UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Scowlitz: A Preliminary History

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1.0 Introduction

Scowlitz is an Indigenous band in British Columbia created by the Canadian Federal government in 1881. Along with nineteen other bands, it comprises the Stó:lõ Nation. The band is situated on the left bank of the Harrison River at the point where it flows into the Frasier River, adjacent to an ancient village site.[1] The government recognized the Scowlitz reserve in the nineteenth century; however, Scowlitz people have a rich and extensive history that dates back thousands of years. No academic work aimed at bridging the gap between ancient and contemporary Scowlitz has yet been written. Using extant records and oral interviews with community members, this essay connects Scowlitz's ancient past with its colonial and post-colonial history. This encompassing account is achieved by: examining traditional Scowlitz lands; placing legends into a contemporary context; and looking at the band's colonial history. Through this analysis, it will be shown that many traditions and myths from the ancient era have survived and still hold an important place in contemporary Scowlitz society.

Andy Phillips, the current Chief of Scowlitz, posed the question, "how many of us know our true history?"[2] There is a divide within the Scowlitz community over whether or not traditional practices are useful in modern society. Andy champions the view that Scowlitz community members should practice their customs and know their history. One of his goals as chief is to make a "trail" so that Scowlitz youth can learn more about their ancient traditions. He asks them, "what does it mean to come from Scowlitz?"[3] He wants Scowlitz youth to learn the importance of their family roots, traditional customs, place

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[1] Charles Hill-Tout, *The Salish People*: *Volume III: The Mainland Halkomelem* (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1978), 148.

[2] Andy Phillips, (Scowlitz Chief, Seabird Island Band Office, British Columbia) interviewed by Stephanie Bellissimo and Ben Clinton-Baker, May 10, 2011.

[3] Ibid.

names, the uses of cedar, and the importance of the drum. He also thinks it is important to teach youth to take only what they need; for instance, when they fish or hunt.[4] Andy wants to ensure that these traditions are not lost in contemporary society. He used the example of Scowlitz canoe races to illustrate how traditional practices are disappearing. These races used to be a very popular tradition. Up to thirty people would take their canoes to the Harrison River to race, but now only six or seven community members participate. It is important to Andy that the Scowlitz community finds a place for its traditions and history in modern life.

2.0 Ancient Scowlitz

Many archaeological findings were found on Qithyil Island, an ancient village situated in the middle of the Harrison River that comprises part of the Scowlitz reserve. These findings include burial mounds and pieces of stone tools, including pointed projectiles, pipes, knives and scrapers.[5] These artifacts have allowed Scowlitz residents to forge a stronger connection to their land and history. Clarence Pennier, a Scowlitz community member who initiated the 1992 excavations on Qithyil Island, described the ancient village remains and burial sites as a relationship between Scowlitz and the wider landscape.[6] The site bonded community members together by linking individuals to common ancestors. The findings on Qithyil Island proved to the Scowlitz community and the province that Scowlitz ancestors occupied the land for thousands of years, also demonstrating that the land was a historically important area.

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[4] Ibid.

[5] Reciprocal Research Network, https://www.rrncommunity.org/items#?filters=scowlitz (accessed June 2011)

[6] Natasha Lyons, Phillips, Andy, Schaepe, Dave, Charlie, Betty, Hall, Clifford and Hennessy, Kate. *The Scowlitz Site Online: Launch of the Scowlitz Artifact Assemblage Project.* The Midden, v. 43, no. 2, 2011, 1.

The Scowlitz Archaeological Project, a joint program between the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University, uncovered many of the artifacts found at Qithyil Island beginning in 1992. For years, the Scowlitz community found artifacts on the island and feared that anything remaining would erode on the riverbanks.[7] Field school students from both universities were invited to excavate and study the area during summer months until 1999.[8] They made some exciting discoveries. The use of carbon dating showed that people lived in the area earlier than experts thought. In fact, the evidence suggested that people occupied the area up to three thousand years ago. The ancient village consisted of four pit house depressions and two smaller depressions. These smaller depressions are believed to have been a house or a place of cultural significance. A flat surface was also found. Archeologists speculated it to be a plank house, similar to today's longhouses.[9]

Researchers also discovered that 1500 years ago Scowlitz ancestors began to use the site as a place to bury their dead.[10] Hundreds of mounds were found on the island. Betty Charlie and Clifford Hall, two active participants in the Archaeological Project and residents of Scowlitz, explained that areas A through N of the site contained approximately 250 mounds, and then after that they lost count.[11] Ancient Scowlitz people used this land to hunt, fish and gather until approximately 1000 years ago; sometime after the site was no longer used.[12]

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[7] Nichole Oakes, Natasha Lyons, *Scowlitz Archaeological Times*, May 1999, 1.
[8] Natasha Lyons, et al. "The Scowlitz Site Online: Launch of the Scowlitz Artifact Assemblage Project," 1.
[9] David Schaepe, Michael Blake, Susan Formosa, Dana Lepofsky, "Mapping and Testing Pre Contact Sto:lo Settlements in the Fraser Canyon and Fraser Valley (2004-2005), December 2006., 18.
[10] Nichole Oakes, Natasha Lyons, Scowlitz Archaeological Times, May 1999, 2.
[11]Betty Charlie, Clifford Hall, John Pennier, Lucille Hall, (Scowlitz Residents, Scowlitz British Columbia) interviewed by Stephanie Bellissimo and Ben Clinton-Baker, May 2011.
[12] Nichole Oakes, Natasha Lyons, *Scowlitz Archaeological Times*, 2.

Figure 1 Artifacts found by Betty Charlie and Clifford Hall at Qithyil Island. Photograph taken by author, May 2011.

Figure 2 Artifacts found by Betty Charlie and Clifford Hall at Qithyil Island. Photograph taken by author, May 2011.

The burial mounds were an important discovery for the Scowlitz community. Before the Scowlitz Archaeological Project occurred, no other mounds on the mainland of British Columbia had been dated. The only mounds dated in British Columbia at that time were found on Vancouver Island.[13] Mound 1, the largest mound on the Qithyil Island site, has dates suggesting that an individual was buried there between 460 AD and 640 AD.[14] Field school students Sandra Morrison and Heather Myles believed that the mounds provided a strong indication that a hierarchical system existed during the ancient Scowlitz era.[15] Betty and Clifford explained that the archaeological findings led them to conclude that royalty existed in ancient Scowlitz. Betty stated:

> [A]nd back then they did have royalty in their families. We found that out when we went into mound 1… and he [the ancestor they found in the mound] was all geared down with everything. Copper, jade, dectaila rachelle beads, stone beads…he had everything on." [16]

Clifford's father told him that everyone along the Fraser River came to Scowlitz to have big meetings, and that the man decorated from mound 1 must have been important to that process.[17]

There is further evidence suggesting that Scowlitz was an important regional trade centre. The ancestor in mound 1 was decorated in materials found outside of Scowlitz land. Betty stated, "you don't find abalone here, dectalia shell, copper, he had it all on. He was just totally…decked out in everything. So, it had to be a trade centre."[18] She believed that many people ventured to Scowlitz in canoes to trade. Scowlitz land is at a

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[13] Blake Michael, Gary Coupland, Brian Thorn, "Dating the Scowlitz Site" *The Midden*, vol. 25 no. 1, February 1993, 7.
[14] Ibid., 7.
[15] Sandra Morrison, Heather Myles, "The Sacred Mounds of Scowlitz" *The Midden,* vol. 24, no. 4, October 1992, 4.
[16] Charlie, Hall and Pennier interview.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid.

crossroads, situated where the Fraser and Harrison Rivers intersect. Thus, it is easily accessible, making it a great location for trading. Based on this knowledge, Morrison and Myles speculated that the Scowlitz area must have been excellent for fishing, transportation and trade, and that it was likely the location of a powerful village.[19]

2.1 Scowlitz Legends

Early anthropologist Charles Hill-Tout (1858-1944) used oral history research to record Scowlitz origin stories. Legends state that ancient Scowlitz people were divided into three septs (clans), each with a different origin. Two were *tel sweyil* (sky born), while the third descended from the sturgeon. According to the stories, the first Scowlitz man used a red parachute to descend from the sky with two animals- *Skaiaq* (mink) and *Cwometsel* (otter). He also brought with him a feathered ring called *celmoqtcis.*[20] The man landed on a rocky point at the mouth of the Harrison River, on the opposite side of where the Scowlitz people would later settle. There, he constructed a raft and tied it to the point of the river with a cedar rope; there, he caught salmon using a dip net. The next day the Scowlitz man dropped *celmoqtcis* into the water. The otter and the mink fetched the feathered ring and brought it back in their mouths. The man then put on the *sxwaixwe* mask and performed a dance, which caused the two animals to become children - one a boy, and the other a girl. The children married and later many children sprang from their union. They were poor in the beginning; they did not even have any clothes to wear. The boy learned how to make bows and arrows and began to hunt. He brought the skins home to his wife, which she used to make clothes and blankets.[21]

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[19] Sandra Morrison, Heather Myles, "The Sacred Mounds of Scowlitz," 4.
[20] Charles Hill-Tout, *The Salish People: Volume III: The Mainland Halkomelem*, 150.
[21] Ibid., 150.

One of Hill-Tout's informants, Pat Joe, claimed to be the only descendent left of the first Scowlitz man. During the interview he showed Hill-Tout the piece of cedar rope that the first Scowlitz man used to tie the raft. Hill-Tout explained:

> It was the best specimen of Native rope I have ever seen. The Indians never make these ropes now. This specimen was about three-quarters of an inch in diameter, and was very finely made, not a single end or join in the whole length was visible, and the strands of cedar were twisted with the evenness and regularity of those of hempen rope. I tried to secure this specimen, but the old man would not hear of parting with it on any consideration; he was keeping it to be buried with his body along with the sacred relics he had inherited from the first founder of his family.[22]

Pat's rope was important to him because it fostered a connection to one of his ancestors. He tied this artifact, and the origin legend, to his identity. Pat also possessed the skins that the mink and otter left behind when they transformed into children. The Scowlitz community believes that those who have the skins in their possession are successful in trapping mink and otter. Pat had many skins in his house when interviewed, demonstrating that he was a successful hunter.[23] He was able to form a connection to the land and animals through the use of Scowlitz myths.

The location where the first Scowlitz man fell to the earth is an important place within Scowlitz territory. This location, an ancestral rock, holds very important meanings, as it offers the community a physical place to connect with its origins. Allen Williams, a Scowlitz Elder, discussed his spiritual connection to this particular location. During our interview he took professor John Lutz and I to Qithyil Island to show us the location of the ancestral rock. He stated:

> **Allen**: We had the *sxwaixwe* masks in our family so there is a rock right over here. They [British Columbia government] blew it up. You can hardly see the rock at that point now. See where the light green trees are? There is

[22] Ibid., 150.
[23] Ibid., 151.

> a rock there. There was one above it where our *sxwaixwe* mask …
> **John**: That was the spot where the masks came down from the sky?
> **Allen**: We were going out fishing one day with my brother and I told him, look, and there was light coming out of the water just over on that side, and it was going up river, and it was a beam of light, and I told him look, you see it? He didn't want to say nothing but there was a beam of light coming out…[24]

The story Allen told bridges the gap between ancient and contemporary Scowlitz by highlighting the spiritual and geographical importance the ancestral rock continues to hold. The province of British Columbia destroyed this rock because it was seen as a potential hazard to boats.[25] Although the rock is no longer on Qithyil Island, the spot where it once resided is still historically important.

Figure 3 The author and Scowlitz Elder, Allen Williams, walking back from the ancestral rock location. Photograph taken by John Lutz, May 2011.

[24] Allen Williams (Scowlitz Elder, Scowlitz British Columbia) interviewed by Stephanie Bellissimo and John Lutz, May 17, 2011.
[25] Ibid.

Qithyil Island is an important location on the reserve because it reinforces to the community that they occupied the land well before reserves were established. During our interview, Betty and Clifford laid out dozens of artifacts that they found on the site. Such artifacts offer physical proof that the land was occupied for thousands of years prior to European settlement. They then explained their spiritual connections to the site. Betty stated:

> **Betty**: The one area over there… is a lot of children [referring to the mounds.]
> **Stephanie**: Really?
> **Betty**: Yeah… There had to be some kind of epidemic gone through… We used to dock the boats and walk on the trailer up to where we would be doing the archaeological work and everyone would stop walking because they could hear children crying… We weren't the only ones who heard them.[26]

Lucille Hall, another Scowlitz resident, shared a similar experience:

> We were down at that beach years ago…before they did the dig over there [inaudible] a whole bunch of us had a bon fire. It was dark out and we were just sitting down at the beach there and we heard drumming and singing across there and we were all looking out there in the dark wondering why all the Natives over there were singing. And we were wondering about that. I said, "it's dark over there." We thought it was coming from upriver and it was echoing, but it sounds like its from those bushes over there. We got scared so we went home and a few years later they dig over there and they found all that stuff. It just freaked me right out. We heard drumming and singing on the beach, so I said we got to go.[27]

The fact that the Scowlitz community continues to find spiritual significance in their myths and ancestral locations demonstrates that although they adapted to overcome the challenges posed by newcomer society, they have not forgotten what is culturally important to them.

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[26] Charlie, Hall and Pennier interview.
[27] Ibid.

3.0 Colonial History

The Scowlitz community's traditional lifestyle was disrupted by the introduction of Euro-Canadian society in the nineteenth century. In 1876 the lives of Indigenous people rapidly changed when the government introduced the *Indian Act*. This *Act* was paternalistic, as it gave the government authority to make decisions for Indigenous groups regarding their identity, cultural practices, governance, and education. The Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) was created shortly after in 1880. This body administered a series of policies aimed at "civilizing" Indigenous populations in order to assimilate them into Euro-Canadian society.[28]

This next section will discuss the historical policies and attitudes made and held by the government. These attitudes drastically altered the lifestyle of Scowlitz community members, and other Indigenous groups. Policies attempted to assimilate Indigenous groups into the more dominant European society. Thus, the Scowlitz community could no longer make decisions about how they governed, lived, educated their children, and practiced religion.

[28] J.R. Miller, *Compact, Contract, Covenant: Aboriginal Treaty-making in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 190.

3.1 Creation of the Reserve

Figure 4 A view of Scowlitz reserve land. Image taken by author, May 2011.

Figure 5 The Canadian Pacific Railway tracks and the entrance to Old Scowlitz, the reserve's older section. Photograph taken by author, May 2011.

Edward B. Lytton, Secretary of State for the Colonies, initiated a policy forcing Indigenous people onto reservations in 1859. The use of reserves created localized collective identities and political authority, causing Indigenous identities to be tied to geographic location.[29] Band lists were created and governed by the *Indian Act*, which kept track of which band each Indigenous person belonged to. In 1881, the government surveyed Scowlitz land, allotted them 330 acres, and officially classified them as the Scowlitz band.[30]

Band creation not only formed a type of classification system; it also incorporated elements of Euro-Canadian society into Indigenous peoples' daily lives. By 1859, the reserve land framework was established, dictating which lands could be included within Indigenous reserves. These lands included village sites, burial grounds and cultivated potato patches. By 1862, the provisions expanded to include "isolated provisional grounds," which resulted in the protection of some fishing sites important to Indigenous families and communities.[31]

Lytton saw many positive aspects to having Indigenous people permanently settled on reserve land. He believed that the policy lessened conflict between Indigenous peoples and European settlers because designated lands, from which the latter could extract resources, kept Indigenous populations out. The policy was also a means of socially manipulating Indigenous peoples so that they could be assimilated into Euro-

[29] Keith Carlson, *The Power of Place, The Problem of Time: Aboriginal Identity and Historical Consciousness in the Cauldron of Colonialism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 158.
[30] Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1881, 175.
[31] Ibid., 171.

Canadian society.[32] To contemporary policy makers, this goal was to be achieved only after Indigenous people practiced both agriculture and wage labour.

3.2 Historical Attitudes

The pinnacle of European settlement on the mainland of British Columbia occurred in 1858 after the gold rush brought many settlers to the area in the hopes of finding success. Prior to this date, Indigenous people in the region were involved in the land-based fur trade for up to eighty years. Indigenous society was mainly concerned with subsistence activities, like hunting and fishing; however, after heavier interaction with Euro-Canadians, numerous Indigenous traditions began to change.

The implementation of the *Indian Act* resulted in Indigenous people discontinuing much of their traditional subsistence living to practice farming and participate in the labour market.[33] The Canadian government subscribed to the view of anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan, and so it pressured Indigenous populations to farm. Morgan asserted that all societies passed through stages of “savagery” and “barbarism” before they became “civilized”. He claimed that Indigenous people, as hunters and gatherers, were still in the savage phase. The Canadian government believed that Indigenous communities were capable of advancing to the barbarism stage, which Morgan asserted was characterized by domestication and cultivation.[34]

The government attempted to hasten the transition by encouraging members of Indigenous reserves to practice agriculture. Farming did not catch on as hoped, due to the disappointing returns of small-scale farming. Indigenous community members often

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[32] Ibid., 169.
[33] Rolfe Knight, *Indians at Work: An Informal History of Native Indian Labour in British Columbia, 1858-1930* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1978), 10.
[34] Derek Whitehouse. “The Numbered Treaties: Similar Means to Dichotomous Ends” *Past Imperfect*. Vol. 3, 1994, 29.

preferred wage labour to farming because it provided them with steadier incomes.[35] For instance, in 1883 the Fraser River overflowed and harmed the agricultural output in the region. Many Indigenous people of this area felt discouraged and went to work on the railroad, where they could earn up to $2 per day.[36]

Europeans also subscribed to philosopher John Locke's view of ownership, which stated that land could only be owned when labour had been applied to it. Locke believed that "as *Much Land* as a Man Tills, Plants, Improves, Cultivates, and can use the Product of, so much is his property."[37] Euro-Canadians used this view to justify their claims to ownership of much of North America. Indigenous peoples' traditional hunter-gatherer lifestyle did not fit within European models of labour. Consequently, Europeans did not believe in Indigenous land ownership. When settlers surveyed land and used it for agricultural purposes they believed that it became their property.[38]

Similarly, Anthropologist Homer Barnett believed that Indigenous peoples were simply hunters, fishers and small-scale farmers. In his mind, if they practiced larger-scale farming, had good houses and boats, only then they would cease to be Indigenous, because, according to contemporary beliefs, Indigenous people did not "work."[39] Ideas like those of Locke and Barnett helped entrench the stereotype of the "lazy Indian," who did not participate in European models of labour. Scholars like John Lutz and Rolfe Knight dispelled the "lazy Indian" myth by demonstrating that the Euro-Canadian

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[35] Rolfe Knight, *Indians at Work: An Informal History of Native Indian Labour in British Columbia, 1858-1930*, 13.
[36] Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1883, 5.
[37] John Locke. *Two Treatises of Governments*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1967), 308.
[38] John Lutz, *Makuk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), 7.
[39] Ibid., 31.

economy depended on Indigenous labour in the eighteenth and nineteenth century.[40] The Scowlitz band was just one of many Indigenous groups active in the workforce.

3.3 The Wage Labour Market

Indigenous populations recognized that adapting to Euro-Canadian practices could ensure their existence as a people and, therefore, allow them to keep their cultures intact.[41] Lutz explained this process through the example of Indigenous responses to the wage labour market. Indigenous participation in wage labour was "moditional," meaning that it consisted of a mixture between modern and traditional. Essentially, Indigenous people participated in the labour market to ensure that their cultural traditions survived. For instance, working ensured that traditional potlatches were held.[42] Although many traditions endured, during the process of adapting to newcomer society numerous ones were also lost.

Members of the Scowlitz band participated heavily in the labour market. When the reserve was established, the DIA documented that Scowlitz residents made their living by hunting, fishing, working on river steamboats, and on farms belonging to white settlers. They were also interested in cultivating their own land and tending to their own livestock.[43] As time passed, Scowlitz people procured other means of wage employment. At the end of the 1880s, the community concentrated heavily on growing their own fruit trees and producing apples, pears, plums, cherries and peaches, which proved very profitable. Further reports stated that most of the orchards were destroyed in an 1894

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[40] Ibid., 8; Rolfe Knight, *Indians at Work: An Informal History of Native Indian Labour in British Columbia, 1858-1930* (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1978), 22.
[41] Derek Whitehouse, "The Numbered Treaties: Similar Means to Dichotomous Ends," 38.
[42] John Lutz, *Makuk: A New History of Aboriginal-White Relations*, 23. Potlatches were made illegal in 1884, offering another example of a government policies created to force the assimilation of Indigenous peoples. Tina Loo. "Dan Cranmer's Potlatch: Law as Coercion, Symbol and Rhetoric in British Columbia, 1884-1951," *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 73, no. 2, 1992.
[43] Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1881, 175.

flood, but were later replanted in 1896.[44] In subsequent years, the annual reports suggested that there were good orchards on the reserve.[45]

Figure 6 Logging being done just outside of reserve land. Logging has been the main occupation of Scowlitz residents. Photograph by author, May 2011.

Logging was also a profitable vocation for Scowlitz men. By 1904, members of the Scowlitz band had been employed as sawmill workers and loggers for Harrison Mills and other nearby businesses for approximately twenty-five years.[46] There were several mills in the area surrounding the Scowlitz reserve at the turn of the twentieth century. Allen discussed how many of the residents worked as loggers as far away as Vancouver, and that they sent logs down the river to the mills. They would boom the logs, meaning that they would string logs together in a bundle and drop them in the water to drive them

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[44] Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1910, 255.
[45] Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1913, 290.
[46] Rolfe Knight, *Indians at Work: An Informal History of Native Indian Labour in British Columbia, 1858-1930*, 121.

to a nearby mill. During that era men would be "running around on logs" with cork boots on.[47]

Figure 7 Logging being done on the Harrison River. Photograph taken by author, May 2011.

In 1870, Henry Cooper built the first water-powered mill on the left side of the Harrison River to produce lumber from local cedar and fur trees. In 1892, Joseph Martin and Sons built a second mill situated on the east side of the Harrison River, south of the Canadian Pacific Railway line. Then, in 1901 John Fulbrook and Joseph Innis built a seven-machine shingle mill on the left bank of the Harrison, right across from Martin's mill. Arthur Tretheways later bought Martin's mill in 1898. It burned down in 1903. He sold the location the following year to Sir Douglas Cameron's Manitoba based Rat Portage Lumber Co., which constructed a new mill on the same spot in 1908. It was a large mill that employed over two hundred men, as well as four hundred additional men

[47] Williams Interview.

in smaller surrounding logging camps. This mill subsequently closed down in 1910. After its closure the importance of sawmills to the local economy decreased.[48]

Figure 8 An old mill in the area, across from the Kilby Store. Photograph taken by author, May 2011.

Although Scowlitz women did not participate in the logging industry, this did not mean that they did not work to help sustain their families. They often participated in seasonal work at the hop yards in Sumas and Lyndon during the summer months, picking berries and cucumbers with their children. They returned home at the end of the summer to start preparing for winter activities. Men aided in this process when they could not secure steady employment. For example, 1886 was a difficult year in the salmon fisheries, so numerous Indigenous men from the Lower Fraser Agency secured work at

[48] Fred Thirkell and Bob Scullion. *Vancouver and Beyond: During the Golden Age of Postcards, 1900-1914* (Heritage House Publishing Co., 2000), 34-35.

the hop yards in Washington.[49] Many ended up staying to work for a longer period of time, which resulted in them being unable to cut hay to feed their domestic livestock.[50]

At the turn of the twentieth century, DIA annual reports stated that the main activities of Scowlitz community members were farming, dairying, fishing, hop picking and logging.[51] These reports continually expressed satisfaction with the agricultural progress of the Scowlitz band. In 1905, the DIA remarked "some of them [Scowlitz residents] have splendid farms, competing closely with their white neighbours."[52] The Indian Agents were particularly impressed by Scowlitz dairy production. The reports remarked that in 1900 a man named James from the reserve milked twelve cows.[53]

Although the government recognized that the Scowlitz band made progress with agricultural endeavours, the community still found farming to be a difficult task. In 1913, during the McKenna-McBride Commission, Chief Joe Hall explained to Commissioner MacDowell that he thought it would be beneficial if a farm instructor came to the reserve to teach farming techniques. He stated that the reserve only received a few tools to get started, but no further assistance. Hall believed that the Scowlitz community needed assistance from the Indian Department to get the mainland ready for farming, because their horses were too small and too few in number to plough the land.[54]

The reserve was set up by the government to be farmland; however, many Scowlitz residents did not farm. As such, the government decreased the size of the Scowlitz reserve because it was not, in administrators' minds, adequately being used for

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[49] Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1886, lxii.
[50] Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1887, 111.
[51] Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1903, 263.
[52] Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1905, 269.
[53] Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1900, 244.
[54] McKenna McBride Reports, 1913, 413-416.

agricultural purposes. After the First World War, veterans wanted land. To accommodate this demand, in the 1930s the government gave away the best farmland on the reserve's north side, near the railroad tracks.[55]

Wage labour resulted in the incorporation of Euro-Canadian practices into the Scowlitz community's daily lives. As one example, residents took their earnings to the Kilby General Store to purchase items. Working long hours made it difficult for Scowlitz residents to prepare everything themselves, like they had done in the past. Allen explained that it was more convenient to go to the store to buy berries than go out and pick them. He recalled that Kilby "used to let us run a bill there. We got maybe forty dollars and he would let us run a bill, sign a check and give it to him."[56] Betty recalled that her family took a tobacco tin full of money down to the Kilby store to purchase groceries.[57]

The Kilby General Store was a place where many people within the surrounding area shopped. Residents from Chehalis and Chilliwack ventured down by canoe, car or horse to visit the general store. Betty discussed how the store became a meeting place for people in the area, "and he [Kilby] knew it too, he knew what to order. I think he had the biggest supply of vanilla in B.C."[58] Vanilla, also known as "black magic," was a fond memory for Betty, who often went to Kilby's store to purchase and drink black magic.[59] The Scowlitz reserve was not just an important meeting place in the ancient era; it continued to attract many people in the colonial age.

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[55] Williams interview; Charlie, Hall and Pennier interview.
[56] Williams interview.
[57] Charlie, Hall and Pennier interview.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Ibid.

3.4 Residential Schools

Education was another provision that fell in line with the government's civilizing policies. Originally, Indigenous peoples educated their youth about: procreation; preservation; how to sustain the community through hunting, gathering and fishing; identity; and how to defend against external threats. These skills were taught by providing positive examples in the home, telling important stories, and conducting rite-of-passage ceremonies that imparted knowledge to youth.[60] Allen recalled that the community helped raise children together by making sure they developed good characters.[61] The Canadian government attempted to undermine these traditional teachings by using education as a means to assimilate Indigenous youth into Euro-Canadian society. The government thought this would end Indigenous dependence on Indian Agents, farm instructors, and financial assistance.[62]

Most Scowlitz youth attended St. Mary's Residential School in Mission, B.C. In 1885, it was reported that forty-two children from the province of British Columbia attended this institution.[63] Boys were taught farming, while girls were taught needlework and housewifery.[64] St. Mary's was often overcrowded, which resulted in many Indigenous youth becoming sick. By the beginning of the twentieth century there were complaints from Scowlitz residents that their children were coming home from school with consumption (tuberculosis). Children slept in one large room together, which resulted in the spreading of illnesses.[65] In 1913, Joe Hall commented that the medical

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[60] J.R. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 17.
[61] Williams interview.
[62] J.R. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools*, 184-185.
[63] Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1885, 169.
[64] Williams interview.
[65] McKenna McBride Reports, 1913, 417.

care at St. Mary's was insufficient. He remembered attending St. Mary's when he was young, stating that he only saw a doctor once during his stay. When he became chief he was afraid to send children there. He affirmed that if there was less crowding that he would be more willing to let the Scowlitz youth attend the school. Instead, he sent youth to Sechelt Boarding School, where their health was reported to be much better.[66]

Not all Scowlitz youth attended St. Mary's Residential School. Some families were discouraged from sending their children to St. Mary's because they had to provide clothing. At the Kokoleetza School children were clothed by the school, so there was more of an incentive for parents to send their children there.[67] To further assimilate Indigenous youth, the DIA sent reserve children to different schools, which separate family members from one another. For example, Allen and his cousins attended Sechelt Boarding School, but his sister went to St. Mary's.[68] Scowlitz resident John Pennier recalled that he went to St. Mary's for ten years, a school in Kamloops for one year, and a school in Agiszee another year.[69] The government also separated pupils within the schools themselves. At St. Mary's the boys and girls were not allowed to communicate, even if they were from the same families. They were taught in separate classrooms, ate in separate dining halls and slept in separate dorm rooms.[70] The government aimed to separate youth so they would experience different training, and to ensure that they were divided and therefore obedient. Separation led to conflicts between family members and

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[66] Ibid., 418.
[67] McKenna McBride Reports, 1913, 418.
[68] Williams interview.
[69] John Pennier (Scowlitz Resident, Scowlitz British Columbia) interviewed by Stephanie Bellissimo, Keith Carlson, Ben Clinton-Baker, Martin Hoffman) May 10, 2011.
[70] Carlson, Keith, et al. *A Coast Salish Historical Atlas* (British Columbia: Douglas and McIntyre Ltd., 2001), 68.

other band members. A less unified Indigenous community meant that the government had more power over them.

Harrison Mills School was built on reserve land in 1901 due to a high demand by mill workers in the area for a place to educate their children.[71] Euro-Canadian children originally used this school; Indigenous youth were prohibited from attending.[72] Eventually, the school's mandate was extended to include Indigenous pupils. Allen attended Harrison Mills School temporarily. By the age of eight he missed too much school and was relocated to Sechelt Boarding School instead.[73]

In 1894, Indigenous children were described by DIA reports as reaping the benefits of education. By that time, most youth could speak, read and write in English.[74] Eradicating Indigenous language was one of the fundamental methods the government used to eliminate Indigenous culture. To this day, the traditional *Halq'eméylem* language of the Stó:lõ people is almost extinct. Only a few members of the community can still speak it. In residential school, youth were punished when they spoke their traditional language. If caught, they were placed in isolation, or were given work during recess.[75] They were forced to speak English, which nearly resulted in the destruction of their language.

One dichotomy lies in the fact that many Indigenous community members chose to send their children to residential schools as a way to keep their cultural identity intact. In 1908, the DIA annual report declared, "most of them [Scowlitz residents] are anxious

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[71] Fred Thirkell and Bob Scullion, *Vancouver and Beyond: During the Golden Age of Postcards, 1900-1914*, 34-35.
[72] McKenna McBride Reports, 1913, 419.
[73] Williams interview.
[74] Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1894**,** 208.
[75] Carlson, Keith et al. *A Coast Salish Historical Atlas*, 68.

to have their children educated, many of whom attend St. Mary's Mission boarding school."[76] The Scowlitz community understood that it was inevitable that their lives would rapidly change with the increase of Euro-Canadian settlement in British Columbia. They were pragmatic in the sense that they adapted as best they could to their new lifestyle. In residential school, youth learned aspects of Euro-Canadian culture, and ultimately these tools allowed them to undermine the system. Later, many Indigenous leaders entered the political arena with knowledge of both Indigenous and Euro-Canadian cultures.[77]

3.5 Religion

Religion was another tool the Canadian Government used to "civilize" the Indigenous population. They built churches on reserve land, utilized missionaries, and sent Indigenous youth to Roman Catholic schools. By 1886, the DIA annual report stated that there was a church built on every reserve in the Lower Fraser Agency.[78] By 1898, it was reported that the church on the Scowlitz reserve was being used regularly. Indian Agents described the Scowlitz residents as "a temperate and moral people."[79] The denomination of the Scowlitz reserve was Roman Catholic. Census returns always matched the number of individuals who were Catholic. For instance, in 1894, the census returns showed that there were fifty-one individuals living on the Scowlitz reserve, and they were all practicing Roman Catholics.[80] Joe Hall commented in 1913 that the priest

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[76] Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1908, 269.
[77] J.R. Miller, *Compact, Contract, Covenant: Aboriginal Treaty-making in Canada*, 233.
[78] Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1886, lxii.
[79] Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1898, 218.
[80] Department of Indian Affairs Annual Reports, 1894, 260.

came to the reserve church once every two months because he was working alone and had a large area of land to cover in the Fraser Valley Agency.[81]

The fact that the Roman Catholic Church was influential in the region did not mean that people of the Scowlitz reserve entirely abandoned their traditional beliefs. They practiced dualism, believing in both the teachings of the Church and their own traditions. The traditions of Scowlitz people continued to occupy an important place in their community. For example, Scowlitz legends continued to allow the Scowlitz community to form relationships with their surrounding landscape as well as their ancestors. As discussed in section 2.1, many physical places outlined in their myths are still important places today, the ancestral rock being one example.

4.0 Contemporary Scowlitz

The Scowlitz community evolved through disruptive processes and managed to retain its culture despite successive government efforts. Andy is determined to bring Scowlitz traditions to the forefront as a way to celebrate their history; to illustrate that they have overcome many of colonialism's challenges. One of the ways that he plans to make Scowlitz traditions more accessible is by building a new longhouse. He described the longhouse as an "important icon and figurehead in the community."[82] There used to be longhouses on Scowlitz reserve land, but they were accidently destroyed by a fire.[83] Andy wants to rebuild them so that the community can have a place to perform its traditional ceremonies, much like Scowlitz people did in the past. This structure will also act as a physical reminder of the past, grounding historical experiences in contemporary society.

[81] McKenna McBride Reports, 1913, 417.
[82] Phillips interview.
[83] Williams interview.

Andy also hopes to teach residents the importance of their history. A new skateboarding park and playground near the band office is being built to facilitate interaction between Scowlitz youth and elders. Andy hopes that this will help bridge the gap between both groups. Youth can hear stories from elders, while elders can bring messages to the youth.[84] Andy also wants to preserve the *Halq'eméylem* language. He believes that language and the Stó:lõ identity are intimately linked. He stated, "if you don't have language, you don't have identity."[85] He discussed devoting resources to teaching youth their traditional language so that they can carry Stó:lõ traditions into the future. There are a small number of *Halq'eméylem* speakers left within the Stó:lõ community. The fact that the Stó:lõ language survived the residential school system and assimilationist colonial policies demonstrates the strong will of Indigenous people who fought against adversity to keep their culture alive.

Andy is currently using an online tool called the Reciprocal Research Network (RRN) to encourage Scowlitz youth to learn about their history. The RRN is a website dedicated to making Coast Salish cultural items more accessible. It achieves this goal by connecting seventeen museums within Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Betty stated, "I think this project [RRN] is good for the younger generation at Scowlitz, and can help them understand where they came from. I think it might help them lead better lives if they know where they came from; it will help them know where they are going."[86]

Knowing where one comes from has always been important to the Scowlitz community. This is especially true when chiefs are chosen. In the past, a young member

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[84] Phillips interview.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Natasha Lyons, et al. *The Scowlitz Site Online: Launch of The Scowlitz Artifact Assemblage Project*, 2.

of the community was trained to be the next chief; today, chiefs are selected through elections. Andy explained that the traditional way of picking chiefs is comparable to an apprenticeship where new incumbents learn about the process from their more experienced elders. For instance, he would like the next chief to understand his reasons for not becoming involved in treaty negotiations. He believes that this traditional way of leadership could help promote Indigenous interests because every new leader would continue the policies of older chiefs. Andy hopes to make a library of past chiefs as a way of beginning this process. He also discussed that he wishes to have a young person apprentice to be the next chief.[87]

5.0 Conclusion

Andy posed the question, "what does it mean to come from Scowlitz?" Scowlitz has an extensive history that dates back thousands of years. There have been many important traditions and myths passed down from ancient times; they are still acknowledged and practiced by Scowlitz residents today. Visual reminders of the past are seen throughout the reserve, acting as markers of the band's rich history. Qithyil Island, its burial mounds, and artifacts are a constant reminder to the community that Scowlitz was once a powerful meeting place. Old fruit trees scattered throughout the reserve showcase their ancestors' hard work. The Kilby store is a physical presence that reminds community members of their colonial past.

The fact that many Scowlitz traditions survived thousands of years is a remarkable feat. This is especially true considering the strong impact that colonial society had on the Scowlitz community in the nineteenth century. Euro-Canadians did not understand the Indigenous hunter-gatherer lifestyle and used their ignorance to argue that

[87] Phillips interview.

Indigenous people did not hold claim to the land. Euro-Canadians infiltrated the province of British Columbia and the government set up assimilationist policies aimed at exterminating Indigenous culture. This was attempted through initiatives like the reserve system, which classified Indigenous people as separate, tying them to geographical locations in order to keep them under control. Indigenous people on reserve land entered the labour market at higher rates in order to sustain their families. For the people of Scowlitz this meant taking employment as loggers, creating orchards, travelling to hop yards, and engaging in farming activities. Residential schools were established to educated youth in Euro-Canadian ways of living, while simultaneously stripping them of their Indigenous identity. The Scowlitz population, like many other Indigenous bands, faced many experiences that attempted to wipe out their culture, history and identity. Despite this, they were able to hold onto elements of their history and traditions; both still play an important role in Scowlitz life today.

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7.0 Appendix

Chief List (Information from Alice Marwood)

Name	Year	Spouse	Age	Other Names	Source
Coutameld, Capt John	1870	Mary		John Kootlelmentow	Petition to Musgrave
Capt John	1874				Petition to Provincial Security
Capt John	1878				Census 1878
Casimir	1891-1901	Celestine Skrou	65		1901 census
Hall, Joe	1924-1949	Celestine Joseph			Band List
Pennier, Clarence	1985-1989				1979 BC Supreme Ct-CNR
William, John	1996				
Pennier, John	1997				