

In Time Immemorial

DAISY SEWID-SMITH

“Our history stretches far back into the silent past. When the great Creator came on earth and walked and talked with our people.”

DAISY SEWID-SMITH was born in Alert Bay, B.C. on 28 November 1938. She is one of nine surviving children of the late Chief James Sewid. She was raised at Village Island until the age of six. Then Chief James Sewid moved to Alert Bay seeking better education for his children. Daisy attended the Alert Bay Indian Day School and then attended the first provincial integrated school in the area. When Daisy graduated she attended a Vancouver College secretarial course. On its completion she worked for the Indian Affairs Branch in Alert Bay for a number of years. Daisy was married to Lorne Smith of Turnour Island. She has two children, Gloria and Todd, and two grandchildren, Shonna and Jamie.

Daisy has written several articles for magazines, and in 1979 wrote the book “Prosecution or Persecution” for the Cape Mudge Museum. This book deals with the potlatch and the confiscation and return of the artifacts to the K^wagut people by The Department of Indian Affairs. Daisy is presently working on her grandmother's life story with Martine Reid and developing the Liq^wala/K^wak^wala grammar books for School District # 72 in Campbell River. She has been employed by School District # 72 for eleven years.

Over the years Daisy has lectured at many schools, colleges, and universities, both in the United States and Canada. She hopes to write more books in the future.

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We have been fighting for our land since the time of contact. Native Indian nations all over Canada have protested against the systematic methods used to take away our land, natural resources and even our freedom to move about in our country. The wishes and even the existence of the native nations have been totally ignored. Promises are made and constantly broken. Our history after contact is full of abuses and sorrows. It is no wonder that the history books are silent about our past. If by accident we are mentioned, it is to say we are a primitive people, with no past, no contribution, no land and above all no rights in our own country. Until quite recently, every history book written stated that North American history began with the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus and British Columbian history began with Sir Francis Drake in 1577 and Captain James Cook in 1778.

Many of my relatives came in contact with Captain George Vancouver in 1792 at what is now known as the Nimpkish River. At the time of contact our population was large in number. The tribes were scattered around Vancouver Island, the inland waters, and the mainland. Prior to this meeting we already had a long history in what is now known as British Columbia.

In Time Immemorial

Our history stretches far back into the silent past. When the great Creator came on earth and walked and talked with our people.

One day the great Creator told those he favoured that a great deluge was coming upon the earth. He instructed each family on how to prepare for the coming flood waters. To one family the instructions were to cover each canoe with cedar bark and cover every hole with pitch. To another family the instructions were to remain in the house and also to cover every hole with pitch. To my ancestor *čeqəmē* his instructions were to hollow out a great cedar tree and he too was to cover every hole with pitch. After he had carried out these instructions he was then to bring his wife, his daughter, and his four sons into the hollowed out cedar tree for safety. The great deluge came just as the great Creator predicted, and all but those whom he favoured perished.

After the Flood

When the flood waters subsided, the survivors left their place of safety. This place became known as the "place of descent." Every place of descent became sacred ground to the people that are now known as the *Kʷagut* Nation. The place of descent of my ancestor *čeqəmē* is a place called *Mitap* near Gilford Island. It is located at the bottom of Mount Reid. This was the place of descent of the ancestors of my people, the *Qʷiqʷasutinuʷ* tribe.

When the survivors left their place of descent, they immediately started seeking other survivors. When families found one another, marriages were arranged between sons and daughters. To this day the dramatization of these first marriages plays an important part in our own tribal marriage ceremonies. After these unions the families went back to their place of descent and built a house. Soon after this a supernatural bird appeared to them. The supernatural bird was either a *qulus, dʷuna*, or a Thunderbird. This supernatural bird stepped out of his bird form and came and lived with my people. My ancestor's daughter married *ʔudʷista*, the *qulus*.

During the ceremony, when it was time for the groom to claim his wife, the qulus used an enormous spoon to bring his wife to his side. He held on to the handle while the bride sat inside the spoon. This became an important part of a Q'iq'asut'inu' marriage ceremony. To this day a dividing line can be seen on Mount Reid. This dividing line was made when the great qulus slid down the mountain to make contact with čeqəmē and his family. Our people call this dividing line kəxədəx' meaning "having parted hair."

Authority was vested in the father, the elder and patriarch of the family. He became known as the ʔuǰ'əmē or λαχ'əmē, meaning he was the head of the family. "The responsibility of the position was to see that the family had enough to eat and that they did not want for anything." Later this responsibility was to include protection against an enemy attack. To fulfil this task, the sons and sons-in-law hunted, fished, and worked for the Patriarch. The provisions were stored in storage boxes in the house in preparation for the winter months. Later when the population increased the whole clan worked for their ʔuǰ'əmē or λαχ'əmē,¹ which now meant "head chief."

As the population increased the Patriarch gave land to all his sons, except for the eldest. These sons became the ʔuǰ'əmē or λαχ'əmē of their own families and eventually evolved into a clan of their own.² The eldest son remained with the Patriarch because he was to inherit his position, land, and privileges.³ The eldest was also to be the head ʔuǰ'əmē or λαχ'əmē of what was now a tribe with a large population. In later years the name of the position was changed to Giǰamē, meaning "greater than," and it was later translated by the Europeans to mean "Chief" because they saw a similarity between our society and that of the Scottish Highlanders.⁴

¹ "This was also asked by you about the early Indians. Indeed, they work for the head Chiefs of the Numaym ." Franz Boas, "Ethnology of the Kwakiutl," Based on Data Collected by George Hunt, in *Thirty-Fifth Annual Report*, Bureau of American Ethnology, 1913-1914, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1921), 133.

"of all the different kinds of food, a little is given to the Chief by those who belong to his numaym ." *Ibid.*, 137.

² "And then Lalaxsendayo said that Nenologeme and his children should now form another tribe. And the name of that tribe was Elgunwe beginning that day." *Ibid.*, 96.

³ "for it was instituted in olden times that the head Chiefs had to keep their names, and that they could give them to no other than the eldest among their children. *Ibid.*, 83.

⁴ "The social structure of the Indians was highly interesting, that of the Kwakiutl being in some respects more complex than that of the Salish. There was a definite hierarchy of society, similar in some ways to that prevailing some centuries ago in the Scottish highlands." Derek Pethick, *The Fort* (Vancouver: Mitchell Press, 1968), 6.

In some tribes the names given the clans were the names of the sons of the first Patriarch. The original clans of the Q'iq'asut'inu'x' tribe were the names of čeqamēs sons. These clans shared the same privileges because their origin was the same. This is also true about the Wiweqē and Wiweqəm clans of the Liǵ'itda'x' tribe. The names of these two clans were the names of the two sons of the Liǵ'itda'x' Patriarch, Weqē. These true clans would be referred to as "nəmimā", meaning "coming from the same origin."

A few of the early Patriarchs formed only one clan after the flood. These clans formed a confederation of clans. They lived in the same territory, but they lived in separate villages. These clans usually took the name of their Patriarch or a name that described who they were. They did not own the same land and resources.⁵ The land and resources of these clans were the territory around their "place of descent" after the flood. These clans did not have the same privileges because they did not have the same place of descent. They were not nəməyəm or kinsmen.

Before European Contact

As the population increased in British Columbia, tribal wars broke out. It was during this period that the clans decided to form a more powerful front by forming an alliance with other clans. True clans moved back into the head clan's village. Large tribes were formed consisting of (1) clans, (2) clans and alliances, and (3) a confederation of clans. Clan ownership of land, resources, and privileges remained the same. Not all clans joined other clans at this time. A few still lived in separate villages but were living close together for protection and for potlatching.⁶

The tribes and clans of the Indian nations of British Columbia were fully developed during this period. They had a large population and they had developed a social system so impressive that apparently a group of Buddhist priests visiting what is now British Columbia in 458 A.D. called it a

⁵ *Hunting Grounds*

"The hunters of the different numayms can not go hunting on the hunting grounds of the hunters of another numaym ; for all the hunters own their hunting grounds" Boas, "Ethnology," 134.

Berry Picking Grounds

"for each numaym owns berry picking grounds for all kinds of berries" *Ibid.*, 135.

Rivers

"The numayms of all the tribes also all own rivers" *Ibid.*, 134.

⁶ "That is how it happened that they came together. Now they invited one another in the village Qalogwis and Q!abe and Adap! for they were ready in the villages they had built." *Ibid.*, 138.

“land well organized.” The visit of these Buddhist priests is mentioned by Dr. Robert E. McKechnie in “Strong Medicine.”

The earliest voyage on record is a visit by a group of Buddhist priests who were reported to have arrived in the year 458 A.D. In 499 A.D., the last of these priests was reported to have returned to Asia. His name was Hwei-shin (sometimes called Hwai-shan) and his home was Cophene, identified as a town in Afghanistan. His report is incorporated in the official yearbook of the Chinese Empire of that year and in it he describes the Kingdom of Fusang (a region that Captain Cook's charts placed in the vicinity of Vancouver) as a land well organized and ruled by a “king” assisted by his noblemen. It is also recorded that Hwei-shin introduced Buddhism to Fusang.⁷

My grandmother, Daisy Roberts, often told me about stories of strange visitors landing on the west coast of Vancouver Island. The Nəmgis tribe intermarried with the people of the west coast and we have many relatives there. She also mentioned a group of strange-looking men that the Nəmgis met at the headwaters of what is now known as the Nimpkish River. They could not communicate with these men because they could no longer speak. They appeared to be lost and very hungry but they would not come near the Nəmgis who found them. It appeared that some of them had gone mad, and they all ran away never to be seen again.⁸

The Kwagw̓at̓ people continued with their way of life, not realizing that across the sea a Queen that they had never heard of was sending a man by the name of Sir Francis Drake to our continent in 1577, 119 years after the Buddhist priests. When he landed he named the area “New Albion.” The place where he landed is thought to be in the vicinity of Long Beach on the

⁷ Robert E. McKechnie, *Strong Medicine* (Vancouver: J. J. Douglas, 1972), 7.

⁸ “It seems that about the year 1639 the Japanese government had ordered all junks to be built with open sterns and large square rudders that made them unfit for ocean navigation. It was the government's hope in this way to confine the Japanese to their own islands. In bad weather the unwieldy rudders were soon washed away and the vessels fell into the trough of the sea and rolled their masts out. The Kuro Shiwo current then swept them at a rate of at least ten miles a day northwards toward the Aleutian Islands and then south along the coasts of what were to become Alaska, British Columbia, and the United States. Some junks arrived with a few of their crew members still alive after a drifting voyage that averaged eight to ten months. The longest recorded being seventeen months. The junks were all Japanese and their wrecks, along with miscellaneous flotsam, were often washed up along the western coast of Canada and were the prime source of copper and iron for the natives.” *Ibid.*, 172.

“The story of such an accidental voyage is given in the records of the Hudson's Bay Company brig Llama, sent in 1834 to rescue three sailors who had been blown across the Pacific in a junk loaded with crockery of the flower-pot and willow-pattern design and finally wrecked off Cape Flattery. They were taken as slaves by the Indians and, after rescue by Captain McNeal, repatriated by way of England to the Orient.” *Ibid.*, 8.

west coast of Vancouver Island. When he landed he claimed the coast for the Queen of England, and this claim was the origin of England's claim to our lands, without consultation or consent of our people. This was to be the beginning of sorrows for the native peoples of British Columbia.⁹

Far across the sea in a place called England, a scene was being played out that was to change the course of history for the North American peoples. The English were to charter a company that was to be used in the future to be the prime adversary of our people. They were to be used to take away our land and our freedom in our own country. Wide-ranging powers were given to the Hudson's Bay Company by the British in 1670. They received sole trading rights in a territory that was to be named Rupert's Land in the Hudson's Bay territories. It was to take a few more years before the K^wagut nation actually had an encounter with these intruders.

The Indian nations along the coast had no idea that a war had broken out between the British and French in 1756 and that the Algonquin of the eastern woodlands sided with the French and most of the Iroquis supported the British forces. They were also oblivious to the fact that the French were defeated and that when they surrendered they signed the Treaty of Paris on 10 February 1763 ceding almost all their remaining territories in Canada to the British Crown without consulting the allied Indian nations in that region.

They were also oblivious to the fact that a Royal Proclamation was being signed 7 October 1763 at the Court of St. James's by the King of England. If this Royal Proclamation had been adhered to, land claims would not be an issue today. The Royal Proclamation ruled that the governments required that Indian Nations consent before allowing white people to settle in the Indian territories of Canada.

In part it read:

And, We do further strictly enjoin and require all Persons whatever who have either wilfully or inadvertently seated themselves upon any Lands within the Countries above described, or upon any other Lands which, not having been

⁹ "In conclusion, Bishop remarks that the Government of British Columbia became so convinced that Drake had reached the latitude of Vancouver Island that the highest peak on the Island was named after Drake's ship, *The Golden Hinde*.

The landing that Drake made at the furthestmost reach of his voyage is thought to have been in the vicinity of Long Beach on the West Coast of Vancouver Island. It was his naming of the territory as New Albion and his claim of it for his Queen that was the origin of England's claim to the coast. New Albion was shown as English territory on many early charts." *Ibid.*, 175.

ceded to or purchased by us, are still reserved to the said Indians as aforesaid, forthwith to remove themselves from such Settlements.¹⁰

The native nations along the coast did not know it at the time, but this Royal Proclamation of 1763 was going to play an important part in their lives. Because of its "Indian protection" clause the Royal Proclamation of 1763 prevented the complete annihilation of the Native Nation of Canada.

Captain James Cook landed at Nootka Sound in 1779. The **Nəmǵis** were frequent visitors to the west coast of Vancouver Island. There was a trail from the headwaters of the Nimpkish Lake to the west coast. It was called the "grease trail," and it was a four-day journey to the village of the **Mawicədaʔaǵ** at Gold River. The **Nəmǵis** had intermarried with them for years. The two powerful chiefs of the west coast, Chief **Galiǵəmē** and Chief **Məkʷəla** (later to be pronounced Maquinna), had many relatives among the **Kʷaguʔ** nation. They had obtained their names as a marriage dowry from the **Nəmǵis**. **Məkʷəla** means "moon" and **Galiǵəmē** means "first in rank."

The **Nəmǵis** had seen first hand how these strangers treated the people of the west coast. The cruelties they endured at the hands of the sailors were to prevent the west coast people from ever wanting to participate in any celebration commemorating the arrival of the Europeans.¹¹ So when Captain George Vancouver landed at the Nimpkish River on 19 July 1792 this was not the first time the **Nəmǵis** ever saw the **Mamətnē**, a name given to these strangers by the people of the west coast which means "people who live on the water." They came, took a few furs, and did not stay.

In 1849 the clan **Sənǵəm** was giving a potlatch at **Qaluǵʷis**, known today as Turnour Island. The twelve clans had formed a confederation of clans under three tribal names, the **Kʷaguʔ**, the **qumuyoyi**, and the **Walas Kʷaguʔ**. The **Sənǵē** had joined the **Kʷaguʔ** tribal group. The eleven clans were invited to the potlatch as well as the **Mamaliliqəla** tribe who lived at **Mimkʷəmlis**, known today as Village Island. It was during this time that a messenger arrived at the potlatch informing the clans that white people were building a house at their place of descent in what was to be later called Beaver Harbour at Fort Rupert, known today as Port

¹⁰ Cited in A. Shortt and A. Doughty, eds., *Documents Relating to the Constitutional History of Canada, 1759-1791* (2 parts, King's Printer, Ottawa, 1918), part 1, 167.

¹¹ "The weather was wet and cold and the natives of the area were disturbed at times to the point of violence by these white settlers from another world." McKechnie, *Strong Medicine*, 100.

"when naval manpower was short, it was a case of any able-bodied man would do, and the prisons and other institutions were drained of debtors, felons and madmen to be made into sailors." *Ibid.*, 54.

McNeill. The Chief of the **Maʔmtagila** clan, Chief **ʔaqʷadʔi**, spoke to the assembled clans:

O mamaleleqala! and you **Kwaguʔ**! how do you feel about the white people who have come and built a house at Tsaxis?¹²

Many of the clans did not believe that such a thing was happening because these white strangers would come and pick up a few furs but would never stay for any length of time. So Chief **ʔaqʷadʔi** made a suggestion that they should go and see if this was really happening. To their disbelief the messenger was not wrong.

“Let us go and see them!” Thus he said. Immediately all agreed to what he said. Then all the **Kwaguʔ** and **Mamaleleqala** and **Q!omoyaye**, and the **Walus Kwaguʔ** went to Tsaxis. Now they believed what was reported to them at **Qallogwis**.¹³

The clans did not like what they were seeing. These strangers had moved in and took their land without consent. It was not just any land, but land given to them after the flood. The clans all agreed to move to Fort Rupert to try and protest against these intruders building on their land.

The **Kwaguʔ** and the **Mamaleleqala** went back at once to bring their houses and all their property, and they came to build houses at Fort Rupert, Now the **Kwaguʔ** really left their village sites at **Qallogwis**, and the **Q!omoyaye** their village site at **Ts!ade**, and the **Walus Kwaguʔ** their village site at **Adap!e**, and they stayed at Fort Rupert.¹⁴

They found out very quickly that these strangers were interested in a black stone they called “**dʔəǵʷət**”. The intruders did not treat them very well. In fact, they acted like they owned the land and the clans were the intruders. A year later the situation got much worse, especially when the English and Scottish miners went on strike against the Hudson’s Bay Company. The miners had a contract with the Hudson’s Bay Company to mine coal for them at Fort Rupert, but the miners wanted to go to California to mine gold for themselves.¹⁵

¹² Boas, “Ethnology,” 97.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 96.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 97.

¹⁵ “These English coal-miners had hardly settled in before they contributed another “first” to British Columbia’s history by going on strike. The spectacle of men actually refusing to do their work after they had accepted employment was a new experience for the H.B.C. For a few days Captain McNeill, in command of the fort, kept the ringleaders shackled and imprisoned in one of its bastions but his action did not end the strike. The men became more militant.” G. P. V. and Helen Akrigg, *British Columbia Chronicle 1847-1871* (Vancouver: Discovery Press, 1977), 31-32.

The **Mamaliqəla** decided that they did not want anything to do with these intruders that they now referred to as "**Mamatʔa**". They left their village site of **Paɗʔawa**, now known as Thomas Point, and moved back to **Mimqəmlis** or Village Island, but the other clans remained.

but the **Mamaleqala** did not stay long, then they went back to **memkumlis**; and the **Kwagut** and **Q!omoyoye** and **Walas Kʷagut** and also the **Q!omkut!es** kept together, and they built at Fort Rupert,¹⁶

The sudden decline of the native population at Fort Rupert puzzled the agent of the Hudson's Bay Company. The population was very large in number when the **Mamaliqəla** were with them, for the **Mamaliqəla** and **Kʷagut** clans were very large in number in 1849. After the **Mamaliqəla** left and moved back to Village Island, the Hudson's Bay agent estimated the remaining population to be ten thousand. Governor Blanshard wrote to Earl Grey about the native population on 5 June 1850:

A Mr. McNeill, agent for the Hudson's Bay Company at Beaver Harbour, who is considered to be better acquainted with the Indian population than any other person, estimates their number at the very largest at ten thousand and these he considers to be steadily decreasing, although the sale of spiritous liquors has been for a considerable time prohibited, and the prohibition appears to be strictly enforced.¹⁷

The tribes that stayed — the **Kʷagut**, the **qumuyoyi**, and the **Walas Kʷagut** — were very angry with these intruders. Not only were they building on their land without permission but they were taking resources out of their territory. The situation became so serious that the mine doctor and magistrate of Fort Rupert wrote to Chief Factor Douglas submitting his resignation:

I cannot stop here; nothing but trouble day after day; not a moment's peace or quietness and now to add to our misfortunes, everyone is afraid for his life, and the fort, and not without reason, for certainly there is not a sufficient number to defend it against the large tribe of Indians here, who are becoming very saucy and the men are afraid of them. As far as I could, it has been my endeavor to check and remedy complaints; these have now grown beyond remedy and probably abandoning the fort shortly will be the cure. I was sent here on account of the miners. They have disappeared; so please allow me to do the same in the "Mary Dare."¹⁸

When the **Kʷagut** people realized that these intruders were not going to go away they started trading with them and a better relationship de-

¹⁶ Boas, "Ethnology," 55.

¹⁷ Pethick, *The Fort*, 78.

¹⁸ Akrigg & Akrigg, *British Columbia Chronicle 1847-1871*, 33.

veloped. Dr. Helmcken was to say in later years that the natives in Fort Rupert were "in reality, . . . our best friends and wished to be on good terms with us."¹⁹

Shortly after this the K^wagut, the qumoyoyi, and the Walas K^wagut had a major disagreement that was to change the clan alliances one more time. Chief Maxwa of the Ma[?]emtagila clan was killed by the Chief of the Kukwəkəm clan. They both belonged to the K^wagut tribe.

When they were at Qaluq^wis or Turnour Island, the clans formed three clan confederations: the K^wagut, the Walas K^wagut, and the qumuyoyi. After the murder, four clan confederations were formed at Fort Rupert: the K^wiḵamut, who were once the K^wagut; the Walas K^wagut; the K^wiḵa, who were once the qumuyoyi; and the q^wəmkuṭəs.

The K^wiḵamut were sometimes called G^witəla. After several years these four confederated clans were to become one and were renamed the "K^wagut".

Many of these clans were to scatter into other clan alliances outside of Fort Rupert after the murder of Chief Maxwa.

When Maxwa was killed some of the Gexsem went to the Gwetela of the Kwagut. Therefore the Gwetela have Gexsem, and they also went to the Gosgimux. The Gexsem xsanaṭ are Gexsem, and there are also Gexsem of the Naqemgilisala, and Gexsem of the L!al!asiqwalā, and Gexsem of the Denaxdaḵ, and Gexsem of the Haxwamis, and Gexsem of the Wiwage. This is referred to by the old people of the Kwagut as 'blown away by the past Chief Maxwa, when he was killed and also the same happened to the Numayn of the Gigilgam, and they all come from the Numaym of Omaxt!alalē. They scattered to all the tribes beginning at the time when Maxwa was killed, for there was only one Numaym Gigilgam of Walas Kwaxilā-nokume, the father of Omaxt!alalē.²⁰

A few years later a so called "treaty" was signed with the K^wagut Indians. It is not clear if this "treaty" was signed with the K^wagut only or with the qumuyoyi, the Walas K^wagut, and the qumkuṭəs. This so-called treaty was signed with an "x". James Douglas claimed he purchased Fort Rupert Indian lands and resources for the equivalent of \$3,000 in goods along with other lands in British Columbia. My grandmother, Daisy Roberts, told me that one of the daughters of the Hudson's Bay factor, Robert Hunt, was sent by the Hudson's Bay Company to go door to door with blankets, shirts, and other trade items. She told the people that "Ottawa" was "potlatching." They were asked to put an "x"

¹⁹ Loc. cit.

²⁰ Boas, "Ethnology," 804.

on the paper to signify that they had received their Potlatch gift. For years K^wak^wala-speaking people thought that Ottawa was a man who ruled over the white people. My grandmother said the native people were shocked when they were ordered out of their property by the Hudson's Bay Company. When they refused, a gun boat was ordered to settle the matter.²¹ The reason they gave for the attack was that the clans at Fort Rupert had killed a poor defenceless Haida Chief who just happened to have taken refuge at the fort. The Haida Chief Gedaxon was indeed killed by the K^wagut, but the Hudson's Bay neglected to mention that the Chief was related to the Hudson's Bay factor's wife and that that was the reason why he was "visiting" the fort. The clans knew that the navy was called in because they refused to leave what they knew to be their land. They claimed they never sold any land to the Hudson's Bay Company; nor did they know what a treaty was, and to their knowledge had never seen one.

The population of the native Indians was dwindling because of the diseases being brought into the country. The smallpox was the worst, since it was hinted that this was being used to systematically eliminate the first peoples of this country.

When the white people came in the spring, they had sealed Hudson's Bay blankets with them. When they opened them, they handled them with gloves, from here, the smallpox epidemic started. The white people's intention was to kill us all, but we were saved by the great Indian doctors.²²

On April 20, 1900, at a regular meeting of the Victoria Medical Society, Doctor Dave was to state:

The first epidemic of smallpox occurred in 1862 when the Indians suffered principally from its ravages. In those days they died like rats and their bodies could be seen lying around Ogden Point by the fifties.²³

Many of the native people tried to go to Victoria thinking that they would get help from the white doctors, but they were forced to return to their villages spreading the dreaded disease up and down the coast.

²¹ The capital city of Victoria was far from the mainland Indian territories. White racists there suggested Canada's treaty-making policy was "your new fangled system of timely precaution, friendly conversation as between men with equal rights and gentle treatment, and equitable principles [which] may suit the atmosphere of Ottawa, but it won't do for our Siwashes. . . ." They preferred genocide to making treaties. "If Indians complain, send a gunboat to them; we have gunboated them for twenty years." Joanne Drake-Terry, *The Same as Yesterday*, (Lillooet: Lillooet Tribal Council, 1989), 107.

²² *Ibid.*, 85.

²³ T. E. Rose, M.D., *From Shaman to Modern Medicine* (Vancouver: Mitchell Press, 1972), 129.

Smallpox broke out among the northern Indian people living in Victoria in May. The police torched their living quarters and sent the sick and dying packing.²⁴

When they reached their villages, the native people tried to isolate themselves to protect their own people from catching this dreaded disease. As a Lieutenant Palmer wrote about the Bella Coolas:

Poor creatures, they are dying and rotting away by the score, it is no uncommon occurrence to come across dead bodies lying in the bush. They have now dispersed from the villages, but it seems to be spreading through the valley.²⁵

While the native people were dying of the smallpox all over British Columbia, the government was wasting no time in trying to find ways of taking more land. James Douglas retired as Commissioner of Lands and Works in 1863, and he recommended that Joseph William Trutch take his place. Trutch felt that the native Indians were an inferior race. He was to say: "the idiosyncrasy of the Indians in this country appears to incapacitate them from appreciating any abstract idea."²⁶ Trutch's answer to dealing with the Indians was to use military force.

After he was appointed Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, the wholesale give-away of Indian lands and resources flourished. Trutch thought it morally appropriate to use military force to deal with Indian Nations' resistance to the illegal takeover of their lands and resources. Trutch resolved to prevent the Indian nations from owning or retaining any lands whatsoever in the British Colonies.²⁷

The Dominion of Kanata (Huron-Iroquis for "Indian village or settlement") was formed in 1867. It consisted of the four provinces of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. Britain, by means of the British North America Act (BNA Act), reorganized these colonies, and the Dominion of Canada was born.

Under section 91 (24) of the Act, the new Canadian Parliament at Ottawa claimed legislative authority over "Indians and lands reserved for Indians." Under this section the Canadian government was obliged to honour the commitments the Crown had made to the Indian nations in the Royal Proclamation of 1763.

The 109th section of the BNA Act put the Indian territories of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick under the jurisdiction of these provincial governments. Britain had made treaties with the Indian nations

²⁴ Drake-Terry, *The Same as Yesterday*, 85.

²⁵ Akrigg & Akrigg, *British Columbia Chronicle 1847-1871*, 253.

²⁶ Drake-Terry, *The Same as Yesterday*, 100.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 96.

of these provinces. They could prove it was legitimately acquired and that they had followed the terms of the Royal Proclamation of 1763 concerning how "unceded" land was to be obtained.

On 20 July 1871 British Columbia joined the Dominion of Canada. Lieutenant-Governor Trutch (the previous Commissioner of Lands and Works) and his provincial legislature decided that the 109th section of the 1867 BNA Act could be interpreted to mean that all unceded Indian lands and resources were "public" lands which were "automatically" placed under the control of British Columbia upon confederation with Canada. The provincial government stated that the provincial legislature did not have to recognize Indian title or negotiate treaties with the Indian nations in British Columbia. On several occasions Ottawa told the provincial legislature of British Columbia that this was not "legal." The first session of the provincial legislature also passed an Act denying Indian people the right to vote or hold public office.

The provincial government knew that its assumption of the "automatic" transfer of Indian lands was not legal, so it passed a "land act" on 2 March 1874. This treated all unceded Indian land as being under a grant from the British Crown and so allowed the provincial government to control and dispose of Indian lands and resources. No such grant had, however, ever been issued because it would have failed to follow the Royal Proclamation of 1763, which clearly stated that "any other lands not having been ceded to or purchased by us, are still reserved to the said Indians." It was also clear that the only way lands could be ceded was through a treaty with the Indian nations of British Columbia.

Ten months after the land act was passed, Justice Minister T. Fournier, in Ottawa, submitted a legal opinion on the legality of the Act to the Dominion government and to Lord Dufferin, the Governor-General of Canada. He reminded them of the contents of the Royal Proclamation of 1763, "that the Indians should not be molested." His legal opinion of the Act was not what they wanted to hear.

Considering then . . . that no surrender or cessions of their territorial rights . . . [have] been ever executed by the Indian tribes of the province the undersigned feels he cannot do otherwise than advise that the Act . . . is objectionable as tending to deal with lands which are assumed to be absolute property of the province, an assumption which completely ignores as applicable to the Indians of British Columbia, the honor and good faith with which the Crown has, in all other cases, since its sovereignty of the territories in North America, dealt with their various Indian tribes.²⁸

²⁸ Ibid., 115.

Lieutenant-Governor Trutch did not want treaties to be made with the Indian nations. He warned the federal and provincial governments to avoid doing so.

If you now commence to buy out Indian title to the lands of British Columbia you would go back on all that has been done for thirty years past and would be equitably bound to compensate tribes who inhabited districts now settled and farmed by white people, equally with those in the more remote and uncultivated portions.²⁹

Prime Minister Mackenzie and his cabinet were afraid that British Columbia might renounce Confederation, so they would not disallow the Land Act. They solved their problem by legislating the "Indian Act" of 1876, placing all Indians in Canada under wardship. This stopped all direct conveyance of land to the native people. It also made native Indians on reserves second-class people. They could not vote or receive any pensions, in time family allowances were denied them, and they were not considered citizens of the province of British Columbia or of Canada. On 1 January 1884 a special law prohibiting potlatches in the Indian territories of British Columbia was added to the Indian Act. This was later repealed in 1951.

The native Indians were finally granted full citizenship rights in 1960. In the Hansard of 18 January 1960, the speech of Prime Minister John Diefenbaker was reported:

The other measure, the provision to give Indians the vote, is one of those steps which will have an effect everywhere in the world — for the reason that wherever I went last year on the occasion of my trip to commonwealth countries, it was brought to my attention that in Canada the original people within our country excepting for a qualified class, were denied the right to vote. I say that so far as this long overdue measure is concerned, it will remove everywhere in the world any suggestion that colour or race places any citizen in our country in a lower category than the other citizens of our country.³⁰

When the native Indians were given Canadian citizenship, the President of the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia called it "a wonderful victory."

Granting of the federal vote to Native Indians is indeed a wonderful victory. Today we have cause to be proud of the great fight the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia has conducted over the years. And we should humbly give thanks to God for sustaining us in our struggle to win better conditions and equality of citizenship and education for the Native people.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 121.

³⁰ *Native Voice*, Special Edition, 1960, 3. "Native Indians Granted Full Citizenship Rights."

After years of "wardship", years of hardship and suffering caused by the neglect and indifference of white governments to those who were first in the land, Native Indians at last stand as full citizens.

I am proud of my people, proud of what the Native Brotherhood has accomplished and confident that out of their splendid heritage the Native Indians will make an ever greater contribution to the progress of their country.³¹

But nothing had really changed, for we were still under wardship and the "promise" to settle land claims did not materialize. British Columbia negotiated to join Confederation and become part of Canada and then made sure we were legislated "out."

It is now 1991, and native Indians in British Columbia are still trying to get the provincial and federal governments to settle with them for their land and resources. Treaties were made with the Indian nations of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick. The Indian nations under the treaty were guaranteed lands and certain rights. As I watch the news I see the Mohawks in Oka, Quebec defending the very land that was included in this treaty because the white population wanted to build a golf course on their land. I wondered about the clause in the Royal Proclamation of 1763 stating "that the Indians should not be molested," when the provincial and federal governments called in the army. As I watched, my mind flashed back to the prophetic words of the *Mainland Colony* newspaper of 11 May 1864.

We are quite aware that there are those amongst us who are disposed to ignore altogether the rights of the Indians and their claims upon us . . . depend on it, for every acre of land we obtain by improper means we will have to pay for dearly in the end. . . .³²

³¹ Loc. cit.

³² Drake-Terry, *The Same as Yesterday*, 88.

Use of International Phonetic Alphabet by Native Groups

The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is an alphabet that has been used internationally for years by different language groups around the world. It has over 100 characters and it is said that if you learn all the characters you will be able to write most of the world's languages.

The Liq^wala/K^wak^wala language uses forty-eight of these characters. The language programme in Campbell River was started by the University of Victoria, where this particular orthography is taught. Several native groups have chosen this particular orthography because it has characters for all the sounds in their particular language grouping.

The Liq^wala/K^wak^wala language is being taught at the Carihi Secondary School in Campbell River as a second language unit. The students are taught the grammar and sentence structure of the language and they are taught to speak, read, and write in the Liq^wala/K^wak^wala language using the IPA.

a	b	c	č	d	d ^z	ē	e	ə	g
g ^w	ǰ	ǰ ^w	h	i	k	k̄	k ^w	k̄ ^w	l
l̄	t	λ	ʔ	ʔ	m	m̄	n	n̄	o
p	p̄	q	q ^w	q̄	q̄ ^w	s	t	t̄	u
w	w̄	x	x ^w	ǰ	ǰ ^w	y	ȳ	ʔ	

VOWELS

ENGLISH VOWELS	Liq ^w ala/K ^w ak ^w ala VOWELS	Liq ^w ala/K ^w ak ^w ala SOUNDS
A	A	AAH
E	E	EH
I	I	EE
O	O	OH
U	U	OOO
	ə "shwa"	UUH
Y (sometimes)	ē (sometimes)	A

The Alphabet with Pictures

 a ʔayasu	 b babagʷəm	 c cupali	 c' čamači	 d dəmalē (L) dəlaxē (K)	 dz dʷoli
 ē hamaʔəlas	 e ʔeǵas	 ə ʔəm/ʔe	 g gukʷ	 gʷ gʷəsu	 ǵ ǵədʷəq
 ǵʷ ǵʷəyəm	 h hawaǵayu	 i ʔipa	 k kəǵəlaǵa	 k' kʷadayu	 kʷ kʷikʷ
 kʷ kʷisa	 l ləqʷa	 l' l'astu	 t taxʷəmalə	 λ labom	 ʷ ʷaqola
 ʷ ʷisəla	 m mayus	 m' məkʷəla	 n nəǵaq	 n' n'əm	 o ʔogiwē
 p puxʷəns	 p' p'əspayʷ	 q qos (L) kʷusi (K)	 qʷ qʷəǵ	 q' q'əspənē	 q'ʷ q'ʷasa
 s siǵəm	 t tominas	 t' t'ibayu	 u ʔupigē ʔukʷəxē	 w wəqəs	 w' w'əči
 x xəldayu	 xʷ xʷeyu	 ǵ ǵaq	 ǵʷ ǵʷənukʷ	 y yawapsoms	 y' y'ugʷa

From A Bridge

So many straight and angular buildings
Stand on true square streets,
Defining equal length blocks.
Attempts at absolute, complete, control.

At the top of the hill authority reigns;
A tower and steeples jutting, rise.
The tiny red leaf announces to all,
"The government is in session."

Across the river, and low,
Married to its graceful banks.
The curvaceous one reposes,
Opposite and opposed as well.

Here the pavement simply wanders,
And draws one to the building,
That follows the contours of the land,
And pays homage to creation.