



## The Native People – French Allies at Fort Necessity

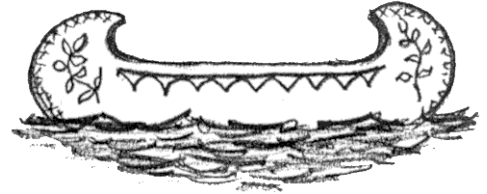
Europeans of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, primarily the French and British, found lucrative trade opportunities in North America. We often group their indigenous trading partners together as "American Indians" or "Native Americans," but the cultures and the relationships between them were numerous, diverse, and complex. Some traded exclusively with the French, others with the British, but most, just as the Europeans, wanted the trade that was to their own greatest advantage. When Britain and France went to war, the various native nations had to decide whom to back. The British were unable to convince any native people to fight with them at Fort Necessity. Between 120 and 250 Indians from different nations fought with the French.



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### Huron: Iroquois speaking

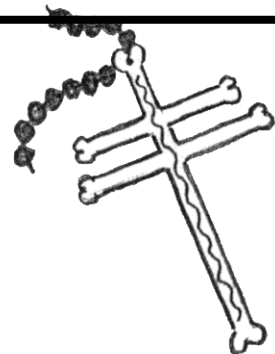
At French contact, the Huron were locked in traditional warfare with the Iroquois Confederacy. Population before the Small Pox epidemic of 1639 was nearly 30,000 people; post epidemic it was 10,000. In the 1640s the Iroquois launched full-scale attacks on the Huron for fur trading opportunities in the Canadian shield. The Huron were displaced from their territory by the 1650s. The Huron were noted canoe builders.



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### Huron of Lorette: Iroquois speaking

The Huron of Lorette were the first and largest group of Huron to seek refuge from their Iroquois attackers. The French Jesuits established them in 1697 at their present location, near the fall of the Saint Charles River in Quebec. Mixing heavily with the French, the Huron language quickly disappeared and was replaced by French (The last Huron-speaking person died in 1912). This Huron group became Catholic very early.



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### Nipissing: Algonquian speaking

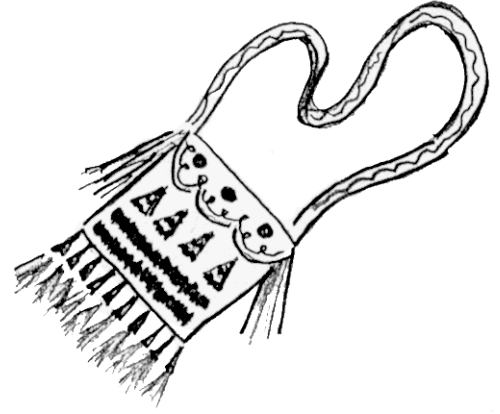
The Nipissing suffered from the same Small Pox epidemic that the Huron did, greatly reducing their population. The Nipissing were strong allies to the French throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. The Nipissing were known to be Sorcerers and were feared by the Iroquois. However, this did not stop the Iroquois's from attacking them also, in the 1640s.



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**Algonquin:  
Algonquian Speaking**

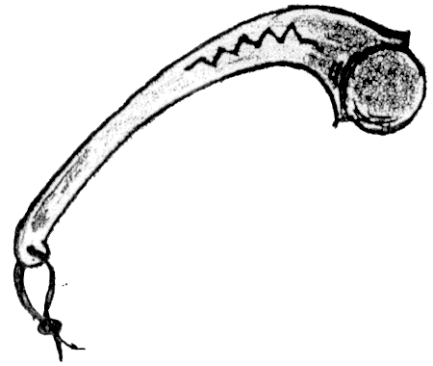
The Algonquin were very closely associated with the Nipissing. Their original territory lay to the East of the Odawa and Nipissing in Ontario and Quebec. The Algonquins also suffered greatly by war with the Iroquois from 1628 to 1646. Fort Necessity was not their only Western Pennsylvania battle; they also fought at Braddock's defeat in 1755.



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**Odawa or Ottawa:  
Algonquian Speaking**

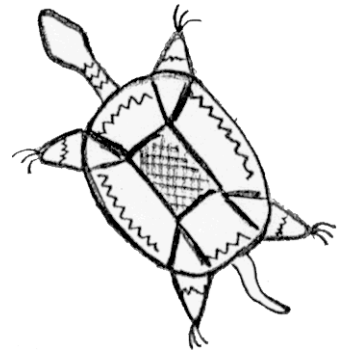
The Odawa inhabited the coastal and river regions of the Lower Michigan Peninsula. They also lived throughout Ontario, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin. They were very pro-French and worked as intermediaries between other native people and the French during the early fur trade. Very few Odawa accepted Christianity. This limited the hold of the missionaries on them. The third quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century shows that the Nation began to split their alliances, some became allied to the Americans, others to the British.



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**Shawnee:  
Algonquian Speaking**

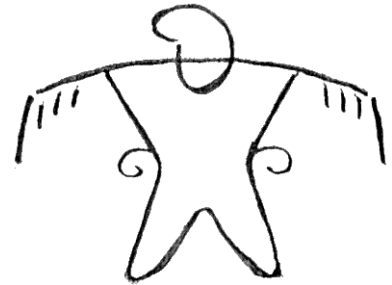
The Shawnee were a semi nomadic people who were scattered through out the East and South. However, they claimed the Ohio Valley region as their traditional homeland. Migrations during the second quarter of the 18th century filled the Ohio regions with Shawnee. They were French allies during the French and Indian War despite their long trade relationship with the English colonies. Today, the Shawnee reside in Oklahoma and Canada. Their language is still used in Oklahoma and is also being taught there.



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**Abenaki:  
Algonquian Speaking**

These people lived in the St. Lawrence waterways of Quebec and surrounding areas. First encountered by the French in 1642, they were converted heavily to Christianity by the Jesuits. They were very pro-French in their alliances and became very important in the early beginnings of New France. They aided the French in their explorations of Canada. The language exists; however most of the remaining Abenaki speak a dialect of the French language.



For further reading on these Nations and other Nations, refer to the Handbook of North American Indians 'Volume 15, Northeast'. Published by the Smithsonian Institute.