

# **Borderlands**

**A Conference on  
The Alaska-Yukon  
Border**

**Whitehorse, Yukon**

**2-4 June 1989**

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### Borderlands Introduction

On June 2-4, 1989, a conference dealing with the Yukon/Alaska/B.C. border and the issues surrounding this border was held in Whitehorse, YT, Canada. This venture was jointly sponsored by the Yukon Historical and Museums Association (umbrella organization for Yukon Museums and Historical societies), Yukon College, The University of Victoria's Public History Group, and the Alaska Historical Society.

The Conference theme revolved around the history of the Yukon/Alaska and B.C./Alaska border, the impacts on people living in those regions, and the future significance of the border to northern peoples. Conference sessions were arranged by geographic regions from southern coastal areas through central areas, and north to the Arctic coast. Presentations within sessions were arranged in rough chronological order. Although a wide variety of information was presented for each region, uniform coverage for these areas spanning the entire time period from native pre-contact to present was not achieved.

In all, there were approximately one hundred and twenty people who attended the three day conference. Participants came from many areas within the Yukon and Alaska, as well as other parts of Canada and the lower 48 States, and ranged from Northern native elders to professors from Western and Eastern institutions. Approximately thirty five academic and non-academic speakers presented papers at

the conference on a broad range of topics.

Four separate speaking sessions were held over the weekend, as well as an opening film festival which took place on the Friday evening. The "Northern Heritage Film Festival" as it was entitled, saw a collection of works shown that dealt with Yukon/Alaska issues and relations of the past and present. This exhibition set the stage for the weekend conference, and gave participants a glimpse of what might be expected during the next two days. On Saturday, an overview session was held to set the context for the whole borderlands area and the history of the boundary itself. On Sunday, two thematic sessions were held; the first dealt with topics related to the boundary in Klondike Gold Rush times and the second was a session on contemporary issues concerning the boundary. The final session on Sunday dealt with debriefing participants and preparing summary comments. One Alaskan and one Yukoner presented their impressions on the conference and reflected on the conference theme.

The conference was a great success, and did prove to be the "exciting international, cultural, and educational" event as previously billed. One aspect of the conference which was of particular interest was the differing views people held as to what a borderline or boundary was-- particularly those of the aboriginal people in attendance who held a markedly different view of the border as being a harmful physical and cultural barrier compared to

many of the other speakers who were not as directly affected by its presence. Generally, however, the information that was presented and exchanged certainly contributed to an improved understanding of the borderline and the implications this boundary has for the people associated with it. As one speaker said, "Border lines mean many different things to different people." This sentiment was expressed repeatedly throughout the conference, and the underlying message seemed to be that a greater level of cross-border communication and cooperation on pertinent issues would be necessary in order to address the differences.

John Ryder  
YHMA

**Life in the Borderlands Area**

**Sam Williams**



Sam Williams:

Well, I am Sam Williams from Haines Junction. My word to you is Aishihik. We drove in after they closed the airport so I've been there since... Haines Junction, and I'm going to be there till the end. So it isn't what I see and what I've heard from the borders and other people in the old days, before the boundary people travel out... not like now when people travel by vehicle; people walked in those days. Borders mean nothing to them, they just spend a lot of time getting there but they do get there. What I see, since my time. People were so nice before; were good to one another, share with one another. Cooperation makes peace together and even a few decided to make houses. They came together and shared work. Nobody got paid, and everybody was happy that way. If another guy's house burns, they do the same, she works and he goes. It's a pretty good family home-- they love one another. After that, life goes on; I don't know how they can get the old picture in the homeroom. As soon as they get there, they bring that racket down there, which they don't need; people made a lot of Dutch home brew and now they would... they get drunk and make trouble with one another, argue with one another; that's when the haywire starts to come. People were so nice before so this can get people ordered, half ordered. Just want to talk about now and then... people trade in Keredonte. My grandfather, Chief Isaac, was in Aishihik at the time and he got special men for that. From the clubhouse, it's that kind of work; scrape and scrape. In Aishihik, they trade with



my grandfather. Another guy, another trader tried to go to Hutshi because he made him. Another one went down to Selkirk; that's a long way for him to come on the Selkirk but they get there by packing-- like stuff, like gunpowder and whatever knife or whatever they do trade for fur. It's like fox for it, but \$1600 for that type of fur at that time. So I... they came on trading till they, till the white people came and the first man here is Jack Dalton, he come through from Haines to the Lagaho, where the Haines Road is now. It's like he break that trail for these white people. And later, by the eighth time, he brought the cattle over these trails to go from Aishihik down to Selkirk; that's where they rafted the cattle from there to Dawson City. Some people who are pretty now a days... pretty hard to bring back the younger people; who never smoke, scratch, have trucks-- someone might come back. People listen all right, but they hang around with their groupies; they should work harder and raise their voices back again. I can't think of anything else to say; are there any questions?

**Question:** Mr. Williams, I just have one question. When that boundary was surveyed in your area, are there any stories that elders tell about meeting surveyors in your area? When the line in Champagne-Aishihik was actually cut through-- actually goes through the mountainous areas. But, did your people tell stories about meeting surveyors or knowing that a boundary was being established between their land and the Tlingit on the coast?

**Mr. Williams:** No such thing as a boundary in the old days and shortly after '98, after the rush in Dawson City they set it up; they'd record the time I guess. They sent a survey out to cut the line and survey over the Yukon and the boundary line at the same time. Before, there was no boundary line and we travelled back and forth. Alaska people, our people, coastal Indians from Haines; the names... I don't know the names, it doesn't make any difference, I guess. Up til '98 and up to this day God knows and we notice the boundary line.

**Sam William:** Thanks. I've got some funny stories about my... can I ask you to stay, make trick from the village. Too late, all right. Actually, in Haines Junction, I think grandpa usually visited trading posts, and there he may take dollars; nobody ever see one before. When they... he kind of head into Ontario and come to lakes, pass 2 lakes, 4th July right now and then grandpa says "Big ducks come, carry away." Now, I guess one old lady says "Big Duck sit." Yeah. He sat there-- cooked a rack right for 5 minutes, (a minute for dry meat) and said "take that old moose dry meat, big ducks going to eat it." So we ate them. Some parts weren't meat, it's grass. I guess that's all. Well, I'm glad to hear, see all you, all different people. Everytime I tell my story I don't add anything to it. I like to tell the story exactly what I hear and I... I've got a good memory, a good enough memory, like it's been written down so long since I've been a little fella. My mother told me "don't ever favour anybody, don't pick up anybody's

stuff." I still remember exactly the day now. It's a long time. When it was back a few years, it was good to see different people; some my friends, especially Kitty, having spent a good time with us in Aishihik - about 9 months, you said?

**Kitty:** Almost, I think.

**Sam Williams:** So, I see her many times, visit us so many times. So I'm happy to see her and trying to bring out the Indian language and I'm trying to do my best and explain what the words mean. So, God bless you. All of you. Praise the Lord.

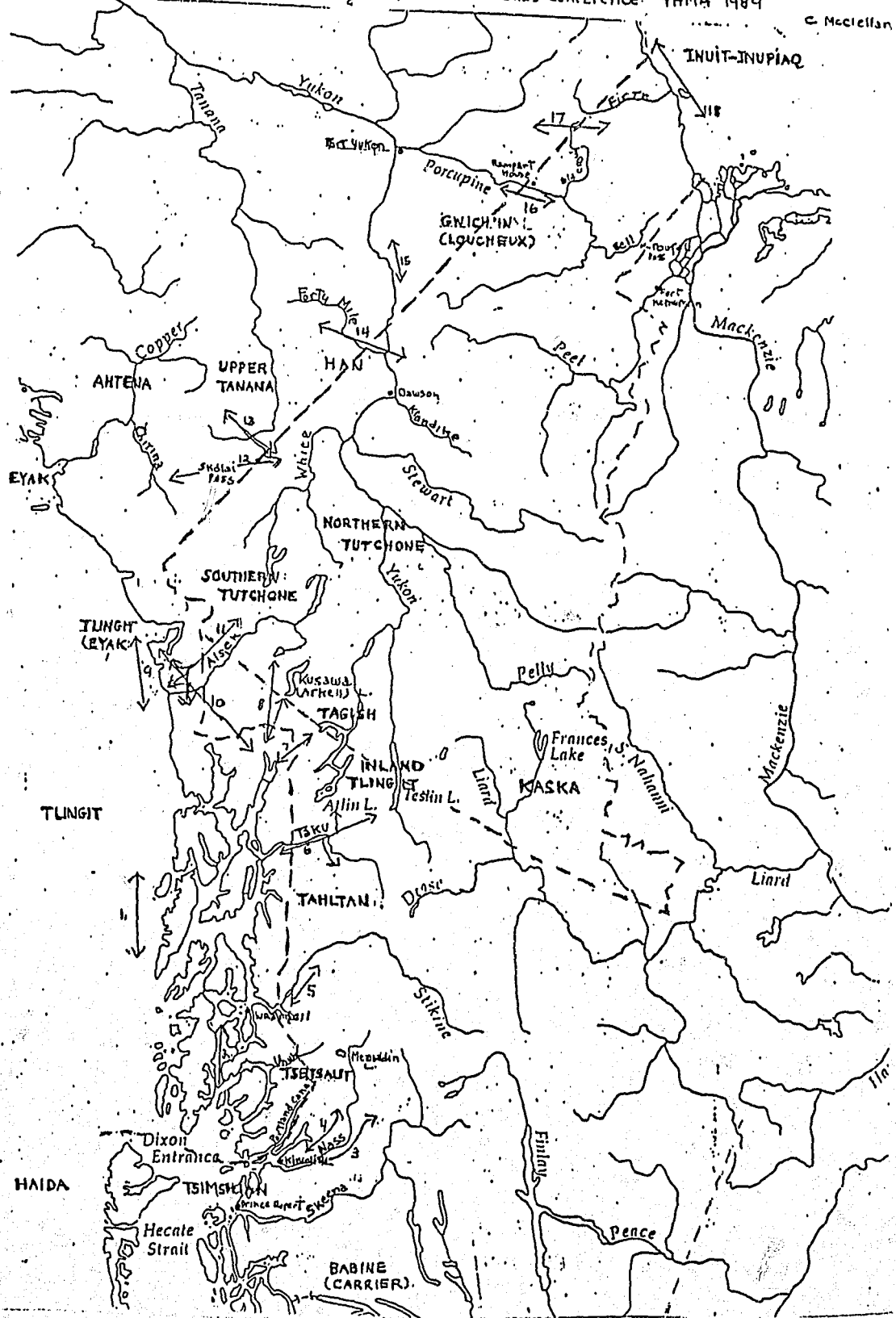
**Before Boundaries: People of Yukon/Alaska**

**Catharine McClellan**

Catharine McClellan: Before Boundaries: Peoples of Yukon/Alaska

Introduction:

Western geographers have long been accustomed to showing the surface of the earth in two dimensional graphic form - usually on parchment or paper. We can easily look at any political map to see the boundaries of past or present political entities of the world. So, if we are concerned with the international boundary between Alaska and Canada, first set in a rather theoretical way in 1825 when Alaska was claimed by Russia and Canada by Great Britain, we need but look at a map to see where it runs. For convenience, I have provided you with such a map (Fig. 1), though a rather rough one, cluttered up with "tribal" names and numbered arrows meant to indicate pre-contact trade routes. There you see the familiar border between northwestern Canada and Alaska. Starting at the Arctic Ocean, it follows longitude 141 slashing south through the arctic coastal plain into the British Mountains (part of the northwestern thrust of the great Cordillera), the highlands and interior flats where it crosses the Porcupine River, a major northern branch of the Yukon River. Then, skirting the edge of the Ogilvie Range to the east it drops down to and across the great Yukon River itself. Here, the river is still flanked on the east by the Ogilvies, but to the southwest the boundary line runs through open highland and valleys drained by tributaries such as the Forty Mile River.



1. S.E. Alaska Coast ( Tsimshian-Haida-Tlingit)
2. Southern S.E. Alaska-B.C. ( Tsimshian-Haida-Tlingit-Tsetsaut)
3. Nass River South (Tsimshian-Sekani-Babine)
4. Nass River North (Tsimshian-Tlingit-Tsetsaut-Tahltan)
5. Stikine River ( Wrangell Tlingit- Tahltan-Kaska-Tsetsaut)
6. Taku River ( Taku and Auk Tlingit-Inland Tlingit-Tahltan-Kaska-Sekani )
7. Chilkoot Pass ( Chilkoot Tlingit-Tagish-Southern Tutchone)
8. Chilkat Pass ( Chilkat Tlingit-Southern Tutchone-Northern Tutchone-Han)
9. Gulf of Alaska Coast ( Yakutat Tlingit-S.E. Alaska Tlingit-Tsimshian)
10. Chilkat-Yakutat Overland ( Chilkat Tlingit-Dry Bay Tlingit-Yakutat Tlingit)
11. Alsek River ( Yakutat Bay Tlingit- Dry Bay Tlingit- Southern Tutchone)
12. Skolai Pass ( Ahtena-Southern Tutchone-Northern Tutchone-Upper Tanana)
13. UpperTanana-White Rivers (Ahtena-Upper Tanana-Southern Tutchone-Northern Tutchone-Han)
14. Party Mile-Yukon Rivers (Han)
15. Yukon River (Han-Gwich'in)
16. Porcupine River (Gwich'in)
17. Porcupine River- Arctic Coast (Gwich'in-Inuit-Inupiaq)
18. Arctic Coast (Inuit-Inupiaq)



Next, 141 bisects the low divide between the headwaters of the Tanana and those of the White River - two other tributaries of the Yukon River which, in spite of their intertwined headwaters, enter the river hundreds of miles apart. Now the line runs on south through new sets of high, glaciated mountains, the easternmost parts of the Alaska range-- the Wrangell Range, the Chugach, and the St. Elias mountains. At Mt. St. Elias itself, the boundary finally abandons 141 to turn sharply southeast and skirt along the icy peaks behind the great Malaspina glacier and Yakutat Bay and to continue along the Pacific Coast Range around the head of Lynn Canal. It follows southeast along the Coast mountains until it reaches Portland Canal where it finally turns west out to sea south of Prince of Wales island at Dixon entrance. The border lands along the boundary thus contain arctic coastal and mountain tundra, bare rocky mountains with craggy peaks, glaciers and ice fields, boreal-forested plateaus and valleys, grassy meadows, swampy flatlands, Pacific rain forests, rivers and lakes, as well as Arctic and Pacific sea waters.

As Lew Green has explained in his splendid book, The Boundary Hunters (198:passim) the politics that created this line have been marked by considerable scientific competence, ingenuity, heroic devotion and hardship. The long time native inhabitants of Canada and Alaska, however, have surely construed what are today's borderlands somewhat differently than have the whites who in the nineteenth century divided up their country, and I have been asked



to comment particularly on the Yukon/Alaska native peoples "before boundaries."

We cannot, of course, hope to get back to such times except in a very fragmented way, let alone to the arrival of the very first inhabitants or the areas in question. But with the help of what their ancestors passed down orally to present day natives and what was recorded by the few whites who first coasted along the shores and then entered the country from various directions in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, we can perhaps ask some reasonable questions about what was happening in the present borderlands at the time of contact.<sup>1</sup> In a gathering such as this we will certainly gain new insights from both native and non-native scholars.

#### Tribal and Linguistic Considerations

In order to talk in some shorthand way about the many aboriginal groups involved we have to have some labels, for the indians of northern Canada never all had exactly the same cultures or languages even though there was often more of a continuum between traditional native groups than is suggested by the customary "tribal" names that appear in text books, law cases, and

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<sup>1</sup> The times of first contacts with whites and the dates when the boundaries were drawn up were not, of course, the same. For a brief history of some of the first contacts in Yukon, see McClellan, 1988: 63-84

on maps. But be that as it may, using the names that western anthropologists usually employ today<sup>2</sup>, I have shown on my working map the major native groups who two centuries ago were probably living on or near today's international boundary.

Starting this time in the south, the groups to be considered are Tsimshian, Haida, and Tlingit-- who traditionally were coastal fishermen, hunters, and gatherers; the Tsetsaut, Tahltan, inland Tlingit, Tagish, Southern Tutchone, and Northern Tutchone. Atna, Upper Tanana, Han, Gwich' In (Loucheux or Kutchin)-- who traditionally were inland fishermen, hunters and gatherers, although by the nineteenth century a handful of Athapaskan Tsetsaut may have reached the coast, perhaps from a Kaska homeland (Danjeli, 1986; Duff, 1981)<sup>3</sup>; and the Inuit-Inupiaq (Eskimo)-- who traditionally were sea mammal and caribou hunters, but not exactly

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<sup>2</sup> The best terminology for northern native groups is a matter of debate. The loose social structure of the past makes "tribe" a questionable term. As noted in this paper, the "tribal" terms used today by anthropologists are based primarily on linguistic considerations. Modern native groups increasingly prefer to use native terms of designation, often meaning "people." For further discussion of this complex problem see, for example, Osgood, 1936; McClellan, 1964, 1970, 1975 a: 13-16, 1988: 40-43; Helm, 1981: 1-4; VanStone, 1974: 7-22

<sup>3</sup> Duff suggests that inland Athapaskans several times pushed out to the sea, but could not adapt to life on the lower rivers and coast (Duff, 1981: 454-457). Tutchone speakers apparently once lived along the lower Alsek River and at Dry Bay and as far west as the Akwe River on the Alaskan coast but were displaced by the expanding Tlingit, perhaps not too long before white contact (deLaguna 1972: 81-82; McClellan, 1975 A: 23-24)

the same groups who were attracted there in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century heyday of the Herschel Island whaling activity.<sup>4</sup>

The "tribes" shown do not correspond to tightly organized political units of the past. Instead, they are based almost wholly on linguistic considerations, and six major language families are represented by this "tribal" list: Tsimshian, Haida, Tlingit, Athapaskan, Eyak, and Inuit-Inupiaq.<sup>5</sup> Some of these families have been grouped into super-families such as Na-Dene or Penutian, the validity of which we need not pause to debate (Krauss and Golla, 1981). We should note, however, that within each language there are dialectical differences, and that within the Athapaskan language family, there are mutually unintelligible languages. Eastern and a western Gwich' In dialects are distinctly different,

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<sup>4</sup> The western limits of the former Mackenzie Delta Eskimo are still in dispute, even for post contact times. Petitot put them variously at the Colville River, Point Barrow, and Herschel Island, and Stefansson at the western edge of the Mackenzie delta; others, at Demarcation Point or Barter Island. There may have been on Mackenzie Eskimo on the Alaskan coast, even though it was an important trade area. After the short lived and traumatic whaling era on the north coast between 1898-1908, the large Mackenzie Delta Inuit population went into a rapid decline. By 1920 they had mostly died out, but in 1906 there had been a great influx of Alaskan Eskimos from the Colville River in Alaska. they began to move into the delta to trap furs. Other Eskimos and Indians joined them in the Aklavik and Inuvik areas of today. See D.J. Smith, 1984 for further details

<sup>5</sup> See Krauss, 1980

and when they first meet, neither a Tutchone or a Han Indian can easily "hear" a Gwich' In speaker. On the other hand, most northern indians are skilled practical linguists, quickly learning the languages of those with whom they come into contact for one reason or another, whether or not the languages involved belong to the same or quite different language families. With respect to borderlands, however, it would be very interesting to know whether major physical barriers may have helped to create boundaries between those who now speak markedly different languages, or alternatively, whether possession of markedly different languages ever dictated "borderlands" so to speak, between native groups in the past.

In the interior, the greatest linguistic continuity across the present international boundary occurs in precisely those areas where mountain barriers are least. For example, though they have dialectical variations, both Han and Gwich'In speakers straddle 140 east to west as do Inuit-Inupiaq on the arctic coast. No major ranges divide these speakers of common languages. The Han and the Gwich'In could travel relatively easily across the present boundary either by foot or down the Yukon and Porcupine Rivers in their finely crafted birch canoes, just as the Inuit-Inupiaq could walk or travel by skin boats along the Arctic coast. But if we consider the matter from north to south, Han and Gwich'In, and Gwich'In and Inuit-Inupiaq are quite different languages are are spoken in areas separated by significant mountain barriers, (especially in Yukon)

though linked by several passes, and in the case of the Gwich'In and the Inuit, by the Peel River which flows into the Mackenzie.

On the Pacific coast, the Tsimshian, Haida and Tlingit all live in roughly the same kind of natural environment and speakers of each of these three languages converge at just about today's international boundary at Dixon Entrance. Other Tsimshian and Tlingit lived from south to north along the lower reaches of widely spaced major rivers draining from the interior or near smaller streams in villages tucked into the coves and inlets of the mountainous mainland and islands strung from beyond Prince Rupert to Yakutat Bay. The Haida were out on the Queen Charlotte Islands. Yet, all of these coastal communities with their three very diverse languages could be relatively easily reached by water travel. Extensive and rugged foot travel was required only to reach the Athapaskan speakers across the Coastal Mountain passes. In short, although there appears to be some correlation between language boundaries and physical barriers, the correlation is by no means absolute. As always, complex factors of history and culture need to be considered, if we are to understand what lies behind the maps of recent linguistic distributions, and we do not yet have the data we need (Krauss, 1982).

#### Native Concepts of Their Land

Having laid out these rather static and scrappy descriptive

"facts" (or assumptions?) about the native peoples who lived in the borderlands at about the time of contact, we can now turn to several tantalizing questions derived from trying to think ourselves back into earlier cultural dynamics of these societies. One fascinating problem is how traditional natives of the borderlands actually visualized their land and learned to find their way about in the past.

Plate 59 of Volume One of The Historical Atlas of Canada shows two maps of north central Canada drawn in 1801 and 1802 by two different Blackfeet Indians, and one drawn by an Athapaskan Chipewyan indian called Cot aw ney yaz zah. His map, drawn in 1810, shows the way to travel by canoe between Churchill River and Lake Athabasca - including different outward and return routes so that the traveller could avoid bad currents and other such hazards (Moodie, 1987). A forthcoming article by June Helm discusses an even earlier Chipewyan map drawn by the famous chief Matonabee who guided Samuel Hearne to the Coppermine River in 1770-72. This map, drawn in 1770, shows the route from Churchill to the Arctic ocean. Helm argues very convincingly that Matonabee's map is remarkably accurate if properly read as a guide to the drainage systems in relation to the coastline, and not as an effort to show a landmass on a north-south, east-west grid (Helm, in press).

Fortunately, we also have some early native maps from our area of particular interest. These are the maps drawn by the Chilkat



Chief Kohklux and his wives at Klukwan in 1869, showing a version of the Chilkat trade routes into and returning from Yukon (No. 8 on my work map) (Johnson, 1984). Another map, drawn by the Gwich'In Indian, Paul Kandik in 1880 for the trader, Paul Mercier shows the present border area near Dawson and includes the country of the Han, Upper Tanana and Tutchone people (Mercier, 1986: endpapers, 88-90). Some of you may have been lucky enough to see the originals of the large Kohklux and the Kandik map in an exhibit here in Whitehorse sponsored by the Yukon Historical and Museums Association in 1987 to commemorate the Yukon Expedition of 1887.

Certainly neither map shows the international boundary nor borders of any kind, though they do designate a few physiographic features and quite a number of specific camps or villages. Like the Chipewyan maps, these Alaska-Yukon maps also appear to be remarkably accurate if one keeps in mind that the basic interest of their creators was to depict specific routes of travel between specific places. Because of this, I doubt if going round and round on his too small piece of paper, which Kohklux did on his first try with pencil and paper bothered him nearly as much as it did the geographer Davidson, who commissioned the map (Johnson, 1984: 12).

I wish we had many more such documents,<sup>6</sup> including all the

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<sup>6</sup> The Chilkat also drew a sketch map of the trail from the coast to Fort Selkirk for Captain Dodd of the Hudson's Bay trading ship who was in touch with Robert Campbell at Fort Selkirk through letters carried by Chilkat traders (see McClellan, 1950: 181)



ephemeral maps that native traders of the borderlands drew on Alexander Murray's sandbox at Fort Yukon in the 1840s (Murray, 1910), not to mention the drawings in the dirt made by Kohklux (Johnson 1984: 12). But most of all I would like to know whether these two dimensional graphics were a purely historical development resulting from the interests of fur traders and explorers for whom they were drawn. Did native people ever make visual maps before the whites asked them to? And, if they did, did they ever try to represent the entire country over which they ranged for their livelihood and which they thought of as their own? I suspect that the shamanic maps made by Atna and Beaver Athapaskans showing the universe or the routes to a supernatural realm above were all relatively late-- some may have even been inspired by the special knowledge that white men's maps appeared to incorporate.<sup>7</sup> In any case, they were certainly of a different order than on-the-ground route maps, and the question remains whether the cognitive knowledge that the pre-contact indians had of the aerial limits and nature of the land that they covered in their usual seasonal travels was gained by looking at or making graphics in whatever medium, or whether-- as seems more likely-- they learned the landscape only by constant travel over it and by repeatedly telling

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<sup>7</sup> Information about the Atna shamanic maps is in fieldnotes of de Laguna and McClellan, 1954, 1958. For Beaver maps of trails to heaven see Brody, 1982: 44-48. I do not attempt to discuss here the "Catholic Ladder", the Algonkian "maps" of scapulimancy, or the mid-eighteenth Naskapi "map" painted on hide, though all are relevant to the problem at hand. (See Helm, Rogers and Smith, 1981: 149, Fig. 2; Rogers and Leacock, 1981: 184, Fig. 10; Philips, 1987: 58-59)

and hearing about it.

It is clear that every important feature of the Yukon and Alaska landscape has a native name and a story associated with it. Older natives memorized the information so well that when they had to go places they had never been before, they still could recognize the land marks and get to where they wanted to go. Texts by Athapaskan elders demonstrate again and again how thoroughly the landscape was "recited" in oral tradition. I think, for example, of Sam Williams telling me in detail about the Tutchone country around Aishihik, and of Gertie Tom on Little Salmon country (Tom, 1987), of Angela Sidney on Tagish country (Sidney, 1980) in Yukon; of Belle Herbert on travelling in the Porcupine River homeland of the Gwich'In on both sides of the border and around Fort Yukon and other places in Alaska (Herbert, 1982); of Katherine Peter on the Chandalar Gwich'In country (Peter, 1981), Adam Sanford and Katie and Fred Johns Sr. on Upper Atna country (Karl, 1986), Shem Pete on Upper Inlet Tanana country (Karl and Fall, 1987) all in Alaska. I remember Yukon native elders organizing the telling of their old stories to me as if they were travelling a route through a country in much the same way that Crow once travelled through the world after he had made it, leaving his marks everywhere for humans to see. I think too of the many accounts of hunting and trapping trips, complete with detailed descriptions of the natural phenomena encountered en route, that every young native hears again and again. In short, I believe that in the interior anyway, native

concepts of the land and practical guides to it in pre-contact times stemmed largely from internalized oral traditions and not from external graphic representations which, perhaps, they never made at all.

But there is still that question of just what the traditional natives actually internalized in their mind's eye when they were thinking about their land? Was it as if one were looking all around from the top of a hill or mountain at a vast expanse of land spread out in all directions? Or was it always like a string of places and landmarks along a trail or a waterway? Or was it in some other way? I hope that we may have a chance to learn something about this from the natives present.

As for the coastal peoples-- what was most important to them where there could be few deeply worn trails on land and none on the water? How did they "recite" the coast? Was it from harbour to harbour, from mountain peak to mountain peak, headland to headland? In addition to the formal clan histories, which do indeed follow the migrations of clan ancestors from place to place, was there also a body of skilled navigators traditions passed on by constant repetition from individual to individual? I believe that there was (F. deLaguna, 1960: 16-23; 1972: 209-291).<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> See for example the Tlingit story of Kaax'achgook (Sidney, 1988: 13-15)

Native Borderlands

Whatever the answers to these questions may be, and whether or not I am right in thinking that neither interior or coastal natives ever shared the western cartographers idea that land and water masses should be laid out on maps as visual wholes, both the late arriving creators or current political boundaries and the precontact natives did share a common recognition that major physiographic features created important borderlands. The indians were well aware that mountain ranges or various drainages separated differing ecological niches and raw resources. In the past, the native inhabitants tried to control the resources that were within their country. In this sense, there were certainly pre-contact borderlands, which often corresponded to, but sometimes differed from the "tribal" and linguistic "boundaries" discussed earlier.

To be sure, the native peoples never conceived of slashing continuous clear-cut boundary lines around entire blocks of land and whatever was contained within them, but there is little doubt that local groups usually thought of themselves as exclusive stewards of their own homelands and whatever natural wealth was contained within them. On the Pacific coast, clan chiefs and their followers frequently contended for the richest oolichon fishing, sea otter, or sealing grounds. Powerful coastal groups also vied with each other for the products of the interior. The rivalry and fighting between Tsimshian clan heads to control rivers and passes

that led to particular inland villages (Cove and MacDonald, 1987) is very reminiscent of the rivalry between certain Taku, Chilkat and Chilkoot clan chiefs for control of the inland trade. All over the northern British Columbia and southeast Alaskan coast powerful native kin groups made sure to mark with their family crests the passes to the interior to which they laid claim. They also displayed their crests in the inland villages or fish camps where they thought they had the exclusive right to trade.

I do not know exactly where the Tlingit face carved in the tree trunk that is shown on our program cover is located-- but I gather it is a Coastal Tlingit clan mark of control of one of the routes into the interior.<sup>9</sup> Another such carving is on display in the Visitors Center of Kluane National Park, and Aishihik Indians and others have told me of a painting or carving of a Crow made as a clan crest, perhaps by coastal Tlingit traders at Lost River, (a settlement on a branch of the Takhini where he said the ancestors of Aishihik and Hutshi people once stayed). I hope that we will hear more at this conference about these markers which in a sense were validating signs of an alien visitor who had crossed into foreign lands. In any case, both Tlingit and Tutchone oral traditions suggest that there were quite a few such carvings on the trails across the coast range and meeting places for trade showing just who had the rights to use them. We heard something about this

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<sup>9</sup> The only published picture of this carving that I know is in Leechman, 1950: 259

from Haines Tlingit on the 1987 occasion of the Kohklux and Kandik map display. In one sense such carvings or pictographs could be construed as boundary markers.

Directly relevant to any discussion of coast-interior boundaries and trade is another plate in the Historical Atlas of Canada which shows in great detail what is known of the various trade routes of the Tsimshian just before contact times, who traded with whom and what products were exchanged in each direction (MacDonald, Coupland and Archer, 1987; See also Cove and MacDonald, 1987).

The plate is a mine of information and I have borrowed its format to some extent to show where there were major precontact trade routes all along and across the international boundaries under consideration today. I, however, do not try to show the routes in detail or others that did not cross current political borders, nor do I list the products exchanged, as MacDonald and his associates have done. That would be a long paper in itself.<sup>10</sup> But we may at least note that many, though not quite all, of the materials that were traded between the interior and the Pacific

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<sup>10</sup> we still know so little about shifts in routes and products at different periods of time over this area in the past that I feared ending up with a fragmentary and basically timeless picture having very little real correspondence to what went on in real history. I am, however, working up what routes, lists and probable data I can for trade and travel throughout all of northwestern North America

coast in pre-contact and early contact times were perishable; for example sea weed, dried clams, oolichon grease, seal skins, seal oil, sea shells, and cedar boxes were exchanged for tanned moose and caribou hides, furs, mountain goat hair, quill work, lichen dyes, spruce gum, and soap berries (de Laguna, 1972: 348, McClellan, 1975a: 501-518; 1988: 235).

On the Arctic coast, walrus hide lines and ivory were sometimes traded across the international boundary for wolverine skins from the interior (McClellan, 1964; McClellan et. al, 1988: 233), but such goods leave little archaeological record, and for the most part we know about precontact trade only through oral traditions. This is also true of the interior, and on the whole, we know less about the loci, control and precontact trade of resources across the present international boundaries that now separate native peoples of the interior from each other than we do about the situation for coast and interior, especially with respect to perishable goods. The western Gwich'In of the Yukon Flats in Alaska prized Yukon Gwich'In caribou, for they had none in their country (McClellan, 1988: 233-34), and the Upper Tanana of the White River headwaters in Alaska and Tutchone who lived in the Shakwak valley of southwestern Yukon, traded with Tutchone and Han of the Yukon River for birchwood to make arrow shafts (Johnson and Raup 1964: 196)

Yet another plate from the Atlas, however, shows important



distribution centers of non-perishable materials in both interior and coastal northwestern America (Wright and Carlson, 1981). Finds from early archaeological sites suggest that obsidian from Batza Tena on the Koyukuk River in western Alaska and from Mount Edziza in Tahltan country in British Columbia was traded from about 9000 B.C. until contact throughout what now constitutes present day Alaska, Yukon, British Columbia and the Mackenzie River valley of the Northwest Territories.

As shown on the plate, and particularly relevant to this conference, is the upper White River-Skolai Pass area, the center of distribution for the Kletsan copper. Kletsan Creek (or River) flows from the Natazhat glacier in the Yukon thirteen miles into the White River on the Alaska side of the border (Orth, 1967: 530).<sup>11</sup> Copper from this general location was traded west to the Kenai peninsula and southwest to Yakutat Bay in Alaska, north and northeast to the upper Peel River and southeast to the southern lakes of the Yukon. The copper was a major attraction for the Atna, Tanana, and Tutchone indians who lived closest to it, not to mention the Chugach Eskimo and Tlingit of the coast. Ultimately it seems to have been the lure that drew the Tlingit up to Yakutat Bay where they could get it from the inland Atna, and the Lynn Canal

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<sup>11</sup> Franklin, Badone, Gotthardt and Yorga (1981: 5-6) write that: "The copper-bearing basalts of the Copper River-White River regions follow the St. Elias Range from the vicinity of Kluane Lake northwest into Alaska and the Copper River area. In the White River-Kluane area copper is found on nearly all the creeks on the northeast slopes of the St. Elias mountains."

Tlingit were apparently crossing the mountain passes into Yukon for it (de Laguna, 1972: 90,112,115,177,348,349). William Workman found 15 copper items at the archaeological site of Chimi, an old Tutchone settlement on the road into Aishihik just above the present day dam and six other pieces were recovered from this general area (Franklin et al. 1981: 125, Workman, 1978: 344-349). There is some question as to how much of this copper was controlled by the Atna and traded by them to the Upper Tanana and Tutchone, or how much each group collected on it's own (de Laguna and McClellan 1981; 645; McClellan, 1975 a: 255,509, Franklin et al. 1981: 125; McKennan, 1959: 58,129).

The area where the Kletsan copper was centered was one where we know that there was considerable political tension during the early and midnineteenth century, for this is where some of the events in what Atan and Upper Tanana elders often title "The War between Canada and Alaska" took place, although the international boundary line per se certainly had nothing to do with the "war." The fighting occurred after the Coast Indians had begun to bring white man's trade goods into the interior, and the references to Alaska and Yukon are simply a shorthand way of indicating that the hostilities were between Upper Tanana (and perhaps some Atna and Tanana allies) and Tutchone of Dalton Post and Burwash. The cause was ostensibly a quarrel over an Upper Tanana woman who had married a Dalton Post Tutchone and run away and also an insult to an Upper Tanana Chief took place when Dalton Post people were trading with

their more inland neighbours.<sup>12</sup>

Control of copper was evidently not a major factor in this particular feud, which probably had much more to do with gaining access to white men's trade goods. Still, we may ask whether the events somehow built on earlier attempts to monopolize the copper sources. Or was access to copper open to all who came seeking it in the kind of pattern associated with what interior peoples called "free" hunting areas? These were usually physiographically determined buffer zones where migratory game abounded at certain seasons. We know, for example, that at the end of the nineteenth century Upper Tanana and Han (and perhaps some Tutchone) all used to gather to hunt caribou in the alpine tundra of the Forty Mile highlands on both sides of the present border (McKenna, 1981: 565). On the Arctic slope the Gwich'in and Inuit-Inupiaq also hunted together for these herd animals (McClellan, 1988: 284). Such "free" lands stood in contrast to the home territories which were usually specific drainages or parts of them that particular bands or local segments of Tlingit style clans claimed to be their own. Apparently a non-band member, and certainly a stranger-- someone whose language or appearance was different from that of persons in the local groups or nearby bands-- had to ask if he wished to hunt, fish, trap or make use of other resources in such

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<sup>12</sup> For a few published versions of this widely told story see McClellan 1975a: 510; McKenna, 1959, 171-172; Workman 1978: 95. I have collected more than a dozen versions of it in McClellan field notes, 1962-1989)

places, but in ties and other considerations meant that it was almost always granted. Except in times of starvation the request and affirmative reply were pretty much a courtesy exercise in the recognition and acknowledgement of a given group's stewardship of a particular segment of country, determined by long time occupation and exploitation, rather than by boundary lines as such (McClellan, 1975a: 482-487; 1975b: 191-192, 206-210, 218-221, 226-227, 238-240; 1988: 175-177). In any case, I look forward to learning much more about the nineteenth century Copper Chief who seems at one time to have controlled access to the Kletsan copper by Yukon Indians and to hearing whatever Mrs. Johns and her daughter Lou Johns Penikett or other members of the Burwash Landing, White River and Northway Indian bands may have to tell us about the past history of this particular border area.

#### Conclusion

What I have been saying is just a start on the many questions that have to do with borderlands-- physiographic, linguistic, social and political-- in pre-contact times. It is evident that I have not been able to give firm answers to even a limited number of them. Native and non-native historians of the future will probably help us out on this score. For now, I want to close by saying that many of the old time Yukon natives have volunteered at different times how very much they dislike the current international and inter

national boundaries and the rules and regulations that came with them. From the native point of view they seem completely arbitrary and unnecessary. I give you but two of many instances of expression with respect to the boundaries. In 1977, old Frank Sidney of Teslin said:

"The Alaskan Indians used to come here. They used to come here too, way down from the Mackenzie and all the way down to the salt water. And there was no boundary lines then. We owned the country. And white people divided us between each other-- you and your brother-- between B.C. and the Alaska line, between B.C. and the Yukon. That one was pretty bad! (McClellan, 1988: 277)

Or, as Tommy Peters put it:

"And another thing, we never used to have a boundary line here at B.C. We never see a boundary line anywhere! (McClellan, 1988: 278)

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**Drawing the Line: Significant Events in the History  
of the Yukon/Alaska Boundary**

**Lewis Green**

Lewis Green:

Drawing the Line - A Brief History of the Alaska Boundary

The Alaska boundary is defined in Articles III and IV of the Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1825:

III. The line of demarcation between the possessions of the High Contracting Parties, upon the coast of the continent, and the islands of America to the north-west, shall be drawn in the manner following:

Commencing from the southernmost point of the island called Prince of Wales Island, which point lies in the parallel of 54 degrees 40 minutes, north latitude, and between the 131st and 133rd degree of west longitude, the said line shall ascend to the north along the channel called Portland Channel, as far as the point of the continent where it strikes the 56th degree of north latitude; from this last mentioned point, the line of demarcation shall follow the summit of the mountains situated parallel to the coast as far as the point of intersection of the 141st degree of west longitude; and, finally, from the said point of intersection, the said meridian line of the 141st degree, in its prolongation as far as the Frozen Ocean, shall form the limit between the Russian and British possessions on the continent of America to the north-west.

IV. With reference to the line of demarcation laid down in



the preceding article it is understood:

1. That the island called Prince of Wales Island shall belong wholly to Russia.

2. That whenever the summit of the mountains which extend in a direction parallel to the coast, from the 56th degree of north latitude to the point of intersection of the 141st degree of west longitude, shall prove to be at the distance of more than 10 marine lengths (about 34.5 miles or 55.6 kilometres) from the ocean, the limit between the British possessions and the line of coast which is to belong to Russia, as above mentioned, shall be formed by a line parallel to the windings of the coast, and which shall never exceed the distance of 10 marine leagues there from.

There is nothing more; it has never been revised or replaced. Disputes that continue to this day are over the interpretation of the wording dealing with the southern or Panhandle portion of the boundary.

Need for a treaty to separate Russian and British interests on both sea and land went back to 1821 when a Ukase, or edict, by Tsar Alexander prohibited foreign ships from approaching within 100 miles of the coast in a huge arc that swept from just north of the tip of Vancouver Island around the Bering Sea and along the Siberian coast almost to the Japanese islands. Negotiations began

in late summer 1823 and soon after there was agreement that the land boundary should be in the form of a Panhandle and that from some point the line should follow a meridian of longitude north to the Arctic coast. The Panhandle would keep the British well inland from the Russian settlements on the islands of Alexander Archipelago while the line along the meridian would protect British fur trading interests at the mouth of the Mackenzie River. From the beginning, Russia insisted that her southern boundary should lie about 55 degrees north latitude and refused to budge. Tsar Paul had given this boundary in his Ukase of 1799 granting rights to the Russian-American Company and his son, Tsar Alexander, had no intention of settling for anything less. Britain, after originally suggesting a line along the 135th meridian of longitude, had retaliated by shifting the proposed line westward to 139, 140 and finally to the 141st meridian of the treaty. Unknown to the negotiators the Klondike gold field lay in the strip added to British territory!

Surprisingly, the first attempt to mark the new boundary was made along the shore of the Arctic Ocean in the summer of 1826 with explorer John Franklin holding a brief ceremony and depositing a tin box containing a royal silver medal and an account of his expedition beneath a pile of drift timber.

In mid-June 1834, there was an incident between Hudson's Bay traders and the Russians at the site of present-day Wrangell. The

former, led by Peter Skene Ogden, arrived aboard the brig, Dryad, intent on ascending the Stikine River to establish a post on British territory. Ogden was certain that the Russians were prepared to use force to prevent him from doing so despite an article in the 1825 Treaty affording freedom of navigation on rivers crossing the boundary line. An added complication was the arrival of a party of Tlingit Indians who made it quite clear that no one was to interfere with their role as middlemen in the trade with the Interior Indians on the Stikine. Ogden gave up his attempt and recriminations between Britain and Russia followed. The incident was finally closed in 1839 when the Hudson's Bay Company abandoned their claim for damages as one of the conditions of a lease that gave them control of much of the mainland portion of the Panhandle. The lease, extended for varying periods, remained in force until the United States purchased Alaska in 1867.

Minor incidents followed the purchase, the first in 1869 when Captain Raymond of the United States Army was ordered to Fort Yukon to determine if the Hudson's Bay post lay in American territory. His approximate longitude determination confirmed the trespass and the company's personnel were ordered to cease trading and to leave Alaska. Canada, having taken over the British territory in 1871, was involved in an incident on the Stikine River in September 1876 when a convict, Peter Martin, escaped briefly from his Canadian captors and at a later trial in Victoria, B.C. insisted that the incident had taken place in Alaska. The upshot

was a flurry of diplomatic correspondence and, in March 1877, a Canadian surveyor, Joseph Hunter, was dispatched to the Stikine to make an interpretation of the 1825 Treaty and to fix the location of Martin's escape. He marked what he considered the boundary line at the Great Bend of the Stikine River and put the site of the escape about 8.5 miles within Alaska. Martin was released and within a year both the United States and Canada had accepted Hunter's line as their temporary boundary pending a final decision and a survey.

With more and more would-be placer miners making their way north each year both the Canadian and United States governments were becoming aware of the need to mark the boundary. Surveyors could start work along the 141st meridian at any time but nothing could be done in the Panhandle until agreement was reached on the meaning of the 1825 Treaty. The American approach was straight forward; simply measure the ten marine league limit along the major rivers and from the heads of the inlets while the Canadians maintained that the summit of the mountains lay close to the coast and that the line should cross many of the inlets. The problem was maps; reasonably accurate ones of the coastline were available but there was next to nothing in the way of good topographic maps that would show the summits.

The break came in 1892 when an agreement between the United States and Great Britain, the latter acting on Canada's behalf,

agreed to a joint survey of much of the mainland portion of the Panhandle. Field work was carried out between 1893 and 1895 with the American parties working mainly along the river channels and obtaining the data needed to provide a suitable base for plotting the new mapping. The Canadian parties carried the surveys inland using photo-topographic methods to extend their mapping into the mountains and glaciers to the east of their camera stations. The survey data was pooled but each side produced their own maps; the Americans simple ones with mountains and glaciers indicated by crude sketches and the Canadians preliminary topographic maps with contour lines at a 250 foot interval. No negotiations followed. At the time the maps were completed, the United States and Great Britain were involved in a bitter boundary dispute in South America and neither party was anxious to raise a new issue.

The Klondike rush of 1897-98 caught both countries partially prepared. In the Klondike region, William Ogilvie, a Canadian government surveyor, had located and marked the 141st meridian to the west of the new find, Canada had a police post nearby and a set of mining regulations was in place. The majority of stampeders were Americans but aside from some loose talk they accepted Canadian control. In the Skagway area to the south, the Mounted Police occupied the passes in February 1898 and a confrontation was avoided when the American military agreed that the boundary must lie in the passes rather than at the ten marine limit beyond as claimed by their customs officials. Temporary measures, including

the marking of provisional boundaries, were the order of the day until January 1903 when a treaty signed in Washington fixed a timetable to resolve the boundary dispute.

The treaty called for a tribunal consisting of "six impartial jurists of repute" each of whom would consider the arguments and evidence and "decide thereupon according to his true judgment." The United States were represented by Senator Henry Cabot Lodge, former Senator George Turner and Elihu Root, Secretary of War. Great Britain, acting on behalf of Canada which was still not a fully independent country, was represented by Lord Alverstone, Britains Lord Chief Justice and two Canadians, Sir Louis Jette, Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec, and Allen Aylesworth, a Toronto lawyer.

A time clock began ticking when the treaty was ratified: up to two months to supply a written case, a further two months for a written counter-case and a final two months for a written argument. Following this, the Tribunal would meet in London to hear oral arguments with the final decision expected within three months. Once again, the United States claimed a line ten marine leagues inland from tidewater and Britain, a line joining mountain summits close to the coast and cutting across the inlets. Both were bluffing, asking more than they expected to obtain.

Behind the scenes there was political pressure, much of it



coming from President Theodore Roosevelt and directed towards Lord Alverstone. The decision was to be by majority vote and if, as it seemed likely, it came down to three Americans against the two Canadians Alverstone's vote would decide between an American victory or deadlock. Alverstone kept his distance from his fellow tribunal members and both sides suspected him of favoring the other. Towards the end of the oral arguments it became clear that Lord Alverstone wanted a compromise line following the summits near the heads of the inlets but leaving the latter in United States territory. Somewhat earlier, he had handed down his written opinion that four islands at the mouth of "Portland Channel" should go to Canada.

The tribunal members held a week of private meetings at the conclusion of the oral arguments. Alverstone, under increasing pressure, refused to budge from his selected mountain summits but the break came when he announced that he now favored awarding two of the islands at the mouth of Portland Channel to the United States. Alverstone never discussed the reasons for his about-face but George Turner may have bluffed him. On that Saturday morning the two Canadians watched suspiciously as a series of hurried conferences took place between Alverstone and one or the other of Lodge and Root and the pair may well have been bearing the message that Turner refused to sign unless the islands were split. Years later, Turner wrote that when he returned to Washington when the Tribunal ended President Roosevelt told Turner that he believed him

"the only individual in all the history of the United States who, by his own unaided exertions, either secured or saved to this Country a single inch of territory."

When the tribunal members reconvened on Monday, the experts had completed marking a compromise line on the big contour maps prepared by the Canadian surveyors between 1893 and 1895 and still the best available. Even these did not go far enough inland and for a distance of about 120 miles, the boundary was left blank. There were minor changes including one where the Americans had purposely moved the line on the Stikine River inland from the Provisional Boundary of 1877 anticipating that Alverstone would move it back. Then when the maps were marked, Aylesworth reminded them that Mount Fairweather had been mentioned in early correspondence on the boundary and the line was brought to the south to include the peak. None of them could have suspected that from time to time a glacier would retreat across the revised line giving Canada tidewater at the head of Tarr Inlet.

The Tribunal Award was a victory for the United States and, in a way, for Great Britain since a cause of friction between the two countries had been removed but in Canada it left a legacy of bitterness. Even today, most Canadians believe that Britain is somehow to blame for the Alaska Panhandle cutting off almost half of British Columbia from the ocean. Yet, even if the British claim had been accepted in full, the Panhandle would be simply a slimmed-

down version of its present form. The root cause is the splitting of the four islands in the Portland Canal area. The real loss there was not a mere six or so square miles of territory but rather Canada's only hope of saving face in the negotiations.

Following the 1903 Award, surveyors of both countries set to work to map and monument the Alaska boundary both in the Panhandle and north along the 141st meridian to the Arctic Ocean. A remarkable group of men working under near-impossible conditions had the task essentially complete by the end of the 1913 field season.

On land, the Alaska boundary was quickly accepted once it was marked on the ground. It was not so on the water where the United States refused to accept the 1903 Award's A-B Line in Dixon Entrance. Latterly, new differences have arisen as the United States and Canada seek to extend their boundaries seaward to a new 200-mile limit. There is no help from the past, neither the 1825 Treaty nor the 1903 Award offer any guidance as to where the new boundaries should run.

Lew Green  
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**The Dryad Affair: Corporate Warfare and Anglo-Russian  
Rivalry for the Alaskan Lisiere**

**J.W. Shelest**

## **The Dryad Affair: Corporate Warfare and Anglo-Russian Rivalry for the Alaskan Lisière**

### The Dryad Affair

One usually finds that a discussion of the present-day boundaries that exist between Canada and the United States in the Pacific Northwest begins with an historical overview of the events that led to the delineation of territorial limits. In most cases, source material is drawn from the documents printed within published accounts of the Alaska Boundary Tribunal and the Fur Seal Arbitration. Unfortunately, a number of these materials are extracts of longer documents and are of course chosen to support a particular case in a boundary dispute. A great deal of material that can be used to explain certain events that took place along the Pacific Coast in the nineteenth century are located in the Records of the Russian-American Company<sup>1</sup> and in the Hudson's Bay Company (henceforth HBC) Archives<sup>2</sup>. In an attempt to more fully explain the events which led to the delineation of the American-Canadian boundary, this paper will use materials drawn from these archives.

The Dryad Affair, or the Stikine Incident, is an event that essentially determines where the boundaries between American and British territory were to be drawn; and it illustrates the part played by the imperialism of monopoly and by the relationship between the companies, aboriginal groups and the British and Russian governments.

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<sup>1</sup> Records of the Russian-American Company 1802-1867: Correspondence of Governors General. File Microcopies of Records in the National Archives No. 11. 77 rolls. (henceforth RACR). These records are the materials that were located in Russian America and acquired by the United States when it purchased that territory from Russia.

<sup>2</sup> This collection of documents, which deals with all aspects of the operations of the HBC, is now located in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

How does one categorize the Northwest Coast of North America in the nineteenth century? Here we have a region that combines the characteristics of informal and formal empire. The authority in British territory was a commercial organization; the Hudson's Bay Company, a company with a trade monopoly. Similarly, Russia possessed territory in this region and while this possession combined aspects of formal and informal empire (the term implies the military and economic predominance of a European presence which recognized and co-operated with indigenous governments in Africa and the East<sup>1</sup>), the colony of Russian America could be perceived as being slightly more a part of Russia's formal empire because of the nature of the connection between government and colonial authority. The authority in this colony was Russian and commercial; the Russian-American Company, a company which, like the HBC, had a monopoly in trade. The examination of the history of this coast, and of the two companies and their policies and activities indicates a number of similarities in their experiences. How can one compare and contrast these outposts of the British and Russian empires within the context of 'Imperialism', or within the relationship between the metropole and the outpost?

The resolution of this problem lies in finding a definition of 'Imperialism' that allows for the territory under examination to be described as being both part of a nation's informal as well as formal empire. This is best achieved by examining the territory within the context of political rule devolved to a monopolied commercial entity, or within the context of 'Imperialism' as the 'imperialism of monopoly'. Imperialism of monopoly is territorial expansion by a nation that is achieved through the efforts of a monopolied organization. The monopoly is motivated to expand the territory under its control and thus its operations for reasons of

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<sup>1</sup> For more detail regarding the term, see D.K. Fieldhouse, Economics and Empire 1830-1914. (London, 1976), pp. 79-80.



economic gain, but turns to its national government to confirm the possession of this newly acquired territory and thus officially expands the operational area of the monopoly. This official recognition of territorial expansion was effected by the issuing of new charters, licences or grants. Where the monopoly comes into contact with the frontier activities of another monopoly, or with the frontier of a nation's sphere of influence, the confirmation of a monopoly's, and thus its mother country's, possession of land enters the diplomatic arena because the issue ceases to be one of defining a region of trade activity, and becomes one of defining the spheres of influence of nations and their territorial boundaries. For reasons of strategy and politics, these territories were at times brought directly under a nation's political control as colonies. This paradigm of expansion along the Northwest Coast of North America allows one to see elements of both formal and informal control by an empire, and allows for the comparison of these elements.<sup>1</sup>

The majority of the works that deal with the question of imperialism, new imperialism<sup>2</sup> or with viewpoints that try to further the understanding of modern history within the context of imperialism, are concerned primarily with Africa, India and the Far East, and to a lesser degree, the countries of Latin and South America. Unfortunately, the Northwest Coast of North America is generally ignored. The studies made of this region deal with the fur trade, the sale of Alaska within the context of Russo-American relations, the Oregon Treaty within the context of

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<sup>1</sup> If one restricts the examination of this form of imperialism to a strictly economic analysis, one can apply the term 'imperialism of monopoly' to the study of contemporary multinational corporations, who because of their size and resources, can be viewed as possessing de facto monopolies in various parts of the world. In the present-day context, one can view these monopolies as exerting various forms of economic, political and cultural influence (an informal empire through monopoly, if you will).

<sup>2</sup> P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, 'Gentlemanly Capitalism and British Expansion Overseas I. The Old Colonial System, 1688-1850', *Economic History Review*, Second series XXXIX, 4(1986), 501-525 and 'Gentlemanly capitalism and British expansion overseas II: new imperialism, 1850-1945', *Economic History Review*, Second series XL, 1(1987), 1-26 deal with expansion motivated not by industrial capitalism but by gentlemanly capitalism, which consists of the evolution and interaction of agricultural, commercial and financial capitalist enterprise.

Anglo-American relations and the Royal Navy and the Northwest Coast. Some of these works do not achieve what they set out to do because they do not take into account the fact that this coast was the arena in which the frontiers of three empires - British, Russian and American - came into contact, resulting in both accommodation and conflict.<sup>1</sup> Of these three players, two were monopolies while the other was a nation expanding into territory it saw as its destiny to possess. The various permutations of the relationships that existed between the three parties indicate the complexity in trying to explain the history of the region.

The year 1821 marked the merger of the HBC and the North West Company, and this union created a new and vital HBC whose territory stretched from Hudson Bay to the Pacific. Like the RAC, the HBC was the sole representative of its mother country's interests in that part of North America, and as such was able to act as it pleased within the restrictions placed upon it by the conditions of its various charters. As the sole representative of Britain on this coast, the HBC played a dual role: it was involved in its own commercial activities, but acted as an information gathering organization for the British Government when required. This is illustrated in a private letter from the Governor and Committee to George Simpson<sup>2</sup>, 2 June

<sup>1</sup> It would be more specific to say that it was a region populated by a number of aboriginal groups in which three non-aboriginal empires came into contact, but this study will deal primarily with the activities of the latter. For information regarding the aboriginal groups and the question of Indian-White contact, see Jennifer S.H. Brown, Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Families in Indian Country. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980); Robin Fisher, Contact and Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia, 1774-1890. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1977); Carol M. Judd and Arthur J. Ray, eds., Old Trails and New Directions: Papers of the Third North American Fur Trade Conference. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980); Arthur J. Ray, Indians in the Fur Trade. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974); Arthur J. Ray and Donald Freeman, 'Give Us Good Measure': an economic analysis of relations between the Indians and the Hudson's Bay Company before 1763. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978); Alvin M. Josephy Jr., "By Fayre and Gentle Meanes: The Hudson's Bay Company and the American Indian." The American West ix, 5 (September, 1972), 4-11 and 61-64; the works of E.E. Rich; and Glyndwr Williams, 'The Hudson's Bay Company and the Fur Trade, 1670-1870.' The Beaver 314:2 (Autumn 1983), 4-86.

<sup>2</sup> George Simpson was born out of wedlock in about 1786 in the parish of Loch Broom. His father was the eldest son of the minister of the parish of Avoch, Morayshire and nothing is known of his mother. He lived with his grandparents and was primarily raised by his aunt, Mary Simpson. For twelve years he worked as

1824, regarding the 1821 ukaz. Simpson was to provide information about the region west of the Rocky Mountains in a form that could be forwarded to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, while a separate paper was to outline details regarding the coast, the location of rivers north of the Columbia, and the numbers and condition of aboriginal peoples living there.<sup>1</sup> This duality in purpose in the correspondence of the employees of the HBC on the Northwest Coast to the Governor and Committee and to the Foreign Secretary - by way of the Governor and Committee - becomes more important at the time of the Anglo-Russian negotiations regarding the Stikine Incident.

The HBC was primarily concerned with expanding its commercial base by the establishment of a network of trading posts which could be used to prove possession of territory and of a system of maritime trade that would include the shipping of furs to Canton for sale, and by an attempt to supplant the Russians in the trade in furs to the Chinese.<sup>2</sup> The HBC maritime policy to dominate the trade in furs along the coast was facilitated by hiring Lieutenant Aemilius Simpson<sup>3</sup> to be the company's surveyor and hydrographer, to command any of the HBC vessels and to

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a sugar-broker's clerk in London, but in 1820 he became the Governor-in-Chief Locum Tenens of the Hudson's Bay Company in North America. In 1821 he became Governor of the Northern Department and was given authority over the Southern Department in 1826 but did not become governor of both departments officially until 1839. He was knighted in 1841, and died 7 September 1860.

<sup>1</sup> Hudson's Bay Company Archives (HBCA), A.6/20, fol. 164.

<sup>2</sup> Governor and Committee to Simpson, 27 February 1822, HBCA, A.6/20, fol. 12; Governor and Committee to John Haldane and John Dugals Cameron, Chief Factors, Columbia Department, 4 September 1822, HBCA, A.6/20, fol. 58; and Governor and Committee to Perkins and Company, Canton, 9 April 1823, HBCA, A.6/20, fol. 108.

<sup>3</sup> Aemilius Simpson was the son of Alexander Simpson, a schoolmaster. His mother died and his father married Mary Simpson, George Simpson's aunt. In April of 1806, aged thirteen, he entered the Royal Navy, rose to the rank of Lieutenant and retired on half-pay in 1816. He was recommended to the HBC by George Simpson and was appointed hydrographer and surveyor as of 1 March 1826. His name was placed on the list of clerks so he would be eligible for promotion. He arrived at Fort Vancouver, Columbia River on 2 November 1826, and he became Superintendent of the Marine Department for the HBC. He was appointed a Chief Trader on 3 November 1830 and died 13 September 1831. For more details see Hudson's Bay Record Society Publications, vol. III, pp. 454-5.

be generally employed wherever his services could be useful.<sup>1</sup> He was the Superintendent of the Marine Department for the HBC on the Northwest Coast. The policy of establishing coastal posts required that surveys be made of the coastline and its inhabitants to determine the most favourable location for the construction of company establishments. In 1829 Lieutenant Simpson visited the headquarters of the RAC at New Archangel where he delivered a letter from George Simpson to Captain Peter Egorovich Chistiakov<sup>2</sup>, the Chief Manager. This communication proposed an agreement between the two companies which would result in the removal of the Americans from the coast, but Chistiakov refused because he lacked the consent of the RAC directors. Aemilius Simpson discussed the HBC plans to establish a post in the harbour of Nass with the Chief Manager, and George Simpson believed that this post, in conjunction with the other coastal posts and two vessels, would remove the Americans from the coast within five years.<sup>3</sup>

The Chief Manager of the Russian colonies told Aemilius Simpson of the dangers that would face the enterprise 'on account of the large savage population in that quarter - their warlike habits and formidable means of offence'<sup>4</sup>. The HBC seemed to agree: it intended to send a party of sixty to seventy men with the support of two vessels to establish a post at 'Nass harbour' in 1830.<sup>5</sup> While the HBC was aware of the hostile nature of the natives north of the Columbia River<sup>6</sup>, one has to wonder if the RAC Chief Manager was not trying to prevent HBC expansion of trade by mentioning the threat posed by the Indians inhabiting the coast. This assumption seems to be borne out by an observation made of these Indians by Chief

<sup>1</sup> Governor and Committee to George Simpson, 23 February 1826, HBCA, A.6/21, fol. 74.

<sup>2</sup> Chistiakov was Chief Manager of the Russian-American Company colonies from 14 October 1825 to 1 June 1830.

<sup>3</sup> Simpson to the Governor and Committee, 31 July 1829, HBCA, A.12/1, fols. 332-334 and 337.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, fols. 333-334.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, fol. 337.

<sup>6</sup> George Simpson to Governor and Committee, 10 August 1824, HBCA, A.12/1, fol. 65.

Trader Peter Skene Ogden<sup>1</sup>. John McLoughlin<sup>2</sup>, the Chief Factor posted to Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River, informed the directors of the HBC that 'Mr. Ogden writes me that the Natives of Nass have so far comported themselves as well as any Indians that he ever saw' and McLoughlin added, 'Yet these very Indians have been represented to us as the most troublesome and hostile tribe to deal with on the Coast'<sup>3</sup>.

In 1829 the HBC Committee pressed McLoughlin, to establish a post at or near the 'Port of Nass' in the summer of 1830 without delay. The expedition that was to effect this plan was to number no less than fifty men under the command of Ogden because of his 'enterprising character and active habits', which were displayed in his efforts in the Snake Country.<sup>4</sup> In March, 1830 Aemilius Simpson was sent to Nass to search for a suitable location upon which a trading establishment could be constructed. He arrived at the Nass on 28 August and found a suitable location for the planned post seven or eight miles upstream where a vessel could lie at anchor

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Skene Ogden was born in Quebec in 1794, the son of the Hon. Isaac Ogden, a judge of the Admiralty Court. He entered the service of the North West Company and was a bitter enemy of the HBC. This prevented his entering the service of the HBC until March 1823 as a chief clerk. He became a Chief Trader in 1824 and conducted the expeditions to the Snake River Country from 1824-30. He was made a Chief Factor in 1834 and in 1835 was appointed to the New Caledonia district, where he stayed until 1844. He returned to the Columbia district after a furlough in 1844. From 1846 to 1850 he was a member of the board of management of the Columbia district, and after a furlough for the outfits of 1851 and 1852 he was made a member of the board of management of the Oregon department. He died in Oregon City 27 September 1854. For further details see *Hudson's Bay Record Society Publications*, vol. II, p. 238 and Gloria Griffen Cline, *Peter Skene Ogden and the Hudson's Bay Company* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1974).

<sup>2</sup> John McLoughlin was born near Rivière-du-Loup, Quebec on 19 October 1784. He studied medicine but joined the North West Company in 1803, becoming a partner in 1814. With the merger of that company with the HBC he became a chief factor and was placed in charge of the Columbia District when Governor George Simpson visited the region in 1824-25. The relationship between the two men became strained over their opinions regarding the murder of McLoughlin's son at Fort Stikine in 1842. McLoughlin retired in 1846 and settled in Oregon City, Oregon, where he died 3 September 1857. W.Kaye Lamb, 'John McLoughlin', *The Canadian Encyclopedia* (Edmonton, Alberta: Hurtig Publishers, 1985), p. 1065.

<sup>3</sup> McLoughlin to the Governor and Committee, 20 October 1831, in E.E. Rich, ed., *The Letters of John McLoughlin: From Fort Vancouver to the Governor and Committee, First Series, 1825-38* (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1941), p. 232.

<sup>4</sup> Governor and Committee to McLoughlin, 28 October 1829, HBCA, A.6/22, fol. 45.

'within Pistol shot of the shore'<sup>1</sup>. He tried to obtain information from the Indians there concerning the details of the river and the country upstream, but it was not provided. Aemilius Simpson noted that these natives enjoyed a monopoly of trade with those native groups located upstream and did not wish to lose their middleman position by describing the land to the interior.<sup>2</sup> Simpson traded with the local Indians, the Nishga, and spoke with one native who came from farther upriver. The information he provided indicated that this river had its source in New Caledonia and was probably the Babine or Simpson River if not the one falling into Port Essington<sup>3</sup>. This expedition left Nass on 3 September and returned to Fort Vancouver, where the majority of the population, including Ogden, was ill with malaria. This state of affairs delayed the expedition to construct the Nass post until the spring of the following year.<sup>4</sup>

The reticence of the Indians to provide Simpson with information regarding the topography or trade of the interior is a common occurrence within the context of the fur trade. The Indians in direct contact with the 'White' trader were able to obtain desired trade goods with the furs they obtained from Indian groups removed from this area of direct contact. There were established trade routes from the coast to the interior and the coastal Indians were very protective of these routes. The HBC wanted to remove the Americans and the Russians from the competition for the trade of the coast, and facilitate their own trade using a network of posts that were linked by a transportation system using steam or sailing vessels. At this time, the HBC restricted itself to establishing posts on or very near the coast at the mouths of rivers. When it began its policy of constructing posts inland of the Russian

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<sup>1</sup> Captain Simpson's Report of his voyage to Nass, A. Simpson to McLoughlin, 23 September 1830, The Letters of John McLoughlin, Appendix A, p. 309.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 308-309.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 311.

<sup>4</sup> Gloria Griffen Cline, pp. 102-3.



lisière (a coastal strip), it began to encroach on a sphere of influence that was, in effect, two-tiered: the area encompassed by Russian trade and that of the coastal Indians.

One can apply the model of imperialism of monopoly to explain the actions of the British and the Russian companies. The chief manager of Russian America did not have the resources, personnel and material, to expand and consolidate Russia's holdings in North America so his intent was to preserve the status quo. After learning, from Lieutenant Simpson, of the HBC's plan to establish posts along the coast and inland, he realized that the British traders would acquire furs that would normally have made their way into Russian hands through the native trade network. He tried to dissuade the British from taking this action by implying that the expense in setting up such a network of posts would be expensive because of the hostile nature of the natives living in the region. Here, Chistiakov is using an economic argument in an attempt to prevent future British encroachment on Russian trade and thus Russian territory.

In 1831 Aemilius Simpson was ordered to transport Ogden and his party to Nass in the Dryad and the Vancouver, and to supply any required assistance. He was then to proceed to the coast to trade while adhering to the articles of the Anglo-Russian Treaty. He was to trade as little liquor, arms and ammunition as was possible to the Indians - even within British territory - and was to examine the Stikine to determine if, as reported, a large river fell into the ocean there.<sup>1</sup> In the autumn of that year, Captain Simpson died as a result of an illness, and Ogden replaced him as the superintendent of shipping on the Northwest Coast. Ogden's instructions from McLoughlin ordered him to avail himself of every opportunity to

<sup>1</sup> McLoughlin to Aemilius Simpson, 10 April [1831], Burt Brown Barker, ed., Letters of Dr. John McLoughlin: Written at Fort Vancouver 1829-1832 (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1948), pp. 194-95.



cultivate a friendly relationship with the RAC, and to 'examine Stikine River and endeavour to ascertain if there is a situation Eligible to erect an Establishment on its Banks about thirty miles from the ocean and also at Port Essington'<sup>1</sup>. He was to go to Sitka if it was convenient and provide the Russians with goods at cost if asked and if he could do so without injuring his own trade. If he was criticized for trading arms, ammunition and liquor to the Indians, he was to indicate that the HBC was averse to the practise, but was forced to do so because American traders traded these items to the coastal Indians.

In the 1820s the HBC was concerned with plans to establish a system of trade along the coast which would connect with the interior trade and remove American and Russian competition. In the 1830s, the HBC was turning more to establishing an alliance of sorts with the RAC to oust the Americans from the trade along the coast while damaging the Russian trade by constructing posts in British territory close to the Russian lisière. It was for this reason that Simpson and Ogden were sent to investigate various rivers flowing into the Pacific for their suitability as transportation routes to the interior.

Ogden was not able to follow McLoughlin's instructions and examine the Stikine River until 1833<sup>2</sup>, and it was his opinion that it would not suit the plans of the HBC.<sup>3</sup> The Governor and Committee of the HBC were pressing McLoughlin to

<sup>1</sup> Port Essington, named by Vancouver in 1793, was on the Skeena River. McLoughlin to Ogden, 15 December 1831, *ibid.*, pp. 237-38.

<sup>2</sup> Little is known of Ogden's activities in 1832 and 1833 because the pertinent materials no longer exist. The letters and logbooks that would illustrate Ogden's movements and actions have been lost, Cline, p. 108. Gloria Griffen Cline states that Ogden traveled to Sitka and was there on 8 May 1832 on the basis of references made of this visit in HBC correspondence. Cline, p. 108 and note 34, p. 251. Two letters from the Governor and Committee of the HBC to John McLoughlin, Chief Factor at Fort Vancouver, dated 1 May and 5 June 1833 refer to Ogden and Russian America: 'upon the subject of Mr Chief Trader Ogden's visit to Sitka', and 'For Mr Ogden's correspondence (No 5) we notice his observation upon the Russian Settlements and his remarks on the coasting trade in conjunction with the Russians', HBCA, A.6/23, fols. 23 and 29. The problems inherent in the study of the Ogden's actions at this time are obviated when one turns to RAC correspondence between Vrangell and the directors of the RAC. These materials will be mentioned in detail in the next section of this paper.

<sup>3</sup> Cline, pp. 110-11.

'establish one or two more posts on the Coast say at Stikine or Port Stevens, or at both those places...as we consider such Establishments highly important to our views in regard to the Coasting Trade.'<sup>1</sup> Their view was that posts located on the Stikine River (at latitude 56° 40'), at Nisqually in the Cowlitz Portage on Puget Sound (latitude 47° 30') and at Millbank Sound (latitude 52°), in conjunction with two vessels that would be used in the coastal fur trade but would be used in the off season to ship timber, salmon and other goods to the Sandwich Islands, and a steam vessel that the company planned to send to the coast, would remove the American traders from this coast.<sup>2</sup> This correspondence indicates that a post on the Stikine was integral to the coastal-trading policy of the HBC, and Ogden was ordered to establish such a post.

The RAC policies with regard to the Stikine River were reactionary in that action was taken to frustrate the ambitions of the HBC rather than to effect some aspect of its own commercial plans. The ambitions of the HBC were made clear to the Governor of Russian America, Chistiakov, during his conversations with Aemilius Simpson and Ogden when they visited Sitka. Lieutenant Simpson visited Sitka in 1829 and delivered George Simpson's letter to the Governor. This letter stated that Aemilius Simpson was to survey the harbour of Nass where the HBC would form an establishment to trade with the natives there the following year. The letter and other correspondence from the HBC to Chistiakov and to the directors of the RAC was forwarded by the latter to the Russian government.<sup>3</sup> These letters suggested a commercial agreement between the companies which could be used to remove the American traders from the Pacific Coast. The RAC directors were of the

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<sup>1</sup> Governor and Committee to McLoughlin, 11 December 1833, HBCA, A.6/23, fol. 49.

<sup>2</sup> Governor and Committee to George Simpson, 5 March 1834, HBCA, A.6/23, fol. 70.

<sup>3</sup> RAC Directors to Count E.F. Kankrin, the Minister of Finance, 27 February 1830 (O.S.), No. 175, RACR, 7:25. This dispatch enclosed Simpson's letter to the Governor of Russian America and the letter from W. Smith, the Secretary of the HBC, to the Directors of the RAC.

opinion that the presence of American traders on the coast led to a decline in the furs obtained by the RAC and, therefore, to financial loss. They asked the governor, Baron Ferdinand Petrovich Wrangel<sup>1</sup>, to restrict the company's trade with the Americans.<sup>2</sup> The RAC was also concerned with the activities of the HBC: it could not remain a passive witness to the activities of the English in Russian territory in the trade with the Kolosh, the Russian term for the Tlingit Indians, but had to take measures to restrict this trade. This required a sufficient stock of goods in Russian America to be used in the Kolosh trade, but it would be difficult to compete with the English because the trade goods brought around the world by way of Siberia were at least twice as expensive as those obtained directly from England by the HBC.<sup>3</sup> The HBC was a greater threat to the RAC than the Americans because of the resources it could bring to bear on and its interest in the coast. The HBC, in trying

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<sup>1</sup> Ferdinand Petrovich Wrangel' was born in Pskov to a family of Baltic-German and Swedish merchants on 29 December 1776 (O.S.). He entered the navy as a cadet and visited the Northwest Coast as a Warrant Officer on board the *Kamchatka*, which was sent by the government on a round-the-world expedition to inspect Russian America in 1817-19. Upon his return, he was promoted to Lieutenant and given the command of the Kolyma Expedition (1820-1824) to the northeastern shores of Siberia. His success in the latter led to his being promoted to Captain-Lieutenant (Captain of the Second Rank). He visited Russian America again while a participant in another round-the-world expedition (1825-27). In 1828 he was promoted to Captain of the First Rank and appointed chief manager of the Russian-American colonies. He served in this capacity from 1 June 1830 to 29 October 1835. He returned to Russia in 1836, was promoted to Rear-Admiral and was appointed to the position of Director of the Department of Ship's Timber in the Naval Ministry. Disputes with his superiors led to his leaving the ministry and joining the RAC as an advisor on colonial and HBC matters for the period 1838-1842. In 1842 he became a member of the Board of Directors and served as its chairman until 1849, when he retired. He had been promoted to the rank of Vice-Admiral in 1847. In 1854 he returned to government service as Director of the Hydrographic Department of the Naval Ministry and was a manager within the ministry during the Crimean War. This position allowed him to attend meetings of the State Council and the Council of Ministers. In 1856 he was promoted to General-Adjutant (an honorary military and court title) and to Admiral. In 1857, as Chief of Chancery of the Ministry, he became involved in the discussions regarding the possible sale of Russian America to the United States. In 1857 he was appointed to the State Council but could not take up his duties until 1859 due to illness. In 1864 he retired to his estate, Ruil', in Estliandsky Province and died on 25 March 1870 (O.S.) in Iuriev (Tartu). For more details see K.N. Shvarts, 'Baron Ferdinand Petrovich Wrangel', *Russkaya Starina*, v, (1872), 389-418, and Stephen Marshall Johnson, 'Baron Wrangel, and the Russian-American Company 1829-1849, Russian-British Conflict and Cooperation on the Northwest Coast,' unpublished Doctoral Dissertation, University of Manitoba, 1978.

<sup>2</sup> RAC Directors to Wrangel', 31 March 1831 (O.S.), No. 359, 7:250.

<sup>3</sup> RAC Directors to Wrangel', 31 March 1833 (O.S.), No. 261, RACR, 8:327-28.

to gain the RAC as an ally against the American traders, laid out its plans for the coast before Vrangél' who could then use this information to take action to frustrate them.

On 26 April 1832 (O.S.)<sup>1</sup>, Peter Skene Ogden arrived at Sitka on the schooner Cadboro to discuss with Vrangél' the possibility of the HBC replacing the Americans as the supplier of the colony's goods. As a result of the conversations between himself and Ogden, Vrangél' learned of the future intentions of the British company. He knew that the HBC planned to establish a post on the Stikine and sent the brig Chichagov, under the command of Lieutenant Zarembo, with instructions to construct a fort there.<sup>2</sup> Vrangél' was also informed that the HBC planned to establish posts at Port Essington and on the Queen Charlotte Islands, and Ogden repeated the HBC proposal to supply Russian America in return for river beaver pelts. This offer was refused by Vrangél'. If the HBC wanted the RAC to join it in its efforts to oust the Americans from the coast, Vrangél' believed the HBC should supply the Russians with goods at prices favourable to the RAC so the latter could dispense with their American suppliers.<sup>3</sup>

Vrangél' was concerned with making the Russian-American colonies self-sufficient, as well as with trying to consolidate Russia's hold on the coast, but was frustrated by the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1825. The Chief Manager was aware of what the effects on Russia's trade with the Indians of, and Russia's claims to, the Pacific Coast would be if the British were allowed to establish trading posts upstream of Russia's territorial boundaries: he had seen Russia's influence and trade

<sup>1</sup> This dispatch (6 May 1832, Vrangél' to Chief Management, 34:158-161) indicates that Ogden was at Sitka from 26 April to 1 May 1832. G.G.Cline could not find material in the HBC archives indicating the time of arrival and departure. The Russian materials however indicate when Ogden arrived and left Sitka, and the topics discussed by Ogden and Vrangél'. Vrangél' forwarded Ogden's dispatches to the HBC in London by sending them along with his own to St. Petersburg where the RAC directors sent Ogden's letters on to London.

<sup>2</sup> Vrangél' to Directors, 28 April 1824 (O.S.), RACR, Communications Sent, 37:174.

<sup>3</sup> Vrangél' to Chief Management, 6 May 1832, RACR, 34:161.

decline at Nass. For these reasons he petitioned the Directors of the RAC to take action to rescind the clause permitting free navigation of rivers and streams in Russian territory by the British but did not think such a restriction would be acceptable. He suggested that free navigation from British territory through Russian territory be allowed but that free navigation upstream into British territory be forbidden. He informed the directors: 'I from my side, until receiving instructions, will hold the English by force if they decide to sail up the river Stikine.'<sup>1</sup>

After Ogden's visit to Sitka, Vrangél' sent two reports<sup>2</sup> to the directors of the RAC commenting on Russia's trade along the coast in relation to that of the British and the Americans. In the first, Vrangél' stated that the HBC was paying the Tlingit, the Indian group which inhabited the Stikine Territory, two to three times the price for furs than that offered by American traders in an effort to remove the latter from the trade, and mentioned Ogden's invitation to the RAC to join the HBC in trying to effect this goal. In the second, Vrangél' described the success of the HBC trade at Nass; he mentioned that the HBC had planned to establish a post in British territory alongside the Stikine River, but that the death of Aemilius Simpson had postponed such action, and stated that an HBC post on the Stikine would destroy Russian trade with the Tlingit since the RAC could not compete with the quality and quantity of trade goods offered by the British. Vrangél' believed the management of the RAC had to provide him with the goods required to compete favourably with the HBC in the trade with the Tlingit if the latter company was not to command the trade of the Pacific Coast from Cross Sound or points farther north, to the south as far as California. He did not want the RAC to be a passive witness to English actions, rather to take measures against them, but was unable to broaden the trade

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., 37:178.

<sup>2</sup> Vrangél' to Directors, 6 May 1852 (O.S.), RACR, Communications Sent, 34:158-62 and 34:103-06.



of the RAC with the then 'shortage of goods and stinginess in pay' to the Kolosh (Tlingit).

In 1833 Vrangeli, motivated by the need to enter the trade with the Tlingit at a competitive level, sent the brig Chichagov under the command of Captain Adolf Karlovich Etholen<sup>1</sup>, to the straits inhabited by that Indian group and located in Russian territory.<sup>2</sup> Vrangeli arranged for the Chichagov to accompany one of the HBC ships on the latter's trading expedition to obtain an idea of how and where trade with the Tlingit was carried on. The principal task of this first visit to the straits was to gather detailed information concerning the prices by which the trade was conducted, and the place where the trade was carried out. In the instructions sent to Etholen, Vrangeli stated that during the months of March and April, when the coastal trade took place, the Chichagov shadow the HBC ship, but in the latter part of May, when the HBC ships would leave the area, Etholen should travel to the Stikine area to determine where and when furs could be acquired from the Tlingit, and what goods and prices would be necessary to acquire those furs. Etholen was to remain on good terms with the HBC and not compete with it, and was to tell the HBC that the RAC was ready to co-operate with the English to push the Americans from the straits. The goal was for the English ship to act as a leader for acquainting the RAC with the course of business in that region.<sup>3</sup>

Vrangeli's report to the RAC directors, dated 1 May 1833 (O.S.), stated the Chichagov's voyage had a number of objectives: to familiarize the RAC with the places and means of trade in the straits lying within Russia's borders; to engage in

<sup>1</sup> Adolf Karlovich Etholen (1799-1876) was chief manager of the Russian-American colonies from 25 May 1840 to 9 July 1845.

<sup>2</sup> He had been ordered by the RAC directors in 1831 to send a ship to the straits inhabited by the Kolosh to become acquainted with the navigation and trade in the area. He was unable to do so because the RAC did not possess the trade goods in Sitka to enter the trade, and if the vessel went empty-handed the company would be considered a laughing stock. When the goods became available, the vessel was sent.

<sup>3</sup> Vrangeli to Etholen, 1 March 1833 (O.S.), RACR, Communications Sent, 35:12-17.

trade actively to complicate that of the Americans and to see that the Conventions of 1824 and 1825 were adhered to by foreigners; and to declare to American skippers that the term of free trade for them in the straits would expire in 1834 and in 1835 for the British, and to inform them that the RAC would not tolerate violations of the Conventions. He stated that the company had not visited this area before because it would suffer a commercial loss since it would not trade in goods prohibited by the Convention. The company was not able to prevent foreigners trading these goods since it could not hold them at the borders of Russian America.<sup>1</sup>

Vrangel' did not favour a renewal of the Conventions since he wanted competition with the British and the Americans to end: he was of the opinion that British and American traders had destabilized the region by trading arms, ammunition and liquor to the native peoples inhabiting Russian territory. It would be possible to remove the American traders through competition in the fur trade, especially with the assistance of the HBC, but the British would not be as easy to oust.

When Etholen returned from the Stikine he informed Vrangel' that the Tlingit there had invited the HBC to settle at the river's mouth. Vrangel' took action to forestall such an occurrence. On 12 June 1833 he instructed Fleet Lieutenant Zarembo, the commander of the brig Chichagov, to sail to the mouth of the Stikine where he was to construct a Russian establishment. Zarembo was to winter there with a threefold purpose: to engage in the fur trade, to prevent the HBC from executing their plans for the Stikine trade, and to cut the timber needed to construct a redoubt. Vrangel' cautioned Zarembo to take steps to ensure that hostilities with the Tlingit be avoided, and the additional instructions he sent to Zarembo on 27 August 1833 stated the latter should provide the toens, or chiefs,

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<sup>1</sup> Vrangel' to Directors, 1 May 1833 (O.S.), RACR, Communications Sent, 35:70-73.



there with gifts to gain their support in order to prevent their impeding the construction of the establishment. Lieutenant Zarembo was not to inform the Kolosh of his intention to construct a post but work on the assumption that the Indians would ask him to remain there. He would then agree and build the post. Zarembo was told to concentrate his efforts on gaining the support of the toens Kek-khal'-tsel and his brother Zhkhya-ti-sti since the former 'has a much better disposition towards us than Seiks, who is tied more to the English.'<sup>1</sup> It was hoped that the favourable disposition of two of the three brothers toward the RAC would facilitate the establishment of Russia's presence at the mouth of the Stikine while hindering that of Britain.

The Russians assumed that the HBC would come to the mouth of the Stikine to trade and Zarembo was to prevent such an occurrence by referring to Article Two<sup>2</sup> of the Anglo-Russian Convention and by telling the captain of the British vessel to leave Russian territory. He was to raise the RAC flag over the establishment that was to be constructed and the chief of the Kolosh was to be presented with a medal that was inscribed 'Ally of Russia'.<sup>3</sup> Even though the Russians at Stikine were to remain on friendly terms with the natives, the expedition was always to be in a state of readiness to repulse an attack.<sup>4</sup>

Regardless of the information and opinions sent to the RAC directors by Vrangeli, the directors were opposed to competition with the HBC in the coastal trade. They wanted the new establishment at Stikine to be made safe first before any thought was given to trade. Vrangeli noted that this was not the policy followed

<sup>1</sup> Vrangeli to Zarembo, 27 August 1833 (O.S.), RACR, Communications Sent, 35:221-29.

<sup>2</sup> Article Two stated that British subjects could not land where there was a Russian establishment without the permission of its Commandant or the Governor. The same was true for Russians at British establishments.

<sup>3</sup> This medal was granted to Kek-khal'-tsel for selling a parcel of land to the RAC. This land, where his own residence was situated, was to be the location of the redoubt. See, Certificate granting medal to Kek-khal'-tsel, signed by Baron Vrangeli in New Archangel, 12 May 1834. RACR, 36:281.

<sup>4</sup> Vrangeli to Zarembo, 12 June 1833, RACR, 35:149.

by the British and if the directors' plan was to be brought to effect, the Kolosh would suspect the activities of the RAC.<sup>1</sup> The establishment of a post that was not trade-oriented would necessarily raise suspicion, while a trading establishment would be readily accepted: 'to settle among them, strengthen our position and not trade with them - is the surest means to array them against us from the first step and such a mistake would be very hard to correct'.<sup>2</sup>

Vrangel' had written to the RAC directors stating his views on how British and American traders were to be dealt with in Russian territory and on the renewal of the Conventions of 1824 and 1825, and asked them if the RAC should compete with the HBC in the straits. The instructions he received were contradictory: he was told both to adhere to the letter of the Conventions and to contravene them.<sup>3</sup> Thus it is understandable that Vrangel' would find it easier to act as he saw fit in order to improve Russia's position in North America until he received instructions to do otherwise. In 1834 Vrangel' appointed Sergei Moskvitinov commander of the establishment constructed at the mouth of the Stikine, and named the post Sv. Dionisiya (St. Dionysius). Fleet Lieutenant Zarembo was to station the brig Chichagov near the post and was to be in command of the Russians there. The Chief Manager instructed Zarembo to frustrate any British attempt to establish a post on the Stikine by refusing them entry into the river's mouth.<sup>4</sup> The post was nearing completion in June of 1834.

1 Vrangel' to Directors of the RAC, 10 April 1834, RACR, 36:104.

2 Ibid.

3 'I consider it my duty to ask the Chief Management to explain to me the important contradiction in dispatch No. 267 concerning the sale of strong drinks and firearms to the Kolosh, - about what is mentioned in one place, 'we cannot act in violation of the Conventions concerning the sale of firearms and alcoholic drinks to the savages,' and in another place 'to you is granted full rights to sell not only strong drinks to the Kolosh, but also firearms and ammunition.' Similarly in dispatch No. 258 it is stated: 'although the Americans and the English long ago violated the Conventions, we must not follow their example and therefore, to the expiration of the terms of the Conventions, the sale of strong drinks to the savages cannot be permitted'. But in 1832 I received in dispatch No. 301, the permission to sell drinks to the Kolosh. How am I to understand all this?' Vrangel' to RAC Directors, 10 April 1834, RACR, 35:105.

4 Vrangel' to Zarembo, 16 May 1834 (O.S.), RACR, Communications Sent, 36:301-07.

### The Expedition

In December of 1833 the HBC had on the Northwest Coast seven vessels of which five were to be used in the coastal trade. As John McLoughlin was informed by the governor and committee: 'We are anxious to prosecute this branch of the business with vigour, and as you will now have five Vessels, say either the Nereide, Dryade or Ganymede, the Eagle, the Lama, Cadboro and Vancouver to act in concert with the Establishments'.<sup>1</sup> In the spring of 1834 the plans of the HBC on the coast were clear. Ogden was placed in charge of the HBC expedition that was to establish a post at least thirty miles upstream on the Stikine River, and he was to take the men required for this task from Forts McLoughlin and Simpson. The Vancouver<sup>2</sup> was to examine 'the Coast between Mount St Elice and Stikine to endeavour to discover if there is any River in that space of Country sufficiently large to enable us to form Establishments in the Interior and to where the Copper Mine is.' Ogden was further instructed that 'If the Russians are established at Point Highfield you will be required by the Russians Tariff in your dealings with the Indians and if they give no Rum to the Indians you will also forbear to give them any.'<sup>3</sup> In short, the trade was to be directed by Russian practices to preserve good relations with the latter.

At Fort Vancouver, Ogden and a contingent of men embarked on the Company brig Dryad, with a crew of seventeen<sup>4</sup> under the command of Charles Kipling, and from there sailed to Nass where the remainder of the expedition was waiting. The

<sup>1</sup> Governor and Committee to McLoughlin, 4 December 1833, HBCA, A.6/23, fol. 49.

<sup>2</sup> This vessel sank on its return voyage and its captain and crew joined the Dryad expedition at Nass.

<sup>3</sup> McLoughlin to Ogden, 6 May 1834, HBCA, B.223/b/10, fol. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Robt Young, Jas Blackie, John Meyers, Archd Campbell, Geo. Washington, Jas Stirling, John Flinn, James Wilson, John Harmes, Jack Kanaka, J. Ward, W. Berth, G. Pirey (?), Ridley, Johs Frobisha, Jack Calder and John Dünn. For more details see Log Book of the Dryad, HBCA, C.1/281.

complete party of sixty-four servants and eight officers<sup>1</sup> then set sail for the river Stikine and on 18 June the Dryad came within sight of the Russian establishment which had been built at Point Highfield.

A 'whale boat' with a swivel or Gunderbuss on the bow and manned by four men came alongside the Dryad, and the man in charge presented Ogden with a number of written questions that were to be answered.<sup>2</sup> There then began the presentation of a series of written declarations from Vrangal', Zarembo and Sergei Moskvitinov telling Ogden that the Dryad had no legal right to travel up the Stikine and that the British expedition should remove itself from Russian territory. A further two visits from the Russians indicated to Ogden that communication would be difficult since the Russians did not have a knowledge of English, French, Latin or Spanish. A baidarka (a kayak with open hatches for one, two or three persons) was sent to Sitka by the Russians to inform the governor of the Dryad's arrival. On 19 June Dr. William Fraser Tolmie<sup>3</sup> and Captain Duncan visited Lieutenant Zarembo on the Chichagov,

<sup>1</sup> Ogden, Alexander Anderson - a clerk, and sixteen men boarded the vessel at Fort Vancouver while William Fraser Tolmie - a surgeon, James Birnie - a clerk, Alexander Duncan and the officers and crew of the schooner Vancouver boarded at Nass. Ogden to McLoughlin, 20 December 1834, HBCA, B.223/c/1, fol. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Questions	Answers
name of the Vessel	Brig Dryad
name of the Master	Charles Kipling
under what Flag	British
her burthen	203 tons
number of men	4 officers and 26 men
number of guns	6 guns
object in coming there	Commerce

Declaration of Charles Kipling, 17 November 1836, HBCA, C.742, fol. 13.

<sup>3</sup> William Fraser Tolmie was born in Inverness, Scotland on 3 February 1812. He studied medicine at Glasgow University and graduated with the degree of M.D. in 1832. On 12 September of the same year he entered the service of the HBC as physician and surgeon. He arrived at Fort George, at the mouth of the Columbia River, on 1 May 1833. From 30 May to 12 December he was at Nisqually and from 23 December 1833 to May 1834 he was at Fort McLoughlin. He joined Ogden's expedition to the Stikine and it sailed from Fort McLoughlin on the Dryad on 30 May. After spending some time at Fort Simpson, he returned to Fort McLoughlin on 3 November. He was stationed at Fort Vancouver from 1836 to 1841, when he returned to Great Britain for a visit. Upon his return in 1843, he was made superintendent of the Nisqually farms of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company (PSAC) and retained this position until 1859. He then moved to Victoria, took over the management of the RSAC farms on Vancouver Island and became one of the three members of the Board of Management of the HBC. He retired in 1870 and died on 8 December

formerly the Tally ho!<sup>1</sup>, which was armed with twelve cannon and four swivel guns. Again, they were informed the Dryad could neither trade in the sound or proceed up the river. Baidarkas sent to Sitka on 18 and 19 June carried Ogden's complaints to the governor.<sup>2</sup>

Etholen, the acting governor in Sitka, informed Zarembo that his letter of 8/20 June had been received and reiterated Vrangal's instruction to prevent the British from traveling upstream. Zarembo was to do this using the terms outlined in Article Two of the Convention of 1825 and Etholen stressed that Zarembo adhere to the terms of Article Eleven<sup>3</sup> not to resort to force. He added that he was sending the translator Dal'strem, the only interpreter at Sitka, who had some knowledge of English, and that he would send the Chilkat, with the translator Gideon aboard, to the Stikine to aid Zarembo in his communications with both the British and the Kolosh.<sup>4</sup>

Two chiefs of the Stikine Indians, Seiks and Anacago, came on board the Dryad and informed Ogden that the British could establish a trading post at the mouth of the river without opposition from them.<sup>5</sup> These Indians were aware that two posts competing for their furs would result in their receiving higher prices, but would

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1886. For more details of his life see S.F. Tolmie, 'My Father: William Fraser Tolmie,' British Columbia Historical Quarterly, i, 4 (October, 1937), 227-240.

<sup>1</sup> Recollections of George B. Roberts, Bancroft Library, P-A83, p. 9. I thank the Bancroft Library, Berkeley, California for allowing me to cite these materials from its collections.

<sup>2</sup> See William Fraser Tolmie, The Journals of William Fraser Tolmie, Physician and Fur Trader (Vancouver, Mitchell Press Limited, 1963), pp. 283-286 and Ogden's Report of transactions at Stikine 1834, The Letters of John McLoughlin, Appendix A, pp. 317-322.

<sup>3</sup> Article XI states the following: 'In every case of complaint on account of an infraction of the Articles of the present Convention, the civil and military authorities of the High Contracting Parties, without previously acting or taking any forcible measure, shall make an exact and circumstantial report of the matter to their respective Courts, who engage to settle the same, in a friendly manner, and according to the principles of justice.' Convention between Great Britain and Russia, signed at St. Petersburg, February 16/28, 1825, Boundary between the Dominion of Canada and the Territory of Alaska, Argument presented on the part of the Government of His Britannic Majesty (London: Printed at the Foreign Office, 1903), p. 39.

<sup>4</sup> Etholen to Zarembo, 13/25 June 1834, RACR, 36:426-429.

<sup>5</sup> The Letters of John McLoughlin, p. 319.



oppose any movement to establish a post further upstream since the fur trade would bypass them. Tolmie stated Seiks 'had undoubtedly been egged up to this line of conduct by our opponents the Russians, who have not failed to point out to him the danger of our intercepting his supply of furs from the interior tribes.'<sup>1</sup> The Tlingit traded with the interior tribes and sold the furs acquired to traders plying the coast. If the trade moved inland they realized they would lose their position of middleman and be reduced to one of poverty, having to trade with tribes in the interior to obtain desired European trade goods.

On 29 June, Ogden visited Zarembo and was handed a written reply to his complaints from Etholen. This letter stated that Vrangell was absent from Sitka and would not be returning until the end of August and that, as a result, permission for the British to proceed up the Stikine would not be forthcoming. However, he could meet with Vrangell at Sitka at a later date to discuss the matter.<sup>2</sup> Zarembo informed Ogden

that any attempt to ascend the river would be opposed by force. On his return [to the Dryad], he asked the opinion of each gentlemen & we all agreed with him in thinking that opposed as we are both by the Russians and Natives it would be highly imprudent to persist in the undertaking.<sup>3</sup>

Ogden was legally entitled to travel up the Stikine by Article Six of the 1825 Anglo-Russian Convention, but was intimidated from doing so by the opposition presented by the Indians and the Russians. The Russians had the brig Chichagov stationed at the mouth of the river. She was a formidable ship with a crew of

<sup>1</sup> Tolmie, p. 285.

<sup>2</sup> For a more detailed account of the voyage of the Dryad see Dryad - Ship's Log, HBCA, C.1/281, fols. 178-89 and C.1/282, fols. 20-22.

<sup>3</sup> Tolmie, p. 286.

eighty-four men and sixteen guns<sup>1</sup>, more than double the complement and armament on board the Dryad. Rather than fight an Indian-Russian alliance, Ogden decided to leave the mouth of the Stikine, promising Zarembo that he would speak to Vrangell in Sitka at the end of August.

On 27 September the Dryad arrived at Sitka. Ogden tried to reason with the Russian Chief Manager regarding the rights allowed him by the Convention of 1825 and how the articles of that agreement were violated by Zarembo, but met with no success. Vrangell continued to support the actions taken by the commander of the Chichagov and based his claims of their legality on Article Two of the same convention. At Sitka, Ogden received a letter from Vrangell dated 19 September/1 October 1834 which stated the latter's belief that the Stikine was not suitable for navigation, that no HBC establishment existed in British territory alongside the river and that 'The true aim of your projected establishment 10 marine leagues up the course of the river Stikine, is none other, than to harm our trade'<sup>2</sup>. On 7 October Ogden left Sitka with the Dryad expedition after failing in every attempt to complete his assignment.

#### Resolution

Chief Factor McLoughlin learned of the Dryad's being prevented from traveling up the Stikine when Ogden returned with the vessel to Fort Vancouver. He then informed the Governor and Committee of the HBC in London of the events that had occurred and enclosed a statement of the losses he believed the company would

<sup>1</sup> The number of guns varies: Ogden's Report of transactions at Stikine 1834 in The Letters of John McLoughlin, p. 318, and the Times, 3 November 1835 state there were fourteen while G.G.Cline, p. 114 and Tolmie, 284 state there were sixteen, twelve cannon and four swivel guns.

<sup>2</sup> Vrangell to Ogden, 19 September/1 October 1834, HBCA, F.29/2, fols. 37-39.



incur as a result - £22,150 10s. 11d.<sup>1</sup> On 24 October 1835, J.H.Pelly<sup>2</sup> informed the British Foreign Secretary, Viscount Palmerston<sup>3</sup>, of the violation of several articles of the 1825 Convention, and asked to meet with him in order to discuss the means to obtain redress from the Russians. The Russians were believed to have violated a formal agreement between themselves and England, and since every attempt to settle the problem of the Dryad Affair at the company level had failed, the HBC decided to press their claims at a diplomatic level.

The claims of the Company became a diplomatic issue when Palmerston informed Britain's ambassador in St. Petersburg, Lord Durham<sup>4</sup>:

Your E[xc]ellency is therefore instructed to bring the Subject without delay before the Russian Cabinet, to claim Redress and Compensation for the British Subjects who have been thereby aggrieved, and to express the Confident Expectation of H.M. Govt. that such orders will be given to the Russian

<sup>1</sup> For a more complete account see 'McLoughlin's Statement of the Expenses Incurred in the "Dryad" Incident of 1834'. British Columbia Historical Quarterly x, (1946), 291-97.

<sup>2</sup> John Henry Pelly was born 31 March 1777 at Upton, Essex. He became a director of the HBC in 1806, Deputy Governor in 1812 and Governor in 1822. He retained the latter position until his death. In 1838 Pelly, accompanied by George Simpson, went to Russia to meet with the Directors of the RAC to resolve the Dryad Affair. He was a director of the Bank of England, from 1839-41 he was Deputy Governor and from 1841-2 he was Governor. He was knighted on 6 July 1840. He died on 13 August 1852. For more details see Reginald Saw, 'Sir John H. Pelly, Bart.' British Columbia Historical Quarterly, xiii, 1 (January, 1949), 23-32, and Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee, eds., The Dictionary of National Biography, London: Oxford University Press, 1917, vol. xv, p. 720.

<sup>3</sup> Henry John Temple, third Viscount Palmerston was born on 20 October 1784 at Broadlands, the family estate, Hampshire. He was junior lord of the Admiralty 1807-09 and secretary at war from 1809-28. He was secretary of state for foreign affairs from 22 November 1830 to 1841, except for the period 17 November 1834 to 17 April 1835, and from 1846 to 1851. In the Aberdeen Coalition of 1852-1855, Palmerston was home secretary. He was prime minister from 1855-58 and 1859-1865. He died at Broomfield Hall, Hertfordshire, 18 October 1865. For more details see The Dictionary of National Biography, vol. xix, pp. 496-513.

<sup>4</sup> John George Lambton, first Earl of Durham was born in London on 12 April 1792. He represented the county of Durham in the House of Commons as a whig from 1813 to 1828, when he was created Baron Durham. He was lord privy seal in the administration of Lord Grey, his father-in-law, and was one of the four persons who drew up the Reform Bill. He resigned in 1833, the year he was made an earl, and from 1835 to 1837 he was ambassador extraordinary to St. Petersburg. In 1838 he was appointed governor-general of Canada but returned to England five months later because the House of Lords voted against the approval of some of his acts. He died at Cowes on 28 July 1840. For more details see Dictionary of National Biography, vol. xi, pp. 463-466.

Authorities on the Coast, as may prevent the recurrence of similar violations of the Treaty.<sup>1</sup>

When Durham raised the matter with Nesselrode, the Russian Foreign Minister, the latter stated that he had no official information regarding the incident but stated that he would look into the matter immediately. After making enquiries Nesselrode came to the conclusion that the Russians had violated the Treaty of 1825, but that the financial claims of the HBC were unjustified. The latter was based on the fact 'that there were no forcible measures taken against Captain Ogden'<sup>2</sup>. If Ogden failed to proceed up the Stikine when no threat of force was forthcoming from the Russians, it was his fault alone that the expedition did not attain its objective. Since Ogden was at fault, in Nesselrode's estimation, any losses incurred by the HBC were his liability and not the Russians'.

The diplomatic settlement of the British claims resulting from the Dryad Affair was not forthcoming because of the problem experienced in trying to determine whether or not the Russians threatened the Dryad expedition with force. The Russian brig stationed at the mouth of the Stikine and the fort there implied a threat of violence which, even though not realized, was successful in deterring the Dryad from traveling up the river. In the words of George B. Roberts, one of the members of the Stikine expedition: 'The Russians bluffed us off they had a brig the Tally ho! purchased from the Americans...'<sup>3</sup> Ogden might have tried sailing upstream past the Russians but to try to attempt to bypass the Indians would have been a different matter. He was unsure as to whether the Russians would resort to force but the Indian tribes assured him they would. The latter threat was actual, not

<sup>1</sup> Palmerston to Durham, 13 November 1835, Palmerston Papers, B.M., ADD.MSS 48534, fol. 18.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Manufacture and Inland Trade to the Directors of the RAC, 31 December (O.S.), No. 4174, RACR, Communications Received, 10:51.

<sup>3</sup> Recollections, p. 9.

probable, and was the determining factor of the two. The documents sent to Palmerston to substantiate the case of the HBC were extracts taken from the accounts written by individuals who had been present on the Dryad during the incident.<sup>1</sup> These edited excerpts were chosen without mentioning the mitigating circumstances such as Indian opposition and the difficulty of communication. In their dealings at the mouth of the Stikine, the British and the Russians communicated in languages in which both parties were not fluent, and this may have resulted in one misunderstanding the intentions of the other. This edited document sent to the Foreign Office is an indication of how the HBC controlled the information sent to the British government to suit its own goals. If the more important factor of Indian hostility had been made known, the justification for the case for losses brought against the RAC may have been removed, or it may have resulted in the British government calling for a reduction in the amount of monies claimed.

There were a number of factors which complicated the discussions concerning the HBC claims. Pelly and Simpson arrived in St. Petersburg 27 August 1838 with the intention of resolving the HBC claims by meeting with the Directors of the RAC. They soon learned any such negotiation would be fruitless because 'the Board of Directors had little power and would not determine any important measure with international ramifications without the sanction of Count Nesselrode'<sup>2</sup>. The Russian company was under the aegis of the Minister of Finance and any communication that took place between the government and the company was the responsibility of Baron Wrangel'. Pelly and Simpson found that they were unable to negotiate on an inter-company level since the issue had entered the realm of international law and diplomacy. The persons that Pelly and Simpson should have dealt with were occupied

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<sup>1</sup> See Ogden's Report of transactions at Stikine 1834, Letters of John McLoughlin, Appendix A, pp. 317-322.

<sup>2</sup> Report of Governor J.H.Pelly, 1838, HBCA, F.29/2, fol. 141.

with the Americans, who were trying to negotiate a renewal of their 1824 Convention with Russia.<sup>1</sup>

On 9 December 1838 (O.S) Nesselrode wrote to Count Kankrin, the Minister of Finance, regarding the negotiations between Britain and Russia concerning the claims of the HBC resulting from the Dryad Affair. He stated that the Tsar

was pleased to admit that it would be more in accord with the rules of strict justice to admit the principles on which the claim is based and to enter into negotiations with the Hudson's Bay Company in regard to the amount of the indemnification claimed by the Company rather than continue a dispute, which we shall be obliged ultimately to give in to ... I take it upon myself to ask Your Excellency to consider whether it might not be advisable for the Russian-American Company to enter into friendly negotiations with the Hudson's Bay Company, looking towards such a settlement.<sup>2</sup>

This desire was being realized by Simpson and Vrangeli' who had been in correspondence concerning a possible means of settling the disagreement between the HBC and RAC. They were in agreement on many of the proposed terms that would comprise the legal resolution of the Dryad Affair, but Simpson proposed they meet in Berlin on the last day of 1838 to discuss some of the details, both armed with the authority to negotiate and sign binding agreements for their respective companies. Count Nesselrode sent a report to Nicholas I asking that Vrangeli' be permitted to meet with Simpson in Berlin. This report mentioned the proposed terms of the agreement which were forwarded to Nesselrode from the Directors of the RAC by the Minister of Finance.

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<sup>1</sup> This renewal would have given rise to further American competition with the RAC for Indian furs, something the latter did not want. In 1838 the American Minister in St. Petersburg, George M. Dallas, was informed by the Russian Government that the treaty would not be renewed. One of the three competitors for the control of the Pacific Northwest Coast was thus removed.

<sup>2</sup> Nesselrode to Kankrin, 9 December 1838 (O.S.), Proceedings of the Alaska Boundary Tribunal (PABT), Appendix to the Case of the United States, ii, pp. 307-08.

The issue moved from the arena of international law and diplomacy to the company level when it was realized that Russia would have to admit a contravention of the Convention of 1825 by its subjects. Rather than continue discussions at the inter-governmental level, it was decided that the companies try to negotiate what indemnities were to be paid. While the Convention had been contravened, the true issue - in the Russian government's interpretation - was not territorial but dealt with the losses suffered by a company involved in a commercial enterprise. In fact, the underlying motivation for the Dryad expedition was both commercial and territorial because the HBC planned to gain economic control of a region which would lead to the removal of the Russian presence from North America because of the losses suffered by the RAC in the fur trade, and the HBC would then acquire Russian America. Russian America would then become a British possession.

Vrangel' and Simpson were unable to meet in Berlin so they met in Hamburg some days later and it was there that they signed an agreement on 27 January/6 February 1839. Article One of the agreement allowed the HBC to lease the lisière, excluding islands, between Cross Sound and latitude 54° 40' for a ten year period beginning 1 June 1840 for the annual rent of 2,000 seasoned land otter skins. The provisioning of the Russian-American colonies by the HBC was mentioned in another article: in 1840 2,000 fenagos (one fenago equals 126 pounds) of wheat were to be supplied and after that initial year 4,000 fenagos were to be delivered yearly at a rate of 10s. and 9d. per fenago.<sup>1</sup>

One of the factors which had a bearing on the Dryad Affair and its outcome was the relationship that existed between the RAC and the Russian Government. The Company was essentially in control of its own economic affairs but political matters came under the purview of the Russian government. Once Vrangel' had

<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed listing of the conditions of the lease see Appendix to the Case of His Majesty's Government, *Alaska Boundary Tribunal*, i, pp. 150-52.

arranged for the Dryad to be prevented from sailing up the river, which violated the convention of 1825, the Company's actions developed political ramifications. The HBC turned to the British Government to present its case to the Russian Government to obtain redress for the RAC preventing Ogden from completing his mission. The factors which complicated these discussions were that the Law Officers of the Crown did not consider the documents forwarded to them by the HBC to be suitable to present as evidence before the representatives of the Russian Government <sup>1</sup>, and that it was not clear whether the Russians at Stikine had threatened the Dryad with violence. Russia's government considered the possibility of an agreement being reached between the HBC and the RAC when it was made apparent that Britain would not cease pressing for the resolution of the HBC case.

Russia saw three reasons justifying such an agreement: the accord would prevent 'unwilling rivalry and unavoidable clashes' between the HBC and the RAC which would result from their attempts to dominate the interior trade; the lease would remove any need for the RAC to pay 135,000 rubles to the HBC; and the lease would prevent - in the opinion of Nesselrode - any clashes with Americans since it would end the latter's attempts to renew the fourth article of the 1824 Convention<sup>2</sup>. When Simpson and Wrangel met in Hamburg to sign the agreement, Simpson was answerable only to the Governor and Committee of the HBC, while Wrangel was answerable to the Tsar. As a result, the agreement can be seen as an accord entered into by a British company and the Russian Government. The HBC did not notify the British Foreign Office of its progress in reaching an agreement, and

<sup>1</sup> The lawyers wanted each amount to be formally certified by the agents on the spot, listing by whom disbursements were made and including supporting vouchers. The statements were lacking in that no mention was made of to what extent the wages of the men in the expedition became a total loss to the company; deductions were to be made from the claims for the other work done by these persons in the period under discussion and for other uses the Dryad may have been put to. J. Backhouse to J.H. Pelly, 20 July 1836, HBCA, A.13/1. fols. 324-25.

<sup>2</sup> These reasons are presented in Zapiski o vozobnovlenii kontrakta s Gydzonbaiskoyu Kompanieyu, St. Petersburg, 1848, pp. 1-3.



the ambassador to Russia continued to present the Company's case in St. Petersburg until he was notified by the Russian Foreign Minister, Nesselrode, that further discussions were unnecessary since the desired agreement was about to be signed.

The 1839 agreement was particularly advantageous to the Russians: the RAC obtained a reliable supply of provisions which later enabled it to sell Ross and its Californian possessions, which were running at a loss, to Sutter. This streamlining of Russia's North American possessions was believed to have created a condition which would allow the Company to govern, and trade within, its remaining possessions more effectively and profitably.

The agreement favoured the RAC in yet another way. If Zarembo had not prevented the Dryad from traveling up the Stikine, the HBC would have established a post in British territory which would have obtained the furs which were being traded to the RAC. The directors of the RAC had informed the Minister of Finance that all the furs that found their way into Russian hands in the area of the Stikine originated in British territory and came to the RAC through trade between Indian groups. Therefore, if the Dryad had been allowed to pass St. Dionysius, the RAC would have lost the income from the trade in furs. Fortunately for the Russians, the Dryad was stopped, an agreement was signed and the RAC was freed of the indemnity claimed by the HBC. Russia retained possession of the Stikine Territory and the RAC obtained 2,000 furs, the equivalent of approximately 118,000 rubles, from the HBC annually.

From the standpoint of the Russian Government the agreement was efficacious diplomatically. In any commercial or political dispute between Russia and Britain it was hoped the Americans would ally themselves with the former. Russia no longer had to fear that country's territorial ambitions since the Americans had no legal right to visit her possessions for reasons of trade, or any other. Thus, her territorial integrity was maintained while any potential for causing



diplomatic ill-feeling between herself and the other two countries concerning her possessions in North America were removed. The amicable settlement resulted in Russia's relations with Britain, her former and potential opponent in European affairs, being more favourable, at least within the context of North America.

The agreement was also highly advantageous to the HBC. The Company acquired control of, while acknowledging Russian sovereignty over, the lisière separating its territories from the Pacific and believed it would, through its trade with the Indian tribes there, gain full possession of the Russian territories in North America. It replaced the Americans as the provisioner of the Russian colonies and, in so doing, removed the Americans from the coastal trade. The RAC remained as the HBC's only rival and the latter did not think the former would survive its competition for long.

In 1834, the HBC company vessel Dryad tried to sail up the Stikine River to establish a post in British territory that would drain that region of furs, lower the profits of the RAC and thus assist in the removal of the latter from the trade with the Indians along the Northwest Coast. Peter Skene Ogden, the leader of the HBC expedition, had informed Vrangél', the chief-manager of Russian America, of the HBC's plans in 1832 when he visited Sitka, and Vrangél', realizing that the British voyage was directed at destroying Russian trade and thus Russian tenure of land in North America, took action to prevent the Dryad from traveling up the river. This action constituted a contravention of article VI of the 1825 convention - the article that dealt with free navigation of rivers - but Vrangél' was aware this action was necessary if Russian land was not to be lost. Vrangél' realized that the Russian monopoly was unable to deal with British competition and thus the trade and control of that region was threatened. He decided to deal with this threat by interpreting the articles of the convention to suit Russian needs.

Discussions at the inter-company, or inter-monopoly, level were unsuccessful so the HBC approached the British Government to obtain redress. The British government then brought the matter to an international level since it was concerned with the financial losses and loss of access to markets suffered by British subjects due to the contravention of an international agreement. The issue then was dealt with by the British ambassador to St. Petersburg and the Russian minister in responsible for foreign affairs. The two monopolies were asked to provide the relevant information that would allow the governments to discuss the matter, and the HBC manipulated the data it provided to remove pertinent factors that mitigated the action taken by the RAC. The documentation that was provided was couched in 'proper terms', the terms of international law, and the HBC was asked by British Crown lawyers to provide additional information within a particular format. After negotiating the matter, the issue remained unresolved because of a stalemate regarding the allocation of fault: both the British and Russian government representatives agreed that the RAC had contravened Article Six of the convention, but the Russian stance was that HBC financial losses were due to Ogden's actions since he could have bypassed Russian opposition without fear of hostile action being taken by employees of the RAC. As this matter remained without conclusion, the HBC approached the RAC with a proposal that would end the problem. The result was the Stikine Lease: the RAC would lease a lisière to the HBC in return for an annual rent, and the British company would also provide the Russian colony with needed supplies. In this manner, the earlier goal of the HBC was achieved, that of replacing the American traders as suppliers of the Russian colonies and thus removing them from the coastal trade since there was no longer any reason for their sailing along the coast. The HBC also obtained effective control of a portion of Russian territory. The RAC achieved its goals as well; it obtained needed supplies on a regular basis and the HBC was made responsible for the administration of a portion of Russian territory.

which the RAC did not have the resources to protect from Indian or non-Indian interests. In examining this incident one can see how a commercial altercation with elements affecting the question of international trade was brought into an international arena, but remained unresolved until the monopolies concluded the matter on an inter-monopoly level that had territorial ramifications: the RAC essentially subcontracted the HBC to protect Russian territory from falling into foreign hands, in effect, the preservation of the status quo. As Donald C. Davidson states, the agreement 'withdrew the region from any pressures of international rivalries. Its influence on history was preventative, or negative; for example it allowed the territorial agreement which has endured as the Alaska-Canada boundary to mature into an accepted unchallenged fact.'<sup>1</sup> Thus, the RAC retained possession of the Stikine territory, received supplies on a regular basis, received annual rent for the territory leased to the HBC and left the cost and effort of administering the territory to the HBC.

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<sup>1</sup> Donald C. Davidson, 'Relations of the Hudson's Bay Company with the Russian American Company on the Northwest Coast, 1829-1867,' British Columbia Historical Quarterly, 5, 1 (1941), p. 51.

**Lieutenant Emmons and the Alaska-Canada Boundary  
Controversy 1902-03**

**Frederica de Laguna**

Frederica De Laguna:

Lieutenant George Thornton Emmons, USN, and "Russian Monuments"  
on the Alaskan-Canadian Boundary

Lieutenant G.T. Emmons, USN, was posted at Sitka from 1882 (on and off) until his retirement from the service in 1900. His duties brought him into contact with the Tlingit Indians, a people in whom he became greatly interested and whom he admired, especially the Chilkat. In an affidavit to the Alaskan Boundary Tribunal (March 23, 1903), he testified that he had been adopted by the Tlingit, but failed to mention by what clan or with what traditional clan name (1904, 2:402-06). It was probably by some branch of the Chartrich-Shotridge family of Klukwan (either the Eagle Kaagwaantaan or the Raven Gaanaaxteidi). Emmons made big collections of Tlingit ethnographic material which he sold to the American Museum of Natural History in New York. The Directors of the Museum and then-Curator Franz Boas were so impressed by the documentation in the accompanying catalogues of these specimens that they persuaded him to write an ethnographic monograph on the Tlingit. Although he did write for them and publish some well known books and articles-- The Basketry of the Tlingit (1904), The Chilkat Blanket (1906), and The Whale House of the Chilkat (1916)-- he was never able to finish the great work. He died in Victoria in 1945, at the age of 93, still trying to puzzle out the arrangement of his too-voluminous manuscripts.

In 1955, Harry Shapiro, then head of the American Museum's

Anthropology Department, asked me to get Emmon's manuscript ready for publication, a far more lengthy task than we realized at the time, but I can now report that it is in press at the University of Washington Press, Seattle.

Jean Low of Atherton, California has contributed a biography of Emmons to this volume and, as you know, has published on Emmons in The Alaska Journal (7 [1]: 2-11). She has most freely shared with me all the information she collected, since I had to follow Emmon's activities year by year to edit his manuscripts properly, and he was shaky on dates. Since his manuscripts contained statements about alleged "Russian Boundary Markers" on the Chilkat Pass, and information about relations between the coastal Tlingit and the interior peoples, I was drawn into investigation Emmon's activities in 1902 when President Roosevelt sent him to look into the Boundary in the area of Chilkat Pass. In this connection, I naturally welcomed Lewis Green's, The Boundary Hunters (1982). The assistance given me by both Jean Low and Lewis Green has been so valuable and so generously bestowed that all I can add to the topic of this paper are the statements and observations of Emmons. I should have listed them as joint authors, were I not afraid of embarrassing them with conclusions which they might not share. At any rate, I thank them both most heartily for their help.

What were these alleged "Russian Boundary Markers?" What did Emmons find? What role, if any, did he play in setting the



Boundary? On what authorities did he rely? Was he deceived by the tall tales fed him? Did he deceive anyone, including himself?

**Background:**

The problem of the Alaska-Canada Boundary concerned particularly the stretch from the head of Portland Canal (or Dixon Entrance) to the One hundred and forty-first Meridian. It arose because of the vagueness with which this Boundary had been defined in the Russian-British Convention of 1825. The latter stated that the line was to run parallel to the coast, along the crest of the mountains, but not more than ten nautical leagues (thirty nautical miles, or thirty-four statute miles) inland. Three nautical miles was in the eighteenth century the distance that a cannon shot could carry-- hence the common "three-mile limit." The trouble with this Convention was that no one knew exactly where the mountains were.

This unsatisfactory definition of the Boundary was incorporated in the Treaty of 1867 whereby the United States purchased Alaska. Both Great Britain and the United States knew they should survey and fix the Boundary, but they procrastinated, until discoveries of gold, especially in the Klondike in 1896, made such a settlement imperative. The stumbling block to agreement lay in the definition of "coast." Canadians interpreted it as meaning "the general direction of the shore"; but Americans took it as the head of bays, inlets, or any salt water, no matter how far inland. On the basis of their definition, the Canadians claimed ports at the head of

Lynn Canal (Skagway, Dyea), while the United States also claimed (and occupied that area), as being on the coast, although they offered Canada control over a port at Pyramid Harbour, below Haines on Chilkat Inlet, and a shipping corridor through the Panhandle. For some reason, this was not adopted. Canadian customs officials were, however, stationed at the summits of the White and Chilkoot Passes, to collect any duty from prospectors bringing dutiable goods into Canada. "The Americans were irritated" (Ulibarri, 1982:17), not hard to understand in the case of a prospector who had only just succeeded, through almost superhuman efforts, in packing his outfit up a treacherous, icy, back-braking trail.

Something had to be done before an "incident" should occur. Accordingly, a Provisional Boundary was established by the United States Secretary of State, John Hay, and Sir Reginald Tower, the British Charge, in Washington, D.C., on October 20, 1899. Easy agreement was reached on accepting the summits of the White and Chilkoot Passes as the Boundary, but there were problems along the Chilkat River, where the summit of Chilkat Pass was much further inland. The Canadians insisted that the Boundary should cross the Chilkat River at Wells (one and one-half miles above Klukwan Indian village, and some nineteen miles above the head of Chilkat Inlet). This was accepted, but Secretary Hay insisted that the line then run along the south bank of the Klehini for twelve miles, so as to leave most of the Porcupine mining area and camp in Alaska. The prospectors there were U.S. citizens who had left the Atlin gold

rush in British Columbia because Canadian law limited the size of claims they could stake, whereas United States mining law let them have bigger claims. Half of the prospectors along Porcupine Creek (tributary of the Klehini) had refused to register their claims with the Canadian authorities. The Canadians were not happy with this cession to Hay's demands.

So, early in June 1900, William King (Canada's Chief Astronomer) and his opposite number, Otto H. Tittman of the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, were marking the Provisional Boundary with iron stakes. Feelings were said to run high among the local residents. The Chilkat Indians petitioned both the Governor of Canada and President Roosevelt to permit them to continue their traditional fishing in the river above the Boundary. Whites in the area were reported to be afraid of an Indian uprising because eleven Chilkat were on trial for the murder of a white man and his pregnant wife, in revenge (legitimate in the Tlingit code) for the drowning of "an Indian and his squaw." (For an excellent summary of the situation, see Green 1982: 74-76.)

It was in this atmosphere of gold fever, high tension, and faith in rumours that the drama or fiasco of the Russian Monuments was to be played.

**The Russian Stone House and Boundary Markers:**

The first mention of Russian Boundary markers was made by Charlemagne Tower, the United States Minister to the Tsar, who in April 1899 forwarded to the State Department a dispatch (unnumbered, in Vol. 4487, 1899-1900) to the effect that:

Certain stone or boundary monuments reported to have been found recently by explorers at a considerable distance East of Dawson City, ... are believed to be the original markings of the boundary line of Alaska between the Russian territory and that of Great Britain. This question is one of great historical value as showing that the jurisdiction of Russia actually was in the interior of the continent prior to the treaty of 1825. (Quoted in Ulibarri, 1982:15)

This vague report would have been completely disregarded, had there not been reports in April 1902 which appeared in a number of Canadian and American newspapers to the effect that such monuments did exist and had been removed or tampered with by an official Canadian surveying party which could only mean the Canadian surveyor, George White-Fraser and that a United States party led by Captain Willis P. Richardson, U.S. Army, and Lieutenant Emmons were to investigate. The whole matter reached the United States Congress, when on April 10, 1902, the House requested the Secretary of State to look into the matter. The latter, April 19, reported that he had heard such rumours, but an immediate investigation had found no evidence in support of the allegation, but he would continue to investigate.

In the meantime, on February 11, April 1, and May 13, Emmons

had been called to Washington and presumably on the last trip had received orders to investigate the Boundary on the Chilkat Trail and to report on his return. (Copies of his orders and of his report have not been found, although I have not abandoned hope that they still exist in some dusty Washington archive. I hasten to add that there is no indication that Emmons ever accused Mr. White-Fraser of any wrong-doing, or produced any evidence against him.)

The North-West Mounted Police at Dalton Trail Post, also known as "Pleasant Camp," on the horse trail over Chilkat Pass, reported to White Horse (then two words), and their superior there to the Assistant Commissioner at Dawson. These reports, which serve to show that the gallant Mounties were more at home driving a dog team than handling a typewriter, also testify to the close watch kept on the various characters in this drama in their goings and comings over the trail.

On June 26, 1902, NWMP Inspector Walke at Pleasant Camp wrote his superior:

I have just received information from Special Patrol from Wells Detachment (down the trail) that a white man by the name of de Blondeau who has considerable influence among the Chilkat Indians having been adopted into the tribe at the last "Kluk-wan" [Klukwan] "Potlatch", is about to take up the "Kluk-wan" Chief called "Yell-Kah" [Yeil xaak, 'Raven's Odor'] and two sub-chiefs called respectively "George" and "Philip Shotridge" [George was Emmon's special friend; these men were all Raven Gaanaxteidi clansmen], to a point 7 miles or thereabouts, past the

Chilkat Summit, at which point there is supposed to be an Old Russian Monument.

An American lawyer is expected to joint the party. [Where did that information come from?]

This man, de Blondeau, I understand, has told the Indians that "if all comes out right," the United States Government will pay them \$4000.00 and the North West Mounted Police will have to move out, as it means that "Wells Detachment" and "Dalton Trail Post" are in the United States Territory. [The last underlined, by the recipient?]

De Blondeau is considered by many to be rather crazy but unprincipled politicians at Washington might overlook this to secure their own hands...

The special Constable [native guide and interpreter] "Paddy" stationed at "Wells Detachment", tells me that his wife's father told him (Paddy) that an Indian had built this cairn (supposed Russian monument) for a shelter, there being no timber near, and that certain of the other Stick Indians knew about it... Special Constable Paddy tells me that there is no writing or marks of any kind in this shelter.

I shall leave in the morning and take a constable and Special Constable Paddy, as witnesses, and take a photograph as it might be useful proof.

And the report ends with the puntillious, "I have the honour to be, Sir, Your obedient servant, W.W. Walke, Inspector."

De Blondeau evidently did write to Washington, for in the Adjutant General's Record (File 4:2889) there is a letter dated July 6, 1902 from J.H. Blondeau, in which he claimed to have found eight Russian stone monuments, marking the true boundary line between Canada and Alaska, and expressed the hope that the U.S.



Government would reward him. He claimed some of the monuments had been tampered with. This is the last we hear of the enterprising de Blondeau and his Chilkat connections.

The day after writing to White Horse, Inspector Walke sent out a small party consisting of Constable Stewart and H.M. Fraser (a doctor attached to the Dalton Trail Post), and Special Constable Peter, their native guide. The white men left at 8 AM on mares ("Reg. Nos. 85 and 86), the guide having started off on foot some two hours before. They all arrived at the "Rainy Hollow Cabin" in good time for lunch. Again, the Indian went on ahead, "for what the Indians term the 2nd Summit about 7 miles farther," beyond Rainy Hollow. As reported by Dr. Fraser on June 28:

About 3 miles past Mt. Glave, the horse trail crosses a tributary of Clear Creek and about 100 yards up from this point on the left bank and a few feet from the creek are some stones piled up to make a shelter and said to be a "Russian Monument." This consists of a large flat stone about 4 feet high, 3 feet wide, and from 2 to 4 inches thick, raised to an angle of about forty-five degrees, and held by another small one at the same angle, which laps over the above, and lies at nearly a right angle to it; then a few smaller ones are laid up on the outer edges of each. The shelter faces west of north. [Isn't this the worst possible direction?] The above were put up by the Indians some years ago and a distinct trail leads them...

The Indians are very much afraid of being caught in a storm while passing over the summit in winter and evidently put up those slabs for shelter in case of accident... [There were no marks or inscriptions on these stones.]

[Two miles further along, and about 400

yards from the horse trail], there are about 8 ["long narrow"] stones set up on end in a line [along a foot trail which is] more or less parallel to the horse trail. These stones would show above the snow in winter... [which] does not lie deep at this point...

There are no other places in this vicinity where stones are laid up or piled together which might by the greatest stretch of the imagination be termed "Russian Monument."

This report and the letter of June 26 about de Blondeau were forwarded to White Horse, and to Dawson.

Emergency shelters among rocks, whether natural or man-made were called by the Tlingit te hit, "stone house," which led to the notion that the "Russian Monument" was a house of stone, built by the Russians!

Lieutenant Emmon's Activities:

No official report by Emmons about the "Russian Boundary Markers" and his search for them has yet come to light, although his notes and manuscripts in both the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) and the British Columbia Provincial Archives (BCPA) describe these stones as markers and document his investigations of them. In addition, the Canadian authorities, suspicious of his good faith, kept close watch over his activities. They felt then, as they do today, that the United States had unjustly managed to "detour" the Provisional Boundary in order to include the Porcupine Creek gold claims in Alaska, and they now feared that the reputed

mineral riches of Rainy Hollow farther up the Klehini River might also be lost.

Thus we learn from Inspector McDowell, writing August 1 from Dalton Trail Post that Emmons had passed through there that morning, with E.B. Hanley and Jack Dalton, to look for the "monuments" and were expected shortly back, because they had taken few provisions. As we shall see, this was Emmon's second trip up Dalton Trail that summer, although McDowell did not so indicate it. Rather he reported that when he was in Haines on July 12, Emmons had arrived, and had told him that he "was going to try and locate the monuments, mounds or whatever they were" but that he had been "endeavouring since the 13th... to locate the monuments, with the aid of Indians in the Chilkat district but [had] been unable to do so... Jack Dalton had told [the inspector] that the only monuments he knew were those put up by Indians on the trail, and which he was going to point out to Lieutenant Emmons."

What we have directly from Emmons are:

- 1) a copy of the deposition made by an old Chilkat woman
- 2) a page torn from his field notebook, dated July 23 (in AMNH)
- 3) a similar, complete notebook (in BCPA), with what appear to be some original field entries, and some copies of others, covering his trip (or trips) from July 23 to August 2, with a list of twelve photographs taken and a crude sketch map
- 4) the photographs themselves, including two of the "stone house" and one of an upright "marker" (in BCPA), and lastly

- 5) descriptions of the "stone house" in his monograph on the Tlingit and other unpublished manuscripts. The curious duplications and inconsistencies in these documents make us wonder what Emmons believed he had found. Nothing of this was included in his deposition to the Alaskan Boundary Commission (1904, 2:402-406) that dealt only with the Chilkoot Pass, not the Chilkat.

As Emmons wrote in his projected "History of Tlingit Clans and Tribes" (manuscript in AMNH):

In 1902, when engaged under the State Department in gathering evidence in relation to the occupation of southeastern Alaska, I met at Chilkat a very old native woman, the daughter of the chief who had accompanied Lindenberg on the expedition to mark the boundary between Russian America and Canada, and her narrative is interesting enough to give in free translation.

Chilkat, Alaska, July 15, 1902. [Chilkat was the Post Office at Haines Mission.]

I, Shu-he-hee, the daughter of Eesh ['father'] Skate lah ka, the chief of the Connuh ta de [Gaanaxteidi] of the Chilkat Kwan ['tribe'], am now very old, but I was a little girl when the Russians came to my country and went up the Chilkat River. I remember their coming to Pyramid Harbour. They first landed about the big ice (Davidson Glacier) and walked along the shore until they reached Pyramid Harbour, and their boat followed along the shore. They had come to this place before, but this time they said they would measure the river. They built a house of chatl (willow) tree trunks this time, which we named Chatl Noow (Willow Fort) when I was out gathering tut hark (isinglass) for the Russian chief, my father sent for me to sew his moccasin that was broken, and as they

were in a hurry to leave in the Russian boat, I went with my father. They were in the boat also, the Russian captain, three other Russians, and a Sitka man, Tchu wark [Choo-wakw, -?- Eye'], half Russian. We started up the Chilkat River and camped that night just beyond Indastahka [a village near the present air field for Haines], on that shore and stayed there two days. We then went to Tuhk ah goo, the eulachon grounds this side of Windy Point on the same bank of the river, where we remained for two days. From there we went to Clau nu [Tl'ew noow] (Sand Fort), and camped there for two days. And from this place we sailed up directly to Yehl heenee [Yeil heenee, 'Raven Water'] "Bear Creek," camping overnight at Kun nah thluck wunk (about half-way between Klukwan and Yeil heenee).

The next day, my father, the Russian chief, and two other Russians started up the river on foot and were away for three days, returning on the fourth day to camp, and afterwards we returned to Pyramid Harbour. All the way up the river, the Russians measured the river with a piece of lead and line; they threw the lead in the water and when they got to the end of the line, they hauled it in and drove a stake in the water. And they did this as far as they went. They also cut crosses on the trees all the way up the river. When we got to Pyramid Harbour, I overheard my father tell my mother that the Russians had made Ar gwaye [Akweiye, 'markers'] "monuments," of piled-up rocks where they had gone on foot up the

river, and the Russians built the Ta hit [te hit, 'stone house'] on the summit.

The Ta hit (stone house) here referred to consists of two great slabs of granite from four to six feet in height, with a thickness of four inches, tapering to the top, and leaning against each other. As stated by the natives, three of these blocks were originally emplaced; the broken pieces of the third are still visible. A few yards distant are two granite shafts two or more feet high, placed upright, supported at the base by a circle of boulders. The position of these structures had been carefully selected as regards visibility. They are not on the summit itself, which is strewn with rocks and where they would be indistinguishable, but are a mile and a half distant, on a level heather-covered plain, free from all obstruction, where they would attract attention from any direction. The Chilkats all agree that those are Russian marks and this seems very reasonable, for they served no native purpose. Their placing entailed a great labor as they had been transported by hand for a distance of several hundred yards from a dry river bed.

Emmons identified the leader, Lindenberg, as a Russian pilot, and set the date for his survey as 1838, "on account of the impending lease of the Alaska littoral to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1839."



I have quoted the old lady's affidavit in full because it has never been published and others may wish to form their own opinions of its value.

In his monograph on the Tlingit Indians, Emmons repeats virtually the same description of the "stone house," but does not mention the upright stones near it. He specifies that it was on a level, moss-covered plain, near the summit of the pass, overlooking Rainy Hollow. He states unequivocally his conviction that the Russians had erected it as a marker, citing the opinion of the natives:

This is the belief of the Chilkat people, as attested by the affidavits of some eighteen of the older Tlingit of Klukwan which I took in 1902 when acting as Boundary Commissioner [?] under the Secretary of State.

Note that he does not mention any white man as an authority. So we must ask: Were his Indian sources reliable? It would be interesting to see the seventeen other affidavits which he did not quote and which are mentioned no where else. Was the testimony of the old Chilkat woman believable? The abundance of detail in her statement makes us ready to accept it as truthful, although we may also wonder whether she could have remembered such explicit detail after a lapse of sixty-four years. Was her information garbled in the "free translation?" Did Emmons perhaps understand that which he hoped to hear?

We may also note the small size of the Russian expedition--only four Russians and a "creole" for most of the distance, then split to leave one Russian and the creole behind, with three Russians freely surveying, without fear or disturbance, in Chilkat territory. This is at variance with Emmon's frequent assertions that fear of the Tlingit kept the Russians behind fortified walls except when they travelled in heavily armed parties. The Tlingit resented any encroachment on their lands. As recently as 1879, three years before Emmon's arrival in Alaska in 1882, Commander Beardslee, USM, had to negotiate special permission from the Chilkat for a group of prospectors to travel through their country. For the Chilkat owned their own trail to the interior, as well as a monopoly of the trade with certain interior tribes, just as the Chilkoot owned theirs. Would the Chilkat have permitted the Russian surveyors to go up the river without hindrance in 1838? Of course, the stampede of white prospectors during the Gold Rush at the end of the century simply wiped away such exclusive Indian claims, and Jack Dalton had converted the Chilkat trail to the Dalton (horse) Trail.

There are a number of inconsistencies, duplications, and presumed omissions in the notes that Emmons left of his trip, or trips, July 23 to August 2, when he actually found and photographed the "Stone House" and a near-by "Marker." There is even a crude sketch map in the single surviving notebook, but no description or measurements of the stones. Such material may have been in the

other notebook, from which there is only a single page. Some of the inconsistencies are due to Emmon's habit of copying data from one notebook into another (as when he lists the photographs of the "Stone House" on a page between entries for July 28, apparently before he had seen it!) Entries in the notebook and loose page deal more fully with ethnographic information, such as Tlingit place names and their derivation, Tlingit methods of handling the canoe, or carrying loads, and of cooking porcupines, than they do of searching for boundary markers. Emmons might well have been on a hunting trip, listing the game seen and shot. A few items from the single torn page are illustrative:

July 23, left Klukwan at 9 AM Cottonwood canoe "lduk" sailed up. Paid customs, American flag one side, Canadian the other. Dog fight 10 on one. Took Paddy's dog in canoe. "George" he sat up and howled and Paddy would say "hish up"...

"Yehlh heenee [yeil heenee] Raven Water," In the cold months of winter the ravens assemble here where the river runs rapidly and seldom freezes and eat dog salmon at night & make a great noise, so the shore is called Yehlh wah tseek heen. In old times cooked fish head by spitting on stick "tseek."

Or entries from the notebook:

All of the country is portioned off by the different clans for hunting, fishing & berrying, and the points, streams and most of the mountains are named for some natural resemblance, peculiarity of formation or old tradition. Also different points in River and all streams large & small have as many... Chilkats in hunting & travel carry small skin bag with bullets, wadding & matches

gwelth una/tar kar kar gwelth  
 "bag gun/outside (carried) bag"

And: In carrying Rifle in wet weather Indians put wood plug in barrel

Was the "Paddy" with Emmons the Special Constable Paddy attached to Wells Division? If so, the notes nowhere suggest that he had informed Emmons that an Indian had built the "Russian monument." He may have remained quiet about this, as a kind of practical joke, for the Tlingit enjoyed such fun. Or did he let each party, Canadian and American, believe what they wanted to believe? I know of no Canadian record about the first trip by Emmons, or any mention that they knew of it, or of Paddy's being with Emmons. Emmons wrote of the latter:

Paddy always say "Good night"... Paddy very goodnatured... always call George "Shot up"  
 -- "hish"

He seems to have been a pleasant, jovial man.

Although there is no specific entry for a return to Klukwan on July 29, we read that Emmons left Klukwan the next day, again with an Indian canoe and crew who took him partway up the Klehini River, from which he walked up the trail to Boulder Creek (alone?). The next night he reached Porcupine at 8:30 pm. On August 1, he left Porcupine with Jack Dalton, on horses, and camped that night at

Rainy Hollow. Starting at 6 am the next day, they reached the Stone House and returned to Porcupine by 5:30 pm, according to the entries in Emmon's notebook.

On August 5, McDonnell wrote that Emmons had returned, and after talking with Jack Dalton, he (McDonnell) was convinced that they had been to the same place as that visited by Dr. Fraser and Constable Stewart.

#### Alarms and Excursions:

The newspapers naturally were eager to learn what Emmons had found and in default of reliable information, published the most far-fetched tales fabricated out of hearsay and gossip. Thus, on August 8, 1902, the Juneau Mining Record offered "the latest details of Lieut. George T. Emmons' discoveries." This was taken up by the Seattle Post-Intelligencer on August 18, and finally appeared in the New York Times for August 31. The next day, Arthur Raikes of the British Embassy, Bar Harbour, Maine, sent the New York Times story to Lord Landsdowne, Great Britain's Foreign Secretary. The account was to the effect that steamer passengers from the north had reported that:

... there is no doubt that Lieut. Emmons has found the ruins of a Russian stone house on the summit of the range and situated near the headwaters of the Chilkat river... The house was found all tumbled down. It was never a pretentious structure, though some of the stones

now in the ruins weighed materially in excess of a ton.

If this is really the ruin of a Russian monument, as Lieutenant Emmons believes it is, it throws the entire Porcupine mining district within the United States domain; also the rich Rainy Hollow Placer gold and copper camps.

The discovery of the monument but confirms the contention of its existence made for years by the Chilkat Indians. This information came from the older Indians, who in their youth were with the Russians when the house was erected...

Lieut. Emmons has just returned... and announces that he has found the old stone house on the summit which the Indians have always declared was called the "boundary house" when the Russians had possession of this country... [He met some] aged Indians on the Klahenia [Klehini] River who told him that they had gone up the river with the Russians when they were young people to the boundary house but that they had not been there for years.

They told the younger Indians as best they could where the stone house was but they could not find it. Finally, an old Indian woman nearly seventy years of age said she would go and show them the way. She walked thirty five miles up the river and went directly to the site where the old house, which she had not seen since her childhood, once stood. The walls of the old building are falling down, but there is every evidence of habitation at one time, and it is established beyond doubt that the Russians did occupy the now disputed territory and that the boundary line, according to the treaty, is where the Americans claim it to be.

Lieut. Emmons has secured the affidavits of two or three of the Indians familiar with the facts of the Russians having lived with them, and has now gone to Lake Bennett to secure still more evidence, which, if successful, he says will be even more convincing than what he has already procured.



But on September 19, the New York Times, reporting that Emmons was in Sitka but refused to comment, published a very different interpretation of the "monuments." A Russian priest was said to have told of an expedition that set out from Sitka some 53 years previously [this would make it 1849, not 1839]. The party failed to return, and a relief party the following summer found their remains and several monuments on the summit of the Chilkat Mountains. This was what Emmon's had found.

Still later, on September 25, the New York Times reported that others who had been to the spot said the "Russian markers" found by Emmons were "ten feet high."

The various NWMP reports were all forwarded to W. King, Chief Astronomer (and main surveyor) of Canada, and the latter sent them on to the Deputy Minister of the Interior, suggesting that

... there seems to be no call for action by the Canadian Government unless the U.S. Government press the matter further, which is unlikely. In the meantime, the close watch is kept by the Mounted Police upon these rather unusual proceedings may usefully be continued.

The Deputy Minister concurred.

On November 7, the New York Times informed its readers that Lieutenant Emmons had reported to the U.S. Secretary of State on the monuments. Since the State Department was not saying anything,

the assumption was that nothing had been found. The report by Emmons was referred to Secretary John W. Foster and Senator Fairbanks, for information, since both were members of the Joint High Commission on the Boundary.

Although the report made by Emmons has disappeared from sight, and nothing about "Russian boundary markers" was ever mentioned officially, this did not end the story which Green (1925:78) justly dubbed "a tempest in a teapot." There was still the published allegation that a Canadian surveyor had damaged or removed boundary marks, and George White-Fraser was clearly the person involved. He naturally was outraged and on December 4, wrote from Dawson to King in answer to the latter's query. He was angry and very much on the defensive.

First, he knew of the searches made by Emmons in the Porcupine district for "supposed monuments," and that he had been misled often, sometimes innocently and sometimes maliciously. Emmons had been informed that he, White-Fraser, had found "a monument or inscription" near Atlin, in 1899, and had written for information, out of "purely scientific interests." But White-Fraser had not answered, implying that he suspected Emmons of bad faith. The "inscriptions" were only some scratches in the moss left by a party of Indians going to Teslin Lake to inform those following that they had passed that way.

Second, he had been all over the area searched by Emmons and had seen "nothing in any way resembling a monument," while "the character of the country is such that any heap of stones" would be seen, "being bare."

I can give very definite information as to the character and reliability of what I daresay Lieut. Emmons accepts as valuable piece of evidence. He was informed I understand-- that I had discovered and destroyed certain monuments west of Rainy Hollow and down the Alsek River. He therefore sought out and found a certain J.P. Commiskey who had been on my party in that country, and questioned him about the matter. I understand further that Mr. Emmons took Commiskey with him to Skagway, and had a conference with Capt. Hovey; and that Commiskey then offered to take them and show them such destroyed monuments, and also one that I had not destroyed. The matter got into Skagway, Seattle and San Francisco papers, and I saw my name appearing as an embroiler of nations, on the information given by "Surveyor J.P. Commiskey" - who by that time had apparently been promoted. The facts of this case are as follows: - no para] Commiskey has been in Alaska several years - is what is called a "squaw man," is really of not much account; and was my cook. He was practically never out of my sight. The following is what he told me in my office three months ago, before witnesses.

No para] He did offer to take Mr. Emmons and show him monuments; his object was to have a good well paid trip, and he was going to take him to one of my own monuments, which were large mounds of rock, with a stake planted. He told me he gave him (Emmons) a good speil." Commiskey told me that although he had been considerably through the disputed tract (having married one of the Haines Chilkats) he had no knowledge of anything suggesting a monument - nor had he ever heard the Indians talk of it. Touching this house that Dalton has found with the help of the Chilkats...

White-Fraser offers two possibilities:

- 1) that it was a shelter where the Inside Indians and Chilkat met for trade, or
- 2) a shelter used for hunting or trapping. Furthermore, the country where a number of these monuments are belongs to other tribes: Tagish, Hutshi, and Weskatahine, and the Chilkat did not dare wander over the territory claimed by others. (Yet it was a Chilkat party under "Chartrich" that looted and shut down the Hudson's Bay Company's post at Fort Selkirk on the Yukon in 1852.)

Furthermore, an old Chilkat Indian, "Schwatka" of Haines, and said to be well-travelled, told White-Fraser that he did not know a very prominent landmark within 15 miles of the head of the Chilkat River, because it would have been too dangerous for any of his tribe to go there. "Any yet this Schwatka is one of the warlike Klukwan Chilkats - who have been the terror of the weaker inside tribes."

Since Schwatka was a well-known Chilkoot Indian-- not at all the same as the Chilkat, though often confused with them-- his lack of knowledge of the prominent landmark is no evidence that it did not exist, for as a Chilkoot he would never have been allowed on the Chilkat trail, just as the Chilkat could not use the Chilkoot Pass.

I know Jack Dalton, and though he is certainly a man of intelligence, he has his limitations. He himself would greatly like the Rainy Hollow district to be in U.S. hands; and to illustrate how the most intelligent person can be deceived. ... [He goes on to cite Dalton's foolish notion of the head of the Takhini River, and ends this paragraph with an impassioned statement:] I most absolutely deny having destroyed or ever having

seen or heard of anything distantly resembling a monument.

My belief is that the United States desires to find one; and therefore will find one; if they have to manufacture one; but Mr. Emmons must be hard pressed for evidence when he seeks it from Chilkat Indians who are treacherous and dishonest; from Pioneers who do not know the difference between a Lake and a Glacier [referring to argument with Dalton] and from squaw men selling lies for a job.

We can say that White-Fraser really "flipped his wig." And since no false Russian monuments, nor real ones for that matter, were advanced by the United States in its claim or counterclaim to the Boundary Tribunal and since we have no evidence that an old Alaska hand like Emmons would have been taken in by "windy" characters like de Blondeau or Commiskey, Mr. White-Fraser really owes all parties: Emmons, Dalton, the Chilkat Indians, and the United States an apology, although he, poor man, was certainly maligned by an irresponsible press.

The last episode of this drama was played out in March and April of 1903, the following year, when Arthur O. Wheeler, a senior Canadian surveyor, was sneaked into the Porcupine-Rainy Hollow area in a style worthy of Gilbert and Sullivan's pirates, or of the villains in the Gas Light Follies that now charms tourists at Dawson City. W.F. King was still afraid as the meeting of the Boundary Tribunal drew near that the United States would pull a fast one, hence his orders to Wheeler to proceed in secret and incognita to investigate (for the last time) the so-called Russian

monuments.

So Wheeler and his young assistant arrived in Skagway, accoutered as glacier-loving fanatics. Met there by a NWMP Inspector, they were passed along from one officer to another until they reached the safety of Dalton Trail Post ("Pleasant Camp"). From there they went to Rainy Hollow, where they stayed for thirteen days in "a small shack in the woods about ten feet square," where the two surveyors and five mounted Policemen were crowded in. From there it was only about five miles away, and one in between.

[The "house" consisted of two gray granite slabs] thrown together to form a rough shelter. It had no semblance to a house and was evidently a camping place for Indians or prospectors. I spent two nights at it, with the thermometer near zero, and found it beastly cold and uncomfortable.

In his formal report, he surmises that it might make a shelter for one person caught in the storm.

The shelter was in the centre of a broad, wide open, rolling valley... on all sides rose pure white, snow-covered mountains and hills, and between two of the outstanding peaks, on opposite sides of the valley, were placed at irregular intervals the so-called monuments. [Wheeler 1929:9]

These markers were "post-like splints of rock" a number of



which had fallen down. Although Wheeler published no measurements, they seem to have been about two or three feet tall, to judge by the photograph he took of two of them with a dog team and sled nearby (Wheeler 1929, fig. on p. 8). There were no markings on these stones, they were so irregular in shape, and so poorly set up with only a few inches of their bases in the ground, propped around with stones (not boulders), that Wheeler found them "absurd" as boundary markers, erected by any civilized people. In a letter of May 23, 1903 we wrote that he had not realized how well the stones were aligned-- not good enough for a survey, but very good for Indians, if they had erected them.

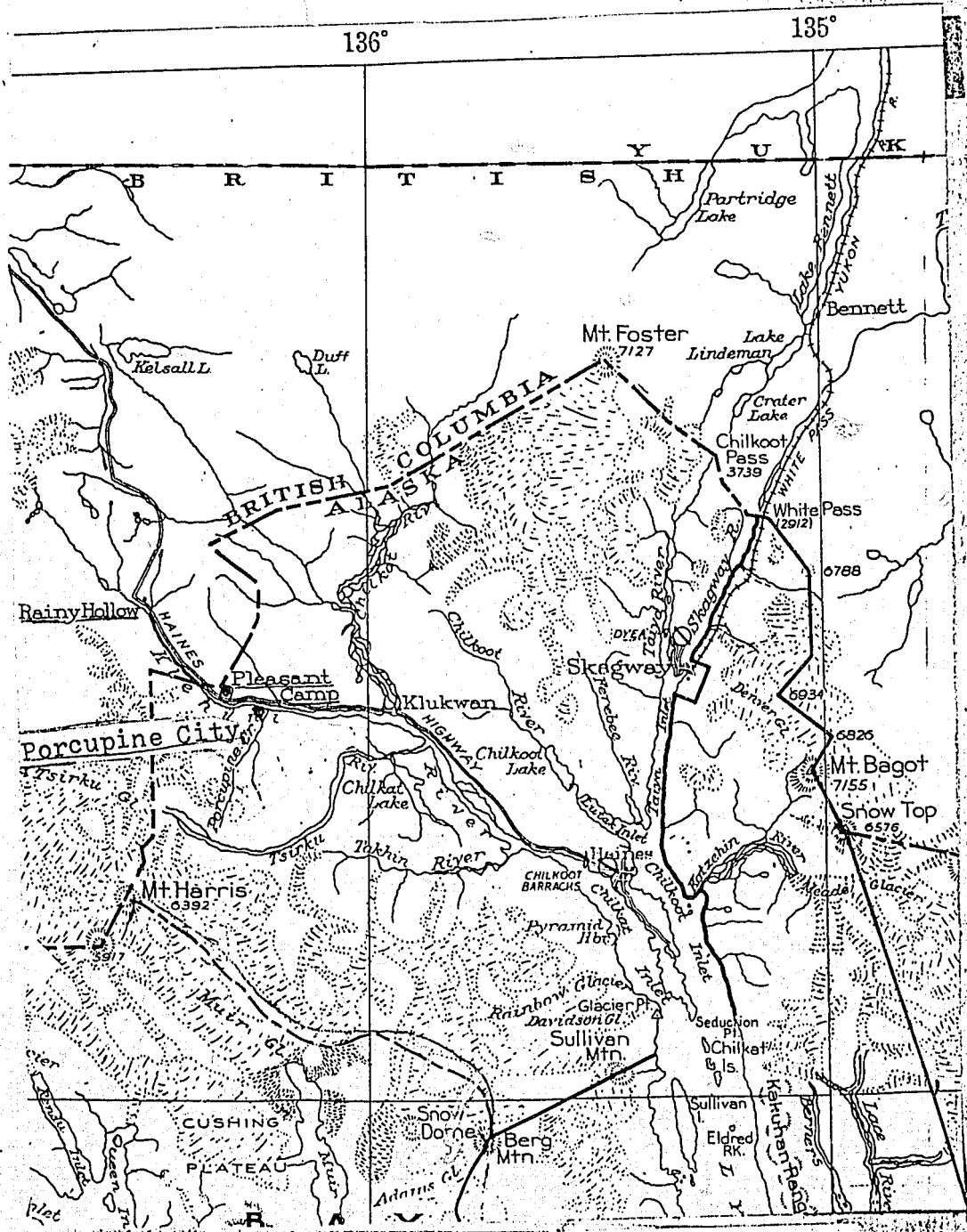
In fact, Wheeler suggests that they were markers on an Indian trail, or that they may have marked the line that the interior Indians ("Sticks") might not cross when coming to trade with the Chilkats.

As it happened, the matter of the supposed Russian stone house and boundary monuments did not come up at the Commission's sittings at London, and we all know the black-eye Canada got in the adjudication of the Alaska Boundary. [Wheeler 1929:9]

What a pity that gold fever should have caused suspicion and ill feeling between two friendly neighbors! Although the exact function of the stone arrangements may never be known, it is reasonable that the Russians should have gone to so much trouble and risk to mark the interior boundary of Russian America, when

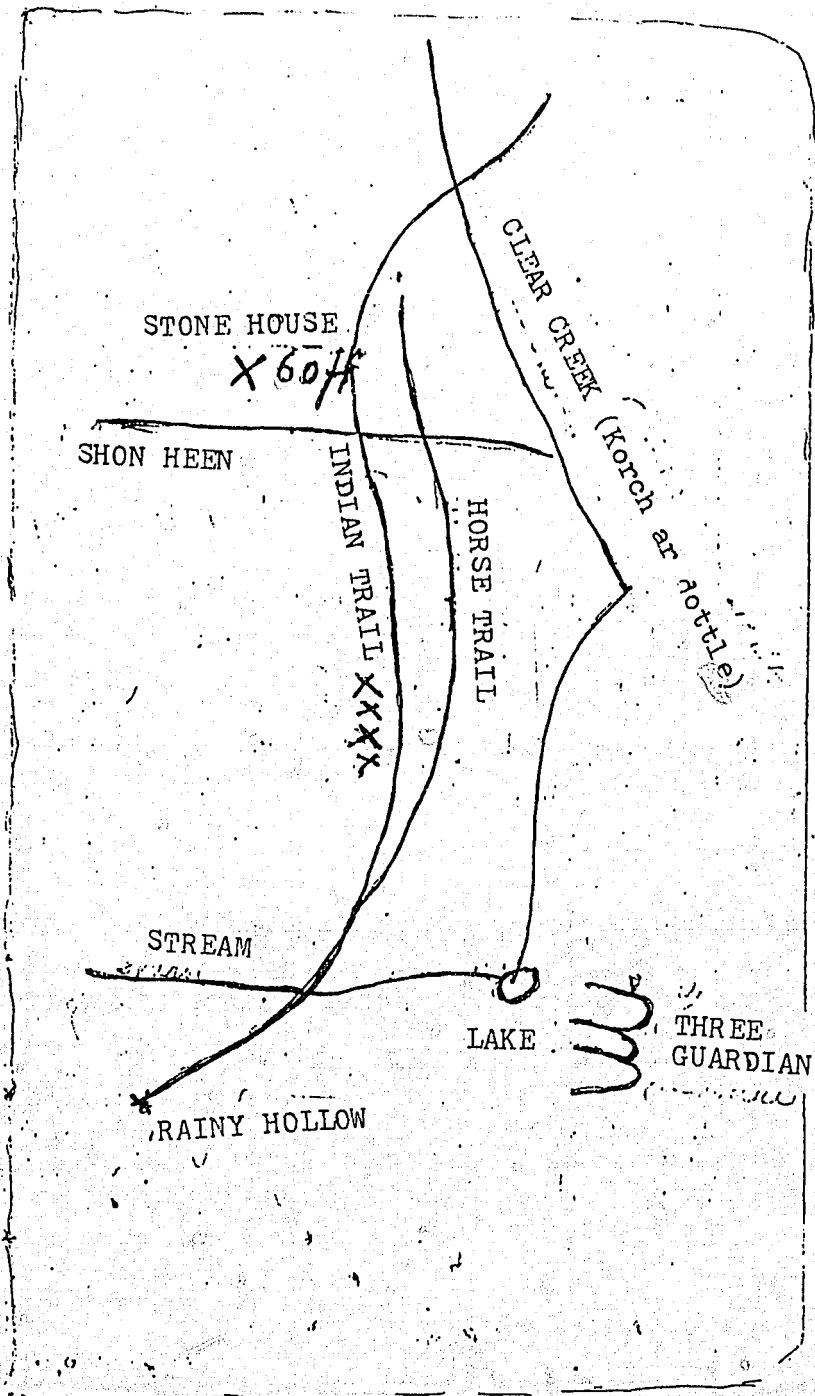
they were leasing the mainland littoral to the Hudson's Bay Company, and organization that already controlled the lands to the east?

Frederica de Laguna  
Professor Emeritus of Anthropology  
Bryn Mawr College



MAP OF DISPUTED AREA SHOWING PRESENT BOUNDARY

Page from notebook with sketch map by Emmons showing Stone House and Markers (XXX). Since the penciled words were illegible in this reproduction, they have been typed out. Enlarged 1 1/4 size.



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(I am indebted to Jean Low and Lewis Green for xerox copies and notes on most of the above. FdeL.)



**Phototopographic Mapping and the Panhandle Boundary**

**Lew Green**

Lewis Green:Phototopography in the Alaska Panhandle 1893-95

It was May 1893, and one by one a Canadian government ship dropped off six apprehensive Canadian surveyors and their field parties along the shoreline of the Alaska Panhandle. There were good reasons for worrying; the surveyors had been given a seemingly impossible task-- two years to complete a topographic survey of the mainland portion of the Panhandle in an attempt to refute the United States' claim that no summit of the mountains lay within the ten marine league limit of the 1825 Treaty.

Data to produce the maps would come from phototopography, a relatively new method that most of the surveyors had only been given a crash course in and the damp, cloud-strewn coastal mountains that rose from the shoreline were a far cry from the Canadian prairies where they were used to working. The survey parties, consisting of the party chief plus a qualified assistant surveyor and perhaps half a dozen hands would be living in tent camps. They would be on their own except for supply visits from a chartered steamer at three week intervals. Most of the field work would be done on foot but for water transportation each party had a thirty-foot sailboat and a fifteen-foot canoe.

Almost from the moment Canada took over the British possessions in 1871, Canadian government officials had puzzled over the description of the Alaska Panhandle boundary given in the Anglo-

Russian Treaty of 1825 and worried that the United States would simply mark a boundary line measured ten marine leagues inland along the principal rivers and from some of the inlets. Two senior Canadian surveyors had already made trips along the Alaska coastline, one travelling incognito as a tourist and the other aboard a Canadian government ship, in hopes of learning what the Americans were up to and of making a preliminary interpretation of the boundary from the water. There was no getting around the conclusion that if a boundary line following "the summit of the mountains situated parallel to the coast" did exist it would take an accurate topographic map to demonstrate it and that the only practical way to produce this would be by working inland from the coast.

The break came in July 1892 when the United States and Great Britain, the latter acting on behalf of not-fully independent Canada, agreed on a joint survey "with a view to the ascertainment of the facts and data necessary to the permanent delimitation of said boundary-line in accordance with the spirit and intent of the existing Treaties." Two commissioners would oversee the work but the surveys would be done independently with each government paying their own costs and the resulting data pooled. The work was divided; the United States parties would improve the triangulation along the coastline and make additional astronomical determinations of latitude and longitude, all essential in providing a suitable base on which to plot the new mapping, and, in addition, work along

the larger river channels while the Canadian parties would carry the surveys inland using phototopography.

The first step in carrying the surveys inland was the careful measurement of a base line along a beach or other open area and, where possible, tying this in to the existing United States coastal surveys. Next a transit was used to measure the horizontal and vertical angles to proposed triangulation stations visible from the stations at the ends of the base line. With the length of the base line known the position and elevation of the new triangulation stations could be calculated and plotted. This done, the surveyor climbed to each of the new triangulation stations, set up his transit and took observations on additional triangulation stations farther inland than his crew had already climbed to and marked with a rock cairn and a flag of signal cotton. Carried forward in this manner, triangulation provided the base or framework for plotting the map while phototopography supplied the topographic information.

Phototopography, developed for mountain work, had been in use for about six years in Canada with much of the initial development done by E. Deville, Surveyor General of Canada. From a camera station, accurately located by triangulation, a series of photographs were taken covering the full 360 degrees visible from that point. The specially designed camera was carefully levelled and the centre line of each photograph established by transit observations and, in addition, the horizontal and vertical angles

to at least one well-defined point that could be readily identified. In addition, a quick sketch was made as an aid to future identification. Later, in the office, the centre line and horizon line of each photograph was obtained from reference marks on the edge of the glass plate negative. With these, and knowing the focal length of the lens, the location and elevation of a prominent feature identified in plates from two camera stations could be calculated. Next, using a framework of known points, the intervening topography could be sketched from the photographs. The new method replaced plane-table methods in which the surveyor sketched his interpretation of the topography directly onto a carefully oriented work sheet. The old method was final; little could be added or revised once the surveyor packed up his equipment and left the station. Now the photographs contained a wealth of information that could be used later to revise or extend the mapping.

Taking an observation from a camera station required about two hours of clear weather with a minimal amount of haze, a rare combination in the Alaska Panhandle. The best time was usually early morning and the surveyor often spent the night in a primitive fly camp in the timber closest to the station in order to reach it quickly if the weather looked promising.

The weather was poor in the summer of 1893 and one of the Canadian parties had only eight days suitable for photography. For

another with ten days, seven climbs to a proposed station had ended in failure when anticipated breaks in the low clouds failed to materialize. The Canadian parties spent much of their time simply waiting, in contrast to the Americans, who could do some work, albeit not too efficient, in the dripping river bottoms. On the very few clear days, the Canadians rushed to reach their camera stations, struggling through matted undergrowth and over rocks with a treacherous moss cover prone to slide off underfoot. Lower slopes were seldom dry; on bright, sunny days a heavy dew kept the bush wet until close to noon. Long climbs were involved with some of the stations as much as seven thousand feet above sea level. Near the summits there were often large patches of soft snow to struggle through and all too frequently clouds of mosquitos and other biting insects would appear from nowhere to harass the surveyors. Where the pests came from and how they survived in the climate of the Panhandle was a mystery.

586 photographs were taken that first summer and 1702 the following summer when the surveyors were more experienced and the weather had improved. Early in 1894, the two-year deadline was extended to the end of 1895 and in the third summer one Canadian and two United States parties were sent out to fill the remaining gaps.

Each side prepared their own set of maps from the pooled survey data and photographs. Other than being on the same scale of



1:160 000, roughly one inch equals 2.5 miles, they were very different and glancing at them one would never suspect a common source. The Canadian version is a preliminary topographic map with a contour interval of 250 feet while the United States version simply indicates the water courses and shows mountain peaks by a pimple-like sketch plus a spot elevation for some of the more prominent ones. Copies of the completed maps were turned over to both governments in May 1896 but with tension between United States and Great Britain high over other boundary issues they were filed away until the Alaska Boundary Tribunal of 1903.

To determine whether a "summit of the mountains" lay within the ten marine league limit, the Tribunal members had to turn to the Canadian map, essentially the only information available. In some sections the map showed a summit, in others a senior Canadian surveyor, present as a technical side, worked with the photographs to sketch the topography to the summit but for a 120-mile stretch the boundary was left blank since the mapping did not go far enough inland. The remarkable Canadian effort paid off. Some Canadians may object to the Boundary Award of 1903 but it is unquestionably closer to the intent of the 1825 Treaty than would have been the case if no map was available.

Nor was the Tribunal Award the end of the work begun in the 1890s as many of the new boundary points were on summits shown on the Canadian map and, in boundary surveys between 1904 and 1912,

the surveyors were charged with locating the peaks shown on the earlier map and photographs and, where possible, monumenting them. Once again, phototopographic methods were employed and the survey parties had to contend with the same hardships.

More recently, new surveying instruments and aerial photography have replaced phototopography but the 1890s topography lingers on, incorporated in government maps published as recently as 1966. The early photos have another use too, in providing an important record used by glaciologists studying the recent advances and retreats of the Panhandle's glaciers.

Lewis Green,  
May 1990

**Taku River Tlingit History**

**Mrs. Antonia Jack and Chief Sylvester Jack**

Antonia Jack:

Hello everybody, good afternoon. I'm Antonia Jack. I'm from a band in Taku called the Taku River Tlingits. The person speaking here a little while ago is my son, my oldest son & he's a chief. Well, a long time ago I used to listen to my elders. The ones that are much older than I am. I used to listen to them, and we used to go out trapping and we used to stay out on a trapline. I don't know, I guess it was my mother in law because I was pretty young. I was around 19 years old & she was much older than I was. When the men-folks go out to run the trapline, she used to tell me, "OK. Make a cup of tea & sit down, I'll tell you stories." So, I used to make tea. Oh, I looked forward to that so much. I'd make tea for her and I'd sit down and then she would start telling me stories from way back about what happened to her when she was just a young woman and I would just sit there. I would sit there, and some of those stories were so sad. While I was looking at her, my tears would roll down my face. She tells me, "Don't cry. It always ends up nicely.", she says. So, I used to listen to her. Of all the stories she told me about people, our native people have a really, really great respect for each other. They used to treat each other good and they used to have a respect for each other, and they share with each other. They hug each other if they need a hug. I used to notice how much people used to care for each other. Like my son says, I guess that's what we want to do too, we want to share with the white people like the way that we used to share with our own people. It gave us that example of how we used to live.

She used to tell me about down in Taku River. Taku River from there on around to Nakina they get native people who own that river. But the Kookittan are up above a ways - up above & our own people are the ones who owned that Nakina. Nakina flows right into the Taku river all the way down to the salt water. That's where we used to live, our people used to live there. The big person, the big leader of our clan, his name was Hughogan. He's the one that used to live up there & had his people all around him. She used to tell me all about that. It's a long story but I'm going to try to make it short because she told me what happens when strangers come up from down below-- that they don't know. They see these big fancy boats when they come up the river. He wouldn't even let them back off side and says "see the cross, there. There's an opening there. Land there. That's where you camp." This is our side. Now, that's what they used to do a long time ago & then my mother in law tells me. The people gather in Nak & down the Taku river when the fish run-- the fish coming up the river. They all gather around there and they fish. They put away enough fish for that winter. They put all that away & they stay there until they finish separating. They get together again & they have a sports day; some of those little sports days. I still remember how they play, but not all of it. She told me all about it. Then they fall out, they spread out, that's when they come up here. Some go to Teslin, some to Carcross, some all over. They stayed the winter there. They hunt caribou, moose and whatever. They do their furs; get all the furs that they can & then they come back again in the spring time. They went down the Taku River someplace and they got kicked



out again. They then had another sports day because the people came back down all together again. After the sports day, they went down to Juneau when the Russian boats came in and they traded. They traded fur with muzzle loaders; I don't know the names of it, but everything they could get a hold of they traded. They used to stand up a muzzle loader like this and you had to pile the beaver skin right to the top before you can get that muzzle loader. That's the way they used to do it long ago & that's the way my mother-in-law used to tell me about it. I used to sit there and listen & there was no such thing as a border in those days - no border. That's the reason the Metis people mix together. They come and see each other & for some reason they have respect for other people by property line. There would be some leaders in each place & they can't go over unless they ask the permission of that leader if they can go in. But they sure handle it pretty good them days. The other people of the other side a ways from them, they don't hunt without respect, they don't just go in and hunt there. They don't go in there and get game and what not. I'm just coming to it, and I'm going to tell you some more about it. But, it seems to me, actually to all the native people that since the border lands went in the natives broke up - some settled in Teslin, some in Carcross, some in Atlin. That's what the boundary land done to us - we act like strangers towards each other instead of being friendly like we used to before. Since things are not going so good for us, sometimes we talk about it when we have a meeting. They even talk about that when they say "The heck with the boundary line." Let's not recognize it, it's not us that put that in. We



didn't put that boundary line in, so why should we have respect for it? It's the white people and the government that put it in, not us. We want things to be the same; we want to be able to go back and forth and see each other. The elder people always say to the people, "Never, never kill any game if you don't need it." That was put on earth for us to use, have respect for it. In fact my mother and law used to tell me even have respect for the insects, you are not to play around with the insects because god makes that stuff. For certain reasons, don't play with them. That is the way we are, the native people, and the boundary line is the thing that rips us apart. I know that they say that they don't like that boundary line and they even say that they don't want to recognize it, and I don't blame them. Another thing, like I said, the other people have respect for each other and don't just go marching in to another group of native people. They say we own that just like us when we say we own that you know. Nobody is going to run in there, not even a long time ago. We will today, but a long time ago they wouldn't do that. We would ask somebody if it is all right if we could come in. If the group says "yes", then we come in there. That goes to show you that the native people before the white people came into this country, they handle there land pretty good; they respect there land, they make sure that they don't slaughter the moose, and the caribou, and the fish and everything. They know they have to live from that; that's why they have respect for it. The native elders tell those people, "don't do those things," and they listen to them. Another thing that I'm going to say for an example: Taku river Tlingits live down the Taku river, and they

own the place. For some reason, the Tahltan people walk in and they set their traps and deadfall, they call their traps and things. Deadfalls-- and they kill martin and things like that, and the Taku river Tlingits say "What are you doing here?" They say, "It's not your property, you go back to Tahltan; that's where you belong." No, they had a war over it between Tahltan and Taku river Tlingits. They really had a war and the Taku river Tlingits won the war, so that's how come the Taku river Tlingits still own the place. The last winter or so, Chief Andrew Williams asked me to go along with them and we flew in a helicopter to see the place where the war was ended. So, I was on that helicopter when we got over there. They call it the "Red rock." So, I saw the Red rock. I was so happy that they asked me to go along. I saw the Red rock where the war ended. So that's the way the native people go; that's the only war I ever heard about was the Taku river Tlingit and the Telegraph Creek people had a war because they had no respect for each other. They were trying to get into the other people's tent. They didn't need any boundary line, but they know there distance and keep always getting into trouble. So I thought that it was pretty good when I heard all about this from my mother, you know. I am sure glad that everybody is listening to me and I enjoy this. Thank you very much.

Antonia Jack: (talks about native blankets)

These kinds of things on a button blanket like that, one would put designs on it but we have to be very careful how we put designs on those things. You have to put something that you own, that belongs to the raven. You can't use that eagle up there, and that wolf down below - it is not ours. But, these are-- that belongs to us. That's a raven. The stories that they used to tell about the raven; the raven is the one that stole the sun. He then let it go and that is why we have the sun up there shining on us. The raven stole it. This one you see at the house, that's a human here. That was called the Kookit. That belongs to us, not to the wolf tribe. It belongs to us. That's "Kookittan" and Kookittan means "pit house." When they built this house, they dug down so far and then they put the building on the edge of the dirt all the way around. That's why they call it "pit house." And that belongs to us "Kookit." That's the reason why they call us "Kookittan." That's what we are.

Chief Sylvester Jack:

First I'd like to introduce myself. I'm Chief Sylvester Jack from the Tlingit Band in Atlin. There is some things I want to say about the border here. Years ago, before the borderlands were put in we always used to trap & that's how it became inland section. We are originally from Juneau & we still have some living relatives in there & a lot of us kept running into the interior somewhere right in here, in the Yukon. You know the Carcross & Tlingit? So is Teslin & we got relatives there too. We're very close knitted between Carcross & Teslin. So, I just wanted to run by you a little bit about how easy it was for us to cross the border. There was no borderline at that time & now were finding borderlines for everything that we do. Where we stay, we have our own lodge & years ago it never used to be that way. The international border, I don't know when that was put in, between Alaska & B.C. and then we start to suffer a little bit there. We couldn't cross the border & visit our relatives, couldn't stay as long as we wanted to. It separated the Tlingits from where they originally started out from - from Alaska. I don't know when the Yukon and B.C. border was put in place, and then we started to have trouble with traplines which is familiar with borderlines too. In the early 1930s we started to have trouble with the people with where they should be trapping. Years ago, the way we used to do it was one person would go in here & there because natives know all this country long before the whites entered. We knew where everybody went to; we knew when they were going to come back. There was no radio communications, no nothin'. I'm an outfitter & then I got a

borderline outfit too. So, I guess all I'm trying to say to you is some of the borderlines effective today are good & some are bad. In natives, I think that it did harm. It's done harm to our culture for the reasons before were the natives were sharing. If the Alaskan people were somehow relative, or didn't even have to be a relative, came from Alaska, I say "OK." You want to go moose hunting? Where you want to go? Not only did I show them but I took them there too & in turn Alaskans would do the same thing to us. They still want to do it this way but the borderland won't be letting us. Sometimes we go down to Alaska & say "Well, we sure like to learn something of salmon fishing to see how it's done." "You're more than welcome." We couldn't do it because of the divider dividing the people. That's the way it is with most natives, anyway & I find it destroying our culture where we once used to share so much among our own people. We shared with the white people also. When the gold rushers came - I saying this without prejudice; I don't want to hurt anybody around here. When I say white people, but that's what we have to live with where we're called natives; proud to be called a native. I wonder if our neighbours think the same way amongst the natives; that Tlingits are there to share. I find it very close between the Whitehorse Band & the Atlin Band - sharing. But it's going away. It's going away but where, where we used to share so much at one time. That's why I say it's sort of destroyed our culture. I apologize for some of you that don't agree with me on this & I don't think that I have much more to say. I've got my elders here that can tell you about some of the history here about it. I really don't know that much,

I'm not saying I didn't listen but I respect my elders very much & I'd like them to have the floor. I thank you for listening to me.



**Growing Up in the Taku River Region**

**Elizabeth Nyman**

Elizabeth Nyman: Growing up in the Taku River Region

(Annotated by Jeff Leer at the Alaska Native Language Center, University of Alaska Fairbanks)

Good afternoon everybody, my name is Elizabeth Nyman of the Taku river Tlingits. First of all I'm going to tell you about my grandfather's picture here-- Dr. Jackson and his Tlingit name was X'agûk'<sup>1</sup>. They figure he was one hundred and fifteen years old when he died. My son Jackie was a year old when he died-- my grandfather. He is the one who was telling every one of his grandsons and his granddaughters to talk to people, to tell how they used to go back and forth to Juneau and Sitka. It was not only Juneau, it was right down to Wrangell and Prince Rupert; they used to go down there with a boat and he's in it; he's a mixed up indian. He thought of a lot of things, there was no such thing as a borderline. There were lots of our people in Juneau and they got our names and they too they came here and they generation in here, increased in here in Teslin. There's not once, I think, that there's a boundary line, no. My grandfather said this is our land, nobody else; were all Tlingit from Alaska to Teslin and all over, we are all Tlingit and therefore this is our land. That's where they used to go to Taku harbor and they used to catch halibut and they used to dry it for the winter to bring it up the Taku river. Sometimes, they take a bunch of dry meat and give it to the people

<sup>1</sup> Tlingit name for Dr. Jackson [Dr. is title for Shaman].  
(Tlingit spelling and translation to English throughout this document was generously provided by Jeff Leer at the Alaskan Native Language Centre in Fairbanks)

they knew in Juneau or Wrangell or wherever they go to. That is the way they used to treat one another a long time ago, and this is why even if I go to Juneau and they tell me that this is the boundary line, well, my grandfather didn't tell me it was a boundary line here when he was young, this is what I think to myself. It doesn't stop me. Still I think the same way, the same way as when the leader of the people or group; there be somebody Yaxgûs'<sup>2</sup> and Dàkgàdlâk'w Îsh<sup>3</sup> until it come to Dàkgàdlâk'w Îsh and that man has a good heart. He never push his people; he didn't say go over there, go over there. Where you want to go, I want to go too to take care of you-- go ahead go. The other ones say that one half of the clan go in a nice way. No body has felt bad about him towards him when he died. My mother has told me so many times that I remember it so good, and this is why when he died they buried him at the Third island and they called that island the Dàkgàdlâk'w Îsh X'ât'i<sup>4</sup>. They got the next one, the leader of the people, Yaxgûs', they push him in place the same day they bury him, they got him in there. He had sort of a meeting just and he said, "What we gonna call this place?" No one has ever felt sorry for Dàkgàdlâk'w Îsh; he didn't force nobody. And this is why we gonna call everything in here Dàkgàdlâk'w Îsh Tûli<sup>5</sup>, Dàkgàdlâk'w Îsh Wênayi<sup>6</sup>, Dàkgàdlâk'w

<sup>2</sup> Old Billie Chief (per Jeff Leer)

<sup>3</sup> Atlin Joe (per Jeff Leer)

<sup>4</sup> Atlin Joe's island (per Jeff Leer)

<sup>5</sup> Atlin Joe's hill (per Jeff Leer)

<sup>6</sup> Atlin Joe's saltlick (per Jeff Leer)

Îsh Âni<sup>7</sup>. That's the way my mother told me. This is what I still follow it, and my grandfather, how old he was, and Dàkgàdlâk'w Îsh was older than he was. This is one reason I never think about boundaryline, even if they tell me I don't worry about it, because my grandfather tell me different. Now, this Yanyèdí<sup>8</sup>; in the first place our name was T'àkú Kwân<sup>9</sup>. The first time that they got to the mouth of the Taku, Katûk<sup>10</sup>, they call that place. That's where the lodge is now. And from there they walk around, and this one old man has sit down and-- I see that place myself; it's a big place where the tide come up, and it go way up. The lodge is right here, it pretty near come up to there, the foot of the mountain. And these geese, they lost their feathers in the spring. Now, that they can't fly. When the tide coming up they all crawl in the water, and they sit there; the tide go up with them. They go way up. When the tide going out they eat all what they want to eat there. As soon as that tide start going down they get in the water and they go back down, because they are filled up for the night. There is a place there, they call it T'àwák wudzigâdi yé<sup>11</sup>. That's where the geese fell down through the crevace. So this man watch it, he watch it all the time and he just talk to himself. "Gee,

<sup>7</sup> Altin Joe's land (per Jeff Leer)

<sup>8</sup> Yanyèdí [clan] (per Jeff Leer)

<sup>9</sup> Taku River People (per Jeff Leer)

<sup>10</sup> cave near Taku lodge [important site for Taku River People] (per Jeff Leer)

<sup>11</sup> Place where the geese fell apart [?] (per Jeff Leer)

them geese, they... áx kè has lakwêch wé t'áwák.<sup>12</sup> And just like that geese they go up that creek (kú-- kè nalkwên-- T'ákú)<sup>13</sup>. That's where they got that name T'ákú Kwân. So, anyway, they used to use brush houses-- no tent, no flytent in them days. They used brush house, and this one time the leader of the group said, "We better try to make something like a house. So we can shelter in there in the winter time." So, they went and look around and the young fellas come back to him and they said to him, "Oh, there's no spruce-- nothing in here but hemlock." "Well, what's wrong with that?" he said, "Use that, that's what we want to use." So, the young fellas cut the yān<sup>14</sup> down and after they got it finished they got the roof on and everything; they got birch bark for the roof. They gonna get people from here and there, wherever they gonna get people so they know that they are going to open the house. So, all these young fellas ask their leader up there, "What we gonna call one another from this house?" He just kept quiet for awhile and he looked at them, "Well, what else can we call ourselves?-- Yanyèdí á uhân.<sup>15</sup>" We call that hemlock-- yān we call that. So they make that for house, and they said Yanyèdí hà shàwu yān<sup>16</sup>, our sisters

<sup>12</sup> the geese keep floating up on the flood waters (per Jeff Leer)

<sup>13</sup> the syllable kú comes from kènkalkwên (they are floating up on the flood waters) which is how they came up with the name T'ákú. (per Jeff Leer)

<sup>14</sup> hemlock (per Jeff Leer)

<sup>15</sup> We are the Yanyèdí (per Jeff Leer)

<sup>16</sup> our clanswomen [the women of our clan] (per Jeff Leer)

and mothers and all that-- our cousins, the women's side is gonna be Yanyèdishâ<sup>17</sup>. And the man's married the Crow, and they have a kid, it's gonna be Yanyèdí yátx'i<sup>18</sup>. He's one of them there, right there; that Sylvester the chief-- he's Yanyèdí yátx'i. And, that's the grandchildren, Yanyèdí dachxán<sup>19</sup>-- the grandchild of the Yanyèdí, who had lots of grandchildren. That's the way my mother has told me about this, and ever since we trying to hold it the same way as they have been telling us. We have been trying hard. But, this new generation, some of them don't listen, eh? They want the new way of life, so but we try hard anyway. What else you want me to tell?

(Mrs. Nyman answers a question about life on the river)

Oh, ya! With my granddaughter, we go way up to Hîn Tlèn<sup>20</sup>. They call it "Big Plain." There is a lot of names for it. There is Nakina come down this way, Hîn Tlèn come down this way, and right there is a mountain in between. They call that Yayuwà<sup>21</sup>. It's in between these two rivers. That's why we say it's in between the two rivers, the mountain Yayuwà. We wintered there lot of times,

<sup>17</sup> Yanyèdí women (per Jeff Leer)

<sup>18</sup> children of the Yanyèdí [people whose father's clan is Yanyèdí] (per Jeff Leer)

<sup>19</sup> grandchildren of the Yanyèdí [people whose grandfather's clan is Yanyèdí] (per Jeff Leer)

<sup>20</sup> Inklen River [lit. 'Big River'] (per Jeff Leer)

<sup>21</sup> Luwa Mountain (per Jeff Leer)



but two winters we were way up close to where Antonia is talking about. I know the names of every creek there, and the mountains, and the hillside, and where they used to camp, they got names for it. Where they used to dry fish, where they used to dry meat, they've got names for those places. I know all that, but this coming summer I hope we'll make that trip to there and it's gonna be in a book. I'm gonna start right from Taku harbor on up into Nakina. And if I could make it some day to the old village, which I would like to try to make it there, well it's gonna be all in the book. There's one coming out according to John it will be in August-- first week in August it's gonna come out. I tell the story ever since I was a little girl; maybe I was five or six years old. I start remembering the old people and how they used to tell me things and how they used to put food out, and I tell all that until the day that I quit telling stories to Jeff and John. So it's gonna be come out this coming August. Lot of places, they got lots of names for those places-- especially Tulsequah. My stepmother used to stand outside with a sweater, and stand there and watch-- she's watching the weather. There is three glaciers there, I don't know if they notice it, Sylvester. There is three of them. Once in a while, I hear it, me, too-- I was young. I hear this thing rolling. She'd stand there and she'd watch it. Pretty soon another one would roll again, another one. And I come to her (my stepmother). I want to find out what she's watching. "What are you watching mom?", I said. "I'm watching the weather--

Hinde kadagatji yé áwé duwa. áxch. Nás'k dís x'ânáx dák guxsatân<sup>22</sup>-  
 - I'm gonna show you when I get down there." They say, "I'm  
 watching that glaciér-- that three glaciér. And that's the name of  
 it, Kadagatji yé." And she said, "All three of them, it's rolled  
 down. Three months it's gonna snow and rain." Just what she said  
 just happened. Then, "Just below that, you see that big snow slide  
 there?" That one too, she watch it. When it's gonna rain it's  
 sort of just like fog on there-- you can hardly see that slide.  
 "Now," she said, "It's gonna rain before morning. That snow slide  
 place tell me." I was wondering how that snowslide could talk to  
 her, but she watch it, you know. Then there's a place there, it  
 fills up. It's a lake, isn't it Sylvester? I've never been up  
 there. I was in Tulsequah I'd say for about 18 years, I was there.  
 But I've never been up there. Just up above the camp, they say, is  
 a big lake. And there's a line in that lake. There is four lines  
 there. That's what they have been telling me. That's the one the  
 other day they say it broke open, and if it go down past, just that  
 one, well there's four more but some of them they had the flood.  
 But, I don't know how bad it is now. All the places, we know the  
 names of it, and which I wish this summer-- I'm getting old, and  
 maybe pretty soon next year I won't be able to do it. But now, I  
 am able to travel up with them so they can write it down and they  
 can take the pictures of it, and so they will know. Sylvester  
 don't know none of the names of the places from Juneau on up. So,

<sup>22</sup> Hinde kadagatji yé: Place where the glaciers keep falling  
 into the water. [After Hinde kadagatji yé] áwé duwa...  
 it's going to rain/snow for three months. (per Jeff Leer)

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I'm gonna start from Juneau to Bishop Point and from there we are going to start to Taku Harbor and from there we will come straight up the river, so everybody will know what's the names of these mountains and creeks and all that. If I don't go this summer, I doubt it if I make it next summer, because I'm getting old. That's all.

**A Social and Economic History of the Taku River  
and the Taku River Tlingits**

**Douglas Hudson**

**Taku: The River and the People<sup>1</sup>**

Douglas Hudson, Fraser Valley College  
Borderlands Conference, Whitehorse, Y.T., June 2-4, 1989

## Introduction

Every river has a story, and the Taku River in northwestern North America is no different. But its history in the European sense has been largely muted, bypassed by the chroniclers of the fur trade and gold rush eras, and mentioned largely in passing in the classic anthropological monographs. However, the history of the river as seen through the lives and accounts of the Tlingit people of the region, the Taku River Tlingits, is beginning to emerge. This paper deals with some aspects of both historical traditions-- Tlingit people in Atlin and non-Tlingit-- and presents some information on the history of the Taku River, an important element in the culture of the Taku River Tlingits. This river system was the focal point of economics activities, centred largely around salmon runs, which predated the arrival of Europeans, and

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<sup>1</sup> Research with the Taku River Tlingits of Atlin and the Taku River has been carried out intermittently since 1985. The results of interviews and observations have yet to be written up for publication. My introduction to the Taku River Tlingits has been guided by E. Nyman, A. Jack, J. Ward, M. Anderson, S. Jack, H. Carlick, and many others. Like most anthropologists who are working in the northwest, I owe an intellectual debt to F. deLaguna and C. McClellan. Working with J. Leer has also benefited me. Because of the paucity of data, many of my comments and interpretations are speculative, and do not necessarily reflect positions or ideas held by the Taku River Tlingits themselves, their elders, or their band administration.

continues to figure prominently in Taku River Tlingits resource use strategies and cultural traditions. This report will touch on some of those. At this stage, though, I am interested in seeing what connections can be made between what I have been told and what the literature might reveal about the people called Taku-- albeit from the perspective of those in Atlin.

I recall my own introduction to the river, flying in to pick up a load of salmon. I recorded my first impressions in my journal:

"The lower reaches are swamp like. It's not surprising that the HBC decided against building a post along the river, opting instead for a coastal location... [As we flew upriver] I was surprised by how wide and 'U'- shaped the valleys were. We dipped over the camp and Canoe Landing, the place where canoes were hauled ashore, and people walked the short divide to the Yukon River watershed." (June 10, 1986)

#### The Taku River and the Taku River Tlingit

The Taku River, and its watershed, lies within the traditional territory of the Taku River Tlingits, also referred to in the literature as the Takukwan. But as I learned later, a simple name masks a complex society, or perhaps more correctly, a number of groups lumped under a generic term. The Taku River Tlingits are one of a number of groups in the Pacific Northwest belonging to the Tlingit language family. While some Tlingit-speaking groups were located only along the coast, the Taku River Tlingits are



interesting in having economic interests in both a Pacific Coast River (Taku River), and the headwaters of the Yukon River (Atlin Lake, Teslin Lake). In simplistic terms, the Taku River provided key riverine resources, especially salmon, while the country around Atlin Lake contained good hunting and trapping resources, especially for caribou (later, moose), mountain sheep and goats, and small game. The Taku River remains the focal point for important resource harvesting activities. Just as important, the Taku River Tlingits used the river as a source of wealth for trade, and the river itself provided a major route of communications between the coast and the interior.

#### Sources of Information

##### Documentary

While the larger region was the scene of one of the most spectacular gold rushes on the continent, early explorations into the region largely bypassed Atlin Lake and Taku River, with movement from the head of Dyea Inlet, across to Lake Bennett, and then north to the Klondike gold fields. When gold was discovered in Atlin Lake, the Lake Bennett route again was the main one used. In their journals, explorers, prospectors, journalists, and an assortment of others make numerous references to the Tagish people (near present Carcross), but Tlingits in the Atlin area are largely invisible-- although there are scattered references. The list of writers during this period is extensive, and includes Schwatka,

Dawson, and Ogilvie. But these accounts largely serve to tell where the Taku River Tlingits weren't. The Tlingits themselves commented on the historical data. They pointed out that James Douglas (about whom we shall hear more later) noted a deserted village in June, 1840. This was the time of the year Taku people were inland. There also are stories about the anushi-- the Russians.

While good descriptions exist of expeditions to the Stikine River in 1837, and of trading posts in Dease Lake in the 1830s, Taku River and Atlin Lake remain largely unknown. While the Hudson's Bay Company did have a post near the mouth of the Taku River, it was in operation only between 1840 and 1843. It appears the post was closed in part because it was uneconomical-- mainly due to the large force required there because of the hostility of the Taku Tlingits. But the post was designed to intercept furs, not to act as the basis for trading expeditions into the interior. However, we do know from the post accounts that the Taku River was an important route for trade between the coast and the interior.

There are a number of reasons for the paucity of documentary materials on the Tlingits of the Atlin area: first, no major trading company established a post either in the headwaters of Taku River or Atlin Lake, thus depriving later researchers of Hudson's Bay Company archival records, and second, the gold rushes largely bypassed the Taku River as an access route.

### Anthropological Descriptions

The closest detailed anthropological material on this area is found in the writings of Catherine McClellan, who included information on Atlin in her larger study of what she called the Inland Tlingit. Her works draw attention to the close ties between Atlin, Teslin, Tagish and Carcross. But in the main, anthropological descriptions of Taku River Tlingits are secondary to detailed descriptions of other groups. In contrast, the nearby coast of Alaska and British Columbia has long attracted professional researchers, particularly anthropologists, and an assortment of surveyors and government officials. Because of this, a substantial anthropological and historical record exists for neighbouring groups. Detailed accounts of a number of Tlingit groups have been published, and we can argue that the Taku River Tlingits share in some, or most, cultural attributes assigned to the Tlingit. Similarly, a number of studies of interior Indian groups, mostly Athapaskan-speaking, exist, and these can be used for comparative purposes. All of these studies 'bracket' the Taku River Tlingits. But I think the people of the Taku have a special place in the history of the northwest, particularly given their riverine and interior locations.

Some of the classic accounts of coastal groups do refer to the Taku. These include Krause's (1956) study of the Chilkat Tlingit in 1881, Swanton's (1908) descriptions of the Tlingit of Wrangell

and Sitka in 1904, Oberg's (1973) account of the Tlingit of Klukwan in 1931 and 1932, Olson's (1967) published material on the Tlingit, based on research in 1933, 1934, 1949, and 1954, and the classic account of the Yakutat Tlingit are described in a three volume work by de Laguna (1972). Goldschmidt and Haas (1946) prepared a report on Tlingit land claims, although their data on Taku was necessarily focused on Alaska.

While many of the early accounts, including Krause's, make references to the Taku Tlingits, their descriptions suggest that they're referring to Taku Tlingits who lived in winter villages along the lower reaches of the Taku River and adjacent coastline, and travelled upriver for fishing in the summer and the fall-- and not to upriver or inland groups. McClellan has emphasized that the Inland Tlingit are the Tlingit-speaking people who presently reside in Teslin and Atlin. This means that the Teslin and Atlin people share a common cultural heritage, as well as a common language. Indeed, the material which McClellan presents from Teslin indicates a common origin (which she places on the Taku River). Genealogies (as well as McClellan's accounts) indicate extensive kinship connections and shared clan memberships between Teslin and Atlin people. We can further argue that as access to resources were traditionally regulated through the clan system, there exists an economic community. The creation of artificial political boundaries (Canada - U.S., Yukon - B.C.) detached people from parts of the economic base of their traditional territory and created a

political distinction between Tlingits in B.C. and the Yukon-- as well as American and Canadian Tlingits.

Archaeological research along the Taku River (McClellan 1953, French 1974) indicates that it was occupied prior to the arrival of Europeans. Other research along the coast suggests that a marine economy may date back 10 000 years (American Antiquity 1985: 659). The Atlin Lake region may have been occupied as far back as 8 000 B.C. (French 1975: 8). Some of the important sites along the Taku are at strategic fishing places, showing the long-term importance of salmon fishing for the ancestors of the Taku River Tlingits.

With the above comments on the sources of information in mind, we can look at what some of the specific sources tell us about the Taku River Tlingits.

#### Early Accounts of Taku Tlingits

An 1835 letter from the Governor of the Russian American Company to the commander of the schooner Chilkat refers to an 1834 "discovery" of the Taku River, and directs the recipient of the letter to engage in trade, specifically to:

"... direct your course to the river Taku which you discovered last year. Trade there with the natives for river beavers and otters, paying them in merchandise at lower rates than in Stachin or Sitka, but at higher ones than they are paid by the neighbouring Kolosh." (Papers relating to

Russian Occupation up to 1867, PABT, 1904: 273-274)

An extract of a Russian census in 1861 lists the "Takushi", with a population of 335 men and 337 women (Papers relating to Russian Occupation up to 1867, PABT, 1904: 316). In his 1881 study, Krause (1956: 69) enumerates the Taku tribe, based on an 1880 census:

"According to the census of 1880 the Taku tribe consisted of two hundred and sixty-nine people, who live in four villages on Taku River and Taku Bay, as follows: (1) Tokeatl's village with twenty-six natives; (2) Chitklin's village with one hundred and thirteen natives; (3) Katlany's village with one hundred and six natives; (4) Fotshou's village with twenty-four natives."

Krause (1956: 69) also makes the observation that the Taku River and Taku Inlet villages were "designated by the names of the chiefs."

A coastal group, the Sumdum Tlingit, is sometimes associated with the Taku Tlingit. For example, Goldschmidt and Haas (1946: 69) wrote:

"The Sumdum people were generally considered by early writers to be part of the Taku."

Schwatka (1883: 10) wrote:



"The Sundowns (or Soundun) and Takos, numbering 350 to 450 who live on the mainland from about Tako River to Prince Frederick Sound, their principal villages being Shuk and Sundown or Soundun, both on Stephen's Passage."

Krause (1956: 69) also wrote:

"The Samdams are occasionally added to the Taku or, according to some authors the Sundowns, about whom we have no additional information."

The distribution of groups is complicated by nineteenth century movements. For example, Krause (1956: 229) wrote that:

"In the summer of 1881 Rev. Dr. Corlies conducted school on Taku River above its mouth in a fishing village, and the following year he moved to a settlement of the same tribe just below Juneau."

In their 1946 study, Goldschmidt and Haas (1946: 67) list several village sites in the Taku Inlet area: (1) Carlson Creek, (2) Sunny Cove, (3) Greeley Point, which is designated as a winter camp, (4) Bishop Point, the site of a village called Taqukwan, the inhabitants of which moved to Juneau, (5) Thane Creek, (6) Du Pont Creek, and (7) Taku Point. Krause (1956: 69) had also noted in 1881 the movement of the Taku to Juneau:

"The Taku have, just like the Auks, settled in large numbers near the prospectors' town of

Juneau."

Later, Oberg (1973: 11) also commented:

"From the old village of Taku at the mouth of the Taku River, the people have left for Juneau..."

The towns which seem to have attracted the Tlingit came out of coastal gold rushes: Harrisburg (later called Juneau), founded in 1880, and Douglas, founded in 1887. According to a report published in 1960 (Rogers 1960: 206):

"All Auk settlements except one at Auk Bay and all Taku settlements except Sumdum disappeared between 1880 and 1890 census reports, their people reappearing as residents of Juneau and Douglas, respectively."

But Rogers (1960: 211) also notes that as the non-Indian settlements were made within the tribal territories, "the movement could thus be made with a minimum of disruptions of aboriginal geographic associations." This suggests that similar resettlement in Atlin by the Taku River Tlingit was simply a matter of remaining for a longer period in a location which falls between the Coast Taku and the River Taku needs clarification. Several maps place the boundary around Telsequah, a now-abandoned mining community on the lower Taku River. Goldschmidt and Haas (1946: 66) suggest that by early in the 1900s the Taku Tlingit had relocated in Juneau and

Atlin, leaving the traditional centres of high population along the river relatively empty:

"The original home of the Taku people was on the Taku River. After the establishment of the international boundary the Taku Tlingits split into two main groups, one living upstream on the shores of Lake Atlin, and the other remaining on the coast. The two groups still recognize their unity and maintained contacts."

This suggests that the Taku River population, the Taku Tlingits, split into two main groups after some key events in the late 1800s. The dispersion suggests that prior to this period, the Taku Tlingits gathered in the winter at one or two main villages, and then used the river and its resources during the rest of the year. For example, Douglas in 1840 refers to "the major part of the Taco Tribe who always winter on the coast." However, it may be that two Taku River Tlingit populations used the region in different ways, with both groups fishing on the river in the summer, and the downriver group shifting in the winter to coastal villages, while an upriver segment moved to the Atlin Lake-Teslin Lake region for hunting and fishing. The inland Tlingit population then returned to the Taku River in the summer and fall for fishing.

#### The Taku River as a Trade Route

Along with the Stikine River, the Taku River was an important trading route, especially for furs from the interior. Krause's

(1956) Tlingit study has several comments on Taku River trade. He wrote (p. 69) that like the Chilkat, the Taku traded with interior groups:

"... the Taku-kon ... have settled on Stephens Passage at the entrance to Taku Bay and on Taku River. From these places the Taku Indians live upstream and trade with the Indians of the interior over reasonably high passes to the tributaries of the Yukon, just as the Chilkat do."

In his study of the Tlingit, Oberg (1973: 11) pointed out the strategic importance of villages at the mouths of rivers:

"Villages at the mouths of larger rivers, such as the Stikine, Taku, and Chilkat, were formerly of great importance because they controlled the trade routes into the interior... "

An earlier view of the importance of the Taku River for trade comes from George Simpson of the Hudson's Bay Company, who visited the region in 1841, and wrote (Simpson 1973: 66):

"There are only two streams of any magnitude falling into the ocean between the Russian southern boundary and Cape Spencer, those are the Stikine and Tacow Rivers, the former being navigable in seasons of high water, for about 40 to 50 miles by the steam vessel, and afterwards by canoe, and the latter by small craft only. There is a range of mountains running along the coast, extending inland about 60 miles, beyond which there is a district of level country, partially wooded, but as there are a few lakes in the interior, it is difficult of settlement, except in a direct line between the great chain of Rocky Mountains and the coast; and as the coast Indians are in constant

communication with those of the interior, it is not supposed that the presence of establishments would tend materially to increase the quantity of furs at present collected..."

In another example, a Hudson's Bay Company employee, Finlayson, described a trip he made about 50 miles up the Taku River in June, 1840, noting that he had met "an Indian slave, the others having been up inland hunting." The inland location is likely Atlin Lake.

The importance of this route is reflected in the move by the Hudson's Bay Company to establish a post on the coast to intercept furs. In his history of the HBC, Rich (1959: 712) indicates that a post at Taku was originally seen as a counter to a Russian post on the Stikine River. Presumably, then, furs from the Taku River region were traded into this Russian post. However, in an agreement in 1839 between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Russians, Fort Stikine was handed over to the former, reducing the need for a post along the Taku. However, one was still built in the area. In 1840, James Douglas surveyed part of the Taku River for a site. His exploration indicated that few places existed for the kind of post the HBC wanted to establish, and a trading centre was actually erected on the coast, halfway between the Taku and Stikine Rivers. As G. Simpson (1973: 63) reported in 1841, on his arrival at Fort Taku:

"This establishment is situated in about latitude 584' Longitude 133 45', and it was intended to have

been placed at the mouth of the Tacow River, but no favourable situation having been found for an establishment there, it was erected on its present site, on the mainland between two rivers, the Sitko and Tacow, about 15 miles from each."

Called variously Fort Taku, Taco, Tacow, and Fort Durham, the post was maintained from 1840 until 1843, when it was abandoned (along with Fort Stikine), and replaced by the steamship Beaver. One of the reasons for the post's abandonment appears to have been the opposition of the Taku Tlingit. As one former trader commented:

"The Chilkats as well as the natives of Cross Sound and Awke came occasionally to the Fort; but they being strangers, were quiet and easily dealt with. It was Taku Indians only who were troublesome, and it was owing to them that Fort Durham (Taku) had to be abandoned." (Letter from Thomas Lowe, dated Oct. 12, 1897)

But while Fort Taku's presence was brief, its records give some indication of the region's Tlingit population. One of the groups trading into the post was identified as the Tako-quanay, who resided on the Taku River and in the vicinity of the post (Simpson 1973: 64). For example, in 1841 Simpson (1973: 64) wrote about the fort that:

"It is frequented by a great many Indians occupying the continental shore, both to the northward and southward, likewise by some of the islanders; in all, from 4000 to 5000 souls are more or less dependent upon this establishment for their supplies... The establishment is



surrounded by a village, containing disposition to be troublesome, more from a jealousy of the encouragement afforded by us to other tribes, than by any hostile feeling toward ourselves."

The report of James Douglas the previous year had included a list of Indian "tribes" trading into Fort Taku, as follows (Simpson 1973: 64, note 1):

Tribe	Place of Residence	No. of "Able men"
Saindau-quanay	Fort Snellsham	80
Tako-quanay	Tako River and Fort	70
Auke-quanay	Douglas Island	180
Hoonah-quanay	Cross Sound	400
Chilcat-quanay	Lynn Channel	600

Simpson (1973: 64) also commented on the fur returns to Taku:

"The returns of the past Outfit were about 1400 beaver and otter, besides small furs, yielding a profit of about \$1000; but from the growing industry of the Indians to the northward, rising from their being more regularly supplied with goods than heretofore, it is expected that the returns will next year amount to about 1800 to 2000 Beaver and otter."

According to Simpson's (1973: 64) report, most of the furs traded at Taku came from the interior:

"Nearly all the returns that are collected at this establishment are brought from the British territory, inland of the Russian line of demarcation, running parallel with the coast, and traded by the coast Indians from those inhabiting the interior country, very few hunted

by themselves."

The post's journals also indicate the nature of trade between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Tlingit. For example, one of the traders noted that:

"The Indians brought us great quantities of halibut, deer, mountain goat, bear, partridges etc. so that we always had an abundance of provisions..." (Letter from Thomas Lowe to J. Walbran, dated Oct. 13, 1906)

The Taku Tlingit had a role as middlemen in the coastal-interior trade. Canoes were taken up the river to the head of navigation, Canoe Landing, at the confluence of the Sloko and Nakina Rivers, and from there overland to trade with the interior groups (cf. McClellan 1981: 474). It can be assumed that trade routes existed prior to the arrival of Europeans and their goods, and that dried salmon and oil formed an important part of the traditional trade.

#### The Resources of the Taku River

The Taku River was, and is, an important location used for several varieties of salmon-- king, silver or coho, humpback, and dog. The river's resources were used by a number of groups aside from the Taku River Tlingits; from the coast came Coastal Taku, Auk, and Sumdum in the summer to gather berries, dry fish, and

visit relatives (Emmons n.d.: 2ff, quoted in McClellan 1975: 50). It is clear that access to the fish resources of the Taku River by these groups was because of prior kinship ties. The river and its resources were not open to every one, just those who fitted into the indigenous social structure of class and kinship relations. There was also a practical reason why coastal Tlingit wanted to come up the Taku River. As McClellan (1975: 196) points out:

"... one of the main reasons that the coastal Tlingit came up the river was that the drier climate made salmon curing much easier than in their own damp homeland."

In the adjacent interior, caribou and mountain sheep were hunted, along with smaller game. The whole region, from the coast to the interior, provided other foods such as bird eggs, plants, and berries.

#### Economic Cycle

The traditional economic cycle took the Taku River Tlingits from the Taku and Nakina Rivers to the inland lakes (Atlin, Teslin), and to the coast. The range of resources obtained reflected access to these three regions-- coastal, riverine, and interior lake and plateau. As one person commented:

"First they set up their fish along the Taku

and at a place called Old Village. Then they came up this way (Atlin) to hunt. In the winter, they're all over the place, but in the spring they head down the river (Taku) to get their fish. They go down to the coast... (to) get molasses from the Russians. They use it like sugar."

The most complete published summary of the yearly round, or cycle, of resource use activities of the Taku River Tlingits (or Inland Tlingit) is provided by McClellan (1981: 471-472):

"In the Taku basin, the Inland Tlingit relied heavily on the summer salmon catch, part of which they stored. Some lower Taku River Tlingit also came upstream in summer where they could dry salmon more easily than on the rainy coast and could also trade with the Inland Tlingit for valuable land furs. By September they returned home, and the Inland Tlingit, after several weeks of berrying, and upland hunts for ground squirrels, groundhogs, and big game, began to gather in settlements near their supplies of stored salmon. But no group could remain sedentary for the entire winter. The food stored in pits on the gravel ridges rarely lasted past January, and in order to get either large or small game, or to trap furs, households had to disperse widely-- a pattern that the fur trade surely intensified. Units of two or three nuclear families increasingly crossed to the Yukon to hunt and trap, not to return to the Taku until after the spring beaver hunt. Some families then continued downstream to trade on the coast, while others remained to prepare again for summer fishing and the upriver trade. Throughout the year feuding with the Tahltan and Coastal Tlingit clans was endemic. By the late nineteenth century many of the Inland Tlingit began to live permanently in the Yukon headwaters. There the salmon supplies were never so great as on the Taku River, and although hunters cached meat from the fall hunt at various spots in the mountains, by midwinter small family groups were constantly moving from one fresh moose or caribou kill to another, or

from one fish lake to another. Spring was the leanest season of all until spawning whitefish enabled the families to reunite at favorite spots such as Nisutlin Bay near present Teslin. In all seasons of the year much of the diet consisted of freshwater fish and small game instead of the preferred salmon and big game. Berries, either fresh or preserved, Hedysarum roots, and inner spruce bark were the chief vegetal foods."

People recalled important fishing villages on the Taku River, like Sekinuxwa'a and Nakina'a (see also McClellan 1975: 459), where, as noted earlier, relatives from other areas also came to join in the fishing. But like most regions which have been incorporated into an expanding national economy, there were changes, which I deal with later.

#### Social Structure and Ownership

Like other Tlingit groups, the Taku River Tlingits have matrilineal descent groups, with two exogamous moieties, Wolf, Gooch and Crow, Yeil. Within each moiety are clans, in turn composed of lineages or houses (cf. deLaguna 1983). For the Taku River Tlingits in Atlin, a single major House is identified with the clan. Yanyeidi ("Hemlock House") is the major Wolf clan and Kookittan ("pit house") is the major Crow clan. Taku River was (and is) considered to belong to the Yanyeidi clan, while the Nakina River is associated with the Kookittan. In their reports, Goldschmidt and Haas (1946: 66) include the statement from one of the Tlingits they interviewed that:

"The yenyedi people claim the river, and the others just come in there because they were married in or related. They could get all the fish they wanted so they lived right there."

It is perhaps likely that the Taku River was controlled in the same way described for the Stikine. For example, the Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for 1881 noted that the Stikine Tlingit, by then part of U.S. jurisdiction, still claimed 150 miles up the Stikine River:

"The coast Indians of this region (now United States Indians) claim the exclusive right of following the salmon about 150 miles up the Stickeen River, and within undoubted British frontier, forbidding the interior resident natives from catching fish there except by purchase. The Coast Indians being the most powerful have maintained this right in practice for a period long, prior and subsequent to the Treaty which gave Russia the strip of territory along the coast involving about 20 or 30 miles of the Stickeen. In those days the interior Indians were not permitted to approach within 150 miles of the coast, or beyond a point especially arranged where both parties met for exchange and barter."

My impression is that the Taku River basin was occupied by three groups-- usually referred to as "tribes" or, using the Tlingit suffix, kwaan, which simply means the people living together. Along the lower reaches of the river below the mining town of Telsequah, and along the adjacent coastal region, were the Coast Taku, or Coastal Takuqwan. In the middle part of the river, centred around a mountain known as Yeyuwa, were also the



T'aakukwaan, but recognized as different from the group in the lower reaches of the river. This middle river group is associated with Yenyeyidi. A third group, the Nakina'a'kwaan, is linked to the Nakina River, and is associated with Kookittan. Both of the upriver groups included the adjacent interior plateau as part of their territories. This points to the complex relationship between regions, residents, and clans. It also suggests that we have to think in terms of riverine Tlingit, as well as coastal Tlingit.

#### Economic and Social Changes

In the late nineteenth century, a number of changes took place in the region which affected the Taku River Tlingit-- and, of course, other groups. The United States of America asserted sovereignty over its Alaskan territory, dividing the Taku River into an American zone and a Canadian zone-- and dividing the population. Government regulations began to interfere with traditional resource-use activities. For example, the B.C. government brought in a program of registered traplines. Gold rushes brought thousands into the region, and what once were Tlingit hunting camps became towns-- Atlin, for example, replaced Juneau as a centre for trade and commerce. Indian groups, some decimated by epidemics, or having to face diminishing resources because of increased competition, began to relocate in the vicinity of these towns.

The sovereignty issue, focused on the drawing of the U.S. - Canada border in the Alaska Panhandle region, brought in Tlingit groups in a somewhat unusual way. The United States government argued before a tribunal that U.S. authority had been accepted by coastal groups, and by bringing Indian groups on-side, as it were, the land these groups were situated on was also brought under American control. For example, a U.S. report from Sitka, dated May, 1868, stated:

"The Taku chiefs have been here recently, and express a desire to trade and cultivate peaceful relations with us." (Papers Relating to American Occupation, PABT, 1904: 354-355)

By 1903, the U.S. was arguing before the Alaska Boundary Tribunal that reports and correspondence from the Navy Department in Alaska showed:

"That the Stikine, Auk, Taku, Chilkat, and Chilkoot Indians, who live along the inlets, and rivers of the lisiere, rendered unquestioned submission to the authority of the United States and recognized their lands as American territory..." (Document 162, PABT, 1904: 94)

With this logic, the U.S. declared the following with respect to the Taku River:

"Taku Inlet and Taku River for a distance of 30 miles from tide water were regarded as American territory, the inhabitants were treated by the military and civil authorities as subject to

American control, and they recognized that authority." (Document 162, PABT, 1904: 101)

Part of the basis of such an assertion of control over the lower part of the Taku River and its inhabitants appears to be the deposition of one Edward Armstrong, who stated that in 1890 he took part in a census "as far as 30 miles up the Taku River at an Indian village... where all the Indians at said place gave their enumerations for the purpose of said census." (Papers Relating to American Occupation, PABT, 1904: 432). The reactions of the Taku River Tlingits to this event remain unrecorded.

In at least one community, Atlin, there emerged a 'prospector' history, which denied that Indian people had lived there-- even though oral traditions point to the area as a prime caribou hunting area, and places where meat drying racks stood (now under shops and houses) can be pointed out. For a while, one of the most puzzling questions was who was around Atlin before the gold rush of 1898. In his testimony to the Royal Commission for Indian Affairs for B.C. in Atlin on June 17, 1915, the Taku River Tlingits Chief, Taku Jack, indicated how the Atlin area was used:

"Atlin means big lake, and that is the place where we used to stay. That is the reason I used to think that the whites were not going to give me any trouble because they call us after this lake. They call us Atlin Indians because they know that I belong to this country."

The early 'invisibility' of the Atlin Indians was perhaps due to seasonal movements; what is now Atlin was likely originally a summer camp. One account describes a group of Taku River Tlingits hunting in the mountains behind Atlin who had left their hunting camp at present day Atlin, and returned weeks later to find a white sea of tents. The town of Atlin had emerged almost overnight while the families were out hunting caribou. The Tlingit chief's remarks also pointed to increasing competition over fisheries. He indicated that diminishing fish stocks on the Taku River was one of the reasons for remaining longer in the Atlin area. For example, in response to being asked what kinds of fish he generally caught, he answered:

"Whitefish and trout, roundfish, greyling, pike, ringfish, suckers, and king salmon on the Taku River. We used to have lots of salmon on the river, but the people are putting up nets and very few come down here."

The nets referred to were on the American side, as the chief continued:

"There are a few on the Taku River and we used to stay down there to dry the fish, but they are not so plentiful now so we catch our fish down here (Atlin Lake) and dry them here."

The chief also pointed to a growing commercial relationship between Tlingit hunters and the larger community:

"We have to live on fish and game-- moose, porcupine, gophers, and if the white men want some of them they buy it from us."

The sale of meat from caribou, mountain sheep, small game, fish, and berries apparently went on into the 1950s. The importance of Tlingit harvesting of bush resources for the local merchant economy is apparent. Juneau was replaced by Atlin as the major source of commercial products. As one person commented:

"Instead of going down to Juneau, it was easier to go to Atlin to get stuff. Pretty soon almost everybody got settled in Teslin and Atlin."

There were also some general changes in the large game population. Since their appearance in the region about 1900, moose have become one of the most important food sources, supplementing caribou which were reduced in number after thousands of gold seekers moved into the region after 1900, and cut down tracts of timber-- as well as utilizing the game. The major sources of caribou were near the town of Atlin, and several miles south of Atlin. Caribou were traditionally caught with what are called fences, set up along migration routes. It is also likely that fish populations in the creeks and smaller lakes were affected by the mining operations.

A segment of the population stayed on the Taku River-- primarily Yanyeyidi people who carried on some trade at the mining

town of Telsequah and also travelled to Atlin and Juneau. But it appears that over time, fewer inland hunters returned to the Taku River, instead remaining for longer parts of the year in settlements such as Carcross, Teslin, and Atlin. At the same time, Taku Tlingits from the lower part of the river shifted to Juneau and Douglas. However, as Goldschmidt and Haas point out, these shifts can be seen as occurring within traditional territories, and perhaps should be seen simply as resettling in a different part of the traditional lands. Further, shifts to Atlin were facilitated (or made necessary) by diminishing salmon runs in the Taku River, and the increased sale of meat to town residents and stores.

As alluded to earlier, there were other population shifts. In general, it appears that coastal and lower river populations of Auk, Sumdum, and Taku relocated to Juneau (and other communities around Juneau), while communities up the Taku and Nakina Rivers shifted to Atlin and Teslin. Some population shifts can undoubtedly be associated with depopulation. A number of epidemics swept the northwest, although the actual impacts can only be guessed at. Small-pox hit in 1836-37 (Krause 1956: 43), measles struck in 1847, small-pox again in the 1860s, and the influenza epidemic of 1918-1919 was recalled as a period in which quite a number of people died on the Taku River, in Atlin, Teslin and Carcross.

Trapline registrations in the 1920s and 1930s also created



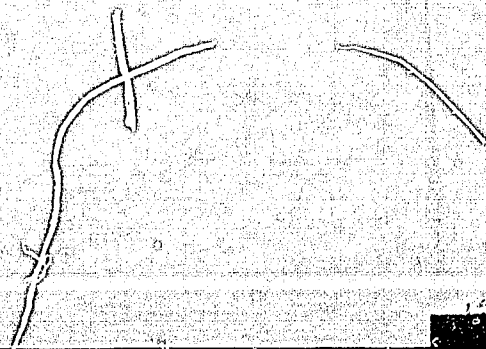
problems in the Atlin area for Tlingit trappers (cf. McCandless 1985). Tlingit trappers resisted registration, and some saw their territories registered in the names of non-Tlingit trappers. In the past decade, there has been an effort to reclaim trapping territories lost over the years, and to reestablish a commercial salmon fishery on the Taku River.

#### Summary

The history of the Taku River and its people represents an important element in the larger history of the northwest. The research is only beginning, but I think a good case can be made for seeing the Taku River Tlingits as a special set of communities, with adaptations to riverine and interior plateau habitats. Their situation is also a special one in that their traditional homeland has been split into a number of different political jurisdictions, and that control of the Taku River no longer just involves clans.

**The White Pass and Yukon Route**

**Roy Minter**



Roy Minter:

The Borderlands and the White Pass & Yukon Route

The White Pass & Yukon Route! This is the company I am to talk to you about today, and I hope that I will be able to provide you with a brief look at the influence the border has had on the conception, construction, and subsequent operations of the railway, its effect on the White Pass River Division, as well as the company's brief but innovative service in the air. Let's start with the railway.

Before the first spike was driven in June, 1898, the railway builders had been plagued for some two and a half years with national and international political problems-- one of the most difficult being rooted in the Treaty of St. Petersburg, signed by Great Britain and Russia in 1825.

This treaty attempted to identify the border between Russian America and what was then known as "The British Empire's Furthest North." But, for all its pompous language it failed miserably to accurately describe the location of the boundary that would, when established, create what we know today as the Alaska Panhandle.

When the United States purchased Alaska in 1867, the treaty, with all its faults, came with it, and it was not long before disagreement about this border escalated into a continuing dispute

between Canada and the United States-- one that would not be resolved until 1903.

Acting on Canada's behalf, Britain claimed that, under the terms of the treaty the boundary between Alaska and British Columbia should intersect Lynn Canal some fifty miles south of Skagway-- an interpretation that would put Skagway and Dyea well within Canada.

Contrary to the British position, American officials claimed that the boundary should be marked near the southern tip of Lake Bennett. Further, despite the conflicting interpretations of the treaty, the United States was in defacto possession of Skagway and the surrounding territory, including the Chilkoot Pass and the White Pass, the two principal routes into the Yukon interior.

In an attempt to settle this ongoing problem, Canada, Britain, and the United States agreed in 1892 to conduct surveys that would lead to establishing the Panhandle border. Nothing was settled, however, and by 1896 hope of resolving the boundary issue evaporated in international rancour and debate. But, despite the strong opposing claims it was generally conceded by pioneers living around the tip of Lynn Canal that the border eventually be established at or near the summits of the two passes.

This then was the situation when Charles Herbert Wilkinson, an

English engineer acting for a British financial syndicate, arrived in Victoria, B.C. early in 1896, seeking investment opportunities.

Soon after his arrival, he met riverboat operator and trail blazer, Captain William Moore who, at the age of seventy-four, was still optimistic, vigorous, and pugnacious. After taking part in William Ogilvie's expedition to the Yukon in 1887, he was convinced that one day gold would be discovered in the Yukon. Moore told Wilkinson that trails, wagon roads, and eventually a railway would be needed to support the great army of miners that was bound to surge north in search of the yellow metal.

Wilkinson fell under the spell of old dream-weaver Moore, and after a personal review of Moore's claims he recommended to his London syndicate that it undertake to build a railway from Skagway to the Yukon interior. Subsequently, London informed him that his recommendation had been accepted, and that he was to incorporate the necessary companies, and obtain the required rights and charters from the appropriate governments.

It was not long before difficulties began to arise. The problem Wilkinson faced was how to incorporate a railway that would cross territory claimed by both Canada and the United States-- a railway that would be capable of maintaining its rights and charters no matter where the statesmen finally placed the international border. He decided that this could best be achieved

by creating three railway companies-- one American and two Canadian.

On November 14, 1896, eight months before the steamer Portland arrived in Seattle with its ton of Klondike gold, Wilkinson incorporated the Pacific and Arctic Railway and Navigation Company under the laws of the State of Washington. Its principal objective was to construct a railway from Skagway Bay to the line of demarcation between Alaska and British Columbia.

The second company, the British Columbia-Yukon Railway Company, was incorporated in Victoria under the laws of British Columbia on April 22, 1897-- three months before the arrival of the Portland. This company was authorized to construct a railway from a point on, or near, Lynn Canal, to the border between British Columbia and the Yukon. You can see that should Skagway be declared a Canadian Port situated in British Columbia, the B.C. company would be able to build from Skagway clear to the province's northern border with the Yukon. The American company therefore, would not be required.

The third company, the British Yukon Mining, Trading and Transportation Company, was incorporated in Ottawa under the federal laws of Canada on June 29, 1897-- three weeks before the arrival of the Portland. It was authorized to "construct and operate a railway from a point in British Columbia near the head of Lynn Canal, thence across the White Pass, and then northerly by the



most feasible route to Fort Selkirk"-- which was the original destination of the railway.

By these clever moves Wilkinson had erected a corporate edifice-- known as the White Pass & Yukon Railway-- that was capable of accommodating itself to any border established by the statesmen of two world powers. Sadly, after incorporating these companies, four major events began to affect Wilkinson's grand plan and it started to fall apart.

Firstly, there was now little doubt that the United States was going to win its battle for Skagway and some twenty miles of land between there and the White Pass summit. In fact, by 1897 American troops, administrators, judges, sheriffs and marshals were in firm control of the area.

Secondly, Wilkinson was shocked to learn that the land laws of the United States did not yet apply to Alaska. Therefore, until Congress acted to make the land laws applicable, the American company could not lay one rail or drive one spike between Skagway and White Pass summit.

Thirdly, the Honourable Clifford Sifton, Canada's Minister of the Interior, decided in September of 1897, that Canada could best serve the Canadian north, by creating an "All Canadian Railway" through the Stikine River valley. Indeed, Sifton actually arranged

a contract with railway builders Mackenzie and Mann to construct the railway from Glenora to Teslin Lake. This undertaking was approved by the House of Commons, but subsequently soundly rejected by the Canadian Senate. But for a time Sifton's proposed Stikine River route threatened to outflank Wilkinson's railway through the White Pass.

Fourthly, Wilkinson's Syndicate failed to raise the capital to build the railway. As a result, it was forced to pass control of the project early in 1898 to Close Brothers of London, a well established British financial house, who undertook to finance and construct the White Pass & Yukon Railway.

The first break for Close Brothers came on May 14, 1898, when the United States Congress extended provisions of the country's land laws to Alaska. This permitted Samuel H. Graves, the railway's first president, to obtain a right-of-way from Skagway to White Pass summit. He wasted no time. Just two weeks after Congress extended the land laws, the first loads of railway construction material landed on the beaches of Skagway, and by the first week in June, 1898, construction was underway.

Day in and day out, Canadian railway contractor, Michael J. Heney, and his construction gangs, attacked the gigantic shoulders of granite deep in the pass. Month after month in the hazy heat of summer and blue cold of winter they blasted, filled, graded and

tunnelled their way to the summit.

At the summit disaster struck! The builders were stopped cold by the North-West Mounted Police who stated that, on instructions from Ottawa, the railway would not be permitted to start construction or extend its survey line into Canada. Edwin Warner, the railway engineer on the spot, reported the situation to Chief Engineer Erastus Corning Hawkins stating, "I suppose we will have to do what they say, as they have a Gatling gun up there that fires 600 shots a minute."

President Graves was appalled by this obstruction and informed the Canadian government that if construction was delayed by further bureaucratic bungling his railway would lose the warm summer months, and be compelled to build the grade north of the summit during the fall and winter when the ground was frozen hard. Furthermore, he added, and I quote, "...because of the government's action we shall be delayed several months reaching Bennett with our tracks. As a result we will sustain a heavy loss of traffic."

During the summer of 1898, Hawkins and Heney made further attempts to start construction in Canada, but without success.

The builders were starting to wonder if their railway might be defeated by interfering politicians and government bureaucrats. Certainly the unofficial border was taking its toll of their time,

money and patience.

Authority to cross the unofficial border was finally received late in September, 1898, and the first sod was turned on Canadian soil on November 4. The railway had lost the battle of the border and was now forced to be built over Canadian terrain that was frozen hard, cold and expensive. No one said they were sorry.

After 26 months of blasting, grading, and laying rail all the way to Whitehorse, they drove home the last spike at Carcross on July 29, 1900. Thus we see the completion of a railway that has been operating on both sides of the border since the summer of 1898.

Skagway remains its operational headquarters. There, the trains are still dispatched, rolling stock maintained, repairs completed. Skagway is indeed a railroad town-- and remains one to this day.

Not content to terminate their freight and passenger service at Whitehorse, the White Pass incorporated the British Yukon Navigation Company in 1901. This company acquired a large fleet of sternwheeler Riverboats and operated them on the Upper Yukon River between Whitehorse and Dawson.

In 1914, White Pass acquired a second fleet of riverboats that

ran on the Lower Yukon from St. Michael to Dawson City. To operate this service it formed the American Yukon Navigation Company. Thus the BYN and the AYN together provided a complete Yukon River passenger and freight service on both sides of the border-- in this case the 141st meridian.

Air transport, the Alaska Railway, and the northern network of highways eventually combined to render the riverboats unprofitable and their romantic era came to a close in the middle fifties. White Pass highway trucks took over and distributed Yukon freight without missing a beat.

Until 1955, Yukon bound freight was carried from Vancouver to Skagway by independent steamship companies. From there, freight was trundled into White Pass boxcars which were then sent across the Panhandle in bond.

At White Pass summit, boxcar seals, railway bills, and passengers were checked by a Canadian Customs Official. This procedure continued from the turn of the century to the end of World War II, and while the border customs has been moved to Fraser on the Klondike Highway the integrity of the border is strictly maintained to this day.

These procedures also applied to White Pass air operations which were organized in 1935-1936 with the incorporation of White

Pass Airways Limited-- an American company based in Skagway. It flew Ford Tri-Motor aircraft, a Boeing 247D and a Douglas Condor biplane which, after its transfer to Canadian registry, was the largest passenger plane operating in Canada. The company's air services on the Canadian side were operated by the British Yukon Navigation Company-- the White Pass subsidiary that ran the riverboats. These two airlines provided an international service from Skagway, Alaska to Dawson City, Yukon and points in between. This is the way things stood until Hitler embarked on his global enterprise. By early September, 1939, Canada was at war.

Because of the intensity of the war effort, the White Pass was forced to sell its airline in 1942, due to the difficulty in obtaining spare parts, planes and pilots to fly them. It was purchased by Grant McConachie, who made it part of his Yukon Southern Airways which eventually became a root company of Canadian Pacific Airlines-- now known as Canadian International.

So, you can see that the White Pass & Yukon's roots run deep. Over the years it has worn many hats, and it has played many roles in the development of the north-- on both sides of the border.

After Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, followed by naval and air attacks on the Aleutians, President Roosevelt, with Canadian participation, ordered the construction of the Alaska Highway. This highway was required to move troops and military



equipment from stateside to Alaska for continental defence, as well as a supply route for airbases at Fort St. John, Fort Nelson, Watson Lake, Whitehorse, Snag, and Fairbanks-- all of these airports used to service fighter planes and bombers being delivered from United States factories to the Russian fighting fronts. Within days of the president's order, Skagway and Whitehorse became military camps. Tons of military equipment and thousands of American troops, as well as civilian contractors, were transported by train from Skagway to Whitehorse, which, in early 1942, was a town of only three hundred people. So, forty-three years after the Trail of '98, and forty-one years after driving the last spike, the White Pass was once again embroiled in a gigantic human drama.

During an eight month period in 1942, the railway moved 67,496 tons of freight-- most of it for the military. Overnight the railway became a vital participant in the defence of North America. Indeed, so great were the demands on its civilian crews, equipment, locomotives and rolling stock, it could no longer cope with the work load thrust upon it-- demands that increased almost daily as construction of the Alaska Highway advanced, and the Canol pipeline project came on stream. By April, 1942, the railway was transporting five hundred tons a day across the pass, several times what it normally hauled when the Yukon was a quiet corner of Canada that was at that time unhurried, unorganized, unobtrusive, and virtually unknown.

Late in July, 1942, General Somervell, Commanding Officer of the United States Army Service Forces inspected the construction of the Alaska Highway. He informed White Pass president Clifford J. Rogers that he wanted the tonnage increased from five hundred tons a day to two thousand tons a day-- an incredible increase-- but Rogers didn't even bat an eye. "Yes," said Rogers, "the railway can do it." But, facing reality, he suggested to General Somervell that the United States Army lease the railway for the duration. The U.S. Army agreed. For the good of the war effort, Rogers was willing to pass control of the line into the hands of the military. Suddenly, the White Pass was in the army-- and had gone to war.

From October, 1942 to April, 1946 the railway operated under the direct supervision of the United States Army's 770th Railroad Battalion. White Pass engineers, firemen, trackmen, and shops crews remained on the job, but they took their orders from the military. There are reports of seventeen trains a day running between Skagway and McCrae-- the U.S. Army's huge Yukon supply depot south of Whitehorse.

But despite the war effort, there was still the international border. The long arm of Hitler's Germany had not moved it an inch. Every piece of construction and military equipment loaded for shipment to Canada still had to undergo customs check and immigration procedures followed without exception. There was no official hanky panky-- although I am sure a few enterprising

soldiers got by with the odd bottle of scotch. This does not mean that there was not a great deal of confusion. Mistakes were made, orders given, orders countermanded and inexperienced military railway officials were forced to deal with winters that could lay five hundred inches of snow across the track. The fog of war crept in and remained throughout the conflict-- a condition that prevailed on every military front.

But, like most human miseries, the war came to an end, and the White Pass & Yukon Railway was demobbed as there were millions of men and women who had served with distinction throughout the world. But the railway was tired. It had been overworked during the war and its fabric was in tatters. It needed a moment to catch its breath and organize a shot of financial Geritol. Close Brothers still controlled the railway from London, but things were about to change. In the early fifties, a Canadian company, The White Pass and Yukon Corporation Limited was formed and it purchased all of the British assets. The White Pass was now Canadian from top to bottom.

Frank H. Brown, a brilliant financial consultant, was made president, and after his first inspection he told me, "After seeing the broken down condition of the railway resulting from the war effort, my first inclination was to cut and run." But he didn't run. He stayed and, with the help of a group of devoted White Passers-- which includes Marvin P. Taylor, the present president of

the railway and subsidiary companies-- he brought the company back to life. Under his direction the White Pass introduced a totally new concept of freight handling into world transportation thinking. He and his associates created an integrated international ship-train-truck containerized transportation system. he upgraded the track, purchased diesel locomotives, and produced the first vessel in the world designed and built from the keel up as a container ship. This made the Yukon Territory the first area in the world to be served by an integrated ship-train-truck container system-- a first that produces a sense of pride among people living on both sides of the border who know of this great accomplishment.

Today, the railway operates a passenger service in the summertime, its traditional transportation role having been passed to its Highway Division which has been operating since the end of the war. Well, as Robert Service said, "Those are the simple facts of the case."

The White Pass has lived comfortably with the border since before the turn of the century. It blasted and hacked a right-of-way through the Panhandle and beyond. It has operated in and out of Alaska, British Columbia, and the Yukon for more than ninety years. It has navigated its riverboats across the 141st meridian, flown above the border markers, railroaded and trucked through the mountain barriers that separate the Yukon from the sea. It has hauled parcels and people, mail and minerals by land, water and

air. Today, it remains a vital northern transportation link. It pumps petroleum across the border to power and heat the Yukon. It employs hundreds of northerners, and lives under the laws of six governments. But, despite the regulations and legalities, the distances and the weather, the northern corridors of commerce have always been open to Alaskans and Yukoners who are ready and willing to engage in creative enterprise to enhance the industrial development, and the social progress of the north.

**Stories of Growing up in the Borderlands Areas**

**Laurent Cyr**



Laurent Cyr:

Well, I haven't got a long write up with me - my write up is here. I remember most of the facts, I've just got a few notes and I hear some messages from elders on this program and others; I usually call them seniors. I don't mind saying I'm seventy years of age, so I guess I classify as that. Anyway, talking about borders; I've been across this border between here and Alaska many times and the first job I ever lost in my life was on account of people who crossed that border.

I was about five years of age and during the summer months particularly, I used to go down and there used to be a guide to a cabin here in Whitehorse - Sam McGee's Cabin which is on the museum property now, but that is not where it was originally. I talked to a merchant here in town to "grubstake" me or whatever you want to call it (finance) to get some business cards and I had one today, but the wording is changed. Anyway, he says "We'll, you go to the printer and I'm sure he'll print them." Well, I went to the printer and the printer printed them but he charged the merchant; I didn't have to pay for them. So I was in business. I had a ribbon and I borrowed an RCMP cap, and had the ribbon painted on it titled "Guide to Sam McGee's cabin" and I'd go down and meet the train. The train would come in, and of course I had no wheels. There weren't any taxis around. For a couple of summers I didn't do too badly. It was tips, there was no fare involved. People

just tipped me off, as there was no set amount. I guided them through Sam McGee's cabin. One enterpriser brought in a vehicle, it was an old reel truck that he'd remodelled into a bus and it carried about ten passengers. I was out of business, they wouldn't walk anymore.

But the first time I went to Skagway, though, was as a stick boy for a hockey team. They used to have hockey teams back and forth on a regular basis and baseball teams in the summer and they didn't have too many players. The population here in the winter was about 300 to 350 people, and in the summer it might increase to 700. But when the hockey players went we also had to have somebody look after their sticks, because they didn't have enough players to look after their sticks. They had no coaches, they had nothing.

That was my first trip, but I was put up in a home; at that time the Canada customs officer was living in Skagway. Anyway, I stayed in his place. The morning we were to leave to come back he said, "Well, I'll carry your suitcase." I said, "There's not much in it". "Well, I'll have to carry it." Well, anyway, we got on the train and of course he made quite a spectacle of going through my suitcase. It was full of oranges and all kinds of contraband stuff, and that he had put in himself. So that was my first trip across the border. But, I have had lots of them since.

Now other borders. I worked on the steamboats here on the

river and I was a Huckleberry Finn type, but maybe you wonder about what this has to do with the border. But, nevertheless it did go into it. As Mr. Minter just said a little while ago about the company having boats from Whitehorse right through to St. Michael. I went down once to Circle city on the Aksala which was originally built in the Shipyards here in Whitehorse and called the Alaska. When the business slacked off on the Alaska side, it was operating on the lower river. They brought it back to Whitehorse, I guess they didn't have to pay for it, the company repossessed it and had it re-registered as the Aksala. Anyway, I was on this Aksala one time and a number of other boats that I've been on. I didn't mind washing the dishes, peeling the potatoes, or waiting tables. But, the potatoes were the ones that really bothered me. They used to get the cheapest potatoes and they picked big eyes and they had to be cut out. Anyway, I went to a lot of trouble-- a couple of wash tubs, a couple of paring knives, a couple of stools just peeling the potatoes. I would sit on the deck, and if somebody came along to start asking questions, I'd invite them to sit down. They had to remove the paring knife first. So, anyway, they would start to peel the potatoes and somebody else would come along and I would ask them to sit down. I supervised. Anyway, when we went to circle on one trip in particular on the steamer Aksala, the crew were not allowed off the boat. We were all Canadians. We were not allowed off the boat at Eagle and at Circle, the only two places we stopped. We had to remain on the boat right through to Dawson City.

Anyway, another talk about border crossings that I was not involved in but in a way I brought it to somebody's attention some years ago at a Vancouver-Yukoners dinner. It was a fellow by the name of Slim Williams who mushed a team of dogs from Copper Centre in Alaska to the Chicago World's fair in 1933. That was quite a hike, as there was no Alaska highway. He went through from Copper Centre to Chicken, through Dawson following the old Dawson trail, down through Whitehorse, Carcross, Atlin, Telegraph Creek, and it was quite a journey. This guy was trying to promote the construction of the Alaska highway in 1933. He made the trip, and was welcomed in the evening in Washington D.C. by Franklin D. Roosevelt. In 1939, the same fellow took another younger guy with him. They took motorcycles from Fairbanks right through to Seattle, and it took them seven months. They had to carry these motorbikes most of the way, but, anyway, they crossed quite a few borders.

Now, getting back to the mention of the Taku River, I was fleeced some years ago before the last war of putting up some money to buy some property, property which probably belonged to some of these people on the Taku River. They figured on building a harbor, and a boat dock to bring stuff through and land it in Canadian territory. I thought it was a good venture. I had a few dollars then and I put it up, but I lost it. But I still think that it would have been a good venture; that was even before the Alaska highway days.

But, the Alaska highway-- of course I was here when they built it. I was working in the post office when the word came out that the Americans were coming here to start construction on the Alaska highway. The post office, I think, was the last ones to find out about it. Within three days there was ten thousand troops landed here in Whitehorse. We were the only post office as they had no post office facilities themselves, of course. There was only two of us in the post office. The old man who was postman-- I was just relieving somebody on holiday-- he died while he was out; he must have heard about it out there. I don't know, but anyway, the postmaster had a stroke and I was stuck. I was a temporary employee, and all these people had mail bags and were out in the back yard just like cordwood. Anyway, I hired a couple of girls without authority. I paid them out of the bank deposit everyday and got a receipt. Anyway, I put up with that for about two years. Finally, some inspectors came up and of course they got more help on. I wasn't getting any bigger wage or any higher wages than the ones they were hiring off the street.

I had a chance to go to customs. Now, that was another experience. I wasn't that old really, but, anyway, we were a long time getting uniforms and that was after the American army had already taken over the White Pass railroad. So, I guess they figured that I was the logical fellow to be sent up on the railroad. I was riding the trains everyday in plain clothes. Well, I had never been a policeman or a plain clothesman, but,

anyway, I was stationed at the summit at White Pass in an old building that was built up against a bluff - a rock bluff. The windows were all boarded up on account of the snow in the winter and they never bothered to take them off in the summer. The only way out of this building is through a tunnel into a snowshed that was on the railroad. I had to pack coal to the stove, and water for our own use from the section house which was about half a mile down the track. Anyway, I didn't have much food there; I'd been travelling most of the time and I should mention that I can prove it... well, I know it for a fact that there was seven to eight trains a day through White Pass besides the extra locomotives that they used to have as helpers. At the summit were steam engines, and they had to have help to climb the mountains. Then of course, the regular engine would take off from there. They turned at a place called Fraser, and the sign of the loop was where the helper engines turned - the sign is still there. The track has been lifted, but, anyway, on the White Pass train I rode to Bennett which is along the railroad. It is about twelve or thirteen miles. I rode on it often enough so I should know. But the train had to travel in darkness with no lights allowed on the engine or the coach. During that period there were many civilian contractors that came up here to work on the Alaska highway, and I think most of them came from penitentiary's. They were rough. When I speak of customs, it wasn't only customs duties we were performing but immigration as well which was the worst part of it of course. When the troop ships came in to Skagway-- they were brought up on troop



ships-- they had the coaches at the dock in Skagway. The coaches would carry about thirty passengers. They loaded fifty-- the military police guys were in-- and when they got on that coach they stayed there and there were six or seven coaches to a train. They had had manifests (passenger manifests) and you had to check these names off; who they were going to work for, how long they intended to stay, and a bunch of jazz because about three days later most of them were on the way back out. Anyway, it had to be done; I won't say efficiently. They got to Bennett, and depending on whether the train was late in Bennett, I used to switch over and go back south again to White Pass. If the north bound train was late arriving, I held them up till I ate a meal at least. It was the only meal I could get; I didn't have time to cook a meal at the summit at White Pass. I had a little bit of grub there, but nothing to speak of.

Anyway, some years later I left customs. I was very disappointed in writing a civil service exam, and I got very good marks but somebody else had extra benefits that I knew nothing about and so I left. It was about forty years later, and I had worked at different jobs, and I was asked to go back to customs for the summer. I looked at this fella and said, "Well, you got to be crazy." He said "Why?" and I said, "Well, I quit the job forty years ago." He said, "You never worked for customs." I said, "You bet I worked there-- and I quit, I wasn't fired." They checked it out and sure enough two or three days later he came back and said "You're right, you did work for customs." "Would you consider one

summer?" Where did they send me? Fraser, right near the White Pass summit. Just a few miles from where I had been travelling back and forth for days on end. Anyway, I decided to take it for one summer. I ended up staying there four years. Anyway, I had some experiences at that place.

I hope you don't take offence to this, but this actually happened. I got into a little hot water over it, but, I weasled out of it. This beat up old truck pulled up to the border station at Fraser one day, pulling a little trailer. There was an elderly woman driving this truck, and she was alone. I said, "Have you got any identification?" She showed me her identification; she came from Ketchikan, Alaska. I said "Where are you going?". She said, "I'm going to work for a mining company just outside of Dawson City." "Oh", I said, "you can't - not without a work visa or permit." She said, "Ya, well I know about that." I said "You better come in." Anyway, there is a very low counter at Fraser. I got the papers out and leaned over the counter, and wrote out her name and her address, and her age and all the rest of it. She was about seventy. Anyway, I said, "You're going to work for what mining company?" She said "My husband owns it." "Well, surely he has a visa.", I said. She said, "Well he knows enough for that, he should have one." Anyway, I said "What are you going to be doing at that mining company?" She said, "I'm a hooker." Here I am leaning over this counter, and I very slowly look up and I said, "I can't put that on a legal document. No way. You got to be a dishwasher

or a flunkie, or something." She said, "No. I absolutely insist. I've got to be a hooker." Well, I said, "Before I write that out, and before I give you this permit..." I said, "You know, I can turn you back." I said, "But before I do that, you better explain to me what a hooker is." Anyway, she said "I stand along side of a sluice box, with an iron rod with a hook on the end, and I hook the boulders out of the sluice box." Anyway, I put that down on the document - "hooker." Anyway, I told her that she had better check in to the immigration office in Whitehorse the next day. First thing the next morning, the phone just started bouncing off the table. They said "You can't write hooker on the document...no, no, no!" I said, "It's a fact." I said, "She's right there. Well, get her to explain what a hooker is. She explained it to me, and I was satisfied." Anyway, there was letters about that. I don't know if it is still on file down there.

Another time-- had lots of memories-- it was on a saturday evening, fairly early around nine o'clock or something. I was on a shift there when this beat up old vehicle; there was always all kinds of these beat up vehicles travelling. We couldn't even stop people in old wrecks of vehicles to see if they were properly licensed; we couldn't even stop them.

We could report them to the police or something. We couldn't even stop drunken drivers. Anyway, this beat up old truck one night came up fenders floppin', a couple of headlights missing, and two of the scruffiest looking people inside. I said, "Have you got any

identification?" The driver showed me an Australian passport. The vehicle had an Alaska license on it. On the back of it was a crate of some kind covered with a blanket. There was something fishy here. Anyway, I said "You just come from Australia?" "Oh, no" he said "I'm a resident of Dyea just out of Skagway." I said, "Well, you must have some American documents. You must have." So, he showed me. Anyway, the woman with him-- the same thing; she was from Australia. They had the proper documentation. They were living in Skagway for a time. While I was talking to them the blanket on this crate started to move, and there was no wind blowing. I thought, "What have they got in there?" Anyway, I asked them. They had two goats. "Why are you bringing goats in?", I said. Well, there was some kid along the Carcross road some place that couldn't drink cows milk and they thought they'd try him on goats milk. I said, "Well, gee, these goats have had to have been to a vet. Have you got your veterinarian certificates?" "Oh, we got them.", they said. Anyway, I said "If you're going to leave them in Canada there has to be duty." Of course, I didn't know the duty rate on goats. I'd never seen one. Anyway, I looked it up; it was two dollars a head. "It isn't worth the paper, Get.", I said. So, I don't know if the goats are still in the country or not.

Anyway, there was a lot of things like that that we had, a lot of instances; I won't hold you much longer. You mentioned the natives at these borders, I was involved in quite a number of those

instances. We had our rules at our borders, and the worst ones we've found for driving in the country were the natives without drivers licences. We again couldn't do anything. "You'd better get it, or we'll have to report you to the police," we said. We had no choice. Otherwise, we got along very well.

Anyway, I won't hold you much longer. I have one here to do with immigration; I hope that there is no offence in this one. Anyway, maybe some of you have heard it. "Alla bless Canada:"

I come for a visit, am created regal, so I stay, who cares illegal? I come to Canada, poor and broke, get on bus, see manpower folk. Kind man treat me well, really swell there. Send me down to see the welfare. Welfare say "Come down no more; we send cash out to your door." Brian Mulroney, make you wealthy. Medical plan will make you healthy. Six months on dole, get plenty money. Thanks to working man, the dummy. Write to friends in Pakistan; tell them to come out as fast as can. They all come in rags and turbans. I buy big house in suburbans. They come with me; we live together. Only one thing bad-- the weather. Fourteen families living in-- neighbours faces wearing thin. Finally, whites must move away; I buy their homes too-- I stay. Buy more pakies, house I rent. More on garden, live in tent. Centre family; they all trash. They all draw more welfare cash. Everything is doing good; soon we own the neighbourhood. We have hobby; it called reading. Baby bonus keeps us feeding. Two years later, big bankrolls. Still go manpower; still draw dough. Kids need dentist, wife needs pill. We get free, we got no bills. White man good, he pay all year. Keep the welfare running here. Bless all white man, big and small for paying taxes to keep us all. We thank Canada; damn good place. Too damn good for white man race. If they don't like coloured man, plenty room in Pakistan.

Thank you ever so much.

**Northway Stories of Meeting the  
Boundary Surveyors 1911**

**Lu Johns-Penikett, Mrs. Bessie Johns, and Northway Elders**



Lulu Johns Penikett & Mrs. Bessie Johns:

Hi, my name is Lulu Johns Penikett. I come from the Beaver Creek border area. The Athapaskan dialect that I speak is Upper Tanana. My role in this conference is to ask my mother some questions about what she remembers being told about the boundary survey party which met her grandfathers camp right at Little Scottie creek. On the Alaska highway, as it goes into Alaska across the Canada/U.S. border at Little Scottie creek there used to be a fairly large Indian village of Upper Tanana speaking people. Most of those people now live in Northway, Alaska. At Little Scottie creek there is a very large U.S. customs built now, and my grandfather and his parents had always resided in this area and he would never move from this area. It was always a great source of irritation for him to check into the American customs as he went back and forth for potlatches and to visit relatives and what not. What I would like to do is to just start out by asking my mother to show on the map; if you can see in front of you there is a linguistic map which shows the area that the Upper Tanana language is spoken in now. I would like my mom to point out on the map which is pinned up behind, and I know it is very hard to see but that's the Yukon/Alaska map. I will just point with my fingers as my mother talks about what she calls our country, which is the area that we use.

According to the transcripts of a tape session that we did with my

mom back in 1978, there are Indian trails and this is the area that the Upper Tanana speaking people use - Kluane going up to Dawson City, going over to Tetlin, Northway, and down to Chisana which is in the mountains, from the Village of Northway and back across to Snag which is a fairly recent settlement. So, on the map it shows a good portion of the Yukon. Underneath Dawson City, there was a lot of inter-marriage in with the Han people as well as the Selkirk people and going more into Alaska. What we will do right now then is I'm going to get my mom to relate the story of what she remembers of when her grandfather who is called "Stsii Stsool." Apparently, he was camped right underneath where the American customs is built now and right on the boundary line. Now, as far as we can estimate that meeting probably took place in the late 1800s. It was not her mother or father, it was her grandfather.

**Lulu:** Mom, can you tell the story about when the boundary survey met "Stsii Stsool?"

**Mrs. Johns:** Oh, Ya. You know that was the first time that my Great Grandfather and my Great Grandma they always live in that place. That story is one great story; right now I'm going to tell you guys about when the borderline go through there. There were two hundred in the village there, the place white people call Little Scottie creek. There are lots of people buried there. All our people, things like that. At that time the borderline went through. That's the story I'm going to tell you guys right now.

This great story. My Great Grandpa, when that borderline go through ahead there. They got some, what they call, moose skin/caribou skin. That's the kind of tent he got right down there at customs with the borderline going through. They don't know at that time, these white people who come around the boundary line, so maybe that one guy who is the government boss, they hid my Great Grandfather's tent. They say, "could you move?" He do that, you see. So, that Government said "You tent gonna be cut." You gonna be Alaskan, you gonna be Yukon. They tell my Great Grandfather, they say. So, they make lots of mooseskin to be used at that time by those boundary line people. I don't know how many wore those mooseskin, but all say "make moccasin." I don't know my mother and my Great Grandfather say "You know how many moose skin they need to keep warm; those Indian people?" Make moccasin, meat, everything. After that, the government, they give all kinds of flour and rice, I guess. They don't know what's that-- my Great Great Grandfather. That flour he tried boiling all day, he said grandma. He tell his wife, he said, "That's sour water. You gonna die if you guys eat it." He boiled that all day, he said grandma. He boiled it all day and put moose fat-- he throw in there. He finished his fat piece, he said my great grandfather, my great grandma. He stirred all day, and after that he got a stick spoon. They made it out of birch bark sometimes. You used a little bit, that's all. You were his kid they say. That's a long time ago they do that, and I'll talk to you about a story, you guys. The boundary line go through at that time. There were lots of people at Scottie Creek at that

time-- about 200. They buried fish, dry meat, everything. All that stuff was cached; they put fish in there, dry meat, everything. At that boundary line, he showed it to my Great Grandfather and that Great Grandma she carried that book around a long time. I'd like to know if that book is in Ottawa. They give my Great Grandma and Great Grandfather a red book a long time ago. "This is your book," they tell my Great Grandfather. They carry it around a long time-- it must have been 1911 when the boundary line went through. Lots of people all just dead now; the story just grow up to us. That's why I tell you guys special story about my Great Grandfather.

**Lulu:** So, mom. What happened when the boundary people asked him to move; did he move or how long did they try and get him to move?

**Mrs. Johns:** Long time. They stay there. He can't move his moose skin or his caribou tent. That's right. They give him lots of food, they say. The government people. They stay there everyday. That's all, I think.

**Lulu:** So, did they move or what happened when the boundary survey...?

**Mrs. Johns:** They don't move. They belong to their village. The old borderline go through. They back and forth. They move all the way down to Big Scottie creek, all the way down to the Yukon River.

That's the right way to Indian. They feed each other, you know. They don't know boundary between Yukon and Alaska. Right now, just everything happened. It was supposed to be that they feed each other, just one trail in this country. All our country, they help each other, you know, Indian people.

**Lulu:** Well, I thought you told me before that "Stsii Stsool" didn't want to move. He didn't want to move but they kept asking him, so what happened? They got him to sign a piece of paper, or something.

**Mrs. Johns:** Ya, that government they tell him to sign a piece of paper. So, he sign paper.

**Lulu:** And what did they say he was going to get from that?

**Mrs. Johns:** You gonna be Alaskan. You gonna be Alaskan. You gonna be Yukon. Two sides of the country, all you are from; they tell my Great Grandfather. After that they do a book, and my Great Grandmother she said, "... some kind of bible." They live to sign that, my Great Grandfather. He can't move his teeth, that's why that government do that and he sign the paper. Two sides of the country, he say. All your family, they are all going to grow up on two side of the country. My Great Grandfather know all about our country here. That's why he signed that paper.

Lulu: We haven't done the research in this area, but we would like to try and get the boundary survey party that met that particular group of indians and see if there was such a thing as a piece of paper that was signed. If it was, you know, we think it is fairly important as far as the movement of the Indians in the Northway and Beaver Creek areas are concerned. I've heard this story of the boundary survey party meeting my Great Great Great Grandfather, and from the other versions that I've heard apparently he wouldn't move and it was only after talking to him for three days. On the third day, he said he wasn't going to move so on the third day they said that if he signed this piece of paper that will allow you to move back and forth freely. It was clear at the time that there was some understanding on the Indian people's part that something serious was happening, and they obviously weren't consulted on this issue. They were trying to maintain an interest in it. If there is something that can be found about the signing, then I think it will be of historical importance. The only other story that I wanted to get my mother to relate is one which is a legend within the Upper Tanana language and it is about a place up on the Donjek; if you go to the headwaters of the Donjek in the glacier area right near the boundary there are apparently two mountains, one on either side of the boundary. I'll let mom tell the story, but when the boundary came through it apparently separated one of the mountains with a face on it somewhat like a woman and on the other mountain there is a face like a man.



**Mrs. Johns:** The borderline go through. Donjek, around Donjek the borderline go through there. My great grandmother told me that they go hunting sheep there all the time, those indian people. So, they know that a woman grows on the Yukon side and a man on the Alaska side. That story is long, long ago when Indians came along about two thousand years ago. This white person climbing up the mountain, they say "Come down! Come down!" He turned and go up that little, high mountain and turned all the rock. That is the Indian story I'm talking about. Still on it now. The borderline go through right there, my Great Grandmother they know that-- that story. The man in there-- the girls are mostly Yukon-- and her husband was the American Alaskan. They would stick on copper; that shows that they make nice copper out of the mountain there. The man and the wife and the borderline go through there. It's a really great story that one.

**Lulu:** I am just going to ask my mom a question that was asked from someone in the audience, and that question was did the White River Indians think that that copper was there's? That's what they traded with, eh?

**Mrs. Johns:** Ya. That's theres. That's there copper.

**Lulu:** Was that what you wanted to ask Kenny? What about the country that they used to cover, did they think that was there's? Was that white river Indian country? Whenever they travelled over

any country, it was their country, eh?

**Mrs. Johns:** Ya. All their country. They know where they get there sleep from. They all died a long, long time ago. They still on it, still on it. They call it rock hill, but nobody know what I'm talking about right now I tell you guys. That's where they go up; they know which way to help to get their own stuff just like that. Sure they know everything; they know where they can mine copper. They know all there own people, and they are still on it.

**Lulu:** Was there any other questions? OK. Anyway, that's the end of our session.

**Alaska Prohibition and its Impact  
on the Yukon Territory, 1921-25**

**Nancy Cameron**

Nancy Cameron:

I would like to discuss today, fairly quickly I hope, a situation that took place between 1921-1925 in which the Alaska/Yukon/B.C. border figured prominently. It was a situation in which the border caused great economic and social problems for the Yukon. From 1921-1925, throughout that period - although not consistently - the American actions prevented liquor from entering the Yukon Territory. As you can imagine that caused considerable problems. It caused what the Yukon's member of parliament at the time, Dr. Alfred Thompson called "an act of international discourtesy." I would like to talk about that today.

Few people are aware, I think, that prohibition or the banning of the sale of liquor was a very popular issue in the Yukon from the time of the First World war into the early 1920s, as it was throughout all of English Canada. It actually resulted in a short period of actual prohibition in the Yukon, which was voted in by the Elector at the time - a short period of prohibition which lasted from May, 1920 to July, 1921 and at this point the population of the Yukon would have been about 4000 people. The non-native population would have been about 2500. Of course, the native population at the time didn't have a vote. The women had just got to vote about 1918. This resulted in a plebescite that brought in a short period of prohibition or banning of the sale of liquor in the Yukon from May, 1920 to July, 1921. However, it was a very short lived experiment. It was voted out again in July,

1921 in favor of the sale of liquor in government liquor stores. One of the major reasons for the fact that they decided to discard prohibition was that the Yukon was in a serious economic slump and they had great need for liquor revenues. There were other issues as well, but that one was important.

It is important to realize the background to the liquor question in Yukon-- at this time liquor revenues were very important. These revenues were generated from liquor permits and were an important source of revenue to the territorial government. The Yukon as a territory had no authority or control over the revenues generated from the reduction of natural resources unlike the provinces. So, for example, any revenues from gold extraction went to the federal government and not to the territory. As a result, liquor licenses and fees were one of the few ways in which the territorial government could raise revenues. Compared to the provinces, for example, liquor revenues represented a much greater percentage of the total government revenues. From 1910 to 1916, for example, liquor revenues in the territory represented 25% of territorial revenues compared to only 5% for the provinces.

In any case, in July, 1921 the electorate of the Yukon voted out prohibition and voted in the sale of liquor through government liquor stores. However, actions by Americans at exactly the same time were to bring in a much longer dry period for the territory. Canadians and Yukoners had largely discarded the idea of prohibition by 1921; this was not the case in the U.S. The very

same day that Yukon voters voted out prohibition, word was received that American authorities had imposed an embargo on liquor passing through the port of Skagway to the Yukon. This was the result of a tightening of the national prohibition law throughout the United States. Alaska itself had had prohibition since about 1918 I believe, but it wasn't until 1921 that this had any serious impact on the Yukon. So, with the strength of the national U.S. prohibition law, Americans were clamping down on liquor passing through any of their ports or crossing their borders. This put the Yukon in a very difficult situation because of its geographic and economic situation. Geographically, of course, the Yukon was dependant on the port of Skagway for the point of entry for all of its goods - including liquor. There was no other practical way to bring in supplies to the territory. That meant that all supplies coming into the territory had to cross approximately 20 miles of American territory on its way to the Yukon. As noted, because of the Yukon's territorial status, the Yukon was very limited in the ways it could raise money. Liquor revenues were a very important revenue source for the territory - particularly in the time period around 1921 when it was in a period of severe economic retrenchment. So, the American embargo imposed in July, 1921 posed a very serious problem for the Yukon economically.

As a result of actions of the Yukon's member of parliament, and subsequently the British ambassador in Washington, the embargo was removed in August of 1921. Liquor was able to be brought into the Yukon to be sold in government liquor stores through 1921 and into

1922. However, Americans clamped down again in June, 1922 and the embargo was re-imposed. No liquor was allowed in after June 15th, 1922. This put the Yukon once again in a difficult situation as Gold Commissioner McKenzie had ordered seventy thousand dollars worth of liquor from the United Kingdom and it was not going to meet the June 15th deadline. He then frantically placed another duplicate order in Vancouver, and this was rushed north and it just got in under the wire. A special train was put on by the White Pass. This caused another serious financial problem in that that meant that not only did they have seventy thousand dollars of liquor ordered from the U.K., they also had a duplicate order from Vancouver which meant that they were at least seventy thousand dollars in debt. The Yukon government had no authority to do that. After a little of finagling there, they were able to get an overdraft to the Bank of Commerce which was authorized by the Department of the Interior. In any case, the shipment from the U.K. missed the connection by a hair. It arrived in Vancouver on the 15th, and couldn't make the connection to take the boat north so it had to be warehoused. In any case, they did get the Vancouver shipment in and so there was a shipment waiting in Vancouver as well.

Within a few months, however, there was further negotiations with Washington and the prohibition director issued a permit to let it go on the mistaken assumption that this liquor would be used for medicinal purposes. There is some very amusing correspondence on the part of the Canadian and British authorities who say "We didn't



tell them that; but were not going to tell them that it's not." I think the prohibition director also must have had a very odd idea of how many people lived in the territory because there were thousands of cases of whiskey allowed in; and this would have been a thousand cases per person for medicinal purposes. In any case, what that meant was that for the time being the Yukon was well stocked with liquor. However, the embargo was still on. The Gold Commissioner continued to press Ottawa to take action on this matter, and in December, 1923 Gold Commissioner McKenzie was authorized to go to Washington where he met with the U.S. prohibition director and the secretary of the U.S. Treasury. As a result of these meetings in December, 1923, McKenzie was told that his request would likely be granted and that liquor could safely pass through Skagway to the Yukon. He was quite happy on his return to Canada, but, once back in Canada he received a telegram that said that this was no longer the case, that pending decisions by the Supreme Court on various liquor cases that no final action could be taken on the Yukon request. In the spring of 1923, he heard indeed that his request had been denied. Therefore, through the spring and summer of 1923, officials at the British embassy continued to press authorities on this question in Washington and Toronto to allow liquor into the Yukon but no action was forthcoming. In the meantime, the Gold Commissioner had gone ahead and ordered another shipment which was waiting in Vancouver. He was beginning to get a bit frantic because the liquor was starting to be decreased and he considers since you can't bring it in through Skagway, how about bringing it via St. Michael's which was

1200 miles down the Yukon River. There was a treaty outstanding between Great Britain and U.S. which said that there could be no stopping of traffic on the Yukon River. However, it doesn't seem very practical to bring it in that way. However, he continues to consider that and presses the Department of the Interior to take that action.

By the end of the summer of 1923, there is still no action by U.S. authorities and the shipping deadlines for the Yukon are missed. By the end of September, there is no word and no satisfaction so the liquor remains warehoused in Vancouver. The Yukon is subsequently becoming drier - the supplies are decreasing and there is no indication that the American's will change their minds. However, some very astute person at the British embassy said "You know there is a conference coming up in Ottawa in November, 1923 on the question of rum-running and liquor smuggling in general in Ottawa." The Americans at this time were very anxious to get Canadian cooperation in stopping rum-running into the States and he said "Why don't we bring this up as a condition of allowing liquor through Skagway?" So, this is exactly what takes place. After the November, 1923 conference the Americans draw up a draft - an anti-smuggling treaty - and submit it to the Canadians. The Canadians return it to the Americans in May, 1924 with one of their conditions being the allowance of liquor through Skagway into the Yukon. Again, nothing is really happening in terms of the Yukon at this time. They are still waiting and waiting... and stocks are decreasing. Finally, in June, 1924, the

anti-smuggling treaty is signed by the two countries. But, it has to go through a series of ratifications which cause further delays. The Yukon situation is expected to be settled by June, 1924, however, the U.S. senate had to ratify this treaty. They adjourned without doing so in June and would not meet again until september. Yukoners were "shocked" at this. That means that there is no hope of getting any liquor into the Yukon for all of 1924.

By August, 1924, there is no more liquor in Yukon Government liquor stores and it is reported that this represents a loss to the territorial government of approximately \$6000 a month. We are talking about \$6000 in 1924 terms. However, there is some relief in September of 1924 as both countries had signed at the convention. The Canadian government was able to get a permit approved by the prohibition director to bring liquor to Skagway again solely for medicinal purposes. So, liquor was brought in and many, many prescriptions were written up. I think they were written out at two dollars a shot, which went into the territorial coffers. However, the poor Yukoners had more problems because this liquor which they'd had waiting in Warehouses in Vancouver which was finally allowed to come in - they found out that half the liquor had been pilfered because it had been sitting in a warehouse for a year and a half. In any case, they brought it up on a special train-- "carload of cheer" I think they called it.

Finally, in December, 1924, the U.S. senate ratified the treaty and in March of 1925 it was ratified by the Canadian parliament.

It still had final ratifications by the British parliament and the U.S. president in July, 1925. After July 28, 1925, however, liquor was available for sale and could be brought safely through Skagway to the Yukon. It was sold at Government liquor stores in the territory for beverage purposes. So, that particular crises came to an end.

***Strengthening the Indian Voice:  
U.S. Military Relations with Natives at Two Sites  
in Alaska, 1942-44, and 1987-89***

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*Strengthening the Indian Voice:  
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in Alaska, 1942-44, and 1987-89*

In March, 1989, three Alaska native development corporations signed major contracts with the United States Air Force which will provide employment and revenue to the natives in return for the military's use of native land for construction and operation of a huge, sophisticated, phased array, or "over-the-horizon" radar, one of six such installations being built in the U.S. The estimated cost of the Alaska radar is \$480 million. Officers and representatives of Ahtna Region, Inc., a regional corporation, and Tanacross Village Corporation and Tetlin Village Corporation, all three formed under the provisions of the 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, conducted complex and protracted negotiations with the Air Force over a three year period. Each corporation concluded its own agreement. By the terms of the contracts, Ahtna, Inc., will be paid \$2.47 million, Tanacross, Inc., \$1.5 million, and Tetlin Native Corp., \$1.38 million. Some Indians in each of the regions will obtain direct employment as construction on the radar begins. In addition, each corporation will bid on sub-contracts created by the project either in its own right, or more likely, in joint ventures with corporations with appropriate expertise and experience.<sup>1</sup>

Phased array radar, often called "Backscatter," is a significant technological advance in early warning. It works by bouncing radio signals from a powerful transmitter off the ionosphere and back to earth. Its range is nearly two thousand miles, whereas line-of-sight radar is limited by the horizon. The system has the ability to track planes and low-flying "cruise" missiles. The transmitter, consisting of two mile-long arrays, will be built near Glennallen, located in the southern reaches of



Alaska's interior region. Two receivers, each two miles in length, will be built on sites over one hundred miles farther east, not far from the Alaska-Canada border. The receivers will be located on land owned by the villages of Tanacross and Tetlin, east and west of Tok, Alaska, respectively. In addition, a power generation facility will be built near the transmission site at Glennallen. Construction will begin in the summer of 1989.<sup>2</sup>

By the provisions of the agreements, the Air Force will not receive title to the land on which the receivers will be located, at Tanacross and Tetlin. Instead, the sites are leased, and the military will have the use of the land only as long as the facilities are operational. However, when the radars are no longer in use, the land near these two villages will revert back to the the two village corporations for their own use. The duration of the lease is twenty years, at which time it will need to be renegotiated. The money from the lease will be used for corporation investments and for an education fund for village students.

The Ahtna Region, on the other hand, negotiated an outright sale of land at the power generation and transmission site. Ahtna took this step because of the high tax payment necessitated by leasing which would have amounted to \$850,000 on the Ahtna parcels involved. Some of the money from the sale will be invested in the Ahtna Heritage Foundation to provide educational scholarships for qualified students. The remainder will be invested in a land fund dedicated to the purchase of other lands in the region which are important to the Ahtna people.<sup>3</sup>

Land ownership is critically important to native people, for it without security of title, native lifestyles are threatened with extinction. Loss of land has been an important issue for native entities created or recognized by the Alaska native claims settlement act. Most native land in Alaska is controlled by regional and village corporations established under that act. Even with amendments to the act adopted by the U.S. Congress in 1988, some native lands may be eligible for taxation, sale, or even



forfeiture within a few years. This has heightened native determination to protect native land from loss or usurpation, and to make provisions for acquisition of alternate lands when land presently controlled is lost or sold. Representatives engaged in negotiations over "Backscatter" with the Air Force were particularly adamant that native title to the land not be jeopardized, and that control of the land ultimately revert to the natives. Failing that, shareholders in the corporations insisted that the corporation voluntarily make a commitment to replacing land sold to the Air Force. The former method was adopted by Tanacross and Tetlin, and latter by Ahtna.<sup>4</sup>

When the Air Force approached the native corporations with plans for its Backscatter project, Robert M. Goldberg, attorney for the Ahtna Region, noted a remarkable coincidence. Having made himself aware of the history of interior Alaska and its native peoples, he remembered that two native communities involved in the Backscatter proposal had previous experience with the use of land by the U.S. military during World War II, experiences which provided them with a negative example of such use. In 1942 both the villages of Gulkana in the Copper River region and Tanacross in the Tok area were impacted by construction of U.S. Army air fields which were operational until the summer of 1944. Also in 1942, initial construction began on the Alaska Highway and on a road connecting Tok with Gulkana, and with Anchorage, two hundred miles farther west; this later would be named the Glenn Highway. In 1943, when the U.S. Public Roads Administration upgraded the original road, extensive construction camps were established at both places. Knowledge of the circumstances of the appropriation of native lands by the U.S. Army in these years greatly strengthened native representatives in their resolve over forty-five years later in negotiating with the U.S. Air Force over the conditions of military use of native lands for "Backscatter".<sup>5</sup>

Goldberg suggested that reconstruction of the historical record, together with oral testimony, might aid the Indians in their negotiations with the Air Force.<sup>6</sup> At his

request, the author designed a questionnaire suitable for eliciting the natives' recollections, and engaged on a study of the surviving official record of military and government agency activities in the Alaskan interior during World War II. Presented with the opportunity to testify, older Indian residents stepped forward to explain their World War II experiences to present leaders. While not all details of the story they told can be documented, the investigation of U.S. Army and other records confirmed many of the events of 1942 and 1943.

For this study, Indians at the villages of Tanacross and Copper Center were interviewed concerning recollections of conditions and events in 1942 and after. Taped interviews were conducted with four individuals at Copper Center, using a translator, and with three individuals at Tanacross. Each respondent had direct experience with the Army, and was directly involved in the events associated with Army construction and the removal of natives and appropriation of native lands at the time. The same questions were asked of all respondents in settings as similar as could be arranged. The testimony of the native survivors provided information beyond that available in the documentary record, which taken together with the surviving written record, permitted a fairly complete reconstruction of the events of that time.<sup>7</sup>

In 1942 twelve or thirteen Ahtna natives comprising three family groups occupied a site called Dry Creek, located along the Richardson Highway about fifteen miles south of the village of Gulkana, and ten miles north of the village of Copper Center. At least three small log houses were located at the site. These were used year-round for general habitation. The vicinity of Dry Creek was used by these and other natives for traplines which were set every winter and checked throughout the winter season. There were no highway facilities at Dry Creek, and the site was not used by non-natives.<sup>8</sup>

Also in 1942, natives at Tanacross, Alaska, on the upper Tanana River, utilized land in the vicinity of an existing small, grass air strip near their village for trails and

traplines. There were no roads at Tanacross, though there had been a U.S. Army telegraph line and station at the village from 1904 until 1922.<sup>9</sup>

In the spring of 1942 the Alaska Defense Command ordered the construction of a number of auxiliary airfields in remote locations in Alaska's interior to serve as emergency facilities for aircraft flying a variety of missions, including the transportation of priority materiel and personnel from the continental states and within Alaska, as well as general defensive deployment. Following the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, ADC planners felt considerable anxiety concerning Japanese intentions toward Alaska. Enemy invasion of the Alaska mainland seemed unlikely, but harassing air strikes were considered a possibility, a concern which increased after the Japanese occupation of Attu and Kiska Islands in the Aleutians in June, 1942. The airfields were marked out and constructed in great haste; most were operational by the fall of 1942.<sup>10</sup>

At the same time, a Cabinet committee consisting of the U.S. Secretaries of the Navy, War, and Interior, meeting with the War Plans Division of the General Staff of the War Department, determined to construct a military road between the continental United States and Alaska to serve as a communication and auxiliary supply corridor in case the coastal seaway should be interdicted by Japanese aircraft and submarines. In point of fact, the seaway was never in jeopardy during the war, and it is unlikely that any significant amount of supplies could have been transported to Alaska over the military highway if it had been.<sup>11</sup> However, beginning in the spring of 1942, a pioneer road was built from Dawson Creek, British Columbia over fifteen hundred miles north to Fairbanks, Alaska, by U.S. engineer regiments. At the same time, the Richardson Highway in Alaska was upgraded from Valdez to Gulkana, and a pioneer road was built from Gulkana over one hundred miles northeastward to meet the Alaska highway. The junction was between the Tanana Indian villages of Tanacross and Tetlin Junction, at a place which came to be called Tok. In 1943, private contractors

working under the auspices of the U.S. Public Roads Administration began the work of upgrading the highways. At the same time, construction began on a road to connect Anchorage with the Richardson Highway. Surveys for this road had been undertaken by the Alaska Road Commission, the peacetime Alaska road agency, in 1941. The junction of the projected road with the Richardson Highway was to be fifteen miles south of Gulkana, at the Indian site of Dry Creek. That place is today named Glennallen.<sup>12</sup>

Ahtna and Tanana Indians who were respondents for this study remembered the arrival of U.S. Army engineer troops in the spring of 1942 to build the airfields and the military roads, and the Public Roads Administration construction crews who followed in 1943. At both Dry Creek and Tanacross the Indians were displaced by Army and PRA construction activity. In some cases they were forced from their homes and summarily forbidden to return. The natives expressed considerable bitterness about the removal.<sup>13</sup> The action of the army was apparently precipitous, and may have been callous. Those individuals who were forced from their homes lost not only their houses and places of abode, i.e., their real property, but also lost personal property, some of which had legal and sentimental value, and which was not replaced. Nor was compensation paid for lost property, even though there were policies and procedures for such compensation at the time of the appropriation and loss. Further, to date, there is no record of acknowledgement of the sacrifice of these natives to the war effort in this instance, nor of the loss of property and inconvenience to the Ahtna and Tanana people affected. Both are matters of considerable resentment on the part of some of the native people today. Respondents indicated that in 1942 they did not always know what the army was doing in the region. Nor did they have a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities as American citizens.

In both the Copper River Basin and at Tanacross the Indians were somewhat acculturated, both from frequent contact with whites and from attendance at schools

maintained by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The Richardson Highway connecting Valdez with Fairbanks had passed through the Copper River country from about 1910, and the Copper River and Northwestern Railroad had been built from Cordova to Chitina, and then eastward to Kennecott and McCarthy between 1908 and 1911. A telegraph line from Valdez to Eagle, built between 1901 and 1904 also passed through the Copper River country, and crossed the Tanana River at Tanacross, from whence the name Tanacross had been derived. In 1942 about twenty Ahtna Indians lived at Copper Center, five miles south of Dry Creek. A number worked for the Alaska Road Commission which maintained the Richardson Highway. A larger number of Indians lived fifteen miles north, at Gulkana, also on the highway. A BIA school, with a small dispensary, was located in the Indian village at Chitina, and some Indian children from the Copper Center area lived in Chitina with relatives to be able to attend. About eighty natives lived in the village of Tanacross on the Tanana River. A BIA school, with dispensary, was located in the village.<sup>14</sup>

The documentary record which survives in the Military Archives Branch in the National Archives in Washington, D.C., in the records of the Public Roads Administration, and in the records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs both there and in Seattle, permit a reasonably complete reconstruction of the activities of the U.S. Army in interior Alaska during World War II, although some important details are not recorded. It will be useful briefly to examine official record of those activities, and then the native memory of how those activities related to the Indians who were impacted by them, first at Dry Creek, and then at Tanacross.

On 29 April, 1942, the U.S. Army 97th Engineer Regiment arrived at Valdez, Alaska, by ship to begin work on the Richardson Highway, and to construct the pioneer road from Gulkana to Tanacross. The regiment was composed of about two hundred black soldiers, mostly from Florida. They were commanded by about thirty white officers. The regiment immediately began working northward along the

Richardson Highway, and into the Ahtna region. Their specific task was to improve the existing roadway to be able to accommodate heavy equipment, such as the D-8 caterpillars and heavy trucks which were a part of their own supply. They were to proceed to Gulkana, Alaska, from which place they were to construct a "pioneer" or low-grade road to a point five miles east of Tanacross, and thence southeastward and northwestward along the proposed route selected for the Alaska Highway, building the pioneer road as far northeast as far as Big Delta where they would junction with the northern portion of the existing Richardson Highway, and southeast until they should link with engineer regiments building the highway northward from Whitehorse and Haines Junction in the Yukon Territory, Canada.<sup>15</sup>

Excerpts from the diary of the field commander who supervised the building of the road provide a glimpse of the conditions under which the men worked. Supplies which worked well at the regiment's staging area in Virginia worked poorly in Alaska in the summer and often not at all in the Northern winter. Trucks often mired in the mud. Sawmills routinely broke down. The small radios provided to individual companies would not work well in the mountains, so communication was often problematical. D-8 caterpillar tractors broke through ice or became stuck in running streams with regularity. Bridges collapsed often and had to be repaired before progress could resume. Powdered eggs, potatoes and milk were often the main food except for occasional game which was shot along the route. Snow had to be melted for water. The white gas stoves the men had been provided did not work in temperatures below -30, for the liquid froze in the tubes which fed the burners. That meant chopping frozen trees for fire, which could only be sustained by the addition of diesel fuel. Eventually, Dutch ovens were made from oil drums. All canned food and distilled water was constantly frozen and could only be thawed when time permitted. The men had no amenities.<sup>16</sup>



However, despite these conditions the 97th moved through the Ahtna region very quickly, and had almost no contact with the native population. The activities of the 97th thus had little direct material impact on the Ahtna people in the region of Gulkana and Dry Creek, or in the vicinity of Tanacross and Tetlin. However, the psychological impact on the native population was much greater. Several native respondents interviewed for this study indicated that seeing the Army come through the region in regiment strength but in such haste caused them to wonder what the war situation might be. On the one hand, there was little reliable news, for it was military policy not to publicize in Alaska the activities or purpose of troop movements. On the other hand, while the natives declared themselves ready to make such adjustments as were necessary for the war effort, it was not plausible to many of them that any combat activity was likely directly to threaten their rugged, essentially inaccessible and remote part of Alaska.<sup>17</sup>

On July 13, 1942, a second construction unit arrived in the region. This was the U.S. Army 176th Engineer Regiment, assigned to build airfields and the radio and housing facilities necessary for their operations. This unit began construction of the military airfield in the vicinity of Dry Creek in August, 1942. Soon after, similar fields were constructed at Tanacross. The installation at Dry Creek was typical. The regiment constructed two gravel-surfaced runways, of 5000 feet and 3500 feet, and an accompanying air operations center. They also constructed an Alaska Communications System facility, and an air navigation radio range facility. In addition, housing for several hundred army troops was provided by five multistory barracks buildings. There was also a motor repair facility, and a fourteen-bed hospital. Construction continued throughout the winter, and the facility was declared officially complete on July 15, 1943. However, air corps personnel began arriving in March. In all, it was a major construction undertaking. The site, called the U.S. Army Gulkana Air Field, was located fifteen miles south of the village of Gulkana. Its location was squarely on the Dry



Creek Indian site where more than a dozen people lived, and where natives from Copper Center had worked trap lines.<sup>18</sup> The official record contains no information on the removal of natives from the Dry Creek site. That may not be unusual, for the record contains almost no information of any kind concerning natives. Native rights had yet to be confirmed in Alaska; they would not be delineated clearly until the 1971 claims settlement act. Operating without sufficient understanding of native culture, and perhaps without sufficient sensitivity, Army personnel might not have recognized the significance of the dwellings and activity there. It is clear from their later memories of the events, however, that the natives did regard their dwellings as permanent, their use of the land from time immemorial as valid, and their ejection from land as temporary.

By April of 1943 when the field was fully operational, an Air Force Service Unit of the 11th Air Force stationed at the field included eighteen officers and three hundred eight enlisted men. The impact of both construction the unit which built the field and the operations unit which staffed it would be considerably greater for the native population than the 97th Engineer Regiment which built the pioneer road from Gulkana to Tok.<sup>19</sup>

Circumstances were somewhat different when the 176th Engineer Regiment moved on to Tanacross in the summer of 1942. A small, grass airstrip had been constructed there in 1940 as part of the Northwest Staging Route, an airway from Grand Prairie, Alberta, to Fairbanks, Alaska, which had been planned and implemented by U.S. and Canada Permanent Joint Board on Defense. Tanacross was an emergency strip on northernmost part of the airway. At the time of U.S. entry into World War II the strip was unimproved. The 176th engineers upgraded the strip and constructed a small operations center, radio facility, and barracks for the airmen to be stationed there. In April, 1943, an Air Service Unit of the Eleventh Air Force arrived at the installation; it was comprised of two officers and twenty-nine enlisted men.<sup>20</sup> Again,

as with the Ahtna Indians, no record of a meeting or agreement with the Tanana Indians at Tanacross survives. Indians clearly remember such a meeting, however, and regard the loss of their land as significant.

The Indian memory cannot be disregarded simply because there is no surviving record to document it. In construction of both the Gulkana and Tanacross Airfields, the U.S. Army appropriated land which Indians used and occupied, and to title of which they had a claim by virtue of that use and occupation, a type of claim which U.S. courts subsequently would uphold in related circumstances.<sup>21</sup> Although in each case the Indians were told that the land was needed for military purposes for national defense, in neither case was compensation offered or paid, nor was the land restored to Indians following the war. While these appropriations may have been legally justified by virtue of military necessity, the manner in which the Army proceeded may not have been, and in any event, left the Indians feeling resentful. At Dry Creek, Indians were summarily ordered out of their houses, and when they failed to meet an arbitrarily imposed schedule established by Army officers, their houses were burned or removed while they were away.

Indians who were interviewed for this project have clear recollections of these events and their effect on certain individuals, and on Indian life generally. Those memories must be accorded respect and validity in reconstructing the events which took place in interior Alaska in 1942. At Dry Creek Indians remember well the construction of the Gulkana Air Field, although they were not certain of the original purpose of the facility, nor of plans for its subsequent history and use. They perceived it simply as an army installation, the construction of which resulted in the permanent loss of their homes and property at the site, and their consequent forced relocation to the community of Copper Center. All the respondents indicated that in the winter of 1942-43, they were forced to move from the homes they had occupied at Dry Creek, and were made to abandon the trapsites there which they had traditionally used. One

respondent reported that "a major" told "everybody" to move that winter. This respondent owned two houses at the site. He reported that he found the explanation for the move, viz., that the Japanese might bomb the area, to be unconvincing. This person was apparently slow in moving, for some time after he was told to move, upon returning from a day-trip away from the area, he found one of his houses burned to the ground, purposely destroyed because it was in the way of construction. He was forced to move to Copper Center. His second house was apparently dismantled, transported to Copper Center, and deposited in a field beside the highway, though not reassembled. This respondent's houses were located on a legal homestead of seven or eight acres. He had filed appropriate documents with federal authorities in the Department of the Interior. He reported in 1942 that he approached the Army, with the aid of a white woman resident in the area, to request compensation for his destroyed and appropriated property. He was told that he would have to travel to Fort Richardson, near Anchorage, to pursue the matter. He was unable to do this. He indicated in our interview with him that the papers proving his ownership of the homestead were burned with the house when the Army destroyed the home in his absence. Other Ahtna respondents interviewed reported similar circumstances associated with the removal, and a similar lack of due process and equal protection, as well as consideration.<sup>22</sup>

At Tanacross respondents for this study remember a meeting at which Army officers explained to the village council that land adjacent to the existing small grass air strip was needed for expansion of the strip into a much larger Army airfield. Several respondents were quite adamant in saying that an agreement was reached at this meeting. Following consultation with village elders, the natives agreed to permit it if the land would be returned to them following the military's need for it. No written account of this meeting could be located in the records of the 176th Engineer Regiment or in records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs or the Office of Territories. It is difficult

to determine the circumstances of this agreement. Since native land rights were not clarified at the time, and the Army had the authority to appropriate land for emergency national defense, no such agreement was technically necessary though such a promise might have been made by Army officers involved. Whatever the circumstances, Indians at Tanacross today are quite persuaded that the Army made a commitment to return appropriated land to the village following the war. The land was not returned.<sup>23</sup>

Final construction of the Alaska Highway and the Glenn Highway by the Public Roads Administration in 1943 brought even greater disruption of native life generally and to native land use patterns particularly. Following construction of "pioneer" roads by the engineering regiments, the PRA was directed by the U.S. War Department to improve the original road to conform to standards for a Class A gravel road. This involved major redesign and upgrading. This work, together with construction of the wholly new road from Anchorage to Gulkana Air Field, the Glenn Highway, was completed in October, 1943. The work was managed by seven private contracting companies under the direction of the PRA. A work force of 14,100 civilian and 1,850 PRA employees was spread out along the entire route of the Alaska Highway and the subsidiary roads in Alaska.

Two classes of construction camps were established along the route; headquarters camps at Ft. St. John, Ft. Nelson, Whitehorse, Tanacross, and at the junction of the Glenn and Richardson Highways, and line camps established at ten-to fifteen-mile intervals along the route, and at every large bridge and sawmill. Both the vicinity of the village at Tanacross and the site at Dry Creek were heavily impacted by this PRA construction effort in 1943. The headquarters camps accommodated over one thousand people. They were in fact complete small towns. In addition to the regional force of construction laborers, they included white-collar workers, women stenographers and clerical assistants, and a predominance of technical workers. The

camps provided recreation halls, commissary and communication service. In addition to the headquarters camps, eleven U.S. Public Health Service-supervised hospitals were located at strategic points along the route. These included a twenty-bed dispensary at Tanacross, and also at the Dry Creek-Gulkana Airfield site.<sup>24</sup>

The impact of these huge facilities was significant and permanent. Perhaps most obvious, the two camps were given non-Indian names: the Tanacross facility became Tok Junction, and the Dry Creek-Gulkana site became Glennallen. These names remained attached to these sites after the 1943 highway construction projects were completed, a reflection of the dominant white presence in the region, and an indication of the level of sensitivity to the Indian heritage and to Indian culture, and perhaps to Indian rights.

Few Indians were employed by the contractors who built the highways through their home regions in interior Alaska. Respondents for this study remembered that there was considerable discrimination against Indians around the camps. Use of the facilities was limited to contracted employees, and Indians were discouraged from visiting the camps. There was apparently little time for fraternizing between employees and local Indians, for the men were kept busy working twelve-hour shifts to take advantage of the extended northern summer daylight. Most of the Dry Creek people moved to Copper Center, ten miles south of Glennallen, the principal Indian settlement in the region. Though little fraternization took place, camp doctors apparently examined Indians at both villages during the winter of 1942-43 when the engineer regiments still were in the region, most likely to determine the extent of tuberculosis infection. However, doctors were unable to stem a measles epidemic which struck Tanacross that winter, killing a dozen Indians.<sup>25</sup>

Despite such conditions, Indians in both locations understood clearly the gravity of the situation, and supported the United States declaration of war on Japan. They remember themselves as patriotic being prepared to make such sacrifices as

might be necessary for the war effort. There is nothing in the documentary record which contradicts that impression. By the end of the war, both Tok and Glennallen supported growing, permanent white populations made up of settlers who determined to make their homes in the Alaskan interior. In both places the Territory of Alaska established various offices related to highway maintenance, law enforcement, aircraft servicing, communications, and other services. In late 1943 the Alaska Road Commission moved its southern interior regional office from Chitina to Glennallen. Following the war, scores of additional white people secured title to land at both highway junctions, east of Tanacross and north of Copper Center, and opened private businesses serving highway travelers.<sup>26</sup>

The resentment expressed by Indians today concerning the actions of the Army in 1942 seems to be related to several factors. One source clearly is a perception of the injustice of the circumstances of the removal and the failure of the Army to keep promises which some natives felt were made at the time of the removal. In addition, discontent seems to be related to the permanence of both the immediate and remote changes which occurred in the Indians' lives. Most particularly, the natives resent the permanent loss of land which occurred. At Tanacross, no land appropriated for the Tanacross Army Air Field was returned to the village. In the Copper River Basin, the Dry Creek site appropriated for the Gulkana Army Air Field was lost to the natives forever. In both places, land which had traditionally been used by Indians was lost to civilian and private use, after its appropriation by the Army. The facilities constructed for the war were not dismantled afterward. The air facilities constructed at both sites were turned over to the Territory of Alaska. Today they are state airfields. The PRA camps which were built at each location were quite large, and after the war became in each place the nucleus of the new, white towns. In each place, the towns grew up around the junction of the new roads which were built during the war. Today, Glennallen at the junction of the Glenn and Richardson Highways, has a population of

about seven hundred fifty people, nearly all white. Most area natives live at Gulkana to the north, or at Tazlina, Copper Center, Tonsina and Chitina to the south. Tok, at the junction of the Glenn and Alaska Highways has a population of about one thousand, nearly all white. Most natives live in Tanacross, to the west, or at Tetlin, to the southeast. Few travelers who stop for gas, food and supplies at either place today find many reminders of the Indian past of the places where those towns are situated today. Nor apparently do many white residents of the communities know much about the Indian past of the region where the communities are located.<sup>27</sup>

In a larger sense, the way of life of the Indians was changed irrevocably by the war, perhaps in ways more profound than the permanent changes which swept across all the American west and Alaska with the war. The villages had been essentially isolated prior to the war. Communication with the outside world, while not impossible, was infrequent and problematical. The few whites living in the region were highly dependent upon hunting and fishing, as were the Indians. With the exception of a school teacher, there was no white population at Tanacross. A trading boat came up the river several times a year from Big Delta, but otherwise, the natives there were almost entirely dependent upon hunting and fishing.<sup>28</sup>

Following the war, the white population at each place grew rapidly, and communication with the large population centers at Anchorage and Fairbanks became relatively common. Glennallen and Tanacross operated principally on cash economies, and while some Indians obtained cash employment, many others did not. Better organized, materially advanced in many ways, and knowledgeable concerning their rights, the white residents soon became dominant in the two regions, and came increasingly to take a proprietary view of the surrounding territory. There were no Indian reservations for Ahina Indians or for the village of Tanacross. Most of the land in the Copper River Basin and in the vicinity of Tanacross was in the public domain, to which whites had a much legal right of access as the Indians. The Indians faced



increasing competition from whites who hunted game as an adjunct to their diets and as sport, which was the same game upon which the Indians depended as a staple in their diet. In some cases favorite and traditional Indian sites were taken over by whites, in some instances on a permanent basis. Moreover, additional numbers of white people in their midst meant additional conflicts based on prejudice. Most of the Indians were quite poor by white standards, and whites often disparaged their way of life. The Indians were slow to adapt to these changes, and some people were bewildered by them. For some Indians alcohol became an increasing problem as they struggled with poverty, prejudice and discouragement. As a result, the Army, which had started the changes in 1942, and which had not always treated the Indians with the respect and care to which they felt they were entitled, eventually became a symbol of change, change which while beneficial in some regard, was unwelcome and disrupting in other contexts. By the mid-1980s, when the American military again came looking for land in Alaskan Indian country, given the opportunity to do so, some of the Indians freely expressed the resentment they felt toward the Army, and what it represented in the history of their villages. And by then, minority consciousness in America, coupled with Congressional legislation had combined to place the Indians in a much more favorable position than in 1942.

In 1971, the U.S. Congress adopted the landmark Alaska native claims settlement act which established provisions for determining Indian title to forty-four million acres of land in Alaska. These provisions were based on the location of Indian residences on the date of the passage of the act, December 18. Twenty-two million acres were designated for selection by villages. Private property to which title already had been granted by federal or state government was not affected by the act. However, untitled land in the vicinity of traditional Indian villages was subject to Indian selection. Both Tanacross and Copper Center made selections of lands traditionally used by villagers. No attempt was made to recover the Dry Creek site, however, for the State

of Alaska had acquired title to it, and there was no documentation to demonstrate prior Indian use.<sup>29</sup>

The profit and non-profit corporate organisms established by the claims settlement have led to the development of native infrastructures which have been able significantly advance native interests, concerns and claims, though perhaps not as satisfactorily as might be desired by all. When the U.S. Air Force first manifested an interest in acquiring land in the Tanacross and the Glennallen regions for use for the new phased array radar, unlike 1942, military representatives were confronted with articulate, informed and highly capable native spokesmen who knew their rights, knew their interests, and could meet the military on equal terms. They had the protection of American law, and the advice of some of the best attorneys in the United States. Negotiations between the Air Force and the Indians were quite protracted, partly because it took the military representatives a long time to realize implications of the extent of the protection of Indian rights. In their negotiations, the Indians' position was strengthened by the documentation of what had happened in 1942, corroborated by the testimony of Indians who had lived through those difficult times. The U.S. Air Force decided not to discount the Indian testimony concerning the event of 1942 in its negotiations with the Indians concerning the "Backscatter" project. Rather, it accorded the Indians' accounts of the incidents complete validity. As a practical matter, it cost the Air Force nothing to do this; the Indians now had clear title to the land the Air Force wanted to use. But there is no question that negotiations were eased by the Air Force's respect for the Indians.<sup>30</sup>

As a consequence, the outcome in 1989 has been quite different from 1942. The Air Force has what it needs: use of Indian land to construct an important national defense facility. But Indian land title is not impaired, and provision is made for the land to revert to Indian control and use when the phased array project is no longer viable. In the meantime, the Indians have received compensatory payment for use of

the land, funds which will be used to advance the Indians' future through education, and through payments to individual Indians based on village and regional investments.

In this instance, history, in addition to helping explain the past, has also been utilized to help effect the present directly, and, most would say, positively.

Reconstruction of the historical record has played a significant role in many Indian land claims in both the United States and Canada. In American law, the Supreme Court has found that abandonment of lands once utilized by Indians does not constitute abandonment of title. Since the end of termination, about 1960, when Indians have been able to prove use of the land through oral testimony corroborated by reference to historical documentation, the courts have confirmed Indian title. While there is no technical obligation of the government to pay compensation, the courts have assumed a moral obligation to do so in recent cases.<sup>31</sup> The experience of the Ahtna Indians and the Tanacross and Tetlin village Indians in regard to the U.S. Air Force's "Backscatter" project suggests that even when a claim is not made for title, oral testimony and historical documentation can greatly strengthen the Indians' position in their relations with government, even in matter bearing on questions of national security. Certainly the achievement of title under the claims settlement act of 1971 was the critical factor in the Alaska Indians' negotiations; they were already in a position of strength. However, their position was conceivably made stronger by reference to the historical record, and acquired considerable moral weight when corroborated by living witnesses to the historical events. It is to be hoped that similar collaboration in the future might serve northern Indians as well.

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<sup>1</sup> Robert M. Goldberg, Attorney, interview, February 18, 1989; *Anchorage Daily News*, March 20, 1989, p. B1.

<sup>2</sup> John Cloe, Historian, U.S. Air Force, Alaska Air Command, interview, March 28, 1989; *Request for Proposal: OTH-B Radar Electrical Power: F66517-87-R0001* (Elmendorf, AFB: Headquarter, Alaskan Air Command, 18 July 1986).

<sup>3</sup> Interview, Robert M. Goldberg, June 5, 1989.

<sup>4</sup> Robert M. Goldberg, Attorney, *Ibid.*; Robert Brean, President, Tanacross, Inc., April 12, 1989.

<sup>5</sup> Robert M. Goldberg, Attorney, *Ibid.*; John Cloe, Historian, U.S. Air Force, *Ibid.*; Robert Brean, President, Tanacross, Inc., *Ibid.*; Goldberg had also represented Tanacross in a clarification of the village's land entitlement under the claims settlement act.

<sup>6</sup> Robert M. Goldberg, Attorney, interview, August 17, 1986.

<sup>7</sup> The methodology used for this study is that outlined in R.F. Ellen, *Ethnographic Re-search: A Guide to General Conduct* (New York: Academic Press [Harcourt Brace Jovanovich], 1984), pp. 275-278, 36-40; on the role and methods of ethnography generally, see Wilcomb Washburn, "The Writing of

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American Indian History: A Status Report," in *The American Indian*, ed., Norris Hundley, Jr. (Santa Barbara: American Bibliographical Center - Clio Books, 1974), pp. 10-11.

<sup>8</sup> Frank Stickwan (age 84), Elsie Stickwan, George Basillie (age 82), and Andrew Stickwan (age 64), interviews, Copper Center, 5 February 1987 (interviews conducted by William Gabella, translator, Robert Marshall). George Basillie reported having used the site from the 1920s. The Stickwans had lived on the site intermittently throughout the 1930s; Constance F. West, "An Inventory of Trails and Habitation Sites in the Ahtna Region," unpublished manuscript, 1973 (report funded by the Alaska Humanities Forum, Anchorage), Ahtna Archives, Copper Center.

<sup>9</sup> Oscar Isaac, Julius Paul and Gaither Paul, interview, September 12, 1987, Tanacross, Alaska (interviews conducted by William Simeone). Isaac was born in Mansfield (near Tanacross in 1913; Julius Paul was born there c. 1911-13; Gaither Paul was born in 1923 at Paul's Place, a camp near Mansfield. Most Mansfield people settled at Tanacross. All three respondents lived at Tanacross in 1942. Oscar Isaac was a village elder. All three were temporary employees of the Army or the Public Roads Administration during 1942 and 1943.

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10 Report, "U.S. Navy and Army Forces and Bases in Alaska," Commander, Army Air Corps to Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet, 23 March 1942, file 370 - Alaska, Records of the Army Air Forces, RG 18, Military Reference Branch, National Archives; "History, Feb. 10, 1942 - Dec. 1945," Box 15721, 176th Engineering Regiment, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, RG 407, MAB, NA; James D. Bush, Jr., CE, *Narrative Report of Alaska Construction, 1941-1944* (Prepared in accordance with memorandum from Headquarters, Alaska Defense Command, dated 5 October 1943), *passim*.

11 Jonathan M. Nielson, *Armed Forces on a Northern Frontier: The Military in Alaska's History, 1867-1987* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1988), pp. 137-38; M.Z. Be-zeau, "The Realities of Strategic Planning: The Decision to Build the Alaska Highway," in Kenneth Coates, ed., *The Alaska Highway: Papers of the 40th Anniversary Symposium* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1985), p. 33 ("With hindsight one can see that the highway never really contributed much to Alaskan supply even after its completion.").

12 U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Roads, *An Interim Report*, House Report No. 1705, 79th Cong., 2 sess. (1946), pp. xi-xiii.

13 Basillie and Stickwan interviews.

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14 Report on the Natives of Alaska, March 18, 1938, file Alaska - Indians, General Cor-respondence File, 1933-35, Records of the Office of the Secretary of the Interior, RG 48, NA.

15 Correspondence between Col. D.H. Fischer (USA Ret.) and Lt. Col. Lyman L. Wood-man (USA Ret.), Anchorage, Alaska, November, 1985, copy in possession of the author; "History, July - December, 1944," Box 19555, 97th Engineering Regiment, RG 407, NA; see also Nielson, *Armed Forces*, p. 138.

16 Fischer correspondence.

17 Basillie and Stickwan interviews.

18 *Ibid.*; Bush, *Narrative Report*, pp. 104-06.

19 Monthly Report, 4 August 1942, Commandant Thirteenth Naval District to Comman-der-in-Chief, U.S. Fleet, file Alaska - 1943, General Records of the Department of the Navy, RG 80, Military Reference Branch, NA.

20 Bush, *Narrative Report*, pp. 120-21; see also Claus-M. Naske, *Paving Alaska's Trails: The Work of the Alaska Road Commission* (University Press of America, 1986), pp. 141-53.



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- 21 F. Cohen, *Handbook of Federal Indian Law* (1982 ed.), editor-in-chief Rennard Strickland (Charlottesville, Va.: Michie, Bobbs-Merrill, 1982), pp. 486-93; David S. Case, *Alaska Natives and American Law* (Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 1984), pp. 47-55.
- 22 Basillie and Stickwan interviews.
- 23 O. Isaac, P. and G. Paul, interviews; Basillie's houses were burned by the Army; Frank and Elsie Stickwan's house was dismantled, taken by trailer to Copper Center, and deposited by the side of the road.
- 24 Report, Alaska Highway Facilities, 18 November 1943, file Facilities (003.12), Box 89002, Records of the Bureau of Public Roads, RG 30, NA; House Committee on Roads, *An Interim Report*, No. 1705, pp. 53-58.
- 25 Fischer correspondence.
- 26 Naske, *Paving Alaska's Roads*, p. 218.
- 27 *The Milepost* (Anchorage: Alaska Northwest Publishing Co., 1989).
- 28 Merle Colby, *A Guide to Alaska: Last American Frontier* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1939), pp. 246-47, 251; O. Isaac, P. and G. Paul, interviews; Basillie and Stickwan interviews.

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29 The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act is explained in Robert D. Arnold, *Alaska Na-tive Land Claims* (Anchorage: Alaska Native Foundation, 1976).

30 John Cloe, Historian, U.S. Air Force, interview.

31 See note 20, above.

Ties Between Natives of Arctic Village and Northern Yukon

Trimble Gilbert

Trimble Gilbert:

Thank you. Before we came to Whitehorse; we were so excited. Linda Johnson called us over and we were so excited to see all our friends on this side - Canada. We did pretty good on travelling except our little grandchildren were so sick all the way from Arctic to here. We were kind of worried, of course, about that. I am 54 years old - my wife and I are the same age. We have been married about 34 years, and we have seven grand children in Arctic Village. I heard a lot of stories from way back from elderly people. There is one from Old Crow, her name is Myra Kaye and she lived over 100 years. Before the boundary line, she told me a story about a lot of good things. She said the people didn't really settle in one place before the boundary line. The reason is that they were always following the animals - like the caribou. They travelled, they covered the whole area back and forth between Crow flats and Arctic Village by foot. Transportation was really hard, but nobody complained about it. During that time she said the people are really healthy, and nobody ever complained about headache, stomach problems and other kinds of problems. People worked so hard everyday, and survived. There was never anyone who knew about the boundary line. I was surprised when she told me about - I found out more relatives on this side. Some of the people from Arctic Village moved to Old Crow. Ten years ago the first trip I made to McPherson, me and my wife - later on we went over there with our children. When we got over there, people tell

us "You are my real relative." And further over in Aklavic and Old Crow; we got a lot of relatives in that area. We found out how many there are after we went up there last summer. When they put the boundary line between us, we lost a lot of our relatives; we didn't even know them. That old lady told us that we've got more on this side. Last gathering we had last summer, there was a lot of elderly people came over and they told us a lot of Gwich'in stories; just about the same stories as we heard from our area. They got a lot of places in that area where I live; there is a lot of caribou fence. I didn't know how many of them in that area. Even on this side near the Crow flats, there is more caribou fence. Some places there is hardly any timber; that is where they put that caribou fence. There is a lot of big logs laying around - miles long. People did really hard work way before us. I didn't even know that until I was about thirty. When I was young, I didn't really listen to our elderly people. I don't know what they were talking about, but after I reached 40 I wanted to learn more about our history. So, I ask around when I was visiting elderly people. I learned a lot of good things from them. I still remember all I heard from my mother. So, this caribou fence I am talking about - it broke. I had it in my office in Arctic, but I didn't bring it over with me. One time I worked with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. They flew around with a helicopter one summer when I worked with them. So, I found out there is a lot of historical sites on that area - camping grounds, lots of signs. That makes me feel funny. Before I come to Whitehorse, one day I got up in the morning and I

want to go out in the woods to see all the campsites. I remember when my grandfather used to sit in his tent, and my mother used to sit with my father. All this; I wanted to see it and I did it for a reason, before this meeting. After I come home, I feel much better about it; to see that. Since that gathering last summer, my wife and I have had quite a few phone calls from the Canadian side. People keep calling us every other day. So, I think back to the old days. We should work together more with the Canadian people. We used to share, during the starvation times, people helped one another on both sides. We don't know about that boundary line; but we share with one another. We travel back and forth for help. So we help out one another and share with one another. Since the boundary line, we don't do it very much. But, since last gathering; this winter there is hardly any caribou on the American side. So, Old Crow people found out just before Christmas and we got a load of meat from Old Crow. It had to go through customs in Fairbanks, but we didn't have any problem. We have more communications between Americans and Canadians, so I don't feel much different where I am at right now. This place, I feel like this is my home. The way I live at the city here, it really makes me feel good. So, I don't feel like a Canadian's Canadian but we are brother and sister; this is the way I feel. I've heard a lot of stories from way back, and I am listening to the one old guy from my area. He said something about the first white men that came to Fort Yukon in 1844. Then, later on in 1852 that first missionary/minister from porcupine. They all travel through this

Yukon from the porcupine. That's what they tell us on the tape. Myra Kaye told me about the gathering. Good people travel around the area, and sometimes where they meet before the boundary line when they were killing enough caribou and had enough meat. That's the time that they gather together and there are all kinds of games going on. She didn't mention what the year of the last gathering was, but it was some years ago. It was the last gathering we had at Sheenjek river. She was even crying when she told me, "That's the last time I see all my people." Then they split because of the boundary line, so we never did see them. So, Arctic Village is a small village with a population of about 100. We have about 1.8 billion acres of reserved land. We are the only ones on that land. We own that land. Now, they start talking about that porcupine herd calving ground. People are so worried about it. In case we lost that porcupine herd, we don't know how were going to survive. So, we tell them something about that were from a way back, how we lasted thousands of years in that area, we survived, and the caribou was our main life. So, like my grandma told me about the caribou and how people used caribou fences and how they survived way back during the cold weather. She mentioned that nobody ever had frostbite; even children, and they travelled around the whole country. They used the clothing; they made clothing out of materials. So, thank you for your time listening. It's good to be here with you. I hope to see you again in the future.



**FROM BOTH SIDES NOW: A LOOK AT THE LOCAL  
PERSPECTIVE ON THE YUKON-ALASKA BOUNDARY  
BEFORE THE GOLD RUSH**

**BY**

**MICHAEL GATES**

In the scheme of world affairs, the local developments along the Yukon River, where it was intersected by the international boundary deserved hardly a nod in the history texts of this country. Territorial boundaries are often the cause of serious international conflict, in which resources, strategic value, and national pride all play a part. It is therefore interesting to watch the developments which took place in an isolated and remote part of interior northwest North America, where, for a period of over twenty years, the natural resources were exploited and developed by a group of hardy and independent men, almost all of them miners and prospectors, in a total absence of government influence.

The men, for there were virtually no white women in the Yukon Basin in the 1880s and early 1890s, were a mixed bag of nationalities, predominantly American. In the 1880s, most of them were experienced men from other gold camps who came north looking for gold, or seeking to escape their past, or the future. They were highly informal, and extremely independent. Past histories were never sought of them, and they were seldom given. They were often given nicknames, either from informality, or from a desire for anonymity. This group of men was highly egalitarian. Anyone who put himself above his fellow pioneers would find himself shunned. The rule of order was to "Do as you would be done by." Mutual trust was a byword, and honesty was expected. If a man came to do business in a store or saloon, the keeper of the business

would be considered inhospitable if he did not turn his back on the customer while the latter weighed out his gold in payment, as it would be a breach of trust to do so. Similarly, cheating was an uncommon practise because a man's reputation would quickly sour in the district if he did. These men were suspicious of authority and any of the restraints it placed upon them.

The Yukon Valley before the gold rush of 1898 was a wilderness thinly populated by white men. It offered numerous obstacles to the progress of placer mining and exploration, including the total isolation for eight months a year, long, dark, brutally cold winters and soul numbing periods of inactivity. The summers were short, and though temperate, characterized by hordes of vicious insects, difficult travel, and hard, usually unrewarding labour.

In this land, however, the miners managed, though living in a political vacuum on both sides of the yet to be defined boundary, to conduct their own affairs. Implementing the rules established in the camps of previous gold rushes, they operated under an anarchistic democracy familiarly known as the miner's committee. This gave way, eventually, on one side of the border, to a system of Canadian justice, just in time for the Klondike gold rush.

This method of governing was used sparingly, and in a limited number of circumstances. It was an informal method of establishing rules of conduct and resolving issues of conflict. At various

times, it dealt with civil and criminal matters, and establishing mining procedures for each vicinity. These committees also dealt with community matters, such as the administering of the estates of the deceased, and registering the land titles in the town of Forty Mile.

The miner's committees were styled after the American principle of democratic conduct. Each member who participated had a vote. If a man had a grievance, a meeting would be convened to resolve it. A moderator would be chosen to conduct the meeting. Both prosecutor and defence would be chosen; each would have an opportunity to question and cross-examine the witnesses, and in the end, summations would be given. A motion would be put before the committee, and it would be passed or defeated. The sentence would be carried out immediately. In serious cases, such as theft or attempted murder, the guilty party would be banished from the Yukon basin, a sentence, which, if passed in the winter, meant serious hardship for the person banished, as he would be compelled to depart immediately for the outside.

The net consequence was a simple system of justice, which in the early days was considered by all to be fair and just. One observer at the time said:

"With all the idleness drinking and gambling, there was less crime there than would be found in most cities of its size in the United States. Cabin doors were nearly always left unlocked, and in them bags of gold and other valuables were

left when the owners were away. The miner's Association was more feared by evil doers than any courts or police would have been. To be sent down river in a small boat was to delinquents a worse punishment than death." (Haskell, 1898: 173)

A number of changes gradually took place over time, however, which diminished the effectiveness of this frontier style of justice. The first of these was the gradual growth of the mining community that shared this wilderness with the indigenous population. In the 1870s, there were probably no more than two dozen white men in the entire Yukon River basin. Through the first half of the 1880s, this number rose to 100. After the discovery of course gold on the Fortymile, Sixtymile and Birch Creeks, the influx of men was dramatic. By 1896, the population had doubled and redoubled till it peaked at 1700, just before the great Klondike Strike (Goodrich, 1897: 125).

William Ogilvie, the Canadian government surveyor who was in the Yukon to witness the transition remarked on the changes:

"When I was in the country ten years ago, the miners were very well acquainted with each other, and there being no saloons, they attended pretty strictly to business. Consequently, there were no rings or cliques formed, and when a miner's meeting was called to adjust any difference or dispute, it was generally decided on its merits. Soon after this, saloons were built, liquor came in, in large quantities, and a class congregated which might be termed professional loafers. These men were always on hand, and when a miner's meeting was called, they attended and voted in the interests of the saloons and their keepers." (Ogilvie, 1897: 29; see also Haskell, 1898: 150; Pike, 1897:220-221; Goodrich, 1897: 127; Stone, 1979: 107-108)

Liquor started to come into the country as early as 1886, when a man named Hawthorne took 50 gallons of alcohol and liquor into the Yukon "presumably to traffic with the Indians." (S.A. May 29/'86: 2)

With the increased gold production from the new strikes the population grew, and diversified. As the century slipped away, a small trickle of white women, probably no more than about two or three dozen, trickled into the region. This small but significant group might have been the cause of some of the ills which began to plague the miners' meetings. Joe Ladue, one of the original sourdoughs in the Yukon, noted sourly that "Nobody can get justice from a miner's committee when women were on one side." (Steffens, 1897: 964-965) It was an incident involving a woman that helped pave the way for the introduction of Canadian justice in the goldfields.

C.H. Hamilton was the manager of the North American Trading and Transportation Co. operation at Fortymile the winter of 1894/95. He had contracted a woman servant to work for him for a period of one year. After a while, she began to take off in the evenings, for which she was talked to by her employer. He threatened her with dismissal, and she was subsequently fired. She complained bitterly and her boyfriend encouraged the camp to indignation. At a miner's meeting, it was resolved that Hamilton should pay her a

full year's wages, her boat fare back to the coast, and enough food to carry her over till her departure in the spring. The crowd was so worked up that Hamilton, who was contemplating a standoff at his trading post, might have been confronted with violence. The committee openly discussed blowing up the company safe in order to obtain the necessary funds, and something dangerous might have occurred, had not Sgt. Brown of the NWMP, who was wintering at Fortymile, counselled Hamilton to co-operate (NAC, RG18 A1 Vol. 100 File 17-95; Letter Brown to Constantine, Feb. 9, 1895)

The boyfriend apparently benefited from the young servant's windfall, and afterward, some of the older and more seasoned sourdoughs were embarrassed or even ashamed of their participation in the affair, and the abuse of the system. (Ogilvie, 1913: 257)

The Canadian government recognized that such a land, with no law enforcement, or government representation, and large numbers of Americans on Canadian soil was a potentially unstable situation. From the outset, the American tradition of independent frontier-style self government was in conflict with the British system of justice where the authority lies with the crown. With two systems so completely different, confrontation was inevitable. In addition, many miners, fearing that the administration of law by miner's committee was about to go in a bad direction, were prepared for a fairer system of justice. (Morrison, 1985: 16)



From previous experience, the Canadian government was cautious about American interest in expanding their territory. For Ottawa, this was an important moment to assert sovereignty. In addition, it was well timed for the NWMP, whose future was in doubt. In response to letters from C.H. Hamilton, and Bishop Bompas, the Privy council, in 1894, resolved to send a police officer to the Yukon. The Commissioner of the NWMP jumped at the opportunity. Inspector Charles Constantine, and Staff Sgt. Charles Brown were dispatched to investigate the Fortymile district that summer. The following year, Constantine returned with twenty officers and men and established the police detachment across the river from the mining community at Fortymile.

The force had not yet moved into its permanent quarters in 1895 when Sgt. M.H.E. Hayne was sent out to intervene in a potentially dangerous situation; a shoot-out over a woman. One of the men, a gambler, was sent out of the country (Hayne, 1897: 68-73). Shortly after Christmas that year, a man was fined for selling liquor to an Indian (Constantine, 1896: 12). Constantine also established sovereignty on the Canadian side of the border. He sent notice to the miners on various creeks that they were subject to Canadian law. He reported:

"A few miners denied Canada's jurisdiction and right to collect fees, on the grounds that there was no joint survey, and a possibility of error in the work. However, I went up to Miller and Glacier Creeks and all dues were paid without any trouble except that of a hard trip."

(Constantine, 1896: 12)

If there was any doubt at all about the right of Canadian justice to rule, it was eliminated in a final incident in the spring of 1896. The decision of the police to take action resulted from a resolution made by a miner's committee. The incident in question occurred because of a man who had a "lay" on another man's claim. The "lay" man disappeared after the spring gold clean-up without paying his labourers. The labourers demanded that the original owner compensate them. The miner's committee determined that his claim be confiscated and auctioned off, and this was done. The owner of the claim protested to the Inspector Constantine, who advised the committee that their actions carried no authority in fact. He also refused to register the transfer of the claim to the new owner, who left Fortymile "breathing defiance, and saying that the miners would see him through" (RG 18, vol. 123, file 467-96: July 13/96) A force of twelve officers and men, armed with Lee-Metford rifles, was dispatched to Glacier Creek, the site of the incident, with the orders to proceed cautiously, and to remain on the disputed claim until the issue had been settled. They occupied the claim, ejecting a representative of the spurious purchaser, and according to Strickland, the officer in charge:

"Several of the miners of the worst class indulged in some big talking and were very anxious that I should call a meeting of the miners to explain the law to them. I gave a decided refusal to this proposition, stating that... (Constantine) had sent them a written

notice which they had chosen to utterly ignore and that my present business on the creek was not to talk but to act. They had nothing to say to this." (Ibid.)

With this act, the will of the miner's committee in the Yukon was forever tamed. According to Hayne, who participated in the events that occurred that day:

"No ill was borne us for our share in the proceedings and I think that everyone was in his heart glad to feel that there was a force in the land that would protect his individual rights and those of others." (Hayne, 1897: 124)

Others confirmed these sentiments (Haskell, 1898: 154). Americans who felt that their democratic rights had been infringed, retreated to Circle, on the American side of the border. As Pierre Berton noted:

"On one side of the border there was complete freedom of action for every man; rule was by committees and by vigilantes; sometimes there was no rule at all. On the other side stood the mounted police." (Berton, 1958: 422)

Not everyone was of the opinion that the law as administered by the NWMP was effective. Tappan Adney, one of the most notable of the Klondike chroniclers, was of the opinion that the peaceable conditions that prevailed during the stampede of 1898 existed before the police arrived, and that they were not to be given and credit for this situation. Adney, however, was not in the Yukon

before the rush to witness the conditions that prevailed, and had to rely upon the accounts of others. (Adney, 1900: 269-270)

Similarly, the anthropologist Thomas Stone commented on the effect of the NWMP:

"The presence of the mounties which displaced the authority of the miner's meeting in Canadian territory, did little to improve the administration of justice. In certain respects, it appears only to have incapacitated it."  
(Stone, 1979: 84)

Stone failed to consider that anybody, including the NWMP, would have fallen short in their ability to dispense justice due to the harsh physical reality. Stone also did not acknowledge that the miners' committee, which has often been held up as an example of truly efficient social order, was deteriorating as the new century approached.

The farcical trial of May Aiken, a black prostitute, in Circle, in the winter of 1896/7 illustrates the point. The woman was encouraged to bring a man, named Phil Lester, before a miner's meeting, on a civil matter. The outcome of the trial was predetermined, and the affair was something of a joke, to everyone except May, who did not know the intent. After two gallons of whiskey had been consumed, the jury came out with the verdict. The joke went sour, however, when the judge assessed a substantial fine against her. This, too, was apparently a joke, although not everyone was aware of the fact (Bender, 1967: 90). Consequently,

the so-called "coon" trial was also viewed as a miscarriage of justice (Johns, n.d.: 155-156). The light way in which this trial was conducted indicates the problems which were developing in the traditional practise of self government; it was becoming merely a form of entertainment for the idle of Circle to while away the long winter hours.

Law and order, or lack of it, remained in the hands of the miner's committee, even after it was rendered ineffective on the Canadian side of the border. Sgt. Hayne, though not an impartial observer, noted that the rules of discovery and claiming of ground on new placer deposits near Circle, were still established by committee. Rules were set out barring Canadians from staking claims, or even working on American and Chicken Creeks (Hayne, 1897: 126). This was done not so much out of nationalism, but out of self interest, cloaked in the disguise of nationalism.

To further emphasize the effectiveness in the administration of law and order by the mounties, Hayne stated, and on this point, there may be good reason to accept his testimony, that:

"... if a man was wanted [by the mounties], it was scarcely necessary to send to fetch him, and in any case, such a proceeding was a mere formality. If there was any little trouble, we had merely to send a man word that we wanted to see him, and he immediately came in and reported himself. This actually happened on one or two occasions, and I firmly believe that if we had sent for a man a hundred miles off, he would immediately have dropped his work and come

in." (Hayne, 1897: 155)

The Americans were well aware of the frightful situation in the northern goldfields. In a letter to Daniel Lamont, Secretary of War, published in the Sitka Alaskan, August 24, 1895, Governor James Shakely asked for 100 soldiers to be sent to the Yukon region to protect life and property. He cited the rapid population growth and gold production as the causes, and stated that the intent of the Canadian government to send 50 men to their side of the Yukon-Alaska border would drive the lawless element into Alaska. A week later, the same newspaper lamented that by comparison to the Canadian government, the United States government seemed to be indifferent to the needs of the miners for the protection of life and property (S.A. Aug. 31/95: 3). Even the commercial interests of the region expressed satisfaction with Canadian justice. In 1897, Eli Gage, of the NAT&T Co. stated the need for American troops:

"... we are desirous of getting troops into that country... The rush... that will take place this year will bring to the territory many parasites and dangerous characters; it is from these that we desire protection. On the Canadian side, they have a form of civil government which is fully as valuable to the miners as to the trading companies, for it insures and protects their interests in the mines." (S.A. April 17/'97)

Even when American government officials were sent into the Yukon basin, their effect upon the administration of justice is

somewhat dubious. The Rev. R. J. Bowen described the actions of an American government official in Circle in 1896, whom he mistakenly identified as a U.S. Marshall:

"The only government protection we had in Circle City was embodied in an United States marshall. I never really understood his duties but they seemed to embrace all government duties as required as each problem arose. His conscience seemed as elastic as his office. Although there were stringent laws in reference to liquor being sold in Indian territory, and its disposition ordered as follows: It had to be poured into a hole in the ground... underneath the hole in the ground into which the whiskey was poured, there was a larger hole... which held a barrel, to which the liquor poured was led through a funnel and tube." (Bowen, 1950: 150-151)

The same year, another observer, William Douglas Johns, noted a similar corruption in a man, possibly the same one identified by Bowen. The young man, who filled the position of revenue officer at Circle actually collected \$25.00 a month from each saloon keeper to leave them alone, for he could have caused them serious grief by imposing penalties for the sale of liquor. The right had only been bestowed upon the AC Co. by the government (Johns, n.d.: 138)

The government officials at Circle were not respected by the body of miners in the camp. Josiah Spurr, a government geologist conducting a survey of the goldfields in the Yukon basin, experienced this when he stayed with two customs officers, while passing through in 1896. The officers, who had just confiscated two kegs of contraband whiskey were besieged by "whiskey-dry" miners, whom they kept from their quarters only by force of arms.



Spurr described a tense night of sentinel duty during which shadowy figures lurked outside the cabin. (Spurr, 1900: 188-195)

U.S. government officials were all too aware of the question of law and order. Captain Patrick Ray, sent by the government to investigate conditions in Alaska, found a lawless and turbulent element entering the country. At Circle, a miner's meeting resolved to take supplies off the next steamer passing through, by force, while at Fort Yukon, he nearly faced an armed rebellion. The NAT&T Co. store was pilfered and \$6000 was stolen. Ray recommended that a military force be brought to posts along the Yukon River to maintain civil authority, prevent smuggling, and provide law and order. (Webb, 1985: 130-132)

Further, Ray commented that the "striking contrast between Canadian law and government, symbolized by the NWMP, and the absence of any government or law enforcement in Alaska filled him with frustration" (Ibid.). It was clear that Ray was not satisfied to entrust the administration of law and order to the miner's committee, particularly in view of their defiance of decisions made by government officials made at the time. (See Hunt, 1987: 74-75)

At the time of the Klondike goldrush, therefore, there was in place in Canadian territory, a mechanism for applying justice suitable for the relatively large population now in the region, while in American territory, there was not. The result was a

disintegration of the local system below Fortymile, and as history has so amply demonstrated, total lawlessness and disorder in Skagway, a few hundred miles to the south, at the gateway to the Yukon.

EXPRESSIONS OF NATIONALISM ON THE FRONTIER

" Dawson, Yukon 7 April 1904"

"To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that the bearer, Mr. Robert Henderson, formerly of Picton, Nova Scotia, was the real Discoverer of the Klondike-Indian River goldfields of Yukon Territory in Canada and is therefore entitled to whatever credit there is for this valuable discovery of placer gold deposits in this Dominion.

He has abundant affidavits and documentary proof to substantiate the claim, which is made by his friends, and NOT by himself, and is also acknowledged to be the discoverer of the Klondike by Ex-Commissioner William Ogilvie, Ex-Commissioner Hon. J. T. Ross, M.P., Commissioner Fred T. Congdon, Asst. Commissioner of the NWMP Major Zachary T. Wood, and by numerous other officials; as well as by the leading pioneers of the Yukon Territory.

(Signed) H. J. Woodside  
Late Census Commissioner of the Yukon" (Turner, p. 1)

It is evident in the document cited above that Canadian nationalism, or more likely, national pride, was at stake when the affidavit was endorsed by the senior officials of the Canadian administration in the Yukon territory. Clearly, the great Klondike gold rush was of such magnitude, it was essential that ownership of the credit be established.

In the period before the gold rush, the topics of sovereignty and national pride, though present, were not considered to be hot issues. The early pioneers had an inherent suspicion of government. In 1887, William Ogilvie noted:

"in a certain sense, they consider every government official or agent their enemy and that he is in the country to spy upon their doings, and find out their earnings, which latter the great majority of them are very much averse to have known." (Ogilvie, 1897b: 39)

Further, George T. Snow, a founding member of the Yukon Order of Pioneers, and the "official" historian for the organization, also remarked upon these men:

"The prospectors and miners (who were mostly American) took very little part in the controversy [regarding the boundary] as most of them were too busy 'snipin' for next season's grubstake." (George Snow, Snow papers, p. 36)

There were individual expressions among the miners of the Yukon basin, perhaps the most peculiar of which was that of Sam Patch, an elder and patriotic American, who, by coincidence, had established a homestead beside the Fortymile River, astride the international boundary. Patch abandoned his cabin and a portion of his potato field when he learned that they were on Canadian soil. He proudly refused to lower his American flag, but typical of the emotions of the time, no one asked him to do so (Spurr, 1900: 121-122; Judge, 1907: 166; Johns, n.d.: 100; Lyons, 1897: 63). He had spent many

years prospecting and mining on Canadian territory, and did not hesitate, on one occasion, to drink a toast to Queen Victoria when invited to do so by William Ogilvie (Ogilvie, 1897: 26).

Although nationalism was not a burning question among the miners of the region, neither was it ignored. Canadian jibes at American lawlessness caused the miners of Circle to call a meeting to stop two men, who had a duel in 1895, from fighting any more (Walden, 1931: 51). Men of both nationalities, however, could not refrain from making observations about the differences on both sides of the border. The Rev. R. J. Bowen commented on the American's demand for preferential treatment in Circle (Bowen, 1950: 151). The reader will recall the remarks of Sgt. Hayne of the NWMP, which were reported above, on the same matter.

While the Hudson's Bay Company moved its trading post at Fort Yukon upstream not once, but twice, in order to respect American sovereignty, Ogilvie wryly noted that Canada allowed two American trading companies to operate on Canadian soil in order to develop the country. Instead of throwing out the aliens, the Canadian government protected them. They were also, he noted, the first to request it. It was Canada's intention to "... live at peace with them and still preserve their identity as people." (Ogilvie, in Snow papers: 3). Ogilvie probably had to bite his tongue when he saw large amounts of Canadian timber being cut and floated down river to American territory, without any benefit to Canada. The

NWMP were, however, unable to do anything about it, as they lacked a patrol boat (Ogilvie, 1897: 53).

Americans, in turn, were quick to criticize the infringements on their individual freedoms in Canadian territory, particularly when it came to making a profit, as the following poem will attest:

"Stay On The Yankee Side Of The Line"

There is gold in Alaska, and plenty of it, too,  
 But don't rush to Dawson, for surely if you do,  
 You'll remember what I've told you in the Record of this  
     place,  
 Which has never printed else but truth about this  
     golden race.  
 Keep on the side of freedom; I mean don't cross the line,  
 And millions of our country men may settle down and  
     mine,  
 For the stars and stripes are free to all, our canyons  
     and our gold,  
 And ten per cent is robbery-- and ten percent, I'm  
     told,  
 Must be paid in solid cash or else your claim is lost,  
 And confiscated by the crown regardless of its cost,  
 Infringing rights and all that's dear, your liberty and  
     time,  
 Dominion law is slavery, lets brand it as a crime.

(Webb, 1985: 133)

CONCLUSION

The relationship between the miners of the two nations along the Yukon-Alaska boundary was very peaceable before the gold rush. This is probably the case because it was forged by the cruel and demanding environment into which they ventured over a century ago. The tradition of co-operation sharing and survival which was

founded on the simple concept "Do as you would be done by," tempered their attitudes much more than did any nationalistic concerns which might have prevailed at the time. Those who followed them into the Yukon inherited a great portion of this tradition. That, plus the resolute presence of the mounties resulted in a peaceful transition to bustling mining community in 1898.

The way in which law and order was administered on opposite sides of the boundary is simply the most obvious expressions of national identity evident from this early time period. The Canadian approach embraced the British tradition of justice; the personality of the nation was cautious, hide-bound, law abiding, recognizing a centralized authority which rested in the crown. By comparison, the American tradition revered rugged independence and adventure, with a strong emphasis on the right of the individual.

While the record of time shows that these pioneers were clearly aware of their differing traditions, and that they expressed their nationalistic feelings, they seemed, more or less, to accept the differences and work together amicably. They left the larger issue of sovereignty to the nations to work out. For two decades, they lived and worked together in an isolated world of their own in which they established, and lived by a very simple set of rules.

Some opinions have been expressed regarding the efficacy of the

social order which was based on the miner's committee. Some of these have wistfully and nostalgically regarded this period of history as an effective and democratic system. With time to reflect upon this order, we can now see that the time during which it worked effectively lasted until just after the discovery of gold on the Fortymile River. Within a few years, such factors as increasing population and diversity, and liquor, caused deterioration of the miner's committee, and necessitated the imposition of a more formal system of social control. The fact that the Canadian government was the first to act was fortuitous, in view of the great gold rush which occurred. The Americans also realized that the old order would no longer serve, and followed suit very shortly after.



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THE ALASKA-YUKON BOUNDARY SURVEY OF 1911-1912:

AN ATHAPASKAN PERSPECTIVE

by  
Craig Mishler



A Paper Presented at the Borderlands History Conference

Whitehorse, Y.T.

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I began working with Elijah John, a Gwich'in elder residing in Fort Yukon, Alaska, in 1972, eight years before he told me the Boundary Line Story. I had recorded a large number of Elijah's traditional stories in Gwich'in during that time, most of them with some historical and legendary content. When I knew him, Elijah was a retired carpenter living alone in a small log cabin in that part of Fort Yukon known as Crow Town. He was born in 1892 at Kiidooch'in at the mouth of Lower Birch Creek and passed away in Fort Yukon on May 27, 1985.

It was always Elijah's practice to have another older man present when telling these stories. He spoke English well enough but knew that my knowledge of Gwich'in was very limited, and I was grateful for this third person audience because it provided a more natural performance context and gave me the freedom to monitor the tape recorder and take notes.

On the evening of August 16, 1980, I was visiting with Elijah and one of his old friends, John Killy, when Elijah asked me if I had ever heard the Boundary Line Story. I said no but also expressed a strong interest in hearing it and turned on the tape recorder. As translated into English later on by Moses Paul Gabriel, this is what Elijah said:

I heard that the land would break in half, and I don't know the whole story, but I heard it from people gathering at the store at Fort Yukon who were talking about it. Jacob Flett's father, William Flett, was there when the white people were talking about the boundary, and he and the interpreter told the Indian people about it. But the way they told it, the land would break in half and float away. So the people got scared, and everybody went northeast [towards Canada].

My own grandmother said, "Let's move up," but my grandfather got mad at her. He didn't like the idea, so he said, "Aaa, it doesn't matter what happens."

They say a lot of people moved up north, but then nothing happened, and they didn't know exactly where the land would break. This is the way I heard it from my own father, from your grandfather [i.e. John Killy's grandfather], and from Old Robert.

They didn't know the white people were talking about t̄y'aa, boundary line. The Indians thought the land would break in half and float away [laughter]. That's what they really thought (John, 1980).

The Gwich'in word *t̥y'aa* has some interesting cultural resonances. Its literal English meaning is 'rope', and it may well be that the Gwich'in first conceived of the international boundary as a rope running across the land. But the word also figures metaphorically into the name for a popular square dance and fiddle tune known as *Neets'ee T̥y'aa*, where the intertwined arms of a circle of men and women dancers resemble a braided cord (Mishler, 1981:291-297).

Although there were two boundary line surveys done in the Gwich'in homeland between Alaska and Canada, the first one in 1889-1890 and the second in 1911-1912, I believe it is the 1911-1912 survey Elijah refers to in this story about *t̥y'aa*. Born in 1892, Elijah would have had no direct experience or memory of the first survey but would have been 19-20 years old when the second one was done. At the same time, it is important to observe that several incidents which developed during the first survey must have heightened Gwich'in anxiety about the purpose and results of the second survey.

From the report left by the American field surveyor, J. Henry Turner (Mendenhall, McGrath, and Turner, 1893), it is easy to identify the circumstances and events which made the Gwich'in skeptical of the north-south boundary passing through the middle



of their historic tribal homeland, which spreads across the Mackenzie River basin of the Northwest Territories, the northern Yukon Territory, and northeastern Alaska.

Turner was in charge of conducting the northern portion of the survey and based his camp at the place where the Porcupine River is intercepted by the 141st meridian, very close to the Indian village of New Rampart. In July, 1889, supplies were hauled from Fort Yukon on board the steamboat Yukon to camp Tittman, about 39 miles west of the border. At that point the Yukon was forced to stop due to low water. A whaleboat and a lighter borrowed from the Alaska Commercial Company were used to haul supplies the remaining distance, and Turner decided to hire some of the local Gwich'in to haul these supplies.

After several close calls and injuries, things took a turn for the worse early in the season when one of the Indians who was attempting to carry a heavy towline across the river in his canoe capsized and drowned. In Turner's words, "The accident led to open hostility on the part of the natives, and but for the timely intervention of the Hudson's Bay company's post trader, Mr. Firth, the consequences might have proved serious. Several plans to murder the entire party were discussed among the hot-headed younger Indians, but the wiser counsels of older heads prevailed,

and as our acquaintance with the natives progressed, their mistrust and hostility gave place to friendliness" (1893:190).

At this time it was discovered that Rampart House, previously thought to be on Canadian soil, was actually located 33 miles inside Alaska. The survey party was therefore forced to move its supplies upriver again, to a place called Camp Colonna at the mouth of the Sunhagun River. A log house was built for the winter, but the surveyors were irritated by frequent visits from starving Indians. At times they forcefully ejected these Indians from their camp and blamed this condition largely on the Indians' failure to lay up food the previous summer. Apparently no thought was given to the fact that many of the Indians had neglected their subsistence activities in order to help the surveyors haul freight up the river.

That winter several old people died of starvation and more would have perished save for some timely assistance from Rev. Charles Wallis, the local Anglican missionary. Turner did help out by donating a case of flour and loaning out a Winchester rifle to an expert Gwich'in hunter who killed a few caribou. Eventually many of the Gwich'in at Old Rampart moved upriver to the site of the surveyors' house, which became known as New Rampart.

But in addition to starvation, the Gwich'in living at Rampart House were beset with a variety of diseases--particularly pneumonia and tuberculosis. The doctor who was with the survey party was totally unsuccessful in treating these ailments, and several of his Indian patients died. In Turner's words, "From implicit confidence, the natives suddenly reverted to extreme distrust and resumed the rites for curing the sick practiced by their own 'shamans'" (1893:192). Turner's opinion of the Rampart House Indians was that they were "grasping, unscrupulous, and often dishonest in [their] dealings with whites" (1893:193). It would be interesting to know what the Indians thought of Turner and his men.

However, because the 1893 boundary survey was based on astronomical measurements and was not felt to be accurate, just a few years later a second large-scale effort was deemed necessary to measure the 141st meridian by chronometer from Greenwich mean time. In the course of performing this second survey, undertaken at Rampart House between 1910 and 1912, the surveyors only adjusted the earlier line by a few yards (Lew Green, personal communication to the author, June 3, 1989).

Nevertheless, this second border survey was also a disaster for Gwich'in-white relations. The initial visit of the second

survey party to Rampart House was made by the steamboat Vidette, which arrived on June 22, 1910, with 50 tons of supplies including horse feed. These supplies were put into the storehouse of Dan Cadzow, a native of Flatsville, Ontario, who had replaced John Firth as the local trader.

Actual work on the new survey did not commence, however, until the summer of 1911, when the surveyors returned with a huge contingent of 80 men and 150 horses. Although the party was greeted by a large assembly of Indians and dogs, none of the Rampart House Indians packed freight for them because of a disagreement over the terms of pay. The surveyors in charge for the United States in 1911-1912 were Thomas Riggs, Jr. and A.C. Baldwin, while the Canadians were led by J.D. Craig.

And this time, instead of TB and pneumonia, the Indians at Rampart House were hit by a smallpox epidemic. By September 10, 1911, there were 71 cases reported (International Boundary Commission, 1918:67) and by November 11 there were 89 cases (Cadzow, 1911), with one death. It is still not clear how many Gwich'in died from the disease in the winter of 1911-1912, but so many were sick that a hospital was built at New Rampart, and a male nurse named Arthur Lee and a doctor (apparently E.D. Evans) arrived from Dawson. All of the Indians' cabins were fumigated

and most of their clothes were burned. At the same time, compulsory vaccines were administered (Yukon Territorial Govt, 1912), and blankets and tents were requested from Dawson City (Anonymous, Dawson News, 1/31/11).

Meanwhile, all the Canadian surveyors left the area, and only a small party of eight Americans stayed for the winter in Turner's old cabin. Again, as in 1893, the Gwich'in faced starvation as well as disease. This time they depended on Dan Cadzow's supply of staples to get through the winter.

When the rest of the surveyors returned to complete the survey in the summer of 1912, no one was around to greet them, and they must have known immediately that they were no longer welcome. After being placed on quarantine, most of the cabins at New Rampart were burned, and the entire band at New Rampart then moved up to Old Crow (Stringer, 1912; Lysyk et al, 1977:163). The Indians blamed the smallpox directly on the surveyors, but the surveyors did not accept responsibility and said the sickness came to Rampart House on clothing that had been shipped in from Dawson City (International Boundary Commission, 1918:70).

When Elijah John's boundary line story is viewed within this historical perspective, it begins to resonate with additional

meaning. For although the rumor of the country being sliced in two may have resulted from a simple misunderstanding, or even a bad translation, it also seems plausible to me that this story may have been intentionally circulated by Canadian traders to persuade those Gwich'in living on the Alaskan side to move across the border and sell their skins to Canadian fur buyers as they had in former times.

Following the American purchase of Alaska in 1867, the Hudson's Bay Company was put in a position of having to give up its near monopoly on furs trapped by the western Gwich'in (i.e. those living on the Alaskan side of the border). The Company was forced to retreat up the Porcupine River first to Old Rampart and then to La Pierre's House on the Upper Porcupine, before returning back to Old Rampart. In the midst of this leap-frogging, Hutchison, Kohl, & Company (which was later bought out by the American Commercial Company in 1872) established a competing trading post in Fort Yukon.

Turner, the first American boundary surveyor, wrote that the Hudson's Bay Company traders at Old Rampart experienced a sharp decline in their fur revenues prior to 1889 (1893:194). As early as 1893 Yankee whaling ships were beginning to trade with Eskimos off the Arctic coast, and the Gwich'in began traveling north to

explore this new market for their furs (McDonald, 1893:April 20). New ships arrived every summer, and some of them even wintered over at Herschel Island (International Boundary Commission, 1918:73). By 1893, just three years after the first boundary survey, the Hudson's Bay Company permanently pulled out of Rampart House and La Pierre's House (Coates, 1982:70-71). I believe this pullout was prompted by strong competition from American traders, both on the Arctic coast and in Fort Yukon. After the Hudson's Bay Company left, independent Canadian traders such as Dan Cadzow were able to move in and capture a share of the lucrative Gwich'in fur trade.

It is not certain just when Cadzow started his trading post at Rampart House, but there is evidence that he was established there by June, 1906, when he purchased a large liquor order of rum, brandy, and rye whiskey from the Hudson's Bay Company, and he may have been there as early as June, 1903, when he was involved in trading marten skins to the Episcopal minister in Fort Yukon, Leonidas Wooden (Dan Cadzow, n.d., Box F-95, Folders 4 & 7, YTA). Bishop Stringer (1909) noticed that Cadzow was living in the old Anglican Mission house at New Rampart in November, 1909.



While Cadzow seems to have been an honest, churchgoing man who was married at different times to two Gwich'in women, Monica Njootli and Rachel Netrooh (ACR/YD, Box 38, Folder 1), he may also have been a desperate man. Like the Hudson's Bay Company, Cadzow also faced strong economic competition from Americans. By the time of the second boundary survey there were four commercial stores operating in Fort Yukon at the mouth of the Porcupine River: Horton & Moore's, McIlroy's, Beaumont's, and Phillips's (Stringer, 1909). During the winter of 1909-1910, Horton & Moore alone took in \$12,000 worth of furs, including about 10,000 muskrat pelts (Anonymous, 1910), and a 1911 photograph taken at an unnamed trading post in the area by the boundary survey party shows a stack of 14,000 muskrat pelts (International Boundary Commission, 1918:59).

That same year Harry Horton and Billy Moore put additional direct pressure on Cadzow by opening a second store just across the border from him at Old Rampart. And it seems curious that after the second boundary survey was completed, the Canadian survey leader J.D. Craig sold his entire outfit not to his fellow Canadian Cadzow but to Cadzow's competitors, Horton & Moore. Craig did sell the large government warehouse at New Rampart to Cadzow, but ostensibly this was for "mission purposes" only (Craig, ACR/YD, 1912).

In 1910, Cadzow responded to all these competitors by building a big new store at New Rampart, where he also observed the construction of seven new cabins (Cadzow, 1910). In light of Elijah John's story, one could speculate that these cabins were built by and for relocated Alaskan Gwich'in. It certainly would have been in Cadzow's own self-interest to manipulate western Gwich'in trappers into moving over to the Canadian side of the boundary, but there is no evidence to show that he actually planted the rumor about the country being cut in two.

Nevertheless, Cadzow's continued agitation over trading competition long after the boundary survey was over is well illustrated in a 1913 letter written by George Black of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to Alfred Thompson, the M.P. commander residing at Dawson. Cadzow was so worried about losing his trade that he requested a customs agent and a policeman be sent to Rampart House. Black refused this request, or at least postponed it indefinitely, both because of the expense and difficulty of winter travel and because, in Black's words, "this agitation for customs officer at the boundary by Cadzow is not for the purpose of securing revenue for the Dominion but rather to shut out any business competition in his trading business" (Black, 1913).

In retrospect, Elijah John's story is not a very dramatic account of what took place at Old and New Rampart in 1910-1911 because it tells us very little except that many of the Gwich'in living on the American side of the border were fearful for their lives and moved upriver to the Canadian side. Of course there are some interesting demographic implications in this resettlement, since a large number of Canadian Gwich'in had moved over to the Alaskan side to trade with gold miners a decade earlier (McDonald, 1900).

Elijah's story is extremely important, however, for the way it expresses the very real fear felt by the Gwich'in that their ancestral homeland would quite literally be cut in half. Certainly in 1911 there must have been widespread fear and suspicion that the second group of surveyors would bring accidents, starvation, and disease, just as their predecessors did in 1889-1890. This fear and suspicion was indeed confirmed by the outbreak of smallpox and the game shortage in 1911-1912.

Both Elijah John and John Killy told me that they were very much afraid of what was going to happen when the boundary was surveyed and truly felt their lives were endangered by the marking of it. Psychologically and symbolically, their fear of the land being split in two was equivalent to a fear of the tribe

being split in two--a tribe split not merely into Canadians and Americans, but more shockingly still, into the living and the dead. Because there are no hints of these fears contained in the written record, Gwich'in oral history plays a critical and essential role in understanding what happened.

At the root of all this anxiety is the sobering fact that the governments of Russia and Great Britain, as remote political entities, never bothered to consult the Gwich'in before negotiating the 141st meridian as the major portion of their mutual east-west boundary in 1825. Before the Anglo-Russian Treaty of 1825 established this boundary (see Alaska Boundary Tribunal, 1903:12-16), neither the Russians nor the British had made any direct contact with the Gwich'in. When the Americans and the Canadians renegotiated this political boundary in 1906 and marked it in 1911-1912, the rights and needs of the Gwich'in were again ignored. Still, clearly, it is the Gwich'in who have suffered most from *tły'aa*, this arbitrary slicing up of the continent.

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**The Alaska-Yukon Boundary:  
the Maritime Dimension**

**William Hanable**

## THE ALASKA-YUKON BOUNDARY: THE MARITIME DIMENSION

by

William S. Hanable  
Anchorage, AlaskaIntroduction

A television newscast in Anchorage recently led off with the statement that the continuing daily news coverage of the *Exxon Valdez* oil spill in Prince William Sound was affecting how people perceived Alaska. The coverage, said the newscasters, was decreasing tourism to Alaska.

Having just returned to Alaska from three weeks "Outside," I knew the newscasters statement to be based on a false premise. Despite what the Anchorage television people thought, the oil spill had long since passed from being front-page news. It was no longer the subject of daily television coverage.

Yukoners and Alaskans have other stories in which their affairs have received little attention from people to the south. Thus this audience may not be suprised to learn that the Beaufort Sea boundary is not a burning issue in our respective capitals. On the American side, the most recent, comprehensive summary of Canadian-American issues in the *Department of State Bulletin -- Official Monthly Record of United States Foreign Policy* fails to mention the Beaufort Sea boundary question.<sup>1</sup> On the Canadian side, a search at the Department of External Affairs Library and the National Library of Canada in Ottawa failed to turn up much about a Beaufort Sea boundary dispute. Yet that dispute involves thousands of square miles of ocean, potentially billions of dollars in oil revenues, and massive employment opportunities for northern peoples.

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1. July 1988, p. 24.

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Those prizes are at stake because Canada and the United States differ in their interpretations of the northern off-shore boundary between Alaska and Yukon Territory. The difference extends beyond those territorial and state concerns into the Arctic Ocean.

Canada takes the position that the boundary should be based on an extension of the 141st degree West meridian. The United States takes the position that the boundary should be based on the equidistant principle of maritime delimitation. American officials say that the boundary should proceed seaward on a 90-degree angle from the point at which the 141st degree West meridian reaches the limits of the North American mainland.<sup>2</sup>

These differing interpretations involve jurisdiction over more than 6,000 square nautical miles of ocean floor. Billions of barrels of oil and trillions of cubic feet of gas are thought to lie under that ocean floor. Petroleum industries in both countries have already established financial interests in the disputed area.

This paper traces the historical basis for the differing views of the boundary, the historical and political influences that will affect reconciliation of those views and suggests that resolution of the dispute will depend on the latter factors rather than on legal interpretation.

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2. *Maclean's*, January 26, 1987, p. 10.

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#### The Root of the Dispute

The Beaufort Sea boundary dispute has its roots in the Anglo-Russian Convention of February 16/28, 1825, which established the boundary between British North America and Russian North America. The convention set that boundary as:

...the line of demarcation shall follow the summit of the mountains situated parallel to the Coast [of Southeast Alaska] as far as the point of intersection of the 141st degree of West longitude (of the same [Greenwich] meridian and finally from said point of intersection, the said meridian of the 141st degree, in its prolongation as far as the Frozen Ocean.<sup>3</sup>

This language was repeated in the 1867 treaty that transferred sovereignty over Alaska from Russia to the United States. In contrast, the 1867 treaty established the western boundary of Alaska by referring to a meridian which passes through Bering Strait "without limitation into the same Frozen Ocean."<sup>4</sup>

As some analysts have pointed out, at the time the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1825 was prepared, the concept of a three-mile seaward territorial limit was not yet firmly established. The treaty-writers also had no conception of such ideas as 200-mile exclusive economic zones.<sup>5</sup> In 1825, in fact, the treaty-writers had no certain knowledge of where the North American mainland ended and the Frozen Ocean began.<sup>6</sup>

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3. Quoted in J.R.V. Prescott, *The Maritime Political Boundaries of the World* (London and New York: Methuen, 1985), p. 268.

4. Prescott, 1985, p. 286.

5. Nigel Banks, Associate Professor of Law, University of Calgary, quoted in *Alberta Report*, January 5, 1987, p. 11.

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#### First Expressions of Concern

The first expression of concern about the Beaufort Sea boundary between Canada and the United States came more than 50 years after the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1825, 30 years after the 1867 transfer of Alaska to American jurisdiction, and 17 years after Great Britain formally transferred jurisdiction of Arctic islands to Canada. That transfer came on July 31, 1880.<sup>7</sup>

In 1897, alarmed by large numbers of American whalers wintering over in the Arctic, the Canadian government sent Captain William Wakeham north. Wakeham asserted Canadian sovereignty over Baffin Island and all adjacent territory. On December 12, 1897, an Order-in-Council established a District of Franklin, bounded by the 141st degree West meridian on the west. Dispatch of Royal Northwest Mounted Police officers to Fort MacPherson and to Herschel Island followed in 1903.<sup>8</sup> Altogether, between 1897 and 1911, six Canadian government expeditions went to the Arctic.<sup>9</sup> Arctic residents were advised that they lived

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6. Mairin Mitchell, *The Maritime History of Russia 848-1948* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson Limited, 1949), pp. 109-111.

7. Shelagh D. Grant, *Sovereignty or Security? Government Policy in the Canadian North 1936-1950* (Vancouver: The University of British Columbia Press, 1988), p. 5.

8. Grant, p. 7, 10; Normal L. Nicholson, *The Boundaries of the Canadian Confederation*, The Carleton Library No. 115 (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada in cooperation with the Institute of Canadian Studies, Carleton University, 1979), pp. 61-62.

9. Gerald S. Vano, *Canada: The Strategic and Military Pawn* (New York, Westport, Connecticut, and London: Praeger, 1988), p. 103.

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under Canadian jurisdiction. Customs duties and license fees were collected.<sup>10</sup> Canadian newspapers of the time decried the American whalers, although they were by 1910 about gone from the Arctic, as "poachers."<sup>11</sup>

As Canada asserted its authority in the Arctic, it argued bitterly with the United States over the boundary between Southeastern Alaska and Canada. That fight, eventually resolved in favor of the United States by the deciding vote of a British judge is told elsewhere. It is a part of our story, however, because it added to Canadians' perception of the United States as an aggressive, greedy neighbor. Almost concurrently, the United States, again with British aid, was concluding a struggle begun in the late 1800s to control pelagic sealing. Not incidentally, the resolution of that struggle profoundly affected a sealing fleet based in Victoria. These issues and their conclusions undoubtedly influenced Canadian views of the Arctic and the importance of protecting Canadian interests there.

The era when the Southeastern Alaska boundary and pelagic sealing issues were concluded was also the era when Canadian leaders first proposed the "sector theory," or extension of boundaries along meridians extending into the Arctic to establish political boundaries there. On February 20, 1907, Canadian Senator Pascal Poirier proposed that the sector theory be officially declared as the basis for Canadian claims in the Arctic. But Prime Minister Sir Wilfred Laurier insisted that sovereignty could be established only by assertion of authority. Discovery had to be effected. Jurisdiction had to be exercised.<sup>12</sup>

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10. Grant, 1988, p. 11.

11. "Crowding Out the Americans: Canada Will Protect Her Whaling Industry," *Prince Rupert Optimist*, September 14, 1910, p. 1, quoted in Webb, Robert Lloyd, *Commercial Whaling in the Pacific Northwest 1790-1967* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1988), p. 181.

12. Grant, 1988, p. 11; Nicholson, 1979, p. 69.



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Captain E.J. Bernier, who had made several voyages to the Arctic, was sent once again. This time Bernier placed cairns on islands in the western islands of the Arctic Archipelago. On July 1, 1909, in a formal ceremony at Winter Harbor on Melville Island, Bernier unveiled a tablet that officially laid claim "to the whole of the Arctic Archipelago lying to the north of America from longitude 60 degrees West to 141 degrees West and on up to latitude 90 degrees North."<sup>13</sup>

In June of 1925, the Canadian government took up Bernier's declarations and Poirier's recommendations. The Minister of the Interior stated in several debates in the House of Commons that Canada "claimed right up to the North Pole," and introduced maps showing the Canadian Arctic as stretching from sixty degrees West to 141 degrees West.<sup>14</sup>

The issue of the Beaufort Sea boundary seems not to have arisen again until 1943. Then Washington requested that it, and the Portland Canal boundary between Alaska and British Columbia, be settled. Ottawa asked that the issue be deferred and, after several months' negotiation, it was.<sup>15</sup> The years of World War II, however, also reinforced Canadian concerns about sovereignty in the North as thousands of American military personnel operated airfields in the Canadian Arctic and helped to construct the ALCAN highway connecting Alaska with the contiguous forty-eight states. In 1953, the Prime Minister again stated Canada's expansive Arctic claims.<sup>16</sup>

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13. Grant, 1988, p. 12.

14. Nicholson, 1979, pp. 70-71.

15. Grant, 1988, p. 81.

16. Nicholson, 1979, pp. 70-71.

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More Recent Evidences of the Dispute

Proceeding on its long-asserted and apparently unquestioned view of the Beaufort Sea boundary, in January of 1965 the Canadian government began to issue oil and gas exploration permits in the Beaufort Sea up to and along the 141st degree West meridian.<sup>17</sup> These Canadian permits fell within an area that, if the American view of the boundary prevails, are under American jurisdiction. No actual exploration seems to have occurred in the disputed area. But investigations were productive in adjacent areas.

Exploration drilling in 1969 resulted in key discoveries between the mouth of the Mackenzie River and Herschel Island. The first off-shore well was drilled from an artificial island in this area in 1973 and the first well was drilled from a ship in 1976. By 1986, more than 150 wells had been drilled in the region. Most struck oil and gas deposits. The Geological Survey of Canada estimated the potential of the region to be more than eight billion barrels of oil and 73 trillion cubic feet of gas.<sup>18</sup> A well immediately adjacent to the disputed area flowed over four thousand barrels of oil a day and promised a potential of 10,000 barrels a day.<sup>19</sup>

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17. David L. Vanderzagg and Cynthia Lamson, "Ocean Development and Management in the Arctic: Issues in American and Canadian Relations," in *Arctic*, Vol. 39, No. 4 (December 1986), p. 329.

18. *Alberta Report*, September, 1986, pp. 24-28.

19. *Alberta Report*, January 5, 1987, p. 10.

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Nineteen-sixty-nine, coincidentally, was the year that the American supertanker *Manhattan* made an test voyage. The *Manhattan* steamed from oil fields in northern Alaska through the Northwest Passage to the Atlantic Ocean. This voyage further alarmed Canadians, who hold the Northwest Passage to be in Canada's internal waters.

After 1969, the Canadian government took several additional actions that relied on the 141st degree West meridian as the Beaufort Sea and Arctic Ocean boundary between American and Canadian waters. These actions included the Arctic Waters Pollution Prevention Act of 1970 which established a 100-nautical mile pollution prevention zone in Canadian Arctic waters, the 1977 declaration of a 200-nautical mile fishing zone in Canadian Arctic waters, and a 1984 land claims agreement establishing a westerly limit to off-shore aboriginal claims in Canadian Arctic waters. The United States first countered these actions on November 1, 1976, by publishing an alternative Beaufort Sea boundary based on the principle of equidistance.<sup>20</sup>

It was one year before another Northwest Passage transit, that of the U.S. Coast Guard icebreaker *Polar Sea* in 1985, that the American government took an action that brought the Beaufort Sea boundary dispute into an immediate confrontation. In that year, 1984, the American government offered for sale several sea-bottom oil and gas leases in the disputed area. In this sale, Number 87 held in August 1984, prospective leasees submitted bids for four "blocks." Because of the disputed boundary, the bids were found "adequate," but not formally accepted. Companies submitting the bids were required to deposit 20 percent of the bid amounts in trust accounts pending the time when leases might be issued.

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20. Vanderzagg and Lamson, December 1986, p. 329.

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This 1984 lease offering was followed by another, No. 97 in March of 1988. In this latest sale, bids on 16 blocks were found "adequate," with the bidders obtaining the same results as those in Sale Number 87.<sup>21</sup>

In the intervening years since lease offerings made the Beaufort Sea boundary between Canada and the United States a problem requiring resolution sooner rather than later, Canadian-American relations in the Arctic have been further compounded by issues such as United States cruise missile testing over the Canadian Arctic, oil and gas leasing in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska that may affect the transnational Arctic caribou herd and other wildlife, the American Strategic Defense Initiative, and suspected American nuclear submarine transits in Canadian Arctic waters.<sup>22</sup>

#### Conclusion

Even Canadian legal scholars agree, given the language of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1825 and the state of geographic knowledge at that time, that Canada has a weak legal argument for its position on the Beaufort Sea boundary. Legal basis is, however, unlikely to be the deciding factor in the outcome of this particular dispute.

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21. Telephone interview with Legal Section, Alaska Office, U.S. Minerals Management Service, Anchorage, May 31, 1989.

22. *Alberta Report*, January 5, 1987, p. 5-14; *The [Ottawa] Citizen*, February 13, 1986; *Maclean's*, January 26, 1987, p. 10; Joel J. Sokolsky, *Defending Canada: U.S.-Canadian Defense Policies (Halifax: Dalhousie University, 1989)*, p. 13-14, 29-33.

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Apart from this case, the United States apparently has nothing to be gained from prevailing with the idea of equidistant boundaries over the sector theory in the Arctic. It does have a great deal to gain by accommodating Canadian interests in the Arctic to achieve agreement on use of the Northwest Passage and joint defense matters such as the early warning radar systems. Given the multi-national nature of the oil industry, it is unlikely that private interests will exert much pressure on either side of the argument.

Overall, the historical record and the current political context suggests that the Beaufort Sea boundary will be determined by political negotiation rather than by judicial decision.

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**Canada's Western Arctic: Testing Ground for  
Canada's National Interest in the North**

**William Morrison**

William Morrison:

Canada's Western Arctic: Testing Ground for  
Canada's National Interest in the North

It is a truism of Canadian history that almost all Canadians have consistently ignored the northern half of the country, and that it has always been on the periphery of government interest, or even beyond it. The reasons for this are partly historical and partly psychological; but the fact is that we live in a country which includes in its national anthem the proud words "True North, strong and free," yet has more than 99% of its people living below the mid-point of the nation, measured from north to south.

Another part of the same truism is that when Canadians have finally become involved in the affairs of their north, it has invariably been because of pressure by external forces. The result of this process is that Canada's north has often been "discovered," categorized, claimed, allotted, mapped, named, and exploited-- in short, "defined"-- by non-Canadians, and Canadians have by and large not objected to this state of affairs, or have done so very late in the game. In the history and development of the Arctic there have been winners and losers; the winners have mostly been foreigners-- whalers, fur traders, oil developers, and the losers Canadians-- Native people, environmentalists, and the Canadian taxpayer. Why this is so is not the immediate purpose of this paper; rather, it is to examine a case study-- the process by which Canadians, and the Canadian government in particular, were compelled to take notice of one important area of the north-- the

### Western Arctic.

The Western Arctic<sup>1</sup> is a good region in which to examine this process. Canada's Western Arctic, though remote from the centres of the country's population, and from the consciousness of most of its citizens, is by no means an insignificant part of it. Strategically located between the main water-routes of the northwestern part of the continent, it has been a factor in virtually every historical, economic, and social development in the region-- in the relations between Canada and the United States, in the fur trade, in Native-white relations, in exploration, and in the question of resource development. In many ways the history of the Western Arctic is a microcosm of the history and development of the Canadian north.<sup>2</sup> Thus to define the Western Arctic is, broadly speaking, to define half of Canada.

For these reasons, the Western Arctic is of more than historical interest. Its past is of vital significance to our understanding of the history of Canada's north, but it is also of contemporary importance as a bellwether of the future of the entire Arctic-- of the future of Native claims, and of the clash of ideas on how the northern frontier should be developed. It provides an

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<sup>1</sup> It is unnecessary to define what is meant by "Western Arctic" too closely. In this paper, I take it to mean the Arctic coast from about Cape Bathurst west to Alaska, the Mackenzie Delta, the northern Yukon, and the islands of the Western Arctic archipelago.

<sup>2</sup> The best overview of the region's history is K.S. Coates, *The Northern Yukon: A History* (Ottawa, 1979).

opportunity to test Canada's official commitment to the north-- whether it exists beyond the necessity to answer awkward questions in the House of Commons.

Recently there has been one of the periodic rekindlings of media interest in Arctic sovereignty which invariably occurs after a foreign power, generally the United States, flouts Canada's claims to the region. The 1985 voyage of the "Polar Sea," like the 1969 voyage of the "Manhattan," was widely reported in the press, and aroused a storm of protest from those who felt that Canada's rights had been violated. There has been some loose talk of mining the Northwest Passage, and retired generals have complained that the DEW line is in the wrong place. The government planned to construct a huge ice-breaker, although there are now doubts as to whether it will ever be built, with much speculation about where the lucrative contract will go. The Minister of Defence talked enthusiastically about nuclear submarines which could operate under the polar ice. Cynics who in 1987 said that the subs would never be launched have been vindicated by the budget of 1989. One suspects that these were not nuclear, but political submarines, powered not by fission, but by hot air.

The unhappy truth is that the band of northern nationalists in this country is not large, and never has been. A more widely held opinion is probably that broadcast over the C.B.C. in late March 1987 of the helicopter pilot flying a reporter to view military exercises on Baffin Island designed to repel an imaginary Russian

invasion: "if they want it" he said, "they can have it."

This pattern of Canadian indifference to the Arctic, and the Western Arctic in particular, of letting others define it and use it, goes back to the beginning of European activity in the region. So does the process by which official interest is stimulated by some circumstances, force or threat which intrinsically has little or nothing to do with purely northern concerns. The first European to arrive in the region, Alexander Mackenzie, came there in 1789 by accident-- he named his find the "River of Disappointment"-- not a ringing endorsement for the north. The second, John Franklin, came in 1819 because the British government, faced with the need to find employment for hundreds of naval officers after the Napoleonic wars, had decided that the discovery of the Northwest Passage was a worthwhile project for the world's greatest power. Like the American space programme in the 1960s, the Northwest Passage was a combination of science and patriotic jingoism, a project imposed on the Arctic from without for nationalistic purposes.

The first commercial enterprise in the Western Arctic was the Hudson's Bay Company, which assisted Franklin on his second expedition of 1826, and sent Peter Dease and Thomas Simpson to the region in 1836. Yet, here there is an early parallel with the later, and current, attitude of Canada towards the area. The Hudson's Bay Company did not make its initial move into the Western Arctic purely for the profits to be made from trade. At the time that Simpson and Dease were mapping much of the Arctic coast, the

Company's monopoly of the British government, and it was anxious to prove that its role in the north transcended the commercial. Its interest in the region was thus in part a public relations exercise designed to prove its usefulness and goodwill to a critical audience in Britain. Of course, the Company stayed in the Western Arctic, and with the founding of Fort McPherson in 1840 became for many years the dominant non-Native force in the region; thus in contrast to the Canadian government, its interest, once aroused, was lasting.

For the next century and a half, from the arrival of the Hudson's Bay Company in the Western Arctic until the oil boom of the 1970s, the development of the region was sparked and carried out not by Canadians, but by foreign interests. The official Canadian attitude to this development ranged from total ignorance of it to passive acquiescence in it, punctuated by periods of assertion of Canadian sovereignty and rights in the region.

After the Hudson's Bay Company, the next development of the Western Arctic came with the arrival in the late 1880s of the whalers. In 1889 seven American whalers anchored off Herschel Island in the company of a naval vessel, the U.S.S. *Thetis*, which surveyed the island and named some of its prominent features. During the next twenty years, as many as fifteen ships operated annually in the Beaufort Sea, most of them spending at least two years in the region, wintering at Pauline Cove and Herschel Island. After 1900, with the whales depleted and the market for bone and



oil waning, the industry began to decline, but before whaling ended in 1910, over thirteen million dollars worth of whales were taken from the Beaufort Sea.<sup>3</sup> The ships operated as though they were in international waters, and as if Herschel Island were no man's land and the Inuit inhabitants of the region were the natives of a country with no formal government.

Missionaries who came to Herschel Island in the early 1890s claimed that the Inuit were being abused by the whalers, who harmed their health with alcohol and took their women as concubines during the winter.<sup>4</sup> Of course the missionaries also had their own agenda for the north. The Anglicans, who had a monopoly on the Native people of the Western Arctic, attempted, with scant initial success, to impose their priorities on the inhabitants of the region.

The reaction of the Canadian government to this situation was at first one of total passivity. It had been eager in 1870 to acquire the North-West Territories, but the Western Arctic, part of which came along with the deal, was far away, and Ottawa had more pressing concerns than spending money in a remote and probably useless region. This attitude was in marked contrast to that of

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<sup>3</sup> John R. Bockstoe, *Steam Whaling in the Western Arctic* (New Bedford, 1977), quoted in Thomas Stone, "Whalers and Missionaries at Herschel Island," *Ethnohistory*, vol. 28 no. 2, 1981, pp. 102-103.

<sup>4</sup> W.R. Morrison, *Showing the Flag: the Mounted Police and Canadian Sovereignty in the North, 1894-1925* (Vancouver, 1985), chapter 6, discusses this question.



the United States government to Alaska (which was also remote and originally considered to be worthless). Shortly after buying the land from the Russians, Americans marked the boundary with Canada. Finding the Hudson's Bay Company operating Fort Youcon to the west of it, they told the company quickly and plainly to leave, which they did. Canada, on the other hand, dithered about the cost of sovereignty; as late as 1901 a senior bureaucrat advised Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior, that "It is certainly desirable that Canada should assert her authority in the Arctic Ocean but it is questionable whether the results would justify the expenditure, at present."<sup>5</sup>

It was not until 1903, when for fourteen years Americans had been living, taking whales, trading with the Native people and generally exploiting the resources and people of the Western Arctic as if Canada did not exist, that Ottawa finally took action in the region, as well as in Hudson Bay, where a similar situation existed. Even at that late date Ottawa's interest in the region was partly a reaction to other forces which had little to do with the local situation in the Western Arctic. 1903 was the year of the settlement of the Alaska boundary dispute, a defeat for the nascent nationalism of the Laurier regime, and Ottawa feared an outburst of public wrath if a part of the north were lost to the Americans. As one civil servant, speaking of a different part of the north, put it some years later:

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<sup>5</sup> Frederick White, Comptroller of the Mounted Police, to Clifford Sifton, 23 January 1901, Public Archives of Canada, RG 18, A-1, R.C.M.P Papers, v. 314.

One has but to recall the outburst of public indignation and protest in Canada at the decision of the Alaskan arbitration to realize what public opinion would be if any neglect on the Government's part resulted in the loss of an area thousands of times larger and more important than was involved in the Alaskan case.<sup>6</sup>

There is a modern sound to this. Then as now, what seemed to stimulate the government to action was fear of the public relations disaster that promised to follow any loss of territory. Ottawa knew well that the Canadian public did not care much and knew less about the north, but cared very much about the fact that Canada was a vast country, larger in area than the United States. Canadians were proud of the extent of their country, and the amount of space it took up in world atlases, while at the same time they ignored the land itself-- an attitude which has been called "mappism."

The point of the presence of whalers in the Western Arctic was not only the damage that they did to the ecology or to the Native people, but that the agenda for the region's development was being set by outsiders rather than by Canadians-- and certainly not by the Canadian government. Of course, in 1903 Ottawa did finally send the Mounted Police to Fort McPherson and Herschel Island-- four men to demonstrate sovereignty and enforce the law over the entire region. But even then the effort was niggardly, and the police were so ill-supplied that they had to depend on the goodwill

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<sup>6</sup> J.B. Harkin, Commissioner of Dominion Parks, Department of the Interior, to W.W. Cory, Deputy Minister, 15 March 1921, Public Archives of Canada, Harkin Papers, v. 1.

of the whalers-- the men they were supposed to be regulating-- to keep from freezing their first winter on the island, for the government had not provided them with shelter, and they had to borrow accommodation from the whaling company. Some of their efforts at enforcing the law were pure bluff; they ordered foreign ships to report at Herschel Island for customs inspection, but had no means of enforcing this decree, since they had no vessel of their own. Compliance with the law was thus voluntary.

Even in a matter as basic to the development of a region as exploring it simply to see what is there, Canada expended little effort until very late in the game. All the principal explorers and mappers of the Western Arctic, and the rest of the north as well, were British, Scandinavian, or American. The Northwest Passage, charted by Britons, was finally traversed by a Norwegian, Roald Amundsen, and the islands at the extreme north of the Western Arctic were discovered by Otto Sverdrup, another Norwegian. Parts of the high Arctic were discovered by members of the R.C.M.P. on patrol, and parts by the R.C.A.F., but most of it was explored by foreigners. This mattered for two reasons. In the first place, it cast a shadow on Canada's claim to Arctic sovereignty. Ottawa's purchase in 1927 of Sverdrup's claims to the islands that bear his name, under the guise of obtaining a copy of his notes and records is one of the more inglorious episodes in the history of our north. In the second place, it meant that most of our Arctic was first described, and thus its initial agenda set, by non-Canadians.

What this meant to Canada is shown by the career of the explorer most active in the Beaufort Sea region of the Western Arctic. Vilhjalmur Stefansson, because he was born and lived briefly in Canada and was sponsored in his most famous expedition by the Canadian government, is sometimes hailed as a Canadian explorer, but as his approach to the north and his post-exploration career showed, he was in the mainstream of American boosters or "developers" of new land. Stefansson was a complex man, one in whom scientific interest and the urge to take hold of the north and develop it (and profit from doing so) lived side by side. Whether he was a selfless scientist or more of a self-promoting developer is still under debate; there is a recent biography on each side of the question.<sup>7</sup> What is not in doubt is that he almost single-handedly compelled the Canadian government, as well as a large segment of the public, to look for the first time at the Western Arctic. Stefansson had originally sought American backing for his great scientific journey of discovery in the Western Arctic, and had enlisted the support of the National Geographic Society. But by 1913, when the Canadian Arctic Expedition was launched, it was unthinkable, at long last, to the Canadian government that a foreign power should discover any more of the Arctic. The twentieth century was to belong to Canada, and Stefansson received official Canadian backing.

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<sup>7</sup> William R. Hunt, *Stef: a Biography of Vilhjalmur Stefansson* (Vancouver, 1986) is laudatory, while Richard J. Diubaldo, *Stefansson and the Canadian Arctic* (Montreal, 1978) is more critical.

But Stefansson's career as an official Canadian explorer was not long-lived. He quarrelled with the scientific members of the expedition, creating violent animosities among them and the Ottawa bureaucracy that survived many decades and even Stefansson himself. The sorry Wrangel Island affair ended his influence in Ottawa. One of Stefansson's problems was that he fell outside the Canadian tradition of group heroism, of which the Mounted Police are the best example. Canadians are suspicious of individualistic heroes-- even Billy Bishop, the World War I flying ace, has recently been attacked by the iconoclasts-- and a man as egocentric as Stefansson was bound to run afoul of Canadian officialdom.

What was worse, though, was that Stefansson-- ever the promoter-- attempted, with a degree of success, to drag the Canadian government in directions in the north in which it did not wish to go. When he talked of the "friendly" Arctic, and floated schemes for domesticating reindeer herds or giving the musk-ox a name with greater consumer appeal, he created a vision of the Arctic that Ottawa did not share. And when the government let itself be seduced by his rhetoric about the northward course of empire, it suffered the public embarrassment of the Wrangel Island fiasco.

Moreover, Stefansson's basic philosophy implied the unsubtle criticism of Canada's official attitude towards the north. If the Arctic in 1920 were a friendly place, then why did the capital of the Northwest Territories stay in Ottawa for another forty years,

the affairs of a million and a half square miles regulated by a tiny south-bound bureaucracy concerned chiefly with spending as little money as possible? The criticism implicit in the contradiction between Stefansson's vision of the north and the official apathy underlay the bitterness that came to cloud their relations. In matters concerning the Canadian Arctic, Stefansson was a prophet (though not a disinterested one), and in the end he suffered the ostracism that is the fate of those who utter unwanted prophecies.

In the early 1940s, twenty years after Stefansson had fallen from official favour, Canada was still ignoring her north, despite the efforts of a handful of dedicated public servants like O.S. Finnie. So far was the Western Arctic from official consciousness between the two wars that a serious proposal was made in 1928 to transfer the Beaufort Sea coastal region of the Yukon to the jurisdiction of the Northwest Territories. But it was not an issue that excited much interest, not even in the Yukon, which would have lost thousands of square miles of territory. The Yukon Territorial Government, in fact, showed little interest in its northern regions until the early 1970s; it was not until 1972 that the flag of the Yukon Territory was for the first time raised on Herschel Island.<sup>8</sup> Once more it took an outside agency to bring Canada's wavering attention back to the region. This time it was not chiefly the Western Arctic, but the whole northwest of Canada, that was in question.

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<sup>8</sup> K.S. Coates, *The Northern Yukon*, p. 137.



The impact of the Second World War, and in particular the defence projects undertaken by the American armed forces, need no description here.<sup>9</sup> Ottawa's indifference to the activities of the American forces engaged in the construction of the Alaska highway until prodded into an examination of them by an official of the British government would be unbelievable were they not so well documented and so firmly in the Canadian tradition of indifference to the north. It is probably not literally true that at American headquarters in Edmonton during the war, clerks answering the telephone did so by saying "Army of Occupation"-- this seems to be one of the folk-legends that gains credibility by repetition-- but it was true in spirit.

Though the grudging attention paid by Canadian officials to the north during World War II did not fade after the VJ day, it was attention which continued to reflect southern rather than northern concerns. Even the "northern nationalists"-- that small but devoted band of public servants who worried about Canada's north when the Mackenzie King administration seemed happy to let it become Americanized by default-- even these men sought to shape the north to fit southern priorities. As Escott Reid of the Department of External Affairs, a member of this group, put it, a northern focus could prove therapeutic to Canadians:

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<sup>9</sup> See K.S. Coates, ed., *The Alaska Highway: Papers of the 40th Anniversary Symposium* (Vancouver, 1985) for a recent study of the subject.



After the emotional debauch of the war there is going to be a bad hangover in all the former belligerent countries. In order that people's lives will not feel too empty, some peacetime equivalents to the exciting national objectives to the war must be found. The opening of a new frontier in the Canadian north can, I think, become a national objective of some importance to the Canadian People. Even if, from the point of view of securing the highest possible national income, the Canadian North is not worth a large expenditure of national energy and capital, and a very large expenditure might nevertheless be justified in an effort to realize an inspiring and somewhat romantic national objective.<sup>10</sup>

But this was another southern perspective, in this case a kind of fantasy image of the north as a place for war-weary Canadians to find new sources of inspiration in the post-war world.

What really thrust the Western Arctic into the national consciousness was an issue centered there which affected almost all Canadians-- the energy crisis of the early 1970s. This time it was not a single explorer who focused attention on the Western Arctic, but a combination of political and economic circumstances which affected the entire industrialized world. The "energy crisis" of that period, and the reputedly tremendous gas and oil resource potential of the region combined to cast a spotlight on the northern Yukon, the Mackenzie Delta and the Beaufort Sea. But this time the processes of outside influence and government reaction were significantly different. The episode of the energy crisis saw

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<sup>10</sup> R.J. Diubaldo, "The Alaska Highway in Canada-United States Relations," in K.S. Coates, ed., *The Alaska Highway*, p. 106.

for the first time the bringing to bear of a significant amount of influence by the Native inhabitants of the region.

This was something that had never happened before. Always in the past, during the fur trade period, the whaling era, the age of exploration and of continental defence, the basic decisions had been made elsewhere; sometimes outside Canada, but never in the Western Arctic or the north. The Western Arctic had been defined and its future determined in Ottawa and in foreign capitals. But by the 1970s this way of settling questions was no longer possible; it was now a given of northern affairs that the Native people had to be at the least consulted, and at best given a substantial share in determining what should become of their homeland.

Why this was so is a matter for sociologists and students of Native affairs to decide,<sup>11</sup> but the reasons why the Western Arctic was so much in the public mind by 1975 are clear enough. The Berger inquiry into the effects of the proposed Mackenzie Valley pipeline-- a combination of Native awareness seminar and media event-- taught Canadians more about the life and problems of the Native people of the Western Arctic and the Mackenzie Delta in one summer than they had learned in the previous century and a half.

It was as if the nation had awakened from a long sleep, and the

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<sup>11</sup> Some suggestions are advanced in W.R. Morrison, *A Survey of the History and Claims of the Native People of Northern Canada* (Ottawa, 1983), p. 38 ff.

effect on the Western Arctic was electric. By the mid 1970s there were three Native claims underway that affected the Western Arctic: the claim of the Inuvialuit, the Dene claim, and the Council of Yukon Indians claim. Only the first of these has been completely settled to date, though the other two groups have signed agreements in principle. The point is that for the first time Canada was not only paying close attention to developments in the Western Arctic, but had actually made it possible for decisions affecting the region to be made by its inhabitants.

For several reasons, the future of the Western Arctic as an important region in the Canadian mosaic now seems secure. The main reason for this is that the energy crisis has only abated, not disappeared. The public memory for unpleasant lessons is short, and North Americans have begun to forget the gasoline shortages of the 1970s; large cars are becoming more popular, and the alternative energy industry is in the doldrums. In the future, perhaps the near future, there will be another crisis, and we will look to the Beaufort Sea for salvation, as renewed discussion of the Mackenzie Valley pipeline project suggests. The question of comprehensive Native claims in the north has not gone away either, and the Dene will have to be reckoned with sooner or later. And it is no coincidence that the question of northern sovereignty is most acute in the Western Arctic, where the 141st meridian cuts through some potentially rich oil deposits in the Beaufort Sea. Does the international boundary run up the 141st meridian to the Pole (following the often cited but apparently unofficial "sector

theory"), does it hug the coast of the Western Arctic islands, or does it follow some intermediate course? The Americans seem unyielding on the issue, and there is no agreement even within Canada on it-- except that it is certain that the question will eventually have to be settled. The Western Arctic's future has yet to be determined, but it will never again be ignored.

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**The Effects of the Boundary on the Han Indian People**

**Gerald Isaac**

GERALD ISAAC

Ladies and gentlemen I am very pleased to be here this afternoon. I am glad to be able to speak to you and share with you some stories related to me by Alaskan Elders. Speaking of elders in Alaska, I had attempted to ask some elders to be here with me but they were unable to be here physically. But they will be with me today in spirit.

It is on that note that I would like to call upon my forefathers and say in my own language: Ji stay t'a Kho balsh-dinclá, which means "grandfathers I am calling upon you now, I'm getting sleepy now". I want to go into a dream state so that I may be able to call on my great great grandfather, who was a practising shaman, to convert me into a raven so that we may fly into the land of the Han Gwich'In. With that I would also like to say that at the sound of three raven calls, I will then take this power and convert you into a raven so that we may travel over this vast domain that is the Yukon and Alaska.

As you can see I have a map on the screen showing a good portion of the northern Yukon area mapped after Cornelius Osgood. The green area depicted on the map, according to Osgood, is the Han Territory. You can see the earlier settlements by way of fort designations. This map shows the populations in the Territory at the time, about 1880, the time the Kandik map was drawn. There were probably less than 100 white people in total. The establishment set by the early Hudson Bay Traders to improve the trade and economy of the Territory and Alaska was competing with Russian and eventually U.S. Traders. Fort McPherson was



established by John Bell at Hudson's Bay near the mouth of the Peel river. It was one of the first forts established in 1818, and as trade increased others were established. Fort Yukon was established in 1847 by Alexander Murray. There, Cornelius Osgood reported, many Han peoples were encountered. This fort was upgraded in later years by Moses Mercier. The reason I point this out is because many years later there was another individual named Mercier, and he developed the Kandik map we will see later on. In 1848, Fort Selkirk was established by Robert Campbell. It is at the confluence of the Pelly River and the Yukon River. It was established by Campbell to improve trading with the indians. In 1852, this very fort was attacked by the coastal Chilkats from Klukwan and later burned down because of it's interference on native trading in that area. It was from here that Campbell learned about Murray's fort from the Han Indians. His fort being Fort Yukon at the confluence of the Yukon River and the Porcupine Rivers.

Around this time, about 1867, the U.S. purchased Alaska from Russia. This, of course, established new precedents affecting all the Gwich'In in the territories and in Alaska. The Alaskan Commercial Company wanted possession of Murray's Fort, Fort Yukon, and to do that they had to determine the longitude and latitude of the boundaries. This is where the surveys came in to show ownership. Eventually the fort was turned over to the Alaska Commercial Company when they took over the lands from Russia.

In 1873, Fort Egbert was established on Bell Island. This was followed by the establishment of Fort Reliance in 1874. It was



established by Leroy McQuesten and Frank Bonfield. It was about eight miles downstream from present day Dawson City. It remained for four years after it was established, but was abandoned due to an incident that happened with our people. When the traders went down river, the story goes, some of our people raided the establishment and got into the flour. The flour had been laced with strychnine and several of the womenfolk died from that. The way that some of our people were compensated at that time was for the traders to give them one of their finest lead dogs. The reason I am pointing this out is because of the importance of the fur trade. There were very few whites and many of the Gwich'In people throughout the territory and there were many forts established to monopolize trade.

In 1880, the Kandik map was developed. This map is a very important map. It was brought out at the YHMA conference last summer and it's claim to fame is the Kohklux map showing routes into the interior from the coast. This one in particular shows the land use and the water use areas travelled by the Gwich'In people. This map is very accurate considering it was drawn in 1880. This map was drawn by Moses Mercier, who was operating Fort Yukon. He obtained the information from Paul Kandik, who knew the trail routes, over land and stream, of the Han so as to take advantage of the trade. In some places he calls the River Le Blanc, en Francais the White River, and the Deer River (Chevreuil River), the present day Klondike River. Much work has yet to be done to decipher this map, but it is important because it shows the trailways of the Han people coming over from the headwaters of the Tanana River.

Because of the burning of Fort Selkirk (word travelled fast even in those days by river and dog team) the U.S. government was somewhat concerned about the increasing dissention among the Gwich'In people. They sent Lieutenant Schwatka in 1883 to do a reconnaissance of the Yukon River. In 1886, there was a major gold strike at the mouth of the Forty Mile river that also had some impact on the trade and the Han Gwich'In in this area. Forty Mile River, by the way, is about forty miles below the earlier border lines. In 1887, Fort Cudahy was established by Arthur Harper, and William Ogilvie, the surveyor, entered the scene at this time and he also represented other Canadian government interests. In 1889, Fort Selkirk was re-established by Arthur Harper. In 1894, Ogilvie Post was established at the mouth of the Sixty Mile River by Arthur Harper. Then, in 1896, the Klondike Gold rush opened up having a major impact on the trade routes and the Han.

Here is a modern day map showing some of the earlier forts. On this map I want you to pay particular attention to the earlier travel routes from the headwaters of the Tanana River. There is a very important story about this river related to me by my elder Oscar Isaac in Tanacross. They used to travel by dog team into the headwaters of the Ladue River, going into the White River system, and then down to Fort Reliance in the Yukon River system in about 9 days. The long marks along the trail then represent days. This confirms the revelation yesterday by Mrs. Johns about her peoples travels from Scottie Creek on into the White River. There was a massive history missing there that is gone because most of the elders have gone.

This next map that I want to show makes reference to Han settlements not only in Alaska, but in the Yukon as well. The settlements were Eagle, Charley's Village, Fetutlin (mouth of the 40 mile river), the Tutchone Kutchin location is unknown, Johnny's Village is on the left bank of the Yukon River below present day Eagle, Moosehide is three miles below present day Dawson City, and at the mouth of the Forty Mile there was a Buxton mission established in 1887, earlier than Bishop Bompas. There is also another older settlement at the headwaters of the Forty Mile river called Kechumstuk. Now once more I will put on this historical document. It is very accurate in terms of it's description and travel routes overland and by river. The implication of the translation of Han Gwich'In is clear. It translates into "the people who live along the river". You can see by this map drawn by Paul Kandik with the assistance of Francois Mercier that it shows most of the river travel routes. Linda pointed out to me earlier that she discovered information about a Han Gwich'In named Paul who was a river boat pilot and that there was the possibly that this was one in the same person. John Ritter tells me that Kandik translates to "Willow Creek."

I have two letters here, one dated Feb. 11, 1910. These show clearly that there was a problem with the boundary. This letter was addressed from a State Trooper from Eagle, Alaska to the Chief inspector from the North West Mounted Police, based in Dawson. It says "please advise me what to do, we are having a group of Indian people who are very unhappy about the way our government is treating them and they want to move to be with the rest of their

relations on the Canadian side near Moosehide. They were very disappointed with the Alaskan laws and scolding by the lay reader and talked to me of hitting the trail very shortly. Do you see any objections to the proposed movement?" The second letter is not actually a reply to that letter. This is a letter from the Yukon Gold Commissioner and it says that the Indians in Eagle, Alaska should be kept in their place because there are immigration laws restricting border movements, even of Indians.

This brings up another interesting question that I wasn't going to touch on today, but I think we have some legal eagles in the crowd that could advise me. There were at the time international treaties made between Canada and the U.S., the Jay treaty before the Royal Proclamation of 1763, for example, that talked of Indians crossing freely between southern Canadian border and the U.S. without restriction being imposed by customs, and without restrictions on travel routes and without having to report to the customs officer or report to immigration. Whether these international treaties apply here between the Alaska-Yukon border is a good question. There were long court cases on that subject alone.

More recently, in 1978, because of that international boundary and because of the loss of the Han language I made a visit to Alaska and visited many of my relations there from Eagle to Northway. When I visited Tanacross, I saw a log house there named "Old Isaac" and thought it was some relation of mine. So I knocked on the door and heard a voice say in my own language of Han Gwich'in "come on in my grandchild, I've been expecting you for a

long time. Where have you been." You can see that the boundary line separated families and relatives. Yesterday, I heard Chief Gilbert express that. To reestablish family lines and so forth, that boundary line has to be crossed. Then the families will be reunited and social gatherings will take place. Potlatches are beginning to come back and it is a joyous occasion.

On that, with the call of three crows, I turn you back into yourselves.

**An Exploration of the Boundary of the  
Klondike Stampeders' Civilization**

**David Neufeld**



David Neufeld: "Cultural Boundaries in the late nineteenth century"

The Klondike Gold Rush was merely one, albeit spectacular, part of the aggressive expansion of Euro-American industrial society in the nineteenth century. This expansion was often experienced as a crusade or pilgrimage to a better future by its participants. Most of them felt that they were contributing to the fulfillment of a greater purpose.

One poet, published approvingly in the Bennett Sun in 1900, expressed this drive in his "The Western Pioneer."

I've been allus in the lead since I grew grass high  
Since my father's prairie schooner left the known,  
For a port beyond the sky-line, never seen by human eye,  
Where God and God's creation dwell alone.<sup>1</sup>

In fact, these "pioneers" or "stampeters" rarely entered an empty land "never seen by human eye." The Yukon River basin was a resource rich land populated by a vibrant aboriginal society. The cultural history of Yukon in the last century is the rapprochement, or lack thereof, between these two groups as they lived side by side.

My approach to this culture history is shaped by the mandate for the National Historic Sites, in particular that for the Chilkoot Trail. The HSMBC has stated that the trail is of national historic significance for its representation of the "social context" of the

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<sup>1</sup> Bennett Sun, 7 July, 1900



Klondike Gold Rush.<sup>2</sup> The trail is therefore an opportunity to explore this culture history. The trail's use for both aboriginal and Euro-American travellers makes it a point of cultural contact. By examining the differing perspectives and experiences recorded by these different travellers in their own mediums it is my hope that a greater understanding of the two cultures will result. This cultural comparison based upon a common experience will offer the modern hiker some insights into the issues of contemporary Yukon.

This paper is limited to the Euro-American culture in the late nineteenth century and its reaction to Yukon and its people. The paper outlines the basic themes of western culture, examines the "stampede" views and offers some preliminary conclusions.

The two major themes in western culture are its agricultural base and its Judeo-Christian heritage.

The Spiritual Heritage - Christianity made a fundamental change in the order of culture upon its acceptance. The creation of the world, the birth of Jesus and his crucifixion for the sins of man were NON-REPEATABLE, HISTORICAL events. By tying mythology to history, Christianity radically altered the perception of time. Christian time was linear, the ancient round was gone, and history as westerners conceived of it became an expression of Christian

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<sup>2</sup> Minutes of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, 1967.

ideas about the nature of time.<sup>3</sup> Western Christianity developed into a religion of action. Where, in many religions, goodness and knowledge or "Grace" was gained through contemplation, in the west "Grace" was obtained through good works. Over time, many western churches came to emphasize material success as a sign of God's blessing and proof of "Grace."

Finally, Christianity developed a dualism that split man from nature. The creation of Adam in God's image and his dominion over the animals meant a significant alteration in the relationship with nature. Man gained a monopoly over the spirit in the world and earlier spiritual, or naturalist, inhibitions against the exploitation of nature crumbled.<sup>4</sup>

The dualism of Christian thought came from the agricultural roots of its proponents. The use of the practical arts in harnessing and harvesting nature's product was part of the agricultural heritage of western culture. As agricultural technique developed through the Middle Ages and in the modern period the separation between man and nature was both further entrenched and its impact expanded.

In eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe these practical arts, or technology, were integrated with the intellectual tradition, or

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<sup>3</sup> Lynn White Jr., "Christian Myths and Christian History", Dynamo and Virgin Revisited (MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1968)

<sup>4</sup> L. White Jr., "The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis", Ibid., pp. 85-87

science, for the first time. The result was the industrialization of the west and a great increase in scientific study both led to a questioning of traditional Christian history. Christian faith was shaken. Socialists seeing the glimmer of a new age, declared that the Middle Ages had ended at last.<sup>5</sup>

From a contemplative science that existed to know the world, science and technology combined to change the world. The shaking of Christian tenets, the great and obvious difficulties arising from industrialization, and the apparent threat to individual liberty stemming from the closing of the western land frontier all put stress on western culture. The power of science and technology fostered a growth in Pragmatism that considered only the known as real. To address the difficulties social critics proposed the application of science to society. Technological utopias, such as the regimented society of Edward Bellamy's Looking Backwards, were described where an abundance of goods were available for a minimum of labour. Grace was to be gained through order, efficiency and materialism. This was the culture that reached into the Yukon in the late nineteenth century.

The impressive material culture of the white stampeders overwhelmed the obstacle of the north and the Yukon became incorporated into

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<sup>5</sup> J.M. Jordan, "Society Improved the Way you can improve a Dynamo: Charles P. Steinmetz and the Politics of Efficiency" Technology and Culture, Vol. 30 No. 1, Jan. 1989 pp. 71-72 and L. White Jr., "The Changing canons of our Culture", Dynamo and Virgin Revisited, p. 15.

the industrial capitalist economy of the Euro-American world. This great power was governed by the belief system of the people controlling it. Their opinions of the nature of the land they entered and the people there had important consequences for Yukon history.

The frontier in North America has long excited the western mind. The "wilderness" beyond the island of settlement offered opportunity and freedom. The wilderness was God's handiwork.

Upon this land lay the laws of the universe in its uncontaminated state before the hand of civilization had spread its warping veneer or written its crooked code... In the strong, pure, free life, no want of woman, no curse of caste, no rust of rivalry, no gall of glory, no edict of earth prevailed.<sup>6</sup>

Here was the modern Garden of Eden awaiting the ordering hand of an up-to-date Adam.

The challenge of the north was thus the challenge of bringing order and control to the land. This was no easy task as the wilderness was untamed. An editor described his trip up the Lynn Canal to Skagway about 1900 in the following terms:

How repelling are those distant peaks, in their unchanging draperies of ice and snow! Their children, the glaciers, cling to their slopes,

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<sup>6</sup> Quoted in W.K. Hubbard, "The Klondike in Literature, 1896-1930", MA thesis, Univ. of Western Ontario, 1969, pp. 24-25.

and though mist and fog of times surround them,  
they are every the same - bleak, barren,  
inaccessible.

Thus, not even time, one of the west's most potent inventions had not yet begun to limit nature in the north. This state of affairs had to be changed if the destiny of the western materialist culture was to be realized. Unmanaged resources were not only inefficient, they were a threat to the already ordered. One early Presbyterian Missionary was quite explicit about this threat. She noted that an unregulated corner of the country was "a drain on the national resources and a corrupter of the national life. For the sake of the country as a whole, Alaska needs, and must have law, order, cultivation, and education." This side of wilderness also had a human danger that I will return to later.

For the Euro-American, their technological skill and richness of the north appeared to fulfill their early dreams of a new and better world beyond the frontier. C.M. Taylor, after overcoming his fear of the inaccessible mountains of the Lynn Canal, triumphantly described the role of the railway in helping to expand western civilization.

The echos of the blastings roll hither and thither among the mountain peaks, repeating to them ever in reverberating tones that eternity is no longer theirs. The solitude of nature here is forever undone, and the absolute reign of the monarchs is over. Alas for the giants! Are they grieving beneath their icy crests that their haughty heads must yield to the demands of the universe... The irresistible power of progress opens the way for the traveller and adventurer, cleaving the massive

boulders, levelling the mountains and bridging the chasms, that it may girdle the globe with its watchword "Excelsior", upon hitherto inaccessible summits.<sup>7</sup>

It was this introduction of western social and technological infrastructure that marked the transformation of the wilderness chaos. Bishop Bompas, in the 1880s, pleased with the growing number of doctors, more regular steamship service, extension of roads and the introduction of government noted the transition of the Yukon "from a savage wilderness to a civilized white man's home."

Even with railways, however, some things remained beyond control. One commentator concluded her notes on the tourist potential of the inside passage with an observation on the utility of volcanoes. "To be thankful for volcanoes (as tourist curios) is to have an insight of the moral uses of dark things."<sup>8</sup>

While this quick review of the fate of the wilderness illustrates the purposeful and directed activities affecting the land, a similar perspective was taken of the aboriginal inhabitants of the north.

Western opinions of the northern natives can be generally summarized into two viewpoints, both based upon the then prevalent

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<sup>7</sup> C.M. Taylor, Touring Alaska and the Yellowstone (Geo. W. Jacobs, Philadelphia, ca. 1901) pp. 209 and 219-220.

<sup>8</sup> J.M. Wright, "Among the Alaskans" (Presbyterian Board of Publication, Philadelphia, 1883) p. 21.



model of evolution. At best the Yukon natives were seen as a portion of the human race frozen in time and behind in evolutionary development. This was generally the missionaries viewpoint as they laboured to help civilize the Indians. Law, temperance, education and religion were the usual remedies prescribed to update the natives.<sup>9</sup>

At worst, the natives were regarded as a wrong turn in the evolutionary process and destined to die out in the natural order of events as the more successful strains of the human race develop. One description is of the Aleuts experience with the Russians. "This intermingling of races had its usual effect, ... the less civilized melted away."<sup>10</sup>

Social Darwinism, the extension of Darwin's theory beyond the strictly biological field, included a radical combination of Christian linear time, the scientific method and the idea of progress. This mixture transformed the concept of time from being a sequence of casual events and results unfolding in a rational pattern to a progressive scale of cultural forms; cultural forms measured by western standards of order and technological control.

All Euro-Americans, whatever their evolutionary bias, were united

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<sup>9</sup> Examples can be found in Ibid. and Church Missionary Society, Bompas letters.

<sup>10</sup> Wright, p. 45 and E. McElwaine, The Truth about Alaska: The Golden Land of the Midnight Sun (author, n.p., 1901) p. 150 for another example



in the belief that natives were a savage, wild people incapable of saving themselves. A description of a cremation on the coast reflects this view.

As the torch is applied, that frenzy which fire inspires in human bosoms takes full possession of the bystanders; leaps, howls, cries, drinking - orgies of all kinds - break forth. One stirs the fire; another adds fuel, a third flings on further gifts. The yelling shaman encourages the madness. Often human life is sacrificed; at all times loss of property, wounds and bruises are the results... Around the burning cling all the superstitions and all the degrading rites of their heathenism.<sup>11</sup>

The wildness of the natives, like that of the land, was dangerous and feared. The upgrading of the natives could not be ignored; left alone or dealt with on their own terms, they destroyed civilization. The traders of the HBC were seen as vassals of a great trust, forced to live with and like natives, even take native wives in the fashion of the country, in order to meet the needs of the fur trade. Bishop Bompas, in his request for a married school teacher, added that the Yukon was not a place where a single school mistress could be left alone "and hardly an unmarried school master."<sup>12</sup> The sense of boundary between civilization and wilderness in western eyes often took on the appearance of a precipice.

To save the natives it became necessary to destroy them. The great

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<sup>11</sup> Wright, pp. 330 and 333

<sup>12</sup> Church Missionary Society, Bompas Letter January, 1894.

danger of the nomadic chaos perceived by the missionaries and the government officials meant that they strove to convert the natives to a more sedentary, regular lifestyle. Gardens, the domestication of reindeer, the establishment of fish canneries and residential boarding schools are all well known and well-meaning attempts at shattering the native lifeways and re-orienting them to the modern world. One missionary appeal for funds to buy a sawmill enumerated the advantages to the missions work.

1. The mill provide regular employment in one place with regular hours, thus instilling the work ethic.
2. The lumber prepared will be used to build proper "American houses" removing natives from the large lodges where "promiscuous crowding forbids all decency of domestic life." This breaks down the traditional social organization that carries native culture.
3. The mill timber requirements will harvest the nearby forest turning it from a dark threat of the old ways to merchantable resources.
4. It will centralize the natives at a single point where they can be more consistently and efficiently taught. Thus, making better use of the limited missionary resources.
5. Finally, by concentrating the population, the local natural resources will be inadequate to support the natives at a subsistence level and they will either have to begin cultivating the soil to grow food or work in the mill to earn money to pay for imported food stuffs.

The results will be educated Indians. "Virtuous, temperate, cleanly, industrious; a generation, in short, permeated with the alphabet and the ten commandments", and one separate from its past.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Wright, pp. 58, 266-277, and 279.

While it appears that both the land and the natives were treated similarly by the newcomers, there is an important difference. The frontier, in American culture at least, had a galvanizing effect upon those advancing it. Turner's thesis on the strengths of the American democracy depended upon this idea. The passing of the frontier in the north was nostalgically regretted.

I cannot help contrasting our present luxurious mode of travel (on the WP&Y hwy) with those early days of adventure and enthusiasm. Yet, for every gain, something is lost... (we miss) the magnetism of continuous contact with Mother Earth. It is true we have gained much in these days of wonderful scientific knowledge, but we have lost something as well.<sup>14</sup>

The passage of the natives, however, was not regarded as a serious loss, except for a few romantic followers of Rousseau. Besides, the western voice cried, they weren't lost - quite the opposite, they had been saved. The great gifts of civilization had been delivered to a blank slate. Bishop Bompas in 1894 wrote, "the whole Indian population are children, little or no mission work is required for them besides schooling, men, women, and children alike."

#### **Conclusions:**

What is important to note from this review is that the Euro-

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<sup>14</sup> Taylor, pp. 220-221.

Americans came, not as individuals with personal dreams, but as components of a society with a directed world view. Culture historians have identified four characteristics that appear to be nicely reflected in the Yukon experience.

1. Occidental - ethno-centric, always a western route
2. Rationality - no understanding of other approaches to a subject
3. Hierarchy of values - some things more valuable than others, no spectrum of ideas, but always a scale of lesser and greater
4. Language and logic - language built upon a belief in action and focused on accomplishments

I hope that this review and its preliminary conclusions are helpful in understanding the western culture that came into the Yukon and analyzing its action in a more rigorous fashion. I hope that a similar review of native culture and its responses to the changes in the twentieth century will help in understanding the modern Yukon.

**Victory or Death: Women on the Klondike Trail**

**Barbara Kelcey**

Victory or Death:  
Women on the Klondike Trail

by

Barbara Kelcey

It is important to place women in Klondike history because the Gold Rush has, for the most part, been considered a male event, and the Klondike community a bachelor society. The Gold Rush was, however, only male-dominated, not exclusively male, and remains a fine example of what women's historian Susan Armitage calls *Hisland*. The problem with the concept of *Hisland*, suggests Armitage, is that "many people believe it is history, and some of those people are historians."<sup>1</sup> This andro-centric bias views women's experience as relative to that of men, or worse still, presents women's circumstances as the same, denying any difference.

Women's experience of the Klondike Gold Rush was different, simply because they were women. That difference was reflected in the necessary preparations for the trip, the way they travelled, and their accomodation *en route*, or included the added complications of marriage and expected domesticity. These women

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<sup>1</sup>Susan Armitage, "Through Woman's Eyes: A New View of the West," in *The Women's West*, Susan Armitage and Elizabeth Jameson, Editors, (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), p. 9.

coped with the extremes of climate and coarse living conditions within the constraints of Victorian society and expectations, and often suffered undeserved derision because they travelled unchaperoned, or because they were pursuing what was perceived as a male goal. Individual circumstances were often distinctive, but the collective experience is also important because it adds dimension to the whole Klondike story. For the call of the North, and the golden riches of the Yukon were as compelling for women as they were for men. Some women went to dig gold, other simply to mine the pockets of successful prospectors. Some women went to the Klondike to save gold-crazed souls, others to heal the broken and diseased bodies of those caught within the grasp of gold-fever.

Fortunately, the experience of women on the trail has not gone unrecorded. Some of these women chronicled the details of their journey in autobiographical works. Mary Hitchcock detailed her trip by sea and river to Dawson in *Two Women in the Klondike*.<sup>2</sup> Emily Craig Romig described her trip to the gold-fields via the ill-fated Edmonton route in *A Pioneer Woman in Alaska*.<sup>3</sup> In her memoirs, Martha Black remembered her arduous climb up the Chilkoot Pass.<sup>4</sup> Lulu Alice Craig's *Glimpses of Sunshine and Shade in the Far North* provides yet another account

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<sup>2</sup>Mary E. Hitchcock, *Two Women in the Klondike*, (New York and London: Putnam's Sons, 1899).

<sup>3</sup>Emily Craig Romig, *A Pioneer Woman in Alaska*, (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers Ltd., 1948).

<sup>4</sup>Martha Black, *My Ninety Years*, Flo Whyard, Editor, (Anchorage: Alaska Northwest Publishing, 1976).



which reveals some of the social changes that frontier living presented to women on their way to the Klondike.<sup>5</sup>

Other women have left their recollections in personal letters and in diaries or journals. Sister Mary Joseph Calasanctius kept her journal aboard the steamer *Alice* as it made its way slowly, and hopelessly, up the Yukon toward Dawson in 1897.<sup>6</sup> Ella Hall wrote an account of her trip to Dawson in 1898. Hall expressed some of the delights of the trip as well as the difficulties.<sup>7</sup> Rebecca Schuldenfrei's letters to her children in Minnesota are more poignant; her view of the Chilkoot trail more grim.<sup>8</sup> The trials and tribulations of the White Pass were graphically presented by Florence Hartshorn in a typescript entitled *Along the Golden Trail of the Yukon Being the Chronilces of the Hartshorn Family*,<sup>9</sup> and Georgia Powell of the Victorian Order of Nurses left her impressions of the Stikine River Route in letters, and in her annual report to headquarters in Ottawa.

Journalists such as Flora Shaw of *The Times* described the

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<sup>5</sup>Lulu Alice Craig, *Glimpses of Sunshine and Shade in the Far North*, (Cincinnati: The Editor Publishing Company, 1900).

<sup>6</sup>Sister Mary Joseph Calasanctius, Journal written aboard the steamer *Alice*, translated from the French, Archives of Sisters of Saint Ann, Victoria, B.C.

<sup>7</sup>Ella Hall, *Account of a Trip to the Klondike Made by Miss Ella Hall*, Manuscript, Public Archives of Canada.

<sup>8</sup>Schuldenfrei Family, Letters, Yukon Archives.

<sup>9</sup>Mrs. H. Hartshorn, *Along the Golden Trail of the Yukon, Being the Chronicles of the Hartshorn Family*, Typescript, Edited by Janet Munro, Public Archives of Canada.

attitudes of men around her as she crossed the Chilkoot. Faith Fenton of the *Toronto Globe* wrote of the majestic scenery, and some of the political aspects of the event as she journeyed along the Stikine River Route with the Yukon Field Force and the Victorian Order nurses. Helen Dare sent back reports to *The Examiner* in San Fransisco about the perils of the trail in the goldfields.

These women all had different reasons for heading to the Yukon with the Rush. Some, like the nurses of the Victorian Order, or the missionaries of the Salvation Army had higher purpose. The VON was a semi-missionary order founded to provide public health care in Canada, and the Klondike was considered a good opportunity to show their value. The two women of the Salvation Army Klondike Brigade went north with four men to combat the vice and wickedness that was reported as rampant in the mining camps of the Klondike. Other women were more pragmatic.

Mrs. W. Place of San Francisco was especially blunt about her motives. "I want to get rich, and will do so if I can," she told the *Seattle Daily Times*.<sup>10</sup> Mrs. Place was travelling with her husband and had every intention of wielding a pick and shovel, which she would have to learn to use on the way north. Her optimism about the Klondike was surpassed by Mrs. P. Sutherland, however, who told the *Daily Times*:

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<sup>10</sup>"Women on Humboldt," *Seattle Daily Times*, August 17, 1897, p. 8.

Of course I shall mine, when I can look up from my housework. Why shouldn't I? I'm sure it will be perfectly lovely. Did I ever mine? Well no; but what difference could that make? I'm oh so certain to pick up a fortune.<sup>11</sup>

Mrs. Sutherland's optimism was not just a result of petticoats, noted the reporter, for men were just as innocent.

Mrs. Marie Riedeselle, a professional masseuse and facial specialist from New York, spent some time in Seattle preparing for her trip. The *Daily Times* called her a "nervy little woman," and recounted how she had studied every phase of life in the North. When asked how long she would remain in the North, she replied that she expected to be gone about three years, but was not going to return until she made her fortune. She also told the paper that she could "do anything a man can."<sup>12</sup>

Similar sentiments were echoed by Mrs. Bessie Thomas of Seattle who was (apparently) interviewed for *The Chicago Record's Book for Gold-Seekers*. Mrs. Thomas was off to open a restaurant. "She believe[d] that a woman who ha[d] her living to make [stood] just as good a chance in a mining town as a man."<sup>13</sup> The Klondike was, after all, "the place for a display of woman's courage and power of assistance."<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Seattle *Daily Times*, July 31, 1897, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup>"A Nervy Little Woman," Seattle *Daily Times*, January 2, 1898, p. 3.

<sup>13</sup>Chicago *Record's Book for Gold-Seekers*, p. 492.

<sup>14</sup>"Belles of Tacoma to Start for Dawson," San Francisco *Examiner*, February 8, 1898, p. 3.

Mrs. Griffith Bates was going to the Klondike because she was sure her husband would suffer from indigestion from eating food that was poorly cooked. The *Daily Times* suggested that Mrs. Bates "would rather be with her husband and a frozen thermometer" than be left at home.<sup>15</sup> Ethel Berry went to Dawson because her husband went, and she simply wanted to be with him.<sup>16</sup>

Mrs. Lilian Agnes Oliver from Chicago was so keen to go to the Klondike that she left behind her ailing husband after making arrangements with his employer to ensure that Mr. Oliver did not become destitute in her absence. Mrs. Oliver later wrote in *Wide World Magazine* that her husband "looked at me in pity, thinking I had the gold fever so badly that it had turned my brain."<sup>17</sup> Lilian Oliver had put together "a fine outfit, and felt that, come what might, [she] would not suffer from the cold," but as she boarded the train for Seattle, resolved that the purpose of the trip was to return a successful woman.<sup>18</sup>

Mrs. E.E.Poor, of Stockton, California, left behind her husband also. She planned to open a restaurant in the Klondike. She was 58 years old and had no fear of travelling alone. Mrs.

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<sup>15</sup>"All Roads to Klondyke," *Seattle Daily Times*, July 27, 1897, p. 5.

<sup>16</sup>Ethel Berry, "How I Mined For Gold on the Klondyke," *The Examiner Sunday Magazine*, August 1, 1897, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup>Mrs. Lilian Agnes Oliver, "My Klondike Mission," *Wide World Magazine*, Volume 3, Number 13, April, 1899, p. 44.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 45.

Poor told *The Examiner* that she was "the whole party, [and did not] propose to go up there with any strings tied to [her], or any cumbersome man to be in the way."<sup>19</sup>

Florence Hartshorn recalled the reason for going to the Klondike as the economic conditions of the early 1890's, a depression that may have left many with a desire for money to provide some security for future hard times. The Hartshorns had lost everything, and chose the Klondike Gold Rush as the vehicle to start afresh. They were also parents who had left their children in the United States. Florence Hartshorn found it hard to leave her five-year-old daughter with her own parents, but she "was thrilled at the thought of going to the land of mystery where gold was found in every stream, on every mountain slope."<sup>20</sup>

The mysteries of the North had appeal for women who just felt they had to see "at least a portion of the country, and the men who were the inspiration of these exciting tales," which was how Frances Dorley of Seattle described her desire to go to the Klondike.<sup>21</sup> Dorley was 26 years of age; she worked as a dressmaker and milliner. She described herself as a "young, unmarried, strictly reared woman of that era," who seldom went

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<sup>19</sup>"Will Try Her Luck in the Klondike," *San Francisco Examiner*, February 8, 1898, p. 3.

<sup>20</sup>Maggie Leech, "Monument Stands Vigil Over Klondyke Memories," *The Columbian*, July 20, 1979, p. A5.

<sup>21</sup>Patricia McKeever, "The Lady Went North in 98," *Alaska Sportsman*, February, 1948, p. 12.

"adventuring" alone, although her parents were "bitterly and justifiably opposed" to her plans.<sup>22</sup> Dorley eventually returned home after her first trip to plan a more extensive journey to the Yukon. She later married a Dawson dentist.

Alice Rollins Crane purportedly went to Dawson under a commission from the Southern California Academy of Sciences, and the Smithsonian Institution Bureau of American Ethnology to study the Natives in the Yukon.<sup>23</sup> She had some definite views about the women who went to the Klondike and her *Wide World Magazine* article entitled "Our Klondike Success" began by noting: "surely only an American woman would have had the daring to attempt so terrible an undertaking as to join in one of the early rushes to the Klondike."<sup>24</sup>

Canadian women, however, also had the daring to attempt such an undertaking, and their desire was often as equally intense as that of Alice Crane and her American sisters.<sup>25</sup> While travelling west to Seattle to prepare for the Brigade's journey north, Ensign Rebecca Ellery of the Salvation Army hurt her foot while in Spokane. Her superiors informed her that she may be left behind because of the injury. In her diary Ellery wrote "I

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup>"Going to Join the Indians," *Klondike Nugget*, July 30, 1898, p. 3. Mrs. Crane was very active, and very vocal, in Dawson society, but the Smithsonian Institution had no record of her other than a snapshot.

<sup>24</sup>Alice Rollins Crane, "Our Klondike Success," *Wide World Magazine*, June, 1901, Volume 7, Number 38, p. 180.

<sup>25</sup>On occasion it was as equally inane!



thought my heart would break. I was afraid they were going to interfere with God's plan for I was so sure God wanted me in the Klondike."<sup>26</sup> Earlier Ellery had written: "I feel keenly the step I am taking, especially when my dear friends are saying good-bye, as if it was for the last time in this life."<sup>27</sup> Like all the officers of the Klondike Brigade, Ensign Ellery had signed a supplementary contract that required her to stay in the Klondike for at least twelve months.

The four nurses of the newly formed Victorian Order who accompanied the Yukon Field Force had signed three-year contracts before leaving for the Klondike. Georgia Powell from Buctouche, New Brunswick was the superintendent of the group that included Rachel Hanna from Port Carling, Ontario, Margaret Payson from Weymouth, Nova Scotia, and an English nurse, Amy Scott. They received a special send-off at Rideau Hall in Ottawa. Lady Aberdeen had organized and sponsored the Victorian Order of Nurses, and she saw the Klondike as an opportunity for the nurses to demonstrate the possibilities of a semi-missionary Order performing public health duties. Lady Aberdeen capitalized on the moment to raise support for the Order, and the four nurses were entertained constantly in Victoria and Vancouver prior to their departure in May of 1898. Later that summer, Georgia Powell wrote to her friend Annie Pride that at the time she "was just

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<sup>26</sup>Brigadier Gertrude Bloss, "Saga of the Klondike," *Canadian Home Leaguer*, April, 1972, p. 10. Diary entry is May 125, 1898.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, March 1972, p. 4. Diary entry is April 15, 1898.



tired enough of being a Klondike nurse, but the soldiers came at last and gave us our freedom."<sup>28</sup> Powell's report for 1898 detailed many incidents along the Stikine River route as the nurses travelled north. Indeed, it is on the trip itself that most Klondike memoirs focus, and it is these accounts that offer some of the more valuable insights into how women coped with the personal trials of the Stampede. It was a difficult journey, and Georgia Powell told Annie Pride that she

had started out with 'Victory or Death' for my motto, and the farther on I came, the more appropriate I thought it. I wrote it on the many guide posts along as encouragement to those who may come after.<sup>29</sup>

Georgia Powell was an experienced nurse and a resourceful woman, but she obviously had some reservations about her trip to the Klondike goldfields. Like most men and women who attempted any of the Klondike trails, Powell was probably not well prepared for the perils she would encounter nor the obstacles that she and the Victorian Order nurses would have to overcome on the Stikine trail as they travelled north with the Yukon Field Force.

There were at least eight recognized ways to get to the Klondike, but because of the military nature of the expedition, the Stikine River Route was chosen for the Yukon Field Force as

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<sup>28</sup>Georgia Powell, letter to Annie Pride, dated at Teslin, June 10, 1898, Victorian Order of Nurses, National Archives of Canada, MG 281, 171, Volume 8.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*

it was "all-Canadian".<sup>30</sup> A Canadian Pacific Railroad leaflet describing ways to get to the Klondike outlined the 1542 mile route from Vancouver or Victoria to Dawson city as: 700 miles by ocean steamer to Wrangel, Alaska; 125 miles by sleigh road or steamer to Glenora; 145 miles to Teslin by trail, wagon and railway; 400 miles further to Fort Selkirk by lake and river steamer; 105 miles by river steamer to Stewart River; and, finally, 67 miles by river to Dawson.<sup>31</sup>

The leaflet went into some detail about conditions along the overland trail, but Georgia Powell's assessment was more honest. It was bad, she told Annie Pride, "bad for people, and very bad for pack animals,"<sup>32</sup> and it required travel through mountains, swamps, icy cold bogs, and the warm ashes of recent forest fires. The trail was often undefined and so narrow that tree branches threatened the eyes of the travellers, or tore at the veiling worn to repel mosquitoes, which Powell suggested "held high revelry, ... [and] for numbers, size and ferocity those mosquitoes [could] not be exaggerated."<sup>33</sup> Although the women were well covered with leggings and gloves, they were severely bitten. Along the trail, huge trees lay fallen and tangled and impeded their progress along the trail, and in Powell's words,

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<sup>30</sup>The Stikine River route actually entailed some travel through the southernmost tip of Alaska.

<sup>31</sup>*Klondyke and Yukon Goldfields Via the CPR*, (N.p., Canadian Pacific Railway, 1898), p. 17.

<sup>32</sup>Georgia Powell to Annie Pride, June 10, 1898.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*

the women trampled, leapt, sprang and climbed over slippery, jagged rocks, and up mountains. It was a trip that "only the strongest and most sinewy of women could bear."<sup>34</sup>

Powell travelled with a Yukon Field Force detachment of thirty-one men and thirty mules, under the command of Major Talbot. Nurse Scott and Mrs. Starnes, who was joining her husband already with the North West Mounted Police in Dawson, were also with this group. The women, suggested Powell, were "incumbrances" (sic), and they often departed ahead of the column to make their own way along the trail. A single horse, "whose only ambition was to bang up against every available tree," was placed at their disposal, and since Powell "had no patience with laziness in either man nor beast,...[she] did not take much stock in this horse, and gave [her] share to Mrs. Starnes and Nurse Scott."<sup>35</sup> Mrs. Starnes apparently preferred to walk rather than pound, as Powell described it, but Nurse Scott preferred to ride. No doubt the poor beast was as tired and apprehensive as the women, but Powell's recounting suggests a woman who was used to taking charge of the situation, rather than allowing the situation to take charge of her. And on two occasions when the small party became lost, Powell's no nonsense approach even included telling them the "Babes in the Wood" fairy tale while the distraught women awaited rescue.

Faith Fenton, a correspondent for the *Toronto Globe* also

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<sup>34</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup>*Ibid.*

travelled with the Yukon Field Force. Fenton's eloquent, weekly reports to the *Globe* rarely mentioned the nurses, and concentrated on the progress of the Yukon Field Force, and the people and conditions along the route.<sup>36</sup> She had few kind words to say about the American administration of its northern territory and placed some emphasis on the law and order that the Force helped to bring to the Yukon. Wrangel, Alaska, was offensive "to lovers of civic order and wholesomeness," she reported, and it was "a relief to [them] all when [they] left Wrangel with its odors of unsanctity, material and spiritual." Fenton added that the group realized "with pride, that such a town would be impossible in Canada," and that the United States had "yet to learn how to govern annexed territory."<sup>37</sup> This condemnation preceded a patriotic outpouring which suggested that the raising of the Yukon Field Force "at instant call for service ... stimulat[ed] civic pride and strengthen[ed] confidence in Canada's ability to look after her own."<sup>38</sup>

Perhaps Fenton's sentiments were a journalistic reaction to the dispute over the boundary between Alaska and the Yukon: both the Canadian and American governments claimed the land adjacent to the Lynn Canal. The Canadian government had installed the

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<sup>36</sup>Fenton's name was actually Alice Freeman, and she had made her name writing for the *Empire*, a rival of the *Globe*. Previous assignments included a series of articles about remote lighthouses, some of which Fenton had visited personally.

<sup>37</sup>Faith Fenton, "Up the Stikine River," *Toronto Globe*, June 11, 1898, page 5.

<sup>38</sup>*Ibid.*

North West Mounted Police on both the Chilkoot and White Passes to solidify the Canadian position, and to establish the law and order which was lacking on the Alaskan side of the border. It is also possible that Fenton was caught up in the excitement of the Gold Rush, and a little awed by her surroundings, for as she noted, the grandeurs of nature were all about. She described the mountains as "great, solemn, chilly giants...tender in the morning when the rose-light touches their whiteness, firm in solid sunshiny strength at noon, remote in shadowy mist at night."<sup>39</sup> Fenton made considerable effort to describe the conditions of the journey for *Globe* readers in the emerging urban centres of Eastern Canada for whom the Klondike experience was both romantic and remote, and who were inundated with accounts of the Gold Rush that ranged in quality between technical accuracy and total fiction. Fenton explained that the reason for this was "not that all men [were] liars up in this country -- that is to any greater extent than they [were] at large -- but that the conditions [were] continually changing."<sup>40</sup>

Fenton also reported the "Vagaries of Packers and Packtrains," and related how one packer named Murphy reminisced around the detachment campfire. He "did his best to be agreeable, and to show [them] that he knew how to play the gallant, but his efforts were a curious revelation of the

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<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup>Faith Fenton, "A Tie Up on the Stikine River," *Toronto Globe*, June 21, 1898, p. 7.

crudeness of his thought regarding women in this country."<sup>41</sup> Murphy, a bachelor, was a good packer, with some considerable experience on the trail, but he told Fenton that "[W]hite women [were] not much good....They [wouldn't] work. A Koolichan (Indian woman) [was] best. She don't ask no questions and she does what she's ordered."<sup>42</sup> Murphy needed a woman who could cook, wash blankets and "round up cayutes", and determined that since Fenton and the nurses could only manage the first two, they would be of little use to him.

Native women did pack freight over the Chilkoot Pass alongside Indian men. The men carried loads up to 200 pounds on their backs; the women managed between fifty and seventy-five pounds. One observer noted that in addition to a pack, one young mother also carried a four week old infant in her arms.<sup>43</sup> In a letter to the *Seattle Daily Times*, T.B. Corey described a similar sight,<sup>44</sup> and the same paper later related how twenty-nine year old Mrs. Johnie Benson had packed on the trail with her husband. She had carried fifty pounds every day for a whole season, with the exception of one day when she had to fix her only dress. Mrs. Benson said she felt good after the summer's work, and was

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<sup>41</sup>Faith Fenton, "Packers on the Trail," *Toronto Globe*, August 20, 1898, p. 11.

<sup>42</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup>Harris, *Alaska and the Goldfields*, p. 112.

<sup>44</sup>T.B. Corey, "The Dyea Pass a Fright," *Seattle Daily Times*, August 12, 1897, p. 5. The letter is dated at Lake Bennett, July 31, 1897.



optimistic that she would make lots of money in 1898. She explained that the work was not hard for women, but that she was usually tired before nightfall.<sup>45</sup>

There is also some evidence that white women packed freight on the Passes as an enterprise. In a report about a disastrous avalanche at Sheep Camp on April 3, 1898, the *Dyea Trail* named Miss Vernie Woodward as a packer who had worked on the trail for over a year and by 1898 owned five pack horses. Woodward was of some interest to the paper because she had revived her apparently dead lover who had been dug out from under the snowslide.<sup>46</sup>

Avalanches and snowslides were not an uncommon occurrence on the Chilkoot Pass, and in the April, 1898 slide two women were listed as dead out of a known fifty-seven.<sup>47</sup> The anonymous sourdough in Mary Davis' *Sourdough Gold*, explained how he had rescued one woman who was hysterical, but unharmed, by this slide. She had been buried head down, and was decidedly upset.<sup>48</sup> The 1898 annual report of Inspector Belcher at Fort Herchmer, Dawson, also mentioned that two women who had escaped a small snowslide at the "Scales" on the Chilkoot Pass, were not so

<sup>45</sup>"Life of Indian Packers," *Seattle Daily Times*, December 21, 1897, p. 4.

<sup>46</sup>"Klondike Tragedy," *Cariboo and Northwest Digest*, January 1950, p. 27, as appeared in the *Dyea Trail*, April 9, 1898.

<sup>47</sup>"Crater Lake Now," *Victoria Daily Colonist*, April 10, 1898, p. 5. The figures depend on the source. The women were identified at Mrs. Ryan of Baltimore, and Mrs. Anna Moxon of Jefferson, Pennsylvania.

<sup>48</sup>Mary Davis, *Sourdough Gold*, (Boston: W.A. Wilde, 1933), p. 49.



lucky as they continued on their way. They were caught in a larger avalanche soon after, and one of the women was killed.<sup>49</sup>

It is perhaps the pictures of men and women climbing the dangerous Chilkoot Pass in an unbroken line up the steep incline of the glacier that represents the image most often associated with the Klondike Gold Rush. There was nothing easy about climbing the Chilkoot Pass, even with steps carved into the ice covered rock. The ascent was described by Lulu Craig whose account is unfortunately clouded by her own sense of inferior capabilities. She wrote that:

Of course one might feel a little nervous when the thought that he was one of a number of a long line, who were ascending this great incline and to falter or deviate a step was to trouble and annoy those behind. But this gave us little or no worry as we were followed by friends, and any way though we might trouble we would not annoy men in this, as we belonged to the weaker sex, and the majority are kind to women when it comes to physical exertion.<sup>50</sup>

It is a shame that Lulu Craig saw her accomplishment in such humbling fashion, for she had just performed a feat no less incredible because she was not carrying supplies. When she climbed the Chilkoot Pass, Ensign Rebecca Ellery carried a seventy pound pack just like the men of the Klondike Brigade. Ellery later posed the question "did we ever get over the pass?" in a letter to her sister, and then noted "of course we did! But

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<sup>49</sup>Canada, Sessional Papers, Number 15, Volume XXXIII, North West Mounted Police, Annual Report of Inspector Belcher, Fort Herchmer, Dawson, November 30, 1898, p. 90.

<sup>50</sup>Lulu Alice Craig, *Glimpses of Sunshine and Shade*, p. 26.

oh! what a climb and a pull and a tug -- sometimes on all hands and feet."<sup>51</sup> At the summit Ellery's group faced a hurricane-like wind, but "nothing daunted", began their descent and on to seven miles of "the worst walking that could possibly be imagined," to their camp where the group offered a prayer of thanksgiving.<sup>52</sup>

For others, there was not only a sense of relief, but an understanding that, no matter what lie ahead, the Pass was the point which marked both a rite of passage, and a point of no return. Martha Black, for example, commented that although she was exhausted "there surged through [her] a thrill of satisfaction."<sup>53</sup> She added that she would never do it again, not for all the gold in the world. Rebecca Schuldenfrei was exhausted by the time she reached Lake Lindemann, and on September 26, 1897, she wrote to her children that "it was so heavy yesterday, that I could not breathe anymore,...I actually gave up and would have turned back (if such a thing were possible for me) as I had no power to move or drag my weary limbs any longer."<sup>54</sup>

The heaviness that Beccy Schuldenfrei described was probably due the high altitude of the Chilkoot Pass rather than any lack of fitness, or poor health. At its peak, the Chilkoot reached an

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<sup>51</sup>Brigadier Gertrude Bloss, "Saga of the Klondike," *Canadian Home Leaguer*, June 1972, p. 4.

<sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup>Black, *My Ninety Years*, p. 30.

<sup>54</sup>Rebecca Schuldenfrei, letters, p. 20.

elevation of 3500 feet. The trail began at Dyea, Alaska, located on the Lynn Canal, and proceeded over the Chilkoot to Lake Lindemann and Lake Bennett in British Columbia. There was a wagon road from Dyea to the Dyea River, which could be crossed except in spring. From the river, a fairly good road took Stampeders to Sheep Camp, so named because it was where shepherds stopped on their way to the upper Yukon. It was also the last place on the upward trail where firewood was available. The ascent to the Chilkoot Pass was 1800 feet in three quarters of a mile, of which the first half mile included 1000 feet. Horses could not be used beyond Sheep Camp.<sup>55</sup>

Flora Shaw told the members of the Royal Colonial Institute in London that her journey along the first part of the trail took three days. She spent one night in the open, and one night in a tent because of an electrical storm. Shaw decided that camping was preferable to the alternative bunkhouse accommodation where "no invidious distinctions of sex [were] maintained and if the number of guests for the night [exceeded] the number of bunks, the sleeper [was] lucky who obtaine[d] a whole berth to himself."<sup>56</sup>

Lilian Oliver called the bunkhouses objectionable, yet mentioned the Wisconsin House kept by a woman from that state, where she "slept on a feather bed made up in a bunk fashion --

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<sup>55</sup>*Klondyke and Yukon Goldfields*, p. 23.

<sup>56</sup>Flora Shaw, "Klondike," *Proceedings of the Royal Colonial Institute*, Volume 30, February, 1899, p. 112.

quite a surprise to [her] tired limbs."<sup>57</sup> For this luxurious accommodation, the charge was fifty cents. Lulu Craig described the curtained off bunks at most "hotels" as similar to sleeping car accommodations,<sup>58</sup> but according to Ella Hall, the Seattle Hotel at Sheep Camp had a sleeping room for women with bunks at two dollars per day.<sup>59</sup> Lulu Craig also stayed at the Seattle House and described the private room as large with beds made of rough timber.<sup>60</sup> The privacy was no doubt appreciated, if only because it meant that some women were able to loosen their corset stays or perform simple ablutions that might have been impossible for them on the open trail.

For most women, however, sharing quarters with men was all that could be arranged. At a hotel at Lake Bennett, John Sinclair found himself sleeping in a stuffy loft with twenty men, and to his surprise, one woman. Sinclair was not aware of her presence until he rolled around among the curtained bunks and discovered the cleanest and softest bunk equipped with feather pillows -- and hair pins. He had found the cook's bed!<sup>61</sup>

Accommodation on the White Pass was no better. Florence Hartshorn travelled the route to join her husband who was a

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<sup>57</sup>Lilian Oliver, "My Klondike Mission," p. 47.

<sup>58</sup>Lulu Alice Craig, *Glimpses of Sunshine and Shade*, p. 21-22.

<sup>59</sup>Ella Hall, *Account of a Trip Made by Ella Hall*, p. 5.

<sup>60</sup>Lulu Craig, *Glimpses of Sunshine and Shade*, p. 30.

<sup>61</sup>John Sinclair to his wife, Bennett, British Columbia, May 30, 1898, p. 18. Provincial Archives of British Columbia.



blacksmith at Log Cabin. She was the only woman in a group of twenty-five, all on horseback; Florence rode the last horse in the pack. The first night out of Skagway, Hartshorn had the ladies' bunkhouse to herself: a tent across the stream from the main roadhouse. Such privacy had drawbacks, for she was lonely, and afraid of the men who were rough and loud. Later, at a roadhouse at the Meadows on the Canada/United States boundary, Hartshorn was denied a room. The female who ran the hostel explained that there were no beds for women, for she assumed that Hartshorn was a prostitute. When the truth became known, however, blankets were tacked up around a bed, and other bunks were robbed of their pillows to make Hartshorn a feather bed.<sup>62</sup>

One of the attractions of the White Pass route was that the trail allowed for the use of pack horses as far as Bennett and Lake Lindemann, which were forty-two miles from the tidewater at Skagway. The highest elevation on the route was 2600 feet. The trail was like a tightrope, a nightmare for horses and men alike, and pack animals died by the thousands. The carcasses were left by the wayside to rot and the stench only added to the uncomfortable conditions. Florence Hartshorn had bought lemons in Skagway "and the blessed rind held close to [her] nose," kept out the odour.<sup>63</sup>

On the trail, the horses in Hartshorn's group were tied head and tails together. She was given a "dandy little pony" for what

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<sup>62</sup>Hartshorn, *Along the Golden Trail*, p. 13.

<sup>63</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 12.

was her first horseback ride along for what was at first a good road. But as for the White Pass trail itself,

it surely was a trail and nothing else. It was very narrow with bluffs on one side, and shelving rocks right down the river...[and she] was afraid they would scrape [her] off the horse and land [her] in the river, which was roaring so [they] were unable to hear anything.<sup>64</sup>

Further along the trail, Hartshorn became separated from her pack train when they had all dismounted as the trail narrowed further still. She was frightened but sure of her bearings, and convinced that she was on the right track, but she recorded in her account of the trip that "on top of that mountain I felt as if I were all alone in the world."<sup>65</sup>

Such feeling of isolation was more eloquently described by Flora Shaw when she told the Royal Colonial Institute about what such a journey entailed. There were physical hardships and obstacles, but the journey also had an effect on the mind. She reminded her listeners that

it is not easy for those who live in civilisation to realise what it means to enter a country where nothing is to be bought; to have to carry everything upon your back; to have no means of locomotion but your own feet; to know that as you walk you are travelling further and further from all bases of supply; and to be aware that if you stray beyond the limits of the time for which you have provided, there is no other end before you but an unrecorded death from starvation in pitiless primeval woods.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>64</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>65</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>66</sup>Flora Shaw, "Klondike," p. 187.

Women coped with the realities of travel on the northern frontier in a variety of ways. As for the trail itself, more than one actually enjoyed the journey. One woman told the *Seattle Daily Times* that the trail was splendid, and that she had never enjoyed a trip so much in her life.<sup>67</sup> Mrs. J.J. McKay took the opportunity to collect and press twenty-six varieties of wild flowers.<sup>68</sup>

Some women, however, dealt with the stress in what was probably considered typical female fashion. They cried. A letter from one Stampedeer to his wife, published by the *Seattle Daily Times*, told how he had seen a woman travelling behind her husband. She was stuck in a mud-hole, crying. The correspondent thought she was homesick, but the woman told him every bone in her body ached from the damp.<sup>69</sup> Martha Black recalled that as she neared the summit of the Chilkoot she wept with exhaustion from the climb, and from the pain of cuts on her legs.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>67</sup>"Skagway Trail is OK," *Seattle Daily Times*, September 13, 1897, p. 18.

<sup>68</sup>Mrs. J.J. McKay, "How I Went Through Chilkoot Pass in the Dead of Winter," *San Francisco Examiner Sunday Magazine*, February 20, 1898, p. 1-2. The apparent contradiction between the title and the wild flowers which only appear in the short summer is explained by the fact that Mrs. McKay began her journey in April of 1897, and arrived in Dawson in July. The "winter" journey was the return trip.

<sup>69</sup>George Ellis to his wife, *Seattle Daily Times*, September 8, 1897, p. 5.

<sup>70</sup>Black, *My Ninety Years*, p. 29.



The option of tears was perhaps a godsend for some women,<sup>71</sup> particularly those women who were travelling with groups of men. When the day's haul was over, the women still had to cook meals and prepare food for the next day's travel. Performing the necessary domestic chores meant added fatigue because the women could not simply relax around the camp. admittedly, men travelling in all male groups had the same duties, but it is likely that men expected better meals and domestic attention when women were present. This attitude was evident by remarks made by Ensign Ellery who was the cook for the Klondike Brigade. She wrote that "the only hard thing [was] to keep enough good food cooked for the men, and some of them want[ed] it like they would get it at home."<sup>72</sup>

Like the feeling expressed by a Seattle man in the *Daily Times* that women stood up to the demands of the trail better than men because they did not have the same "hard-pulling" to do,<sup>73</sup> the attitude of the Salvation Army men reflected the cultural and social expectations of the time. It was difficult for men to accept any change in sexual roles, even on the Klondike Trail. Yet this trail, like other pioneer trails of North America, challenged those roles, as well as the expected modes of

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<sup>71</sup>Men were unlikely to sit down on the Chilkoot Trail and have a good cry, which meant that they were unable to benefit from the emotional safety valve that such a "weakness" would supply.

<sup>72</sup>Gertrude Bloss, "Saga of the Klondike," July/August 1972, p. 4.

<sup>73</sup>H.T. Hannon, "Letter From a Seattle Man," *Seattle Daily Times*, July 17, 1897, p. 5. Letter dated at Lake Bennett, May 3, 1897.

behaviour for women.

Male stampeders reacted to this problem through expressions of surprise at the accomplishments of women on the trail relative to the male experience. Fred Dewey noted in one of his letters home that there was a number of women on the trail, and most of them were doing a man's work.<sup>74</sup> Later, at Sheep Camp, he wrote that he had seen three women travelling alone (together, and without male escort), and hauling their own goods. Dewey added that he "would be ashamed to back down before difficulties that those women surmount[ed]."<sup>75</sup> One sourdough said that he had never seen a woman quitter, either on the trail, or in Dawson, although he saw many of his "own 'strong-sex' break and snap under the press of accident or circumstances."<sup>76</sup>

Women also viewed their experience relative to that of men, perhaps establishing the concept of the Klondike Gold Rush as a male event right from the beginning. "It [was] an undertaking that the average man would not attempt," wrote Ella Hall.<sup>77</sup>

Emma Kelly recorded that she "wanted to see and experience this so-called danger, which men freely court[ed], but which women

<sup>74</sup>Fred Dewey, to his wife, Dyea, Alaska, March 19, 1898. Yukon Archives 81/48.

<sup>75</sup>Fred Dewey, Sheep Camp, March 31, 1898.

<sup>76</sup>Mary Davis, *Sourdough Gold*, p. 58.

<sup>77</sup>Ella Hall, *Account of a Trip to the Klondike*, p. 37. My emphasis.

[could] only read or hear of."<sup>78</sup> Flora Shaw claimed that because she was a woman, her journey was easier; that the trail experience was made less difficult by the kindness of men around her.<sup>79</sup>

No matter how ignorant of the conditions they were about to face, these women were not so unintelligent that they could not anticipate that beyond the "civilized" centres of Wrangel, Skagway, and Dyea, they would be travelling in the company of men suffering from a fever fed by greed. They must have realized that there would be little or no privacy for women to perform even the most rudimentary toilet, and they must have had some notion of the danger posed by the mountain passes and the effort required to cross them. They were on the true frontier -- where savagery met civilization "on the outer edge of the wave,"<sup>80</sup> and where conditions presented the very antithesis of Victorian attitudes of privacy, prudence and propriety. At literally the height of independent and courageous action, they saw themselves as inferior, and a weaker sex, even in the face of adversity and challenge.

It could be that these women did not see these conditions as adverse and challenging. As stampeder Dr. Lydia Clements explained, a "trip to the Klondike may seem appalling, but

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<sup>78</sup>Emma Kelly, "A Woman's Trip to the Klondike," *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, Volume 68, November 1901, p. 629.

<sup>79</sup>Flora Shaw, "Klondike," p. 188.

<sup>80</sup>Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History*, (Huntington, New York: Robert E. Krieger, 1976), p. 3.

[didn't] compare with a journey to Chicago from Boston" eighty years earlier.<sup>81</sup> For some women, desperation may have forced them to use reserves of strength and courage because the opportunities of this frontier offered better alternatives than what they had left behind. Survival, and not idealism, was their motive; these women were not feminists in any sense. They were products of their culture, and kept themselves within what was deemed to be women's sphere whenever possible. Many women, particularly those travelling alone, found it necessary to step out of their perceived realm for at least the time necessary to reach the goldfields, but they still reserved the right to sit down on the mountain and weep.

Expected modes of behaviour for both sexes presented other problems on the Klondike trails. For example, Mrs A. Van Buren was travelling with a party of men that included her husband, and James Hagan, who wrote to the *Seattle Daily Times* that although a woman in the party was not a disadvantage, the men could not leave Mrs. Van Buren alone on the trail. They organized shifts of men to protect her.<sup>82</sup> Whether the men guarded Mrs. Van Buren because they knew she needed protection or because they just thought it was the thing to do, is difficult to determine, for no evidence was found of women being assaulted in any way along the trail. This may have been because everyone was just too

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<sup>81</sup>Dr. Lydia R. Clements, "Fourth of July in the Klondike," *National Magazine*, Volume 10, July 1899, p. 339.

<sup>82</sup>Letter from James Hagan, *Seattle Daily Times*, September 10, 1897, p. 2.



determined to get to the goldfields, but it is more likely that it was due to a lack of candour on the part of the women. These women were unlikely to relate the details of any sexual assault in any publication, and especially in their memoirs.

Given the ratio of males to females and the nature of the frontier, it is difficult to believe that all Stampeders were perfect gentlemen. Presumably among such a large group of unaccompanied men there would be at least verbal propositions, and it is probable that a few might prey on women travelling alone, in the same way that a few of the women who were less than respectable might approach men travelling without women. Yet none of the women indicate any untoward behaviour. In fact, Flora Shaw, travelling alone, insisted that "never once, though the men who passed [her] must have been of the roughest kind, did [she] experience even a momentary fear of incivility."<sup>83</sup> Shaw also noted that men often paused to walk by her side for ten minutes as a pleasant interlude on their journey. Protective attitudes were also official in nature.

After several drownings at the White Horse Rapids, Colonel Steele issued the order that no women or children were to travel through the rapids in boats. He felt that "[I]f they [were] strong enough to come to the Klondyke, they can walk the five miles of grassy bank to the foot of the White Horse."<sup>84</sup> Men

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<sup>83</sup>Flora Shaw, "Klondike," p. 189.

<sup>84</sup>Colonel Sam Steele, *Forty Years in Canada*, p. 311. Up until this point, about 150 boats had been wrecked in the rapids, and ten men had drowned.

were allowed to die in the dangerous waters of the Yukon in their quest for gold, but the law had to protect women against their own idiocy.

Travel by water, whether up the Yukon River to Dawson from St. Michael, Alaska, on a river steamer, or across the lakes and down river in hand-built boats and scows presented unique problems for the Klondike Stampeders. Those who arrived at Lake Bennett and Lake Lindemann from the mountain passes had to build their own boats, and few had the necessary skills or equipment. As one woman put it, "sounds easy enough, but it sure wasn't."<sup>85</sup> Most of the women who waited at the rough camps for the ice to break up cooked and cleaned for men who were building boats. It was the first taste of frontier living for some women, and living in a tent meant that for those used to more civilized society "conventionality was laid aside, and at all times...friends were welcome."<sup>86</sup> It was at the lakes that many women travelling alone joined up with other small groups to share the expense of boat building, or paid passage on a boat.

When the ice finally moved out of the lakes on May 29th, 1898, more than seven thousand boats of every description sailed for Dawson. One of the boats carried two women who had made a

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<sup>85</sup>Belinda Mulrooney, quoted by Stephen Franklin, "She Was the Richest Woman in the Klondike," *Weekend Magazine*, Volume 12, Number 27, 1962, p. 2.

<sup>86</sup>Lulu Craig, *Glimpses of Sunshine and Shade*, p. 31.

sail from undergarments sewn together.<sup>87</sup> For some women, travelling on scows behind boats rowed and sailed by the men, this part of the trip afforded the privacy they lacked on the trail. For Lulu Craig and her sister, a little cabin was built on their barge for their use only.<sup>88</sup> For Ethel Berry, a tent was erected on the provision scow.<sup>89</sup>

Some women just sat and enjoyed the sail. Others, like Lilian Oliver, soon bored of sitting still and took a turn at the oars.<sup>90</sup> Belinda Mulrooney, who would become one of the best known women of the Klondike, and probably the richest, used the opportunity to wash the clothes of the men in her boat. She tied the clothes to a line and dragged them behind.<sup>91</sup> The idyllic conditions of the sail across the lakes soon ended, however, as all the boaters eventually had to face Miles Canyon and a whirlpool, and two sets of rapids beyond. The river presented a formidable obstacle, but until they actually heard the thunder of the churning water and saw what lay ahead, the Stampeders were ill-prepared for the devastation that resulted in Steele's directive.

The trip up river from St. Michael was tame in contrast to

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<sup>87</sup>Pierre Berton, *Klondike: The Life and Death of the Last Great Gold Rush*, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1958), p. 279.

<sup>88</sup>Lulu Craig, *Glimpses of Sunshine and Shade*, p. 42.

<sup>89</sup>Leonard, *The Gold Fields of the Yukon*, p. 158.

<sup>90</sup>Oliver, "My Klondike Mission," p. 50.

<sup>91</sup>Stephen Franklin, "She Was the Richest Women in the Klondike," p. 2.



the down-river journey. This was considered the "rich man's route" because it required little personal effort beyond patience; all travel was by water.<sup>92</sup> Ocean-going steamships from Seattle and Victoria took passengers to St. Michael, Alaska, where they transferred to paddle wheelers. The trip took between thirty-five and forty days, and the cost was \$300 for first-class passage, and \$250 for second-class.<sup>93</sup> Fares included meals and berths, and carriage for one hundred and fifty pounds of baggage. A few concessions were made to women travelling this route on some of the newer ships built expressly for Klondike passengers. For example, the Blue Star Line advertised that on board the steamer *Charles Nelson*, there was a gentleman's smoking room and a ladies music room.<sup>94</sup> Ladies' boudoirs were offered on a few river steamers like the *Morgan City*, but for the most part, "berths" meant exactly that.<sup>95</sup>

Mary Hitchcock and Edith Van Buren travelled to Dawson via the all-water route. Their "cabin" was a tent like structure built upon a barge, but the two women accepted the primitive accommodation with some spirit. They often went without sleep because of the noise, endured petty thefts, and obnoxious

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<sup>92</sup>The Yukon River is ice free for only about three months of the year, which meant travel plans had to be made accordingly.

<sup>93</sup>*Klondyke and Yukon Goldfields via the CPR*, p. 26. Fares from Victoria/Vancouver to Skagway/Dyea were about one tenth this cost.

<sup>94</sup>*Seattle Daily Times*, June 14, 1898, p. 9.

<sup>95</sup>*Seattle Daily Times*, April 4, 1898, p. 3. Advertisement for Ladue Yukon Transportation Company.

passengers. Hitchcock wrote that there were "plenty of 'kickers' who complain[ed] at getting so little for three hundred dollars."<sup>96</sup> The trip was long and tedious. Supplies were often scarce, and had to be secured along the route, but no one had to carry packs, or brave icy glaciers and vicious rivers. On July 17th, 1898, Hitchcock recorded that as the *Leah* steamed slowly up river, the women passengers were "in the dining-room sewing; men [were] on deck with rifles, waiting for something at which to shoot!"<sup>97</sup>

The *Leah* steamed slowly because for 1700 miles the Yukon River is a shallow, braided stream, where low water levels often made navigation impossible for vessels taking gold-seekers to Dawson. In September of 1897, the *Alice* carried four of the Sisters of Saint Ann on a fruitless journey to Dawson from their mission at Holy Cross, Alaska. On board the *Alice*, Sister Mary Joseph Calasanctius kept a journal as the steamer moved slowly and hopelessly up river, where Father William Judge awaited the sisters at St. Mary's Hospital. For Sister Mary Joseph, the slow travel provided her an opportunity to visit with some of her old mission pupils, but she recorded that to keep busy, the nuns prayed, sang, read, talked, wrote, knit and studied. She added: "[W]e take now and then a race on deck!"<sup>98</sup> It was a very

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<sup>96</sup>Mary Hitchcock, *Two Women in the Klondike*, p. 69.

<sup>97</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 78.

<sup>98</sup>Sister Mary Joseph Calasanctius, *Journal written aboard the steamer Alice*, September 15, 1897, p. 6-7.

different Klondike trail.

The Sisters of Saint Ann were forced to return to their mission at Nulatto, and did not arrive in Dawson until 1898, with the main body of Stampeders. By the summer of that year, Dawson had started to develop into a busy community, its docks and warehouses were teeming with the activity of gold seekers and hucksters. Upon her arrival, Mary Hitchcock compared Dawson to the promised land, and she noted that nothing she had seen or heard compared with the reality of what she christened "Circus Town".<sup>99</sup> Flora Shaw was more reflective. Her dispatch to the *Times* described the green and purple hills that slope to where the Klondike and the Yukon meet, but the practical journalist suggested that the first question that came to mind was "is the gold really here?"<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup>Mary Hitchcock, *Two Women in the Klondike*, p. 99.

<sup>100</sup>Flora Shaw, "Letters From Canada," *The Times*, London, September 19, 1898, p. 8.

**Natural Resource Issues and Political Concerns  
Regarding the Boundary**

**Albert Peter**

ALBERT PETER

Good afternoon, I'd like to thank the people here for inviting me and allowing me to share some of our concerns which we're sure are common to all people. I'd like to talk about two major issues that probably have been touched on earlier in the conference, and were mentioned by the previous speaker.

The first issue I'd like to talk about is the Yukon River salmon. Most of you will be aware that there are ongoing negotiations between Canada and the U.S., the State of Alaska and the Yukon. There has been involvement of the local people only after the local people put pressure on our political leaders. The concern was that those are the people directly affected and impacted by resource management and declining stock numbers. People at the community level have firsthand knowledge and can demonstrate the seriousness that the stocks are in. They also have some insight and local knowledge about what can be done to try and preserve and enhance the declining resources. Aboriginal people in the past, prior to political boundaries, had a cooperative relationship and shared information and knowledge with each other regardless of which part of the country they lived and worked in.

You see the stocks declining not only in numbers, but in size. The concerns we have there are dealing with political time frames, in terms of elections, which vary from two years to four years depending on which level of political office we're talking about. The salmon cycle varies from five to seven years, so we see an



immediate conflict there between mandates and the reality of the wildlife in terms of their own natural cycle. The Porcupine caribou herd was touched briefly on. There we have a classic conflict between development and critical habitat area of a natural resource. We then get caught between various political jurisdictions. We have Alaska, the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories, and both federal governments on the American side and the Canadian side. We have various levels of interest that have to be addressed as well as the aboriginal groups in all three political jurisdictions. Again it is the community of people that are impacted primarily and they have some of the insight and knowledge that is required in order to effectively manage the wildlife and to care for the land. We see that there is a need for cooperation, not only with groups within a given political jurisdiction, but as well across other lines.

The animals do not recognize boundaries, they travel freely back and forth. They use different parts of the land in different jurisdictions, and yet as the previous speaker mentioned there is a lack of core native cooperation. Most initiatives are reactive instead of being proactive. There seems to be a limited vision as far as what we as people can do to support the wildlife and the natural resources that we all depend on, whether we live on it day-to-day or just like to know that it's there for future generations. The land has healing powers that can assist us as people in becoming stronger and more open to each other and better allow us to understand the land and resources.



I believe that aboriginal people and local citizens have the ability to provide the consistency regardless of political time frames. These people are there regardless of which party or which person is in office. The same people are there on a community level. They have the understanding and the ability to work together to facilitate the joint process which can be transferred across any political jurisdiction if the will is there. There must be the political will to do something and the information in terms of what the opportunities and the options open to them are. As I mentioned before, the aboriginal relationship existed prior to the drawing of any boundaries, and in the case of the Yukon I refer not only to the Yukon-Alaskan border but to the Yukon-B.C., and the Yukon-Northwest Territories. Those all have an impact on community and daily life. The freedom to continue our traditional relationship still exists today. There are some complications and limited restrictions but generally the people have continued to exercise their past freedoms.

We see it as a way, not only of reinforcing each other, but of exchanging information and ideas on some of the immediate concerns and issues that we are faced with. We see that the local people's role is increasing in not only the political arena, but also the developmental arena, where we are taking a more active role. This provides us with the ability to combine not only the traditional knowledge but, also utilizing modern information and technology. We can try and combine the old and the new. The common concern, the common issue, is the land and the resources and the people who

depend upon them. We see that our approach is more flexible and allows the flexibility to fulfil your responsibilities. As well, it creates other spin-off benefits, the actual relationship between peoples is strengthened and enhanced. We see a need for planning, coordination, and long term vision. As well we see a need to evaluate how we have done as managers, how we've done fulfilling our responsibilities and making adjustments as needed. Governments have a role not only to facilitate that discussion but to support and provide us with ongoing communication links between ourselves and other people, regardless of where they live in the northern part of the world. The environment is similar. There are differences in regulations and institutions but the issues are common. I believe that we have an opportunity to enlighten the world and to provide some direction for the future. In the Yukon, the Yukon Indian people have tried to use the land claims forum to get this message across. This advantage will be carried on into the future.

It's an opportunity that does not exist everywhere. We have taken the initiative to hold out our hand and ask people to join us. We have a process that has never been tried in the world. It is called unity negotiations and if you break that word down you come to unity. This is what we have to offer the people as well as the traditional knowledge that our elders are storing for us and eagerly waiting to share. But we have to listen. Thank you.

**The Border as Constraint:  
The Need for New Approaches in Transboundary  
Natural Resource Management**

**Stephan Fuller**

STEPHAN FULLER

The title of my comments this afternoon , I think, falls into the same category as Mr. Neufelds earlier about having written the title six or eight months ago and waiting until somewhat later to go into detail. Both Albert and Glenn have set the stage for some of the comments I will make this afternoon. I am going to use language that is not particularly rigorous from the point of the historian. I am going to talk very loosely about Yukon-Alaskan relations and when I'm speaking about certain senses in the Yukon it may sound technocratic, but when I'm speaking about the Yukon circumstances, I'm anticipating a successful outcome to the land claims. I believe that the process is workable and will have some very beneficial results.

One of the opportunities that being a bureaucrat provides, particularly if you are in a policy unit of a government department, is that when the ministers office or people in other departments can't figure out what to do about a particular document that may be loosely related to their jurisdiction they usually send it over to another department and say "I think you might be interested in this". So in a policy function you get to see everything that gets produced and that nobody knows what to do with. So, in my office you will see stacks of reports. You will see reports related to caribou, moose, fish and a variety of things that come from a variety of places. The deputy minister or the member says "provide appropriate response" or "what should we do

about this?" If you view it sectorally you get a real interesting office. It reflects very much the approach that agencies, environmental agencies in particular, take in resource management. That's not because they lack vision all the time, it's because of the bureaucracy and the paper load.

About a year ago when I was sorting through this stuff, and I finally got some walls and an office, I sat back and said "maybe there is a better way to organize all this". I began to realize if you began to look either page by page, or chapter by chapter, or even document by document, and tried to do some kind of cross-sectoral analysis, you began to realize that there were an awful lot of these documents that related and illustrated or discussed, at least parenthetically, issues with Alaska. I started making a list, and it got longer and longer, until I had a legal pad full of these issues. Very little attention gets paid to it because of other bureaucratic priorities. I am going to take you down, very quickly, to the border.

We have certainly heard about the offshore boundary dispute. Related to that boundary dispute are sales of petroleum rights, and a number of pollution related issues. Most of us are aware of the Northern Yukon National Park and the ANWAR debate. What gets lost in that debate are a number of other things besides the Porcupine caribou. There are a number of procedural issues related to international relations, and there are at least three or four other species that are considered to be at risk. These includes muskoxen, polar bears, migratory birds and a number of other border



species. If you move further south there are emerging issues around the extension and consolidation of the Northern Yukon National Park. There are issues related to the management and research of some of the natural areas as they are defined in the U.S. under the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service. In particular there is interest from federal agencies in the U.S. in getting Canadian cooperation across the border. If we move into the Ogilvies we run into issues related to the transborder enforcement of game laws. There are issues and research opportunities and lots of good sectoral research for geologists, fur bear biologists and that sort of stuff. Albert has drawn your attention to fisheries-- the allocation and use of the fish in the Yukon river. There are a whole series of issues centred around water quality and the potential of those issues. In that area you can get into concerns about the Forty mile caribou herd recovery and woodland caribou in the whole region generally. Moving into the national parks, one individual who is now with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature once referred to the area between the highway and both governments national parks as the Serengetti of the Yukon because of the wealth of wildlife in that region. There is in fact very little attention being paid to the long term management of that area-- at least today. I think that you are aware that there are several types of protected areas in the knot of mountains down there. There are a series of emerging issues in the Tatshenshini range, most of which you know about, related to recreational management. Beyond that there are



a number of mineral opportunities in Canada, particularly a series of issues related to social impact assessment, transportation infrastructure and transborder movement of those minerals. Many of you have heard of Windy Craggy deposits and the Mayo Rusty mountain deposits. The Yukon is going to be faced with tripling or quadrupling ore truck traffic on its way to tidewater. To make a long story short, as you move down the border, you know the issues, I think Glenn has reviewed rather nicely the problems that the border produces.

So what. I have given you a litany, a list of issues. In the past we dealt with them on an ad hoc basis, we form some sort of interjurisdictional committee, we deal with it, and come up with some sort of solution. There are a number of problems with that, it is short sighted and it is also extremely inefficient. There are limited resources to deal with these things. It also loses us opportunities in respect to long term economic development on both sides of the border. I was thinking of trying to link some of the issues into what I think is a major opportunity presented to us by one of the United Nations agencies looking at a model for transborder cooperation.

Mr. Neufelds recitation of the comments made by the Chicago newspaper struck home because two weeks ago I was up one of those glaciers behind those mountains that were referred to as being a walk in time, with no movement no light, no nothing. We were skiing on the two major glaciers in that particular area that flow together. One is called the Mead, one is called the Denver. We

were at a juncture and starting to ski north back into Canada and began to feel this phenomenon known as Glacier Lassitude. You get it when you are skiing uphill too long with weight on your back. It was mid afternoon so we stopped for some lunch. The clouds were boiling around and we became absolutely surrounded by this cloud. Somebody said "where are we?", and I said "well, let's get the compass out". So we did. That does not tell you very much, unfortunately, when you can't see anything. Suddenly we realized we were smack dab in the middle of the Alaska-B.C. border. Then someone asked whether the glacier was advancing or retreating and I tried to explain that we didn't really have enough information, but that it probably moved back and forth between the two countries, but there is no research network to gather exact data. The conversation inevitably went on to the quality of the snow and ice that we were eating and drinking while we were up there, and of course one of the research opportunities that are provided from the glaciological sciences is some kind of record of transborder pollution and some kind of record of atmospheric quality. There is a booklet, and it is a good one, about the glacier ice that is falling from Alaska into B.C. and back into Alaska and does contain a record of a number of major transborder, international events related to air quality and arctic pollution and all that kind of stuff. There is a broader reason for Alaska-Yukon cooperation. The point is, and I think Albert has made his point quite nicely, that there is a bigger picture that goes beyond the nature of that border. It goes on the fact that this region is not well

represented in terms of global environmental monitoring systems and there is an opportunity. I am going to skip forward for a second here because there are a number of things that Glenn drew your attention to. There are certainly some interesting ways we can improve transborder cooperation. The Alaskans are certainly well advanced in autonomous identifying research in natural areas. But we need to do more than that, we need to be linked into some of these local environmental systems and there is a little bit of work that is being done on that. I'll just skip back for a second and say that the United Nations Environmental Science and Cultural Organization, UNESCO, has for fifteen years been establishing a series of sites around the planet in an attempt to link together and do several things. One is basic conservation, two is research and education, three is local economic development and in recent years, at least, they have expanded that list of opportunities to include the use of traditional aboriginal knowledge and experience in the Hinterland regions. These things are called biosphere reserves. Biosphere reserves present an interesting opportunity and unfortunately they are a term reserved for; they conjure up parks and things that people tend to think of as limiting economic development opportunity and limiting local involvement. Of course, in the Yukon we have some continuing debate about Kluane national park and involvement and stuff like that. Well, there was a similar problem some years ago with Waterton and Glacier National Park and the transborder between Alberta and B.C. and Montana. The way they have solved their problem there, to some extent, is by

using the UNESCO model. Changing it a little bit, adapting it to local circumstances and having local people involved in the management of the area around it, that type of thing. Now this reserve has proved that the UNESCO model and stuff like that has to be adapted locally, but it provides interesting opportunities to link local peoples protected areas the opportunities for using that protected area for research as well as monitoring the protected areas differences from the area around it. And, of course, it links us to these international environmental systems. The way that this system has been set up around the planet is that there are three in this part of the world, one for the tundra, one for the taiga, and one for the sitkan province, or what's called the northern sand. If these areas are represented in our system, I quite honestly believe that the biosphere reserve model could work quite nicely. Some kind of cooperative model could be used that allows the people of Old Crow, Arctic Village, and Kaktavik to be involved in management of those protected areas with opportunities in the central part of the Yukon. I'm not sure how they are dealing with Alaska yet, but there is certainly an opportunity there because the Alaskan government has already nominated Glacier Bay as a biosphere reserve. It is a nice interesting set of protected areas there in Glacier Bay; Wrangell-St. Elias, and Kluane and the zone of cooperation around those transborder international managing committees. The involvement of local people-- aboriginal people in the management of those areas-- can transcend alot of those individual differences over the particular

resources. We can have transborder ecosystems that are partly protected and partly developed and alot of cooperation - holistically, to use Glenn's word. I think I'd better call it quits. There is alot of information available on these things and anyone who is interested in more specifics, please contact me. Thank you.



**Northern Frontiers:  
Political Development and Policy Making  
in Alaska and the Yukon**

**Michael Pretes**



MICHAEL PRETES:

I'm not a historian but a political scientist, and so I don't have a story to tell you but rather just some ideas on the nature of the border between Alaska and the Yukon. A border is a political construct dividing a region into two different political jurisdictions which have two different political systems. Because these political systems are so different it's not unusual that this will lead to very different political institutions in both the U.S. and Canada, and more specifically in Alaska and the Yukon. Before I talk about these differences I would like to talk about some of the similarities in the Alaska/Yukon area.

These political jurisdictions can be said to constitute a single region. They both rely on a single commodity of a primary nature, in other words a natural resource, and they are both involved in capital intensive industries, in terms of mineral extraction and petroleum extraction. These industries rely heavily on outside capital and technology and both Alaska and the Yukon can be said to have jurisdiction but very weak authority. What this refers to, jurisdiction meaning legal right over a territory to govern it and authority being the ability to penetrate a society and effect changes in behaviour. This is despite the fact that Alaska is a state; it still has a very weak authority because the government is so new. The final similarity is that both Alaska and the Yukon are parts of a federal state.

There are two major differences that I want to speak about.

The first of these is the difference in the federal systems in Canada and the U.S. and the impact this has in Alaska and the Yukon. The second is the nature of the different commodities, mining in the Yukon and petroleum extraction in Alaska, and the impact this has on development. There are other differences one can think of as well, political culture being one. It is often suggested that America has a much more individualistic political culture with an emphasis on free enterprise and individualism, while Canada on the other hand having a more collectivist system with the emphasis on the common good. The cliché goes that America was opened up by men, Canada was opened up by corporations.

The first of the differences I want to discuss are the differences in the federal systems. The U.S. can be characterized as having a highly centralized federal system, meaning that there is quite a difference in the authority or power of the subnational jurisdiction (the states) and the national jurisdiction (the federal government). In the U.S., the federal government is far more influential and powerful than are the states so there is quite a great degree of relative influence. Canada, however, has a far more decentralized federal system, meaning that the powers or authority of the provinces vis a vis that of the national government are much more equal. This can be evidenced through such things as the first ministers conference where you have all the representatives of the eleven jurisdictions meeting together as first ministers. It would be difficult to imagine the president of the U.S. condescending to meet with the governors on the same sort

of level. Curiously enough the U.S. originated as a decentralized system because the founding fathers were worried about having a central authority. They thought that's what got them into trouble in the first place. This evolved into a very centralized system. On the other hand Canada started out as a very centralized system and went the other direction. This is because the founding fathers of Canada had saw what had happened to the U.S., mainly civil war, because of this decentralized system and decided this was to be avoided. That is why the centralized system was established. This also evolved over time into a decentralized system which has the potential, incidentally, for greater resource conflict.

The differences in status between Alaska and the Yukon is mainly that Alaska is a state and participates equally with the other states, and it has full constitutional participation in terms of power. The Yukon, on the other hand, is a territory and is centrally controlled in Ottawa. The Yukon, for example, cannot amend its own constitution, unlike the provinces. The Yukon has a far greater dependence, in the political sense, and can be said to be more politically underdeveloped. It doesn't have the ability to control its resource revenues and their disposition and to make critical decisions about resource use. On the other hand Alaska is far less dependant after achieving statehood in fifty-nine, because as a state it can control its own resources and their rate of development.

The second difference is the difference in the two primary commodities in Alaska and the Yukon, mainly mining in the Yukon and

petroleum products in Alaska. The argument here is that different commodities lead to the establishment of different political structures in terms of different goal formations, types of public institutions, and locus of decision making. These different political structures then lead to different development in terms of different rates of development in both of these two areas. I'll speak a bit about the differences between a petroleum based system and that which is based on mining. There have been certain features of a petroleum based economy that have been described as being very unique and very different than that of a mining economy. Petroleum based economies have been called petro states. Petro states are more dependant on a single economy than are mineral states. That is one of the major differences right there. Another difference is that petro states have a greater degree of capital intensive industry; that is, petroleum is much more capital intensive than mining. A third difference is that oil is depletable at a much faster rate than minerals. A fourth difference is petroleum is a basis of about a fourth of the worlds energy and therefore it is capable of generating extraordinary rents or windfall profits-- much more so than minerals are. Oil prices fluctuate much more widely. Another difference is that, normally speaking, in a global sense, the wealth of a petro state precludes the state government or the government in question, giving it a rontier position.

These particular features that differentiate a petro state from a mineral state create a condition that some economists and

political scientists call the dutch disease, because it was first applied to a case in the Netherlands. Dutch disease refers to a case in where you have the development of an oil economy, which is a booming sector. This leads to a situation in which you have the other sectors of the economy lagging behind. This results in a structural bias against industrialization and an oil elite aristocracy that attempts to block any diversification because of their vested interests. This then leads to a greater dependence on a single resource. In this sense oil can be said to have a negative effect. It is risky because the potential for development might be greater because of surplus windfall rents, but on the other hand the potential for underdevelopment is also greater, and the potential for dependency is complicated because of these factors. Another difference is that rapid development, such as found in petro states, leads to weak authority as I defined it earlier. In other words the state having achieved political development in such a short time lacks the authority that is acquired over years of development. A problem arises because it has been suggested that if the provinces or states have control over their own natural resources this leads to a misallocation of rents. This however seems to have been largely avoided in Alaska curiously, probably because Alaska was able to sterilize and externalize it's rents through the permanent fund. It has also been suggested that perhaps, speculatively speaking, Alaska's statehood might have been inhibited if oil had been discovered much earlier, rather than ten years after her statehood.



This leads me to suggest two possible options for the Yukon, short of provincehood, in terms of a revenue sharing agreement. The first of these is the revenue sharing such as has been suggested in the northern accord that is currently in progress, modeled after the U.S., in which the majority of the lands are owned by the federal government. However the revenues from the resources on these lands are divided equally between the state and the federal government under the mineral lands act of 1976 and the Bureau of Land Managements "organic act" of 1976. The states receive fifty-fifty distribution and Alaska actually receives a larger share because of a separate legislative agreement based on the idea that it's economy is underdeveloped. A second possibility is the allocation of land to the territory. When Alaska became a state it was granted over one hundred million acres as state land. In the Yukon however there is a lack of crown land. The Yukon has no crown right as there is a crown right of provinces and a crown right of Canada. However, precedents do exist for the establishment of crown in the right of a territory. The old Northwest Territories did have a crown.

In conclusion, to stress what was the primary point of this discussion, is that the different federal systems and the different commodity base of Alaska and the Yukon have led to different political structures and policy responses on the part of both governments.



**Multi-Sector Institutions  
in the ABCY Region**

**Glenn T. Gray**

**Borderlands: A Conference On  
The Alaska-Yukon Border**

**Whitehorse, Yukon  
2-4 June 1989**

Glenn T. Gray:

Multi-Sector Institutions in the ABCY Region

Cooperation between Alaska and Canada occurs through a complex network of interactions. Cross-border exchanges take place between public and private entities. Corporations, interest groups and professional organizations link Alaskans and northern Canadians. Federal, subnational (provincial-state-territorial) and local government officials also cooperate across the border. Many institutions have been created to aid transboundary cooperation for specific issues within individual sectors. Cooperation occurs between people concerned with issues relating to transportation, petroleum development, fish and wildlife, research, health, education, and tourism. Few mechanisms exist to address multiple issues. The purpose of this paper is to discuss existing government institutions capable of coordinating issues from more than one sector.

The international frontier along the Alaska-Canada border forms a transboundary region which will be referred to as the Alaska-British Columbia-Yukon Region or for convenience, the ABCY Region. During the twentieth century, international relations in this region have evolved from acrimony to the relative harmony of today. Negative feelings by Canadians after the Alaska border settlement have been replaced for the most part by a willingness to work together. Prior to Alaskan statehood in 1959, cooperation occurred primarily through the two federal governments. Since that time,

subnational relations have steadily increased.

Although international relations have improved, both maritime borders are in contention. The international border in the waters between Southeast Alaska and Northwest B.C. is in dispute. The boundary again enters contention in the maritime waters of the Beaufort Sea.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the rest of this paper, multi-sector government institutions will be addressed in more detail. An overview of federal institutions will be followed by a discussion of subnational and local level cooperation. Lastly, recommendations for future institutions will be proposed.

#### Federal Multi-Sector Institutions

National institutions concerned with Alaskan-Canadian relations are important because 70% of Alaska<sup>2</sup> and 98% of the Yukon is managed by the federal governments. This level of cooperation is less important for B.C. because less than one percent of B.C. is federally managed.<sup>3</sup> Many international issues fall into federal

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<sup>1</sup> John Carroll, Environmental Diplomacy. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1986).

<sup>2</sup> Alaska. Alaska Blue Book 1987. (Juneau: State of Alaska, 1987). Once State and Native land selections are completed, the federal government will manage even less land.

<sup>3</sup> British Columbia. British Columbia Land Statistics. (Victoria: Ministry of Lands, Parks and Housing, 1985).

jurisdiction regardless of the amount of land the subnational governments may manage.

Most topics of federal concern between Alaska and Canada are addressed by the U.S. Department of State and External Affairs Canada. These two agencies work with other federal and subnational agencies during international negotiations. The U.S. Department of State and External Affairs Canada address northern issues such as defense, transportation corridor planning, power development and arctic sovereignty.

The Interparliamentary Group is another federal forum for discussing multiple issues. Representatives of the U.S. Congress and the Canadian Parliament have met every year since 1959. No votes are taken at these meetings and discussions are off-the-record.<sup>4</sup> The 1979 meeting was held in Anchorage, Alaska.

#### Subnational Multi-Sector Institutions

Although the federal governments have primary responsibility for international negotiations, it is not clear to what degree subnational jurisdictions may cooperate before it becomes a federal responsibility. The B.C. government may enter into agreements

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<sup>4</sup> Roger Swanson. Intergovernmental Perspectives on the Canada-U.S. Relationship. (New York: New York University Press, 1978).

within areas it has jurisdiction.<sup>5</sup> U.S. states are constitutionally prohibited from entering into international compacts but some relaxation of this provision was granted during the 74th and 88th Congresses.<sup>6</sup>

Multi-sector cooperation at the subnational level is primarily expressed through two forums. First, trilateral meetings between the leaders of Alaska, B.C. and the Yukon Territory have occurred since 1960. Second, the Yukon Legislative Assembly and the Alaska State Legislature have met annually since 1982.

#### Trilateral Heads-of-Government Meetings

During the first state legislature, Alaska created the International Development Commission.<sup>7</sup> The purpose of this commission was to explore opportunities for joint economic development. The first meeting between Alaska's Governor Egan, B.C.'s Premier W.A.C. Bennett and Yukon's Commissioner F.H. Collins occurred in 1960. Two additional meetings were held in the 1960s

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<sup>5</sup> A more detailed discussion about the extent provinces and states may cooperate without federal approval may be found in Richard Leach, Donald Walker and Thomas Allen Ledy. "Province-State Transboundary Relations: A Preliminary Assessment." Canadian Public Administration. Vol. 16 No. 1 (1973).

<sup>6</sup> See Roger Swanson. Intergovernmental Perspectives on the Canada-U.S. Relationship. (New York: New York University Press, 1978.)

<sup>7</sup> Alaska State Legislature. Creation of the International Development Commission. Chapter 61. (1959).

to further explore opportunities for joint economic development planning. Hydroelectric projects, transportation planning and tourism promotion were discussed. Although it was a subnational initiative, representatives of the federal government and private citizens attended these meetings. It has been suggested that the primary purpose of these meetings was to pressure the federal governments to act on subnational concerns. B.C.'s Premier, W.A.C. Bennett, participated in the meetings to assist his goal of annexing the Yukon Territory.<sup>8</sup> The Representatives from the Yukon were reluctant to become active participants in the conferences because of the territorial status of the Yukon.

Interest in the conferences declined for two reasons. First, the meetings failed to pressure the federal governments to act on subnational concerns. Second, a personality clash developed between Premier W.A.C. Bennett and Alaska's new Governor Hickel. There is some speculation that B.C. purposely kept a Prince Rupert ferry out of service to force the U.S. to change restrictive shipping legislation. The two leaders ended up speaking to each other only through news releases. As a result of this conflict, trilateral meetings were suspended for over a decade.

B.C. and Alaska remained at odds even after Governor Egan was reelected. Premier W.A.C. Bennett refused to grant a right of way

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<sup>8</sup> For an excellent discussion of the early Trilateral Heads-of-Government meetings see Peter Johannson. "A Study in Regional Strategy: The Alaska-British Columbia-Yukon Conferences." BC Studies. Vol. 28. Winter (1976).



for the Skagway-Carcross road (Klondike Highway) in 1972 to the chagrin of Alaskan and Yukon officials. Relations began to improve when Premier Barrett was elected. The three subnational leaders met in Victoria to sign an agreement for construction of the Skagway-Carcross road. No additional trilateral meetings, however, were held during Premier Barrett's leadership.

During 1975, a group of representatives from the Yukon visited Juneau. During this visit officials decided to hold regular meetings between Alaska and the Yukon. It was later agreed that B.C. should be invited to join these meetings. A coordinating committee made up of senior-level bureaucrats was created to deal with the logistics of the trilateral meetings and to complete low-level negotiations. Trilateral meetings in the 1970s covered such topics as fishery allocation, tourism, oil and gas development and transportation. The meetings occurred regularly and were well documented.

During the 1980s, trilateral meetings continued. Although they have been labelled as annual meetings, they often were postponed and only five meetings were held. The 1988 meeting led to an agreement to study the feasibility of linking power grids and to initiate a joint tourism marketing program for the Alaska Highway. The meetings of the 1980s were less well documented and occurred less often than during the 1970s.

Although trilateral meetings provide a forum for discussing

many different issues, the agendas encourage discussion of each topic in isolation. Few examples of proactive planning occurred after the 1960s. Individuals have, however, called for a broader outlook. During the 1976 meeting Commissioner A.M. Pearson stated that the:

[T]he Northwest corner of North America, consisting of Alaska, Yukon and British Columbia can be viewed as a compact economic region with dynamic potential for economic development and containing the resources, entrepreneurship and the initiative to carry it forward. Developmental planning in any areas should not be restricted to the confines of existing political boundaries which are economically meaningless.<sup>9</sup>

During the 1978 meeting, Yukon Government Leader C.W. Pearson called for more discussion about the:

trans-border aspect of policy developments with respect to management of entire eco-systems such as the Northern Alaska/Yukon area, transportation systems, sports and cultural exchanges and pipeline related matters.<sup>10</sup>

Recommendations for annual meetings and a broader outlook have not resulted in more structure for the trilateral meetings.

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<sup>9</sup> Dr. A.M. Pearson. "Address to the Meeting of the Premier of British Columbia, Governor of Alaska and Commissioner of the Yukon." (Juneau, 1976).

<sup>10</sup> See Yukon Territory. "Minutes of the 24 January 1978 Heads of State meeting in Whitehorse." (Whitehorse, 1978).

### Legislative Exchanges

Annual meetings between the Alaska State Legislature and the Yukon Territorial Assembly provide another subnational, multi-sector avenue for cooperation. These meetings began in 1982 with a joint meeting between Alaska, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. Each year since then, except for one, exchanges of delegations between Alaska and the Yukon have rotated between Juneau and Whitehorse.<sup>11</sup> Members of the delegation discuss different approaches to similar problems such as delivery of services to remote locations, alcoholism, and education issues. They also discuss controversial issues such as the possible petroleum development of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the allocation of certain salmon fisheries. Interest in Canada by Alaskan legislators has increased in the past two years. There were more references to Canada in legislative committee meeting minutes between 1987 and 1988 than in the previous four years.<sup>12</sup>

### Local Multi-Sectoral Institutions

Local level multi-sector cooperation between Canada and Alaska has occurred through meetings between Juneau and Whitehorse.

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<sup>11</sup> Randy Phillips. Legislator to the Alaska House of Representatives. Interview with Author. (Juneau, 1988).

<sup>12</sup> Committee minutes of the Alaska State Legislature may be accessed by the general public through use of the Alaska Legislative Computer System. The public may use computer terminals in the Capital in Juneau or in any one of the seventeen Legislative Information Offices throughout the State.

During 1988 Juneau's Economic Development Council met with members of the Whitehorse City Council to discuss matters of mutual concern. These meetings resulted in recommendations for more exchange between the University of Alaska and Whitehorse Community College. It was also suggested that direct mail service be instituted between Alaska and the Yukon as well as better transportation connections. The two municipal governments also agreed to increase trade between the two cities. A proposal to make Whitehorse and Juneau sister cities is currently being evaluated.

#### Conclusion

Cooperation between Alaska, B.C. and the Yukon is generally episodic. It usually occurs in reaction to specific issues within individual sectors. Interest in transboundary cooperation waxes and wanes. Its success is often dependent upon the interest of the leaders. There are few forums capable of coordinating cooperation between different sectors. There are even fewer instances of proactive planning.

Different levels of cross-border cooperation provide checks and balances. Federal level cooperation occurs for issues of national interest or in areas where a federal presence is constitutionally mandated. Multi-sector cooperation occurs at the federal level through exchanges between the U.S. Department of State and External Affairs Canada, and through legislative exchanges of the

Interparliamentary Group.

Subnational cooperation occurs for a plethora of issues. Multi-sector cooperation is accomplished through Trilateral Heads-of-Government meetings and legislative exchanges. Subnational cooperation is sometimes used to pressure the federal authorities to act on issues of concern to the subnational authorities but under federal jurisdiction. Similarly, cooperation between local authorities about issues of concern to them but under higher level authority can be used to pressure those levels to act. The different perspectives of the various levels of government tend to provide a balance in transboundary cooperation. While federal officials tend to link issues from one region to another, local level cooperation is directed to a more specific physical area. Subnational authorities tend to look at regional issues, moderating the parochial interests of local governments and the more continental outlook of the federal governments.

While cooperation tends to occur incrementally along sectoral issues, the lack of a coordinated approach has disadvantages. First, a piecemeal approach can result in the loss of future opportunities. A coordinated approach, on the other hand, can lead to consideration of how different sectors relate to each other. Second, without a proactive approach cooperation will tend to be reactionary. Third, the lack of an anticipatory approach can result in incompatible land uses along the border. Fourth, a coordinated approach could lead to the establishment of innovative

international institutions useful to other transboundary regions. Most cooperation in other border regions is in reaction to water and air pollution and incompatible land uses.

Because multi-sector institutions are already in place, it would take little effort to expand their scope to a more proactive role. Several measures could be implemented to reach this goal. First, trilateral meetings between leaders of Alaska, B.C. and the Yukon could be held annually. Second, the reintroduction of a coordinating committee similar to the one in place in the 1970s could address day-to-day issues. Lastly, more all-encompassing proactive planning could be accomplished through regional conferences.<sup>13</sup> These conferences would deal with issues of a specific sub-region of the ABCY Region with representatives of federal, state, territorial, provincial, and local officials to address issues specific to a sub-region without linkage to other areas. Implementation of these recommendations would reduce instances where personality conflicts of leaders or a lack of interest lead to a neglect in cross border communication

The ABCY Region is relatively undeveloped. An excellent opportunity exists to develop proactive institutions capable of addressing and mitigating problems before they become unmanageable. Experimentation with new transboundary institutions could provide benefits to both Alaska and Canada. A successful relationship

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<sup>13</sup> Glenn Gray. "International Cooperation in the Alaska-British Columbia-Yukon Region." (MS Thesis University of British Columbia, 1989).



would also have the added benefit of providing an example to people of other border regions.

**The Implementation of the Klondike Gold Rush  
International Park, Canada and the U.S.**

**Clay Alderson**

CLAY ALDERSON:

It was in the fall of 1986 that I first saw Skagway Alaska, the fourth city of the northwest end of the famed Inside Passage. This is the inside passage that links southeast Alaska with the lower 48 and southern B.C. through the ports of Seattle and Prince Rupert. Ships using the inside passage brought thousands of stampeders north to the Skagway and Taiya River valleys in 1897-98. It was from these beaches that economically frustrated, gold hungry prospectors began the most difficult and strenuous part of their trip to the Klondike. Similarly, today's travellers cruise the inside passage, but in comparative luxury to reach Skagway. Many seek only the curio shops, eating establishments and the easily accessible visitor attractions of Skagway's downtown historic district. This is one segment of what is easily the longest linear park in the world. Yes, it is even longer and far more diverse than the Appalachian or any other long trail system. This trail stretches from Seattle, Washington, in the south to Dawson City, in the Yukon, in the north. Beyond these terminus points, stampeders came from throughout the world to seek the riches of Bonanza Creek and Eldorado. When they found that all the gold bearing streams had been claimed, and the only wealth to be found was in goods and services they could provide to other miners like themselves, many of them reluctantly turned home. They carried with them a lifetime of stories to relate of their great adventure, for after all they had been a part of the last great gold rush the world will ever

know.

In the wake of the gold rush, historic sites are being recognized by the U.S. National parks service and by the Canadian parks service to commemorate significant events of the Klondike Goldrush. In the U.S., the Klondike Goldrush National Historical Park has units in Seattle's Pioneer Square, and in addition to the downtown Skagway historic district, there are park units preserved in the Chilkoot and White Pass trail corridors in Alaska. The Canadian park Service manages the Yukon and Klondike Historic Sites in Whitehorse and Dawson and soon will be adding to this the Chilkoot trail national historic park in B.C.. With such a close thematic tie it is natural for managers of these park areas to maintain a close liaison. This is accomplished through annual meetings of managers to discuss common problems in the sites. In 1987, managers from U.S. national parks attended the regional superintendents conference with managers of the prairie and northern Canadian park sites. This proved to be very useful, if only to verify the fact that we share a surprising number of problems across the border. With the common bond of the Chilkoot trail, the Alaska and B.C. based park units had the greatest opportunity for cooperative planning and management. Such issues as commercial uses of trail, avalanche forecasting and warnings, bear management, employee orientation and training and trail maintenance practices bring managers from these areas closely together. At the operational level during the summer months, national park service trail rangers from the ranger station sheep

camp meet with Canadian wardens from stone trail on Lake Lindeman on a daily basis to exchange information on trail use, condition of hikers crossing the Chilkoot summit, and to assist hikers over the most difficult portions of the trail.

You may find it odd that we have gained such handholds to assist hikers over the trail, but when you recognize the fact that the average hiker on the trail is not the average sierra club, vibram boot, twenty mile a day hiker, you will understand why this help is necessary. Most of are travellers are older, some are family groups including small children, over half the hikers are european with little experience in American and Canadian parks, and nearly all are hiking the trail for the very first time. To many it is the lure of history and the uniqueness of the Chilkoot trail that spurs them to tackle the thirty three miles through the coastal rain forest and the Taiya river valley to the alpine lakes of Happy Camp and the boreal forests of lake Lindeman and Bennett. The rangers and wardens also share radio frequencies in order to maintain better communications, frequently emergencies occur that require a cooperative response. The call can be made by radio to summon help, even though the respondent may be representing another jurisdiction, another government, and another country. By working together each agency saves on the number of people required to accomplish the important job of patrolling the Chilkoot trail. By sharing radio frequencies, we shorten the response time that could mean the difference between life and death in some emergency situations.

At the beginning of each summer season, joint training sessions are held for trail rangers and for visitor centre information desk personnel. These sessions cover such topics as search and rescue procedures, first aid, and avalanche hazard monitoring. Visitor personnel discuss interpretive themes and learn of the interpretive offerings of each park area. In addition to the value of the exchange of information, ideas, and expertise, these employees have an opportunity to get better acquainted, so when the need arises for a combined response, be it an emergency or simply a request for information, the visitor is better served by personnel who work closely together.

The enabling legislation authorizing Klondike Gold Rush National Historic Park contains the language to allow the U.S. park to be designated as an International Historical Park. The authorization calls for cooperation between the governments of the two countries. The public law is paraphrased to say that the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, in cooperation with the Secretary of State, is authorized to consult and cooperate with the appropriate officials of the government of Canada and provincial or territorial officials, regarding the planning and development of the U.S. based park and an international historical park. At such time as the Secretary of the Interior advises the President of the U.S. that the planning, development, and protection of the adjacent or related historical scenic lands in Canada have been accomplished by the government of Canada, the President is authorized to issue a proclamation designating and including the park as an International



Historical Park to be known as the Klondike Gold Rush International Historical Park.

The management plan for Canada's Chilkoot Trail National Park has been approved. Part of the approval process included public meetings in Skagway to allow those persons on the south end of the trail who were interested in the new park in B.C. an opportunity to review the plan and to discuss the alternatives with the officials of the Canadian parks service. While the meeting as not well attended, it was nonetheless a good gesture, worthy of mention in that it crossed political boundaries in an effort to obtain input from a wide range of individuals interested in the development of the newly designated park land.

With the management plan approved the process may continue. Final authorization for the park could come any time within the next ten years. One thing that is assured is that it will happen. With this assurance Canadian park managers are beginning to implement the plan by constructing facilities and initiating interpretive programs to get the stories of the events of the Goldrush to the people. Park officials in Whitehorse expect to have most of the Facilities constructed within the next seven years at a cost between two and three million dollars. We look foreword with great anticipation to the day when Klondike Gold Rush and Chilkoot Trail National Parks take their place with other international sites such as Wrangell-St. Elias in Kluane, Waterton Glacier, the International Peace parks, along with many others.

The advent of the international designation is not expected to

greatly change the operational behaviour of the park. There is already a significant amount of cooperation and sharing of ideas and expertise across the border. In 1988 twenty eight new wayside exhibits were installed through the cooperative efforts of the U.S. and Canadian park officials. The text and layout was done at the National Park Service Exhibit Design Centre in Harbours Ferry, West Virginia. Translation of the text into French was provided by the Canadian Parks Service. Cost of producing the exhibits was borne by the U.S. National Parks Service, including production of eight exhibits provided for the Canadian portion of the trail. The Canadian Parks service interpreters are rewriting the brochure about the Chilkoot trail and will provide adequate copies for distribution at the National Parks Service trail head for distribution in Dyea and the visitor centre is Skagway. This is typical of the operational compatibility that exists between many such areas in these two countries. Recent meetings between managers of the four Goldrush era sites has centred on the theme of the centennial of the goldrush.

1997 and 1998 have been designated as the official years marking the centennial of the Klondike. Leading up to the centennial are a number of supporting events that serve to build the gold rush excitement. 1987 marked the 100th anniversary of the founding of the town of Mooresville. The town was later renamed Skagwa from the Tlingit indian word meaning "Home of the north wind", and Skagwa was later renamed Skagway because the post office found it easier to pronounce. In 1988, we had the celebration of

the first trip over the Chilkoot trail by an American woman, one Dutch Kate Wilson. Celebrations along the Gold Rush trail in 1988 were, therefore, based upon the theme of women in the gold rush. This years theme is water transportation and boats featuring travel on the inside passage and also travel on Lake Bennett into the Yukon River system up to the Klondike. Annual celebrations will continue to take place, including the centennial of the discovery of gold by George Washington Carmack on Rabbit Creek in 1896. The main thrust of the centennial celebrations will point towards 1997 and 1998. Plans are to prepare a centennial edition goldrush publication, compiling in one volume all the pertinent facts about people and events that went into making the goldrush the last great adventure.

Being one of the first worldwide events to take prominence after the popularization of the portable camera, there was a great interest in recording the events of the gold rush on film. Many of these photographs, taken by professionals and amateurs alike, have found their way into the various archives of libraries and research centres where gold rush history is being recorded and preserved. Each year, our visitors centre in Skagway receives leads on sources where information, photographs, journals and items of the goldrush can be found. These leads are not the painstaking work of researchers or historians, but instead are the result of a sign prominently displayed in our visitors centre requesting that visitors who know someone that was a part of the gold rush, and who left some record of that involvement, to please provide us with a

name or address or somewhere that this information can be obtained. This has led to volumes of information leading to many gaps being filled in our records. This would be lost were it not for the cooperation of people who retain an interest in the events that predated our generation by less than fifty years. We have already contacted the U.S. Postmaster General to request that a commemorative stamp be issued honouring the gold rush. A similar request will go to the Canadian postal authorities.

It is anticipated that the travel on the Chilkoot Trail will increase, as will visitors to all gold rush era sites, as more and more publicity is made available about the goldrush era sites. The cities of Seattle, Skagway, Whitehorse, and Dawson have a lot to gain for their involvement in the gold rush, especially as we approach the centennial years. Beyond the centennial and the international designation of the parks areas is the fact that the parks need to serve the needs of the visitors, be they American, Canadian, European, for young or old, for active or passive, or all the above, or any of the other categories that park users are segregated in. The visitor and the resources for which the parks are managed are the basis for the organic acts dual mandate of preservation and use. Our mandate should not end at a political boundary but should allow us to serve the visitor and the total resource to the best of our ability. Thank you.

**The Implementation of Klondike Gold Rush  
International Park**

**Sandra M. Faulkner**



The Implementation of Klondike Gold Rush International Park

Sandra M. Faulkner

In August 1896 George Washington Carmack and his two Indian companions, Skookum Jim and Tagish Charlie, found gold in a tributary of the Klondike River in Canada's Yukon territory. This set off one of the greatest gold rushes in history. There were three routes to the Klondike gold fields. The all-Canadian route was the most difficult, least successful, and therefore least popular. The all-water route from Seattle via Saint Michael and the Yukon River was the rich man's route, few could afford it. Most stampeders used Skagway and Dyea as jumping off points for the 600 mile trek to the goldfields.

Skagway, only a homestead before late July, 1897, began as a chaotically arranged tent camp and grew as hastily erected wooden buildings appeared along the southern reaches of the White Pass trail. By June of 1898, an estimated 8000 to 10 000 people lived in and around Skagway. Dyea, rival port city roughly nine miles away at the beginning of the Chilkoot Trail, grew in much the same way. At the far end of the trail in Canada, Dawson "The Queen City of the Klondike" boomed.

There was a whole flock of work-mongers who joined the big rush between 1897 and 1898, one of the most notable was Elmer J. White, commonly known as "Stroller" White, who began at the Skagway News



in '98 and whose column, "The Stroller" appeared in the Klondike Nugget in Dawson, and, over the next thirty years, in nearly every newspaper in Alaska. At a Days of '98 celebration in Juneau in 1923, the Stroller described the journey from Skagway over the White Pass, "the curtain-raiser to the main show":

Just outside the city limits of Skagway is the site of the former town of Liarsville which once consisted of sixty or seventy log cabins occupied by people who required sleep and could not get it in Skagway because of the noise... The railroad next passes the spot where White Pass City grew, sinned and died, and four miles beyond that is the Summit, which marks the boundary between Alaska and Canada. The next stop is Log Cabin where the Royal Northwest Mounted Police once had a headquarters and inspection station and where Few Clothes Molly conducted a roadhouse... You could get hot cakes,... but they always tasted of stove polish... Beyond Log Cabin are Bennett at the south end of Lake Bennett and Carcross at the north end of the same lake, both heavily marked by Gold Rush history, and after that there is a great deal of scenery and climate until the railroad reaches its end at Whitehorse, the head of steamboat navigation on the Yukon river...

From Whitehorse it was another four hundred miles downriver to Dawson. The Stroller recalled the differences between the beginning and the end of the trail:

Skagway and Dawson were products of the same Gold Rush, but they were vastly different in character. Skagway was lawless and disorderly and wicked in those early years... The town was full of goldseekers grimly determined to get to the Klondike, and a multitude of others who were just as grimly

determined to relieve the gold-seekers of a part of their burdens, particularly the cash portions thereof... Dawson was far-- sometimes very far-- from being a model for the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavour, but there was a gaiety and a lightheartedness about its sinning that was absent in Skagway.<sup>1</sup>

Unwittingly echoing the Stroller forty years later, early park planners interpreted Skagway as where they mined the miners.<sup>2</sup> In 1981, making reference to historic integrity if not any other kind, the Skagway City Manager told NPS to remember that "After all, the Klondike Gold Rush Park commemorates an era of greedy, rampant, uncontrolled development"<sup>3</sup>

The last great Gold Rush of 1897-- from Pioneer Square in Seattle, through the historic district in Skagway, around Dyea, and over the Chilkoot Trail into Canada, the story of this period lives in the buildings and artifacts preserved in time and place. From its inception, advocates and detractors alike have recognized the international character of the Park. In the 1930s proponents recommended the Chilkoot trail as an international park because of its natural resources. In the 1960s advocates recommended an

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<sup>1</sup> "Days of '98" in 'Stroller White' tale of a Klondike Newsmen, R.N. DeArmond, Compiler (Vancouver: Mitchell Press Limited, 1969), 176-182.

<sup>2</sup> Interview, Reed Jarvis, August, 1988.

<sup>3</sup> Russell Dickensen, Director, NPS, from Skip Elliott, Skagway City Manager, February 28, 1981.

international park because of its cultural resources. In the 1970s, the United States and Canada formed the Klondike Gold Rush International Advisory Committee to coordinate planning and implementation of historical parks on both sides of the border. Since the Dedication of Klondike Gold Rush Historical Park in 1977 the United States and Canada have coordinated development, operation, and the interpretation of the Chilkoot Trail. In 1986 the Canadian Parks Service initiated a management planning program for their proposed Chilkoot Trail National historic park. A position common to all three proposed by the Canadian Park Service is the recognition that "Co-operation between the Canadian and U.S. National Park Services is vital,"<sup>4</sup> affirming the concept of the international park.

Early interest in the establishment of a park at Skagway focused on the natural resources of the Chilkoot trail. At a 1934 meeting of the Skagway Chamber of Commerce, Alaskan Territorial Governor John W. Troy proposed as a National Park or Monument the area north of Skagway, including Dyea and the Chilkoot Trail to the U.S./Canadian boundary, excluding Skagway and the railroad. Troy, who came to Skagway during the Gold Rush, recognized that the Southeast attracted more than 75% of the tourists to Alaska. In the same year, Wallace W. Atwood, President, Clark University, proposed to the National Parks Advisory Board that an international

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<sup>4</sup> Parks Canada, Proposed Chilkoot Trail National Historic Park, Management Plan Alternatives, Newsletter No. 3, May 1987.

park be set aside in the mountains above Skagway and on the Canadian side of the Chilkoot Trail. Atwood recommended that Alaskan delegate Anthony J. Dimond was the logical one to introduce legislation, but that Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes could carry it through, then Dimond could "carry it back to his people as a great service he has performed."<sup>5</sup> The Directorate prepared two responses to Atwood. The January 14, 1935 response, which was not sent, rejected the international park recommendation because "we already have one," but, if we were to have another it would be Glacier Bay, and besides, Texas wants one. The January 16th response, which was sent and originated with NPS Director Arno B. Cammerer, was a noncommittal request for more information.<sup>6</sup> In February Atwood sent enthusiastic letters to both Director Cammerer and Secretary Ickes extolling the scenic, scientific, diplomatic and historic virtues of the proposed Chilkoot National Park, complete with maps proposing a boundary which excluded the town of Skagway.<sup>7</sup> Ickes reacted with a memo to Cammerer inquiring "why shouldn't we make a national park out of it before anyone else is particularly interested in it?" and posed the long standing

<sup>5</sup> Arno B. Cammerer, Director, National Park Service, from Wallace W. Atwood, President, Clark University, January 1, 1935, Klondike Gold Rush National Historic Park files, (hereafter cited as KLGO).

<sup>6</sup> Wallace W. Atwood, from Arno B. Cammerer, January 14, 1935 and Wallace W. Atwood, from Arno B. Cammerer, January 16, 1935, KLGO.

<sup>7</sup> Cammerer from Atwood, February 12, 1935 and Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes, from Atwood, February 14, 1935, KLGO

question that seems to always come up regarding Alaska: "Does anybody know anything about it?" In March, 1935, the Advisory Board appointed Dr. Atwood, Dr. Oastler, and George M. Wright to investigate the merits of the project. Wright expressed disfavor for the project as the city of Skagway and the railroad were intrusions, the site was too close to Glacier Bay and the Mount Saint Elias region should be considered first. The committee recommended no further action.<sup>8</sup>

Interest in the establishment of a historical park in Skagway did not stop at the border. Canadian officials expressed interest in a cooperative effort because the "depth and breadth" of the history of the Gold Rush carried the story into Canada.<sup>9</sup> In 1959, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada concluded that gold field areas and related features were of national significance. Canadian interest continued; in 1967 National Historic Parks and Sites began a long term study into Dawson City and the adjacent gold fields.<sup>10</sup> In April of 1968, Peter Bennett, Assistant Director, National and Historic Parks outlined preservation plans for gold rush related sites at Whitehorse,

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<sup>8</sup> George M. Wright, to Cammerer, February 28, 1935 and April 3, 1935, KLGO.

<sup>9</sup> Peter Bennett, Assistant Director, Historic Sites, National and Historic Parks Branch, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development to Robert S. Luntley, Chief, Office of Resource Planning.

<sup>10</sup> Parks Canada, A Master Development Plan for the Klondike Historic Sites, October, 1978.



Dawson, and Lake Bennett.<sup>11</sup>

U.S. National Park Service interest in the Skagway area focused on the cultural resources of the town of Skagway and the Chilkoot and White Pass trails. In 1962, National Parks Advisory Board recommended "sites in Skagway (Historic District) be considered as possible additions to the National Park System."<sup>12</sup> In 1965 the Historic Sites Survey by the National Park Service resulted in Skagway and White Pass being declared eligible for National Historic Landmark status. In the same year, Alaskan Representative Ralph J. Rivers recommended an international park at Skagway with reference to historic preservation objectives.<sup>13</sup> The National Park Service recognized that "at Skagway there is a unique opportunity to develop with Canada a joint park project to attract visitors from both countries."<sup>14</sup>

In 1968 the United States National Park Service initiated the Skagway Alternative Study. Planners initially determined Skagway

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<sup>11</sup> Phone record: Bennett, April 25, 1968.

<sup>12</sup> Proposed (Klondike) Gold Rush National Historical Park, Alaska, Secretary's Advisory Board, Pacific Northwest Region Keyman, R.J. Branges, April 22, 1970.

<sup>13</sup> George B. Hartzog, Director, National Park Service, from Ralph J. Rivers, House of Representatives, Alaska, member Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, Chair, National Parks and Recreation Committee, August 27, 1965.

<sup>14</sup> Remarks for Delivery, National Park Service, Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Senate Public Works Committee, September 24, 1968.



did not merit inclusion in the park system, except as part of a larger unit, an international park commemorating the international rush for gold.<sup>15</sup> In 1969, the team recommended Alternative III which required the acquisition of 978.0 acres throughout Skagway, Dyea, and the Chilkoot and White Pass Trails. Alternative I required no NPS participation. Alternative II, required approximately 2.4 acres to be acquired in the city of Skagway for preservation purposes. The Assistant Director of Interpretation, the Chief, Archaeology and Historic Preservation, the Chief, Division of Land and Water Rights, the Acting Chief, Design and Construction, the Acting Chief, Office of Resource Planning, San Francisco Service Center, and the Regional Director, Western Region, unanimously concurred with Alternative III.<sup>16</sup>

In September of 1969, at Whitehorse, United States and Canadian officials drafted an "Outline of Program for Possible International Historic Park in Alaska, British Columbia, and Yukon Territory." The joint proposal recommended the creation of an International Advisory Committee for consultation in connection with the planning of the program. Development and operation would remain entirely in the hands of the respective National and Historic Park Services, with the coordination to be handled by a special Joint Committee of

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<sup>15</sup> Interview, Reed Jarvis, August, 1988.

<sup>16</sup> Memo, District Director, Northwest District from Acting Chief, Office of Resource Planning, SSC, July 1, 1969.

the two Services.<sup>17</sup> On December 30, 1969, Walter J. Hickel, Secretary of the Interior, in Washington, D.C. and Jean Chretien, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, in Ottawa, concurrently announced cooperative planning to establish an international historical park commemorating the Klondike Gold Rush historic sites.<sup>18</sup> Once the concept was agreed upon, both governments moved into the next phase, planning and implementation.

The governments of Canada and the United States created the Klondike Gold Rush International Advisory Committee. The intent was to create an international body to assist in the implementation of the proposal and to keep various levels of both governments informed concerning the progress.<sup>19</sup> Initially, it was suggested that the composition of the International Advisory Committee should include representatives from both federal park systems, the State of Alaska, the province of British Columbia, the Yukon Territory, and the Mayors of Skagway, Dawson City, and Whitehorse.<sup>20</sup> By the first meeting in September of 1971, officials agreed that the Committee should not include municipal or private sector

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<sup>17</sup> Attachment H: Outline of Program for Possible International Historic park in Alaska, British Columbia and Yukon Territory, Confidential, Swem papers, KLGO.

<sup>18</sup> Harpers ferry Center, Klondike Gold Rush National Park, Richard Stenmark papers.

<sup>19</sup> Walter Hickel, Secretary of the Interior, from Jean Chretien, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, March 5, 1970.

<sup>20</sup> Memo: Director, Northwest Region from Director, WASO, April 10, 1970, Seattle, NPS.

representation, but should be confined to the federal, provincial, state and territorial representatives at the senior level. The agreed Terms of Reference directed the Advisory Committee to review development plans and progress made in the Canadian and American sections of the proposed park, discuss timing and scale of future park developments, and consult on other cooperative measures affecting the program for the park.<sup>21</sup>

During the 1970s the Klondike Gold Rush International Advisory Committee addressed the cooperative effort. While the progress of legislation to create the parks always concerned the Advisory Committee, they addressed the practical day to day problems both governments faced in protection and interpretation. The enforcement of state and provincial archaeological protection laws concerned the Advisory Committee because of the large numbers of artifacts along the trails that were unprotected from the casual souvenir taker as well as professional looters.<sup>22</sup> At its September 11, 1974 meeting the Advisory Committee recommended the establishment of a Planning and Development Sub-Committee to coordinate long term and short term, interim, planning proposals and development activities for the international park as well as to

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<sup>21</sup> "Composition and Terms of Reference for Proposed Klondike Gold Rush International Historic Park International Advisory Committee," 1972. Typescript, KLGO and "First Klondike Park Meeting to be Held by Canada, U.S." Anchorage Daily times, september 21, 1971.

<sup>22</sup> Minutes of the Meeting, Klondike Gold Rush International Advisory Committee, March 8 and 9, 1973, page 9.

co-ordinate research studies.<sup>23</sup> The Advisory Committee gathered progress reports on preservation efforts in Dawson and Skagway. They also facilitated joint management of the Chilkoot Trail.<sup>24</sup> After the designation of the Park in 1977, the Committee met once in Victoria. At that meeting the U.S. National Park Service made personnel changes to include people directly involved with the work on the Advisory Committee.<sup>25</sup> While the Advisory Committee disappeared sometime soon after the creation of the Park, the Superintendents of the Seattle and Skagway units of Klondike Gold Rush National Park and their counterparts from Canadian Parks Service in Whitehorse and Dawson meet annually to coordinate interpretation and operations along the Chilkoot Trail. Cooperative agreements with Canada formalize the cooperative effort.

The Klondike Gold Rush International Historical Park remains a goal. The Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park enabling legislation authorized the Secretary of State, to consult and cooperate with Canadian officials regarding development and planning of an international historical park. Presently Canadian

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<sup>23</sup> G.D. Gallison, Asocial Regional Director, Cooperative Activities, NPS from Director, Prairie Region, Parks Canada, December 17, 1974.

<sup>24</sup> Minutes of the Meeting, Klondike Gold Rush International Advisory Committee, November 8-9, 1976, pp 5-7, KLGO.

<sup>25</sup> Minutes of the Meeting, Klondike Gold Rush International Advisory Committee, November 15, 1978, p. 3, KLGO.

officials are moving forward on legislation to create the Chilkoot Trail National Historic Park. Once achieved, the President is authorized to issue a proclamation designating and including Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park as part of an international historical park commemorating the great rush for gold from Seattle to the Klondike.



**Conference Summary: Yukon Perspective**

**Rosemary Blair-Smith**



ROSEMARY BLAIR SMITH

I'm very glad to be here today. One of the things that I'm seeing right now is that people are looking tired, absorbing a lot of the information, and it's like a good tiredness. I see that people did a lot of information sharing and absorbing that information has been important to me.

I'm from Beaver Creek, about eighteen miles from the U.S. border, and I didn't realize the border existed. The Canadian customs was plunked right down in the town that I grew up in, but it had no significance to me at all. It was a Canadian customs that the American traveller had to go through. The American border was in Tok, Alaska and I didn't have much to do with Tok, Alaska. I did have relatives in Northway, Alaska so I didn't really know that there was a border. My history with the border and what I understood a border was, was traditional land. We had travelled extensively on the land, we had two dog teams, twenty one dogs, and we had our own territory that we travelled within. One of the things that we did if we travelled across the accepted traditional territory, was to get the okay from the First Nation that was across the traditional border. The border is not new to me in the sense of traditional lines, but the Alaska-Canadian border is. When the customs office was moved from Tok to the border line it made a lot of difference to potlatches, gifts going back and forth between borders, what was acceptable and what wasn't, and the Jay Treaty recognized by the Americans and not by the Canadians.

I know that some of the speakers such as Sam Williams,

Elizabeth Nyman, and Antonia Jack talked about the free movement and sharing, the relatives on both sides of the border, not recognizing the boundary. There is a lot of sharing between Indian peoples and others. One thing I know is that my dad William Arthur Blair and his friend Pete Eckland were involved in a mine in Alaska and they were illegally shooting some meat, moose specifically, one that was carrying a baby. Instead of deciding to face up to the law, they decided to skip the border. They went from Chisana to Scottie Creek and in their travels almost froze to death. Their moccasins wore out and they had gunnysacks on their feet. When they came upon a community (which was Scottie Creek) they were sick, hungry and almost frozen to death. The community took them in. They made clothes for them, kept them warm, and fed them. My dad established relationships with people in that area and finally married a woman from the Snag area. People have not talked about the private consultations about the border because it has been a political decision. People talked about consulting the Russians because they had been there before, but no one thought about consulting the Indians. The northern Indians and Eskimos were not consulted.

It is exciting for me to see that we are all ordinary people, some of us are non-academics, like me, others are academics, like a lot of you out there. The idea of coming here and sharing information scared me to death, honest to God. What was interesting was to see that we are all ordinary people. This was truly a "meeting of the minds." We are not just talking about

history, we are talking about borderlands and we are all part of that. The other thing is talking about the international scope of what we have here. I now know that there are resource people out there that are interested in accurate history, and there is truly international involvement in this conference.

One of the things I picked up was the fear that people had for the border and what it meant in terms of the breaking up of the family or the breaking up of relatives. A lot of credit for the recognition of this problem goes to the academic world. This is an issue that has to be dealt with. The involvement and participation of the native people and your interest in what we have to say really makes a difference in the future. This conference has the markings of being successful and it is the follow-up that will really be a success. When we start talking about our participation, responsibilities, and involvement in policies that affect all our lives, that is when we know whether it was a success or not. It has brought my awareness up and it has certainly brought your awareness up.

I think that some of the points raised by Albert Peter and Gerald Isaac here are important. Gerald talked about the question of the Jay Treaty and I think that's a question that some one up here should research. Let us know what your findings are, because no one knows how it applies one way or the other. Whether it means free trade is going to affect us or not is really a very big concern. Albert Peter talked about the unique opportunity of the land claims process, traditional knowledge and modern technology.

The last speaker talked about communication; how important it is that we keep communication and coordination open amongst the Indian People across the boundaries. We all face similar problems. We need local input, native and non-native, to guide our politicians in Ottawa and in Washington. In closing I'd like to say you are not so scary after all.

**Conference Summary: Alaskan Perspective**

**Dr. William Schneider**



DR. WILLIAM SCHNEIDER

I promised I would give Linda the four minute version and I have my eye on the clock, so give me the hook if I go beyond. At this conference we have often spoke of the boundary as a limiting factor; restricting the flow of people, limiting peoples rights, dividing up peoples land. In a more general sense, it is representative of a continuing emphasis on regulation and restriction. This trend is long standing. Witness the gold rushes, the prospectors claims, the legacy of World War Two with the establishment of air bases, and, yes, even the land claims represents a stage in the evolution of land segregation. How ironic that one must own land in the western sense of the word in order to make ones claim recognized and understood by the governments of the world.

Ever since the gold rushes, and perhaps earlier, native peoples have had to accommodate, adjust and change to new and increasingly restrictive borders. Chief Sylvester Jack reminded us of this point when he mentioned there were lots, traplines and outfitters boundaries. His mother, Antonia, eloquently remarked on boundaries when she said that "... with boundaries, we act like strangers to each other." The effects of boundaries have also been felt by a wide range of whites. Some reside in the North, others reside in the towns and cities of the World. In Alaska we have come to recognize that the national interest lands are not just important to us in Alaska and Canada but, to people all over. They



are to be managed for the interests of many people, some who will never set foot in Alaska. Perhaps we should not find that so surprising since historically, we have learned at this conference, that the voyages of exploration and the interests of the fur companies were not developed with northerners at heart. Northerners have always had to accommodate southern and eastern management and, to use Linda Johnson's terms, "conflicting visions of the north". Borderlands has served as an intriguing theme to explore our various visions of the north. It has been a metaphor for comparison and contrast. We have struggled these last two days to understand each other. Perhaps we could have predicted this after Friday nights film festival and the variety of perspectives presented. Reflect, if you will, on how different the subjects were, the issues and the opinions expressed; development and conservation, the old and the new, native and white. This conference is unique because it brings a variety of perspectives together; native elders, historians, anthropologists, knowledgeable citizens, and those just interested in their country and their past.

The challenge has been to create appropriate settings for the sharing of our knowledge. I am reminded of the Gwich'In gathering as an important time for the people to gather and talk over issues. The setting was Arctic Village and much of the conversation took place around campfires. As historians we feel comfortable in the archives sifting through papers for days, searching for material. As anthropologists we feel comfortable spending days with elders

recording their lives. But how many prepared for this conference like Trimble Gilbert by travelling out to his mothers place, and his fathers place out on the land and reflecting on what it meant. We need to know more about how each of us works and this conference has given us some clues. We need to continue the dialogue that we have begun here. We need to learn how to listen, as Albert Peter has put it. The success of this conference then, in my mind, is that we have asked each other important questions. I think we were started off by being asked the right types of questions. We have become increasingly sensitive to the importance of setting in how we learn and transmit our knowledge and in our sharing. So I hope that those two things, that continuing the knowledge and new dialogue and our sensitivity to appropriate setting for the learning and transmitting of that information will remain in future conferences that you hold. You are to be congratulated, I think, in setting this pattern. This is a unique type of conference and I feel privileged to have been here. Thank you.