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Article abstract

In the 18th century the Indigenous peoples of the James Bay region shared land near the coast, a few resources, and furs from a vast hinterland with European newcomers. The Royal Proclamation of 1763 excluded Rupert's Land – an appropriate decision for it was quite distinct from lands in the south where settlers were acquiring Indigenous land on the fee simple real estate model. What were the James Bay indigenous people's conditions for sharing their land? It was arguably their principles, and not King George's edict, that characterized the year 1763 at Moose Fort (Moose Factory). This paper draws on Hudson's Bay Co. records to examine what was being shared with the newcomers in this northern region. Unlike in the southern regions, the newcomers had no intention of displacing Indigenous peoples. A modest sharing of land and a generous sharing of food and fur resources, on terms congenial to its first inhabitants, characterizes 1763 in this northern region.

SHARING THE LAND AT MOOSE FACTORY IN 1763

by

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In 1763, the Mushkegowuk of what we now call the James Bay region would have been glad to hear that war between the English and French was over.¹ For nearly a century they had acted as hosts to uninvited visitors from these

countries, sharing a relatively tiny living and working space of land near the coast, a few nearby resources, and the furs from a vast hinterland. The Hudson's Bay Company's (HBC) terms of engagement for the Rupert's Land territory were set

*Acknowledgements (written by John Long): "I wrote an earlier version of this paper for a community teach-in on the Royal Proclamation at Canadore College on 12 December 2013, which was inspired by Dick Preston who observed following a 1990 Mushkegowuk treaty research meeting that 'the James Bay Cree understood the specific events of the treaty making situations of 1905 and 1930 in terms of the cultural history that they brought to that situation.' I am also grateful to the late anthropologist Krystyna Sieciechowicz; when I told her, in 2004, that I found the widespread notion that 'We agreed to share the land' jarringly at odds with how the Treaty No. 9 commissioners explained its purpose, she seemed amused and immediately replied that 1905 was not much different from 1805 or 1705."

Editorial note by Richard J. Preston, Katrina Srigley, and Lorraine Sutherland: In February 2016, we lost John Long, our dear friend, colleague, and mentor. In the last months of his life, John tasked us with finalizing this article, certain our shared interests, and diverse perspectives, knowledge and skills would strengthen it and ensure its completion. We were heartbroken and honoured to do this work together. As always, we learned from John during this last collaboration together. Through this article, and his other award-winning publications, we know readers will continue to benefit from his knowledge and understanding of Mushkegowuk territory developed over decades spent learning with, sharing and advocating alongside the Mushkegowuk. Mushkegowuk means the people in the language of the territory.

¹ On naming see: Jennifer S.H. Brown, "Intangible Culture on Inland Seas, from Hudson Bay to Canadian Heritage," *Ethnologies* 36:1-2 (2015) and her "Rupert's Land, Nituskeenan, Our Land: Cree and English Naming and Claiming Around the Dirty Sea," in *New Histories for Old: Changing Perspectives on Canada's Native Pasts*, eds. Ted Binnema and Susan Neylan (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2007), 18-40.

Abstract

In the 18th century the Indigenous peoples of the James Bay region shared land near the coast, a few resources, and furs from a vast hinterland with European newcomers. The Royal Proclamation of 1763 excluded Rupert's Land – an appropriate decision for it was quite distinct from lands in the south where settlers were acquiring Indigenous land on the fee simple real estate model. What were the James Bay indigenous people's conditions for sharing their land? It was arguably their principles, and not King George's edict, that characterized the year 1763 at Moose Fort (Moose Factory). This paper draws on Hudson's Bay Co. records to examine what was being shared with the newcomers in this northern region. Unlike in the southern regions, the newcomers had no intention of displacing Indigenous peoples. A modest sharing of land and a generous sharing of food and fur resources, on terms congenial to its first inhabitants, characterizes 1763 in this northern region.

Résumé: *Au XVIII^e siècle, les peuples autochtones de la région de la baie James ont partagé leur territoire côtier, leurs ressources et leurs fourrures avec les nouveaux arrivants européens. La proclamation royale de 1763 avait exclu la Terre de Rupert – une bonne décision car celle-ci était bien distincte des terres au Sud où les colons acquéraient des terrains autochtones selon le modèle immobilier en fief simple. Quelles étaient les conditions selon lesquelles les peuples autochtones de la baie James partageaient leurs terres? C'était possiblement leurs principes, et non les décrets du roi George, qui ont défini l'an 1763 à Fort Moose (Moose Factory). Nous utiliserons les archives de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson pour examiner ce qui était partagé avec les nouveaux arrivants dans cette région du Nord, qui, contrairement à leurs homologues du Sud, n'avaient pas l'intention de déplacer les peuples autochtones. Un partage raisonnable de terres et un partage généreux de nourriture et de ressources – dans des conditions affables aux premiers habitants – a marqué cette région du Nord en 1763.*

out in annual written instructions from the committee in London: "Treating the Natives with Civility and dealing justly and equally with them on all occasions."² The 1763 Royal Proclamation's exclusion of Rupert's Land was a political decision, but it was also appropriate, for this hinterland was quite distinct from lands in the south where settlers were pursuing ownership of Indigenous land on the fee simple real estate model. What were the James Bay Indigenous people's conditions for sharing their land? It was arguably

their principles, and not King George's edict, that characterized the year 1763 at Moose Fort, as the British named Moose Factory from 1730 to 1810.

Moose Factory in 1763 serves as an important reminder that political and economic relationships in the classic fur trade period varied significantly. The year was of great import in British North America for those working to sustain and build relationships in southern regions, but the event had no significance at all in Moose Factory, the base of the fur trade in

² HBCA, Moose, Correspondence Inward, B.135/c/1, fos. 54-55, Instructions to Messrs. John Favell & Council at Moose Fort, 31 May 1763.

the James Bay region. This paper draws on HBC archival records to examine what was being shared with the visitors in this northern region. Unlike the situation of settlers in the southern regions, they had no intention of displacing Indigenous peoples from these lands. A modest sharing of land and a generous sharing of food and fur resources, on terms congenial to its first inhabitants, characterize 1763 in this northern region. There was no question of permitting the Indigenous people to live on their ancestral lands; it was a necessary condition of survival and trade.

The Setting Land

Moose Fort lies within the Hudson Bay lowlands, which bordered the saltwater coast in a band stretching 240 kms (150 miles) or more inland, rising to less than 150 metres (500 feet) above sea level. Rivers and lakes account for just three percent of these lowlands, much of which is peat bogs, fens, and shallow lakes. Tamarac, as well as white and black spruce, grows along the riverbanks. The climate in this windy coastal region is “the most rigorous and limiting” in Ontario today.³ The territory is rich with animal life. Moose, caribou, beaver, bear, wolverine, skunk, fisher, marten, mink, muskrat, weasel, and hare, can be found in the hinterland, though beaver are scarcer near the coast, and the diversity

of species is greater inland than near the bay. Arctic fox and several other species of fox are found near the saltwater shores. Over two hundred bird species can be encountered in the hinterland, some three dozen of them year-round. The saltwater marshes are an impressive staging ground for migratory geese and ducks. Northern pike, pickerel, brook and lake trout, lake sturgeon, and whitefish are the major fish in the vast expanse of the bay.⁴

Mushkegowuk

This is the traditional territory of the Mushkegowuk or Cree peoples. In earlier times, Cree territory extended as far south as the north shore of Lake Superior and west to Lake Winnipeg, but they were displaced from much of this range by Anishinaabeg (Ojibway) migration north and west and by 1763 “the boundary between Lowland Cree and Northern Anishinaabeg followed roughly the boundary between the Hudson Bay lowlands and the upland Shield region.”⁵ The HBC employees, whose records we are analyzing here, made distinctions between lowland and upland Cree whose territory abutted that of their Anishinaabeg allies and trading partners. Linguistic and cultural distinctions also existed amongst the Cree people. Lowland Cree (*weenneebaykoininiw*) lived on the land that is on the coast, close to water, called

³ Ontario, Royal Commission on the Northern Environment (RCNE), *An Atlas of Far Northern Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), ix, xi, plates 11-12, 14-18, 24; John Stanley Rowe, *Forest Regions of Canada* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 172), plates 16-18.

⁴ Ontario, *Atlas of Far Northern Ontario*, ix, xi, plates 11-12, 19-20, 22-23, 26-28.

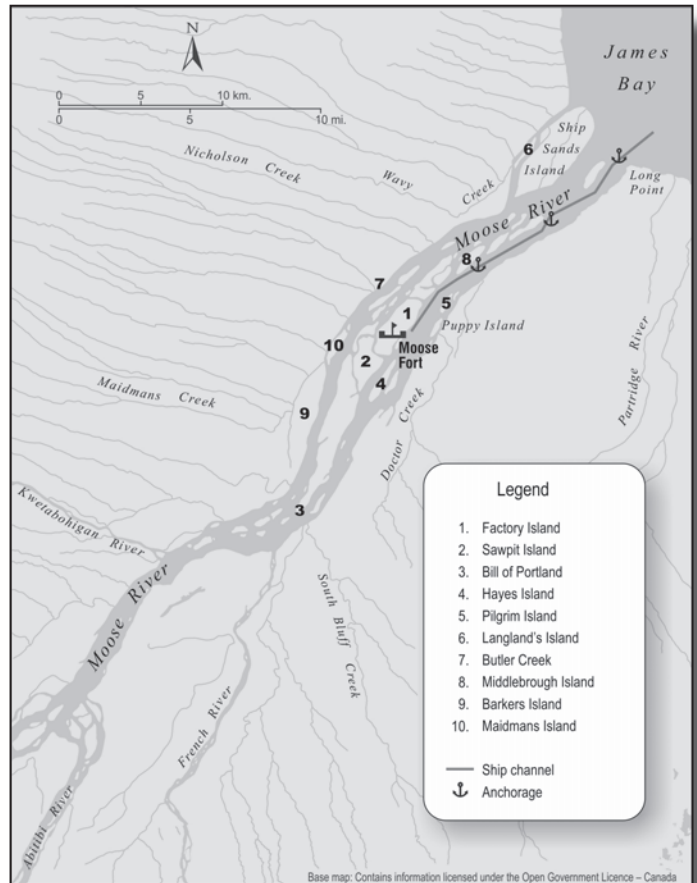
⁵ Victor P. Lytwyn, *Mushkegowuk Athinuwik: Original People of the Great Swampy Land* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 2002), 43-44, 51.

Figure 1: Map Moose River, 1763, courtesy of Weldon Hiebert, Department of Geography, University of Winnipeg.

wiinipek. The upland Cree are known as *noochimiwininiw*. They live inland and away from the coast, but such divisions were not rigid or inscribed on the land in ways that maps or treaty designations suggest. Relationships to territories varied and shifted more fluidly for the Mushkegowuk.⁶ Some Cree people lived upland all year and others travelled at certain seasons like after the spring thaw to the lowlands.⁷ Today, we know this entire 1763 region as Mushkegowuk territory.

The Europeans who arrived on the shores of the territory recorded their perspectives of the Cree people they found there at the behest of the HBC. John Oldmixon, relying on journals kept by Thomas Gorst, a scribe and storekeeper at Charles Fort (now Waskaganish, the Hudson's Bay Company's first trading post), described the Indigenous peoples trading there in the 1670s as "generally peaceable, and not given

to quarrel."⁸ He noted that they were "distinguish'd by several Dialects," likely including what linguists now call East, Swampy and Moose Cree (although there would have been others, as well, trading neighbours of the Cree from further inland). The ethnonyms *Eeyou* and *Eenou*



⁶ We acknowledge this complication and say Chi-miigwech to Duane Linklater for the important reminder. <https://twitter.com/duane_linklater/status/788464496457183233>, last accessed 16 December 2016.

⁷ Lorraine Sutherland, personal correspondence with Adrian Sutherland, 29 April 2016.

⁸ John Oldmixon, "The History of Hudson's Bay" in *Documents Relating to the Early History of Hudson Bay*, ed. J.B. Tyrrell (London: The Champlain Society, 1931 [1708]), 389. Oldmixon relied on the journals of Thomas Gorst, kept in 1670-71 and 1672-75. Alice M. Johnson, "Gorst, Thomas," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, volume 1, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003).

(plural -ch), *Ininiw* and *Ililiw* translate as “person,” “Indian” or “Cree.” Mushkegowuk is used to refer to people, while Omushkego, a synonym for *Ininiw* and *Ililiw*, literally means “muskeg person, swamp person”. Opinions are divided as to whether these are self-designations or Anishinaabeg labels referring to the lowland region where their neighbours lived.⁹ The Mushkegowuk lived their lives on contiguous family hunting territories, in “portable home[s] within an ecological range.”¹⁰ Oldmixon wrote that each family had a territory “which they seldom quit, unless they have not Success there in their Hunting, and then they join in with some Family who have succeeded.”¹¹ These impressions offer glimpses into life

in the region around James Bay for those who called it home and those welcomed there as visitors.

Visitors

The lowland Cree’s first experience with European newcomers would have been through indirect trade with the French (*wapistikwayaawak*), through Indigenous middlemen, when the French were based at what we now call the St. Lawrence River. Some upland Cree may have traded directly with the French once the latter reached Lake Superior.¹² It is possible that the Cree heard about the English (*wemistikoshiwak*) in what is now the northeastern United States.¹³ It is more likely that they knew of early ex-

⁹ Iiyiyuymuwin or East Cree is spoken by the Eeyouch of eastern James Bay. Ininiimowin or Swampy Cree is spoken by the Ininiwuk, while Ililiimowin or Moose Cree is spoken by the Ililiwuk, known collectively today as the Mushkegowuk of western James Bay. David H. Pentland, “Synonymy [West Main Cree]” in *Subarctic*, ed. June Helm, vol. 6 of *Handbook of North American Indians*, ed. William C. Sturtevant. Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1981 [227-30]. See also, in same: “Synonymy [East Main Cree],” 205-7.

¹⁰ Richard J. Preston, “Twentieth-Century Transformations of the West Coast Cree,” in *Proceedings of the Seventeenth Algonquian Conference*, ed. William Cowan (Ottawa: Carleton University), 245.

¹¹ Oldmixon, *History*, 389.

¹² Charles A. Bishop, “The First Century: Adaptive Changes Among the Western James Bay Cree Between the Early Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries,” in *The Subarctic Fur Trade: Native Social and Economic Adaptations*, ed. Shepard Krech (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1984), 25.

¹³ The word for a French person translates to English as “It is a narrows in a river [the St. Lawrence],” i.e. Quebec. David H. Pentland, cited in Jennifer S.H. Brown, “Intangible Culture on Inland Seas”; see also C. Douglas Ellis, “Glossary,” in *ĭtalôhkâna nêsta tipâcimôwina: Cree Legends and Narratives from the West Coast of James Bay*, Simeon Scott et al., ed. C. Douglas Ellis (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1995), 545. The word for English person translates as “People with a wooden boat.” C. Douglas Ellis, personal communication, cited in John S. Long, “Treaty No. 9 and Fur Trade Company Families: Northeastern Ontario’s Halfbreeds, Indians, Petitioners and Métis,” in *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America*, eds. Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S.H. Brown (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1985), 162, n62. See also: David H. Pentland, “French Loan Words in Cree,” *Kansas Working Papers in Linguistics* 7 (1982), 106. In East Cree the corresponding words are *pishtikwaayaawich* and *wemistikushiiuwich* (northern dialect), *upishtikuyaawich* and *wemistikushiiuch* (southern dialect). Marie-Odile Junker, Marguerite MacKenzie, Luci Bobbish-Salt, Alice Duff, Ruth Salt, Anna Blacksmith, Patricia Diamond and Pearl Weistche, eds. (2012). *The Eastern James Bay Cree Dictionary on the Web: English-Cree and Cree-English, French-Cree and Cree-French (Northern and Southern dialects)*, <<http://dictionary.east-cree.org/Words/>>, last accessed 5 April 2016.

peditions to James Bay taken by explorers such as Henry Hudson, but they did not establish ongoing relationships with the English until 1668. In that year, Zachariah Gillam a ship captain from the Massachusetts Colony—with Frenchman Médard Chouart des Groseilliers as interpreter and advisor—sailed the *Nonsuch* to James Bay on behalf of the English investors who formed the royally-chartered HBC two years later. The newcomers were welcomed and guided to what they called the Rupert River, where they built a modest shelter (Charles Fort), traded, and then departed the following spring, promising to return. Gillam kept his promise to come back in 1670, and brought a larger vessel with Gorst and another interpreter, Pierre Esprit Radisson, aboard.¹⁴

In 1670, the visitors ventured further into the territory and extended their trade relationships. They travelled west to the Moose River—“Mousibi [moos’ siipii], that is the river of elks [moose], so

called from the store of elks that are to be found there”¹⁵—where they traded with a Tabitee [Abitibi] spokesman who said “the Upland Indians would come down and trade” if there was a post in that location.¹⁶ In 1673, the company responded by building its second post there, on an island some fifteen kilometers (nine miles) inland from James Bay. This post was accessible by water and somewhat sheltered from the north wind, but was not entirely suitable as a year-round habitation. North-flowing rivers like the Moose and Albany (where a third post was built by 1679) drain enormous hinterlands and—unlike the Rupert—their low-lying deltas are periodically subject to massive spring flooding.¹⁷

Just thirteen years after becoming accustomed to trading with the English at Moose River, local Cree experienced a seven-year French interregnum, when the HBC was displaced by la Compagnie du Nord in James Bay.¹⁸ Although

¹⁴ E.E. Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company, 1670-1870. Volume 1: 1670-1763*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1960, 66-67, 77.

¹⁵ Information provided to the Royal Society of London in 1672 by Gillam and Bayly, reprinted in Toby Morantz, “Old Texts, Old Questions: Another Look at the Issue of Continuity and the Early Fur-Trade Period,” *Canadian Historical Review* 73:2 (1992), 190.

¹⁶ Oldmixon, “History”, 396.

¹⁷ Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company*, 70, 80-81.

¹⁸ In 1686, the three James Bay posts, and the company's warehouse at Charlton Island, were captured in peace time by a French overland expedition for the Compagnie du Nord and renamed. Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company*, 212-19. Moose, Charles and Albany became Forts Saint-Louis, Saint-Jacques and Sainte-Anne, respectively. Daniel Francis and Toby Morantz, *Partners in Furs: A History of the Fur Trade in Eastern James Bay 1600-1870* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1983), 29. The HBC also had posts on western Hudson Bay: York Fort (which replaced Port Nelson in 1684) at the mouth of Hayes River, and New Severn (initially known as Fort Churchill) near the entrance to Severn River. In 1694, a sea-borne French force took York Fort and the HBC burned New Severn. If the English had not recaptured Albany, this could have been the end of the HBC. Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company*, 289, 292, 333. But from this vulnerable foothold the HBC was able to expand its trade on the other side of James Bay at Eastmain River (where Albany's sloop was wintered). When the HBC regained Albany in 1693, during



Figure 2: Map of the Moose River watershed, courtesy of Weldon Hiebert, Department of Geography, University of Winnipeg.

for Eastmain and a few supplies for hunters intending to trade there.²⁰ Replacing Moose Fort made good business sense, for there was French competition upriver. The company hoped to win back the Rupert River trade, and satisfy Moose River inlanders who complained of the long and difficult route to Albany.²¹ The HBC re-established Moose Fort on the same island in the Moose River in 1730, upstream from the original site. It was destroyed by fire during Christmas revelry in 1735 and had to be constructed anew.²² Trade and relationships in this territory

were clearly important to the HBC. the HBC re-took Albany in 1693, and then operated an October-July outpost across the bay at Eastmain soon afterwards, there was apparently no trading at Moose and Charles Forts until they were rebuilt in 1730 and 1776 respectively.¹⁹ Rupert House, as Charles Fort's replacement was named, was a very small and modest enterprise, providing geese

By 1763, the HBC had three James Bay posts in operation: Albany Fort, Moose Fort and Eastmain House. The Charlton Island depot and Charles Fort lay vacant in 1763, as did the company's short-lived outposts at Richmond Gulf and Little Whale River. Upriver from Albany, the company's first inland post—

a period of war with France (1688-97), the French burned the Moose and Rupert River sites. Francis and Morantz, *Partners in Furs*, 30. There were similar English-French conflicts on southwestern Hudson Bay. Rich, *Hudson's Bay Company*, 228, 290-92, 302-303, 329-52, 414. From 1694 to 1713, the HBC's only trading sites were Albany Fort and the Eastmain winter anchorage—where trade was conducted from the sloop until 1719, when a modest seasonal outpost was built. Francis and Morantz, *Partners in Furs*, 35. On New Severn see David John Christianson, "New Severn or Nieu Savanne: The Identification of an Early Hudson Bay Fur Trade Post," MA thesis, McMaster University, 1980.

¹⁹ Francis and Morantz, *Partners in Furs*, 35.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 102, 40.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 40.

²² *Ibid.*

Henley House—was also vacant, having been attacked in 1754 by local Cree in retribution for the sexual misconduct of its manager William Lamb.²³ Unsurprisingly, most HBC personnel were unwilling to travel inland to this post.

We focus here on Moose Fort. There were twenty-three year-round European men at Moose Fort in 1763, a third of whom departed when the ship arrived at the end of the summer.²⁴ These were not settlers. This was not their home and they had no intention of staying. Unless they died during their employment, the twenty-three transient sojourners intended to return to the land of their birth. The group was socially stratified into officers, tradesmen and—the largest group—servants. The officers included factors, masters and chief traders, while the servants included year-round labour-

ers and those who worked for the sloop master from spring through fall. They found the climate arduous, and tended to leave when their three-year contract was up. At Moose Fort, the Factor had a small council to advise him, which consisted of his second (and accountant), the surgeon, the sloop master and, for a few weeks (unless he was forced to overwinter), the commander of the company's annual ship.²⁵

These were not the only residents, however. The twenty-fourth employee at Moose Fort was Trolio, an Inuk man who had been captured in his youth by the Mushkegowuk.²⁶ Such attacks by the Mushkegowuk on their neighbours near southeastern Hudson Bay the Inuit—and sometimes on the Eeyouch—were common and persisted for another thirty years.²⁷ In addition to Trolio, there were

²³ *Ibid.*, 99-100.

²⁴ The Europeans besides John Favell, Second (in command) and accountant in 1762-63 were, in alphabetical order: Adam Corrigan; John Flemming; Thomas Halcro, armourer and smith; John Hemming, shipwright; Alexander Hunter, John Inkster, John Irvin, surgeon; Eusebius Bacchus Kitchin, Hugh Lisk, George Matches, John Moad, James Omand, carpenter; Thomas Pope, William Robinson, steward; William Shourie or Shorey, George Sinclair, sloop master; Thomas Smith, James Spence, John Spence, Trolio, John Ward, George Willdridge, apprentice; William Wood and John Wright. At ship time, eight returned: Flemming, Hunter, Inkster, Kitchin, Pope, Shorrey, Smith, and John Spence; Magnus Brown, carpenter and sawyer; Silvanus Garret, surgeon; Christopher Gofton, armourer; George Merriweather, sloop master; Thomas Moore, smith; and John Pittway replaced them, and Pope was sent to Albany. John Barker was writer and assistant in 1764, and perhaps the previous year. HBCA "Moose Accounts," 1762-63, 6d-8d and 1763-64, 11-12d; HBCA, Moose Correspondence Inward, B.135/c/1, Committee to John Favell & Council, 31 May 1763 and 23 May 1764.

²⁵ HBCA, Moose Correspondence, Inward.

²⁶ Daniel Francis, "Les relations entre Indiens et Inuit dans l'est de la baie d'Hudson, 1700-1840" *Études Inuit* 3:2 (1979), 73-83; François Trudel, "Trolio et Jack: deux Inuit au service de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson au XVIIIe siècle" *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 7:1 (1987), 79-93.

²⁷ Francis and Morantz, *Partners in Furs*, 75-77; Lytwyn, *Mushkegowuck Athinuwick*, 59-69; Roland Bohr, "Aboriginal Archery and European Firearms on the Northern Great Plains and in the Central Subarctic: Survival and Adaptation, 1670-1870" (PhD dissertation, University of Manitoba, 2005), 258-85; Charles A. Bishop and Victor P. Lytwyn "Barbarism and Ardour of War from the Tenderest Years: Cree-Inuit Warfare in the Hudson Bay Region" in *North American Indigenous Warfare and Ritual Violence*, eds. Richard J. Chacon and Rubén G. Mendoza, 30-57 (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2007); Toby

year-round Cree residents. John Favell's (second and accountant) journal makes no mention of his country wife, but Titameg was surely living with him in the master's flanker, inside the palisade. Her Cree name "Whitefish" may indicate paler skin and a European father or grandfather. When he died at Albany in 1784, Favell's will provided for Titameg and their four children.²⁸ Had he lived to retirement, theirs would have been one of the first European-Cree unions to remain intact. There were several other resident Cree, some of whom may have been Titameg's relatives. "All the Indians are gone now," Favell wrote on 5 November 1762, "except 2 or 3 old Women & men who are not able to Travel & have been here several Years; but shall employ them in catching Rabbets & Fish for the Factory, as soon as the river is fast." There seem to have been at least two old women and two old men, since he later uses the plural form for each sex. At other times he refers to two Indians, without the adjective "old"—perhaps sons of these elders who had wives and children.

It is quite possible that at least a dozen Cree lived at Moose Fort at this time. Aside from important family connections, they were likely bilingual and perhaps even trilingual, improving the Factor's communication with visiting Cree and

Anishinaabeg. It is conceivable that their peers teased them—good-naturedly calling them *wemistikoshi-hkan* (plural -ak; Eastern Cree *wemishttikushihkan*), using the suffix that means surrogate—for the way they lived like the English-speakers, or perhaps for their European ancestry.²⁹ They may have helped visiting Cree to set up their camps, tended their sick, surreptitiously traded with them, interceded with the Factor, and provided him (and the visitors) with intelligence. They were likely invited to holiday celebrations at the post, observing and eventually participating in step dancing, hearing and perhaps learning to play fiddle tunes. They may have known how to play cards and given the games Cree names. Whatever the exact permutations of people, relationships and events, it is clear that the community at Moose Fort was diverse and that, as we will see, relationships (economic and otherwise) and the sharing they entailed played themselves out in deeply local ways relevant to our understanding of the Mushkegowuk and their territory in the past and the present.

What's Being Shared With the Visitors

For the Cree at Moose Fort, sharing was a way of life. It was a way of seeing and acting in the world that was re-

Morantz, *Relations on Southeastern Hudson Bay: An Illustrated History of Inuit, Cree, and EuroCanadian Interaction, 1740-1970* (Westmount: Avataq Cultural Institute, 2010), 9-13.

²⁸ In addition to monetary bequests to his father and his father's servant, a feather bed left to John Kipling of Gloucester House HBC post and other items (his looking glass, liquor case and draught) willed to John Best of Henley House, Favell provided for his wife Titameg and his "four natural children" Jane, Humphrey Martin, Mary and Thomas. United Kingdom. National Archives PROB 11/1135/206, Will of John Favell, Junior, Second Factor of Albany Fort. See also HBCA, "Favell, John Jr."

²⁹ C. Douglas Ellis "A Note on Okimaahkaan," *Anthropological Linguistics* 2:3 (1960), 1.

ciprocal and involved the land and animals, the spirit world and the ancestors, and most certainly people they accepted as visitors. The extent and nature of that sharing has important implications for how we understand 1763 at Moose Fort. Land, water and resources were shared in the immediate vicinity of the post (and between posts), as well as in the nearby lowlands, and further inland. The Cree had no concept of “surrendering” land, but they “granted the company approval to build and maintain [its] trading posts.”³⁰ First of all, they permitted the HBC to build a star-shaped fort with four flankers—with internal free-standing buildings for the cows and pigeons, boats and tradesmen, plus gardens—surrounded by a palisade on a small plot of land on an island in the Moose River, and to clear a ‘plantation’ outside, where Cree and other visitors could camp (see Figure 3). This is where the resident Cree lived, unless they were women allied with company officers.

What else was shared from the immediate vicinity, from nearby and from the wider region? The HBC records for 1763 provide us with the answers. Whose calendar shall we use? The Cree did not need a paper calendar and their annual cycle

did not start on 1 January. It began in November, *kashkatinisiw-piisim* or freeze-up month, which was followed by *paapii-waacakinishiish-piisimw*, the little scattering month of December that marked the onset of *pipon* (winter).³¹ Winter was not forbidding, even though it was cold and the hours of sunlight were short. Cree people count their age by the number of winters lived, but they had survived and thrived in their homeland for centuries prior to the HBC’s arrival. January is “great- or old-scattered-about-moon,” *kishe-paapiiwaatakinipiisim*, when winter hunting groups—three or four related families—often separated and dispersed to maximize the chance of finding food. February’s *kishe-piisim* moon (the prefix *kishe-*, “great” or “old,” indicating respect), signals that winter is ending and warmer weather is coming. The “eagle moon,” *mikisiwi-piisim*, of March signals the return of the first migratory birds, and the start of a new annual cycle.³²

For HBC personnel, the yearly cycle did not begin in January either. It started when the annual supply ship took home the previous year’s furs, feathers, timber and other country produce—plus that year’s record books—and a new “outfit,” with a new set of records, commenced.

³⁰ Arthur J. Ray, *Telling It To The Judge: Taking Native History to Court* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2011), 70, emphasis added.

³¹ Ellis, “Glossary,” 467, 521.

³² See “*pipon*—winter, year”—and “*tahto-piponesi*—be of such an age, be of so many winters.” Ellis, “Glossary,” 527, 538. “*Kishe-piisimw*—February, lit., ‘old moon, great moon.’” Ellis, “Glossary,” 473. Ellis, “Glossary,” 473, 490. See also: John J. Honigmann, “The Attawapiskat Swampy Cree: An Ethnographic Reconstruction,” *Anthropological Papers of the University of Alaska*, 5:1, 31-32 and Whapmagoostui First Nation, “History and Culture,” “Cree Calendar.” Eagles were normally not a food source, but a Cree hunter would shoot any bird of prey that interfered with his goose hunting. The eagle feather complex of the Plains likely had not yet diffused to the James Bay Cree.



Figure 3: *A south-east view of Albany Factory, William Richards, (c1800) HBCA.*

Moose Factory is at the same latitude as London (51°), but its winter is longer and much more “severe.” Although further south than Stromness (almost 59°), where most of the Company’s personnel signed on, it is chilled by arctic winds over Hudson Bay, not warmed by the Gulf Stream.³³ The prolonged and intense cold would have been a shock to new recruits, who would have been eager to celebrate the start of a new year, mindful that during revelry in 1735 a fire had destroyed the newly-rebuilt post.³⁴

In recognition of who was sharing with whom, we divide the year in four parts with respect for the Cree seasons and centre it around geese. From the viewpoint of the resident Cree, and those whose territories are relatively close (for Favell the “Home” Indians), and even

for the HBC men (who share the land differently at certain times of year), the first season of 1763 includes freeze-up in November 1762, and onset of winter through to April 1763. This is a period when no geese are killed.³⁵ This is the prime time for hunting caribou and trapping furbearers. The second period, from late April to early June, is the goose and duck hunt, during which the river breaks up. This is followed by two and a half months of summer, largely without geese; this third period involves fishing and snaring, hunting small birds, the occasional partridge and a few ducks. The fourth and final period begins in mid-August and lasts two-and-a-half-months through fall goose and duck hunt and the end of October. Then freeze-up ushers in another six-months without geese.

³³ Stuart Houston, Tim Ball and Mary Houston, *Eighteenth-Century Naturalists of Hudson Bay* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2003), 115-16.

³⁴ Rich *Hudson’s Bay Company*, 547.

³⁵ Favell does not use the term “Home Indians” until 6 May 1764. HBCA, Moose Journal, 1763-64.

Of course, the Cree themselves have different experiences of this seasonal change depending on their territory. The more distant upland Cree did not hunt geese on the coast. They made brief forays downriver to trade their furs after break-up, and perhaps again to get some supplies in late summer. They reached their winter territories much earlier than their “Home” brethren and could be on their winter grounds well before freeze-up. Having set the spatial and temporal context, we now explore what was going on in Moose Factory in 1763. In structure we combine the social hierarchy as the HBC saw it with seasonal shifts from the Cree perspective.

Season 1: November 1762 through April 1763

Company Men: Officers and Servants

Company men used the land and islands in the immediate vicinity of the post, 10–15 km (6–9 miles) up or down the Moose River. They ensured the security of the Post by limiting the number of men who could be away at any one time. In this area, they hunted partridges, snared rabbits and trapped fur-bearers. Just before freeze-up (mid to late October), one or two HBC men hunted and trapped on Factory Island, and across on the south shore. Later, as the river froze, groups

were sent away from the Post for these activities. At Waway Creeks, Bill of Portland, and South Bluff, some distance away two-man details stayed in tents. Another two would be dispatched to the eastward tents, another would tend the north shore and one or two hunted and trapped at unnamed locations. A further one or two set hooks through the ice. HBC men kept half the value of any furs they brought in, providing a degree of incentive. Camping away from the Post also meant freedom from the Factor’s surveillance, as well as opportunities to engage in forbidden private trade or prohibited mingling with Cree age mates.³⁶ The HBC Company men travelled the territory. They hunted, trapped, and fished. If they violated local customs and norms by taking animals on family territories and sacred sites, which they surely did, this does not appear in the journals. They were, after all, visitors with no intentions of staying who were accorded tolerance by their hosts. They also honoured protocols of reciprocity by giving things in return for sharing the land and its resources.

These efforts and the welcome they required provided mightily for those living at the Post. By the end of April, in a good winter like 1762–63, the HBC men dined on an impressive 1,712 partridge (including seventeen “pheasants” or sharp-tails, five “wood” or spruce, one “puskie” or ruffed, and “white partridge” or ptarmigan) and just four hares, at the

³⁶ Francis and Morantz, *Partners in Furs*, 91. See also Jennifer S.H. Brown, *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families in Indian Country* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980) and Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur Trade Society, 1670–1870* (Winnipeg: Watson and Dwyer, 1980).

post, plus any consumed in the tents and unreported. Many more of the birds listed as partridges were likely ptarmigans.³⁷ They also trapped 240 martens, 16 foxes (13 arctic, 2 cross and 1 red) and a “Quicohatch” (*kiihkwahaabkew*³⁸ or wolverine). As with snaring hares, HBC men were not proficient fishermen, catching just “a few Fish” and then 21 “Methy” (mariah or burbot³⁹) that winter. There were geese that had been salted and stored in barrels of about 120 geese each.

In addition to subsistence work, HBC men felled a two-year supply of firewood on Hays Island and hauled it home. Crosscutting and splitting firewood for the factory stoves was a year-round task. Beyond the immediate vicinity of the post, HBC men walked on snowshoe, wearing “Indian shoes” (likely caribou hide lined with duffle), along the frozen shoreline to take the company’s winter mail to Albany or Eastmain. Couriers from Albany and Eastmain also brought mail to Moose Fort.⁴⁰ When salt

supplies ran low at Moose, men were dispatched to Albany to get more. There were various reasons to make the trip between posts. They did not travel alone. The distance covered required help from Cree guides. There is no mention of dogs being used to pull the sleds. Despite the hard labour involved, these trips were welcome adventures for HBC men.

Resident Cree

Cree residents like Titameg and her relatives contributed in important ways to life at Moose Fort. Post records indicate that the last two families of goose hunters departed on 4 November, 1762 for their winter hunting territory. This was late in the season. Over the following six-months, resident Cree supplied the post with 473 hares, 565 partridges, 68 lb of Mariah (and a few more on three occasions), 17 lb of unnamed fish (plus a vague “few” in five entries), and “2 fine Trout.”⁴¹ These contributions extended the nourishment available at Moose Fort significantly.

³⁷ Why were the species not always identified? As a food source that would be plucked or skinned, such details were unimportant to the consumers and probably to the hunters. The few who are identified may have been bagged by the surgeon or the sloop master, as sport, and their kind mentioned in conversation when they joined the factor at his table. If, as is likely, resident Cree women cleaned the birds after the hunters reported their overall tallies, the women may have delivered them to the kitchen and just referred to them as *pilewak* (partridges), the *waapi-pilew* (willow ptarmigan, literally “white partridge”), *aabkiskow* (sharp-tailed grouse, or “pheasant”), *papaskiw* (ruffed grouse) and *mistikow-pilew* (spruce grouse, literally “wood partridge”) particulars being irrelevant. Spelling adapted from Arok Wolvengray and Jean Okimâsis. “Alphabetic List of Hudson Bay Area Cree Names for Birds, 1770-1830” in *Eighteenth-Century Naturalists of Hudson Bay*, eds. Stuart Houston, Tim Ball and Mary Houston, 210-46 (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2003), 213, 225 and Ellis, “Glossary,” 452, 525, 547. Thanks also to Billy Isaac, Logan Jeffries, Wilbert McLeod and Norm Wesley.

³⁸ Wolvengray and Okimâsis, “Alphabetic List,” 240

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 235.

⁴⁰ Albany men brought a “packet” of letters to Moose on 11 December 1762 and stayed at the post for five nights while the armourer repaired their guns. Favell doesn’t identify the visitors, but the Albany journal tells us they were “one Man and an Indian.” HBCA, Albany Journal, 1762-63, B.3/a/55, 7 December 1762. Two Englishmen brought letters from Eastmain to Moose in February.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

We do not know what the Cree were wearing as they departed the Post for their hunting grounds. Mitts and footwear sewn from caribou and lined with imported duffle likely kept their feet warm, but what motifs did their seamstresses apply? Did the children wear woven rabbit-skin coats? Did the women wear beaded hoods, and capots made from white blankets, as shown in Figure 4? Did the men wear coats, caps and leggings—made by their wives—designed to please the caribou?⁴² Was Titameg dressing in imported woolens and cloth, and were her kin and friends sometimes doing the same? As oral accounts suggest, the clothing worn by Titameg and her contemporaries likely shifted and included imported materials when desirable and reasonable for conditions.⁴³ No dogs are mentioned in the journals, but each hunter likely kept a small dog.⁴⁴ Cree dogs were not used to pull loads, and larger dogs—such as the one shown in Figure 4—may not yet have been imported by the HBC for that purpose.⁴⁵

“Home” Cree

For some Mushkegowuk, Moose Fort and surrounding territory were a win-

ter destination. Those who arrived in this season were hunting and trapping within the lowlands, between Halfway Point and Missisicabi River, and inland up to 160 km (100 miles). Between 25 November 1762 and 4 April 1763 there are eighteen references to visiting Cree. The first arrived on 25 November 1762. Unnamed in the journal, like all the others, this man was having a successful winter and had prized food to share with the factor: “2 Rumps 2 Sides & 4 Shoulders of Venison [*atihk*, caribou], also a few Furs.” The furs would have reduced part of the fall debt he incurred for supplies advanced prior to departure. It was the need for trade goods that occasioned his visit: “his Hatchet being broke & likewise in want of Powder... was the reason of his coming in.”⁴⁶

The visitors arrived in various configurations. Thirteen of the first fifteen visitors, including this man, paid part of their fall debts: two in late November, two in late December, two in January, and four in February and three in March (one bearing a “Fresh [frozen] beaver”).⁴⁷ It is impossible to know whether any of these included repeat visits by the same party. Seven appear to have been lone visitors (“an Indian”).

⁴² Cath Oberholtzer, “Beaded Hoods of the James Bay Cree: Origins and Developments,” in *Papers of the Twenty-Second Algonquian Conference*, edited by William Cowan (Ottawa: Carleton University, 1991), 264-78 and her “Together We Survive: East Cree Material Culture,” (PhD dissertation, McMaster University, 1994).

⁴³ For more on the clothes people wore see the oral account: James Wesley ed., “What the People Used to Do Before the Coming of the Whiteman,” in *Stories from the James Bay Coast* (Cobalt, ON: Highway Book Shop, 1993), 51-54, 59-60.

⁴⁴ Bryan D. Cummins, *First Nations, First Dogs: Canadian Aboriginal Ethnecynology* (Calgary: Detsilig, 2002), 115; Preston *Cree Narrative*, 24-25.

⁴⁵ E.E. Rich and A.M. Johnson eds., *Moose Fort Journals 1783-85* (London: The Hudson’s Bay Record Society, 1954), 24-25n.

⁴⁶ HBCA, Albany Journal, 1762-63.

⁴⁷ Three hunters arrived on 22 December, one on 29 December. Their departures are not noted.



Figure 4: *A man and his wife returning with a load of partridges from their tent, William Richards, HBCA*

Two are visits by “3 Indians.” Two families arrived on two occasions, and a separate family accompanied the fourteenth visitor on one of his three visits. Those who arrived on 10 January are described as “Eastern Indians,” perhaps from the Kesagami or Harricanaw River watersheds, or as far as the Nottaway or Rupert River basins.⁴⁸ In winter, when the muskeg was frozen—and especially in a winter with less snow—they could travel cross-country with relative ease. Wintering so far from this post, easterners would not return until May or June. The captain of the goose hunters arrived on 16 January and “paid his Fall Debt” (in full). He returned on the first of March, when he “brot a few Furrs,”

and again on 25 March—accompanied by another family—when they each “brot a few Furrs.” The hunt captain was an acknowledged and respected leader among the Cree and HBC men alike.

Visitors to Moose Fort in mid-March were much less fortunate. The first was an “Indian Woman about Starv’d,” whose family arrived the next day. The other was a man “almost Starv’d,” whose family also joined him later. These unfortunate people arrived with the expectation that food would be shared. Any other turn of events would have been unfathomable to those living life in a good way, the Mushkegowuk way. The eighteenth visitor of the winter arrived on 4 April. He was the

Did they time these visits to coincide with the feasting (three cattle slaughtered on 8 and 15 December), brandy consumption and holiday conviviality?

⁴⁸ Francis and Morantz, *Partners in Furs*, 40, 53.

first of many who began congregating at the post for the spring goose hunt. He “Paid his Fall Debt [in full]” and advised Favell “that most of the Hunters are near hand & will soon come in,” suggesting that there were seasonal rendezvous sites prior to arrival at the post. There is no further mention of fall debts in the Post records, likely because it was such a busy time for Favell and his men. In any case, it is clear that there were many Cree with different circumstances and from various locations arriving at the Fort.

Visitors arrived in earnest through April for the goose hunt. On 5 April, “3 Familys [sic] of Indians came in to wait the flying of the Geese.” The next day two more families arrived and on the 6th Favell observed, “There is above 40 Indians in the whole at this time on the Plantation, depending Chiefly on the Factory” for subsistence. They kept arriving, three families on 7 April, “an Albany Indian & his Wife” on the 13th. A Cree who arrived on 11 April presented Favell with meat: “2 Rumps, 3 Sides & one Brisket of Dry’d Venison, also two Dry’d Beaver.” Three families of “Eastern Indians” arrived on 17 April, prompting Favell to write, “here are no less than 72 Indians [men, women and children] on the Plantation depending upon the Factory for Supply [food].” Those arriving traded their furs, perhaps a third of those that would be shipped to London at the end of the summer months (but fewer of the beaver, and more of the martens, foxes and muskrats): about 4000 marten, 3000 beaver, 1800 muskrats, 318 otters, 150 lynx, 62 bears,

51 mink, 38 foxes, 23 groundhogs, 10 wolverines, as well as 64 lb of castor (from beaver scent glands).

The Cree on the plantation outnumbered the HBC men inside the palisade, and heightened security measures may have been employed, though frankly the visitors were always outnumbered. No matter the level of ease inside the palisade, it would have been a joyous, raucous time at Factory Island as the Cree visited, heard how everyone else had fared over the winter, gossiped about the factor and his men, discussed the upcoming hunt, and told stories. When another three families of Eastern Cree arrived on the 18th, Favell tallied the number of hunters at twenty-four and decided “to send ‘em to the Marsh tomorrow in order to be ready.” This may have been a cost-cutting decision on Favell’s part, because the geese would not arrive until the end of the month. Did the Company provide a special feast, with European victuals, before the hunt?⁴⁹ If so, there may well have been dancing, speeches and toasts. What the onset of this season at Moose Fort makes clear is the abundance of the land, the reliance on HBC men on the Mushkegowuk, as well as the dimensions and nature of sharing. Certainly, sharing the land on the James Bay in 1763 was quite different from that in Montreal in the same year.

Season 2: Late April through Early June

The spring goose hunt is a vibrant time of year. As the people gather, the land

⁴⁹ Lytwyn, *Muskegowuk Athinuwik*, 139.

awakens and the geese liven the territory with their sounds. For the Mushkegowuk, it is now *siikwan* (early spring, before open water). April means feasting under the goose moon (*niski-piisim*) on the most welcome of the returning fliers, the fat-rich spring Canada geese (*niskak*)—called grey geese by HBC men—and ducks (*shiishii-pak*). May brings the trilling chorus of frog moon (*aliiki-piisim*), named for an animal that Cree do not eat, and June brings brilliant new growth under budding moon (*saakipakaawi-piisim*).

Company Servants

The HBC men of 1763 were not goose hunters, but they gratefully consumed the tasty birds. Sharing the land meant a welcome ration of half a goose per day, and seven hundred geese—most of them salted in barrels, not cured by Cree—fed twenty-four men for ten weeks. They were equally unskilled fishermen. In May, HBC sloopers hauled the seine on two occasions, catching twenty small “Tickomeg” (*atihkamek*—whitefish, ‘caribou fish’) the first time. They managed three hundred the next, but not sufficient to supply the Post with food. In another four years, company men would be trying to “catch Fish in Netts, under the Ice,” but the number of men constantly deployed for watch duty and the wartime labour shortage made this impossible in 1763.⁵⁰ By 2 June, the Post was running low on trade goods (corded blue cloth, white cloth, box-handled knives, fine white twine and powder horns). Favell tried to

send the boat to Albany, but there was too much ice in James Bay so he sent a Cree party by canoe. Several days later, a Cree courier from Albany Fort brought a letter for Favell. Despite the running rivers and easing cold, the HBC men relied heavily on the Mushkegowuk in multiple ways.

Resident Cree

The records make this particularly clear with regards to the role of the Cree living at the Post. The Cree of Factory Island supplied the last of the winter’s ptarmigan in mid-April. They provided the post with 112 hares during the first two weeks of April and another 21 in June. During the first nineteen days of April, while the ice was still on the river, and goose hunt fever had not yet seized the post, resident Cree provided in excess of 55 lb of fish, mostly burbot. After the hunt, from mid-May until late June, they supplied the Post with an additional 458 lb of fish. They also hunted geese and ducks, either close by or on the coast with Cree from farther away. They may even have helped transport geese to the post and distributed powder and shot in exchange.

Home Cree

The Cree who traded at Moose Fort would have hunted at family goose hunting territories along the coast between Halfway Point and Missisicabi River, at inland swamps or on the frozen Moose River before it broke up. Some certainly chose not to hunt for the company, and those who did would have kept

⁵⁰ Rich, *Hudson’s Bay Company*, 602.

a good portion of their geese for their own subsistence. The geese obtained for HBC use are of particular interest to us. The Mushkegowuk did not hunt geese for the HBC when the traders first arrived or for decades afterwards; the role developed several years after Moose Fort was re-established in 1730 and was only a generation old by 1763.⁵¹

The 1763 journal does not tell us where the company's goose hunt took place. We know that in later years it took place in three locations. In the spring it was near the Waway Creeks (probably including the coast north of Langland's Island, not just today's Wavy Creek, shown in Figure 1), East Bluff (the coast to Long Point) and apparently further east: Eastward (where Pusso was the goose hunt captain), perhaps meaning Hannah Bay. Waway or wayway is a mispronunciation of *wehwew*, the blue or snow goose, also rendered as wavey.⁵² The 1763 journal tells us that a goose flew over the post on 19 April, but two days later, four hunters travelled back to the post for "Victuals, who say they have seen no Geese or Ducks, only two of each." Two new families arrived for the hunt, "almost Starv'd." More goose hunters came back for food. The Post received its first goose and duck on 26 April. A bottle of brandy was awarded to the hunter who supplied the factor with the first goose of

the season.⁵³ More "Indians came out of the Marsh from the Eastward, for Provisions," wrote Favell, "who inform me that they have not seen many Geese or Ducks as Yet." Nonetheless, the hunt was on.

During the hunt, it may have been resident Cree women who brought the geese to the Post.⁵⁴ Entire families would have participated in the hunt: the hunters to shoot, others to pluck, cook, cut firewood, prepare the hunting blinds, monitor the weather, talk about past hunts, teach younger family members, and generally help or learn and enjoy themselves (as many still do today). The post received fourteen geese and two ducks on the 28 April, nineteen geese and six ducks the following day, then a goose and four ducks, then two geese. Several flocks flew over the post on 2 May and then two geese and 116 ducks were delivered to the post. Another ninety-six geese and twenty-one ducks were received on 3 May. The first cask contained eighty salted "Grey Geese." On 4 May, the post was provided with ninety-eight geese, sixteen ducks and a swan. Another twenty-eight geese and three ducks were delivered on the 5th and then none for five days. The river was breaking up, ushering in a new season: *miloskamin* (open water).

The land comes alive in unique ways when the ice disappears. In 1763, the river

⁵¹ Lytwyn, *Muskegowuck Athinuwick*, 137-38.

⁵² Rich and Johnson, *Moose Fort Journals 1783-85*, 40-42, 78-80. Samuel Hearne's 1774 map shows "Wavy Creeks" in that location and also on the opposite shore of the Moose River.

⁵³ Lytwyn, *Muskegowuck Athinuwick*, 139.

⁵⁴ Although new governor Anthony Beale of Albany usually wrote that his hunters brought the geese, on 21 September 1705 he wrote "This afternoon two Indian women came from the plains... to fetch powder and shot for the Indian hunters." Glyndwr Williams ed., *Hudson's Bay Miscellany 1670-1870*. (Winnipeg: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1975), 12. See also Lytwyn *Muskegowuck Athinuwick*, 143.

ice broke upriver on the 5th, well below Moose Fort, and the river was flowing safely by the 7th. In some years, ice dams and rising waters surrounded island residents, forcing them to seek refuge on the second floors or roofs of company buildings. Goose hunters did not worry about the break-up of smaller rivers along the James Bay coast, for they did not hunt on islands. Break-up left broken slabs of ice piled on the steep riverbanks of Factory Island, and the Company's servants hastened to cut a clear path, just in time for the delivery of hundreds of geese and ducks (and the uplanders' arrival).

Evidence of plentiful catches supplied to the Moose Fort abound in the journal. On 10 May six hands took the sloop's boat across to the Wayway Creeks, returning with 252 geese and eight ducks. On 13 May, several hunters came in "from the Northward ... to be Paid for the Hunt," bringing twenty-seven geese and twenty-one ducks, but informing Favell "that the Geese were all gone." Hunters who had arrived at the post on snowshoes did not have canoes nearby, so the HBC brought more "Indians over with Geese (they having no Canoes) who ... brot 19." Their goose hunt finished, these Cree from "the Northward" were paid and then they left to hunt beaver and caribou for their own consumption. A canoe came upriver "from the Eastward" with nineteen geese and four ducks on the 10th. Six hands took the

HBC boat "to fetch Geese from the Eastward," returning with 257 geese and four ducks. Four more casks of salt geese were sealed, three containing eighty and one with one hundred. Another canoe from "the Eastward" arrived on the 16th with sixty geese and returned the same day.

While the hunters' direction was often not recorded, the quantities they shared was a priority for record keepers. On 21 May, wrote Favell, hunters brought twenty-nine geese. Four families came in on the two days later with 162 geese and 27 ducks. On the 25 May, three families arrived with sixty geese. These too were paid and left to hunt caribou and beaver. Two hunters brought in forty-five geese on 28 May. On 3 June the last of the hunters brought in twenty geese. This brought an end to the spring goose hunt for 1763. Over the season, the Home and Resident Cree had supplied the post with enough meat to satisfy them until the annual ship arrived and the fall wavey hunt began. Did they celebrate the end of the hunt with an eat-all feast and dance, and perhaps a display to honour the food-persons and spirit-helpers?⁵⁵ Whether the HBC visitors and their Cree family joined them does not appear in the record. Stories from the land tell us that the Cree most certainly acknowledged the occasion and expressed gratitude for gifts given to them from Creator, Great Spirit, Kitchi Manitou through feasting and celebration.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Lytwyn, *Muskegowuck Athinuwick*, 141-42; David Meyer, "The Goose Dance in Swampy Cree Religion," *Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society* 33:1 (1991), 107-18; Regina Flannery and Mary Elizabeth Chambers, "Each Man Has His Own Friends: The Role of Dream Visitors in Traditional East Cree Belief and Practice," *Arctic Anthropology* 22:1 (1985), 10-11. See also: Preston, *Cree Narrative*.

⁵⁶ Louis Bird, Our Voices, <<http://www.ourvoices.ca/>>, last accessed 5 April, 2016; Alex Goodwin,

Uplanders

A shift in the seasons also brought Indigenous visitors from farther afield and in significant numbers. From mid-May to late June some forty canoes of uplanders—some coming once a year, others not every year—arrived to trade their furs. Perhaps as many as one half were inland Cree, and the others Anishinaabeg, but their affiliations are not indicated in the records. The first three “Canoes of Uplanders” came down the river to trade on 11 May, three more arrived the following day, and another two on the 13th. Uplanders usually stayed just a night or two, and sometimes left the same day. Three more inland canoes came in on 14th, another on the 15th, three more on the 16th and five on the 20th. Three canoes appeared on 24 May, departing the next day. One canoe came down the river five days later. On the 1 June, “came down our Upland Captain with four other Canoes to Trade.” Two more canoes came downriver to trade on 4 June. On the 6th, a “Leading Indian” came down the river with three other Canoes. Two separate canoes came down the river to trade and left the same day, one on the 24th and one on the 25th. A canoe of “eastern Indians” came in to trade on 4 June. Two more canoes came up the river on 8 June and “in one of them,” Favell wrote, “was our Eastern Captain.” Two Eastern Cree lit a fire on the south shore, indicating that they had arrived on foot and the post should

send a boat over so they could trade “their Goods.” A fourth canoe from the same direction came in to trade on 27 June and left the same day. These uplanders, of course, brought the balance of the furs already enumerated above, sharing the resources of the land as generously as the Home Cree. As the goose hunt wound down and Moose Fort entered its next season the HBC visitors benefited once more from this relationship.

Season 3: Mid-June to

Early August

Trade and reciprocity continued to be at the heart of the relationship between the HBC men and Cree during the warm summer months. June, the hatching egg moon (*opâskahopîsim*) is followed by the moulting month (*opaskowi-pîsim*) of July, and then the flying-up moon (*ohpahowi-pîsim*) of August, before *niipin* (summer) is over.⁵⁷

Company Servants

The HBC men had cattle, domesticated animals foreign to the territory, which grazed on nearby islands during the summer. During the winter, they survived on marsh grass harvested and stacked at the post by company men at the Waway Creeks, Middlebrough, Pilgrim and Puppy Islands, and Moose Flats. HBC servants spent weeks each summer felling and limbing firewood at South Bluff, rafting it home, carrying it up the 16-20 ft. riverbank, and piling it. They gathered drift-

“What we learned in the past is disappearing,” *But Life is Changing*, vol. II (Timmins, ON: Ojibway and Cree Cultural Centre), 28-32.

⁵⁷ Ellis, “Glossary,” 511, 509, 506.

wood as well. Buoys and beacons, made from local lumber, were set out to indicate the mouth of the river in anticipation of the ship's arrival in August, and quickly taken up—in times of war—upon its departure. Stones had to be gathered, ballast for the ship's return trip with a comparatively lighter load of furs. Favell's records tell us that the company men dragged the seine again on six occasions, catching 660 whitefish in six hauls. Though the HBC men may not have understood these resources as gifts to them from the land and water, the Cree certainly did.

Resident Cree

Resident Cree continued to provide the post with fresh meat, including eighty-six hares, four "pheasants" (*aahkiskow*, sharp-tailed grouse), a ruffed grouse (*papaskiw*, written as "puskee"), four "partridge" and approximately 450 lb of fish, plus some small sturgeon.⁵⁸ They also supplied caribou meat and two fresh beaver. Summer also meant a plethora of seasonal food with wings, including flightless birds: ten now-extinct passenger pigeons (*miimiwak*), numerous unnamed "small birds," more than eighty-five ducks of unnamed species, two geese, a crane and 267 plovers. In addition to these food supplies, community members continued to travel in support of the HBC. Two Cree went to Albany for clay pipes on 8 August, returning

with the goods nine days later. Favell explained "the Quantity of Indians this Year hath been considerably larger than Usual, which is the reason all the Pipes are exhausted." The supplies at Moose Fort included items of importance to Mushkegowuk, such as pipes, which acknowledged the relationship that existed between the visitors and their hosts.

Home Cree

Mushkegowuk from father away continued to arrive at the Post in the summer months. Two canoes of eastern Cree came in to trade furs in mid-July, departing the same day. A third arrived in mid-August, but its departure was not noted. These Cree traded unspecified numbers of "summer goods" and "small furs" on four occasions in August.

Uplanders

Favell has less to say about uplanders in this season, though some continue to arrive. He notes: Three parties of uplanders came in for trust (debt) and another two canoes of uplanders came down the river in mid-July and left a day later with their guns repaired.

Season 4: Mid-August through October

At the onset of season four, Favell notes that two Cree from Albany Fort arrived with the Company's packet

⁵⁸ Wovengray and Okimâsis, "Alphabetic List," 213, 225; Ellis, "Glossary," 452; personal communication with Billy Isaac. Not only is sturgeon delicious, but the company hoped to develop a trade in isinglass, the gelatin found in the fish's air bladders. Arthur J. Ray, "Ould Betsy and Her Daughter": Fur trade Fisheries in Northern Ontario" in *Fishing Places, Fishing People: traditions and Issues in Canadian Small-scale Fisheries*, Dianne Newell and Rosemary E. Ommers eds. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 80-96.

of letters for him on 21 August, staying for two nights. Another Cree mail carrier arrived on 22 August, with news that Captain William Norton had safely piloted the HBC vessel Prince Rupert to Albany River and now urgently needed the Moose sloop to help unload the supplies from England. Long anticipated supplies and connection with family from home would arrive shortly.

When August disappears, September brings the blue goose moon (*web-wewi-piisim*), when blue and snow geese, as well as ducks, gather in their staging grounds along the coast of *wiinipek*, the Cree name for the inland sea. October is the migrating month (*opimahaamowi-piisim*), which signals the end of *tak-waakin* (autumn).⁵⁹

Company Servants

For the HBC men, preparing stores for winter food and warmth was a priority in this season. This included preserving geese and ducks provided by resident Cree hunters, and fish provided by their families and a few elderly Cree, perhaps two men and two women, who wintered at the post. Casks were made and old ones repaired. Oats were ground for oatmeal. Beer was brewed. The second priority was collecting, rafting, and then hauling, cutting and stacking the winter's supply—a great quantity—of firewood. This was a major job. Work also involved “making” (cutting, transporting and stacking) hay for the cattle to survive the winter, and

bringing the cattle into the plantation. The third priority was maintenance and repair of the buildings and tools. Hunting muskets were mended, hatchet heads made and helved, windows and doors mended, stoves repaired, and trenching around the buildings for drainage. The sloop was unloaded and goods stored, and rocks loaded into the empty sloop for ballast. The long boats were brought up for the winter. Lead was melted and spread on the boats, against leakage. The HBC men were tremendously busy. In their activities, the repair of muskets and the stocking of supplies sent from Europe, they ensured they had something to share with their hosts.

Resident Cree

Favell enumerated quantities tirelessly. We know, therefore, that the dozen or so Cree living at Moose Fort provided nearly 3,000 pounds of fish and small animals to the operation. Well beyond what the HBC men were able to supply for themselves. He mentions four elders specifically, “two old men” and “two old women”. They apparently arrive every few days with between ten pounds and a few hundred pounds of fish, presumably much of it dried for preservation. In most cases the people are not specified and it is difficult to know when “Indians” refers to resident Cree or home Cree. It is mentioned that there are two “Canoes for Factory Use.”⁶⁰

Home Cree

Favell notes that a family of hunters arrived at the post on 17 August

⁵⁹ Ellis, “Glossary,” 549, 511, 538.

⁶⁰ Favell, “Accounts” 1763-64, 14d.

and five hunters went to hunt ducks and small birds two days later. Another family arrived on 23 August. The post's hunters went to "hunt for the Factory" on 24 August and again five days later.⁶¹ In this time, the Post acquired about 1,400 geese (12 casks of approximately 120 geese per cask), 2,590 pounds of fish, and during the fall the Cree brought in three seals, a fresh fall beaver, and some fresh venison

Uplanders

In August, some hunters are already coming to the post to take their debt goods for the winter. This would consist of powder, shot, hatchets. Otherwise, there is little mention of uplanders here. This is unsurprising, as most would have been making sure they arrived on their home territory and winter hunting grounds. As the season gave way to freeze up, HBC men and the Mushkegowuk ensured they were well prepared to survive another winter.

Conclusion—Sharing the Land in 1763

In 1763, the Mushkegowuk of the Moose River region shared the necessities of life—a place to live and work, and, as Favell's journals make clear, all-important food to sustain life—with the HBC visitors. Sharing also meant developing satisfactory relationships. This included enough shared understanding of one another to permit acceptable levels of mutual respect, reciprocal trade, permission to live on and use the land for

Moose Fort, access to local resources like firewood and hay for cattle, and to travel to other posts, for hunting and the like.

When satisfactory relationships do not exist among people. When people's rights to their lands and homes are ignored or denied by powerful others, such as agents of a foreign corporation or government, they rightly feel that they, and their rights, are not respected. This was not what happened in James Bay in 1763. Here HBC visitors and Indigenous peoples were partners in the fur trade. These partnerships developed for a variety of reasons. Certainly, the Europeans were not adept at providing the basic necessities for themselves by going into the 'bush' for hunting, fishing, and trapping. Instead, of necessity, they stayed near the trading posts, giving tools, cloth, brandy and other goods in exchange for food and furs. To varying degrees they regarded themselves as superior, but they had little ability to demonstrate this in any way. The HBC, as the employer in the region in 1763, well aware of the risks associated with this lack of skill and the ways it stood in the way of profit, ordered them to act "with Civility and deal justly and equally with them on all occasions." If the traders felt themselves socially superior to the Indigenous people, they were also very aware that the Mushkegowuk were far more able to live on the land.

We do not know what the Cree thought of the abilities of the visitors. Certainly, HBC hierarchies (factor, officers, servants) were not part of the Cree

⁶¹ Favell, "Journal," 10, 12, 17, 19, 23-24 and 29 August 1763.

world these visitors entered and violated Cree code of ethics based on humility. The Cree may well have had their own feelings of superiority and viewed the visitors as having little or no knowledge on the land, but they would not have criticized them openly. Instead as part of the developing relationship they would have offered to show or share knowledge with them. It would be a long time before this balance was fundamentally disrupted. Oral accounts from Elders make it clear that the extensive knowledge and skill of the Cree, and an education system to pass down that knowledge across generations, ensured that the Mushkegowuk lived on the land without relying on the supplies provided by visitors well into the mid-twentieth century.⁶² The HBC records for 1763 indicate some mutual regard in the recognition of Indigenous leaders, which the Factor called “principal Indians” or “captains” and to which he gave gifts that included badges of rank as well as trade goods, including brandy. These leaders also had a Cree role and a Cree name, *okima*, probably largely invisible to the traders. But the *okima* were visible as people who brought hunters to the post and spoke on their behalf with the trader to get good value for their furs. One of the principles that distinguish the Cree social order is this form of leadership. Another is the relationship of the land and the people living on the land, to one another. The pervasive ideal of mutual respect sets

the tone for success in living well together and success in getting a living, and failure is often attributed to some discerned lack of respect.

The British colonizers and the Cree on whose territory they spent time both had principles that reflected ideas about fair treatment. For the English, the Royal Proclamation provided an important indication of their thinking on fairness in 1763. It was a single, regal, documented pronouncement for the fair treatment of Indigenous peoples in areas where settlers were taking land and were requesting deeds to their real estate, showing that the owner of a piece of land could use it to secure a loan, or could sell it. A royal proclamation meant that the King spoke for all his subjects and the people were obliged to obey. In the James Bay region, the Cree counterpart is a principle that was the functional equivalent of a ‘proclamation’ that also set the standard for fair treatment of others, human and other-than-humans embodied in myriad actions and words, both expressing a willingness to share the land and resources with other Cree, with other Indigenous visitors, and with European sojourners. In contrast to a royal proclamation, the Cree principle was traditional and collective. It was spoken or acted upon by anyone, in confidence that this was the right thing to do, not by order of a leader.

The Royal Proclamation of 1763 asserted the King of England’s right to

⁶² Raphael Wabano, “They always survived on the land,” in *But Life is Changing*, vol. 2 (Timmins, ON: Ojibway and Cree Cultural Centre, 1999), 52-56; Michael Patrick, “Our youth are losing their language and culture,” in *But Life is Changing*, vol. 2 (Timmins, ON: Ojibway and Cree Cultural Centre, 1999), 91-95; Adrian Sutherland, personal correspondence with Lorraine Sutherland, 28 April, 2016.

hold, protect or dispose of lands in a large part of the eastern part of North America, to the south of Rupert's Land, the Hudson's Bay territory. The land in the more northerly region of Rupert's Land was the homeland of Indigenous people, including the Moose Factory Cree. Their relationship to land was fundamentally different from that of the European visitors. While there were certainly family relationships that included use rights to hunting territories, there was no sense of "holding" the land. For people, the animals, and other living things it was literally the ground of their being. People shared the land with the animals and other living things, and when the small number of rather helpless European visitors came by ship to trade, it was normal, based on this understanding and principles of doing things in the right way, for them to share the land and its resources with the visitors. It was also in keeping with age-old practices and long-distance

trade routes and relationships with allies, such as the Anishinaabeg, that they would reach a mutual understanding with the European visitors, which included the exchange of meat and other local resources, for useful and desirable trade goods such as metal knives, hatchets, hunting muskets, and other goods.

In 1763, the territory of the Mushkegowuk was little affected by the visitors, who were sojourners in a stable hunting society that was regulated by traditional, consensual principles for surviving and living well together. Favell's journals provide us with a clear understanding of how he viewed the territory and its people, as well as the significant ways in which they hosted them and ensured their survival. This view of the year from James Bay gives us much to reflect on as we reconcile the present with the history of colonialism in Canada and learn to build respectful relationships that allow us to share the land and its resources in a good way.
