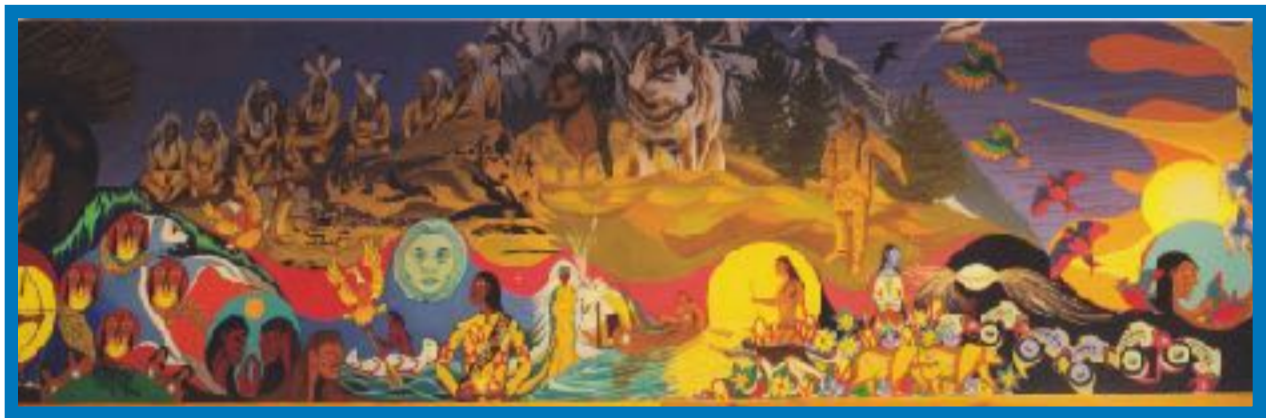


MISSISSAUGAS OF THE NEW CREDIT FIRST NATION (MNCFN)



This mural is located in the library of the
Lloyd S. King Elementary School
and was completed in 2002
Parts illustrate New Credit: Past and Present

Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation (MNCFN)

The first aboriginals reached what would be southern Ontario some 10,000 years ago, arriving through the Ohio Valley into the Great Lakes area.

The Mississauga Indians are of the Ojibwa Nation (or Chippewa) and spoke the Anishinabe language. Circa 1634, their history tells of Ojibwa ancestors migrating, about 500 years ago, from Canada's east coast to Madeline Island in Lake Superior. They later settled at the Mississagi River located at the head of Lake Huron i.e. between Sault Ste. Marie and Sudbury. In the late 17th century the Mississaugas had expanded their territory to the north shores of Lake Superior and Lake Huron and were moving into southern Ontario.

Meanwhile, the French had made an alliance (Huron French Alliance of 1616) with the Algonquins and Montagnais, natives of Laurentian Shield, including the Hurons of southern Ontario.

The Iroquois Five Nation Indians who spoke Iroquoian (Mohawk, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca and Onondaga, and later Six Nation Confederacy which included the Tuscarora Tribe) were located south of Lake Ontario. In 1649, through the effective use of muskets, the Iroquois Five Nation Confederacy dispersed the Huron Indians northward where they resided at Midland at the south end of Georgian Bay, and points north. The Iroquois took possession of what is now south west Ontario backing onto Lake Ontario. The Hurons were allies of the Ojibwa (later the Mississaugas) who were also enemies of the Iroquois and thus affected by the Iroquois invasion.

By the end of 1650 the Hurons, the Ojibwa and their allies fought the Iroquois and eventually defeated them, forcing them to return to the south side of Lake Ontario.

The Ojibwa expansion in the Georgian Bay area had moved south following a winding river (Credit River). They set up a campsite at the river's mouth on Lake Ontario. By 1700, Ojibwas laid claim to some 3.9 million acres across southern Ontario. When they first met French traders, they were referred to as Mississauga Indians. By 1720, the French had built a trading post at the foot of the Credit River and Lake Ontario.

The Mississauga Indians were nomadic, roaming where they pleased and became great traders. At first they bartered furs and crafts for items they wanted. Later, their hunting and fishing was barter for food and clothing needs. The French traders extended credit to the Indians for future furs, and later venison and salmon. The river became known as Riviere du Credit and in the future, the Credit River. The Indian encampment was at the mouth of

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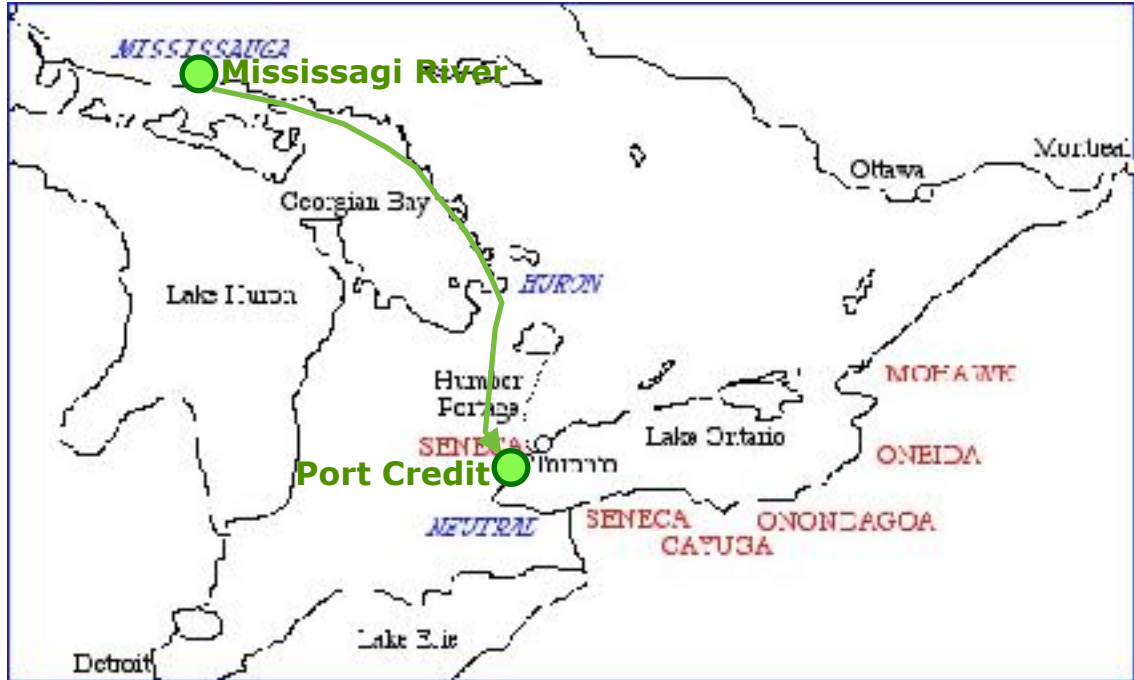
the Credit River, on the western bank, and was known as the "Mississaugas of the Credit".

In 1763 the British took control of Canadian lands. A Royal Proclamation by the Crown recognized the Credit First Nation's ownership of their lands which could only be purchased by the Crown. By 1768 the Ojibwa Indians had 25 villages in Southern Ontario. The Credit River became the principle home of the MNCFN.

There was a massive move of "Loyalists" moving north following the American Revolution (1773-1783). They included both British sympathizers and Iroquois Indians who had fought with the British. In order to reward the the Iroquois for their loyalty, in 1784 the British set aside land in the Grand River valley, which they had purchased from the Mississaugas.

1791: Canada is split into Upper and Lower Canada.

During this period, the Mississaugas became allied with the English, and fought as allies of the British Crown during the War of 1812. The British Government made several land purchases from the Mississauga Indians.



Five Nations Iroquois
League of Four Tribes

NATIVE POPULATION AT THE TIME EUROPEANS ARRIVED

Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation (MNCFN)

The first purchase, the Toronto Purchase, was in 1787. This purchase was reconfirmed with the Mississauga Tract purchase of 1805. The Mississauga Tract purchase contained all the lands between the Etobicoke Creek and Burlington Bay, except for a one mile track of land on each side of the Bronte, Oakville and Credit Rivers. Included in the area are the Townships of Toronto, Trafalgar and Nelson. Land grants for settlers were then distributed. The settlers had an abundant supply of vegetables to trade with the Indians. The Indians had complete fishing rights on their lands on each side of the three rivers. Relationships between the two parties was peaceful.

Other than one United Empire Loyalist preacher arriving from New York State in 1812 and settling in what would become the Lakeview area, the 1812 war with the United States mostly bypassed Port Credit.

Further Mississauga Indian lands were purchased by the British Government (1818 - Second Purchase). By the 1820's over 200 Mississaugas had settled on the western side of the Credit River of Port Credit. They turned to making baskets, brooms, wooden bowls, tools and sold them. The land grants to the white people had crowded the population at the Credit River to the extent that made it desirable to purchase the Mississauga Indians lands of one miles on each side of the river to the "north trail", north of what would become the Queen Elizabeth Way. The Indians moved north and settled on the west side of the river where the Mississauga Golf Club is currently located and became known as the Credit Mission or the Credit Indian Village. This move only temporarily solved the crowding problem. The Indian chiefs considered a move to Owen Sound but found the cultivation potentials unsuitable for their needs.

Kahkewaquonaby (Sacred Feathers) better known as the Rev. Peter Jones was to become their saviour. Born in 1802, he was the son of a Welch surveyor and a Mississauga Indian mother. He spent his early life with the Mississaugas, was converted to Christianity and became a Methodist missionary and by 1826 had converted most residents to Christianity. With the aid of the government he was able to build a Christian mission village on the west side of the Credit River.

Twenty wooden homes were built, more to follow, with curtains, trunks and boxes, furnished with European cooking and dinnerware. Small vegetable gardens expanded into a cultivated 900 acre, fenced in village property, which expanded their farming into pork, beef and fowl plus corn, wheat,

Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation (MNCFN)

potatoes and root vegetables. The village was now prospering. As time passed, the Credit River village contained a hospital, two public stores, two sawmills, a blacksmith shop, carpenter shop, a chapel (1852) which also served as a school house. Education and the Christian faith were cornerstones of the village. The Mississaugas were two third shareholders in the Credit River Harbour Company and port. The government regarded the success of the Credit River village as a model for other First Nation communities.

However, the Mississaugas of the Credit only numbered 266 at that time. Continued encroachment by settlers caused depletion of game and fish and wood. Villagers had concerns about their future and sought new sites only to find they would not support their agricultural products. In May 1847 villagers were turning in their homes to the government, to sell. The Mississaugas, for all intents and purpose, were homeless. Unable to obtain title to their lands and encroached upon by settlers, MNCFN ancestors removed themselves from the Credit River Mission.

The Six Nation Indians, of the Grand River, came to their rescue giving them 4800 acres in the Grand River Indian Reserve. This gift was in appreciation of the Mississauga Indians defeating the Iroquois, following the 1649-1650 war. Most of the Mississauga Indians, now numbering a population of less than 200, left the banks of the Credit River forever, for their own Reserve in the Grand Valley. They called the settlement the "New Credit" (MNCFN).

The government built a harbour in Port Credit in 1828. Port Credit was established as a village in 1834 (340 acres), the same year York became the City of Toronto.

By 1850, there were 87 mills on the Credit River waterways, 17 in Toronto Township. The MNCFN, Grand River reservation, had grown to 250 band members.

In 1855 Port Credit experienced a major fire on the west side of the Credit River, the centre of the town. The fire damage resulted in growth on the east side of the river, thus moving the village centre across the river. Names of new area roads were called after well-known Indian tribes such as: Mohawk, Brant, Cayuga and Seneca.

Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation (MNCFN)



Port Credit Harbour facing west
Circa 1890

In 1909, the Port Credit council carried out the necessary Iroquois paperwork to make Port Credit a police village. With approval, Port Credit separated from Toronto Township and had its own council and administration. A police commission was put in place and a volunteer fire department was formed in 1923.

In 1961, the village became a town and the Town of Port Credit remained autonomous until it was amalgamated with the City of Mississauga, in 1974.

Between 1990 and 1997, the New Credit Commercial Plaza was opened on the corner of First Line and Highway #6. A Health Services Building, Community Centre and Elementary school followed shortly and thereafter a public library and Children's Centre was opened.

Details of this article are from:

"Port Credit: Past to Present" by Kathleen A. Hicks

"Earliest Toronto" by Robert M. MacIntosh

Heritage Mississauga

Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation (revised 2018)