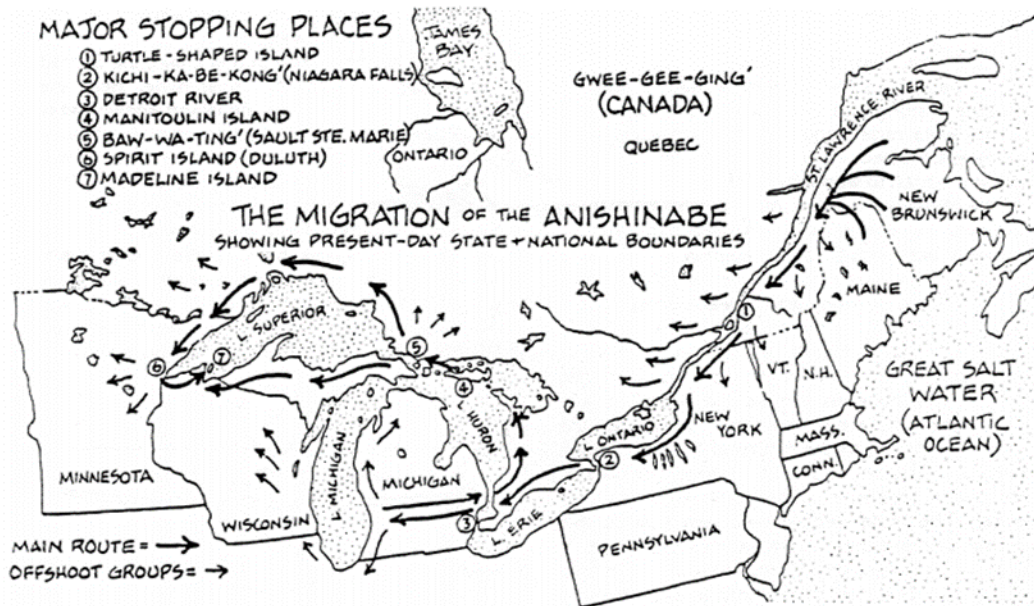


The Great Migration



Map from Edward Benton, *Mishomis Book*, 1988, First University of Minnesota Press Ed.

The Prophecy of the Seven (7) Fires of the Anishinaabe (Benton, 1988) The Mishomis Book

The first prophet said to the people,

"In the time of the First Fire, the Anishinaabe nation will rise up and follow the sacred shell of the Midewiwin Lodge. The Midewiwin Lodge will serve as a rallying point for the people and its traditional ways will be the source of much strength. The Sacred Megis will lead the way to the chosen ground of the Anishinaabe."

The prophet told the people they would find a turtle shaped island at the beginning and the end of their journey. He warned that if they didn't move from the east coast, they would perish. The prophet said the people would know they had reached their chosen ground when they found the "food that grows on water", otherwise known as Manoomin (Wild Rice).

The second prophet said to the people,

"You will know the Second Fire because at this time the nation will be cambed by a large body of water. Int his time the direction of the Sacred Shell will be lost. The Midewiwin Lodge will

diminish in strength. A boy will be born to point the way back to the traditional ways. He will show the direction to the stepping stones to the future of the Anishinaabe people.”

The 3rd prophet said to the people,

“In the Third Fire the Anishinaabe will find the path to their chosen ground, a land in the west to which they must move their families. This will be the land where food grows on water.”

The Fourth Fire

The Fourth Fire was originally given to the people by two prophets. They come as one. They told of the coming of the light skinned race.

One of the prophets said, "You will know the future of our people by the face of the light skinned race wears. If they come wearing the face of nee-kon-‘-nis-i-win’ (brotherhood) then there will come a time of wonderful change for generations to come. They will bring new knowledge and articles that can be joined with the knowledge of this country. In this way, two nations will join to make a mighty nation. This new nation will be joined by two more so that four will form the mightiest nation of all. You will know the face of the brotherhood if the light skinned race comes carrying no weapons, if they come bearing only their knowledge and a hand shake."

The other prophet said,

"Beware if the light skinned race comes wearing the face of ni-boo-win’ (death). You must be careful because the face of brotherhood and the face of death look very much alike. If they come carrying a weapon ... beware. If they come in suffering ... They could fool you. Their hearts may be filled with greed for the riches of this land. If they are indeed your brothers, let them prove it. Do not accept them in total trust. You shall know that the face they wear is one of death if the rivers run with poison and fish become unfit to eat. You shall know them by these many things."

The fifth prophet said,

"In the time of the Fifth Fire there will come a time of great struggle that will grip the lives of all native people. At the waning of this Fire there will come among the people one who holds a promise of great joy and salvation. If the people accept this promise of a new way and abandon the old teachings, then the struggle of the Fifth Fire will be with the people for many generations. The promise that comes will prove to be a false promise. All those who accept this promise will cause the near destruction of the people."

The prophet of the Sixth Fire said,

"In the time of the Sixth Fire it will be evident that the promise of the Fifth Fire came in in a false way. Those deceived by this promise will take their children away from the teachings of the chi'-ah-ya-og' (Elders). Grandsons and granddaughters will turn against the Elders. In this way the Elders will lose their reason for living ... they will lose their purpose in life. At this time a new sickness will come among the people. The balance of many people will be disturbed. The cup of life will almost become the cup of grief."

The seventh prophet that came to the people long ago said to be different from the other prophets. He was young and had a strange light in his eyes. He said:

"In the time of the Seventh Fire Osh-ki-bi-ma-di-zeeg (New People) will emerge. They will retrace their steps to find what was left by the trail. Their steps will take them to the Elders who they will ask to guide them on their journey. But many of the Elders will have fallen asleep. They will awaken to this new time with nothing to offer. Some of the Elders will be silent because no one will ask anything of them. The New People will have to be careful in how they approach the Elders. The task of the New People will not be easy."

"If the New People will remain strong in their quest the Water Drum of the Midewiwin Lodge will again sound its voice. There will be a rebirth of the Anishinaabe Nation and a rekindling of old flames. The Sacred Fire will again be lit."

"It is this time that the light skinned race will be given a choice between two roads. If they choose the right road, then the Seventh Fire will light the Eighth and final Fire, an eternal fire of peace, love brotherhood and sisterhood. If the light skinned race makes the wrong choice of the roads, then the destruction which they brought with them in coming to this country will come back at them and cause much suffering and death to all the Earth's people."

It is believed that the "two roads" referred to in the Prophecy of the Seventh Fire are:

- 1) The road to Materialism and technology
- 2) The road to Spirituality

If the people of the Earth join together in brotherhood, we may be able to avoid the road to destruction. We are living in a crucial time. All of the prophecies have come to pass, and now we are approaching a fork in the road that will either lead us to the Eighth Fire, or to destruction.

The 8th Fire