Geographies of the Lower Skeena[1]

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During the nineteenth century the human geography of the lower Skeena region of north coastal British Columbia (figure 1) was altered by the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), the Christian church, and colonial, provincial, and dominion governments. The sequence of discourses marking these institutions incorporated Coast Tsimshian in different ways in the region's three major settlements — Fort Simpson (a fur trade post), Metlakatla (a missionary settlement), and Port Essington (a salmon canning town). This article focuses on the ways Coast Tsimshian became ordered as objects of discourse in these places — on how they were viewed and represented by fur traders, missionaries, and government officials, and how those views were shaped by the geographical settings through which they worked. Discourses on Coast Tsimshian were based on strategies for engaging and dealing with natives. I will argue that these strategies connected knowledge (of natives), power (the forms of power that could be or were exercised over natives), and space (the places and settings through which forms of knowledge/power worked). Indeed, I will suggest that the three settlements, and the wider institutional geographies within which they were embedded, were the medium through which such strategies and discourses were themselves conceived. The bulk of this article is an attempt to elaborate these claims — to look at white discourses and, by implication, nineteenth-century coastal British Columbia, from sites within the lower Skeena region. I will reflect on the connections between discourse and space by way of conclusion.

Fort Simpson: The Sight of Trade

In 1834 the HBC established Fort Simpson to gain a foothold on the north coast and as part of a strategy to eliminate Russian and American
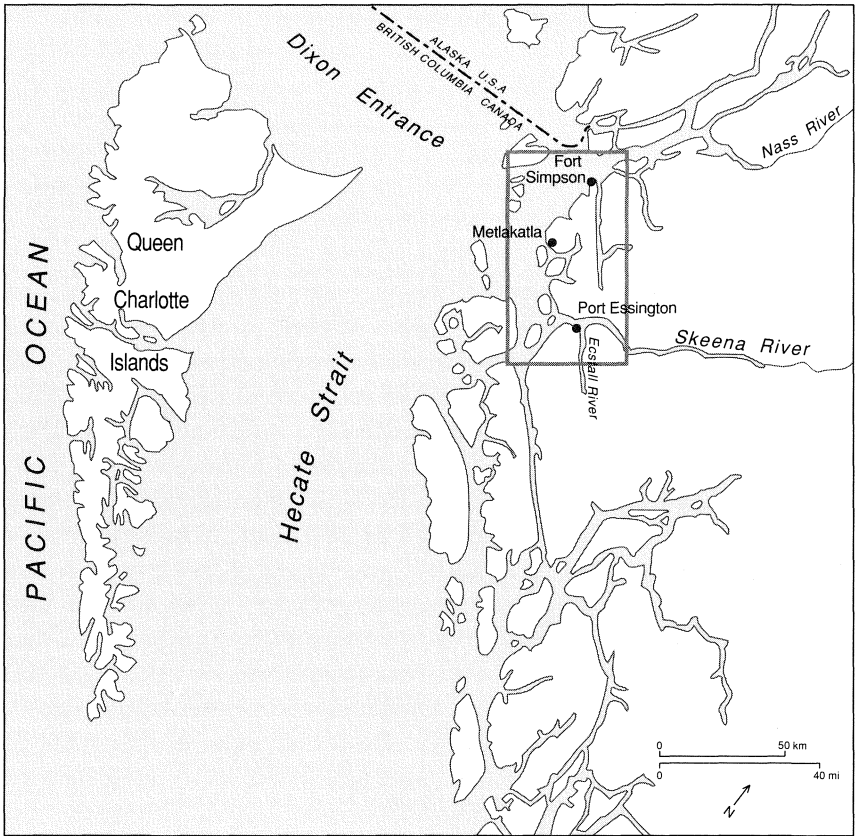
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Figure 1. Lower Skeena Region.

competition in the region. Situated in a sheltered harbour, on land apparently unoccupied (though not unowned), the fort stood as an isolated node of trade surrounded by copious native trading cultures.[2] In 1824 the HBC's governor, George Simpson, described the north coast as "a grand mart for furs," and in its first five years Fort Simpson yielded nearly

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[2] The fort was originally constructed twenty miles up the Nass River but was moved because the new site was more accessible by ship, offered more ample provisions, and was thought to be more central to surrounding native groups for trade. Duncan Finlayson to John McLoughlin, Fort McLoughlin, 29 September 1836, Provincial Archives of Manitoba — Hudson's Bay Company Archives [hereafter HBCA], B.223/b/12, fo. 16-17. Recounting his arrival at the site of Fort Simpson in the summer of 1834, W. F. Tolmie said that there was no sign of a native village, and that the site was "covered to the water's edge by primeval forest and undergrowth." "Memorandum regarding the state of things at McLoughlin's Harbor," signed by W. F. Tolmie, MS., Newcombe Family Papers, British Columbia Archives and Records Service [hereafter BCARS].

15,000 beaver pelts and good profits.[3] Most HBC forts along the coast had a diversified output of salmon, lumber, and foodstuffs as well as furs, and aimed to be self-sufficient.[4] Fort Simpson was always the least self-sufficient of them, and the one most geared to the fur trade proper.[5]

The fort was set in an intricate Coast Tsimshian world marked by a seasonal round of subsistence activity rearranged by forty years of maritime fur trading. Tlingit, Niska, and Haida traded furs, fresh game and produce at Fort Simpson, but Coast Tsimshian were, as Simpson described them, the HBC's "homeguard," or most consistent trade partners.[6] By the 1840s nine Coast Tsimshian tribes had moved their winter villages from what is now Prince Rupert harbour to the area immediately around the fort, giving the area around the fort a winter population of over 2,000 Coast Tsimshian, and the place an appearance bound to the character of HBC-native relations.[7] I will introduce these relations with some illustrations.

Figure 2 is a British Admiralty chart of Fort Simpson, surveyed in 1853.[8] It shows the juxtaposition of two worlds, distinguished by shading. The Company's pallisaded fort housed an average of twenty employees, and the Coast Tsimshian cedar-plank houses surrounding it, depicted here as blank squares, seem secondary to it.[9] Fort Simpson appears here as an object, a cartographic fact. The apparent order, regularity, and quiescence of the fort and the native world surrounding it is achieved as a collorary of the nautical soundings on the water. The ocean may be unpredictable

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[3] George Simpson to William Smith, November 1828, cited in Frederick Merk (ed.), *Fur Trade and Empire* (Cambridge, Mass., 1931), 300. Figures for the fur trade at Fort Simpson are from, "Fort Vancouver: Fur trade Returns, Columbia District and New Caledonia, 1825-1857," MS., BCARS.

[4] See Richard Mackie, "The Company Transformed: The New Fur Trade on the West Coast, 1821-1858," paper presented to the fifth B.C. Studies Conference, Simon Fraser University, 1988.

[5] See Lorne Hammond, " 'Any Ordinary Degree of System': the Columbia Department of the Hudson's Bay Company and the harvesting of wildlife, 1825-1849," M.A. thesis, Department of History, University of Victoria, 1988. Cf. Helen Meilleur, *A Pour of Rain: Stories from a West Coast Fort* (Victoria, 1985).

[6] George Simpson, "Simpson's Narrative," in Glyndwr Williams (ed.), *London Correspondence Inward from Sir George Simpson, 1841-1842* (London, 1973), 62, note 2.

[7] Four tribes surrounded the fort itself, with the other five residing on the adjacent Village Island. See Marius Barbeau, "Fort Simpson," Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies, Canadian Museum of Civilization, Barbeau Papers, f.26(1).

[8] Published in London, 1856.

[9] These employees were usually made up of two or three officers, a handful of clerks, and fifteen or so servants and labourers, the former being of British background, and the latter consisting of a mixture of mixed bloods, French Canadians, Orkney Islanders, Sandwich Islanders, and Norwegians. See, "Columbia District, Book of Accounts and Abstracts," HBCA, B.223/g/4-9.
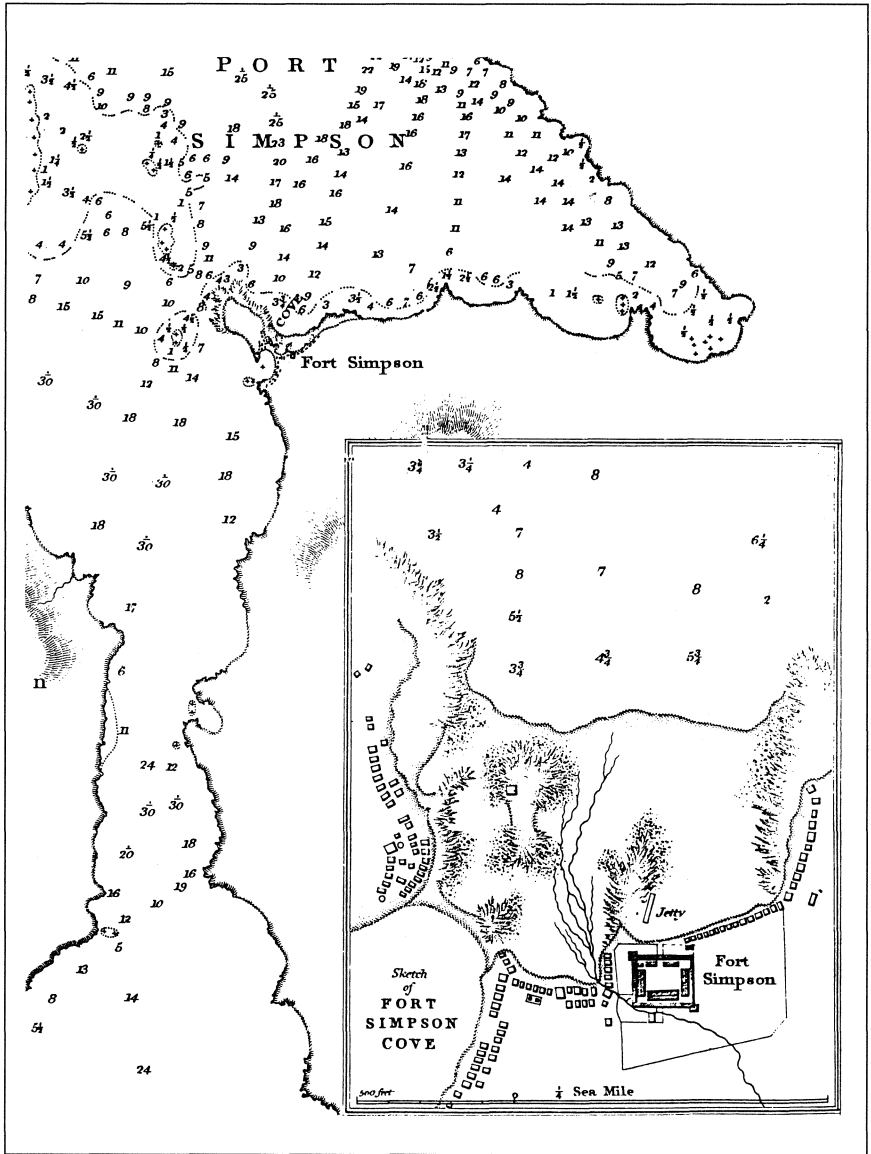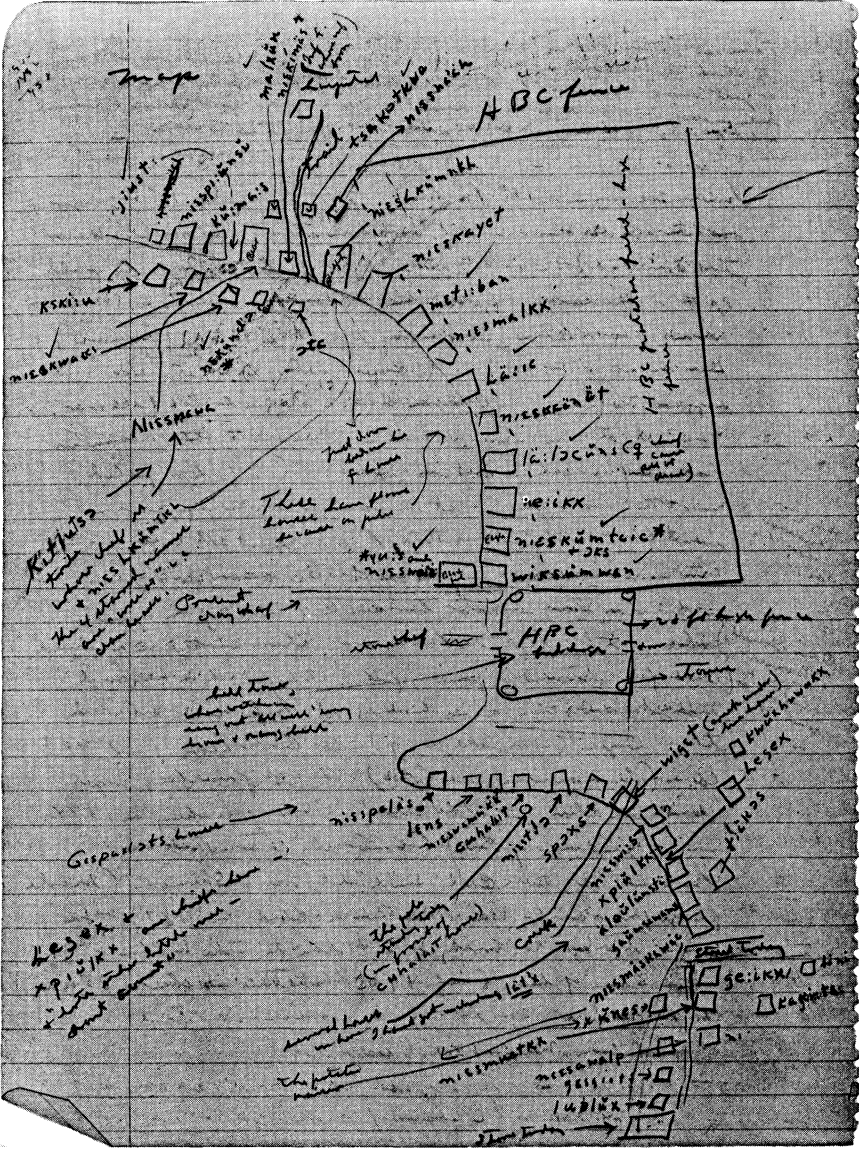
Figure 2. Fort Simpson, 1853.

Figure 3. Fort Simpson sketched by Homer Barnett, 1940.

but has, in its essentials, been mastered — it is measured, marked, and known. So, by implication, has the native world around the fort. Frozen on the surface of a map, the fort setting is a projection on land of a maritime order. Marking the land in this manner, the map denies that the fort is an incursion in a region that had been ordered and settled for many centuries.

In Figure 3, on the other hand, we see a native world only partially understood by HBC traders, let alone represented by Admiralty cartographers. It is a sketch of early Fort Simpson taken from Homer Barnett's Tsimshian notebook, compiled during fieldwork in 1940.[10] The geometry of the fort and its apparent satellites has been bent out of shape. The fort is now a blank box, and the houses surrounding it have been named — those in Barnett's sketch belonging to two of the nine Coast Tsimshian tribes. There are arrows and ticks, suggesting some process of interlocution, and the names of houses and lineages give the Coast Tsimshian move of the 1830s an accompanying social history. In Barnett's ethnographic frame of reference, the fort is marginalized and the nautical grid displaced. This sketch signifies an intricate native world beyond the fort and the depths and shoals leading to it.

Figure 4 is a sketch of Fort Simpson around 1860, and invites some kind of recomposition.[11] It portrays the two worlds in motion: a HBC flag blustering in the wind; shadows cast on the water alongside native canoes; a clearing behind the fort; people in the foreground busying themselves. With these worlds in motion the HBC's presence seems far more fragile than in the map, and the Coast Tsimshian presence seems far more anonymous than in the sketch. HBC employees appear to be locked securely behind fort gates while faceless natives stir around outside. The HBC's flag is set in the heart of the picture but is overshadowed by the monumental pole to the right. However hard we focus on the fort, our attention seems to get diverted.

These illustrations could be read in a number of ways, but I take them to signify what I think were the three distinguishing features of HBC-native relations at Fort Simpson: the punctiform nature of trade, the fragility of the HBC's presence, and the anonymity of natives in its discourse. I also take them to suggest that HBC-native relations were shaped in the fort setting — a claim I will now discuss in more literal, concrete terms.

The HBC relied on natives for furs, but could do little to secure a regular supply except guarantee exchange at a fixed yearly rate and assume that

[10] Barnett Papers, University of British Columbia, Library-Special Collections Division.
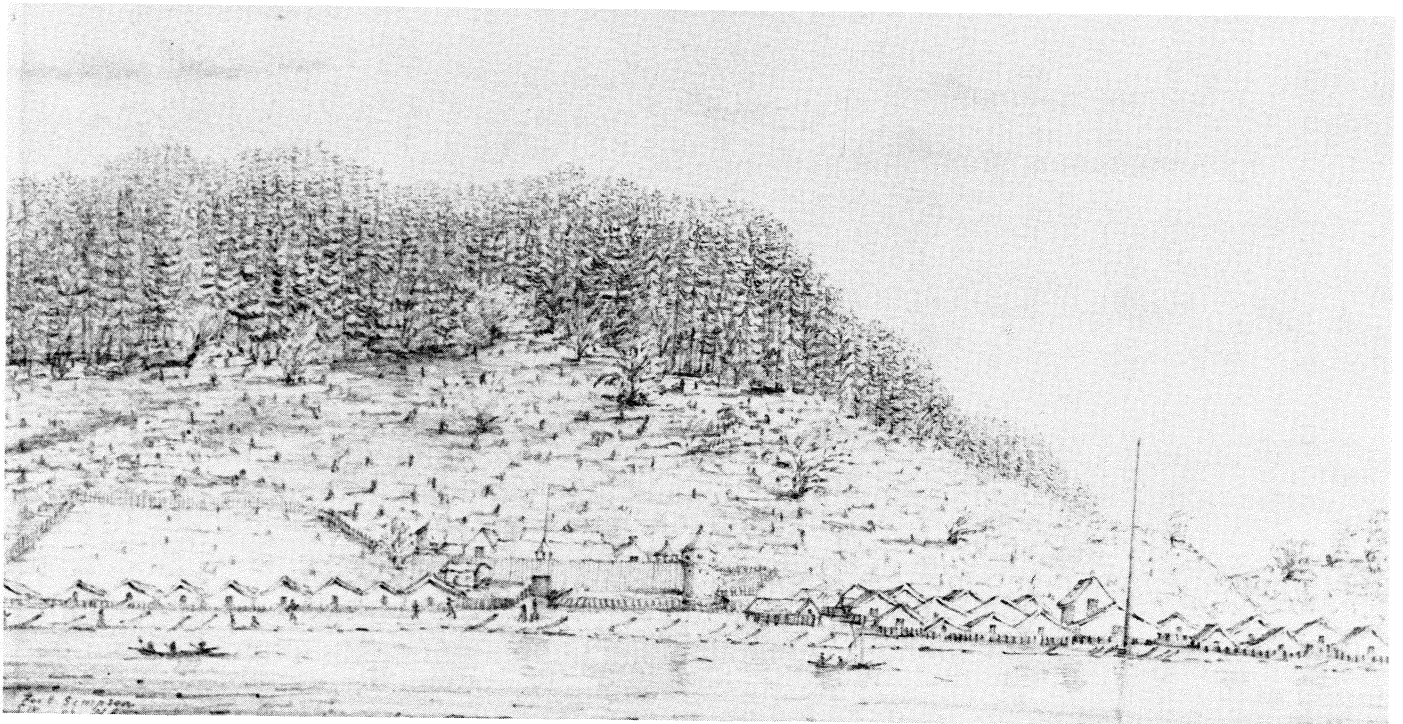[11] National Archives of Canada, C16999.

Figure 4. Sketch of Fort Simpson, c. 1860.

Figure 5. Metlakatla in the 1880s.

natives would keep trading at their forts. This mode of trade was Company policy; the HBC's "Standing Rules and Regulations" stated that "the Indians be treated with kindness and indulgence . . . and that no Gentleman in charge of Districts or Posts be at liberty to alter or vary the standard or usual mode of trade with the Indians, except by special permission of council."[12] As native groups were highly mobile, and their trading motives sometimes difficult to assess, an unapproved change in trade prices at one fort might markedly affect supply at others. As such, the actions of fur traders were carefully monitored, and as Simpson's "Character Book" compiled during the 1830s clearly indicates, the HBC had a built-in system of surveillance for monitoring the activities of clerks and officers in distant places.[13]

HBC-native trade was premised on a web of expectations built up over time, and Coast Tsimshian became the HBC's most reliable suppliers at Fort Simpson. Marriages between HBC officers and high-ranking native women served to stabilize and regularize trade relations at Fort Simpson, but fur returns fluctuated enormously and HBC traders were often at pains to figure out why there were so few furs, or why natives would not trade.[14] These fluctuations were bound to changing geographies of HBC and native activity. The elimination of American competition in the late 1830s coincided with a downturn in fur returns, in part because the HBC established two coastal posts north of the Skeena region — Fort Taku (or Durham) in 1839 and Fort Stikine in 1840 — which drew furs away from Fort Simpson.[15] The natural cycle of fur-bearing animals also affected the

[12] "Standing Rules and Regulations," Joseph W. McKay Papers, BCARS. All subsequent quotations are from this source. These rules were probably drafted in 1834, accompanied the HBC's "Deed Poll," and remained in effect until they were slightly modified in 1843. The "Standing Rules" of ·1843 remained unaltered until 1851. I am indebted to Richard Mackie for this information.

[13] Simpson's "Character Book" contains descriptions of the business aptitude and personal character of HBC employees down to the rank of postmaster. His reports were sent to HBC officials in London. See Glyndwr Williams (ed.), *A Hudson's Bay Company Miscellany* (London, 1974).

[14] In 1834 Fort Simpson's surgeon, John Kennedy, married a Tsimshian woman who, according to Barbeau, was the niece of Legyarh or Stone-Cliff, "virtually the head chief of the Tsimshian," and the leader of the Eagle clan. In the 1850s another prominent Fort Simpson trader, William McNeill, married a native woman, bringing the support of a Wolf clan of the Nass River. Barbeau, "Fort Simpson," 4-5. There were other sides to such relationships, of course, and they certainly cannot be reduced to this economic template. See, for example, Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-trade Society in Western Canada, 1670-1870* (Winnipeg, 1980).

[15] See, "Fort Simpson, Journal," May 1842 to June 1843, signed by John Work and Roderick Finlayson, BCARS.

quantity of furs obtained.[16] Fur returns at Fort Simpson picked up in the 1850s, but HBC traders faced further competition — as some Coast Tsimshian went south to trade at Victoria or moved to neighbouring Metlakatla, and then from whisky schooners trading in the region.

In the HBC's discourse, then, Coast Tsimshian were primarily economic objects. That is, they were the HBC's most regular suppliers of furs at Fort Simpson, but HBC traders did not entertain grand social designs about the way their trade partners should live. As the British Anglican missionary William Duncan proclaimed: "I see [HBC traders] actuated by one feeling . . . it is the furs they want."[17] This discourse was elaborated in, and in part produced by, places like Fort Simpson. Native groups were of interest only to the degree that trade was directly affected by them. This was so, in part, because HBC rules governing the mode of trade at different forts permitted little else. Natives were admitted into the fort to trade, but otherwise the two worlds kept largely apart. On a trip along the north coast in 1850, Captain David Wishart of the HBC described Fort Simpson as "a most miserable place, surrounded by the Indian lodges — and the Fort gates secured from sunset to sunrise, and locked during meals."[18] For those locked inside the hefty fort, the following was the grille of daily life:

The gates were massive structures about six or seven inches thick, studded with large nails, to guard against their being cut down by the natives. There were small doors within so as to admit only one person at a time. . . . The pickets surrounding the establishment were of cedar, about twenty-two feet long by nine to twelve inches thick; they were square internally, to prevent bullets from passing between. . . . An inside gallery ran around the whole enclosure of pickets at about four feet from the top, and afforded a capital promenade and a means of seeing everything. . . . A regular watch was kept all night in a small turret, surrounded by the flagstaff, over the gate.[19]

This HBC discourse did not seek to colonize. It spun around a strategy of profit maximization and cost minimization, and made little attempt to stretch the scope of HBC power in the native world. From experience and practice, this strategy was considered to work best by establishing posts and relying on native expertise to hunt and supply the furs. Such posts were connected by HBC ships — the *Beaver* being the most important during this period — which increasingly plied the coast, delivering supplies

[16] See I. T. Cowan, "The Fur Trade and the Fur Cycle, 1825-1857," *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, vol. 11, no. 1, (1938), 19-30.

[17] William Duncan to Henry Venn, 1857, cited in Peter Murray, *The Devil and Mr. Duncan: A History of the Two Metlakatlas* (Victoria, 1985), 32.

[18] D. D. Wisehart to Dr. Helmcken, 17 August 1850, Helmcken Papers, BCARS.

[19] Account of P. N. Compton, 1859, cited in Barbeau, "Fort Simpson," 9.

and provisions to land posts, returning to department headquarters with fur exports for shipment to London, and trading with natives at different points along the way.[20] In this light, there was neither a need, nor the intention, to educate or "civilize" natives.[21] Fort Simpson was no exception to these maxims; "economy is studied as much at Fort Simpson as at any other of the Posts," wrote Hamilton Moffatt (a factor at the fort in the 1860s).[22] Commenting on the suggestion that the HBC had always cared about natives, the HBC fur trader John McLean claimed, "I never saw any [caring]. The history of commercial rule is well known to the world; the object of that rule . . . is gain. In our intercourse with the natives of America no other object is discernable, no other object is thought of, no other object is allowed."[23]

HBC traders at places like Fort Simpson knew the surrounding native world through the alliances that could be forged by marriage with the daughters and nieces of local chiefs. Those natives involved in the complex procurement and trading networks stretching for hundreds of miles beyond the fort gates remained largely anonymous. HBC traders undertook expeditions into, and occasional censuses of, the surrounding native world, but did so to chart new horizons of profit. They could document where natives trading at forts had come from and, in outline, who warred with whom, but the world beyond the fort was rarely known in detailed, individual terms. Natives who came to Fort Simpson were "Indians," bearers of furs and foodstuffs, abstract economic objects. The demographic and social impact of HBC activities on native societies was unanticipated and only partially perceived by HBC traders, for their discourse did not encourage such speculations.

The majority of trading post journal and diary entries record the arrival of native canoes, the native group to which they belonged, and the quantity of furs and foodstuffs traded. In their official correspondence HBC traders

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20 Nor were the fur trade returns of ships such as the *Beaver* negligible. See, "Fort Vancouver: Fur Trade Returns . . ."

21 The "Standing Rules and Regulations" in fact state that "mild and consiliatory means be resorted to in order to encourage industry, repress vice, and inculcate morality," but this was perhaps more a gesture to the anti-HBC lobby in London than anything else. Indeed, one might argue that the "mild and consiliatory means" referred to in this clause reaffirm the idea that HBC traders were often in volatile settings that they could, in fact, have done little to alter. On this anti-HBC sentiment see, "The Hudson's Bay Company, Canada West, and the Indian Tribes" [1856], and *Aborigines' Friend, and The Colonial Intelligencer*, vol. 1, no. V, reprinted in *The Hudson's Bay Question* (London, 1857).

22 Hamilton Moffatt, "Letter Book," November 1864, BCARS.

23 W. S. Wallace (ed.), *John McLean's notes of a twenty-five year's service in the Hudson's Bay territory* (Toronto, 1932), 327-28.

paid great attention to natives' economic motivations but seldom wrote about native cultures.[24] Such accounts were conditioned by HBC discourse. The "Standing Rules and Regulations" asked for officials to submit to their department heads, annually, "a journal of occurances, with correct copies of all official correspondence, and a report conveying every requisite information in regard to the state and mode of conducting the trade." Department heads had to co-ordinate the movement of furs, exports, supplies, and provisions over large areas, and requested short, truthful, considered summaries of production and post needs, to make their job easier and to prevent corruption.

Yet this "mode of conducting the trade" was also rooted in the very nature of the fort locale. What department heads managed as a trade *site*, with profit and loss figures by its name, was to fort traders a setting that tied trade to the *sight* of a native world. While these journals and diaries were in one sense the product of rules and regulations, they were also conditioned by how HBC traders viewed things from under the flagstaff (and for some, from the boarding deck). HBC traders hoped to maximize profits from furs, and employees at Fort Simpson often relied on natives to provide fresh food to supplement their staple provisions, but neither could be sure whether this would transpire. With the fort shut off from the source of furs and food, the surrounding native world could not be controlled in any direct way. It was nearly impossible to predict the extent of trade. Coast Tsimshian were Fort Simpson's "homeguard," in part, because the sight of their houses pushed up against the fort gates gave HBC traders visible reassurance that alliances with local chiefs would not evaporate. Other native groups slipped in and out of the fort journals as they came and went from the fort. Knowledge of the native world was mediated by an economic gaze elaborated in fort settings. These settings permitted limited direct control over natives, shortening the horizon of that gaze.

Along the coast, the HBC's discourse on natives might be distinguished by the mutually reinforcing effect of a political economy of profit and loss and the *sight* of a native world from isolated forts connected by supply ships. HBC traders at Fort Simpson were part of a geography of political economy that stretched from the fort's pallisades and trading hall, through department headquarters on the Columbia River and at Lachine and York Factory, to London, but the fort setting was by no means marginal to its definition.

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[24] The Fort Simpson journals that have survived are for the years 1835, 1842-3, 1859-1861, and 1861-1862. The Letter Books run intermittently from 1841 to 1865. All of these documents are in the BCARS.

Metlakatla: The "Heathen Indian"

After five years' work at Fort Simpson (alongside HBC officials largely indifferent to his efforts), William Duncan created a separate mission in 1862, resettling seventy Coast Tsimshian converts at Metlakatla — an old Coast Tsimshian village site. By 1870 its native population had increased tenfold. Duncan and his few missionary workers were the only non-natives at Metlakatla. The settlement was established for the moral and spiritual transformation of natives. Duncan sought to tear away the traditional structures of Coast Tsimshian society and create a Christian community in which each individual was equal before God. This manifesto was woven into the fabric of his new settlement. Figure 5, a photograph of Metlakatla in the 1880s, shows that Duncan shaped a landscaped place, with rows of identical, single-family dwellings.[25] Each house had a small garden, glass windows, sash curtains, and was fitted with beds and clocks. The church and other public offices were Metlakatla's largest and most imposing buildings. This morphology typified Duncan's notion of a Christian community, and linked his work among Coast Tsimshian to philanthropic efforts to "improve" working class environments in Britain's industrial cities through programmes of slum clearance and re-housing. In both cases particular notions of community were articulated in spatial terms; changes in location and living arrangements were considered to play an active role in the creation of social order and control.[26]

Funded and instructed by missionary societies in London, by 1862 British missionaries had established "Christian villages" in Africa and Asia as well as North America. The Church Missionary Society of London (Duncan's sponsor) had, in the words of its figurehead Henry Venn, a "complete . . . girdle of missionary stations round the globe."[27] The societies supporting people like Duncan relied on donations from British, primarily middle class, benefactors, and while most missionaries were men many of their benefactors were women.

Missionary societies advertised in books and monthly compendiums that carried missionary reports.[28] The main purpose of missionary writing was

[25] HP55799, BCARS.

[26] See, Felix Driver, "Moral Geographies: Social Science and the Urban Environment in Mid-nineteenth Century England," *Trans Inst. Br. Geogr.*, (1988), 275-87.

[27] Henry Venn, "Journal," 19 December 1856, cited in Eugene Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society: Its Environment, Its Men and Its Work*, in three volumes, (London, 1899), vol. II, 614.

[28] During the nineteenth and early twentieth century, Anglican missionaries in the lower Skeena region published their homebound reports and vignettes in the *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, *The Mission Field*, and *The Church Missionary Gleaner*.

to render the lives of distant people in a way that roused readers' sensibilities, created sympathy and compassion for the plight of others, and secured donations. Missionaries produced what the historian Thomas Lacqueur has called "humanitarian narratives" that attempted to capture the "suffering" of others "as if the pain were one's own or that of someone near."[29] Would-be benefactors read about the suffering of others in missionary journals and could assuage their conscience by donating money.

Missionaries sought to rescue the body and soul of the "heathen Indian" who, according to the Methodist missionary Thomas Crosby, was suffering from "a feeble and quite indefinite polytheism" that had yielded "delusory forms of belief and behaviour."[30] Missionaries also portrayed native involvement with non-native traders as a hapless encounter that left them the helpless victims of drink, violence, and debauchery. Suffering was viewed as a general condition of native society, and missionaries' evocation of this condition was premised on an imperious distinction between savagism and civilization assumed by author and donator alike. Missionaries argued that drunkenness, debauchery, and heathen superstition had arisen because "unfortunate" native individuals lacked European mores of discipline, self-improvement, law, Christian religion, and secular reasoning, and because they had been set bad examples by unruly white traders. This exposition of suffering included a presupposition about relief — the ameliorative path from savagism to civility. More, since the cause of suffering was only discerned by the reader and the missionary, the missionary was then the only person who could guide natives to avoid grief.

Tied to this discourse in a new settlement, Coast Tsimshian became objects of compassion. Christian villages such as Metlakatla took missionaries' "moral infants" away from "demoralizing" centres of trade (such as Fort Simpson), harboured them from the "temptations of civilization," and showed them the "proper" road to improvement. Duncan devised and supervised economic and social programmes to cater to his brethren's material and moral "needs." Venn instructed his missionaries to bring a spirit of capitalism as well as Christianity to aboriginal peoples around the

Methodists published in the *Missionary Bulletin* and *The Missionary Outlook*. There is an incomplete collection of these journals in the Anglican and Methodist Archives and Library at the Vancouver School of Theology.

29 Thomas Lacqueur, "Bodies, Details, and the Humanitarian Narrative," in Lynn Hunt (ed.), *The New Cultural History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1989), 176-204. The quotation is from page 179.

30 Thomas Crosby, *Up and Down the Pacific Coast by Canoe and Mission Ship* (Toronto, 1914), 99.

world, seeing the two as compatible parts of an ethic of improvement.[31] With a store and a variety of businesses, Metlakatla became, for a time, economically autonomous. Within a year of Duncan's move, Moffatt of Fort Simpson complained that "Mr Duncan is doing us a great deal of harm, [and] if he continues the trade much longer I see no alternative for us but to shut up our shop."[32] The moral and spiritual transformation of Metlakatlans was grounded in laws created by Duncan that forbade the social and moral deficiencies that he thought typified native life.[33] Metlakatlans were divided into "companies" headed by Coast Tsimshian chiefs who were to "further . . . progress and improvements in the village." "For the maintenance of peace and law" — or to supervise his own laws — Duncan also appointed a number of constables.[34]

In missionary texts, places like Metlakatla appear as utopias of Christian light, hope, and purity, and are contrasted with surrounding places of darkness and sin. In 1862 the readers of the *Church Missionary Intelligencer* were told that Metlakatla was an attempt to build a "model Christian village reflecting light and radiating heat to all the spiritually dark and dead masses of humanity around us."[35] Keeping his readers up to date about "progress" on the Pacific coast at the end of the century, the historian Eugene Stock wrote about the place in a similar vein:

Metlakatla proved to be no hermit's cell in the wilderness, removed far from the haunts of man, and exerting no influence over them. Rather did it become a harbour of refuge, with its lights radiating forth into the darkness, inviting the distressed bark to seek its friendly shelter, and guiding the passing vessel on its course. It rapidly acquired a recognized position of importance and influence as the centre . . . of all good work of every kind among the coast Indians.[36]

Duncan rendered Metlakatlans as his children. They had not known good from evil until he showed them the distinction. With his move, good and

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[31] See, Wilbert Shenk, "Henry Venn's Instructions to Missionaries," *Missiology*, vol. V, no. 4 (1977), 467-85.

[32] Moffatt, "Letterbook," 31 October, 1863.

[33] There were fifteen laws which, *inter alia*, forbade potlatching and drinking, and included instructions to attend school, be "clean . . . and industrious" and "build neat houses." William Duncan, "Laws of Metlakatla," October 1862. "Notebooks," William Duncan Papers, University of British Columbia, Microforms [hereafter UBC-MCR], C2158. For an early account of Duncan's work, written for his sponsors in England and published by the Church Missionary Society, see J. Nelson, *Metlakatla: Ten Years' Work among the Tsimshian Indians* (London, 1869).

[34] William Duncan Papers, UBC-MCR, C2158.

[35] "Recent Intelligence," *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, vol. XIII (October 1862).

[36] Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society*, II, 618.

evil became located in different places — Metlakatla and Fort Simpson, respectively. To his nineteenth-century readers, Duncan not only brought civilized ways to his "heathen children" but also masterminded their improvement. To secure the donations that supported his work, missionaries such as Duncan roused compassion and also reported progress.

Missionary discourse, then, was in part constituted by the donation system that sponsored missionary settlements. Missionary settlements like Metlakatla appear on the pages of missionary journals and books as sights to be viewed from a great train of Civilization steaming around the world, with carriages of missionaries laying the tracks in the most difficult terrain. Whether or not Duncan actually improved the lot of his Tsimshian brethren is, in this light, an arbitrary question, for "improvement" was in important respects a textual construction embedded in a wider geography of missionary activity. But this geography also fed into a much broader set of Eurocentric discourses that connected the engines of profit and improvement in various ways — nineteenth-century discourses that sent not only missionaries but also gunboats to British Columbia, and not only traders that explored commercial possibilities in distant corners of the world but also armies to conquer indigenous peoples.[37]

On another level, however, missionary discourse had a deeply personal side. At places like Metlakatla, missionaries wielded what the historian Michel Foucault terms "a pastoral modality of power," a form of power, rooted in Christian traditions, which aimed constantly to "ensure, sustain, and improve the lives of each and everyone."[38] If, in the HBC's discourse, the native world remained anonymous, then in missionary discourse it was quite the reverse. Uppermost in the minds of missionaries such as Duncan was an attempt to address and change the details of the daily lives of individual natives. Missionaries lowered the threshold of visibility into the body and soul of everyday life. They did not look at anonymous "heathen" faces; they tried to get inside the "heathen" soul and vanquish its sins. Missionaries laboured to get these individuals to "work at their own 'mortification' in this world" — to work towards a death in this world that would provide life in another.[39] They were church-appointed shep-

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[37] For an incisive account of some of these connections see, Thomas Haskell, "Capitalism and the Origins of the Humanitarian Sensibility, Part I," *The American Historical Review*, vol. 90, no. 2 (April 1985), 339-62; "Part II," *idem.*, no. 3, 547-67.

[38] Michel Foucault, "Politics and Reason," in *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings, 1977-1984* [L. Kritzman, ed.] (New York and London, 1988), 57-85; the quotations are from pages 60 and 67. This essay was originally a lecture given by Foucault in 1979.

[39] *Ibid.*, 70.

herds who assumed power over a flock and whose job it was to watch the flock, prompt and guide it to salvation, and in the meantime provide for its material needs. This flock was neither anonymous nor amorphous. Each individual counted, and the shepherd had to know what each did. In guiding the conscience to master the passions and delusions of the soul, the missionary-shepherd had to recognize that each individual would have her or his own needs, and inform the flock that "mortification" was an individual achievement that could not be passed around. In short, Christian pastorship is distinguished by a form of power that individualizes, and is threaded into a string of modern discourses that preach self-examination in the name of self-action. This account of the life and death of the Coast Tsimshian chief Legaic epitomizes the idea of "pastoral power" at Metlakatla:

He had given Duncan much anxiety. After he appeared tamed, his old ferocity and love of sin had got the mastery again and again. On one occasion he gathered the Indians together and bid them farewell, saying he could bear the restraints of Metlakatla no longer. . . . He got into his canoe and paddled away alone, to the grief of the Christians he was leaving. Next day he re-appeared. "A hundred deaths," he said, "would not equal the sufferings of that night." And now the "blasphemer and persecutor and injurous" was baptized. . . . Legaic's story has been told . . . all around the world, and who shall say what miracles of grace the Lord has wrought by its means? For six years the once-dreaded savage lived a quiet and consistent life at Metlakatla as a carpenter, and then died on a journey, "very happy," he said, "not afraid to meet God."[40]

Duncan was not only a preacher, but also the village's law-maker and magistrate, its school teacher and chief entrepreneur. He visited England in 1870 to learn various trades. He fashioned what Crosby later termed a system of "[M]osaic rule," where "before any Justice of the peace, Indian Agent, or other officer of the law was sent to [the lower Skeena] region, these people were governing themselves under the direction of their missionary."[41] Duncan allowed a certain degree of native "autonomy" in the social and political affairs of Metlakatla, but as the appointed shepherd of a people he thought of as a suffering flock, he sought out, attended to, and reported the material and spiritual details of native life, and preached practices of self-examination. Tied to this regime of law-church-school-and-gaol, Coast Tsimshian became objects of a discourse that aimed to rule far more directly and continuously than did the HBC discourse at Fort Simpson.

40 Stock, *The History of the Church Missionary Society*, II, 621.
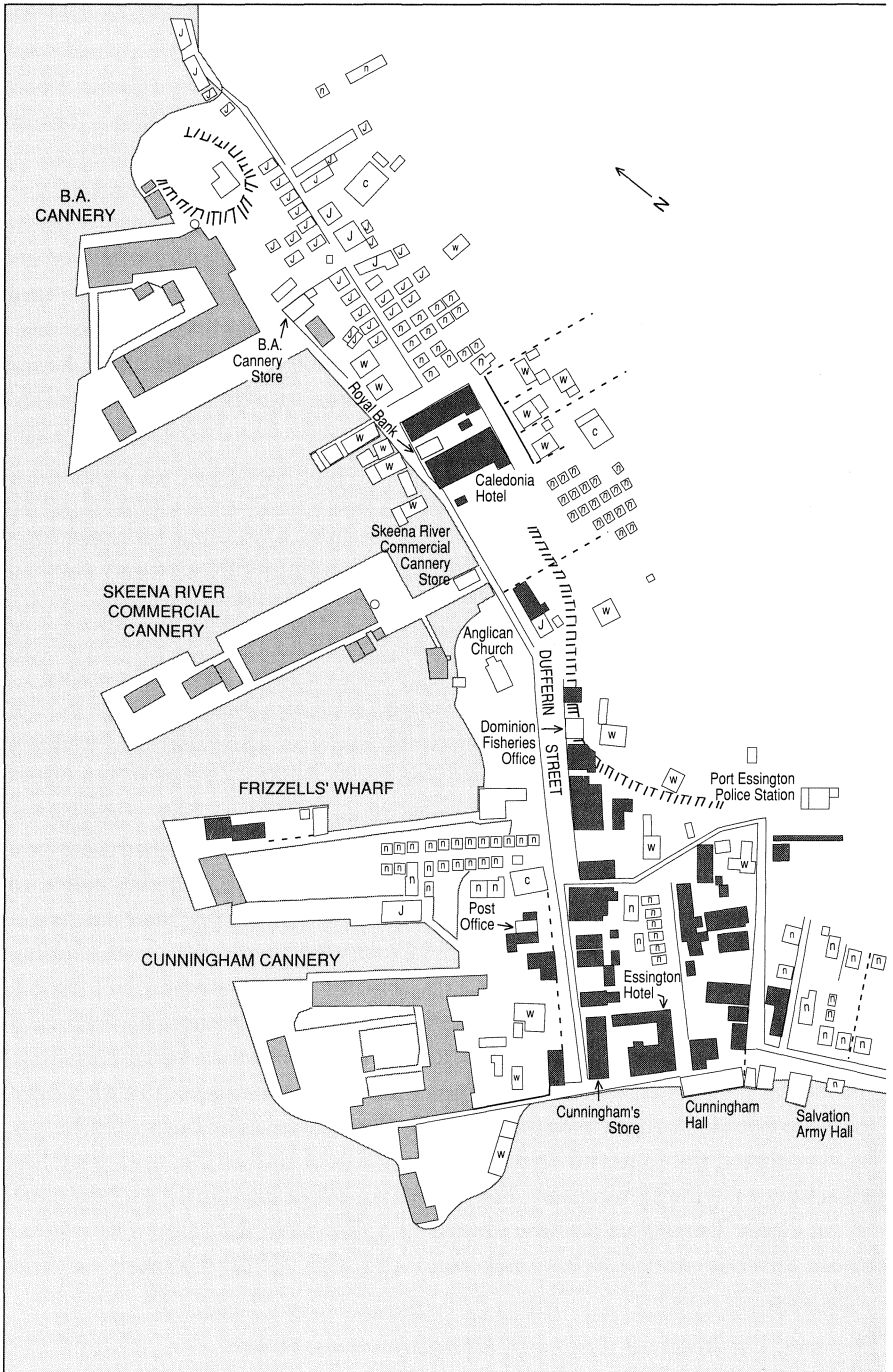41 Crosby, *Up and Down the Pacific Coast*, 66.

Figure 6. Port Essington, c. 1915.

Buildings

Residential:

| n | Native

| c | Chinese

| J | Japanese

| w | "White"

Industrial:

▨ Cannery

■ Business and Commercial

0   feet   250

CUNNINGHAM'S PRIVATE "INDIAN RESERVE"

Hospital

School

School

Methodist Church

Rectory of the Methodist Church

Christian Band Workers' Hall

Salvation Army

Boat Builders
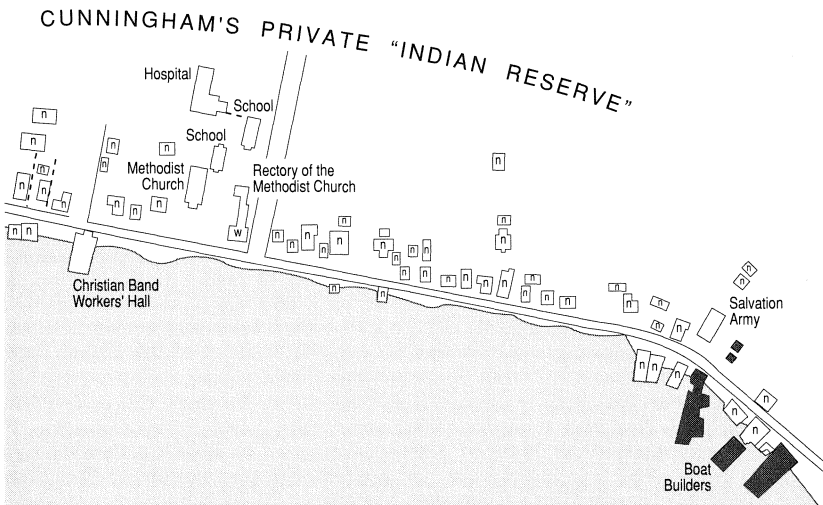
Port Essington: The Government "Native"

Port Essington, established in 1871 by Robert Cunningham (who had previously worked for both Duncan and the HBC at Fort Simpson), was the most complex of the three settlements.[42] Three salmon canneries — two built in 1883, the other in 1898 — transformed the town from a small port that rose on the back of the Omineca gold rush of the early 1870s to the production and distribution centre of northern British Columbia at the turn of the century. The canneries were financed by Victoria merchants and, then, by the early twentieth century, by Vancouver-based international companies.[43] Both trade and industry were premised on the extension of credit.[44] Port Essington was an acutely seasonal town, its population swelling tenfold to 4,000 or 5,000 during the summer canning season. The canneries employed native men and women (the majority of them Coast Tsimshian), and Chinese and Japanese men. They were not part of a barter system but were entrenched in a modern economy marked by wage labour and an industrial division of labour. Port Essington became an ethnically diverse industrial town with stores and hotels.

The town's cultural groups were pressed together along a narrow strip of land at the water's edge, yet set apart in different abodes (see figure 6).[45] Few from any group could speak any other tongue (except, perhaps, Chinook), and disconnected networks of association were forged around language and a group's type and place of residence. For Chinese cannery workers on summer contracts, life revolved around the cannery, butchering table and the bunkhouse. Few had the money to venture very far, many would send what they had made back to China, and according to some the

[42] I have given Port Essington a more detailed and rounded treatment than can be managed here in Daniel Clayton, "Geographies of the Lower Skeena, 1830-1920" (M.A. thesis, Department of Geography, University of British Columbia, 1989). See, especially, 71-179.

[43] In 1890 the British American Cannery, established with American funds, was bought by the British-sponsored Anglo-British Columbia Packing Company. In 1902 the Cunningham Cannery was sold to B.C. Packers, raised mainly on funds from eastern Canada and the eastern United States. The smallest of the three canneries, the Skeena River Commercial, was sold to Northern B.C. Fisheries in 1916.

[44] The Victoria merchant R. P. Rithet financed many entrepreneurs and canners on the Skeena, including Cunningham. The extension of credit in this region, and especially along the river itself which had ice on it and was almost unnavigable for around five months a year, was vital to commercial and industrial activity. Cunningham and Rithet's dealings are recorded in volumes 8 and 9 of the Rithet Papers, BCARS.

[45] This map of Port Essington is adapted from Chas Goad, *Northern Canneries, British Columbia including Port Essington* (Vancouver, 1915), and British Columbia, Fire Underwriters Association, *Plans of Salmon Canneries in British Columbia* (Vancouver, 1924). The map information was verified with photographs of Port Essington, 1902-1915, Ernest Harris Collection, Vancouver Public Library.

evenings were spent with opium.[46] There was both a permanent and
seasonal native population. The former were from Kitselas and Kitsum-
kalum well up the Skeena and lived on a private "reserve" donated to
them by Cunningham in 1880.[47] The latter were from all over the region
and lived in rows of huts rented from the canneries, where aspects of their
subsistence economy — such as drying salmon for the winter — still ac-
companied wage labour.[48] Japanese fishermen, some of them with families,
also lived in blocks of cannery-built huts, although much less is known
about their existence. Within the white community — most of whom were
either British emigrants or Canadian — class and occupational distinc-
tions emerged. The resident élite of store owners and cannery officials lived
in large fenced houses on the hillslope away from the noise of the canneries
and the smell of offal. They ran a number of social clubs that blossomed
in the winter months, and between them elected an unofficial mayor. But
there were also many white seasonal fishermen, some of whom boarded
in the town's two large hotels, and many of whom drank in the hotels'
bars during the weekly fishing close on the river. Parts of cultures from
different parts of the world were juxtaposed, and for the majority fleeting
social attachments were conditioned by the exigencies of a resource in-
dustry and the needs of strangers.

No one institution held sway in Port Essington, and no single discourse
prevailed. This, and a growing government apparatus, most distinguished
the town from either Fort Simpson or Metlakatla. During the late nine-
teenth century economic and social relations became circumscribed by
government laws monitored by provincial and dominion officials. Port
Essington was conceived within the purview of government land laws.
By 1900 there was a sharp distinction between the lower Skeena's fifty or
so pre-empted lots (mostly around salmon canning sites, and many of
them undeveloped) and the tiny "Indian Reserves" within and around
them (mostly resource procurement sites rather than village sites) (figure
7).[49]

[46] Benjamin Appleyard, "Missionary Work among the Fishermen and Skeena Indians
around Port Essington," MS., 34, BCARS.

[47] Department of Indian Affairs [hereafter, DIA], RG10, vol. 3776, file 37373-1.

[48] See, for example, Ronald Rohner (ed.), *The Ethnography of Franz Boas: Letters
and Diaries of Franz Boas Written on the Northwest Coast from 1866 to 1931*
(Chicago, 1969), 94, for Boas's description of Port Essington's native huts around
1890.

[49] This figure is adapted from Prince Rupert, map of pre-emptions, 1916, Ministry of
Land and Works, Victoria; and Canada, *Report of the Royal Commission on Indian
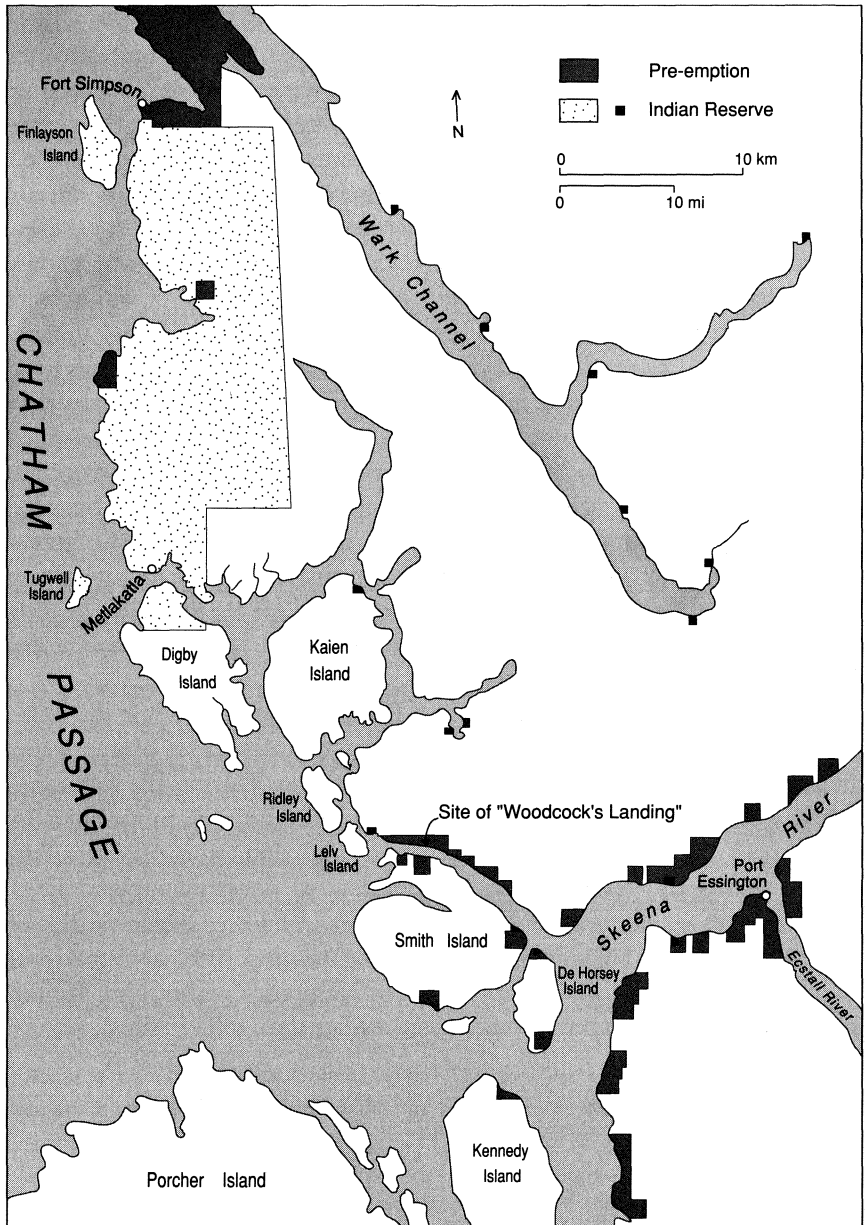Affairs for the Province of British Columbia* (Victoria, 1919), vol. 3 "Nass Agency —
maps."

Figure 7. Pre-emptions and "Indian Reserves" in the Lower Skeena Region, c. 1900.

The "Northwest coast Agency" of the Department of Indian Affairs (including the lower and middle Skeena) was created in 1888, and the legal sanctions administered by the Department of Lands and Works and "Indian Agents" introduced new modes of demarcation between natives and non-natives. Places were now marked by their position within a legal apparatus that favoured some groups and constrained others. While Port Essington's white elite became the citizens and clients of government — paying taxes and able to vote in provincial elections — Coast Tsimshian became wards of government, with their lives administered and their lands patrolled.

Missionary conceptions of moral and social deficiency became re-institutionalized and re-spatialized. Government discourses on British Columbia's native peoples were not just the creation of politicians in Ottawa and Victoria; they were also based on a series of spatial practices. Skeena river reserves were not created until the region was settled by people like Cunningham. While the reserve system in British Columbia was clearly based on a model of spatial separation and demarcation, reserve areas themselves were established in only a piecemeal fashion. Most of the reserves in the lower Skeena region were allotted in 1881-82, surveyed in 1887, and confirmed in 1892. Native groups waited until an understaffed Reserve Commission managed to get to their region and listen to their requests, but the timing of such trips, especially along the coast, was determined in good measure by the extent of white settlement. Wherever settlers went in the province they were soon followed by Reserve Commissioners and surveyors; wherever settlers encountered a native population their relations were soon mediated by the machinery of government. G. M. Sproat, writing about reserve policy on the eve of the Skeena allotments, noted that:

All the remaining points on the extensive coast line could be attended to as occasion required, because there are no white men to interfere with the Indians, and not likely to be pending the development here and there of some mining, fishing, or manufacturing industry. The coast might not be compared with the interior. . . . In the latter the Indians depend upon agricultural pursuits, and require protection from the encroachment of white settlers. Upon the former, the natives will never take to pastoral vocations, and with the exception above noted, there are not immediate prospects of difficulty with whites, who, as yet, have not been attracted to settle among them.[50]

However Coast Tsimshian at Port Essington engaged with others during the summer canning season, their lives were now framed by land laws. In

[50] G. M. Sproat, B.C. Indian Reserve Commission, 51, Salmon River, 24 November 1879, *Canada, Sessional Papers* (Ottawa, 1880), S.P.4., 130.

government discourses "native" became "an ecologically and ideologically restrictive" term that identified those with only subsistence needs and who had their subsistence areas defined for them while governments assumed sovereignty.[51] Places like Port Essington were characterized as much by this background of regulation as they were by the details of a resource town. It is extremely difficult to establish how dependent on a money economy Coast Tsimshian had become by the late nineteenth century, but they had certainly become objects of a discourse that had the capacity to affect their lives radically.

While in government discourse the idea of "native" was part of a new political geography, Indian Agents were meant to take over many of the tasks of the missionary and wield a form of "pastoral power." Sproat's idea of the duties of an Indian Agent, for instance, reads much like Duncan's manifesto: native tribes, he said,

should be rebuked, warned and instructed, and gradually trained for responsible management of their own little affairs, not by an officer calling for an hour at a village once in a few years with a gunboat for a conveyance but by an officer living constantly in their midst going from place to place and encamping to get information, and to have a talk — appearing unexpectedly at certain points, threatening the Potlatch givers, and bending the people to his will for their own good by mingled instruction, persuasion and firmness.[52]

The missionary's spiritual baggage was pushed to the background, but Indian Agents were still supposed to supervise reserves at close quarters, report on details, and advise a "flock." Yet if this were the ideal — Christian pastorship having become secularized and sanitized in a different discourse — then it was, by and large, far more loosely exercised around the Skeena than at Metlakatla. There was only one Indian Agent for a huge Agency and, judging by the quantity and quality of the correspondence left, the region's Indian Agents fell well short of Sproat's mark, visiting groups infrequently and writing little about them. Indian Agents were perhaps more the symbols than the bearers of governmental power, but the land laws, by virtue of their brute materiality, probably needed little policing.

In Port Essington itself, there were many other traces of the emerging apparatus of government. Contract laws defined economic relations between worker and employer. Criminal codes distinguished inadmissible

[51] The quotation is from Arjun Appadurai, "Putting Hierarchy in its Place," *Cultural Anthropology*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1988, 36-49, at 39, who offers a rich genealogy of the idea of "native" in modern anthropology.

[52] G. M. Sproat to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, Fort Rupert, October 1879, DIA, RG10, Vol.1274 (Indian Reserve Commission).

from acceptable behaviour. Disagreements were now settled by recourse to a judicial process.[53] By 1900 most forms of economic activity were in some way taxed. Such laws were monitored and enforced by resident police constables, visiting magistrates, and fishery overseers. There was a three-cell gaol in the town, and individuals from all of the town's cultural groups were arrested. White settlers did not possess the means of legal sanction, but contract, property and liquor laws, ensuring title to land and a sober workforce, served their interests more than others', and constables and magistrates were often dispatched to places like Port Essington at their request. Even so, their lives were increasingly administered and policed in ways that neither HBC officials nor missionaries had encountered. Yet there was no simple political aim or reason generating these new forms of power in late nineteenth-century British Columbia. Rather, there was an emerging government apparatus that tended to follow large conglomerations of people and act in tandem with this net of white citizen-client relations.

Police constables represented the authority of government on the lower Skeena and were also in large measure its bureaucracy. They collected property and revenue taxes for the Government Agent, fines from court cases, and fees for cannery, fishing, ship, liquor, trading, and firearms licences. They were also sanitation and hotel inspectors, and agents of surveillance. They were sent to places like Port Essington to monitor "ordinary" people. They wrote daily summaries about many aspects of daily life and reported to their superintendent in Victoria every month. Constables were meant to remain aloof from the communities they policed, and were not to stay in one place for too long. "Constables shall be auxilliary to each other," deemed the Provincial Secretary, "and shall be subject to removal from place to place as the necessities of the service require."[54] But again, this was the ideal, for this system of policing did not work very smoothly along the lower Skeena. Petty "offenders" in an overcrowded gaol often waited weeks before being tried. Constables were never trained surveillance experts, and they were usually unsure about how or when to collect revenue, and to whom it should be sent. Even so, it would be wrong to overemphasize the fitfulness of law enforcement at Port Essington. Police constables were vital links in an expanding network of authority that from the end of the nineteenth century brought govern-

[53] On this government apparatus in Port Essington see, "British Columbia, Provincial Police, Superintendent Correspondence Inward, 1893-1912," BCARS, GR55-57; "Prince Rupert, County Court, Plaints and Procedure Books, 1906-1914," BCARS, GR1629; "Port Essington. Police. Jail Occupants," MS., BCARS.

[54] British Columbia, *Provincial Police Regulations* (Victoria, 1908), VI, 25, page 6.

ment into the lives of non-natives as well as natives. Port Essington was part of a modern secular society characterized by new systems of economic regulation and political supervision.

There were Anglican, Methodist, and Salvation Army ministers at Port Essington. Coast Tsimshian, whites, Chinese and Japanese attended church, but the church provided one form of socialization among others, and the possibility of creating a missionary-governed Christian village was slight. "Cunningham owned all the property at Essington," wrote the town's Anglican priest Benjamin Appleyard, "and all who lived at the place were more or less under his influence . . . the things he encouraged [created] the greatest difficulties in the spiritual advancement of the Church people at Essington."[55]

Port Essington signifies many facets of modernizing British Columbia. Bound to a great expansion of government apparatuses between 1880 and 1920, and the spread of industrial capital, such places were marked by the convergence of different groups on, and their contiguity in, (often) isolated settings. Their work patterns were set by specific staple industries, and their economic fate was fastened to the availability of a targeted resource and the vagaries of an international economy. As the editor of one of Port Essington's newspapers observed, "The old Hudson's Bay preserve ha[d] passed through an evolutionary stage."[56] With the influx of these different groups, and the development of industry and settlement, Coast Tsimshian became part of new discourses. Government power was felt most directly through the land laws, yet, not restricted to a native world, was dispersed through the workings of an industrial economy and a settler society. Figures 6 and 7 do not simply reflect these emerging processes and discourses but are, more precisely, made possible by them. They have been spliced together from the reports of private surveyors, fire insurance underwriters, and government officials. They signify a new cartography of power, an emerging apparatus of government that demarcated groups spatially as well as socially, and which required details about the size, density, and value of buildings and businesses for taxation and insurance purposes. With detailed maps, some of the problems of bringing distant regions into the regulatory fold of government could be ameliorated without leaving head offices in Victoria or Ottawa. More insidiously, the plethora of maps in late nineteenth-century British Columbia

[55] Benjamin Appleyard to the Bishop of Caledonia, 1904, Diocese of Caledonia Synod Office, Prince Rupert.

[56] *The Sun*, Port Essington, 21 December 1907.

accompany discourses different from those produced at either Fort Simpson or Metlakatla but which, once in place, begin to redefine and resituate them.

Discourse and Geographical Change

As each discourse was placed in the lower Skeena region, the ones preceding it became redefined. Metlakatla was one of the first Christian missions established in the Skeena region. In the 1870s Crosby established a Methodist mission and school outside the pallisades at Fort Simpson. Coast Tsimshian cedar-plank houses began to disappear, a street plan was drawn, boardwalks were constructed, and Fort Simpson became the small town of Port Simpson with a magistrate and the region's Government Agent. With the rise of the canning industry in the late 1870s, Metlakatla's economic autonomy began to be undermined as many of Duncan's brethren fled his Christian village in the summer. In the 1880s the region's newly-created Anglican Diocese of New Caledonia impinged upon Duncan's religious work. While Duncan was the region's Justice of the Peace, government officials began to undermine his 'mosaic' rule. In 1887 Duncan left the Skeena region with six hundred followers to establish "new Metlakatla" in Alaska. Port Essington was the region's largest and most prominent settlement until the end of World War I, but was then quickly usurped by Prince Rupert, which was the terminus of a transcontinental railway, more accessible by ship, and the seat of local government.[57]

By 1900 Coast Tsimshian had become part of a much larger set of relations and appeared to slip from immediate view. Yet this shift from "Indians-as-economic-objects," to the "heathen Indian," to the government "native" marks the regulation of Coast Tsimshian life and land by white discourses and practices through the nineteenth century. Coast Tsimshian were never confined to Fort Simpson, Metlakatla, or Port Essington. They moved around and beyond the lower Skeena region, fishing, hunting, trading and, increasingly, working for money. Whether in or out of these places, however, they could not escape the orders of discourse that had been placed in the region. Native-white relations were complex, diverse, and shifting. At the same time, however, the flux of interaction in the lower

[57] For an overview of these changes, see, R. G. Large, *Skeena: River of Destiny* (Museum of Northern British Columbia Edition, 1981). For more scholarly treatments of later Fort Simpson and Metlakatla see, Clarence Bolt, "The Conversion of the Port Simpson Tsimshian: Indian Control or Missionary Manipulation," *BC Studies*, 57 (1983), 38-56, and Jean Usher, *William Duncan of Metlakatla: A Victorian Missionary in British Columbia* (Ottawa, 1974).

Skeena region was ordered and fixed in places accompanied by specific discourses. I have tried to account for the ways these discourses worked.

The geographies of the lower Skeena I have outlined are informed by wider theoretical and political considerations. Scholars of early British Columbia have recognized that fur traders, missionaries, settlers, and government officials had different agendas and engaged native peoples in different ways. They have also identified elements of the discourses I have outlined.[58] Yet they have, I think, paid insufficient attention to the ways white views and strategies were shaped by the spaces and settings within which native-white interaction occurred, and in this essay I have tried to elaborate two aspects of this claim.

The first is that white views and strategies have to be examined and theorized in relation to the *geographies* of native-white interaction. I have tried to sketch how white power in the lower Skeena region was mediated by the way Coast Tsimshian came into view from particular locations, by the way native-white interaction was ordered in space, and by the way patterns and processes in the lower Skeena region were connected to wider geographies. Analysis of places and regions need not entail parochial or limited conclusions. Indeed, in early British Columbia, where interaction took place in diverse physical landscapes and native settings, synthesis and generalization should be forged from an appreciation of the diverse local and regional complexions of interaction. I have also suggested that the geographies of the lower Skeena region contributed to broader sets of continental and international relations. The activities of fur traders and missionaries attest to the power of European societies to stretch over space, and to a capitalist order which, by the end of the nineteenth century, was truly global in scope. Native reserves and an emerging apparatus of government attest to the rise of modern disciplinary forms of power in British Columbia. These local patterns and global forces were interlocking, and the one cannot be theorized without the other.

The second aspect of the claim is that these spaces and settings of interaction had a great bearing on the nature of white reports, journals, and correspondence. My analysis of white discourses is, in part, a response to the methodological problems posed by trying to account for white-native *interaction* using a partial historical record. Academic historical discourse is based almost entirely upon written evidence; it is extremely difficult to

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[58] The most succinct and best overview of early British Columbia is Robin Fisher, *Contact and Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia, 1774-1890* (Vancouver, 1977).

get at native motivations and experiences because they were mostly reconstituted in white records. Loose counterfactuals are sometimes drafted in an attempt to speak on behalf of native groups, to counter the ways they were incorporated into white discourses, and to represent "their side" of the story. Such counterfactuals are used to suggest that if natives had written their own texts in the nineteenth century they would furnish evidence that their view of whites would correspond to the scholar's moral and/or political position on natives.[59] These positions are usually appealing, but counterfactual analysis reveals little about white discourse itself. I have focused on the ways Coast Tsimshian were reported and represented — ordered and constituted — in white discourses, the institutional forces shaping those discourses, and on the way those discourses worked to demarcate, divide, and contain Coast Tsimshian in space. By illustrating the diverse connections between knowledge, power, and space in the Skeena region I seek to question the power of discourses to produce "truths" that stretch beyond their points of production and become more widely accepted. One such "truth" is that native "acceptance" of British sovereignty was demonstrated by peaceful and willing interaction with fur traders and missionaries, and later by compliance with land laws and respect for the law, across the province. It is assumed that what was recorded by whites can be used in a transparent manner as evidence of "acceptance," and that to question British sovereignty one must prove that white discourses in native territories were actively resisted and protested. Such "truths" hide the specificity of these discourses in time and space, and do not address the possibility that natives were often silenced by the way they were incorporated into discourse.

Assertions of white power and sovereignty, as blatant now as ever, can be exposed by trying to uncover the modes of power and representation embedded in the statements we now take as "evidence." The remarks, statements, and maps of fur traders, missionaries, and government officials belonged to discourses and institutional practices which represented and dealt with natives in specific ways. These discourses were anchored in, and worked through, geographical settings. Analysis of white discourses will do little to explain the nature of native motivations and experiences. But it can be used to show how a partial historical record mirrors a historical process where, in the historian Patrick Bratlinger's words, "the voices of the

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59 In Fisher's case the counterfactual is that natives would either accept or tolerate non-natives as long as their ability to govern their own lives was not restricted in any determinate way. It is informed by liberal views about equality and well-being.

dominated are represented almost entirely by their silence, their absence."[60]
To expose those modes of silence we have to remain sensitive to the geo-
graphies of native-white interaction and the part they play in a historical
geography of white domination and power in British Columbia.

[60] Patrick Bratlinger, "Victorians and Africans: The Genealogy of the Myth of the
Dark Continent," in H. L. Gates (ed.), *"Race," Writing, and Difference* (Chicago:
Chicago University Press, 1986), 185-222, at 185-86. The theoretical connections
explored in this last section are informed by the work of Michel Foucault. See his
Power/knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings 1972-1977 [C. Gordon,
Ed.] (New York, 1980). For an accessible and suggestive introduction to his work
see, John Rajchman, "Foucault's Art of Seeing," *October*, 44 (1988), 89-117.