SETTLEMENT, TRADE
AND
SOCIAL RANKING
AT
KITWANGA, B.C.

By

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Abstract

This thesis examines the influence of indirect European contact upon Native social ranking and settlement systems at the Kitwanga Hill Fort and throughout the Upper Skeena Valley region of northern British Columbia during the Protohistoric Period (AD 1700-1830). Ethnographically, this is the territory of the Gitksan First Nation and falls within the Northwest Coast culture area.

Diachronic spatial analyses of material excavated at Kitwanga and the distribution of archaeological sites in the region are integrated with historical documents and Native oral traditions relating to inter-group interaction and settlement. Based on these analyses, I argue that competition for trade goods between Native groups prior to direct European contact contributed to warfare, population movement and amalgamation, an increase in sedentism, particularly near trade routes, cultural borrowing and a growth and elaboration of socio-economic differences between community members. I argue that these processes led to the late and widespread appearance on the Upper Skeena of the Northwest Coast culture pattern - particularly its settlement system and elaborate social differentiation.

This thesis contributes to our understanding of the culture history of the Skeena, and the greater Northwest Coast culture area, which is often depicted as static during late prehistoric and early historic times. It also contributes to the broader literature on culture contact by demonstrating that serious cultural changes can occur prior to direct European contact and that they are contingent upon the dynamics of indigenous cultures.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Introduction to Problem

This thesis examines the influence of indirect European contact upon social ranking and settlement patterns at the Kitwanga Hill Fort, and throughout the Upper Skeena Valley region during the protohistoric period (AD 1700-1830). Ethnographically, this is the territory of the Gitksan First Nation and is on the north eastern edge of the Northwest Coast culture area (Figure 1). The approach taken integrates analysis of archaeological materials from Parks Canada excavations at Kitwanga, regional site inventory files, and original survey of the Kitwanga Valley with historical documents and Native oral traditions. The primary goal of the thesis is to address a problem in regional culture history: whether or not the introduction of European trade heightened social competition and contributed to the spread of the Northwest Coast culture pattern in the Upper Skeena region. Beyond this, I hope to make a contribution both to the broader studies of culture contact and 'the development of cultural complexity' among Northwest Coast cultures.

Culture Contact Studies

Themes and Goals

The study of contact between the indigenous cultures of the Americas and Europeans has long had an important position in anthropology. As early as

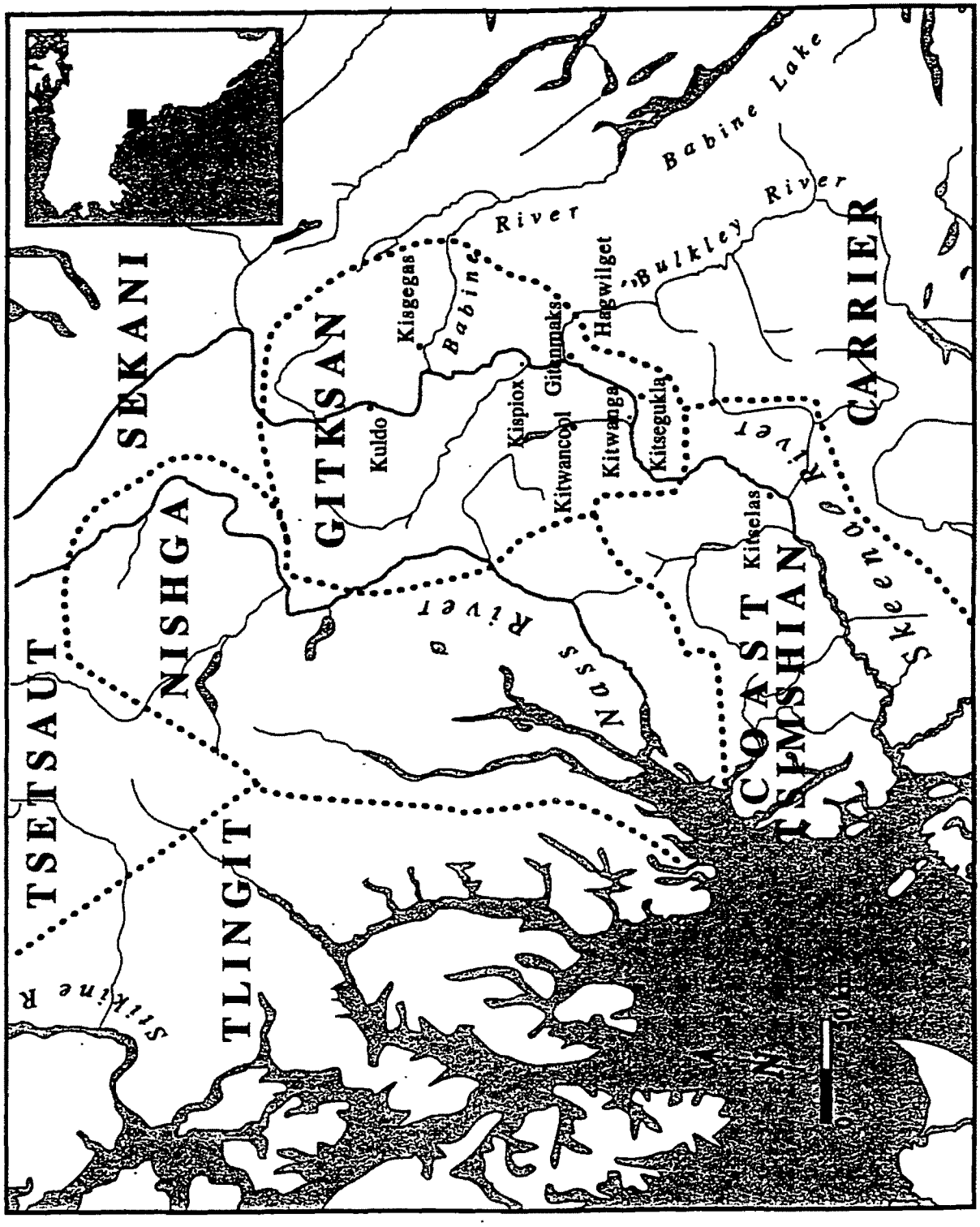

Figure 1. Map of Ethnic Borders and Gitksan Villages in the Mid-19th Century.

1896 Mooney produced a study of how the pressures of colonialism contributed to the creation of new cultural institutions for survival on the Plains - the Ghost Dance (Mooney 1896). However, the prevailing goal of anthropology at that time, as advocated by Franz Boas and his students, was the reconstruction of indigenous cultures on the eve of European contact.

By the 1930s, it was widely realized that the 'traditional' cultures of North America were being quickly changed by various pressures of colonialism, and the database of ethnography was disappearing (Trigger 1985:165). The process of post-contact change itself and the resultant cultural forms became the subjects of enquiry, and 'acculturation' studies were born (Redfield et al. 1936; Barnett et. al 1954; Linton 1940). Historical documents were used in these studies to identify contact pressures, along with ethnographic observation to delineate cultural change. A role for archaeology was proposed in establishing the prehistoric context for contact (Barnett et. al 1954:999), and tracing changes not recorded in documents (Ramenofsky 1991:444), but this was rarely attempted.

Acculturation studies attempted for several decades to define the general forms, stages and governing laws of cultural change, with limited success, before falling out of general favour. Edward Spicer was prominent in attempts to systematize and predict the forms and sequences of post-contact cultural change, but became resigned to the impossibility of doing so. Spicer (1961:542) blamed the uneven treatment of acculturation in the literature, and the immense number of variables required to establish a universal methodology. The subsequent anthropological post-mortem of the failure of acculturation studies has stressed that culture change is a natural, creative and continuous process,

that the form it takes depends on its historical context and it is neither linear nor formulaic (Roseberry 1989; Wolf 1982; Sider 1987). Some archaeologists, however, have continued the effort to define and describe the stages of acculturation (White 1974; Farnsworth 1992).

In the 1950s, the goal of contact period studies expanded from general acculturation studies to include tracing the histories of specific ethnic groups, largely towards resolving land claims, and the methodology, or special sub-field of ethnohistory emerged (Ramenofsky 1991:441). 'Ethnohistory uses written sources of information and oral traditions to study the history of nonliterate peoples' (Trigger 1985:164). Since its inception ethnohistory has become much more problem oriented, producing general studies of cultural processes on a broad scale (Wolf 1982); historical narratives of particular cultures (Trigger 1985); critical evaluations and syntheses of the raw data of history and ethnography at several levels (Brettel 1986); as well as analyses of the events, motives and outcomes of contact for both Europeans and Natives (Trigger 1983:417).

While ethnohistory was taking form, historical archaeology, the archaeology of the historic period, was broadened from its focus on colonial European contexts to include contact settings, such as trading posts and Native settlements (Lightfoot 1995:203). Although ethnohistory and historical archaeology shared an overlap in subject matter, the two remained epistemologically separate - ethnohistory being closely allied with the theory and goals of anthropology, and historical archaeology with those of history. Only recently have attempts been made to more closely integrate the two (Lightfoot 1995; Deagan 1990).

Ethnohistory and historical archaeology have since come to contribute to our understanding of how colonialism brought various Old World ethnic groups into contact with Native American cultures and environments to form new entities such as African-American, Asian-American, Hispanic-American, Euro-American, Metis and Creole, and addresses issues of interest to a wide range of social scientists (Lightfoot 1995; McGuire and Villalpando 1989:160; Thomas 1989:8; Deagan 1990:298). Among these are the issues of power and hegemony.

Both anthropologists and historical archaeologists have begun to recognize their role in creating a dominant Euro-American national identity through their representations of history and ethnography, and in the process marginalizing other peoples (Brow 1990; Geertz 1988; Clifford 1988; Deagan 1991; Ferguson 1992). This has led to attempts to deconstruct the academic process through self-examination of the relationship and biases between the academic and the subjects of study (Friedman 1992; Clifford 1988). In culture contact studies this is a complicated process involving examining the roles and baggage of the original European observers in the creation of the hegemony (Simmons 1988); of Natives in creating, maintaining and recreating their own traditions (Trigger 1982); and of contemporary academics in representing both sides today (Sahlins 1995). The entire process of deconstruction can be narcissistic, as it still leaves the academic as authority, and very often, in opposition to contemporary Native viewpoints (Friedman 1992). At its best, it has lent to an appreciation of how culture contact, and the study of contact processes, have contributed to the fabric of contemporary North American society.

A spin-off of the analysis of hegemony and the back-lash against acculturation studies has been a recognition of the resiliency of aboriginal cultures and their ability to recreate themselves (Sider 1987:11; Miller et. al 1989:23). In many cases, the programs of assimilation instilled by colonial governments, such as reservations, missions, education and labour economies, in themselves treat Natives as something different, or 'other', keep them at a distance from the dominant society, and thus allow them to continue to exercise autonomy (Sider 1987:11;17). The 'artificial' communities created by these policies (e.g., reserves, bands) can serve as focal points around which histories and traditions are invented, interpreted and legitimized (Hobsbawm 1983:9; Roseberry 1989:76).

A cumulative result of contact period study has been a realization that cultures cannot be studied and described as though they are bounded and static, because interaction in historic and prehistoric contexts has contributed to a wide range of complex and contingent cultural forms and histories (Wolf 1982; Trigger 1989:330; McGuire and Villalpando 1989:160). In archaeology, Trigger (1989:376) feels this has contributed to the development of a more 'humanistic' discipline - one that does not reduce human behaviour to a set of natural laws. Trigger and others have claimed that the continued study of problems in culture contact will serve to integrate the discipline by breaking down dichotomies between prehistory, ethnohistory and history to produce 'Native History' (Trigger 1983), 'Historical Anthropology' (Kirch 1992:26), or an 'Integrated Approach' (Lightfoot 1995:211).

Protohistory in Historical Context

The recent Columbian Quincentennial saw a resurgence of culture contact studies and further exploration of the theoretical links between history, ethnohistory and archaeology (e.g., Thomas 1991; Wilson and Rogers 1993). Two related issues have emerged from this discourse which are of particular importance to this thesis. First, the Native societies described by the first European explorers or ethnographers in much of North America were already transformed through interaction with neighbouring groups, who passed along European influences such as disease, new cultural forms and items. This phase of indirect contact is usually referred to as 'protohistory'. Secondly, current theory stresses that understanding the effects of contact requires consideration of the precontact cultural milieu, and long-term patterns of change (Wolf 1982; Sahlins 1981).

Important cultural changes are proposed to have occurred as a ripple effect in many areas during the protohistoric period. Various authors have proposed that epidemic disease quickly spread across North America, causing a demographic collapse with consequences for the organization of labour, economic stability and household organization (Lycett 1989:120); population density and level of political integration (McGuire and Villalpando 1989:173); and economic specialization and spiritual leadership (Dobyns 1991:552-557). Disease is also proposed to have caused the early extinction of entire cultures (Ramenofsky 1987:174), and the migration and amalgamation of others to form new entities (Ramsden 1977). New trade relationships resulting from a distant European presence have been proposed to have realigned traditional economies, internal and external power relationships, and contributed to

militarism and social stratification (Spielmann 1989). Increased intertribal borrowing and diffusion has also been proposed, with effects upon architecture, crafts, ceremonialism and subsistence (Lightfoot 1995:201). In addition, alien plants and animals (such as the horse), quickly spread, with unexpected results upon indigenous environments and economies (Lightfoot 1995:200; Trigger 1989:335).

Protohistoric period change is usually argued to have serious implications for how the ethnographic record is used in archaeology (Trigger 1981; Wobst 1978). The common archaeological practice of uncritically using the earliest ethnohistoric description of a culture (the ethnographic present) as a source of analogy for interpreting aspects of prehistoric cultures, or entire suites of behaviour generally applicable to cultures of a similar nature, has been criticized as 'ahistorical', assuming extreme conservatism in behaviour (Trigger 1989:334), as well as 'distorting', or obscuring possible precontact variability (Dunnell 1991). Equally important, protohistoric events had a contingent effect upon the eventual outcome of the later contact era (McGuire and Villalpando 1989:160; Trigger 1985).

Although protohistoric change is often hypothesised to have occurred, the nature, and even demonstration of such change is usually vague, because direct written observations are lacking. The potential for archaeology to fill in this gap between the prehistoric and historic periods has been often described (Trigger 1981; Ramenofsky 1991), but rarely attempted.

Archaeology's utility in this regard relates to the second issue identified above - that of examining contact in the context of long-term history. A common approach to culture contact\acculturation studies, is to use the earliest

descriptions of a culture to establish a 'baseline' from which subsequent change can be measured (Barnett et. al 1954; Spielmann 1989). This creates the impression that Native cultures are static prior to, and passive during European contact (Wolf 1982). Archaeology is often proposed, and sometimes utilized, as a means of placing change within the context of a reconstructed precontact culture (Trigger 1985; Bradley 1987). However, if archaeology is to do more than contribute to the description of an older, equally static baseline, a more dynamic theory of prehistory and history is required. Towards this end, various aspects of historical theory, particularly as derived from the *Annales* school of thought, are beginning to be used in archaeological studies of culture contact.

Historical theory, as used in archaeology, stresses that the form of cultural change is conditioned by pre-existing cultural and environmental structures, and is contingent upon the playing out of a particular sequence of events (Braudel 1980; Kirch 1992). In contact contexts, this means examining how particular sequences of events, which can be both pressures and opportunities for change, lead to the adoption, modification and creation of new cultural traits in a manner that fits, and often reshapes underlying structures (Lightfoot 1995:206; Kirch 1992:3; Duke 1992). Not only is a broad temporal focus used in historical theory to reconstruct events and structures, but a broad geographic focus is taken as well, to understand local events as part of broader interaction spheres (Trigger 1989:331), or 'world history' (Kirch 1992:3).

This approach holds the potential of helping to place the post-contact era into long-term cultural and historical perspective (Duke 1992; Ramenofsky 1991; Kirch 1992), and countering the tendency to think of contact as initiating change in static cultures. Instead, protohistoric and historic period developments are

seen as part of a continuum of history, in which Native people are not passive, bounded, or timeless.

Theoretical Context of Thesis

For the purpose of this thesis I have adopted many of the elements of current theory on culture contact. This is in large part a case study of indirect contact in the protohistoric period. It is both motivated by and has implications for how the ethnographic record is used for our understanding of this and earlier periods. It is not, however, intended as a deconstruction of the ethnographic present. Rather, the purpose is to address a specific problem in interpretation of the cultural history of the Skeena Valley, as outlined below.

In as much as the data permit, an attempt is made to place the protohistoric period into a long-term historical perspective, and a position is adopted that considers Native peoples as active agents in initiating and shaping change. Within this theoretical framework various sources of archaeological and ethnohistoric data are critically evaluated and integrated. It is not, however, claimed to be 'Native History', as the Gitksan have their own very vibrant understanding and narrative of history (Monet and Wilson 1992; Gisday Wa and Delgam Uukw 1992).

European Contact and Northwest Coast Ethnography

Despite the growing recognition in most regions of North America of protohistoric change, much of Northwest Coast archaeology and ethnohistory assumes that extreme cultural continuity extends from the time of earliest ethnographic observation, several centuries, or millennia into prehistory.

Relative to the rest of North America, European contact on the Northwest Coast was recent (the late eighteenth century in most regions), and was initially sporadic. In addition, many of the early fur traders and explorers left detailed descriptions of various aspects of aboriginal life and collected items of material culture (Gunther 1972). The pervasive interpretation of these early records is that contact produced no significant cultural disruptions prior to widespread efforts at colonization and missionizing in the late nineteenth century (Fisher 1978). Formal ethnographic research began very soon after, in the 1880s (Suttles and Jonaitis 1990:73; Jacknis 1991:94). Consequently, many archaeologists uncritically accept the ethnographic record and historical documents as being representative of a pristine past, and find it to be a compelling source of research questions, and an irrefutable source of inference for interpretation (Ames 1991:937).

Anthropologists, however, have recently begun to examine critically the biases in the ethnographic and historical records of the Northwest Coast. Early ethnographies were conducted in the Boasian tradition of reconstructing aboriginal cultures on the eve of contact from material culture and the memories and oral traditions of aged informants (Jacknis 1991:99). Memories are faulty, and the interview process involved several interpretive filters. They were often conducted by Native field workers without the ethnographer's presence, and were published without critical consideration of the context under which the information was gathered (Cannizzo 1983). Boas's employees George Hunt and William Tate, and Marius Barbeau's informant William Beynon are the most notable Native field workers. Beynon also worked for Drucker, Boas and Garfield (MacDonald and Cove 1987:iv). This emphasis on a limited number of

good informants by several ethnographers, potentially obscures variability and perpetuates a limited view. It has also been noted that the ethnographic record is heavily biased towards the activities of the wealthy (Ray 1966), further obscuring variability in behaviour.

Mid-twentieth century ethnographies expanded from cultural reconstruction to attempt the functional explanation of particular cultural forms, especially the potlatch (Suttles 1960; Codere 1956). Many of these (e.g., Drucker 1955; Barnett 1955; Codere 1961) relied heavily upon historical documents and earlier ethnographies, and tend to perpetuate biases, although they do attempt a more exacting account of acculturative change. Efforts to derive ethnographic data from early historical documents are also fraught with difficulties, requiring careful attention to the biases, motives and skills of observation of the writer in a manner which was usually beyond the scope of the ethnography.

Modern ethnographers are beginning to identify the degree of distortion in the ethnographic record and variation in cultural pattern (Canizzo 1983; McDonald 1984). Most importantly for this thesis, the emphasis on reconstructing the point in time just prior to European contact has ignored the possibility that acculturative change affected the patterns recalled and observed. Even if a reconstruction of the point of contact is accurate, important changes may have occurred in the phase of indirect contact, making the delineation of the nature of continuity and change in the protohistoric period all the more imperative. Some archaeologists (Ford 1989; Ames 1991; Moss and Erlandson 1995) are taking note of this, and asserting that the applicability of the ethnographic record to archaeology has to be tested, and variability explored.

Studies which take a long-term perspective from prehistoric through to ethnographic times, however, remain few in number (Acheson 1995; Marshall 1993; Prince 1992).

The Influence of Ethnography on Northwest Coast Archaeology

The development of Northwest Coast archaeology has been closely allied with the ethnographic goal of cultural reconstruction. The first professional archaeologist in the area was Harlan Smith, who worked with Boas' Jesup North Pacific Expedition (1897-1903) and later with the Geological Survey of Canada (1911-1920s) tracing the geographical distribution of biological and material culture traits (Carlson 1990:108). The archaeological definition of geo-cultural boundaries continued in the 1930s (Drucker 1943). In the 1940s and 1950s, temporal depth was added to geographical distribution analysis to construct developmental sequences (Carlson 1990:108-109). The explicit concern of Northwest Coast archaeology then became to trace specific ethnic groups back in time by investigating multi-component sites within and straddling historic tribal boundaries (the direct historic approach) (DeLaguna 1960). In the 1960s and 1970s, several large archaeological projects still had this as a goal (Hobler 1970; MacDonald and Inglis 1981; Haggarty 1982; Mitchell 1981). All of this research takes the ethnographic record as its starting point, interprets the prehistoric archaeological record with reference to that same ethnographic record, and is in a sense, self-fulfilling. A general picture has been produced from this research of long-term ethnic continuity, with traits reminiscent of the ethnographic cultures appearing as early as 4000 BP in places (Carlson 1991).

The last two decades of Northwest Coast archaeology have been dominated by economic and paleo-ecological research, loosely unified by the broad goal of explaining or modelling the origins of cultural complexity. This phase of research is consistent with the broader paradigm of neo-evolutionary or processual archaeology in North America (Trigger 1989). This research takes a generalized ethnographic reconstruction of cultural traits for the entire culture area, the 'Developed Northwest Coast Culture Pattern', as its starting point. The Developed Northwest Coast Culture Pattern is typified by a high degree of sedentism with large multi-family households and split plank dwellings arranged in permanent villages; a hunting-fishing-gathering economy with an emphasis on salmon procurement and storage; hereditary positions of status with resource ownership and marked differences in wealth; ritualized exchange and elaborate crest art and mythology (Matson and Coupland 1995:6). This culture pattern, particularly the social inequities in power, privilege and wealth between ranked classes, is contrasted with that of 'typical' egalitarian hunter-gatherer societies in cross-cultural contexts (Matson and Coupland 1995:4-5).

The origin of social inequality (also termed 'complexity') has been cited as the fundamental question in Northwest Coast prehistory (Coupland 1988a:211). Archaeological research seeks to identify its prehistoric ecological, social, or economic causal underpinnings (Croes and Hackenberger 1988; Schalk 1977; Burley 1980), and/or to model its evolution in a general sense (Matson 1992; Coupland 1988a; Ames 1985; Maschner 1991). Even archaeologists who do not explicitly follow an evolutionary model seek to find the material correlates of the Northwest Coast culture pattern, and particularly status differentiation, in prehistory (Carlson 1991; Moss and Erlandson 1992; Moss et. al 1990;

MacDonald and Inglis 1981). To them, the perceived uniqueness and elaborateness of the Northwest Coast status system among hunter-gatherers, along with the rich written detail of potlatching and the prerogatives of status in ethnographies, make its origins a compelling topic.

Archaeologists working in other maritime hunter-gatherer contexts, particularly post-Pleistocene Europe and Formative Peru, have used the ethnographic pattern of the Northwest Coast as a functional model for 'affluent' foragers (Rowley Conwy 1983; Henry 1989; Yesner 1980). Hayden (1990) feels the ethnographic Northwest Coast may be representative of a general evolutionary stage preceding complex agriculturalists. According to Matson and Coupland (1995:8) then, 'the development of the Northwest Coast Pattern should give us insight on the origins of human inequity and social complexity, and perhaps to the development of agriculture', and is therefore, of general importance to archaeology. Adams (1987:67) suggests that the recognition of complex hunter-gatherers in Northern Europe, along with increasing speculation that typical 'egalitarian' hunter-gatherers are more complex than originally thought, (e.g., the Australian Aborigines), or else recently marginalized (e.g., the !Kung), indicates that the Northwest Coast Pattern is even less unusual, and it is important to understand the ecological and historical conditions fostering its development and maintenance.

The Problem: The Influence of Indirect Contact on the Upper Skeena

The Gitksan of the Upper Skeena Valley are one of the few Northwest Coast groups that some anthropologists suggest experienced significant cultural change in the protohistoric period (AD 1700-1830). The Gitksan are one of

three ethnic subdivisions of the Penutian speaking Tsimshian people: the other two are Nisga'a and Coast Tsimshian. The Gitksan and Nisga'a practised a river oriented version of the Northwest Coast culture pattern. Historical Gitksan territory is on the Upper Skeena and its tributaries above Kitselas Canyon (Figure 1). At the time of contact, the headwaters of the tributaries to the north and east were occupied by Athapaskan speaking, mobile hunter-gatherers (the Carrier to the east and the Tsetsaut, Tahltan and Sekani to the north). Downstream, Gitksan territory bordered on that of the Kitselas and Kitsumkalum groups of the Coast Tsimshian.

Early ethnographers noted an incipient version of the Northwest Coast pattern among the Carrier, including matrilineal phratries and clans with associated privately owned resource territories, ranks, crests and potlatches (Kobrinsky 1977:201). Missionary and historian A.G. Morice provided the first ethnographic description of the Carrier, and proposed that their social organization reflected recent borrowing from the Coast Tsimshian and Gitksan. His reasoning was that Carrier potlatches were less elaborate than those of the Tsimshian and the ceremonial lexicon of the Carrier included poorly pronounced Tsimshian words for titles, social groups, songs and crests (Kobrinsky 1977:206).

In the 1940s, studies of the Bulkley River (Jenness 1943) and Stuart Lake Carrier (Steward 1972) further suggested the diffusion of coastal traits to the interior. Jenness (1943:478, 584) noted that the distribution of rank-associated traits declined to the east and south of the Bulkley, and proposed that they diffused from the west through intensive trade in furs and European goods with Gitksan and Tsimshian middlemen in the coastal fur trade. Steward (1972) also

suggested that the initial fur trade provided the impetus and wealth for the spread of the 'moiety-potlatch' system to the Carrier, but stressed that ecological factors both enabled and set cultural and geographical limits on the extent of the diffusion. The Carrier of the Pacific drainages as far as Stuart Lake were able to adopt the coastal system because they had access to salmon resources that could be stored and permit a high degree of sedentism, but salmon was not as abundant or reliable as in the lower reaches of the drainage, which limited the scale of stratification. Northern Athapaskans occupying the Mackenzie Basin were unable to sustain a system of social stratification at all: the Sekani experimented with potlatching and ranked titles, but failed because they lacked the salmon resource base (Steward 1972:176).

Subsequent anthropologists have studied the timing and social mechanisms involved in the spread of cultural complexity up the Skeena to the interior from the perspective of comparative ethnography. Kobrinsky feels that among the Bulkley River (Wetsuweten) and Babine Carrier, ranked matrilineal corporate groups (crests) evolved from an ancient system of bands/septs as a means of regulating access to prized fur trapping areas which became important in the protohistoric period when interaction with the Tsimshian and Gitksan increased (Kobrinsky 1977:207-208). Rubel and Rosman (1983) stress that heightened inter-group exchange in the fur trade brought new wealth to the Carrier, which permitted the elaboration of an indigenous big man type achieved prestige system to a rank system of hereditary titles, borrowed from the Coast Tsimshian. They argue that the borrowing was possible because northern Northwest Coast and Athapaskan societies shared a basic prototypic form, coastal societies having themselves evolved permanent matrilineages and

hereditary statuses through manipulation of the distribution of wealth by dynamic big men (Rubel and Rosman 1983:21-23).

Bishop (1983, 1987) agrees that the Carrier rank system derives from a prototype shared with the Coast Tsimshian and that they followed a similar path towards developing it, but argues that control of exchange, rather than merely an abundance of wealth, was the key. On the coast he argues that competition for control of exchange and differential access to exotic goods and hence hereditary positions of status, are in evidence 2500 years ago at Prince Rupert Harbour (Bishop 1987:74). This period will be reviewed in more detail in chapter two. For the interior, Bishop (1987:75-76) presents evidence that the Carrier had incipient ranking with competitive feasting by 1800, and argues it became formalized as Carrier nobles adopted the emblems, paraphernalia and titles of high ranking Tsimshian trading partners to avoid appearing inferior and exerted exclusive rights to trade and resource areas (e.g., beaver lodges). 'Participation in and control of exchange networks became the basis for social differentiation. While titles were initially achieved through control of prestige resources and also through limited control over labor for production, these became symbolically ascribed within preexisting matrilineages' (Bishop 1987:79).

Clearly, the development of social ranking among the Carrier is depicted as being influenced by diffusion of trade items and cultural traits up the Skeena through the Coast Tsimshian and Gitksan. There are suggestions that the social forms of the Gitksan were also affected by this interaction. Marius Barbeau (1929) compiled the origin myths associated with Gitksan totem poles and concluded that Gitksan society was a recent amalgamation of coastal people

who moved up the Nass and Skeena valleys, and interior people who moved down these same corridors.

Subsequently, Adams (1973) argued that the Gitksan are descended from a 'Tsimshianized' interior Athapaskan society. 'Gitksan society probably represents a gradual extension of Coast Tsimshian and Nass social forms to include upriver groups who were in all likelihood Athapaskan semi-nomadic groups similar to the Stikine and Tsetsaut peoples' (Adams 1973:22). Unpublished linguistic evidence from Bruce Rigsby was cited to date the upriver movement to the last 1000 years (Adams 1973:22). Adams' own ethnographic research on the population and resource dynamics of the Gitksan potlatch was used to explain the mechanism for the spread of the Tsimshian social system. He argued that lineages, which own hereditary positions of status and resource territories, naturally fluctuate in size due to variability in birth and death rates, and that one means of maintaining their numbers is to adopt 'outsiders' or 'Carriers' to fill in lower statuses and help to accumulate resources (Adams 1973:36, 50). Ames (1979a) built upon Adams' theory, arguing that the Northwest Coast system spread up the Skeena through a process of population growth and fissioning into new territories to fulfil resource needs, until encountering Athapaskans. At this point individuals and small groups of outsiders were incorporated into Tsimshian lineages to maintain optimal sizes and economic efficiency (Ames 1979a:234, 236). According to Ames (1979a:233) this process of 'enculteration' was accelerated by competition for European trade goods and access to sources of furs in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which provided upriver populations with the wealth needed to adopt the Northwest Coast system directly.

MacDonald (1984a, 1989) has elaborated on this competition and its effects in the Skeena Valley during the protohistoric period. MacDonald's perspective is based primarily on the Tsimshian-Gitksan oral traditions collected by Barbeau and Beynon and his own informants, plus his excavations in Prince Rupert Harbour (MacDonald 1984a:78). He argued for wide scale change in terms of ethnic boundaries and warfare over control of trade, but did not go so far as to suggest it introduced cultural complexity to the Gitksan.

In MacDonald's view, a complex network of intertribal trade, warfare and ranked societies was in place on the North Coast more than 2000 years ago, and remained 'relatively stable' until the early 1700s (MacDonald 1984a:79, 1987:viii). This period will be further discussed in chapter two. Coinciding with the advent of the Russian fur trade in Alaska in the early 1700s, there was a general northward expansion of Tsimshian peoples - the Coast Tsimshian displacing the Tlingit from the mouths of the Nass and Skeena, and the Gitksan displacing Athapaskans from the Upper Nass and Skeena - to attain greater access to the Alaskan trade routes (MacDonald 1984a:79-80). Intensive competition arose between chiefs over the new source of wealth (especially metal weapons and guns) leading to an endemic state of warfare centred on efforts to control access to an ancient network of intertribal trade routes - referred to as 'grease trails' (MacDonald 1984a:78-80). From the oral narratives, MacDonald (1984a:78) 'culled the names and locations' of a number of forts built by rival chiefs at important nodes along the trade routes to defend their trade resources and exact tribute from those trafficking along it. He proposed a significant change in the nature of trade and warfare, from a situation in which access to eulachan grease trading trails was free and forceful

acquisition of foreign territories a 'sacrilege', to one in which trade routes were privately owned and tightly controlled, and territory was taken militarily (MacDonald 1984:78;80). 'Petty chiefs' rose in wealth and influence in this manner, but power on the Skeena was eventually consolidated militarily by a series of Coast Tsimshian chiefs named Legaic, who came to monopolize trade from the 1830s-1890s (MacDonald 1984a:79, 1987:ix). MacDonald's argument thus describes an increase in the fortunes and power of interior chiefs and a geographic spread of territories, and implies an increase in societal complexity, but not wholesale adoption of an alien social structure.

Despite the literature on settlement and socio-economic change in the Skeena drainage during the protohistoric and historic fur trade, many anthropological studies continue to assume extreme stability in cultural patterns and boundaries, from historic to remote prehistoric times (Cove 1982; Albright 1987; Ives 1987; Harris 1995). Ives (1987:212) even goes as far as suggesting that cultural complexity developed prehistorically in the interior first, related to the ease with which salmon resources could be intensively harvested, stored and controlled there, and diffused down the Skeena to the coast through successive movements of populations ancestral to the Haida, Tlingit and Tsimshian.

A significant reordering of social and settlement systems is implied by the discussions of protohistoric change. Generalizing from the discussions of the Carrier, the advent of intertribal trade in furs for European goods is proposed to have brought increased contact between coastal and interior cultures, a significant increase in wealth to the interior and a desire on the part of emerging elites to borrow the Northwest Coast system of managing wealth. The literature

on the Gitksan suggests a variety of processes may have occurred in late prehistory and protohistory, including an upriver movement of Tsimshian people and incorporation of local populations into their social system, and borrowing of Northwest Coast traits by Athapaskans, with European trade leading to violent competition, expansion of local group territories to the upper reaches of the Nass and Skeena, and strict control of trade resources by 'petty chiefs'. Ames argues for an acceleration in the spread of the Tsimshian system to Gitksan territory, while MacDonald implies only a change in emphasis within indigenous social forms.

The two perspectives are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The competition between chiefs MacDonald proposes was probably motivated by their desire to control symbols of power and wealth, and would result in increased social disparities within their own local group and between groups. The strict controls which MacDonald argues grew on access to trade would only be effective if accompanied by a formalized system of status differences and rights. Control of trade in exotics and symbols of material wealth is held to have played a role in formalizing status differences and contributing to cultural complexity in several other cultural and temporal contexts (Feinman 1995; Plog 1995). The actual institutions of rank may well have been adopted through acculturation and borrowing from neighbouring groups in a manner analogous to that proposed for the Carrier. In addition, whether through rapid intertribal acculturation, or military expansion, both MacDonald and Ames propose a geographical spread of Northwest Coast culture to the upper reaches of the Nass and Skeena.

The main differences in the anthropological and archaeological literature on the Skeena are between those professing protohistoric change, and those advocating extreme stability. However, both perspectives are somewhat ahistorical. The arguments for protohistoric change view indirect European contact as setting off a series of changes in previously static cultures, as though they were billiard balls, to use Wolf's analogy (Wolf 1982:6), while the continuity argument is one of stasis despite contact. Regardless of which may be most correct, there is still a lack of a clear, critical narrative of the possible effects and opportunities raised by indirect contact for Native societies of the Upper Skeena.

This thesis considers the implications of the change and stasis models for settlement pattern and social ranking, and attempts to 1) assess whether change occurred in the protohistoric period and on what magnitude, and 2) place this period within a long-term perspective that considers protohistoric events to be contingent not only upon the nature of contact, but also established cultural patterns and Native agency.

Approach

Investigating cultural change in contact contexts requires the creative use of various sources of archaeological and ethnohistoric data to flesh out and cross-check the often sparse or biased information provided by each (Bradley 1987; Netherly 1987), assess how various interconnected cultural institutions were affected (Rogers 1990), place change in long-term cultural perspective, and avoid the segregation of the past between disciplines (Lightfoot 1995). Much of the prior work on the protohistoric Skeena region has been conducted from the perspective of comparative ethnography (Kobrinsky 1977; Rubel and

Rosman 1983), ecological modelling (Ames 1979a), or sparse, uncritical and often incompletely cited reference to documentary sources and recorded oral traditions with occasional assertions of similarity to unpublished prehistoric archaeological data from Prince Rupert Harbour (Bishop 1987; MacDonald 1984a, 1989). The entire scenario of protohistoric change on the Skeena thus remains incompletely demonstrated and tested. The prehistoric and early contact archaeological records of the Skeena remain particularly under-utilized in these arguments. Although MacDonald presented his argument for protohistoric competition in two publications which described his excavations for Parks Canada at the Kitwanga Hill Fort (MacDonald 1984a, 1989), he left his ethnohistoric model and the archaeological record largely unarticulated, probably because neither the archaeological implications, nor analysis of excavated material were completed at the time of publication.

In this thesis, the influence of indirect contact upon social ranking is approached through integration of archaeological excavation and settlement pattern data, historical documents and Native oral traditions. The archaeological focus is on the analysis of spatial variables over time at two scales: 1) the distribution of excavated materials and features within a single community (the Kitwanga Hill Fort), and 2) the distribution of archaeological sites throughout the Upper Skeena Valley.

The rationale behind examining spatial variables on a local scale at Kitwanga is that the ethnographic Gitksan organized space in their houses and villages according to social rank, and suitable material is extant and available for diachronic spatial analysis from MacDonald's excavation of the fort. The spatial dynamics of Gitksan social organization and its implications for this thesis will be

discussed in more detail in chapter two. Briefly stated, the basic socio-economic unit of the Gitksan was a matrilineal household, 'house', whose members usually occupied a multi-family dwelling (Cove 1982:6; Halpin and Seguin 1990:274). The members of each house were ranked and space was allocated accordingly, with the chief's family occupying the rear of the house and the lowest ranking family at the front (Duff 1959:37). Within a village, entire houses were often of differing rank, and were situated relative to one another accordingly (Duff 1959:13). Trade historically was a prerogative of high rank.

The local implications of the protohistoric competition outlined above are an increase in exotic materials, strict restrictions on their distribution, and increased, formalized disparities in the wealth of community members. The alternative is that indirect contact produced little or no change in these regards. Since the Kitwanga Fort is situated at a critical location on the trade routes and figures largely in the oral traditions of trade and warfare, it may preserve a material record of the processes proposed to have been operating in protohistory. My analysis at the local level is therefore focussed on within and between house comparisons over time of rank-associated variables including artifacts (particularly trade goods), fauna and architectural features.

The Kitwanga material is suitable for this analysis because MacDonald's excavation clearly defined and sampled five protohistoric houses and an earlier archaeological component. This permits spatial and temporal comparisons of the excavated materials to be made. For these purposes I conducted first hand observation of the Kitwanga artifacts and analyzed their spatial distribution, while faunal identifications were provided by Rick (n.d.) and I contributed detailed comparisons of their distribution. The description and distribution of

architectural features was derived from MacDonald's excavation report (MacDonald 1989). The methods I used in analysis of the Kitwanga Fort are described further in chapter three.

The regional spatial analysis examines a set of different but related questions and variables. The Northwest Coast settlement system followed by the ethnographic Gitksan is very distinctive. It includes a high degree of sedentism with large, permanent plank house villages and short-term seasonal dispersions of small household groups to special resource extraction sites within well defined local group territories. If arguments for protohistoric change are valid, one could expect not only a rapid spread of the Northwest Coast settlement system to the Upper Skeena, but an orientation of permanent settlements and forts towards critical junctions on trade routes to gain and maintain access to this resource. Therefore, the distributions of prehistoric and contact era sites in the Skeena drainage were compared for signs of the ethnographic settlement system and changes in access to and control of trade routes. The data used in the regional settlement pattern analysis were derived from extant site inventory files and supplemented by my own surface survey of the Kitwanga Valley.

Historic fur trade documents and recorded Gitksan oral traditions were used to assess specific aspects of the regional competition arguments described above. Ethnohistoric evidence was evaluated having bearing on protohistoric trade patterns, intergroup competition, cultural borrowing, population movement, territorial expansion and the degree of cultural complexity and its relationship to European trade on the Upper Skeena.

By asking such different questions of the excavation, settlement pattern and ethnohistoric sources the results are less circular than simply using one to illustrate the other, and a more stringent assessment of early contact processes is produced than is possible with one set of data alone. In addition, the examination of phenomena on such varying temporal and geographical scales is advocated by archaeologists applying historical *Annales* theory to provide an holistic and integrated understanding and narrative of change that can explicate long-term, broad scale trends, as well as local variability and events (Knapp 1992; Duke 1992; Barker 1992). In contact contexts, such an approach permits examination of how regional and extra-regional processes and events are mediated by local structures and histories (Kirch 1992:3; Duke 1992:105; Wilson and Rogers 1993:4). In this case, it is hoped that the result is a less passive historical reconstruction than arguments of diffusion or stasis.

How the various sources of data were integrated is discussed further below.

Organization of Chapters

Chapter two outlines the regional, temporal and cultural background of the study. Included are: a brief discussion of the relevant aspects of the Skeena Valley's geography and environment; a brief introduction to the Gitksan focussing on the spatial aspects of their social organization; a review of Skeena prehistory outlining major cultural changes, especially as regards social ranking; a more detailed outline of indirect contact and a synopsis of its proposed effects.

Chapter 3 introduces the Kitwanga Fort excavations and presents analysis and interpretation of the settlement pattern. Two temporal components

are identified and described. The distribution of artifacts, fauna and archaeological features is analyzed for rank-associated variability within and between houses, and over time. Interpretation focuses on the effects the introduction of European items may have had on control over access to exotic goods and symbols of status.

Chapter four presents the regional settlement pattern and describes how the data were generated, including discussion of extant site inventory files, the surveys that generated them and the methods and rationale behind my survey of the Kitwanga Valley. The distribution of pre-contact and post-contact sites is compared, with particular attention to variables associated with the Northwest Coast settlement strategy and inter-group access to trade routes.

Chapter five presents analysis and interpretation of the ethnohistoric record of regional trade and settlement. The focus is upon assessing the structure of protohistoric trade and competition, and the degree of change in social organization and settlement pattern.

Chapter 6 synthesizes the results of the ethnohistoric and settlement pattern analyses, and evaluates them in the context of the research problem and the wider issues of culture contact and Northwest Coast social ranking.

CHAPTER 2

REGIONAL, TEMPORAL, AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Skeena Valley Geography and Environment

The Skeena is the second longest river in British Columbia. It is approximately 560 km long and drains an area over 38,850 km^2 (Inglis and MacDonald 1979:2). The mouth of the Skeena is near Prince Rupert Harbour, and its headwaters are in the remote northern interior. Together the Skeena and Nass Rivers (immediately to the north) dominate the physiography of the North Coast of British Columbia, providing long corridors to the interior and access to important anadromous fish (salmon and eulachon) and terrestrial resources (Fladmark et al. 1990:229). For the purpose of discussion in this study, I have followed Halpin and Seguin (1990:267) in dividing the Skeena into Upper and Lower segments just above Kitselas Canyon, the first major constriction in the river, about 120 km from the sea (Figure 1). Below Kitselas Canyon the Skeena Valley lies entirely within the Coast Mountain Ranges and coastal biotic zones - primarily the Coastal Western Hemlock Biogeoclimatic zone at low elevation, and the Mountain Hemlock zone at higher elevations - and is the traditional territory of Coast Tsimshian groups (Halpin and Seguin 1990; Province of British Columbia 1989). The climate in the Lower Skeena is dominated by coastal systems with small variation in seasonal temperature, cool summers, mild winters, high annual precipitation and a long frost free season (Inglis and MacDonald 1979:4).

Immediately up-river, the Coast Mountains give way to the Hazelton Mountains, which are similar in height, but not as steep at their bases and have more terrace development (Inglis and MacDonald 1979:2). The influence of Pacific air masses gradually deteriorates and the climate becomes cooler and drier. At Hazelton, nearly 250 km from the mouth of the Skeena, at its junction with the Bulkley River, an interior climate predominates with less rainfall, abrupt seasonal temperature changes and shorter frost free season (Inglis and MacDonald 1979:4). The area 50-100 km upstream from Kitselas Canyon sees a transition from coastal to interior biotic zones (Ketcheson et al. 1991). This is also the traditional boundary between the Gitksan and Coast Tsimshian[1] (MacDonald 1987:xiii). The Coastal Western Hemlock (CWH) biogeoclimatic zone penetrates at low to medium elevation as far upstream as the Kitwanga River, although the Interior Cedar Hemlock (ICH) zone also occurs in this area, and the Mountain Hemlock (MH) zone occurs at higher elevations (Province of BC 1989; Millennia 1995:16). Both the CWH and MH zones are relatively rich economically with a variety of edible berries and plants and habitat for game animals.

Upstream from Kitwanga, the ICH zone predominates in the valley bottoms (Province of BC 1989: Millennia 1995:16). A variety of edible plants and berries are also available in the ICH zone along with large

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[1] Gitksan territory, although disputed with the Nisga'a (Millennia 1995:22; Inglis et al. 1990:290), also includes a portion of the Upper Nass River, above the Kinskuch junction, and the tributaries of the two big rivers are in places closely interdigitated. For these reasons, sites in the Nass drainage are included in my description of the regional settlement pattern (see chapter four). But the Skeena was the main residential focus and trade corridor of the Gitksan, and is therefore the focus of discussion in this chapter.

game animals (Millennia 1995:17). At higher elevations, the Englemann Spruce-Subalpine Fir and Alpine Tundra zones occur. Plant foods generally decrease in abundance and variety as elevation increases, but important game animals can be found, largely on a seasonal basis (Millennia 1995:17).

Throughout the length of the Skeena system, the lakes and waterways themselves provide habitat for all six species of Pacific salmon (including steelhead) and various non-anadromous fish, and water fowl. Ethnographically, and probably prehistorically, salmon were of utmost importance to the aboriginal economy. Although available, they were not equal in abundance, accessibility or value throughout the Skeena. A general decrease in abundance, variety and caloric value of salmon species can be expected as distance from the coast increases (Ames 1979a; Kew 1992). Also available, but decreasing in abundance with distance and crossing of ecozones upstream, is the economically important western red cedar. The western red cedar was extensively used in Northwest Coast technology and material culture, and some feel the development of efficient salmon storage and large sedentary settlements was closely related to its availability (Hebda and Matthews 1984; Carlson 1996:219; Cannon 1998).

North and east of the Skeena, in the Bulkley, Babine and Sustut Valleys, although still in the Pacific watershed, the coastal biogeoclimatic influence is negligible, and the climate is considerably harsher (Province of BC 1989).

The modern ecological character of the Skeena is, of course, not timeless. Glaciers retreated from the Lower Skeena around 10,000 BP, but not from Hazelton until a 'few thousand years later' (Millennia 1995:18; Gottesfeld et al. 1991:1584). Huge marine transgressions occurred with sea waters extending

inland to Terrace, near Kitselas Canyon. Shorelines reached up to 200 m above present before falling to current levels 8000 years ago (Fladmark et al. 1990:229; Gottesfeld et al. 1991). According to Fladmark (1975; Fladmark et al. 1990:230) it was not until shorelines became stable that salmon runs became rich and predictable, and Northwest Coast culture began to develop. Although the timing of shoreline stability is now placed at 8000 BP, rather than the 5000 BP that Fladmark believed, salmon production may not have peaked, at least at Namu on the Central Coast, until 5000 BP (Cannon 1996:28).

The vegetational and climatic history of northern BC is not well known. A pollen core from Seeley Lake, 10 km from Hagwilget Canyon, indicates that 10,000 to 6150 years BP, the climate was warmer and drier than present; 6150-4700 BP it was moist and warmer, but similar to present; and 4700-2200 BP, it was possibly cooler and moister than present (Gottesfeld et al. 1991). After 2200 BP, it was similar to present; western red cedar appeared and steadily increased (Gottesfeld et al. 1991; Millennia 1995:18). The late arrival of cedar may indicate that many aspects of Northwest Coast culture in the Upper Skeena, such as massive architecture, do not have great antiquity (Millennia 1995:19).

Cultural Background

Just as the Upper Skeena lies on the traditional boundary of the Northwest Coast ecologically, Gitksan territory marks the inland extent of the Northwest Coast culture area (Adams 1973:5). While Gitksan is a Tsimshian language, it is much closer in dialect to Nisga'a than to Coast Tsimshian and its sub-division, Southern Tsimshian (Halpin and Seguin 1990:267). The word Gitksan is derived from K'san, meaning 'River of Mists', the Skeena, and Git,

meaning people (Harris 1974:xx). However, as with all of the Tsimshian groups, the household, 'clan' and village, or local group, were the social units people most closely identified with (Halpin and Seguin 1990:267). In the mid-nineteenth century there were seven Gitksan local groups, each with a single winter village from which their group name was derived. In ascending order upstream these were Kitwanga (the Gitwangak people), Kitwancool (the Gitanyow people), Kitseguecla, Gitenmaks, Kispiox, Kisgegas and Kuldo (Figure 1). Each winter village was located on or near the Skeena River at the junction of a major tributary, except for Kitwancool which is up the Kitwanga River. Today, Kisgegas and Kuldo are abandoned.

Villages were typically comprised of two 'sides', or moieties, each of which was made of members belonging to the same 'clan' (Adams 1973:24; Cove 1982:5-6). The Gitksan have a four clan system, also sometimes called phratries or crests: Wolf, Eagle, Frog-Raven and Fireweed (Cove 1982:5-6; Adams 1973:23; Halpin and Seguin 1990:274-275). The sides of a village were comprised of a number of households - called houses or *wilp* - which were the principle socio-economic and territorial units (Cove 1982:6). Adams (1973:23) recognizes a social unit intermediate between house and side called *wilnad'ahl* which owned hunting grounds, but Halpin and Seguin (1990:236) and Cove (1982:6) feel that there were likely no corporate groups larger than the house.

A house was a corporate group whose membership was defined by matrilineal descent. House also referred to the dwelling of the household - a large cedar plank structure with a central fire pit - where adult males resided with their wives and offspring under avunculocal rules of residence (Cove 1982:6). Each house held title to fishing, hunting and gathering territories which were

acquired by ancestors of the house through supernatural encounters with spirits of the land and its animals called *naxnox* (Cove 1982:7). According to Cove (1982:4-5), each house territory corresponded roughly to a salmon spawning stream, including its mountain source, valley and river junction. This provided a house with access to its basic seasonal resource needs.

Although villages were maintained on a permanent basis, resources were spatially and temporally patchy, and household groups moved to places of abundance seasonally within their territories. Ethnographic studies (Adams 1973:7; Cove 1982:4; Ames 1979a:229) state that large permanent villages were situated mainly in the Skeena Valley at or near the confluence of major tributaries which gave them easy access to major salmon runs in summer and fall. Salmon were taken in large quantities from key locations such as canyons, gorges, shallows and the mouths of tributary streams. At such locations households maintained fishing stations, which often included one or more small plank houses or cabins as temporary residences, processing facilities such as smokehouses, and/or temporary caches (K'san 1980:21; Millennia 1995:26). Temporary residences and storage, or processing facilities, were also sometimes maintained at plant gathering locales used in spring and summer, or hunting and trapping camps used periodically through the fall and winter (K'san 1980:21,48; Millennia 1995:26-27). The village was the main residential focus in winter, during which stores were drawn upon. From late February to April, Coast Tsimshian, Nisga'a, Haida, Tlingit and Gitksan households made their way to the mouth of the Nass to catch and process large quantities of eulachon, and to trade (Halpin and Seguin 1990:281; Ames 1979a:227).

The members of Gitksan houses were socially ranked according to the hereditary resource areas and associated names and crests to which they had access. Names and crests recounted and symbolized the powers and territories acquired by ancestors of the house and were passed along in the matrilineal line (Cove 1982:7-9). Halpin and Seguin (1990:276) distinguished four social ranks, or classes, for all Tsimshian groups: 'real people', or chiefly families; 'other people', having names of lesser rank; 'unhealed people', free people without ancestral titles; and slaves. The highest ranking family head was chief of the house and managed its rules of descent, resource use and distribution, trade and surpluses and staged feasts (Halpin and Seguin 1990:271, 274). Most importantly to the Gitksan, chiefs were religious leaders 'who inherited relationships to the supernatural beings encountered by the original holders of their names' (Seguin 1984:xiv; see also Gisday Wa and Delgam Uukw 1992:32-33). Their role as managers of their house's economic affairs, wealth and lineage was part of a continuing obligation to the supernatural.

The allocation of space within a house depended on the rank of individual families. The 'chief and immediate family occupied one or more cubicles at the rear of the house; people of lesser rank had family quarters along the side walls' (Halpin and Seguin 1990:271); and those of lowest rank were at the front (Duff 1959:37).

The size and productivity of house territories within moieties and villages were variable, as were the rank, wealth and population of the houses themselves (Halpin and Seguin 1990:274; Adams 1973:25, 104). According to Duff (1959), the houses of each clan or moiety in a village were situated relative to one another according to rank. Houses were arranged in linear fashion along

the river bank facing the water with the highest ranking house of each village side in the centre (Duff 1959:12-13). In addition, the crests of each house were displayed on frontal totem poles which validated its deed to a territory; and the stories behind them were recounted in oral histories called *adaawk* (Duff 1959; Cove 1982:9-11). Houses lacking extensive territories and histories displayed few, or no crests, and were of low rank (Cove 1982:9). While the houses of clans and villages were ranked, the highest ranking house chief apparently had no authority over the other houses (Halpin and Seguin 1990:276; Duff 1959:12; Cove 1982:6).

As with paleoenvironment, the ethnographic pattern of the Upper Skeena cannot be assumed to be timeless and immutable. It is thus to a critical discussion of Skeena prehistory and cultural sequences as reconstructed from archaeological excavations that I turn next.

Skeena Prehistory

Excavations

The Skeena Valley is a large area and archaeological investigations have been conducted since the 1920s, yet relatively few sites have been excavated and the prehistory of the area remains very sketchy (Figure 2). Harlan Smith conducted limited surface collections at the fortress Gitlaxdzawk, GdTc 1, at Kitselas Canyon in the 1920s (Inglis and MacDonald 1979:10). In 1953 Borden conducted excavations at GdTd 1 at Kitsumkalum Canyon, a tributary of the Lower Skeena (Archer 1987:21). Both of these projects were small scale, largely limited to historic components and only partially reported.

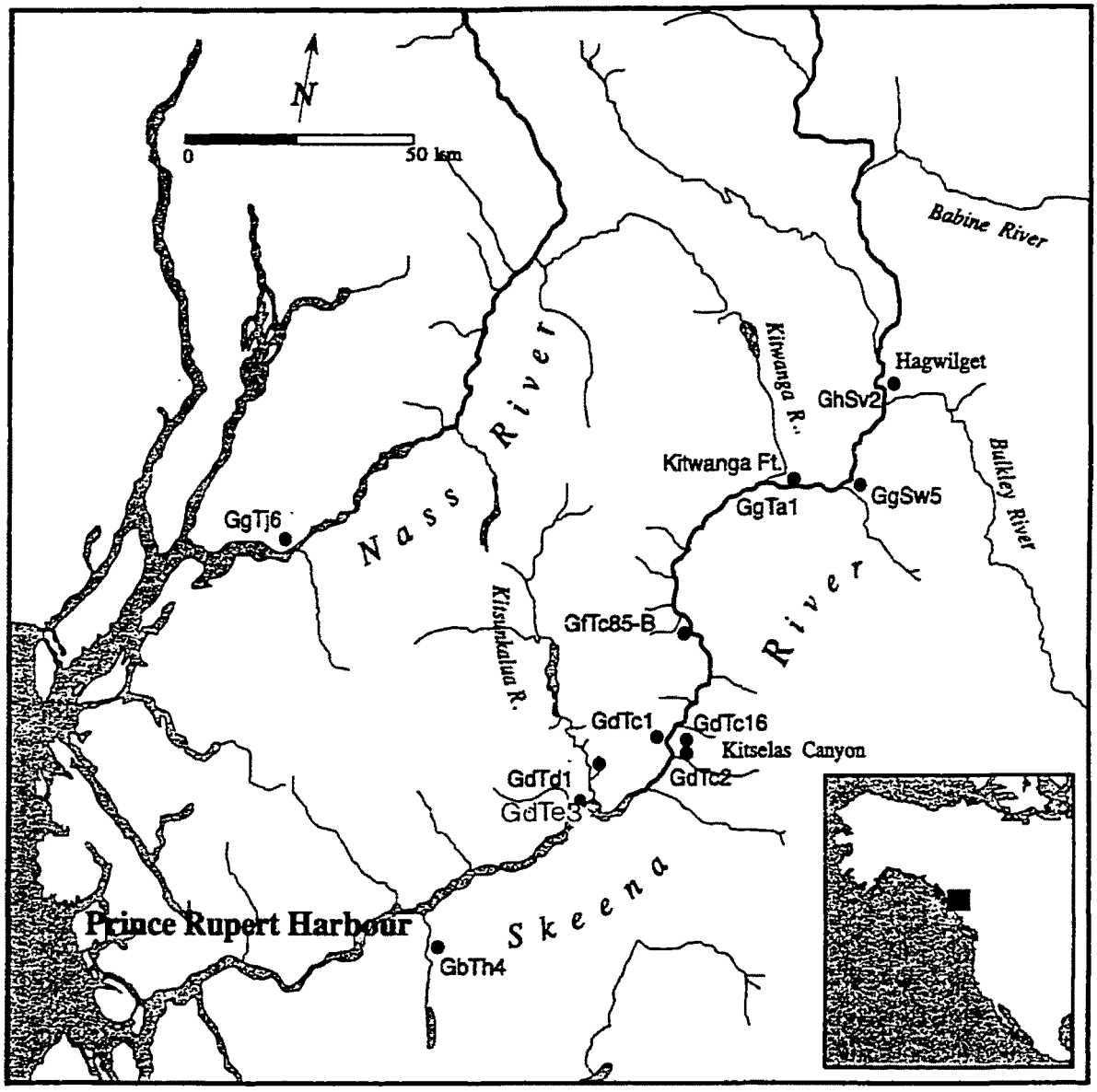

Figure 2. Locations of Excavated Sites in the Skeena Valley.

In 1966, MacDonald began a large-scale, multi-year investigation of the North Coast of British Columbia and Skeena River. The purpose of this project was to reconstruct the cultural sequence of the area and test the stability of historic-period ethnic boundaries (MacDonald and Inglis 1981:37-38). The North Coast project included test excavation at GhSv 2 in Hagwilget Canyon (Figure 2) by MacDonald, and later by Ames (Ames 1979b). At Kitselas Canyon, Gitlaxdzawk was tested (Allaire et al. 1979) and Gitaus (GdTc 2) was excavated (Allaire 1979). But the project's focus was on large scale excavation of several deep shell midden sites in Prince Rupert Harbour (MacDonald and Inglis 1981).

MacDonald continued his investigations in the Skeena Valley in the late 1970s and early 1980s with test excavations at the Kitwanga Hill Fort (GgTa 1) and the Paul Mason site (GdTc 16) at Kitselas Canyon (MacDonald 1983a:24). Coupland continued the work at Paul Mason and reported on the results in detail (Coupland 1988a, 1988b). Archer (1984) conducted test excavations at GdTe 3, a late prehistoric to early historic period village near the confluence of the Kitsumkalum and Skeena rivers. Most recently, excavation projects have been carried out at GbTh 4 in the Gitnadoix tributary of the Lower Skeena (Martindale pers comm), and McNichol Creek in Prince Rupert Harbour (Coupland 1993).

Analysis and reporting on the large quantity of material recovered from many of the sites excavated by the North Coast project is incomplete and ongoing (e.g., Stewart and Stewart 1996). This spotty excavation and reporting has hampered efforts at comprehensive synthesis and understanding of Skeena River prehistory (Coupland 1988a; Matson and Coupland 1995; MacDonald and Inglis 1981). Aside from the Paul Mason site, the best reported prehistoric sites in the Skeena Valley are Hagwilget Canyon GhSv 2, and Gitaus (Allaire 1979).

In addition, unpublished cultural resource management reports record test excavations at Kitseguecla GgSw 5 (Acheson 1977) and Fiddler Creek GfTc 85-B, and large surface collection at GhSv A, the 'Four Mile Creek Site', at Hagwilget Canyon (Albright 1987).

In the following sections I offer a brief critical review of the cultural reconstructions of Kitselas Canyon and the Lower Skeena, and Hagwilget Canyon and the Upper Skeena. Current interpretations of the archaeological sequences in the Skeena tend to see major cultural changes as being the result of either upstream or downstream diffusion, with the two major canyons as either passive or progressive foci. In this sense, interpretations of the prehistory of the Skeena are similar to reconstructions of the later protohistoric and historic periods.

Kitselas Canyon and the Lower Skeena

The prehistory of Kitselas Canyon and the Lower Skeena is held to be closely tied to that of the adjacent coast, and interpretations of the Skeena sequence rely heavily upon analogy with excavated components at Prince Rupert Harbour (e.g., Coupland 1988a, 1988b; Allaire 1979; MacDonald 1987; MacDonald and Inglis 1981; Matson and Coupland 1995). The earliest cultural period known from Prince Rupert Harbour is called Prince Rupert Harbour III (PRH III) and dates to 5000-3500 BP (Table 1; MacDonald and Inglis 1981:42). The earliest component known at Kitselas Canyon is the Bornite Phase, 5000-4300 BP, from the Paul Mason site. The Bornite Phase assemblage is predominantly chipped stone, includes cobble and flake tools, obsidian microblades and a microcore, and lacks faunal remains (Coupland 1996:160).

Table 1. Known Cultural Phases on the North Coast and Skeena River.

Years BP	Prince Rupert Harbour	Kitselas Canyon	Hagwilget Canyon
	Protohistoric	Protohistoric	Protohistoric
500	PRH I	Hiatus	Unnamed
1000			
1500	PRH II	Kleanza	
2000			
2500			
3000		Paul Mason	
3500		Skeena	Skeena
4000	PRH III	Gitaus	
4500		Bornite	
5000			

Coupland (1996:162) interprets the Bornite Phase as representing short-term summer-early fall use of the canyon, primarily for salmon fishing.

The next cultural phase at Kitselas Canyon is the Gitaus Phase, 4300-3600 BP, and is known from the Gitaus and Paul Mason sites. This phase is contemporaneous with PRH III, and the two areas show broad similarities in tool assemblages including an abundance of cobble tools and cortex spalls, the addition of groundstone, occasional leaf shaped projectile points and obsidian from Mount Edzizia (Coupland 1988a:223). Both Coupland (1988b:234) and Allaire (1979:45-46) interpret the Gitaus Phase as representing summer use of

the canyon as a fishing camp by a coastal culture, although once again, faunal remains are absent.

The succeeding Skeena Phase (3600-3200 BP) is represented at the Gitaus site and GhSv 2 at Hagwilget Canyon (Allaire 1979; Ames 1979a:235). The Skeena Phase assemblages are marked by an increase in formed bifaces, well-made lanceolate projectile points, unifaces and retouched flakes (Coupland 1988a:223). Allaire (1979:47) postulated that the Hagwilget and Kitselas Skeena Phase components reflect a down-river migration of a culture of interior origin. Coupland (1988b:121-123) argues that the differences between the Skeena complex and the early part of the PRH II period (3500- 1500 BP) are quantitative; a matter of degree rather than kind. The similarities with Prince Rupert sites suggest to him that Kitselas Canyon was probably used during this period in summer and fall, with an emphasis on land-mammal hunting, by people over-wintering on the coast. The argument against winter occupation is made on the basis of scant faunal indicators of seasonality and a lack of evidence for substantial architecture (Coupland 1988a:223). In reviewing the evidence, however, Ives (1990:340) asks why the coast and not some other interior location should be proposed for winter residence.

The Paul Mason Phase (3200-2700 BP) follows the Skeena Phase and is known from the Paul Mason site. The artifact assemblage shows a decrease in formed chipped stone tools and an increase in groundstone, cobble and flake tools analogous to contemporaneous coastal assemblages (Coupland 1988a:223-225). Coupland (1988a:225) feels the decrease in chipped stone means a decrease in land mammal hunting. Most significantly, the Paul Mason site has the first clear evidence of permanent architecture and village planning in

ten house depressions arranged in two rows dated from 3070 to 3165 BP (Coupland 1988b:135). Based on homogeneity in house size and an absence of artifacts related to status or personal adornment, Coupland (1988a:229) argues for the existence of sedentary, egalitarian corporate social groups.

Sedentism at Kitselas is hypothesized by Coupland (1988a:237) to have been made possible by the development of intensive salmon procurement and storage technologies, and motivated by a desire for emergent corporate groups to ensure access to nearby salmon resources. In Coupland's opinion, seasonal control of the canyon from the coast was sufficient during earlier periods to maintain the rights to fish and hunt there (Coupland 1988a:237). Ives (1990:340), however, feels that the salmon storage and processing technology, supposedly required before sedentism was possible, was not difficult to develop and may not have been absent earlier. Indeed, Cannon (1991) has demonstrated that salmon were intensively harvested, and probably stored for over-wintering at Namu on the Central Coast of British Columbia 6000 years ago. Ives (1990:340) further suggests that residential and political control of the canyon may have become more important to a coastal culture if an interior population had begun to migrate into the area, as Allaire proposed for the Skeena Phase. Regardless of the motives for the establishment of sedentary settlement, or the geographic origins of the population involved, the first clear evidence for permanent residence at Kitselas Canyon is the Paul Mason Phase house floors.

The Kleanza Phase (2500-1500 BP) follows the Paul Mason Phase and is represented at the Gitaus site only. The artifact assemblage is similar to the preceding phase with a low frequency of formed chipped stone and large

numbers of groundstone and cobble implements (Coupland 1988a:225). Both Allaire (1979:49) and Coupland (1988a:225-229) argue that social inequality is evident in the Kleanza Phase based on the presence in midden contexts of items, which by ethnographic analogy, may have signified personal status, such as labrets, slate mirrors and daggers, and broad similarities to the contemporaneous PRH II period.

At Prince Rupert Harbour sites, house floor features and rapid shell midden accumulation after 3500 BP are interpreted as evidence of population increase (Fladmark et al. 1990:232; MacDonald and Inglis 1981:45). Portable art (e.g., zoomorphic bone and siltstone), exotic and foreign items (e.g., labrets, nephrite blades, ochre nodules, obsidian, amber and dentalium) are interpreted as evidence of a developing system of trade and rank resembling the ethnographic pattern (MacDonald and Inglis 1981:45, 52; MacDonald 1983b:101; Ames 1985). According to MacDonald (1987:viii), this system encompassed a wide geographic area, including the Queen Charlotte Islands, northern mainland and Nass and Skeena Valleys, that he calls the North Coast Co-Tradition. A large sample of burials was recovered from Prince Rupert Harbour dated 2500-1500 BP which includes the differential occurrence of exotic materials, as well as caches of war clubs, bits of armour, a high incidence of skeletal trauma, trophy heads and a disproportionately large number of males (MacDonald 1983b:101). These graves provide the best, and earliest evidence of social inequalities in the region, and have been used to argue that extensive trade, warfare and social ranking evolved together (MacDonald 1983:102, 1987:viii; Coupland 1989).

In Coupland's model, social differentiation evolved in-situ on the Lower Skeena and North Coast 2500-1500 BP as a consequence of the differential productivity of corporate group territories, and competition in the form of trade and warfare between aspiring elites over labour and resources, which increased their prestige, wealth and following, and validated and created further inequalities (Coupland 1988a:239). Allaire's earlier model suggested that cultural complexity was introduced to Kitselas Canyon through acculturation of an interior population by the Coast Tsimshian.

After 1500 BP there is a gap in dated occupations at Kitselas until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when a fortress (Gitlaxdzawk, GdTc 1) and village (Gitsaex, GdTc 3) were situated at the canyon (Coupland 1988b:241). These two communities are convincingly demonstrated, based on substantial differences in house floor size and associated storage capacity at each site, to have had ranked social organization (Coupland 1988a:232-233). The Northwest Coast pattern of social differentiation is thus clearly in evidence at Kitselas Canyon 300 years ago, and probably as early as 1500 years ago. During the hiatus at Kitselas, the archaeological record at Prince Rupert Harbour (PRH I, 1500-300 BP) indicates a 'fluorescence' of Northwest Coast culture. The full suite of ethnographic-period material culture is in evidence along with architectural features indicative of ranked household and village structure (MacDonald and Inglis 1981:52). Recently, Coupland (1993:57) has argued that the early part of PRH I may have seen significant population movement and village coalescence. The data in support of this impression and their implications for our current understanding of the developmental sequence in Prince Rupert Harbour have not yet been fully published, but Coupland suggests

that large households and multi-lineage villages may not have taken form until this period (Matson and Coupland 1995:280).

Hagwilget Canyon and the Upper Skeena

In the upper portion of the Skeena drainage the most substantial excavated prehistoric deposits are at GhSv 2 in Hagwilget Canyon. Ames placed his excavation units near to MacDonald's and correlated the results of both to define three components (Ames 1979b:205-207):

Zone A includes storage pits, large hearths, fish and animal remains and a diverse lithic assemblage. It is interpreted as a multi-purpose occupation layer with an imprecisely provenienced radio-carbon date of 3500 BP, which Ames feels marks the terminal end of the component. The inception of the component is estimated at 4500 to 5000 BP based on the depth of strata below the dated sample (Ames 1979b:208).

Zone B lacks features and finished tools, but has fauna and lithic detritus, and is interpreted as representing a long period of limited use as a fishing site.

Zone C contains historic refuse and features, and represents the post AD 1820 Wetsuweten (Carrier) occupation of the site.

Coupland (1988b:125) feels that the placement of the Zone A termination date may have been manipulated to fit a model of down-river migration during the Skeena Phase. Regardless of the precise stratigraphic placement of this date, and whether migration occurred, Zone A at Hagwilget is at least 3500 years old, and there are demonstrable similarities to the Skeena Phase at Kitselas Canyon. Coupland (1988b:125) interprets these similarities as representing a similar economic (land mammal hunting and fishing), seasonal

(summer and fall) adaptation in both localities. However, while he argues that the Skeena Phase population at Kitselas Canyon moved to the coast for the winter, he does not indicate where the Hagwilget population moved, or why (Coupland 1988b:126, 235). The storage pits, hearths, fish and animal remains and diverse lithic assemblage at Hagwilget could just as easily be interpreted as representing a year-round occupation, although evidence of a winter dwelling (e.g., large post molds) is lacking. In the absence of detailed faunal analysis, any interpretation of seasonality at GhSv 2 remains equivocal.

Albright surface collected a large Hagwilget Canyon site designated GhSv A, 'Four Mile Creek', which exhibited a diverse artifact assemblage she felt resembled the late Skeena or early Kleanza complex, including a high proportion of cobble and chipped stone tools, as well as groundstone abraders, an axe, an adze and a slate mirror fragment (Albright 1987:53-60). This site is a short distance (1.25 km) from GhSv 2, on the opposite side of the gorge (Albright 1987:27). Albright (1987:60) interprets this assemblage as representing the permanent village that would have been associated with the use of GhSv 2 Zone B as a fishing site. If this is the case, it sheds further doubt on Allaire's Skeena Phase migration model, as there would be no reason to think that the Hagwilget area was abandoned in favour of down-river locations. However, neither GhSv 2 Zone B, nor GhSv A are dated, and they are not demonstrated to have been contemporaneous.

Other artifactual evidence from Hagwilget Canyon includes a cache of 35 stone war clubs collected in 1898 (Duff 1975:116). These items have been loosely dated to 2000 BP based on stylistic similarities to excavated examples from Prince Rupert Harbour (MacDonald 1989:11), and have been taken as

evidence for the existence of the North Coast co-tradition on the Upper Skeena, including warfare and exchange between chieftains (Coupland 1989:208; MacDonald 1987:viii). However, this assertion cannot be supported by reference to firm evidence of other aspects of the developed Northwest Coast Culture pattern at that time.

Prehistoric components on the Upper Skeena outside of Hagwilget Canyon have not been as well defined, and do not seem to represent major settlements. Acheson's excavation at GgSw 5 was conducted in the vicinity of cultural depressions (cache pits) threatened with destruction. A small assemblage of lithics was collected, including what Acheson (1977:11) tentatively identified as two microblades, which he felt could date as early as 4500 BP. Albright (1987:3), however, states that the 'microblades' were misidentified, making the artifact assemblage undiagnostic temporally.

The only remaining excavation of a prehistoric site reported on is a small, square house feature (5m x 5m) at a site near Fiddler Creek that Albright designated GfTc 85-A. Albright (1987:11) conducted a test excavation in the house and collected a carbon sample dated to 1730 $\pm$ 60 BP from the living floor, but no artifacts were recovered.

Discussion of Skeena River Prehistory

It is not my intention here to resolve the differences between Allaire's model of alternating migrations of coastal and interior populations in the Skeena Valley (which Ives [1990:339] supports), and Coupland's model of in-situ, step-like evolution. Interpretations of the Hagwilget Canyon sequence have been made along similar lines: Allaire (1979:47) using the GhSv 2 Zone A material in

support of his model of down-river migration after 3500 BP; Ames (1979b:209) suggesting a sharp decrease in the intensity of use of GhSv 2 at that time; and Albright (1987:60) arguing instead for continuous intensive use and occupation of the canyon. Many of these points of contention, especially as regards the ethnic identity of phases and the motives and causes behind major cultural transitions, probably cannot be resolved with the present evidence. Instead, the above discussion of prehistoric excavated components has been meant to contribute towards a thumb-nail sketch of culture history prior to European contact in order to set the context for the protohistoric period.

The earliest dated human occupation in the Skeena Valley is 5000 BP at Kitselas Canyon. Hagwilget Canyon may have been occupied close to this time, and certainly by 3500 BP. Salmon fishing and hunting were probably important activities in both locations in these early components. Sedentism (i.e., summer, fall and winter occupation) is clearly in evidence at Kitselas Canyon by 3200 BP, and includes plank dwellings. Marked status differences appear to have been lacking at this time. Occupation and use of Hagwilget Canyon around 3500 BP seems to have been substantial, with storage features containing fish and mammal bone, hearths, and a diverse tool assemblage, but clear evidence of sedentism and social organization is lacking. The period 3000-2000 BP is extremely poorly known for the Upper Skeena because dated components are lacking. Site GhSv 2 seems to have been used for limited purposes, probably salmon procurement, and the residential focus of Hagwilget Canyon may have shifted to site GhSv A, although this remains to be proven.

At Kitselas Canyon between 2500 and 1500 BP there is some evidence for a concern with displaying personal status. Certainly there is good evidence

for social inequality represented in the burials at Prince Rupert Harbour during this time, and the Lower Skeena population seems to have participated in a shared evolutionary pattern, or North Coast Co-Tradition (MacDonald 1987:viii; Coupland 1988a). The assertion that this cultural pattern extended to the Upper Skeena at 2000 BP, however, is tenuous. The Prince Rupert Harbour assemblages indicate that trade with the interior was well developed and the Skeena and its tributaries were the most likely trade routes, but trade does not necessitate shared culture. The main evidence for the extension of the North Coast Co-Tradition to the Upper Skeena seems to be the Hagwilget stone club cache, but these clubs are of uncertain origin, not directly dated, and differ from historic Northwest Coast sculpture in style (Duff 1975:116). They do indicate, or rather symbolize, conflict and personal prowess, but not necessarily Northwest Coast style ranked chieftains in-situ on the Upper Skeena. Maschner (1991:929) and Sutherland (1996) have both recently pointed out that in cross-cultural contexts neither warfare nor exotic items are necessarily limited to ranked societies, and they cannot by themselves be asserted to represent rank in prehistoric northern Northwest Coast contexts. The only other archaeological evidence dated to this time on the Upper Skeena is the small 1700 year old house floor at Fiddler Creek, which does not seem to represent a substantial occupation resembling the North Coast Co-Tradition. From 1500 BP to the inception of the protohistoric period (ca. AD 1700) there are no dated excavated components at either Kitselas Canyon, or on the Upper Skeena.

The prehistoric culture history of the Upper Skeena is very sketchy, but elements of the developed Northwest Coast pattern can be seen, including salmon fishing, conflict, trade and lithic technology resembling that of the coast.

However, it is not until the historic period that the full suite of Northwest Coast cultural traits appears fully developed and widespread on the Skeena above Kitselas Canyon.

The Protohistoric and Historic Periods

Outline of European Contacts

The protohistoric period is generally defined as the interval between the appearance of the first European material, biological or ideological introductions and the earliest permanent European occupation or substantial written record in an area (Trigger 1985:116; Swaggerty 1991:476). The dateline for the protohistoric period therefore depends on the region being discussed.

The first recorded European excursions into the far periphery of the Skeena region occurred in 1741 when the Russian mariner Chirikov explored the Aleutian islands and mainland coast of Alaska (DeLaguna 1990a:223). The motive of the Russian expeditions was to acquire sea otter pelts. To this end, a trading post was established on Kodiak Island in 1784 (MacDonald 1989:24). The Russians quickly exhausted otter stocks in the Bering Sea and moved southward, trading with the Tlingit from ships, and sending Aleutian hunters forth to take otters directly from the sea (Emmons 1991:325-326). Baranov established a fort at Yakutat Bay in 1796, which was destroyed by the Eyak in 1805 (DeLaguna 1990b:195). Baranov built a second post at Sitka (Redoubt St Gabriel), directly in Tlingit territory, in 1799. It was destroyed by the Tlingit in 1802; rebuilt by the Russians in 1804 as New Archangel, and served as headquarters for the Russian-American Company from 1808-1867 (DeLaguna 1990a:223). Another Russian post, Fort Dionysius, later named Wrangell, was

built near the mouth of the Stikine River (Figure 3; DeLaguna 1990a:223).

While the Russians approached from the north, Spanish, British and American mariners reached the northern Northwest Coast from the south, some strictly to trade for sea otter pelts, others (i.e., Vancouver) in search of a northwest passage to the orient. Such expeditions were frequent on the Northwest Coast from 1774-1820s and define the maritime fur trade era of the Pacific (Fisher 1978). Some American ships continued to trade on the coast at least until the 1840s (Ogden 1937:48). Maritime fur traders' contacts with Native populations were generally brief and unintrusive, and Native cultures are usually considered to have enjoyed both autonomy and enrichment, or at least an infusion of wealth (Fisher 1978; Darling and Cole 1990).

Early maritime fur trade visits to the Tlingit include de Hezeta in 1775, who introduced small pox, LePerouse in 1786, Malaspina in 1791 and numerous British and American ships (DeLaguna 1990b:223). According to Halpin and Seguin (1990:281) the earliest recorded contacts with the Tsimshian are Duncan and Colnett in 1787 and Caamano in 1792. The first European description of the Skeena was provided by Whidby of Vancouver's crew in 1793 (MacDonald 1989:26). The list of vessels known to have travelled to the north coast in the late 1700s and early 1800s, however, is quite long (see Howay 1973) and many direct visits to Tsimshian territory may be unrecorded.

Europeans also approached the edges of the Skeena drainage from the east, seeking overland passage to the Pacific and new sources of land mammal furs. In 1805, Fraser established the Northwest Company post of Fort McLeod on McLeod's Lake, followed by Fort St James on Stuart Lake in 1806, both in the Fraser River drainage (Large 1957:11). In 1812, Daniel Harmon from Fort St

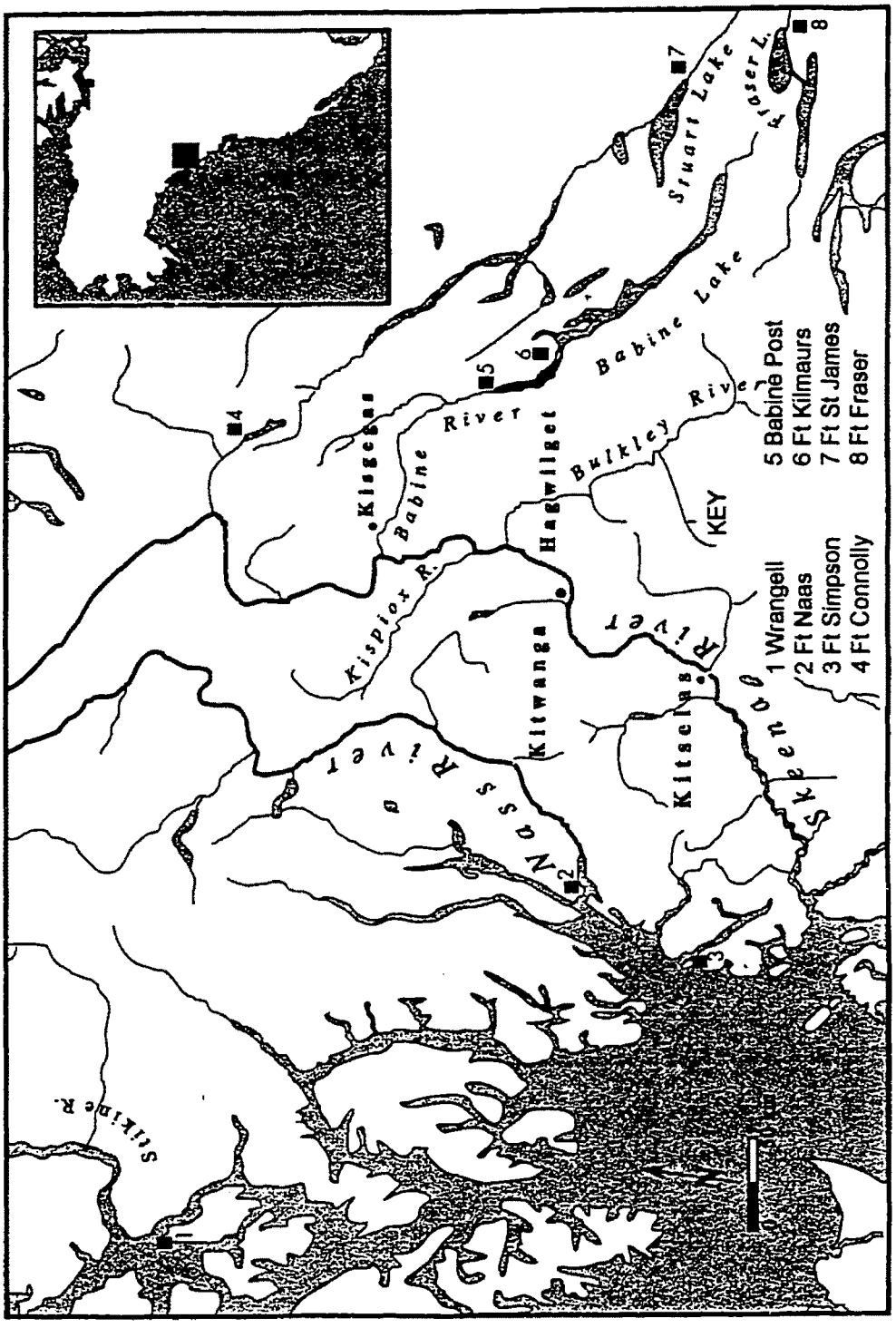

Figure 3. Early Trading Posts Within Reach of the Skeena.

James visited the Babine Carrier at Babine Lake, and was the first European on record in the headwaters of the Skeena (Harmon 1957:149). Fort Kilmaurs was built on Babine Lake in 1822 (Brown 1823a), and was moved to the outlet of the lake in 1836 and renamed Babine Post (McEachern 1991:25; Voorhis 1930:39). Another establishment was built in the Skeena drainage at Bear Lake (Fort Connelly) in Sekani territory in 1826 (Large 1957:11).

The first recorded European visit to the Gitksan was made from Fort Kilmaurs by William Brown to assess the trade potential (Brown 1826a). Brown made trips down the Babine River in 1825 and 1826. A detailed account of the 1826 trip survives from a journal kept by Brown (Brown 1826a), while the previous trip is only referred to in the 1826 journal and in post records (Brown 1826b:13). Brown described visiting three Gitksan villages he called Weepsim, Childocal and Needchip (Brown 1826b:13, 1826a). Ray (1987:17) places two of these villages near Kisgegas at Shegisic Creek on the lower Babine River, and the other at the confluence of the Babine and Skeena. An account of another trading expedition from Fort Kilmaurs to Hotset, a Carrier village on the Bulkley River, apparently at Moricetown, also survives (Ogden 1972). This account is from an anonymous memoir, later attributed to Peter Skene Ogden, and reputed to have occurred in the 1830s (Ray 1987:42). Morice (1971:350-351), however, thought the book was a dramatization inspired by the life of Ogden and other traders. The author claims to have made the trip one year after he founded Fort Kilmaurs ('Ogden' 1972:35), which would make it 1823, rather than the 1830s. Ogden was posted on the Columbia River in 1823 (Morice 1971:351); the hero of the story may therefore have been Brown, the founder of Fort Kilmaurs.

Regardless of the authorship of the story, it does indicate that Europeans probably began first-hand explorations of the Bulkley River in the 1820s.

European activity on the Lower Skeena accelerated in the 1830s. Fort Simpson was established at the mouth of the Nass in 1831 and moved to the Tsimshian peninsula in 1834 (Large 1957:15). From Fort Simpson, Donald Manson ascended the Skeena in 1832, followed by John Work in 1835, but Large (1957:23) doubts that either man was permitted to pass Kitselas Canyon because of Native trade monopolies.

Because Europeans were well established all around the peripheries of the Upper Skeena Valley by the 1830s, and face to face contact had been made in Gitksan territory, I employ 1830 as an approximate cut off date for the protohistoric period. With each new encounter, Europeans consistently reported that Natives were already in possession of trade goods, especially metals (Brown 1826a; Harmon 1957:150; Halpin and Seguin 1990:281; MacDonald 1989:24). European goods apparently spread from the centres of contact through indigenous trade networks, as likely did disease (Boyd 1990). MacDonald (1989:16-23) has plotted and described the historically known trade routes that connected the Upper Skeena with the primary sources of European goods on the coast, Alaska and the interior (see chapter 4). Direct evidence for the structure of trade in these corridors will be discussed in more detail in chapter five. MacDonald (1989:24-25) feels that Native trade may have brought iron across the Bering Strait as early as 1648, and that European goods reached the Skeena at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The date AD 1700 is therefore taken as the inception of the protohistoric period.

European activity in the Upper Skeena region continued to be sporadic until the 1860s. In 1866, what became the town of Hazelton was established at the confluence of the Bulkley and Skeena Rivers, and experienced a modest boom during the Barkerville goldrush (Large 1957:44). Fort Stager was also built near Kispiox in 1866 (Large 1957:27). The 1830s-1860s are thus considered the early historic period in this study.

Overview of the Consequences of Early Contact

In chapter one, I discussed various models of the effects of indirect European contact upon settlement pattern and social institutions in the Upper Skeena. The above outline of European activities places these arguments in chronological context and introduces the sources of trade goods which are assumed to have stimulated the Native competition, settlement movements, innovations and diffusions proposed by Ames (1979a), Adams (1973), MacDonald (1984a, 1989) and others. Here I wish to draw the outlines of European and Native activities closer together to emphasize a few points.

The earliest European goods probably entered the Skeena Valley second hand through Native middlemen. For much of the contact era, the Coast Tsimshian seem to have been middlemen to the Gitksan, and the Gitksan middlemen to the Carrier (Ray 1987:41), although I will argue that these relationships fluctuated. The coasts of northern British Columbia and Alaska continued to be the main sources of European goods, via middlemen, for the Gitksan and many Carriers even after interior posts were established in the 1820s (Brown 1826b:15; Ogden 1937:48). Social forms and practices have

been proposed to have diffused from one group to the next along with trade goods (Kobrinsky 1977; Rubel and Rosman 1983; Steward 1972; Bishop 1987). In this manner, the Carrier may have adopted not only the trappings of ranked societies (e.g., potlatches and totem poles), but also their institutions (crests\clans, hereditary titles, and exclusive resource areas and trade relationships) (Kobrinsky 1977:207-208; Bishop 1987:79). There are some suggestions that the coastal societies involved in this trade network themselves became more complex, with paramount chiefs, like Legaic of the Coast Tsimshian and Shakes of the Tlingit, who controlled the sources of trade goods and were treated as autocrats by the Europeans, coming to have an unprecedented degree of influence (De Laguna 1983:80; Mitchell 1983:62).

Barbeau (1929), Adams (1973) and Ames (1979a) have all discussed coastal influences extending upriver to incorporate the Gitksan into Northwest Coast social groups and practices. In Ames' view, this process was accelerated by the introduction of European goods (Ames 1979b:233). MacDonald (1984a, 1989) has argued for a marked increase in intergroup competition, conflict and a general northward shift in orientation of interaction with the establishment of Russian trade. Based on oral traditions, he proposed an expansion of Gitksan territory to the Upper Nass and the construction of forts by chiefs seeking to increase their wealth, influence and power by controlling trade (MacDonald 1984a:78). Of particular importance in MacDonald's model is the route which connected the Upper Skeena, via the Kitwanga Valley, to the Nass and thence the Stikine River and coast of Alaska, as it avoided Coast Tsimshian territory. I take the implications of these models to be at least a general increase in disparities in wealth and power within and between local and corporate groups

on the Upper Skeena, and perhaps formalization of positions of status, as well as a shift in regional settlement pattern, as I discussed in chapter one.

Summary

In this chapter, the Skeena Valley, its history and its cultures were introduced. Geographically, the Skeena Valley is a long corridor extending from the British Columbia interior to coast, and crosses several environmental zones. The study area - the Upper Skeena - has been defined, and while it has geographic and cultural coherency, it is in many ways transitional between coastal and interior environments.

The predominate ethnographic group of the Upper Skeena - the Gitksan - was also introduced. Like the Skeena itself, the Gitksan had important connections with the interior and coast, but are more closely identified with the coast, and mark the eastern edge of the Northwest Coast culture area. Those aspects of ethnographic Gitksan culture that relate to social ranking and spatial organization on a regional, household and village scale were described to provide further support and background for the archaeological spatial analyses proposed in chapter one, and presented in chapters three and four. The ethnographic description is intended neither as a simple source of inference for interpreting prehistory, nor as a baseline for examining post-contact change. Instead, archaeological spatial analysis will be used to test the ethnographic record and current interpretations of protohistoric developments. The models of protohistoric interaction outlined in chapter one and briefly discussed above suggest that many aspects of the Gitksan social ranking and settlement systems may not have immutable, deep roots.

As a step towards placing these models into long-term perspective, the prehistory of the Skeena, as reconstructed from excavated components, was reviewed. Current evidence indicates that the developed Northwest Coast culture pattern was probably in place 1500 years ago at Kitselas Canyon. The culture history of the Upper Skeena is much more sketchy. A substantial occupation with salmon fishing and storage was in place 3500 years ago at Hagwilget Canyon, and conflict between individuals possessing and displaying considerable personal prowess may be evidenced at 2000 BP by the Hagwilget stone clubs. However, dated components do not indicate the existence of the full suite of Northwest Coast traits above Kitselas Canyon before the contact era, which could be taken as support for the ethnohistoric arguments proposing diffusion and heightening of cultural complexity.

Finally, I have defined the protohistoric period as AD 1700-1830, and reviewed models of intergroup interaction. This is not meant to suggest that the people of the Upper Skeena were static prior to AD 1700. The reconstructions of Skeena prehistory discussed also rely heavily upon interaction and population movement as explanations for culture change, although always within the framework of an active donor and passive recipient group. Chapters four and five will further discuss prehistoric and contact period interaction with an eye towards identifying continuity and change in settlement strategy.

CHAPTER 3

KITWANGA HILL FORT

Introduction to Site, Methods and Materials

The Kitwanga Fort is situated atop an isolated, steep sided hill on the Kitwanga River, 5.5 km from its confluence with the Skeena. In 1979, George MacDonald conducted excavations on behalf of Parks Canada to aid in interpretation and management of the site. Surface contours indicated three rectangular house platforms on top of the hill (Figure 4). Excavation revealed two additional houses, one at either end of the hill, which were likely partially supported on stilts (MacDonald 1989:74). MacDonald proposed that there were two phases of occupation (components) at the site: one dating to the late prehistoric period, roughly AD 1550-1650, and the other, which included the five house platforms, belonging to the protohistoric period (MacDonald 1984a:73, 1989:68-70). I argue below that both components are protohistoric in age.

MacDonald's excavation revealed architectural details of the fort and recovered moderate assemblages of artifacts and faunal remains. The architecture of the site was reported on in some detail (MacDonald 1989). MacDonald and Schaeffer (n.d.) prepared a manuscript describing the artifact types recovered, their frequencies and metric variation, but it was never published. In preparing the manuscript, they consulted Parks Canada material culture specialists to identify and date some of the trade goods recovered. Spatial comparisons of artifact distributions were not undertaken.

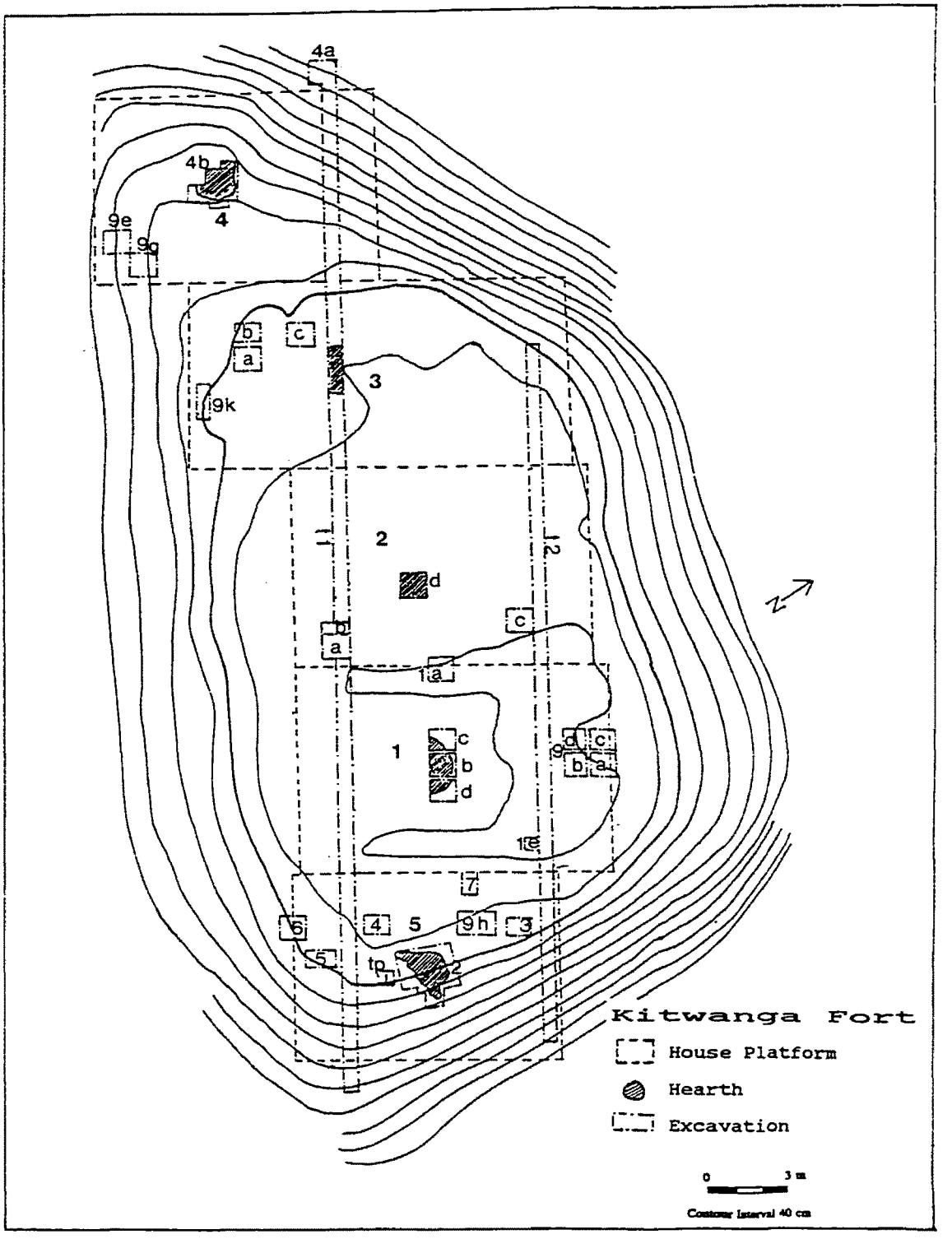

Figure 4. Site Map of the Kitwanga Fort (adapted from MacDonald 1989).

Archaeological faunal elements were identified by Rick (n.d.). A brief report on the fauna, including a numerical summary of elements in the hearths of houses 1, 2 and 3, was appended to MacDonald's report on the excavation (Rick 1989).

With the consent of MacDonald, Rick and Parks Canada, I undertook temporal and spatial comparisons of the artifactual and faunal material from Kitwanga. I used MacDonald's field catalogue to determine the three-dimensional provenience of all artifacts, including lithic debitage. Several items lacked complete provenience information, and were eliminated from further consideration in my study. Each item was physically examined and checked against the artifact type assigned to it in the field and the description in MacDonald and Schaeffer's manuscript. Some errors were discovered, for example obsidian flakes classed as glass sherds, and gunflints called chert flakes. Such mistakes can probably be attributed to inter-observer error, and amount of experience with contact period assemblages. For the most part, MacDonald and Schaeffer's typology was accepted. My catalogue of the artifact assemblage and proveniences is included as Appendix 1.

To better suit the analysis of spatial differentiation in exotic (foreign) and indigenous artifact categories I employed some overarching artifact categories. The categories I used are commonly employed in studies of historic Native assemblages (e.g., Quimby and Spoehr 1951; Vanstone and Oswalt 1967; Bradley 1987) and are as follows:

1) Items of European manufacture. These are trade goods introduced by Europeans which lack evidence of modification in form (e.g., beads, gun parts).

2) Items of European material and Native modification. These are metal items reworked into new objects such as knife blades and ornaments. This category

also includes the metal scrap bi-products of reworking, such as pieces of sheet metal showing evidence of having been folded over and hammered, and scraps of metal having been broken by hand.

3) Items of indigenous material and Native manufacture. This includes all traditional stone and bone artifacts.

The modified European artifact category is common in many protohistoric and early contact period assemblages and is felt to represent the early stages of incorporation of European materials into preexisting categories of Native material culture, technology and meaning (Quimby and Spoehr 1951:147; Bradley 1987:174; Prince 1992:172). I hoped that the vertical distribution of modified items at Kitwanga would help to differentiate the two temporal components (see below). However, for most of the analyses presented here, the manufactured European and modified European categories were lumped together as 'European' artifacts. This combined category represents all imported European trade goods and is crucial to the spatial comparisons presented below.

In fur trade contexts throughout the Northwest Coast, trade was a prerogative of those of high status. It was Native chiefs who assembled the furs of their territory, organized the labour to process them and interacted and bargained with fur traders (Wolf 1982:186, 189; Gunther 1972; Ray 1987:18, 47; Brown 1826b). Chiefs also proudly displayed and redistributed the goods they had acquired, including many that might seem to us mundane items such as cloth, blankets, guns, ammunition, tobacco, and flour (Wike 1951:90); clothing and mirrors (Fisher 1977:18); buttons, metal ornaments and weapons (Mackenzie 1967:291). Brown recorded Gitksan chiefs displaying European

cloth and guns (Brown 1826a), as well as iron axes, hoops and ammunition (Brown 1826b:21). Although in documented historic contexts trade goods were amassed by chiefs largely to be publicly given away at potlatches, the amount an individual received at a potlatch depended on their rank (Adams 1973:71-72), and the status of the giver was validated and increased (Wolf 1982:186). Therefore, I expect that European trade goods were acquired, possessed and redistributed among individuals of high rank, and those of low rank had less access to them. This expectation and the ethnographic model of spatial organization discussed in chapter two inform the spatial comparisons of artifacts made below.

Rick's faunal analysis did not treat the two temporal components at Kitwanga separately; nor did she look for variability in the complete faunal assemblage of all five houses. In the following analyses I have taken Rick's identifications of faunal elements and assigned them horizontal and vertical proveniences using her specimen identification sheets and MacDonald's field inventory. I then examine the distribution of faunal elements to determine whether there are significant differences vertically between components and horizontally within and between houses. A catalogue of identified elements and their proveniences can be found in Appendix 2. Several hundred faunal specimens could not be identified by Rick, and are not considered in this study.

I expected that if trade in furs was a prerogative of high rank, some houses might have evidence of more fur-bearing animals. Further, if there were marked differences in status at Kitwanga, there may have been significant differences in the distribution of subsistence resources. Faunal analysis of the house floors at the Ozette site in Washington indicates that this was the case

there, with exotic shellfish and 'preferred food' elements (e.g., salmon, halibut, whale) being unevenly distributed in abundance (Wessen 1988; Huelsbeck 1989).

Excavations and Architecture

The reader is referred to MacDonald (1989) for a detailed description of his excavation strategy and the features he defined. MacDonald's main objective in excavating the fort was to define its internal structure and determine the length of occupation. Excavation began with two exploratory trenches running east-west along the long axis of the hill (Figure 4). Additional test units were placed within each of the houses to define their internal structure. All excavations were conducted in 5 cm arbitrary levels. The soil removed was routinely sifted through 1/4" mesh screens, and through 1/8" mesh when features or artifact concentrations were encountered (MacDonald 1989:34, 57).

The houses were not evenly sampled. MacDonald did not record either the floor area of the houses, or the total area of his excavation units. I have derived these measurements from his site map, and they are thus approximations (Table 2). Not all units were excavated to the same depth, and MacDonald does not indicate in his report or his records what the depth of each individual unit was. Therefore, the precise volume of soil excavated from each house cannot be determined. MacDonald (1989:57) does indicate that the trenches were excavated to sterile glacial soil deposits at a fairly uniform depth of 1 m below surface. In addition, one of the test units near the centre of the hill, unit 1a, was excavated to bedrock at a depth of 1.75 m below surface, to determine the structure of the hill (MacDonald 1989:32). The remaining

excavation units were apparently limited in depth to levels bearing 'cultural evidence' (MacDonald and Schaeffer n.d.). The lowest artifact or fauna (including unidentifiable specimens) bearing level excavated in each house was determined from MacDonald's field catalogue and is indicated below. While the figures in Table 2 are only approximations, they do convey the relative size of the houses and the amount of excavation in each. Because the area and volume of excavation varies between houses, artifact frequencies have been converted to percentages for most of the spatial comparisons below and tests were run to determine the statistical significance of the observed patterns.

Table 2. Approximate House Floor and Excavation Unit Measurements.

House	Floor Area (m^2)	Area of Exc (m^2)	% of House Excavated	Lowest Art/Faun Lev
1	11.8x8.3=97.9	16.55	17	14
2	11.2x8.0=89.6	11.5	13	12
3	14.5x7.5=108.7	10	9.2	13
4	10.8x7.7=83.2	10.85	13	13
5	10.0x7.5=75	18	24	5

MacDonald estimated house locations based first on surface contours. Large flat, rectangular surface areas on top of the hill were taken to represent prepared house floor platforms (MacDonald 1989:36, 64). Linear ridges and depressions were interpreted as the remains of sill beams at the edges of houses (MacDonald 1989:36, 1984:70). A large rectangular depression in one of the platforms (House 1) with a raised edge on three sides was suggestive of a

central house pit and raised bench (MacDonald 1989:36). This pattern was confirmed by excavation. MacDonald (1989:36) first encountered a hearth feature of fire-reddened soil, ash and burned bone in the centre of House Platform 3. Further excavation revealed hearths in the centre of each of the platforms and confirmed that they were house floors. Smaller depressions in the centre rear of Houses 1, 2 and 3 were interpreted by MacDonald, with the aid of Gitwangak informants, as escape tunnels, or 'hidey holes' (MacDonald 1989:71). MacDonald also recorded numerous house floor storage pits and structural post holes during the course of excavation (MacDonald 1989:68). The floors of the houses over the pits are believed by MacDonald (1989:74) to have been decked with wooden planks.

MacDonald reconstructed the houses as abutting one another. Houses 4 and 5 occupied small terraces at either end of the hill and probably overhung the sides of the slope on stilts (MacDonald 1989:74). Their hearths were apparently supported on the hillside by cribwork (MacDonald 1989:74).

In addition to the house features, MacDonald recorded 84 cache pits around the base of the hill, as well as a possible sweat lodge, four girls puberty isolation pits, and a general activity area (MacDonald 1989:47, 50-55). Artifacts recovered from these areas are listed in my catalogue (Appendix 1), but are not included in my spatial comparisons, which are focused on the houses.

Definition of Components

Most architectural features, including hearths and the tops of pits and post holes, occur about 20 cm below surface (Figure 5). This indicates that the house floors belong with levels 1-4. Site stratigraphy does not provide any clear

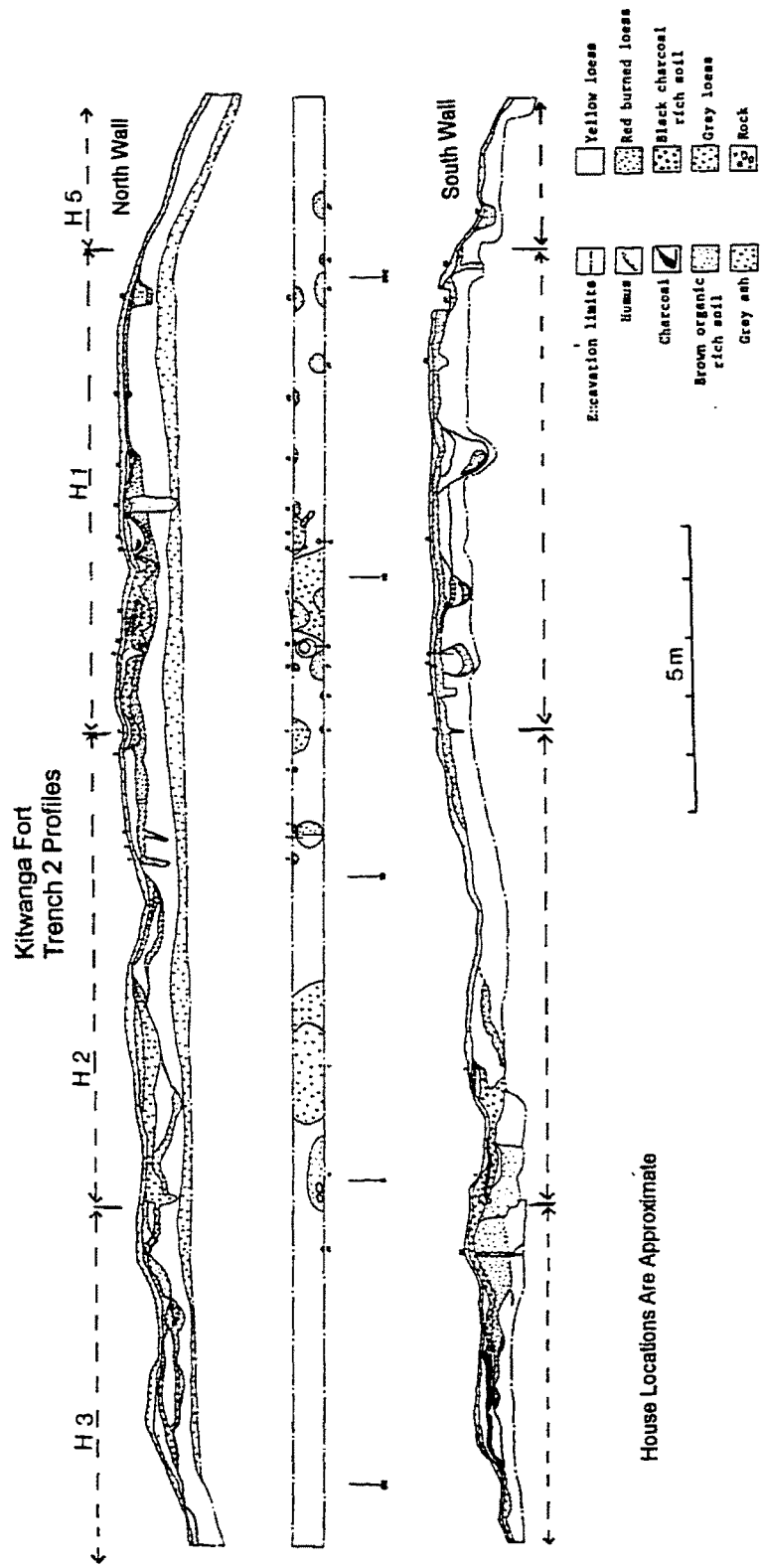

Figure 5. Trench 2 Profiles, Kitwanga (Adapted from MacDonald 1989)

indications of substantial architecture earlier than level 4, although cultural material does occur (features, organic lenses, artifacts and fauna). This suggests that there were two broad phases of occupation, roughly demarcated by the house floor features at the boundary of levels 4 and 5.

The sequence of construction, occupation and abandonment of the houses is unclear. Houses 4 and 5 may have been constructed after Houses 1-3, and thus had to accommodate the constraints of limited space on the edges of the hill. MacDonald (1989:67) believes there is evidence of filling in House Platform 4 and excavating in House Platform 5 to create more level space for construction. All of this activity is evident, however, in the upper 25 cm of the site (MacDonald 1989:67), and therefore, probably occurred close to the time of construction of the other houses. MacDonald (1984b:9) gathered from informants and oral narratives that the site was abandoned after an attack during which Chief Nekt was killed and the fort was burned. Details of Nekt's death and the fort's abandonment vary in different stories, but MacDonald believed charred house remains below the sod in Houses 2 and 5 represented the abandonment event (1989:68). Since the construction of all of the houses probably occurred in a narrow space of time, site abandonment may have been sudden, and MacDonald's excavation was conducted in arbitrary levels, rather than natural or cultural strata, it is not practical to attempt a more fine grained temporal separation of the material assemblage than treating levels 1-4 of all five houses as a single component.

The artifact assemblage from levels 1-4 is comprised mainly of manufactured European items, followed by indigenous stone and bone artifacts and reworked trade metals (Table 3, Figure 6).

Table 3. Artifact Frequencies per House and Component.

	House 1		House 2		House 3		House 4		House 5	
Category	Lev 1-4	Lev 5-14	Lev 1-4	Lev 5-12	Lev 1-4	Lev 5-9	Lev 1-4	Lev 5-12	Lev 1-4	Lev 5
Manufact Euro										
Beads	95	10	5	5	16	2	3	2	1	
Pistol Barrel									1	
Gunflints	1	1				1	2			
Brass Key	1									
Adze			1							
Mirror Glass	1									
Undiagnostic Glss	3	2							1	
Iron Pot				1						
Total	101	13	6	6	16	3	5	2	3	0
Modified Euro										
Knife Blade					2					
Dagger									1	
Leister Prong			1							
Perfor Thimble			1							
Nose Ring		1								
Copper Tubes	3	1		1						
Copper Band					1					
Copper Wires	2									
Copper Rivet	1									
Iron Wires	3	1	1		1					
Folded Iron		2								
Unidentified Iron	2	1								
Total	11	6	3	1	4	0	0	0	1	0

Table 3. Continued.

Category	House 1		House 2		House 3		House 4		House 5	
Native	Lev 1-4	Lev 5-14	Lev 1-4	Lev 5-12	Lev 1-4	Lev 5-9	Lev 1-4	Lev 5-12	Lev 1-4	Lev 5
Abraders	8	1	2		1	4				
Hammerstones	2	1				2		1		
Cobble Choppers	1		1							
Cobble Cores		2		1						
Cobble Spalls	5	6	3	3	6	5	4		1	
Projectile Pts		3								
Retouched Flakes			1				1			
Flakes	6	61	3	17	10	15	8	1	1	1
Bone Harpoon	1									
Rib Spatulate						1				
Unidentified Bone						1				
Ground Shell	1		1			1				
Ochre Nodules	7	3	1	1	5		1			
Total	31	77	12	22	22	29	14	2	2	1
Total	143	96	21	29	42	32	19	4	6	1

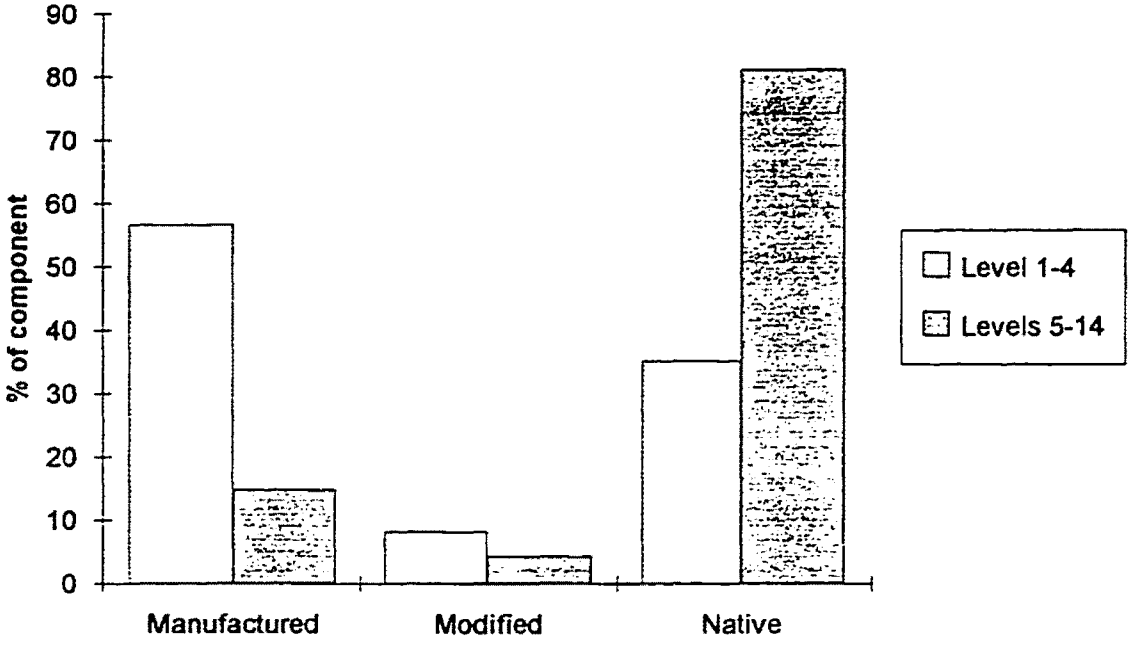

Figure 6. Percentage of Artifact Categories per Component.

Diagnostic trade goods range in date of manufacture mainly from 1750-1850. These include tubular glass beads dated 1795-1850 by Parks Canada bead specialist Karlis Karklins; an eighteenth century flintlock pistol barrel identified by Parks Canada arms specialist Douglas Bryce; and a nineteenth

century brass key identified by lock specialist Bruce Morton (MacDonald and Schaeffer n.d.). Other materials include a stamped brass thimble dating 1750-1850; three British gunflints popular from 1750-1875 (Hume 1970:220, 256); and an iron adze popular in trade during the 1780s and 90s (Wike 1951:53). These dates and the co-occurrence of manufactured European, modified and indigenous artifacts are characteristic of the protohistoric or early historic period.

Artifacts occurring below level 4 include manufactured and modified European items, but indigenous materials are in the majority. The relatively small quantities of European materials suggest this represents the initial stages of their introduction (early protohistory), although the dates of production of the manufactured European items are not fine-grained enough to make this distinction. The beads and gunflints are of the same types as those in levels 1-4. The only other temporally sensitive item is an iron pot, broadly dated to the nineteenth century (MacDonald and Schaeffer n.d.).

As discussed above, it has been demonstrated in several contexts that during the initial stages of European trade, a high percentage of European items were reworked or recycled by Natives, and components can be seriated on this basis (Bradley 1987; Prince 1992). This pattern is only weakly expressed in the Kitwanga assemblage (Figure 6). A marked difference is expressed, however, in the proportions of manufactured European, modified and Native artifacts between levels 1-4 and levels 5-14. A chi square test indicates that this pattern is not likely a chance occurrence (X^2=81.7, phi=.21, p=<.001). I feel that this statistical pattern and the general stratigraphic break between levels 4 and 5 indicates there are two distinct temporal components at the Kitwanga Fort. The European goods in both components suggest that they represent successive

segments of the protohistoric period. Further, oral traditions collected by Barbeau (1929:142) state that the site was abandoned prior to 1830, when the population moved to the present location of Kitwanga on the Skeena River. If this is correct, occupation of the fort did not extend into the historic period.

MacDonald more loosely defined two components at the fort, but felt that one was prehistoric. MacDonald (1984a:73, 1989:67) noted that many of the features associated with the houses intrude into lower levels, and that landscaping may have occurred during construction, such that the early component may be a mixture of late prehistoric and contact period material. In his view, the stone tool industry, particularly below a charcoal lens 20-25 cm below surface (Figure 5), represents a prehistoric occupation dating AD 1550-1650 (MacDonald 1984a:73, 1989:68-70). However, as noted above, the introduction of metals to Native cultures did not usually lead immediately to the extinguishment of stone tool technology (Bradley 1987; Rogers 1990; Prince 1992). Further, none of the lithics at Kitwanga can be firmly dated stylistically. This casts significant doubt on MacDonald's argument for a prehistoric component.

In further support of his belief in a prehistoric component, MacDonald (1984:73) claimed that wood samples from the 'upper horizon', above the charcoal lens, represented structural remains and were dated by dendrochronology to AD 1750-1835. However, the dendrochronology report states a confident match was found for only one sample, no. 111-1, from AD 1680-1749 (Jozsa et al. 1989:A-12). Neither Jozsa et al., nor MacDonald's records give a provenience for sample 111-1. Therefore, all that can be said

from this evidence is that some part of the site post-dates AD 1749, rather than that this date caps a prehistoric component.

As a final step in distinguishing components, I tested the vertical distribution of lithic flakes and glass beads (Figure 7).

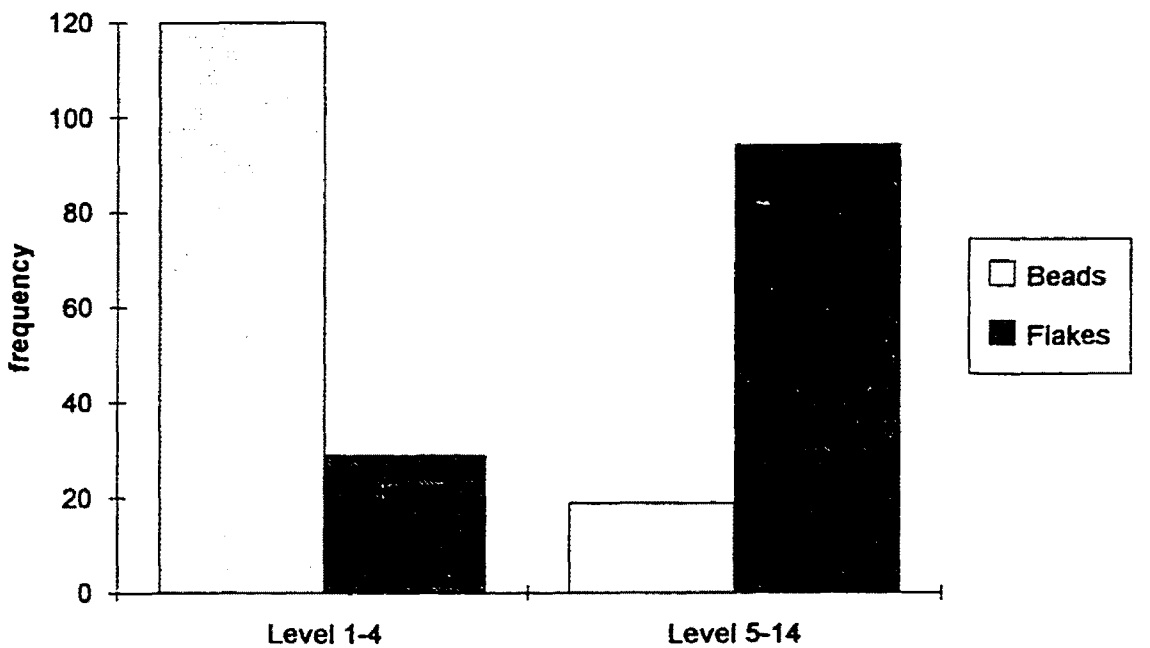

Figure 7. Bead and Flake Frequencies per Component.

These two artifact types are common and small. If the components were disturbed by earth moving, I would expect these artifacts to be randomly distributed. In actuality, the vertical distribution of flakes and beads shown in Figure 7 would only occur by chance less than once in a thousand times (X^2=107.4, p=<.001, phi=.4). A pattern similar to this - small quantities of flakes in the upper component and of beads in the lower component - might be

expected if the interface (levels 4 and 5) was mixed by trampling and other activities. However, beads were found in levels 1-10 (except for level 7) and sharply decline in frequency below level 4, while flakes were found in levels 1-14 (except for levels 11 and 13) and generally decrease in frequency above level 4. This distribution suggests that there was little mixing of the components.

In summary, I argue that there were two successive components at the Kitwanga Fort, both post-dating AD 1700 and pre-dating AD 1830. The late component is represented by the features, artifacts and fauna of levels 1-4. This component saw the construction and occupation of five plank houses. Given their extremely constrained positions, Houses 4 and 5 may have been built slightly later than Houses 1 to 3, but current architectural and artifactual data do not warrant splitting the late component further. The early component is represented by levels 5-14, and includes cultural features, artifacts and fauna, but lacks clear evidence of substantial architecture. This component probably saw the initial introduction of European trade goods into the region. Chi square tests of the vertical distribution of artifact categories and of flakes and beads indicates that the break between the components is real. Admixture is thus not likely a significant biasing factor.

Artifact Distributions

Late Component Interhouse Comparisons

The proportions of European trade goods (a combined category of modified and manufactured items) to indigenous artifacts in levels 1-4 of each house were compared to determine if there were inequities in their spatial, and by extension, social distribution (Figure 8). The House 5 assemblage is

extremely small, and statistically random. Although the sample sizes are uneven, the artifact distributions in Houses 1-4 are unlikely to occur by chance, and have a high overall probability of significance (X^2=33.7, p=<.001, phi=.15). House 1 stands out, with a high proportion of European to Native artifacts, while Houses 2 and 3 have slight majorities of Native artifacts, and House 4 has a predominance of Native material.

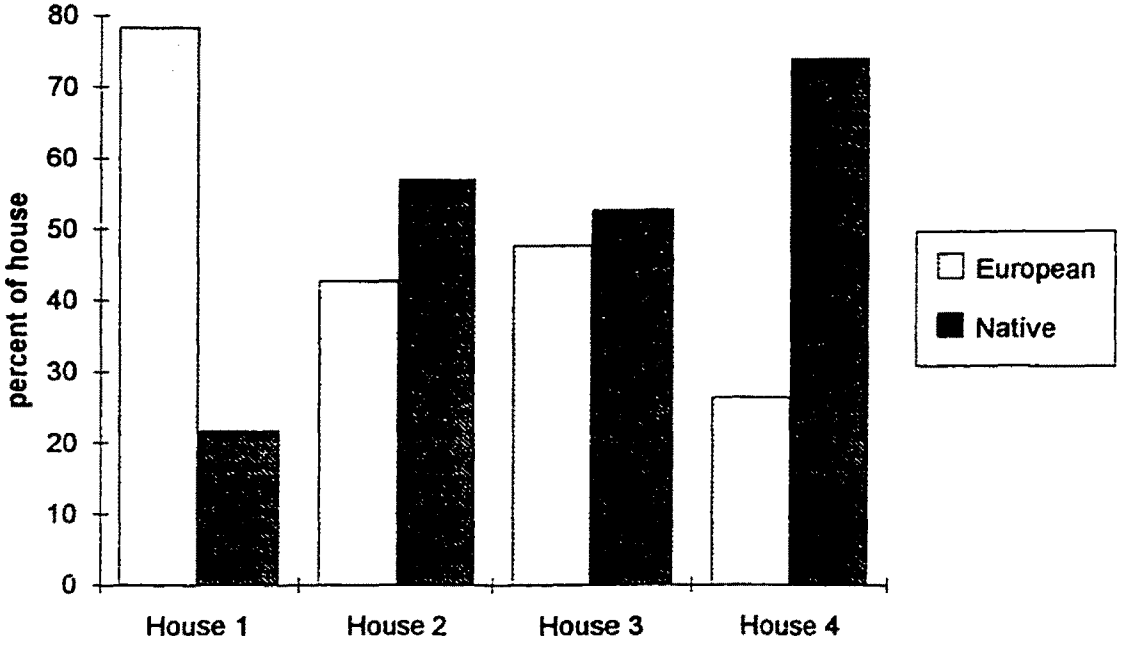

Figure 8. Inter-house Comparisons of Artifact Categories, Late Component.

My interpretation is that House 1 had greater access to trade goods than the other houses, and was perhaps of highest rank, while House 4 had limited access, and low status. The probable late appearance, small size and marginal location of House 4 on the hill are also suggestive of relatively low status. According to Duff (1959), the highest ranking house of each side of a village

should be located towards the centre of the row of houses, and Coupland (1988a) has demonstrated the association between Tsimshian house sizes and rank.

The high status of House 1 is further suggested by its architecture, which includes the central depression and raised area around two sides and the rear, discussed earlier (Figure 4). These features in historic Tsimshian contexts are associated with the houses of lineage heads (Halpin and Seguin 1990:271). House 1 was interpreted by MacDonald (1989:75), with the aid of Gitwangak informants, to be the home of chief Nekt. Oral traditions indicate that Nekt was an ambitious warrior and chief who founded his own house, established the community at the fort and drew other houses to join his local group and form the Gitwangak (Barbeau 1929:52-53). He is one of the 'petty chiefs' that MacDonald believes rose to prominence in the protohistoric period by controlling trade.

The individual types of trade goods in each of the houses may give further indications of their relative statuses and influence in trade. House 1 has a predominance of manufactured beads, and other European trade goods include metals reworked into tubes (perhaps beads or tinklers), and wires (Table 3). All of these items could have been used for personal adornment and display of success in trade. Beads, however, are also the most numerous European goods in Houses 2, 3 and 4, and their numbers are too small to make valid comparisons.

Several artifact types within the Native category may also have carried some prestige. Obsidian and marine shell are both exotic materials that had to be imported from considerable distance. A sample of fourteen obsidian flakes was identified to a source at Mount Edziza in northern British Columbia by

Nelson (1989:A-46) using an X-ray florescence technique. The occurrence of obsidian from distant sources in prehistoric contexts has been cited by MacDonald (1983b:102) as evidence of an exchange network between elites in exotic materials. A total of nine obsidian flakes and one retouched flake were recovered from the late component (Appendix 1). In addition, two worked fragments of *Mytilus californianus* shell were recovered, indicating a trade connection in this exotic material with the coast. Ochre is a third item which may have carried some prestige, having been used as a pigment in arts and ceremonials. However, none of these artifact types are discretely distributed across the site, and they occur in numbers too small to make convincing interhouse comparisons (Table 3). The more inclusive artifact categories, European and Native, thus permit the most reliable comparisons.

Late Component Intra-House Comparisons

MacDonald's excavation tested various portions of the house interiors. In the present study excavation units were grouped into front, middle and rear for each house (Table 4), and within house comparisons of artifact distributions were made for evidence of differentiation that may be related to household statuses (Figure 9).

Table 4. List of Excavation Units per Area of House.

House	Front	Middle	Rear
1	t1	1A,1B,1C,1D	1E,t2,9A,9B,9C,9D
2	t1,2A,2B	2D	t2,2C,2E
3	9K,3A,3B	t1,3C	t2
4	9E,9G	4B	t1,4A
5	tp4,tp5,tp6,t1	tp1,tp2	t2,tp3,tp7,9H

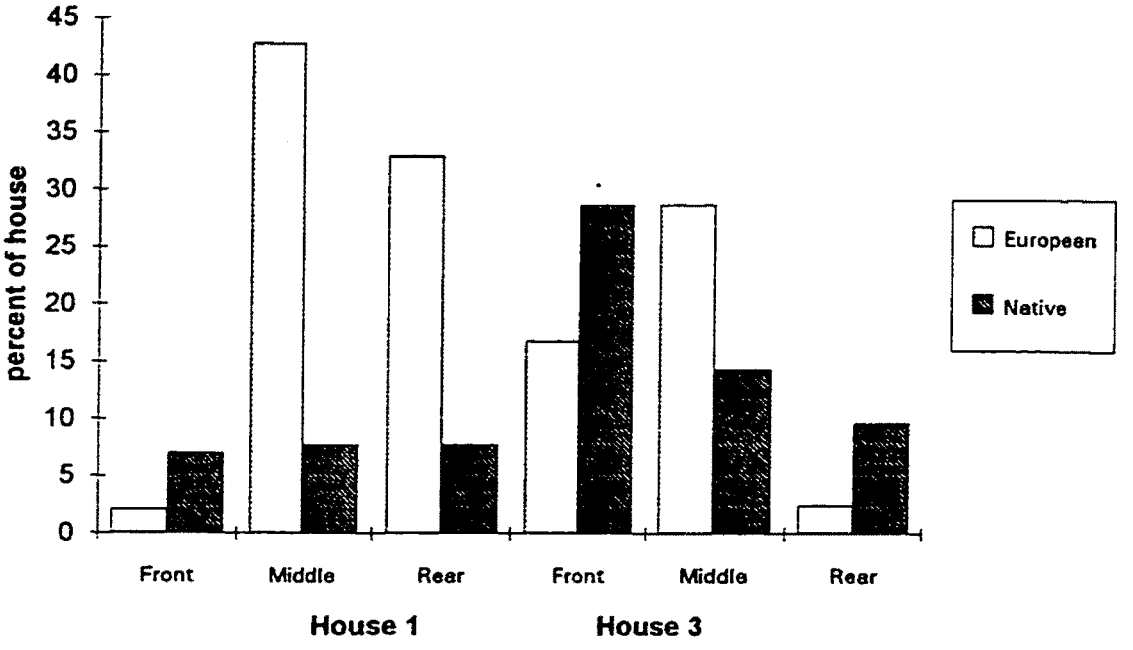

Figure 9. Distribution of Artifact Categories Within Houses 1 and 3.

The distribution of European and Native artifacts within Houses 2, 4 and 5 have a high statistical probability of occurring by chance, probably due to the extremely small sample sizes produced when these house assemblages were divided by area. The distributions in Houses 1 and 3 have low probabilities of occurring by chance, although less confidence can be placed in House 3.

The artifact distribution in House 1 yields a X^2 of 24.7, the probability of chance occurrence is less than one in one thousand, and phi is .17; while the House 3 distribution yields a X^2 of 4.9, p=.08, and phi=.12. House 1 shows a predominance of European over Native goods in its middle and rear, and the reverse trend in the front. In House 3, the middle area has a predominance of European over indigenous artifacts, while the front and rear show the reverse trend. The trend in the rear of House 3 may be affected by the relatively small amount of excavation in that area (Figure 4, Table 4).

In both Houses 1 and 3, some degree of control of trade items and social inequity between house members may have been in operation. This is much more strongly suggested, with greater statistical confidence, for House 1, which closely approximates the ethnographic model of chiefs, in this case Nekt, occupying the house rear. The relatively high percentage of European goods, and overall frequency of artifacts in the middle of Houses 1 and 3 may reflect increasing access to trade goods among household members towards the rear of the house, and perhaps a tendency for the hearth area to be used as an activity zone where more artifacts would be lost or discarded.

The frequency of occurrence of individual artifact types in the three areas of the houses roughly mirrors the distribution of larger categories: beads, metal ornaments, ground shell and ochre tending towards the middle and rear of House 1, and the middle of House 3; and utilitarian Native artifacts tending towards the house fronts (Appendix 1). As with the interhouse distributions, however, the larger artifact categories permit the most convincing comparisons.

Early Component Horizontal Comparisons

In the earlier component, there are no clear indications of substantial architecture. For the purpose of horizontal comparisons in this component, I treated the later house locations as arbitrary spatial units. The distribution of artifacts indicates that activity was concentrated in the areas occupied later by Houses 1, 2 and 3 (Table 3).

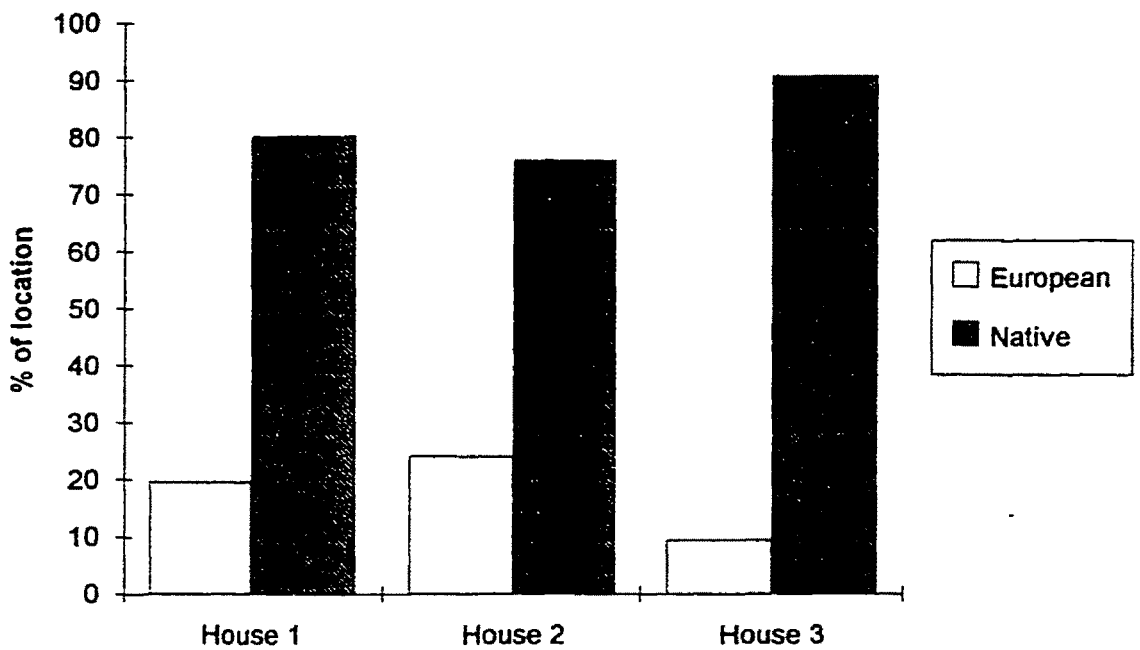

Figure 10. Horizontal Comparisons of Artifact Categories in the Early Component.

In each of these three areas, Native artifacts are by far the majority (Figure 10). No spatial differentiation is evident, and the distribution of artifact categories between the three house platforms could be expected to occur by chance 28% of the time (X^2=2.5, phi=.016, p=.28). Therefore, there is no association between the distribution of European and Native artifacts and house

areas. The pattern shown in Figure 10 indicates that there was no area of concentration for exotic materials during the early phase of occupation. Such an homogenous distribution is unlikely to result simply from later disturbance.

The House 1 area has a greater variety of artifact types represented, but this may simply be a reflection of the larger sample size from this house area over the others. Because of the uneven sample sizes and amount of excavation in each platform, the percentages of artifact categories are probably more representative, and these figures indicate homogenous distribution across the three platforms.

Given that substantial architecture is not clearly defined, and was perhaps not present in the early component, within house comparisons are not possible.

Fauna Distributions

Samples

Rick (1989:A-8) identified a total of 974 specimens, including two intrusive cow elements and two fish vertebrae that could not be identified further. These four elements were eliminated from my analysis. I have provenienced and listed the remaining 970 identified elements in Appendix 2. One hundred eleven of the identified elements could not be provenienced to component, reducing the total NISP (number of identified specimens) in Table 5 to 859. I assigned elements to a component based on the level (lot) they were provenienced to, except for specimens c12, c25b, 21, 32, 137 and 139. These were recovered from lot (level) 5, feature 1 in unit 1a. The top, or origin of this pit feature is in level 3 or 4 (MacDonald 1989:35, 37), and its fill probably belongs with the upper component. MacDonald (1989:37) believes the fill from this feature originated

Table 5. NISP per House and Component.

	House 1		House 2		House 3		House 4		House 5		Total	
Species	Lev 1-4 &f.1	Lev 5-6	Lev 1-4	Lev 5-6	Lev 1-4	Lev 5-11	Lev 1-4	Lv 5	Lev 1-4	Lev>4	Lev 1-4	Lev 5-11
Mammal												
Hare	276	56	31		13	4	2		5		327	60
wdch/mar	4				2						6	
Beaver	14	14	2	1	3	1	1		3		23	16
Porcupine	12	4									12	4
Beav/porc		1										1
Bear	26	11	4								30	11
Martin		1										1
Total	332	87	37	1	18	5	3		8		398	93
Bird												
Loon									1		1	
Duck									1		1	
Eagle	1										1	
Grouse/ptr	29	4							1		30	4
Total	30	4							3		33	4
Fish												
Oncorhync	3								2		5	
Salmonin	163	3	42		29	37	16	2	33		283	42
Coregonin	1										1	
Total	167	3	42		29	37	16	2	35		289	42
Total NISP	529	94	79	1	47	42	19	2	46	0	720	139

from the House 1 hearth. No other faunal elements are provenienced to pit features.

Three major classes of fauna comprise the Kitwanga assemblage: mammal, bird and fish. Bird elements are only represented in Houses 1 and 5, and are therefore not shown in the following series of spatial comparisons.

Late Component Interhouse Comparisons

Figure 11 compares the proportions of mammal and fish remains in each house. Faunal remains in Houses 4 and 5 are predominantly fish, particularly salmon which is abundant locally. Houses 2 and 3 have smaller majorities of fish. House 1 stands out with twice as much mammal as fish. This interhouse distribution has a chi square value of 67.87, phi=.099, p=<.001.

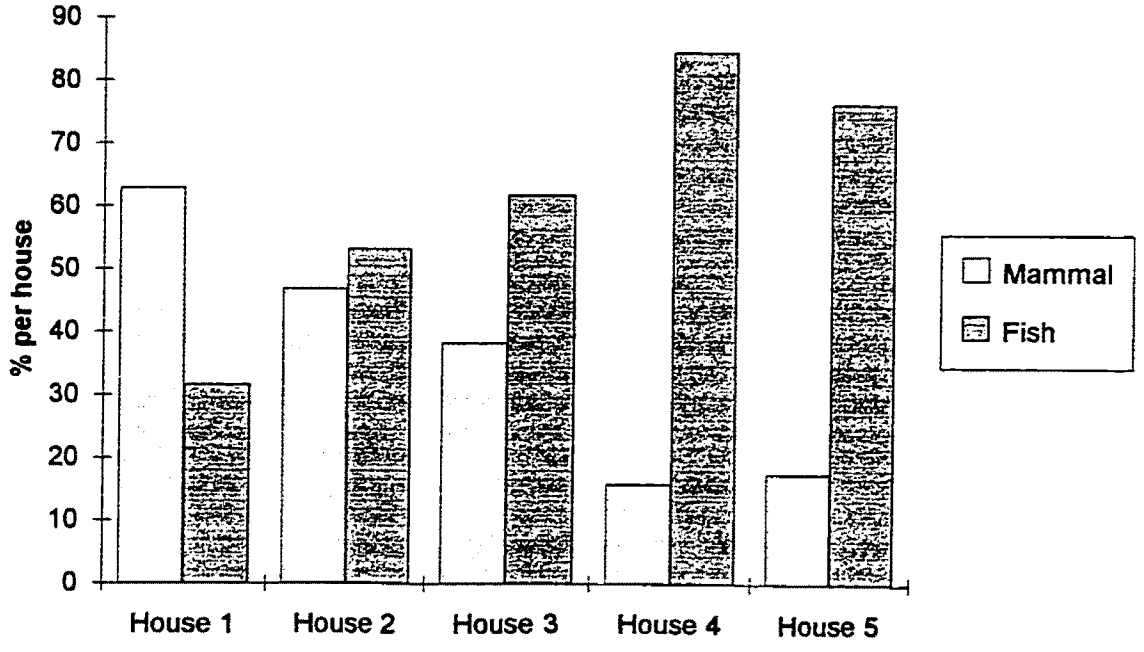

Figure 11. Percentage of Mammal and Fish Remains per House in the Late Component.

Interpreting the cultural significance of faunal distributions can be very difficult due to many possible biasing factors of preservation, and the complicated activities contributing to site formation. The greater quantity of mammal elements in House 1 may mean that house's occupants had a more varied diet than the other houses. It may also have been a location of public feasting involving a greater variety of food stuffs. House 1 also had a greater array of species represented (including birds) than the other houses, which is further suggestive of a more varied diet.

It is also worth noting that, with the exception of porcupine, all of the mammal species represented are fur bearing creatures (Table 5). Hare and beaver pelts, in particular, were frequent items of exchange at Fort Kilmaurs according to Ross' journal (Ross 1825). This could indicate a more important role for House 1 in trade.

Some of the species represented in House 1 are relatively exotic, including bear, eagle and coregoninae (whitefish, a lake fish). The procurement, display, or consumption of these species may have carried some prestige. The bear bones are all foot elements, which may have survived as parts of bear pelts, or robes (Rick 1989:A-8). Interestingly, bear robes are frequent items of Gitksan chiefly regalia, and chief Nekt is reputed to have owned a bear robe suit of armour (MacDonald 1989:7).

After House 1, mammal elements are most frequent in House 2, followed by House 3. These houses may also have had a role in the trade of furs, and the consumption of a somewhat varied diet. House 2 is the only house other than House 1 with exotic (bear) species represented. There is, however, little difference in the faunal assemblages of Houses 2 and 3.

The House 4 and 5 assemblages, while small, are dominated by locally available fish (salmon). They have few fur bearing mammal remains, and no exotic species, though this lack of variety could be a function of sample size.

House 1 may have had a more varied diet, access to exotic /prestigious species, and a more important role in fur trading. Houses 2 and 3 seem to have been lower in status in these regards, and Houses 4 and 5 appear lowest on this scale. However, interpretations of the relative standings of the houses based on faunal distributions should be considered tentative, since the observed patterning could have been affected by the sequence of house abandonment, which is not unequivocally known. In particular, the abundance of mammal elements in House 1 could have resulted if this house was abandoned first, and then used as a disposal and/or processing area for animal remains by the other houses. This activity would have to be systematic, primarily involving fur-bearing mammals, in order to produce the marked patterning shown in Figure 11. Given the mess involved in processing mammals, the site's occupants may well have preferred to perform this activity in an abandoned portion of the site. However, there is no independent evidence in either oral narratives, or the site stratigraphy to indicate that all five houses were not abandoned at once, and as was discussed above, MacDonald argued that the fort was destroyed upon Nekt's death. Further, Rick's faunal identification records indicate that nearly all of the beaver bones are leg and foot elements, as are most of the hare's (Rick n.d.) There are no identified ribs from these animals, and a few cervical vertebrae, suggesting that most of the initial processing may have been done off-site.

Late Component Intrahouse Comparisons

Assessing the cultural significance of the intrahouse distribution of faunal elements proved difficult. The faunal assemblages of most of the late component houses are too small to attempt intrahouse comparisons. There is also an overwhelming tendency for bones to occur in the middle/hearth areas of the houses.

In House 1, which has the largest assemblage, the bulk of the fauna (98%) was recovered from the middle section; and in the middle, mammal elements outnumber fish 2:1. This mirrors the overall breakdown of faunal classes in the house shown in Figure 11. This may reflect a high amount of processing, or consumption of fauna by the occupants of the middle section of the house. However, the near absence of faunal elements in the front and rear of the house cannot logically mean a lack of animal resources for the occupants of these house portions. It is more likely that factors of preservation and human activity account for the intrahouse distribution of faunal elements.

Again, if House 1 was abandoned first, one possibility is that its central depression/hearth area was used for animal disposal and processing by the other houses. However, the centres of the other houses also had a relative abundance of bone. Rick (1989:A-6) reported that most of the fauna at Kitwanga was recovered from the hearths of Houses 1 to 3, and that nearly all of the bone was calcined from exposure to fire. In the absence of charring, bone would not likely be well preserved in the acidic soils of the site. In addition, the hearths in the centres of the houses may have been general food cooking locations for all house occupants.

The ethnographic Gitksan also followed a custom of burning animal food remains in fire in the belief that the animal's soul would be reincarnated (K'san 1980:118). The hearth matrix at Kitwanga is described by MacDonald (1989:36) as containing solidified masses of charred bone. Samples of these fused bone blocks were collected by MacDonald, but were not analysed (Rick 1989:A-6). The high frequencies of bone in house centres is thus probably a factor of these being general areas of food preparation and deposition for their occupants, and having favourable conditions for preservation.

Early Component Horizontal Comparisons

In contrast to the artifacts, there is little difference between the two components in the proportions of animal classes represented: mammal, fish and bird elements occurring in descending order of abundance (Table 5). The importance of fur bearing mammals in the early component is consistent with my interpretation of it as a protohistoric occupation, but we do not see the same increase in importance over time in fur animals as is apparent for fur trade goods. When we examine the distribution of the faunal assemblages in the early component spatially, it is apparent that this pattern is really a reflection of two highly localized concentrations of bone.

The faunal assemblages in the early component of House Platforms 2, 4 and 5 are either non-existent, or are too small to be analysed spatially (Table 5). The House 1 and 3 platform faunal assemblages have a distribution that is similar to that of the late component, although exaggerated (Figure 12).

The House 1 area has much more mammal than fish bone, and House 3 has much more fish than mammal. The total assemblage of these two areas is small, but the pattern is statistically valid (X^2=97.39, phi=.737, p=<.001).

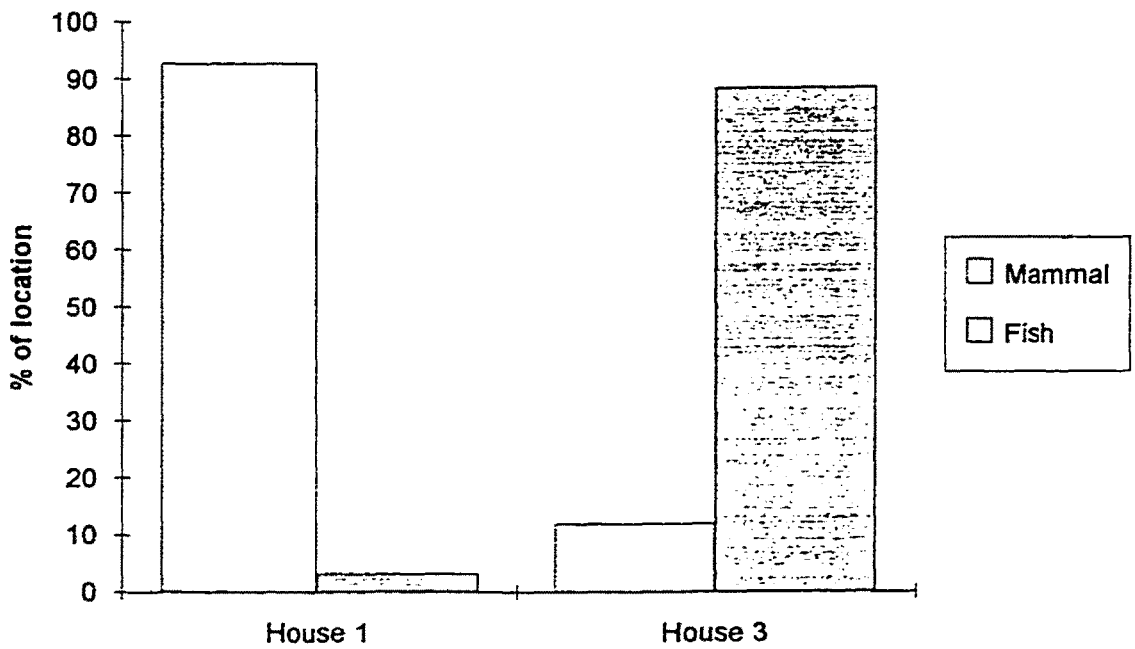

Figure 12. Horizontal Comparisons of Fauna in the Early Component.

The distribution of fauna in the early component is markedly different from the homogenous distribution of artifact categories. A closer examination of faunal proveniences shows even more discrete concentrations of bone. All of the House 1 faunal assemblage, except for one beaver element, is from two samples - #468 and #532 (Appendix 2). Rick's records indicate that both samples have the same grid provenience (south 3, east 14, level 6), and

therefore represent a single concentration of bone. These samples are not provenienced to a feature, but MacDonald (1989:60) does describe a large, possible cooking feature (feature 26) nearby at south 3, east 14.5-15.1, with charcoal and burned sand. Perhaps some factor of preservation, or localized processing or dumping activity accounts for this concentration of mammal bone.

The faunal assemblage in the House 3 area is comprised mostly of fish, and most of the fish is provenienced to various levels in unit 3a (Appendix 2). Again, these samples are not provenienced to a feature, but there may be some factor of preservation or human activity that accounts for this concentration of bone.

Uneven preservation and a tendency for animal processing and disposal activities to be localized probably affected the intrahouse distribution of bone in the late component, and similar factors may have exaggerated the pattern seen in the early component. There is a possibility that the differences between the bone assemblages in the House 1 and House 3 areas reflect a difference in the subsistence base (although a subsistence adaptation dependent on hare and virtually lacking salmon seems unlikely), or degree of involvement in fur trade of people occupying these portions of the site. However, in the absence of clear architectural indicators, it is impossible to delineate discrete areas of occupation by social groups in the early component. For these reasons, the significance of the early component faunal distribution is less clear than the artifact distribution, or the late component fauna.

Discussion

I have identified two temporal components at Kitwanga, separated by architectural differences and substantial differences in their artifact assemblages. Chi square tests of the artifact assemblage suggest the separation of components is valid, and admixture did not have a serious distorting effect. Both components are considered protohistoric, based on the proportions of artifact categories and the range of dates of manufacture on diagnostic goods.

The late component occupation included five houses. Making meaningful archaeological comparisons of house floor assemblages can be fraught with difficulty. A vast literature on 'household archaeology' identifies two main problems: delineating site formation processes, and equating social groups with physical structures. Many archaeological studies treat the social, political, economic and ideological organization of households as though they are synchronic phenomena that can be isolated in time; yet the archaeological record is diachronic, having been built up over years, and reflects phenomena produced over this time. This problem has been debated by Binford (1981), Schiffer (1985) and others (Reid and Whittlesey 1982; Ciolek-Torrello 1989; Smith 1992). Binford (1981) claims Schiffer treats house floors as Pompeii-like assemblages, reflecting a moment that can be disentangled, or undistorted from assemblage formation and alteration processes preceding and following it, and thus isolated in time. Schiffer (1985) levels the same accusation against Binford and his students who described prehistoric Pueblo social organization. An archaeological house floor assemblage is typically the product of a complex history of formation that can include numerous periods of abandonment,

remodelling, reoccupation, changes in function and several natural transformational processes (Ciolek-Torrello 1989; Schiffer 1985). Contrary to Binford's accusation, Schiffer (1985) believes that understanding how such cultural and natural site formation processes operate is more fruitful than isolating social organization.

This so-called Pompeii-premise debate fails to recognize that households themselves are not synchronic either, but fluctuate in size, composition, activities and prosperity - what has been termed the 'household cycle' (Goody 1972; Netting et al. 1984:xxiv). Ethnographic households are actually highly variable in behaviour, rules of residence and composition, and there is a growing debate over the efficacy of studying such social groups from archaeological remains (Wilk and Ashmore 1988:4; Hirth 1993:21; Netting et al. 1984). Some archaeologists claim to have developed refined chronological scales and entirely non-social units, such as 'homestead' (Hirth 1993) or 'household series' (Smith 1992), better suited to the analysis of domestic architecture. However, it is simpler for archaeologists to clearly distinguish between what they study and what they infer: between houses and associated internal and external features, artifacts and fauna; and the activities and social groups that produced patterning in these. In the present case, expectations derived from the recent ethnographic record are tested against a relatively recent archaeological assemblage to determine if historical social group types and behaviours (as regards correlates of rank) are in evidence. In addition, temporal resolution and site history are concerns in any archaeological study, but attention to dating and stratigraphy can demonstrate broad contemporaneity between residential structures.

Even more importantly, the questions asked of these structures need not hinge upon fine scaled contemporaneity, but can instead focus on trends.

At Kitwanga, the site formation history is not entirely clear. Houses 4 and 5, at the ends of the hill, may have been built slightly later than Houses 1 to 3. The locations of Houses 1 to 3, however, do not seem to have been shifted to accommodate Houses 4 and 5: the hearths of all houses are located in the centre of their house platforms, and do not overlap other features. Instead, there is evidence for a small amount of landscaping and the construction of stilts to make room for Houses 4 and 5. We cannot be certain, but MacDonald (1984b:9) suggests that the site was destroyed suddenly in an attack, and there is no evidence for a staggered sequence of house abandonment. I therefore assume that for most of the late component Houses 1 to 5 were occupied as they are, and my interhouse comparisons are made on this gross level with the acknowledgement that the faunal distribution could be affected if abandonment were uneven. The extant artifact and faunal assemblages and architectural details do not warrant or permit a more fine-grained splitting of the late component.

My discussion of the intrahouse distributions does try to account for taphonomic processes, and is therefore more tentative. In particular, there is a possibility that the central hearths were a general activity focus and had good conditions for faunal preservation.

Based on the above distributional analyses, I argue there are good indications of unequal access to European trade goods between houses in the late component. The house identified as belonging to chief Nekt (House 1) had unique architectural features and the highest proportion of trade goods, perhaps

reflecting his control of this resource and high status for his house. Houses 2 and 3 had lesser proportions of trade goods and may have been equal to each other in rank; and House 4 had a predominance of indigenous artifacts, a precarious physical location on the hill, and, by inference, a low rank.

The interhouse distribution of fauna in the late component shows a similar pattern. House 1 had the most fur bearing mammals, the greatest variety of species and more exotics than the other houses. I suggest its occupants enjoyed a more varied diet and a bigger role in the fur trade, both of which could be correlated with high social rank. As with the artifact distributions, Houses 2 and 3 are intermediate, but similar to one another, with lesser proportions of mammals and exotics; and the House 4 and 5 assemblages are dominated by locally available fish, suggesting limited involvement in the fur trade and a relatively low rank.

Houses 1 and 3 have significant within-house differences in the distribution of trade goods, suggesting unequal access to imported items among household members. This pattern also conforms to both ethnographic expectations of spatial organization, and models of competition between elites for control of European goods during the protohistoric period. However, the intrahouse distribution of fauna may reflect factors of uneven preservation, or a tendency to use the central hearth as a general animal preparation and disposal area. Faunal distributions are therefore not convincingly associated with intrahouse social differences.

In the early component, the spatial distribution of European and indigenous goods across the site is undifferentiated. While sample sizes in this component are small, the homogenous distribution of European goods is

dramatically different from the late component, and is not likely the result of random disturbance. In contrast, the horizontal distribution of faunal classes in the early component is uneven. The bulk of the early component faunal assemblage comes from two highly localized concentrations in the House 1 and House 3 platforms. The relative abundance of mammal, especially hare and beaver, in the House Platform 1 concentraion, may mean a greater involvment in the fur trade for a group using this part of the site. However, what European goods were brought to the site as a result of trade during this phase of occupation seem to have been evenly distributed. Unfortunately, unequivocal evidence for the locations of social groups (houses) is lacking. What can be said with confidence is that the strict restrictions on access to European goods operating in the late protohistoric period are not in evidence in the initial protohistoric period. Further, a comparison of artifact distributions between the two components shows a marked increase in spatial differentiation over time that may have been related to an increase in social differentiation.

The greatest difference between the components is in intensity of occupation. The late component consists of five relatively large multi-family dwellings with abundant storage features, squeezed into a small, possibly palisaded area. The early component has refuse and storage features, but was much less intensely occupied. The attraction of the hill in both phases of occupation was probably defence and trade, but these seem to have been much more important in the late component. The shift in the importance of the fort, accompanied by the appearance of marked spatial differentiation in the distribution of trade goods and faunal classes within the settlement conforms to the model of European trade contributing to the expansion of social competition.

Interestingly, the late component architecture, artifact and faunal distributions can be articulated with or predicted from oral traditions describing Nekt's campaigns for power and booty, and his role in regional trade (Barbeau 1929; Barbeau and Beynon 1987b; MacDonald 1984a). Oral traditions cannot as easily explain the early component. Oral traditions do not speak of the development of social practices. In oral traditions, Nekt and the other Gitwangak chiefs were of high status from the outset, and the acquisition of additional crests is recounted (Barbeau 1929). The chiefs of oral tradition may actually be amalgams of several generations of people holding a title. By examining the material correlates of social inequality diachronically, I feel that archaeology makes a contribution to the history of the Gitksan independent of oral traditions. Instead of forcing a static ethnographic present unto the past, a developmental history emerges of settlement, competition and power. This theme will be pursued further in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER 4

REGIONAL SETTLEMENT PATTERN

Introduction

In chapter three I argued that unequal access to European goods was evident in the late protohistoric component at Kitwanga, but not earlier, and that European trade contributed to social competition and differentiation. In this chapter evidence for related processes operating upon regional settlement pattern and social systems is examined. Various models synthesised in chapter one suggest a late up-river expansion of the Tsimshian social system, accompanied by violent competition and strict control of trade. The ethnographic Tsimshian and Gitksan social systems are closely tied to a distinctive settlement pattern characterized by permanent villages with seasonal resource extraction camps distributed throughout well defined local group territories. This pattern of movement tends towards what Binford (1980) calls logistical hunting and gathering. If protohistoric trade and competition contributed to the development of the Northwest Coast culture on the Upper Skeena, we could expect to see, archaeologically, a rapid spread of this settlement system, and an orientation of permanent settlements and forts towards the junctions of trade routes.

In the following pages, I present archaeological settlement pattern data from the Skeena and Nass Valleys and their tributaries from the pre-contact and post-contact eras. The focus of my study is the protohistoric Upper Skeena, but because a diachronic perspective is necessary to understand protohistoric

change, and the processes discussed here occurred over a broad scale, the upper and lower portions of both the Nass and Skeena are examined and compared over time.

Methods, Data and Rationale

The settlement pattern data used in this study were derived from three main sources: 1) the Archaeology Branch of British Columbia's site registry (CHIN) data base; 2) an inventory of archaeological sites in the Upper Skeena compiled by the Gitksan-Wetsuweten tribal council for land claim research (Albright 1987); and 3) my own surface survey of the Kitwanga Valley (Prince 1996).

The use of extant site inventory records imposes limitations on the distinctions that can be drawn between types of sites. The information provided in the Archaeology Branch data base is often cursory, providing only details of site location and the investigator's assignment of a type (e.g., village, cultural depression/cache pit, lithic scatter etc.). Where available, unpublished field reports and original site record forms and maps were consulted in search of additional information and clarification for the assignment of a type. The Gitksan-Wetsuweten inventory is even more cryptic, providing only locations and site types, except for those sites investigated and mapped by Albright (1987) in detail.

Based on what is most reliably recorded in site inventories, I have employed a crude site typology. The extant information permitted me to define: 1) villages with surface evidence of houses; 2) large sites registered as villages based on excavated evidence of features, diverse refuse and middens;

3) villages with visible fortifications or defendable hilltop locations; 4) isolated house locations; 5) surface scatters of cultural material; and 6) cache pit depressions not clearly associated with a settlement.[1] Categories one and two were lumped together when plotted for ease of presentation, but the features identified above provide jusification for their classification as villages. Large surface scatters of cultural material that investigators called villages based on size alone are included in category five because they may represent repeated seasonal use (i.e., as fishing camps), rather than permanent occupation.

In the 1980s and 1990s, a large number of locations were registered with the Archaeology Branch as culturally modified tree (CMT) sites. These represent wide ranging resource extraction activities that have not yet been demonstrated by archaeologists to be associated with distinct settlements or groups of people. Because the significance of CMTs is ambiguous, I have neither enumerated nor plotted their occurrence in my study area.

The site types that I have categorized and plotted are those that are most informative of the degree of sedentism, importance of trade and organization of group territories. It is generally acknowledged (Carlson 1996:219; Matson and Coupland 1995:241; Ames 1994:217) that the best archaeological indicators of sedentism on the Northwest Coast are evidence of substantial, planned village sites. These are large settlements with diverse refuse, and ideally with architecture and storage. The presence of such villages on the Upper Skeena

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[1] The site type cultural depression/cache is often paired in the site record forms with other types (e.g., village or lithic scatter). Where this occurs, I have given the other category primacy in assigning a type because caches may represent only temporary storage, while the other types indicate more substantial activity.

may be the best evidence of Northwest Coast culture in the area. Further, if villages are found to occur in association with trade routes, and/or fortifications, support would be lent to the argument for inter-group competition outlined in chapter one. Most models of the origin of prehistoric social complexity on the Northwest Coast consider a high degree of sedentism to be an essential ingredient (Matson and Coupland 1995; Ames 1994), closely linked to the patchy nature of resource areas, primarily salmon fishing locales (Schalk 1977; Matson 1983). Sedentism is usually considered a deliberate effort to control access to such resources (Coupland 1988b) or a logical result of heavy reliance upon them (Cannon 1991). I would suggest that trade routes, or key points along them, can also be thought of as resource areas, that could best be exploited or controlled by establishing permanent settlements along them - particularly villages and fortresses.

Smaller sites lacking evidence of a diverse array of activities, such as lithic scatters, groups of cache pits and small isolated house sites, are usually regarded as seasonal, or specific purpose sites (Haggarty 1982; Mackie 1986). Depending on their temporal and cultural context, these less substantial sites may represent the activities of small groups of mobile hunter-gatherers, or the forays of people having permanent settlements elsewhere. Therefore, for much of the spatial and temporal analysis presented below, a simple comparison is made between the occurrence of these less substantial sites, and larger, more permanent settlements (villages and forts).

In addition to information on site type, extant inventories usually make a broad temporal assignment. In the absence of diagnostic materials and dated samples, sites lacking surface evidence of historic refuse are usually considered

pre-contact, and sites having European goods are considered post-contact. The protohistoric period, which saw the continuance of lithic technology and the introduction of European goods, is blurred by this distinction. However, as I argue further below, the differences between pre-contact and post-contact settlement patterns are likely indicative of transitions occurring in the intermediate protohistoric period. In my analysis, sites known to be protohistoric (such as the Kitwanga Fort), are included in the post-contact group.

The regional settlement pattern data are presented in a series of maps showing the distribution of settlement types for the pre-contact and post-contact eras relative to major trade routes. The positions of grease trails correspond roughly to river drainages and were derived from MacDonald (1987, 1989) and MacDonald et al. (1987). This information and the crude temporal distinction between prehistoric and historic were used to form an impression of the influence of European trade upon settlement strategies and social systems. An inventory of sites used in the study, including the sources of my information is presented in Appendix 3.

Regional Surveys

Previous Surveys

Although no single survey project has encompassed the entire Skeena or Nass drainage, large portions of both river systems have been covered by various cultural resource management and research surveys. The first of these surveys was conducted by Smith in the 1910s-20s in association with the Canadian National Railway (Inglis and MacDonald 1979:9). MacDonald (1967) conducted a brief reconnaissance of portions of the Skeena and lower Babine

rivers in Gitksan territory in 1966. Ames (1971) continued survey on the Skeena, intending to define prehistoric Gitksan territory. These initial projects were highly judgemental and the sites found were mostly large.

From the 1970s to 1990s a number of surveys were conducted along stretches of the Upper Skeena and its tributaries that were threatened with development as transportation and communication corridors (e.g., McMurdo 1975a; St. Pierre 1974; Irvine 1980; Acheson 1977; Montgomery 1981; Carlson and Bussey 1990; Simonsen 1989; Zacharias and Eldridge 1990) or logging (Eldridge 1989). Recent surveys on the Upper Skeena have also been conducted to trace Native land use patterns (Richards 1981), and to identify particular prehistoric settlement locations in preparation for land claim cases (Albright 1987; Inglis 1976). The Lower Skeena has received similar survey coverage starting with work by MacDonald (Inglis and MacDonald 1979); various corridor impact assessments (Mackie 1986; Archer 1984); Native land use inventories (Archer 1987); and academic research (Martindale 1997). Survey on the Nass, however, has been very sparse (Carlson 1977; St. Pierre 1974; Hanson 1973; McMurdo 1975b; Bussey 1988). The Nass sites are included here to illustrate the geographic connections of settlements and the extent of historical processes.

Most of the Skeena projects in the 1980s and 90s intensively and systematically covered the corridor under consideration. Earlier survey reports, however, sometimes do not describe their methodology or the area covered. A notable example is McMurdo's survey of the Kitwanga Valley (McMurdo 1975a). The methodology employed by McMurdo is not clear, but it seems that only major settlements, historically or currently known, were recorded and/or visited.

Some sites were registered based on Native testimony and were not observed first hand.

While making a preliminary assessment of registered site distributions in the Upper Skeena region, I noted a marked temporal contrast in the number of villages and their positions relative to trade routes (Prince 1995). The Kitwanga Valley, in particular, appeared to have no settlement prior to the establishment of the hill fort near its mouth, and Gitanyow at its headwaters. Since the Kitwanga Valley figures largely in models of the protohistoric period as a trade route to Alaska, and as a base of operation for an ambitious chief, I felt that more survey was warranted to test the validity of this pattern.

The Kitwanga Valley Survey

The Kitwanga River flows southward to join the Skeena approximately 170 km inland from the sea. The Kitwanga River's headwaters are a small creek which drains a large swamp southward into Kitwanga Lake (Figure 13). The Cranberry River drains the same swampy area northward to the Nass River. Together, the Kitwanga and Cranberry Rivers occupy a broad trough between the Nass and Kispiox Ranges which served prehistorically, as it does today, as a major transportation route between the Skeena and Nass Valleys.

Kitwanga Lake discharges at its south end into the Kitwanga River which flows 30.5 km to the Skeena. For a distance of approximately nine km below the lake the Kitwanga River is shallow, with a swampy flood plain. Below its confluence with Kitwancool Creek, the Kitwanga River becomes gradually faster, deeper and meandering, with steep valley walls and more terrace development. Erosion is very active in the lower 16.5 km of the river. For purposes of

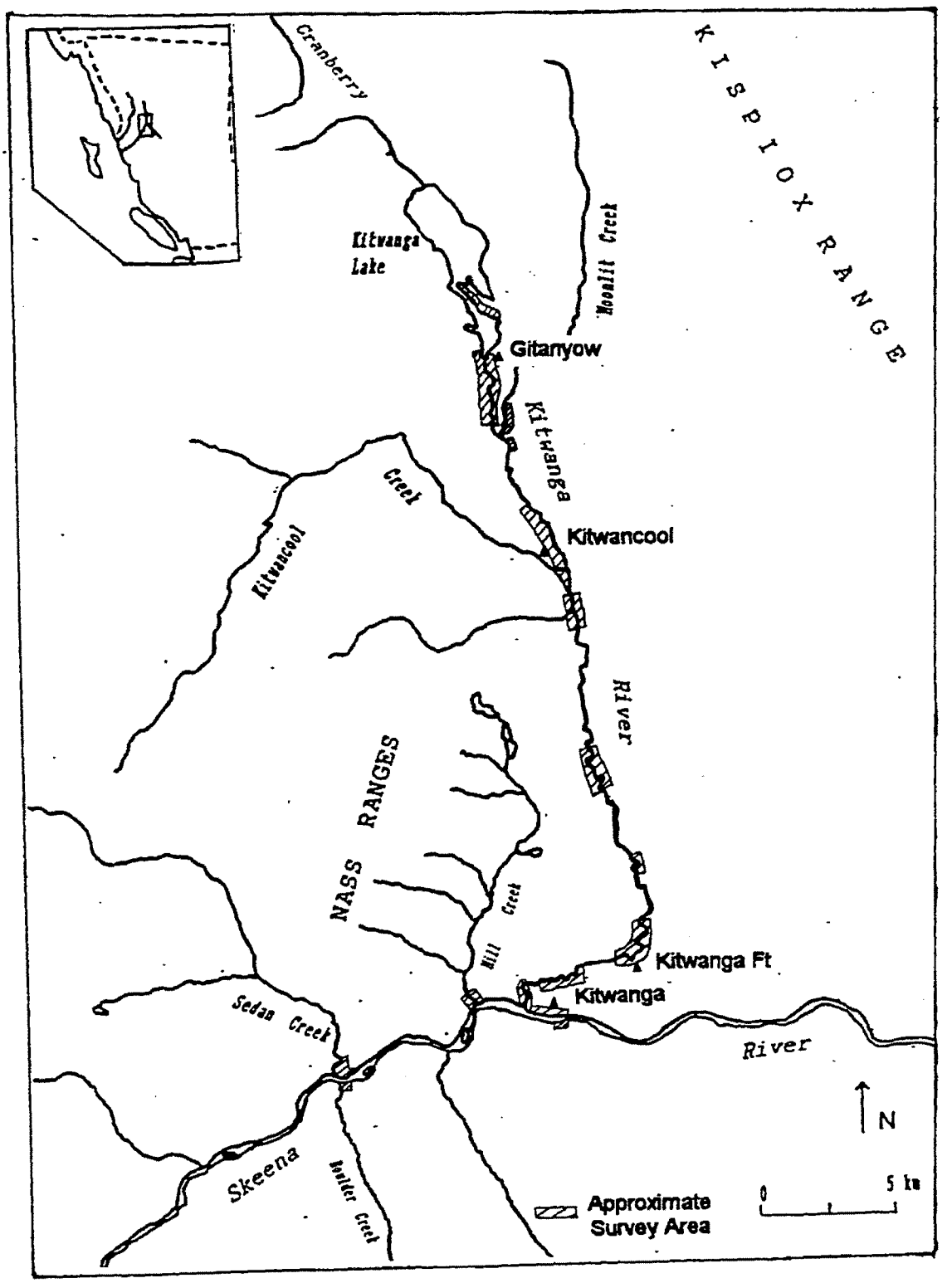

Figure 13. Survey Coverage in the Kitwanga Valley.

discussion, I divide the Kitwanga River into Upper and Lower portions at about Kitwancool Creek.

Biogeographically, the Kitwanga Valley occupies the boundary between the Coastal Western Hemlock and Interior Cedar Hemlock biotic zones (MacKinnon et al. 1992). There is also important biotic variation with elevation represented. The result is a diversity of micro-environments and plant life along the length of the valley. Most notably, the Kitwanga River sees extremely large runs of pink salmon, and large runs of sockeye, coho, chum and chinook relative to other tributaries of the Upper Skeena (DFO n.d.).

At the time of contact with Europeans, the Kitwanga Valley was occupied by two distinct groups of Gitksan speakers: the Gitwangak and Gitanyow bands. Today, the Gitwangak live in the village of Kitwanga, near the confluence of the Kitwanga and Skeena Rivers (Figure 13). Their territory includes the Lower Kitwanga River to the Skeena, and a portion of the Skeena to the east and west (MacDonald et al. 1987:pl. 13). The Gitanyow band currently lives in the village of Kitwancool (Gitwinlquol), near the confluence of Kitwancool Creek and the Kitwanga River. Their territory includes the Upper Kitwanga River, and extends up the Cranberry Valley and into the Nass River system (MacDonald et.al 1987:pl. 13; Duff 1959).

The goals, methods and empirical results of the Kitwanga Valley Survey were described in detail in a report to the BC Archaeology Branch (Prince 1996). Survey was conducted over four weeks in August of 1995 with a three person crew. A comprehensive heritage resource inventory of the valley was beyond the scope and resources of this project. The primary objective of the survey was to determine whether there were prehistoric villages in the Kitwanga Valley, or

immediate vicinity, and their relationship to trade routes, as their presence would cast doubt on the origins of a sedentary Northwest Coast settlement strategy in the area being related to protohistoric trade. A lesser goal was to form an impression of the representativeness of extant settlement distribution data in the Archaeology Branch site registry files.

Given the logistical constraints of a small crew, limited funding and short period for investigation, as well as the narrow research focus, a judgemental sampling strategy was employed. The following types of areas were given priority for investigation:

1) Historic village locations, namely Kitwanga (GgTa 2), Kitwancool (GhTa 1), and Gitanyow (GiTa 1), were investigated for evidence of major pre-contact occupation.

2) Locations identified by Native and EuroCanadian informants as ancient village/settlement locations. This led to inspection of locations on the Skeena near to the mouth of the Kitwanga River.

3) Confluences of major tributary streams with the Kitwanga River were investigated for signs of fishing stations or settlements utilizing the resources of tributaries as might be expected from Cove's (1982) ethnographic model of Gitksan land use and settlement (see chapter 2).

4) Locations well suited for fishing stations, such as sets of rapids with bedrock outcrops along the shore suitable for dip-netting from, or major constrictions in the waterway. Fishing stations have been known to change in function and intensity of settlement (as at Hagwilget Canyon, GhSv 2 (Ames 1979b)).

5) Ancient river terraces deemed suitable for habitation by virtue of being level and high enough to avoid flooding, yet reasonably close to the river (within

approximately 40 m).

6) Other stretches of the Kitwanga River bank that were accessible were inspected as time permitted.

Archaeological sites were located by surface inspection only. One person was deployed to walk along the river bank, inspecting erosional faces for exposed artifacts or buried cultural strata. Two people were deployed to walk transects on the terrace or floodplain above the river, inspecting the surface for artifacts, and cultural depressions. In open ground, where visibility was good, these transects were 10 m apart, while in dense undergrowth, they were 5 m apart. Areas of high potential, such as broad level terraces, were covered in detail, with several transects being passed over them, moving progressively inland from the water. Where archaeological materials or features were discovered, an intensive surface inspection was made radiating in all directions from the find to determine the limits of the site, and a soil probe was used to test for sub-surface deposits at roughly 5 m intervals. Wherever possible, modern human disturbances, such as bulldozer cuts, ploughing and building trenches, were inspected for surface exposure and the presence of artifacts and features.

Although the target of the survey was village sites, all site types encountered were recorded. Each site observed was mapped by chain and compass. Artifacts were <u>not</u> collected, but rather, sketched, measured and photographed in the field and returned to the context in which they were found.

The sampling strategy employed permitted coverage of all areas I judged to be of high potential for village locations according to the criteria discussed above. Approximately 17 linear km of the Kitwanga Valley bottom were inspected between the peninsula on Kitwanga Lake and the confluence with the

Skeena (Figure 13). The total length of the same area is approximately 32 km.

Particular attention was given to searching for prehistoric deposits in the vicinity of the historic villages of Kitwanga (GgTa 2), Kitwancool (GhTa 1) and Gitanyow (GiTa 1). A large amount of historic refuse was noted eroding from the Skeena River bank in front of Kitwanga, but no prehistoric material was found. A new band council office was being constructed on the terrace above the river in the area known to have had houses in the nineteenth century. Our inspection of the four foot deep foundation trenches and back-dirt revealed only historic refuse.

Careful inspection was made of approximately 3.5 km of river front in the vicinity of Kitwancool. Evidence of prehistoric occupation along the riverbank and nearest terraces was not visible, but late nineteenth century and early twentieth century refuse was in evidence in the area in front of the historic plank house village.

Gitanyow was described by McMurdo (1975a:8) as an historic village, at the outlet of Kitwanga Lake, on the east side of the river, having 6 cabins and a smokehouse. It was described by Duff (1959:31) as being ancestral to the modern village of Kitwancool, having been abandoned as a village after a series of wars with the Tsetsaut. The Hereditary Chief's Office of Kitwancool informed us that the standing remains of the village were recently destroyed by the Ministry of Forests, and that in ancient times, this community extended for several kilometres southward along the banks of the river. Our surface inspection in the area of GiTa 1 found no evidence of prehistoric occupation.

In addition to these historic village locations, approximately 9.5 km of river bank were inspected on the Lower Kitwanga, between the confluence with

Kitwancool Creek and the mouth of the Kitwanga River. This included inspection of three major sets of rapids and several broad terraces. Sites GgTa 6 (cache pits) and GgTa 8 (lithic scatter) were found in association with the terraces and rapids (Figure 14). Upstream from GgTa 8, for approximately 4.5 km, maps and aerial photographs indicate the valley sides are very steep and largely lacking in the types of topographic features targeted for survey. This area was not surveyed.

Approximately 6 km of river bank were inspected from the confluence of the Kitwanga River and the south branch of Kitwancool Creek, north to the outlet of Kitwanga Lake (Figure 13). One new non-CMT site was recorded - GhTa 6 (cache pits) (Figure 14). Much of this area proved to be very low-lying swampy land.

It was not possible to cover Kitwanga Lake in detail, nor necessary given the sampling strategy of the survey. The peninsula that juts northwestward into the lake and effectively divides it into two bodies of water was targeted for inspection, as the narrows at its tip offer an attractive fishing location. Thus, the south side of the peninsula, from its base to its tip was inspected. One habitation site, GiTa 2, was recorded. This is a small village with four circular pithouse depressions (Figure 15). The habitation depressions are nearly perfectly circular, with gently sloping sides (Table 6). A tree throw on the western rim of depression 1 revealed an apron of fire cracked rock, which is typical of pithouses.

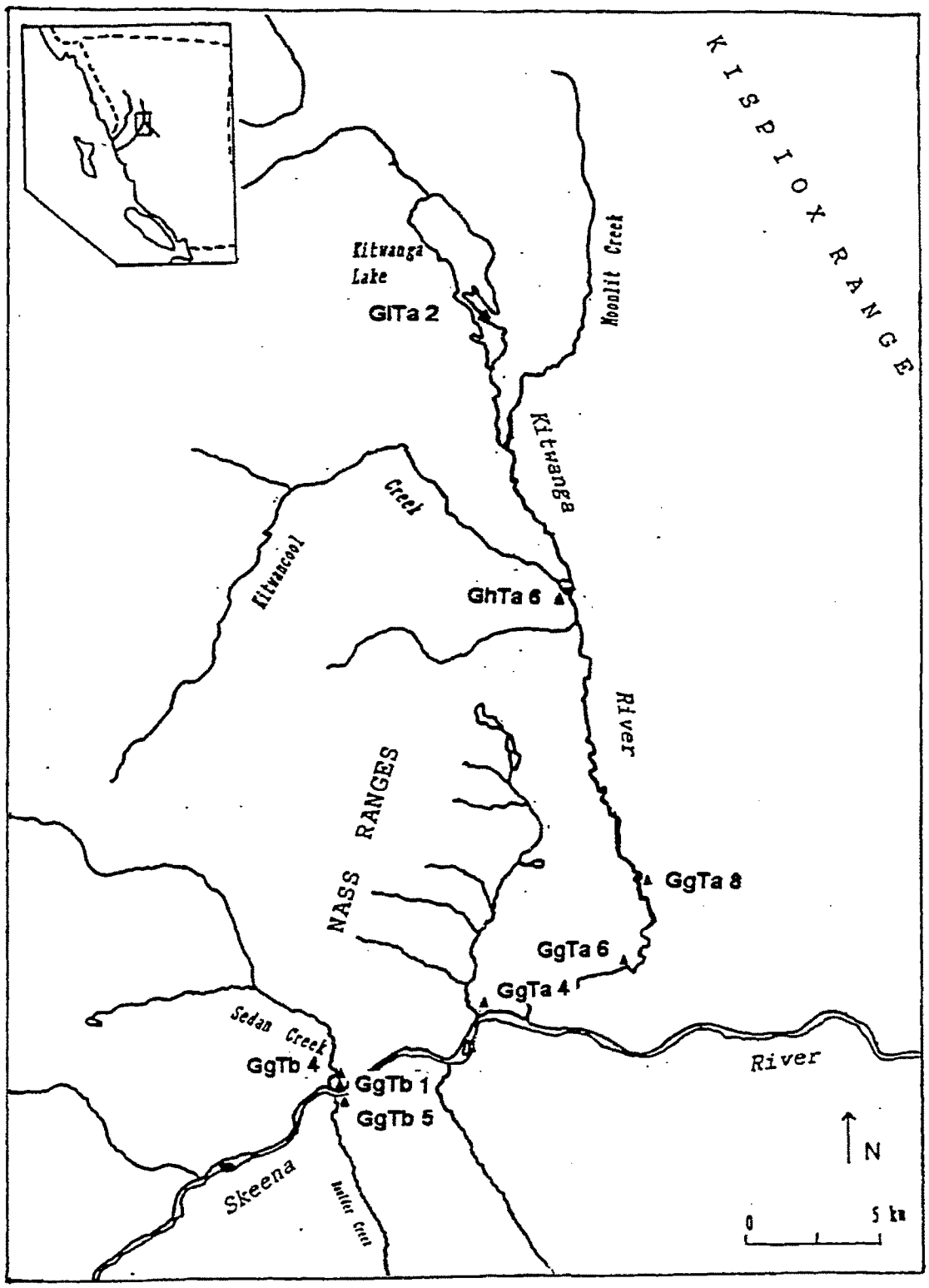

Figure 14. Map of non-CMT Sites Recorded in the Kitwanga Valley Survey.

Table 6. GiTa 2 Pithouse Depressions

Pithouse #	Diameter (m)	Depth (m)
1	6.1	1.6
2	10	2.3
3	6	1
4	6.3	1.5

Figure 15. Pithouse Depression 1 at GiTa 2.

Each depression was tested with the soil probe to a depth of 30 or 40 cm before encountering impenetratable roots and rock. The stratigraphy in the centre of each pit showed a layer of littermat and humus, followed by dense charred wood, ash, then fire reddened soil. This stratigraphy would be expected from a hearth or the superstructure of a pithouse that was burned. Soil probing between the houses did not encounter charcoal and ash, further suggesting that

the charred material in the depressions was cultural, rather than the result of a forest fire.

A sample of charred wood was collected from the soil probe in Pithouse 1 and was radiocarbon dated to 220 ± 90 BP, which intercepts the calibration curve at AD 1665 (Beta-88442). The 2 sigma calibrated range is AD 1470-1950; and there are three possible 1 sigma ranges: AD 1640-1695, AD 1725-1815, and AD 1920-1950. The 2 sigma range has the greatest probability (95%) of covering the age of this wood. This range can be narrowed by the association of relatively large cedar trees (up to 1.5 m in circumference) with the rims of the depressions. These trees post-date the occupation of the houses, and their sizes make a late nineteenth to twentieth century date of occupation unlikely. There are also no ethnographic observations of pithouse dwellings in the Kitwanga Valley. The early end of the 2 sigma range cannot be definitely ruled out, but a series of Gitanyow oral traditions that refer to protohistoric and early historic period conflicts with and the adoption of the Tsetsaut, an Athapascan group who used semi-subterranean houses, are provacative (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:25; Barbeau 1929:60-63). The site may be associated with these events (discussed in chapter 5). Further, there is no additional archaeological or ethnohistoric evidence for prehistoric pithouse dwelling in the area[2], which would make the appearance and abandonment of this site seem incongruous if it were placed within the early part of the 2 sigma range.

[2] Another probable pithouse (GeTe 6) is known closer to the coast in the Kitsumkalum Valley in Coast Tsimshian territory, but it is undated (Archer 1987). This site does not comprise a major settlement tradition, and may also prove to be related to interaction with and incorporation of Athapascans by Tsimshian. Archer (1987:35,195) suggests a depression at GdTd 15 may also be a house, but I believe it is too small (only 3.0 m in diameter by 0.4 m deep).

Although the charcoal sample from GiTa 2 probably represents cultural activity (a hearth or house fire), its precise stratigraphic context is unknown and we cannot be certain that it represents the full range of occupation in House 1, or of the other houses. Our probing failed to identify deep cultural deposits in the houses, or external middens, but earlier components could be present at the site. Given the two sigma range, there is as much probablity that the site was occupied in the protohistoric or early historic period, as there is that it was prehistoric, and I believe a protohistoric occupation can be supported by the oral traditions. But in the absence of material culture and a solid association for the dated sample, which can only be provided by excavation, my chronological placement of the site should be considered tentative.

Informants directed our attention to several locations on the Skeena in the vicinity of Kitwanga that were reputed to be village sites, including the mouths of Boulder Creek, Sedan Creek and Coyote Creek (Figure 14). The mouth of Mill Creek was inspected because an archaeological site was recorded there earlier by McMurdo based on Native testimony. Archaeological material and/or features were encountered in all of the above locations.

Summary of the Kitwanga Survey Results

The Kitwanga survey recorded a total of 10 new archaeological sites (including CMTs), and updated 2 others with new information (Table 7). A third previously recorded site (GgTc 1) was visited and new features noted, but it was not re-recorded. Eight of the sites recorded are in the Kitwanga Valley. Four (GgTa 7, GhTa 4, GiTa 3 and GhTa 6) only have CMTs, appear relatively recent in age, and lack signs of occupation or other activity. Two of the Kitwanga

Table 7. Non-CMT Sites Recorded in Kitwanga Survey.

Designation	Type	Arts & Fea	Location	Setting	Note
GgTa 6	Cache Pits	7 pits	Lower Kitwanga	Low terrace, near rapids	1st recording
GgTa 8	Scatter	1 chopper 1 utilized flake	Lower Kitwanga	High terrace, between rapids	1st recording
GhTa 6	Cache Pits	2 pits	Upper Kitwanga	Low terrace, confluence w Kitwancool Cr	1st recording
GiTa 2	Village	4 pit-houses	Kitwanga Lake	Peninsula, high above l.	1st recording
GgTa 4	Scatter; caches	1 cobble tool, 8 pits	Skeena/ Mill Cr	Terraces above Mill Cr, below gorge @ confluence	re-recorded, previously fish stn
GgTb 4	Scatter	1 anvilst. 1 cobble tool	Skeena/ Sedan Cr	Old channel below gorge @ confluence	1st recording
GgTb 1 Kitskahaws	Scatter; caches	1 st bowl, 1 spall, dozens of pits	Skeena/ Sedan Cr	Terrace & bluff top, above Skeena	re-recorded, severe erosion
GgTb 5	Cache Pits	21 pits	Skeena/ Boulder R	Terraces @ confluence	1st recording
GgTc 1/ Gitlusec	Cache Pits	>20 pits	Skeena/ Coyote Cr	Terraces @ confluence	re-visited,

Valley sites (GgTa 6 and GhTa 6) are small cache pit clusters which are undated and appear to represent limited fishing, storage or processing activities. Site GgTa 8 is associated with a set of rapids with foreshore bedrock exposures suitable for fishing from, and yielded two lithic artifacts. However, the lithics are neither temporally diagnostic, nor suggestive of major prehistoric occupation. In all, these sites represent repeated use, but not substantial settlement.

The remaining Kitwanga Valley site (GiTa 2) is the cluster of four circular pithouse depressions at the constriction of Kitwanga Lake. This is clear evidence of substantial occupation in the Kitwanga Valley, but the site is small and of a different architectural tradition than the historic Gitksan plank longhouse villages. Furthermore, the site is probably late. While its radiocarbon date is broad and from a loose provenience, and in the absence of artifacts it may be impossible to firmly assign the site an ethnic affiliation, its consistency with ethnohistoric details leads me to consider it an eighteenth or early nineteenth century Tsetsaut site. It may represent an earlier period during which the lake fell within Athapascan territory, but I feel it more likely reflects a stage in the movement of the Tsetsaut to nearby Gitanyow, which is only 2 km across the water and can be seen from GiTa 2. The relationship between the Tsetsaut and Gitanyow is further discussed in chapter five. Regardless of its precise chronological placement, the pithouse site represents a different form of settlement from that ethnographically known in the Kitwanga Valley, and is consistent the suggestion of changing settlement pattern and the late expansion of Northwest Coast culture.

Four sites were recorded at the mouths of large creeks where they meet the Skeena River downstream from Kitwanga. GgTa 4 and GgTb 4 are both

small sites. Neither is associated with level landforms large enough to accommodate a village, and both probably represent seasonal fish resource use. GgTb 1 and GgTb 5 are large, having numerous cache pits, and in the case of GgTb 1, lithic artifact finds. These sites are also very actively eroding and may represent remnants of much larger sites that could have included habitations. In the absence of houses and midden deposits, these sites cannot be considered villages, although one Gitksan informant claimed GgTb 1 was a village ancestral to Kitwanga (Dallen 1995 pers comm). Even if this were the case, it is still consistent with expectations of the historic sedentary settlement system diffusing up-river to important trade locations.

Coverage and Comparability of Surveys

The survey of the Kitwanga Valley gave priority to finding large sites - villages. Judging from known villages, these should be highly visible sites with abundant refuse (middens), house platforms, cache pits, hearths and perhaps smokehouses (Millennia 1995:39; 46; Mackie 1986). Historically known villages in the Kitwanga Valley, and throughout Gitksan territory, occur in predictable locations - valley bottoms on high, stable, well drained terraces, at a stream constriction, or a major confluence (Millennia 1995:39). These have also been considered the most logical kinds of places to look for prehistoric villages, and have been targeted as high potential by previous surveys in the Skeena Valley (Millennia 1995:47, 62: Mackie 1986:9). Using this strategy, small prehistoric and historic sites (caches and scatters) were visible in the Kitwanga Valley and in other surveys, but prehistoric villages remain poorly represented (see below).

Given the scope of the combined survey projects in the Skeena Valley, and the methods used, I feel that many areas of high potential for village sites have been covered, and the results are comparable. However, the Skeena and its tributaries are active river systems, and the Kitwanga survey demonstrated that a large amount of river bank erosion has occurred. This is undoubtedly a factor in site preservation. Some sites recorded in my survey, particularly on the Skeena, may be remnants of once larger sites. This may also be the case with sites recorded by other surveys on the Skeena. However, it is unlikely that erosion would systematically destroy all evidence of major habitations (villages), yet leave a wide array of smaller site types in remnant, or undisturbed contexts. Further, although there were likely exceptions to the rule, villages may have been situated towards high, stable (bedrock based) landforms to begin with to avoid problems of flooding and erosion (Mackie 1986). This is the case with the modern Gitksan villages of Kitseguecla, Kitwancool and Kisgegas (Albright 1987:26), and the Paul Mason archaeological site at Kitselas Canyon. Finally, where erosion is active, it can be beneficial to archaeologists in exposing deposits, as was the case in several instances in the Kitwanga survey. I therefore do not feel that either erosion or incomplete coverage have seriously biased archaeological survey results on the Skeena, and the settlement patterns discussed below are applicable to my questions concerning the once active settlement systems.

Pre-Contact Settlement Pattern

The distribution of known prehistoric archaeological sites in the study area is indicated in Figure 16. The sites shown on the map are not all contemporaneous. We can note, however, that prehistorically, some kinds of locations saw more use and activity than others.

The prehistoric settlement pattern indicates that canyons, such as the Kitsumkalum, Kitselas and Hagwilget canyons have a high density of sites. According to Millennia (1995:62), extant survey has recorded 17.3 sites/km^2 of area surveyed in Hagwilget Canyon, and 55 sites/km^2 in Kitselas. Most of these are classed as prehistoric cache pits, but also included are large village sites and several small surface scatters and houses.

Stream and river confluences appear to be other important locations, having caches, scatters and occasionally houses. These may be the remains of fishing camps oriented towards salmon runs up side drainages. A few of the major confluences with the Skeena and Nass, like Kitsumkalum, Tseax, and Kitseguecla also have permanent settlements. Interestingly, these are the only nodes of grease trails with village settlements. These sites are not, however, fortified.

Only one site is classified as a fort, site GdTc 11 in Kitselas canyon. Irvine (1980) reported that six to nine prehistoric house platforms were present, but a map of the site is not included in either her report, or the site record form (Foster 1996, pers comm). A re-survey of the area for Parks Canada in 1981 (Mackie 1986:25) classed the site (re-designated GdTc Kw 4) as a 'small village' with six house platforms. Irvine's original classification of the site as a 'refuge' was based on its defendable location (atop a terrace 25 m above the Skeena on

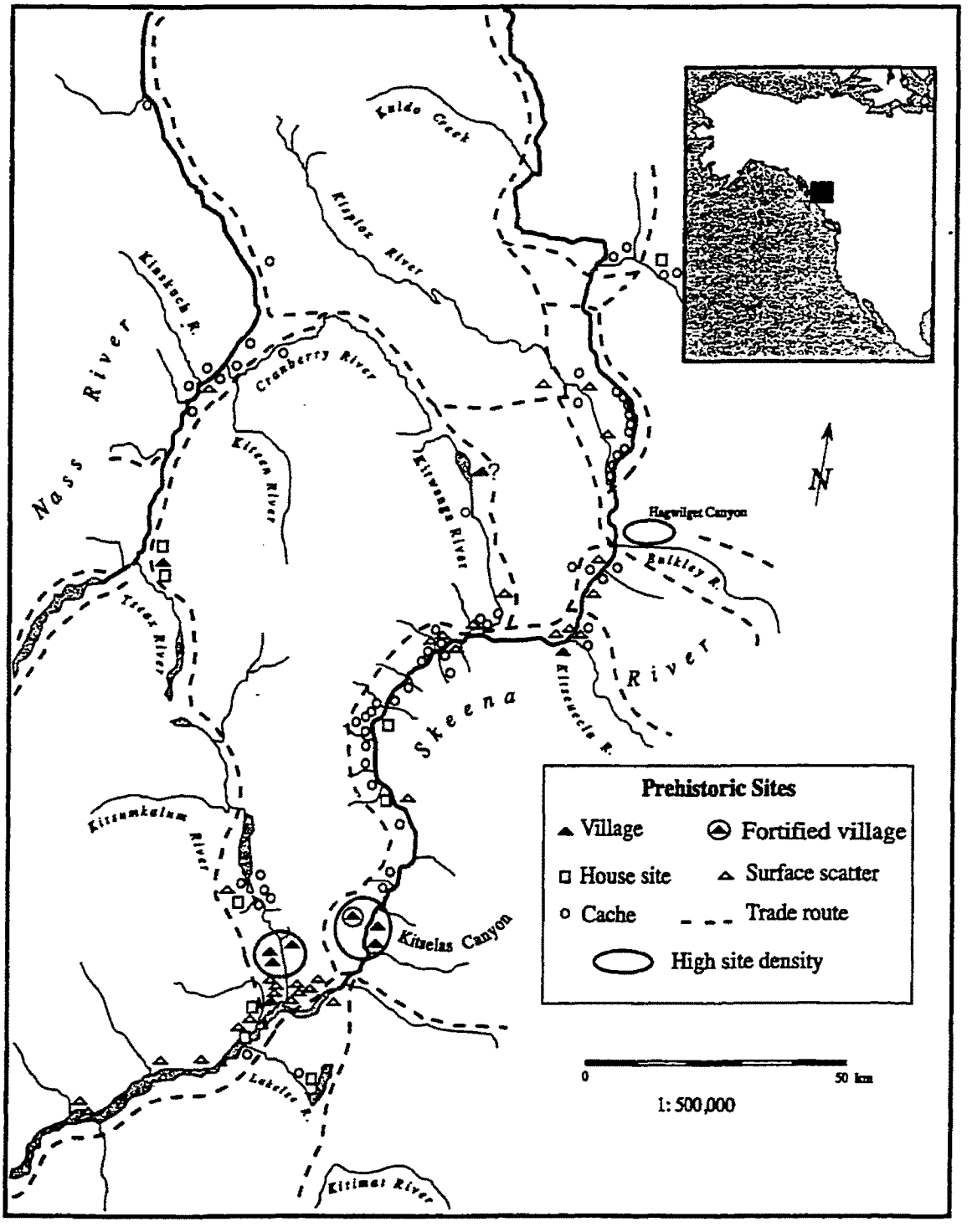

Figure 16. The Distribution of Pre-Contact Sites in the Skeena Valley

a point of land), and Native testimony. For my purposes, this classification stands.

There is a notable difference between the prehistoric settlement pattern of the Upper and Lower Skeena. Only one prehistoric site (GgSw 2) above Kitselas Canyon can be clearly considered a village according to the above criteria; as opposed to seven prehistoric villages at or below Kitselas. Two large surface scatters near Kitseguecla (GgSw 3 and GgSw 4), on the Upper Skeena, are registered in the site records as villages based on their size, but they lack recorded evidence of architecture or middens (Foster 1996, pers comm), and are not included as villages here. Site GhSv 2 at Hagwilget Canyon is also registered as a prehistoric village. As discussed in chapter two, it has evidence of large hearths, storage pits with mammal and salmon remains, and a diverse artifact assemblage approximately 3500 years old, but lacks definite signs of permanent architecture (post molds) (Ames 1979b). Ames (1979b:210) offered no classification for this component, only describing it as a 'relatively intense' occupation, but Coupland (1988b:126) called it a 'base camp', and further, considers the later Paul Mason Site house depressions (3200-2700 BP) at Kitselas Canyon to be the earliest known village on the Northwest Coast (Matson and Coupland 1995:183). Given the presently equivocal nature of our understanding of the degree of sedentism and settlement form that may be represented by the early component at GhSv 2, I have not classified it as a village here.

The Kitwanga Lake pithouse site (GiTa 2) may also belong to the prehistoric period and is indicated with a question mark on Figure 16. Regardless of its chronological placement, this type of structure is

ethnographically associated with interior Athapaskans who had a more mobile settlement strategy than Northwest Coast cultures.

Descriptions and site maps of the remaining Upper Skeena village, GgSw 2, immediately adjacent to modern Kitseguecla, indicate three rectangular house depressions and substantial midden deposits of two to three feet (Ames 1971). This form of settlement is consistent with the ethnographic Northwest Coast, but the site seems to belong very late in the prehistoric period, and is small in comparison to historic villages. Ames (1971) estimates it represents prehistoric to recent occupation (my emphasis). It is also very near to the locations of the modern and nineteenth century villages of Kitseguecla. This suggests to me that it may be an immediately earlier (late prehistoric or protohistoric) stage in the development of Kitseguecla. There is, therefore, no evidence for a lengthy tradition of substantial settlement on the Upper Skeena.

There is also a noticeable clustering of smaller sites around villages in the Lower Skeena in a pattern suggestive of movements from a permanent base, while small sites on the Upper Skeena, outside of Hagwilget Canyon, are widely scattered. It should be noted, however, that cache pits are by far the most numerous sites on the Upper Skeena (Appendix 3). Cache pits tend to be automatically classed as prehistoric when historic goods or structures are absent, but some of these sites may in fact be historic. In addition, the climate of the Lower Skeena is considerably wetter, and caching food in the ground may have been simply impractical. For these reasons, comparisons of the numbers of small sites on the Upper and Lower Skeena may not be significant. Nonetheless, the scarcity of villages on the Upper Skeena, and the abundant

and widely scattered nature of less permanent sites, does suggest a significantly different settlement system, perhaps oriented towards greater mobility.

The prehistoric settlement pattern of the Nass, although more sparsely surveyed, shows a pattern similar to the Skeena. A cluster of prehistoric villages occurs near the mouth of the Nass (Appendix 3), and scattered, less substantial settlements are known from above Tseax junction.

Post-Contact Settlement Pattern

The post-contact settlement distribution (Figure 17) shows there are fewer surface scatters, probably reflecting the much shorter temporal duration of the historic period, and fewer cache sites, partially reflecting the tendency to classify these as prehistoric. The distribution of these small sites, along with house sites, reflects the continued importance of confluences and side drainages as resource procurement and processing locales. Additionally, the distribution of camps can be linked ethnographically to local groups maintaining permanent residences at villages as part of a pattern of seasonal household movements. For instance, sites up the Cranberry, Kiteen and Upper Nass rivers are claimed as fishing and hunting camps by households at Kitwancool (Duff 1959).

Kitselas and Hagwilget canyons continued to be important locales in the historic period, and a group of villages was also situated near to Canyon City on the Nass. Notably, the Kitsumkalum Canyon villages, and one downstream from the confluence with the Skeena were abandoned, and replaced by a single village closer to the confluence and the junction of the Kitsumkalum and Skeena grease trails. The Kitsumkalum move occurred by the mid-nineteenth century

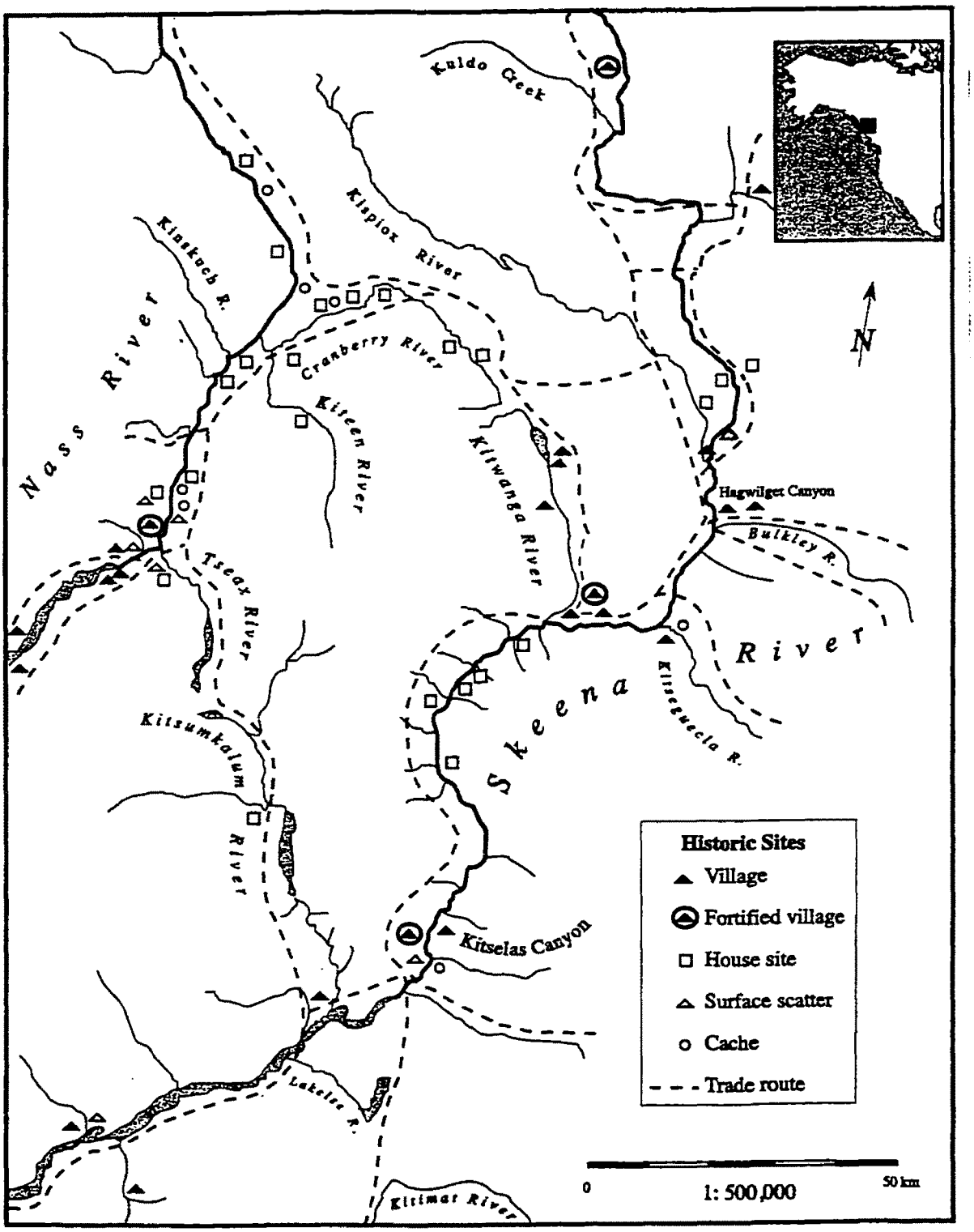

Figure 17. The Distribution of Post-Contact Sites in the Skeena Valley.

(Archer 1987:58), and may have been motivated by a desire to access trade in European goods along the Skeena.

Most importantly for this thesis, there are more villages upstream historically. There are nine registered archaeological post-contact and protohistoric village sites above Kitselas Canyon (ten if GiTa 2 is included), and an additional two ethnographically and currently occupied villages (Kitseguecla and Gitenmaks), which are also plotted in Figure 17 (see also Table 8). The increased number of post-contact settlements on the Upper Skeena may indicate an increase in sedentism and population. The slightly lower number of villages on the Lower Skeena may reflect consolidation of settlement (as in the case of Kitsumkalum) or an emphasis on localizing sedentary settlement on the coast.

Although canyons continued to be important loci for permanent settlement, there is a tendency for new villages to be situated near major river confluences and the junctions of trade routes. These appear to be well situated to control access to sources of fur, and European posts in the interior (see chapters two and five), and traffic between the interior and coast along the Skeena and Nass.

Several of the protohistoric-historic villages are described as having some kind of fortifications. MacDonald plotted five of these locations as forts based on oral traditions: Kisgegas, Kispiox, the Kitwanga Fort, Gitlaxdzawk, and Gitladamsk on the Nass (MacDonald 1989:10). Original site record forms and maps of Gitladamsk do not indicate fortifications, but Barbeau photographed and documented its location (Riley 1988). The Kitwanga (GgTa 1) and Gitlaxdzawk (GdTc 1) fortresses have been well documented as such archaeologically

(Allaire et al. 1979). Site record forms also describe defensive features at Kuldo (GlSx 1), including ditches and pits. Although it is not a hilltop site, it is considered here to be a fortified village, bringing the number of forts I have plotted to four. The Kispiox site (GiSv 11) is classed by Albright (1987:25) as a 'fortress or refuge' site, but no further information is available. MacDonald's Kisgegas (GkSv 3) fort is not documented as such at all. Site record forms do not describe defensive features or settings at either location (Foster 1996, pers comm). The oral traditions may be referring to retreats nearby the villages of Kispiox and Kisgegas, but these would be significantly different, less permanent settlements, from the fortified villages at the other locations, and less likely used as a point of control.

It is also worth noting that all forts are on upper rivers - above Kitselas on the Skeena, and above Tseax on the Nass. This pattern fits with a model of control of trade being of particular importance to interior chiefs in acquiring positions of prominence.

Temporal Comparisons

The pre-contact settlement pattern of the Upper Skeena is characterized by a dispersed distribution of small sites, mainly at the confluences of streams with the Skeena; a sparsity of villages, particularly of the Northwest Coast plank house style; and a lack of fortifications. This settlement pattern is more characteristic of mobile hunter-gatherers than the ethnographic Northwest Coast settlement strategy in evidence on the Lower Skeena.

The main difference between the pre and post-contact settlement patterns of the Upper Skeena that I wish to stress is the number of villages (Table 8).

Table 8. Upper Skeena Village Sites.

Designation	Location	House	Age	Reference	Comment
GgSx 1/ Andimaul	Skeena	12	Contact	Ames 1971	"Historic to recent" according to Ames 1971
GgSw 2	Skeena/ Kitseguecla	3	Precontact	Ames 1971	"Prehistoric to recent" according to Ames 1971
GgTa 1/ Kitwanga Ft	Kitwanga R	5	Protohistoric 1700-1830	MacDonald 1989	Excavated - see chapter 3
GgTa 2/ Kitwanga	Skeena	11	1830-present	MacDonald 1984	
GhTa 1/ Kitwancool	Kitwanga & Kitwancool	8	Contact-present	Duff 1959	
GiSw 1	Skeena/ Kispiox	-	Contact-present		
GiTa 1/ Gitanyow	Kitwanga R & Lake	6	Contact	McMurdo 1975a	Predecessor to Kitwancool
GiTa 2	Kitwanga L	4	Protohistoric?	Prince 1996	Pithouses, dated AD 1470-1950
GkSv 3/ Kisgegas	Babine R/ Shedin Cr	-	Contact-1940s	MacDonald 1967	Recently abandoned
GhSv 2/ Hagwilget	Hagwilget Canyon	-	>3500 BP-Present	Ames 1979	Excavated substantial features, Village in Historic Period
Gitenmaks	Skeena	-	Present		Ethnographically known
Kitseguecla	Kiseg/Skna	-	Present		Ethnographically known
GlSx 1/Kuldo	Skeena	-	Contact-1940s	CHIN	Recently abandoned

The archaeological record of settlement on the Upper Skeena extends back at least 3500 years, yet only one prehistoric village is known. In contrast, there are eleven definite, and one probable, post-contact (including protohistoric) period village sites. I interpret this increase in village sites as reflecting an increase in sedentism. There is certainly very little evidence of sedentary settlement above Kitselas Canyon earlier. It is also worth noting that the prehistoric plank house village (GgSw 2) is small, apparently late, loosely dated, and could actually be protohistoric, which would make the late appearance of large sedentary settlements even more dramatic.

In addition to the increased number of villages in the post-contact period, a number of the isolated cabin sites, can be linked to villages in a pattern of logistical mobility. By contrast, prehistoric house sites, caches and lithic scatters occur in the near absence of villages and are widely and nearly continuously distributed (with the exception of Hagwilget Canyon). These sites probably reflect greater mobility and repeated short-term use of locations in pre-contact times. Most of the sites in Hagwilget Canyon are ephemeral and probably represent salmon procurement and processing activities. Their high density here undoubtedly reflects the attractiveness of the canyon for catching salmon in a concentrated locale with nets and traps.

Not only is the increase in village numbers significant, but their locations - which tend towards key points on trade routes - is important as well. Several of the new villages were fortified, as opposed to only one prehistoric fortified village in the entire Skeena and Nass drainage systems. MacDonald (1984b:9) postulated that a series of Native forts were established along trails in protohistory in order to control trade. Although there is not good archaeological

evidence for as many forts as MacDonald proposed, he is probably correct. The archaeologically known fortified villages were probably established and occupied close together in time. Although the 'fort' site GdTc 11 in Kitselas Canyon may well be prehistoric, it was reported to have preserved house boards and posts on its surface (Irvine 1980), indicating that it was probably occupied into the nineteenth century. Its supposed prehistoric component may represent an earlier precedent for controlling traffic at key points on the Skeena corridor. In chapter three, I argued that archaeological evidence and oral traditions place the establishment and occupation of the Kitwanga Fort in the protohistoric period (ca AD 1700-1830). Archaeological testing at Gitlaxdzawk in Kitselas Canyon has placed its occupation in the same general range, continuing until the late 1800s (Allaire et al. 1979:138). By association, oral traditions relate episodes in which occupation of the fortresses of Gitlaxdzawk, Kitwanga, Gitladamsk and Kuldo was contemporaneous (Barbeau 1929:39, 42; Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-90.11).

I further suggest that the increased number of unfortified villages around the same time and their proximity to trails also represents an effort by Upper Skeena populations and newcomers to tap into and maintain a presence in trade. Several ethnographic studies (Daly 1987:387; Cove 1982:4; Ames 1979a:228) have stated that historic Gitksan villages were situated mainly at the junctions of productive salmon streams with the Skeena, implying that access to this resource was a primary determinant of village location. Cove (1982:4) and Ames (1979a:228) have further emphasized that ownership of salmon streams was the basis for the organization of Gitksan local group and household territories. Ames (1979a:228-229) in particular, felt that territories were

organized to ensure a local group access to a variety of spawning streams, including ideally those in both the Nass and Skeena drainage systems, to ensure against the failure of a run. This proposition, however, cannot be supported for several reasons. Ethnographically, only the Gitanyow local group, who lacked direct access to the Skeena, had territories in both the Nass and Skeena drainages. While their territories in the Nass system may have provided security against a bad spawning year in the Kitwanga River, it does not explain why these territories were so large. Factors of trade competition and population movement in protohistory, which are discussed in chapter five, I feel offer a better explanation for this fact. Further, in his ethnographic study of household population flux and movement, Adams concluded that resource scarcity was not likely a significant problem: people could exchange wealth for occasional food shortages, and no houses reported difficulty in accessing salmon (1973:9, 90-92). This may be because traditional household fishing sites are maintained primarily on the Skeena (Morrell n.d.), rather than on the more ecologically vulnerable tributaries, whose junctions the village sites occupy. Interestingly, Adams (1973:9) did report that access to fertile trapping areas was a point of contention between houses, lending support to the possibility that participation in the fur trade was a factor in the spread of the Gitksan settlement system.

Most importantly for this thesis, any reference to spawning stream abundance cannot explain why the Northwest Coast settlement system is not in evidence on the same scale on the Upper Skeena in prehistory. The availability of salmon was undoubtedly a factor enabling the development of Northwest Coast culture on the Upper Skeena, and in limiting its inland extent. But it cannot explain the late and apparently rapid and widespread appearance of the

Northwest Coast settlement system, nor why post-contact villages were established exactly where they were, while access to a new source of trade can.

The regional settlement pattern evidence indicates that the protohistoric period was a critical time for the establishment of fortifications and other substantial settlements on the Upper Skeena. This was also probably the time during which the sedentary settlement system and local group territories viewed ethnographically were solidified. Further evidence for the importance of controlling trade and its relationship to the establishment of local group bases and territories is presented in chapter five.

Discussion

The distribution of archaeological sites in the Skeena and Nass valleys has been plotted to determine the degree of sedentism and fortification and their relationship to trade routes over time. Particular attention, including original survey, was given to investigating the settlement pattern of the Kitwanga Valley, as its grease trail and the Kitwanga Fort figure largely in models of protohistoric competition, and by extension, the spread of Northwest Coast culture on the Skeena. The results of the Kitwanga Valley survey are consistent with the site distribution I generated from extant site inventories. The Kitwanga Lake pithouse site (GiTa 2) is tentatively fitted within a model of late expansion and consolidation of the ethnographic Gitksan settlement system, as will be discussed further below.

Throughout the Upper Skeena, permanent Northwest Coast style settlement, logistical mobility and fortifications all appear late. The review of survey projects presented above, suggests to me that the differences I have

noted between the pre-contact and post-contact eras in these regards are not simply the result of inadequate coverage. Surveys have routinely covered the most likely locations for villages, and the differences between the pre-contact and post-contact settlement patterns are probably the result of cultural processes and historical dynamics. Furthermore, the relatively late dates of villages and forts suggests to me that the protohistoric period was crucial in the formation of the ethnographic pattern. The apparent strategic location of protohistoric and historic forts and villages along trade routes suggests that control of trade may have been a major factor in the establishment of the Northwest Coast pattern on the Upper Skeena.

CHAPTER 5

THE ETHNOHISTORIC RECORD OF TRADE AND SETTLEMENT

Introduction

In chapter four I identified a number of differences between the prehistoric and post-contact settlement patterns of the Upper Skeena and argued that significant changes in settlement systems occurred during the intervening protohistoric period. The timing and nature of these changes, particularly as regards the degree of sedentism near trade routes, suggests that indirect European contact may have been a significant causal factor. Similarly, in chapter 3 I proposed a link between increased spatial differentiation of exotics on a local scale at the Kitwanga Fort and an increase in social complexity during the protohistoric period. In this chapter, I evaluate evidence for social competition, increased ranking, control of trade, diffusion of cultural traits, movement of peoples and expansion of territories from an ethnohistoric perspective.

Data, Methods and Rationale

The ethnohistoric data employed in this chapter were derived from primary published and unpublished fur trade records and secondary historical syntheses, as well as published, or otherwise documented oral traditions and syntheses produced from these.

The fur trade records document events, observations and impressions from a European perspective at the peripheries of the Upper Skeena (Fort St. James and Fort Kilmaurs, see Figure 3) during the final stages of the protohistoric period (AD 1810-1830). The records of Fort Kilmaurs were of particular importance for their observations of the Gitksan (see chapter 2), and were made available through the Hudson's Bay Company Archives at the National Library of Canada. Most of the records of a third fort, Fort Connelly, in the headwaters of the Skeena at Bear Lake do not survive for its early stages from 1826 to 1874 (according to Finding Aid 65).

The establishment of these posts on the peripheries of Gitksan territory roughly defines the final stages of the protohistoric period. Goods, information and other influences from these posts reached the Skeena indirectly through Native middlemen. At the same time, European fur traders gathered intelligence on lands, people and resources in the Skeena from these middlemen, and made direct observations during their rare face-to-face encounters with the Gitksan. The primary motive of the Europeans in gathering this information was to assess the potential for expansion of their business. Their observations and opinions are full of biases, especially as concerns the industriousness of Native populations in procuring furs, and are prone to exaggeration. This is largely a factor of the traders own cultural backgrounds, and the audience they reported to - either business superiors or a popular audience - both of whom it was necessary to impress with the difficulty of their job and their success. When observations or impressions are reported by European traders second-hand, having been derived from Native informants, additional biases are introduced,

including the complex motives of the informants and the skill of the fur trader in interpreting what he was told.

Although they are biased, I consider the early fur trade records to be a valuable source of information on the protohistory and early history of the Upper Skeena. In the course of assessing the business potential of the Upper Skeena, fur traders made particular note of the existing structure of trade and inter-tribal politics. With an eye towards the biases mentioned above, I have reviewed this information, and sought additional clues to ranking, competition, control of trade, cultural diffusion and the structure of settlement pattern.

Native oral traditions comprise an important and independent source of ethnohistoric information. The Gitksan, like other Northwest Coast cultures, have a strong and deeply integrated tradition of oral history. Individual, household and local group rights to territories and titles are traced through oral histories. The Gitksan and other Tsimshian groups recognize three broad kinds of oral tradition: 1) creation myths, which offer supernatural explanations for the order of the world and the origins of people; 2) anecdotal tales, or personal reminiscences; and 3) *adaawk*, which they regard as 'true histories', recounting the origins of houses, crests, local groups and powers (Halpin and Seguin 1990:280).

Adaawk are the main subject matter of totem poles and are carefully recounted when titles and territorial rights are passed from one generation to the next. To traditional Gitksan people, these oral traditions order the universe, legitimate their social positions and spiritual power and are the 'law' (Duff 1959; Gisday Wa and Delgamuukw 1992:25-26).

Oral traditions have been extremely important to ethnographers of the Tsimshian groups. They have been used to 'reconstruct' and describe pre-contact culture, and to trace the origins of modern groups on their lands (Boas 1916; Garfield 1951; Barbeau 1929). More recently, Cove (1987) has attempted an understanding of Gitksan cosmology from an analysis of oral traditions. The most common recent anthropological usage of oral traditions, particularly *adaawk*, has been as a direct and literal accounting of Gitksan history, largely to support land claims (Marsden 1987; Albright 1987; Harris 1995; McEachern 1991).

From an ethnohistoric perspective, however, Native oral traditions are at least as subject to bias as European documents. The fact that informant's memories are likely to be faulty and limited in perspective by their own standing and background was discussed in chapter one in the context of ethnographic analogy. In addition, Native oral histories are not subject to the same conventions of linear, chronological narrative and cause and effect as European historiography. In most cases, it is impossible to determine when a particular event took place, or which incarnation of an individual was involved, as each Gitksan chief is believed to be the reincarnation of a previous chief of the same name. The concepts of history are not only different in the Gitksan world view; such mundane details are largely irrelevant to the deeper meaning of the narratives, which Chief Harris (1974:xvi) regards as lessons in ethics, and definitions of relationships to family and the rest of creation. Finally, the secular function of oral histories, which is to legitimate the status quo, rather than to trace its development, introduces further biases.

Given these biases, Gitksan oral traditions still provide valuable clues to the problem under consideration here. The movement of people, establishment of 'villages' and trade and conflict with neighbouring groups are important subjects of oral tradition. On occasion the stories make reference to fixed chronological points, such as the establishment of a fur trade post. When it was possible to associate a story with the protohistoric or early historic period, an effort was made to find indications of the structure of trade, intergroup competition, changes in the balance of power, ranking, borrowing, expansion of territories and movement and absorption of groups of people.

The records of Marius Barbeau and William Beynon comprise the main body of work on Gitksan oral tradition. Barbeau and his Nisga'a field-worker, Beynon, collected a large number of oral traditions from the Gitksan between 1915-1957 (MacDonald and Cove 1987:iv). Much of this information was synthesised in Barbeau's *Totem Poles of the Gitksan*, 1929. A selection of the raw notes has been published in two volumes by MacDonald and Cove (1987). The remainder of their large collection of stories has been archived at the Canadian Museum of Civilization as the 'Barbeau-Beynon/Tsimshian Files', and catalogued with B-F series numbers keyed to a published finding aid (Cove 1985). These files are vast and very repetitive. I therefore only sampled Gitksan stories relating to trade, conflict, the founding of villages and expansion of territories. In addition to these works, I consulted stories published by Duff (1959) and MacDonald (1984b).

Evaluation of the Documentary Record

The Structure of Regional Trade

As European fur traders approached the Skeena drainage from the east in the early 1800s, they tapped into an already existing pattern of aboriginal trade. The earliest reference to trade in the Upper Skeena comes from the journal of Daniel Harmon (1957) of Fort St. James in the Fraser drainage, a short distance east of Babine Lake and the Skeena drainage. Harmon was at Fort St. James from 1810-1819. Harmon made the first recorded European contact with the Babine Carrier in 1811, when a group visited Fort St. James. Upon questioning them about their lands and trading connections, he gathered that they lived in a separate drainage that discharged into the Pacific and that 'white people', whom he presumed were Americans, came up the river system in barges to trade (Harmon 1957:140-141). Harmon (1957:150) visited Babine country first hand in 1812 and found that they actually received goods from the Pacific by way of 'barter from their neighbours the Atenas [the Carrier name for Gitksan] who purchase them directly from the white people', rather than from Americans ascending the Skeena. The European goods the Babines had obtained in this trade included guns, cloth, blankets, axes, cast iron pots; as well as Gitksan mountain sheep blankets (Harmon 1957:150).

Harmon's assessment of the trade connection between the Babines and Gitksan was supported by later descriptions, although his description of whites ascending the Skeena may reflect a misinterpretation, or a lack of knowledge on the part of his informants of the Gitksan's coastal trading connections, which were actually via the Coast Tsimshian. There are no known descriptions by maritime fur traders of ascending the Skeena River at this early date.

Elsewhere, in the context of a discussion of aboriginal trade in dentalium shell, Harmon described the Gitksan procuring these from a coastal tribe, and in turn, trading them to the Carrier (1957:244). It is this aboriginal trade network that the fur traders seem to have tapped into, although the influence and identity of the players changed over time.

Once European traders were established in the Skeena drainage with a post at Fort Kilmaurs on Babine Lake in 1822, clearer descriptions of the regional trade network emerged. William Brown, the first manager of Fort Kilmaurs, clearly described the Gitksan as being middlemen in a trade between the Coast Tsimshian, who received European goods directly from ships, and the Babine and Bulkley (Wetsuweten) Carrier (Brown 1823a:55-56, 1823b:90, 1826b:22). Brown was originally led to believe by the Carrier that his rivals had a post at the forks of the Bulkley and Skeena Rivers, but later established that they traded from ships on the coast (Brown 1823a:55-56, 1823b:90). Brown complained that 'Three fourths of the furs procured by the Indians of the Simpson's [Bulkley] River, were carried below and traded with the Indians of the Sea Coast' (1823b:90). These trading relationships were so strong that the Babine Carrier on occasion refused to trade at Fort Kilmaurs, preferring to 'traffic with the Traders of the sea coast, who they maintain have an abundance of leather and other goods much better and cheaper than ours' (Ross 1825:21).

Upon visiting Kisgegas, Brown gathered from the Gitksan that exchange occurred at their own villages with parties of visiting Coast Tsimshian traders (Brown 1826b:20-21). In addition, both Brown (1823a:50-51) and 'Ogden' (1972:44,46) mention 'the forks' (of the Skeena and Bulkley) as a regular meeting place with the Coast Tsimshian. I gather from these descriptions that

both the Carrier and Coast Tsimshian came to the Gitksan to trade. Ray (1987:47) supposed that the Babine Carrier conducted their trade at Kisgegas and the Wetsuweten at the Bulkley/Skeena forks - sometimes directly with the Coast Tsimshian. The materials exchanged in this traffic included leather, guns, ammunition, bayonets and blankets (Ross 1825:21; Brown 1823b:91, 1826b:21). Along with European goods passing through the Gitksan hands in this indirect exchange, disease also reached them. Brown (1826a) observed at one of the Gitksan villages near Kisgegas, which he described as a trading centre, that many were 'sick and several dying' in some kind of epidemic.

In addition to the Coast Tsimshian - Gitksan - Carrier trade, Brown (1823b:97) also mentioned trade between the Gitksan and Sekani, who lived in the Skeena headwaters and Bear River drainages (Figure 1). Both the Gitksan and Sekani are mentioned as having connections to Russians on the Pacific north of Bear River, (probably via the Stikine drainage), although it is unclear who the middlemen were in this trade (Brown 1823b:98). Brown (1826b:15) was also told that one of the Gitksan villages down the Skeena was on a trail with connections to Russian traders on the north coast.

In summary, in the 1810s-20s the Gitksan had access to European goods from maritime traders on the British Columbia coast, Russians on the Alaska coast and trading posts at Forts St. James, Kilmaurs and Connelly through connections with Native neighbours including the Carrier, Sekani and Tsimshian. The Gitksan occupied an important position as middlemen in the trade between the Coast Tsimshian and Carrier, and perhaps between the Sekani and Stikine people. These networks may have been in place prior to indirect European contact. Prehistorically, trade in obsidian and jet of interior origin, and shell and

sea mammal bone from the coast, was apparently conducted along the Skeena corridor (MacDonald 1987:vii), and was probably passed down-the-line through neighbouring groups. Indigenous foodstuffs, such as coastal eulachon, shellfish and kelp and interior meats and berries, and other perishables, such as hides, furs and wooden objects were also exchanged in the nineteenth century (MacDonald et al. 1988:32), and this practice too may have extended into prehistory. However, the relative positions of people in trade seems to have been subject to change, as is further discussed below.

Competition and Control of Trade

I believe there is evidence that the trading relationships discussed above were in flux in the 1810s-20s, especially as regards the middlemen positions. Brown's initial impressions of the Gitksan were formed through discussions with the Carrier and were quite negative. He described them as a 'wretched and miserable set'; 'fierce and volatile'; only interested in fishing and ashamed of meeting with whites because they had no furs (Brown 1823b:96-97). I suspect that the Carrier depicted the Gitksan to Brown in this manner in an effort to discourage him from meeting the Gitksan directly, and to monopolize trade with Fort Kilmaurs. After having become familiar with the Kisgegas Gitksan personally, Brown (1826b:16) reported that the Babines had lied to him earlier. The Gitksan broke through the Babine's effort at monopoly early on, visiting the European post in 1823 (Brown 1823a:96-97). They invited him to visit the Kisgegas area later that year, along with their assembled trading partners, including the Coast Tsimshian, and claimed to be diligently hunting fur animals

in preparation (Brown 1823b:92-93). Brown made such a visit in 1825, but no first hand record of it survives (Ray 1987:14).

Trading expeditions were on occasion associated with open hostility between the Gitksan and Carrier. One such dispute occurred as early as 1822 (Brown 1823a:2). Charles Ross of Fort Kilmaurs (1825:15) reported a group of Gitksan traders being killed by some Wetsuweten at Hotset (on the Bulkley River). On another occasion, a shoot-out occurred between the Babines and Gitksan near Kisgegas at 'Needchips' village, which led to a series of retaliations (Ross 1825:48). To judge from Ross' journal there was a lot of violence associated with trade in 1825. In addition to the above incidents, the Hotset's killed people on the Upper Fraser, and Ross was in fear of Fort Kilmaurs itself being attacked (Ross 1825:16,31).

By the time of Brown's second visit to Kisgegas in 1826, the Babines had apparently lost all influence as middlemen in their relationship with the Gitksan. Instead, there are indications that Gitksan chiefs were arguing amongst themselves over exclusive rights to trade directly with Brown. Brown (1826a) claimed to have been 'badgered' by the chiefs of three different villages (Quoem, Needchips and Sojick) to trade and to return to their villages in the future. Consequently, Brown stated 'It appears from this discourse that they are in general all bad friends amongst themselves. Which keeps them in a constant state of anxiety and alarm' (1826a).

Ross reported open hostilities between Gitksan groups of the Bulkley-Skeena forks and Babine River a year earlier. 'The Atnahs of the forks of the Simpson's [Bulkley] River and those of McDougall's [Babine] River had quarrelled among themselves - and in consequence of this quarrel the former

had constructed a barricade to keep the salmon from going up to the latter' (Ross 1825:44). There is no direct indication of the cause of this dispute. However, it might have some relationship to the extension and realignment of trade relationships occurring at that time.

From the outset of Fort Kilmaurs' operation, Brown complained that the bulk of the furs in the Babine and Bulkley drainages were traded through the Gitksan and out to the coast, as discussed above. This network continued to persist, even though Brown (1823a:55-56, 1823b:91) claimed that the coastal trade goods were inferior ('old', 'good and cheap', 'of the coarsest kind'). We probably cannot trust Brown's opinion that his goods were superior, but the coastward trade does seem to have been very strong. Ray (1987:36-41,49) feels that the Gitksan maintained the middlemen position and fuelled the coastward trade through force - having the ability to control the Carrier's source of fish, being well supplied with arms, and wealthy enough to place their partners in debt of reciprocation. Similarly, it has been argued that the Coast Tsimshian, particularly Legaic, extended their trading position at the Gitksan's expense by force. While the threat of force may have been a factor, there were likely social ties between groups as well that were maintained by trade and that may have been more important than trading with Europeans directly. The Gitksan and Carrier on occasion preferred to trade with the Coast Tsimshian, rather than Fort Kilmaurs (Brown 1826a), and Brown seems to have been pre-occupied with the fear that the Coast Tsimshian would extend their influence directly up to his doorstep, cutting both the Hudson's Bay Company and Gitksan out of the Carrier trade (Brown 1823b:91, 1826b:21-22). In 1826, Brown indicated that the Coast Tsimshian were rapidly extending their trade, saying 'they seldom used to come

higher than the forks of the Babine and Simpson's [probably Skeena in this case] River, and very frequently not so high. But last fall they came as far as the Upper Atna village [probably Kuldo]' (1826:21). In 1842, in a letter to his successor as chief factor of New Caledonia, Ogden echoed this same fear (Ogden 1937:48).

Interestingly, in all of this discussion of trade, hostilities and the expansion of networks, there is no mention of the Kitwanga Fort or chief Nekt by the Europeans, but the Gispaxloats are described as the principal traders (Brown 1826a, 1826b:15-16, Ogden 1972). Nor was the Kitwanga Fort mentioned in Brown's description of Gitksan territory, as discussed below. It may be that the Kitwanga Fort had been removed from the picture by the 1820s, or perhaps the emphasis of trade had shifted away from the Kitwanga Trail to the Russians in Alaska, and towards the mouth of the Skeena and the posts at its head. In either case, the expansion of the Gispaxloats trading influence up the Skeena may have been made at the expense of the Gitwangak. This issue is discussed further below.

Cultural Diffusion

There are some indications that along with all of this trade and interaction went an exchange of cultural traits and practices. Some of these are presumed by the fur traders to have been recent borrowings. The Carrier practice of wearing dentalium shells through pierced noses was suspected by Harmon (1957:244) to have diffused from the coast through the Gitksan. Brown (1826a) noted that the Gitksan possessed 'blankets, fine skins and capot from the coast', as well as 'shell beads and ermine skins'. In addition to such items, Brown felt

that the Gitksan probably adopted customs from the coast, such as labret wearing (1826b:17).

Other Northwest Coast-like elements are noted for both the Gitksan and Carrier, without speculation on their origins. These may have been in existence well before the fur traders. Harmon, for instance, describes Carrier raven shakers and welcoming dances with down dispensed from a headdress (1957:254). Brown (1826b:16-17) contrasted Gitksan villages and fishing technology with those of the Carrier, saying they were better constructed and more organized. The Gitksan seem to have been more Northwest Coast-like in these regards.

The record on social organization, however, is more ambiguous.

Social Organization/Ranking

The use of fur trade records, or any other ethnohistoric source, to reconstruct Native social organization is hampered by several factors, including the skills of observation and interest in such matters by the recorder, the general lack of understanding, appreciation and tolerance for cultural differences in the early nineteenth century, and the small segment of Native society with whom the Europeans interacted. Fur traders generally held to British values and a frontier businessman's sensibilities (Fisher 1978:42). There was, therefore, a general tendency to project European-like power structures onto descriptions of Native societies, particularly as regards the influence of their trading partners. Where such descriptions exist for the Upper Skeena, therefore, they are likely to be not entirely reliable if taken literally. The sub-text of fur trader's statements, however, may be informative of the issues with which I am concerned.

Brown (1823b:87) described Carrier chiefs as holding rights to private hunting grounds. This is one aspect of their social organization usually considered atypical of hunter-gatherers, and to be borrowed from Northwest Coast cultures (Kobrinsky 1977). Brown, however, noted further, that beyond controlling hunting grounds, Carrier chiefs had no authority over other people (1823b:78). Harmon (1957:250) described Carrier hunting and fishing territories as belonging to the village, but did not note any sort of chiefly control, or smaller corporate groups. Perhaps Brown had more interest in such details, or was projecting power onto family heads. Neither Brown, nor Harmon, mentioned any sort of social hierarchy between chiefs, or any positions other than chiefs. The fur traders may simply have been unaware of these, or the early nineteenth century Carrier may have lacked the more elaborate system of social ranking and authority of the ethnographic Northwest Coast.

Early descriptions of Gitksan social organization are also ambiguous. Brown (1826a) visited three different Gitksan villages and interacted with a single chief at each (Needchips, Sojick and Quoem), whom he assumed was chief of the entire village. He further assumed that these three individuals were ranked and that 'Needchips was principal' (Brown 1826b:14). However, based on late nineteenth and twentieth century fieldwork and Native traditions, ethnographers clearly stated that there was no chief at the village level (although the house chiefs in each village were ranked), and that one village did not have formal authority over any other (Halpin and Seguin 1990:276; Duff 1959:12; Cove 1982:6). Brown seems to have been ignorant of house chiefs and the organization of houses, and may have projected high political offices onto the wealthiest traders, thereby inflating the social differences at Kisgegas.

Alternatively, if the social ranking system was just beginning to form, or undergoing a change at this time, the most influential traders may have wielded more chiefly powers than their ethnographic successors and intermediate ranks may not have existed yet.

Regardless of the details of Gitksan social organization, Brown's descriptions of their activities do indicate that there was some measure of social ranking associated with trade. Quoem welcomed Brown with a dance and feast in his ceremonial regalia, possessed many furs and European goods and engaged him hard in trade, while other individuals at the village had less elaborate dress, fewer goods, and a less prominent role in the feast and trading (Brown 1826a). Given Quoem's position and the elaborate display of his trade wealth, it is likely that trade goods carried a great deal of prestige, and manipulating their presentation and redistribution may have been a means of legitimizing and increasing one's status, as was the case on the coast (Codere 1961; Wolf 1982:186).

Identifying a prestige value for European goods, however, does not deny their functional utility. Brown made particular note of Gitksan guns and metal, and while he described them as inferior to his Hudson's Bay Company stock, and the practicality of muskets in the wet frontier lands of British Columbia has been questioned by ethnohistorians (Fisher 1976), the utility of metal tools is undeniable. These, however, were not the only items in demand. Quoem wanted Brown's shirt more than knives, flints, shot or powder (Brown 1826a). I only wish to demonstrate here that European goods, and trade with Europeans themselves, carried a prestige value that in early contexts, before Natives became technologically dependent on them, probably outweighed their

functional value. This point is also apparent from Native traditions, as described later.

The Structure of Settlement

Several elements of aboriginal settlement pattern are mentioned in the fur trade records which have bearing on the argument for competition over trade and shifting group territories. The Sekani are described as new-comers to the Upper Skeena/Bear River area, having come 'a few years since' from the Peace drainage (Harmon 1957:256), or the 'prairies' (Brown 1823b:98). Anthropologists feel that their origin was in the Peace area, and that they were forced westward in the early 1800s by rivals (the Beaver) who had better access to firearms (Denniston 1981:434).

The Gitksan, to judge from Brown's descriptions, were already in-situ on the Upper Skeena in the 1820s. Brown initially gathered from Carrier informants that there were two Gitksan villages on the MacDougall's [Babine] River, another at 'the forks', and others downstream 'increasing in size as they approached the sea' (1823b:95). Subsequently, in his own travels, Brown visited three Gitksan 'villages' on the Babine River (Needchips', Weepsim and Childocall) and learned from the Gitksan of five other villages. 'The first is 2 days march below Childocall and the second is at the forks [Bulkley and Skeena] which is 2 days march further. The other 3 are below the forks and are each 2 days journey asunder' (Brown 1826b:15). These may well be Kispiox, Gitenmaks, Kitseguekla, Kitwanga and Kitwancool, although their positions are hard to determine from the estimated travel times given. In addition, Brown (1826a)

described another Gitksan village between the Babine and Bear River, which may be Kuldo.

Brown's information on groups further afield was much less precise - 'various and not to be depended upon' (Brown 1826b:15). One informant told him the Gispaxloats occupied all of the territory between the Gitksan and the sea, while another told him that there were '3 distinct nations' (Brown 1826b:15). He was told of a trail overland from the upper of the three Gitksan villages below the forks to a large river where the Ute sin nah reside, who traded with Russians established at its mouth (Brown 1826b:15). The location of the trail is hard to pin-point. Ray (1987:21) assumes it is the Kitwanga trail to the Nass River and the Nisga'a, and he is probably correct. It could be another trail to the Stikine and Athapascan people - although the only other major northward trail known is up the Kispiox Valley, and it is above, not below the Bulkley-Skeena forks. Again, there is no mention of a Native fort controlling access to the trade route, as was most likely the function of the Kitwanga fort.

In addition to describing group territories, historic sources give some indication of local settlement pattern and seasonality. In the Kisgegas area of the lower Babine, Brown described two 'principal villages' -Weepsim and Childocall - which are '5 miles asunder' (1826b:13). Both were occupied in March, when Brown visited, and were the places 'where they assemble to make their feasts and perform all ceremonies of a general nature' (Brown 1826b:13). Brown said nothing about the form of these two settlements, but on this basis and the fact that he contrasted them with 'winter encampments' and nearby salmon fishing 'villages' to which people dispersed, they were probably both permanent villages (Brown 1826b:13-14). The third Babine River village -

Needchips' - is not described in these terms, and we cannot be certain that it was not a seasonal camp.

What can be ascertained from Brown's descriptions is that distinct Gitksan groups were in place on the Upper Skeena in the 1820s and that they had a seasonal round with permanent villages and resource extraction camps. In these regards, the early nineteenth century Gitksan may not have been unlike the ethnographically described Gitksan.

Evaluation of the Oral Traditions

The Structure of Trade

The oral traditions do not provide significantly different details on trade patterns than do historic documents. The Gitksan's middleman role in trade between the coast and interior is clearly evident in oral traditions. In particular, narratives relate that they obtained eulachon directly from the Nass fishery and traded it to interior Athapascans, although the antiquity of this practice cannot be determined. In stories that obviously relate to the fur trade, groups of Gitksan acted as middlemen between coastal Nisga'a and Tsimshian groups and the interior Carrier (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:19,80). As will be discussed below, this pattern of trade was subject to flux and the assertion of various trade monopolies, along lines consistent with what was derived from written records.

Competition and Control of Trade

Intergroup competition and raiding are common elements of the narratives, and in many cases these can be clearly related to trade disputes. For the purposes of this thesis, one of the most important series of wars was

between the Tsetsaut and the various Gitksan groups. The Tsetsaut were a group of northern interior Athapaskans who no longer exist as a distinct entity, and are most closely identified with the Talhtan or Kaska of the Upper Nass and Stikine (the Meziadin and Bowser Lakes area) (Duff 1981; Figure 1)[1].

The narratives and totem poles of Kitwancool recount several conflicts with the Tsetsaut. The Tsetsaut were traditional trading partners of the upper Nisga'a - trading furs for seafood (Duff 1959:28). When a Nisga'a man was killed by a Kitwancool man, the Tsetsaut are said to have raided Gitanyow (the predecessor to Kitwancool) in revenge (Duff 1959:28). Although not stated, the original act of violence may have been related to an effort on the part of the Gitanyow local group to maintain their rights to trade with both the Nisga'a and Athapaskans. A party of Gitksan from several villages in turn raided the Tsetsaut on the Upper Nass and a series of retaliatory raids on both sides followed (Duff 1959:29-30). At least some of these incidents probably occurred in the nineteenth century, as one of Duff's informants claimed to have a grandfather and father involved (Duff 1959:30). Narratives state that after a trading post was established at Telegraph Creek in the Stikine drainage, peaceful trade resumed, although some trade meetings turned sour and led to shootings (Duff 1959:33). Elsewhere, Duff (1981:455) dated the general peace to about 1865.

The Tsetsaut are also said to have had conflicts with the Kisgegas and Kuldo Gitksan (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:16, 24-26). Some of the Kisgegas

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[1] In some Gitksan traditions the name Tsetsaut is used in a more general sense to refer to northern Athapaskans, including the populations of the Bear River and Skeena headwaters, which were historically Sekani.

conflicts are said to have occurred at the time of Fort Connelly's founding (1826), involving the 'first gun seen in the country', and as a consequence, the Kisgegas obtained trading rights with the fort (Barbeau 1929:103). The Kisgegas-Tsetsaut conflict may therefore relate to an effort by the Gitksan to expand their direct trading networks to the new fort.

In other incidents, raids resulted in the theft of that which the offenders were unable to obtain through trade or inheritance. In particular, Nekt, of the Kitwanga Fort, raided Kitimat on the coast, and stole crests (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:170), which probably elevated him in rank. Barbeau (1929:53), in synthesising the oral epic of Nekt, depicted him as someone aspiring to elite status, who rose to power and acquired followers through such raids and the construction of a fortress stronghold. In most versions of the story, he is killed with 'the first gun used in the country' by 'several tribes, from Kitimat and the Nass, [who] organized together to defeat him and his confederates and curb his ascent to power' (Barbeau 1929:53). MacDonald (1984a, 1984b) has apparently extrapolated from these stories of raids, the fort and the allusion to protohistoric contact (the first gun), that Nekt, like other fortress chiefs, controlled trade.

The oral traditions contain many references to chiefs from various Tsimshian groups (e.g., Guam and Githawn of Kitselas, Tsebasa of Kitkatla, Legaic of the Gispaxloats) controlling trade, exerting monopolies, and killing over the rights to these (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b). Much of this probably occurred in the protohistoric and early historic periods.

A story that Barbeau dated to 1857, states that the Nisga'a were barred from trade with the Upper Skeena, which was a lucrative source of furs, moose hides and meat (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:19). A Nisga'a chief, Hlitux,

organized a trip from Gitlaxdamks in defiance of this ban and visited Kitwancool, Kispiox and Gitenmaks, only to have his goods confiscated at the Kitselas fortress (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:19). Another version of the story explains that Legaic and the Kitselas held exclusive rights to trade with the Upper Skeena (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:213). In other narratives that relate the first introduction of European kettles, guns and axes to Kisgegas and Kuldo, the purveyors are Nisga'a traders from Gitlaxdamks (Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-90.11; B-F-89.11). These stories may relate events that predate the Nisga'a ban from the Skeena, as a different series of stories describes raids by the Gitlaxdamks and other Nisga'a upon the Kisgegas Gitksan (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:13,17,164). Although these stories are not dated, and the motives are not always clear, they may signify a more forceful defiance of the ban on Upper Skeena goods. At least one of these episodes began with a trade visit by Gitksan to the Nass (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:17).

For the Nisga'a part, their narratives describe a trade monopoly with the Tsetsaut to the north of the Nass at the head of Portland Canal which was established in maritime fur trade times and eventually broken by the missionary Tomlinsen (Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-442.6).

The origin of the Kitselas trade monopoly with the Upper Skeena, and subsequent violent conflicts with the Gispaxloats over it are also described in oral traditions. Chief Hlengwa of Kitwanga supposedly gave trading privileges to Kitwanga and 'all the other villages above' to Githawn of Kitselas in a marriage relationship (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:78-79). Subsequently, at least two other generations of Legaics and Githawns feuded over this monopoly, which was controlled by the Kitselas fortress (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:80). Neither

the Kitwanga fortress, nor Nekt is mentioned, but the story is told as though Kitwanga had some influence over who traded with the rest of the Upper Skeena. Hlengwa eventually proposed a compromise which saw the Kitselas trade with Kitwanga and Kitwancool, and the Gispaxloats trade with the rest of the Gitksan and Wetsuweten Carrier (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:83-84).

There are many stories of Legaic raiding Gitksan villages and stealing booty and captives sometime in the post-contact or protohistoric era (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:123,125). Current academic opinion is that most of Legaic's campaigns on the Upper Skeena occurred after 1830, and that he had a complete monopoly by 1862 (Mitchell 1982). Many other stories about raiding and trade disputes can probably be placed in the same time frame, or slightly earlier.

Cultural Borrowing and Ranking

My search of the oral traditions turned up little direct reference to cultural borrowing. Barbeau, however, put forth several ideas on cultural diffusion that he gathered from his observations of totem poles and their oral histories. Barbeau did not feel that there were any totem poles on the Upper Skeena before 1840, and that they first appeared at Kitwancool and Kitwanga (1929:13). In the 1920s, the upper-most villages, Kuldo and Kisgegas, only had three poles each, and Barbeau (1929:3) did not feel that they were ever common there. Along with the stories depicted on them, the names and origins of totem pole artists were part of oral tradition. Barbeau found that the oldest Gitksan poles were commissioned to Nisga'a artists and that the earliest efforts of local carvers were not as sophisticated (1929:4-5). He also found that in the 1920s, most of

the old poles were remembered to have been erected within the last 60 years (Barbeau 1929:4-5). Barbeau further believed that throughout the Northwest Coast it was not until after 1830 that totem poles 'became a fashionable way of displaying ones' own power and crests, while commemorating the dead' (1929:8). This does not necessarily mean that power and crests were absent earlier. But, with reference to the Upper Skeena, Barbeau (1929:12, 24) felt that in the nineteenth century, increasing wealth, trade rivalries and 'rising ambitions' created a need for totem poles as a means of displaying pride and rights, and the introduction of metal tools facilitated their construction.

The subject matter of the poles, and associated adaawk, themselves on occasion make reference to cultural borrowing - or rather stealing, as in Nekt's stealing of Kitimat crests. While this story indicates that the Gitksan were able to take short cuts towards attaining a position of rank, it does not necessarily mean that the cultural practice of ranking was borrowed as well. However, one element of the rank complex that is acknowledged in oral traditions to have been borrowed is secret societies. According to oral tradition, secret societies originated among the Kitimat, and were borrowed by the Kwakiutl and Coast Tsimshian, who passed them on to the Nisga'a and Gitksan (Barbeau and Beynon 1987a:95). While secret societies were ranked, membership was not reckoned by kinship and the power associated with high positions was of a personal rather than political nature (although chiefs always served as heads and received wealth from initiates).

As concerns the origins of ranking, and most other social practices, the oral traditions are static. Positions of high status - 'chiefs' , or 'royalty' - seem always to exist in oral narratives. Individual chiefs are usually credited with the

first establishment of villages (e.g., Kispiox in Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-75.3), and are described as staging elaborate feasts in early contexts (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:13,16). In stories that relate to loosely datable events, such as the first trade in metal tools, firearms, or encounters with traders from Fort Kilmaurs or Fort Connelly, chiefs are described as exercising the same prerogatives as their ethnographically known counterparts, including acting as principal traders and performing exchanges at public feasts (Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-89.11, B-F-89.12); seating themselves and honoured guests in the rear of the house (Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-90.8; Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:164-165); exerting private ownership over territories and trade connections (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:79); and adopting new crests to symbolize encounters (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:160-163; Barbeau 1929:148).

It is apparent in the narratives that there was an association between European goods, trade and chiefly status. As I argued from the fur trade records, European goods and encounters seem to have carried prestige, although they also had a technological utility. A series of narratives relating the origins of the first European goods - guns, pots, axes -are particularly illustrative (Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-89.11, BF-89.12, B-F-90.11). In these stories, the first Gitksan to possess such goods is always a chief. He has to better his rivals in acquiring it, and enjoys the admiration of the public in first displaying it, and then demonstrating its practicality. For instance, the first iron axe head is said to have been brought to Kisgegas by a chief who journeyed to Fort Connelly. Thinking of it as a personal ornament to signify his bravery and wealth, he proudly displayed the axe suspended from his neck at a feast in

honour of himself. His guests were suitably impressed; even more so when one of them demonstrated its utility as a wood-working tool. The chief, however, at this point, was embarrassed. In these stories, European goods are used first for their prestige value within Native cultural contexts, rather than simply for their western function. Even once their European functions are adopted, they could still contribute towards enhancing the chief's standing. A big iron pot enables larger feasts; an axe enables greater household productivity, and the construction of monuments; and a gun, arguably, helps better one's rivals.

While trade and European goods seem to have enhanced prestige within a ranking system, and the desire for prestige may actually have been the primary motive for the trade, this does not by itself resolve the question of when the Gitksan developed social ranking. Barbeau suggested that the adoption of symbols of Fort Connelly by the Kisgegas Gitksan to legitimize their trade rights there, indicates that crests, elements of social ranking, were still new to them in 1826 (Barbeau 1929:148). We could, however, just as easily conclude that the Gitksan had a crest system that was established sometime before this encounter. I feel that in the absence of datable stories that explicitly describe the origins of social ranking, little can be concluded in this regard from the narratives alone. In fact, because the oral traditions were recorded in the twentieth century, well after the events that they describe occurred, we cannot be certain that the narrators and recorders have not projected contemporary social practices onto the past. However, in conjunction with the other information presented in this chapter, I believe we can come closer to identifying the influence of protohistoric interaction on the development of social ranking, as discussed below.

Migrations and Absorption of Peoples and Territories

The rights of individuals, houses and local groups to tracts of land is one of the major subjects of oral traditions. Totem poles functioned largely as a visual statement of these rights. Barbeau and Duff recorded many of the stories illustrated in totem poles in detail. There is thus a vast body of traditional information on the origins of Gitksan groups on their territories. These stories describe a complex series of migrations and group fusions and fissions, and are often contradictory in detail. The rights to the territories and crests that the stories describe are also often contested between individuals and houses and have long been subjects of dispute within traditional Gitksan culture. From an academic perspective, Barbeau (1929:36-37) stressed that such contradictions occurred between origin stories because they are 'semi-historical' or 'semi-legendary', and not strictly factual.

Given these caveats, oral narratives may still be informative of the broad outlines of Gitksan group origins and population movements, if not particular details. Barbeau collected and synthesised information pertinent to this endeavour for all Gitksan groups, and Duff provided details on the origins of the Gitanyow. In the discussion presented below, I have synthesised both sources. The difficulty in this analysis was in reconciling the social units that Duff and Barbeau chose as a base. Barbeau traced the origins of what he called 'clans', which he defined as matrilineal kin groups within the Gitksan phratries (Frog-Raven, Wolf, Eagle and Fireweed), who shared a common origin, but were sometimes composites formed by fusion (1929:153). This definition of clan differs from that used in other Gitksan ethnographies which equate phratry and clan (Duff 1959; Cove 1982). Barbeau's definition of clan fits what Duff and

Cove call lineages, which comprise houses, although in Barbeau's reckoning, these units cross-cut villages. Barbeau may have been describing what Adams (1973:23-24) called *Wilnad'ahl*, a grouping intermediate between house and clan. However, Barbeau's 'clans' are most often named for a chief, as is commonly the case with houses. Duff (1959) in his narratives described the origins of individual houses within clans at Kitwancool. Cove (1982:6) tentatively suggested that the variation in social units identified by ethnographers may reflect variation in the villages they studied, or that Barbeau initially misapplied social labels.

For my purposes, I have treated Barbeau's phratries as being equivalent to clans, and his clans as houses/matrilineages. I then traced the origins of these units as described in both Barbeau (1929) and Duff (1959). The social units present in each ethnographic Gitksan local group are presented in Table 9. Table 10 shows the supposed place of origin and subsequent migrations of each house according to the above sources.

On the face of it, the oral narratives indicate that the origins and histories of the Gitksan houses are diverse and complex. A closer look indicates that many groups traced their origins to areas to the north such as Alaska, the Stikine, the Nass, the Skeena headwaters and Bear Lake. Others were of coastal descent (e.g., Hlengwah and the Giltwinth), and made their way up the Skeena and Nass (Barbeau 1929:154-156; Duff 1959:14). A third grouping, such as the Fireweed sky 'houses', claimed Temlaham as their homeland in the distant past (Barbeau 1929:10). Temlaham is a fabled homeland in the oral traditions of segments of each division of the Tsimshian - the Coast Tsimshian, Nisga'a and Gitksan. Temlaham was reputedly located on the Upper Skeena,

somewhere in the vicinity of the Bulkley - Skeena forks, and was abandoned in the distant past during a huge flood of the entire Skeena valley. Some stories equate this catastrophe with the biblical flood (Duff 1959:18). Narratives relate how the survivors of the flood settled new lands in the Nass and Skeena valleys and adjacent coast as far as Alaska, some eventually returning to the Upper Skeena (Duff 1959:13).

Table 9. Ethnographic Gitksan Local Groups and Divisions.

Village	**Phratry/Clan**	**House**
Kitwanga	Frog-Raven Eagle Wolf	Neegyamk; Nekt; Hlengwah; Yarhag & Lelt Qawg/Gitanraet Gitrhandakhl
Kitwancool	Frog-Raven Wolf Fireweed	Neegyamk * *; Wild-rice/Gitanrasrh; Water-lily; Yarhag & Lelt; Hanelalgag* Prairie; Wild-rice 2; Kaien Island; Giltwinth*; Mahley & Akqwendasqu* Weegyet
Kitseguecla	Frog-Raven Wolf Fireweed	Nekt; Hlengwah; Wild-rice Wild-rice Sky; Sky 3; Weegyet
Gitenmaks	Frog-Raven Wolf Fireweed	Nawle; Wild-rice Prairie Sky (after 1872); Weegyet
Kispiox	Frog-Raven Wolf Fireweed	Nekt; Nawle; Water-lily Prairie; Wild-rice Sky; Gitkeemelae; Sky 3; Wild-rice
Kisgegas	Frog-Raven Wolf Fireweed	Wild-rice Wild-rice 2 Wild-rice
Kuldo	Wolf***	unknown

Source: Barbeau (1929:153-157), except for * Duff (1959:14-24), ** Duff (1959) and Barbeau (1929), ***Adams (1973:23).

Table 10. Origins and Migrations of Gitksan Houses.

Clan	House	Origin and Movements	Source
Frog-Raven	Neegyamk	Temlaham>Ketchikan>Kincolith>Ksgaygainet /Cranberry>Wilpandaugh/Upper Kitwanga> Gitanyow	D (18-21)
		or	
		Nass>QCI>Kitwancool, Kitwanga	B (153)
	Nekt	Nass>QCI>Nass>Skeena>Kitwanga Ft	B (52)
		or	
		Temlaham>Kispiox>Nass>QCI>Gitladamks> Kitwancool>Kitwanga>Kitseguecla, Kispiox	B (39, 153)
	Nawle	Temlaham>?>Gitenmaks (1850s)>Kispiox	B (153)
	Hlengwah	Alaska>PRH>Kitselas>Kitwanga Ft> Kitwanga, Kitseguecla	B (74-75,154)
	Wild-rice	Head of Skeena/Stikine>Gitladamks> Gitanyow>Kitwancool, Gitenmaks, Kitseguecla, Kisgegas	B (154, 60-62)
	Water-lily	Hagwilget Carrier>Kitwancool, Kispiox	B (154)
	Lelt	Anteguale/Nass>Kitwancool>Kitwanga (1700s)	B (42, 154)
	Yarhag	Antkee'is/Skeena>Gitlusek>Kitwanga Ft	B (74)
	Hanelal-gag	Upper Nass/Zemanlusqaks>Sganestsuha-bausq>Lakweeyep>Anukgemeliknagag>Gam lugaldalgood>Aksnagalga>Wensgalgul>Ksg aygainet>Lakgetksedzozqu>Ksgaygainet> Gitanyow	D (24)
Wolf	Prairie	Head of Stikine>Na'a/Alaska>Upper Nass> Skeena>Kitwancool, Gitenmaks, Kispiox	B (155)
	Gitran-dakhl	Gitrandakhl/Kitsumkalum headwaters> Skeena>Kitsumkalum, Kitwanga, Gitladamks, Hagwilget	B (156)
		or	
		Nass>Gitrandakhl>Hagwilget & Kunekstaet on Skeena>Kitwanga	B (10, 157)
	Wild-rice	Tahltan>Gitanrasrh/Bear L>Kuldo & Kisgeags>Kispiox, Gitenmaks	B(126, 156)
	Wild-rice 2	Gweesaedzan/Skeena Head/Bear L>Anlarasemdaerh/Kisgegas>Kispiox, Kitwancool, Hagwilget	B (122, 156)

Clan	House	Origin and Movements	Source
Wolf	Kaien Isl.	Stikine head>Na'a>Prince Rupert> Kitwancool, Gitladamks	B (156)
	Giltwinth	Prince Rupert ('1000 BP)>Nass/Anlathgauthu >Zamanlutool>founded Gitanyow	D (14-17)
	Mahley & Akgwen-dasqu	Gitenmaks>Gethsqansnard/Kispiox R>Kisgegas & Getangwalg/Kispiox>Gitanyow	D (24)
Fire-weed	Sky	Nass>Temlaham>Larhsendzihl/Kispiox R>Gitenmaks(1872)>Kitseguecla, Kispiox	B(79, 86,154)
	Gitkimilae	Gitkimilae/Nass>Temlaham>Kitselas>Temlah am>Gitangwalk/Kispiox R> Qatqaieeden/ Kispiox R>Kispiox (1800s)	B (10, 88,154)
	Sky 3	Temlaham>'acquired coastal affinities'>Kitseguecla, Kispiox, Hagwilget	B (91, 97,154)
	Wild-rice	Gitanrasrh/Bear L>Anlarasemdaerh/ Kisgegas>Kispiox (by 1830s)	B (98)
	Weegyet 1	Nass>Skeena>Kisgegas (by 1826)>Babine L Carrier	B (102, 157)
	Weegyet 2	Geenarhaat, near Lorne Cr on Skeena> Ksedoe>Kitseguecla>Gitenmaks, Kitwancool	B (10, 155)
Eagle	Qawg	Na'a/Alaska (1600/1700)>Kitsumkalum >Fiddler's Cr/Gitanraet>Kitwanga Ft> Kitwanga	B (134, 140, 157)

Note regarding bibliographic sources: B is Barbeau 1929 and D is Duff 1959.

If Temlaham was an actual prehistoric settlement, its location has repeatedly eluded archaeologists (Inglis 1976; Albright 1987).

Both Barbeau and Duff (1959:13) concluded that the ethnographic Gitksan were actually an amalgamation of populations. In Barbeau's reckoning, there was an indigenous Upper Skeena population represented by the Yarhag, Lelt and Fireweed Sky groups (1929:10, 74, 79-86, 154). (However, in some

stories, the founders of Temlaham are said to have been Tahltan, Athapascans (Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-442.5)). To the indigenous population were added groups, probably of Tlingit descent, who migrated from the north. Houses claiming the headwaters of the Stikine, Nass, Skeena and Bear Lake were believed to be of northern Athapascan descent (Barbeau 1929:10; Duff 1959:13). The Prairie, Wild-rice and Gitrandakhl groups apparently claimed to have been Tsetsaut, Tahltan, or Sekani (Barbeau 1929:10, 122-127, 155). Houses from Prince Rupert Harbour and the lower reaches of the Nass and Skeena (such as Nekt and the Eagles) were of Coast Tsimshian, Nisga'a or Haida extraction and brought with them coastal affinities (Barbeau 1929:10, 152).

In the oral traditions, the motives for population movement include natural disaster, social or military strife (Barbeau 1929:36; MacDonald 1984b:9) and drastic population fluctuation (up or down) (Barbeau 1929:40, 74). Each of these could cause houses and local groups to fission, or incorporate others. Consequently, Barbeau (1929:152) felt that the Gitksan local groups came about 'casually' and 'could easily dissolve again'.

Contrary to current academic assertions (MacDonald 1984a:78), groups and their territories were also acknowledged in the oral traditions to have been incorporated through conquest. According to Barbeau (1929:11), 'A state of almost incessant warfare resulted from the transgressions of the newcomers in a country already settled as were the North West Coast and adjacent valleys. This conflict forms the theme of countless narratives, many of which explain the origin or acquisition of new crests'. I would add that new territories associated with the crests were also acquired in this manner. Duff (1959:12, 31) stated, that

as a consequence of their wars with the Tsetsaut, the Gitanyow acquired their territories on the Upper Nass around Meziadin Lake. Barbeau and Beynon (1987b:29-30) also related a story in which the Gitanyow claimed Tsetsaut territories, including Meziadin Lake, as victory in battle. Although the Tsetsaut are said to have retaliated when these Gitksans used their new territories, the Gitanyow maintained their rights there. Tsetsaut territories are also said to have been given over to the Gitksan as compensation for conflicts. A narrative relates how Kisgegas came to acquire Athapascan territories to the north near Bear Lake in compensation for a murder committed at the time of their first visit to Fort Connelly (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:162).

The Kuldo -'Tsetsaut' feuds are said to have begun when there 'were no guns', and occurred when a group of Gitksan were hunting in the hinterland at the 'headwaters of the Skeena' (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:25). One of the main elements of the story is the foreign nature of the Tsetsaut, who 'lived underground', 'like squirrels' and did not have dried salmon (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:25-26). Although not datable, this story may indicate that the Kuldo were actually expanding their territory. Similarly, a version of the stories of the Tsetsaut - Gitanyow wars has it being instigated by an attack upon a Gitanyow chief who was out in the hinterland of his hunting grounds at Ks-gay-gainet, on the Cranberry, near the Nass junction, and was followed by a second attack on a Gitanyow chief hunting on the Aks-na-galga, on the Upper Nass (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:29-30). These stories, also, may relate to the expansion of Gitksan territories at the expense of their Athapascan neighbours. A version of the Tsetsaut - Kisgegas conflict in 1826 also has it started with an

attack upon a chief hunting to the north '5 walks from Bear Lake' (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:160).

It is also apparent in the narratives that in many cases, houses brought the rights to distant territories with them when they joined a new village. According to Duff (1959:13, 26) the Gitanyow have territories on the Upper Kispiox River because of houses which fissioned off groups living there. There are suggestions in Barbeau that some of the Tsetsaut territories may have been acquired through the gradual adoption of refugees from the dominated group. In his version of the Gitanyow -Tsetsaut conflicts, a group of Tsetsaut refugees established a house at Gitanyow, and as neo-Gitksan, waged a feud against the Tsetsaut of the interior (Barbeau 1929:60-63). The adopted Tsetsaut retained their language 'almost to present time' and commemorated their ancestry with the 'smoke-hole ladder crest' (Barbeau 1929:60). 'The smoke hole and the notch ladder here are not of the North West Coast type, but belong to the semi-subterranean lodges of the nomadic tribes of the interior' (Barbeau 1929:60). Barbeau described their pithouses as 'Round lodges, half sunk underground, with dome roofs, and the entrance through the roof; a log with deep notches served as a ladder' (1929:61). This story of Tsetsaut refugees and their distinctive house style is consistent with the details of site GiTa 2 on Kitwanga Lake and took place within the two sigma age range (AD 1470-1950) derived from the site's charcoal sample. The smoke-hole crest was also depicted by a group at Kispiox (Barbeau 1929:58), and although its origin is not given, the crest may belong to the ancestors of a refugee group there.

The Tsetsaut groups gradually dwindled and ceased to exist as a distinct entity in 1885 (Duff 1981:456). Their population may have been critically

reduced by the migrations and conflicts of their burgeoning neighbours, the Gitksan, Nisga'a and Tlingit. It seems that their numbers and territories were assimilated within these increasingly dominant groups, both forcefully and peaceably (Duff 1981:454). Nisga'a narratives relate, for instance, that one branch of the Tsetsaut, the Smailx of Portland Canal, were assimilated by the Nisga'a through increasingly tight trade relations beginning in the maritime fur trade (Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-442.5, B-F-141.6, l.37). In other narratives this group was over-run by Nisga'a seeking first new territories, and then people to bolster dwindling household populations (Duff 1981:455).

Barbeau felt that the above processes of population movement and incorporation brought the Gitksan together as an ethnographically recognizable entity relatively recently. 'The gradual drift of these [Tlingit and Athapascan] people from the north southward is at the core of their [Gitksan] recent history' (Barbeau 1929:10). Later, he stated that most of the movement recalled by his informants occurred 'within the last two hundred years' (Barbeau 1929:152). The Alaskan/Tlingit Eagles, he believed migrated to the Skeena after AD 1600/1700, as they possessed a split eagle crest which he thought was copied from the Russian cossacks while they still lived in Alaska (Barbeau 1929:135-136). MacDonald (1984b:93) pointed out that double-bodied bird images were widespread in Pre-Columbian times. Therefore, there is no reason to believe this crest was borrowed from the Russians. The Coast Tsimshian and Nisga'a divisions were believed by Barbeau to have made their way upstream '200 years ago or less' in the case of Lelt, or 'not long ago', in the main (Barbeau 1929:42, 48). Duff (1959:14) was told that the Wolf Giltwinth movement up the Nass from

Prince Rupert Harbour, and their eventual founding of Gitanyow, began 'a thousand years ago, more or less'.

Barbeau placed the incorporation of most of the northern Athapascan groups into the Gitksan in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The Sky group at Gitenmaks was apparently established in 1872, within the memories of informants (Barbeau 1929:154). Weegyet's Wild-rice, Wolf group, which was of Babine or Sekani extraction, joined the 'newly formed Kispiox tribe' during Legaic's reign of raiding (Barbeau 1929:98). At least one Gitksan house, the Water-lilies of Kispiox, is claimed to be a very recent (post 1830) off-shoot of the Wetsuweten Carrier (Barbeau 1929:10). And, as was discussed above, the incorporation of the Tsetsaut into Kitwancool and the other Gitksan local groups was probably not complete until the mid-nineteenth century (Barbeau 1929:60, 157). While pinning dates to oral traditions is suspect, a lot of population movement and local group consolidation does seem to have occurred in the last three hundred years.

Origin narratives are recorded for most of the ethnographic Gitksan villages, and in some cases, the place and group names relate to their origins in themselves. The occupants of Kitwancool are called Gitanyow. The name Gitanyow is derived from a village occupied before Kitwancool, which Barbeau (1929:31) called 'mythical'. Gitanyow is claimed to have been huge, with houses extending in different estimates for eight to sixteen miles north and south from the present village of Kitwancool to the shores of Kitwanga Lake (Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-132.2; Duff 1959:17, 31). According to Duff (1959:17), the name meant 'Village of Many People', in reference to its size. In some stories, it is said to have been abandoned during the great flood, and was re-established

afterwards, but smaller, and renamed 'Gitwinlkul' [Kitwancool] - 'People of the Narrow Village, or Where it is Narrow' (Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-132.2; Barbeau 1929:32). Elsewhere, Barbeau (1929:3) translated the name as 'Mountain Pass Tribe'. In other stories, the original name, Gitanyow is translated as 'Where People Take Refuge', and refers to its founder as having been a Tsetsaut feud refugee from the Upper Nass (Barbeau 1929:60; Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-132.2). In Duff's stories, the population and village of Gitanyow was greatly reduced subsequently in the wars with the Tsetsaut, and the name Gitwinlkul was adopted to refer to this reduction (1959:17, 31).

If the origins of Gitanyow and Kitwancool were tied to the wars with the Tsetsaut, then they may have been founded in sequence sometime in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This is consistent with the archaeological evidence discussed in chapter four. It does not seem likely that the village of Gitanyow was ever as large as the narratives state. The settlement of Gitanyow, in fact may have been limited in extent to the archaeological site of that name at the outlet of Kitwanga Lake, while the name may also have referred to a larger territory in the upper Kitwanga valley.

The origin myths of most of the other ethnographic villages are even more difficult to situate in history.

Gitenmaks is translated as 'Torch-light-fishing-tribe' in reference to the subsistence practices of its mythical founder (Barbeau 1929:3; Barbeau and Beynon 1987a:89). Its founding was supposedly nearly co-terminus with that of Temlaham (Barbeau and Beynon 1987a:89), and is therefore not fixed in time.

Kispiox means 'The-hiding-place', and refers to its having been founded by a fugitive from Temlaham in mythical times (Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-

75.3). In another narrative, the fugitive (Yael) recruited followers from established villages (Kitwancool and Kisgegas) at a place called Gitangwalk, on the Kispiox River, and then moved to the present site of Kispiox after a small-pox epidemic (Barbeau 1929:88-89). The reference to the epidemic would place the founding of Kispiox in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. Yet another story claimed that Kispiox was founded by a faction from Kuldo, but Beynon doubted this because it contradicted information that Kispiox was older than Kuldo (Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-76.6).

No definition is given for the name Kuldo. Kuldo is said to have been founded by people from Gitong.ast (Gitanrasrh) on Bear Lake, and Gamgelilas, which was still occupied when guns were introduced (Barbeau 1929:125; Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-85.6). Its founding would therefore fall in the protohistoric period. Barbeau (1929:60) said the founding groups were Tsetsaut from 'groundhog country', which is a grassy plateau at the head-waters of the Skeena, Nass and Stikine rivers (Denniston 1981:434).

Kisgegas means 'Seagull-people' (Barbeau 1929:150). Beynon recorded an origin myth that says its founders came from a village near Bear Lake called Gitga'anxgis (Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-79.6), but the story is not situated in time.

The stories of the founding of Kitwanga, or the Gitwangak ('People-of-the-rabbit') contain the most reliable chronological markers. In the oral narratives, the details of Nekt's migrations are variable, but he is consistently credited with founding the fort and drawing the Gitwangak local group together as an entity. Nekt apparently attracted the families of Hlengwah and Arhkawt, who were already living on the Skeena, towards him because he was a bold warrior

(Barbeau 1929:39, 42, 53). The initial merging of these people together to become the Gitwangak is said to have occurred on the Upper Skeena below Kitwanga, either at Kwunekstaet, reportedly near Lorne Creek (Barbeau 1929:131; MacDonald 1984b:54), or at Gitlusek, reportedly near Coyote Creek (Barbeau 1929:75). They quickly moved to the Kitwanga Fortress, where Nekt was eventually killed by 'the first gun' (Barbeau 1929:53). In Barbeau's accounts, the fortress was a permanent settlement, and the village of Kitwanga was not established until after Nekt's death. 'The removal from Ta'awdzep [the fort] dates back, in the opinion of some informants, to the time when the white people first came to this country; and according to Alfred Sinclair, to the time when the HBC established its post at the mouth of the Nass (1831-33)' (Barbeau 1929:142). If these sources are at all accurate, the establishment of the Kitwanga Fort and the Gitwangak local group, the events leading up to it, and the abandonment and subsequent movements are all roughly datable to the mid 1700s to 1830s. This possibility can be supported by the archaeology of the fort which indicates occupation during this time frame, and the regional settlement pattern which indicates a roughly co-terminus expansion of village settlement in the Upper Skeena. All of this information can be taken as support for Barbeau's position on a 'recent' ethno-genesis for the ethnographically known Gitksan groups.

Discussion

For the purposes of recovering factual cultural descriptions, outlines of events and changes over time, both the oral and documentary sources have a number of weaknesses, which have been discussed above. However, I believe

that the subject matter of these two sources of data is compelling and sheds useful light on a number of issues addressed in this thesis.

Both the documentary and oral sources indicate that there was an extensive network of trade between the coast and interior along the Skeena and its tributaries. In the 1810s and 20s the Gitksan occupied a middleman position in this trade. This situation may have been in existence in prehistory, as they acted as middlemen in the exchange of indigenous items, such as eulachon and dentalium, as well as in European goods and furs. There are indications, however, that the middleman position in trade was competed for and in flux in the 1820s. I have suggested that the introduction of new sources of European goods in the interior, at least at Fort Kilmaurs, led to competition between the Gitksan and Carrier over control of direct access to the fort. After a series of violent episodes, the Gitksan established direct links to the Europeans and cut the Carrier out as middlemen. There are also indications that the Gitksan of the Kisgegas area competed amongst themselves over trading rights with Fort Kilmaurs, and perhaps with Gitksan further down the Skeena system. At the same time, fur traders indicate that the Gispaxloats, Legaic's Coast Tsimshian group, were actively extending their trading expeditions in European goods of maritime origin, and were a threat to both the Gitksan's and interior posts' positions in the fur trade.

The importance of holding a monopoly on fur trade, or a middleman position, is indicated in oral traditions in which it is fought violently for. I suggest that narratives describing violence between the Kisgegas and Tsetsaut, may indicate that there was a rivalry over trading rights at Fort Connelly, and the Tsetsaut-Gitanyow wars may relate to rights to the fur bearing area of the Upper

Nass and the rights to trade downstream with the Nisga'a. Violent rivalries between Legaic, the Nisga'a and Kitselas over the monopoly on fur trade with the Gitksan are obvious in the oral traditions. The narratives also indicate that Kitwanga occupied an influential position in this trade (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b:78- 79).

Chief Nekt and the Kitwanga Fort are not directly said to have controlled trade, but it is apparent in tradition that he increased in prestige and following during the early stages of European trade, and he was perceived as a threat by the above parties who wanted to monopolize trade and eventually eliminated him (Barbeau 1929:53). Nekt and the fort are not mentioned in the historical documents of the 1820s, which although based on second hand information, seem generally accurate in their assessment of regional trade patterns (Brown 1826b:15). The Alaska trade route, for instance, is mentioned. Nekt may have been removed from his position in trade by the 1820s, and certainly by 1830 according to oral tradition.

At the same time as groups were competing over European trade, there seems to have been a lot of population movement, amalgamation and displacement. It is generally acknowledged that some northern Athapascan groups moved to the south and west in the Skeena and Nass drainages. Brown's intelligence from informants suggests that the ethnographic Gitksan permanent villages and local groups were essentially in place in the 1820s, although their exact locations cannot be determined. The Gitksan settlement system with permanent villages and seasonally used camps also seems to have been in place, to judge from Brown's descriptions of the Kisgegas area.

Oral traditions, however, suggest that the Gitksan local groups may not have been in their final form, or positions for long at this point.

Migration is a major theme of the Gitksan oral narratives. The details are often confusing, sometimes contradictory and some places and events are probably mythical or metaphorical, but I believe the broad outlines of the Gitksan migrations are recoverable. Oral traditions indicate that the ethnographic Gitksan are an amalgamation of peoples from the northern interior, coast and Skeena. Some of the population movement and group formation, particularly when Athapascans are involved, such as the Tsetsaut refugees at Kitwancool, can be fixed to the contact era. In other stories, the amalgamation of Athapascan people to become Gitksan groups lacks chronological reference, seeming to have occurred in the distant past, and may indicate that there were waves of migration into the Skeena area.

The causes for migration and the amalgamation of groups include population fluctuation, natural disaster and various forms of strife and conflict. These movements invariably brought about a realignment of territories. Refugees apparently brought the rights to their house territories with them when joining a new local group. In other cases, local groups, or components of them seem to have consciously set out to expand their territories. A combination of deliberate expansion and the adoption of Tsetsaut refugees in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries probably accounts for the Gitanyow claim to territories on the Upper Nass. Similarly, narratives indicate that Kisgegas acquired territories on Bear Lake as compensation for a violent clash with Athapascans in 1826, which I think could be read as being a consequence of the Gitksan group deliberately pushing the edge of their hinterland. The narratives of the Kuldo-

Tsetsaut clashes also have as a starting point Gitksan chiefs being attacked while exploring the northern hinterland of their lands in what I think may be an effort at expansion.

Working from the oral narratives, we can not be certain when all of this population movement, amalgamation and territorial re-alignment began, but it does seem to have been on-going in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Some of the local groups and their territories clearly took form in that time, namely Kitwanga, Kitwancool, Kispiox and perhaps Kuldo. The story of Nekt and the establishment of the Gitwangak group is firmly situated in the protohistoric period, and indicates the degree of population amalgamation and territory expansion possibly occurring on a regional scale during that time. Wide scale settlement and land-use shifts are consistent with the archaeological settlement pattern presented in chapter four, and as was discussed above, access to trade may have been an underlying factor.

Indications of social change, especially as regards ranking, are harder to extract from the documentary and oral sources. This is primarily because fur traders were not trained cultural observers or always culturally sensitive. Nor did they have access to, or an interest in all segments of society. The Native oral traditions' main weaknesses are that they were not concerned with social change, and they were told and functioned within the context of a ranked society, and may therefore have projected this context onto the past.

The fur traders did note coastal cultural traits and material culture among the Carrier and Gitksan, and suspected they were recent cultural borrowings. We cannot be certain when these borrowings occurred, but they may have gone along with the expansion of coastal trade networks in the late eighteenth to

nineteenth centuries. Barbeau suspected that totem poles diffused to the Upper Skeena in the 1800s, along with metals and an increased concern with prestige and its display. This, however, does not mean that the crests, stories and ranking system associated with the poles were new as well. Oral traditions do explicitly indicate that the Gitksan stole crests and ranks from their neighbours during the protohistoric period, and that secret societies were borrowed. All of this would seem to indicate an increase in complexity as a result of interaction with coastal groups.

Oral traditions, unfortunately, do not describe the evolution of social organization. Chiefs, and the prerogatives of high rank seem to be constant elements of oral narratives, and we cannot be certain how much of this has been projected onto the past by the story tellers. Fur trade documents also indicate that 'chiefs' were present in the 1820s. Brown seems to have been under the impression that each village had a principal chief, and that the chiefs of different villages were ranked. This is contrary to the social ranking system described in the Gitksan ethnographies, but we cannot be certain whether this is a projection of European-like power structure by the fur trader, or if some change in the ranking system occurred later in the nineteenth century. It is clear, however, from Brown's descriptions that some form of social differentiation was in existence and that trade, wealth, ceremonial regalia and power were its prerogatives.

Taken as a whole, the ethnohistoric sources indicate that there was a trend towards territorial expansion and the movement of peoples who would become Gitksan groups to the Upper Skeena during the protohistoric and historic periods. It is also apparent that they competed with their neighbours and

amongst themselves over access to trade in European goods and furs. This competition was probably motivated by a desire for prestige and power. Wealth and success in war and trade clearly contributed to these qualities and were a means for people to move up the social ladder (Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-21.13).

Neither the documentary, nor oral records say directly that the processes of population movement, amalgamation, trade and conflict had any effect on the development of cultural complexity. This issue is simply not addressed or recoverable in either source, although I have argued that there is archaeological evidence for it. Ethnohistoric sources do, however, indicate that the transfer of cultural traits and assimilation of ethnic groups were a part of the protohistoric interaction processes. I therefore feel that there is ethnohistoric evidence that competition for important roles in the fur trade contributed to the spread of people with Northwest Coast cultural traits and expansion of their territories, accompanied perhaps by an increase in social complexity, or at least an elaboration of its trappings, such as totem poles, ceremonial regalia and displays of wealth.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The primary goal of this thesis has been to assess the influence of indirect European contact upon social ranking and settlement pattern at the Kitwanga Hill Fort, and throughout the Upper Skeena region during the protohistoric period (AD 1700-1830). The pervasive academic opinion in Northwest Coast studies is that European contact was of little consequence to Native societies until very late, when demographic decline, permanent White settlements, and encroachments on political and religious autonomy are supposed to have had disastrous effects. At the same time, anthropologists widely accept that significant cultural change occurred early in the contact era in interior regions, including the headwaters of the Skeena. In particular, ethnographers noted an incipient version of the Northwest Coast culture pattern among the Carrier and proposed that their ranking complex was borrowed from Tsimshian groups early in the fur trade as a consequence of heightened interaction, the increased availability of wealth items and a desire for prestige on par with the Tsimshian.

There is reason to believe that the social forms of the Gitksan may also have been affected by this interaction. In the 1920s Marius Barbeau felt that the Gitksan were a 'recent' amalgamation of coastal and interior cultures. This point was reiterated in the 1970s by Adams (1973), and ecologically modelled by Ames (1979a) as being a consequence of up-river expansion of Coast

Tsimshian economic and social systems, which was accelerated by involvement in the fur trade. MacDonald (1984a) ignored the possibility of late cultural transformation in the Upper Skeena region, but did argue for protohistoric changes in ethnic territories and balances of power as a consequence of competition and warfare over control of the new sources of trade.

In chapter one, I stressed that regardless of the differences in these perspectives on the cultural development of the Upper Skeena, a significant re-ordering of social and settlement systems is likely to have occurred. Whether through migration and the expansion of the Tsimshian ecological niche, or through efforts to control access to interior trade in fur and European goods, an expansion of Northwest Coast cultural territories to the upper reaches of the Skeena and Nass is proposed to have occurred and to have been on-going during the protohistoric period. In addition, I proposed that competition on this scale to control access to European goods could have contributed to increased social disparities and formalized status differences among the Gitksan, as they apparently did for the Carrier. This proposition can be supported by Barbeau's field notes, in which he stated that the Gitksan system of social ranking was much more fluid than that of the Coast Tsimshian and was based more heavily on the manipulation of wealth (Barbeau and Beynon n.d., B-F-21.13).

Such a large degree of protohistoric change for a Northwest Coast culture group is not widely accepted. Traditionally, Northwest Coast archaeologists and ethnohistorians have ignored the possibility of significant cultural change occurring as a consequence of indirect or direct European contact prior to the generation of the ethnographic record (Ames 1991:937; Acheson 1995:274). In archaeology, the ethnographic record has been considered a compelling source

of analogy for modelling prehistoric societies and interpreting specific material remains (e.g., Carlson 1991; Huelsbeck 1989; Burley 1980; Matson 1992). In Northwest Coast ethnohistory, the earliest historic and ethnographic records are traditionally regarded as a baseline description of traditional culture from which subsequent directed European change can be assessed (Fisher 1978; Darling and Cole 1990; see also the ethnographic reconstructions in Suttles 1990). The depth of the ethnographic record has been recently challenged by some Northwest Coast archaeologists and ethnohistorians (e.g., Acheson 1995; McDonald 1984). But for the Upper Skeena region, several scholars, including MacDonald in some contexts, have assumed extreme continuity of the ethnographic culture pattern. Both this perspective, and the arguments for protohistoric change, have been made with little reference to the archaeological record of the Upper Skeena, and no detailed reference to the early documentary record or oral traditions.

In this thesis, I have outlined the implications of protohistoric competition over trade on social ranking and settlement pattern at two spatial scales - locally at the Kitwanga Hill Fort, and regionally throughout the Upper Skeena and Nass valleys, and I have examined the archaeological evidence of each, as well as the ethnohistoric record. The results of these analyses are summarized and synthesized below.

The Kitwanga Hill Fort

The ethnographic Gitksan organized space in their houses and villages according to social rank. I proposed that the local implications of competition over trade and the spread of the Northwest Coast culture pattern would include

an increase in exotic materials, strict restrictions among community members on their distribution, and increased disparities in wealth and that these conditions should be manifest archaeologically at the Kitwanga Fort in significant inter and intra-house variation in artifacts, faunal remains and architecture.

I defined two components of occupation at Kitwanga, both during the protohistoric period, based on site stratigraphy and statistically significant vertical differences in the proportions of European and Native artifact categories in the site's assemblage. Specifically, above level 5 there is a dramatic decline in indigenous artifact categories and a corresponding increase in European goods with a decrease in their tendency to be modified.

During the later of the two components five plank houses were occupied. My inter-house comparisons of the late component faunal and artifact assemblages supported one another. There are strong indications that there was unequal access to trade goods and fur bearing mammals between the houses, although the distribution of fauna could have been affected by post-abandonment processes, as discussed in chapter three. House 1 stands out with the highest proportion of trade goods and fur bearing mammals, as well as the greatest diversity of faunal species and number of exotic animals represented. It also has unique architectural features - a raised bench and central depression - and has been identified by oral tradition as the home of Chief Nekt. I argued that the occupants of this house were of higher rank than the others and exercised its prerogatives, including participating in, and controlling trade, possessing and displaying exotic goods, consuming a more varied diet and occupying a conspicuously different dwelling. By the same criteria, houses 2 and 3 seem to have been of intermediate rank, with perhaps a

lesser degree of involvement in the fur trade. Both houses have slight majorities of Native artifact types and locally-available salmon remains, and unremarkable house features. Houses 4 and 5 occupy precarious positions on the edges of the hill, and perhaps joined the community after the other three houses, and have archaeological assemblages dominated by Native artifact types and fish remains. These two houses likely had the smallest share of the fur trade and its wealth and were probably low ranking.

Only Houses 1 and 3 showed statistically significant intra-house differences in the distribution of trade goods, and the pattern is suggestive of inequality among household members. Within house differences in the distribution of faunal remains may be skewed due to a bias towards preservation of bone in the hearth areas of houses, and are probably not socially meaningful.

The composition of the artifact and faunal assemblages indicates both components were involved in fur trading. While the distribution of archaeological materials in the late component conforms to expectations derived from the ethnographic record and oral traditions, the differences between the components are suggestive of a growth in control of trade and social differentiation in terms of wealth and prestige that cannot be predicted from oral traditions alone. The overall difference in the proportions of European and Native artifact categories between the components certainly indicates an increased involvement in European trade at Kitwanga, and the predominance of beads in the late component may indicate a greater desire for obvious prestige items. Furthermore, the horizontal distribution of trade goods in the early component is homogenous in contrast to the unequal distribution in the late component. The distribution of classes of fauna in the early component is

uneven, but its social significance is ambiguous because the occurrence of bone in this component is highly localized (occurring in two discrete concentrations), and may be skewed by factors of preservation. There is a possibility that the abundance of fur-bearing mammal remains in the House Platform 1 concentration means that a group using this part of the site was more heavily involved in fur trading, but strict control over the wealth from trade (European goods) is not in evidence.

Importantly, occupation of the hill during the early component seems to have been much less intense. The extreme density of occupation on the hill during the late component, I think is indicative of the degree of competition over trade and the importance of defending one's position in it. The relatively rapid change in intensity of occupation is also consistent with the argument I put forth in chapter five for access to trade having brought together the Gitwangak local group as an entity during the protohistoric period.

Regional Settlement Pattern

The river oriented version of the Northwest Coast settlement system that the ethnographic Gitksan followed was highly distinctive. Local groups maintained distinct territories in which they had a permanent plank house village and a series of smaller, seasonally used, household owned resource extraction and processing sites. I hypothesised that if the protohistoric period was a time of rapid change in terms of the spread of Northwest Coast culture to the Upper Skeena, then we should expect to see the appearance of this settlement system in the regional archaeological record. Further, if trade was the main impetus for

change, then permanent settlements, and especially forts, should be oriented towards trade routes and sources of furs.

My review of the literature found little excavated evidence for the presence of Northwest Coast culture on the Upper Skeena in prehistory, although, admittedly there have been few excavations in this region and this impression could change with the accumulation of more data. Presently, we know that there was a substantial occupation at Hagwilget Canyon (GhSv 2) 3500 years ago, although clear evidence of social organization and the degree of sedentism are lacking. The early assemblage at this site is similar to the Skeena Phase at Kitselas Canyon (3600-3200 BP), but in both locales it is held to predate the appearance of 'Developed Northwest Coast culture'. During the period 2500-1500 BP, complex Northwest Coast culture is in evidence at the mouth of the Skeena, and at Kitselas Canyon. However, site GhSv 2 at Hagwilget Canyon seems to have been less intensively used and other components dated to this time on the Upper Skeena are lacking. MacDonald has argued that Hagwilget Canyon was encompassed in the north coast cultural tradition at this time, but this is a tenuous assertion. Excavated evidence at Prince Rupert Harbour suggests prehistoric trade up the Skeena, and the collection of a cache of stone war clubs at Hagwilget Canyon suggests involvement in warfare, but neither can be equated with the practice of the coastal culture pattern, particularly social ranking.

My study of the distribution of archaeological sites indicates that there is only one pre-contact village known on the Upper Skeena, and with the exception of the Hagwilget Canyon area, small sites (caches, scatters and house sites) are scattered about. Even in Hagwilget Canyon where the density of sites is high,

they seem to represent short-term use. This pattern was confirmed by my survey of the Kitwanga Valley. Several cache and lithic scatter sites were found, but there was a distinct lack of prehistoric Northwest Coast style villages, even though this was historically a major trade route and has a relative abundance of subsistence resources. Overall the prehistoric settlement pattern of the Upper Skeena seems to represent a high degree of mobility, is not very Northwest Coast-like, and stands in contrast to the post-contact settlement pattern.

The post-contact site distribution shows a dramatic increase in the number of villages in the last 300 years, with fewer less substantial sites (though there may simply have been less time for these to accumulate) and a tendency for them to be situated in a manner conforming to ethnographic expectations, within reach of permanent villages. Post-contact villages tend to be situated towards trade routes, and in several cases they are recorded as being fortified. I believe these data indicate that the widespread appearance of the Northwest Coast settlement system on the Upper Skeena was late, and that attempts to gain access to and control of trade were major motives in its establishment.

A small pithouse settlement (GiTa 2) was found during survey of the Kitwanga Valley, which I have suggested is protohistoric or early historic based on a broad radiocarbon date and its correspondence with oral traditions of Gitksan - Tsetsaut interaction. In light of the ethnohistoric evidence presented in chapter five for group migrations and ethno-genesis, the Kitwanga Lake pithouse site may relate to the process of Gitksan territorial expansion and the incorporation of Athapascans in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The Ethnohistoric Record

The early historic record of the Upper Skeena was evaluated for evidence of social competition, control of trade, diffusion of cultural traits, social ranking, the movement of peoples and expansion of territories, all of which could be expected if arguments for protohistoric change are valid.

It seems from both European and Native sources that the middleman position in trade between Europeans and various coastal and interior groups was highly desired and subject to change. I believe the fur trade records indicate that in the 1820s the Kisgegas Gitksan competed, sometimes violently, amongst themselves and with the Babine Carrier over exclusive rights to trade with Fort Kilmaurs, and that the Gispaxloats Coast Tsimshian threatened to encroach on the interior fur trade. The situation in the Babine drainage seems to have been part of a larger pattern of regional trade and conflict. Native oral traditions certainly indicate that trading rights were frequently a subject of dispute throughout the Skeena and Nass Valleys during the protohistoric period, and on the Upper Skeena, I believe it may have contributed to hostilities between the Kisgegas and the 'Tsetsaut', and the Gitanyow and the Tsetsaut. The great warrior chief Nekt, and the Gitwangak local group, probably had a prominent role in regional trade and conflict. Oral narratives do not directly state that Nekt enjoyed the monopoly on trade that MacDonald (1984a) suggested, but it is apparent that he rose in prestige and acquired a following during the protohistoric period, and he was eventually killed by those who later fought over a monopoly on trade with the Upper Skeena. It is therefore likely that the rise and fall of Nekt and the Gitwangak was related to their position in trade.

There also appears to have been a lot of population movement, group amalgamation and displacement at the same time as trading feuds occurred, and I believe these processes were related. Historical documents indicate that the Gitksan local groups and their ethnographic settlement system were essentially in place in the 1820s. This is, however, towards the end of the protohistoric period, and I believe that the settlement system may have already undergone some significant changes. Oral traditions indicate that the ethnographic Gitksan local groups were an amalgamation of migrants. Some of the migrations are hard to fix chronologically, and may represent remote prehistoric or metaphorical events. However, some of these narratives clearly refer to post-contact events.

I gather from the narratives that as a consequence of a series of post-contact conflicts Tsetsaut refugees were absorbed into the Gitanyow local group, that the Gitanyow came to acquire territories on the Upper Nass, and that they moved their primary settlement to the present site of Kitwancool. Similarly, the Kispiox group may have come to its final composition and village location in post-contact times (after a smallpox epidemic in some stories). The stories of Nekt and the Gitwangak indicate that the formation of entirely new and distinct ethnic groups was also possible in the protohistoric period.

The oral traditions also suggest that along with, and sometimes apart from, population movement and amalgamation went a realignment and expansion of Gitksan territories, particularly to the upper reaches of the Skeena and Nass rivers. The best examples of this are the expansions of Gitanyow territories on the Nass and of Kisgegas territories to Bear Lake. Both were accompanied by conflict, and both I think can be interpreted as deliberate efforts

by the Gitksan to access new sources of furs and trade. The Kuldo group may have made a similar effort.

Finding indications of social change in the ethnohistoric record is a little more difficult. Some form of social ranking is evident from both the fur trade records and oral narratives. However, neither deals explicitly with the origins of social practice; they were recorded after a long period of indirect and direct European contact; and the social forms recorded were subject to the influence of the processes described above. There are, however, indications of cultural borrowing between the coast and interior in the protohistoric period, including many of the trappings of social ranking. Barbeau believed that totem poles were introduced to the Upper Skeena in the nineteenth century, and Gitksan narratives acknowledge the adoption of secret societies and the occasional stealing of symbols of rank from their coastal neighbours. Whether or not the actual concept of social ranking was borrowed as well is more difficult to determine, and will be addressed below. However, I think it is apparent from the ethnohistoric record that the elements borrowed by the Gitksan and interior groups from their coastal neighbours brought with them an increase in personal prestige and status.

Synthesis

This thesis took as its starting point the possibility that indirect European contact contributed to significant changes in the culture pattern of the Upper Skeena, primarily as a consequence of intergroup competition over access to new sources of trade. I have outlined the implications of such competition for the Native settlement and social ranking systems of the Upper Skeena.

However, competition over trade was not taken as a given. Instead, I set out to examine evidence for it in the ethnohistoric and archaeological records.

The most direct evidence for competition over trade comes from the ethnohistoric records which describe inter and intra-group disputes and feuding over the middleman position between the interior and coast, and over direct access to new sources of European goods and furs. It is also apparent that positions of prominence in trade and regional competition were subject to change. Archaeologically, I believe that the uneven distribution of trade goods and fur bearing mammal elements in the late protohistoric component at the Kitwanga Fort indicates that unequal access to trade also occurred at a local level. In addition, the much more intensive occupation of the hill and greater quantities of European goods in the late component, along with the lack of spatial differentiation in trade goods during the early component, may indicate that the importance of European trade and the degree of regional and internal competition increased as the protohistoric period progressed. On a regional level the archaeological evidence suggests that in post-contact times a series of Native fortresses and villages were established, and that these were situated near to trade routes, probably to ensure local group access to European trade and sources of furs. The Kitwanga Valley trail, for instance, apparently lacked such intensive occupation prehistorically.

Aside from supporting the suggestion that competition for trade occurred, this site distribution represents a significant change in the regional settlement system - towards a greater degree of sedentism and marked territoriality. Competition over access to trade probably contributed to the spread of the Northwest Coast settlement system itself to the Upper Skeena. Fur trade

records indicate that a settlement pattern resembling that recorded in ethnographies of the Gitksan was in place by the 1820s, but oral traditions suggest it was undergoing change during the protohistoric period. A great deal of population movement, group amalgamation and displacement were ongoing, which I believe can be related to intergroup jostling for advantage in trade. It is apparent from oral narratives that some Gitksan local groups expanded their territories to trading sources and fur bearing hinterlands at the expense of their Athapascan neighbours. Some combination of these factors may account for the appearance of the Kitwanga Lake pithouse site. Although its ethnic affiliation and date are not firmly defined, it is tempting to identify it as a Tsetsaut community that was adopted by the expanding Gitanyow group. As well, new ethnic groups came into being and took up prominent positions in trade during this period, as is probably represented archaeologically at the Kitwanga Fort, and others were transformed in composition through the adoption of dominated refugees, and the fission and fusion of houses.

The link between the regional competition over trade and the changing settlement pattern I have identified, and social ranking is more tenuous, but I believe it was real. In the regional settlement pattern, there are no direct indications of social ranking. The presence of a Northwest Coast settlement system of plank house villages and smaller resource extraction sites does not necessarily mean that the ethnographic system of social ranking was also present. The association between villages and forts and trade routes, however, is suggestive of a desire for prominence in trade, and trade ethnographically was a prerogative of those of high rank. The best material evidence for the relationship between competition over control of trade and social ranking is in

the spatial variables at the Kitwanga Fort. There, differences in the spatial distribution of trade goods, fur bearing mammal elements, exotic species and architecture in the late component all conform to ethnographic expectations of differential rank. In short, those who controlled trade were likely of higher rank. Furthermore, the differences between the components may reflect not only a growth in control of trade, but also of social differentiation. In the ethnohistoric record, there are no direct indications of such change in social organization, but there are indications of cultural borrowing from the coast by the Gitksan, including the trappings of the ranking system. It is also apparent that borrowed cultural traits, including European goods, as well as success in regional competition (trade and warfare) brought an increase in prestige and status to those involved.

Based on the available evidence I think we can safely say the introduction of European goods through Native trading links into the Upper Skeena region led to inter-group competition over access to and control of this trade, which contributed to the movement and amalgamation of Gitksan groups, the expansion of their territories inland, and the borrowing of coastal cultural traits. While these processes were intimated in the discussions of Ames, MacDonald and Barbeau, pertinent ethnohistoric and archaeological evidence had not previously been examined. I further believe that these processes led to the late and widespread appearance of the Northwest Coast culture pattern on the Upper Skeena - particulary the settlement system and elaborate social differentiation.

I have also suggested in this thesis that a desire for increased prestige, wealth and ultimately rank, more so than simply the functional benefits of

European goods, was a motive for involvement in trade and intergroup competition. The question of where such a desire came from is not definitively answerable in the context of this thesis, but I can offer the following possibilities. Given the amount of population movement ongoing in the protohistoric period, it is possible that migrants from the Lower Skeena and Nass and the coast brought with them a fully developed system of social ranking in which the manipulation of trade and exotics were important elements, and that they simply transplanted it to the Upper Skeena, along with themselves. It is also possible that the practice of social ranking was borrowed from Northwest Coast cultures by indigenous Skeena River groups, in a manner similar to that which has been proposed to have occurred further inland among the Carrier. The infusion of wealth and a controllable resource represented by the fur trade may have set the conditions for latent 'exploitative' big men or 'aggrandizers' (as Coupland [1993] and Hayden [1995] have described aspiring elites in more general evolutionary models) to take advantage of their positions and essentially transform positions based on achieved prestige into formalized ranked positions. In explanations for the growth of cultural complexity among the Carrier, the borrowing of institutions of rank, including the formation of lineages, was possible because the Athapascans and Tsimshian (including the Gitksan) shared a similar underlying social structure that was conducive to its development, and the subsistence resources (salmon) and wealth (trade) were available to make the system go (Bishop 1983, 1987; Rubel and Rosman 1983; Kobrinsky 1977).

In historical reality, some combination of both population movement and cultural borrowing probably initiated the development of cultural complexity on

the Upper Skeena, which once in place, fuelled further trade, competition and its own elaboration.

Conclusion

At the outset of this thesis, I situated my research within the context of current discourse on culture contact and cultural complexity on the Northwest Coast. Two themes were emphasized in my discussion of culture contact: the importance of understanding protohistory; and the benefits of taking a long-term historical perspective on the study of cultural change. In its most basic terms, the former concern calls for a consideration of change within a culture prior to direct written observation by Europeans, and the latter calls for a consideration of continuity, if not in cultural practice, in the processes directing change, and the structures mediating it. Working both considerations within the study of culture contact need not involve a contradiction.

In this study I have argued for protohistoric cultural change on the Upper Skeena, particularly in the development of cultural complexity and the Northwest Coast settlement system. The identification of such change has implications for how archaeologists use the ethnographic record in the interpretation of prehistoric social organization. Assertions for the long-standing existence of the ethnographic pattern on the Upper Skeena have not withstood the tests to which they have been put here: instead, its appearance seems to have been greatly influenced by the advent of indirect European contact. A similar situation may eventually be discovered for other parts of the Northwest Coast culture area where arguments for the expression of social ranking in prehistory have been made on the basis of a limited number of variables. At the least, this study

indicates that there is variability in the timing and expression of the ethnographic pattern in the Northwest Coast culture area that cannot easily be accommodated within over-arching evolutionary models.

My attempt to take a long-term perspective on culture change on the Upper Skeena was somewhat limited by the lack of a detailed prehistory of the region. Current information is sufficient, however, to indicate the direction of post-contact change, the regional and extra-regional influences on it and the historical contingencies shaping it. Of crucial importance to the development of the Northwest Coast settlement and social ranking systems on the Upper Skeena were the indigenous network of regional exchange, a resource base conducive to support Northwest Coast culture, the presence of cultures in the river valleys and coast suited to amalgamation and inter-cultural borrowing, and the unobtrusive nature of the introduction of European goods.

At the least, a long-term perspective that examines pre-contact and post-contact settlement variables indicates the degree of cultural change on the Upper Skeena. I have criticised other approaches to culture contact, and to the Upper Skeena in particular, as being ahistorical because they either deny change for long periods, or regard Native populations as being passively dominated. I have argued that a great deal of culture change occurred on the Upper Skeena protohistorically, but in so doing, I do not wish to deny an earlier or continuing history to the Gitksan people. The use of a long-term perspective allows us to see that change was the result of Native agency and thus adopted according to indigenously evolved criteria: it was not forced upon First Nations by Europeans.

Finally, while I have argued that the Gitksan local groups assumed their ethnographically described composition and social form relatively recently, I do not think this in any way diminishes the antiquity and achievements of their constituent components (houses) as outlined in their own traditions. Traditional Gitksan people identify themselves most closely with their house and clan, then local group and nation (Gisday Wa and Delgam Uukw 1992:25). Be they ultimately of interior Athapascan, coastal or indigenous Skeena origin, the archaeological history of these most basic units of Gitksan culture remains to be detailed.

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Appendix I - Kitwanga Fort Artifact Catalogue and Proveniences.

Artifact Type	Cat #	Unit	Locat.	Level	H 1	H 2	H 3	H 4	H 5	Op 7	Op 5	Op 11
Euro Manufacture												
Beads	15	1b	m	1	1							
	18	1b	m	1	1							
	19	1b	m	1	1							
	27b	1c	m	1	1							
	33	9a	r	1	1							
	42	9e	f	1				2				
	43	9e	f	1				1				
	149f	9d	r	1	3							
	256	3c	m	1			7					
	364	3t1	m	1			1					
	154	9d	r	1	1							
	24	1c	m	2	1							
	26	1c	m	2	1							
	34	9a	r	2	4							
	35	9b	r	2	1							
	40a	3a	f	2			1					
	40b	3a	f	2			1					
	49a	3a	f	2			1					
	71	9c	r	2	6							
	87	1c	m	2	1							
	88a	1c	m	2	2							
	104	1c	m	2	2							
	156c	9d	r	2	1							
	173	3b	f	2			1					
	155	9d	r	2	1							
	219	1d	m	2	2							
	223b	1d	m	2	1							
	224a	1d	m	2	1							
	264a	1d	m	2	1							
	264b	1d	m	2	2							
	265a	1d	m	2	2							
	274	2a	f	2		1						
	300	3c	m	2			2					
	25	1c	m	2	1							
	26	1c	m	2	1							
	34	9a	r	2	1							
	5	1?	?	3	1							
	20a	1a	m	3	1							
	20b	1a	m	3	2							
	74	9c	r	3	3							
	75	9c	r	3	1							

Artifact Type	Cat #	Unit	Locat.	Level	H 1	H 2	H 3	H 4	H 5	Op 7	Op 5	Op 11
Beads	76	9c	r	3	5							
	77	9c	r	3	2							
	78	9c	r	3	6							
	79	9c	r	3	1							
	81	9c	r	3	2							
	83	9c	r	3	1							
	91b	1c	m	3	1							
	92	1c	m	3	1							
	93	1c	m	3	1							
	135	1c	m	3	5							
	217	1d	m	3	1							
	218b	1d	m	3	4							
	222	1d	m	3	1							
	227b	1b	m	3	1							
	290a	1d	m	3	1							
	291	2a	f	3		1						
	292	2a	f	3		1						
	434	1t1	f	3	1							
	205	3b	f	3			1					
	92b	1c	m	3	1							
	204	1c	m	4	1							
	212b	1b	m	4	5							
	228a	9d	r	4	1							
	266	1d	m	4	2							
	269	1b	m	4	2							
	275	2a	f	4		1						
	352	2d	m	4		1						
	179	3b	f	4			1					
	408	9t1	f	4					1			
	32	1a	m	5	1							
	48	1a	m	5	1							
	82	9c	r	5	1							
	225	1b	m	5	3							
	107a	9c	r	5	1							
	124	3a	f	6			1					
	132	9c	r	6	1							
	465	1t1	f	6	2							
	162	3a	f	8			1					
	185	9e	f	8				1				
	360	2b	f	8		1						
	393a	2t2	r	8		1						
	394b	2t2	r	8		2						
	488	2t2	r	9		1						
	187	9e	f	10				1				
Pistol Barrel	415	9?.1	?	1					1			
Gunflints	149e	9d	r	1	1							

Artifact Type	Cat #	Unit	Locat.	Level	H 1	H 2	H 3	H 4	H 5	Op 7	Op 5	Op 11
Gunflints	393b	4t1	r	2				1				
	96	9e	f	3				1				
	318	3t2	r	5			1					
	423b	1t2	r	7	1							
Brass Key	331	1t2	r	3	1							
Adze	342	2t1	f	4		1						
Mirror glass	88b	1c	m	2	1							
Undia.glass	23	1c	m	2	1							
	156b	9d	r	2	1							
	116	9e	f	3	1							
	407b	9t2	r	3					1			
	107b	9c	r	5	1							
	484	1t2	r	5	1							
	326	2t2	r	?		1						
Iron Pot	347	2c	r	5		1						
Modified Eu	**uropean**											
Knife Bl	255	3c	m	1			1					
	308	3t2	r	1			1					
Dagger	527	9t	?	1					1			
Leist prong	439	2t2	r	1		1						
Perf Thimbl	362	2t1	f	4		1						
Cu Tubes	330	1t2	r	3	1							
	20d	1d	m	3	1							
	268	1b	m	4	1							
	373	2t2	r	6		1						
	483	1t2	r	7	1							
Nose Ring	464	1t1	f	10	1							
Cu Band	38	3a	f	1			1					
Cu Wire	430	1t1	f	2	1							
	9	1a	m	3	1							
Cu Rivet	149g	9d	r	1	1							
Fe Wires	367b	3t1	m	1			1					
	89c	1c	m	2	1							
	223e	1d	m	2	1							
	156e	9d	r	2	1							
	351	2d	m	4		1						
	399	1t2	r	5	1							
Folded fe	287	1b	m	5	2							
Unid. fe	10	1a	m	3	1							
	93c	1c	m	3	1							
	288	1c	m	10	1							

Artifact Type	Cat #	Unit	Locat.	Level	H 1	H 2	H 3	H 4	H 5	Op 7	Op 5	Op 11
Native Material & Manufacture												
PECKED &GROUNDSTONE												
Abraders	58	3a	f	1			1					
Abraders	105	1c	m	2	1							
	277	9d	r	3	1							
	335	2t1	f	3		1						
	428	1t1	f	3	1							
	22a	1a	m	3	1							
	22b	1a	m	3	1							
	22c	1a	m	3	1							
	539	9c	r	4	1							
	550	1t1	f	4	1							
	344b	2t1	f	4		1						
	402	1t2	r	5	1							
	160	3a	f	8			1					
	164	3a	f	9			1					
	381	3t2	r	9			1					
	527	3a	f	9			1					
	530	1?	?	?	1							
Hammerst	31	1a	m	3	1							
	72	9c	r	3	1							
	123	9e	f	5				1				
	127	3a	f	7			1					
	130	3a	f	8			1					
	494	1t2	r	9	1							
	490	1a	m	?								
	234	7e	na	s						1		
	236	7e	na	s						1		
CHIPPED STONE												
Cobble Choppers												
	346	2t1	f	2		1						
	427	1t1	f	3	1							
	504	11	na	5								1
	12	5b	na	?							1	
	233	7e	na	s						1		
	502	11	na	s								1
	507	11	na	s								1
	523	11	na	s								1
	503	11	na	s								1
	521	11	na	s								1
Cobble Cores												
	403	1t2	r	4	1							
	426	1t1	f	6	1							
	558	2t1	f	6		1						
	472	1t2	r	14	1							

Artifact Type	Cat #	Unit	Locat.	Level	H 1	H 2	H 3	H 4	H 5	Op 7	Op 5	Op 11
Cob Cores	510	11	na	s								1
	526	11	na	s								1
Cobble Spalls												
	547	9g	f	1				1				
	548	9g	f	1				1				
	295	9h	r	2					1			
	39	3a	f	2			1					
	396a	2t2	r	3		1						
	553	9k	f	3			1					
	176	3b	f	3			1					
	109	3a	f	4			1					
	419	2t2	r	4		1						
	540	9c	r	4	1							
	542	9e	f	4				1				
	549	1t1	f	4	1							
	555	3t1	m	4			1					
	556	3t1	m	4			1					
	544	1t1	f	4	1							
	545	1t1	f	4	1							
	344a	2t1	f	4		1						
	534	1t1	f	4	1							
	122	9e	f	4				1				
	479	1t2	r	5	1							
	357a	1t2	r	7	1							
	338a	3c	m	8			1					
	338b	3c	m	8			1					
	376a	2t2	r	8		1						
	376b	2t2	r	8		1						
	554	2t1	f	8		1						
	529	9c	r	8	1							
	380a	3t2	r	9			1					
	380b	3t2	r	9			1					
	380c	3t2	r	9			1					
	455	1t2	r	9	1							
	437	1t1	f	10	1							
	546	1a	m	18	1							
	249a	7c	na	?						1		
	249b	7c	na	?						1		
	249c	7c	na	?						1		
	249d	7c	na	?						1		
	528	9d	r	?	1							
	530a	1a	m	?	1							
	530b	1a	m	?	1							
	530c	1a	m	?	1							
	522	11	na	s								1
	231	7e	na	s						1		

Artifact Type	Cat #	Unit	Locat.	Level	H 1	H 2	H 3	H 4	H 5	Op 7	Op 5	Op 11
Spalls	509	11	na	s								1
Projectile Pt	538	9c	r	5	1							
	422	1t2	r	7	1							
	244	9c	r	10	1							
Ret Fl/Scr	341	2t1	f	4		1						
	64	9e	f	2				1				
Flakes												
basalt	59	9e	f	2				2				
	84	9c	r	3	3							
	97	9e	f	3				1				
	51	3a	f	3			1					
	85	9e	f	3				2				
	302	3c	m	3			1					
	441	9t1	f	3					1			
	384	3a	f	3			1					
	55	3a	f	4			1					
	115	9e	f	4				1				
	372a	2t2	r	5		2						
	475	1t2	r	5	1							
	134	9c	r	5	2							
	317	3t2	r	5			5					
	460	9t1	f	5					1			
	481	1t2	r	6	1							
	103	3a	f	6			2					
	101	3a	f	6			1					
	445	1t1	f	6	11							
	375	2t2	r	7		1						
	423a	1t2	r	7	1							
	448	1t1	f	7	10							
	449a	1t1	f	8	1							
	376	2t2	r	8		3						
	380	3t2	r	8			2					
	487	2t2	r	8		5						
	447a	1t1	f	9	10							
	438	2t2	r	9		5						
	165	3a	f	9			1					
	446a	1t1	f	9	1							
	451	1t2	r	9	5							
	288	1c	m	10	1							
	254	9e	f	12				1				
	249	7c	na	?						4		
	491a	1t1	f	?	1							

Artifact Type	Cat #	Unit	Locat.	Level	H 1	H 2	H 3	H 4	H 5	Op 7	Op 5	Op 11
andesite&gran												
	283	3b	f	6			1					
	279	9d	r	5	1							
Flakes												
chert	50	3a	f	3			1					
	313	3t2	r	4			1					
	445	1t1	f	6	5							
	446a	1t1	f	9	3							
	442	1t1	f	14	1							
quartz cryst	416	3t2	r	1			1					
	312	3t2	r	4			1					
	433	1t1	f	4	1							
	449b	1t1	f	7	1							
	446c	1t1	f	9	1							
obsidian	60	9e	f	2				1				
	355	2t1	f	2		3						
	411	1t1	f	2	1							
	310	3t2	r	3			1					
	337	1t2	r	3	1							
	116	9e	f	4				1				
	259	3b	f	4			1					
	285	3b	f	5			1					
	311	3t2	r	5			2					
	423c	1t2	r	6	1							
	445	1t1	f	6	1							
	446b	1t1	f	9	1							
	447b	1t1	f	9	1							
	453	1t2	r	9	1							
	473	2t1	f	12		1						
Worked Bone												
Leister Prng	157	9d	r	2	1							
Rib Spatul	324	3t2	r	9			1					
Unid	129b	3a	f	9			1					
Ground Sh	156a	9d	r	2	1							
	349	2d	m	4		1						
	128	3a	f	7			1					
Ochre	149b	9d	r	1	1							
	44	9e	f	1				1				
	333	2t2	r	1		1						
	49c	3a	f	2			1					
	299	3c	m	2			2					

Artifact Type	Cat #	Unit	Locat.	Level	H 1	H 2	H 3	H 4	H 5	Op 7	Op 5	Op 11
Ochre	405	9k	f	3			1					
	205a	1c	m	3	2							
	218a	1d	m	3	1							
	298	3t1	m	4			1					
	212a	1b	m	4	1							
	238	9d	r	4	1							
	410c	1t1	f	4	1							
	227a	1b	m	5	1							
	452	1t2	r	7	1							
	131a	9b	r	8	1							
	371	2t1	f	11		1						
GRAND TOTALS					246	51	74	23	7	12	1	10

Appendix II - Kitwanga Fauna Catalogue and Proveniences.

Species	Cat #	Unit	Locat.	Fea.	Level	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5
Mammal										
Hare	203	1b	m		1	23				
	216	1d	m		1	1				
	348	2d	m		1		30			
	365	3t1	m		1			5		
	70b	1c	m		1	1				
	293	2b	f		1		1			
	63	9e	f		2				1	
	213	1b	m		2	22				
	223a	1d	m		2	1				
	296	9h	r		2					1
	301	3c	m		2			3		
	535	9t1	f		3					4
	7	1?	?		3	7				
	93b	1c	m		3	1				
	175	3b	f		3			1		
	206	1c	m		3	1				
	358	3t1	m		3			2		
	c6	1a	m		3	2				
	c7	1a	m		3	4				
	388	3t1	m		4			2		
	144	9g	f		4				1	
	21	1a	m	1	5	108				
	32	1a	m	1	5	70				
	137	1a	m	1	5	2				
	139	1a	m	1	5	1				
	206	3b	f		5			1		
	c12	1a	m	1	5	12				
	c25b	1a	m	1	5	20				
	468	1t1	f		6	24				
	532	1t1	f		6	32				
	111	3a	f		7			1		
	304	3b	f		7			1		
	166	3a	f		9			1		
	536	1b-d	m		?	69				
Woodchuck/Marmot										
	203	1b	m		1	1				
	365	3t1	m		1			1		
	16	1b	m		1	1				
	358	3t1	m		3			1		

Species	Cat #	Unit	Locat.	Fea.	Level	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5
Woodchuck/Marmot										
	412	1t1	f		3	2				
Beaver	203	1b	m		1	1				
	348	2d	m		1		1			
	2	1?	?		1	2				
	391	2d	m		2		1			
	89b	1c	m		2	1				
	224b	1d	m		2	1				
	425	9k	f		3			3		
	461	9t1	f		3					3
	93b	1c	m		3	1				
	206	1c	m		3	1				
	412	1t1	f		3	3				
	c53	9g	f		3				1	
	290b	1d	m		4	1				
	21	1a	m	1	5	2				
	c25b	1a	m	1	5	1				
	468	1t1	f		6	2				
	532	1t1	f		6	11				
	534	1t2	r		6	1				
	374	2t2	r		6		1			
	389	3t1	m		11			1		
	536	1b-d	m		?	3				
	297	3t1	m		?			2		
	327	2t2	r		?		1			
Porcupine	21	1a	m	1	5	4				
	32	1a	m	1	5	3				
	468	1t1	f		6	3				
	532	1t1	f		6	1				
	c12	1a	m	1	5	1				
	c25b	1a	m	1	5	3				
	89b	1c	m		2	1				
Beaver/Porcupine										
	468	1t1	f		6	1				
Bear	21	1a	m	1	5	13				
	32	1a	m	1	5	5				
	468	1t1	f		6	3				
	532	1t1	f		6	8				
	348	2d	m		1		3			
	7	1?	?		3	1				

Species	Cat #	Unit	Locat.	Fea.	Level	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5
Bear	139	1a	m	1	5	1				
	297	3t1	m		?			4		
	309	2t2	r		1		1			
	c12	1a	m	1	5	3				
	c25b	1a	m	1	5	3				
Marten	c12	1a	m	1	5	1				
Total Mammal						491	39	29	3	8
Bird										
Arctic Loon	461	9t1	f		3					1
Mallard/Pintail										
	461	9t1	f		3					1
Eagle	208	1d	m		1	1				
Grouse/Ptarmigan										
	203	1b	m		1	2				
	216	1d	m		1	1				
	89b	1c	m		2	1				
	213	1b	m		2	1				
	396b	1a	m		2	1				
	461	9t1	f		3					1
	21	1a	m	1	5	12				
	32	1a	m	1	5	5				
	c12	1a	m	1	5	1				
	c25b	1a	m	1	5	5				
	532	1t1	f		6	4				
	536	1b-d	m		?	3				
Total Bird						37				3
Fish										
Oncorhynchus										
	21	1a	m	1	5	1				
	391	2d	m		2	1				
	461	9t1	f		3					2
	410b	1t1	f		3	1				
Salmoninae	203	1b	m		1	23				
	216	1d	m		1	3				
	348	2d	m		1		39			
	365	3t1	m		1			7		
	147	4a	r		1				1	

Species	Cat #	Unit	Locat.	Fea.	Level	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5
Salmoninae	149d	9d	r		1	1				
	180	3b	f		1			1		
	63	9e	f		2				5	
	89b	1c	m		2	5				
	143	9g	f		2				2	
	148a	4a	r		2				7	
	174	3b	f		2			2		
	213	1b	m		2	17				
	c8b	1d	m		2	1				
	425	9k	f		3			3		
	461	9t1	f		3					32
	535	9t1	f		3					1
	93b	1c	m		3	2				
	108	3a	f		3			2		
	175	3b	f		3			1		
	267a	1d	m		3	1				
	270	2b	f		3		3			
	273	1b	m		3	1				
	319	1c	m		3	4				
	358	3t1	m		3			6		
	401	1t2	r		3	2				
	388	3t1	m		4			6		
	56	3a	f		4			1		
	117	9e	f		4				1	
	21	1a	m	1	5	66				
	32	1a	m	1	5	29				
	62	3a	f		5			1		
	142	9g	f		5				1	
	145	9g	f		5				1	
	186	9e	f		5-Jan			4		
	260	3b	f		5			2		
	c12	1a	m	1	5	1				
	c25b	1a	m	1	5	7				
	468	1t1	f		6	2				
	532	1t1	f		6	1				
	102	3a	f		6			3		
	125	3a	f		6			1		
	128	3a	f		7			4		
	304	3b	f		7			1		
	305	3b	f		7			1		
	113	3a	f		8			2		
	129a	3a	f		8			2		
	159	3a	f		8			8		
	166	3a	f		9			8		
	536	1b-d	m		?	26				
	41	9e	f		?				2	
	297	3t1	m		?			1		

Species	Cat #	Unit	Locat.	Fea.	Level	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5
Coregoninae										
	213	1b	m		2	1				
Total Fish						196	42	67	20	35
TOTAL NISP						724	81	96	23	46

Appendix III - Catalogue of Recorded Archaeological Sites in the Skeena and Nass Valleys.

Site Designation	Location	Period	Type	# Hses	Source and Comment
Lower Skeena					
GbTh 2	Skeena/Exchamsiks	C	Village	6	Martindale 1997
GcTh 14	Exchamsiks	C	House	1	Martindale 1997
GcTh 19	"	Precontact	Scatter		Martindale 1997
GbTh 4	Gitnadoix	C	Village	2	Martindale 1997
GbTi 1	Skeena/Kasiks	C	Houses	2	CHIN - Fish Stn
GbTj 1	Skeena/Khtada	Precon & Con	Scatter		CHIN - Fish Stn
GbTk 4	Skeena/Khyex	Precontact(P)	Scatter		CHIN
GcTd 1	Lakelse R	P	Houses	?	CHIN - Fish Stn
GcTd 2	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GcTd 4	"	P	Scatter		CHIN
GcTe 1	Lakelse/Skeena	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GcTe 2	Zymagotitz/Skeena	P	Houses	?	CHIN - also has surface scatter
GcTe 3	"	P	Scatter		CHIN
GcTe 4	Skeena	P	Houses	4	CHIN - also has caches & midden
GcTe 5	"	P	Scatter		CHIN
GcTf 1	"	P	Scatter		CHIN
GcTh 1	Skeena/Exchamsiks	C	Scatter		CHIN - also precontact component
GcTh 3	"	P	Scatter		CHIN
GdTc 1	Kitselas	C/Protohistoric	Fort.Village	13	CHIN; Allaire et al 1979
Gitlaxdzawx					
GdTc 2/Gitaus	"	P	Village		CHIN; Allaire 1979, excavated
GdTc 3 Gitsaex	"	C	Village	17	CHIN; Coupland 1988
GdTc 4	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GdTc 11	"	P	Fort.Village	6	CHIN; Irvine 1980; Mackie 1986
GdTc 12	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GdTc 13	Skeena	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GdTc 16/Mason	Kitselas	P	Village	12	CHIN; Coupland 1988, excavated
GdTc 17	Skeena	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GdTc 18	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GdTc 21	Kitselas	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GdTc 22	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GdTc 23	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; also caches

Site Designation	Location	Period	Type	# Hses	Source and Comment
GdTc 24	"	C	Cache Pits		CHIN; also a burial
GdTc 26	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GdTc 27	"	C	Scatter		CHIN; also Caches
GdTc 31	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GdTc 33	Skeena	P	Scatter		CHIN
GdTc 34	Kitselas	P	Scatter		CHIN
GdTc 35	"	C	House	1	CHIN
GdTc 36	Skeena/Lowrie	P	Scatter		CHIN; also caches
GdTc 37	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GdTc 38	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GdTc 40	Kitselas	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GdTd 1	Kitsumkalum Canyon	P	Village	?	CHIN; Archer 1987, excavated by Borden
Old Kitsumkalum					
GdTd 2	Skeena	P	Scatter		CHIN
GdTd 3	"	P	Scatter		CHIN
GdTd 4	"	P	Scatter		CHIN
GdTd 5	"	P	Scatter		CHIN
GdTd 6	Kitsumkalum Canyon	P	Village	2	CHIN; Archer 1987
GdTd 7	"	P	Village	>1	CHIN; Archer 1987; Mackie 1986
GdTd 8	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Archer 1987
GdTd 10	Skeena	P	Scatter		CHIN; also caches
GdTd 11	Skeena/Kitsumkalum	P	Scatter		CHIN; Archer 1987 'fish stn'
GdTd 13	Skeena	P	Scatter		CHIN; 'fish stn'
GdTd 14	"	P	Scatter		CHIN
GdTd 15	Kitsumkalum Canyon	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Archer 1987, also surf. mater
GdTd 16	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Archer 1987
GdTe 2	Skeena/Kitsumkalum	C	Village?	1	CHIN; destroyed according to Archer 1987
					1 structure according to Mackie 1986
GdTe 3	"	P	Village	14	CHIN; Archer 1987; Mackie 1986
GdTe 6	Kitsumkalum R	P	Scatter		CHIN; Archer 1987
GdTe 7	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Archer 1987 'fish stn'
GdTe 8	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Archer 1987, also caches
GdTe 9	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Archer 1987

Site Designation	Location	Period	Type	# Hses	Source and Comment
GdTe 10	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Archer 1987
GdTe 11	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Archer 1987
GdTe 13	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Archer 1987
GdTe 14	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Archer 1987
GdTe 17	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Archer 1987
GeTb 2	Skeena	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GeTb 5	Skeena/Hardscrab.	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GeTb 6	Skeena	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GeTe 5	Kitsum./Red Sand L	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Archer 1987
GeTe 6	"	P	(Pit)House	1	CHIN; Archer 1987
GeTe 7	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Archer 1987
GeTe 9	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Archer 1987
GeTe 10	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Archer 1987
GeTe 12	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Archer 1987, 'temporary camp'
GfTc 1	Skeena	P	Scatter		CHIN
GfTc 2	"	C	Houses	5	CHIN; Ames 1971, 'fishing camp'
GfTc 3	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GfTc 4	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GfTc 5	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GfTc 7	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GfTc 9	"	C	Cache Pits		CHIN
GfTc 11	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GfTc 15	"	C	House	1	CHIN; also caches
GfTc 17	Skeena/Quill Cr	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GfTf 2	Cedar R/ Little Cedar	C	House	1	CHIN; also caches
Upper Skeena					
GfTc 85-A	Skeena	P	Cache Pits		Albright 1987
GfTc 85-B	Skeena/Fiddler Cr	P	House	1	Albright 1987, house dated 1730 BP, ,caches
GgSw 1	Skeena/Kitseguecla	C	Scatter		CHIN; also caches
GgSw 2	"	P	Village	3	CHIN; Ames 1971, apparently 3' of midden
GgSw 3	Skeena	P	Scatter		CHIN; classed as village based on size (2500m2

Site Designation	Location	Period	Type	# Hses	Source and Comment
GgSw 4	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; supposedly a village
GgSw 5	Skeena/Kitseguecla	P	Scatter		CHIN; also caches
GgSx 1	Skeena	C	Village	>12	CHIN; Ames 1971
Andimaul					
GgTa 1	Kitwanga R	C	Fortif. Village	5	CHIN; MacDonald 1989
Kitwanga Fort					
GgTa 2	Skeena	C	Village	check	CHIN; 19th c to present
Kitwanga					
GgTa 4	Skeena/Mill Cr	P	Scatter		CHIN; Prince 1996, also has caches
GgTa 6	Kitwanga R	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Prince 1996
GgTa 8	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Prince 1996
GgTb 1	Sedan/Skeena	P	Scatter		CHIN; Ames 1971; Prince 1996, also caches
Kitkahaws					
GgTb 3	Skeena	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GgTb 4	Skeena/Sedan Cr	P	Scatter		CHIN; Prince 1996
GgTb 5	Skeena/Boulder Cr	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Prince 1996
GgTc 1/Gitlusec	Skeena/Coyote Cr	P&C	Hse & Caches		CHIN; Ames 1971; Prince 1996, historic cabin &
					"pre-contact" caches
GhSv 1	Bulkley/Skeena	C	Scatter		CHIN; supposedly has pre-contact component
GhSv 2	Hagwilget Canyon	P&C	Village		CHIN; Ames 1979, excavated multi-component
Hagwilget					site; village in historic period
GhSv 3	"	P&C	Houses	3	CHIN; Ames 1971, recently abandoned
Tsitsk					according to Ames with 3 small houses
GhSv 4	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; also Caches
GhSv 5	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; also caches
GhSv 6	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Carlson 1990, also caches
GhSv 7	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Carlson 1990, also caches
GhSv 8	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Carlson 1990
GhSv 9	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Carlson 1990
GhSv 10	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Carlson 1990
GhSv 11	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Carlson 1990, also caches
GhSv 12	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Carlson 1990
GhSv 13	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Carlson 1990

Site Designation	Location	Period	Type	# Hses	Source and Comment	
GhSv 14	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Carlson 1990	
GhSv 15	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Carlson 1990, also caches	
GhSv 16	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Carlson 1990	
GhSv 17	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Carlson 1990	
GhSv 18	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Carlson 1990, also caches	
GhSv 19	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Carlson 1990, also caches	
GhSv 20	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Carlson 1990	
GhSv 21	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Carlson 1990	
GhSv 22	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Carlson 1990	
GhSv 23	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Carlson 1990	
GhSv 24	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Carlson 1990	
GhSv 25	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Carlson 1990	
GhSv 26	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Carlson 1990	
GhSv 27	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Carlson 1990	
GhSv 28	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Carlson 1990, also cache pits	
GhSv 29	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Carlson 1990	
GhSv 85-A	"	P	Scatter		Albright 1987, surface collected	
"4 mile cr"						
GhSv 85-B	"	P	Cache Pits		Albright 1987	
GhSv 85-C	"	P	Cache Pits		Albright 1987	
GhSv 85-D	"	P	Cache Pits		Albright 1987	
GhSv 85-E	"	P	Cache Pits		Albright 1987	
GhSw 85-A	Skeena	P	Scatter		Albright 1987	
GhSw 85-B	Skeena/Chicago Cr	P	Cache Pits		Albright 1987	
GhSw 85-E	"	C	Cache Pits		Albright 1987	
GhSw 85-C	Skeena	P	Cache Pits		Albright 1987	
GhSw 85-D	"	P	Scatter		Albright 1987	
GhTa 1	Kitwanga R/	C	Village	?	CHIN; McMurdo 1975; Prince 1996	
Kitwancool	Kitwancool Cr					
GhTa 6	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Prince 1996	
GiSv 1	Skeena	C	Cache Pits		CHIN; Richards 1981	
GiSv 2	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Richards 1981	
GiSv 3	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Richards 1981; Albright 1987	

Site Designation	Location	Period	Type	# Hses	Source and Comment
GlSv 4	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Richards 1981
GlSv 5	"	C	Cache		CHIN; Richards 1981, above ground cache
GlSv 6	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Richards 1981
GlSv 7	"	C	House		CHIN; Richards 1981, hist 'fishing stn'
GlSv 8	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Richards 1981
GlSv 9	"	C	Houses	3	CHIN; Richards 1981, 'fishing stn'
Ansehawsko					
GlSv 10	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Richards 1981
GlSv 11	"	?	?		CHIN has no record, Albright 1987:25 claims
					it is 'fortress or refuge site'
GlSv 12	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Richards 1981
GlSv 13	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Richards 1981
GlSw 1	Skeena/Kispiox	C	Village	?	CHIN
GlSw 4	Skeena	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Richards 1981
GlSw 5	Kispiox	P	Scatter		CHIN; Richards 1981
GlSw 7	"	C	House	1	CHIN; Richards 1981, 'fishing stn' w caches
Holcats					
GlSw 8	"	P	Scatter		CHIN; Richards 1981, also caches
GlTa 1/Gitanyow	KitwangaR&Lake	C	Village	6	CHIN; McMurdo 1975
GlTa 2	Kitwanga L	C?	Village	4	Prince 1996, Pithouses dated AD1470-1950
GlSx 1	Kispiox	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GlSx 2	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GlTa 1	"	P	Scatter		CHIN
GkSv 1	Babine R	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GkSv 2	Babine R/Shedin cr	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GkSv 3/Kisgegas	"	C	Village	?	CHIN; MacDonald 1967
GkSv 85-A	Babine R	P	Houses	2	Albright 1987; houses est. 350BP, also caches
GkSw 1	Babine/Skeena	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; Albright 1987
Tanglegesm					
GkTc 1	Nangeese/Kispiox	C	House	?	CHIN; not visited by McMurdo 1975
					therefore not plotted
GkTc 2	"	C	House	?	"
GlSx 1/Kuldo	Skeena	C	Fortif. Village	?	CHIN

Site Designation	Location	Period	Type	# Hses	Source and Comment
HaSq 1	Bear L	C	House	1	Albright 1987
HbSr 3	Bear R	P	Scatter		Albright 1987
HbSr 6	"	C	House	1	Albright 1987
HbSr 5	Bear L	C	House	1	Albright 1987
HbSr 2	"	C	House	1	Albright 1987
HbSv 85-B	"	P	Cache Pits		Albright 1987
HbSv 85-C	"	P	Cache Pits		Albright 1987
192	Skeena	P	Scatter		Albright 1987, undesignated
194	"	P	House	1	Albright 1987, "
195	"	P	Cache Pits		Albright 1987, "
196	"	P	Cache Pits		Albright 1987, "
198	"	P	Scatter		Albright 1987, "
202	Kitwanga R	P	Cache Pits		Albright 1987, "
205	Skeena/Sedan Cr	P	Cache Pits		Albright 1987, "
206	"	P	Scatter		Albright 1987," also caches
207	"	P	Cache Pits		Albright 1987
Nass Valley					
GfTk 1	Nass	C	Village	?	CHIN; Carlson 1976
Lachtesk					
GfTl 1	Nass/MissionCr	C	Vilage	?	CHIN;Carlson 1976
Kincolith					
GgTh 2	Nass/Zolzap	P	Scatter		CHIN
GgTi 1		C	House	1	CHIN; not actually visited
GgTj 2	Nass	C	House	?	CHIN, includes caches
GgTj 6	Nass/Greenville	P	Village	?	CHIN; excavated by Cybulski 1990
GgTj 7	Nass	C	Village	>1	CHIN;Carlson 1976
GgTj 8	"	C	Village	2	CHIN; Carlson 1976
GgTj 9	"	C	Village	9	CHIN; Carlson 1976
Lachcoahluck					
GhTg 1	Nass/Vetter	P	Village	?	CHIN; Carlson 1976
Laxsilenx					
GhTg 2	Nass/Gingit Cr	C	Scatter		CHIN; Carlson 1976

Site Designation	Location	Period	Type	# Hses	Source and Comment
GhTg 5	Nass	C	Fortif Village	"many"	CHIN; St. Pierre 1974
Gitladamsk					
GhTg 6	Nass/Seaskinnish	C	Scatter		CHIN; St. Pierre 1974 'fishing stn'
GhTg 7	Gingit/Tseax	P	Houses	2	CHIN; St. Pierre 1974, also caches & scatter
GhTg 8	Tseax/Gitzyon	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; St. Pierre 1974
GhTg 11	Nass	C	House	1	CHIN; St. Pierre 1974, 'fishing stn w smokehous
Tsiminaweenalist					
GhTh 2	Nass Canyon	C	Village	>1	CHIN; St. Pierre 1974, 1 house platform visible
Canyon City					
GhTh 7	Nass/Gish Cr	P	House	1	CHIN; St. Pierre 1974, 'smoke house'
GhTh 9	Nass	C	Village?	?	CHIN; St. Pierre 1974, has "frame houses"
GlTe 1	Kiteen R	C	House	1	CHIN; McMurdo 1975
GlTf 1	Nass/Tchitin	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; McMurdo 1975
GlTf 2	Nass/Kinskuch	C	House	1	CHIN; McMurdo 1975
Kiyug					
GlTf 3	Nass/Tchitun	C	Houses	3	CHIN; McMurdo 1975, 'fishing stn w caches'
Githenaksit					
GlTg 2	Khlmatlqoe/Nass	P	Village	several'	CHIN; McMurdo 1975
Gitaloht					
GjTb 2	Cranberry R	C	House	1	CHIN; McMurdo 1975
GjTc 2	"	C	House	1	CHIN; McMurdo 1975
Ksinseratis					
GjTd 1	"	C	House	1	CHIN
GjTd 2	Cranberry/Calmin	C	House	1	CHIN
GjTd 3	Cranberry	C	House	1	CHIN
GjTe 1	Cranberry/Ginmilktun	C	House	?	CHIN; McMurdo 1975, 'fishing stn'
KsGayGainet					
GjTe 2	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; McMurdo 1975
GjTe 3	"	C	Cache Pits		CHIN; McMurdo 1975
Cranberry Crossing					
GjTe 4	Nass	C	Houses	4	CHIN; McMurdo 1975 calls it 'fishing stn' w 4
Wensgatgoal					cabins, elevated cache & scatter
GjTe 5	Nass	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; McMurdo 1975

Site Designation	Location	Period	Type	# Hses	Source and Comment
GjTe 7	Cranberry R	C	House	1	CHIN; McMurdo 1975
GjTf 1	Nass/Kinskuch	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
Gwingag					
GjTf 2	Nass/Kinskuch Cany	P	Cache Pits		CHIN; McMurdo 1975
GjTf 3	"	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GkTe 1	Nass	P	Cache Pits		CHIN
GkTe 2	"	C	Houses	2	CHIN; McMurdo 1975;clamimed by Gitanyow
GkTf 1	"	C	Houses	1	CHIN; McMurdo 1975; claimed by Gitanyow
Aksnagalga					
GkTf 3	Nass/Bear	C	Cache		CHIN; McMurdo 1975, raised cache
GlTg 1	Nass/Moore Cr	P	Cache Pits		CHIN