

Family Hunting Territories of the Lake St. John Montagnais and Neighboring Bands.

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In 1915 and 1917 I presented papers giving the results of investigation in a new aspect of the social life of the Indians of northeastern Canada¹. They described the institution of the family hunting territories which, taken together in groups, constitute the habitat of these peoples. Until then I had covered only part of the area occupied by them and was giving attention while in the field to the securing of final information concerning the names of the hunters who were heads of families of the Montagnais of the Lake St. John bands and the others located along the north shore of the St. Lawrence as far down as the Montagnais of Escoumains. At the same time a preliminary list of the family subdivisions of the Indians of Lake Mistassini was completed, and published in 1922². As the survey of several other bands occupying the same section of the peninsula had been nearly completed the material might have been combined with it. But circumstances made it feasible to bring forth the Mistassini study as a single report. The intervening period has, however, been of advantage in enabling me to go over the whole situation with more care during the many visits I have subsequently made to these Indians,—it being now some fifteen years since the first outlines of the investigation were laid out. Being now able to furnish the list and location of the families of the southwestern Montagnais, known in the region as the Lake St. John, Chicoutimi, Tadousac and Escoumains bands, the area of knowledge is considerably extended toward the east and south linking up with the zone covered in the previous paper on the Mistassini.

There is considerable importance attached to a study of this character, since it provides the necessary preliminaries for an understanding of what constitutes the geographical boundaries of what we might call the semi-independent groups or subtribes of a wide region which are only to be differentiated from each other by weak lines of distinction, often mere geographical ones, but sometimes differences that extend to dialect customs, industries and folk-lore. Hence such an approach to the ethnology of a large area leads to the only scheme of classification possible in the case. The way is also opened for the study of many social problems, especially those involving definite knowledge of population in bulk its distribution, its decline or increase, the size of families, the nature of land-inheritance, the matter of

¹ *a)* The Family Hunting Band as the Basis of Algonkian Social Organization. *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1915, pp. 289—305. — *b)* Family Hunting Territories and Social Life of various Algonkian Bands of the Ottawa Valley. *Memoir 70*, No. 8, *Anthropological Series*, Geological Survey of Canada, Ottawa, 1915. — *c)* The Social Structure of the Northern Algonkian. *Publications of the American Sociological Society*, Vol. XII, 1917, pp. 82—100. — *d)* Game Totems among the Northeastern Algonkians. *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 19, No. 1, 1917, pp. 9—18.

² Mistassini Hunting Territories in the Labrador Peninsula. *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 25, No. 4, 1923, pp. 452—471.