

Not only did they possess pieces of the metal and various articles made of it but there was a widely diffused knowledge among them of the distant source from which the "red copper" was procured.

The early French explorers were informed by the Indians, even as far south as the Gulf of Mexico, that copper came from a distant country in the north, and this information was verified as these voyagers neared the region of the Great Lakes.

In an account of Cartier's second voyage, 1535, given by Harkluyt, it is stated of the Indians along the south shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, that they said to Cartier that:

"The way to Canada was toward the west, and that the north shore, before Canada was reached, was the beginning of Saguenay, and that thence cometh the red-copper of them named Cavgetdage."

The same historian informs us that on this voyage, Cartier kidnapped a chief of a local tribe, to take with him to France. Sympathizing tribesmen who visited the chief before the ship sailed, were assured of his early return, for which:

"They greatly thanked the captain and gave their lord three bundles of beaver and sea-wolves skinned, with a great knife of red copper, that cometh from Saguenay."

The early explorers in Canada, on the coast of New England, New York, Virginia, the Carolinas and Florida, including, besides Cartier,—Alfonse, Verrazano, Raleigh, Heriot, Ribault, Newport, Allouez, De Soto and Champlain,—all concur in saying that the Indians were using implements and ornaments of copper.

Cartier found the natives of the whole sea-board "sparingly in possession of the red metal." Verrazano, in 1524, saw, along the Atlantic coast, "many plates of wrought copper which they (Indians) esteem more than gold." Newport was told by Powhatan, in 1607, that the copper they had "was got in the bites of rocks between cliffs in certain veins, a great distance north." Abbe Segart, a missionary to New France in about the year 1630, gave an account of the resources of the country in his "Grand Voyage du pays des Hurons," and mentions specimens of copper from the Lake Superior mines, which he says were "80 or 100 leagues distant from the country of the Hurons.