

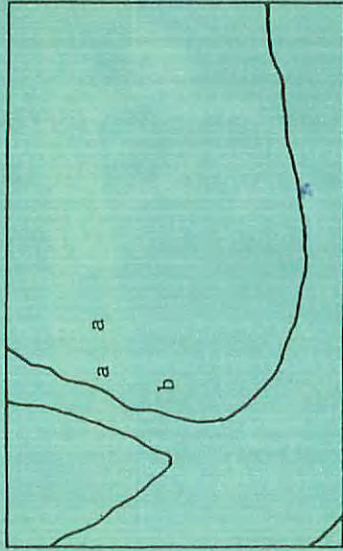
## THE BEGINNING

Fifteen thousand years ago, during the last Ice Age, a massive sheet of glacial ice covered the area that is now Manitoba. As the climate warmed and the ice retreated to the north, a large lake (Glacial Lake Agassiz) formed, covering most of southern Manitoba. This lake receded about 10,000 years ago, providing barren clays that plants quickly colonized. Animals began to inhabit the area and hunters soon followed, thereby becoming the first Manitobans.

The area known as The Forks offers an archaeological opportunity to document the many cultures that have hunted, fished, traded, and lived in what is now central Winnipeg. Each time the rivers flooded, a layer of silt and clay was deposited over things left behind by people who camped at the site. Once unearthed, these artifacts enable archaeologists to piece together the unwritten history of Manitoba, as lived by different groups of people over the past 10,000 years.

## THE FIRST PEOPLE

The earliest evidence of human activity at the site was discovered during archaeological monitoring of sewer excavations in the fall of 1988. The remnants of two campfires were discovered at a depth of six meters (a). While no artifacts were found that could identify culture, the depth of the discovery shows that people lived at The Forks about 6000 years ago.



Locations of Early Occupations

Also during 1988, an extensive "Archaic" occupation zone was found buried under three meters of soil on the north bank of the Assiniboine River (b). Recovered artifacts indicate that people from the northeastern Boreal Forest camped at The Forks, trading with other groups from the Upper Assiniboine River area and the North Dakota region. Revisiting the campsite many times over the years, these people hunted (bison and small mammals), fished (catfish, drum, sucker), and gathered (shellfish, berries, nuts) at The Forks.

## INTERESTED IN ARCHAEOLOGY?

In 1984, archaeologists from Parks Canada uncovered parts of a building that may be Fort Gibraltar I (1810-1816). Today's dig will attempt to recover data that will positively identify the structure and provide information about daily life at the Fort.

If you are interested in participating in this voyage of discovery as a digger, as a laboratory helper or as a computer assistant, we would be pleased to have you join our crew.

To apply contact:

Volunteer Co-ordinator

942 - 7243

OR

Fill out an application form at the dig site.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE FORKS

To find out more about the projects and programs of the Forks Renewal Corporation, contact:

Communications Manager

The Forks Renewal Corporation

#404 Century Plaza

#1 Wesley at Main

R3C 4C6

Telephone 943-7752

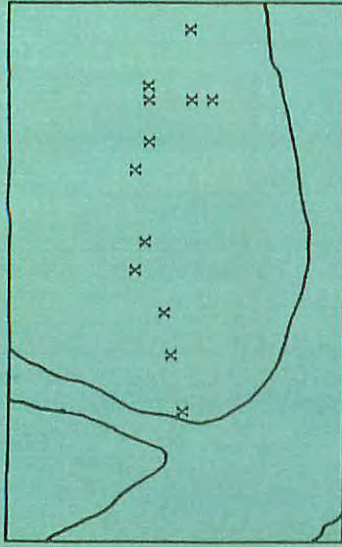
942-6393



# PUBLIC ARCHAEOLOGY PROGRAM AT THE FORKS

### THE POTTERY MAKERS

The next known inhabitants of the site were people who had developed the technique of making clay pots. These people were the ancestors of the natives met by the European fur traders in the 1700's. They are



Locations of Ceramic Occupations

given archaeological names based upon their pottery styles: Blackduck, Selkirk and Sandy Lake.

Along with sherds of broken clay pots, archaeologists at the Forks have found stone tools, campfire ashes, and bones from the fish and animals that were part of the diet of these people.

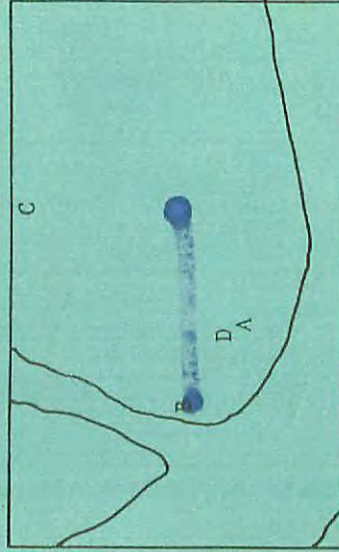
### EXPLORATION AND FUR TRADE

The activities of the Fur Trade Era (1737 to about 1875) are central to the history of Western Canada. Written history at The Forks begins with the visit of La Verendrye in 1737.

Little information can be found about the first seventy years of this era, however, we do know that Fort Rouge existed in the area from 1738 to 1749.

Explorers and fur traders noted native campsites (Cree, Saulteaux and Ottawa) and occasionally spent the winter at The Forks (St. Pierre, Bruce & Boyer, Dorion).

The North West Company built Fort Gibraltar in 1810 (a). This structure was dismantled in 1816, during the conflict between the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1817, Fort Gibraltar II was built on the north bank of the Assiniboine River (b). After amalgamation of

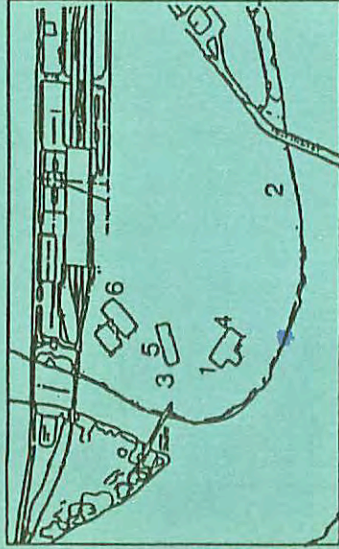


Locations of Fur Trade Structures

the two rivals, it was renamed Fort Garry and became the administrative centre for the fur trade. Although damaged by the 1826 flood, it continued until 1835, when Upper Fort Garry was built. The Upper Fort Garry North Gate still stands near Broadway and Main Street (c). During the middle of the century an Experimental Farm was established at The Forks (d). Most buildings were probably destroyed in the 1852 flood.

### INDUSTRIAL & RAILROAD PERIOD

Immigration Sheds (#1), were constructed in 1873 as receiving centres and living quarters for new Canadians arriving by steamboat from the south. They remained standing until 1885. The Broadway Bridge, connecting The Forks and St. Boniface, was built in 1882, with Finkelstein's Grocery (#2) on the west bank of the Red River. In 1872, a flour mill complex was built by the Hudson's Bay Company (#3) on the bank of the Assiniboine.



Industrial & Railroad Structures

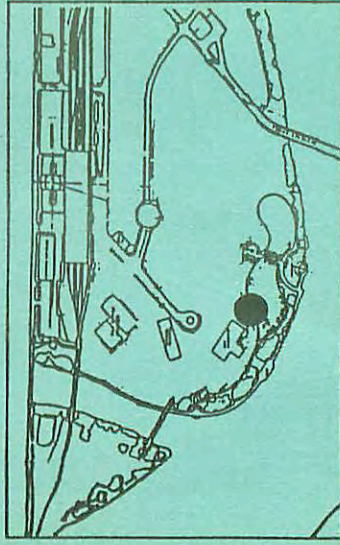
Early industrial activity was concentrated on the west bank of the Red River, to take advantage of river transportation. The end of the steam riverboat era came in 1889, when the Northern Pacific & Manitoba Railroad arrived at The Forks. The company erected the B & B Building (still standing) (#4), with an attached roundhouse, demolished in 1926). Numerous warehouses and freight sheds were built over the decades, including the Johnston Terminal (#5). Two stables were built in 1909, to shelter the freight-hauling horse teams (#6) (now revitalized as The Forks Public Market).

### WHY A PUBLIC DIG?

Heritage belongs to everyone. Increasing our knowledge of our history enhances our cultural identity as Canadians, as Manitobans and as Winnipeggers.

The thrill of uncovering artifacts from the past is an experience that should be available to all individuals.

Everyone can participate. Even though analyzing and interpreting archaeological discoveries requires professional skills, several archaeological activities can be performed by the average person. Techniques of excavating, artifact cleaning, artifact identification, and some computer operations can be learned quickly. Under the supervision of a professional team, volunteer archaeologists can contribute greatly to the understanding of the past and our own personal histories.



Location of the Public Dig