



The Island of Seven Cities: Where the Chinese Settled When They Discovered North America

Paul Chiasson

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The gripping, marvel-filled account of how a native son took a casual walk up a mountain on Cape Breton Island and made an archeological discovery of world-shaking proportions.

In the summer of 2003, at home for his parents' fiftieth wedding anniversary, Paul Chiasson decided to climb a mountain he had never explored on the island where eight generations of his Acadian family had lived. Cape Breton is one of the oldest points of exploration and settlement in the Americas, with a history dating back to the first days of European discovery, and it is littered with the remnants of old settlements. But the road that Chiasson found that day was unique. Well-made and consistently wide, and at one time clearly bordered with stone walls, the road had been a major undertaking. In the two years of detective work that followed, Chiasson systematically surveyed the history of Europeans in North America, and came to a stunning conclusion: the ruins he stumbled upon did not belong to the Portuguese, the French or the English – in fact, they pre-dated John Cabot's "discovery" of the island in 1497.

Using aerial and site photographs, maps and drawings, and his own expertise as an architect, Chiasson carries the reader along as he pieces together the clues to one of the world's great mysteries. While tantalizing mentions can be found in early navigators' journals and maps, **The Island of Seven Cities** reveals for the first time the existence of a large Chinese colony that thrived on Canadian shores well before the European Age of Discovery.

Chiasson addresses how the colony was abandoned and forgotten, in the New World and in China, except in the storytelling and culture of the Mi'kmaq, whose written language, clothing, technical knowledge, religious beliefs and legends, he argues, expose deep cultural roots in China. **The Island of Seven Cities** unveils the first tangible proof that the Chinese were in the New World before Columbus.

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