

First Nations Peoples



Little is known about the history of the Native people in this area prior to the 16th century, as First Nations' history was passed through word of mouth.

However, artifacts dating back several thousand years were found in several locations on the perimeter of Nictau Lake in 1970-71 by the New Brunswick Department of Tourism.

Some of these have been stored in the Provincial Archives of the Historical Resources Administration in Fredericton, New Brunswick.

Early Naturalists

Although there were others who explored this part of the province before him, none showed as much devotion to the task of mapping and studying its fauna and flora as William Francis Ganong. Ganong was born in Saint John, New Brunswick in 1864.

His father, James Harvey Ganong, and Uncle Gilbert Ganong established the now-famous Ganong Brothers candy factory in St. Stephen.

From a young age, William Ganong showed an interest in natural history and a talent for languages, including German, French, Maliseet, and Micmac

After obtaining a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1884 and a Masters degree in 1886 from the University of New Brunswick, Ganong obtained a doctorate in biology from the University of Munich in 1894. Much of his career was spent teaching botany at Smith College in the US.

However, Ganong, spent many a summer exploring his native New Brunswick. He is well known for studying the history of an area and coming up with a suitable name for the places he

studied.



For example, he was the first to establish that Mount Carleton was the highest peak in the province of New Brunswick and named the mountain after the province's first Lieutenant-Governor, Thomas Carleton.

In 1901, his friend and fellow naturalist, Mauran Furbish named a mountain after Ganong to the north of Mount Carleton. Ganong died at his summer cottage in Saint John in 1941 at the age of 77.

Working in the woods

Logging is an important part of the history of this area. In the mid-1800s, settlers from Nictau and Riley Brook left the women and children in charge of the family farm to go work in the woods.

In her Mount Carleton Wilderness, Marilyn Shaw called this period the era of the stately pine, meaning that woodmen sought the straightest, tallest, and broadest pine trees to cut down with their axes.

These trees ended up being converted into boats for England. Of 150 boats operated by the British navy in 1843, 79 were built in New Brunswick using trees from that province.

These lumberjacks worked 12 to 14 hour days, six days a week. They stayed in primitive, one-room camps which served as kitchen, living area, and bedroom. A huge fireplace which occupied the middle of the room was used for cooking and heating.

There was no chimney. Smoke from the fire escaped through a hole in the roof. Conditions improved by the early 1900s during which time the sleeping and cooking quarters were put in separate buildings. Wages were \$18.00 a month plus room and board.

All trees were cut with axes. When a man broke his axe handle, he had to pay the foreman \$0.50 to replace it. A good chopper could chop down 25 trees a day.

Few could handle that as every tree that was felled needed to be at least 20 feet long and be 10 inches in diameter at the top. These trees were dragged and left alongside the banks of streams and rivers until spring when they would be floated downstream to a mill.

March usually signaled the end of the lumberjacks' stay in the camps. They were paid for their winter's labor and most of them went home to their families.

The money they earned was used to pay for seeds, to make a payment on the farm, to purchase clothing for the kids, and so on. In May, many of these men returned for the spring log drive.

At this time of the year, the springs, streams, and rivers of Mount Carleton are swollen from the melting snow and ice. With the skillfulness and agility of hundreds of men who cajoled, prodded, and blasted them free from log jams, millions of board feet of lumber were floated downstream to a mill in Plaster Rock.



At the headwaters of the Little Tobique on Nictau Lake, we can see what remains of two dams used to control the level of the water during the log drive. After 70 years, the last log drive on the Tobique occurred in the 1960s.

Outfitters

Moose, caribou, and Atlantic salmon were plentiful in the Mount Carleton wilderness around the end of the 1800s. Adam Moore, George Armstrong, and Charlie Cremin believed money could be made by outfitting, that is, providing lodging, canoes, food, guides, and so on, to non-resident sportsmen.

In 1897, Adam Moore and Charlie Cremin built their first camp at Nictau Lake.

They participated in sportsman shows in Boston in an attempt to lure hunters to the Mount Carleton wilderness. It worked as many of America's rich and famous came including Archie, the son of former US president Theodore Roosevelt; Gifford Pinchot, the first chief of the United States Forest Service; and Donald R. Dickey, a famous wildlife photographer. Many of their exploits are recounted in Marilyn Shaw's *Mount Carleton Wilderness*.

In the early 1900s, Moore and Cremin divided their territory. Moore took the Little Tobique region while Cremin took the Nepisiquit and Miramich rivers. Moore, Cremin, and Armstrong

became charter members of the New Brunswick Guides Association, the first of its kind in North America, which was formed in 1899.

After Adam Moore became ill, his son Burton took over management of their camps and after Charlie Cremin died, Burton purchased all of his holdings and formed the Nictau Fish and Game Club in 1919.

Membership was kept low in order to provide each member with the opportunity of staying and hunting at the camps for a two week period. Some of the members like the Barneys from Connecticut and the Spruances from Delaware had their own private camps.



Many of these original camps are still in existence at Mount Carleton Provincial Park today and are a tribute to the original intent of this land which was to serve as home for more plant and animal species than anywhere else in the province.