Prepared for Pacific Northwest LNG Ltd.

ABORIGINAL USE AND OCCUPANCY OF LELU ISLAND, 1793 TO 1846

(With additional information regarding the current uses of Lelu Island and the adjacent marine area by Aboriginal peoples for traditional purposes)

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12/12/2013

1.0 Executive Summary

This report provides a preliminary review of the historical and ethnographic record as it pertains to First Nations use and occupation of Lelu Island — an island in the Skeena River estuary—and the marine area surrounding Lelu Island: Inverness Passage, Porpoise Harbour and Chatham Sound. The study area is also currently the site of a proposed liquefied natural gas facility.

The terms of reference called for a review of readily available documentary sources relating to both past and current use of the study area. The report is not a strength of claim analysis.

The study area falls within the territory historically associated with the Coast Tsimshian people, an ethnolinguistic entity that once included as many as 12 distinct tribes, but sources vary when it comes to linking specific groups with the study area. By the mid-eighteenth century, ten Coast Tsimshian tribes (a.k.a. the Northern Tsimshian) occupied twelve or more permanent winter villages on the shores of Venn Passage and Tuck Inlet in relatively close proximity to one another. This led some scholars — including the Tsimshian-born ethnographer, William Beynon — to view the coastal area between the mouths of the Nass and Skeena rivers as a locality used by the Northern Tsimshian in common.

Other scholars have observed that due to the nature of Tsimshian social structure, chiefs, as lineage heads, were recognized as the custodians of discrete resource areas and further that these areas were associated with specific houses and families. The authorities taking this view have generally associated the Gitwilgyoots tribe, one of the Northern Tsimshian tribes, with Lelu Island and surrounding marine areas. On the other hand, the Gitxaala assert that the house territory of Txa Gyet of the Gitnagunaks encompasses the Porpoise Harbour area.

Although there are differing views on territorial areas, there is no written or archaeological evidence for a permanent occupation site on Lelu Island.

The allotment of an Indian reserve on the right bank of Inverness Passage acknowledges a tradition of marine harvesting activities in or near the study area. Willaclough IR 6 was set aside in 1881 as a fishing station at the request of the Northern Tsimshian. The reserve was cutoff in 1916. The sources indicate that salmon and seals would have been the marine resources most commonly targeted at the mouth of the Skeena River. Environmental conditions including fresh water flowing from the Skeena River mainly rule out Lelu Island as a site where other economic marine resources would have been available in abundance. Sources indicate a number of other preferred harvesting sites, and they do not refer to Lelu Island as a probable hunting site.

There is substantial evidence that Lelu Island, along with other islands at the mouth of the Skeena, provided western red cedar bark for various purposes. Inventories of Culturally Modified Trees (CMTs) indicate forest utilization between the 1830s and the 1960s.

Oral history accounts, *adawx*, describe supernatural beings associated with places in the vicinity of Lelu Island. Inverness Passage is acknowledged as an important marine route and a submerged reef is identified as a hazard in this waterway. Another source also identified Telegraph Passage as a primary route.

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2.0 Location and Study Area Description

The study area is Lelu Island, a 192 hectare island within the District Municipality of Port Edward and the boundaries of the Prince Rupert Port Authority (Figure 1), and the adjacent marine area. Lelu Island lies south of Ridley Island and Porpoise Harbour, and north of Inverness Passage in the Skeena River estuary. Inverness Passage forms the north arm of the Skeena River, flowing between the mainland and Smith Island; Telegraph Passage forms the south arm of the Skeena River.

Since Prince Rupert was established as a national harbour in 1972, Lelu Island has been federal Crown land. The nature and location of the proposed project area is fully described in the proponent's Project Description (Stantec 2013b).

Place names mentioned in the report, which are in close proximity to Lelu Island, are marked on Figure 1. The reference map in Appendix A locates other geographical place names in the broader region between the mouths of the Skeena and Nass rivers.

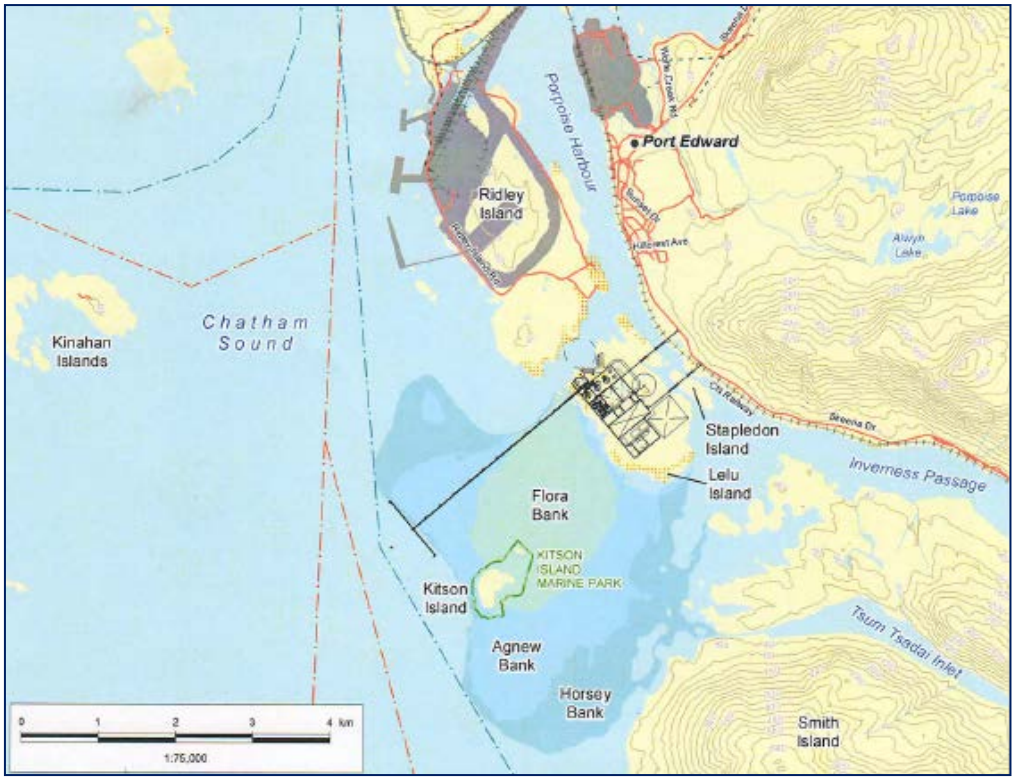


Figure 1: Lelu Island and Surrounding Area (Stantec 2013b)

3.0 Terminology

Historically, the term "Coast Tsimshian" has been used to refer to an ethnolinguistic entity that once included as many as 12 distinct tribes living along the lower Skeena River and on the coast north of the river. The term is now understood to refer to the Lax Kw'alaams and Metlakatla First Nations. This usage excludes the two Coast Tsimshian tribes — the Kitsumkalum and Kitselas — who lived on the Skeena River canyon near Terrace.

In order to distinguish between the coastal and inland groupings, some sources refer to the ten tribes on Prince Rupert harbour as the Northern Tsimshian and the two inland tribes as the Canyon Tsimshian (Coupland *et al.* 2001:226; Martindale and Marsden 2011:72).

In keeping with this convention, the report refers to the ten coastal tribes who are the ancestors of the Lax Kw'alaams and Metlakatla as the Northern Tsimshian. The Southern Tsimshian are a third regional grouping living on coast and the islands south of the Skeena River. Table 1 (next page) illustrates the regional and tribal groupings of the Tsimshian. The tabular statement also outlines the progression from tribal groups to Indian Act Bands for the Northern Tsimshian, Canyon Tsimshian and Southern Tsimshian. Tsimshian social organization is discussed in a little more detail in Section 6.0.

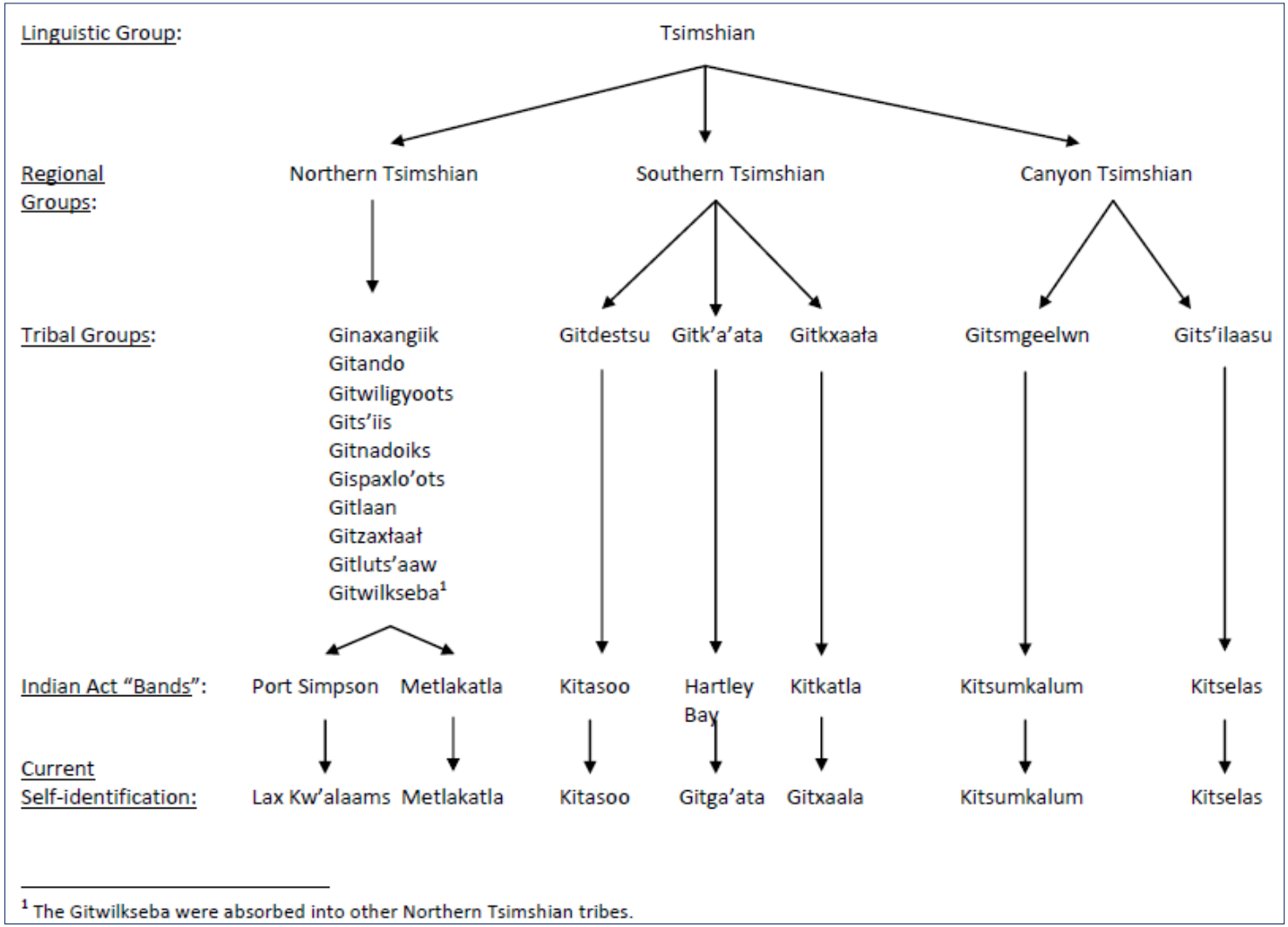
4.0 Introduction and Report Organization

The terms of reference for this report called for a high level ethnohistoric report addressing the use and occupation of Lelu Island and the surrounding marine area. A retainer letter dated September 12, 2013 defined the scope of the research as follows:

1. We are asking you to identify, using available sources, the uses to which the Project area was put in the past, and the uses to which it is now being put by First Nations people.
2. We would ask you to list all of the sources you have reviewed and cite sources.
3. We are not seeking your advice or opinion on these matters. We want the report to be as factual as possible. If there are doubts or uncertainties in the existing record, please feel free to point those out.
4. If you think it appropriate to include speculation about Aboriginal activities that informed authors have made, that would also be fine, provided the sources are identified and documented.
5. This is not intended to be a strength of claim analysis. A strength of claim has already been done by Canada[1] and may soon be completed separately by British Columbia. Instead, we are asking you to gather up the available information and bring it together in a single report.
6. This information should provide a picture of the hunting, fishing, trapping and other harvesting activities that were carried out on the island and adjacent marine area. If there are references to other kinds of activities in the Project area, we would expect that to be included in your report. We are also interested in understanding the intensity and duration of those activities.

[1] The strength of claim analysis was prepared in relation to Ridley and Kaien islands, which are also on Prince Rupert Harbour.

Table 1: Organizational chart showing Tsimshian divisions



[1] The Gitwilkseba were absorbed into other Northern Tsimshian tribes.

7. To the extent that the historic record indicates that the island was occupied, please include such information as may be available.

8. The report should provide background information on the broader geographic and economic setting and include summary information as to the location of permanent settlements, the principal fishing and hunting areas and other culturally significant sites as disclosed by the ethnographic sources.

This review of secondary sources included archaeology reports, published ethnographies, expert reports, the Gitxaala Strength of Claim Submission (2013), historical documents held by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC), survey materials and plans produced by Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN), Wilson Duff's research files at the UBC Museum of Anthropology archives, selected files from Marius Barbeau's and William Beynon's research papers held by the Canadian Museum of Civilization, a manuscript and maps prepared by William Beynon deposited in the American Natural History Museum, and historical survey and lands records obtained from the Land Title Survey Authority and British Columbia Archives in Victoria.

Section 5.0 provides an historical overview of developments in the Prince Rupert region, and Section 6.0 sets out a brief introduction to Tsimshian ethnography. Section 7.0 — the main body of the report — reviews the ethnographic materials relevant to the research guidelines set out above. Section 8.0 summarizes these findings, and Section 9.0 provides a complete inventory of the sources consulted.

5.0 Tsimshian History Before Contact and Post-Contact Historical Developments in the Prince Rupert Region

Tsimshian History before Contact

The Tsimshian have extensive oral narratives (*adawx*) concerning the Nass and Skeena river regions extending back well before the written record. These *adawx* describe Tsimshian settlement history, territorial conflicts, family histories and social relationships. The *adawx* explain the means by which house groups obtained ownership of territories and they are understood to be evidence of Tsimshian title.

The archaeological record confirms that settlement in the Prince Rupert harbour area extends back at least five thousand years. Archaeological reconstruction also indicates that Prince Rupert harbour was probably abandoned more than once since 2200 BP and reoccupied again by about 1500 BP (Ames 2005:73).

The history of human settlement along the northern coast of British Columbia involved multiple migrations of Athapaskan peoples from the headwaters of the Stikine and Nass rivers. Some groups traveled down the Stikine River, joined with the Tlingit and moved down the coast to inhabit the mouths of the Nass and Skeena rivers. The Tlingit are thought to have displaced the Tsimshian from the Prince Rupert region for a time. Some scholars suggest that the Tlingit wars likely took place between 2000 to 1500 BP at which time the Tsimshian drove the Tlingit away from the harbour (Marsden 2001:103). According to the ethnographer, Franz Boas, the first Tsimshian scholar, the Tlingit wars occurred "three or

four generations before the white man arrived on this coast" (Boas 1916:370). According to George MacDonald, an archaeological authority on early Tsimshian settlement in this area, the displacement of the Tlingit from the Skeena estuary occurred sometime around 1720 (MacDonald 1984:80). Tsimshian ethnographers, Marjorie Halpin and Margaret Sequin, summarize simply that the Tsimshian extended their territories coastward in "late prehistoric times" (1990:267).[2]

First Contact and Early History

European trade goods are thought to have reached the Tsimshian through indigenous trade networks at least 75 years before contact (MacDonald 1984:74). Russian fur traders were the first Europeans to directly engage in trade as early as the 1740s and the first permanent Russian trading station was established in 1784 on Kodiak Island on the southern coast of Alaska (Galbraith 1957:114). By the late eighteenth-century, other European nations were trading directly with the Tsimshian. The Tsimshian integrated the maritime fur trade into their late winter migration to the Nass River for the eulachon fishery without disruption to their traditional residential pattern (Martindale 2003:25).

First contact with Southern Tsimshian people occurred in 1787 off Pitt Island. In 1793 George Vancouver came across the Tsimshian in the waters around Dundas Island and the entrance to Portland Inlet —the first recorded European encounter with the Northern Tsimshian (Halpin and Seguin 1990:281).[3]

For a time, many European nations claimed sovereignty over the west coast of North America, but by the 1820s the sovereignty question was moving to a resolution. The 1818 Anglo-American Convention established the Oregon Territory between 42° and 54°40′ as a joint occupancy area between Great Britain and the United States of America (Mackie 1998:28-29). In 1824, with the terms of the Russo-American Convention, the United States of America accepted 54°40′ as the northern extent of American territorial claims, and one year later the Anglo-Russian Treaty fixed this same boundary as the limit of British claims (Galbraith 1957:130&134). Under the Oregon Boundary Treaty of 1846 Great Britain asserted sovereignty over the region between the 49° and 54°40′ on the west coast of North America.

In 1831 the Hudson's Bay Company [HBC] established their first post on the northwest

[2] Sources differ with respect to the date of the Tlingit wars. And revision occurs with closer examination over time: Marius Barbeau challenged Boas' reliance on his single informant, Henry Tate (1917:553). Wilson Duff criticized Barbeau for his unscientific methods, including his Siberian migration hypothesis (1964:71). Attempts to bring oral narratives into alignment not only with archaeological evidence but the narratives of adjacent groups are, not unexpectedly, fraught. Boas found that Tsimshian migration narratives could not be reconciled with those of the Haida and Tlingit (1916:525); and, Dorothy Kennedy and Randy Bouchard found contradictions in *adawx* relating to Gits'iis crest prerogatives in the Khutzeymateen valley (1989:19-20). Jonathon Dean cautions that *adawx* reveal "one dimension of a multi-faceted contact situation (1994:78)." Andrew Martindale and Susan Marsden, on the other hand, emphasize that the "most accurate source for Tsimshian rights and titles comes from Tsimshian oral history (2011:41)."

[3] As to the date of contact, see *Lax Kwa'alaams Indian Band v. Canada (Attorney General)*, 2008 BCSC 447, at paras. 115-118.

coast, Fort Nass 14 miles inland from the mouth of the Nass, only to relocate it three years later to the northern end of the Tsimpsean Peninsula — re-establishing it as Fort Simpson. This new location was thought to have been used as a stopping place during seasonal movements to the Nass fishing grounds. By the 1840s, the Northern Tsimshian tribes had relocated their winter villages on Venn Passage to the immediate vicinity of Fort Simpson (1939:177). Garfield reports that within a few years of the establishment of Fort Simpson "the Skeena River and Metlakatla towns were virtually abandoned (1966:34)." Martindale notes that with this move a new relationship of dependence gradually developed — as the fur trade developed from an exchange involving furs for luxury goods to an exchange involving furs for food supplies, the balance of power shifted from First Nations to the colonizers (2003:28). He proposes that this dependence was in evidence following the arrival of the Anglican missionary William Duncan in 1857.

In 1862, William Duncan established a separate religious community at Metlakatla. Many Northern Tsimshian people, including most of the Gitlaan, Gitluts'aaw and Gispaxlo'ots relocated from Fort Simpson to Metlakatla (Beynon 1954: Volume V:25), along with a number of Tlingit, Nisga'a, Gitxaala and Kitselas (Lovisek 2009:65).

The first cannery opened on Inverness Passage in 1876, and eventually there were five canneries operating along this waterway. Also in the 1870s, Port Essington developed as the first Euro-Canadian community centre on the lower Skeena River (Archer 1983:60-61).

By October 1881, the system of reserve creation was introduced. At this time, Indian Reserve Commissioner Peter O'Reilly set aside reserves at the aboriginal settlements at Fort Simpson and Metlakatla along with nine fishing stations on Prince Rupert harbour and along the lower Skeena River (AANDC 1882). One of the reserves set aside for fishing purposes was situated on the right bank of Inverness Passage opposite Lelu Island, a former 30-acre reserve named Willaclough IR 6.[4]

O'Reilly did not investigate reserve requirements on the Skeena River further than 17 miles (27 km) upriver nor did he examine the requirements with respect to the offshore islands. He simply allotted Indian reserves in this region to the "Tsimpsean Indians," leaving additional Indian reserves on the Skeena River and on offshore islands to be set aside at later dates.

More Recent Developments

In 1906, the provincial government sold Lelu Island to E.J. Matthews, who bought the land in anticipation of railway development (Blyth 1975; Leonard 1996).[5] At this time, Lelu Island was surveyed and the provincial Crown Grant designated the island as Lot 501. Matthews and his partners acquired additional provincial Crown lands south of Kaien Island which were surveyed in 1908 as the town of Port Edward (Blyth 1975:5).

[4] The reserve was cut-off by the McKenna-McBride Royal Commission in 1916. Additional details about the allotment of Willaclough IR 6 are discussed below in Section 6.0 of the report.

[5] Land Title and Survey Authority of British Columbia (LTSA), Crown Grant no. 1078/176 dated January 8, 1906.

Even though the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway was constructed through Port Edward and it was in operation by 1914, economic development of the town was very slow. The near absence of investment activity may explain why Lot 501 reverted to the provincial government on a tax sale in 1938.[6] WWII gave a major boost to the Port Edward economy when American military forces established a base on Watson Island with a large ammunition magazine and an attached port facility (Blyth 1975:32).

After the war, Watson Island was developed by the Columbia Cellulose Company as a pulp mill. The industrial development of Watson Island involved the excavation of a large volume of rock removed from the face of the island; over 500,000 cubic yards of rock was pushed into the water to expand the area of the military dock (Blyth 1975:57-8).

Although Lelu Island was not originally included in the boundaries of the Village of Port Edward when the town was incorporated in 1966, the municipal district's boundaries have since been expanded to include Lelu Island (Blyth 1975:100).

In 1972, Prince Rupert harbour was declared a national harbour (Large 1996:201). By British Columbia Order in Council 777-1972, the administration and control of Crown lands described in a schedule to the Order were transferred to Canada for the purpose of operating a national harbour.[7] At present, Lelu Island is a federal property, and the custodian is the Prince Rupert Port Authority.[8]

6.0 Summary Overview of the Tsimshian

Linguistic Divisions

The Tsimshian currently live in northern British Columbia on the Nass and Skeena rivers and in surrounding areas. In 1887, a number of Tsimshian migrated with William Duncan to Annette Island in Alaska to establish a new religious community there, following a period of dispute and division at Metlakatla.

There are four major divisions of the Tsimshian people who are linked by adjoining territories, language and culture. The four divisions are linguistically related although two separate languages are spoken by Tsimshian peoples. The Nisga'a and Gitxsan are speakers of one language, while the Coast Tsimshian and Southern Tsimshian are speakers of a separate language (Halpin and Seguin 1990:267).

Ethnographic sources associate the Nisga'a with the Nass River; the Gitxsan with the upper Skeena River above the Kitselas canyon; the Coast Tsimshian with the lower Skeena River and the coast to the north of the river; and the Southern Tsimshian with the coast and islands to the south of the Skeena River (Halpin and Seguin 1990:268).

As noted in Section 3.0, two regional groupings developed within the Coast Tsimshian over

[6] According Crown Land Registry information available on Tantalis GATOR, Lot 501 reverted to the provincial Crown on September 16, 1938.

[7] British Columbia Archives (BCA), British Columbia Attorney General, GR-0113, Reel B-6562.

[8] http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/dfrp-rbif/pn-nb/19270-eng.aspx?qid=13370561.

time. By about 1750, ten of the Coast Tsimshian tribes established winter villages on Venn Passage. In contrast, two other Coast Tsimshian tribes, the Kitsumkalum and Kitselas, remained year round on the Skeena River (Beynon 1953: Vol. V:30-31; Drucker 1965:115). The Kitsumkalum and Kitselas did not migrate to the coast to establish permanent settlements until after 1870s when canneries were established at the mouth of the Skeena River. In order to distinguish between these two regional groupings, some sources — and this report — refer to the ten tribes living on Venn Passage as the Northern Tsimshian and the two inland tribes as the Canyon Tsimshian (Coupland *et al.* 2001:226; Martindale and Marsden 2011:72).

Social Organization and Property

Tsimshian society has several levels of organization (Garfield 1966:22-23). The houses or house groups are the fundamental unit of social and economic organization. These entities are matrilineages meaning that descent is traced through the maternal line. Property rights to land and resources are held by house leaders and the group takes its name from the house leader. Historically, the house groups wintering together in a village were more or less synonymous with tribes. The tribes living together in a particular environmental setting formed regional groupings. Clan affiliation was a separate Tsimshian institution cutting across tribal and regional divisions. The four clan groups are named Wolf, Blackfish, Raven and Eagle.

The identity of one prominent house group mentioned in this report — the Blackfish house of Gilax'aks (or Aksk) of the Gitwilgyoots tribe — exemplifies how the various levels of social organization are expressed in a house group name. Blackfish describes the house group's clan affiliation; the house group is named for the leader who in this case bears the ancestral name Aksk; the house group lives in a Gitwilgyoots village; and the Gitwilgyoots form part of the Northern Tsimshian based on the regional setting where their village and resource locations are situated. Because clan affiliation cuts across tribal divisions, the Gitwilgyoots village was occupied by Blackfish houses as well as house groups with other clan affiliations.

The *adawx* specify that a house could obtain new lands by conquest, colonization, or as compensation from other houses. Titles to house territories were publicly asserted through the ceremonial retelling of *adawx* and symbolically represented by crests and totem poles. In the words of one Nisga'a man, crests were a "`sign of right' much like a deed" (McNeary 1974:81). For the Tsimshian, acceptance of *adawx* at public feasts confirmed house rights. In cases where house rights to a territory were seen to be violated, trespassers could be killed or compensation could be demanded (Duff 1959:36; Halpin and Seguin 1990:274-276).

Garfield observed that coastal locations were used more regularly and intensively than the less accessible inland areas (1966:14-5). However, she notes that by the time of contact, lineage territories virtually blanketed the landscape (1966:14).

> Lineages of the Tsimshian were the owners of rights to hunt, fish, pick berries or gather raw materials from geographically defined territories. ...By the time Europeans arrived, there were no unclaimed land or sea food resources of a kind important in the Indians' economy.

Although most sources indicate that house territories generally conformed to watersheds with the heights of land forming the boundaries, there are exceptions worth noting. Territorial data compiled by William Beynon confirms that house territories situated along tributaries of the Skeena River conformed to Garfield's description. Plate No. III from his 1954 "Ethnical and Geographical Study of the Tsimsiyœn Nation" demonstrates that house territories in the river valleys were contiguous, leaving no areas unclaimed (Figure 2).

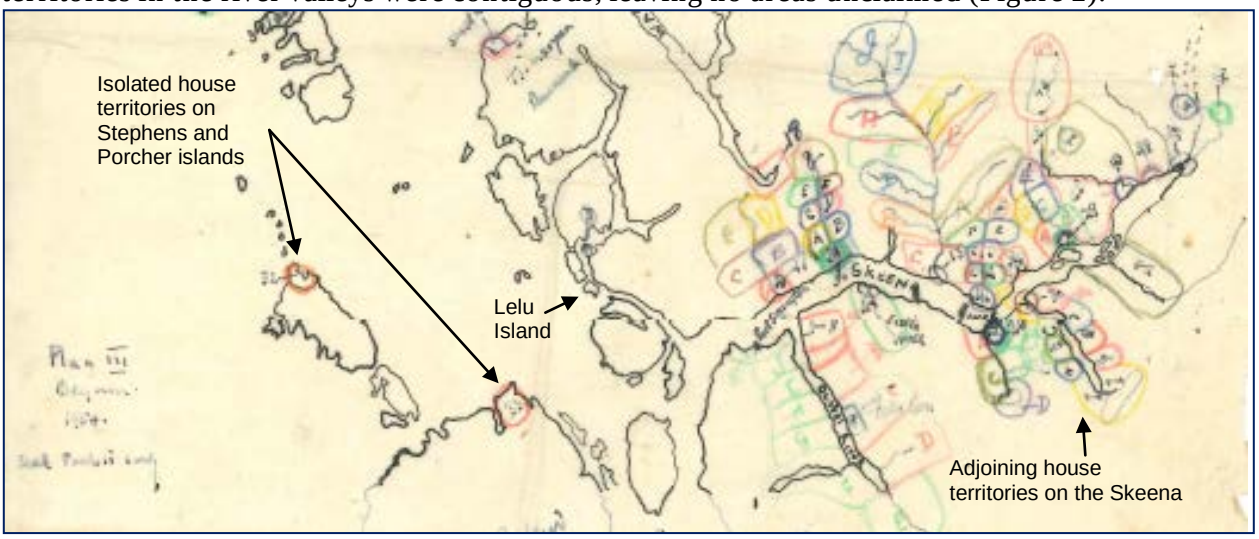


Figure 2: Detail from Plate III to William Beynon's "Ethnical and Geographical Study" showing seasonal resource locations owned by Northern Tsimshian houses (1954)

In contrast, Beynon depicted house territories on the outer islands on Plate III (Figure 2) and in the Prince Rupert harbour area on Plate II (Figure 3) in a very different manner. As marked on Figure 2, two Gitwilgyoots house territories on Stephens Island (No. 32) and Porcher Island (No. 33) were isolated areas.[9]

It is worth noting that these territories constituted only portions of the islands on which they are located. Thus, according to Beynon, house territories did not always conform to watershed boundaries, nor did they "blanket" the land; rather, Beynon essentially proposes that nearby areas could be left unclaimed.

Beynon's map of Venn (Metlakatla) Passage marks twelve villages on Kaien Island, Digby Island and the Tsimpsean peninsula and eight other territories and places (Figure 3 next page).[10] Some of these village territories are marked as being contiguous to one another, but there were also gaps between territories leaving much of the land depicted as being vacant.

[9] The numbers on Beynon's Plates correspond to geographical place names mentioned in his manuscript. The Gitwilgyoots Eagle house territory No. 32 – Squaderee on Stephens (or Stevens) Island is discussed at Volume V, pp.13-14 and the Gitwilgyoots territory No. 33 - Kwəl'mas on Porcher Island is discussed at Volume V, pp.16-17. Beynon states that Kwəl'mas was a property owned in common by the Gitwilgyoots.

[10] Appendix B lists twelve villages identified by Beynon on Venn Passage. The concordance chart in Appendix B refers to a) the tribal villages mentioned by Beynon; b) the site number reference marked on Beynon's Plate No. II (Figure 3); and c) the citation in Beynon's manuscript where he mentions the village site. Most village site maps unfortunately do not indicate the sources for their data. Beynon's maps are an exception.

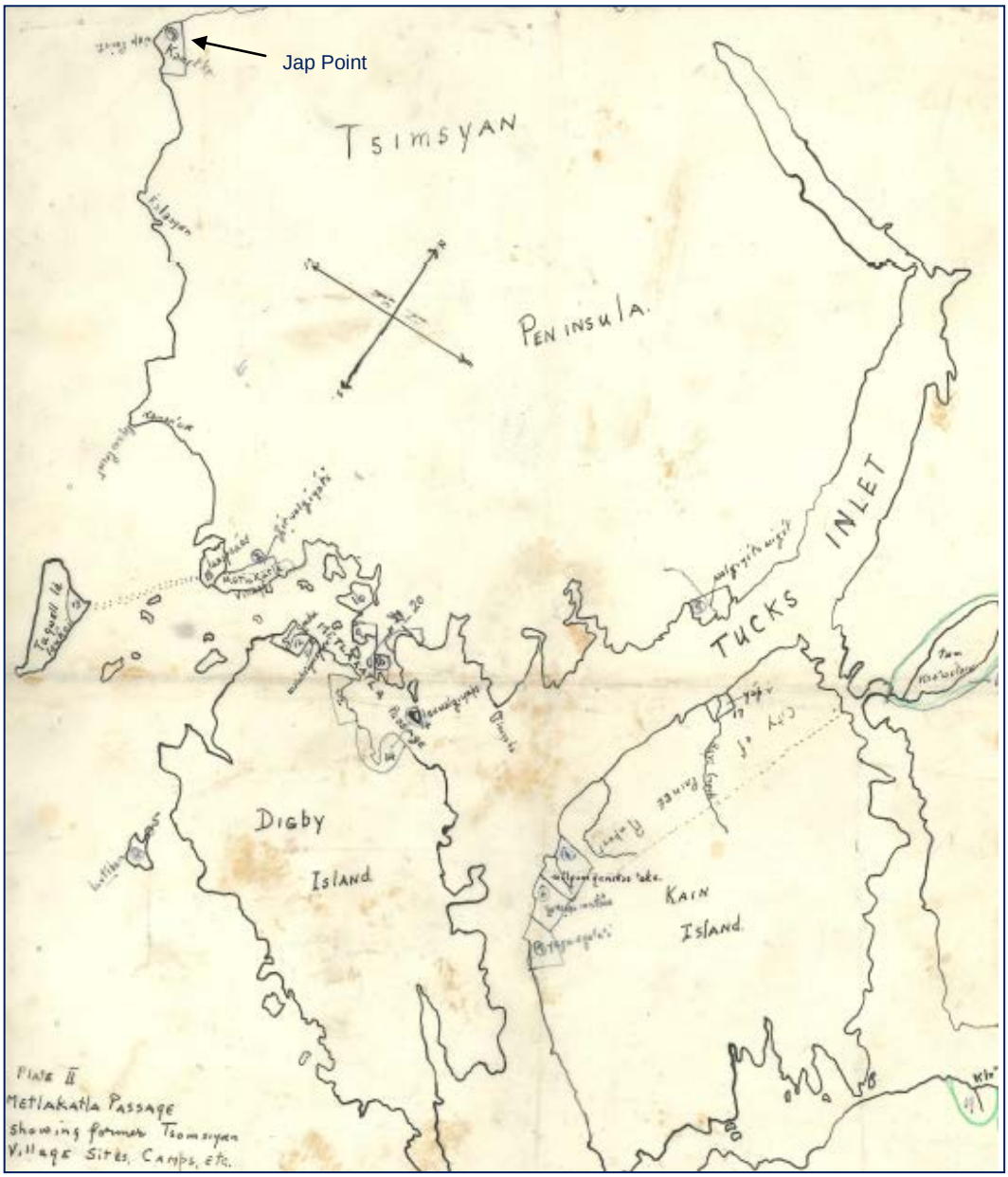


Figure 3: Plate II from William Beynon's "Ethnical and Geographical Study" (1954) showing winter village locations on Prince Rupert harbour

Beynon emphasized that the area around Jap Point (No. 3 on Plate II) was an important and economically valuable fishing site, exclusive to a Gitwilgyoots house group (1954: Volume II:9). The exclusivity of this house territory at Jap Point stands in significant contrast to other vacant or common lands on the harbour. Indeed, on Beynon's Plates II and III, most lands (including Lelu Island) between the mouths of the Skeena and Nass rivers are not marked as house territories.

The Gitwilgyoots had a special connection to Venn Passage/Prince Rupert harbour according to the *adawx* of the Blackfish house of Gilax'aks (or Aksk). The narrative recounts a Gitwilgyoots house leader "chasing" the Tlingit away from the harbour in the

course of the Tlingit wars, and indicates that the house of Gilax'aks was the first to re-occupy the harbour area following the Tlingit blockade (Boas 1916:370-374; Beynon 1954: Volume II:1-8; Marsden 2001:79-82). Other Gitwilgyoots house groups followed, and in the course of events another Blackfish house group acquired Jap Point as an exclusive property. One version of the *adawx* of Gilax'aks (or Aksk), however, identifies this house leader as a Gitxaala man.[11]

Beynon's study reveals that the management of house territories was flexible and thereby susceptible to change over time (see also Garfield 1966:14). For example, there were protocols whereby non-house members had permission to use another house territory. House leaders could also exact tribute from their members as a condition of their use of house territory (Beynon 1954: Volume V:16).

Some Gitluts'aaw house territories were used for berry picking by the tribe in common (Beynon 1954: Volume V:8 & 23). Similarly, the Gitwilgyoots site on Porcher Island mentioned above was considered common harvesting territory (Beynon 1954: Volume V:16-17). In the case where a house group did not possess its own hunting territories, such as the Blackfish newcomers to the Gitnadoiks, its members were allowed to share house territories on sufferance (Beynon 1954: Volume IV:50-51). Beynon provides a number of examples indicating that when a house group became weak their territory would revert to common use (1954: Volume IV:19, 40-42; Volume V:13-14).

Regulations introduced by Canadian governments had a significant impact on Tsimshian forms of tenure. Beynon describes how reserve creation resulted in "confusion" regarding the ownership of traditional sites. He recounts the case where Northern Tsimshian eulachon fishing stations on the Nass River were allocated as Indian reserves for the Nisga'a (1954: Volume V:26). To add to the confusion, the establishment of the Port Simpson (Lax K'wallams) and Metlakatla Bands imposed an artificial division within the Northern Tsimshian. When Indian reserves were established for these bands, the means by which access to traditional resources were to be granted was no longer clear (1954: Volume V:27). Trapline registration laws added another layer of interference with traditional hunting rights, and fishing regulations similarly disrupted traditional patterns of fishing (Beynon 1954: Volume VI:22-23; 54-55).

Subsistence and the Seasonal Economy

Salmon constituted the primary source of food for the Tsimshian (Boas 1916:404; Garfield 1966:13). Garfield described salmon as the "decisive food resource of the Tsimshian." Large quantities of spring salmon and pink salmon were dried and preserved for winter use. Most houses controlled several different fishing stations, meaning that they had access to all five salmon species in the event of the periodic failure of a particular run (Halpin and Seguin 1990:271).

[11] Adaorh [*Adawx*] of Gilarh'aks, Canadian Museum of Civilization, Barbeau Fonds, Part II, 102 f.2. It is not uncommon that multiple versions of a narrative contain different elements. For a good summary of Wilson Duff's findings on this point, see *Lax Kwa'alaams Indian Band v. Canada (Attorney General)*, 2008 BCSC 447, para. 45.

Eulachon (or oolichan) also constituted an important resource, second only in value to salmon according to Garfield. Eulachon was not only a source of fresh food in late winter scarcity but also served as an important trade commodity throughout the Northwest coast (Garfield 1966:13). Halibut and cod were harvested in deeper waters; and closer to shore, Red cod, octopus, crabs, eels, sea eggs and chitons were sought after (Boas 1916:404). The Tsimshian also hunted seals and sea lions, and were known to recover whales that drifted ashore.

On land, the Tsimshian hunted mountain goats, bear and deer for food and associated material (Boas 1916:44; Garfield 1966:13). Oral narratives repeatedly emphasize the importance of dried bear fat and goat kidney fat, highlighting their prestige value. Berries, kelp and seaweed were collected and preserved for winter use (Boas 1916:44). Garfield also records secondary food and material resources including the edible shoots of plants, roots, crab apples, barnacles and bark (1966:13). Wild rice is mentioned in the *adawx,* and an island off Port Simpson was named for its wild celery.

The seasonal cycle for the Northern Tsimshian is detailed in the ethnographic sources (Boas 1916:399; Garfield 1939:277; Garfield 1966:15-17; Halpin and Seguin 1990:269-271; Mitchell 1981). The Northern Tsimshian tribes lived at permanent winter village sites from November until late winter. Their first move was in February/March to the mouth of the Nass River where they fished for eulachon. The fish were dried or processed into oil or grease. The Northern Tsimshian monopolized the lucrative trade in eulachon oil, the "grease trade," from which they amassed significant wealth.

In the spring, following the eulachon fishery, families would gather to dry seaweed. Areas on Stephens Island and Dundas Island were considered to be the best places to collect seaweed. At this time, men fished for halibut, much of which would be promptly dried. Herring spawn would be collected. Red cedar bark was stripped from trees and cambium was scraped from the inner bark of a number of tree species. The salmon fishing season was initiated when the salmon moved into tidal waters in the spring where they were caught by trolling. Birds' eggs were collected in early June, and abalone was harvested at low tide.

By early summer, house groups would have moved to seasonal camps situated at fishing sites. Most salmon fishing by the Northern Tsimshian tribes occurred at the mouths of the Skeena River's tributary streams. Women collected a variety of berries through the summer months on the Skeena River territories. At the end of the fishing season, by which time the salmon had been dried, hunting would begin in earnest through the late fall after which people gravitated back to their winter villages. Shellfish, including cockles, clams and mussels, would be collected during the winter months. Winter ceremonies prevailed and individuals attended to the repair and crafting of household and ceremonial objects.

Beynon's distinction between resource areas that were owned exclusively and those used in common reflects the relative importance of food resources in the Northern Tsimshian economy. Beynon notes that

> [e]ach tribe have their own village sites and each individual group in the tribes, house groups, have their own individual hunting, berry, sea lion rocks and salmon rights. For other food gatherings such as oolichan, herring spawn, dulse (seaweed), clams, all other shellfish, halibut fishing, there were many

tribal camps used in common by each tribe (1954 Volume I:5).

The correlation between exclusivity and relative economic importance does not seem to hold for eulachon. As noted, the Northern Tsimshian tribes derived great wealth from their monopoly over the grease trade, yet fishing sites on the Nass River were used by a number of house groups in common. Beynon's information on Plate III indicates individual tribal areas for eulachon collection just as his map shows tribal "territories"[12] around village sites on Venn Passage. In both places, the resource areas do not appear to have been associated with specific house groups, unlike the tribal territories on the Skeena River tributaries.

7.0 Ethnographic Information regarding Lelu Island

Territories

The ethnographic sources represent the Northern Tsimshian territories at the mouth of the Skeena River and on Prince Rupert harbour in two different ways. According to Beynon and some other scholars, Lelu Island fell within an area used in common by all Northern Tsimshian tribes. MacDonald *et al.*, however, place Lelu Island within the Gitwilgyoots tribal territory, in keeping with Duff's later conclusions.[13] In contrast to these differing points of view, Spencer describes a Gitxaala house territory (*Lu Asdi Gam Uula*), as embracing Porpoise Harbour and extending past Lelu Island to the Inverness Cannery on the Skeena River (2013: para. 38).

Again, Beynon's geographical study of the Tsimshian indicates that many areas between the mouths of the Skeena and Nass rivers were not exclusive. On his Plate III (Figure 2), Lelu Island is not attributed to any of the Northern Tsimshian tribes. It should be noted that, according to Beynon's study, only the Northern Tsimshian tribes are associated with sites in the Prince Rupert harbour region.

Wilson Duff spent an intensive period of time between 1958-1959 analyzing Marius Barbeau's and William Beynon's Tsimshian materials held by the Canadian Museum of Civilization. Duff's research material is currently held by the Museum of Anthropology Archives at the University of British Columbia, in the form of unpublished manuscripts,

[12] It is worth noting that in his 1954 manuscript, Beynon used the word "territory" in a very broad manner. He notes that the Gitsmgeelwn (Kitsumkalum) and Gits'ilaasu (Kitselas) did not follow the pattern of establishing village sites on Venn Passage in keeping with the Northern Tsimshian tribes. He observes that they "had no coast locations but confined themselves to their own locality" (1954: Volume V:30). In the same paragraph, he explains how these groups eventually migrated to Port Essington following the establishment of a trading post and cannery where an Indian reserve was eventually set aside for them. Beynon identifies this Indian reserve as "the only coastal *territory* of either of these two inland Tsimshian" (emphasis added). It is worth noting that, in this instance, Beynon described an Indian reserve set aside outside the tribal area as a "territory," suggesting Beynon's use of the term "territory" to be flexible.

[13] Martindale and Marsden emphasize that the term "common ground" is inconsistent with Tsimshian law and that this principle is "borne out by the documentary oral record, which never speaks of this concept" (2011:74). For his part, Wilson Duff struggled with the contradictory statements made by Hebert Wallace in 1915 and 1926 on this subject (Duff n.d.:File 41-57). In his final analysis, Duff seems to have taken the view that the mouth of the Skeena River and Prince Rupert harbour were probably a Gitwilgyoots area.

notes and maps. Duff's premature death in 1976 left his work unfinished and his intention to publish unfulfilled (Duff 1964:65).

Duff's incomplete manuscripts include summary information relating to a number of the Northern Tsimshian tribal territories — with some territories more documented than others. He allowed that the data related to the Nass eulachon camps — as well as the Skeena River territories of the Gits'iis, Gitzaxłaał, Gitwilgyoots, and Gitnadoiks — were mainly "ample and harmonious" (Duff: n.d. File 40-9). As for other data, he took care to note the inherent difficulties:

> Difficulties arose in the preparation of maps of the village or campsites and hunting territories. While the field notes and narratives contain very full information on these territories it was sometimes impossible to transfer them to accurate maps. ....The maps therefore are not of the degree of precision one would desire. An attempt has been made to draw them in a way that does not imply a degree of accuracy which the data do not support.

And so, even though Duff had more confidence in his maps of the Gitwilgyoots territory, along with those of a few other tribes, he was still unsure about some particulars. Ambiguities were present between the boundary of Gitwilgyoots territory and a "common" territory at the mouth of the Skeena River — "the very mouth of the river." He notes that

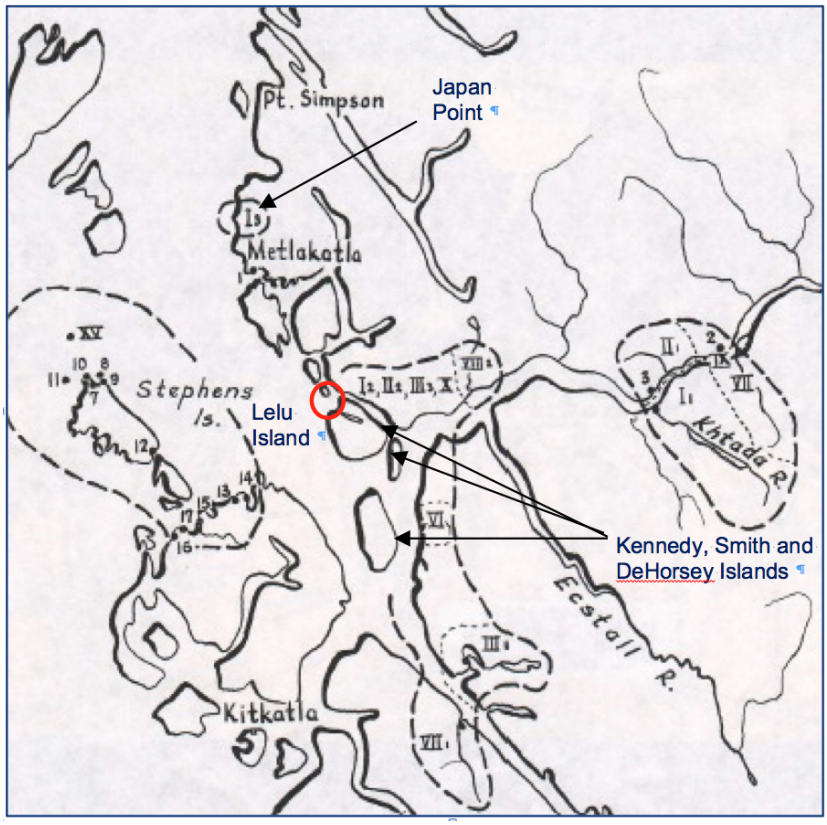


Figure 4: Gitwilgyoots House Territories (Duff n.d.)

> [t]he field notes give rise to some confusion over the very mouth of the river. In 1926 Wallace stated that Kennedy Island (las'gaswɛ·n), Smith Island (kpɛ'xt), and DeHorsey Island (ntɛ'·ləks) were the common property of all the Tsimshian tribes, as presumably was the coastal area in the vicinity of Metlakatla, farther north. His 1915 information however indicates that a number of houses claimed territory on the north bank of the river at its mouth, and even perhaps the islands named. Confusion exists, therefore, on the boundary between [Gitwilgyoots] territory and the 'common'

> territory to the north. The fact that the [Gitwilgyoots] owned Jap Point[14] suggests that they were the original owners of this whole part of the coast (Duff: n.d. File 41-57).

Duff's map of Gitwilgyoots tribal territory shows house territories at the mouth of the Skeena River and along the right bank of Inverness Passage (Figure 4 above). It is difficult to ascertain from the map whether Lelu Island is placed within Gitwilgyoots territory even though his manuscript favours this interpretation.

In 1987, George MacDonald, Gary Coupland and David Archer prepared a "Coast Tsimshian" map for the *Historical Atlas of Canada* approximating tribal boundaries understood to be present around 1750 (Figure 5). Here, Gitwilgyoots territory includes Stephens Island, Prescott Island the northern part of Porcher Island, as well as lands on either side of Grenville Channel, islands at the mouth of the Skeena River, and lands along the right bank of the Skeena River to a point below the mouth of the Kyhex River.

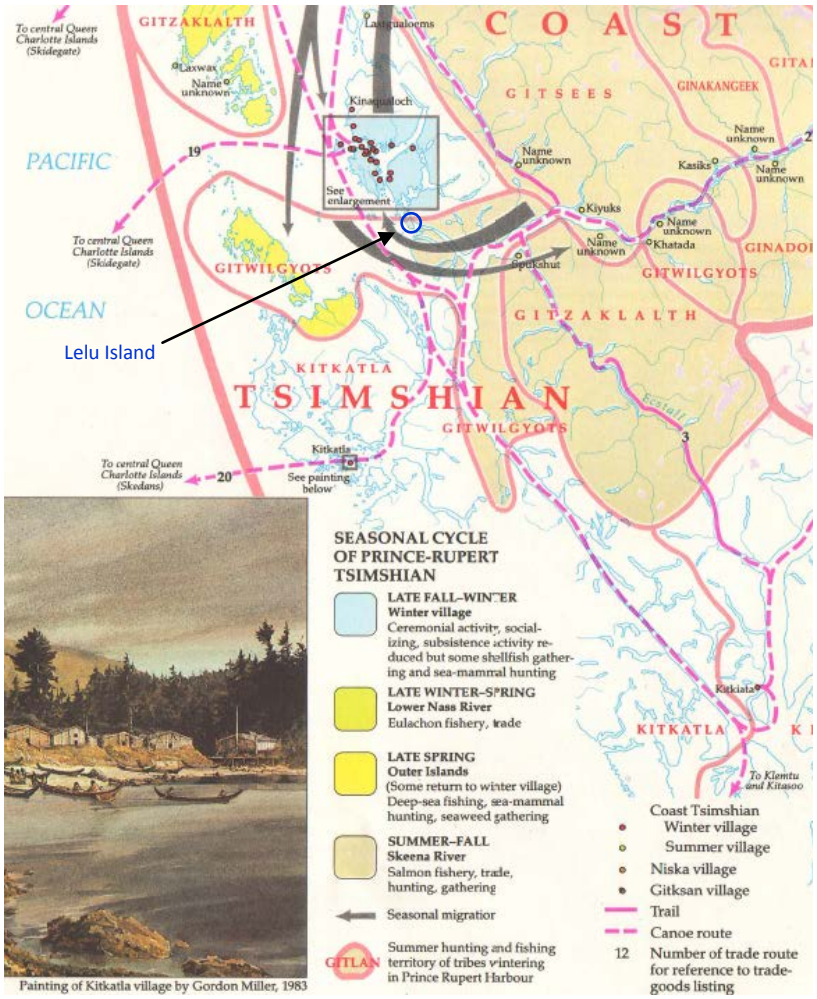


Figure 5: Coast Tsimshian ca. 1750 (MacDonald *et al.* 1987)

Figure 5 clearly shows Lelu Island as included within the boundaries of Gitwilgyoots territory. In contrast, the Prince Rupert harbour area is not associated with any of the Northern Tsimshian tribes, indicating that this region was thought to be an area held in common.

[14] Jap Point is marked as site No. 3 on Beynon's Plate II (Figure 3). This location is on the Tsimpsean Peninsula north of Venn Passage. Because Jap Point was an exclusive Gitwilgyoots territory, Duff seems to have concluded that the area south of Jap Point to the mouth of the Skeena River was probably a Gitwilgyoots area as well, but was concerned by Herbert Wallace's contradictory information as well as the contradictory presence of other Coast Tsimshian villages along this section of the coast.

The MacDonald *et al.* map is the only map consulted for the purpose of this research that shows Lelu Island attributed to a particular Northern Tsimshian tribe.

The Gitxaala contest the attribution of Prince Rupert harbour as territory common to the Northern Tsimshian tribes on the basis of their oral history. They cite an *adawx* which features Aksk, the famous Gitwilgyoots warrior, and hold that he was a Gitxaala man.[15] According to the Gitxaala, one of their ancestors drove the Tlingit away from Prince Rupert harbour, leaving the Gitxaala in possession of Kaien Island and other locations on Prince Rupert harbour on their defeat of the Tlingit. The Gitxaala support this claim on the basis of their oral history, now in the form of twelve statutory declarations made by Gitxaala elders in 2012 and 2013. The statutory declaration of Richard Spencer specifies that *Lu Asdi Gam Uula*, a Gitxaala house territory embracing Porpoise Harbour, extended passed Lelu Island to the Inverness Cannery on the Skeena River (2013: para. 38). While this statement does not explicitly describe Lelu Island as falling within this house territory, it clearly includes nearby places.

SUMMARY

The sources vary when it comes to linking specific groups with the study area. Some sources describe the study area and the greater Prince Rupert harbour region as a Northern Tsimshian common use area; whereas other sources associate these places with one Northern Tsimshian tribe — the Gitwilgyoots. Neither description is consistent with Tsimshian title in principle which holds that house groups were the owners of territories. If there is more specific information available concerning a Northern Tsimshian house group owning a territory embracing Lelu Island, this information is found in sources beyond those consulted for this report. Gitxaala oral tradition describes a house territory embracing the Porpoise Harbour area including places nearby to Lelu Island.

SETTLEMENTS

There is no indication, on the basis of the sources consulted, that Lelu Island was the site of an aboriginal settlement.

In the course of his archaeological impact study for the Prince Rupert harbour area, Richard Inglis identifies food and shelter as the two most important factors in predicting sites that would have been suitable for habitation, neither of which apply well to Lelu Island. In general, limiting factors would have included an exposed coastline, sedimentation from the Skeena and extreme low or high areas of land (1974:20).

> Several generalized environmental factors also affect the choice of areas for human occupation. The two basic considerations are:
>
> a) shelter from the elements
> b) location of food resources
>
> Sites are most frequently situated in small bays, or on the lee side of islands or points of land. Economic resource areas – hunting fishing and collecting locales for various plant and animal foodstuffs were a valuable asset and were

[15] Adaorh [Adawx] of Gilarh'aks, Canadian Museum of Civilization, Barbeau Fonds, Part II, 102 f.2.

> inevitably exploited.
>
> Many areas could be eliminated because of adverse environmental factors - rocky shoreline, muskeg hinterland, restricted intertidal zone - areas that were physically unsuitable to access, or that offered little resource potential.

As to his examination of locations in Map Area 3, Inglis reported that (1974:32):

> Included in this map area are Ridley, Lelu, Kitson, Smith and De Horsey Islands, and the mainland opposite Porpoise Harbour and Inverness Passage. Two primary development areas - Ridley and Kitson Islands - are within this area. A secondary site development alternative is listed for the east shore of Porpoise Harbour.
>
> Few sites were located in this area. There are several physiographic and environmental factors which limit site and resource availability:
>
> a) rugged and exposed coast lines along the western shores
>
> b) sedimentation from the Skeena River affecting the productivity of the intertidal areas
>
> c) low, muskeg areas along the shoreline, or a steep rise of the land from the shoreline.

Inglis did not indicate archaeological sites that could point to settlement on Lelu Island, nor did subsequent archaeological investigations of the island (Archer 1983; Millennia 2012; Stantec 2013a; Stantec 2013c; Stantec 2013d).

Sources disagree on the exact number of Northern Tsimshian occupation sites. The documented sites known to have been present in the region around 1750 were on Venn Passage, Kaien Island and on the Skeena River (see Figures 3 & 5).[16] In his 1954 manuscript, Beynon identified twelve villages on Venn Passage and Tuck Inlet.[17] Other sources have identified more. For example, MacDonald *et al.* state that there were about 24 occupied sites on Prince Rupert harbour at contact (1987: Plate 13). Richard Spencer identifies *Lu Asdi Gam Uula* as a Gitxaala settlement situated on Porpoise Harbour but does not disclose the location (2013: para.38). In any event, there is no evidence for a Tsimshian occupation site on Lelu Island.

Duff lists a site on the Skeena which he identified as *willaxlɔ't* and described as a Gitwilgyoots village on Inverness Passage (n.d.: File 41-107). However, he does not mention this site in another list of Gitwilgyoots villages and territories (n.d.: File 41-57). The discrepancy between these two lists is perplexing. It seems evident from Duff's files that the latter list represented his conclusions; on this basis, it might be doubted whether Duff concluded that *willaxlɔ't* was a Gitwilgyoots village. More information about this location is provided below in the sections on fishing places and supernatural beings.

[16] Most Skeena River villages seem to have been at the mouths of the tributaries. However, Beynon refers to a Gitzaxłaał Wolf clan summer village on the Ecstall River that was located a considerable distance upriver from the river's confluence with the Skeena (Beynon 1954: Volume III:34).

[17] See Appendix B for a list of the twelve villages identified by Beynon.

Fishing and other Seafood Harvesting

The most significant marine resources harvested by the Tsimshian were salmon, eulachon, halibut, cod, sea mammals, shellfish, herring spawn and seaweeds. Following are a number of considerations that would rule out Lelu Island as a harvesting site, or at least point to other and more preferable sites:

- The major eulachon run in the region was on the Nass River.
- Halibut and cod fishing were conducted on offshore fishing banks.
- The best seaweed harvesting beds and seal hunting areas in the Gitwilgyoots tribal area were situated between Stephens and Dundas islands (Beynon 1954 ; Duff n.d.:File 41-57).
- Hunting for sea lions was typically pursued on offshore rookeries (Beynon 1954: Volume II: 15).
- Shellfish abundance in the intertidal area around Lelu Island is limited due to sedimentation and fresh water outflow from the Skeena River (Inglis 1973:32).[18]

On the other hand, seals were hunted in the lower Skeena River (Garfield 1966:13). The Port Edward location named *Lu Asdi Gam Uula* means "the place where a lot of seal dwell" (Spencer 2013: para. 38). Other evidence also suggests that Lelu Island could have been a suitable seal hunting location. For instance, an oral narrative describes the construction of a weir to trap seals and salmon between an island and the mainland on Venn Passage (Boas 1916:400). This weir, however, was in the vicinity of two villages.

Although Garfield reports that seal hunting took place at the mouth of the Skeena River, there is no reference in any of the sources consulted to seal hunting, by any means, in the vicinity of Lelu Island.

Historically, the Tsimshian did not use gillnets at the mouth of the Skeena River however well-suited this technology proved to be in later years (Coupland *et al.* 2001:235). Salmon fishing technology included traps and dip nets, most effective in smaller, more restricted steams rather than the wider expanse of the Skeena:

> In general, traditional Tsimshian fishing technology was not well-suited to catching salmon in the Skeena. Before the arrival of Europeans, the main salmon procurement techniques were weirs, other types of traps such as basket traps, and dip nets (Drucker 1965:118; Nolan 1977:135-138). These techniques would have been effective in the small, narrow streams or in canyons, but not in the wide, slow-moving lower Skeena.

Sources agree that most salmon fishing was conducted on the tributary streams flowing into

[18] Two studies of Ridley Island in 2006 and 2007 found that shellfish and other marine resources are not currently abundant in the intertidal zone. A 2011 report concludes that fresh water from the Skeena River results in a habitat around Ridley Island that is poorly suited for shellfish (Stantec 2011:15-13). Despite the Skeena River's apparent detrimental effect on the intertidal zone at the river mouth, Kenneth Ames comments that river sedimentation has produced shallow banks (Horsey, Agnes and Flora) off Lelu and Ridley islands which have substantial stands of eel grass and "are extremely rich marine habitats" (2005:7). See Figure 1 for the location of these banks.

the Skeena River (reflected in the situation of the house territories).[19]

Beynon and Duff identify a number of important salmon fisheries owned by the Gitwilgyoots. At Jap Point, a Blackfish house possessed an exclusive territory used for salmon and halibut fishing and for shellfish harvesting (Beynon 1954: Volume II: 9). This house group used a round salmon trap 100 yards in diameter located in the intertidal zone. Duff names three other Gitwilgyoots salmon fishing locations on the north side of Porcher Island (n.d.:File 41-57). Gitwilgyoots houses also owned salmon fishing locations on the xáidzəks [Kasiks] and Khtada rivers flowing into opposites sides of the Skeena River (Beynon 1954: Volume V:13; Duff n.d.:File 41-57).[20] The *adawx* also describe the annual return to the Skeena River to fish for salmon.

A fishing site on the right bank of Inverness Passage is also associated with the Gitwilgyoots. As mentioned above, in one list of place names, Duff named this location — *willaxlɔ't* — as a Gitwilgyoots village. This location may be the same place identified by Richard Spencer as *Wilthk-logth* (2013: para.38).

In 1881, when Indian Reserve Commissioner O'Reilly visited the Skeena River to set aside Indian reserves, he consulted William Duncan about the places that the Tsimshian had identified as reserve areas. In his ensuing report on the allotment of reserves for the Tsimshian, O'Reilly praised Duncan's input:

> The above reserves on the Coast and on the tidal waters of the Skeena for a distance of 17 miles from its mouth embrace all the fishing stations pointed out by the Indians, and mentioned to me by Mr. Duncan of Metlakatla, who I may here observe, rendered me valuable assistance in this matter (AANDC 1882).

The outcome of this consultation may well have been recorded on an undated and unsigned sketch map that shows the location of the areas identified by the Tsimshian according to Duncan. This map is on file with AANDC (Figure 6). It has been attributed to Duncan and was possibly prepared in the process of his consultations with Commissioner O'Reilly.

[19] Drucker 1965:118; Halpin and Seguin 1990:270.

[20] Not all sources identify the Kasiks and Khtada rivers as Gitwilgyoots Skeena River territories. Duff and MacDonald *et al.* associate the Gitwilgyoots with the Khtada River but not the Kasiks River. MacDonald *et al.* associate the Gits'iis tribe with the Kasiks River (Figure 5). Martindale does not associate the Gitwilgyoots with either river and instead places the Gitwilgyoots at a location opposite the Ecstall River (probably McNeill River) (2003:16). Marsden places the Gitwilgyoots on the coast and not on the Skeena River at all (2001:64).

This seems a reasonable attribution as many of the locations marked on the sketch map were set aside for reserves. Kaien Island is marked on the sketch and Ridley Island is presumably the unnamed island situated below Kaien Island. There is no feature marked on the sketch which might correspond to Lelu Island.

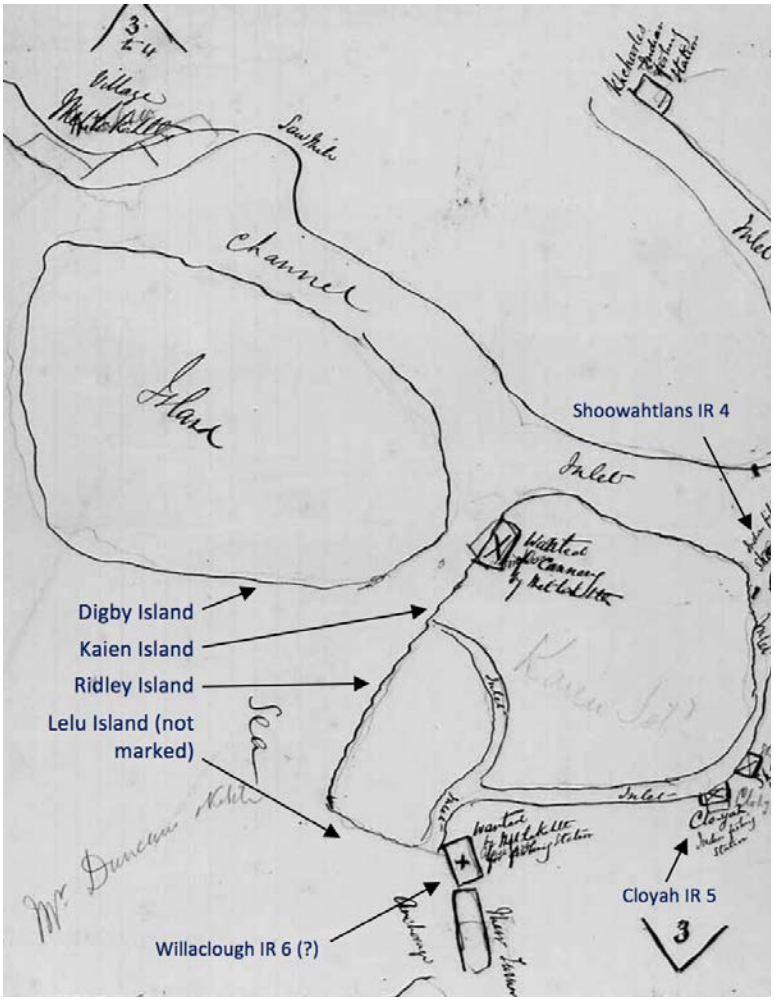


Figure 6: Sketch attributed to Mr. Duncan showing fishing stations sought as Indian reserves (AANDC n.d.)

One of the Indian reserves set aside by O'Reilly — and marked on this sketch — is Shoowahtlans IR 4, labeled "Indian fishing station Shawah tlan" on Figure 6. Similarly, Cloyah IR 5 corresponds to "Clo-yah Indian fishing station" identified on the sketch.[21] Another site— situated on the mainland south of Kaien Island — is identified as "wanted by Metlakatla for fishing station." O'Reilly did, in due course, allot Willaclough IR 6 as a fishing station on Inverness Passage, in the vicinity of Lelu Island. It seems safe to infer that Willaclough IR 6 represents the site identified by the Metlakatla Tsimshian as a desirable fishing station. "Willaclough" is likely an Anglicization of the Tsimshian term "*willaxlɔ't*" – a place name recorded by Wilson Duff.

The proximity of this reserve to Lelu Island is evident in Figure 7, where Lelu Island is identified as "South Porpoise Is. L. 501."

[21] Cloyah IR 5 was surrendered and sold in 1949. See, *Schedule of Indian Reserves*. Prepared by the Legal Surveys Division, Natural Resources Canada and revised to February 2005, p. 58.

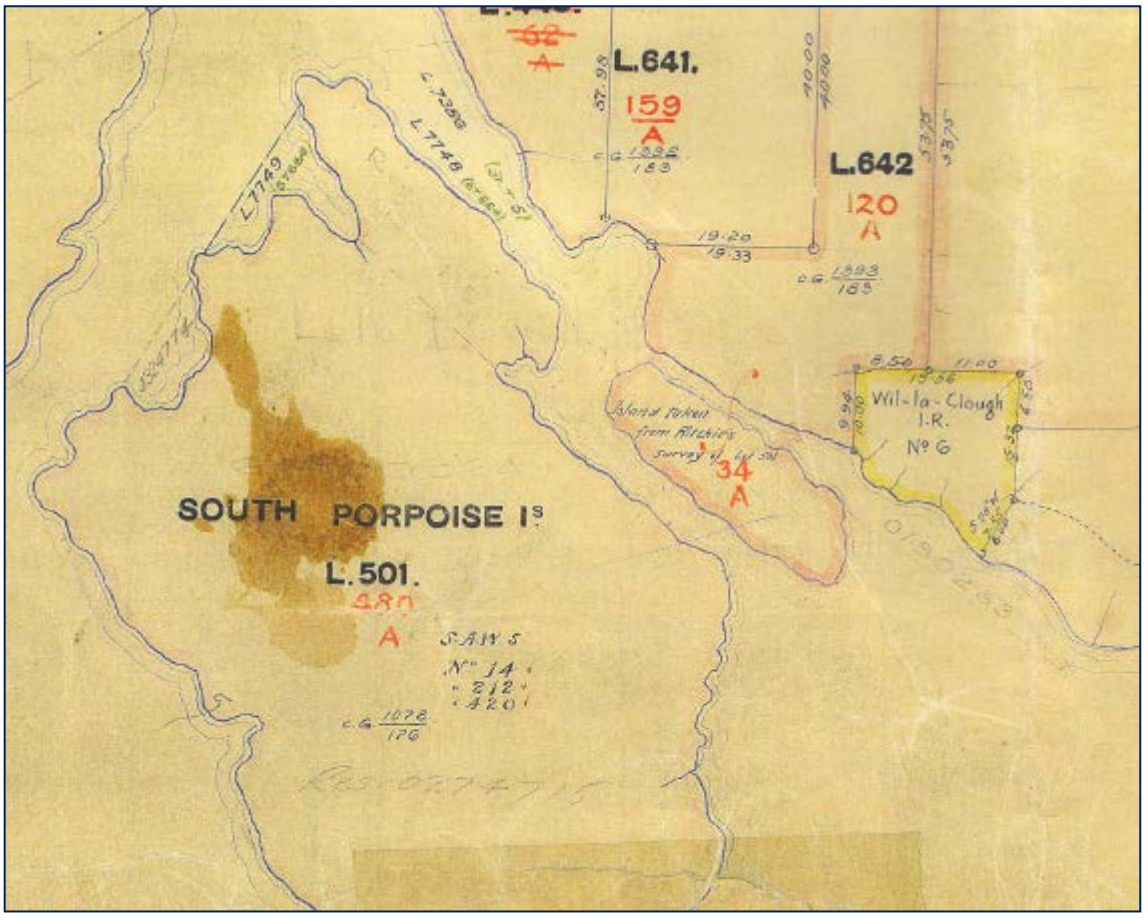


Figure 7: Detail from Plan 30Tray1 (LTSA n.d.)

O'Reilly's Minute of Decision for Willaclough IR 6 describes a reserve of approximately 30 acres adjoining the western boundary of the Inverness Cannery Company's claim: "Commencing at the mouth of a slough 5 chains west of a charcoal house and running North 10 chains...." (AANDC 1882:46). The reference to a "charcoal house" indicates that a structure was already present on the land set aside as an Indian reserve. Given that this was a traditional fishing site, this structure was likely a smokehouse, erected to dry and cure fish. The survey field notes for 1887, when "Willaclough" was surveyed and finalized, also refer to the charcoal house/charcoal shed situated about 5 chains west of the southwest corner of the reserve (NRCAN 1887:24). The notes also indicate Willaclough IR 6 adjoined the western boundary of Lot 1, Block 1, a parcel of land sold to Henry Soar in 1871.[22] Willaclough IR 6 was cut-off by the McKenna-McBride Royal Commission in 1916.[23]

[22] BCA, Department of Lands and Works, GR-3097, Crown Grant 1175/2. The survey field notes and plan associated with the survey of Soar's land disclose no information concerning aboriginal use and occupancy of land on the right bank of Inverness Passage (LTSA, F.B. 1/71, P.H. 1 & *Plan of Henry Soar's Military Grant and Proposed Town Site Skeena River* by Edgar Dewdney dated April 10, 1871). Soar's application for the land was granted on November 10, 1870 on the condition that the lands were "found not to include any portion of any land held as an Indian settlement previous to this date." (BCA, Colonial Correspondence, GR-1372, File 1617A. Letter to Henry Soar from the office of the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works dated November 10, 1870).

[23] *Report of the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of British Columbia*. Victoria:

The establishment of Willaclough IR 6 as an Indian reserve for fishing purposes provides the strongest documentary evidence for traditional marine harvesting in the vicinity of Lelu Island. The existence of a "charcoal house" at the time of reserve allotment combined with O'Reilly's report indicating the use of this site as a fishery in the late-nineteenth century, substantiate this evidence. The sources reviewed in the course of this research did not, however, reveal any indication that this site was used prior to the 19th century, or that use persisted into the late 19th century.[24]

CURRENT USE FOR TRADITIONAL PURPOSES

Some First Nations may currently fish in the marine area around Lelu Island. As recently as 2013, the Kitsumkalum First Nation and the Metlakatla First Nation have entered into Comprehensive Fisheries Agreements with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), making provision for the issuance of Communal Licences for the Food, Social and Ceremonial (FSC) Fishery. Under these agreements the area where the FSC Fishery takes place includes the marine area around Lelu Island.[25]

Gitxaala elders also describe current fishing activities in the marine area close to Lelu Island. Allan Brown observes that Gitxaala still fish in Prince Rupert harbour for salmon, cod and halibut and that they also harvest clams, abalone and crabs there (Brown 2012: para. 96). Clarence Innis' (*Txa gyet*), a *sm'ooygit* (chief) owning Gitxaala territory on Porpoise Harbour, states that he occasionally goes crabbing in Prince Rupert harbour and along the coast of Ridley Island, but that pollution limits his trips. Innis has fished salmon commercially along the shores of Ridley Island and states that, "I would still go there now if I knew there were fish there" (Innis 2012: paras. 50& 56). Edward Gladstone stated in 2012 that he was able to get fish, shrimp, prawns, crabs, clams and cockles around *K'xen* (Kaien Island) and other places until "the last couple of years" (2012: para. 70).

HUNTING

There is no indication in the ethnographic sources suggesting that Lelu Island was used for hunting.

FOREST UTILIZATION

The archaeological data confirms that Lelu Island was used extensively to harvest forest

Acme Press Ltd, 1916, p. 601. In 2008, the Specific Claims Branch of AANDC entered into a settlement agreement with the Metlakatla and Lax Kw'alaams First Nations regarding the BC Cut-Off Lands. See, http://services.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/SCBRI_E/Main/ReportingCentre/PreviewReport.aspx?output=PDF.

[24] Willaclough IR 6 may have been the location of archaeology site GbTn-23, a shell midden on the right bank of Inverness Passage thought to have been mainly destroyed by railway construction (Stantec 2013a:6).

[25] Comprehensive Fisheries Agreement between Canada and the Kitsumkalum Indian Band dated November 27, 2012, p. 30 (http://waves-vagues.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/waves-vagues/search-recherche/display-afficher/347446) and Comprehensive Fisheries Agreement between Canada and the Metlakatla Indian Band dated September 9, 2013, p. 35 (http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/349704_AFS2013-SYR-1323-0.pdf).

products.

In 1983, David Archer recorded six Culturally Modified Tree (CMT) sites on the western and southern shores of the Lelu Island, including 21 trees (1983:91-92). However, more recently, some of the features catalogued by Archer are now thought to be evidence of historic logging rather than traditional aboriginal forest use (Millennia 2012:8).

An archaeological inventory made in 2012 documented 286 CMTs on Lelu Island in three large patches on East Lelu Island (Millennia 2012:Fig.7), South Lelu Island (Millennia 2012:Fig.8) and West Lelu Island (Millennia 2012:Fig.9). Field work conducted in 2013 shows that the distribution of CMTs is more widespread (Stantec 2013a; Stantec 2013d; Stantec 2013e). These reports indicate that, in some cases, CMTs dating from the 1830s to the 1960s are present along much of the shoreline of Lelu Island.

Two inventories of plant species on Lelu Island (undertaken in August 2012 and May 2013), have identified a number of species known to have been used by the Tsimshian for food and medicine. These include four trees (Hemlock, Pacific silver fir and Sitka spruce, and Pacific crabapple), eight shrubs (Alaska blueberry, black crowberry, blueberry, bog cranberry, red huckleberry, salmonberry, Labrador tea and salal) and two herbs (bunchberry and skunk cabbage); five plants used for medicine were identified, including licorice fern, devil's club, juniper, Labrador tea and hellebore (Stantec 2013c:Table 10-5).

Northwest Coast ethnographers have always acknowledged the economic importance of forest products to the Tsimshian — and the special importance of yellow and western red cedars (Boas 1916:45). Franz Boas, the earliest ethnographer working on the coast, emphasized that two resources underpinned the culture that flourished on the Northwest Coast: "It may be said that the salmon and cedar are the foundations of Northwest coast culture (1916:46)." George Emmons, another early ethnographer, saw the Gitxsan bark containers as essential to subsistence itself, for their importance in transporting and storing food and other materials (Emmons n.d. cited in Laforet 1984:234).

Philip Drucker echoes this as he describes the multiple uses to which wood was put: for houses, canoes, furnishings, containers, tools, textiles, and a variety of other purposes including a wide range of ceremonial objects:

> The bark of the red cedar was utilized for making the ubiquitous checkerwork mats, used for a thousand purposes – to sleep and sit on, to cover canoes, to gamble or cut fish on, to wear as a rain cape. Checkerwork baskets of red-cedar bark met nearly as many needs. The same bark was hackled with a whalebone 'shredder' to make ceremonial insignia, bandages, cradle padding, and, in the days of muzzleloaders, gun wadding....
>
> The Kwakiutl and Tsimshian were important centers of ceremonialism on the Northwest Coast. Their rituals were for the most part dramatic performances at which supernatural beings and deeds were represented realistically. Deities, spirits, and other beings were personified by masked dancers, who performed to an accompaniment of carved rattles, wooden drums, and wooden whistles. Elaborate and ingenious devices were made to reproduce supernatural events. Great wooden birds flew from one end of the house to the other, a supernatural mink might come up through the floor, run across the room, and disappear, a human dancer would be dragged down into the ground by a spirit

> from the underworld. Shamanism, too, had a wealth of regalia and tricks that depended on mechanical contrivances (1943:32).

William Beynon identified an important forest utilization site on the northern side of Porcher Island owned by the Gitwilgyoots. He describes, as well, the multiple uses to which hemlock bark was put:

> On the coast again, there was another territory owned jointly by the entire tribe. No. 33 Plan III *Kwəl'mæs = kwəl = where 'mæs = bark.* The place was abundant in large hemlock trees from which bark was gotten and the inner sap bark was gathered together and beaten as a pulp then made into plugs and was considered a great delicacy mixed with wild rice and oolichan oil. Sometimes it would be toasted then pulverized and mixed with other foods. The territory was situated on Porcher Island and geographical name being Island Point. It was mainly used by the entire tribe when gathering herring spawn and dried here (1954: Volume V:16-17)

There were at least three fishing sites present on Porcher Island. Beynon notes that this resource site was used by the entire Gitwilgyoots in common.

Archaeological forest utilization data for Lelu Island is significant in light of the central importance of forest products, not only for subsistence but in the extent to which these resources were transformed to provide a rich material and ceremonial culture. At the same time, there is no indication that Lelu Island was a unique location for stripping and planking trees, or for harvesting food and medicinal plants. Inventories of nearby locations reveal similar results. In the course of his 1983 survey, Archer found a similar sampling of CMTs on Ridley Island as he found on Lelu Island (Arrowstone 2009:28). Other archaeological assessments conducted on the islands at the mouth of the Skeena have also recorded evidence of CMTs in a similar abundance to those discovered on Lelu Island.[26]

CURRENT USE FOR TRADITIONAL PURPOSES

The evidence shows that Lelu Island, along with other sites in the immediate area, was valued for its forest products. Dating techniques indicate that the forest was used for stripping bark, among other things, as early as 1830; bark has also been stripped on Lelu Island more recently, with two instances that date to 1959 and 1961 (Stantec 2013a:23).

SUPERNATURAL

Tsimshian oral narratives describe five supernatural spirits (*spanaxnox*) associated with places in the vicinity Lelu Island. William Beynon located one of these supernatural sites at the south end of Lelu Island, but later research indicates that he may have been mistaken.

Four of the five *spanaxnox* appear in the *adawx* of Nisłguts'olk. Susan Marsden notes that this *adawx* tells the history of Lumaas, who sought "to overcome all the spanaxnox of the lower Skeena River. The adawx describes a shift in the balance of power between these spanaxnox and the human world as Lumaas seeks mastery rather accommodation (2002:123)."

[26] See for example Permit Report 1999-004 documenting forest utilization sites on Smith Island.

According to Marsden, Ałgaligigan was the first *spanaxnox* whom Lumaas encountered near the entrance to the Skeena River (2002:124). This monster inhabited Coast Island, the small island just west of Ridley Island. Wiłłootk, the second *spanaxnox* inhabited the north side of Inverness Passage — at or near the location of Willaclough IR 6 (Marsden 2002:124). A translation for this location is given as "Place of Slides." Two *spanaxnox* – identified as Ksidai'x and Ksi'oom — inhabited Smith Island.[27] The fifth *spanaxnox*, appearing in the *adawx* of a Wolf house in the Gitzaxłaał tribe, is said to have occupied Watson Island on Porpoise Harbour (Beynon 1954: Volume III:43).

Another narrative, "The man who bound up his wrinkles," and distinct from the *adawx* of Nisłguts'olk, provides a different account of Wiłłootk or the "Place of Land Slides" (Beynon 1953: Notebook III: 36-40).[28] Here a shaman used magic to obtain a princess in marriage after which he killed her. He attempted the same magic on the younger sister of the dead princess but she escaped. In the course of trying to recapture the younger sister, the shaman fell into Inverness Passage where he drowned when he became entangled in his own wrinkles: "This was the monster who bound up his wrinkles and where he drowned is now a reef opposite Inverness."

Of interest in this narrative is the accompanying sketch map which locates the places described in the text (Figure 8 next page). The supernatural being, Wiłłootk is associated with the number "23" — marked at the south end of an island and identified with an illegible place name. This island may well be Lelu Island, given its position on the diagram — south of Ridley Island with a smaller island (Stapledon Island?) drawn between it and the mainland.

It seems probable that number 23 does not actually coincide with Wiłłootk. First, because the *adawx* of Nisłguts'olk places Wiłłootk on the right bank of Inverness Passage in the vicinity of Willaclough IR 6,[29] and second because the "place of landslides" is an unlikely place description for Lelu Island.

The topographic map of Lelu Island in the Millennia report does indicate that there is a steep hill at the south end of the island (2012: Figure 3), but a rocky hillside does not show up in aerial photographs of the area (Stantec 2013b: Figure 4). Instead, the photograph indicates that the area is forested.

[27] Dashken IR 22 would appear to have been set aside at or near the location of Ksidai'x.

[28] In his notebook, Beynon renders the place name something like wəlxtɔtk. The place is clearly the same location mentioned in the *adawx* of Nisłguts'olk because they are both translated as "Place of [Land] Slides." For the purposes of this report, the place name is given in the orthography used by Marsden.

[29] Possibly, the place names "Wiłłootk" and "Willaclough" refer to the same location.

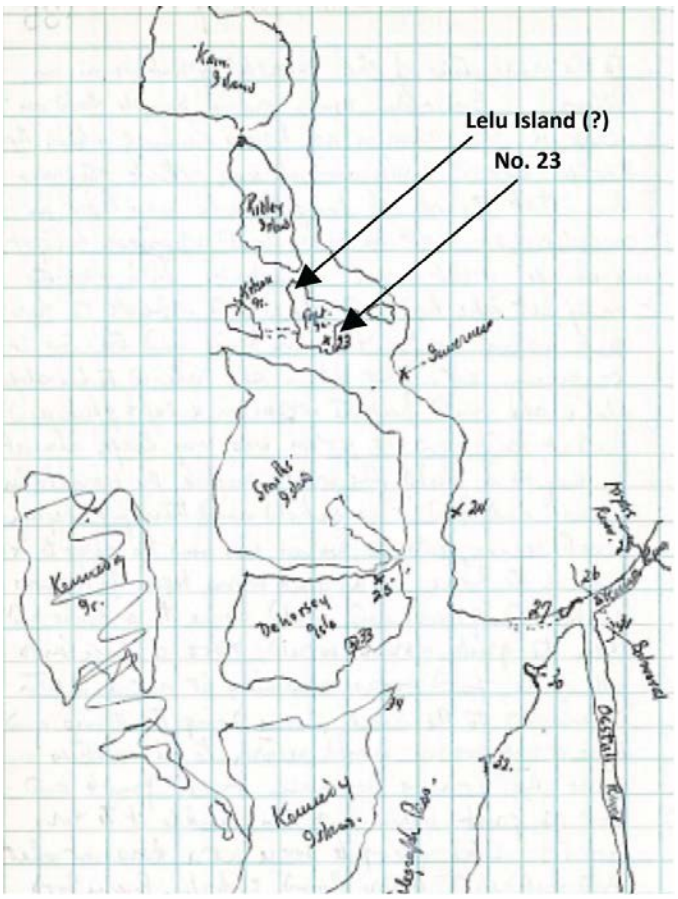


Figure 8: Sketch map from W. Beynon's notebook (1953)

The name "Place of Land Slides" appears more appropriate to the landscape features found on Willaclough IR 6 where a 520 metre mountain rises up steeply from the river bank (Stantec 2013:Figure 5). Additionally, an 80-100 foot high waterfall is noted in the survey field book for Willaclough IR 6 along with the note "slide from mountain" to describe the area above the falls (NRCAN 1887). It would seem that locating Wilłootk on the north bank of Inverness Passage makes more sense than the southern point of Lelu Island, despite Beynon's sketch (Figure 8) which, upon closer examination, appears to have mistakenly placed Wilłootk on what appears to be the south shore of Lelu Island.

Remembering that Wilłootk's death is marked by a reef — "... the monster who bound up his wrinkles and where he drowned is now a reef opposite Inverness" — there is a submerged reef situated off the bank below Inverness. This reef shows up in a plan related to the military grant awarded to Henry Soar in 1871 (for Lot 1, Block 1, Coast District), which marks a reef in Inverness Passage (Figure 9 next page). It is reasonable to suppose that this is the same reef featured in the narrative. Possibly, the narrative may have served as a mental marine chart to assist Aboriginal mariners to avoid a known hazard in Inverness Passage.

TRAVEL

There is little documented evidence for marine and overland transportation routes in the sources consulted. The Coast Tsimshian ca. 1750 map published by MacDonald *et al.* is a noteworthy exception (see Figure 5). The travel route shown at the mouth of the Skeena River indicates a course along Telegraph Passage to the south of Smith Island and not along Inverness Passage. This is interesting because Inverness Passage was acknowledged in Tsimshian oral history. For example, the *adawx* of Nisłguts'olk recounts the history of a man who travelled up the Skeena River by entering the river along Inverness Passage (Marsden 2002:124) and another narrative mentions a reef in Inverness Passage (Beynon 1953: Notebook Vol. III).

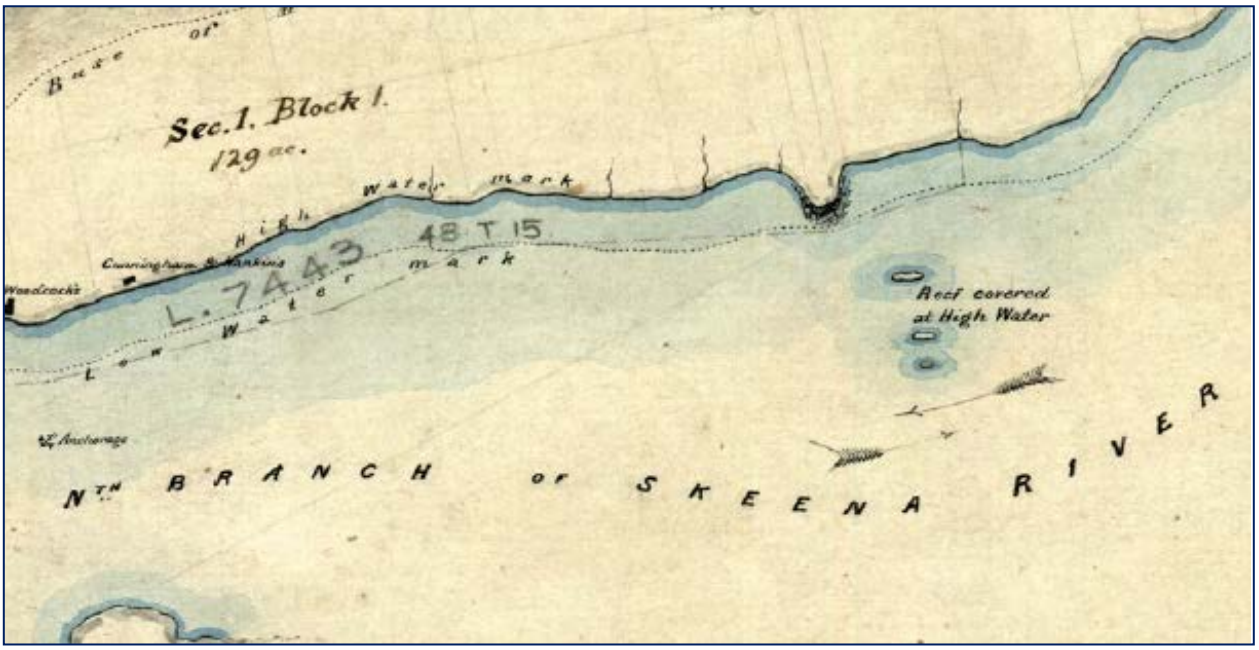


Figure 9: Detail from *Plan of Henry Soars Military Grant and proposed Town Site Mouth of Skeena River* (Dewdney 1871)

Lelu Island could well have been along the route to the winter villages on Venn Passage to the north and to the resource locations on the Skeena River to the south, depending on weather and tides (there is no evidence to the contrary). Seasonal movements between the winter settlement at *Lach Klan* on Dolphin Island to the eulachon fishery on the Nass River could also have involved travel in vicinity of Lelu Island. Gitxaala oral narratives certainly account for a number of stopping places in the vicinity of Lelu Island. Job Spencer identifies Kennedy Island on Telegraph Passage as a stopping point en route to the Nass River, noting that stops were made in the Port Edward area along the way (2012: para.75). Richard Spencer also identifies Kennedy Island as a stopping place (2013: para.58), Samuel Lewis identifies Kennedy Island as an old Gitxaala deer hunting location (2012: para.66), and, Douglas Brown identifies Kennedy Island as a lookout (2012: para.101).

CURRENT USE FOR TRADITIONAL PURPOSES

The Comprehensive Study Report prepared in connection with Fairview Terminal expansion plans identifies a small vessel navigation hazard for Aboriginal mariners (Canada 2012:13). The report acknowledges that the passageway between Coast and Ridley islands (near Lelu Island) is generally preferred over travelling in open waters. Aboriginal mariners entering Porpoise Harbour would also travel in close proximity to Lelu Island.

8.0 Summary of Findings

There is no oral or written evidence that Lelu Island served as a site for winter settlement.

The island was, however, clearly used to harvest forest products. The existence of major winter settlements on Venn Passage and Kaien Island around 1750 suggests that nearby resource locations, such as Lelu Island, would likely have been used at this time as well. CMT dating techniques indicate that the forest on the island was used for stripping bark as early as 1830.

There is no evidence that the changes in settlement patterns on Prince Rupert harbour around 1840 were immediately accompanied by dramatic changes in traditional use patterns. It wasn't until the 1860s that Tsimshian trade with the Hudson's Bay Company shifted from luxury to necessity — where once furs had been traded for luxury items, they were eventually traded for food supplies. With this shift in trading patterns came fundamental changes to the traditional Tsimshian economy and social structure.

The strongest evidence for Tsimshian use of Lelu Island is in the extent to which the forest was used to harvest western red cedar bark materials. Recent studies have shown that CMTs are widely distributed on the island, particularly along its perimeter. Most CMTs on Lelu Island have been stripped for their bark. Other inventories on Lelu Island indicate the presence of numerous plants used for food and medicine—most likely harvested in the course of stripping bark. There appears to have been continuous activity of this nature on Lelu Island according to the range of dates recorded (between 1830 and 1961).

The fishing station on Inverness Passage provides the most direct evidence that fishing occurred in the marine region nearby to Lelu Island. The presence of a "charcoal house" or smoking shed on this site in 1881 substantiates the likelihood of subsistence fishing nearby. While seal hunting certainly took place at the mouth of the Skeena River, there is no specific record of seal hunting in the vicinity of Lelu Island. Some First Nations currently have agreements with DFO related to their FSC fisheries in the marine area around Lelu Island.

The oral narratives locate numerous supernatural sites in the vicinity of Lelu Island — on Coast Island and along Inverness Passage. While the evidence indicating that the supernatural being Wiłłootk actually inhabited the south end of Lelu Island is not compelling and may be in error, Inverness Passage is accounted for in good detail as a supernatural site and a travel route.

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Indian Reserves , File 40-46

Theory, File 40-47

Names of the Tsimshian , File 40-48

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Gitxaata : Names, File 40-52

Gitwilgots Crests, File 40-53

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Gitzaxtet Territories, File 41-62

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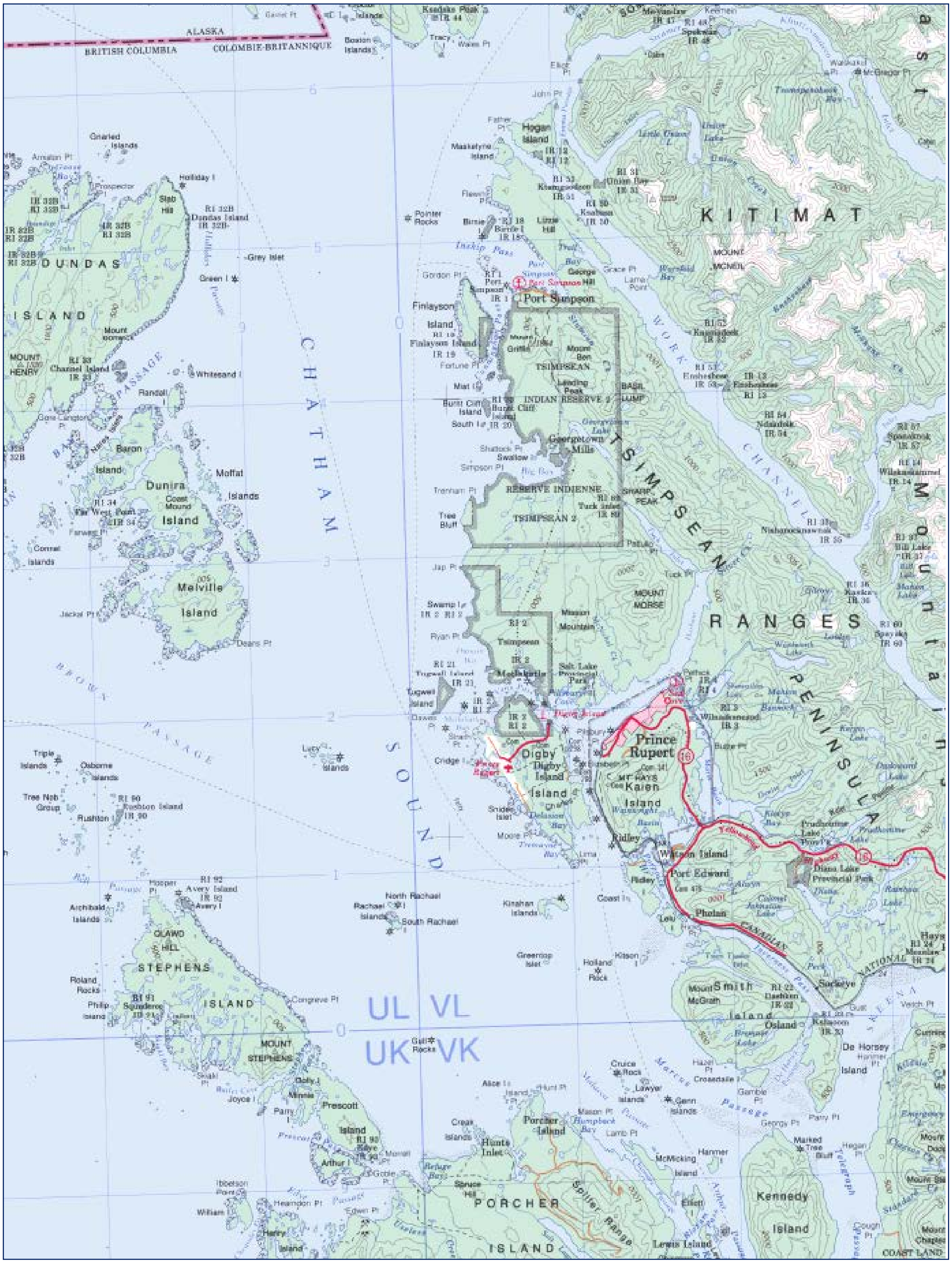
Appendix A: Reference Map for the Region between the Skeena and Nass Rivers



APPENDIX B: VILLAGES ON VENN PASSAGE AND TUCK INLET MAPPED BY WILLIAM BEYNON

Village No. on Plate II (Figure 3)	**Tribe**	**Citation** in *Ethnical and Geographical Study of the Tsimsiyæn Nation* (1954)
1	Gitwiligyoots	Volume II, p. 8
2	Gitwiligyoots	Volume II, p. 8
6	Gitwiligyoots	Volume II, p. 21
7	Gispaxlo'ots	Volume II, p. 24
9	Gispaxlo'ots	Volume II, p. 41
10	Gitando	Volume III, p. 1
12	Gitzaxłaał	Volume III, p. 19
13	Ginaxangiik	Volume IV, p. 1
14	Gits'iis	Volume IV, p. 19
15	Gitnadoiks	Volume IV, p. 41
16	Gitlaan	Volume IV, p. 51
20	Gitluts'aaw	Volume V, p. 3