

# THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF 1858 IN THE FRASER CANYON

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## INTRODUCTION

**B**RITISH COLUMBIA was created as a political entity because of the events of 1858, when the entry of large numbers of prospectors during the Fraser River gold rush led to a short but vicious war with the Nlaka'pamux inhabitants of the Fraser Canyon. Due to this large influx of outsiders, most of whom were American, the British Parliament acted to establish the mainland colony of British Columbia on 2 August 1858.<sup>1</sup>

The cultural landscape of the Fraser Canyon underwent extremely significant changes between 1858 and the end of the nineteenth century. Construction of the Cariboo Wagon Road and the Canadian Pacific Railway, the establishment of non-Indigenous communities at Boston Bar and North Bend, and the creation of the reserve system took place in the Fraser Canyon where, prior to 1858, Nlaka'pamux people held largely undisputed military, economic, legal, and political power. Before 1858, the most significant relationship Nlaka'pamux people had with outsiders was with the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), which had forts at Kamloops, Langley, Hope, and Yale.<sup>2</sup> Figure 1 shows critical locations for the events of 1858 and immediately afterwards.

In 1858, most of the miners were American, with many having a military or paramilitary background, and they quickly entered into hostilities with the Nlaka'pamux. The Fraser Canyon War initially conformed to the pattern of many other "Indian Wars" within the expanding United States (including those in California, from whence many of the Fraser Canyon miners hailed), with miners approaching Indigenous inhabitants

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\* The many individuals who have contributed to this work are too numerous to list. They include students, research assistants, colleagues, peers, administrators, campground managers, editors, and friends. I am indebted to the Boston Bar and Spuzzum First Nations, who are active research partners and hosts for this work. Nlaka'pamux people in general also deserve recognition for their historic role in the War of 1858, for without their sacrifice and engagement in that conflict our province might not exist.

<sup>1</sup> Averill Groeneveld-Meijer, "Manning the Fraser Canyon Gold Rush" (MA thesis, University of British Columbia, 1994).

<sup>2</sup> Cole Harris, *The Resettlement of British Columbia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997).

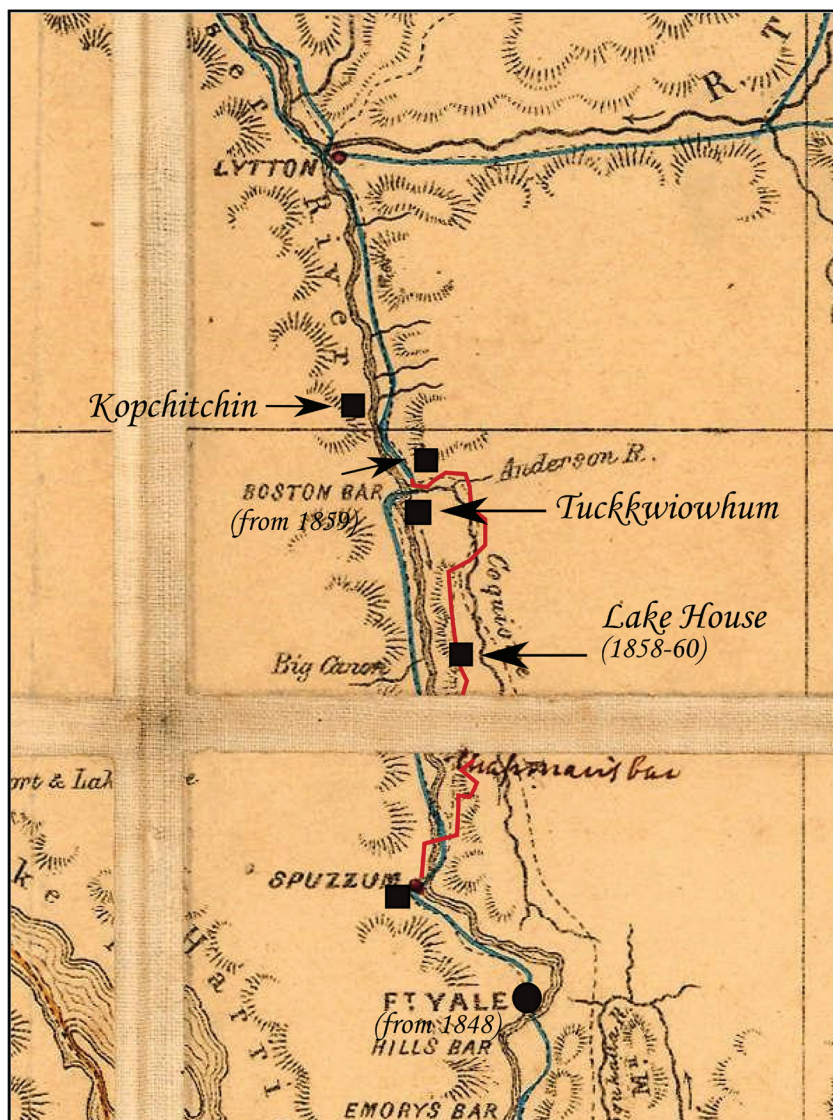


Figure 1. Cultural geography of the Fraser Canyon circa 1858, overlaid on an 1860 Royal Engineers map. A rough trail followed the Fraser River between Yale and Tuckkwiowhum, with one segment ascending over the height-of-land south of the latter between the Anderson and Fraser rivers (travels via Lake House). There were approximately forty-five kilometres between Fort Yale and Tuckkwiowhum. *Source:* John Arrowsmith, *Map of a portion of British Columbia, compiled from the surveys and explorations of the Royal Navy and Royal Engineers at the camp New Westminster, Nov. 24th, 1859, 1860*, Vancouver Archives, AM1594-Map 786.

as adversaries and threats rather than as friends or business partners.<sup>3</sup> Hostilities began in late summer 1858 and took the form of skirmishes and guerilla engagements as opposed to pitched battles. The miners retreated downriver to Yale, often burning Nlaka'pamux communities along the way, and organized themselves into multiple militia groups with widely differing goals. While the miners probably had a technological advantage, with their Kentucky rifles and cap-and-ball revolvers, the Nlaka'pamux were in their home territory, had access to food, and possessed intimate knowledge of the landscape. Nearby Nlaka'pamux allies included the Secwepemc and Okanagan peoples, some of whom had already fought with American regular and irregular forces south of the border.<sup>4</sup>

Nlaka'pamux military actions were sufficient to motivate the miners to negotiate for an end to hostilities in late August 1858. A militia calling itself the Pike Guards, under the command of H.M. Snyder, travelled upriver from Yale to Klikumcheen (Lytton), following Nlaka'pamux instructions by concluding treaties with smaller communities on their way north. At Klikumcheen, Snyder was met by Spintlum, whom he describes as "the war chief of all the tribes for some distance up & down Frazer River."<sup>5</sup> Hostilities formally ended with a final treaty agreed to by these two men. While the last treaty did not involve the British Crown, both sides largely respected its terms. This enabled the Royal Engineers to enter the territory and to begin to survey for Indian reserves<sup>6</sup> and to supervise the construction of the Cariboo Wagon Road, which was completed throughout the Fraser Canyon by 1863.<sup>7</sup>

While historians have analyzed documentary evidence pertaining to these critical events and processes, they were not subjected to the lens of archaeology until Kwantlen Polytechnic University's (KPU) Applied Archaeology Project in the Fraser Canyon. Archaeological remains result from the accumulation of many individual actions and choices, and from these remains larger historical patterns and events may be deduced. Usually, because of the palimpsest-like nature of the archaeological

<sup>3</sup> Harris, *Resettlement*, III-12.

<sup>4</sup> Daniel Marshall, "Claiming the Land: Indians, Goldseekers and the Rush to British Columbia" (PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2000); Nlaka'pamux Nation Tribal Council (NNTC) Research Unit, Draft Nlaka'pamux Ethnography of the South West Nlaka'pamux Territory, 2009 unpublished report, [www.bcuc.com](http://www.bcuc.com); Harris, *Resettlement*, III.

<sup>5</sup> H.M. Snyder, 28 August 1858, in Marshall "Claiming the Land," 199.

<sup>6</sup> Since the final treaty did not involve the British Crown, when reserves were apportioned this process was conducted in the absence of a formal treaty between the Crown and the Nlaka'pamux, and without express Nlaka'pamux consent.

<sup>7</sup> Andrea LaForet and Annie York, *Spuzzum: Fraser Canyon Histories, 1808-1939* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998), 75.

record, archaeologists are most concerned with long-term processes. However, for more recent events, those for which we have independent lines of evidence (for instance, documentary and oral history), it is possible to investigate the past on a much finer scale.

This article offers a brief overview of the KPU's work relating to four sites that were intimately involved in the events of 1858. I argue that archaeology should be used much more frequently to address the colonial period in British Columbia. In addition, short-duration, historically important events such as the War of 1858 can and should be investigated archaeologically. The material remains from the sites addressed in this article contain direct physical evidence of the means by which Nlaka'pamux people negotiated the colonial process. Colonialism had (and continues to have) many obvious negative consequences for the interests of the Nlaka'pamux, but they nonetheless engaged it with a fighting, entrepreneurial spirit.

Four archaeological sites were investigated, beginning in 2009, all within the central Fraser Canyon between Spuzzum and Lytton (Table 1). The Boston Bar First Nation and the Spuzzum First Nation were both active research partners, and each set the overall objectives for KPU's project. Detailed archaeological data, including artefact catalogues, site maps, photographs, and methods, can be found in Heritage Conservation Act Permit Reports 2009-0043, 2011-0084, and 2013-0088.

TABLE 1

*Summary of archaeological fieldwork in the Fraser Canyon between 2009 and 2015*

SITE NAME	DESCRIPTION
Lake House (DkRi-85)	Miner's roadhouse built in 1858 and burned in 1860. Situated on the height-of-land between the Fraser and Anderson rivers, at 900 m asl. Excavations were completed at the site in 2013.
Lake Mountain Culturally Modified Trees (DkRi-74)	Bark-stripped cedar culturally modified trees (CMTs). Situated along the ancient trail between Tuckkwiowhum and Spuzzum and is also very close to Lake House. Dendrochronological analysis and survey was completed at the site in 2013.
Kopchitchin (DIRi-6)	Ancient Nlaka'pamux community dating to at least 6,000 BP. Situated on an alluvial terrace on the west side of the Fraser River. Site contains remains of mat-lodges and circular house depressions, some of which were inhabited until 1858, and was excavated in 2009.
Tuckkwiowhum (DIRi-3)	Ancient Nlaka'pamux community dating to at least 3,500 BP. Situated on an alluvial terrace on the east side of the Fraser River. Site contains circular house depressions, some of which were inhabited until the 1860s. This site was excavated in 2011 and 2015.



## LAKE HOUSE (DkRi-85)

This was the location of two structures, most likely a log cabin and a wooden-floored canvas wall tent (built first), constructed in the late summer of 1858 and used until the site was burned in 1860. Lake House was used during the gold rush as a stopover point on the difficult trail over the mountains between Spuzzum and Tuckkwiowhum, a necessary route for miners in 1858 as the rougher trail following the river was not suitable for pack animals. Archaeological investigations during 2013 identified and excavated both locations,<sup>8</sup> situated near a small creek at an elevation of 900 m asl on the height-of-land between the Fraser and Anderson rivers.

The archaeological assemblage from the site is consistent with a miners' occupation beginning in 1858, containing square nails, lead-soldered cans, livestock shoes from mules and horses, eating utensils, Chilean currency, extensive liquor bottle glass, cookware, personal items such as tobacco pipes, and the remains of a carpet bag (Figure 2). Other important objects included a brass-lined knife or sword sheath, a lead bullet from a .44-calibre cap-and-ball revolver (possibly a Colt), and a brass percussion cap also from a revolver (Figure 3). The .44-calibre bullet has been deformed from chambering, firing, or both.

Miners at Lake House were importing outside goods into Nlaka'pamux territory at enormous cost to themselves, with rates for packing as high as one dollar per pound,<sup>9</sup> embedding the Fraser Canyon within a continental cash economy that was beginning to be dominated by the United States. Initially, most miners were unwilling to engage with Nlaka'pamux people economically, much to their detriment. It is significant that no Indigenously sourced materials, such as basketry, cedar bark, or salmon, were identified within the 1858-60 assemblage at Lake House. Other perishable materials, such as leather and wood, were commonly identified there. Nlaka'pamux items would have been highly useful to miners and, before 1858, were popular trade items between Nlaka'pamux and the HBC.<sup>10</sup> Canned food and liquor were the only "foods" that left archaeological evidence at Lake House, even though salmon could have been obtained with less expense had relations between the newcomers

<sup>8</sup> Brian Pegg, J. Elcock, C. Cromarty, and A. Spence, "HCA Permit 2013-0088, Archaeological Research near Boston Bar, BC," unpublished permit report on file with the Archaeology Branch, Victoria, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> E. Scholefield and F. Howay, *British Columbia from the Earliest Times to the Present*, vol. 2 (Vancouver: JS Clarke, 1914).

<sup>10</sup> Brian Pegg and Lili Kolaric, "HCA Permit 2011-0084, Archaeological Research Investigations near Boston Bar, BC," unpublished permit report on file with the Archaeology Branch, Victoria, 2013; Morag MacLachlan, *The Fort Langley Journals, 1827-30* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999).



Figure 2. Selected artefacts from Lake House, from top middle, clockwise: lock mechanism from a carpet bag; Chilean two reale coin minted in 1845; iron three-tine fork with wooden handle; worn summer mule shoe.

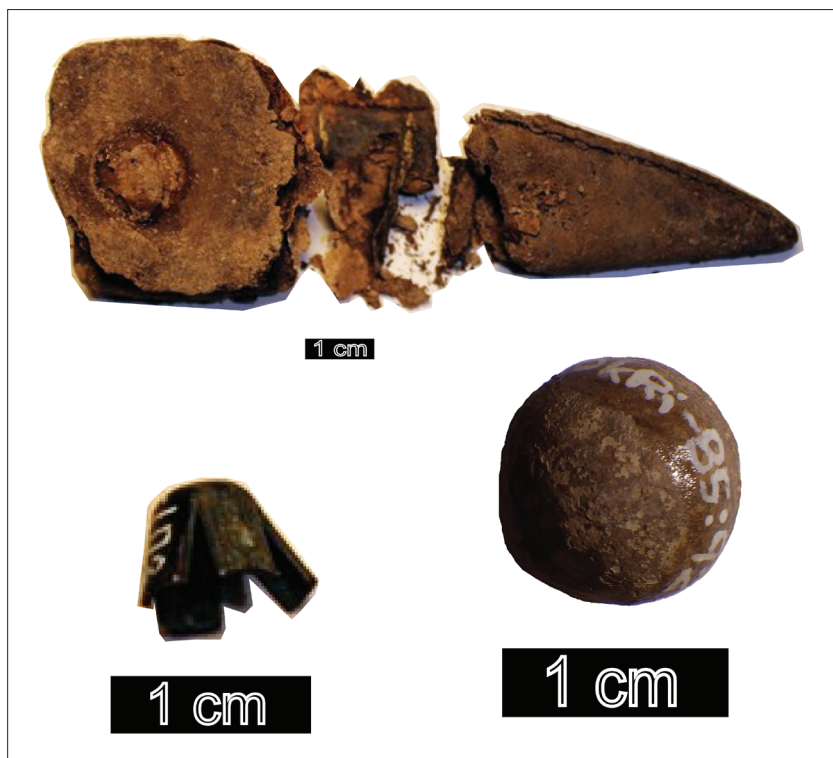


Figure 3. Material evidence of weaponry from Lake House. From top, clockwise: brass-lined leather sheath (fragmentary, would have been much longer when whole) for a short sword or knife; .44-calibre cap-and-ball round; brass percussion cap from a cap-and-ball revolver.

and Nlaka'pamux been friendly. Miners were keen to purchase salmon after the 1858 war, and they recognized its appeal in terms of both cost and taste. Dutch Bill Dietz wrote from Emory Bar in 1859:

I shall eat no more bacon for the next three months, if I stay here, for the Indians have begun to catch the delicious salmon. I shall live on them I bought a half one a few days ago for 50 cents, about 8 pounds and had quite a feast.<sup>11</sup>

An unnamed correspondent published a letter in the *San Francisco Bulletin* in the fall of 1858 after visiting this location, detailing this reliance upon imported foods and liquor:

The Lake House, unlike its namesake near San Francisco, is nothing more than a large round tent, wherein you can get a good cup of coffee and beans adlibitum for one dollar. The lake is about 50 yards from the tent, and appears to poses [*sic*] nothing attractive. The owners of this half-way house seem to be making money, to judge by the number combing [*sic*] both coffee and whisky, which latter article was of the most villainous kind, as I was told. They originally came up the river, and arrived at Fort Yale "broke." They swapped off their whitehall boat for an old horse, which they packed with about as much as he could well stand under and who "gin out" at this place, where they concluded to stop and sell out what they had to passers-by.<sup>12</sup>

This reliance on outside goods purchased with cash acted to reinforce the miners' world view of a landscape and its products as commodified. Laforet and York assert that this dissociation between landscape and food enabled a commercial and exploitative ideology to flourish among the miners.<sup>13</sup> They did not see the landscape in terms of food or nourishment but, instead, in terms of adversity, gold, opportunity, and profit. In contrast, the Nlaka'pamux saw in the rivers, streams, and wildlife not primarily opportunities for profit but the means of their own sustenance.<sup>14</sup> Viewing the landscape in this manner, the Nlaka'pamux became an impediment to the miners rather than potential business partners, allies, or even friends.

<sup>11</sup> William Henry (Dutch Bill) Dietz, 1859, as quoted by Groeneveld-Meijer, "Manning the Fraser Canyon," 47.

<sup>12</sup> *San Francisco Bulletin* correspondent, as quoted by L.J. Swindle, *The Fraser River Gold Rush of 1858: As Reported by the California Newspapers of 1858* (Victoria: Trafford Publishing, 2001), chap. 5.

<sup>13</sup> Laforet and York, *Spuzzum*.

<sup>14</sup> Brian Pegg, C. Cromarty, J. Elcock, and N. Martin, "Just over the Mountain: The Archaeology of Gold Rush History in the Fraser Canyon," *Midden* 45, 3 (2013): 2-10; LaForet and York, *Spuzzum*; Marshall, "Claiming the Land."

## LAKE MOUNTAIN CULTURALLY MODIFIED TREES (DkRi-74)

CMT sites are common in the Fraser Canyon and are primarily composed of western redcedar trees that have been stripped by Indigenous bark harvesting. Since most trees do not die after this event, dendrochronological methods can be used to date the sites and investigate economic and population history within regional study areas. They may also be utilized as a proxy measure to examine demographic changes (Figure 4).<sup>15</sup> This site is located approximately one kilometre north of Lake House in a mountainous area, near the trail that connected Tuckkwiowhum with Spuzzum.

While cedar mortality plays a role in the patterning of dates, cultural factors influence them as well.<sup>16</sup> Trends, processes, or events that act to reduce cedar harvest, such as warfare and introduced disease, can be identified within CMT dendrochronological datasets. Although the dates cannot be definitively connected with specific causes, they are strongly suggestive of the influence of important events of the time. In particular, the 1850s were a low point of cedar harvest on Lake Mountain, in contrast to other nearby CMT sites in the Fraser Canyon that show high (though declining) rates of cedar harvest for the same decade.<sup>17</sup> The 1850s are of course the decade of the Fraser Canyon War, with the nearby trail being used extensively by miners at this time. The 1860s and 1870s were the decades with the highest rates of cedar harvest, possibly due to expanded commercial opportunities related to the Cariboo Wagon Road; however, after the 1890s, cedar harvest is in steep decline, nearly ceasing in this location. The late 1880s and 1890s are the decades in which the concerted legal attack upon Indigenous rights came into full force. In 1880, the Federal Indian Act was amended to prohibit any assembly; in 1885 the potlatch was banned; in 1888, Indigenous people were prohibited from commercial fishing without a licence; and, in the 1890s, the residential school system was substantially expanded.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Brian Pegg, "Dendrochronology, CMTs, and Nuu-chah-nulth History on the West Coast of Vancouver Island," *Canadian Journal of Archaeology* 24, 3 (2000): 77–88; Paul Prince, "Dating and Interpreting Pine Cambium Collection Scars from Two Parts of the Nechako River Drainage, British Columbia," *Journal of Archaeological Science* 23, 3 (2001): 253–63.

<sup>16</sup> Morley Eldridge, "The Significance and Management of Culturally Modified Trees," Millenia Research, unpublished report for the Vancouver Forest Region and CMT Standards Steering Committee, Victoria, 1997.

<sup>17</sup> Brian Pegg, A. Besla, G. Coffey, A. Froese, and A. Haugo, "When the World Washed Away: Colonial History in the Fraser Canyon," *Midden* 43, 4 (2011): 10–14.

<sup>18</sup> Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC), *Historical Timeline from the 1700s to the Present*, at <http://www.ubcic.bc.ca/Resources/timeline.htm#axzz4kluqXP1s>.



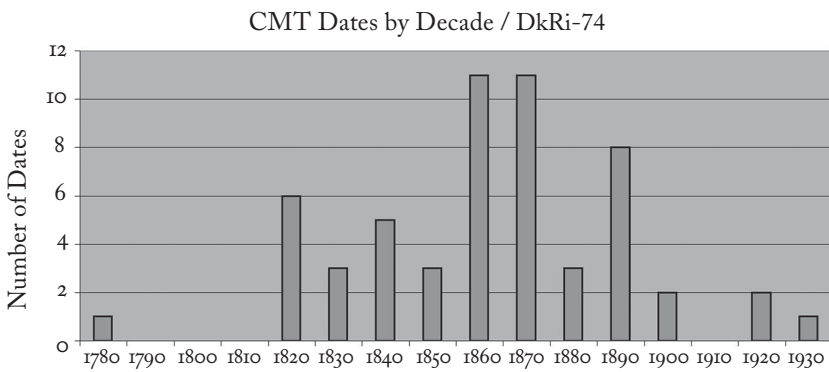


Figure 4. Sampling a rectangular bark-strip with an increment borer (top) and CMT dates from DkRi-74 (n = 56).

## KOPCHITCHIN (DIRi-6)

This site is situated on the west bank of the Fraser River near North Bend. Kopchitchin is very old, with at least six thousand years of time depth according to 1984 excavations by Arcas Associates Ltd.<sup>19</sup> Anglican missionary John Good visited the community in 1867, noting forty-five residents with “Soye” as the chief.<sup>20</sup> KPU’s investigations at the site in 2009 focused on the remains of two dwellings,<sup>21</sup> a mat lodge and a pit house, both probably last occupied in 1858. Final occupation of the structures was estimated using the artefact assemblage and historic documents: a search of Library and Archives Canada revealed a placer mine lease application for the Kopchitchin IR#2 dating to 1892–93. A sketch map of the reserve included with the application shows two structures present in the location excavated by KPU, with the notation “long abandoned by the Indians.”<sup>22</sup>

The artefact assemblage is dominated by objects that date to the mid-1800s, many of which undoubtedly came to the community from the HBC trade network. These include blue and green glass trade beads; a button manufactured by William Astons in Birmingham, United Kingdom; and tobacco pipe fragments. Some of the materials also come from an American trade network that competed with the HBC, such as the harmonica reed plate found within the circular house depression.<sup>23</sup> No objects are present that can be connected with the CPR. Surface assemblages at the site, in contrast to the subsurface assemblages from the structures, are strongly patterned by the CPR, which began construction in 1881 and is immediately adjacent to Kopchitchin. The artefact assemblage fits well with an abandonment date of 1858 as several buttons had a manufacture range from the 1850s to the 1860s, and the entire in situ assemblage fits well with a pre-1858 deposition.

<sup>19</sup> Arcas Associates Ltd., “1984-4: Excavations at the Kopchitchin Site (DIRi-6), North Bend, BC,” unpublished permit report on file with the Archaeology Branch, Victoria, 1985.

<sup>20</sup> NNTC, “Draft Nlaka’pamux Ethnography,” 13.

<sup>21</sup> Brian Pegg and Nelissa Ling, “HCA Permit 2009-0043, Archaeological Research Investigations near Boston Bar, BC,” unpublished permit report on file with the Archaeology Branch, Victoria, 2011.

<sup>22</sup> Indian Affairs, Sketch Map, Hydraulic Mining Lease Application, Library and Archives Canada (LAC), RG 10, vol. 3881, file 94,649, 1892.

<sup>23</sup> The HBC does not seem a likely source for these instruments. They have not been identified at the excavated sites of the Thompson River Post and Fort Langley (with the exception of a single find from the 1860s), and a review of account books (HBCA B97/d/1) for these forts did not document any musical instruments at all. In addition, a review of HBC Freight Books for shipping to the Pacific Coast of North America between 1844 and 1875 lists no harmonicas in any ship’s inventory (HBCA C.6/1).

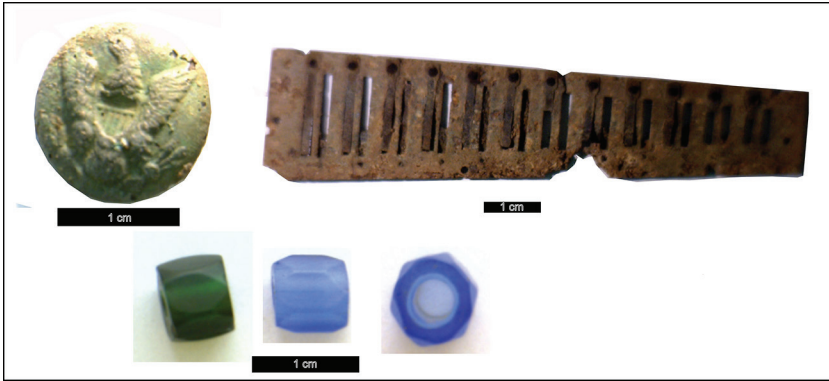


Figure 5. Selected artefacts from in situ contexts at Kopchitchin, clockwise from top left: brass US military button manufactured by Scovills & Co., Connecticut, United States of America; harmonica reed plate; and blue and green cut-glass HBC trade beads.

Most significant was a US Army military uniform brass button from the mat lodge floor deposits. This button was the first direct physical evidence of the 1858 gold rush and war identified by the KPU project (Figure 5). The US military button bears the symbol of an eagle with a shield on its chest, grasping arrows in its left claw and the olive branch in its right. This symbol is the Great Seal of the United States, still in use by several branches of the US military as well as the US federal government. The button was manufactured in Connecticut, United States of America, by Scovills & Co. and adorned the jacket of an enlisted man in the general service,<sup>24</sup> not an officer or a specialist. Many of the 1858 miners had been in the military, seeing service in the US war with Mexico from 1846 to 1848 or in some of the various mid-1800s “Indian Wars” of the west.<sup>25</sup>

Because the structures are relatively recent by archaeological standards, substantial amounts of wood framing and roofing material were identified in both excavations. Without exception, this wooden material was charred by fire. Extensive shovel testing outside the structures where houses are absent identified little to no evidence of burning. It is therefore most likely that the structures themselves were burned rather than that a naturally occurring fire burned the entire site. Figure 6 shows burned structural materials from both buildings.

At the peak of the gold rush, twenty-five to thirty thousand miners came to what is now British Columbia, with many of these passing

<sup>24</sup> Pegg and Ling, “HCA Permit 2009-0043.”

<sup>25</sup> Marshall, “Claiming the Land.”



Figure 6. Burned structural wood from the pit house (left, Douglas fir); another part of the pit house (middle, probably western redcedar); and the mat lodge (right, Douglas fir).



through the Fraser Canyon within Nlaka'pamux territory.<sup>26</sup> When war began in the late summer of 1858, many of the miners were far upriver of Yale and began retreating downstream through hostile territory.<sup>27</sup> As they did this, numerous skirmishes occurred between the retreating miners and the Nlaka'pamux. A first-hand account of this retreat is provided by Ned Stout in a 1908 interview: "We had to fight our way through and we burned every rancherie and every salmon box that we could get ahold of."<sup>28</sup> Many miners were organized into militias, armed with reliable percussion-lock Kentucky rifles or with Colt cap-and-ball revolvers. Ammunition and a percussion cap from this type of weapon was recovered from Lake House. The Nlaka'pamux, on the other hand, had smooth-bore flintlocks and poisoned arrows.<sup>29</sup> On the surface, based on numbers and weaponry, it would appear the miners had military superiority.

The Nlaka'pamux, however, had substantial advantages as well. They were in home territory and had intimate knowledge of the region. They could supply themselves with food and had ready access to friendly communities for resupply and shelter. In addition, Nlaka'pamux allies included the Secwepemc and Okanagan groups to the north and east, some of whom had had experience fighting American regular and irregular troops in earlier wars to the south.<sup>30</sup> The Nlaka'pamux strategy was to avoid direct engagement, instead skirmishing and harassing miners, thus many of their communities were empty when the miners arrived.

Captain Charles Rouse, a former Texas Ranger, writes that a group of volunteer soldiers under his direction had

route[d] the Indians, who took refuge in the mountains; they then burnt three of their rancheries, destroying all of their provisions, which consisted of salmon and dried berries. The miners found quite a number of packages of powder and lead in different camps. There have been, in all, five of their rancheries burnt; three above the Big Canon, and two below.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Harris, *Resettlement*, 109–10.

<sup>27</sup> Marshall, "Claiming the Land," ii. This figure is commonly cited, but the estimate of miners' populations within the Fraser Canyon at any particular time is very difficult.

<sup>28</sup> Edward Stout, "Reminiscences," BCA, E/E/ST.71, 1908. The miners called Nlaka'pamux communities "rancheries," using Hispanicized terminology imported from the California gold rush.

<sup>29</sup> Stout, "Reminiscences"; Harris, *Resettlement*, iii.

<sup>30</sup> Marshall, "Claiming the Land."

<sup>31</sup> Rouse, as quoted by Marshall, "Claiming the Land," 217.

H. Bancroft, writing only twenty-nine years after the events in 1887, believed that the primary target of this scorched earth strategy was the “Big Cañon tribe, ... whose rancherías had been burned by the rifle company.”<sup>32</sup>

These accounts raise the possibility that Kopchitchin was one of the settlements burned in 1858. The “Big Cañon” referred to by Rouse (above) is the part of the canyon south of Hells Gate, twelve kilometres south of Kopchitchin. Kopchitchin IR #2 belongs to the Boston Bar First Nation, whose territory extends south of Hells Gate, and they are almost certainly the “Big Cañon tribe” in Bancroft’s history. These accounts, together with the extensive evidence of burning in the structures at the site, the absence of artefacts in situ that clearly postdate 1858, and the US military button from the floor of the burned mat lodge constitute a convincing case that Kopchitchin was one of the communities burned in 1858. Kopchitchin was established as a reserve on 19 July 1870,<sup>33</sup> and the census conducted by the Indian Reserve Commission in 1878 showed only twenty-six inhabitants.<sup>34</sup>

The potlatch ceremony was outlawed in 1885 by the federal government.<sup>35</sup> A search of the British Columbia Archives revealed two photographs (D-01496 and D-01497), probably taken by the same photographer, showing an illegal potlatch at Kopchitchin in 1895 (Figure 7). In the photograph, many people are in Western dress; however, several are not, and several men have kept their hair long. Objects, presumably gifts, held by people in the photograph include baskets, rolled bark, blankets, and an oversized wooden spoon. Cedar bark for the baskets would have come from CMT sites like DkRi-74, which is located only fourteen kilometres away on the opposite side of the Fraser. These photographs were consciously arranged, probably involving either a professional or a skilled amateur; this shows that Nlaka’pamux people were in essence thumbing their noses at colonial authorities. This event is a critical piece of historical evidence as it relates to the trajectory of Kopchitchin after the war and into the late 1800s.

<sup>32</sup> H.H. Bancroft. *History of British Columbia* (San Francisco: The History Company, 1887), 32: 395-96.

<sup>33</sup> Cole Harris, *Making Native Space* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2002).

<sup>34</sup> Harris, *Resettlement*, 121.

<sup>35</sup> UBCIC, *Historical Timeline*.



Figure 7. 1895 photograph (BCA, D-01497) labelled “Potlatch in North Bend” (Kopchitchin).

#### TUCKKWIOWHUM (DIRi-3)

Situated on the east bank of the Fraser River immediately south of the confluence of the Anderson River, this site has a deep antiquity similar to that of Kopchitchin. Lochnore period artefacts, dating to 5,000 to 3,500 BP,<sup>36</sup> have been fairly commonly found during KPU excavations. In the 1800s, Tuckkwiowhum was a major community, the largest settlement between Spuzzum and Klikumcheen (Lytton). An HBC census, compiled at Fort Langley in 1830, documented 840 inhabitants at the site.<sup>37</sup> The reserve at Tuckkwiowhum was surveyed in 1861 by James Turnbull of the Royal Engineers,<sup>38</sup> making it a very early mainland reserve, still within the tenure of Governor James Douglas.

KPU excavations in 2011 focused again on the period of the 1800s, with results in many ways similar to those for Kopchitchin. Two circular pit

<sup>36</sup> Mike Rousseau, “Chipped Stone Bifaces as Cultural, Behavioural, and Temporal Indices on the Central Canadian Plateau,” in *Projectile Point Sequences in Northwestern North America*, ed. Roy L. Carlson and Martin P.R. Magne, 221–50 (Burnaby: Archaeology Press, 2008); Mike Rousseau, personal communication, 2011.

<sup>37</sup> Harris, *Resettlement*, 107; Keith Karlson, *The Power of Place, the Problem of Time* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 146–47. This somewhat speculative “census” was compiled by HBC trader Archibald Menzies by asking prominent Indigenous leaders for estimates of the numbers of men in lower Fraser River communities. Harris, *Resettlement*, then extrapolates his 840 inhabitants (total population) from this males-only estimate.

<sup>38</sup> James Turnbull, “Reserve on the Anderson and Fraser Rivers (Survey),” BCA, legal surveys, roads and trails series, 14T1.

houses were excavated,<sup>39</sup> both of which were most likely last occupied in the 1860s or 1870s. Judge Begbie, who visited Tuckkwiowhum in 1859, records a restaurant in the community.<sup>40</sup> The artefact assemblage from both pit houses is dominated by market economy items, almost certainly brought into the site on the Cariboo Wagon Road, which was completed through the canyon by 1863.<sup>41</sup> The wagon road ran north right through Tuckkwiowhum to a bridge over the mouth of the Anderson River. North of the Anderson, the nearby non-Indigenous village of Boston Bar had five buildings in 1860: two stores, a liquor shop, a restaurant, and a blacksmith's. One of the stores was owned by Wells Fargo.<sup>42</sup>

Tuckkwiowhum inhabitants were using cash to purchase sometimes expensive goods from the outside world, and this is well reflected in the artefact assemblage (Figure 8). Substantial portions of the assemblage from Tuckkwiowhum document entrepreneurship and a relative degree of financial success in that expensive luxury goods imported from outside the territory are present.

Similar to what was found at Kopchitchin, a jacket button from a US military uniform is present at Tuckkwiowhum, with the same eagle emblem. A battle on 14 August 1858 is known to have taken place near here, in which at least nine people from the town were killed along with several miners.<sup>43</sup> While the structures were not burned in 1858, the button is again direct physical evidence of the involvement of the Nlaka'pamux of Tuckkwiowhum with the 1858 war.

During the 1858 hostilities, the miners formed militia companies in Yale with the intent of moving upriver. Several of the companies wished to continue the fight, but one, the Pike Guards, had elected an American, Henry Snyder, as its leader and wished to make peace with the Nlaka'pamux.<sup>44</sup> When this company moved up the east side of the river in August 1858, the Nlaka'pamux required it to stop at larger communities to conclude treaties individually with each before arriving in Klikumcheen.<sup>45</sup> The treaty at Tuckkwiowhum involved Snyder, three

<sup>39</sup> These structures are Indigenous dwellings with a substantial time depth, found at many sites throughout the BC Interior. The pit houses at Tuckkwiowhum were occupied just prior to the switch to Euro-Canadian-style frame houses.

<sup>40</sup> M. Begbie, "Journey into the Interior of British Columbia (letter, 1859)," *Journal of the Royal Geographic Society of London* 31 (1861): 237.

<sup>41</sup> LaForet and York, *Spuzzum*.

<sup>42</sup> George Hills, *Bishop's Journal*, UBC Special Collections, R.C. Harris Fonds, box 35, fol. 5, 1860; R.C. Mayne, Letter, Lt. Mayne to Capt. G.H. Richards, 7 July 1859, UBC Special Collections, R.C. Harris Fonds, box 35, fol. 5, 1859.

<sup>43</sup> LaForet and York, *Spuzzum*, 51-53; Bancroft, *History of British Columbia*, 396.

<sup>44</sup> Marshall, "Claiming the Land," 225-26.

<sup>45</sup> NNTC, "Draft Nlaka'pamux Ethnography," 26-27.





Figure 8. Selected artefacts from Tuckkwiowhum, clockwise from top left: brass US military button manufactured by Scovills & Co.; 1853 British one florin coin; glass Lea & Perrins Worcestershire sauce bottle closure; “dog and birds” decorated gunpowder flask; leather women’s left shoe. The shoe is particularly important in terms of dating for the site as it is of mixed manufacture – a machine-stitched upper with a hand-pegged and stitched sole, common in the 1860s.\*

\* Museum Services for the Northeast Region of the National Park Service (JessicaC), “Adding a Spring to Your Step: Tips for Dating Shoes in Your Archeological Collection,” 2011, at [nmsscarcheologylab.wordpress.com](http://nmsscarcheologylab.wordpress.com).

Nlaka'pamux chiefs, and symbolic white flags.<sup>46</sup> The white flag did not mean the same to the Nlaka'pamux as it did to the miners: for them white symbolized death and the spirit world, meaning that Snyder's intention to signify peace with this flag required Nlaka'pamux to see past their own world view in order to negotiate with the newcomers.<sup>47</sup>

The assemblage from Tuckkwiowhum demonstrates that its inhabitants had disposable income. Nlaka'pamux exchanged gold at Fort Kamloops in 1856.<sup>48</sup> By the 1860s and 1870s, fewer than twenty years later, they were using cash, earned through a variety of small businesses and by wage labour to purchase imported goods such as shoes, harmonicas, and glass coal-oil lanterns (Figure 9). Wells Fargo, an important American company, had stores established in Boston Bar and Chapman's Bar by 1859, both good candidates for the source of the goods identified within Tuckkwiowhum Indigenous houses.<sup>49</sup>

When Judge William Begbie travelled through the Fraser Canyon in 1859, he stopped at a restaurant located at Tuckkwiowhum, which would have been a source of income for its Nlaka'pamux operators.<sup>50</sup> A journal kept by Anglican bishop George Hills in 1860 documents Nlaka'pamux involvement in packing and canoe ferrying as well as construction of sluiceways and placer works on-contract to miners.<sup>51</sup> Nlaka'pamux people also obtained wage employment from the Royal Engineers during their survey work on the never-completed Hope-Boston Bar trail.<sup>52</sup> After emerging from the short but vicious 1858 war and under the developing regime of racial and legal discrimination brought by colonialism, Tuckkwiowhum people were relatively successful in the new economy.

## CONCLUSION

The final treaty to end the 1858 hostilities was concluded in Klikumcheen, with both sides strongly motivated to negotiate peace terms. No written record of the Klikumcheen treaty has been found, but Nlaka'pamux oral history records the terms as made between equal parties, involving

<sup>46</sup> Marshall, "Claiming the Land," 231.

<sup>47</sup> LaForet and York, *Spuzzum*, 55.

<sup>48</sup> NNTC, "Draft Nlaka'pamux Ethnography," 26.

<sup>49</sup> R.C. Mayne, Letter, Lt. Mayne to Capt. G.H. Richards, 7 July 1859, UBC Special Collections, Philip and Helen Akrigg Fonds, box 4, fol. 30.

<sup>50</sup> M. Begbie, "Journey into the Interior of British Columbia, letter, 1859," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 50 (1880): 237-438.

<sup>51</sup> George Hills, *Bishop's Journal*, 1869, UBC Special Collections, RC Harris Fonds, box 35, fol. 5.

<sup>52</sup> Robert Smith, Outgoing letter, 29 June 1859, UBC Special Collections, RC Harris Fonds, box 35, fol. 7.

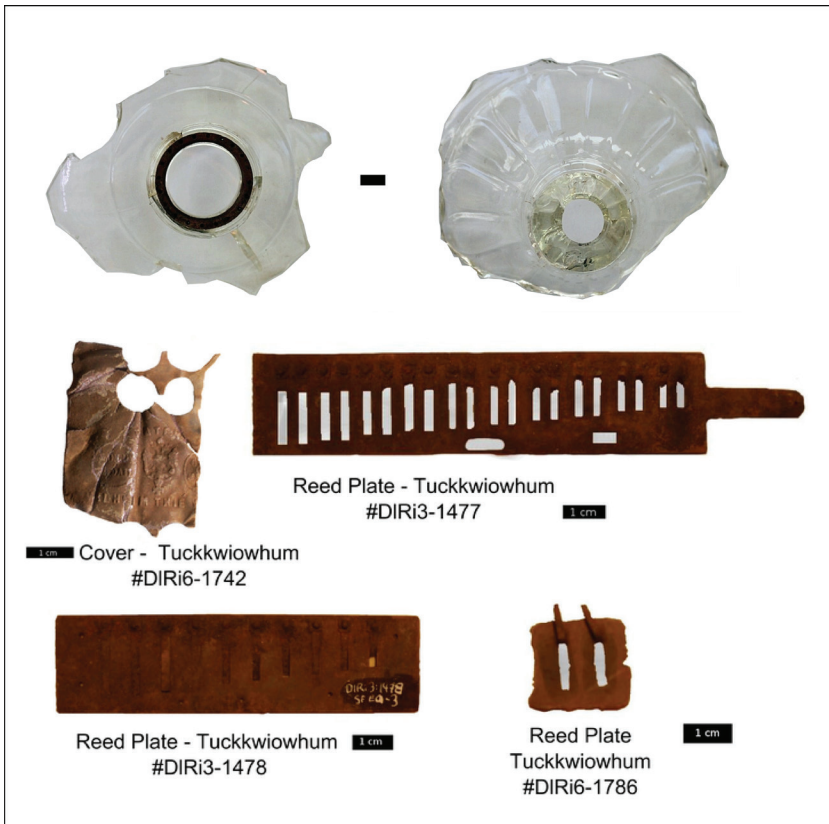


Figure 9. Imported objects from Tuckkwiowhum, clockwise from top to bottom: broken reservoir and base from a coal-oil lantern; assortment of harmonicas. #DIRi6-1742 was manufactured by Willem Thie in Vienna, Austria.\*

\* University of Michigan, School of Music, Theatre and Dance, Stearns Collection, at [http://www.music.umich.edu/research/stearns\\_collection/index.htm](http://www.music.umich.edu/research/stearns_collection/index.htm).

respect for the landscape as well as Nlaka'pamux interests and ownership of the resources of that landscape. In 1918, Chief Benedict of Inkahtsap (Boothroyd) wrote down the oral history about the treaty and submitted it to the Department of Indian Affairs:

The running water and the trees of the forest, my children and yours will use as they see fit, they shall share and share alike ... the fish, this is ours. We are to fish at any time ... I do not want any white man to enter, or break into our homes, nor tell us to move off our land and go and build elsewhere, we are to be left in peace where we are.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Benedict, as quoted by NNTC, "Draft Nlaka'pamux Ethnography," 27.

If the two parties had not been militarily equal, the treaties would have been unfair to the less powerful side. The treaties were fair, however, and both sides observed their terms, enabling Governor Douglas to direct the Royal Engineers to the area and ensure British influence on the mainland.<sup>54</sup> South of the forty-ninth parallel, the US Army had repeatedly become involved in “Indian Wars” on the side of gold miners, ostensibly for the protection of American citizens, and in late summer 1858 a large US Army force was present and ready for action in the Washington and Oregon territories.<sup>55</sup> If there had been no treaties, it is possible that the US Army would have become involved in hostilities north of the forty-ninth parallel, potentially taking away both Nlaka’pamux and British sovereignty in favour of American.

The gold rush and the War of 1858 represented the first serious challenge to Nlaka’pamux sovereignty and the entry of a cash-based market economy into their territory. Moreover, the years of 1857, 1858, and 1859 were extremely difficult as salmon runs had failed, leading to widespread starvation in northern Nlaka’pamux territory, especially in the winter of 1859.<sup>56</sup> Smallpox, which reached Victoria in March 1862, entered Nlaka’pamux territory via the Fraser Canyon in the summer of that year, and it persisted in some portions of the interior into the early months of 1863.<sup>57</sup> James Teit’s Nlaka’pamux informants told him that, in 1863, the disease “carried off from one-fourth to one-third of the tribe.”<sup>58</sup> Prior to 1858, the landscape, under the jurisdiction of Nlaka’pamux law, was not capitalized. By 1860, food, fish, gold, labour, lumber, and water had been redefined as commodities with a cash value.<sup>59</sup>

Obtaining cash from mining gold or from other enterprises enabled Nlaka’pamux families to moderate the impact of failed salmon runs, war, introduced disease, and colonial assaults upon their sovereignty. Despite the burning of several important Nlaka’pamux communities during 1858,

<sup>54</sup> Marshall, “Claiming the Land,” 232–39.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 223.

<sup>56</sup> M. Begbie, *Journeys in the Districts Bordering the Fraser, Thompson, and Harrison Rivers, 1859*, Council of the Royal Geographic Society, UBC Special Collections, RC Harris Fonds, 34; W.G. Cox, Outbound Letter, 1859, UBC Special Collections, RC Harris Fonds, box 38, fol. 6; Arthur Thomas Bushby, *The Journal of Arthur Thomas Bushby, 1858–59*, UBC Special Collections, R.C. Harris Fonds.

<sup>57</sup> Robert T. Boyd, *The Coming of the Spirit of Pestilence* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999); Robert Galois, personal communication, October 2017.

<sup>58</sup> James Teit, “The Thompson Indians of British Columbia,” *American Museum of Natural History, Memoir* vol. 2, pt. 4, the Jesup North Pacific Expedition, ed. Franz Boaz (New York: American Museum of Natural History, 1900), 176.

<sup>59</sup> Richard H. Robbins, *Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism* (New Jersey: Pearson, 2011), 11; LaForet and York, *Spuzzum*; Hills, *Bishop’s Journal*.



these communities began to successfully engage with the cash economy. Archaeological evidence from Tuckkwiowhum, in particular, shows significant Nlaka'pamux income in the years after 1858 within the two excavated pit houses containing luxury goods such as footwear, glass lanterns, and tableware. This physical evidence matches documentary evidence related to Nlaka'pamux participation in small businesses and wage labour. In addition, cedar harvest actually increased after the difficult years of the 1850s, with elevated levels of harvest at DkRi-74 in the 1860s and 1870s demonstrating the health of this critical component of the pre- and postcolonial Indigenous economy.

A well-known problem in historiography is the potential biases of written source materials, including what is chosen to be included and what is omitted. For example, in 1808, when Simon Fraser descended the river that now bears his name, he passed through the core of Nlaka'pamux territory, stopping at Tuckkwiowhum on 24 June of that year. During this journey, he records only a single Nlaka'pamux place name for the entire journey: Spazum [Spuzzum].<sup>60</sup> This issue is of critical importance when dealing with societies, such as the Nlaka'pamux, that map much of their own history using oral, not written, records.

Archaeological remains can clearly be biased as well, but not in the same way. Most archaeological materials accumulate as a result of the discard of unwanted objects; therefore, this material record is not overtly affected by colonial prejudice or the privilege of using written records. This means that the archaeological record can provide an independent line of evidence to be used in conjunction with documentary records, enabling a far more robust historiography.

Archaeological materials and sites are the physical remains of everyday decisions, but they also mark much wider patterns and processes, and are strongly influenced by the motives of their producers. The sites presented here offer us direct physical evidence for a Nlaka'pamux approach to colonial domination that was characterized by a fighting, entrepreneurial spirit.

<sup>60</sup> Simon Fraser, *The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser, 1806-1808*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb (Toronto: Dundurn, 2007).