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country, which serve as laws and regulations to the Gaspeians (Micmac), to distribute the places of hunting to each individual. It is not permitted to any Indian to overstep the bounds and limits of the region which shall have been assigned him in the assemblies of the elders. These are held in autumn and spring expressly to make this assignment." No doubt, by "the head of the nation" Le Clercq was referring to the headman of the individual bands, as he makes clear in another passage. "The occupation of this chief (from the Restigouche River) was to assign the places for hunting, and to take the furs of the Indians, giving them in turn whatever they needed." Very likely there was some precedent for the allotment system in the re-allocation prerogatives of the headman.. Biard, writing three-quarters of a century before Le Clercq, recalled that the sagamore, as he called the headman, was the eldest son of a powerful family. "All the young people of the family are at his table and in his retinue; it is also his duty to provide dogs for the chase, canoes for transportation, provisions and reserves for bad weather and expeditions. The young people flatter him, hunt, and serve their apprenticeship under him, not being allowed to have anything before they are married." The sagamore was reportedly entitled to all the game taken by these youthful apprentices, but only a portion of the catch of a married man. When one of the latter returned from either a hunting expedition or with other supplies, he would scrupulously pay his "dues and homage in skins and like gifts." To be headman was a coveted office, and Biard makes it clear that there was plenty of intrigue for it. Considering, therefore, the commercial incentives associated with the unrestrained character of fur hunting and trapping in the early years of the seventeenth century, it is not difficult to imagine how the headman's function in re-allocating community resources was extended to embrace the allotment of community lands toward the close of the century. The copper kettle, in a word, by virtue of its portable, sturdy nature, made it easier for these people to roam the woods in search of furbearers--easier than it would have been had they been obliged to rely on the stationary wooden cauldrons. Granted, they could have hacked out temporary cauldrons as they moved about the bush, reminiscent of Lescarbot's experience, but that is not the point. The Micmac would have responded to the lure of the fur trade the way they did with or without the copper kettle; the point is that the kettle facilitated (intensified) their mobility. Although it is only conjectural, the evidence of mass slaughter of wildlife, De Vries' cryptic allusions to nomadism, and the belated imposition of an allotment system to safeguard territorial boundaries--all seem to suggest that the copper kettle was one element in a complex of forces which overthrew the traditional settlement pattern and mode of land tenure (obscure as it is). One can take this kind of argument too far, of course, to where it begins to sound like technological determinism. That is emphatically not our intention here, however. Kettles, like many other forms of technology, are capable of being put to many uses and defined in just as many ways. In this sense they follow--they offer possibilities • rather than lead. Reminiscent of Pierre Biard, with whom we began,



we concede that trade goods lists are undoubtedly tedious records of culture contact, that is, they are if one does not interrogate them for their deeper mysteries. Examples such as this show the implications which at least some of these items posed for the native recipients. The picture that emerges is one of assimilation into the native economic, ceremonial, spiritual, and demographic context, in the Nova Scotia quiltmaker/embroideress seeks outlets for quilts, batiks, dolls, embroidered hangings etc. For information please contact Louise Chisholm, Freeport, Digby Co., Nova Scotia BOV IBO. Bill's Pet Centre '33 George Street in Sydney "B liVi Jf'e'ct to Island Crafts " T iSA Phone 539-2243 HAGEN j pet Supplies and Accessories A Complete Selection Exotic Birds and 1 of Tropical Fish Small Animals Groceries Quick Snacks Coffee General Merchandise Trail Store at Wreck Cove, on the Cabot Trail / " _ Tourist Brochures // JL 1 & Colour Printing 'H'F'ISO TOWNSEND STI'EET, SYDNEY, N.S. TELEPHONE (902) 564?M6 OF TBE PONZO iXtIIN O rI I UntIN Ponzos A N D Pizza 429 Prince Street, Sydney, 562-5538 C.B. Shopping Plaza, Sydney River, 539-3983 OPEN TILL 2 AM, EXCEPT SUNDAY (1-8) Ponzo Originated in Cape Breton