

# EARLY MAPS LOCATING THE PETUN

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## Abstract

*Early maps of Ontario which show the pre-1650 Dispersal location of the Petun Indians are discussed and compared.*

*Le sujet des anciennes cartes de l'Ontario indiquant l'emplacement des Indiens Petun avant 1650 est traité et comparé.*

## Introduction

From 1616, when Samuel de Champlain visited the Petun (petum, Tionnontate, Tobacco, Wyandot) Indians, until 1650, when the Petun left Ontario, the location of these people west of the Nottawasaga River below the Niagara Escarpment was well known to the French. A number of written descriptions and maps survive from this period. All presently known maps to 1660 a.d., pertinent to the Petun in Ontario, are discussed in this paper.

## [Map 1]

Samuel de Champlain "[La Nouvelle France] fait par le Sr. de Champlain, 1616" 1616.

(For a reproduction of part of the map showing the Petun area, enlarged, see [Map 1], page 9, following; for a reproduction of the entire map in the original size, see Champlain 1936:portfolio; for much of the map in reduced size, see Heidenreich 1971:Map 3).

This map is the first showing the location of the Petun. It was drawn by Samuel de Champlain following his visit to Ontario 1615-1616, including to the "gens de petun" in 1616. Although the map was not finished, corrected, or even titled, it "depicts the areas Champlain visited fairly well" (Heidenreich 1966:105), and by contrast, the areas he did not visit are not depicted well, being composed from "a number of separate sets of information", including native accounts (Heidenreich 1976:86). Thus it is possible to discern where Champlain was, and where he wasn't, by the varying accuracy of the map. Applied to the Petun area, two levels of information are apparent. A recognizable Penetanguishene Peninsula is shown, and the curve of Nottawasaga Bay as far west as the legend "Gens de petum" is accurate, indicating that Champlain was there. In contrast, the Georgian Bay shore line west of the Petun is purely hypothetical, with no representation of the Bruce Peninsula, indicating that Champlain did not see the shoreline west of Wasaga Beach. This indicates that to visit the towns of the Petun and their "neighbours and allies" he had to turn inland, southerly, away from the shore.

Champlain also visited "Les cheueux releuez" (Standing Hair Ottawa). The map indicates they were west of the Petun, and sufficiently inland that the shoreline could not be clearly seen, otherwise Champlain would have undoubtedly rendered it more accurately than he has. The indentation in the shore above the "e" of "petum" presumably represents the Nottawasaga River.

Champlain's diary of his visit to the Petun and southern Ontario in 1616 was first published in 1619, but without the map (Champlain 1929(III)1-230, particularly pp.94-101). The 1632 edition included a revised map, now following.

*[Map 2]*

Samuel de Champlain "Carte de la Nouvelle France" 1632.

(For a reproduction of part of the map showing the Petun area, enlarged, see *[Map 2]*, page 10, following. For a reproduction of the entire map in the original size, see Champlain 1936:portfolio; for much of the map in reduced size, see Heidenreich 1971:Map 5 or 1978:89).

In 1632, a new edition of Champlain's 1619 work was published, accompanied by a map. The 1632 map was more finished than the 1616 map, and was accompanied by a lengthy Identification Table (Champlain 1929(III)231-418, 1936(IV)1-220, 1936(VI)221-252).

Unfortunately the 1632 text contains so many puzzling anomalies, variants, changes, suppressions and emendations, with admitted insertions by some-one else (Champlain 1929(III)xi-xii, 1932(IV)viii) that the reliability of the differences between the 1632 and earlier text has been challenged. The long controversy as to who made the changes, and why, is not yet resolved (Ciguère 1973 I:i-xxi). The suspicion that someone tampered with Champlain's original work extends to the Identification Table, which is entirely a new feature in 1632. The Identification Table explains that "The Tobacco People is a tribe which cultivates this herb, in which they have a great trade with other tribes" (Champlain 1936(VI)248). While the Petun might well have cultivated and traded tobacco, Champlain did not say this in either his original 1619, or revised 1632, texts, and this statement cannot be regarded as Champlain's. Champlain's use of the word "petun" (petum), the name then in use for the tobacco plant, as the name of a people, is not explained.

Fortunately, the Petun portion of the 1632 map not only corresponds satisfactorily with the 1616 map in the placement of the Petun homeland, but provides added detail of the Penetanguishene Peninsula and the Nottawasaga River, which is moved to a better location. The legend "Gens de petun" is accompanied by ten huts (longhouses ?), presumably intended to represent the ten villages Champlain visited west of the Nottawasaga River, being the one of the Petun proper, "seven other villages of their neighbours and allies .. two where we passed .." under construction (Champlain 1929(III)95-96).

*[Map 3]*

Jean Boisseau "Description de la Nouvelle France" 1643.

(For a reproduction of the entire map, see JR 23:following p.233. Much of this map in reduced size is found in Heidenreich 1971:Map 6).

This map is copied from Champlain's 1632 map, and as regard the placement of the Petun, corresponds.

*[Map 4]*

Jean Bourdon(?) "Nouvelle France" n.d. (ca. 1641).

(For a reproduction of this map in reduced size, see Heidenreich 1988:68, Steckley 1990:26-27).

This recently published manuscript map is dated ca. 1641 on internal evidence, and depicts the locations of a number of Great Lakes Tribes at the time, giving many of their names in the Wyandot language. The map is believed to be the work of Jean Bourdon, and has been discussed in detail by Conrad E. Heidenreich (1988:67-111) and John L. Steckley (1990:17-29).

The legend "Nation dv petvn divisée en 8 bourgs", a number probably taken from the writings of Champlain (Heidenreich 1988:72), is placed west of a bay which may be intended for Nottawasaga Bay. The map is not cartographically accurate enough to identify with a modern map, or to reliably locate the Petun, and provides no new information.

*[Map 5]*

Anonymous "Corographie du pays des Hurons" n.d.(1650 ?).

(For a reproduction of this map in reduced size, see Heidenreich 1966:112, or 1971:Map 14).

This undated map shows the locations of Huron missions ca. 1639-1648. The author may have been one of the Jesuit Fathers who served in Huronia, perhaps Jérôme Lalemant. It is said to be the best map of Huronia (Heidenreich 1966:111-113, 1971:312). It shows the Petun area as a headland, but does not identify it, and is of interest to Petun researchers principally for its rendering of the Nottawasaga River.

*[Map 6]*

Sanson d'Abbeville "Amérique Septentrionale" 1650.

(For a reproduction of much of this map in reduced size, see Heidenreich 1971:Map 8).

Sanson d'Abbeville's 1650 map is the first to place the Petun in the Bruce Peninsula, there being little space to put them elsewhere. The map shows more territory than did Champlain's, but where Sanson got his information is not known (Heidenreich 1966:105). His sources must have included other maps and his added interpretation of written accounts. He was never in Canada himself, and he had no first-hand knowledge to enable him to correct errors. The placement of the Petun on this map is so contrary to the primary source maps that it cannot be accepted.

*[Map 7]*

Anonymous (Jean de Brébeuf ?) "Description du pays des Hurons" 1631/1651.

(For a reproduction of part of the map showing the Petun area, in approximately original size, see *[Map 7]*, page 11, following).

The map was originally dated 1631, altered to read 1651, and in the main represents the period 1639-1648. It is suggested that the author of at least part of the map may have been Father Jean de Brébeuf (Heidenreich 1966:113-114, 1971:312). If this is so, the map gains credibility because Brébeuf knew the Petun area personally from his visit in 1634.

The map shows the Nottawasaga River as wide with many tributaries. To the west of the river is a headland marked "Nation du Petun", accompanied by two houses. The legend "Ekarenniondi" (Where the Rock Stands Out) appears in the water, possibly for lack of space on the land, or to match two other headlands whose names are similarly placed in the water. Whatever the reason, this may

have caused later maps to show Lake Huron by the name, whereas the intention seems more to apply the name to all, or the northern part, of the Petun homeland area.

The two houses shown with the legend "Nation du Petun" perhaps represent the "two different Nations which occupy the whole of that country" (Wolf and Deer)(JR 33:143).

*[Map 8]*

Pierre du Val "Le Canada " 1653.

(For a reproduction of much of this map in reduced size, see Heidenreich 1971:Map 5):

Du Val's map was drawn on Champlain's 1616 unfinished plate, on which some of Champlain's work is still partly visible (Heidenreich 1976:86; 1978:86). Consequently, the placement of the Petun is exactly the same as on Champlain's unfinished map of 1616.

*[Map 9]*

Sanson d'Abbeville "Le Canada, ou Nouvelle France" 1656.

(For a reproduction of part of the map incorrectly locating the Petun west of their true area, enlarged, see *[Map 9]*, page 15, following. For a reproduction of much of this map in reduced size, see Heidenreich 1971:Map 9. The entire map appears in reduced size in Heidenreich 1978:90).

Although Sanson d'Abbeville's beautiful 1656 map is more detailed than his one of 1650, it is still not as detailed and reliable as the contemporary map of Francesco Bressani, whose 1657 map incorporates his personal experience (Heidenreich 1966:108-109). This raises the question of the reliability of any part of either of Sanson's maps, which were composed in part by copying other maps, and from his interpretation of written accounts. As with his 1650 map, the "N. du Petun, ou Sanhionontateheronons" are placed far west of their true position as given on primary source maps. The Petun missions "St. Simon & St. Jude" and "S. Pierre S. Pol" are indicated, respectively at the northern tip of the Bruce Peninsula, and somewhere near Goderich. This improper placing of the Petun is one example of an inaccuracy corrected by Bressani, who on his maps clearly places the Petun immediately west of the Nottawasaga River. François Du Creux appears to have copied this map in his similarly incorrectly locating the Petun.

This map is the first to name Lake Huron "Karegnondi".

*[Map 10]*

Françesco Bressani "Novae Franciae Accurata Delineatio" 1657.

(For a reproduction of the entire map, reduced, see *[Map 10]*, page 12, following. For a reproduction of part of the map showing the Petun area, enlarged, see *[Map 10]*, page 13, following):

Although the author's name does not appear on the map, for several reasons it is confidently believed to be the work of Father Francesco Bressani, S.J., the only Italian Jesuit in Huronia, and drawn to accompany his book "Breve Relatione", published in Italy. It has been described as one of the most beautiful maps of Eastern Canada ever made, and until 1670 the most accurate map of the Great Lakes (Heidenreich 1966:105-109). It provides "a more intimate knowledge of the geography west of Montreal than the Sanson map which it resembles" (Heidenreich 1978:91). and "is more detailed

and more accurate" than the Sanson maps (Heidenreich 1966:108).

Although he did not personally visit the Petun, Father Bressani was several times stationed at Ste. Marie among the Hurons in nearby Huronia, with access to the priests whose duties did take them to the Petun, and possibly to Jesuit maps subsequently lost. His map is therefore regarded as a primary source, certainly more reliable than Sanson, which he corrects.

The map excellently portrays Lake Simcoe and the Penetanguishene Peninsula, and a large indent at Wasaga Beach, probably intended to be the Nottawasaga River. Two houses are shown in the style of the earlier `Anonymous (Jean de Brébeuf ?) "Description du pays des Hurons" 1631/1651' map, and similarly presumed to indicate the two Petun Nations, Wolf and Deer. The accompanying legends read "Tionnontate pop." and "Seu Natio Vulga del tabaco" (called the Tobacco Nation). "Tionnontate" was the Huron name for the Petun.

*[Map 11]*

Francesco Bressani "Huronum Explicata Tabula" 1657.

(For a reproduction of this inset map, enlarged, see *[Map 11]*, Page 14, following):

This map, confidently believed to have been drawn by Father Francesco Bressani (Heidenreich 1971:312), appears as an inset to and part of "Novae Franciae Accurata Delineatio", but provides additional information. The Nottawasaga River is shown with several tributaries. West of the river, in the first headland, are repeated five composite marks and two names "eKarinniondi" and, further south, "Ethahita". Below are the legends "Tionnontate pop." and "Seu Natio Vulga del tabaco". "Tionnontate" was the Huron name for the Petun. As noted, Bressani did not visit the Petun area personally.

The marks indicate villages, being composed of a circle (village ?), a few short vertical lines (palisade wall ?), and one tall central line (central ceremonial post ?). The same marks are used in the Huron portion of the map, with the Huron or Jesuit village names (Italianised) against them. In the Petun portion the southern name "Ethahita" actually overlays and incorporates the village symbol. To which of the two nearest equidistant symbols the name "eKarinniondi" applies is not certain.

The map shows the Petun homeland after 1646, when the suspended Mission of the Apostles recommenced, when Etharita (capital of the Wolves) was the southernmost village, and Ekarenniondi (capital of the Deer and the Petun confederacy) was further north. At the same time the map advises that five villages existed at this time.

Another exciting feature of this map is the hachuring shown inland from Wasaga Beach, north-east from the Nottawasaga River. This must represent the extensive inland natural soft dune system, some of which survives to this day, but which in early days necessitated some avoidance planning on the part of travellers intent on crossing the river.

*[Map 12]*

François du Creux "Tabula Novae Franciae" 1660.

(For a reproduction of part of the map incorrectly locating the Petun west of their true area, enlarged, see *[Map 12]*, page 16, following. For a reproduction of much of this map in reduced size, see

Heidenreich 1971:Map 11. The entire map in reduced size is found in Heidenreich 1978:92 and JR 46:frontispiece. For a reproduction of the inset map "Pars Chorographia Regionis Huronum, hodie desertae", somewhat enlarged, see Heidenreich 1966:110, or 1971:Map 12, or Jones 1903:96, or 1909:facing 6).

This map is said to be valuable in other areas (Du Creux I(1950)between 68 & 69; Heidenreich 1978:92), but as regards the Petun area it has served only to confuse. It was drawn to accompany and illustrate Du Creux' book "Historia Canadensis" 1664, a compilation of selected excerpts from several sources "to be read rather for its value as literature than as a candid account of an epoch", and much of the map is simply imperfectly copied from Sanson's inaccurate maps (Du Creux I(1951)xii-xiii, xxviii, map between pp.68 & 69). Neither Sanson nor Du Creux were ever in Canada, and neither had any first-hand knowledge of the country, or of the events of which they wrote and illustrated (Du Creux I(1950)xii; Jones 1909:155).

This map has an inset map "Pars Chorographia Regionis Huronum, hodie desertae" (Huronian, Today Deserted), showing the location of many Jesuit missions in Huronia. As with the parent map, the inset map is simply copied from someone else's work, in this instance the anonymous "Corographie du pays des Hurons", adding errors (Heidenreich 1966:108, 110; Jones 1909:155). As with the map from which it was copied, this inset map does not show the Petun country.

While admitting the defects obvious in the inset map (Jones 1909:5-6), Father Arthur E. Jones, S.J., was naively uncritical of this, the parent map, and accepted as reliable Du Creux's placement of the Petun Missions "St. Simon & St. Jude" in the Bruce Peninsula, and "St. Peter & St. Paul" further south near Mount Hope, evidently unaware that all this is simply copied from the inaccurate Sanson maps. Jones argued that the map was evidence that prior to 1639 the Petun "extended as far west as the mouth of the Saugeen, and as far north as the townships of St. Edmund and Lindsay in the Bruce Peninsula .. to the shores of Lake Huron .. northward to Cape Hurd, taking in .. Grey and Bruce Counties" (Jones 1909:219, 220, 422). The myth that Champlain went to the Bruce Peninsula because the Petun were there was created by Jones' espousal of this inaccurate secondary source map, and his ignoring Champlain's maps, on which nothing resembling the Bruce Peninsula can be seen (Garrad 1970:235-239, 1973:107-111; 1995:16-18).

In summary, the Du Creux general map offers no new reliable information, and has served only to confuse.

### Footnote and Conclusion

Other maps were made during the Petun period, presently lost, but which may yet be found, as with the recently discovered Bourdon(?) 1641/6 map (discussed as no. 4) (Heidenreich 1978:86). However, any new information cannot displace the fact that the five known primary maps that have survived (discussed as nos. 1:plate 1, 2:plate 2, 7:plate 3, 10:plates 4 & 5, 11:plate 6) clearly correspond in placing the pre-Dispersal Petun immediately west of the Nottawasaga River.

Maps showing the Petun in the Bruce Peninsula, or along the lower Lake Huron shore (for example nos. 6, 9:plate 7, 12:plate 8) are based on secondary source information, and are in error. Maps published later than 1660 are all secondary, and contain no new reliable information. For further details of these maps, consult the several cited works of Conrad E. Heidenreich.

## REPRODUCTIONS OF MAPS

(page 9) [Map 1] enlargement of 'Gens de petum' area from the map by Samuel de Champlain "[La Nouvelle France] faict par le Sr. de Champlain, 1616", 1616.

(page 10) [Map 2] enlargement of the Gens de Petun area from the map by Samuel de Champlain "Carte de la Nouvelle France", 1632.

(page 11) [Map 7] the map by Anonymous (partly Jean de Brébeuf ?) "Description du pays des Hurons", 1631/1651, showing the Nation du Petun area.

(page 12) [Map 9] enlargement of part of the map by Sanson d'Abbeville "Le Canada ou Nouvelle France", 1656.

(page 13) [Map 10] the map by Francesco Bressani "Novae Francia Accurata Delineatio", 1657, reduced size, showing the Petun (Tionnontate) area.

(page 14) [Map 10] enlargement of the Petun (Tionnontate) area from the map Francesco Bressani "Novae Francia Accurata Delineatio", 1657.

(page 15) [Map 11] enlargement of the map by Francesco Bressani "Huronum Explicata Tabula", 1657, showing the Petun (Tionontate) area.

(page 16) [Map 12] enlargement of part of the map by François Du Creux "Tabula Novae Franciae", 1660.

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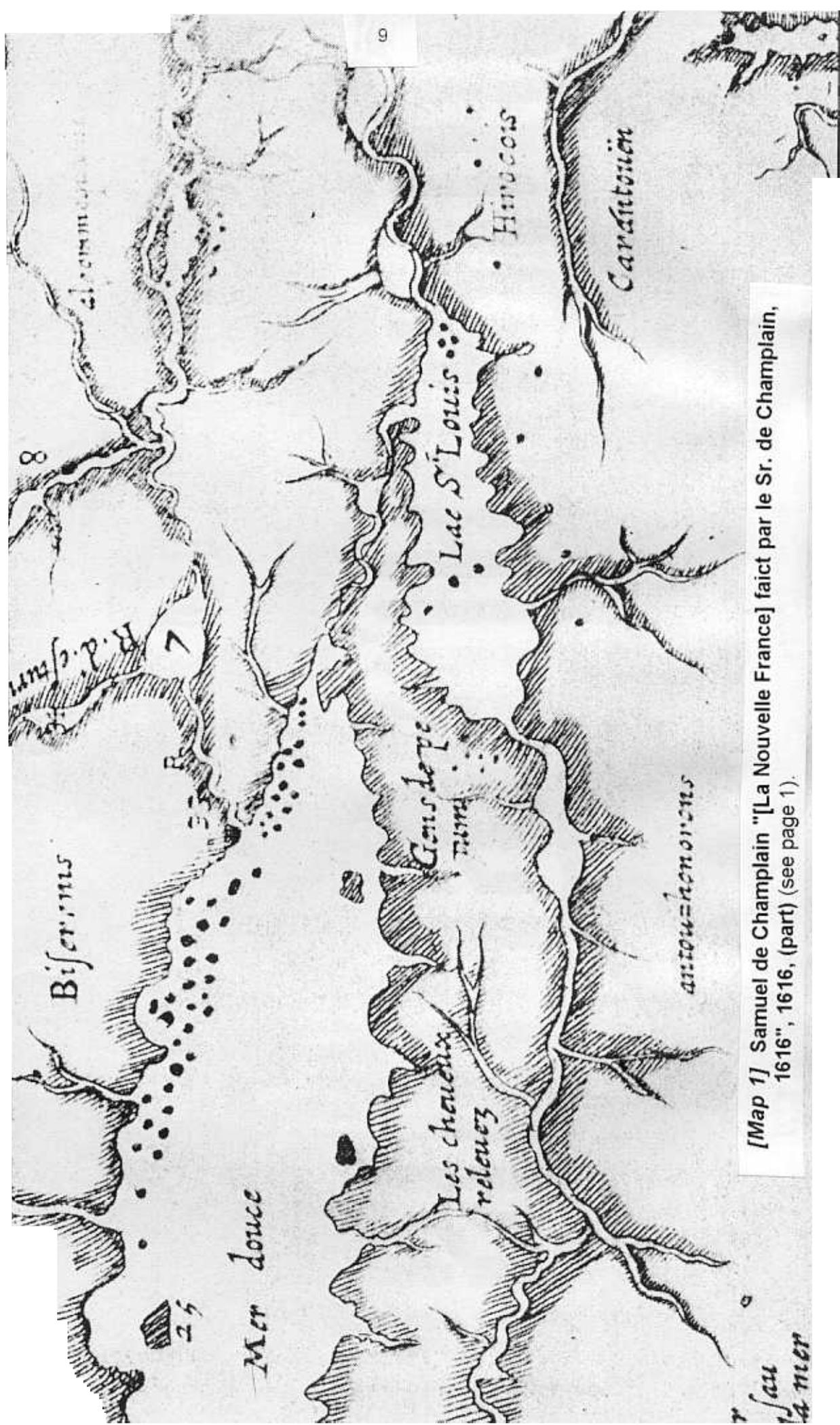
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[Map 1] Samuel de Champlain "[La Nouvelle France] faict par le Sr. de Champlain, 1616", 1616, (part) (see page 1).



...blues tous les ans.

Chasse des caribous

Algonnuesquins

Lieu ou il y a forse Cerfs

Hurons

Luc S<sup>t</sup> Louis

Gens de petun

Antouaronans

La nation neutre

...ouice

...and lac, et de toutes ses terres,  
...ois par le S<sup>t</sup> de Champlain, es  
...et 1615, iusques en l'an 1618.

Cheueurs releuez.

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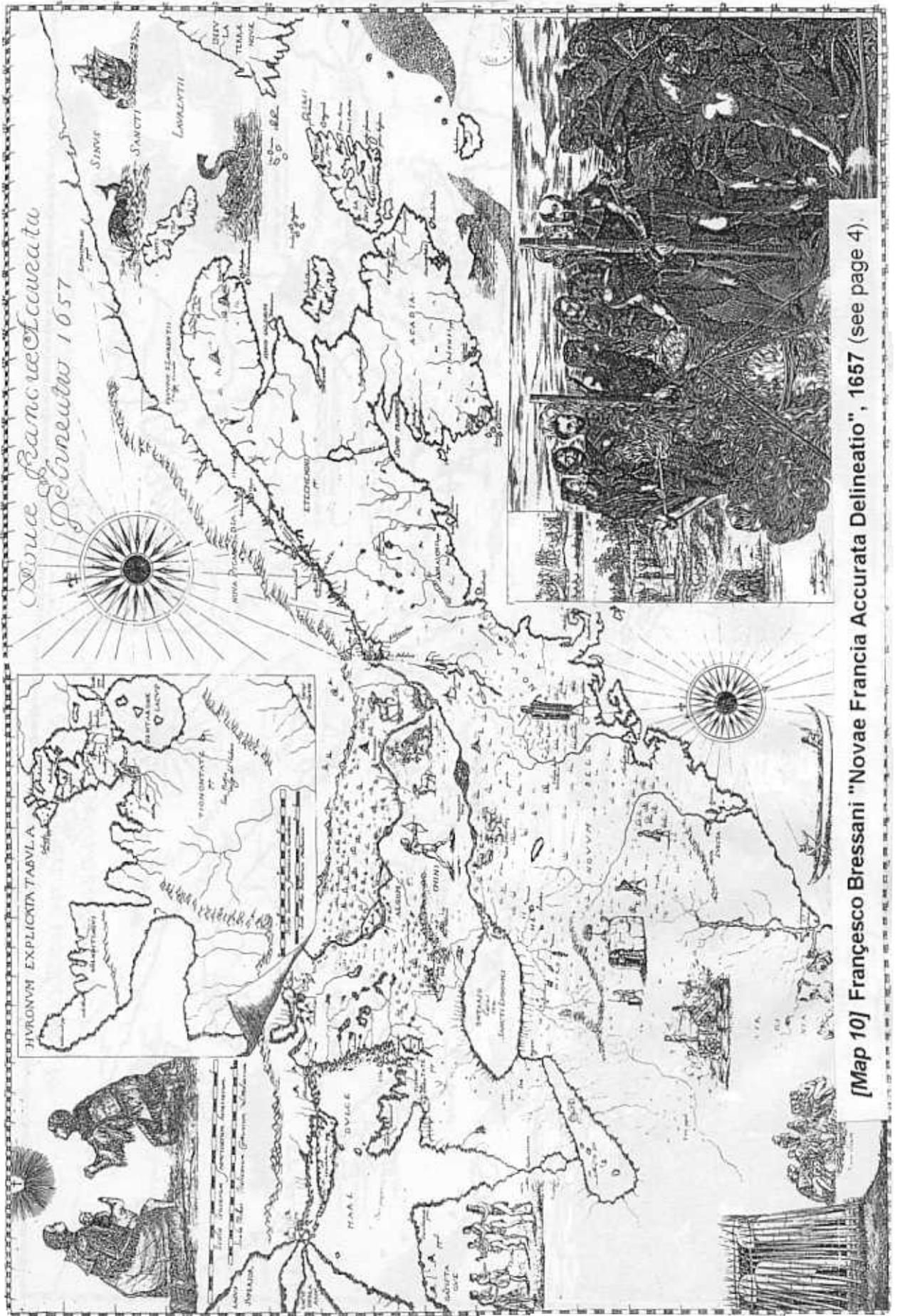
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[Map 2] Samuel de Champlain "Carte de la Nouvelle France", 1632, (part) (see page 2).





[Map 9] Sanson d'Abbeville "Le Canada ou Nouvelle France", 1656, (part) (see page 4).



[Map 10] Francesco Bressani "Novae Francia Accurata Delineatio", 1657 (see page 4).



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[Map 10] Francesco Bressani "Novae Francia Accurata Delineatio", 1657, (part)  
(see page 4)

ONTARIO



