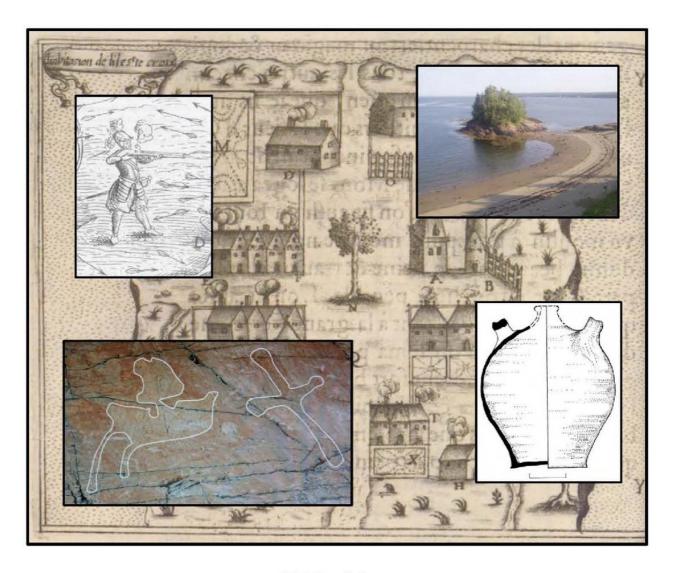
SAINT CROIX ISLAND

MAINE

History, Archaeology, and Interpretation



Edited by

Steven R. Pendery

Saint Croix Island, Maine

History, Archaeology, and Interpretation

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Steven R. Pendery

With contributions by

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Foreword by David Hackett Fischer

Occasional Publications in Maine Archaeology Number Fourteen 2012

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission and The Maine Archaeological Society Augusta, Maine

Report Certification

The archeological report "Saint Croix Island International Historic Site: History, Archaeology, Interpretation" with contributions by H. Borns, J. Bradley, T. Crist, M. Crist, E. Johnson, S. Noel, J. Pendery, S. Pendery, V. Reams (with D. Wade and M. Scheid), D. Sanger, D. Soctomah, M. Sorg, A. Spiess, E. Thierry and G. Vitelli dated 2011, has been reviewed against the criteria contained in 43 CFR Part 7.18(a)(1) and upon recommendation of Dr. Steven R. Pendery, Acting Archeology Branch Chief, Northeast Region, NPS, has been classified as "Available"

Superintendent Date

Classification Key Words:

"Available" - Making the report available to the public meets the criteria of 43 CFR 7.18 (a)(1).

"Available (deletions)" - Making the report available with selected information on site locations and/or site characteristics deleted meets the criteria of 43 CFR (a) (1). A list of pages, maps, paragraphs, etc. that must be deleted from each report in this category is found below.

"Not Available" - Making the report available does not meet the criteria of 43 CFR (a) (1).

Occasional Publications in Maine Archaeology Fourteen Series Editor: Arthur Spiess

Printed in the United States

Distributed in the United States through the Maine Archaeological Society, P.O. Box 982

Augusta, ME 04330 www.mainearchsociety.org

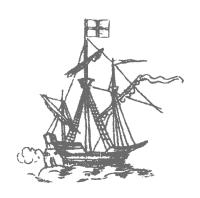
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ISBN 978-0-935447-20-0

"French, British, Passamaquoddy, and American History" by Eric Johnson, is reprinted in altered form from his 1996 report, "Archeological Overview and Assessment, Saint Croix Island International Historic Site," by permission of the National Park Service.

This volume is dedicated to Gretchen Fearon Faulkner and to the memory of Alaric Faulkner:

Two intrepid explorers of Acadia's archaeology.



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Foreword

Saint Croix, Island of Discovery

It is a very small island, barely 300 yards long and 100 yards wide, and has been growing smaller through the centuries. This tiny piece of terra firma sits in the middle of the St. Croix River, the international boundary between the state of Maine and the province of New Brunswick. For many years the island has been uninhabited. It is difficult of access, and remote from major centers of population in Canada and the United States.

And yet, even as the island is small and slowly shrinking, interest in it is large and rapidly increasing – never more so than in our own time. In the early twenty-first century Saint Croix Island has received much sustained attention – more perhaps than any small uninhabited place of comparable size in North America. The book that you have before you is a leading example.

Much history has happened on Saint Croix. And because this place is now uninhabited, and carefully protected by the United States National Park Service and Parks Canada, the physical remains of many centuries are unusually accessible in the ground. The island has become a laboratory for a dozen learned disciplines. Many questions can be studied here. In that great diversity of opportunity, we also find a unity in what has happened here.

Since the early seventeenth century, Saint Croix Island has been important as an island of discovery. That was the purpose of seventy-nine men who planted a French settlement in the summer of 1604. This not a colony of the usual kind. There were no women, no families, and no possibility of natural increase.

This settlement was something else--an outpost of empire and a base for discovery. Its mission was to learn about the new world. Saint Croix Island itself taught them hard lessons, at a terrible price. The French founders were unfortunate in their choice of a site, and unlucky in their timing. The winter of 1604-05 was one of the worst in a long era that climate historians call the Little Ice Age. Saint Croix was surrounded by a dense barrier of broken ice, and the settlers suffered cruelly. By the spring, 35 or 36 of them were dead, mostly from scurvy, and many more were severely ill. Of the original 79 settlers, only eleven remained in good health.

The survivors were quick to learn from that experience. They abandoned Saint Croix Island, but continued their mission in Acadia and Québec, where they planted other settlements. Slowly they established a permanent presence of France in North America. That success grew from hard lessons of failure that were painfully learned on Saint Croix Island.

Another process of discovery also happened at Saint Croix Island in 1604, when the new French settlement was under construction. Its leader, the sieur de Mons, asked his young lieutenant Samuel Champlain to lead a mission of exploration and discovery to a place they called Norembega. We know it as the coast of Maine.

De Mons and Champlain were part of an extraordinary circle who had gathered around Henri IV, the first Bourbon king of France and one of the great figures in early modern history. They had come of age in a cruel period when their country suffered through eight civil wars, which were also wars of religion with many atrocities and heavy loss of life. Henri IV and his men sought to end that strife. In 1598, they succeeded in bringing tolerance to France, peace to Europe, and comparative calm to the North Atlantic. Then they turned their attention to the founding of New France in America.

These French leaders around Henri IV were humanists of a new breed, different from the classical humanism of the Italian Renaissance. The sieur de Mons and Champlain were consumed with curiosity about the world and its inhabitants, and driven by a passion for discovery. More than that, their struggle against intolerance in France persuaded them that all people shared a common humanity, and could learn to live in peace with one another. They spoke not only about humanity itself, but also about treating others humanely, *humainement*, a French

adverb that began to spread in their time, as we ourselves can discover in the new empirical evidence of Google n-grams.

This ideal inspired a dream of New France that would be very different from New Spain and other European colonies. The great question was how to make that dream a reality. That was the mission on which Champlain embarked at Saint Croix Island, in a small vessel called a *patache*, which was specially designed for discovery. He sailed south from the St. Croix River along the coast of Maine. Primarily he sought to establish good relations with American Indians.

Champlain approached the Indians without fear or force or guile, usually with an interpreter, and he was welcomed. They found ways to talk. Altogether, Champlain himself would form lasting alliances with more than 50 Indian nations -In 1604 this great effort centered on Saint Croix Island. Even after that settlement failed, the results of this process long endured.

From the eighteenth century to our own time, Saint Croix Island has attracted other missions of exploration and discovery by scientists and scholars. Today yet another generation is very active on projects are reported in this extraordinary volume. It represents a major work of collaborative scholarship, led by Steven Pendery, an archaeologist of high distinction. He has brought together the research of 17 scholars and scientists, who in turn combine their work with the inquiries of many others.

They also are heirs to the great intellectual traditions of humanism. Scholars and scientists in our time share much in common with Champlain, de Mons and Henri IV – the same insatiable curiosity about the world, the same passion for learning, and the same delight in discovery. They too have inherited the humanist idea that all people of the world share a common humanity. Today, Saint Croix Island and its rich remains have become a laboratory for research and discovery in many disciplines. Among the work reported in this volume are studies in geology, climatology, ecology, ethnography, demography, osteology, nutrition, anthropology, architecture, and material culture and many fields of history.

The results of this research have opened the way for other discoveries on Saint Croix Island. As this book is published, Steven Pendery is planning a complete laser scan survey of Saint Croix Island, which in his words is "a relatively recent development in technology that is truly miraculous."

This new work in turn invites you, the reader, to launch your own inquiries. In the spirit of Champlain and the sieur de Mons, and now of Steven Pendery and his colleagues, Saint Croix Island continues to offer fresh opportunities to study large questions in a small place, and to apply new methods of inquiry to old materials. In the future as in the past, Saint Croix will continue to be an island of discovery. It is for you to make it so.

David Hackett Fischer Mount Desert Island, Maine October, 2011

Preface

To many Americans, Acadians or 'Cajuns' are practitioners of cherished regional traditions in cooking and music. To others, they represent a tradition of resilience and survival in face of recent natural and man-made environmental disasters impacting their Louisiana homeland. Far fewer Americans are aware that in the mideighteenth century, Acadians were rounded up by the British and deported from their original homeland of Acadia in what is now northern Maine and the Canadian maritime provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island. Most Americans are ignorant of the fact that three years before colonial Jamestown was founded, a group of about 120 Frenchmen initiated the settlement of Acadia based on a fatal decision to occupy a six-acre island within the State of Maine now designated the Saint Croix Island International Historic Site.

The purpose of this edited volume is to share information with the public about the history and archaeology of this remarkable island. Individual authors link the island's rich documentation and material culture with broader themes including colonization and culture contact. The contributors draw from numerous and far-ranging sources that are generally inaccessible to the public including geological data, Passamaquoddy tribal history, archaeological data and site reports, forensic data, documentation from French, Canadian, and American archives and National Park Service management studies. Few of the images of artifacts have been published before.

As volume editor, I thank the contributors including Harold Borns, Jr., David Sanger, Eric Thierry, Donald Soctomah, Eric Johnson, Giovanna Vitelli, James W. Bradley, Stéphane Noël, Arthur Spiess, Thomas Crist, Molly Crist, Marcella Sorg, Robert Larocque, John M. Benson, Virgina A. Reams, Margaret Scheid, Deborah R. Wade and Joyce S. Pendery. Notes on these contributors are found immediately after Chapter 13. Professor David H. Fischer's interest in Saint Croix Island archaeology has inspired several of us. Gary Dunham served as copy editor for several chapters, and Pauline Matarasso translated Chapter 2. Simon Pressey's excellent illustrations of metal artifacts are represented in Chapter 7. Many of the ceramics illustrations in Chapter 8 are based on originals by Matthew Palus. Other acknowledgments follow each chapter.

Special thanks are due to the staff of Acadia National Park including Superintendent Sheridan Steele, Deputy Superintendent Len Bobinchock, Chief of Resource Management David Manski and Cultural Resources Manager Rebecca Cole-Will and Museum Technician Bret Achorn. The assistance of former Acadia National Park staff Lee Terzis, Brooke Childrey and John McDade is gratefully acknowledged.

Thanks are extended to State of Maine Senior Archaeologist Arthur Spiess, who is Series Editor for Maine's Occasional Publications in Maine Archaeology, and to the Maine Archaeological Society. Last, but not least, I thank Elisa and Lily for their enthusiastic support for this project over the past decade both at home and in the field.

SRP May, 2011