

### *How Ile-a-la-Crosse Got Its Name*

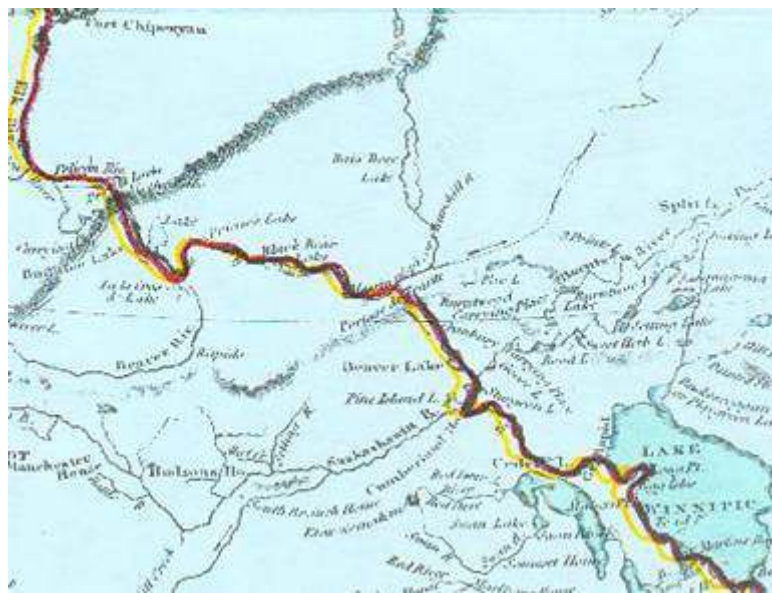
"Isle a la Crosse Fort appears on a low isthmus, at the distance of five miles, and is in latitude 55.25. North, and longitude 107.48. West is already mentioned, ...This lake and fort take their names from the island just mentioned, which, as has been already observed, received its denomination from the game of the cross, which forms a principal amusement among the natives."

This quotation was taken from Alexander Mackenzie's journal which was written around 1790.



This is Mackenzie's map and the route he took to Lake Athabasca to bring the fur trade to the Dene. For a Dene view of Mackenzie's trip see Rose Campbell's interview

MacKenzie's observation is interesting because a similar account was given by Isidore Campbell, English River Reserve, who said, "the story of Dene playing lacrosse on Big Island was well known by the people living in Patuank." According to Isidore, the game was not only played among the Dene, as a form of entertainment, but it was also played between the Crees to settle any hostilities that arose between the two groups.



A similar use for the game was recognized by the Iroquoians and Algonkians living in Ontario and United States.

Once the fur trade began to push further north and west, competition for trapping territories increased, and as a result hostilities between the two cultural groups – the Cree and Dene - increased to the point where bloodshed and murder became accepted practice.

Lacrosse sticks were replaced with muzzle loading rifles

