that viewed the Ojibwe's rich traditional lifestyle of hunting, fishing, and gathering as not civilized and not Christian as well. In "view of the terrible degradation and destruction of the Indians of Mille Lacs," the Northern Convocation of the Diocese of Minnesota wrote to Secretary of the Interior Teller and Minnesota Senator Samuel James McMillan. This state-wide Christian body asked that the Mille Lacs bands be removed to the White Earth Reservation at the "earliest moment possible" so they could become farmers and be "christianized and civilized." In their eyes, there were no farming opportunities on the Mille Lacs Reservation, so they should be removed to an area where they could be transformed into yeoman.⁴³

*Christian
missionary
activity*

The only friend that the Mille Lacs people seemed to have was former Chippewa Indian Agent Edward P. Smith. Secretary of Interior Teller contacted Smith for advice, but Smith concluded that the reservation should not be opened.⁴⁴

At this point, in view of conflicting advice, Interior Secretary Teller sought additional information. Teller sent Chippewa Indian Agent John A. Wright to make an assessment of the situation.

Unbeknownst to Wright, his detailed but very ethnocentric description of the Mille

⁴² Petition of Mille Lacs Chiefs, 10 November 1882, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁴³ J.A. Gilfillan to Secretary of the Interior, 31 January 1883, #3,703; J.A. Gilfillan to Senator McMillan, 5 February 1883, #3,926; J.A. Gilfillan to H.M. Teller, 24 February 1883, #3,926, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁴⁴ [E.P. Smith] to Secretary of the Interior, 26 April 1883, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

Lacs Reservation confirmed the positive and negative aspects of their traditional mode of life, land use and social problems.

The Indians are very poor, with few comforts around them, with scarcely anything to eat at present except fish, which are caught in the lake by means of traps; they live mostly in birch bark tepees though there are a few old log houses in tolerably fair conditions. They have no oxen and but few _____ or plows, consequently their gardens patches are small and poorly cultivated, so much so indeed that in no single instance do I feel justifiable in using the word farm. . . . As a rule the men were lying idly around the lodges while even the labor of taking fish from the nets and bringing wood and water was imposed upon the women.

The Indians at proper seasons of the year gather wild rice, cranberries, blueberries and hunt deer, rabbits and other animals when they can be found, but are often in want because of relying on such resources instead of making personal effort toward advancement by way of manual labor. . . .

Of the five hundred (500) Indians accredited to Mille Lac I found not exceeding two hundred and seventy (270) on the reservation, the balance are on Snake River and in the adjacent country. Of these two hundred and seventy (270), the best disposed sixty-seven (67) in number [are] under chief Sha-bosh[-kung] live in Township No. 43 N. Range 27 W. and the worst element about one hundred and fifty (150) in number, under chiefs Nah-qua-na-be and Mon-so-ma-na in Township No. 42 N. Range 26 W. All the Indian lodges are near the shores of the lake. . .

After recommending four individual areas of land for them (roughly the Vineland area, the Ogechie to Shakopee Lake area, the Cove-South Harbor area and a section of land east of present-day Isle) to be held from entry by the Homestead Act, Wright continued:

The lands definitely described in Inclosure No. 2 are in my judgement necessary for their support and they will afford them sufficient room for their lodges, gardens, and other domestic purposes, maple and birch trees for sugar season; maple, tamarack

and pine for their canoes, fuel for all required purposes; cranberries, rice and, in fact, everything that the Indian values obtainable from the reservation, can be obtained on these lands in sufficient quantities to meet their wants except game.

According to Wright, there were problems regarding drinking on the reservation. His report stated:

The majority of the male adults are the victims of the low grade rum sellers by whom they are apparently hemmed in and as there is no check on the traffic, the Indians boldly carry whiskey to their homes, sometimes in five gallon kegs. . . . Drunken Indians looking at these matters [mistakenly selling their reservation in the 1863 Treaty] from such a standpoint are liable to do desperate deeds.⁴⁵

Clearly, the Mille Lacs bands were fed up with broken promises and inaction by government officials to protect their reservation rights. Excessive drinking may have been a symptom of escapism.

Defending Their Homeland

For a long time, the Mille Lacs Indians handled the invasion of their territory through passive resistance, such as purloining property from settlers during their absence. By 1883, however, many of the Mille Lacs band members were very near to open rebellion. They started to actively take matters into their own hands through open confrontation.

First, they took action against the fifty or so "pretend settlers" who in recent months began supposedly homesteading the land. From previous experience, the Mille Lacs people were fully aware that these so-called settlers were really employed and paid by lumber interests to enter land claims on the reservation's pine timber. The Mille Lacs people, perhaps ordered by their chiefs, intimidated and ordered these "pretend settlers" off the reservation. "Through fear of their lives, they had obeyed the mandates of the Indians."⁴⁶ They also began to

⁴⁵ John A. Wright to Hiram Price, 27 June 1883, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁴⁶ John A. Wright to Hiram Price, 27 June 1883, Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central

discourage real settlers from entering claims upon their lands. One settler stated that he and his party abandoned their homesteads at the south end of Mille Lacs lake because the Indians claimed they did not sell the land; and that they only sold the timber. Thereafter, the Ojibwe followed these settlers around and directly prevented them from making any improvements.⁴⁷ Settlers began registering frequent complaints against this treatment at the general land office. Tensions mounted between the Ojibwe and the settlers.

Suffering from a year of failed ~~of~~ rice crops due to high water from lumber dams, poor deer hunting conditions, and no annuities, Mille Lacs Ojibwe resistance to this encroachment on their land culminated during the winter of 1883-1884. Frustrated and convinced that the government did not really care what happened to them, Mille Lacs band members destroyed the main logging dam on the Rum River.⁴⁸ The magnitude of this action can only be assessed if one understands that the Mille Lacs band leaders knew full well that any misbehavior on their part (and certainly destroying dams constituted misbehavior) could cost them their right to remain on the reservation.

Naturally, the brave act of defiance and resistance by the Mille Lacs brought headlines to the condition of the Mille Lacs band. Throughout 1884, reports, letters, and newspaper accounts flew about and investigations were made regarding the destitute condition of the bands and the need for relief. These news articles and reports described how lumbermen dams caused their failed rice and cranberry crops, and how the Mille Lacs people suffered from poor deer hunting, fish shortages, and lack of money. Information sources questioned whether or not the Mille Lacs people should be removed to the White Earth Reservation and some saw forced removal to White Earth as a solution to the problem.⁴⁹

Fortunately for the Mille Lacs people, Joseph Roberts, a long-time friend of the Mille Lacs bands made this question mute. In January 1884, he and several band chiefs travelled to Washington, D.C. to present accurate information regarding the Mille Lacs Indians. They successfully lobbied for congressional resolution

Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁴⁷ E.C. Ingalls to J.P. Owens, 1 December 1883 with newspaper enclosure, #22,420, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁴⁸ L.F. Hubbard to C.P. Luce, 22 December 1883, #23,545, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁴⁹ R.M. Wellington to Lucius F. Hubbard, 22 January 1884, #2,587, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

that prevented the dispossession of their lands. This resolution was a stopgap measure that prohibited any "further entries upon the lands of the Mille Lacs until further legislation was enacted" by Congress.⁵⁰

During 1884, some Mille Lacs Ojibwe continued to resist encroachment on their lands and timber resources. For instance, in May, 1884, David H. Robbins settled on the Mille Lacs Reservation under the Homestead Act, but the Ojibwe camped on his land with impunity and burned three of his buildings and haystacks to the ground.⁵¹ In another occurrence in November 1884, Ojibwe prevented lumbermen from harvesting an extensive timber-fall on their reservation. They insisted that the timber belonged to them and threatened to burn the lumbermen's camp if they cut the timber without their permission.⁵²

Other Mille Lacs band members reacted in a different manner. It appears as though the older civil leaders wished to find a means of accommodation. Chief Ma-zo-mo-nee of the Cove area, wrote to Minnesota Governor L. F. Hubbard that the Ojibwe were willing to sell the pine if they were paid fairly and the money used to improve their lives.⁵³ Shaw-bosh-kung, who by 1884 was old, poor, and often intoxicated, also wanted to sell the pine on his part of the reservation and even part of his patented lands.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Affidavit of Joseph Roberts, 23 January, 1884, #2,587, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives; United States, House of Representatives, "Mille Lac Indian Reservation in Minnesota," House Executive Document 148, 48th Congress, 1st session, p. 9; and S.M. Brosius, "The Urgent Case of the Mille Lac Indians," Indian Rights Association, October, 1901, p. 3.

⁵¹ David H. Robbins to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 29 May 1884, #10,905, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives; and Deposition of David H. Robbins, 6 August 1909, p. 17, Box 2172, Record Group 123, United States Court of Claims, Federal Record Center at Suitland, Maryland.

⁵² Milton Peden to N.C. McFarland, 27 November 1884, #23,485, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁵³ Mille Lacs Leaders to Governor Hubbard, 27 February 1886, #7,969, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁵⁴ Speeches of Mille Lac Leaders to John Wallace, 26 October 1885, #27,169; and Bruckart and Reynolds to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 18 December 1886, #33,905, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

Nonetheless, younger members of Shaw-bosh-kung's band continued to resist the encroachment of settlers and lumbermen on their part of the reservation. In March 1887, they torched the house and barn of a lumberman, who lived near to the reconstructed dam on the Rum River. Thereafter, they harassed and pilfered the homes of settlers on the reservation, threatening to burn settler's improvements. The settlers prepared to defend themselves against these depredations. Uneasiness mounted throughout 1887, as several arrests and deaths occurred due to incidents associated with whiskey. In several situations, settlers were blamed for the troubles because they paid the Ojibwe they employed to cut their hay with whiskey.⁵⁵

In hindsight this type of resistance seemed fruitless. New pressures on the loomed on the horizon.

First, as early as June 1886, rumors flew regarding the prospect of a railroad passing through the reservation from Duluth to Little Falls, Minnesota. David H. Robbins, one settler the Ojibwe had almost been forced off his land, was connected with this enterprise. The railroads employed him to construct claim shanties on reservation land for the future railroad. Timber interests saw this as a means for acquiring valuable timber lands, and even though the Mille Lacs tribe reported this activity, there is no evidence that Robbins stopped.⁵⁶

Second, Indian reformers led by religious groups began to advocate the removal of the Mille Lacs band to the White Earth Reservation. In 1886, the Northwest Indian Commission was formed to investigate conditions at Mille Lacs and other Indian reservations and to treat with the various bands and to convince them to remove to the White Earth Reservation. Judge John V. Wright (former Chippewa Indian Agent), Charles F. Larrabee of the Indian Bureau, and Bishop B. Whipple made up this commission.⁵⁷ When they reached Mille Lacs, the commission met "stiff opposition" and filed a negative report regarding the Mille Lacs bands,

⁵⁵ Earl Tucker to White Earth Agent, 13 March 1887, #7,439; and D.H. Robbins and Others to J. Sheehan, 15 March 1887, #7439; and John T. Wallace to Attorney General, 27 April 1887, #11,938, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁵⁶ T.J. Sheehan to D.C. Atkins, 14 June 1886, # 16,267, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁵⁷ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1886 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1886), p. 170.

referring to their leaders as a "few beggardly old chiefs."⁵⁸

Third, government officials each year reported on the deplorable condition the Mille Lacs bands and how they should be removed to the White Earth Reservation. For instance, in 1884, the annual report stated:

The Mille Lac Indians. . . are living on their old reservation ceded to the government in 1863. The right granted them to occupy the land unmolested during good behavior has been, in my opinion, the source of all the evil that has arisen in that ever-dissatisfied and much to be pitied community of Indians. Living 130 miles from the agency, where no funds can be lawfully expended for them, and being estranged from the beneficial influence of missionaries and teachers, without the aid extended to other Indians living at established agencies and under the immediate care of the agent. . .⁵⁹

Three years later, in 1887, a different Indian agent wrote:

I would respectfully call the attention . . . to the deplorable condition of the Mille Lacs and Sandy Lake Chippewas. Residing in the vicinity and surrounded by the white settlers at Mille Lacs and Sandy Lake, living on no reservation of their own and at a distance of 150 miles from the agency, it is next to an impossibility to extend to them the care and protection which their conditions demand. Being in the neighborhood of towns, they can easily obtain intoxicating beverages, which they never fail of doing when so declined. Coming contact with white men of low grade of morals, which their condition seems to invite, their habits and morals are not in any wise benefited by such contact, and they appear to be sinking, day by day, lower and lower in the depths of degradation. Several murders have occurred amongst them during the last year. Their only chance for their future salvation is in their removal to this reservation, where they belong.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ Roger and Priscilla Buffalohead, Against the Tide of History: The Story of the Mille Lacs Anishinabe (Cass Lake: Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, 1985), p. 63.

⁵⁹ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1884 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1884), p. 106.

⁶⁰ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1887 (Washington, D.C.:

A year later, the same Indian agent wrote "I had occasion to respectfully call the attention of the Department to the deplorable condition of these bands of the Chippewa tribe of Indians . . . Their condition remains the same at this date."⁶¹

With railroads, lumbermen, Christian Indian reformers, and government agents, as well as settlers, all calling for the removal of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe to the White Earth Reservation, it is hard to see how they could have fully resisted this onslaught of pressure upon them.

Mille Lacs Uprising and the Opening of the Mille Lacs Reservation

Upset over trespasses on the land by settlers and loggers, agitated about the neglectful treatment by the government of their treaty rights, fearful of removal to the White Earth Reservation, destitute from failed wild rice, hay, and berry crops, poor hunting conditions, degraded by increased intoxication with whiskey, and pressured by settlers, lumbermen, the railroads, Indian reformers and government officials to remove and open up the reservation for settlement created a tinderbox situation ready to explode. On June 12, 1889, it did explode into the impugnable Mille Lacs uprising, the only incident of recorded "open hostility" between the Mille Lacs Ojibwe and the United States.

According to the limited sources pertaining to the incident, the dubious Mille Lacs uprising began over a land conflict between the Ojibwe living at Cove and the Swedish settlers to the area. By early 1889, Swedish immigrants had moved in large numbers onto the Mille Lacs Reservation and were starting to make homestead claims there. The interests of the Mille Lacs Indians were looked after by the Swedish Christian Association. This organization had linked up with the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and was attempting to organize a mission and school on the Mille Lacs Reservation. By 1889, the Swedish Christian Association had actually begun construction of the school on the reservation for Ojibwe children.⁶² Nevertheless, this missionary effort was

Government Printing Office, 1887), p. 128.

⁶¹ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1888 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1888), p. 149.

⁶² M.W. Montgomery to M.E. Strieby, 2 August 1888, Special Case Files - 143, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives; and Robert S. Gardner to John H. Oberly, 22

halted abruptly, when trouble between Swedish settlers and Ojibwe broke out.

The trouble began with a group of Swedes led by settler named Andrew Berg. This group settled upon Section 15, Township 42, Range 26, which adjoined a section of land called Mo-zo-mi-ni Point. For fifty years or more, Ojibwe resided at Mo-zo-mi-ni Point and had made their summer homes there. They also conducted their annual Midewiwin ceremonies there as well. From the beginning, the close proximity between the Berg group and his Ojibwe neighbors caused strained relations. The Mille Lacs Ojibwe did not want them there. They often tried to intimidate these Swedish settlers to move and they made numerous hostile demonstrations in an effort to prevent their settlement on the reservation. However, these attempts failed with Andrew Berg's group.⁶³

Apparently, on the night of June 12th, a Ojibwe named Wa-de-na, in an intoxicated state set out supposedly to kill Andrew Berg. Ironically, Wa-de-na went to the house of Swen Maguson, a person who had the confidence, respect, and friendship of the Ojibwe, looking for Andrew Berg. For some unknown reason, Wadena expected to meet Andrew Berg at the door. When Maguson appeared at the door, Wa-de-na, under the influence of alcohol, mistakenly shot him point blank instead. Seriously wounded, Maguson lived long enough to be transported to Brainerd. The next day, the settlers were very nervous about the matter. When some Ojibwe ordered a number of Swedish settlers to quit cutting maple trees in the area, these parties felt frightened for their lives. They "believed in their own minds that these Indians meant business, that if they did not remove from the reserve, they would be massacred."⁶⁴

The news of the Maguson incident and the Ojibwe intimidations over the maple groves became intertwined together and blown out of proportion. By the time news reached Mora, Minnesota thirty miles, where the nearest telegram office was located, it was exaggerated that the Ojibwe had killed one person and were driving out settlers and had killed or wounded six others. Like a fire-bell in the night, a telegram was dispatched to Minnesota Governor W.R. Merriam that the

June, 1889, #16,695, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁶³ Robert S. Gardner to John H. Oberly, 22 June, 1889, #16,695, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁶⁴ Robert S. Gardner to John H. Oberly, 22 June, 1889, #16,695, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

night. Governor Merriam reacted to this telegram by immediately ordering three companies of troops from Fort Snelling to repress the uprising. Within a few days, the situation was evaluated and sorted out as a simple drunken row. Troops arrived by rail and tribal members were thoroughly interviewed about the incident. After the Ojibwe agreed to hold and deliver Wa-de-na for the sheriff, the troops were then called back to Fort Snelling.⁶⁵

Less than a week after the incident, special Indian Agent Robert S. Gardner from the La Pointe Agency investigated the situation at Mille Lacs for the Indian Bureau. Gardner found the Ojibwe in their summer wigwams peacefully preparing for their Midewiwin ceremonies, and very sorry that their friend Maguson had been shot by Wa-de-na. Gardner discussed the incident with Wah-we-yay-cum-ig (considered the head chief), Nay-gwon-ay-be, I and Nay-gwon-ay-be, II (considered as principal head men), Mooze-o-mah-nay (considered head medicine man), and forty-one other male adults.⁶⁶

They were very upset that the incident had been overdrawn and offended that the whites would even think that they would take up arms against them. Notwithstanding this affront, they told Gardner that they still could not just stand by and watch settlers cutting down their maple trees from which they derived considerable sustenance and income. The Ojibwe expressed the fact that no agent had visited them in many years or had protected their reservation rights from violation such as the maple tree cutting. They informed Gardner that as they spoke, lumbermen were cutting a fifty foot wide, three foot deep canal through their reservation from Mille Lacs Lake to Onamia Lake to increase the water volume of the Rum River. They wanted this and other violations of their reservation rights stopped, stating that they felt like a boat on the lake with no oars or rudders, "tossed first one place and then another" and they knew not what to do.⁶⁷ Gardner listened to their complaints. He agreed that they were unfairly

⁶⁵ Robert S. Gardner to John H. Oberly, 22 June, 1889, #16,695; and R. Williams to Adjutant General, 14 June 1889, #16,282, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁶⁶ Robert S. Gardner to John H. Oberly, 22 June, 1889, #16,695, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives. The names of the chiefs were standardized with the spellings found in the following document. United States, House of Representatives, "Chippewa Indians in Minnesota," House Executive Document 247, 51st Congress, 1st session, p. 46.

⁶⁷ Robert S. Gardner to John H. Oberly, 22 June, 1889, #16,695, Letters Received, Central

treated and that they were not hostile or dangerous to the American people. He thought that if the settlers would treat them honestly and fairly, then no settler should have any fear of them. However, he said nothing about the lumbermen's canal.⁶⁸

In parting, he dropped a bombshell of information upon them. Gardner apprised them that in January, six months ago, a special commission had been formed by the Secretary of the Interior to negotiate their removal to the White Earth Agency with all the other Ojibwe in Minnesota. Gardner counseled them to negotiate an agreement with this commission.⁶⁹

The Chippewa Commission

The Act of January 14, 1889 (25 U.S. Statute 612), commonly known as the Nelson Act, contemplated the voluntary removal of all the Ojibwe in Minnesota to the White Earth and Red Lake Reservations. This act called for a commission to negotiate for this removal and to allot land on these reservations to the various Indian tribes under the terms of the General Allotment Act of 1887. The General Allotment Act, or the Dawes Severalty Act as it was sometimes called, was designed to breakup each reservation into allotted land and to end the Indian community practice of holding land in common. This allotment process was designed to make "individual landowners and farmers of the Indians, without reference to tribe or traditional community life." The Dawes Severalty Act tended to "encourage government officials to deal with individual Indians and Indian families and to by-pass tribal leaders and to sometimes ignore the tribal groupings."⁷⁰

With this mission in mind, former Minnesota Senator Henry M. Rice and Dr. Joseph R. Wright of Wisconsin, two of the three men appointed to the commission, met with the Mille Lacs band in October. For four days among the

Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁶⁸ Robert S. Gardner to John H. Oberly, 22 June, 1889, #16,695, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁶⁹ Robert S. Gardner to John H. Oberly, 22 June, 1889, #16,695, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁷⁰ S. Lyman Tyler, A History of Indian Policy (Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, 1973), p. 95.

trees on the shores of the lake, they negotiated with band members trying to get them to accept land allotments on the White Earth Reservation. In their report to Congress, they summarized the history between the Mille Lacs bands and the Americans, as well as their impression of bands.

Contrary to the general opinion, we found them intelligent, cleanly and well behaved. Their neighboring white settlers gave them a good name. Some who had been on these borders for many years said they had never been molested in person or property by them. . . . Their principal fault seems to lie in possessing lands that the white man wants. . . .

The Interior Department now holds that— "The Mille Lac Indians have never forfeited their right of occupancy and still reside on the reservation."

But, notwithstanding this, white men have been permitted to rob them of their pine, and for years to settle upon their agricultural lands, and there to remain in quiet possession to this day to the great injury and fear of the Indians. Some of the whites had the shameless audacity to take from the Indians land the latter had, with much labor and perseverance, put into cultivation. Squatters are now setting upon this reservation, and the interest of the Indians ignored.⁷¹

Despite these sentiments, the Commissioners were at Mille Lacs to convince the Mille Lacs people to give up their rights to reservation land at Mille Lacs.

During the negotiations of the Chippewa Commission, several chiefs spoke for the Mille Lacs people. Shaw-bosh-kung (72 years old), from the Vineland village, led the delegation of Ojibwe speakers and the discussion. Other elder leaders and speakers, who also spoke during the council, were Mah-eeng-annce (a.k.a. Muh-eng-aunce) (52 years old) of the Snake River group, and Nay-gwon-ay-be, No. 1 (60 years old), Mooze-o-mah-nay (64 years old), and the young chief, Wah-we-yay-cum-ig (34 years old) from the Cove area. During the proceedings, Wah-we-yay-cum-ig declared himself the successor to Shaw-bosh-kung as the head chief of the

⁷¹ United States, House of Representatives, "Chippewa Indians in Minnesota," House Executive Document 247, 51st Congress, 1st session, p. 22.

bands.⁷²

Together, Shaw-bosh-kung, Mah-eeng-annce, and Wah-we-yay-cum-ig questioned the Commissioners very carefully about land matters and past grievances, such as settler's cutting timber and hay on their reservation, damages to their rice fields by lumber dams, and other depredations committed by Americans. Each time these injuries were brought up, the Commissioners stated in one way or another that the matters would be looked into or resolved sometime in the future by the federal government.⁷³

In addition to discussing these injustices, the Mille Lacs leaders and the Commissioners discussed removal issues. But very early in the discussion, the Mille Lacs leaders made known their intentions regarding removal to the White Earth Reservation. Mah-eeng-annce stated it frankly. "You say that whoever wishes to go to White Earth shall be allowed to do so. . . . we make known to you that we wish to take our allotments on this reservation, and not to be removed to White Earth." Commissioner Rice responded by stating that the Mille Lacs band members could select their farm lands, hay lands, sugar bushes, and hard-wood lands on their reservation and not remove to White Earth if they so desired. In addition to selecting allotments on the Mille Lacs Reservation, the Commissioners promised them cattle and agricultural implements as well.⁷⁴

From the transcription of their discussion, it is apparent that the Mille Lacs people were led to believe that they could choose whether or not to remove to White Earth. They also were led to believe they could choose to take their allotments of land on the Mille Lacs Reservation as well. However, when it came time to sign the final document, neither of these items appeared in the language of the document. The final document simply stated that they agreed to relinquish their right of occupancy on the Mille Lacs Reservation reserved to them by the twelfth article of the Treaty of 1867. Nevertheless, 189 of the 213 males eighteen years or older duped into signing this piece of paper that contained none of the promises made to them by Commissioner Rice.⁷⁵

⁷² United States, House of Representatives, "Chippewa Indians in Minnesota," House Executive Document 247, 51st Congress, 1st session, pp. 163-176.

⁷³ United States, House of Representatives, "Chippewa Indians in Minnesota," House Executive Document 247, 51st Congress, 1st session, pp. 163-176.

⁷⁴ United States, House of Representatives, "Chippewa Indians in Minnesota," House Executive Document 247, 51st Congress, 1st session, pp. 163-176.

Commissioner Rice did not maliciously leave these items out of the document. He felt that the word of the commission was enough. After their meeting, Commissioner Rice wrote the Indian Commissioner directly concerning his council with the Mille Lacs bands. His letter outlined the need to break up Ojibwe traditional practice of holding land in common and sharing one's material wealth and he was pleased they had selected to take allotments. He wrote:

The Mille Lac adult males, with few exceptions, assented to the proposition offered them. The band number nine hundred. They signified their intention to remain where they are, and will take allotments upon that reservation.

They are destitute, having neither saw-mill, agricultural implements, farmer, blacksmith, carpenter, or physician. They all live in wigwams, or miserable one-room huts. For years they have lived in fear of being forcibly removed, and have been constantly intruded upon by whites who have sought to dispossess them of their rightful homes. . . . Upon this reservation there are now probably one hundred squatters. Some of them took the gardens the Indians made, and built thereon, appropriating to their own use the fields which the Indians had broken and cultivated with much labor, and without assistance from any one. . . . The young men all wanted work, but could not get it without going to the settlements of the whites, and when they returned to the Reservation, (where everything has heretofore been held in common) their little was soon dissipated among the others. No people on earth can prosper under such circumstances, and I am satisfied that the holding of lands in common has been the curse of the Indians.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ United States, House of Representatives, "Chippewa Indians in Minnesota," House Executive Document 247, 51st Congress, 1st session, pp. 9, 45-48, and 163-176; and First Council with Mille Lac Indians, October 2-5, 1889, Folder: Minutes of Council Called to Accept Act of 1889, Box 50, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁷⁶ Henry M. Rice to T.J. Morgan, 12 October 1889, #29,114, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

Opening of the Mille Lacs Reservation

Federal government officials ignored Senator Rice's promises to the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. They wasted little time in encouraging the Mille Lacs people to take up allotments on the White Earth Reservation, even though the majority of the Ojibwe had specifically stated they did not wish to remove there.⁷⁷

Thereafter, various factors put pressure on the Mille Lacs band members to take their allotments on the White Earth Reservation instead of the Mille Lacs Reservation. On January 9, 1892, the Secretary of the Interior, seeing that the Ojibwe had relinquished their right of occupancy to the Mille Lacs Reservation under the Chippewa Commission agreement, immediately opened up the Mille Lacs Reservation as part of the public domain and subject to homestead entry, declaring that the Mille Lacs Reservation was "no longer held to be a reservation."⁷⁸ The Chippewa Commission had promised that the Mille Lacs Ojibwe could have the first chance to make their allotment entries before this would occur. However, this promise was ignored and the consequences were devastating to the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. When the decision of the Secretary of the Interior became public, more than two hundred settlers filed land entries on the former Mille Lacs Reservation, taking many of the best lands on the reservation. Between January 9th and May 3rd, 109 homestead entries (13,628 acres), 131 preemption declaratory statements (17,991 acres), and one soldier's declaratory statement (40 acres) were made. These entries totalled 31,659 acres or over one-half of the 61,000 acre former reservation.⁷⁹

Of course, this massive entry of settlers onto the Mille Lacs Reservation created additional conflicts between the Mille Lacs Ojibwe and non-Indians. In August,

⁷⁷ A small number Mille Lacs band members immediately took advantage of removal plans of the government to the White Earth Reservation. For instance, between July 6, 1891 and November 30, 1891, four members of the Mille Lacs band were removed to the White Earth Reservation. However, they were the only band members to remove in 1891. Francis Campbell to D.S. Hall, 30 November 1891, Folder: Misc. Correspondence Chippewa Commission, 1891, Box 47, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁷⁸ United States, Sixteenth Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1891), p. 260.

⁷⁹ United States, House of Representatives, "Mille Lac Indian Reservation, Minn.," House Executive Document 2321, 52nd Congress, 2nd session, pp. 1-2.

Minnesota Governor Merriam wrote Indian Commissioner T. J. Morgan calling his attention to the removal of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. Governor Merriam recounted incidents where settlers left their house for a few hours and found it destroyed and everything of value carried off. He recommended removal as soon as possible.⁸⁰ By September, 1892, the settlers around Aitken had also petitioned for the removal of all the Mille Lacs Indians to White Earth and by 1894, the settlers around Finlayson, Minnesota complained about Mille Lacs hunting activities in their area.⁸¹

Mille Lacs Ojibwe suffered abuses as well. A typical example of the abuses that the Mille Lacs were subjected to during the 1890s is the case of Ain-dus-o-ke-shig. According to one source:

During the month of April, 1890, all of the Mille Lac Indians who could work sought employment of the lumbermen operating in the vicinity of Mille Lac, who logs to drive to markets and mills from the point where the timber was cut. Being expert log-drivers, they all found employment. Among these was Ain-dus-o-ke-shig, now [1901] one of the chiefs of the Mille Lac band. He was absent from his home for two months working on one of the log drives. When he returned to his home he found a new house built on his premises, and his own house being used as a blacksmith shop. He addressed the man he saw there in English, but the latter could not understand, as he was a Scandinavian; so the chief secured an interpreter and was informed that the land had been entered in the Land Office by this foreigner.⁸²

Ain-dus-o-ke-shig experience similar circumstance twice more thereafter, and he successfully resisted the third effort to remove him from his land. Ain-dus-o-ke-shig's experience was not unique. Another Mille Lacs Ojibwe named May-qua-

⁸⁰ W.R. Merriam to T.J. Morgan, 29 August 1892, #31,878, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁸¹ Petition from Settlers around Aitkin, September 1892, Folder: Misc. Correspondence Chippewa Commission, 1892, Box 47, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center; and Knute Nelson to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 6 September 1894, #34,472, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁸² S.M. Brosius, "The Urgent Case of the Mille Lac Indians," Indian Rights Association, October, 1901, p. 4.

mem-wan-o-quit also had his home taken by a Scandinavian settler. When Mayqua-mem-wan-o-quit returned home one day, he found that he had been turned out by Scandinavian who converted his dwelling into an icehouse.⁸³

With settlers and Ojibwe complaining in their ears about depredations, government officials put additional pressure on the Mille Lacs bands to remove. They used several inducements to try to get individual Mille Lacs band members to at least visit the White Earth Reservation. They promised comfortable furnished homes, cookstoves, yokes of oxen, wagons, plows and other farm implements if the Mille Lacs Ojibwe removed. They also changed the distribution of government payments from Mille Lacs Lake to the White Earth Reservation, in order to lure the Mille Lacs Indians into visiting the White Earth Reservation and seeing the progress of the Ojibwe there.⁸⁴

One official thought that this was an especially good idea. Because of the heavy trafficking in liquor and trouble that these payments drew, they often aroused public sentiment against the Ojibwe. For instance, recently, on the south shore of the lake at a place called South Harbor, a store owner named John McQueen was caught getting several Ojibwe into a drunken state. Brandishing knives and shouting their deeds of valor in the woods, these Ojibwe caused no harm. Nevertheless, this official thought they could better spend their money on the necessities of life.⁸⁵

Despite all these inducements, by the end of 1892, only another 39 Mille Lacs members had taken up land at White Earth with a view to future removal during their visit. Though allotment of the White Earth Reservation was pushed with vigor, there was a critical problem. The Chippewa Commission promised 160 acres to each Indian of the Mississippi band of Chippewa in open council. However, the Dawes General Severalty Act of 1887 provided only for 80 acres. The Mille Lacs and Ojibwe refused to take their allotments until this situation was

⁸³ S.M. Brosius, "The Urgent Case of the Mille Lac Indians," Indian Rights Association, October, 1901, pp. 4-5

⁸⁴ Chairman of the Chippewa Commission to T.J. Morgan, 27 October 1892; and Rockwell J. Flint to D.S. Hall, 31 December 1892, Folder: Misc. Correspondence Chippewa Commission, 1892, Box 47, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁸⁵ Chairman of the Chippewa Commission to T.J. Morgan, 27 October 1892; and Rockwell J. Flint to D.S. Hall, 31 December 1892, Folder: Misc. Correspondence Chippewa Commission, 1892, Box 47, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

corrected. Their refusal exerted a wide influence over other bands and proved an obstacle to removal. However, on May 20, 1892, Senator H.D. Dawes introduced a bill in the Senate that corrected this situation.⁸⁶

Yet with this obstacle hurdled, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe insisted that they wished to have their allotments on the Mille Lacs Reservation and not on the White Earth Reservation. But year after year, during the 1890s, Mille Lacs Ojibwe faced countless invasions and depredations against their property. They penned numerous communications to President Grover Cleveland, stating that they never sold their reservation in 1889 under the Chippewa Commission; that they had only sold the pine on the lands. However, executive branch officials and Congress felt they had relinquished title to the reservation in 1889. In 1893 and in 1898, Congress came to the rescue of the settler, who "under the guise of law made settlement."⁸⁷

Shortly after this last confirmation of settlers' entries in 1898, the Mille Lacs people experienced the most humiliating insult to themselves and their rights to occupy the reservation. In May, 1901, according to one source, about one hundred Mille Lacs Indians were ejected from their homes by the sheriff of Mille Lacs County. Their dwellings and property were burned and otherwise destroyed. Now the title to these lands, that the Mille Lacs Ojibwe occupied for a century or more, belonged to American settlers.⁸⁸ Certainly no people on Earth could prosper under such circumstances.

⁸⁶ Chairman of the Chippewa Commission to T.J. Morgan, 27 October 1892; and Rockwell J. Flint to D.S. Hall, 31 December 1892, Folder: Misc. Correspondence Chippewa Commission, 1892, Box 47, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁸⁷ United States, House of Representatives, "Mille Lac Indian Reservation," House Report 1174, 55th Congress, 2nd session, pp. 1-4; S.M. Brosius, "The Urgent Case of the Mille Lac Indians," Indian Rights Association, October, 1901, pp. 5-6; and Mosemoney (Mille Lac Chief) to President of United States, 20 February 1894, #8,499; Mille Lacs Band to Our Great Father in Washington, 10 October 1894, #48,382; Wah-we-ya-cum-ig to Grover Cleveland, 8 January 1895, #3,165; Mille Lac Chippewa to Grover Cleveland, 9 June 1895, #28,660; and Mille Lac Chippewa to Grover Cleveland, February 1896, #7,243, Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁸⁸ S.M. Brosius, "The Urgent Case of the Mille Lac Indians," Indian Rights Association, October, 1901, pp. 5-6.

Notes on Chapter Sources:

This chapter is based largely upon primary correspondence, reports and documents written during the time period 1876-1901. Primary works consulted for this chapter include Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1876 to 1901 and material from the National Archives and several federal record centers. The following material from the National Archives was consulted: Letters Received by Commissioner of Indian Affairs (CIA), Chippewa Agency, 1876-1879, National Archives, Microfilm Publications (M234-Rolls 150-162); Depositions of Various People, July-August 1909, Box 2172, Record Group 123; and letters and documents from Record Group 75, including Letters Received, Central Classified Files, 1880-1906; 310-Irregular Shaped Items, Number Ten, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files; and Special Case Files - 109, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files.

Record Group 123, United States Court of Claims, located at the Federal Record Center at Suitland, Maryland provided vital information regarding legal matters and depositions. At the Federal Record Center at Kansas City, the records of the White Earth Agency, 1874-1922, Record Group 75, contained important information on the Correspondence of the Chippewa Indian Commission, 1892.

Other important primary material include: S.M. Brosius, "The Urgent Case of the Mille Lacs Indians," Indian Rights Association, October, 1901; and Rev. Joseph A. Gilfillan, "The Ojibways in Minnesota," Minnesota Historical Society Collections, Vol. 9 (1897); and "List of Chippewa at Mille Lacs about 1880." Roberts: Mille Lacs Chippewa, FE 96.C6, R6, Minnesota State Archives, Minnesota Historical Society. In addition to the above primary documents, a number of congressional documents were reviewed. They are listed below by congress and session. United States, House of Representatives, "Mille Lac Indian Reservation in Minnesota," House Executive Document 148, 48th Congress, 1st session; United States, House of Representatives, "Mille Lac Indian Reservation," House Report 1174, 55th Congress, 2nd session; United States, House of Representatives, "Chippewa Indians in Minnesota," House Executive Document 247, 51st Congress, 1st session; and United States, House of Representatives, "Mille Lac Indian Reservation, Minn.," House Executive Document 2321, 52nd Congress, 2nd session.

Few secondary accounts on Ojibwe history were used in the writing of this chapter. They are: S. Lyman Tyler, A History of Indian Policy, Washington, D.C.: United States Department of the Interior, 1973; and Roger and Priscilla Buffalohead, Against the Tide of History: The Story of the Mille Lacs Anishinabe Cass Lake: Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, 1985.

Ojibwe Historical Chronology: 1876-1901

- 1877 In March of 1877, Secretary of the Interior Zachariah Chandler questions why the Mille Lacs Indians were allowed to hold title to all the Mille Lacs Reservation, when they had ceded it in the 1863 Treaty.
- 1879 Secretary Zachariah Chandler of Interior Department issues orders that Mille Lacs reservation could be claimed by private individuals. Over 23,000 acres of land claimed by outsiders. Secretary of Interior Schurz on May 19, 1879 cancels all entries of land upon Mille Lacs reservation.
- 1880 In early 1880, Mille Lacs chiefs write directly to President Rutherford B. Hayes for help. In their petition, the Ojibwe leaders reminded President Hayes that the Mille Lacs band had faithfully helped the Americans in 1862, during the Hole-in-the-Day incident. Because of this assistance, they informed Hayes that their American allies, at the time, promised they could inherit their "home on the beautiful and to us lovely Mille Lac [Lake] forever; or so long as we behaved ourselves well towards our white neighbors."
- 1880 Citizens of Morrison County sign a petition stating that the federal government should deal with the Mille Lacs Indians honorably; that they have been well-behaved since 1862; and that they felt there was a plot to steal the Ojibwe's timber.
- 1882 Secretary of Interior Henry M. Teller orders that the land entries, cancelled by Secretary Schurz in May of 1879, be reinstated if the land was not presently or in the past used by the Ojibwe.
- 1882 In November, 1882, Mille Lacs Ojibwe leaders reported destruction of their wild rice and marsh beds and an invasion of lumbermen on their reservation to government officials in a petition. They recounted these outrages, and stated that they would rather be killed than leave their homes.

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- 1883 Mille Lacs Ojibwe resist encroachment on their land. Frustrated and convinced that the government did not really care what happened to them, Mille Lacs band members in December destroyed the main logging dam on the Rum River.
- 1884 In January 1884, Joseph Roberts, a good friend of the bands, and several band chiefs travel to Washington, D.C. They successfully lobby for a congressional resolution that prevents the dispossession of their lands. This resolution was a stopgap measure that prohibited any "further entries upon the lands of the Mille Lacs until further legislation was enacted" by Congress.
- 1886 Indian reformers led by religious groups began to advocate the removal of the Mille Lacs band to the White Earth Reservation. In 1886, the Northwest Indian Commission was formed to investigate conditions at Mille Lacs and other Indian reservations and to treat with the various bands and to convince them to remove to the White Earth Reservation. When they reached Mille Lacs, the commission met "stiff opposition."
- 1889 The Act of January 14, 1889 (25 U.S. Statute 612), commonly known as the Nelson Act was passed. This act contemplated the voluntary removal of all the Ojibwe in Minnesota to the White Earth and Red Lake Reservations. This act called for a commission to negotiate for this removal and to allot land on these reservations to the various Indian tribes under the terms of the General Allotment Act of 1887.
- 1889 On the night of June 12th, a Ojibwe named Wa-de-na, in an intoxicated state attempts to kill a Swedish settler. At the same time, Ojibwe order a number of Swedish settlers to quit cutting maple trees in the area. These incidents set off rumors of a general Mille Lacs Ojibwe uprising that brings troops from Fort Snelling to repress the uprising. Within a few days, the situation was evaluated and sorted out as a simple drunken row.
- 1889 From October 2nd to the 5th, the Chippewa Indian Commission meets with the Mille Lacs band among the trees on the shores of the lake. They negotiated with band members to give up their occupancy rights to the Mille Lacs Reservation and accept land allotments instead.
- 1892 On January 9, 1892, the Secretary of the Interior, seeing that

the Ojibwe had relinquished their right of occupancy to the Mille Lacs Reservation under the Chippewa Indian Commission agreement, immediately opened up the Mille Lacs Reservation for settlement, declaring that the Mille Lacs Reservation was "no longer held to be a reservation."

- 1893 Congress passes joint resolution on December 19, 1893, to quiet title upon lands settled between 1891 and 1892.
- 1898 On May 27, 1898, Congress enacts legislation confirming titles acquired by whites upon Mille Lacs lands, with a proviso that certain tracts be set aside for use of the Mille Lacs Indians for a burial place.
- 1901 In May, 1901, one hundred Mille Lacs Indians were forcibly ejected from their homes by the sheriff of Mille Lacs County. Their dwellings and property were burned and otherwise destroyed. Now the title to these lands, that the Mille Lacs occupied for a century or more, belonged to American settlers.

Chapter Seven

"Our Bones Shall Be Placed Here With Those of Our Fathers"

Introduction

During the first three decades of the twentieth century, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe witnessed both removal and revival. After resisting removal from their former reservation lands to the White Earth Reservation for more than a decade, in 1902, the will of the majority finally collapsed when threatened with "involuntary" physical removal of their belongings and persons. At Lawrence, Minnesota, under the leadership of Chief Wah-we-yay-cum-ig, the majority of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe "voluntarily" agreed to removal.>

From this point onward, the history of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe becomes not a history of one people, but the struggle of several individual Ojibwe communities against the dominant non-Ojibwe culture. By 1912, more than three-quarters of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe migrated to the White Earth Reservation, leaving behind mere remnants of Ojibwe communities at Vineland, Isle, Tamarack River, and Sandy and Rice Lakes. After discussing the history of the removal process to the White Earth Reservation, this chapter outlines the strategies for survival of these "Non-Removable" Ojibwe against continued encroachment on their lands, as well as homelessness, destitution, and impoverishment. In the end, each community managed to develop a stable land base, and a viable mixed economy based in part on the continued exploitation of traditional seasonal round resources (fishing, hunting, ricing, sugaring) in combination with agriculture and a cash/wage/labor economy. This combination allowed them to not just survive, but to a certain extent, by 1932, also gave each community the chance to revive themselves.

"Voluntary" Removal and the Lawrence Agreement of 1902

Up until 1901, only a few Mille Lacs Ojibwe voluntarily removed themselves to the White Earth Reservation and accepted allotments there. In May of that year, the pace of removal quickened when approximately one hundred Mille Lacs Indians

were ejected from their homes by the sheriff of Mille Lacs County. The details of this ejectment are not very clear. According to one source, a settler purchased the land on Mo-zo-mi-ni Point and then gave the Ojibwe living there repeated notices to vacate their homes and move off the land. Led by Chiefs Wadena and Nay-gwon-ay-be, they refused to abide and resisted. Thereafter, the owner secured a writ of ejectment and with the help of officers moved the Indians and their personal property off the land. Afterwards, they set fire to the Ojibwe homes, burning them to the ground.¹ Reportedly, only Ojibwe women were present when the sheriffs came and some of the women were beaten in the ejectment process.²

The "attack" on the Wadena-Nay-gwon-ay-be village was clearly an outrage, one that all parties wished to avoid in the future. Clearly the government and the Ojibwe feared that other forced ejections would occur unless the Mille Lacs people removed to White Earth. In 1889, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe had ceded their rights of occupancy of the Mille Lacs Reservation, but they had not been paid for any improvements they made on their former reservation. To remedy this situation, in May, 1902, Congress passed legislation appropriating \$40,000 to pay the Mille Lacs Ojibwe for their improvements, but under two stipulations. The first condition was that the Mille Lacs Ojibwe should meet in council and accept the provisions of the act. The second condition was that to receive the money they had to remove at once. Under the terms of the act, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe were permitted to "take up their residence and obtain allotments in severalty either on the White Earth Reservation or on any of the ceded Indian reservations in the State of Minnesota on which allotments are made to Indians."³

On August 19, 1902, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe met in council with government officials at Lawrence, Minnesota⁴ for four days. Major James McLaughlin,

¹ Charles H. Burke to Frank Armstrong, Jim Stevens, and Joe Barney, 6 May, 1921, Folder: Removal of Non-Removal Indians (Mille Lacs), Box 42, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

² Tom Hill to E.B. Meritt, 24 October 1921, Folder: Removal of Non-Removal Indians (Mille Lacs), Box 42, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

³ Meetings of Council Held at Lawrence, Minnesota in Reference to Their Removal from the Former Mille Lac Reservation, 19 August 1902, pp. 1-66, Folder: Mille Lacs Reservation, Council of Mille Lac Indians, 1902, Box 39, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁴ Lawrence was a small non-Indian community near present-day Wahkon that started in the

U.S. Indian Inspector, and Simon Michelet, U.S. Indian agent, represented the government. McLaughlin opened the council by plainly stating their two-fold mission: 1) to agreed upon a fair appraisalment regarding Ojibwe improvements; and 2) remove Ojibwe from the former Mille Lacs Reservation thereafter. McLaughlin bluntly explained to the crowd of Mille Lacs leaders attending that they should accept the government's offer to pay for their improvements because they clearly ceded their rights to occupy the reservation in 1889. McLaughlin and Michelet then described the White Earth Reservation, where they would make their future homes, in glowing terms.⁵

Chief Wah-we-yay-cum-ig opened the proceedings for the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. He presented the Ojibwe position just as blunt as McLaughlin. Wah-we-yay-cum-ig succinctly stated that the Mille Lacs people did not trust the government's offer because the government had lied to them so many times in the past. Wah-we-yay-cum-ig angrily reviewed past grievances committed by the Americans, declaring: "If all the wrongs that have been done by the white people on this reservation were ascertained there is no scale that is large enough to weigh the losses we have sustained."⁶

McLaughlin asked Wah-we-yay-cum-ig to forget the past and to look only at the present and what was best for the future of the Ojibwe. Besides compensation for their improvements, McLaughlin promised that each Ojibwe who took an allotment at White Earth would be provided with a "comfortable dwelling, one yoke of oxen or equivalent, a cook stove, wagon, plow and other necessary farming implements and subsistence." Michelet pointed out that the Mille Lacs could no longer depend on the game and fish around their present land to sustain

mid-1880s. Nearby was the town of Potts. When the Soo Line came through in 1907, both of these communities merged and became Wahkon. Duane R. Lund, Tales of Four Lakes: Leech Lake, Gull Lake, Mille Lacs Lake, the Red Lakes and the Crow Wing River (Staples, Minnesota: Nordell Graphic Communications, 1977), p. 94.

⁵ Meetings of Council Held at Lawrence, Minnesota in Reference to Their Removal from the Former Mille Lac Reservation, 19 August 1902, pp. 1-5, Folder: Mille Lacs Reservation, Council of Mille Lac Indians, 1902, Box 39, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁶ Meetings of Council Held at Lawrence, Minnesota in Reference to Their Removal from the Former Mille Lac Reservation, 19 August 1902, pp. 5-15, Folder: Mille Lacs Reservation, Council of Mille Lac Indians, 1902, Box 39, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

themselves. Michelet also stated that he would employ Ojibwe to build their new homes so they could earn money from removal as well.⁷

After listening to McLaughlin and Michelet explain their mission and the advantages of removal to the Mille Lacs, Wah-we-yay-cum-ig spoke at length. He recounted how the Mille Lacs trusted the Chippewa Indian Commission in 1889; how they thought they were selling only the pine on their reservation; and how they had no intention of removing to the White Earth Reservation. Wah-we-yay-cum-ig and other Ojibwe, such as Ain-dus-o-goeshig, and Ko-gee, expressed shock at the news when they learned they had ceded their lands, especially since they were told by the Chippewa Indian Commission members that they could take allotments on the Mille Lacs Reservation. He wryly asked if they were being punished for preventing Hole-in-the-Day from "precipitating an outbreak and chastising and massacring the whites." McLaughlin's answered that the Chippewa Indian Commission mistakenly told them that they had the right to take allotments on the former Mille Lacs Reservation, because they did not.⁸

Notwithstanding this heated exchange and misinterpretation of the promises made by the Chippewa Indian Commission, by the third and fourth days, the Mille Lacs people seemed to show signs that they were considering the proposition brought by McLaughlin and Michelet. The Ojibwe asked McLaughlin to send someone to ascertain damages that they sustained by past American depredations and present-day improvements. However, they soon proposed a new arrangement. They informed McLaughlin and Michelet that with the money from damages, they wished to buy five small tracts of land around the former Mille Lacs Reservation as an insurance policy. Then if things did not work out at White Earth, they would have some land to fall back on.⁹

⁷ Meetings of Council Held at Lawrence, Minnesota in Reference to Their Removal from the Former Mille Lac Reservation, 19 August 1902, pp. 16-18, Folder: Mille Lacs Reservation, Council of Mille Lac Indians, 1902, Box 39, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁸ Meetings of Council Held at Lawrence, Minnesota in Reference to Their Removal from the Former Mille Lac Reservation, 19 August 1902, pp. 28-33, Folder: Mille Lacs Reservation, Council of Mille Lac Indians, 1902, Box 39, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁹ Meetings of Council Held at Lawrence, Minnesota in Reference to Their Removal from the Former Mille Lac Reservation, 19 August 1902, pp. 34-48, Folder: Mille Lacs Reservation, Council of Mille Lac Indians, 1902, Box 39, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal

McLaughlin and Michelet opposed this plan instantly. They pointed out that purchasing a few small tracts of land by Mille Lacs Lake would defeat the object of their mission, as well as the intent of the congressional appropriation. In their opinion, it was out of the question. McLaughlin and Michelet pressed on in the negotiations, stating that their hands were tied by the language of the legislation.¹⁰

Finally, on August 23, 1902, the fifth and last day of the council, Wah-we-yay-cum-ig and the other Mille Lacs Ojibwe leaders assented to the agreement proposed by McLaughlin. The council disbanded for the next week, while D.H. Robbins, accompanied by Ojibwe, went around the area appraising the improvements made upon the land by the Ojibwe. From this effort, an inventory of improvements was developed, which "magically" equalled \$40,000.00. The improvements listed included: 231 acres of cultivated and fenced fields, 128 frame, log and bark houses, thirty-two barns, store houses and out buildings, and several sugar bush areas.¹¹

Review of the Lawrence Agreement

Was the Lawrence, Minnesota Agreement fair? Essentially, the agreement was not a very fair one because it overlooked and failed to fully compensate the Ojibwe for their improvements to their land, damages to their ricing, cranberry, and hay making areas, and the loss of fishing and hunting territory.

On August 15, 1902, only days before McLaughlin and Michelet came to Lawrence to meet with the Mille Lacs Ojibwe, D.H. Robbins appraised their losses resulting

Record Center.

¹⁰ Meetings of Council Held at Lawrence, Minnesota in Reference to Their Removal from the Former Mille Lac Reservation, 19 August 1902, pp. 48-60, Folder: Mille Lacs Reservation, Council of Mille Lac Indians, 1902, Box 39, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹¹ Meetings of Council Held at Lawrence, Minnesota in Reference to Their Removal from the Former Mille Lac Reservation, 19 August 1902, pp. 61-66; and "Recapitulation of Improvements Made By Mille Lacs Indians," no date, pp. 1-4, Folder: Mille Lacs Reservation, Council of Mille Lac Indians, 1902, Box 39, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

from the lumber industry since 1884. Robbins' report indicated that the Ojibwe were not fairly treated, and that the Mille Lacs people may have been entitled to compensation much greater than that offered by McLaughlin and Michelet. Robbins' appraisal outlined the rice, cranberry and hay making damages suffered by the Mille Lacs people at the hands of lumberman prior to 1884. Certainly from 1884 to 1902, these losses continued.

According to Robbins, in 1884, the Ojibwe gathered annually 2,500 bushels of rice a year, whereas in 1902, they gathered only 200 bushels a year. Robbins report implied that if their losses were 2,000 bushels a year at \$1.00 per bushel for the years 1884 to 1902, their losses would have totalled \$18,000 (18 yrs. x \$2,000). As for cranberries, in 1884, the Ojibwe annually gathered 1,500 bushels, which was valued at \$1.50 a bushel. According to Robbins' figures, their cranberry losses for eighteen yeas would have been \$40,500 (18 yrs. x \$2,250). In regard to damages from lost hay making income, in 1884, Robbins' report suggests that the Mille Lacs Ojibwe put up some 2,000 tons of hay each year at approximately \$5.00 per ton. If their losses for the years 1884 to 1902 are fully counted, then their damages for loss of marsh hay production would equal \$180,000 (18 yrs. x \$10,000)! All total, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe were not compensated for \$238,500 of wild rice, cranberry and marsh hay, which they should have been compensated for at this time—excluding any lost hunting and fishing rights!¹²

There is no explanation why D.H. Robbins' report, regarding these important Ojibwe economic resources, was not taken into account by McLaughlin and Michelet. Perhaps since the congressional act allowed only \$40,000 for compensation, McLaughlin and Michelet overlooked compensating the Ojibwe for damages from these lost resources.

Final Approval of the Lawrence Agreement

On August 30, 1902, the minutes of the council and the inventory of improvements were firmly approved by voice vote by all present. Thereafter, several headmen signed the final agreement. The final agreement stated that the Mille Lacs Ojibwe accepted the appraisement of \$40,000 for improvements made upon their lands that either presently existed or had been destroyed by settlers who forced the

¹² D.H. Robbins to Gus H. Beaulieu, Circa 1900, 310-Irregular Shaped Items, Number Ten, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files, Record Group 75, National Archives.

respective Indian owners from their tracts of land. In signing this agreement, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe agreed to remove from the former Mille Lacs Reservation after they received payment for these past and present improvements. Of the 125 male adult members over eighteen years of age present at the council, 74 signed the foregoing agreement. Two signatures were noticeably absent from the final documents—those of Chiefs Me-ge-zee and Wah-de-nah. The absence of their signatures indicated that the Vineland Ojibwe and some of the Cove Ojibwe bands openly opposed removal and that they had split with the majority led by Wah-we-yay-cum-ig.¹³

Privately, in council, the principal chiefs and headmen of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe decided how to disburse the money from their action. Under the leadership of Wah-we-yay-cum-ig, they agreed to disperse the \$40,000 in the following manner. They allocated \$8,480.00 to various non-Ojibwe (Gus Beaulieu, Daniel B. Henderson, D.H. Robbins, Charles A. Ruffee), for legal and other services. Next, they paid \$2,000.00 to the chiefs for services rendered. Of the remaining amount, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe deposited \$11,020.00 in the First National Bank at St. Paul to the credit of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. They then distributed the remaining \$18,500.00 as per capita payments to individual band members.¹⁴

Households, Land Occupation, and Distribution of Wealth Prior to Removal

The inventory of improvements that the Lawrence Agreement was based on indicated that the Mille Lacs people lived in seven distinct areas along the shoreline of Mille Lacs Lake. They were: Isle, Wadena Point, Wahkon, Cove, Rice Lakes, Vineland and Wigwam Bay. A tabulation of households and locations of these groups follows.¹⁵

¹³ "Minutes of a Council of the Mille Lac Chippewa," 30 August 1902; and Agreement Made by Mille Lacs Indians on the Former Mille Lac Indian Reservation with James McLaughlin, and Simon Michelet, 30 August 1902, pp. 1-14 Folder: Mille Lacs Reservation Council of Mille Lacs Indians, 1902, Box 39, White Earth Agency, Record Group. 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹⁴ "Agreement Made and Entered Between James McLaughlin and Simon Michelet and Mille Lac Chippewa Indians," 30 August 1902, pp. 1-6; "Schedule of Improvements Made By Mille Lac Indians Upon Lands Within the Former Mille Lac Indian Reservation," 30 August 1902, pp. 1-14, Folder: Mille Lacs Reservation Council of Mille Lacs Indians, 1902, Box 39, White Earth Agency, Record Group. 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

Isle Area

Twshp 42 N, R 25 W. (Section 2)	20 Households
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Wadena Point

Twshp 42 N, R 25 W. (Section 4)	1 Household
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Twshp 42 N, R 25 W. (Section 5)	2 Households
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Wahkon Area

Twshp 42 N, R 25 W. (Section 6)	1 Household
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Twshp 42 N, R 25 W. (Section 7)	3 Households
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Twshp 42 N, R 25 W. (Section 17)	19 Households
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Twshp 42 N, R 25 W. (Section 18)	7 Households
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Twshp 42 N, R 26 W. (Section 12)	2 Households
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Cove Area

Twshp 42 N, R 26 W. (Section 10)	1 Household
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Twshp 42 N, R 26 W. (Section 15)	9 Households
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Twshp 42 N, R 26 W. (Section 16)	7 Households
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Twshp 42 N, R 26 W. (Section 17)	12 Households
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Twshp 42 N, R 26 W. (Section 20)	3 Households
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Twshp 42 N, R 26 W. (Section 22)	1 Household
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Twshp 42 N, R 26 W. (Section 27)	1 Household
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Rice Lakes Area (Ogechie, Shakopee and Onamia Lakes)

Twshp 42 N, R 26 W. (Section 31)	2 Households
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Twshp 42 N, R 27 W. (Section 3)	2 Households
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Twshp 42 N, R 27 W. (Section 4)	4 Households
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Twshp 42 N, R 27 W. (Section 23)	3 Households
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Twshp 42 N, R 27 W. (Section 25)	5 Households
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Twshp 42 N, R 27 W. (Section 27)	1 Households
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Wigwam Bay and Sha-bosh-kung Point

Twshp 43 N, R 27 W. (Section 7)	1 Households
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Twshp 43 N, R 27 W. (Section 8)	2 Households
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¹⁵ "Schedule of Improvements Made By Mille Lac Indians Upon Lands Within the Former Mille Lac Indian Reservation," 30 August 1902, pp. 1-14, Folder: Mille Lacs Reservation: Council of Mille Lacs Indians, 1902, Box 39, White Earth Agency, Record Group. 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

Twshp 43 N, R 27 W. (Section 16)	2 Households
Twshp 43 N, R 27 W. (Section 18)	4 Households

Vineland Area

Twshp 43 N, R 27 W. (Section 21)	7 Households
Twshp 43 N, R 27 W. (Section 27)	9 Households
Twshp 43 N, R 27 W. (Section 28)	5 Households
Twshp 43 N, R 27 W. (Section 33)	2 Households

The inventory of improvements also indicated that some of wealthiest people among the Ojibwe were also considered headmen of the bands. The following chart indicates persons considered to be wealthy (improvements valued over \$800.00) and Ojibwe who were also at various times considered either chiefs, headmen, or spokespersons.¹⁶

<u>Name</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Houses</u>	<u>Barns</u>	<u>Appraised Value</u>
Ain-dus-o-ge-shig (Headman)	20	15	4	1	\$1,900.00
Shah-go-bay	66	4	2	1	\$1,200.00
Me-ge-zee (Headman)	74	8	3	1	\$1,140.00
Boin-aince (a.k.a. Bow-naince)	49	3	3	1	\$1,020.00
Ah-show		6	2	1	\$1,000.00
Chah-ge-gah-bow		5	1	1	\$950.00
Ah-je-dum		4	3	1	\$890.00
Ko-gee (Headman)		2	1	1	\$880.00
Wa-de-nah (Headman)		4	2	1	\$870.00
Wah-we-yay-cum-ig (Chief)	49	4	2	0	\$860.00
Nay-guan-aybe (Headman)	79	5	2	0	\$860.00
We-sug	54	5	3	1	\$800.00

¹⁶ "Schedule of Improvements Made By Mille Lac Indians Upon Lands Within the Former Mille Lac Indian Reservation," 30 August 1902, pp. 1-14; "Agreement Made and Entered Between James McLaughlin and Simon Michelet and Mille Lac Chippewa Indians," 30 August 1902, pp. 1-6; and "Recapitulation of Improvements Made By Mille Lacs Indians," no date, pp. 1-4, Folder: Mille Lacs Reservation, Council of Mille Lac Indians, 1902, Box 39, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

Removal to White Earth Reservation, 1902-1914

For the next decade, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe relocated their belongings and households to the White Earth Reservation. Removal was a slow process. In December, 1903, Chief Wah-we-yay-cum-ig, the self-proclaimed leader of all the Mille Lacs bands, set an example for the Mille Lacs bands and removed first. In accordance with the Lawrence Agreement, Wah-we-yay-cum-ig and his family traveled to White Earth Reservation and selected an allotment. After Wah-we-yay-cum-ig removed, other families promised to move the following spring. The promised departure of the Indians was a "source of joy to the settlers around the lake." Settlers around Mille Lacs felt that Wah-we-yay-cum-ig's move would be the wedge to result in the full migration of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe from the area.¹⁷

Following Wah-we-yay-cum-ig's removal, each year several Mille Lacs individuals and/or entire families relocated to the White Earth Reservation. Under the watchful supervision of the White Earth agent, they were escorted there to assure their safe arrival and adaptation to their new environment. And, each year, the White Earth agent transferred the names of these Ojibwe families representing heads of households from the "Non-Removal" rolls to the "Removal" rolls.¹⁸ Once removed, the "Removal" Ojibwe received allotments, and, in theory at least, they became citizens of the United States—subject to the laws of the State of Minnesota, like any other citizen. The federal government no longer had control over their movements, and in fact, had little to do with them.¹⁹

Clearly, the Mille Lacs families "voluntarily" removed to the White Earth Reservation. By 1901, from the long history of resistance to removal by the Mille Lacs Ojibwe, government officials realized that they could not force or arbitrarily remove the remaining Mille Lacs Ojibwe to the White Earth Reservation or elsewhere. Government officials also realized that if the Ojibwe were not persuaded to voluntarily remove; they most likely would return to their former

¹⁷ "Example Set by Old Chief" 15 December 1903, Folder: Removal of Mille Lac Band to White Earth, Box 41, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹⁸ Acting Commissioner to U.S. Indian Agent, 21 May 1908, 123-1908-46,129, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹⁹ Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs to J. Adam Bede, 3 March 1908, 123-1908-46,129, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

"haunts" located on the former Mille Lacs Reservation.²⁰

Ojibwe Rationale for Removal

Many positive and negative reasons account for why the Mille Lacs Ojibwe voluntarily moved to the White Earth Reservation. On the positive side were the promises and inducements offered by the federal government. Ideally, with permanent title to a piece of land, horses, oxen, and farming implements to work the land, the Removal Ojibwe hoped they could enjoy a comfortable existence in their new dwellings complete with cook stoves. These promised material inducements were indeed a strong motivation for removal.

But counterbalanced with this positive picture are a series of negative inducements that made the Ojibwe leave their land they had known for so many years. The first, and foremost, was the hardships of living on the former Mille Lacs Reservation. Their present living conditions were certainly tenuous and for some simply untenable. They no longer could depend on the game and fish from their present land to sustain themselves. Nor could they depend on sustenance and income from ricing, maple sugaring, and haymaking. Second, besides a lack of opportunity to pursue their traditional economic way of life, there were continual and constant complaints against the Mille Lacs people by newly arrived settlers, who saw the Ojibwe as an annoyance to the community.²¹ Third, some Mille Lacs Ojibwe left because they believed that if they did not take an allotment on the White Earth Reservation, chances were they would not get any allotment land at all. They feared becoming landless.²² Finally, some Ojibwe realized the inevitable. The longer they stayed on their former reservation lands and occupied it without land title, the greater their chance of having conflicts with settlers who

²⁰ Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs to A.W. Selover, 16 July 1908, 123-1908-46,129, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

²¹ E.E. Dinwoodie to Indian Commissioner, 13 January 1908, 123-1908-46,129, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

²² Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs to J. Adam Bede, 3 March 1908, 123-1908-46,129, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

bought the former reservation land.

As mentioned earlier, removal was a slow process. Prior to the Lawrence Agreement, 336 Mille Lacs Ojibwe had removed to the White Earth Reservation, leaving approximately 903 Mille Lacs Ojibwe on the former Mille Lacs Reservation.²³ After the Lawrence Agreement, each year an average of one hundred or more Mille Lacs Ojibwe removed to the White Earth Reservation. By 1905, there were almost as many Mille Lacs Ojibwe at the White Earth Reservation as there was on the former Mille Lacs Reservation. After 1905, the balance shifted to the White Earth Reservation. The following chart indicates these migration trends.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Removal Mille Lacs</u>	<u>Non-Removal Mille Lacs</u>	<u>Difference</u>
1901 ²⁴	336	903	567
1902 ²⁵	323	870	547
1903 ²⁶	394	828	434
1904 ²⁷	518	723	205
1905 ²⁸	615	634	19
1906 ²⁹	724	545	-179
1907 ³⁰	907	366	-541
1908 ³¹	966	314	-652

²³ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1902 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902), p. 253.

²⁴ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1902 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902), p. 253.

²⁵ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1903 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), p. 224.

²⁶ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1904 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904), p. 187.

²⁷ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1905 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1905), p. 222.

²⁸ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1906 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1906), p. 232.

²⁹ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1907 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1907), p. 174.

³⁰ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1908 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1908), p. 186.

1909	no data	no data	no data
1910	no data	no data	no data
1911	no data	no data	no data
1912	1,071 ³²	271 ³³	-800
1913	no data	no data	no data
1914 ³⁴	1,152	276	-876

Though the history of the "Removable" Mille Lacs Ojibwe at Elbow Lake and elsewhere on the White Earth Reservation is interesting and yet tragic because promises of good farming land, housing, rations, farming equipment, and other agricultural aid, were not kept,³⁵ the remainder of this report will recount only the history of those Mille Lacs people who remained on their homelands.

"Non-Removable" Mille Lacs Ojibwe

Though scattered throughout the countryside, the Ojibwe who call themselves "Non-removable" Mille Lacs include those Ojibwe living in the communities of Vineland, Cove, Isle, Tamarack River area, and Sandy Lake. From 1902 to 1932, the history of the communities of Vineland, Cove and Isle is one of survival

³¹ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1909 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1909), p. 146.

³² Statistical Chart "Removal Mille Lac Indians," 1912, Folder: ML Indians: Population Totals, Box 39, White Earth Agency Files, 1895-1922, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

³³ Statistical Chart "Non-Removal Mille Lac Indians," 1912, Folder: 1912 Census, Box 275, Consolidated Chippewa Agency Files, 1908 and 1912, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

³⁴ United States, Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1914 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1914), p. 79.

³⁵ For the early history of the Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe see: Chief Wah-we-yay-cum-ig to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 27 June 1910, 121-1910-64,250, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives. For secondary source material see Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986); and Melissa L. Meyer, "Tradition and the Market: The Social Relations of the White Earth Anishenaabeg, 1889-1920" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1985).

against the dominant non-Indian culture, while the communities at Tamarack River and Sandy Lake lived in relative isolation. The history of each of these communities will be addressed separately. The history of the Vineland, Cove and Isle communities will be discussed first, followed by sections on the history of the communities at Sandy Lake and Tamarack River.

"Final Resting Place"

After the Lawrence Agreement, life for the two hundred and fifty "Non-Removable" Mille Lacs Ojibwe families desiring to remain at Vineland, Cove, and Isle was not ideal. After 1900, the Non-Removable Mille Lacs were forced to live as part of a growing and developing community in the area that was based on the arrival of the railroad, the growth of agriculture, and the roots of the tourism industry. These developments held both promise and problems for the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. Each Ojibwe community dealt with the encroaching American settlement in different ways.

In 1902, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe at Vineland were led by Me-ge-zee. Around 1894, the venerated leader Shaw-bosh-kung died at Vineland and he was buried nearby. Me-ge-zee was the son of Shaw-bosh-kung.³⁶ To Me-ge-zee fell the difficult task of maintaining their traditional homeland; and that probably is the main reason why he failed to sign the Lawrence Agreement promulgated by Major James McLaughlin.

Immediately following on the heels of the Lawrence Agreement, Me-ge-zee's village faced its first critical test of resolve to remain there. In 1902, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe at Vineland held legal title to their village area and to a village burial ground nearby (Lot 4, Section 28, Township 43 N, Range 27 W. and Lots 1 and 2, Section 33, Township 43 N, Range 27 W.). These burial grounds were reserved "perpetually" to the Ojibwe by Congress in 1898. From time immemorial, these areas were the final resting place for their dead, and the Mille Lacs Ojibwe best and most beloved leaders, such as Shaw-bosh-kung, who had convinced the Mille Lacs bands to remain loyal and friendly to the Americans during the Sioux uprising in 1862, were interned here. In 1902, one source depicted these sacred

³⁶ Memorandum from Report of Inspector James McLaughlin, 5 November 1914, 307.1-1910-22,704, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

burial grounds this way:

several high knolls or hills . . . and these spots are used as places for graves, but the low spots are unused. There are about 20 Indian graves which have little houses built over them, and about 40 or more which have been destroyed. This is on Lot 4. On Lots 1 and 2 there are about 50 graves in sight and 7 or 8 acres where the Indians have been buried but the evidence from the surface destroyed. Lots 1, 2, and 4 have been the burial ground for the Mille Lac Indians for a great many years.³⁷

However, even in their final resting place, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe were not safe from encroachment by American settlers.

In 1901, two settlers named Joseph P. Jorgensen and Leander Anderson made entry upon these burial grounds. Almost immediately, Jorgensen built a house on his property (Lot 4) and Anderson built one as well (Lot 2). Together, they fenced off Lots 1 and 2 with barbed wire and harvested the marsh hay growing thereon, using the land to graze their cattle. Knowing full well that these lots contained Ojibwe graves, the two settlers "diligently labored to destroy, by burning and other means, the little grave houses, which were at one time numerous," and they obliterated "every indication of graves from these grounds."³⁸

Naturally, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe strongly objected to this desecration of their sacred burial grounds. Their burial grounds were partly saved through desperate protests to government officials, along with affidavits from Chief Wah-we-yay-cum-ig and local settler D.H. Robbins that the lands in question had long been burial grounds for the Ojibwe. Government officials ejected Leander Anderson from Lots 1 and 2, where most of the graves were located, and also forced the removal of all buildings off the property. However, through legal technicalities, J.P. Jorgensen held onto his land entry on Lot 4. He even refused a government offer to purchase this lot for the Mille Lacs Ojibwe.³⁹ The Vineland

³⁷ Simon Michelet to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 19 January 1903, 307.1-1910-22,704, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

³⁸ Simon Michelet to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 21 November 1904, 307.1-1910-22,704, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

Ojibwe won a half-hearted victory against Jorgensen and Anderson. Even though Ojibwe protests forced the ejection of Anderson, their burial grounds had still been desecrated and destroyed. Jorgensen's land entry stood as valid and it was the first of several successful attempts to acquire land used by the Vineland Ojibwe.

Soo Railroad, Boomtowns, and Ojibwe Destitution

The encroachment of Jorgensen and Anderson on the Mille Lacs burial grounds served as a warning sign to the Mille Lacs Ojibwe to expect future encroachment by settlers. The Ojibwe communities at Vineland, Cove, and Isle had experienced encroachment before, and they had learned to sidestep pressure from loggers and a few "brave" Scandinavian settlers. But after the Soo Railroad laid tracks across the former Mille Lacs Railroad in 1907-1908, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe encountered overwhelming settlement pressures on their lands by additional Scandinavian farm families.⁴⁰

Prior to the coming of the railroad, there were small non-Indian communities at Onamia, Cove, and Wahkon that served the needs of nearby logging camps. However, with the coming of the Soo Line, these non-Ojibwe towns grew rapidly and became centers of commerce and trade with stores, banks, and churches that served the growing farming community and the nascent tourist industry as well.⁴¹

It did not take long for newcomers to the Mille Lacs Lake country to complain about having Ojibwe as their neighbors. For instance, in 1908, Congressman J. Adam Bede of Minnesota (1903-1909) received several communications from

³⁹ Simon Michelet to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 21 November 1904.; E.A. Hitchcock to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 14 December 1904; and Simon Michelet to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1 August 1905, 307.1-1910-22,704, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁴⁰ Duane R. Lund, Tales of Four Lakes: Leech Lake, Gull Lake, Mille Lacs Lake, the Red Lakes and the Crow Wing River (Staples, Minnesota: Nordell Graphic Communications, 1977), pp. 94-95.

⁴¹ Duane R. Lund, Tales of Four Lakes: Leech Lake, Gull Lake, Mille Lacs Lake, the Red Lakes and the Crow Wing River (Staples, Minnesota: Nordell Graphic Communications, 1977), pp. 94-95.

constituents regarding the "Non-Removable" Mille Lacs in his district. These letters asked for their removal. Congressman Bede naturally passed them on to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, asking for action to help his "voting" constituents. The Indian Commissioner counseled the Congressman to forbear any action on the matter for a while longer because for fifteen years the Indian Service had patiently tried to persuade the Mille Lacs Ojibwe to remove and they were still undertaking the process.⁴²

Each year the White Earth Indian agent came to the Mille Lacs villages to encourage them to remove. Sometimes, they were successful and other years they were not. However, by 1908, when Congressman Bede asked for action, the pace of removal had slowed considerably, and some Mille Lacs Ojibwe who removed earlier to White Earth, now began to return to the former Mille Lacs Reservation area, which created problems. In 1908, Indian agent John R. Howard reported this situation to his Washington superiors:

. . . I did not have good success in bringing the Mille Lac Indians to the White Earth Reservation; brought only a party of 11 in number and I am sorry to say only one out of the party was a non-removal, the rest have been removed before. . . . Most of them are old women. While I was at Mille Lac I visited about nine Indian villages, I think in all there are about three hundred Indians — I found them comfortable—they have log houses to live in and plenty to eat— I talked with them personally as I know most every one by name, and asked them to remove again to White Earth this winter, they will not come. . . .⁴³

In 1908, the Mille Lacs Indians were reported to be in good shape. However, within a few years, reports began to circulate that they were on the verge of destitution.

For instance, a year after Howard visited them, Darwin S. Hall, who was given charge of removing the last Mille Lacs Ojibwe, described their situation this way:

⁴² J. Adam Bede to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 28 February 1908, 123-1908-46,129, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁴³ D.F. Porter to John R. Howard, 4 December 1908, 123-1908-20,376, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

This band originally numbered about nine hundred, of which about three hundred still remain on and around the old, so called, Mille Lacs Reservation, scattered in three or four counties. Those in the vicinity of the Lake are many miles apart, living in settlements consisting of from three to twelve cabins and birch wigwams. They seem to be quite destitute, sustaining a precarious existence by fishing, picking berries and occasionally a days work.⁴⁴

Hall advised the Mille Lacs Ojibwe that they needed to remove soon and furthermore, he warned Washington officials that the laying of Soo Line track nearby would make the land along the shoreline desirable for summer resorts and cottages. Furthermore, he stated that already resort owners complained that the Ojibwe camped upon much of the shore land, destroying the shade trees and retarding their improvements.⁴⁵ Hall's task for the next two years was to continue to convince the Mille Lacs Ojibwe to remove and avoid further conflicts between Ojibwe and non-Ojibwe.

Isle and Cove Resist Encroachment

Darwin Hall's warning to the Mille Lacs Ojibwe and government officials that they needed to remove soon proved prophetic. Such was the case at Isle. In 1908, a land company purchased and started to sell lots of land along the Mille Lacs shoreline north of present-day Isle (Section 35, Township 43 N., Range 25 W.). This land was still occupied and used by the Ojibwe living there. The land company informed the Indian Service of the purchase of the land and asked the government to remove the Indian occupants before there was any controversy. Of course, the Isle Ojibwe occupying the land strongly protested and even threatened to burn any houses built on the land. However, their threats were ignored and eventually settlement took place there and elsewhere around the Isle area.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ D.S. Hall to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1 August 1909, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁴⁵ D.S. Hall to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1 August 1909, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁴⁶ A.W. Selover to Secretary of the Interior, 6 July 1908, 123-1908-46,129, Letters Received from

At the same time pressure was brought to bear on the Isle Ojibwe, extreme pressure was placed on Chief Wadena's settlement at Cove. Chief Wadena was the head of the "Grand Medicine" or Midewiwin; and considered the leading Ojibwe chief left on the former Mille Lacs Reservation, other than Me-ge-zee at Vineland. Chief Wadena was adamantly opposed to removal and it was his people that had been forced from their village on Mo-zo-mi-ni Point. After this ejectment, Wadena's people moved to two new areas (Sections 11 and 15, Township 42 N., Range 26 W.). However, by 1910, these lands were bought by the Mille Lacs Investment and Improvement Company. The owners were very anxious that the Ojibwe be removed because they wanted to plat this valuable lakeshore land into plots to sell for residences and summer cottages.⁴⁷

In June, 1910, they started eviction proceedings against Wadena and his followers. The Mille Lacs Investment and Improvement Company threatened to remove the Ojibwe by force if necessary.⁴⁸ In addition to threats of physical eviction, they also brought pressure upon the Indian Service through Minnesota Congressman Clarence B. Miller.⁴⁹

In response to these circumstances, Commissioner of Indian Affairs R.G. Valentine wrote Chief Wadena directly regarding the matter, trying to persuade him to remove. Valentine pointed out that the Mille Lacs Ojibwe had signed the Lawrence Agreement in 1902 in which they agreed to remove to the White Earth Reservation. Valentine informed Wadena that that they were illegally occupying

White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁴⁷ Summons Mille Lac Investment & Improvement Company vs. Chief Wadena, et al., 11 August 1910; and Supervisor in Charge to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 18 June 1920, Folder: Removal of Non-Removal Indians (Mille Lacs), Box 42, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center; and D.S. Hall to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1 April 1910; and 1 May 1910, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁴⁸ D.S. Hall to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1 May 1910, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁴⁹ R.G. Valentine to C.B. Miller 2 June 1910; and C.F. Hauke to C.B. Miller, 20 May 1911, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

their land, warning him that he was amenable to the ejection laws of the State of Minnesota. Valentine cautioned Wadena that unless he complied with the agreement and removed, he and his band would fail to receive allotments at White Earth and they would forfeit their right to further assistance and protection by the Indian Service.⁵⁰

If Commissioner Valentine hoped to intimidate Chief Wadena, he failed miserably. Wadena had not signed the Lawrence Agreement and his band was not bound by it. In addition, Wadena had faced ejection before and was undaunted by the prospect. Wadena's indifference miffed Valentine tremendously. Without any legal authority, he ordered Hall to forcibly remove Wadena's band to the White Earth Reservation, stating: "if necessary to effect the removal, you may call on the Superintendent at White Earth to furnish you with his entire police force or with such a detail of policemen as you think necessary."⁵¹ Fortunately, no force was used against Wadena, even though the sheriff of Mille Lacs County offered to physically eject them if the Indian Service paid the expenses. Commissioner Valentine changed his position entirely regarding force and advised Congressman Miller that force was not justified in this case.⁵² Meanwhile, Wadena and his band were allowed to stay.

In January 1911, Hall made his final report regarding his efforts to remove the last Mille Lacs Ojibwe. Since starting in 1909, Hall had succeeded in removing only about fifty Ojibwe. One hundred and seventy-four Ojibwe remained on the former Mille Lacs Reservation. They lived either in Me-ge-zee's village or were scattered along the shore of Mille Lacs Lake. From this point onward, the remaining Mille Lacs Ojibwe were left to their fate under the laws of the state of Minnesota.⁵³

⁵⁰ R.G. Valentine to Wadena, 11 May 1910, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁵¹ Commissioner to D.S. Hall, n.d. (circa June 1910), 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁵² C.F. Hauke to C.B. Miller, 19 July 1910, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁵³ D.S. Hall to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 31 January 1911; and R.G. Valentine to Warren K. Moorehead, 6 March 1911, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives; and R.G. Valentine to Moses E. Clapp, 30 June 1909, 121-1909-85,787, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

Nadir of the Non-Removable Ojibwe

In 1912, pursued by county officials serving notices of ejection from their lands and abandoned by the federal government, the 174 Ojibwe left on their former reservation area had clearly reached the nadir of their existence as a people. To add to these problems, land speculators even threatened to possess Me-gee-zee's village at Vineland as well. Me-gee-zee's father Shaw-bosh-kung received this land (652 acres) in the 1864 Treaty (Fractional Sections, 16, 21, 22, 27, 28, Township 43 N., Range 27 W.) and a fee simple patent was issued to Shaw-bosh-kung on January 19, 1967. During his lifetime, Shaw-bosh-kung never sold his land. Nevertheless, somehow a St. Paul person purported to have title to part of the Vineland village area.⁵⁴

In 1912, White Earth agent John R. Howard was sent to Vineland to investigate this situation and recent reports of destitution among the Ojibwe living there. Fortunately, Howard found that non-Ojibwe claims to the title to Me-gee-zee's village were cloudy and invalid. Notwithstanding, Howard found that reports of destitution among the Ojibwe were not exaggerated.

On the former Mille Lacs Reservation, Howard found 63 Ojibwe families (150 Mille Lacs) living at Vineland, 112 of which he considered destitute and starving. Many of them had become dependent on credit from local traders and store owners to carry them through each year. One such trader who extended credit to the local Ojibwe was D.H. Robbins, who lived very near to Me-gee-zee's village. Sometime around 1900 Robbins turned to trading to make a living and began operating an unlicensed store/trading post out of his residence. By 1911-1912, as many as forty-five Mille Lacs Ojibwe were extended credit at the Robbins trading post.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Oscar Lipps to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 12 May 1912; and C.F. Hauke to Oscar H. Lipps, 20 September 1912, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁵⁵ "Names of Chippewa Indians at Mille Lacs Trading Post, 1911-1912," n.d., Folder: Chippewa at Onamia, Minnesota, 1911-1912, Lund Papers, MHS. Though, Robbins had lived among the Mille Lac band and traded with them, Robbins could only speak enough Chippewa to carry on trade with them at his store. D.H. Robbins and his wife continued in the trading business until at least the summer of 1917. Deposition of David H. Robbins, 6 August 1909, p. 48, Box 2172,

According to Howard, the destitution at Mille Lacs was brought about by a recent stringent law passed by the State of Minnesota that prohibited the catching of fish in any of its lakes except by hook and line. Since at this late date the Mille Lacs Ojibwe depended almost solely on fish for sustenance and they used nets to catch them, this law affected them in the extreme. Apparently, within a short time of the passage of this state law, the Vineland Ojibwe began living from hand to mouth.⁵⁶

Despite their destitute condition, Howard found they still resisted any talk of removal and truly earned the name "Non-Removable." Chief Wadena, through an interpreter, defiantly and clearly expressed this fact to Howard. Wadena stated:

Many years ago our fathers came to Mille Lacs Lake. Since that time many generations of our people have lived here; our children were born here; the bones of our fathers rest here. For many generations our fathers shed their blood in battle with their enemies for the possession of this ground, and we are resolved that our bones shall be placed here with those of our fathers. If the government removes us to White Earth, it must be by force, and when we are released over there, we will find our way back to Mille Lac.⁵⁷

It may have been the way Wadena expressed these feelings, or it may have been that finally a government official fully understood that these Ojibwe would rather die than leave their beautiful homeland. Which ever was the case, perhaps for the first time since the 1860s, federal officials advocated assisting the Mille Lacs Ojibwe in developing their few remaining resources to give them a permanent home at Mille Lacs Lake. Notwithstanding, in his report, Howard described the

Record Group 123, United States Court of Claims, Suitland Federal Record Center; and E.B. Meritt to John H. Hinton, 20 June 1917, Folder: 1917, April-June, Box 7, Pre-Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1895-1922, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁵⁶ Superintendent and Special Disbursing Agent to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 July 1912, Records of White Earth Agency, Entry 1246, Box 19, Central Classified Files, 1885-1922, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁵⁷ Superintendent and Special Disbursing Agent to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 July 1912, Records of White Earth Agency, Entry 1246, Box 19, Central Classified Files, 1885-1922, Record Group 75, National Archives.

meager situation of Me-ge-zee's village. He then recommended government assistance beyond just removing them to the White Earth Reservation. In fact, Howard stepped forth and in so many words recommended that the Me-ge-zee's village be given federal reservation status again and that additional land be purchased for them. His report read:

At Vineland, an Indian named Me-ge-zee or "Eagle" has a homestead of about eighty acres. On this homestead there are living at this date ten families, consisting of sixty-eight Indians, old and young. This is the only spot around Mille Lac lake where the Indians are at present allowed to remain unmolested. I looked over this ground carefully and recommend that authority be granted to build houses at this place to accommodate these sixty-eight people and that sufficient ground be cleared and broken to enable each family to have a garden spot. I believe that twenty acres of this ground can be grubbed out and prepared for seed at an expense of about ten dollars per acre or two hundred dollars. If this work was given to the Indians, it would be of great assistance to them at this time, and additional ground can be prepared for cultivation later. I would suggest, as a matter of precaution, that this land be purchased by the government of Me-ge-zee and held in trust for this band of Indians.⁵⁸

Thereafter, Indian Agent Howard visited the Ojibwe scattered at Onamia, Cove, Wahkon, and Isle. He also found them living in bark wigwams and in need of provisions. Howard recommended that they be removed not to a tract of land adjacent to Me-ge-zee's village or elsewhere at Mille Lacs Lake purchased by the federal government. He also recommended that houses be built for them and that sufficient ground be cleared to enable each family to have a few acres for cultivation. However, Howard cautioned officials in Washington that because of land speculation there would be no land left for the Ojibwe if they did not act soon. The shoreline of the beautiful lake, according to Howard, was rapidly becoming a "summer resort for many families of wealth who are purchasing small tracts and building houses at various points around the lake." Before leaving, Howard provided fifteen days worth of rations to the Mille Lacs bands and recommended

⁵⁸ Superintendent and Special Disbursing Agent to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 July 1912, Records of White Earth Agency, Entry 1246, Box 19, Central Classified Files, 1885-1922, Record Group 75, National Archives.

that a ration payment in goods and supplies be made to the Ojibwe at Onamia to get them through the coming winter.⁵⁹

Washington officials approved Howard's recommendation for a per capita payment, which was welcomed by the Ojibwe, who immediately asked for additional credit at Robbins' store using the payment as collateral, and asked the government to distributed the payment at Vineland, instead of Onamia. Chiefs Me-ge-zee, Wadena, and Na-qu-a-na-ba desired that the provisions be sent to D.H. Robbins trading post instead of Onamia for three reasons. First, the Ojibwe were expected to congregate at Me-ge-zee's village for ceremonies soon and they expected to remain there for some time. Second, they claimed that Onamia was too far for many of them to go, especially the elderly Ojibwe. Third, they argued that Onamia offered temptations of alcohol that they wished to avoid as much as possible.⁶⁰

Me-ge-zee's Reservation

Though Howard's recommendation to aid the Ojibwe with a ration payment in goods and supplies was approved, his recommendation that the remaining Ojibwe living on the former Mille Lacs Reservation be congregated at Me-gee-zee's village and land bought for them set off a storm of protest by local citizens. When they learned of the news, they immediately were up in arms to protest this action.

⁵⁹ Superintendent and Special Disbursing Agent to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 July 1912, Records of White Earth Agency, Entry 1246, Box 19, Central Classified Files, 1885-1922, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁶⁰ However, by this date, the worst whiskey dealers that sponged off the Ojibwe went either to White Earth Reservation to ply their trade or they went out of business. Even some of the saloons in Onamia and elsewhere cooperated after a little persuasion by leading members of the their communities. Saloons posted "No Indians allowed in this Saloon" signs in their establishments. This eliminated daily inbibing in town saloons by local Ojibwe, but "exceptions" were made duing annuity payment time. W.L. Smith and D.H. Robbins to John Howard, 6 November 1912, Records of White Earth Agency, Entry 1246, Box 19, Central Classified Files, 1885-1922, Record Group 75, National Archives; H. Hutching to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 24 February 1908, 126-1908-14,035, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives; and D.S. Hall to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1 February 1910, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

E.E. Dinwiddie, Kathio town clerk, led the local opposition to any and all government plans to establish a permanent Ojibwe village at Mille Lacs Lake. To start with, Dinwiddie began a writing campaign to Minnesota politicians and government officials asking them to oppose this government plan. Dinwiddie's campaign included letters to Adolph O. Eberhart, Governor of Minnesota, United States Senator's Knute Nelson (1895-1923) and Moses E. Clapp (1901-1917) from Minnesota, Indian Commissioner Valentine and President Howard Taft regarding the matter. In his letters, he and other local citizens demanded that the Mille Lacs Ojibwe be removed to the White Earth Reservation as they were supposed to have been under the Lawrence Agreement. According to Dinwiddie, the local settlers had lost their patience and that they have had enough broken promises regarding Ojibwe removal. The settlers considered them a "filthy and degraded lot," "troublesome and thievish," a threat to their women and children and offered to remove them with very little trouble or expense.⁶¹ Resort owners complained about cottages being broken into as well.⁶²

With this kind of political pressure, the Indian Service almost gave in to the demands of these citizens. They advised Minnesota Senator Clapp, a member of the Indian Affairs Committee, that they would make every effort to remove all unallotted Ojibwe from the area. On the other hand, the Indian Service informed the others that they were weighing the recommendations of Howard.⁶³

Meanwhile, Howard visited Vineland again to gather information regarding purchasing sufficient land next to Me-ge-zee's village, in order to relocate about 27 Ojibwe families from elsewhere there. Howard met with the Ojibwe in council to explain the purpose of his visit. They appeared greatly pleased with the project and the prospect of having homes built for them on this land. Howard wanted to secure certain tracts to give the settlement lake frontage of between three and four

⁶¹ E.E. Dinwiddie to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 July 1912; E.E. Dinwiddie to Knute Nelson, 22 July 1912; and E.E. Dinwiddie to President Taft, 8 August 1912, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁶² William Anderson to Knute Nelson, 22 July 1912, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁶³ For instance, see F.H. Abbott to Moses E. Clapp, 15 August 1912; and F.H. Abbott to Knute Nelson, 7 September 1912, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

miles and embrace the sites of two ancient villages. This would give them an exceptionally fine fishing grounds as well as some maple stands for sugaring. From this land, the Vineland Ojibwe could also reach their rice beds on present-day Ogechie, Shakopee, and Onamia Lakes by canoe. In Howard's opinion, the thousand acres of land to be secured would be sufficient for the present and future needs of these people. Howard importuned that the government "quietly" buy Me-ge-zee's land and adjoining tracts before Me-ge-zee died and his land was probated. Howard feared that the land would then be bought by speculators and the Ojibwe driven away. In his opinion, if the government bought the land, it could be held in trust by the United States for the Ojibwe and their heirs.⁶⁴

Local citizens led by Dinwiddie, along with Senator Clapp, openly opposed the purchase of these lands and building houses for the Mille Lacs Ojibwe.⁶⁵ Notwithstanding their opposition, the Indian Service supported Howard's recommendation to purchase land for the Ojibwe at Mille Lacs. In a letter to Senator Clapp, Washington officials reported:

. . . from the information that is before the Office, it is believed that the best interests of these Indians demand that land be purchased for them in the vicinity of Mille Lac Lake as a permanent home, and that if such land is purchased for them they can be encouraged with proper supervision to live in such manner as to make them desirable citizens in the community.⁶⁶

Thereafter, the Indian Office lobbied Congress for appropriations to this end. However, before the final passage of the appropriation bill which contained monies to purchase land, the appropriation was stricken out of the Senate Indian Appropriation Bill, perhaps by Senator Clapp. Meanwhile, the Indian Office began to issue supplies to the Ojibwe in order to get them through another

⁶⁴ John R. Howard to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 30 September 1912 with attached map, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁶⁵ Moses E. Clapp to Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 3 October 1912; and E.E. Dinwiddie to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 14 October 1912, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁶⁶ F.H. Abbott to Moses E. Clapp, 19 October 1912, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

winter.⁶⁷

When Chief Wadena of Cove learned of government plans to purchase land at Vineland for the Mille Lacs Ojibwe, he sought out government officials to request that land be procured for himself and his people. Apparently, he not only did not want to remove to the White Earth Reservation, but he also did not want relocate to Me-ge-zee's village either. Government officials sidestepped his request and avoided giving him a definite answer.⁶⁸

The Mille Lacs people appreciated this effort to purchase additional land and build homes for them, but by the end of 1913, when nothing happened, they pressed government officials regarding these matters. In December, Chiefs Me-ge-zee and Ne-gon-a-binase wrote the Indian Commissioner requesting permission to come Washington, D.C. to discuss the fulfillment of Howard's promises to them, as well as other promises to supply them with horses, livestock and agricultural implements. In addition to these matters, they also requested a school, a church, and a teacher to educate their children.⁶⁹

The government denied their request to come to Washington, but otherwise responded with good news. In early 1914, Indian Commissioner Cato Sells informed the Ojibwe that an appropriation authorizing an expenditure for the purchase of land was before Congress. As soon as it passed, Sells assured the Ojibwe that the government would take steps to purchase the promised lands, erect houses, and furnish them with livestock and farming implements. According to Sells, if the lands were purchased, then the Mille Lacs Ojibwe would not be "compelled to remove to White Earth, but would be allowed to remain on such lands as may be purchased at Mille Lacs Lake." In regard to schools and a church, government officials promised to investigate the matter as soon as possible.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ C.F. Hauke to J.R. Howard, 22 October 1912; and John R. Howard to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 28 October 1912, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁶⁸ C.F. Hauke to J.H. Hinton, 12 May 1913; and J.H. Hinton to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 25 April 1913, 52,840, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁶⁹ Chiefs Me-ge-zee and Ne-gon-a-binase to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 31 December 1913, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

On August 1, 1914, Congress passed legislation (38 Statutes at Large 591) providing for the expenditure of not to exceed \$40,000 in the purchase of land for the homeless "Non-removal" Mille Lacs Ojibwe.

McLaughlin's 1914 Report

The following September, Indian Inspector, James McLaughlin was sent to Mille Lacs to examine their land situation and to negotiate with nearby land owners for purchases. McLaughlin found that the majority of the Ojibwe lived at Vineland with a few scattered families at Onamia, Cove, and Isle.⁷¹

McLaughlin did not describe the village at Vineland in any great detail, yet he thought that about 1,000 acres north and adjacent to the present village (Me-gee-zee's allotment) should be purchased for the Ojibwe by the federal government. His recommendation to buy land north of the village was in direct contrast to Howard's suggestion to purchase land south of the village along the shoreline. McLaughlin's report also ignored the families living at Onamia and Cove as well.

McLaughlin's report did describe the Isle community in some detail. Following their troubles in 1908, some Isle Ojibwe probably relocated to the White Earth Reservation. However, these Ojibwe, like so many others, may have accepted allotments on the White Earth Reservation, then sold them in order to raise enough money to purchase land in their former village areas. Most likely, this is what happened at Isle.⁷² McLaughlin found only a few Ojibwe still living there, but they had recently purchased land. His report stated that:

There are eleven (11) families of Mille Lacs Indians residing on a 40 acre tract of land. . . which they purchased about a year ago [1913],

⁷⁰ Cato Sells to Chiefs Me-ge-zee and Ne-gon-a-binase, 21 January 1914, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁷¹ James McLaughlin to Commissioner of Indian Affairs with attached memoranda, 5 November 1914, 310-1914-119,093, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁷² Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Brenda Boyd," 16 October 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 4-5.

paying \$600.00 cash therefore, and which they hold in common. The Indian owners have erected ten houses of sawed lumber, with sides, ends and roofs covered with building paper, at a cost of about \$100.00 each, and they have cleared a few small patches of ground near their houses upon which they have raised some vegetables this year. . . . There land is rather hilly and quite stony in portions, but the soil is good and there is an abundance of fuel timber on the tract.⁷³

McLaughlin also learned that the Isle Ojibwe, comprised of about fifty persons, including men, women and children who did not wish to relocate to Vineland. They felt they had a better chance to obtain employment near their homes and that they would succeed better in small segregated settlements than by all residing in one large community.⁷⁴

The people of of the town of Isle, according to McLaughlin, also spoke well of their Ojibwe neighbors. They stated that were:

desirous of having them make their permanent home where they are now located. They are said to be good laborers and work a great deal for the neighboring farmers, some of the whites whom I met at Isle stating that the presence of these Indians, who are always ready to work when called upon, has solved the questions of labor strikes in that locality.⁷⁵

After his investigation, McLaughlin concluded that 277 acres of land should be purchased for the Isle community, but that the scattered families at Onamia and Cove should be encouraged to remove to either the Vineland or Isle Districts.⁷⁶

⁷³ James McLaughlin to Commissioner of Indian Affairs with attached memoranda, 5 November 1914, 310-1914-119,093, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁷⁴ James McLaughlin to Commissioner of Indian Affairs with attached memoranda, 5 November 1914, 310-1914-119,093, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁷⁵ James McLaughlin to Commissioner of Indian Affairs with attached memoranda, 5 November 1914, 310-1914-119,093, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁷⁶ James McLaughlin to Commissioner of Indian Affairs with attached memoranda, 5 November 1914, 310-1914-119,093, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified

Upon learning of McLaughlin's recommendation that land be purchased north of Me-gee-zee's village, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe strongly objected. They approved the principal of purchasing land, but they clearly did not trust McLaughlin because of their previous experience dealing with him at Lawrence, Minnesota. They also strongly disagreed with his recommendations to purchase tracts of land north of the village, which the Ojibwe considered swampland and unredeemable.⁷⁷

After holding a council at the Cove village, Chiefs Me-gee-zee (Isle), Ne-gon-a-binase (Cove), and Jim Stevens (Tamarack River), and eighty or more Ojibwe petitioned Washington about the matter. They notified Washington officials that they wanted land purchased for them along the south shore of Mille Lacs Lake from Me-gee-zee's village to Cove. They also desired land southward to include land around Ogechie, Shakopee, and Onamia Lakes where their traditional ricing beds were located and where they presently hunted as well. Non-Ojibwe landowners had been recently ordered them off the rice beds of one of these lakes, an action which concerned them a great deal. Because of this incident, they worried about future access to these lakes. Finally, they also wanted the land purchased for them held in common and not individually allotted.⁷⁸

Court of Claims Case

Meanwhile, the Non-Removable Mille Lacs had not given up on their rights to their 1863 Reservation and their right to claim losses sustained by them by reason of opening of the Mille Lacs Reservation to public entry and settlement. To this end, in 1909, they prevailed upon Congress to pass legislation allowing the Court of Claims to hear their case.⁷⁹ After testimony from witnesses was taken, the

Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁷⁷ Mille Lacs Ojibwe Petition to C.B. Miller, 26 February 1915; and H.E. Poseley to C.B. Miller, (circa February 1915), 310-1914-119,093, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁷⁸ Mille Lacs Ojibwe Petition to C.B. Miller, 26 February 1915; and H.E. Poseley to C.B. Miller, (circa February 1915), 310-1914-119,093, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁷⁹ James Garfield to the President, 15 February 1909, 308.1-1908-11,208, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

Mille Lacs band became excited over the prospect that their claim might give them millions of dollars to be divided among them.⁸⁰ However, it took several years for the case to be resolved, but finally in December, 1916, the Court of Claims made its award for pine cut on the former Mille Lacs Reservation by lumbermen.⁸¹ When the payment was distributed at Mille Lacs in June, 1917, there was a great celebration. Because of the exuberant celebration, local resident-trader D.H. Robbins of Vineland, thought that the Indian Service had issued rations to the Ojibwe. According to Robbins, for four weeks straight, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe engaged in dancing day and night and refused all work offered them, even when there was "plenty of work for them to do at good wages."⁸²

Robbins complained to the Indian Service regarding the constant dancing and celebrating. Though Robbins had lived and traded with the Ojibwe for many years, and they were deeply in debt to him,⁸³ he was not particularly fond of them. Robbins and his wife continued in the trading business until at least the summer of 1917, but when the opportunity came, he sold his property and buildings to the U.S. government. The federal government purchased the land in the Mille Lacs area for an Indian day school, under the authority of Public Law

⁸⁰ D.S. Hall to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 14 August 1909, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁸¹ Superintendent to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 3 January 1917, Folder: Correspondence with CIA, October-December, 1916, Box 7, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁸² E.B. Meritt to John H. Hinton, 20 June 1917, Folder: Correspondence with CIA, April-June, 1917, Box 7, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁸³ For instance in 1915, Me-ge-zee wrote the government concerning this problem. He informed the government that many of his band members had run out of money within a few weeks after their annuity payments were issued in the fall mostly because they had to pay the storekeepers what they owed them on credit. When this happened, Chief Me-ge-zee acted as the liason for the Ojibwe at Vineland, Cove and Isle and requested assistance. The government issued additional rations to the Ojibwe at Vineland, Cove or Isle to get them through the winter, but only to the old and sick who needed it. Me-ge-zee to John R. Howard, 26 November 1915; Superintendent to Me-ge-zee, 6 December 1915; Chief Me-ge-zee to J.R. Howard, 21 January 1916; Chief Me-ge-zee to J.R. Howard, 28 February 1916; Superintendent to Chief Me-ge-zee, 13 March 1916; Superintendent to Ne-gaun-e-be-nais and Superintendent to William Henry, 11 May 1916, Records of White Earth Agency, Entry 1246, Box 19, Central Classified Files, 1885-1922, Record Group 75, National Archives.

160 (August 1, 1914), authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to purchase land for homeless Non-Removal Mille Lacs Indians. The D.H. Robbins property was chosen for this site among several other parcels and the government proposed constructing a new school building there in the future. Because plans for the school were delayed for some time, the government leased the former Robbins trading post store to Harry D. Ayer and his wife Jeannette, a couple from Minneapolis, who would have a profound affect on the lives of the Ojibwe living nearby.⁸⁴

Tourism, Loss of Isolation, and the Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post

Unlike the Mille Lacs Ojibwe elsewhere at Sandy Lake and Tamarack River, during the 1920s, the Ojibwe at Vineland, and to some extent Cove and Isle, did not live in an isolated area apart from most non-Ojibwe communities. After World War I, there was a rapid expansion in the resort industry at Mille Lacs Lake. Several factors contributed to this expansion; including improved roads, increased automobile usage, increased leisure time, as well as extensive promotional campaigns undertaken by various private and state-wide tourism promotion associations. Because of its excellent fishing and nearest to the Twin Cities, Mille Lacs Lake became an important fishing and later resort area. By 1917, with the construction of all-weather roads through the area, a number of automobile-oriented resorts developed around Mille Lacs Lake, including the Mille Lacs Lake Resort, Shore Acres, Murry Beach Fishing Resort, Bay View Hotel and Camp Izaty's, which was developed in 1914 by the Mille Lacs Investment and Improvement Company. Each Memorial Day, fishermen came to the lake for opening day, rowing out or being towed out into the lake by launches to use their cane poles and droplines baited with minnows to fish for walleye and other fish.⁸⁵

During the time period of transition, Harry and Jeannette Ayer leased the Robbins trading post and when the trading post became available in 1918, they

⁸⁴ U.S. West Research, "Historic Structures Report: Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post Site, Mille Lacs Lake, Minnesota," Prepared for the Minnesota Historical Society, June 1992, 1977, pp. 11-12.

⁸⁵ Duane R. Lund, Tales of Four Lakes: Leech Lake, Gull Lake, Mille Lacs Lake, the Red Lakes and the Crow Wing River (Staples, Minnesota: Nordell Graphic Communications, 1977), pp. 96-97.

obtained a license to operate a store on the Robbins' property. The Robbins trading post was a small operation, but it did have an established Ojibwe clientele that were dependent on the trading post for goods and credit.⁸⁶

Harry and Jeannette Ayer realized the potential of the trading post/general store and tourist possibilities for the area and rapidly capitalized on them. By the spring of 1923 with the completion of a new scenic highway, County Highway 169, the Ayers were ready to invest in the tourism and the resort industry. During the next few years, along with their trading post/general store, they built up a boat rental business by renting equipment along with bait to visiting fishermen and tourists. In 1925, with the money earned from the trading post, and the thriving boat rental business, the Ayers built a new trading post/general store, called the Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post, along with a dining hall, seasonal cottages or cabins for the tourists, and by 1929, even a fishing boat factory.

Since colonial days, trading posts have played a key economic and social role in the lives of the Ojibwe. At the time that the Ayers took over the Robbins trading post, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe bands were entering a transitional phase in their history. Their basic economic pattern of using available natural resources (fishing, hunting and gathering) was now limited. In order to survive, they needed to change and adapt to a cash economy based on the growing tourist business. During this transition period, many members of the Mille Lacs band entered the new cash economy by virtue of association with the Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post. It provided a source for general food goods and other supplies needed on a daily basis. To buy these goods, some Mille Lacs Ojibwe paid cash from their annual tribal annuities, while others began to exchange tourist trade goods, valued cultural items, as well as food items, such as wild rice and maple sugar for goods and credit at the trading post.⁸⁷

During the 1920s, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe band benefitted in many ways by their relationship with Harry and Jeannette Ayer. For instance, with his background in agriculture, Harry Ayer immediately set about encouraging the Ojibwe to take up co-operative gardening, and particularly to engage in the cultivation of

⁸⁶ U.S. West Research, "Historic Structures Report: Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post Site, Mille Lacs Lake, Minnesota," Prepared for the Minnesota Historical Society, June 1992, pp. 13-14.

⁸⁷ U.S. West Research, "Historic Structures Report: Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post Site, Mille Lacs Lake, Minnesota," Prepared for the Minnesota Historical Society, June 1992, pp. 103-105.

cucumbers, the surplus of which Ayer sold to a pickling factory which had a salting station at Wahkon, Minnesota. By the fall of 1919, members of the Mille Lacs band produced 21,627 pounds of cucumbers for which they earned \$379.40. Besides deriving extra cash from this endeavor for the year, the Vineland Ojibwe also produced potatoes, beans, and squash on this land—over and above their winter needs.⁸⁸

The Mille Lacs Ojibwe at Vineland benefitted in other ways from their relationship with the Ayers. It is true that from May to September, the general store catered to the needs of tourists and fishermen, but during the rest of the year, it served the Indian community with goods and supplies. The general store stocked typical items needed and desired by Ojibwe, such as candy, snuff, bread, various canned goods, bins of bulk food items, such as dried beans, white rice, oatmeal, cornmeal, sugar, beans, salt, flour, dry goods, such as work clothes (pants and shirts), mosquito netting, gloves, dress goods, quilting scrap bundles, stockings, bolts of cloth and thread and similar items. Added to the list were special items for the local Ojibwe, including beading needles and a wide assortment of trade beads as well as green "Japanese" tea that the local Ojibwe drank before World War II.⁸⁹

In addition to stocking goods for the Ojibwe, the Ayers bought their surplus goods from the local Ojibwe, pumping money into their economy. Harry Ayer bought garden vegetables and wild rice from the local Ojibwe, which he most likely sold to wholesale grocers. By 1930-1932, Harry Ayer also built a maple sugar refinery near his trading post, which produced approximately 700-1,000 gallons of maple syrup a year. Ayer rented land and trees from nearby individual Ojibwe at a rate of \$.10 per maple tree and most likely used Ojibwe labor to refine the maple sugar.⁹⁰

The Ayers also acquired handicraft merchandise from the Mille Lacs Indian band each spring. Indian women of the band who wished to sell items that

⁸⁸ U.S. West Research, "Historic Structures Report: Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post Site, Mille Lacs Lake, Minnesota," Prepared for the Minnesota Historical Society, June 1992, pp. 17-18.

⁸⁹ U.S. West Research, "Historic Structures Report: Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post Site, Mille Lacs Lake, Minnesota," Prepared for the Minnesota Historical Society, June 1992, pp. 29-32.

⁹⁰ U.S. West Research, "Historic Structures Report: Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post Site, Mille Lacs Lake, Minnesota," Prepared for the Minnesota Historical Society, June 1992, pp. 33 and 56.

spring, made beaded objects (necklaces and chains) and birch bark objects to sell in the sales room of trading post during the winter months. They did not make many large items like handbags because that meant a larger investment of time, work and money. Oftentimes, Jeannette Ayer would visit with people in the village and request certain birch bark craft items be made for the next tourist season, especially if they were short of a particular trade item. Certain people were better at making certain items, so they specialized in that line. Middle-aged and elderly Ojibwe women either brought individual items or bundles of items into the trading post during the spring season. Jeannette Ayer paid the Indian women what she thought she could double and sell the item for in the sales room. This 100 per cent mark up system also pertained to Indian hand-crafted items the Ayers acquired from other parts of the country.⁹¹

Throughout the 1920s, the general store continued to extend credit to the local Ojibwe against their hand-crafted goods. However, in 1930, in the midst of the Depression, extending credit to Ojibwe became difficult, and the Ayers began using "brass trade tokens in values of 5, 10 and 25 cents" to pay local Mille Lacs Indians for their native crafts, which they sold to the tourists. One writer described the token trading system in this way.

From a general store attached to the museum, groceries, clothing and other merchandise was sold to the Indian in an unique manner. The method used in paying the Chippewa and their purchases of merchandise at the store was as follows: one half of the value of an Indian's handicraft was credited to his account and the other half was given him in trade tokens. If he had no account at the store he was paid one half in cash and one half in trade tokens. This method of payment kept accounts balanced and insured necessities for the families as less cash was available for liquor and non-essentials. Tokens were never used as payment for work done for the operators of the trading post. They were used only as a means of assistance to the Indian in disposing of his native handicraft.⁹²

91 U.S. West Research, "Historic Structures Report: Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post Site, Mille Lacs Lake, Minnesota," Prepared for the Minnesota Historical Society, June 1992, pp. 38-39.

92 George A. Flaskerd, "Merchandise Trade Tokens Used by Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post," Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XXIV (July, 1962): 72-73.

The Ayer general store did not have a monopoly of trade with the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. There was another general store at Cove, Minnesota for an indeterminate time period. Sometimes, Mille Lacs Ojibwe also traveled south to Onamia and then took a train to Pierz, Minnesota to do their shopping and then returned on the next train.⁹³

The general store served several community functions as well. When annual treaty payments from the Indian Service were due, they were paid out to the Mille Lacs Ojibwe from the general store. As always, this system allowed the Indians to pay off their credit accounts at the Mille Lacs Trading Post. In addition to providing this service, the trading post acted as the post office for the local Ojibwe, with the Ayers distributing mail to the residents when they came to the general store. The trading post was also a social gathering area for some members of the tribe year round. In the winter, local Indian men came to the store in the morning, half a dozen or so, to sit around the heater and play cards. In the summertime, the members of the Mille Lacs Band often gathered in front of the general store or sat on the porch to play moccasin games. This game of chance was very simple affair.⁹⁴ One person described the game playing at Mille Lacs this way:

They'd sit out on the ground in front of the trading post, or they'd sit on the porch. They spread a deerskin or blanket or something out there, and they each had a long stick about two or three feet long, like a willow stick. Then they had these little square pieces of buckskin, about seven inches square, maybe six inches, and they were a little bit heavy, so I think they must have been double. Then they had a little steel ball, like a small marble, and the game was to—the one who was the dealer would make believe he was putting the steel ball under one of these three buckskin patches, pieces. Then he'd sit back, and they'd all sit back and look. Finally one would take his willow stick, and he'd point to one, and he'd lift it up. If it was there, then he got the marble. If it wasn't there, then he was out.⁹⁵

⁹³ U.S. West Research, "Historic Structures Report: Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post Site, Mille Lacs Lake, Minnesota," Prepared for the Minnesota Historical Society, June 1992, p. 34.

⁹⁴ U.S. West Research, "Historic Structures Report: Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post Site, Mille Lacs Lake, Minnesota," Prepared for the Minnesota Historical Society, June 1992, p. 35.

⁹⁵ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Letitia Caldwell," 9 November 1991,

Employment of Ojibwe Men and Women

The Ayer trading post/general store/resort employed both Ojibwe women and men, exposing them to cash/labor economy. Young Ojibwe women acted as day clerks and salespeople in the trading post, where they displayed and sold local handicrafts. The Ayers also hired Ojibwe women as housekeepers and waitresses in the dining hall during the tourist season.⁹⁶

Mille Lacs Ojibwe men were hired by the Ayers and employed in a number of capacities. In 1925, Harry Ayer employed several Ojibwe men to construct the trading post/resort complex. Thereafter, on a regular basis, he employed several men and young Ojibwe boys as either storekeepers, handymen, and/or grounds keepers. In the winter, Ojibwe helpers put up ice in the ice house, packing it with sawdust to keep it for the summer tourist season. When fishing season opened, Ojibwe men found employment as fishing guides. Each spring with the opening of fishing season on May 15th, the Ayers rented boats and provided Indian fishing guides to the fisherman. During most of the year, a majority of the fishing could be done from along the shallow reefs, but in July and August the fish migrated into cooler "deep water." These deeper parts of the lake were too far from shore to be safely reached by rowboat alone. To meet this situation, a rowboat-towing launch system was introduced on the lake so fishermen could enjoy fishing year round. Ojibwe guides from Mille Lacs participated in this system, hooking fifteen or so row boats together at a time and then pulling them out as one into the bay with a motor boat. Harry Ayer employed only Ojibwe guides, perhaps as many as fifteen men and boys each summer. These guides were knowledgeable about weather conditions as well.⁹⁷

Besides these tourist-related activities, in the fall of 1928, Harry Ayer set Mille Lacs Ojibwe men to work with nails, saws, and hammers in a two-story gable end frame boat factory, which contained large windows on the first and second floors so the workers would have ample light for their work constructing and painting

Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, June 1992, p. 28.

⁹⁶ U.S. West Research, "Historic Structures Report: Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post Site, Mille Lacs Lake, Minnesota," Prepared for the Minnesota Historical Society, June 1992, p. 39.

⁹⁷ U.S. West Research, "Historic Structures Report: Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post Site, Mille Lacs Lake, Minnesota," Prepared for the Minnesota Historical Society, June 1992, pp. 26-29, 50-51, and 56-57.

boats. On January 1, 1929, the Ojibwe drove the first nail into the first boat produced by the Mille Lacs Indian Boat Works. From January 1 to September, 1 1929, the Ojibwe at the Mille Lacs Indian Boat Works constructed more than 30 boats.⁹⁸ It was not long before it was considered a success by the government. For instance, in 1929, the Superintendent of the Consolidated Chippewa Agency commented on the industrial and economic impact of the Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post on the reservation. His annual report stated:

Mr. H.D. Ayer of Vineland, conducting an Indian trading post and a summer resort at Vineland is furnishing the Chippewas of his locality important opportunity for employment. In addition to purchasing all the craft articles offered he has at his place in operation a boat factory that employs several Chippewas now and promises to be a growing industry.⁹⁹

By 1931, the boat works employed six Ojibwe with a non- Ojibwe master builder to direct them. The first boats were made for fishing, but by 1931, a wide variety of boats were made. Even a specially designed boat was in the works for the use of the United States Forestry Service. In the same year, the Consolidated Chippewa Agency Superintendent reported in the industrial section of his annual report:

Also at Mille Lacs, Trader Harry D. Ayer employs a crew of all Indian labor in his boat factory, besides employing much Indian labor during the maple sugar and fishing seasons.¹⁰⁰

Undoubtedly, the Harry and Jeannette Ayer profited from these ventures with the nearby Ojibwe band. The local Ojibwe provided a source of cheap labor, an outlet for his store goods, a steady source of handicraft items for the tourist trade, and an attraction for tourists that kept coming to his trading post—all of which

⁹⁸ U.S. West Research, "Historic Structures Report: Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post Site, Mille Lacs Lake, Minnesota," Prepared for the Minnesota Historical Society, June 1992, pp. 57-59.

⁹⁹ Annual Report of Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1929, pp. 23-24, Folder: 1929 Narrative, Box 342, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹⁰⁰ Annual Report of Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1931, pp. 6-7, Folder: 1931 Narrative, Box 343, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

provided a steady source of income and sizeable earnings for the Ayers.

The local Ojibwe also gained from the relationship as well. The Mille Lacs Indian Trading post provided key employment for several band members. Jobs at the trading post included: maintaining the grounds of the resort, cleaning cabins, selling tourist items in the curio shop, running the general store, guiding fishermen on Mille Lacs Lake, and building boats at the Mille Lacs boat factory. In addition, Mille Lacs Band members were paid to hold ceremonials, games, and craft-making demonstrations on the grounds of the trading post by the Ayers, in order to attract the tourists to the trading post. In addition to employment, the Ayers operation also provided training in agriculture and manual skills, and existed as an outlet for traditional Ojibwe products (rice, maple sugar, and handicraft items). As one can see, the Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post played a key role in the local economy of the Mille Lacs Indian Reservation and dominated the Vineland Ojibwe economy in the 1920s and into the early 1930s, during the height of the Great Depression. This critical economic role would not be displaced until World War II, when many Mille Lacs families moved to the Minneapolis-St. Paul area and elsewhere for jobs in war-related industries.¹⁰¹

Non-Removable Cove and Isle Ojibwe

The Ojibwe living at Cove and Isle were not as fortunate in finding employment and developing their communities as those Ojibwe living at Vineland. They had no equivalent source of employment and income to carry them along during the 1920s. Nevertheless, they hung on to their lands as long as possible.

Chief Wadena continued as the leader of the small Cove settlement.¹⁰² Throughout the 1920s, Chief Wadena harassed government officials regarding lost Ojibwe treaty rights and broken promises by the government to him and other Ojibwe. Chief Wadena also argued to protect the sovereignty of the Ojibwe bands, insisting that the State of Minnesota had no right to regulate Ojibwe hunting and

¹⁰¹ U.S. West Research, "Historic Structures Report: Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post Site, Mille Lacs Lake, Minnesota," Prepared for the Minnesota Historical Society, June 1992, pp. 103-105.

¹⁰² Superintendent to Commissioner, 13 March 1928, Folder: Mille Lacs Band Claims (Non-Removal), Box 52, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

fishing.¹⁰³ Wadena pressed to send Ojibwe delegations to Washington, D.C. to right these wrongs, but he was stymied by government officials and other Ojibwe, such as Chief Me-gee-zee.¹⁰⁴ Wadena had never received an allotment at the White Earth Reservation and refused to sign the Lawrence Agreement as well. In the 1920s, he was finally evicted by the Mille Lacs Investment and Improvement Company from their lands (Sections 11 and 15, Township 42 N., Range 26 W.). Thereafter, he lived on an area land that belonged to a Catholic priest, who had passed away. He and his few followers refused to leave this land (Section 16 and 21, Township 42 N., Range 26 W.).¹⁰⁵ In the 1920s, the few families living at Cove were constantly pressured to move elsewhere, either to the White Earth Reservation or to Vineland, even by Harry Ayer, who convinced two Cove families to move to Vineland.¹⁰⁶ Eventually, after the death of Wadena, the Ojibwe groups living at Cove dwindled away.

The Ojibwe living at Isle prospered and survived the 1920s, under the leadership of John Jekey, who was considered the spokesperson for the Isle Ojibwe.¹⁰⁷ Though the Isle Ojibwe had been promised land by McLaughlin in 1915, they did not receive allotments until 1923, when official census rolls were made for the Isle Ojibwe.¹⁰⁸ In 1923-1924, they received 280 acres of trust allotments, which was divided into thirty-seven allotments. The allotted land was poor and not well-

¹⁰³ Superintendent to Commissioner, 13 March 1928, Folder: Mille Lacs Band Claims (Non-Removal), Box 52, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹⁰⁴ H.D. Ayer to C.V. Peel, 12 November 1919; and Supervisor in Charge to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 11 May 1920, Folder: Correspondence with CIA, 1920 (April-June), Box 8, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹⁰⁵ Supervisor in Charge to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 25 March 1920, Folder: Correspondence with CIA, 1920 (April-June), Box 8, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹⁰⁶ H.D. Ayer to P.R. Wadsworth, 25 March 1920, Folder: Ayer, Harry D., Box 10, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹⁰⁷ Superintendent to Commissioner, 13 March 1928, Folder: Mille Lacs Band Claims (Non-Removal), Box 52, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹⁰⁸ W.M. Wooster to P.R. Wadsworth, 4 December 1923, Folder: Mille Lacs Band Claims (Non-Removal), Box 52, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

suited to agriculture, and during the 1920s, they eked out a living and support themselves, either by working this poor agricultural land, or by working in the neighboring community of Isle. When the Depression hit the Isle area, many of the Ojibwe living there, like elsewhere, could not find work. The majority of the families did not live on the allotted land, but instead occupied the forty acre tract they had purchased in the past. This land also included their community graveyard as well. By the height of the Depression, the Ojibwe were delinquent in paying their property taxes on this tract of land, and it was set to revert to the State of Minnesota.¹⁰⁹

Non-Removable Tamarack River People

The history and lifestyle of the Ojibwe living at Tamarack River differed considerably from the history of the Vineland, Cove, and Isle Ojibwe. Up until 1905, the Tamarack River Ojibwe had been largely ignored by the federal government. They had moved to the Tamarack-St. Croix River area sometime in the 1880s, where they made their living by working in local lumber camps as log-drivers and by living a seasonal round of life. At this time, their main village was located on a 40 acre tract along the upper Tamarack River in eastern Pine County (Section 26, Township 42 N., Range 17 W.), which they purchased with their own money. Living in this sparsely settled area of Minnesota, they had been completely ignored by the government, even by the Chippewa Indian Commission of 1889.¹¹⁰

In 1905, this situation changed. Under the authority the White Earth Indian Agent Simon Michelet, Theodore H. Beaulieu visited and investigate their situation to assert whether or not they should be removed to the White Earth Reservation. Evidently, Beaulieu succeeded in convincing seventeen members of the Tamarack bands to remove to the White Earth Reservation in that year. However, the remaining Tamarack Ojibwe elected to stay at their village. The remaining families included John, Bill and Mary Nickaboyn (a.k.a. Nickaboine),

¹⁰⁹ "Final Project Plan, Mille Lacs 1937, IRA Expendable Project," 1937, p. 2, Folder: Final Project Plan, Mille Lacs IRA, 1937 Expendable Land Acquisition Program (Office Copy), Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹¹⁰ Theodore H. Beaulieu to Simon Michelet, 8 December 1907, Folder: Removal of Mille Lacs Band to White Earth, Box 41, Pre-Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1895-1922, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

Steve, Frank and Sam Clark, John Moose, John Bob, and John Bewash. They held title to their village area jointly.¹¹¹ Two other families that lived in the area were O-mah-kah-kee and his family and Nah-wah-quay.¹¹²

The Tamarack River Ojibwe might have remained in this isolated state, enjoying the fruits of their environment and the fruits of their labor in the lumber camps, if the pine resources in their part of Minnesota had not dried up. By 1908 or so, the lumber industry had exhausted the timber in their area, and the Ojibwe, who worked in the forests each winter, were no longer needed. With no pine left, settlers began to buy up land in the area. Thereafter, they pushed the federal government to remove their Ojibwe neighbors to the White Earth Reservation.¹¹³

In late 1908, Senator Clapp from Minnesota began receiving complaints regarding the Pine County Ojibwe from St. Croix River settlers. Senator Clapp, who was former prosecuting attorney from St. Croix County, Wisconsin, was very familiar with the Ojibwe in the eastern part of Pine County.¹¹⁴ He wrote the Indian Service regarding their removal stating:

That county is sparsely settled and while, of course, there is probably no danger from these Indians, yet they do terrorize the people there who are largely from foreign countries and not familiar with Indians. They are sort of lawless, cutting down timber and hunting without reference to the rights of others. . . .If it is not too late in the season, I wish something might be done toward getting them over to White Earth.¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ Theodore H. Beaulieu to Simon Michelet, 16 March 1905, Folder: Removal of Mille Lacs Band to White Earth, Box 41, Pre-Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1895-1922, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center; and F.E. Leupp to Moses E. Clapp, 7 November 1908, 123-1908-74,787, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹¹² Theodore H. Beaulieu to Simon Michelet, 8 December 1907, Folder: Removal of Mille Lacs Band to White Earth, Box 41, Pre-Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1895-1922, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹¹³ Moses E. Clapp to Francis E. Leupp, 4 November 1908, 123-1908-74,787, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹¹⁴ Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1949 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1950), pp. 978-979.

¹¹⁵ Moses E. Clapp to Francis E. Leupp, 4 November 1908, 123-1908-74,787, Letters Received from

Senator Clapps' inquiry brought an immediate response from Indian Service officials. They sent the White Earth agent to Pine County to make every reasonable effort to induce the scattered Ojibwe there to remove to White Earth.¹¹⁶ In May, 1909, Indian agent Howard visited them and assessed their situation in this way:

...these Indians are not ready to move at this present time, they promise to do so later in the summer, some time in July or August. The greater number of these Indians had a very difficult time in supporting themselves and their families during the past winter. A number of them were detected in hunting wild game contrary to the State statutes and were convicted and sentenced to the State penitentiary at Stillwater, serving short sentences.¹¹⁷

Since they had not paid taxes on their land for some time, they also were in danger of losing their land, at which time, Howard thought they would be forced to remove to the White Earth Reservation. Interestingly, Howard also pointed out that they labored for nearby settlers in the summer, and that in the winter, fifteen to twenty men drove logs on the St. Croix River, making about \$2.00 to \$2.50 per day for their work. Howard believed they were reluctant to remove because their relatives were buried nearby and that these "medicine Indians," as he called them, constantly attended and cared for these graves.¹¹⁸

After Howard's visit, Darwin Hall, Commissioner in charge of removal of all the Mille Lacs Ojibwe, visited them with the full intent of convincing the scattered band to remove to the White Earth Reservation. The settlement he visited in the fall was located along the Wisconsin border and he reported to Washington officials that:

White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹¹⁶ F.E. Leupp to White Earth Agent, 7 November 1908, 123-1908-74,787, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹¹⁷ John R. Howard to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 25 May 1909, 41,062, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹¹⁸ John R. Howard to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 25 May 1909, 41,062, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

the settlement consists of about fifteen log cabins and shacks built upon a small tract of land owned by the Indians and situated on the Tamarac River near the Wisconsin State line, about thirty miles from the railroad with some very rough wagon roads to reach it. We found in this village only two persons, one old and one young woman. The others of the settlement were gathering rice at lakes some distance from the settlement. We visited a number of these rice gathering camps and talked with them regarding their removal to White Earth. A number indicated their desire to remove to White Earth after rice making. . . . I informed them . . . that this is the last time the Indian office will make such effort to assist them to remove to White Earth where they may get comfortable homes of their own. I shall expect to start these at Mille Lacs, or such of them who have indicated a desire to move at the end of this month or the first of next, as their hay and rice making will be finished by this time.¹¹⁹

Apparently, some of the Tamarack River Ojibwe sent for Hall to come see them again about removal for the following spring. Hall visited them once more. They indicated to him that most of them would remove to White Earth during the year. By August, 1910 about twenty Ojibwe followed through on this promise.¹²⁰ These were probably the last Tamarack River Ojibwe to remove to the White Earth Reservation. The Tamarack River Ojibwe that remained behind became known as the "Non-Removable" Tamarack or the Danbury Ojibwe because they lived near to this community across the St. Croix River.

Land Purchase at Tamarack River

From 1910 to 1914, Indian Service officials ignored the Danbury Ojibwe. However, in October 1914, Indian Inspector McLaughlin, in keeping with investigating the conditions of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe and their need for land, visited the Tamarack

¹¹⁹ D.S. Hall to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 15 September 1909, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹²⁰ D.S. Hall to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1 March 1910; 1 April 1910; 15 June 1910; 1 July 1910; and 1 August 1910, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

River settlements. McLaughlin reached the principal village by way of Danbury, Wisconsin in order to make himself familiar with the terrain. He described the area as typical "cut over lands" with numerous small lakes, some marsh and swamp tracts, and timbered areas that when cleared could support a variety of crops.¹²¹ His mission was to determine whether or not the Tamarack Ojibwe should be removed to Vineland or not, and/or whether they should have land purchased for them.¹²²

Apparently, by 1914, the Tamarack Ojibwe lived in several settlements on land they purchased with their own money. To McLaughlin, they appeared to be self-supporting. According to McLaughlin, John Churchill owned a 40 acre tract of land, where he had a "very comfortable house, 2 milk cows, and about five acres under cultivation, with an excellent crop of corn and vegetables thereon." About a mile north of Churchill's tract, six families led by a full-blood Ojibwe named James Razor lived on a 120 acre tract that they held in common. They had two very good houses and another under construction. These families each had "small patches cleared and under crop and they own 35 well-bred hogs, apart from some good teams and wagons." About three miles north of the Churchill camp was another village. Scattered about from these Pine County settlements, along the Tamarack River and its tributaries and even over the state boundary line in Wisconsin, lived additional Ojibwe families. These Ojibwe informed McLaughlin of their desires to remain where they had lived for a number of years past.¹²³

Chief Ne-ba-go-shig, otherwise known as Jim Stevens, led the various Ojibwe-families. The Danbury Ojibwe relied on Chief Stevens to correspond with the federal government on matters that concerned them. Their children attended a day school only a mile or so from their main encampments.¹²⁴

¹²¹ James McLaughlin to Commissioner of Indian Affairs with attached memoranda, 5 November 1914, 310-1914-119,093, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹²² James McLaughlin to Commissioner of Indian Affairs with attached memoranda, 5 November 1914, 310-1914-119,093, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹²³ James McLaughlin to Commissioner of Indian Affairs with attached memoranda, 5 November 1914, 310-1914-119,093, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹²⁴ Jim Stevens to J.R. Howard 21 December 1915, Records of White Earth Agency, Entry 1246,

After his visit to the Danbury Ojibwe, McLaughlin reported that these self-supporting Ojibwe received nothing from the government other than their per capita shares of annual payments, and had gained the respect from settlers among whom they resided. Because of their attachment to their lands, McLaughlin recommended that additional land be purchased for them near Danbury.¹²⁵

Bad Year at Tamarack

Life among the Danbury Ojibwe was a precarious existence. For instance, in 1915-1916, the Tamarack Ojibwe suffered considerably from a lack of work and food for their people. In 1915, when band members could not find enough work and they were "nearly out of grub," Chief Jim Stevens wrote Superintendent Howard requesting rations for his band.¹²⁶ Unfortunately, at that time, the government had limited supplies available and could not provide them with rations for several months.¹²⁷ Rations for about 60 old and sick people were sent, but over 100 Ojibwe appeared and asked for supplies.¹²⁸

Economic problems continued throughout the year, and Chief Stevens pleaded with Superintendent Howard for additional help because the local traders no longer could extend them credit. Stevens wrote:

Box 19, Central Classified Files, 1885-1922, Record Group 75, National Archives; and James McLaughlin to Commissioner of Indian Affairs with attached memoranda, 5 November 1914, 310-1914-119,093, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹²⁵ James McLaughlin to Commissioner of Indian Affairs with attached memorandum, 5 November 1914, 310-1914-119,093, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹²⁶ Jim Stevens to J.R. Howard 21 December 1915, Records of White Earth Agency, Entry 1246, Box 19, Central Classified Files, 1885-1922, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹²⁷ Superintendent to James Stevens, 24 December 1915, Records of White Earth Agency, Entry 1246, Box 19, Central Classified Files, 1885-1922, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹²⁸ Superintendent to Me-ge-zee, 18 February 1916, Records of White Earth Agency, Entry 1246, Box 19, Central Classified Files, 1885-1922, Record Group 75, National Archives.

These Indians at Tamarack are in need of groceries, and they need it in worst way. There were no work going around here so none of us had a chance to make any thing to buy food to satisfied our wants. Our store keepers who has been holding us up for the past six months are asking us for settlements, they say they can not stand it for they have to pay for the stuff in 30 days and their money is getting short.

There are some familys here who I do not believe had a good square meal for over a month. We want to get Tea, Sugar, beans, pork, Flour and rice and want all of the Indians to get it. Children the same as grown up persons for they eat just as much as the older folks. We pray that you will look after this right away and, send rations out for us for God know we need it and need it bad.¹²⁹

Improved Conditions and Land Purchases for Danbury Ojibwe

Fortunately, the Danbury Ojibwe made it through the year and there conditions improved thereafter. In 1917, there were approximately 150 Tamarack people residing in Pine County, Minnesota, living in 38 family units. Their population almost equalled the number of families living at Vineland at this time. Many Danbury Ojibwe were also inter-married to Ojibwe from Wisconsin. The Danbury people lived in the following nuclear family units (husband, wife, children and step-children):¹³⁰

<u>Name of Household</u>	<u>No. in Family Unit</u>	<u>Name of Household</u>	<u>No. in Family Unit</u>
James Stevens (Chief)	3	George Primeau	6
James Razor	3	Dick Primeau	8
John Moose	2	Martin Sontag	6
Levi Moose	6	James Sontag	5
John Sutton	4	Steve Clark	3

¹²⁹ Jim Stevens to Agent, 6 June 1916, Records of White Earth Agency, Entry 1246, Box 19, Central Classified Files, 1885-1922, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹³⁰ Census of Tamarack Settlement of Non-Removal Mille Lac Indians Residing in Pine County, Minnesota, 9 November 1917, 310-1919-119,093-14, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

James Sutton	2	John Clark	3
James Benjamin	3	Frank Wind	8
Fred St. John	6	Peter Sutton	10
Henry Sutton	8	John Matrous	9
Jack Churchill	9	Gene Reynolds	6
John Sutton	2	Lizzie Pike	6
John Benjamin	2	Qua-ya-took	1
John Benjamin, Sr.	4	Bi-she-kee	1
Pete Moose	2	Tamarack	1
Joe Oiyette	4	Jack Churchill's mother	1
Frank Keene	3	Annie Rogers	1
Henry Cook	3	Tom Matrous	1
Joe Davis	4	Richard Matrous's wife	1
George Long	3	Gene Wasnaqua	1

Pursuant to the Act of August 1, 1914, which appropriated \$40,000 for the purchase of land for the homeless "Non-Removable" Mille Lacs Ojibwe, in August, 1918, the federal government began purchasing land to allot to the Tamarack River people. The allotted land was located along the Tamarack River and Crooked Creek in Township 41N., Range 17 W. (fractional sections 2, 3, 6, 18, and 30) and Township 41N., Range 16 W. (fractional sections 10). By October, 1919, the federal government had bought from 820 to 900 acres in Pine County, Minnesota for the one hundred or more Tamarack River people living there at a cost of \$10,095.00. By 1917, the main village had moved to a location on the lower Tamarack River (Section 28, Township 42N., Range 17 W.). The land upon which the village rested had been purchased previously by the Ojibwe themselves.¹³¹

With allotments of additional land, the Tamarack Ojibwe settled into a way of life based on exploiting particular natural resources (fish, wild rice, maple sugar, blueberries) on a seasonal basis, and continuing to seek out day labor from non-

¹³¹ S.G. Hopkins to John H. Hinton, 2 August 1918; S.G. Hopkins to John H. Hinton, 6 August 1918; and S.G. Hopkins to John H. Hinton, 3 September 1918, Folder: Correspondence with CIA, 1916-1920, Box 7, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center; and Memorandum from James McLaughlin, 26 October 1914 and attachment "Lands Purchased for Homeless Mille Lacs, 9 October 1919, Folder: P-R, Box 41, Pre-Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1895-1922, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center; and C.F. Hauke to Ed. L. Peet with attached map, 28 February 1918, 310-1919-119,093-14, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

Ojibwe farmers and others for additional income. They still lived in scattered family groups along the upper and lower Tamarack River. They also dwelled along the St. Croix River near the mouth of Crooked Creek at a place called St. John's landing after a former logging camp that once existed there. The nearest store to the Danbury Ojibwe was on the Wisconsin side of the river.¹³²

Typically, the Danbury Ojibwe families only stayed in these dwellings in the winter time, and for short periods of time during the rest of the year. During the rest of the time, they were on the move during each season taking advantage of available natural resources. One informant described this seasonal migration pattern in this way:

Like I was saying before . . . you live in your home in the wintertime, and in the spring, when the sap starts running, maple sap, we'd move away from home. They'd go build a wigwam out in the woods by the sugar bush, and we'd camp there. We'd stay out in the woods, . . . camp out in the sugar bush. That would only be maybe a mile from home, but we still went and camped out there.

Well, after sugar bush they'd come home. It would be warm by that time, and maybe the people'd go out and work someplace for maybe a couple weeks. There were no steady jobs, but they'd go out and work for farmers, and they'd come home. I remember my dad and them used to plant. . . . we had gardens around the house. They'd plant. . . the extent of our stay at home would be maybe a couple weeks. Then they had ceremonial things going on in the village below us, so we'd pack up right after they'd get done planting their garden. We'd pack up, move down there. We'd go camp down there a couple, three weeks. . . . by that time it was getting pretty warm. We'd move out. They'd go out and cut pulp, and we'd camp out there. So we weren't home. We'd go out and cut pulp, and we'd camp out there. . . . they'd cut pulp till blueberries got ripe. Then we'd move out to blueberry camp. We'd go out and camp in blueberries—pick blueberries, maybe, gee, sometimes maybe last two or three weeks, go from one area to another. . . . You know, they ripen one place, and these people knew where these blueberries ripe at what time. So they'd go camp in one place; then they'd move another. And so you were gone maybe

¹³² Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of James Clark," 6 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 2-3.

two, three weeks, out to blueberries. Well, they'd go home once. They'd go home maybe once or twice during that time, you know, to go take care of, maybe go weed gardens or something. I remember going home. . . .I remember getting ten cents a quart for those blueberries picking them. . . .Thirty-two quarts, two cases of blueberries—three dollars and twenty cents. They made a living that way. But anyway, we'd move from there, from blueberries. They'd go home, maybe for a couple of weeks. And these guys, they would start—if somebody had a car, they'd take off, and they'd go out and start looking at rice beds . . . right after blueberry season. . . .And they'd take a car, somebody's car. Maybe three, four guys in different groups would take off. They'd go look at rice beds

Well, from where we lived, we had to go to Princeton, maybe Mora. Of course, there were rice lakes around there, but with that many people, they didn't—the little ones that were around home wouldn't take care of all the people that were there. Anyway, they'd go out and look at rice beds, and they'd come back and they'd say, "Well, we have to move over there." We'd have to move, so we were gone again. You know, after a couple weeks at home, we'd be gone again. We'd be camping during ricing time. From there, they went out and worked for farmers, harvesting potatoes, whatever. They'd work for these farmers, and by that time, it was late September or early October. That's when we started school. We'd go home and start school. So we were camped out all summer, and people wonder why we don't like to camp!¹³³

In 1917, Danbury Ojibwe youth attended school only in the winter at a nearby rural school at Lake Lena (Section 10, Township 41N., Range 17W.), where the Ojibwe outnumbered the white kids five to one. During the other seasons, the children helped their parents harvest natural resources for subsistence. By 1920, Ojibwe children went to the Ogema or Bangs Brook School, which was near the "Crossroads" area (Section 21, Township 41N., Range 17W.). In the winter, they rode in a covered sleigh pulled by Ojibwe ponies to the school.¹³⁴

¹³³ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of James Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 6-11.

¹³⁴ No. Author. "Ogema Township History" with maps, circa 1987. Typescript. Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

In the 1920s, in addition to their seasonal way of life, the Danbury Ojibwe also occasionally received per capita payments. These per capita payments were in addition to annual interest payments to Ojibwe band members. The first payment actually came 1916, and amounted to \$130.00—a considerable amount of money at that time, and they probably purchased land with the money.

Thereafter in the 1920s, per capita payments came with regularity. All in all, from 1922 to 1926, they received an additional \$350.00. During the 1920s, as per capita payment were made, the Ojibwe did not save the money but spent it freely in neighboring non-Ojibwe communities for furniture and Model T automobiles. According to one source, after a \$100 per capita payment to the Danbury Ojibwe, one automobile salesman "sold fifteen cars in one day and could have sold more but ran out of goods."¹³⁵

One Ojibwe informant clearly remembered what it was like growing up near the St. Croix River, and in particular the day his father purchased a car and new furniture for the house with his per capita payment monies. According to the informant:

[by] standards today, it would be pretty dull. . . we lived out in the woods. . . . Of course, we lived by a river, and everywhere we went, we had to walk. We had one road that ran out there. I remember my dad had gotten a Model T from someplace—bought a new one and drove out there. . . . One time my mother says, "This must be your dad coming." So we started walking down the road. We went and met him. You know, these old roads, you couldn't drive, maybe, five miles an hour. You know, it's just a set of ruts out in the woods. And went out there and we met him, and he had boughten a new car, a new Model T. Of course it was a touring car. But I remember he had a table in there, a new table, and some new chairs, all tied around that new car. I can see that. And he didn't have room for—he had even something sitting in the front seat. So we just met him, and he stopped, and we looked at the car. That was new stuff that he brought for the house, I guess.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Annual Narrative Report of Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1929, pp. 22, Folder: 1930, Narrative, Box 342, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹³⁶ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of James Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by

Like other Ojibwe at Vineland, the Danbury Ojibwe appeared to enjoy prosperous times during the 1920s. However, when the Great Depression came after 1929, they, like other Ojibwe, felt a downturn in their fortunes and the requests for rations to the Indian Service increased significantly.¹³⁷ Though most of the Ojibwe escaped the most dire consequences of the Depression because they sustained themselves by harvesting natural resources (fish, wild rice and maple sugar), there was significant drop in their ability to find outside work on farms and elsewhere because of the hard economic times.¹³⁸

Sandy Lake Ojibwe History, 1900-1932

Like the Mille Lacs Ojibwe at Tamarack River, the Ojibwe at Sandy Lake lived in an isolated area apart from most non-Ojibwe communities and they were ignored for a long time by the federal government. In the 1855 Treaty with the United States, the Sandy Lake had been granted reservation lands at Sandy Lake and Rice Lake. In the 1864 Treaty, the Sandy Lake Ojibwe were allowed to remain on their reservation until "the President shall so direct" their removal, but in the 1867 Treaty, they relinquished that right to occupy their reservation lands for lands elsewhere. However, in a previous treaty (1864 Treaty), Misquandance, their leader, received a section of land at Sandy Lake which became the core area for their settlement. During the late nineteenth century, the Sandy Lake Ojibwe were linked with the White Oak Point band to the north and thereafter their individuality from this group was hard to distinguish. In 1889, when the Chippewa Indian Commission sought to remove all the Ojibwe to the White Earth Reservation, the Sandy Lake Ojibwe were either lost in the shuffle or they were considered White Oak Point Ojibwe because of their proximity to these bands.¹³⁹

U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, p. 5.

¹³⁷ Superintendent to Lynn J. Frazier, 7 January 1931, Folder: F misc. (1927-1935), Box 14, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹³⁸ Rev. Bernard Fries to Indian Agent, 26 January 1931, Folder: F misc. (1927-1935), Box 14, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹³⁹ Charles J. Kappler, "Treaty with the Chippewa, 1855;" "Treaty with Chippewa of Mississippi and the Pillager and Lake Winnibigoshish Bands, 1863;" "Treaty with Chippewa of Mississippi and the Pillager and Lake Winnibigoshish Bands, 1864;" and "Treaty with Chippewa of Mississippi, 1867," Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1903), pp. 513-515, 642-644, 660-662, and 752-754.

The Sandy Lake Ojibwe occupied two distinct areas. One village existed on their traditional lands along the north shore of Sandy Lake with nearby Minnewawa Lake providing wild rice for them. Sometime after 1871, another Ojibwe group began occupying land on the shores of Rice Lake south of McGregor, Minnesota and near present-day East Lake, Minnesota. However, the exact date of occupation of this area is unknown.¹⁴⁰

The first time the Sandy Lake Ojibwe were linked to the Mille Lacs Ojibwe to the south was in 1892, when residents of Aitkin County complained to the Indian Service that "certain parties of Indians belonging to the Mille Lacs and Sandy Lake Bands are roving about the country and proving themselves a source of great annoyance and trouble to the settlers throughout this County." Aitkin County settlers claimed that the Ojibwe wantonly destroyed crops, tore down fences, broke into houses and compelled settlers to supply them with food.¹⁴¹

Notwithstanding these charges, by the twentieth century, the Sandy Lake Ojibwe were clearly linked to the White Oak Point Ojibwe and their agreement to the remove to White Earth under agreement with the Chippewa Indian Commission. Many of the Sandy Lake Ojibwe removed to the White Earth Reservation. As late as 1907, Sandy Lake Ojibwe were still migrating to the White Earth Reservation.¹⁴²

Nevertheless, by 1909, this migration had halted and, actually, a reverse migration began back to Sandy Lake. In 1909, Darwin Hall made an extensive report on the conditions and seasonal lifestyle of the Sandy Lake Ojibwe. His report stated:

I find these Indians nearly if not all, have been at one time to White Earth and in almost every instance had land allotted to them, some

¹⁴⁰ J. Wm. Trgygg, "Composite Map of United States Land Surveyors' Original Plats and Field Notes," Sheet 13, Minnesota Series, Ely, Minnesota, 1966.

¹⁴¹ Petition from Aitken County Settlers to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, September, 1892, Folder: Records of the Chippewa Commission, No Box Number, Pre-Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹⁴² Simon Michelet to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 13 November 1907, 123-1907-93,254, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

have had houses built for them and claim they are only visiting friends and expect to return. These Indians are about eighteen miles from the nearest railroad, they all work and seem to be getting along very well and at this time the men are making hay and the women all out picking berries of which there is an abundant crop; the proceeds of which supply them many of the necessities. . . . I am informed that some of them had purchased land at Sandy Lake. . . . these Sandy Lake Indians are sober, industrious people, in the main getting along about as well as any community similarly situated; that no one is finding fault regarding their presence at Sandy Lake, such as Mille Lacs Lake, . . . that I am glad to report is about the status of the Chippewa Indians at Sandy Lake.¹⁴³

Apparently, the Rice Lake Ojibwe who were entitled to allotments at the White Earth Reservation enrolled there for their allotments, received them, and then sold them to purchase lands at Rice Lake their principal subsistence use area.¹⁴⁴ This pattern occurred at Isle and it may have been a strategy used by all the Mille Lacs Ojibwe for coping with removal from their traditional homelands. Thereafter, in 1915, the Sandy Lake Ojibwe received thirty-two acres along the north shore of Sandy Lake which was granted to them by an Executive Order (March 4, 1915) and the government began sending rations to them when they fell on hard times. For instance, in early 1916, the government sent rations to McGregor to help beleaguered old and sick people. Rations for sixty people were sent, but they had to be reduced in order to allow the seventy-nine people who applied to get at least some assistance.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ D.S. Hall to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 31 August 1909, 123-1912-39,110, Letters Received from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹⁴⁴ J.S. Monks to J.M. Stewart, 31 March 1937, Folder: Mille Lacs (General Correspondence), Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center. For a roll of White Oak Point and Sandy Lake Chippewas entitled to remove to White Earth Reservation and take allotments and have houses erected, see "Roll of White Oak Point and Sandy Lake Chippewa," 1907, Folder: Removal of Mille Lacs to White Earth, Box 41, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹⁴⁵ Superintendent to Chief Charles Grasshopper, 26 January 1916; Superintendent to Me-ge-zee, 18 February 1916, Records of White Earth Agency, Entry 1246, Box 19, Central Classified Files, 1885-1922, Record Group 75, National Archives.

During much of the 1920s, the Sandy Lake village was a rural farm community situated along the north shore of beautiful Big Sandy Lake. Known as Big Indian village, the isolated community had no improved roads leading to it. Ten to fifteen families lived there. Most of the families had small farms with a few horses, cows, goats, chickens, and other farm animals, but Chief Grasshopper, who was considered their leader, lived in a larger log house and probably his family was more prosperous than the others. The Sandy Lake Ojibwe planted mostly potatoes on their farm land, but they also planted gardens of beans, peas, carrots, and other vegetables. Besides farming, they supported themselves by producing maple sugar in the springtime, fishing in the summertime at Sandy Lake, and ricing in the fall at Minnewawa and Rice Lakes. During the appropriate seasons, they also collected wild plums, strawberries and other wild fruit either to supplement their diets or to sell commercially. The nearest general store to the Sandy Lake community was about five to ten miles away. They traveled to Libby and McGregor, Minnesota to shop as well. The nearest medical facility for the community was at Cloquet, where there was an Indian community hospital.¹⁴⁶

By the 1920s, a larger village of Ojibwe grew up around Rice Lake, where about twenty to twenty-five families of Ojibwe resided. Prominent families living at Rice Lake included the Skinaways, the Benjamins and the Abits. Their village area lay near the north shore of Rice Lake, where the present-day administration buildings for the Rice Lake Wildlife Refuge are located. John Abit, who they considered their spokesperson, had worked as a log-driver and with his money built a two-story log house and a barn for his cows and horses. Many of the other houses in the village area were board and frame structures. Most of the families farmed land nearby and had horses, cows, chickens and garden areas as well. At the Rice Lake village, they also had a schoolhouse and a large dance hall, where before the 1930s they still practiced ceremonial dances and the Midewiwin.¹⁴⁷

Life at Sandy and Rice Lakes was not all tranquility. There were disputes between the Ojibwe and the local non-Ojibwe. For instance, in 1920, John Misquadace, a

¹⁴⁶ Superintendent to Chief Charles Grasshopper, 26 January 1916; Superintendent to Me-ge-zee, 18 February 1916, Records of White Earth Agency, Entry 1246, Box 19, Central Classified Files, 1885-1922, Record Group 75, National Archives; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Mabel Boyd Albino," 5 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 1-15, 27 and 37.

¹⁴⁷ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Mabel Boyd Albino," 5 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 1-10, and 49-51.

Sandy Lake spokesperson, complained to government officials that a non-Ojibwe had homesteaded a particular plot, which for many years past, the Sandy Lake Ojibwe had used for as a boat landing. The non-Ojibwe refused to allow the Ojibwe to use it after he entered on the land. However, these conflicts were not as serious as the disputes at Vineland and elsewhere along the shores of Mille Lacs Lake.¹⁴⁸

Like the other Ojibwe at Mille Lacs and Danbury, in the 1920s, the Sandy Lake and Rice Lake Ojibwe spent their per capita payments on automobiles and furniture. According to one source, at one such per capita payment, more than 150 per capita shares were paid out and the Rice Lake Ojibwe bought more than fifteen Model T cars at once.¹⁴⁹

Nevertheless, like the Ojibwe at Mille Lacs and Danbury, the Sandy and Rice Lake Ojibwe were affected by the Great Depression even though they lived through harvesting traditional food sources, such as wild rice. In 1930, government officials began to get indications of economic hardship among these Ojibwe, which resulted from the 1929 rice crop failure and the decline of wild rice prices to only 20¢ per pound.¹⁵⁰ The following year, economic woes began at Rice Lake, when the Ojibwe had trouble making payments on their mortgages and paying their property taxes. Two elderly Ojibwe family heads and landowners, John Abit (75 years old) and Emma Houle (60 years old) were among those behind in their property taxes. Both Abit and Houle and their families had lived and owned land at Rice Lake (Sections 23 and 24, Township 47 N., Range 24 W.) since childhood. They had buried their parents on this land and feared losing their land because of delinquent taxes. Both Abit and Houle appealed to the government for help with their debts.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ John Misquadace to U.S. Indian Agent, 2 June 1920, Folder: Central Subject Files, Sandy Lake Boat Landing, Box 42, White Earth Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹⁴⁹ Annual Narrative Report of Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1929, pp. 22, Folder: 1930, Narrative, Box 342, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹⁵⁰ Harold Knutson to Mark L. Burns, 13 December 1930; M.L. Burns to Harold Knutson, 16 December 1930; and John Abit and Emma Abit to Harold Knutson, 4 May 1931, Folder: Knutson, Congressman Harold, Box 18, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

Minnesota Senator Harold Knutson visited with the Rice Lake Ojibwe, who told him that the Ojibwe had a very poor rice crop that year and were not doing well. To compound the situation, the price of rice was so low that the Ojibwe did not realize any profit from their labor. In addition to this problem, the Ojibwe could not find any additional work to support themselves because of the Depression. Their situation was pretty hard and the Senator asked the Indian Service to look into the matter. A field representative visited the area, and distributed rations and woolen underwear to them, but informed Knutson that the Indian Service was caring for more Indian than ever before and they feared that their funds for the care of old people was insufficient to meet the needs of all the Ojibwe that needed help.¹⁵²

By 1932 or so, the ten families still living in scattered parts of the north shore of Sandy Lake (Section 32 of Township 50 N., 23 W.) and fifteen or so families at Rice Lake Ojibwe were in bad shape. Both groups were in danger of losing their ancestral land because of tax foreclosure.¹⁵³

Conclusion

In 1902, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe people faced the choice to remove or to resist. By 1912, fully three-quarters or more of these Ojibwe people decided to relocate to the White Earth Reservation and had done so. Those that stayed behind lived in separate communities at Vineland, Cove, Isle, Tamarack River, Sandy and Rice Lakes. During the period 1912 to 1932, the history of each community varied widely as each community struggled to survive in the midst of a dominant non-Ojibwe culture. Nevertheless, each community could take comfort in the fact that they now were considered "Non-Removable" Mille Lacs Ojibwe, and that their

¹⁵¹ John Abit and Emma Abit to Harold Knutson, 4 May 1931, Folder: Knutson, Congressman Harold, Box 18, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹⁵² Harold Knutson to Mark L. Burns, 24 November 1931; and M.L. Burns to Harold Knutson, 30 November 1931, Folder: Knutson, Congressman Harold, Box 18, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹⁵³ "Preliminary Project Plan," circa 1937, Folder: Preliminary Plan—Mille Lacs Land Acquisition Program, 1937 Expenditures, Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

bones would be placed next to those of their fathers. In the next decade, this common theme, along with a common culture, would reunite them as the Mille Lacs Ojibwe people once again.

Notes on Chapter Sources:

This chapter is based almost solely upon primary correspondence, reports and documents written during the time period 1902-1932. Primary works consulted for this chapter include: Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1902 to 1932, and material from the National Archives and several federal record centers.

The following material from the National Archives was consulted: Letters Received by Commissioner of Indian Affairs (CIA), Central Classified Files, 1880-1906; Letters from White Earth Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939; and 310-Irregular Shaped Items, Number Ten, 1880-1906, Central Classified Files. All the above are in Record Group 75.

At the Federal Record Center at Kansas City, the records of the White Earth Agency, 1874-1922, the Pre-Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1895-1922; and the Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75 were all very essential to the writing of this particular chapter.

Other important primary material include a series of oral histories conducted specifically for this project. They are: Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Brenda Boyd," 16 October 1992; "Oral History of Letitia Caldwell," 9 November 1991; "Oral History of James Clark," 6 August 1992; and "Oral History of Mabel Boyd Albino," 5 August 1992, all prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993. In addition to these oral histories, U.S. West Research, "Historic Structures Report: Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post Site, Mille Lacs Lake, Minnesota," Prepared for the Minnesota Historical Society, June 1992, proved most useful for explaining the history of the Vineland Ojibwe in the 1920s.

Only a few secondary accounts was used in the writing of this chapter. They are: Duane R. Lund, Tales of Four Lakes: Leech Lake, Gull Lake, Mille Lacs Lake, the Red Lakes and the Crow Wing River, Staples, Minnesota: Nordell Graphic Communications, 1977; and George A. Flaskerd, " Merchandise Trade Tokens

Used by Mille Lacs Indian Trading Post," Minnesota Archaeologist Vol. XXIV (July, 1962): 72-73.

However, there are several secondary sources on the White Earth Reservation and the Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe. For this information, see: Rebecca Kugel, "To Go About on the Earth: An Ethnohistory of the Minnesota Ojibwe, 1830-1900" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Los Angeles, 1986); and Melissa L. Meyer, "Tradition and the Market: The Social Relations of the White Earth Anishenaabeg, 1889-1920" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1985).

Ojibwe Historical Chronology: 1902-1932

- 1902 In May of 1902, Congress passed legislation appropriating \$40,000 to pay the Mille Lacs Ojibwe for their improvements on their former reservation land. Prior to receiving the payment, the Ojibwe were expected to both accept provisions of the act and immediately remove once they received the money.
- 1902 On August 19, 1902, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe met in council with government officials at Lawrence, Minnesota to discuss removal and a fair appraisal of their improvements. On August 30, 1902, Ojibwe headmen signed the Lawrence Agreement. This agreement stated that the Mille Lacs Ojibwe accepted the appraisal of \$40,000 for improvements made upon their lands that either presently existed or had been destroyed by settlers who forced the respective Indian owners from their tracts of land. The Mille Lacs Ojibwe also agreed to remove from the former Mille Lacs Reservation.
- 1903 In December of 1903, Chief Wah-we-yay-cum-ig, the self-proclaimed leader of all the Mille Lacs bands, set an example for the Mille Lacs Bands and removed to the White Earth Reservation first.
- 1905 By 1905, there were almost as many Mille Lacs Ojibwe at the White Earth Reservation as there were on the former Mille Lacs Reservation.
- 1905 In 1905, Theodore H. Beaulieu visited, investigated, assessed the situation of the Ojibwe living along the Tamarack River. Evidently, Beaulieu succeeded in convincing 17 members of the Tamarack band to remove to the White Earth Reservation.

Five year later, 20 more members of the Tamarack band removed to White Earth Reservation.

- 1907-1908 Soo Railroad Line laid track across the former Mille Lacs Railroad in 1907-1908. Thereafter, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe encountered overwhelming settlement pressures on their lands by Scandinavian farm families.
- 1908 In 1908, a land company purchased and started to sell lots of land along the Mille Lacs shoreline of present-day Isle (Section 35, Township 43 N., Range 25 W.). The Isle Ojibwe protest but they lose their battle to keep their land.
- 1910 By 1910, the Mille Lacs Investment and Improvement Company purchased Section 11 and 15, Township 42 N., Range 26 W. Chief Wadena, considered the leading Ojibwe chief left on the former Mille Lacs Reservation, refused to remove from this area. As a result of government officials opposition to using force to remove the Ojibwe, Wadena stayed on the land for ten more years.
- 1912 In 1912, pursued by county officials serving notices of ejection from their lands and abandoned by the federal government, the 174 Ojibwe left on their former reservation area had clearly reached the nadir of their existence. In that same year, White Earth agent John R. Howard was sent to Vineland to investigate the land disputes and recent reports of destitution among the Ojibwe. Following Howard's report, Washington officials approved per capita payments to the Ojibwe.
- 1914 On August 1, 1914, Congress passed legislation (38 Statues at Large 591) providing for the expenditure of \$40,000 in the purchase of land for the homeless "Non-removal" Mille Lacs.
- 1914 In September of 1914, James McLaughlin, Indian Inspector, was sent to Mille lacs to examine their land situation and to negotiate with nearby land owners for purchases. McLaughlin's choice of land was controversial and the Ojibwe petitioned to Washington about the matter.
- 1918 In 1918, Harry and Jeannette Ayer obtained a license to operate a trading post store on the south-west shore of Mille Lacs Lake. They take over the former D.H. Robbins trading post and store.
- 1919 By 1919, the federal government bought from 820 to 900 acres in Pine County Minnesota for the one hundred or more

Tamarack River Ojibwe living there.

- 1923 In 1923, official census rolls were made for the Isle Ojibwe. Thereafter they received 280 acres of trust allotments, which was divided into 37 allotments.

- 1925 In 1925, the Ayers built a new complex, called the Mill Lacs Indian Trading Post, consisting of a trading post/general store, dining hall, and seasonal cottages.

- 1929 In 1929, the Ayers built a fishing boat factory. On January 1, 1929, an Ojibwe drove the first nail into the first boat produced by the Mille Lacs Indian Boat Works. This factory employed a number of Vineland Ojibwe and introduced steady wage work among them.

- 1930-1932 By 1930-1932, the Ayers also built a maple sugar refinery near their trading post, which produced approximately 700-1,000 gallons of maple syrup a year. Lawrence, Minnesota Agreement.

Chapter Eight

"New Directions and False Starts"

Introduction

From the 1930s through the 1950s, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe experienced significant changes in their traditional lifestyle, affiliation with the federal government, and interaction with the "modern society." In November of 1932, the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt as president fostered Ojibwe hope that the horrible economic conditions and cultural degradation experienced on the Mille Lacs Reservation during the Great Depression would end. With Roosevelt's election came relief in the form of a number programs, such as the Civil Works Administration (CWA),¹ Works Progress Administration (WPA),² and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).³ In addition to these work-relief programs, in 1934, Congress enacted the Indian Reorganization Act, which called for a new direction in Indian policy, centering on tribal self-government, land acquisition, and acceptance of cultural pluralism.

This chapter concentrates on how the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe

¹ The Civil Works Administration was a temporary emergency work program begun by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1933. It took people off the relief rolls and those that needed jobs and found make-work for them, paying them minimum wages. William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1963), p. 121.

² The Works Progress Administration was begun in 1935 as a gigantic program of emergency public employment. The emphasis of the program was to devise labor-intensive projects in order to hire as many people as possible, but because it was not to compete with private industry, many of its projects were of a "make-work" nature, and had little value. William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1963), pp. 124-125.

³ The Civilian Conservation Corps, created in 1933, was one of several massive relief programs devised by Roosevelt administration to provide federal assistance and work for the unemployed in the cities. The original concept of the CCC was to provide for "universal service for youth with a desire to improve the nation's estate," but Roosevelt thought that the "character of city men would benefit from a furlough in the country" as well. William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1963), pp. 52-53.

successfully utilized this newly established Indian policy, called the "Indian New Deal," to better their conditions. During the 1930s, they established a tribal government, improved their economy, health, and lifestyle, increased their land base with land for ricing camps, added roads, wells, and housing to the reservation infrastructure, and improved their work skills as well—all in part due to New Deal programs, such as the CCC and the WPA.

This success would have continued into the 1940s, if World War II had not interrupted their progress. In the post-World War II period, and into the 1950s, the accomplishments of the New Deal for the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe first waned and then disappeared altogether under the weight of urban relocation and economic stagnation on the reservation. Nevertheless, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe, remaining on reservation lands, persisted through a combination of a traditional seasonal round lifestyle, tourism, and part-time wage labor.

The Great Depression and the New Deal

By 1932, the nation had suffered three years of deepening depression, which affected every segment of American society. National income had dropped by more than one half, five thousand banks had failed wiping out nine million savings accounts and fifteen million workers had lost their jobs. By the winter of 1932-1933, bread lines lengthened nationwide as cold and hungry unemployed workers desperately searched for shelter and food.⁴ It was the winter of despair for the Mille Lacs Ojibwe as well. The Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe were in very poor condition and were not insulated from the calamitous affects of Great Depression that struck the rest of the nation. For instance, the Ojibwe from Vineland and Isle faced very hard times, so difficult that they pleaded Congress for a small per capita payment to get them through the hard economic times. They had recently received such a payment, but that meager amount of money quickly dissipated as they used it to purchase needed food and to pay their debts to local store owners, such as Harry and Jeannette Ayer. These expenditures left little or no money to buy seed for their gardens in the spring, or even to live on while they sought work.⁵

⁴ William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers. 1963), pp. 18-19.

⁵ Petition of Chippewa Indians from Vineland and Isle to Chairman of Senate Indian Affairs Committee, 5 April 1933, File: Mille Lacs Reservation (Isle and Vineland), Box 58, Special

The election of Franklin D. Roosevelt as president in November of 1932 and his promises of a "New Deal" for the American people gave hope to most of the country. The Mille Lacs Ojibwe and other Indians longed for one as well. Clearly because of their dire economic circumstances and their cultural degradation, the present Indian policy needed changing. During the 1920s and much earlier, American Indian policy centered on the idea that for their own protection, the Ojibwe were to be assimilated into mainstream America. According to policymakers, assimilation of American Indians could be achieved by breaking up communally owned Indian reservations into individual allotments. The process of dividing Indian reservations into individual allotments was supposed to transform Indians into neo-American yeoman in some magical way. . . . This policy of "individualizing" and "Americanizing" the Indian began with the passage of the Dawes General Allotment Act of 1887."⁶ These policies had not worked well at the Mille Lacs Reservation and for the rest of the nation. The Mille Lacs Ojibwe had simply lost their land.

In 1933-1934, under the Roosevelt administration, Indian policy did head into a new direction— a so-called "Indian New Deal." According to one historian, "Indians were to be integrated into modern-day society, not assimilation; and tribalism rather than individualism, was thought to be the best way to insure Indian survival in the dominant culture. Consequently, this new policy called for the modernization, maintenance, protection, and revitalization of Indian tribal identity rather than its wholesale destruction."⁷

This new policy was embodied in the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 (IRA), legislation that became an important cornerstone of Indian policy then and today. Among its provisions, the IRA declared that tribal self-government be organized and promoted; that a system of higher education and the study of and preservation of Indian arts, crafts, skills and tradition be fostered; that a permanent basis of self-support be established; and that land be acquired within or outside the existing reservations for the purpose of consolidating tribal areas.⁸ In the Indian New Deal years from 1933 to 1941, the

Indians in the scene again

Committee on Indian Affairs. Sen 83A-F9, Record Group 46, National Archives.

⁶ Anthony Godfrey, "Congressional-Indian Politics: Senate Survey of Conditions Among the Indians of the United States," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Utah, 1985), pp. 2-3.

⁷ Anthony Godfrey, "Congressional-Indian Politics: Senate Survey of Conditions Among the Indians of the United States," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Utah, 1985), pp. 2-3.

Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe took advantage of this new policy, especially the provisions regarding three distinct areas tribal self-government, land acquisition, and development and employment opportunities.

Mille Lacs Tribal Government

Because of prior experience with the federal government, the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe were deeply suspicious and wary of this new federal Indian policy even before it was passed. However, unlike previous pieces of Indian legislation, the original bill was presented to Indians at a number of Indian congresses nationwide before it was passed. At these congresses, the opinion and support of Indians regarding this legislation was openly solicited. The Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe attended one such conference at Hayward, Wisconsin. At Hayward, the bill was explained to the Ojibwe from Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan. The Mille Lacs Ojibwe sent two delegates to Hayward, one of whom was Joe Eagle, the son of Me-ge-zee who had passed away in the mid-1920s.⁹ ✕

Following the Hayward congress, Mille Lacs Ojibwe talked at length with attorneys and government officials regarding the bill,¹⁰ including Ed Rogers,¹¹ an Indian attorney originally from Sandy Lake. All agreed that it was a good bill, and that it was worthy of support. However, the Ojibwe worried about two aspects of the drafted bill. First, the Ojibwe feared losing their pre-existing allotments. Second, they worried that the money for the bill would come from their appropriated funds.¹² Hilding Swanson, an attorney who for twenty years

⁸ Anthony Godfrey, "Congressional-Indian Politics: Senate Survey of Conditions Among the Indians of the United States," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Utah, 1985), pp. 291-292.

⁹ "Testimony Taken at Haywood, Wisconsin on Wheeler-Howard Bill," 23-24 April 1934, pp. 50 and 71, Folder: Wheeler-Howard Conference, Box 5, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹⁰ Hilding Swanson to Theodore Christianson, 11 May 1934, Folder: Mille Lacs IRA, Box 2, Department of Natural Resources Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

¹¹ Edward Rogers was born when near Sandy Lake, when his mother was making maple sugar in camp. He went to Carlisle Institute, Dickinson College and the University of Minnesota and started practicing law after graduation in 1903. Two years later, he became a probate judge and a county attorney for forty years. Marion E. Gridley, ed., Indians of Today, 3rd ed. (Chicago: Towertown Press, 1960), pp. 162-163.

worked closely with the Mille Lacs Ojibwe, described the problems facing the Ojibwe to Congressman Theodore Christianson of Minnesota (1933-1937). In regard to tribal self-government, Swanson wrote:

. . . as attorneys for these Chippewa Indians at Mille Lacs Lake we know this, that they need supervision as yet, for the reason that the older Indians have not had an education at all and it is only the younger ones that have had schooling. . . . but amongst the older Indians there are a lot of wise and bright ones whom we are well acquainted with, that personally can take charge of a community and operate the Indian affairs.¹³

Swanson also thought there should be a way the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe could get a decent return on the wild rice and maple sugar they gathered and sold, as well as their handicraft items, such as birch bark articles for tourists. Swanson was very concerned about the welfare of the group as a whole. He thought they were close to destitution and needed seed, agricultural implements, and wage work beyond the recent hiring of a few Ojibwe by the CWA.¹⁴

Minnesota Chippewa Tribe and the Mille Lacs Tribal Council

Before the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act passed in June, 1934, the Non-Removable Ojibwe and other Ojibwe were given the choice whether or not they would accept the principles of the Indian Reorganization Act in a referendum. In April, 1934, when it came time to choose, the Non-Removable Mille Lacs voted to endorse the act with the exception of the Red Lake Reservation Ojibwe. After the passage of the IRA, representatives from the six member reservations, White Earth, Leech Lake, Fond du Lac, Grand Portage, and Nett Lake (Bois Forte) drafted and adopted a Constitution and By-laws and formed a single government entity, the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT). Historically, the

¹² Hilding Swanson to Theodore Christianson, 11 May 1934, Folder: Mille Lacs IRA, Box 2, Department of Natural Resources Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

¹³ Hilding Swanson to Theodore Christianson, 11 May 1934, Folder: Mille Lacs IRA, Box 2, Department of Natural Resources Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

¹⁴ Hilding Swanson to Theodore Christianson, 11 May 1934, Folder: Mille Lacs IRA, Box 2, Department of Natural Resources Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

Minnesota Ojibwe had never had a single form of government, and as time wore on, the differences between the various tribes surfaced, especially by the 1970s and 1980s.

Notwithstanding, the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe were viewed as one representative body among five other Ojibwe groups in the MCT. The Mille Lacs Ojibwe were represented in the MCT by a delegation to the overall Executive Committee. In cooperation with federal officials, the MCT devised a charter of organization to establish a Mille Lacs Tribal Council. The purpose of this governing body was to give effective rights of local self-government to the Mille Lacs people, and to give them a means to engage in local and tribal affairs in a business-like manner.¹⁵

The Mille Lacs Tribal Council was comprised of five districts, each with one or more representatives, based upon the size of the constituency. The districts were: Sandy Lake (1 council member), East Lake 1 council member), Danbury (2 council members), Isle (2 council members), and Vineland (3 council members). Council meetings were held semi-annually with a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer serving as officers. The powers of the Council included the power to negotiate with federal, state, and local governments, and with the MCT Executive Committee on all matters affecting the band; and the power to manage the use, property, and monies of the band for all purposes related to the band. Other powers of the Mille Lacs Tribal Council included prescribing rules and regulations concerning hunting, fishing, and trade by ordinances. On February 16, 1939, the MCT submitted the charter for organization to popular referendum. By a vote of eighty-two for and sixteen against, the Mille Lacs band duly ratified and accepted the charter.¹⁶

The first tribal delegates to the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe were William Nickaboine, Henry Davis (Vineland District), Fred Sam, Charles Moose (Isle District) and Frank Skinaway and George Skinaway (East and Sandy Lake Districts). William Nickaboine and Frank Skinaway were the first delegates

¹⁵ "Charter of Organization of the Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians," 22 February 1939, Folder: Mille Lacs-Charter of Organization, Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

¹⁶ "Charter of Organization of the Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians," 22 February 1939, Folder: Mille Lacs-Charter of Organization, Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

selected to represent the Mille Lacs people on the Tribal Executive Committee (TEC) of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe.¹⁷

The first chairman of the Mille Lacs Tribal Council was Fred Sam from Isle. Other officers and councilmen were: William Nickaboine (Vice-Chairman), Henry Davis (Secretary), Frank Skinaway (Treasurer), and Councilmen Fred Jones, William Reynolds, Eugene Dunkley, Charles Moose, and George Skinaway. Thereafter, the Mille Lacs Reservation Tribal Council, later called the Reservation Business Committee (RBC), existed as a representative body for the communities at Vineland, Isle, Sandy Lake, East Lake and Danbury.

In the end, even though the Mille Lacs Ojibwe adopted the American-style elected democratic government, in practice, for many, many years, the federal government in conjunction with the MCT directed and controlled most legislative matters. The Mille Lacs Tribal Council either rubber-stamped the MCT's decisions or ineffectively opposed their decisions. As time passed, differences over the issue of sovereignty grew between the Mille Lacs Ojibwe and the MCT.

Mille Lacs Land Purchase Program

Forming a new tribal government system was not the only legacy of the Indian New Deal for the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe. During the New Deal years, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe were given the opportunity to acquire additional land. Under the authority of the Act of August 1, 1914, the federal government had purchased approximately 2,000 acres of land in Pine, Aitkin and Mille Lacs Counties for the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe.¹⁸ In 1926, this acreage was finally surveyed and allotted to individual Ojibwe with the allotments ranging in size from five to ten acres.¹⁹

¹⁷ Minnesota Chippewa Bulletin 22 May 1939, pp. 2-3.

¹⁸ William Zimmerman to Theodore Christianson, 15 July 1933; and Harry Slattery to Will Rogers, 7 June 1939, 308.2-1924-44,428, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

¹⁹ "Final Project Plan: Mille Lacs 1937 I.R.A. Expendable Project," p. 1, Folder: Final Project Plan-Mille Lacs IRA, 1937, Expendable land Acquisition Program, Box 550 (Oversize and Photographs), Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

Nevertheless, by the 1930s, the Ojibwe needed and desired additional land. Starting in 1936, under Section Five of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, which dealt with land matters, federal officials began plans to purchase additional land for the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. Ultimately, the preliminary project plan was to purchase a total of 14,500 acres of land for the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. Of this acreage, 4,500 acres were intended for farming on a self-sustaining basis. Since the chief enterprise in the region was farming, government officials thought that forty-acre farm plots would make each Ojibwe family self-supporting, and integrate them with their non-Ojibwe neighbors. At the time, dairy farming was the most promising industry. They estimated, that with this land, at least 100 Mille Lacs Ojibwe families could establish small dairy farms. The remaining 10,000 acres of the proposed plans was intended for timber land. This forest land would provide for Ojibwe fuel needs, and include valuable lake frontage and rice fields for support. Government officials thought that with careful selection and management, these tribal timber assets would increase with the natural forest reproduction. The initial proposed purchases for 1937 included land for each community, with Vineland getting the larger share (1,000 acres), and the other communities getting varying amounts ranging from 640 acres at Danbury and East Lake, to 880 acres for Isle and a mere 320 acres for Sandy Lake.²⁰

At Vineland, William Nickaboine and Fred Sam advised government officials to buy tracts of land that were adjacent to the allotments of individual band members in the Vineland community. The object of these purchases was threefold: 1) to form a continuous block of land for the reservation; 2) to provide land for landless Ojibwe; and 3) to provide additional lands for those holding small allotments. The additional land would be used mostly for agricultural purposes and pastures for cattle, while other tracts contained wooded lots for fuel sources and viable tracts of sugar maples. Government officials proposed that the Ojibwe could "utilize the sugar maples on these tracts in production of maple syrup for home use" and perhaps the "manufacture of maple syrup on a cooperative basis."²¹ During the

²⁰ William Zimmerman to Augustine L. Hook, with attached "Preliminary Project Plan," 24 August 1936, Folder: Preliminary Project Plan-Land Acquisition Program, 1937, Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

²¹ "Final Project Plan: Mille Lacs 1937 I.R.A. Expendable Project," pp. 1-2, 7, 9-19; and William Nickaboine and Fred Sam to J.M. Stewart, 17 December 1936, Folder: Final Project Plan-Mille Lacs IRA, 1937, Expendable land Acquisition Program, Box 550 (Oversize and Photographs), Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record

1930s, several of these tracts of land were purchased for the Vineland Ojibwe without any problems.

Isle Land Purchase Problems

Though the land purchase program at Vineland went well, this was not the case at Isle. At the height of the Great Depression, the Isle Ojibwe were in deep economic trouble and were in danger of losing their only lands (a forty acre tract) due to tax delinquency. The Isle Ojibwe also needed additional land for fuelwood and to raise gardens for sustenance. Therefore, purchasing this tract of land and additional tracts of land were a high priority to the Isle Ojibwe.²²

In addition to buying this land for sustenance and fuelwood, government officials also gave a high priority to purchasing land along the shore of Mille Lacs Lake for the Isle Ojibwe. In particular, they sought to acquire a 300 acre lake frontage tract. They hoped that this purchase would give the Isle Ojibwe access to the lake so they could fish any time they wished and land for home sites and subsistence gardens, which their present acreage was ill-suited for.²³

Purchasing additional land at Isle proved a difficult task. Government officials and the Isle Ojibwe had not counted on feelings of racial discrimination and prejudice in the Isle community. In December, 1936, federal officials sent a number of letters to property owners, asking if they would be willing to sell their land.²⁴ However, as soon as neighboring non-Ojibwe Isle property owners, real estate companies, local businesses, the American Legion, and the Isle Civic and Commerce Association learned of the proposed purchases, they openly protested

Center.

²² Fred Sam to Mr. Munnell, 18 November 1937, Folder: Mille Lacs (General Correspondence), Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

²³ "Final Project Plan: Mille Lacs 1937 I.R.A. Expendable Project," pp. 1-2, 7, 9-19; and William Nickaboine and Fred Sam to J.M. Stewart, 17 December 1936, Folder: Final Project Plan-Mille Lacs IRA, 1937, Expendable land Acquisition Program, Box 550 (Oversize and Photographs), Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

²⁴ For instance, see A.L. Hook to S.B. Molander, 19 December 1936, Folder: Mille Lacs (General Correspondence), Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

it. Rumors abounded that the government not only planned to buy this land, but they also intended to remove the Danbury Ojibwe to this land, bringing to the site as many as 150 families.²⁵

One summer home owner and real estate agent summed up the worries of the community this way:

While agreeing that this movement by the government is an admirable one, surely some locations could be selected that would not bring a tribe of Indians near to homes that have been built up by a community of home owners, who made considerable investment for the benefit of their families, to give their children the benefit of a lake home during the summer months away from the dangers of city life during school vacation periods.²⁶

The protesting community leaders suggested that the Isle Ojibwe be removed to Vineland and one letter writer stated:

We are opposed to have Indians at so many different locations within the same locality. And as there has been several cases of where White people in general as well as white girls have been molested by the Indians around our Village here for many years past we are coming to a stand where we will take a stand against any new Indian Reservation or Indian Grant being made in this vicinity.²⁷

The concerned citizens even brought considerable political pressure on the Indian Service and members of the Minnesota congressional delegation to block the proposed program of land acquisition.²⁸ Ultimately, because of this pressure on

²⁵ Hazel Carlson to A.L. Hook, 5 January 1937, Folder: Mille Lacs (General Correspondence), Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

²⁶ Walter Stevens to A.L. Hook, 16 January 1937, Folder: Mille Lacs (General Correspondence), Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

²⁷ Henry Paulsen to Department of Interior, 8 January 1937, Folder: Mille Lacs (General Correspondence), Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

²⁸ William Zimmerman to Henrik Shipstead, 7 May 1937; William Zimmerman to Harold Knutson, 8 May 1937; and A.L. Hook to Louis Balsam, 30 November 1937, Folder: Mille Lacs

congressional members and the Indian Service, government officials backed down on the Isle land acquisition program.

The Isle land acquisition issue, however, was not laid to rest. In 1939, the question of land acquisition at Isle occurred once again, when the thirteen Ojibwe families living at Isle were about to lose their last remaining tract of land because of non-payment of taxes.²⁹ This time the MCT acted in behalf of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. The MCT openly supported the purchase of this land for the Isle Ojibwe as a permanent home.³⁰ Nevertheless, given the climate of discrimination in Isle, local federal officials did not back the MCT, but instead tried to convince the Isle families that they should remove to Vineland instead.³¹ A recent government report clearly pointed out that the Isle Ojibwe suffered from prejudice from the neighboring non-Ojibwe community. According to this report,

The Indian population, particularly at Isle, are looked down upon as wretched paupers by the white inhabitants. This white prejudice added to the miasma of degradation created by other circumstances, makes life for the Indians intolerable and disgraceful by any civilized standard. . . . The Isle public school has five Indian pupils The presence of Indian pupils in the public schools is said to be resented by the whites although they are admitted.³²

The Isle Ojibwe held their ground. They firmly stated that they had no intention of removing unless it was to land located along the shores of Mille Lacs Lake near (General Correspondence), Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

²⁹ M.L. Burns to A.L. Hook to 28 November 1938, Folder: Mille Lacs (General Correspondence), Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

³⁰ Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, Resolution XV, 9-12 January 1939, Folder: Mille Lacs (General Correspondence), Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

³¹ M.L. Burns to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 8 March 1939; A.L. Hook to M.L. Burns, 3 December 1938; M.L. Burns to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 16 June 1939, Folder: Mille Lacs (General Correspondence), Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

³² A.L. Hook to J.M. Stewart, 12 April 1939, Folder: Mille Lacs (General Correspondence), Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

Isle.³³ The local population also held their ground and bitterly opposed any purchase of land for the Isle Ojibwe. They started a petition drive which succeeded in gathering hundreds of signatures protesting the settling of Ojibwe on the shores of Mille Lacs Lake.³⁴ In the end, their petition drive succeeded and federal officials weakened in their resolve to buy land at Isle for the Ojibwe. In June, 1939, citing the unfavorable social and educational situation at Isle and the inimical attitude of the white community, government officials actually considered removing the Isle Ojibwe to Vineland.³⁵ Fortunately, these plans never materialized, and the Isle Ojibwe were able to keep their forty acre tract of land upon which their homes rested.

Land Purchase Success at Danbury and Sandy Lake

For the Ojibwe at Danbury, the purchase of land proved less difficult than at Isle. The government's strategy at Danbury was to purchase more than a dozen forty to eighty acres tracts of wooded lots near the villages of the Danbury Ojibwe. The intent of these purchase was to provide sufficient forestry land for Ojibwe use, as well as small plots of land that could be cleared for home sites and subsistence gardens. Government officials planned to give each family sufficient land to graze a few cows, raise chickens, and plant a garden.³⁶ The MCT endorsed this land purchase because the acreage allotted to the band in the past was inadequate for the proper economic needs and fuel supply of these Ojibwe.³⁷ However,

³³ M.L. Burns to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 8 March 1939; A.L. Hook to M.L. Burns, 3 December 1938; M.L. Burns to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 16 June 1939, Folder: Mille Lacs (General Correspondence), Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

³⁴ Henry Paulsen to A.L. Hook, 19 April 1939; and Henry Paulsen to Department of the Interior, 12 May 1939, Folder: Mille Lacs (General Correspondence), Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

³⁵ A.L. Hook to J.M. Stewart, 1 June 1939, Folder: Mille Lacs (General Correspondence), Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

³⁶ "Final Project Plan: Mille Lacs 1937 I.R.A. Expendable Project," pp. 1-2, 7, 9-19; and William Nickaboine and Fred Sam to J.M. Stewart, 17 December 1936, Folder: Final Project Plan-Mille Lacs IRA, 1937, Expendable land Acquisition Program, Box 550 (Oversize and Photographs), Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

unlike at Isle, the Pine County Land Board fully cooperated with the land purchase program,³⁸ and the land purchases went ahead without any problems.

No definite tracts of land were chosen for Sandy Lake or East Lake at this time. However, clearly they needed agricultural land and forest land for fuelwood. The Sandy Lake Ojibwe recently had a road built to their village by the Indian Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC-ID).³⁹ Sometime prior to 1941, in the name of the MCT, the government bought the Sandy Lake Ojibwe an additional 147 acres (Section 22, Township 50 N., Range 23 W.).⁴⁰

Removal of the Rice Lake Ojibwe

Purchase of land at Rice Lake was a different matter. For a time, the Rice Lake Ojibwe, who in the early 1930s, lived about two miles west of present-day East Lake, remained completely isolated from the world. The only road to their community was an abandoned railroad bed of the Cuyuna and Iron Range Railroad (a branch of the Soo line) that was constructed in 1910. Like the land holding of the Ojibwe at Isle, Ojibwe landowners at Rice Lake were also in jeopardy of having their lands repossessed because of delinquent taxes.⁴¹

³⁷ Minnesota Chippewa Tribal Resolution XVIII, 9-12 January 1939, Folder: Mille Lacs (General Correspondence), Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

³⁸ A.L. Hook to Eugene Dunkley, 3 April 1937, Folder: Mille Lacs (General Correspondence), Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

³⁹ "Final Project Plan: Mille Lacs 1937 I.R.A. Expendable Project," pp. 1-2, 7, 9-19; and William Nickaboine and Fred Sam to J.M. Stewart, 17 December 1936, Folder: Final Project Plan-Mille Lacs IRA, 1937, Expendable land Acquisition Program, Box 550 (Oversize and Photographs), Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁴⁰ F.J. Scott to Peter F. Walz, 5 May 1941, Folder: Records of the Reservation Council, Unnumbered Box, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁴¹ "Final Project Plan: Mille Lacs 1937 I.R.A. Expendable Project," pp. 1-2, 7, 9-19; and William Nickaboine and Fred Sam to J.M. Stewart, 17 December 1936, Folder: Final Project Plan-Mille Lacs IRA, 1937, Expendable land Acquisition Program, Box 550 (Oversize and Photographs), Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center; and ; and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "Rice Lake: National Wildlife Refuge: Auto

Unfortunately, unlike Isle, the Ojibwe living at Rice Lake did loose their land. In 1935, the federal government bought their land and established the Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuge. The Ojibwe were allowed to remain for a short period of time and to continue to harvest wild rice from Rice Lake. However, sometime in 1939, the Bureau of Biological Survey designated Rice Lake as a Migratory Waterfowl Refuge, and thereafter began to buy up land around Rice Lake in order to restore the land to its natural state.⁴² Thereafter, a CCC camp with twenty-four buildings was erected to work on the refuge project, which included building water control structures for Rice Lake.⁴³

To build the CCC camp, the Rice Lake Ojibwe were removed from their homes and their property destroyed. Julie Shingobe, as a young girl, heard stories from elders about how the federal government took over the land that formerly was the home of the Rice Lake Ojibwe. According to her account of how they made room for Civilian Conservation Corps camp and destroyed their village site, the following happened:

... there was a schoolhouse there. They practiced our religion of the Midewiwin and in our ceremonial dances. The people had horses and cows and chickens and gardens. There was many families there in later years I understand that the CCC, whatever, came in there and just forcibly removed them. And when they didn't [leave], they just torched their houses, and the United States government took it. They were displaced, and there was promises which were never kept There was a really thriving village there. There was a lot of people there, and some of them—this storekeeper used to be there. He let some of the Indian families who didn't, you know, have no other place to go, live there. Some of them went to Mille Lacs. Some of them went to Sandy Lake. Some of them went to Fond du Lac, and some of them went to Wisconsin. They were scattered.⁴⁴

Tour," Pamphlet RF-32540.

⁴² Minnesota Chippewa Bulletin 22 July 1939, p. 5.

⁴³ F.J. Scott to Peter F. Walz, 5 May 1941, Folder: Records of the Reservation Council, Unnumbered Box, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center; and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, "Rice Lake: National Wildlife Refuge: Auto Tour," Pamphlet RF-32540.

⁴⁴ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Julie Shingobe," 5 August 1992, Prepared by

After this incident, the Rice Lake Ojibwe that remained in the area eventually acquired lands a few miles east of their former location and became known as the East Lake Ojibwe. Sometime prior to 1941, the federal government purchased sixty-six acres for them (Section 21, Township 47 N., Range 23 W.). Thereafter, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service restricted the ability of the East Lake Ojibwe to freely camp and rice along Rice Lake in their traditional way. In turn, the East Lake Ojibwe attempted to regulate ricing on Rice Lake among other Ojibwe groups, determining which Ojibwe could legitimately use the lake. For instance, in the fall of 1940, the East Lake Ojibwe refused to allow Fond du Lac Ojibwe to rice there.⁴⁵ However, they soon discovered that control over these matters now rested in the hands of others, such as the MCT.

Purchase of Ricing Camps

Wild rice played a critical element in the economy of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe, as both an annual source of food and income for the Ojibwe. However, often times, the Ojibwe were hampered in gathering wild rice because they did not always have open access to some of the better wild rice lakes in the region. Therefore, acquiring ricing areas became a high priority to individual Ojibwe communities. In the 1930s, federal government officials realized this critical point and tailored their land purchase program to this specific need. So, in addition to buying land in each community for homesites, farms, and timber land, federal officials made purchasing land for permanent ricing camp sites on lakes with wild rice beds an important goal. Government officials reasoned that these ricing camps would provide immediate and future benefits to the Mille Lacs Ojibwe.⁴⁶ With permanent ricing camps, the Indian Service believed that the Ojibwe could better support themselves through reliable harvests of wild rice.

U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 2, 4, and 9.

⁴⁵ F.J. Scott to Peter F. Walz, 5 May 1941, Folder: Records of the Reservation Council, Unnumbered Box, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁴⁶ "Final Project Plan: Mille Lacs 1937 I.R.A. Expendable Project," p. 2, Folder: Final Project Plan-Mille Lacs IRA, 1937, Expendable land Acquisition Program, Box 550 (Oversize and Photographs), Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

After a thorough field investigation of the most desirable rice sites based on past and present usage by the Ojibwe, the quality of the rice beds, the source of wood for fuel, and the proximity to the various bands of the Mille Lacs people (Vineland, Isle, Sandy Lake, Rice Lake, and Danbury), the Indian Service selected camp sites on Onamia, Ogechie, Dean, Swamp, and Minnewawa Lakes. Altogether, 1,119 acres were purchased for \$13,102. This action had the endorsement of the MCT as well. The sites were purchased with federal funding allocated to the MCT and held in trust for the Mille Lacs Ojibwe.⁴⁷

1934 Profile of Vineland Ojibwe

Tribal government and land acquisition were important, but development and employment opportunities were also needed by the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe. On the eve of the New Deal, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe were close to destitution. The Ojibwe from Vineland and Isle, like so many Americans, looked to the federal government for help. After suffering through the winter of 1932-1933, they petitioned Congress for a small per capita payment to get them through their hard economic times. During the winter, they had received a payment, but that money had been used for food and to pay their debts at local stores, leaving no money in the spring to buy seed for their gardens, or even to live on while they looked for work.⁴⁸

During the Depression years, the Indian Service had tried to expand self-sufficiency on the Mille Lacs Reservation and to teach industry and thrift. For instance, the Extension Service of the Consolidated Chippewa Agency encouraged 4-H Club projects on the reservation. Men, women, and young people were encouraged to raise and exhibit prize turkeys and other poultry, swine, garden vegetables, canned goods, and hand-sewn items. In 1932, the Mille Lacs Club had

⁴⁷ M.L. Burns to J.M. Stewart, 21 August 1937; Fred Daiker to A.L. Hook, 28 September 1937; T.W. Wheat to J.M. Stewart, 30 September 1937; A.L. Hook to J.M. Stewart, 4 October 1937; Louis Balsam to A.L. Hook, 19 October 1937; William Zimmerman to A.L. Hook, 23 December 1937; and Louis Balsam to Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 17 January 1938, Folder: Wild Rice Sites-Mille Lacs Project IRA 1937, Box 550, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁴⁸ Petition of Chippewa Indians from Vineland and Isle to Chairman of Senate Indian Affairs Committee, 5 April 1933, File: Mille Lacs Reservation (Isle and Vineland), Box 58, Special Committee on Indian Affairs, Sen 83A-F9, Record Group 46, National Archives.

forty-six men and women members. Batiste Garbow, a young club member, won first place with her garden, winning a trip to the State Horticultural Show, Minneapolis, and later she raised a prize winning pig.⁴⁹ The Extension Service also supported marketing Ojibwe handicraft products locally through roadside stands and local traders.⁵⁰

These efforts, however, provided only minimal development and employment opportunities in either farming or making handicrafts. This type of work could not possibly provide the types of projects needed to bring the Ojibwe economy out of the doldrums of the Depression. The following raw statistics from the Annual Report of Extension Workers for the year 1934 provide an interesting perspective on life at the main Ojibwe community at Vineland and indicate the inadequate economic conditions at Vineland.⁵¹

OJIBWE POPULATION AT VINELAND

Population: 314

No. of Families: 76

Male Population: 160

Female Population: 154

FARMING AND GRAZING STATISTICS

No. of Farms Operated by Ojibwe: 2

Agricultural Acreage: 90 acres

Estimated Tillable Acreage: 200 acres

Crops:

Corn	115 bushels
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⁴⁹ Annual Report of Extension Workers, 1931-1932, pp. 1, 9, 12, and 14; Consolidated Chippewa Jurisdiction Annual Report, 1932, pp. 15-20; and Consolidated Chippewa Jurisdiction Annual Report of Extension Activities, 1933, pp. 25-26; 031-1933-52,500, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁵⁰ Annual Report of Extension Workers, 1936, p. 32, 031-1936-6,149; and Annual Report of Extension Workers, 1937, p. 20, 031-1937-8,851, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁵¹ Annual Report of Extension Workers, 1935, pp. 4-16, 031-1936-6,149, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

Wild Rice	6,000 bushels (2,000 bushels stored, 4,000 bushels sold)
Wild Hay	25 tons

Grazing Acreage: 50 acres

Other Land (Forest, Waste Land, etc.): 1,820 acres

No. of Families with Gardens: 60-61

Total Yield of Gardens: 20,710 lbs of vegetables (mostly potatoes, squash, turnips and dry beans)

No. of Root Cellars: 6

Farm Animals:

Poultry: 60 birds

Cattle: 4 dairy cattle

Swine: 14

Horses: 2

HANDICRAFT AND OTHER ITEMS

Basketry Produced: 350 (Valued at \$350.00)

No. of Ojibwe Engaged: 18

Beadwork Produced: 210 (Valued at \$250.00)

No. of Ojibwe Engaged: 24

Bark Craft Produced: 2400 (Canoes) (Valued at \$2,200.00)

No. of Ojibwe Engaged: 140

Leather Crafts (Buckskin) Produced: 1000 (Valued at \$1,200.00)

No. of Ojibwe Engaged: 35

Wood Crafts Produced: 225 (\$200.00)

No. of Ojibwe Engaged: 10

Maple Sugaring Produced: 350 (Valued at \$400.00)

No. of Ojibwe Engaged: 45

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STATISTICS

Estimated Average Family Income: \$230.00

No. of Ojibwe Who have Skilled Work: 10 (yearly earnings total \$1,000.00)

No. of Ojibwe Who have Unskilled Work: 100 (yearly earnings total \$20,000.00)

No. of Individuals assisted with Rations and Relief: 64

No. of Ojibwe Wearing Modern Attire: 314

No. of Ojibwe Eligible to Vote: 108
No. of Ojibwe Speaking English: 144
No. of Ojibwe Who Read and Write English: 140
No. of Ojibwe Who are Entirely Self-supporting: 70
No. of Ojibwe Who live in Permanent Homes with Wood Floors: 75
Value of Ojibwe homes, barns and corrals: \$6,500.00
Value of Ojibwe furniture in Indian homes: \$3,400.00
Value of Ojibwe tools and agricultural implements: \$400.00
Value of Ojibwe wagons and vehicles: \$1,000.00
Total Value of all individual Ojibwe property: \$12,880.00

The above profile indicated that in 1934, only about fifty percent of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe at Vineland were self-supporting to any degree, while the rest needed rations and relief. Those Vineland Ojibwe who sustained themselves did so through a combination of crops, gardens, poultry, wild rice, and wage labor. For the most part, the Non-Removable Mille Lacs at Vineland were an unskilled labor force, the majority of whom were dependent on selling wild rice, maple sugar, birch bark, and other handicrafts to tourists to make a living. These items were either sold to the Mille Lacs Trading Post, or sold by individual Ojibwe at roadside stands to passing tourists. Most likely the ten skilled workers in the above profile labored at the boat factory owned and operated by Harry Ayer since 1929.

Reservation Development, Employment, and New Deal Programs

Over the years of the Indian New Deal period, the quality of life and economic situation in the various Mille Lacs communities improved considerably. There were increases in wild rice gathered, stored, and sold, as well as the production of handicraft items.⁵² By 1938, the Extension Service built two long-needed community wells for the Vineland community—the "Point" well and the "Benjamin" well.⁵³ In addition to these wells, the Extension Service each year promoted and executed a number of projects that benefitted the Vineland Ojibwe. One Extension Service project aimed at increasing the winter storage capacity of vegetables for the band through the construction of a concrete community root

⁵² Annual Report of Extension Workers, 1936, Form B., pp. 1-12, 031-1937-8,851, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁵³ Annual Report of Extension Activities, 1938, pp. 37-38, 031-1938-1,608, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

cellar. In former years, they had no way to store their canned goods during the winter. This community root cellar alleviated some of this problem.⁵⁴

However, rice was still a very important resource to the Mille Lacs Ojibwe, and one informant described the ricing process in the 1930s and the hard work of her mother and father with the following details:

. . . first she would go out . . . and get the wild rice, . . . for her own use. . . . we used to go out and live in those lakes in wigwams. . . . Platte Lake—we used to go out and lived there for about a week or so or two weeks. I don't really recall what, how long we lived out there, . . . bringing it off the lake, drying it, and then she would parch it. My dad would thresh it with his feet, and the rice that she did not finish, she'd bring it and finish it at home. . . . I used to remember seeing them standing out on the lawn, what we call a lawn, . . . [and] when there was a stiff breeze, they used to go out and shake the rice out there after threshing it, you know, by feet and stuff. We used to get out there and thresh the rice with our feet, too. . . .

[We] helped them—my brother and I. It was more or less just to play around, but we finished them. She would get out there and do the same thing. She'd put on one of my dad's pants, and she would tie it around her legs and finish the rice, too, threshing it with her feet. And then she would work way late into the night, 'cause I remembered she would have one of these old-fashioned lanterns out in the trees and hanging. That was our light, and I remembered her being out there late at night, finishing rice and stuff like that. We used to do a lot, and then . . . they'd go to Aitkin and go to that—there used to be a big company, like McGregor Wild Rice. He was famous for that, and he would have just tons of rice. They'd bring the rice out to home, and she would work on that until it was all done. They used to have, I imagine, close to five hundred pounds, maybe. . . . That's a lot of rice. I remembered having great big wild rice . . . canvas bags. They'd take maybe one or two. My memory there is kind of vague, but I remember having those stacked—you know, two or three of them. . . . And they would take it in the trailer and take it back to the wild rice companies. To this day, I don't know what they got for it. They

⁵⁴ Annual Report of Extension Workers, 1937, p. 12, 031-1937-8,851, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

got a certain—I don't know if it's five or three cents a pound for finishing rice up there.⁵⁵

To aid in the production of rice, by 1938, the WPA and the Minnesota Conservation Department built a dam on the Rum River at Onamia to control the water level on Ogechie, Shakopee, and Onamia Lakes for rice growing purposes.⁵⁶ With added income from increased rice production and handicraft sales, Ojibwe average yearly income rose from \$230.00 in 1935 to \$375.00 a year by the end of 1937.⁵⁷

CCC-ID and the WPA

Certain New Deal programs, such as the CCC-ID, contributed to this rise in income levels as well, bringing employment to the older men and boys in the community. Like the regular Civilian Conservation Corps, the CCC-ID was designed to conserve land and resources, while providing education, training, employment, and relief to out of work people and their families. Married and unmarried enrollees over the age of eighteen from all the Mille Lacs Ojibwe communities participated in the CCC-ID program. In Minnesota, within a year of the beginning of the program a majority of the non-urban Ojibwe received some aid from the program. Most of Mille Lacs Ojibwe were sent to either the CCC-ID camp at Nett Lake or the one located at Grand Portage, both of which were several hundred miles away. Coordination of transportation to the camps was a major concern, and many of the men had to pay their own way to pickup stations, such as Cloquet. While at Nett Lake and Grand Portage, they participated in a number of work projects, such as constructing rice camps, fire suppression, building bridges, fire lookout towers, and blister rust control.⁵⁸ The Districts of Danbury,

⁵⁵ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Jessie Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 4-5.

⁵⁶ Annual Report of Extension Activities, 1938, Figure 24, 031-1938-4375, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁵⁷ Annual Report of Extension Workers, 1937, Form B., pp. 1-12, 031-1938-1,608, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives.

⁵⁸ Calvin W. Gower, "The CCC Indian Division: Aid for Depressed Americans, 1933-1942," Minnesota History (Spring 1972): 7-9; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of James Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 39-45.

Lake Lena, Markville, Onamia, Isle, Vineland, and Sandy Lake were allotted only fourteen positions in the camps. Thus, camp assignments were very competitive among the Ojibwe.⁵⁹ Some individual tribal members petitioned government officials to help them enroll, while others lied about their age in order to get into one of the CCC-ID camps. For instance, one Danbury leader wrote: "We just have to work in order to live and as you know, no work around here."⁶⁰ The men were clothed, fed, and paid forty-five dollars a month, which was sent home to their families.⁶¹

While some Mille Lacs Ojibwe labored in CCC-ID camps at Grand Portage and Nett Lake, the majority of Mille Lacs Ojibwe worked on WPA projects near the reservations. For instance, in 1937, over twenty-five men and boys from Isle and Onamia alone were employed on WPA projects in Mille Lacs County.⁶² These projects improved the communities in various ways. Projects varied widely from constructing and improving trails and roads for better access to communities, to clearing land for gardens, to drilling individual community wells, to constructing new houses, or to rehabilitating the exteriors and interiors of older homes.⁶³ For instance, a 1940 report stated that under these programs, twenty new houses and twenty one-acre garden sites had been started, nineteen houses had been shingled, sixteen had been fitted with storm windows, ten had chimneys built, eight had doors and locks fitted, and three had oak flooring laid at Mille Lacs.⁶⁴ These rehabilitated houses lasted until the 1960s, when a major overhaul of the housing situation was required because the structures had simply worn-out.

The CCC-ID and WPA projects contributed greatly to improving the physical and

⁵⁹ E.J. Carlson to Isabelle Robideau, 20 December 1935, Folder: Camp—1934-1936, Box 362, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁶⁰ Albert Churchill, et al. to Isabelle Robideau, 6 April 1935, Folder: Camp—1934-1936, Box 362, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁶¹ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of James Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 39-41, 43-45.

⁶² William H. Crowe to Isabelle Robideau, 22 February 1937, Folder: CCC—Camp 1937, Box 362, Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Record Group 75, Kansas City Federal Record Center.

⁶³ For instance see Minnesota Chippewa Bulletin 21 November 1938, p. 8; Minnesota Chippewa Bulletin 20 October 1939, p. 10; Minnesota Chippewa Bulletin 22 January 1940, p. 7; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of James Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 14-16, 23, 39-45.

⁶⁴ Minnesota Chippewa Bulletin 23 February 1940, p. 17.

economic lives of many of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. Employment on CCC-ID and WPA projects boosted the income of poverty-stricken families, gave the Ojibwe new skills and proper work habits, improved their most tangible asset, their reservation land and homes, and in the process did not force the Ojibwe to make radical adjustments to the world around them.⁶⁵

On the other hand, the CCC-ID programs in particular had an adverse social affect on these communities. Understandably, many of the younger enrollees tasted adventure by going off their traditional homeland. Thereafter, many of them became restless and pursued opportunities far away from their home communities.⁶⁶ The onset of World War II added to this quest for adventure in the younger members of the community. Their willingness to seek off-reservation experiences and employment altered their isolated living conditions, society, and cultural values as well.

World War II and Urban Relocation of the 1950s

With the declaration of war with Japan after Pearl Harbor in late 1941, the Indian New Deal waned and then disappeared as the nation girded itself for battle in the Pacific and Atlantic theaters. World War II affected the Mille Lacs Ojibwe in two distinct ways. First, a high percentage of young Mille Lacs men, who were eligible for military service, volunteered and/or were drafted for duty in World War II.⁶⁷ One such person was James Clark, who was drafted into service and took military training at Camp Robinson, Arkansas. Clark described his service years as a medic in the European theater this way:

I got into the medical department. I was a medic. Yeah, I was a medic for four years, and I learned a lot from that. I wasn't drafted. I was dragged into it. Anyway, I was in the service for four years, in medics all that time. In fact, I worked in a hospital as a technician, and if I'd had any brains, I could have ended up as a

⁶⁵ Calvin W. Gower, "The CCC Indian Division: Aid for Depressed Americans, 1933-1942," Minnesota History (Spring 1972): 13.

⁶⁶ Donald L. Parman, "The Indian and the Civilian Conservation Corps," Pacific Historical Review Vol. XL (February 1971): 56.

⁶⁷ Roger and Priscilla Buffalohead, Against the Tide of History: The Story of the Mille Lacs Anishinabe (Cass Lake: Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, 1985), pp. 97-99.

nurse, because I learned all that stuff. We worked right in the hospital as nurses. . . .[and] I left Berlin on the twenty-seventh of November in '45.⁶⁸

Going off to war for men like James Clark brought both new skills and a greater degree of cultural sophistication to them regarding the ways of the outside world— a greater world perspective than they had never witnessed before.

The second major affect of World War II focused on economics and urban relocation. For the very first time, many Ojibwe men and women left their home communities in order to take jobs in defense industries in the cities. While men like James Clark and others went off to war, many Mille Lacs families moved to the Minneapolis-St. Paul and the Duluth areas for jobs in war-related industries. During the war years, a steady stream of Mille Lacs people migrated into large and small urban communities, such as like Minneapolis-St. Paul, Duluth, Brainerd, and Anoka. Once there, they joined relatives and other minority groups in finding work in the defense industry to support themselves. After World War II, many of these families stayed in the cities. Those that stayed on the reservation participated in the war effort as well. They partook in domestic activities related to the war effort, such as National Defense programs (collections of war-related materials, victory gardens, American Red Cross work, rationing, etc.) which were pursued.⁶⁹

During the 1950s, for many reasons, voluntary migration to urban centers continued. For some, going to work and living in urban locations meant better living conditions, better jobs, and steadier employment compared to conditions on the reservation. For others, migrating to the cities was not a choice, because if they stayed they knew they would become a burden on their families at home. Once in urban centers, many Ojibwe moved into minority neighborhoods, such as the Indian neighborhood in southern Minneapolis. With support from friends and families in the form of temporary shelter, they searched for jobs to better their economic situation.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of James Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 21-22.

⁶⁹ Roger and Priscilla Buffalohead, Against the Tide of History: The Story of the Mille Lacs Anishinabe (Cass Lake: Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, 1985), pp. 97-100; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Doug Sam," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 28-29.

For instance, after returning from the World War II, James Clark moved to Minneapolis, where he easily found work at a building materials company. He worked there for a few years, but eventually, through a friend, found a better job at Fairview Hospital, where he stayed employed for thirty years before retiring. Others, such as Jessie Clark, Marge Anderson, and Doug Sam followed either siblings or spouses to Minneapolis-St. Paul and/or urban centers in California. In these locations, they raised their families. However, many families living in the Twin Cities area still maintained their ties with the reservation, returning home on the weekends to visit folks, and taking part in traditional activities like ceremonial powwows.⁷¹

Relocation Programs!

In the 1950s and into the 1960s, other Mille Lacs Ojibwe participated in the voluntary relocation program organized by the federal government. The theme of the voluntary relocation program was to advocate cultural assimilation into urban society by providing post-high school vocational training. In 1956, through the passage of Public Law 959 (70 Statute 986), the federal government provided financial assistance to any Indian (ages 18-35) who sought vocational training. This program sought to "teach or improve upon a marketable skill for urban employment."⁷²

⁷⁰ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of James Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, p. 30; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Jessie Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 42-43, 48-52; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp.7-11; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Julie Shingobe," 5 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 50-52; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Doug Sam," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 24-25, 28, and 32.

⁷¹ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of James Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, p. 30; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Jessie Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 42-43, 48-52; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp.7-11; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Julie Shingobe," 5 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 50-52; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Doug Sam," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 24-25, 28, and 32.

Several Mille Lacs Ojibwe took part in the relocation program and/or education training program in the late 1950s and early 1960s with varying degrees of success. One such individual was Doug Sam. After graduating from high school at Onamia, in the mid-1950s, Doug Sam worked at a number of jobs in urban situations (Minneapolis, Brainerd, and Aitkin), until he was given a chance to relocate to California. His brother had gone through a vocational training program to become a machinist, and then he had moved away to the Twin Cities. In 1959, Doug Sam chose to go to San Francisco, where with some difficulty over his skill assessment as a "fitter," he eventually found work as a pipefitter, shipfitter, and structural steel fitter and stayed for sixteen years.⁷³

In the early 1960s, another Ojibwe who took advantage of the relocation program after he graduated from high school was Joe Nayquonabe. Initially, he was more concerned with adventure than with economic opportunity. When asked whether he joined the relocation program because of economic reasons or adventure, Nayquonabe said:

Boy, I think more of adventure I had no problems finding work around here [Vineland], you know, resort work. If anybody needed a dock put up or their resort ready for operations, that was no problem. That I could do. But I think this was a time for me to get out there to see what's going on, see what's happening out there. But then we were also getting television, you know, and we could see things, that there's a lot more. For me, anyway, I could see that there's not just this [living at Vineland]. There's also something out there that I'd like to take a look at. So this gave me an opportunity to do that. You know, being eighteen years old, you want to get out and do something.⁷⁴

⁷² Margaret Connell Szasz, Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination Since 1928 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974), p. 137.

⁷³ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Doug Sam," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 24-28, and 33-39. Initially, the San Francisco relocation office personnel sent Doug Sam to a job at a Levi-Strauss clothing factory, not realizing that he was a structural steel worker.

⁷⁴ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, p. 21.

After graduating from Onamia, Nayquonabe was given the choice of going either to Milwaukee, Chicago, Cleveland or Minneapolis for vocational training and relocation. Not knowing that he was part of a national urban relocation program for Indians, Nayquonabe selected to go on after high school to vocational school in Milwaukee. Nayquonabe described his situation and his introduction to the government urban relocation program this way:

. . . see, at the time I didn't know it was the Relocation Act. I thought this was my schooling, you know, this is how I get to go to school. So I went, and I was getting my monthly stipend, you know, for going to school. But then later, about fifteen years later, I went to find that this was part of the Relocation Act that was getting Indians off the reservation and into the urban areas. . . . I caught a bus from here, got into Minneapolis with all my clothes and all my belongings. They met me there, and they had a ticket for me and some money, the first month's pay. But when I got into Milwaukee, I got there about six in the morning, about five-thirty, six in the morning. I can't even remember, but real early—nobody there to meet me, nobody to tell me where the school's at, nobody to tell where's there's any housing, you know, nothing. And so I kind of stood around there, you know, wondering, "Well, jeez." Oh, they did tell us to go see the school counselor when we get there. I guess he was the one that would have, you know, got that done. But didn't know where the school was, and here we are, sitting there in the morning, wondering what's going to happen here.⁷⁵

From a number of oral histories conducted regarding Mille Lacs Ojibwe urban experience, including the oral histories with Doug Sam and Joe Nayquonabe, it is clear that living in an urban environment had its positive and negative aspects. Moving to the cities in the 1950s provided an array of positive features to many Ojibwe. There were better jobs, children often found better education and less discrimination than if they had stayed at home, and there was adventure and new experiences.⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 17 and 19. After graduating, Nayquonabe went on to fight in the Vietnam War at Phuoc Vinh in the First Infantry Division as a medic, where he received a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart.

⁷⁶ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared

But for many Mille Lacs Ojibwe, migration and living in cities gave them their first taste of urban living and it was not always a pleasant one. Some feared the crime. Others experienced isolation and loneliness, with one person stating "you can walk down the street and meet ten thousand of them [people], and yet there's nothing there between them and me." Some felt closed in by their new urban environment, and longed for the natural environment in which they grew up in at Mille Lacs. Still yet, others fell into the mainstream of the greater society, assimilating to both the bad and good habits and social behaviors of the majority. Bad habits included extensive social drinking in neighborhood bars and/or friend's houses, which for many ultimately led to alcoholism and divorce. Many of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe who stayed in the cities, lost touch with their traditional Ojibwe family and living values, and failed to pass these values onto their children.⁷⁷

While the urban relocation movement economically benefitted many families and individuals, and gave new vocational-trade skills to band members, it also adversely impacted the reservation. Band members who traveled home from the cities on weekend or summer visits transpired their urban sophistication and experiences to their reservation family and friends. This interchange rapidly broke down the isolation of Mille Lacs members from the greater society. The

*were they
isolated
before?
would they*

by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 12-13; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Jessie Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 42-43, 48-52; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Julie Shingobe," 5 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 50-52; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Doug Sam," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 36-39; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, p. 23.

⁷⁷ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 12-13; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Jessie Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 42-43, 48-52; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Julie Shingobe," 5 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 50-52; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Doug Sam," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 36-39; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, p. 23.

results magnified the adoption of western cultural practices over traditional values and increased incidences of alcoholism, juvenile delinquency, vandalism, crime, and drug problems on the reservation. It also resulted in a changing economy from one based on seasonal employment and local labor to one centered on full time employment in non-Indian communities.

Reservation Life in the 1940s and 1950s

While many Ojibwe moved to the cities, many chose to remain on the reservation for one reason or another. Band members left on the reservation continued to survive by exploiting and following a traditional seasonal round of life. Those that remained became the last generation to fully partake of the lifestyle that their ancestors for generations relied on for sustenance.

At Vineland, winter activities still centered around indoor activities, although children had fun outdoors sledding, skating, and taking part in other winter activities. During the winter, work was at a minimum for men and women. Men chopped wood for wood stoves and ice fished on Mille Lacs Lake. Women, besides the usual household chores of cooking and cleaning, sewed birchbark items that they would sell during the coming summer tourist season. At night, with no television, no electricity and only a kerosene lamp for light, grandparents entertained, educated, and imparted cultural values to their families by storytelling, especially *Wanabozho* stories which everyone enjoyed. Storytelling especially kept the young people entranced, as everyone huddled around the wood stove for warmth, much as they had done for many generations past. Winter months were a time to attend ceremonials at home, such as the Midewiwin, or ceremonials at other Ojibwe communities, and also a time to visit with neighbors and relatives locally or in distant places, such as Pequot Lakes on the White Earth Reservation. In summary, winter was a season for family and community togetherness.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 1, and 9-12; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, p. 4; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Doug Sam," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 2-3; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Brenda Boyd," 16 October 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, p. 26-27.

In the spring time, at Vineland and Isle, the main activity continued to be maple sugaring. Grandparents usually led the family in preparing and harvesting maple sugar sap in the traditional way. Though the sugar bushes were only a few miles from Vineland and Isle, entire families camped out in make-shift wigwams near the maple groves. Entire families stayed there during the few weeks of maple sugaring, each with their own individual chore, whether it be gathering wood or stirring the boiling kettles of sap. For days, family members extracted maple sap from the trunk of trees, using special taps made from sumac. The collected sap was then put in large metal kettles to boil down into maple sugar. The treat of the day was to make taffy and sugar ice cakes by pouring hot maple sugar over ice.⁷⁹

Following spring came the long warm summer months, when whole families from Vineland and Isle left their homes to camp along Highway 169 to sell handcrafted birchbark items to passing tourists from their temporary road side stands and homes. Roadside stands stretched from south of Vineland all the way north to Wigwam Bay.⁸⁰ During the summer, practically every household also planted and tended to several gardens. They raised mostly potatoes and other vegetables, which they stored in root cellars. This stored food was intended to last individual families over the wintertime.⁸¹ Many of the gardens were started as

⁷⁹ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, p. 12; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Doug Sam," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 15-16; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Brenda Boyd," 16 October 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 31 and 33.

⁸⁰ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, p. 2; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Doug Sam," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 13-14; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Brenda Boyd," 16 October 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 36-37; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Julie Shingobe," 5 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, p. 44.

⁸¹ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, p. 5; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Jessie Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 2-3; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Brenda Boyd," 16 October 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 34-36.

either 4-H gardens from the 1930s or as victory gardens during World War II. For some men and women, there was also seasonal work. Some worked at the Mille Lacs Ojibwe Museum, which was still owned by Harry and Jeannette Ayer, while others found seasonal employment as bean pickers for farmers in Mora and elsewhere.⁸² For the six or so Ojibwe families living at Isle, steadier employment was found at the Little Joe Manufacturing, a nationwide fishing tackle manufacturer.⁸³

In the fall, perhaps the most important season of all for the Mille Lacs in the 1930s and 1940s, the Ojibwe focused their attention on harvesting rice. First, knowledgeable men would check out each lake to determine when and where that year's harvest would take place. During the month of September, various related and unrelated families gathered together for the ricing season. Because few people had their own transportation, they usually hired a truck to convey everyone and their belongings (tarps, and pots and pans for cooking outside) to the best ricing lakes. Again entire families, camped out in temporary wigwams for shelter on the shores of the ricing lakes. Traditional Ojibwe considered the ricing season as the social highlight of the year. As many as twenty or more families came together at one lake to participate in the harvest. Using long hand-made flat bottom ricing boats, sometimes fourteen feet long, they poled themselves through the thick rice beds, beating the rice into the bottoms of their boats. Children learned to pole, while grandparents and parents sat in the back of the boat guiding them. At the end of the ricing season, each family saved enough rice for their winter needs, and sold the remaining finished rice to large wild rice companies for profit. The revenue from the rice sales was used to buy necessities they needed through the winter, including clothes for children going to school. The Ojibwe from Vineland and Isle used ricing camps bought for the tribe in the 1930s, such as Dean and Swamp Lakes, as well as other areas, such as Platte Lake near Vineland, Mallard Lake near Bennettville, and Rice Lake near East Lake.⁸⁴

⁸² Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Doug Sam," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 6-9.

⁸³ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Brenda Boyd," 16 October 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 5-6, and 16.

⁸⁴ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 13-14; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 5-6; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Doug

By the 1950s, the social role and the practice of harvesting rice dramatically changed. No longer was ricing done primarily for sustenance and considered a social as well as an economic activity. In the 1950s, the price of wild rice skyrocketed. Big companies, such as Chun-King started bidding for the rice, and the price reached as high as ten dollars a pound. With prices rising to exorbitant levels, the practice of wild ricing became commercialized and ricing became a major income producing activity for certain people. Ojibwe families both at Mille Lacs and elsewhere, with no thought for the future, over exploited this precious resource, going from one lake to another, with many people harvesting as much as four hundred pounds. It was said, that in one day, a family could earn almost a thousand dollars. At that point, even non-Ojibwe began harvesting the rice, more often than not knocking down and breaking more rice beds than they harvested. The boom eventually turned to bust because of this over exploitation and other reasons.⁸⁵

After the September ricing season, in late October, Mille Lacs Ojibwe families turned to fishing on Mille Lacs Lake as the next resource to harvest. In the 1930s, they used gill nets to bring in their day's catch, until the lake froze over, then the men would cut holes in the ice and continue to fish all winter long for northerns and walleyes in makeshift fish houses. After the catch, women cleaned, salted, and smoked the fish in a traditional fashion, so it could be stored for the winter.⁸⁶ One informant described her mother performing these tasks:

. . . then they did the fishing. She would go out, set net, and bring the fish out. . . towards late October. . . almost until late October, when the lake starts to freeze. . . I remembered her bringing great big

Sam," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 2-5, and 10-11; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Jessie Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 3-4; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Brenda Boyd," 16 October 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 42-48.

⁸⁵ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Doug Sam," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 5, and 10-13; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Brenda Boyd," 16 October 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, p. 48.

⁸⁶ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Jessie Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, p. 3.

tubs full of what they call tulibeas. . . . to us they were little white fish And she would work on those. She would open the stomachs, you know, do all that and salt them. Then she put those in great big barrels, and she would soak those maybe overnight or two nights. Then she'd get out there and do her smoked fish. . . . What I could remember, she would take something like a fish house, maybe four by four. Then she would have what you called chicken wire, layered maybe two, three. Then she'd put all those—that fish in there—and she would smoke those. She would have maybe about four feet or maybe five feet off the—from the ashes—and she'd smoke those. She'd cover that up real tight, and she would just have little ashes in there that's real live. She would cook those maybe all day, all night. I remembered her doing—sort of getting up in the middle of the night and going out there to see if they were burned or anything. She would stack those in paper boxes or what. . . . we had to try and get boxes or paper bags and store them or someplace. I'd never used to see her sell them, but she used to sell them, I guess. . . . People that come to look for fish, you know, have smoked fish, because they knew that she had them. People would come out. I don't know if she got two or three pennies for each fish or not. . . . We ate some, yes. . . . And we ate fresh fish. I remember my dad going out in the wintertime now. He'd go out, take a bunch of blankets or canvas, and he would go out and lay on the ice. He'd bring fish in. That was our meals.⁸⁷

However, as tourism increased in the region, one Ojibwe informant thought that it ruined the fishing on Mille Lacs Lake. According to that informant:

We used to go out here [Mille Lacs Lake] and get whitefish by the barrels in them days and smoke them or salt them for the winter. Used to have big barrels full of salted fish to last all winter. But not game fish, just mostly whitefish, you know? You smoke most of them. And early spring there you go put a little tepee out there and get a golden northern or a walleye. That was your meal. You didn't get a whole bunch. You just got what you needed for—It was a good life. It was a good life. I don't know. . . . when I was young here,

⁸⁷ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Jessie Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 5-7.

there was no resorts in the area. You could move around freely around the lake. . . . it was all lost through the population moving in and new laws coming out, conflicting laws that bans, bans cultures, and just—I don't know. I guess it's progress, but this progress will probably wipe out a culture I remember sitting out there fishing through the ice, you know, in the spring, spearfish. You could see the bottom. You could see everything down there. When I got back . . . [from California] you couldn't see the bottom. It was all murky. I was gone about seventeen years to California. That's how long it took to pollute that lake, where you couldn't see the bottom anymore.⁸⁸

Seasonal Round, and Life at Sandy Lake, East Lake and Danbury

Life for the Ojibwe living at Sandy Lake, East Lake, and Danbury during the 1940s and 1950s was not much different than life at Vineland for those that did not relocate to the cities. They supported themselves through either tourism, seasonal wage-labor or selling products from natural resources. Those Ojibwe who could not support themselves in this manner, eventually moved from the reservation to nearby urban locations to find work.

For instance, in 1944, the Ojibwe living at Danbury, along other Mille Lacs Ojibwe, initiated annual July 4th pow-wows in order to draw tourism there way. These July 4th pow-wows lasted for three days and attracted thousands of visitors each year until the 1960s. Visitors came from as far as Canada to attend the pow-wows. Over the decade of the 1950s, the Danbury Ojibwe also harvested, cleaned, and finished rice for commercial purposes. Commercial buying of rice began at Danbury about 1950, and at that time, wild rice sold for 22¢ a pound. Thereafter, prices rose and harvesting wild rice provided an important source of income for the Ojibwe.⁸⁹ For a time the Danbury Ojibwe riced in both Wisconsin and Minnesota. However, eventually, they were forced to confine their ricing activities to Minnesota, mostly at Rice Lake, near McGregor, Minnesota. In addition to these pastimes, heads of households, such as Albert Churchill, continued to find

⁸⁸ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Doug Sam," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 18-20.

⁸⁹ Dick Riis, compiler, and Vicki Koenen, editor, Danbury Diamond Anniversary History, 1912-1987 (Siren, Wisconsin: Lakeland Press, 1987), p. 8; and "Ogema Township History File" circa 1987, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

employment either cutting pulp wood, working for the railroad, or driving truck.⁹⁰

Opportunities for outside labor provided greater economic benefits than living off reservation land in the traditional manner. As Danbury Ojibwe took these jobs, they lost their isolation from the outside world and began to move away from the community, either to urban areas, such as Pine City or to the Mille Lacs Reservation. In 1949, John Dunkley was the first to move and build a house elsewhere. Thereafter, others followed, including Albert Churchill, who moved to Pine City in the mid-1950s. The population at Danbury dropped from an all-time high of 344 in 1940 to just 200 by 1960.⁹¹

Lifestyles at Sandy Lake and East Lake, mirrored life at Danbury. In the 1940s and 1950s, these Ojibwe relied on a seasonal round lifestyle, which included commercial sales of rice for income. Ricing by them was conducted on the Rice Lake Wildlife Refuge and Lake Minnewawa.⁹² However, like at Danbury and Vineland, they fell economically behind mainstream America in material goods.

Conclusion

As a result of the new directions and false starts of the preceding decades, the Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe fell behind mainstream America. In the 1930s, the Roosevelt Administration and the Indian New Deal offered great hope for the Mille Lacs Ojibwe in terms of tribal and economic progress. However, hope dissipated immediately following World War II, when the draw of the outside opportunities of the outside world uprooted hundreds of band members, leaving those behind on the reservation to try to survive in a dominant American

⁹⁰ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Albert Churchill," 6 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 4-6, 10, and 12.

⁹¹ Dick Riis, compiler, and Vicki Koenen, editor, Danbury Diamond Anniversary History, 1912-1987 (Siren, Wisconsin: Lakeland Press, 1987), p. 8; "Ogema Township History File" circa 1987, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Albert Churchill," 6 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 4-6, 10, and 12.

⁹² Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Julie Shingobe," 5 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 11-18, 20-24, 38-39, and 43-46.

society. The decade of the 1950s brought unparalleled prosperity to America, but clearly left the Mille Lacs Reservation in a deplorable state. By 1960, the Mille Lacs people and their reservation lacked economic development, effective tribal leadership, adequate education, standard housing, and sufficient health facilities. Furthermore, Mille Lacs Ojibwe were losing their Ojibwe heritage, as well as hope for the future.

Notes on Chapter Sources:

This chapter is based largely upon primary correspondence, reports and documents written during the time period 1930s through 1950s. Primary works consulted for this chapter include: Special Committee on Indian Affairs, Sen 83A-F9, Record Group 46, National Archives; Consolidated Chippewa Agency, Central Classified Files, 1907-1939, Record Group 75, National Archives; Consolidated Chippewa Agency, 1922-1954, Record Group 75, Federal Record Center at Kansas City; and Department of Natural Resources Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

Other important primary materials include a series of oral histories executed specifically for this project. They are: Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992; "Oral History of Brenda Boyd," 16 October 1992; "Oral History of Albert Churchill," 6 August 1992; "Oral History of James Clark," 26 August 1992; "Oral History of Jessie Clark," 26 August 1992; "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992; "Oral History of Doug Sam," 7 August 1992; and "Oral History of Julie Shingobe," 5 August 1992.

Secondary sources, containing information about Ojibwe history and general American Indian policy, were also utilized in this chapter. They include: Roger and Priscilla Buffalohead, Against the Tide of History: The Story of the Mille Lacs Anishinabe, Case Lake: Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, 1985; Marion E. Gridley, ed., Indians of Today, 3rd edition, Chicago: Towertown Press, 1960; William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, New York: Harper & Row, Publishers; Dick Riis, Compiler, and Vicki Koenen, editor, Danbury Diamond Anniversary History, 1912-1987, Siren, Wisconsin: Lakeland Press, 1987; and Margaret Connell Szasz, Education and the American Indian: The road to Self-Determination Since 1928, Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974.

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Ojibwe Historical Chronology: 1932-1959

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| 1932 | In November of 1932, Franklin D. Roosevelt, running on a platform known as the "New Deal," was elected as president. |
| 1933-1934 | In 1933-1934, the Roosevelt administration set forth a new Indian policy, known as the "Indian New Deal." |
| 1933-1941 | From 1933-1941, Mille Lacs Ojibwe found work on Indian Civilian Conservation Corps and Works Progress Administration projects. |
| 1934 | In June of 1934, Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA). This piece of legislation became to cornerstone of Indian policy in America. |
| 1934 | In 1934, after the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act, representatives from the six member reservations (White Earth, Leech Lake, Fond du lac, Grand Portage, and Nett Lake) formed a single government entity, known as the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT). |
| 1936 | In 1936, under Section five of the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, federal officials began plans to purchase additional land for the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. Federal officials were able to purchase land at Vineland, Danbury, and Sandy Lake. However, efforts to purchase land at Isle and Rice Lake were unsuccessful. Eventually, Ojibwe living at Rice Lake were removed from their homes and relocated near East Lake. |
| 1938 | In 1938, the Extension Service built two needed community |

wells for Vineland community--the "Point" well and the "Benjamin" well.

1938 In 1938, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and the Minnesota Conservation Department built a dam on the Rum River at Onamia to control the water level on Ogechie, Shakopee, and Onamia Lakes for rice growing purposes.

1939 On February 16, 1939, the MCT submitted a charter, which organized a Mille Lacs Tribal Council, to a referendum. By a vote of eighty-two for and sixteen against, the Mille Lacs band duly ratified and accepted the charter.

1941 On December 7, 1941, following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, the United States entered World War II. Thereafter, Mille Lacs men, who were eligible for military service, volunteered and/or were drafted for duty in World War II. Other Ojibwe relocated to the cities to work for war-related industries.

1950s-1960s From the mid-1950s to the 1960s, the federal government extended relocation services to Mille Lacs Ojibwe. The relocation program encouraged Ojibwe to seek employment in urban areas. As a result of the relocation program, many Mille Lacs Ojibwe assimilated into the majority society and began losing contact with their traditional culture.

Chapter Nine

'Non-Removable and Self-Determined'

Introduction

From the 1960s to the present, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe have struggled arduously to improve their quality of life, retain their heritage, and unify the band to determined their own fate. The pull of Mille Lacs Ojibwe workers to large cities during World War II, as well as the urban relocation in the 1950s, left the reservation in a lamentable state. Fortunately, in 1960, the election of Sam Yankee as chairman of the Mille Lacs Tribal Council ushered in a new administration that addressed the decline on the reservation. With Yankee's election came relief to the reservation in the form of the application of a number of federal programs that improved housing, health and social conditions, and unemployment problems on the reservation.

In the 1970s, changes at Mille Lacs occurred even quicker as the band took advantage of new legislation advocating tribal self-government over dependency on the federal government. In 1972, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe elected Arthur W. Gahbow as band chairman. Under Gahbow's administration, the Mille Lacs band gained greater government authority over the reservation by devising and implementing its own tricameral governing system. During the 1970s and 1980s, they also focused geater attention on improving the standard of living on the reservation through new health facilities, education programs, and housing projects. Furthermore, in an attempt to create jobs, as well as build a sound financial base, the Mille Lacs band invested in several business ventures including the Marina Tourism Complex, Drift Inn, a construction company, and the Grand Casino and Hinckley Casino gaming facilities. This final chapter concentrates on how the Mille Lacs Ojibwe merged into mainstream society as a self-sufficient people, and the problems they encountered along the way, including retaining their Ojibwe heritage.

Sam Yankee's Administration

During the 1950s, the voice of the Mille Lacs tribal council was virtually ignored by the federal government, as it turned to the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe as the decision-making body for the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. During this time period, Fred Jones was chairman of the Non-Removable Mille Lacs, but the Jones' administration proved ineffective. Throughout the 1950s, with little or no funds or other economic resources, the Mille Lacs Tribal Council could do little to improve reservation conditions. In the 1950s, like other tribes, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe fought a defensive action against government policies that attempted to end reservation life, such as the congressional threat to terminate federal trusteeship and responsibilities over tribes that were ready economically to mainstream with the rest of America. Fortunately, or unfortunately, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe had not progressed to the point of self-sufficiency, where federal officials felt that it could set them free from a burdensome, custodial, and paternalistic Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).¹

For the Mille Lacs Ojibwe, the 1960s began with new leadership. In 1960, Sam Yankee was elected the new chairman of the Mille Lacs Tribal Council. Known as *Ay-sh-pun* (Very High Above), Sam Yankee met the challenges that faced the Mille Lacs Reservation during the 1960s and early 1970s. These problems included poor housing, unemployment, poverty, and a lack of education. Yankee was the first of a generation of leaders at Mille Lacs who grew up under the Mille Lacs Tribal Council. He had been schooled politically on the state and national level through previous experience. In the 1950s, he was a member of the Mille Lacs Tribal Council for many years, and he had served on the Executive Committee of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT). Sam Yankee was a traditionalist leader, a singer on a ceremonial drum, a teller of old legends, and a dancer. Along with Sam Yankee, Georgianna Day, Rose Benjamin, Earl Sam, and Albert Churchill served on the Reservation Business Committee (RBC)² during most of the 1960s.³ The most pressing problems during Sam Yankee's

¹ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Doug Sam," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 26-27.

² In 1963, in an attempt to improve local government, the MCT changed its constitution and by-laws and set up individual Reservation Business Committees on each reservation. The RBC replaced the Mille Lacs Tribal Council as the governing body on the Mille Lacs Reservation. Roger and Priscilla Buffalohead, Against the Tide of History: The Story of the Mille Lacs Anishinabe (Cass Lake: Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, 1985), p. 118.

administration were poor housing which promoted health problems, and rampant unemployment. The Mille Lacs people could not meet these difficulties empty-handed or alone. They needed financial assistance from federal agencies in order to begin to alleviate the root causes to them. That help came from a number federal programs, known collectively as the Great Society. These programs tried to end poverty, unemployment, and help disadvantaged Americans through a variety of federal programs and agencies.

Housing, Health, Social, and Unemployment Problems in the 1960s

In the 1960s, the majority of the Mille Lacs Reservation population lived along Mille Lacs Lake, stretching from the west central to the southeast shoreline. One to two Ojibwe families lived in Onamia, fifteen to twenty families resided in Isle, but the majority of Ojibwe (200 or so) lived in the Vineland area that stretched from Vineland northward to Garrison. A few scattered houses stood on Sherman's or Weidy's Point, with a few clusters of houses closer to Highway 169, but the majority of residential development stood on both sides of Highway 169. This highway split the residential community with the public school and recreational areas located on the east side of the highway.⁴

Related families usually lived in the same vicinity, giving the reservation a consistent configuration. One large nuclear family usually occupied each one-room cabin or home. However, the adoption of small children by older people, and the incorporation of widowed elderly Ojibwe into their children's homes, altered the standard situation and placed extended families into some households. Additional family members contributed to already crowded living conditions in most of these homes.⁵

A housing report conducted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), dated January

³ Timothy G. Roufs, The Anishinabe of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Phoenix: Indian Tribal Series, 1975, p. V; and Roger and Priscilla Buffalohead, Against the Tide of History: The Story of the Mille Lacs Anishinabe (Cass Lake: Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, 1985), pp. 115-116.

⁴ Vivian J. Rohrl, Change for Continuity: The People of a Thousand Lakes (Maryland: University Press of America, Inc., 1981), pp. 18 and 21; and "Preliminary Guide Plan Mille Lacs Indian Reservation, Minnesota," April 29, 1964, p. 7, Cass Lake Indian Agency Files.

⁵ Vivian J. Rohrl, Change for Continuity: The People of a Thousand Lakes (Maryland: University Press of America, Inc., 1981), pp. 18 and 21.

3, 1964, clearly spelled out these over-crowded living conditions, and described the deplorable state of many of the houses on the reservation. Most of the cabins were wood frame structures, consisting of a single room with a floor space equalling about 320 square feet. These 16 x 20 foot structures were sheathed with tar paper, and a variety of "makeshift" materials to block cracks and act as insulation, and many dated to the turn of the century. The occupants had neither electricity nor indoor plumbing in the house. Wood stoves were used to heat the structures, while kerosene lamps provided light during the night. As a result of the poor heating conditions and insulation, family members sometimes shared beds in attempt to keep warm during the harsh Minnesota winters. Since the houses only contained one door, the occupants were in constant danger of asphyxiation, as well as fire.⁶

The last time that Mille Lacs Ojibwe had physically improved their housing was during the late 1930s, when several houses were either rehabilitated, or newly built by the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The WPA built structures contained four rooms, as opposed to the one room Ojibwe structures, dating from an earlier time. According to a 1964 BIA survey report:

The rehab. houses built by WPA were generally well kept by the families living in them. Some were reasonably well maintained and well kept inside. Others had not been kept in repair and showed deterioration from hard use during the past 25 years, but there was no evidence in any of them of willful destruction. The major complaint about these rehab. houses was that the floor framing had rotted out. Some roofs were leaking and, in others, doors needed replacing.⁷

Poor housing conditions and overcrowding contributed to continual poor health conditions among the Ojibwe living in these typical reservation structures in several ways. Many illnesses resulted from poor water supplies and poor sanitation. First, because three or more people often shared one bed, with several more Ojibwe sleeping on the floor, viruses were passed back and forth easily, and

⁶ Mille Lacs Housing Report, January 3, 1964, passim, Cass Lake Indian Agency Files; and Vivian J. Rohrl, Change for Continuity: The People of a Thousand Lakes (Maryland: University Press of America, Inc., 1981), p. 21.

⁷ "Mille Lacs Home Improvement Survey, December 24, 1963, Exhibit 1," Mille Lacs Housing Report, January 3, 1964, Cass Lake Indian Agency Files.

many Ojibwe experienced continual poor health because of these close crowded conditions. Second, a majority of the homes on the reservation did not have a water pump or an immediate source of drinkable water. Some Ojibwe hauled water from community wells built in the 1930s with some people traveling as far as two miles away, while others obtained potable water from a local store. During the summer months, many Ojibwe even used nearby Mille Lacs Lake as their water source. Third, because of the difficulty in hauling water, the Ojibwe reused the resource several times, which added to unsanitary conditions. Fourth, many homes did not have either indoor plumbing or out houses. Fifth, since the homes lacked adequate foundations and insulation, many of the structures were subject to bug infestations and rodents.⁸

A majority of the Ojibwe children and adults, reaching as high as 65 percent, lived under these overcrowded conditions, which proved unhealthy. A direct correlation existed between repeated cases of infections and illnesses and the Ojibwe's sub-standard living conditions. The deplorable conditions promoted recurring colds, diarrhea, impetigo, dermatitis, and chronic bronchitis among the children. Whereas, Ojibwe adults suffered from arthritis, respiratory infections, diabetes, and heart conditions. Overall, the majority of the Vineland Ojibwe families surveyed in 1964 reported that at least one member in their family suffered from poor health. A direct relationship also existed between the low standard of living and social diseases, such as alcoholism. Mille Lacs Ojibwe often attributed their drinking problem to their pathetic housing and health situation, many of which were heads of the households.⁹

Sub-standard living conditions severely affected the social lives of Ojibwe children as well, resulting in juvenile delinquency. A large proportion of Ojibwe children, who were removed off the reservation and placed in foster home facilities, came from these inadequate housing conditions. Besides the high rate of juvenile delinquency, during the 1960s, Ojibwe children living on the reservation also experienced a high dropout rate. The distraction of sharing a one room house with an average of six siblings often hurt a student's study habits. Interestingly, in an attempt to appeal for the establishment of a housing project on the reservation, the director of the Mille Lacs County Welfare Department made a strong correlation between the deplorable housing conditions of the Ojibwe and

⁸ Mille Lacs Housing Report, January 3, 1964, passim, Cass Lake Indian Agency Files.

⁹ Mille Lacs Housing Report, January 3, 1964, passim, Cass Lake Indian Agency Files; and James V. Soldin to Paul Windsor, 23 December 1963, Mille Lacs Housing Report, January 3, 1964, Cass Lake Indian Agency Files.

the large child welfare problems.¹⁰

A majority of the Ojibwe living on the reservation during the 1960s received federal assistance year round. Even though it was a time when the Indian Relocation Program was reaching its zenith, poor health conditions, old age, and insufficient work skills kept many Ojibwe on the reservation. In 1966, only 31 percent of the 196 Ojibwe living on the Mille Lacs Reservation, and eligible to work, were employed. The small percentage of employed Ojibwe labored in blue collar jobs. These individuals usually worked seasonally in construction, cleaning, mechanics, tourism, and lumbering. Several of the Ojibwe listed in a 1964 report on reservation conditions had received vocational training. However, there simply were no jobs on the reservation for them to fill. Only on rare occasions was an Ojibwe able to hold a job for a long period of time. These Ojibwe generally were a part of the urban relocation program and worked in Minneapolis. At Mille Lacs over half of the adult male population had found employment in the Twin Cities. Ojibwe who worked in the cities often travelled back to the reservation on the weekends, especially for ceremonies.¹¹

HUD Housing Project

The poor housing, health conditions and unemployment was partially alleviated in 1965 by a housing improvement program sponsored by Department of the Housing and Urban Development (HUD)¹² in 1965. Nationwide, Indian housing was a critical problem. Under the leadership of president Lyndon B. Johnson, the federal government created housing assistance programs, such as HUD, and made them available to Indian reservations. These programs gave Indian tribes the financial assistance they needed to improve poor reservation housing.

In 1964-1965, the BIA proposed a HUD type of housing program at Mille Lacs.

¹⁰ James V. Soldin to Paul Windsor, 23 December 1963, Mille Lacs Housing Report, January 3, 1964, Cass Lake Indian Agency Files.

¹¹ Mille Lacs Housing Report, January 3, 1964, passim, Cass Lake Indian Agency Files; and Vivian J. Rohrl, Change for Continuity: The People of a Thousand Lakes (Maryland: University Press of America, Inc., 1981), p. 30.

¹² The Department of Housing and Urban Affairs was created in 1965 by legislation. HUD, the acronym that it became known by, provided aid to and extended urban renewal to low-income homeowners for home repairs and improvements.

This housing program was tailored toward two groups. Small households, containing one or two elderly people with grandchildren in their care, were given top priority for housing. Thereafter, houses with growing families were slated next to receive new housing. By the end of 1965, under this program, thirty houses were built in the Vineland area with one or two at Isle, and twenty additional houses were scheduled to be rehabilitated or built the following year. This housing program did not answer all the needs of the Mille Lacs people, but it did improve housing conditions in the community.¹³

The structure they built were considered adequate by most standards of construction. The intent of the housing project was to provide employment to local unskilled Ojibwe. The lack of experienced work crews resulted in some shoddy construction. One oral history informant, Joe Nayquonabe, remembered working on the construction of these houses this way:

I applied for the job, interviewed, and then got it. There was a few of us, a lot of us that applied, and we were hired. The interviewers were businessmen from Onamia, and we went ahead. . . .the work was kind of basic carpenter-helper type of work, you know, banging nails and hauling cement and moving, just basic housing work. . . .I think what the reservation was doing was, you could either build ten good houses with good equipment, with good products, or you could build fifty houses with not-too-good material. . . .I think they chose to build a lot. I think a lot of the materials they got were not that good. . . .I don't think a lot of the guys were really into it. I mean, we learned. There's no doubt that we—but for some of us, it was probably our first time ever doing this type of activity. I think if you look at some of the houses we've built, it shows. . . .I mean, there was complaints. . . . It wasn't that—and there was some good houses. I mean, I'm not saying that they were all—people complain about, 'Jeez, when I step here, there's a'—between the wall, you know—it separates.' You know, where you could push the wall in, you could feel it move. Those type of complaints. And I got those when I came back, you know, ten years later, after I started working for the band. People were complaining about the houses. I'd go first hand, look at them and see that, yeah, they were pretty bad.¹⁴

¹³ Mille Lacs Housing Report, May 27, 1965, passim, Cass Lake Indian Agency Files.

¹⁴ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared

In the 1970s, after the construction of these HUD houses, the Mille Lacs RBC started their own construction company to construct additional housing at Vineland and at other Mille Lacs Ojibwe communities.

Little Flower Mission

Besides housing and unemployment problems, in 1960, Sam Yankee and the Mille Tribal Council also faced many non-traditional reservation problems, including the presence, influence, and impact of the dominant non-Ojibwe society. During the early 1960s, Sam Yankee's administration faced problems that could not be solved through governmental action—such as the assimilation of band members into non-traditional religious groups.

During the 1940s and 1950s, religious life at Vineland, Isle and elsewhere had changed in a significant way. For the first time, non-Ojibwe religious institutions established foothold in these communities.

Around 1942, the Little Flower Mission, affiliated with the St. Cloud Catholic Diocese, established the first permanent church at Vineland and leased acreage on the Mille Lacs Reservation from certain band members. This leasing arrangement was extended in 1951, when the land was bought from band members by the Interior Department in trust for the MCT and the Mille Lacs band. Thereafter, the Little Flower Mission grew, and by 1959 or so, the Catholic church had constructed a church, a gymnasium, and a mission house on this parcel of land. In 1962, the MCT sold this parcel and some additional land, totaling 4.8 acres, to the Little Flower Mission so they could provide additional recreational facilities, as well as a garden tract, sewage disposal system, and an extension of their cemetery. The expansion allowed the Little Flower Mission to "continue its religious and charitable work for the betterment of the Mille Lacs people."¹⁵

During the 1940s and 1950s, some band members gave up or at least modified

by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 35-38.

¹⁵ U.S., Congress, Senate, Providing for the Conveyance of Certain Land of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe of Indians to the Little Flower Mission, S. Report 1375 to Accompany S. 2895, 87th Cong., 2d sess., 1962.

their traditional beliefs in order to join the Catholic church. For children, the additional recreational facilities provided for the Mille Lacs community by the Catholic church were an inducement to convert as well. Nevertheless, not all community members were pleased to have the Catholic mission on the reservation. Traditional elders frequently opposed the conversion of tribal members and their grandchildren to these non-Ojibwe religions. Still yet, others thought that the Little Flower Mission did not benefit "all" the Mille Lacs people, nor was it charitable in spirit. Some band members felt that they were demeaned and treated as second-class people simply because they were not members of the church. To them, the system of donations and distribution was objectionable and offensive. For instance, some non-Christian Ojibwe felt that the church profited from the poverty of the Mille Lacs, when it sold the very best donated material to raise funding for their mission. Additionally, non-Christian Ojibwe complained that the Catholic Ojibwe families were given the first opportunity to select from the remaining donated material, which in their eyes was uncharitable and unchristian. Finally, non-Christian Ojibwe object to the manner the remaining clothing was distributed to other tribal members. One band member described the system as an all out "rag" fight, wherein the clothes were piled high on the gym floor, and then on a signal, non-Christian tribal members rushed to grab whatever they could from the picked over pile. Selective distributions of "charitable" goods by the Catholic church created class distinctions among band members, lumping them into "haves" and "haves nots."¹⁶

Rebuilding Community Life and CAP Programs

The intrusion of non-traditional religions into the community created divisiveness among the Ojibwe and undercut traditional Ojibwe values of communal sharing, the cornerstone of their culture since colonial days. To bring back this sense of community, the Mille Lacs RBC employed tribal members in a number of community outreach programs. One program was the Neighborhood Youth Corps (NYC).¹⁷ The NYC was part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great

¹⁶ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 28-29; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 14-16.

¹⁷ Mille Lacs Ojibway Press, Volume 2, No. 2 (July 8, 1966): 1; and Mille Lacs Ojibway Press, Volume 2, No. 3 (July 22, 1966): 1.

Society and the War on Poverty. NYC programs at Mille Lacs included running a neighborhood youth corps project, which hired both males and females between the ages of 16 and 21 for part-time and summer employment as clerical aides, home-maker aides, maintenance aides, recreation aides, and teacher aides. In 1966, thirty Mille Lacs Ojibwe were hired in NYC programs.¹⁸

However, by far, the most important programs on the reservation were the Community Action Programs (CAP).¹⁹ In 1966, CAP programs employed twenty tribal members and the focus of their work was the organization of community centers in each Mille Lacs community.

Community Training Centers

In the 1960s and early 1970s, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe built and ran community centers at Danbury, and East Lake. In 1964, the Danbury Ojibwe with the assistance of local Indian labor, built a tribal hall/community center at Danbury. This hall became the center of community life at Danbury, a place where funerals, bingo, and special dinners that featured "wild rice, wild cranberries, wild blueberries and venison" took place. In this hall, community meetings took place. By 1967, the Head-Start Program, the Parent-Child Center, and the Adult Education Program met in this hall as well.²⁰ The East Lake Center was built in the mid-1970s. It provided band members with meeting facilities for education, medical, and nutritional programs, as well as facilities for social occasions, such as pow-wows. Before its construction, band members met in an old schoolhouse.²¹

¹⁸ Mille Lacs Ojibway Press, Volume 2, No. 13 (September 23, 1966): 1.

¹⁹ The Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 established the Office of Economic Opportunity, which was part of a broad front of programs designed to fight the war on poverty, started under Lyndon Baines Johnson. The "most innovative and controversial part of the legislation was Title II, which called for community action programs to develop employment opportunities and improve performance and motivation by stipulating maximum feasible participation by the poor themselves." Dewey W. Grantham, The United States Since 1945: The Ordeal of Power (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1976), pp. 219-220.

²⁰ Dick Riis, compiler, and Vicki Koenen, editor, Danbury Diamond Anniversary History, 1912-1987 (Siren, Wisconsin: Lakeland Press, 1987), pp. 7-8.

²¹ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Mabel Boyd Albino," 19 July 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 20-21; and Minnesota Historical

But, by far, the largest community center was built at Vineland. In the early 1960s, Sam Yankee and the RBC fought to alleviate unemployment on the reservation and poverty through education programs, and the construction of a community training center with HUD funds. When the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) initiated community action programs, the Mille Lacs Reservation was one of the first reservations to submit their application for funding. In this effort, they were helped by United States Senator Walter Mondale and by the Mille Lacs Foundation.²² Senator Mondale set up the initial meeting with HUD officials, and openly supported the project, stating: "I think it will be a great thing for the Mille Lacs area, and you can be assured that I will do everything I can to be of help to you in implementing the program."²³ On the other hand, the Mille Lacs Foundation assisted the Mille Lacs RBC in finding matching funds for the HUD grant in order to build the community training center.²⁴ Equipment for the new center was also paid for by the Mille Lacs Foundation. By 1968, the Mille Lacs Foundation had donated more than \$36,000 to the Mille Lacs RBC for the new training center.²⁵

The new community training center was designed by Wallace and Mundt, Architects in conjunction with a tribal building committee. The center was built on a two acre site on the Mille Lacs Reservation near the southwest shore of Mille Lacs Lake. The final cost of the 15,800 square feet facility was approximately \$235,000.00 with the RBC providing \$58,000.00 of the cost. When it opened, it offered a wide variety of services. The local Community Action Agency and the Mille Lacs Reservation CAP made extensive use of the facility in carrying out

Society, "Oral History of Julie Shingobe," 5 August 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 29-30.

²² The Mille Lacs Foundation was founded by Father Justin K. Weger to "initiate, organize, promote, subsidize, operate, manage and make contributions to Training Centers, Community Centers, Scholarships, and Facilities of every kind for Training Assistance, Care Treatment and general welfare of the needy Indians residing on the Mille Lacs Reservation." The first board of trustees were: Robert Reardon, Lawrence Carr, and Father Justin Weger. Mille Lacs Ojibway Press, Volume 3, No. 11 (April 12, 1968): 1.

²³ Mille Lacs Ojibway Press, Volume 2, No. 14 (September 30, 1966): 1.

²⁴ Mille Lacs Ojibway Press, Volume 2, No. 13 (September 23, 1966): 1; and Mille Lacs Ojibway Press, Volume 3, No. 11 (April 12, 1968): 1.

²⁵ Mille Lacs Ojibway Press, Volume 2, No. 10 (September 2, 1966): 1; and Mille Lacs Ojibway Press, Volume 3, No. 11 (April 12, 1968): 2.

their services of job training for the unemployed. Beside employment training, the new building offered educational programs, health and welfare programs, and recreational and social activities to the community.²⁶

In August 1968, the new community center was dedicated with Will Rogers, Jr., Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs of the BIA as the guest speaker for the dedication ceremony.²⁷ The Mille Lacs Ojibwe dedicated the facility with a pow-wow, which now is celebrated every August.²⁸

The Community Center building was divided into the following use areas: Entry Hall with space for display; 3 Classrooms used by Head Start programs, adult education and meeting rooms; Health Room with storage cabinets, supplies, and lavatory; 3 Vocational Training Workshops for woodworking, metal work and crafts; Lounge for young people with vending machines; All Purpose Room which served as the hub of the building and was used for pow-wows, basketball, games, banquets, dancing, large meetings, plays, movies, and such uses; Kitchen equipped to serve full course meals for the Head Start program and pot-luck meals for 200; 5 Offices used by the CAP director and staff and the Head Start program; Laundromat with twelve washers and four dryers; and Mechanical Equipment Room for the boiler and hot water heaters.²⁹

Electronic Component Assembly Factory

The construction of the community center was only Phase One of an overall economic plan to end poverty on the reservation that also included the establishment of small businesses on the reservation owned by the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. Phase Two of the RBC's long-range planning entailed the construction of electronics parts factory on the reservation to employ people being trained in the Community Center. On the day of the dedication of the Vineland Community Training Center, it was announced that the RBC intended to build this electronics

²⁶ Mille Lacs Ojibway Press, Volume 2, No. 10 (September 2, 1966): 1; Mille Lacs Ojibway Press, Volume 2, No. 15 (October 14, 1966): 4; and Mille Lacs Ojibway Press, Special Issue (August 24, 1968): 1-7.

²⁷ Mille Lacs Ojibway Press, Special Issue (August 24, 1968): 1-7.

²⁸ People of Mille Lacs County, Mille Lacs County (Princeton, Minnesota: Mille Lacs County Historical Society, 1989), p. 15.

²⁹ Mille Lacs Ojibway Press, Volume 2, No. 15 (October 14, 1966): 4.

parts factory, using Economic Development Administration (EDA) funding opportunities. At the same time, it was announced that International Business Machines (IBM) intended to enter into a contract with the Mille Lacs RBC to assemble components for electronic machines in the new factory. The IBM contract promised to hire at least a supervisor and five workers. These workers were to be sent to IBM's Rochester plant for industrial training, but then other workers would be trained in the vocational education facilities of the new community training center. The RBC expected to employ at least fifty Ojibwe band members in this new electronics parts factory venture.³⁰

Up until the proposed construction of this factory, the Mille Lacs Reservation had no industrial areas and only small commercial areas within the boundaries of the reservation. These commercial areas were general stores, taverns, gas stations and the Mille Lacs Trading Post and Museum owned by the Minnesota Historical Society and all were specifically related to recreational activities and the seasonal tourist trade. The construction of the electronics factory would provide the first opportunity the Mille Lacs Reservation Ojibwe had to earn steady wages year long.³¹

The Mille Lacs Reservation training and industrial facility received open support from the neighboring non-Ojibwe community and from state officials, such as Minnesota Governor Harold LeVander.³² On January 2, 1969, Senator Mondale informed Mille Lacs RBC members that the EDA had approved their application for a 50 percent public works grant and a 50 percent loan for the computer component plant and that construction of the 7,000 square foot plant would start June 1, 1969. Thereafter, IBM agreed to provide equipment for the plant, initial on-the-job training and additional assembly contracts, if the Mille Lacs RBC agreed to supervise the plant and its operation. By October of 1968, before the actual factory was constructed, the joint Mille Lacs band/IBM venture began producing and supplying IBM's Rochester facility with sub-assembly parts for the IBM 2560 computer, using the community center basement.³³ The Mille Lacs

³⁰ Mille Lacs Ojibway Press, Special Issue (August 24, 1968): 1-7.

³¹ "Preliminary Guide Plan Mille Lacs Indian Reservation, Minnesota," April 29, 1964, pp. 7-12, Cass Lake Indian Agency Files.

³² "A Job Well Done," Onamia Independent 20 April 1964; and Governor Harold LeVander to Sam Yankee, 21 March 1969, Folder: 38, Box 2, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

³³ Community Action Progress Report, circa January 1970; and "Computer Plant Offers Hope for Indian Unemployment Problem," Unknown Newspaper, circa April, 1969, Folder: 38, Box 2,

Reservation Training and Industrial Facility project stimulated industrial growth and created permanent jobs on the reservation. The new factory initially was designed to employ fifty people in the production of electronic-computer components and for a time was very successful. By January, 1970, with the help of CAP and the BIA, the RBC began the Reservation Business Enterprise (RBE), a business vehicle for managing this factory work and other business projects.³⁴

1960s Post-Mortem

By the end of the 1960s, life on the Mille Lacs Reservation had improved in many significant ways, thanks in part to Sam Yankee's and the RBC's work. Major accomplishments included improving reservation housing conditions, constructing a large community training center to provide vocational training, and building an industrial plant for the assembly of electronic components to provide jobs for the reservation unemployed. Sam Yankee's administration enjoyed other accomplishments, such as improving the reservation's infrastructure with a central water supply and sewer system. The path to greater achievements lay ahead, thanks to their work.

However, the accomplishments of the 1960s depended on broad support from federal funding programs, such as CAP, EDA, and HUD, as well as from groups such as the Mille Lacs Foundation. Since the federal government provided this funding, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe had to work in tandem with the goals and designs of federal Indian policy, if they wished to continue to enjoy federal funding. The Mille Lacs people had no autonomy over their own affairs. Actions that they took had to be approved by the federal government and the MCT. The 1970s and the 1980s provided a challenge to this dependent relationship, when the federal government could no longer fulfill its partnership role because of national economic crises. These difficulties were met by new leadership, when in 1972, the Mille Lacs people elected Arthur W. Gahbow as tribal chairman.

Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

³⁴ Community Action Progress Report, circa January 1970, Folder: 38, Box 2, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

A True Government to Government Relationship

Changes in Indian Policy occurred quickly during the 1970s. President Richard Nixon's "Message to Congress on Indian Affairs", dated July 8, 1970, recommended that the dependent relationship existing between the United States Government and American Indians be terminated. Self-determination, self-help, self-sufficiency, and local control emerged as powerful concepts in the address. These policies, advocating the separation from federal control, were designed "to strengthen the Indian's sense of autonomy. . ." and make them responsible for their own destinies.³⁵

Several significant pieces of legislation followed Nixon's address. First, in 1975, Congress established the American Indian Policy Review Commission. Comprised of a large number of Indians, the Indian Policy Review Commission's responsibilities included analyzing Indian problems, eliminating problems in distributing funds for programs, and examining the overall future of Indian life. During that same year, Congress also passed the Indian Self Determination and Education Act (Public Law 93-638), another significant piece of legislation. The Indian Self Determination and Education Act advocated tribal self-government over dependency on the federal government, encouraging tribal governments to identify their members' needs, and then to contract for federal funds to satisfy those demands. Thus, federal funds could go directly to the tribes and bypass federal and state government employees.

In this new theory of "Indian self-government," the government recommended that each Indian tribe draft its own constitution and function under this separate legislation. This concept promoted the theory that a tribe can best define and deal with its own problems. Potential concerns addressed when forming constitutions included defining tribal membership, regulating social programs, devising legislation to set up guidelines for tribal members, and empowering a system to enforce the legislation.³⁶

In the summer of 1972, the Mille Lacs tribe elected a powerful leader to balance

³⁵ Judith Rosenblatt, ed., Indians in Minnesota (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), p. 15.

³⁶ "Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians Band Analysis, Fiscal Year 1984," unpaginated, Folder: MLB Analysis 1984, Box 12, Department of Natural Resources Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

America's changing Indian policies, when Arthur W. Gahbow entered office as the new Chairman of the Mille Lacs band. Three years later, he also served as the President of the MCT. Notwithstanding, in 1978, Gahbow relinquished his position with the MCT, and instead focused his attentions on the Mille Lacs Reservation and the pursuit of self-government and band autonomy. After 1978, Gahbow and Mille Lacs representatives began to pressure the MCT to construct a more efficient governing system. They felt that the governmental relationship between the MCT and the Mille Lacs band hampered the progress of the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. They asked the MCT to rewrite their constitution accordingly. However, when the MCT overlooked the request, Mille Lacs Ojibwe decided to focus on reconstructing its own governmental system to become more efficient and autonomous over their own affairs.³⁷

By the early 1980s, Chairman Gahbow emerged as an instrumental figure in the RBC's plans to change the government structure of the band entirely. Several factors legitimized the need for the new governing system. First, since eighty to ninety percent of the government's time revolved around running social programs, band members hoped to separate business and government affairs. Second, the band wanted to protect their right of self-government, and alleviate the possibility of control from outside parties.³⁸

In support of the "self-government" concept, Gahbow stated:

We, the People of the Non-Removable Mille Lacs federation of Chippewa Indians are comprised of five separate and distinct bands who have been brought together to enter into the future for the purpose of preserving our sovereignty, our aboriginal rights, our language, our religion and our culture. We must proceed into the future with one common goal. That goal is to preserve the sovereignty of the Federation.³⁹

³⁷ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Don Wedll," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 36.

³⁸ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 16; and "Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians Band Analysis Fiscal Year 1984," unpaginated, Folder: MLB Analysis 1984, Box 12, Department of Natural Resources Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

³⁹ "State of the Band Address," Folder: State of the Band Address, 1985, Box 12, Department of Natural Resources Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

Significant planning preceded the implementation of the new government. Advisory consultations occurred between the Ojibwe, the BIA, and other concerned groups and individuals. Eventually, the RBC devised a four phase process for actual execution of the new government. Phase One, created an executive branch of government and transformed it from a business administration into a, solely, governing body. Phase Two, created a legislative branch, called the Band Assembly. The primary goal of the branch was to enact laws. Phase Three, created a judicial branch. Phase Four, through the recommendations of the Mille Lacs Elderly Advisory Committee, ensured the formation of a culturally sympathetic government.⁴⁰

Interestingly, during the time that the Mille lacs band was drafting the new government system, President Ronald Reagan made his January 24, 1983 policy statement on Indian affairs, the first to be articulated in thirteen years. Reagan's policy statement took self-determination beyond the rhetoric of the past and into implementation. The key to his plan was to "strengthen tribal governments while moving the federal government out of the surrogate governing role it had assumed." The object was to shift the role of BIA from a "service organization to one that assists tribes in taking control of their own affairs."⁴¹

Another important section of Reagan's policy was to promise to help reservations develop their economies and administrative managerial skills and attract private capital. The policy asked "tribes to seek real economic development, to build on private investments and profit-making industries, and to forego a system of government handouts and make-work programs." Furthermore, it recommended that tribes separate the management of tribal enterprises and businesses from tribal government and politics.⁴²

In this policy, Reagan unknowingly supported the Mille Lacs band's actions by

⁴⁰ Roger and Priscilla Buffalohead, Against the Tide of History: The Story of the Mille Lacs Anishinabe (Cass Lake: Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, 1985), p. 128.

⁴¹ Vince Lovett and Larry Rummel, American Indians: U.S. Indian Policy, Tribes and Reservations; and BIA: Past and Present Economic Development (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1984), pp. 4-5, 11, and 31.

⁴² Vince Lovett and Larry Rummel, American Indians: U.S. Indian Policy, Tribes and Reservations; and BIA: Past and Present Economic Development (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1984), pp. 11, and 31-32.

recommending that tribes create separate government systems. When the Mille Lacs band heard this, they presented Reagan's policy to the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in an attempt to gain support and legitimize their proposed government system. The director of the area office, however, said that the Mille Lacs band were at least five years ahead of the BIA, and they would have to wait. Gahbow decided not to wait for the BIA. Instead, he continued to proceed with the plan to form the government.⁴³

In the early 1980s, the Mille Lacs band began to break up the old RBC form of government, and develop a new form of government based on three separate branches of government.⁴⁴ Modeled after the United States government, the Mille Lacs government utilized a tri-cameral system. The executive branch of the government, headed by a tribal chairman, presided over the governing body. The legislative assembly, which incorporated the secretary-treasurer as a speaker for assembly and three remaining district members, drafted and approved laws. The judicial branch, a seven person court, enforced laws and ordinances of the band and resolved tribal disputes. Both tribal ordinances and cultural traditions acted as the foundation for the court rulings promulgated by the judicial branch. The system also incorporated advice, consultation and recommendations of the Mille Lacs Elderly Advisory Committee.⁴⁵

Even with this radical change in government, the Mille Lacs band still retained its affiliation to the MCT structure. In 1990, a referendum, authorizing the Mille Lacs band to separate from the Minnesota Chippewa, received a tie vote. Nevertheless, Mille Lacs leaders explain that the new government is based on "inherent sovereignty" that rests with the band.⁴⁶

⁴³ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Don Wedll," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 26.

⁴⁴ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Don Wedll," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 25; and Judith Rosenblatt, ed., Indians in Minnesota (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), p. 55.

⁴⁵ No Title, Summary Mille Lacs Government Changes, 2 page typescript, Folder: Edited Version of Don Wedll's Book, Box 1, Department of Natural Resources Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

⁴⁶ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 18.

The Mille Lacs band of Ojibwe became the sixth Indian tribe nationally to participate in a self-governance demonstration project, and today it exists as a model for other reservations.⁴⁷ Through this project, the Mille Lacs band obtained resources directly from the federal government and distributed the funds to meet the demands of its members. It greatly increased their authority in budgeting and spending federal funds for BIA programs, giving them the opportunity "to administer and redesign existing BIA programs according to tribal priorities and to receive direct funding from BIA's annual budget appropriation."⁴⁸ Prior to this project, money allocated to the band passed through several federal and state offices. By the time it reached the reservation, only 11 cents out of each federal dollar was left. Now, as a result of the new system, the band receives 30-35 cents of each dollar allocated to the reservation. The Mille Lacs band now had the "ability to operate programs with minimal regulation and record-keeping requirements and will have the ability to shift funds between programs."⁴⁹

In response to the new relationship, Gahbow stated, "We, not the BIA, are better able to determine how best to serve the people. . . . As the Mille Lacs Band participates in this self governance demonstration project, we are not only contributing to our own community, but we are contributing to the improved quality of life for Native Americans everywhere."⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, pp. 18 and 39; "A Historical Review of Legislative Acts, Court Decisions and Treaties," Mille Lacs Messenger, 23 October 1991, p. 3; and "Mille Lacs Band Sixth to Sign Self-Governance Pact," Indian News: Week-in-Review Vol. 14, no. 10 (July 13, 1990): 1.

⁴⁸ "Building Through the 90s Toward the Next Century," Folder: State of the Band Address, January 8, 1991, Box 2A, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives; and "Mille Lacs Band Sixth to Sign Self-Governance Pact," Indian News: Week-in-Review Vol. 14, no. 10 (July 13, 1990): 1.

⁴⁹ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, pp. 18-19; and "Mille Lacs Band Sixth to Sign Self-Governance Pact," Indian News: Week-in-Review Vol. 14, no. 10 (July 13, 1990): 1.

⁵⁰ "Building Through the 90s Toward the Next Century," Folder: State of the Band Address, January 8, 1991, Box 2A, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

Raising Living Conditions: Housing, Health, and Human Services

Besides the implementation of "self-governance," during the 1970s and the 1980s, the Mille Lacs band continued to focus a significant amount of attention on improving the standard of living on the reservation, and other social problems unresolved under Sam Yankee's administration. The band concentrated many of its resources on improving housing, health and human services, and developing chemical dependency programs. These new social programs increased expectations and hope on the Mille Lacs Reservation.⁵¹

The tribe continued to look toward federal programs for assistance in eliminating substandard housing through repairs, renovation, and additions. In the 1970s and 1980s, the continued availability of HUD housing programs, significantly altered living conditions and housing standards on the reservation. During these decades, HUD administered its money through tribal housing authorities, whose duties involved the development and management of housing projects. In 1978, HUD allocated funds to the MCT for the construction of an additional 200 units of housing apportioned between the six reservations of the MCT, which included the Mille Lacs Reservation.⁵² In the 1970s, the Housing Improvement Program (HIP), administered through the BIA, also began servicing the Mille Lacs Reservation. HIP offered grants to Indians living in sub-standard housing to repair, renovate, and build additions on existing houses. It also provided financing for the construction of new houses.⁵³

Housing construction not only provided adequate living conditions, but created a much needed job base on the reservation. Under the supervision of the RBC, trainees in a community action program project constructed two and three bedroom houses on the Mille Lacs Reservation. The construction workers, who underwent approximately two months of training, received stipends from the Office of Economic Opportunities (OEO). In total, the agency spent about \$59,000 on the training. In early 1970, the Mille Lacs band counted approximately 120 families in the Vineland area, sixteen families at Sandy Lake and sixty-seven

⁵¹ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joyce Wedll," 16 October 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 33.

⁵² "Minnesota Chippewa Tribal Government Student Handbook, 1978," p. 190, Folder: No File Name, Box 6, Department of Natural Resources Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

⁵³ "Minnesota Chippewa Tribal Government Student Handbook, 1978," p. 192, Folder: No File Name, Box 6, Department of Natural Resources Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

families in area east of Hinckley (Danbury). Reservation residents from these Ojibwe districts purchased the two and three bedrooms houses, worth \$9,000, for one-third of their open market value.⁵⁴ Joyce Wedll recounted her grandparents reactions toward their government-funded house on the reservation. She said, "They were really proud of it and really happy to get it," and, therefore, acted very protective toward their new house.⁵⁵

However, in the 1980s, during the Reagan and Bush presidential years, funding for housing projects on reservations declined dramatically, as politicians attempted to control federal government spending nationwide. By 1992, the Bush Administration requested that funding allocated to Indian housing be cut in half, proposing to spend only \$125 million in 1993. The BIA noted that this money would build approximately 1,500 houses, out of the 50,000 homes, requested by reservation residents living in the United States. In response to Bush's cuts, Russel Thomas, Mille Lacs Housing Authority Director, noted that he held over 100 applications imploring for new and remodeled houses on the reservation and that the number of requests housing enlarged daily. In response to these housing demands and needs, the Mille Lacs Housing Authority hopes to initiate its own building program and anticipates on constructing a total of 60 houses for Mille Lacs, East Lake, and Hinckley residents.⁵⁶

Along with the changing standards of housing on the Mille Lacs Reservation, health care standards also improved during Art Gahbow's administration. In the 1970s, major acts passed through Congress that greatly impacted the status of Ojibwe health care. In 1975, Congress passed the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, also known as Public Law 93-638, which gave Indian tribes the ability to provide manage services to its people by directly contracting for health programs with federal agencies. The Indian Health Care Improvement Act, passed by Congress one year later, set forth a new national policy to provide top health services to Indians. The seven year act, also known as Public Law 94-437, allocated resources to existing Indian health services in an attempt to upgrade services.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ "Mille Lacs Indian Work on Own Housing," The Minneapolis Star 14 April 1969.

⁵⁵ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joyce Wedll," 16 October 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 32.

⁵⁶ "Indian Housing to be Cut by Half," Ourselves: Ni-Mah-Mi-Kwa-Zoo-Min, February 1992, p. 1.

As a direct result of these new policies and legislation, a new clinic opened on the Mille Lacs Reservation band members. This clinic was dearly needed by the Mille Lacs people, who suffered from chronic health conditions. Prior to the 1970s, the Mille Lacs Reservation maintained the highest infant mortality rates in the nation, which was three times the national rate, twice the national Indian rate, higher than any other reservation in Minnesota. In 1978, to reduce infant mortality and other health problems on the reservation, the Mille Lacs band opened the Nei-Ah-Shing Clinic. Through funds provided by the Indian Health Service, the clinic operated an integrated health service, providing medical and dental services to the people. The facility operated on a five-day basis and carried out "special detection and preventive services, including audiology screening, immunization clinics, vision screening and diabetes clinics."⁵⁸ In addition to the clinic, the band provided health care services to the community through community health representatives, who made home visits to the elderly in nursing homes, rest homes and hospitals and who acted as liaison between band members and other health resources.⁵⁹

Health officials found that just developing health plans was not enough. They had to earn the confidence of community members to trust the new clinic and the confidentiality of their records. Joe Nayquonabe, who ran the health program for a time, explains:

We developed a health plan, and again, we were right into a lot of federal programs—638 became public laws—93-638, you know, where Indians started assuming, contracting their own programs like schools and health services. And the result we got—we contracted

⁵⁷ "Minnesota Chippewa Tribal Government Student Handbook, 1978," p. 185, Folder: No File Name, Box 6, Department of Natural Resources Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives; and "Chippewa Treaty History," p. 12, Folder: Historical Documents, Box 10, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

⁵⁸ Roger and Priscilla Buffalohead, Against the Tide of History: The Story of the Mille Lacs Anishinabe Cass Lake: Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, 1985, p. 127; "Community Action Progress Report, circa January 1970," Folder: 38, Box 2, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives; and "The Reservation of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe," Mille Lacs Ojibwe Tribal Brochure, post-1980.

⁵⁹ "The Reservation of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe," Mille Lacs Ojibwe Tribal Brochure, post-1980.

for the clinic and CHR programs. . . . Well, when we very first started, you know, we opened up the clinic. Nobody came. . . .

And we sat over there for a month. Maybe one or two people came. Me—I came. My son came. But we weren't getting anywhere. I mean, then we were beginning to wonder, 'Jeez, did we do the right thing here? Maybe we shouldn't have done this.' But we asked some of the doctors up at—that were treating Indians, why they weren't coming here. One of the doctors would say, 'Jeez, you got a beautiful clinic over there. Why ain't you going there? I mean, you're seeing me over there. Why drive this far to see me when you can walk over there to see me?'

Bottom line was confidentiality. . . . Lot of them are saying, 'Well, over here we know what I tell you is going to stay here. Is that going to happen over there?' So they were really—you know, they thought anybody could walk into that medical records room. 'Well, let's check out so-and-so. Oh, Jesus, somebody's pregnant here. Somebody's got VD here. Somebody's had an abortion here.' So that's then what we started working on. You know, we started making real strict policies. . . . Finally, we started slowly gaining their confidence. Whenever we'd see them, we'd say, 'The only one that will know is but you and the doctor and who's ever typing in the information. But none of that can go out unless you say so.' So that was our big hurdle, and finally we got them to start coming.⁶⁰

After band members started coming to the Nei-Ah-Shing Clinic, health officials discovered that the abuse of alcohol was a major factor in health questions. Again, former tribal health official Joe Nayquonabe explains:

But we started looking at what's our number one problem here, and bottom line was alcohol. I mean, everything that we've seen or treated, if you wanted to, you could go back and you'd find that alcohol led to what was happening here. Statistics—we were looking at those from Indian Health Service and seeing that leading cause of death here was alcohol, not alcohol, but a result of alcohol. Somebody

⁶⁰ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, pp. 37-38.

went smashing into a tree. It wasn't the alcohol; it was the vehicle and him. But that was what we were starting to see, and then we were starting to see where it was also devastating other areas, like family. You know, Dad doesn't come home with the paycheck. Well, somebody has to pay for the consequences there.

Malnutrition—you know, kids who are starting to—not getting the proper diets because of no money. The other thing we were seeing was—and I think this still bothers me—is we're not seeing as many home-cooked meals anymore. Now it's open up the can and —a lot quicker.

But alcohol just kept popping up. Almost everything we—if there was a problem anywhere, it was alcohol. 'Why weren't the lights paid?' 'Drank up our money.' 'Oh, you lost your car. What happened?' 'Drank up our money.'⁶¹

The Mille Lacs Reservation, in its endeavor to alleviate the alcohol and drug abuse problem on the reservation began the Mille Lacs Halfway House. The RBC utilized federal and state funds by initiating chemical dependency programs on the Mille Lacs Reservation. Federal programs, which heavily concentrate on reforming young chemical abusers, financed a half-way house for recovering addicts.⁶² This ten-bed facility combated the high incidence of alcohol and drug abuse among adults and reservation youth through education and counseling by a staff of Native Americans. Treatment centers located throughout the state of Minnesota recommend the Mille Lacs facility to their clients. The half-way house offered a variety of programs such as individual and family counseling, group therapy, Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meetings, job training, and cultural activities.⁶³

⁶¹ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, pp. 38-39.

⁶² Roger and Priscilla Buffalohead, Against the Tide of History: The Story of the Mille Lacs Anishinabe (Cass Lake: Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, 1985), p. 127.

⁶³ Judith Rosenblatt, ed., Indians in Minnesota (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), p. 229; "Community Resource Guide, n.d.," p. 12, Box 1, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives; and "The Reservation of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe," Mille Lacs Ojibwe Tribal Brochure, post-1980.

Part of the alcohol problem at Mille Lacs was that the Mille Lacs band owned several tourist facilities where alcohol was served. So, on the one hand, the band said to community members that its wrong to abuse alcohol, but then it sold drinks to tribal members. According to Nayquonabe: "They had the Drift Inn; then they had the marina—two establishments to sell alcohol. So on the one hand, they're saying, "We got to get those sales up." Then on the other hand they're saying, "Sober them up."⁶⁴

This problem continued into the 1990s, especially after the Mille Lacs band lost state support for the Halfway House because of a dispute with the State of Minnesota over a sovereignty issue.⁶⁵ Actions toward chemical dependency continued to coincide with improved health services. In his 1991 State of Band Address, Chairman Gahbow exclaimed:

In the area of Health and Human services, were are rapidly building one of the best chemical dependency treatment programs in all of the Indian Country. Our Community, like many communities, experiences many chemical dependency problems. Too many of our people have become abusive while under the influence of alcohol. Too many families have experience too much pain because of alcohol abuse. . . our health and human services department, acting with assistance from many other Band initiatives, will help us conquer the scourge of chemical dependency that so threatens our Community.⁶⁶

By 1992, reservation residents noticed a significant decrease in alcohol consumption from twenty years ago. Joyce Wedll opined:

I think it was worse back during the time when I was growing up more so than it is now, . . . I think the reason for drinking and like doing that type of stuff was because of the hopelessness on the reservation. There was really nothing else to do. . . . the men didn't

⁶⁴ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, pp. 40-42.

⁶⁵ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, pp. 40-41.

⁶⁶ "Building Through the 90s Toward the Next Century," Folder: State of the Band Address, 8 January 1991, Box 2A, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

have any jobs. . . . most of the men were drinkers, and the women were left to take care of the kids and feed them and try to figure out where they're going to get their next meal from . . .

Now today . . . I don't think it's as bad. . . . there are still people who do a lot of drinking and stuff, but it's not as bad as it was, say, twenty years ago. It's not like it was when there wasn't any jobs on the reservation and stuff. Even though there wasn't any moneys coming in, I don't know how they got their money to go out and get drunk.⁶⁷

Overall, the social programs, administered by the Mille Lacs band under Art Gahbow's administration have started to reach the demands of the Ojibwe. The ability of the Ojibwe to administer and manage federal programs have allowed the reservation to start to reach living standards equal to that of non-Indians.

Non-Ojibwe Public Education and Discrimination

Prior to the 1970s, Mille Lacs Ojibwe students encountered a variety of educational experiences, which often included discrimination. While some Ojibwe students claimed they never were discriminated against, others did experience discrimination in public schools.⁶⁸

Discrimination came in several forms and from different directions. For instance, some Ojibwe children were teased by fellow Ojibwe for being "half-breeds" and academic over-achievers. Other children were taunted by non-minority students for not assimilating into the greater society and for their inability to speak and read English.

⁶⁷ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joyce Wedll," 16 October 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, pp. 56-57.

⁶⁸ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Brenda Boyd," 16 October 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 8; "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 2; "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 16; "Oral History of Albert Church," 6 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 6; and Oral History of Julie Shingobe," 5 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 34.

Each child handled the situation in a different way. Joe Nayquonabe, in remembrance of his school days, stated: ". . .with my lack of English as a first grader, I got a lot of teasing. . . . So I'd go home feeling bad, and my grandparents would tell me, 'You're not a white person to be speaking. You're Indian.' So I'd tell the kids that. . .Well, the reason I learned Indian is because I am Indian, not a white person." Nevertheless, prior to the 1970s, being Ojibwe in a public school presented difficulties and carried painful memories of non-conformity. One informant even reported that because she was so ostracized for her inability to speak English, she regrettably but purposely did not teach her children Ojibwe so they would not have to face the same problem in school.⁶⁹

Mille Lacs Ojibwe attending school in the 1960 encountered strong academic barriers to receiving a high school diploma. Collected dated indicates that cultural differences significantly impacted Ojibwe students when they entered high school. Furthermore, similar to previous generations, Ojibwe students struggled in the curriculum dealing with English. Hence, the Ojibwe's inability to grasp both written and oral English skills, prevented the student from interacting in the classroom.⁷⁰

Several specific statistical data figures obtained in the 1960s substantiated the high dropout rate of Mille Lacs Ojibwe. First, statistics acquired from the Onamia Public School, from the year 1962-63, note that the attendance of Ojibwe secondary student was 7.8 percent lower than the entire school—thus, confirming the direct relationship between attendance and graduation. Second, statistics were collected on a sample group of six Ojibwe classes entering the seventh grade from 1951-1956. The students' progress was documented until graduation day. The final numbers show a deplorable

⁶⁹ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Brenda Boyd," 16 October 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 8; "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 2; "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 16; "Oral History of Albert Church," 6 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 6; and Oral History of Julie Shingobe," 5 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 34.

⁷⁰ Harold Weberg, "The Role of Education in the Social, Cultural, and Economic Development of an Indian Community," (Master Thesis, St. Cloud State College, 1963), p. 29.

graduation rate of only 18.33 percent.⁷¹ Furthermore, a majority of the small numbers of Ojibwe graduating in the 1960s were females.⁷² The following statistics indicate the abysmal graduation rate for Ojibwe students in public schools in the late 1950s and early 1960s.⁷³

EXPECTED YEAR OF GRADUATION	NO. OF OJIBWE IN JR. HIGH	NO. OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES
1962-1963	11	1
1961-1962	10	2
1960-1961	14	4
1959-1960	9	0
1958-1959	9	2
1957-1958	<u>8</u>	<u>2</u>
	61	11

In analyzing the background of graduates and dropouts, parents of Ojibwe graduates appeared to be more active in reservation matters. However, there was no correlation between the dropout rate and either regular employment of the head of the household, the presence of books in the home, or practice of English in the home and the dropout rate.⁷⁴

In July of 1970, a national study of American Indian education and Mille Lacs Ojibwe was completed. The report summarized the poor education conditions found on the reservation. It concluded:

. . . Indians stand no chance of individual or group development as Indians unless the terrible inequities of education, occupation, income and related variables are relatively erased. It is not enough to be content, as some are with absolute gains in these and other

⁷¹ Harold Weberg, "The Role of Education in the Social, Cultural, and Economic Development of an Indian Community," (Master Thesis, St. Cloud State College, 1963), pp. 29-30.

⁷² Victoria L. Holbert, et. al., "Indian Americans at Mille Lacs," Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Training Center for Community Programs, 1970, p. 9.

⁷³ Harold Weberg, "The Role of Education in the Social, Cultural, and Economic Development of an Indian Community," (Master Thesis, St. Cloud State College, 1963), p. 30.

⁷⁴ Luddy Martinson, "A Comparison of Indian Dropout and Indian Graduating Students at the Mille Lacs Indian Reservation," (Master Thesis, St. Cloud State College, 1965), p. 51.

variables of importance to Indian progress. It is necessary to focus upon the relative upward movement of Indians along these indices as they are compared with other populations in the United States. Such a comparison is not "unfair"; it is an aspect of the reality Indian-Americans face as a contemporary minority category in a pluralistic setting largely outside their power to control.⁷⁵

Clearly, the Mille Lacs band needed to focus on education in order to raise the standard of living on the reservation, and improving the education of Mille Lacs children was an important objective, when Arthur Gahbow stepped into office.

Head Start/Home Start

In 1991, Gahbow addressed the need for education on the reservation and advocated a cultural-based education system. "In education," Gahbow said, "our people must learn about their proud past to gain strength and vision for the future. . . .we must also learn the skills necessary not only to survive but to prosper in this complicated world within which we all must live."⁷⁶ Gahbow and the Mille Lacs Ojibwe people wished to incorporate Ojibwe culture into both preschool and secondary education.

Before culturally based education could begin at Mille Lacs, the band had to learn to run its own education system. The first step in this direction was the establishment of a successful Head Start program on the reservation in the 1960s. In the 1970s, the Mille Lacs Reservation emerged in the forefront of the field of Indian preschool education. Their success produced an opportunity to establish a model Indian preschool education program.

On March 29, 1971, the Indian Migrant Program Division (IMPD), the Career Development Technical Assistance staff, and the Indian Community Action Project (ICAP) devised a plan to implement a Demonstration Center Concept in Minnesota. Following the conference, the Mille Lacs emerged as a site for the experimental program. A series of preliminary undertakings preceded the

⁷⁵ Victoria L. Holbert, et. al., "Indian Americans at Mille Lacs," Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, Training Center for Community Programs, 1970, pp. 16-17.

⁷⁶ "Building Through the 90s Toward the Next Century," Folder: State of the Band Address, January 8, 1991, Box 2A, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

implementation of the new program. First, a standing committee was created representing local Head Start staff in Minnesota. Second, ICAP staff requested approval, as well as suggestions, from all interested parties related to the Mille Lacs Reservation regarding the possible establishment of a Demonstration Center. Third, Mille Lacs submitted a proposal to IMPD outlining the reservation's ability to meet the standards essential for a Demonstration Center. Finally, by June 15, 1972, IMPD accepted Mille Lacs Reservation as the site for the new Demonstration Center.⁷⁷

Staffing for the new facility received mandatory professional training. ICAP, using the "Training the Trainer's Concept," sponsored regular training sessions to both disseminate information and to receive feedback. Training topics included educational material specifically related to Indian children, health care issues, and curriculum design and implementation. Bemidji State University supplemented the Mille Lacs staff with additional training program in the areas of early childhood human relations, science, and psychology.⁷⁸

The implemented preschool program, entitled Head Start/Home Start, provided education for children age three to five. Incorporating the children's entire families and communities as the foundation of the program, it provided a broad range of services. However, it focused its curriculum on teaching the Ojibwe language and culture. On January 26, 1973, the Tri-State ICAP Board voted to have the Mille Lacs Head Start Program serve as the sample site for the IMPD Child Development Associate Pilot Program. Head Start/Home Start expanded to also service children in the Lake Lena, Hinckley, Sandstone, and Pine City areas.⁷⁹

⁷⁷ "Mille Lacs Head Start Demonstration Center Progress Report, October 1972 to 15 December 1973," Folder: Head Start, Box 3, Department of Natural Resources, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

⁷⁸ "Mille Lacs Head Start Demonstration Center Progress Report, October 1972 to 15 December 1973," Folder: Head Start, Box 3, Department of Natural Resources, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

⁷⁹ "Minnesota Chippewa Tribal Government Student Handbook, 1978," Folder: No File Name, Box 6, Department of Natural Resources Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives; "Community Resource Guide," p. 23, Folder: Box 1, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 26; and "Mille Lacs Head Start Demonstration Center Progress Report, October 1972 to 15 December 1973," Folder: Head Start, Box 3, Department of Natural Resources, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

Onamia Walkout, and the Nay-Ah-Shing School

While the Mille Lacs Ojibwe were succeeding on the preschool level, they experienced problems in public secondary schools. In the early 1970s, a majority of Mille Lacs Ojibwe students from Vineland attended Onamia Public School. However, in 1975, an event prompted band members to search for an alternative educational option for the Ojibwe student. On a April 1, 1975, approximately 40 Ojibwe students walked out of the Onamia High School in protest of unfair treatment. The students claimed they experienced beatings and harassment from non-minorities at school. This atmosphere impeded their ability to learn and led to a high drop out rate.⁸⁰

After the incident, tribal members tried to orchestrate an immediate solution by bringing the students together to discuss it. The Ojibwe students went back to Onamia to sit down with other students to work out a solution, but a firestorm of acrimonious discriminating racial stereotyping occurred among the students. Don Wedll, an early Mille Lacs Educational Commissioner, described the tense situation:

. . . it got real crazy real fast. White, non-Indian kids would say stuff like, 'Where do you get your groceries from? Where do you get your meat from? Us!' You know, 'You live on dirt floors, and you don't have any water in your houses. You live in tepees, and you're a bunch of Apaches,' and all this kind of stuff. And we weren't prepared to, you know, deal with those kinds of levels of racism and just ignorance. And so we tried a couple of those meetings, and they just were too volatile to deal with. I was really worried some kid was going to get caught in the middle of all and get hurt. I think everybody else was, too. And so then they decided, 'Well, we'll just keep the kids out here.'⁸¹

Thereafter, over the summer, Mille Lacs Indian education committee and tribal

⁸⁰ Memorandum from Jerry Seck to Art Garbow, 8 April 1975, Folder: Indian Student Walkout, Box 6, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

⁸¹ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Don Wedll," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 17.

leaders held several tense meetings with Onamia school administration officials and the school board to discover the cause of the walkout. Tribal members discovered several disturbing facts. First, they learned that fourteen of the extra-curricular activities lacked Native American participants. Second, while 10 percent of the school enrollment was Indian, no Indian worked as a professional on the staff. Third, the drop-out rate of the Ojibwe in the school had reached 95 percent. Fourth, 70 percent of the Ojibwe student received detention for an average of 52 hours, while only 10 percent of non minority students received detention for 16 hours. Fifth, 20 percent of the Ojibwe students received suspensions, while only 4.2 percent of the non-minority students received suspensions. Sixth, and most significant, the Onamia school board refused to comply with the request of the Ojibwe to establish an inter-cultural education commission. After these facts were heard, the Ojibwe ultimately decided to fully support the walkout and the student's position.⁸²

Following the summer of meetings, the Mille Lacs RBC, and the local Indian education committee decided to design and implement a substitute school for the disgruntled students, using Title IV funding from the Indian Education Act, which President Richard Nixon signed into law in 1972. The thrust of the Indian Education Act was to give Indian control over educational services, and to encourage the establishment of education programs that stressed "culturally relevant and bilingual curriculum materials."⁸³ The Onamia walkout gave the Mille Lacs band the opportunity to accomplish both these goals, but not without paying a price.

The process of creating a new school, the Mille Lacs band discovered, was not as easy as they naively thought. First, the Onamia school district threatened to charge the students with juvenile delinquency if they did not return to Onamia High School, which frightened many Ojibwe parents into sending their children back to the public school. Second, the Onamia school district claimed that a separate reservation school violated the Civil Rights Act.⁸⁴ In an attempt to find

⁸² Ivory Mitchell to Joan Gaetz, 13 March 1975, Folder: Indian Student Walkout, Box 6, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Don Wedll," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, pp. 15-19.

⁸³ Margaret Connell Szasz, Education and the American Indian: The Road to Self-Determination Since 1928 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1974), p. 199.

⁸⁴ Memorandum from Jerry Seck to Art Garbow, 8 April 1975, Folder: Indian Student Walkout,

a feasible solution, the Mille Lacs band hired Robert Speed to devise an alternative education program at Onamia for the Ojibwe students. Speed previously designed a desegregation program in the St. Paul school system. In an attempt to meet the needs of the Indian community, as well as satisfy the Civil Rights Act, Speed devised a plan that required Ojibwe students to attend the Onamia School for a four hour in the morning, and then a Cultural Learning Center for a three hour block in the afternoon. The alternative school, served grades 7-12, and originally was located in the back of Onamia High School. The Cultural Learning Center provided education in the Ojibwe language, art, and culture. Eventually, however, an influx of non-Indian students into the program, a lack of funding from the government, and change in the curriculum away from the Ojibwe culture contributed to the demise of the program.⁸⁵

As a result of a strong Ojibwe dissatisfaction with the Alternative School and the Onamia Public School, on June 1, 1978, the Mille Lacs band established a new school called Nay-Ah-Shing. That fall the new reservation school opened its doors to students, teaching students between 7th and 12th grades academic areas, such as mathematics, english, science, art and physical education. In addition to these traditional subjects, students received class room instructions in the areas of Ojibwe culture, language, and history. Eventually, the school received accreditation through the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges, and the Nay-Ah-Shing school became the first Indian contract school in Minnesota to receive this distinction.⁸⁶

Culturally based education is a key element to the Nay-Ah-Shing School. In 1991, Mildred Benjamin, who won an outstanding teacher award for her work at the Nay-Ah-Shing School, emphasized this point. Benjamin stated:

Box 6, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

⁸⁵ Memorandum from Jerry Seck to Art Garbow, 8 April 1975, Folder: Indian Student Walkout, Box 6, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Don Wedll," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, pp. 19-20.

⁸⁶ Judith Rosenblatt, ed., Indians in Minnesota (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), p. 144; "Community Resource Guide," p. 22, Folder: Box 1, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives; "The Reservation of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe," Mille Lacs Ojibwe Tribal Brochure, post-1980; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Don Wedll," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, pp. 21-22.

We are trying to incorporate language study into all the curriculum. . . . We've even had to translate algebra terms into Ojibwe. Our language and traditions were being lost. They were not being taught at home or practiced at home. I stress to my students the need to save the language for ceremonial purposes, dances, prayers, and rituals. We need to learn the language to keep the traditions alive.⁸⁷

Ojibwe students on the reservation receive a majority of their cultural training from the Nay-Ah-Shing School. This system differs greatly from the generations of Ojibwe children that received cultural training from their grandparents. In regard to the younger Ojibwe cultural teachings, Joyce Wedll responded:

I think I grew up traditionally. . . . I grew up more under the influence of my grandmother, whereas, I'm not passing it on to my children. So I think that part is lost, and now they're getting it—rather than getting the teachings and some of the old traditional stuff from home, they're getting it from school.⁸⁸

Many Ojibwe agree with Wedll's assessment of the situation and fear that young people are not going to completely understand their culture because they do not live it on a daily basis.

Today, the Mille Lacs band is in the process of rebuilding their educational system from the ground up. Recently, the band established a program known as Mille Lacs Band 2000, that is designed to prepare Ojibwe students for the demands of the 21st century. This program involves the construction of a new school. It also promotes the concept that chemical substances are not historically a part of the Ojibwe culture, and that by using chemicals, Ojibwe are submitting to the dominant society.⁸⁹

In 1992, the Mille Lacs band apportioned \$4.2 million dollars for the construction of a 66,000 square building to house the new 7-12 private school, which will

44 "Nah Ah Shing Teachers Wins Outstanding Teacher Award," Mille Lacs Messenger, 27 November, 1991, p. 8.

88 Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joyce Wedll," 16 October 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 42.

46 "Mille Lacs Band Pledges to Use All its Resources if Treaty Goes to Court," Mille Lacs Messenger, 22 January 1992, p. 2.

eventually be enlarged into a pre-K through 12 school. The band expects to complete construction of the new school in 1993. The Onamia School District's still retains a large number of Ojibwe students in the primary school, and stands to lose \$1 million annually when the Nay-Ah-Shing School expands.⁹⁰

Adult Training for Employment

In the area of adult training and education, the Mille Lacs band also has pushed for federal and band funds to assist Ojibwe in seeking post high school training. In the early 1970s, several federally funded programs helped Ojibwe adults seeking post-high school training, including the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), which Congress passed in 1973. CETA programs contracted to Mille Lacs Reservation Business Committee included several job programs, which supported both summer youth employment programs and research and demonstration projects.

In 1983, CETA became the Job Training Partnership Act (JPTA), which was managed by the U. S. Department of Labor. JPTA advocated job assistance to under-privileged individuals by teaching them job skills that would help secure long-term employment. JPTA services Ojibwe living in the three Districts of the Mille Lacs Reservation: Mille Lacs County, Aitkin County, and Pine County. In conjunction with CETA, and later JPTA, Employment Assistance Programs, Adult vocational Training Programs, and Direct Employment Assistance Programs have also been utilized by members of the Mille Lacs Reservation.⁹¹

Today, revenue from the new gaming facilities has also been filtered back into the reservation in an attempt educate students who will be able to utilize their new skills for the betterment of the reservation and improve the standard of living.

⁹⁰ "No More Smoke Over Nay Ah Shing Issue, Mille Lacs Messenger, 26 February 1992, p. 25.

⁹¹ Judith Rosenblatt, ed., Indians in Minnesota (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), p. 117; "Community Resource Guide," p. 24, Folder: Box 1, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives; and "Minnesota Chippewa Tribal Government Student Handbook, 1978," p. 182, Folder: No File Name, Box 6, Department of Natural Resources Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

An Economic Foundation

A strong tribal government, a better education, improved housing and employment opportunities helped the Mille Lacs band move forward in the 1970s and 1980s, but in order to sustain these advances, the band needed viable economic development. In the late 1960s, the RBE had opened an electronics component factory, which during the company's peak business years, scheduled two work shifts and employed approximately 50 people, including non-Ojibwe community members and tribal members from as far away as Sandy Lake. In the 1970s, the company attracted a number of contracts from IBM, and General Electric, but eventually folded in the early 1980s because of management problems.⁹²

In addition to the electronics factory, the RBE expanded its operations by investing in a construction company as well. In 1976, the RBE organized the Mille Lacs Reservation Construction Company as an Ojibwe enterprise, and began to build reservation housing with this newly formed company. Using HUD funding, the band's construction company actively built much needed homes, garages, and storage facilities needed on the reservation.⁹³ The company also received contracts for the construction of community centers at Hinckley and McGregor. These projects were sponsored by Minnesota Community Development Block Grants.⁹⁴ Construction trainees, working under the Indian Action Team Program, constituted one-third of the labor utilized on these construction projects.⁹⁵

⁹² Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joyce Wedll," 16 October 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, pp. 35-37; and Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Mabel Boyd Albino," 19 July 1992, Prepared by U.S. West Research, Contract #92-C-2763, January, 1993, pp. 2 and 25.

⁹³ "The Reservation of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe," Mille Lacs Ojibwe Tribal Brochure, post-1980.

⁹⁴ "Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians Vineland, Minnesota, Enterprises Accountant's Report 1 November 1977 -30 June 1979," p. 7, Folder: Mille Lacs Enterprises, Blue, Box 9, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

⁹⁵ "Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians Vineland, Minnesota, Enterprises Accountant's Report 1 November 1977 -30 June 1979," p. 14, Folder: Mille Lacs Enterprises, Blue, Box 9, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

While the electronic component factory and the Mille Lacs Construction Company were in full swing, the RBE next decided to capitalize on the growing tourism industry on Mille Lacs Lake. First, in 1975-1976, the RBE obtained a loan from the Economic Development Administration to build a marina/tourist complex at Vineland, Minnesota.⁹⁶ The completed Mille Lacs Marina/Tourism Complex consisted of a bar, lakeside restaurant featuring fresh-caught fish on the menu, banquet room, 12 shore-front, modern cottages, a channel, and boat harbor. The facility also offered fish house rental in the winter and boat rental in the summer. The entire complex employed approximately 21 people.⁹⁷ The CETA agreements, existing between the United States Department of Labor and the Mille Lacs band of Ojibwe, funded all personnel positions, except the bookkeeper.⁹⁸

With the seeming success of the marina/tourism complex, in 1980, the RBE purchased a local resort called the Drift Inn Resort, located three miles south of the reservation.⁹⁹ However, the purchase turned out to be a bad investment. At the onset, the BIA drafted a profit and loss statement for the Mille Lacs band to obtain a loan. However, the BIA over-estimated the cost of goods in relationship to the gross sales in order to be eligible for the loan. Thus, the Drift Inn Resort drew cash away from the capital financial base of the RBE. Since the RBE invested a substantial amount of money into the Drift Inn to keep it going, it could not make other investments. Additionally, the RBE extracted substantial funds from its other corporate entities (\$100,000), and invested that money into the Drift Inn Resort.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶ Roger and Priscilla Buffalohead, Against the Tide of History: The Story of the Mille Lacs Anishinabe (Cass Lake: Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, 1985), p. 127.

⁹⁷ Judith Rosenblatt, ed., Indians in Minnesota (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), p. 98; and "The Reservation of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe," Mille Lacs Ojibwe Tribal Brochure, post-1980.

⁹⁸ "Mille Lacs Band of Chippewa Indians Vineland, Minnesota, Enterprises Accountant's Report 1 November 1977 -30 June 1979," p. 7, Folder: Mille Lacs Enterprises, Blue, Box 9, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

⁹⁹ Roger and Priscilla Buffalohead, Against the Tide of History: The Story of the Mille Lacs Anishinabe (Cass Lake: Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, 1985), p. 127.

¹⁰⁰ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Don Wedll," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 45; Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-

The purchase of the Drift Inn Resort, along with several local and national factors, set off a series of events that eventually led to the demise of the RBE. First, on the local level, there was the problem of selling alcohol on the reservation. Both the Drift Inn Resort and the Marina/Tourism Complex offered alcohol, which caused a conflict of interest between the RBC's desire to make a large profit on liquor sales, and its attempt to end alcoholism on the reservation.¹⁰¹ Conflicts soon arose between intoxicated Ojibwe and non-minorities, causing many non-minorities to avoid the tribally-run tourist facilities and altogether entering onto reservation land out of fear. Second, on the national level, the energy crisis of the late 1970s and early 1980s, prohibited many people from traveling and vacationing as they had done before. The final factor was President Reagan's cuts to federal programs which funded part of the operational costs of these Ojibwe enterprises. The culmination of all these factors eventually led to a domino effect in which all the companies owned and managed by the RBE failed by early 1980s.¹⁰²

Even though the Mille Lacs band struggled to create commerce and industry on the reservation in the 1960s and 1970s, by the early 1980s, the employment picture looked bleak. The RBC continued to search for viable options to decrease unemployment and secure an economic foundation on the reservation. An economic development report, presented in 1980, pointed out that even well-trained Ojibwe people (welders, plumbers, bookkeepers, carpenters, auto mechanics, and heavy equipment operators) had difficulty finding positions. In 1981-1982 unemployment rate on the reservation reached 51 percent. The RBC concluded that training programs retained no lasting effects without businesses to provide for the continuing development of trained employees.¹⁰³

Bingo Parlors, Casinos and High Stakes Gambling

In 1980, the question of where and how to develop new businesses on the

2763, January 1993, p. 20.

¹⁰¹ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 40.

¹⁰² Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Don Wedll," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, pp. 44-46.

¹⁰³ Judith Rosenblatt, ed., Indians in Minnesota (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), pp. 112-113.

reservation was answered. Based upon a landmark decision in Itasca County, stating the State of Minnesota did not have civil authority to halt gaming by enforcing a charitable bingo statute on reservations, and Public Law 280, the Mille Lacs band of Ojibwe tapped a new economic resource — gambling.¹⁰⁴

In 1980, using the Mille Lacs Reservation gymnasium, the Mille Lacs band opened a bingo parlor to take advantage of this new ruling. The bingo parlor proved mildly successful and eventually, the bingo parlor expanded to its own building in 1982. The new parlor housed two electronic bingo machines, four video screens, seventeen varieties of pull tabs, and a "Little Casino" room that housed thirty-two poker machines. As a result of increased patronage, the operation also added a manager and core staff in 1982.¹⁰⁵

Nationally, the expansion of Indian gaming on reservations in Nevada, California, Arizona, Minnesota and Wisconsin warranted federal and state attention. In Minnesota, a report from the Minnesota Attorney General's Office on the status of Indian gambling claimed that Minnesota state law had no bearing on Indian reservations. According to it, only Congress retained the authority to empower a specific committee to oversee the gaming industry. Clearly national legislation was needed to create uniform laws for managing and regulating reservation gambling enterprises in a variety of states. Therefore, in October 1988, Congress acted by passing this new legislation— the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act. This piece of legislation regulated and categorized the different forms of gambling. Class I, primarily connected with tribal functions, consists of social games. Bingo, pull tabs, punch cards, and tip jars fall under Class II, and all other forms of gaming are listed under Class III.¹⁰⁶

In the spring of 1990, Governor Rudi Perpich and six Minnesota Indian tribes signed a tribal-state compact to allow Class III video gambling machines on reservations. These included: Grand Portage, Bois Fort, and Fond du Lac Ojibwe and the Lower Sioux, Shakopee Mdewakanton, and Prairie Island Sioux. In the summer of 1990, the State of Minnesota signed a similar compact with the Mille Lacs Ojibwe band. The signed tribal-state compact allowed the Mille Lacs Ojibwe to operate "electronic or electro-mechanical video devices that simulate games commonly referred to a poker, blackjack, craps, hi-lo, roulette, line-up symbols

¹⁰⁴ "Indian Sovereignty," Mille Lacs Messenger, 25 September 1991, p. 3.

¹⁰⁵ Mille Lacs Messenger, 13 November 1991, p. 4.

¹⁰⁶ "Indian Sovereignty," Mille Lacs Messenger, 25 September 1991, p. 3.

and number, or other common gambling forms, which are activated by the insertion of a coin, token, or currency, and which awards game credits, cash, tokens, or replays." By 1991, Governor Perpich had signed compacts with a total of eleven Minnesota bands. During that same year, signed compacts also permitted blackjack to be played on reservations.¹⁰⁷

In 1990, with a tribal-state compact in place, the Mille Lacs band wisely sought financial and management support from an outside interests, and for two specific reasons, the band eventually entered into a partnership with the Grand Casino Management Company. First, and foremost, the company loaned the Mille Lacs band 3 million dollars to enlarge the old bingo hall into the Grand Casino Mille Lacs.¹⁰⁸ Second, the company provided experienced management to the casino, which the band needed given the failure of the RBE. By November 1990, construction began on a 22,000 square foot casino, which was twice the size of the original bingo parlor.¹⁰⁹

To date, the band's gamble to open the casino has been an economic success, not only increasing the reservation's economy but also that of nearby communities. Initially, the new casino employed approximately 300 people and disbursed payroll checks totalling 2 million dollars, substantially reducing unemployment on the reservation. Prior to the opening of the new casino, about 45 percent of Mille Lacs Ojibwe adults living on the reservation were unemployed. The Mille Lacs band receives about 60 percent of the casino profits, while the Grand Casino Management Company receives the remaining percentage. Marge Anderson, Executive Chief of the Mille Lacs band, said that the Mille Lacs band draws approximately one million dollars in profits a month. Since reservation lands can not be used as security for credit financing, and the Mille Lacs band uses a portion of the revenue to back bonds sold to improve local facilities.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ "Indian Sovereignty," Mille Lacs Messenger, 25 September 1991, p. 3; "Six Tribal-state Compacts Approved," Indian News: Week-in-Review Vol. 14, no. 5 (April 13, 1990): 3; and "Two More Tribal-State Compacts Get Okay," Indian News: Week-in-Review Vol. 14, no. 10 (June 29, 1990): 5.

¹⁰⁸ "Casino Investor to Offer Stock" Mille Lacs Messenger, 25 September 1991, p. 2.

¹⁰⁹ Mille Lacs Messenger, 13 November 1991, p. 4.

¹¹⁰ "State of the Band: Coming Home," Mille Lacs Messenger, 22 January 1992; Mille Lacs Messenger, 13 November 1991, p. 4; and "Mille Lacs Casino Profits to Go to Band," Mille Lacs Messenger, January 1992, p. 6.

In a United States Senate hearing, dated 1992, the Chairman of the Minnesota Indian Gaming Association, Myron Ellis, spoke about the positive impacts of Indian gaming on tribes in Minnesota in 1992. Ellis stated that revenue from the casino promoted the establishment of associated businesses, including cafes and motels. Furthermore, the casino reduced local unemployment and funded a variety of social and government programs.¹¹¹ On a state-wide level, based upon figures presented by Minnesota Indian Gaming Association, the Grand Casino Mille Lacs and five other Indian casinos in Minnesota have employed 4,500 people and cut welfare recipients by 38 percent.¹¹² In 1990, the Mille Lacs band existed as one of eleven tribes in Minnesota who utilized the gaming industry and gained profits reaching \$400 million.¹¹³

The partnership between the Mille Lacs band and the Grand Casino Management Company put 2.4 million stock shares from the Grand Casino on the open market. Proceeds from the stocks were used to construct a second casino, the Grand Casino Hinckley, which broke ground in August of 1991.¹¹⁴ The Hinckley Casino, built on Ojibwe-owned land, sits just east of Highway 35 between Duluth and the Twin Cities. The complex, worth \$18 million dollars, employs 1,400 people and includes a hotel, restaurant, golf course, swimming pool, night club, and recreational vehicle campground.¹¹⁵ The business partners retained the same 60-40 profit split involved in the management of Grand Casino.¹¹⁶

In general, the revenue received by the Ojibwe is divided into thirds between long-term investments, land acquisition, and social programs.¹¹⁷ The Mille Lacs band

¹¹¹ "U. S. Senate Committee Hears High Praise for Indian Gaming," Mille Lacs Messenger, 19 February 1992, p. 28.

¹¹² "Study Shows Indian Gaming has Significant Local Impact," Mille Lacs Messenger, 12 February 1992, p. 12.

¹¹³ "The Brass Ring: Gambling is a Good Bet in Minnesota," Mille Lacs Messenger, 25 September 1991, p. 3.

¹¹⁴ "Casino Investor to Offer Stock" Mille Lacs Messenger, 25 September 1991, p. 1; and "Building Through the 90s Toward the Next Century," Folder: State of the Band Address, January 8, 1991, Box 2A, Administration Files, Mille Lacs Tribal Archives.

¹¹⁵ "Grand Celebration Scheduled for Hinckley," Ourselves, February 1992, p. 1.

¹¹⁶ "Casino Investor to Offer Stock" Mille Lacs Messenger, 25 September 1991, p. 2.

¹¹⁷ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Don Wedll," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U.

hopes to complete construction on a new school, health clinic, day-care unit, housing, and water system with the revenue from the casinos. Marge Anderson stated that the band plans to pull band members living away from the reservation back to the reservation by improving conditions, which includes using the revenue to restore traditional rights and landholdings.¹¹⁸

Inherent Rights

The Ojibwe subsistence patterns historically centered around a hunting, fishing, and gathering lifestyle. However, the loss of territory and influence of non-Ojibwe altered the extent of this lifestyle. In response, the Mille Lacs Reservation established specific departments and positions responsible for maintaining the band's current rights and for seeking viable options to regain rights provided for in the 1837 Treaty. The Casino's revenue afforded the Mille Lacs Ojibwe the ability to file suit to stop the continued degradation of previously established hunting, fishing and gathering rights by the State of Minnesota.

On August 13, 1992, the Mille Lacs band filed suit in federal district court to recover these hunting and fishing rights. Based upon the 1837 Treaty, the plaintiffs are attempting to secure rights to hunt, fish, and gather, free of state regulations throughout the ceded territory.¹¹⁹

A prior case, *Lac Courte Oreilles v. Voight*, presented in the Seventh Circuit Court set the standard for the Minnesota Mille Lacs band's case. The Seventh Circuit validated the stipulations found in the Treaty of 1837 and centered around inappropriate executive actions of President Zachary Taylor. The Court declared that President Taylor's removal order exceeded the authority of the 1837 Treaty in two specific areas. First, Taylor's removal jurisdiction was contingent on Ojibwe "misbehavior." However, President Taylor's order made no reference to "misbehavior." Second, the State of Minnesota claimed the Treaty of 1855 voided provisions set forth by the Treaty of 1837. However, it is not feasible that Ojibwe leaders knowingly relinquished "all right, title and interest" in land previously allocated in the Treaty of 1837, because they could not continue their seasonal

S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 50.

¹¹⁸ "Mille lacs Casino Profits to Go to Band," Mille Lacs Messenger, January 1992, p. 1.

¹¹⁹ "Fishing Conflict: The Mille Lacs Issue Point/Counterpoint," Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 3 May 1992, sec. C: 16.

lifestyle based on hunting, fishing, and gathering without land rights.¹²⁰

Meanwhile, discussions between the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Mille Lacs Ojibwe ensued regarding the Treaty of 1837. They focused on several specific topics, but fishing rights remained the most controversial issue of the 1837 treaty, according to Don Wedll, Commissioner of Natural Resources.¹²¹ Additional issues being discussed, according to the Minnesota DNR, included the practice of traditional hunting and fishing off the reservation in the ceded territory; controlled commercialized fishing by band members; payments to the band to compensate for off-reservation treaty rights; and acquisition of state land tracts.¹²²

Raymond Burns, an Ojibwe from Lac Courte Oreilles, eloquently addressed the case regarding the Treaty of 1837. Burns supported his band's position with two significant points. First, the Treaty of 1837 did not question, or even grant, the Ojibwe use of the land. Thus, the United States Government never took away or altered the Ojibwe's right to hunt, fish, or gather in Minnesota. Past treaties defined areas where Indians could continue to practice their seasonal round lifestyle, not areas of land exchange. Second, since past treaties existed between at two sovereign nations, treaties only could be revised by the involved parties and not the State of Minnesota. Treaties established a nation-to-nation pact with the United States, and Ojibwe sovereignty exists as the bottom line to understanding Indian "rights" in the United States.¹²³

Attempts were made to negotiate the conflict over treaty rights between the State of Minnesota and the Ojibwe band. Through negotiations, the Minnesota DNR and Mille Lacs Ojibwe have so far side-stepped the violence experienced in Wisconsin over spearfishing.¹²⁴ The Native American Rights Fund (NARF), a leader in

¹²⁰ "Fishing Conflict: The Mille Lacs Issue; A Cooperative Solution," Saint Paul Pioneer Press, 3 May 1992, sec. C: 17.

¹²¹ "Mille Lacs Band Natural Resource Commissioner Speaks on Treaty Rights," Mille Lacs Messenger, 23 October 1991, p. 1.

¹²² "Decision Allows Nine Counties to Intervene in 1837 Treaty Lawsuit," Mille Lacs Messenger, 13 November 1991, p. 2.

¹²³ "Find Out the Facts on the Treaty," Mille Lacs Messenger, 4 March 1992, p. 5.

¹²⁴ "Lawsuit Settlement Gives Chippewa Spear-Fishing Rights at mille Lacs," St. Paul Pioneer Press, 5 November 1992, sec. A: 6.

protecting Indian legal rights, mediated the negotiations between the DNR, representing the State of Minnesota, and the Mille Lacs Ojibwe. NARF's involvement indicated the case's significance to all parties involved.¹²⁵

In November of 1992, the Minnesota DNR and the Mille Lacs band devised and accepted a proposal to avoid going to court. It contained the following provisions:

- Spearing and netting would be allowed on 6,000 acres in a tribal fishing zone (4.5 percent of the lake), located on Mille Lacs Lake adjacent to the reservation's shores;
- The Ojibwe and Minnesota would jointly make an effort to collaborate to manage and protect the longevity of natural resources;
- The State of Minnesota would transfer 7,500 acres of state land to the band from locations to be selected after consultation with the public and local governments;
- The State of Minnesota would pay \$10 million to the Mille Lacs band over a five year period. The band would invest 50 percent of the allocated money for ten years and use the proceeds only for conservation purposes.¹²⁶

The proposal also contained a number of restrictions including:

- The walleye harvest will be limited to the average of four pounds per acre taken by anglers, similar to that of the rest of the lake;
- Band conservation codes would limit hunting, fishing, trapping, and gathering rights;¹²⁷
- The yielding of fish, game, and timber would be used for subsistence purposes, unless specified under band codes;
- The band netting and spearing would be limited to six lakes and 25 miles of river. Ogechie, Onamia, and Shakopee Lakes and the Rum and St. Croix Rivers are included in the proposal. The three additional lakes

¹²⁵ "Decision Allows Nine Counties to Intervene in 1837 Treaty Lawsuit," Mille Lacs Messenger, 13 November 1991, p. 2.

¹²⁶ "Fued at Mille Lacs," St. Paul Pioneer Press, 27 December 1992, sec. B: 6.

¹²⁷ The tribal conservation codes, seasons and limits, resemble state laws. Tribal code are enforced through fines and confiscation procedures. Judith Rosenblatt, ed., Indians in Minnesota (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), p. 72

- will be decided by a Minnesota-Mille Lacs agreement;
- Angling in the tribal zone could be controlled by the band with licenses available to the public. When a 24,000-pound quota is reached, fishing would be closed to the band and the public;
- An agreement that no casinos will be constructed on the transferred lands.¹²⁸

The proposal, drafted by the DNR and the Mille Lacs band of Ojibwe, needed approval by the Minnesota Legislature and Mille Lacs tribal officials in 1993. Not only is it expected to a highly debated issue in the State of Minnesota's 1993 legislative session, but also followed closely by Minnesota constituents.¹²⁹ The fate of Mille Lacs Lake itself exists as a significant issue for all parties involved. Nevertheless, the Ojibwe are pursuing fundamental treaty rights, so that their traditional way of life may be maintained in the future.

Non-Removable and Self-Determined: The Future

The future of the Mille Lacs Reservation rests on the success and longevity of the new Mille Lacs "self-government" system and its ability to properly define and manage the band's business, social, and educational concerns. The framework for the Mille Lacs Ojibwe's future also rests on the band's ability to successfully invest in its future. In Marge Anderson's first "State of the Band Address", since taking office after the death of Arthur Gahbow in April of 1991, she expressed her concern for the future of her people and emphasized the theme "Coming Home." She defined the need of the reservation not just to improve the quality of life for the 1,100 Ojibwe who now reside on the reservation but to also provide incentives for those Ojibwe who moved away in the past to return to the reservation.¹³⁰

"The distinction of a strong tribal government," according to one source, "is its ability to influence tribal members to forego the immediate distribution of tribal funds so capital for tribal projects and programs can be accumulated."¹³¹ Tribal

¹²⁸ "Feud at Mille Lacs," St. Paul Pioneer Press, 27 December 1992, sec. B: 6; "Pact Allowing Spearfishing Brings Outcry From Anglers," St. Paul Pioneer Press, 6 November 1992, sec. A: 12; and "Meeting to Help Explain DNR-Mille Lacs Deal," St. Paul Pioneer Press, 17 December 1992, sec. F: 7.

¹²⁹ "Feud at Mille Lacs," St. Paul Pioneer Press, 27 December 1992, sec. B: 6.

¹³⁰ "State of the Band: Coming Home," Mille Lacs Messenger, 22 January 1992

Chief Executive Marge Anderson and other band leader's have taken this mantle of leadership upon themselves, by resisting and rejecting the distribution of per capita payments to band members. Band leaders provided three reasons to justify not making per capita payments. First, the Mille Lacs band maintained that they had a larger number of members, compared to the Sioux communities in southern Minnesota, who offered per capita payments, and therefore per capita payments would be a financial drain on band's capital resources. Second, federal government regulations complicated and deterred the disbursement of per capita payments. Third, a decision to make per capita payments overlooked investing in the future, and it is the future of the band that concerned Anderson and the other leaders at this time.¹³² Instead of per capita payments, band leaders wished to use future profits of the Grand Casino and the Hinckley Casino to finance basic improvements on the reservation, and to invest in non-gaming businesses to create a job base. It is hoped that this reinvestment would bring business and economic stability to the reservation. In addition to this point, Anderson and band leaders realized that they must prepare themselves with casino profits to face competition from other gaming facilities and opposition from non-Indians. They also realized that the gaming industry might not last long, and that the money should be invested wisely in the community.¹³³ Many band members are pleased with the Mille Lacs Reservation government's position regarding per capita payments. Some Ojibwe opine that if per capita payments were allocated to band members, people would depend on them in the same fashion that they depended on welfare in the past.¹³⁴

Besides the issue of casino profits and per capita payments, there are several other problems confronting the band including raising the standard of living on the reservation. To urban Mille Lacs Ojibwe visiting, the reservation looks in terrible shape. One Mille Lacs Ojibwe had a difficult time explaining the deteriorated conditions to a friend. He said:

That's what kind of puzzles me, yeah, there's more money, but yet

¹³¹ Vince Lovett and Larry Rummel, American Indians: U.S. Indian Policy, Tribes and Reservations; and BIA: Past and Present Economic Development (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1984), p. 32.

¹³² "State of the Band: Coming Home," Mille Lacs Messenger, 22 January 1992, p. 2.

¹³³ "State of the Band: Coming Home," Mille Lacs Messenger, 22 January 1992, p. 2.

¹³⁴ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joyce Wedll," 16 October 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 51.

you see deteriorating, the reservation deteriorating rather than going up. Boy, if you don't believe me, just take a drive around. . . . while I was over at school, during their Indian week . . . and we bring in speakers. We've had people from Mille Lacs come up to talk. Some of the things you hear, you know from the students—"Well, jeez, you guys got all this money." I mean, got casino going over there, got this, and that going over there. Yet, the other day when I was up there I drove around. That's the most horseshit place I'd ever seen in my life. I mean, some of these houses had weeds growing up in there. They had—in fact, one stretch of that place looked like a dump from here to here. There was about fifteen houses there—kids running around naked, you know, I mean, dogs walking around there and then garbage laying all over the place from here to there. And again, I hadn't been here for awhile, but he caught my attention, so I did drive around. He was right.¹³⁵

Raising the standard of living on the reservation is important, but perhaps the most critical problem facing the Mille Lacs band is how to maintain Ojibwe traditionalism in the face of an inherent and overwhelming cultural onslaught by the nearby dominant society. Today, there are many signs that the Mille Lacs Ojibwe are rapidly losing their traditional identity. Even though the casinos bring much-needed financial resources to the reservation, the influx of people, jobs, and money, are also importing new ideas, attractions and inter-actions with non-Ojibwe that are clearly breaking down the isolation of the community. This inevitable breakdown of values began during World War II, when hundreds of Mille Lacs Ojibwe left their closed community and entered the mainstream American society looking for jobs. Thereafter, the process has accelerated with time and may not be reversible.

For instance, today, even though the Ojibwe language is taught at Nay-Ah-Shing school, few students actually learn the language fluently enough to speak to their elders. One Ojibwe elder described the situation with strident concern. He stated:

I think my main concern for now is language. See, you go out and talk to these people around here, talk Ojibwe to them. Most of them won't understand it. The older people do. Well, some of the older

¹³⁵ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 55.

people don't, either. But you talk to these young people, they don't know what you're talking about. . . culture and language go together Some of them say, "We just want to learn about the culture." Okay. You can't teach culture without getting language in there. So if the language goes, the culture goes. I think my main thoughts about the future is I think they should push the language.¹³⁶

In addition to losing their language capabilities, many younger Ojibwe have only learned and practiced seasonal round activities in school. Today, few families actually continue to use seasonal resources and therefore the traditional seasonal round lifestyle and associated values with the land and family members, which sustained the Mille Lacs people and their culture for hundreds of years, has all but been ignored and relegated to a series of museum dioramas at the nearby Minnesota State Mille Lacs Indian Museum.

It seems that even fewer young people are ready to take over positions in ceremonial drum societies of the band. Even though Mille Lacs Ojibwe children receive classroom training in traditional lifestyles, history, and ceremonies, only through actual adoption of these practices will the culture really be maintained. If they are not adopted in the heart as well as the mind, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe are in grave danger of becoming "textbook" Ojibwe. One band member expressed this fear stating, "I don't want to get too much like the white society. I mean, I want us to be different; I want us to be who we are and not change that. I can see it happening even now, where a lot of younger generation aren't attending like the ceremonial dances or getting involved in any type of cultural stuff."¹³⁷

The loss of language and the loss of adequate ceremonial participation is reflected somewhat in the lack of cohesion amongst all the Non-Removable Ojibwe. There is considerable bickering among the Mille Lacs Ojibwe in the various districts, especially over receiving appropriate shares of the casinos profits.¹³⁸ Members from outlying Sandy and East Lakes feel that they are not receiving their fair shares. They also felt that they deserved greater representation in the governing

¹³⁶ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of James Clark," 26 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 56.

¹³⁷ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joyce Wedll," 16 October 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 50.

¹³⁸ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 47.

body. Chief Executive Marge Anderson responded to this complaint with the idea that if and when the Mille Lacs band separates from the MCT, the smaller bands at Sandy and East Lakes and elsewhere would have more autonomy and each individual band would thereafter have greater representation in the Mille Lacs government.¹³⁹

Nevertheless, currently, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe band is definitely attempting to improve life on reservation, maintain its Ojibwe heritage, and reunify the various Ojibwe bands together to become a self-sufficient people. There are many barriers in their path, but the Mille Lacs people are intent on determining their fate themselves, and according to Chief Executive Anderson, " . . . some how or other we got to find a way to go around those barriers. I mean, there's no holding us back. . .we want to keep moving. And sometimes its kind of scary because we're moving as such a fast pace-that but it's for the positive."¹⁴⁰

From their historical past, the Mille Lacs Ojibwe earned the sobriquet Non-Removable Mille Lacs Ojibwe. In the future, given the leadership and new directions the band is now taking, history may very well tag the title "Self-Determined" before their name as well.

Notes on Chapter Sources:

Information contained in this chapter is based largely upon primary correspondence, reports, and documents written during the time period 1960s through 1990s.

The following primary materials, located in the Mille Lacs Tribal Archives at the Mille Lacs Reservation were utilized: Administrative Files and Department of Natural Resources Files. In addition to the tribal materials, primary sources were extracted from Cass Lake Indian Agency Files.

Other important primary materials include a series of oral histories conducted

¹³⁹ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 34.

¹⁴⁰ Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992, Prepared by U. S. West Research, Contract # 92-C-2763, January 1993, p. 32.

specifically for this project. They are: Minnesota Historical Society, "Oral History of Marge Anderson," 7 August 1992; "Oral History of Brenda Boyd," 16 October 1992; "Oral History of Albert Churchill," 6 August 1992; "Oral History of James Clark," 26 August 1992; "Oral History of Mabel Boyd Albino," 19 August 1992; "Oral History of Joe Nayquonabe," 25 August 1992; "Oral History of Doug Sam," 7 August 1992; "Oral History of Julie Shingobe," 5 August 1992; "Oral History of Don Wedll," 25 August 1992; and "Oral History of Joyce Wedll," 16 October 1992.

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Additional secondary sources used in this chapter include: articles from the Mille Lacs Ojibwe Press, Mille Lacs Messenger, Indian News: Week-in-Review, The Minneapolis Star, Ourselves: Ni-Mah-Mi-Kwa-Zoo-Min, and the St. Paul Pioneer Press.

Ojibwe Historical Chronology: 1960-1992

- 1960 Sam Yankee elected the new chairman of the Mille Lacs Tribal Council.
- 1964 The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) completes a housing survey report regarding conditions of the Mille Lacs Reservation.
- 1964 The Danbury Ojibwe, with the assistance of Indian labor, built a tribal hall/community center at Danbury.
- 1965 Under the supervision of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), thirty houses are built in the Vineland area with one or two at Isle, and twenty additional houses were scheduled to be rehabilitated or built the following year.
- 1966 Only 31percent of the 196 Ojibwe living on the Mille Lacs Reservation and eligible to work were employed.
- 1968 In August of 1968, the new community center at Vineland was dedicated, with Will Rogers, Jr., Assistant Commissioner of Indian Affairs of the BIA as guest speaker. The final cost of the 15,800 square feet facility was approximately \$235,000.00.
- 1968 In October of 1968, a joint Mille Lacs Band/International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) venture begins producing sub-assembly electronic parts on the reservation.
- Mid-1970s Community center built at East Lake.
- 1972 Arthur W. Gahbow enters office as the new Chairman of the Mille Lacs Reservation Business Committee.
- 1972 On June 15, 1972, the Indian Migrant Program Division (IMPD) accepted Mille lacs Reservation as the site of a Demonstration Center, a model Indian preschool education program. By January 26, 1973, the Tri-State Indian Community Action Project (ICAP) voted to have the Mille Lacs Head Start Program serve as the sample site for the IMPD pilot program.
- 1973 Congress passes the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). Ten years later, CETA became the Job Training Partnership Act (JPTA), which was managed by the U. S. Department of Labor. Both programs provided job

assistance to under-privileged individuals through training and helped them develop job skills to lead them to permanent employment.

- 1975 Congress establishes the American Indian Policy Review Commission.
- 1975 Congress passes the Indian Self Determination and Education Act. The act advocated tribal self-government over dependency on the federal government.
- 1975 On April 1, 1975, approximately 40 Ojibwe student walked out of the Onamia High School in protest of unfair treatment and racial discrimination.
- 1976 Congress passes the Indian Health Care Improvement Act. This act set forth a new national policy to provide top health services to Indians.
- 1976 The Reservation Business Enterprise (RBE) obtained a loan from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to build a marina/tourist complex at Vineland, Minnesota.
- 1977 On November 1, 1977, the RBE organized the Mille Lacs Reservation Construction Company as an Ojibwe business.
- 1978 On June 1, 1978, the Mille Lacs band established a new school called Nay-Ah-Shing.
- 1978 The Housing and Urban Development (HUD) allocated funds to the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe (MCT) for construction of 200 units of housing apportioned between the six reservations of the MCT, which included the Mille Lacs Reservation. In conjunction with funds provided by HUD in the 1970s, the Housing Improvement Program (HIP) also improved the standard of housing conditions on the Mille Lacs Reservation.
- 1978 The Nei-Ah-Shing Clinic opened on the Mille Lacs Reservation.
- 1980 The RBE purchases a local resort called the Drift Inn Resort, located three miles south of the reservation.
- 1980 Using the Mille Lacs Reservation gymnasium, the Mille Lacs band opens a bingo parlor. The bingo parlor expanded to its own building in 1982.

Early 1980s	The Mille Lacs Reservation Business Committee initiated plans to change their governing system.
1983	On January 24, 1983, President Ronald Reagan presented a new Indian policy. The key to his plan was to help reservations develop their economic and administrative potential by strengthening tribal governments and ending federal involvement. Reagan unknowingly supported the Mille lacs Bands actions by recommending that tribes create separate government systems.
Mid-1980s	Several RBE operations fail, including the electronics component factory, the marina/tourism complex and the Drift Inn Resort.
1988	Congress passes the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act. This piece of legislation regulated and categorized the different forms of gambling allowed on Indian reservations.
1990	In the summer of 1990, Governor Rudi Perpich signed a tribal-state compact with the Mille Lacs Ojibwe band allowing Class III gambling on the reservation.
1990	In November of 1990, ground breaking occurred on a 22,000 square foot casino, located on the Mille Lacs Reservation, which was twice the size of the original bingo parlor.
1991	In August of 1991, ground was broken for a new casino at Hinckley, known as the Grand Hinckley Casino. The Grand Casino Management Company and the Mille Lacs Band offered stock shares to pay for the facility.
1992	The Mille lacs Band apportioned \$4.2 million dollars for the construction of a 66,000 square building to house a new 7-12 private school. The band expects to complete construction of the new school in 1993.
1992	On August 13, 1992, the Mille Lacs band filed suit in federal district court to recover hunting and fishing rights provided for in the 1837 Treaty.

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