



Discover Portage Road Lesson Plan

The Cradles

Subject Area: Social Studies

Grades 6-8

Subject Area: Social Studies

New York State Social Studies Learning Standards

Standard 1

History of the United States and New York

Students will:

- **Use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.**
- **Distinguish between near and distant past and interpret simple timelines,**
- **Investigate key turning points in New York State and United States history and explain why these events or developments are significant.**
- **Gather and organize information about the important achievements and contributions of individuals and groups living in New York State and the United States,**
- **Prepare essays and oral reports about the important social, political, economic, scientific, technological, and cultural developments, issues, and events from New York State and United States history.**

Overview

This Cradles historical marker is located on the grounds of the Earl W. Brydges Artpark.

To reach this historic marker, visitors must take South 4th Street south all the way to where the road ends, at the entrance to the Earl W. Brydges Artpark. The historic marker is on the grounds of the Earl W. Brydges Artpark on a section of land just south of the first large parking area.

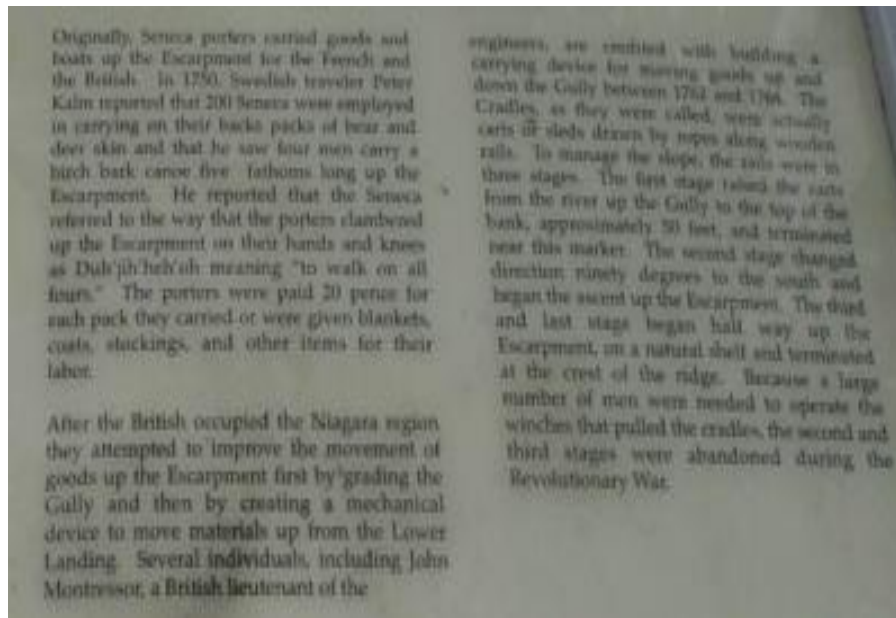
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View of the Cradles historical marker, looking south along a campus driveway, on the grounds of the Earl W. Brydges Artpark.

Source:

Source: <http://www.hmdb.org/marker.asp?marker=66328>



Originally, Seneca porters carried goods and boats up the Escarpment for the French and the British. In 1750, Swedish traveler Peter Kalm reported that 200 Seneca were employed in carrying on their backs packs of bear and deer skin and that he saw four men carry a birch bark canoe five fathoms long up the Escarpment. He reported that the Seneca referred to the way that the porters clambered up the Escarpment on their hands and knees as *Duh'joh'juh'oh* meaning "to walk on all fours." The porters were paid 20 pence for each pack they carried or were given blankets, coats, stockings, and other items for their labor.

After the British occupied the Niagara region they attempted to improve the movement of goods up the Escarpment first by grading the Gully and then by creating a mechanical device to move materials up from the Lower Landing. Several individuals, including John Montrossor, a British lieutenant of the

engineers, are credited with building a carrying device for moving goods up and down the Gully between 1764 and 1766. The Cradles, as they were called, were actually carts of sleds drawn by ropes along wooden rails. To manage the slope, the rails were in three stages. The first stage raised the carts from the river up the Gully to the top of the bank, approximately 50 feet, and terminated near this marker. The second stage changed direction ninety degrees to the south and began the ascent up the Escarpment. The third and last stage began half way up the Escarpment, on a natural shelf and terminated at the crest of the ridge. Because a large number of men were needed to operate the winches that pulled the cradles, the second and third stages were abandoned during the Revolutionary War.

The Cradles Marker

Close-up view of the text displayed on the historical marker.

By Dale K. Benington, June 11, 2012

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Activity:

Students will:

1. Visit the Cradles Historical Marker located on the grounds of Artpark.
2. Read the following inscription on the Historical Marker:
3. Use the content of the inscription to match answers to descriptions

INSCRIPTION:

Originally, Seneca porters carried goods and boats up the Escarpment for the French and the British. In 1750, Swedish traveler Peter Kalm reported that 200 Seneca were employed in carrying on their backs packs of bear and deer skin and that he saw four men carry a birch bark canoe five fathoms long up the Escarpment. He reported that the Seneca referred to the way that the porters clambered up the escarpment on their hands and knees as Duh'jih'heh'oh meaning "to walk on all fours." The porters were paid 20 pence for each pack they carried or were given blankets, coats, stockings, and other items for their labor.

After the British occupied the Niagara region they attempted to improve the movement of goods up the Escarpment first by grading the Gully and then by creating a mechanical device to move materials up from the Lower Landing. Several individuals, including John Montessor, a British lieutenant of the engineers, are credited with building a carrying device for moving goods up and down the Gully between 1762 and 1764. The Cradles, as they were called, were actually carts or sleds drawn by ropes along wooden rails.

To manage the slope, the rails were in three stages. The first stage raised the carts from the river up the Gully to the top of the bank, approximately 50 feet, and terminated near this marker.

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The second stage changed direction ninety degrees to the south and began the ascent up the Escarpment

The third and last stage began half way up the Escarpment, on a natural shelf and terminated at the crest of the ridge. Because a large number of men were needed to operate the winches that pulled the cradles, the second and third stages were abandoned during the Revolutionary War

EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

	Descriptions		Answers
1	Stages that were abandoned during the Revolutionary War	A	Cradles
2	The beginning of the third and final stage	B	John Montessor
3	End of the third stage	C	Grading the Gully
4	Distance from the Gully to the top of the bank	D	“to walk on all” fours”
5	Number of stages to manage the slope	E	The crest of the ridge
6	Carts or sleds drawn by ropes along wooden rails.	F	Three
7	A British lieutenant of the engineers, are credited with building a carrying device for moving goods up and down the Gully	G	Half way up the Escarpment, on a natural shelf
8	Attempt by British to improve the route	H	Peter Kalm
9	Duh'jih'heh'oh	I	The second and third stages
10	Swedish traveler who described the transport of goods up the Escarpment	J	Approximately 50 feet,

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ANSWER KEY

	Descriptions		Answers
1	Stages that were abandoned during the Revolutionary War	I	The second and third stages
2	The beginning of the third and final stage	G	Half way up the Escarpment, on a natural shelf
3	End of the third stage	E	The crest of the ridge
4	Distance from the Gully to the top of the bank	J	Approximately 50 feet,
5	Number of stages to manage the slope	F	Three
6	Carts or sleds drawn by ropes along wooden rails.	A	Cradles
7	A British lieutenant of the engineers, are credited with building a carrying device for moving goods up and down the Gully	B	John Montessor
8	Attempt by British to improve the route	C	Grading the Gully
9	Duh'jih'heh'oh	D	“to walk on all” fours”
10	Swedish traveler who described the transport of goods up the Escarpment	H	Peter Kalm

Reference

The Historical Marker Database: *The Cradles: British military engineering eases the ascent from the river to the top of the Escarpment*. At <http://www.hmdb.org/marker.asp?marker=66328>