Ethnohistory Field School Report

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Iwówes I.R. #15: The Progression from Ancestral Community to Abandoned Village

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The Ethnothistory Field School is a collaboration of the
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Preface:

The Sto:lo people of the Lower Fraser River have an intimate relationship with the Fraser River and the surrounding landscape that is an integral part of their traditions and heritage. The parcel of land, known as Union Bar Reserve #15 located approximately 2 miles east of Hope on the Fraser's southern shore, holds particular meaning to the Sto:lo people, not only spiritually but also as a well established community dating from Pre-Contact to the 20th Century when it was almost completely abandoned.

Union Bar Reserve #15, the official Department of Indian Affairs designation, is also known as Iwowis, although there have been several variations in the spelling and pronunciation of the Sto:lo place name. Gilbert Malcolm Sproat, the Canadian Government representative on the Indian Land Commission, 1876-1880, recorded the settlement situated on this parcel of land as Ay.waw.wis[1], while archaeological surveys conducted by Donald Mitchell, Quentin Mackie (1986)[2], and Gordon Mohs (1989)[3] used the variation Aywawwis. A third variation, Ewowis, has also been used in other documentation. Up to this time, there was no comprehensive linguistic studies conducted in Halq' emeylem, the Sto:lo language.

Brent Galloway, a UBC graduate student, compiled a linguistic dictionary and phonetic study for the Halq' emeylem language which was published in

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[1] Gilbert Malcolm Sproat, The Joint Indian Land Commission of British Columbia Papers, (Sto:lo Nation Archives), 205.
[2] Donald Mitchell and Quentin Mackie, British Columbia Archaeological Site Inventory Form; Site No. DiRi 83, (Sto:lo Nation Archives: 1986).
[3] Gordon Mohs, British Columbia Archaeological Site Inventory Form; Site No. DiRi 82, (Sto:lo Nation Archives: 1989).

1993. From this study and documentation, the Sto:lo spelling of Iwowis has been standardized and recent documentation and histories use this form. Many Sto:lo place names have literal translations and meanings associated to them. Iwowis has been translated as "does not want to be seen" or "that which is hidden." These translations have direct association to Sto:lo transformer stories, oral histories and events that took place in this location.

The recent spelling variation of Iwowis will be used throughout the following community profile and history with variations noted when direct citations or quotations are presented.

Introduction:

The historical Native reserve of Iwowis in the Fraser Valley, British Columbia, was an important community until its abandonment in the 1940s. Union Bar, Indian Reserve #15, included the island of Lhilhetalets as well as a section of land just off of the Fraser River which is called Iwowis. Union Bar consisted of what was "formerly a pithouse settlement and more recently an historic village with a church, graveyard and gardens."[4] Iwowis was also classified as a fishing station and drying rack location. This reserve, described as being "one of the ancestral Sto:lo villages"[5] was a large and important community in early Sto:lo history. The abandonment of Iwowis was identified by the Sto:lo Nation as important because of a need to record oral histories of the elders and original inhabitants of the area. This paper seeks to provide insight into some possible explanations for an entire community's dispersal in the mid-twentieth century.

In his 1952 book on the Upper Sto:lo Wilson Duff wrote, "[a]t present the Stalo live on small reserves scattered throughout their former territory, and most find employment in fishing, farming, logging, or railroad work."[6] Also within his book Duff sums up the reserve by describing it as "[a]n important village on the east bank of the river about 2 miles above Hope. Although only a few people live there today (actually a little down-river, at Ay-wa-wis Reserve, I.R. 15), this has

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[4] Gordon Mohs, Spiritual Sites, Ethnic Significance and Native Spirituality: The Heritage and Heritage Sites of the Sto:lo Indians of British Columbia, (Simon Fraser University, 1987), 99.
[5] Gordon Mohs, British Columbia Archaeological Site Inventory Form; Site No. DiRi 68, (Sto:lo Nation Archives: 1976).
[6] Wilson Duff, The Upper Stalo Indians of the Fraser Valley, British Columbia, (Victoria: British Columbia Provincial Museum, 1952), 12.

always been a large and important village."[7] Gordon Mohs, staff archaeologist for the Sto:lo Nation reported that the village of Iwowis and Lhilhetalets "formerly housed a sizeable community and were occupied on a year round basis."[8]

There are several reasons why Iwowis is important historically to the Sto:lo First Nation community. In the late nineteenth century, the Iwowis reserve boasted both a church and a large cemetery. The Church on location was Roman Catholic, which was the dominant religion in Fraser Valley Native communities at this time. There was not a full-time priest at this church but he would come to the community to perform masses, baptisms, weddings, and funerals. The Catholic Church on the reserve is a typically positive feature because it signifies a large and important community. Many of the recorded facts about the early community of Iwowis come from church and census records.

Iwowis was an important community to the Sto:lo people because it was a large reserve with quite a few inhabitants. It had great natural resources. The community's access to the river was essential to the Sto:lo way of life through fishing, etc. Early years in the Iwowis community are described as peaceful and happy. Wells commented, "[t]hey [Roy's brothers] smoked salmon, they dried salmon, they salted salmon, anyway you could preserve the salmon for the winter. The root cellar was full."[9] Roy Wells describes his earliest memories of Iwowis, when there was:

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[7] Duff, The Upper Stalo, 33.
[8] Gordon Mohs, "Twin Tracking Indian Alliance," Alliance Heritage Study, (Sto:lo Nation Tribal Council, 1984), 40.
[9] Roy Wells, Personal Interview with Jody Bergerman and Henry Nicklaus, 23 May 2005, Transcript on file at Sto:lo Nation Archives.

> A bit of a settlement. There were several residences and well there was a creek running by and that's were they got their drinking water and stuff like that, otherwise it was the Fraser River to wash. Just the basic things, do your laundry and you could wash dishes as the water had to be boiled for sanitation. So there were different residences there. I'm talking, say we go up the track about a mile and a half, that's where the Reserve spread out and just across the water there's a little channel run through it where the church was.[10]

The historical Iwowis area is notorious for being a great location to catch and dry salmon. Other natural resources on the reserve include numerous berry trees and orchards. It is also noted for its wild onions and willow grouse and is situated on an animal trail. The flats near the reserve are a great place for deer hunting. Mount Ogilvie is directly east of Iwowis and is a noted hunting ground for mountain goats and the lower slope is abundant in berries. Also, the main channel of the Fraser River is a major stopover point for migrating geese.[11]

The Abandonment of Iwowis:

Abandonment of one's home is a deeply personal decision and therefore the decision to leave varies from family to family. There was not one main reason that the community was abandoned but several push/pull factors that caused community members to move from I.R. #15 and disperse elsewhere.

There are several potential theories about the abandonment of the Sto:lo community of Iwowis. The informants that are still available have aided in the discourse surrounding the abandonment of Iwowis. There is not, however, one main factor in the abandonment of I.R. #15. Instead, I intend to begin the

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[10] Wells Interview, 23 May 2005.
[11] Gordon Mohs, Heritage Site: DiRi 81, The Aywawwis (Iwowes) Pebble Tool Site, Archaeologist's Statement, July 28, 1986, 24.

discussion about factors leading to the Iwowis band members choosing to leave their homes and move elsewhere. These theories, although preliminary, have surfaced in interviews and archival research and are probable cause for many members of this community to abandon their homes and the Iwowis reserve.

1) Flood of 1898:

According to Gordon Mohs, "[a]bandonment of this site began following the Flood of 1898."[12] This natural event caused "considerable damage to structures and crops"[13] as well as the cemetery on the island of Lhilhetalets was partially washed away. The flood uncovered several of the buried graves, which were quickly relocated and reburied at Iwowis cemetery (site DiRi 74). There are presently numerous burials with grave markers that are barely visible through the overgrown brush. The oldest gravestone reads 1910 and the newest is 1947. There are also two rectangular depressions that must be evidence of historic dwellings.[14]

2) Decline of Church Influence:

The decline in influence of the Roman Catholic Church may have influenced the abandonment of Iwowis. The church fell into disuse in the early to mid-1900s, which may have contributed to the declining population in the village. The presence of a Catholic parish in Iwowis may have been a positive feature for community members and therefore the decline of the church may have hurt the population growth. Wells reminisced, "[w]here the church was, well, I don't know

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[12] Gordon Mohs, Spiritual Sites, Ethnic Significance and Native Spirituality: The Heritage and Heritage Sites of the Sto:lo Indians of British Columbia, (Simon Fraser University, 1987), 100.
[13] Mohs, Spiritual Sites, 100.

what's left, just the pillars. It's already collapsed and its decay, but I can show you where it was. I never did attend a service in it, but I've been in it, as it was still a bit of a structure."[14] When asked about the church falling into disuse Wells replied, "Well, I'd say when it gave up, I can not say, in the 50s. I was born in '36, I'm 69 now, and it wasn't too long."[15]

The decline of the Catholic Church in Aboriginal British Columbia society contributed to the abandonment of Iwowis. "While most Indians today are still at least nominally Christian, the increasing tendency has been...[to amalgamate] Christian and traditional beliefs."[16] It is likely that the Church's influence in Native society waned and therefore aided in the abandonment of the community. "The fact that many of the fine churches built by the missionaries are now derelict or in poor repair shows that they [missionaries] did not impose their will and their culture entirely."[17]

3) CN Railroad:

In the early 1900s, the Canadian National Railway (CNR) began to extend its line into the west toward the Pacific Coast. The Canadian National Railway bisects the Union Bar reserve. Access to the railway could potentially help the community grow but it is also dangerous and noisy. Wells remembers his childhood, "I was never allowed to the railway, to the railway tracks."[18]

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[14] A. Styrd and M. Eldridge, British Columbia Archaeological Site Inventory Form: Site No. DiRi 74, Sto:lo Nation Archives: 1983.
[14] Wells, Personal Interview, 23 May 2005.
[15] Wells, Personal Interview, 23 May 2005.
[16] Robin Fisher, "Missions to the Indians of British Columbia," Early Indian Village Churches: Wooden Frontier Architecture in British Columbia, Eds. John Veillette and Gary White, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1977), 11.
[17] Fisher, "Missions to the Indians of British Columbia," 11.
[18] Wells, Personal Interview, 23 May 2005.

The construction of the CNR in 1912/13 caused a lot of damage to the village as well. "The settlement was bisected, community access was restricted and fishing activities irrevocably altered."[19] Some of the traditional fishing sites in this village were also damaged with the coming of the train. Much of the site was situated within the CNR right-of-way and was destroyed with the original construction. Also, considerable damage has occurred at this site from ongoing maintenance activities. Gordon Mohs states, "[c]onstruction of the railroad through Iwowes in 1914 had a major impact. A fish processing area (dry rack location) and several fishing sites were lost,...a spiritual site..."little tunnels", was destroyed,... and access to the western portion (riverside) of Aywawwis I.R. 15 was severely impaired."[20] "Fishing within the Lhilhetalets channel was irrevocably altered with the construction of the CNR in 1912-13."[21] The coming of the railway to the Fraser Valley was not a positive move for the community members of Iwowis because it bisected the village and disrupted its peoples' settlement.

4) Other Theories:

Sto:lo Elders, Amelia Douglas and Agnes Kelly stated that the Coquihalla River used to flow through Iwowis but has changed its course several times since the 1860s. "Formerly, the Coquihalla River used to enter the Fraser just below Iwowes... The Coquihalla now enters the Fraser about 2 km. Downstream of its

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[19] Mohs, Spiritual Sites, 100.
[20] Mohs, Heritage Site: DiRi 81, 28.
[21] Gordon Mohs, British Columbia Archaeological Site Inventory Form; Site No. DiRi 68, Sto:lo Nation Archives: 1976.

former mouth."[22] The gold mining rush in the nineteenth century was likely an influence on the Coquihalla River's path change. The shift in flow could have been a result of channel erosion or by planned diversion on the part of the Canadian National Railway.

The Canadian government's attempts to assimilate the Sto:lo revolved around a shift to an agricultural economy from the traditional Native way of life. This is unusual because as "People of the River" they were focused around a mainly fishing orientated lifestyle, which worked well for them. The government wanted the Sto:lo to make their living off of the land but through agricultural pursuits instead of their traditional fishing and hunting methods. Life changed greatly for the Sto:lo people in Iwowis with the influx of non-native people nearby and their different ways of life.

Employment dislocation is another reason that Sto:lo people may have moved off the reserve. They may have been forced to make a living off of the reserve because their traditional methods were either taken away from them or became unnecessary. The government began to put bans on Native fishing in the Fraser River and therefore dramatically changed the generation long legacies of the Sto:lo people. "In order to support themselves and their families many had to leave their villages to look for work in the larger towns created by colonial settlement. This often led to the breakdown of traditional social relations and increased the dependence of First Nations people on settlers."[23] New methods of

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[22] Mohs, Heritage Site: DiRi 81, 24.
[23] Robert J. Muckle, The First Nations of British Columbia: An Anthropological Survey, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998), 64-65.

making a living that were introduced included logging, building the railroad, gold mining, and farming.

An issue with close physical proximity to urban centres is that the First Nations community is forced into a non-native lifestyle to compete for jobs. Native people were forced to acquire "new skills, trades, and work attitudes, to take advantage of employment opportunities in the new or expanding cities and towns that are engulfing them."[24] The traditional jobs of fisherman or hunter were less productive than they once were in the community. Community members were forced to leave the reserve to seek employment in larger centres or on the road. Wells spoke of his brothers' struggles to make a living,

> My brothers worked on the railway, remember the Kettle Valley... They [Jim and Harold] worked on the Kettle Valley Railway and Buster, he worked on the, he was a fireman. I guess on the engines. You know the old steam pots. My brother Bill, he worked on a section [of the railway]. This was their only source of income, to work, until they started logging, but who was logging around here. See when I was a kid, when I go to the Residential School, they did start logging up there. Monty Hall, so the veterans went into logging; better money, better money and it was right there. They had to go to town; I mean come from town to get up there to pick up. That's where I learned how to log when I was 15 years old.[25]

Other theories of abandonment include a decline in reserve populations because of enfranchisement and loss of Indian status in the early twentieth century. According to Alan Guiterrez, a former inhabitant of Iwowis, one of the residents "surrendered his Indian rights from where I lived at Union Bar, just so he could go to the liquor store and buy a bottle."[26] The temptation of

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[24] H. B. Hawthorn, C. S. Belshaw, and S. M. Jamieson, The Indians of British Columbia: A Study of Contemporary Social Adjustment, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1958), 159.
[25] Wells, Personal Interview, 23 May 2005.
[26] Alan Guiterrez, Personal Interview with Brian Thom, 25 August 1995. Transcript on file at Sto:lo Nation Archives.

enfranchisement was to become a Canadian citizen and receive many of the rights that status Native people were not entitled to.

While Native communities were often characterized by a fluidity of population this is now seen to be a stereotype. According to the McKenna/McBride Commission the surrounding reserves were not permanently settled in 1912. They only had transient members who used the land seasonally. "Roots, game, and firewood would become scarce in an area, and family groups would move away to other places where these were more plentiful."[27] Roy Wells remembers, "[t]he thing that we had big trouble with, getting wood. I'd see my Mom up there with the hand fiddle cutting off a block of wood. They call it a hand fiddle, the saw, so we could have warmth and something to cook with."[28] "Also, "[a] family might move closer to its kinfolk, or go up fishing and decide to stay the winter, or longer, close to kin."[29]

The fluidity of the populations slowed when the government began to survey reserves in the 1870s. Native people began to claim good fishing spots and homesteads for their families. The notion of private ownership is a mainly Western one and is very different from traditional Aboriginal concepts. They began to stray from their traditional practices of hereditary rights and family 'ownership'.

According to Wilson Duff's The Upper Stalo, "[t]o the Tait themselves, the only resource areas actually owned were the fishing-rocks in the upper

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[27] Duff, The Upper Stalo, 40.
[28] Wells, Personal Interview, 23 May 2005.
[29] Duff, The Upper Stalo, 40.

canyon."[30] This exemplifies the importance of fishing to the Sto:lo people for subsistence. "Salmon has always been the principle source of food for Aboriginal people living along the rivers of the Pacific northwest coast."[31]

"The supplies of fish available to [Native people] along inland streams, rivers and lakes are likely to decline, owing to the damming of rivers for hydro-electric power developments."[32] This could have been a problem for the community of Iwowis because "[t]he fishing industry is by far the most important field of employment and livelihood for Indians in British Columbia."[33] The Sto:lo people also feel a deep and spiritual connection with the Fraser River, Wells comments, "I love the water and when I go down there, I just sit by the river and just watch it, admire it and what not. That was my life, the water."[34]

The gold rush affected many First Nations communities. "The first reserves in Sto:lo territory were created in 1858 as a direct response to the Fraser River gold rush and the resulting tensions between *Xwelitem* miners and the *Sto:lo*."[35] "Gold miners and settlers who came to British Columbia began to utilize the resources of land, sea, and river increasingly to the exclusion of the Indians."[36]

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[30] Duff, The Upper Stalo, 19.
[31] Laura Cameron, "The Aboriginal Right to Fish," You Are Asked to Witness: The Stó:lō in Canada's Pacific Coast History, Ed. Keith Thor Carlson, (Chilliwack: *Stó:lō* Heritage Trust, 1997), 141.
[32] Hawthorn, The Indians of British Columbia, 97.
[33] Hawthorn, The Indians of British Columbia, 107.
[34] Wells, Personal Interview, 23 May 2005.
[35] Keith Thor Carlson, "Indian Reservations," A Sto:lo Coast Salish Historical Atlas, Ed. Keith Thor Carlson, (Chilliwack: Sto:lo Heritage Trust, 2001) 94.
[36] Robin Fisher, "Missions to the Indians of British Columbia," Early Indian Village Churches: Wooden Frontier Architecture in British Columbia, Eds. John Veillette and Gary White, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1977) 3.

According to historian Robin Fisher, "[t]he miners and their operations were a major interference with the life and livelihood of the Indians."[37] "Many First Nations people traditionally dependent on salmon had to alter their diet because the amount of fish available to them was reduced. In other cases spawning areas were destroyed by mining activities."[38] "The Fraser Canyon had been the major salmon fishing area…[m]ining operations disrupted the catching and drying of a major staple in the Indian diet"[39] Salmon was a "traditional food resource of the Fraser River Indians [which] was disrupted with the coming of the gold miners in 1858."[40]

"Miners also interfered with the Indians' land holdings; village sites, fishing stations, and cultivated areas were all intruded upon."[41] Roy Wells speaks fondly of the wonderful orchards that grew in Iwowis, but the gold miners completely disregarded the natural resources while searching for their treasures,

> Cherry trees, beautiful cherries, apple trees, sweet apples, early apples, the place where I was raised we called the first orchard, the second orchard, because when the gold mining days, they cut a swath right through our orchards so we got one orchard, second orchard.[42]

Population loss led to "changes in subsistence and settlement patterns."[43] There were also many conflicts with European settlers over land. "In areas

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[37] Robin Fisher, Contact and Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia, 1774-1890, Second Edition, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992) 100.
[38] Robert J. Muckle, The First Nations of British Columbia: An Anthropological Survey, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998) 64.
[39] Fisher, Contact and Conflict, 100.
[40] Fisher, Contact and Conflict, 109.
[41] Fisher, Contact and Conflict, 101.
[42] Wells, Personal Interview, 23 May 2005.
[43] Muckle, The First Nations of British Columbia, 61.

where pressure from Europeans was particularly intense, even Indian village sites and cultivated fields were intruded upon."[44]

"The combined effects of urbanization, agriculture and increasing road density have negatively impacted water resources and displaced indigenous wildlife and vegetation."[45] According to a Sto:lo community member and former inhabitant, Roy Wells, the village of Iwowis was abandoned partly because of poor soil conditions for growth. Wells said,

> I can tell you why the Reserve was left. That Reserve we got, you can not plant a potato in there. I mean, you got to get the topsoil in order to plant something. All you can grow on the thing is cottonwood. Trees, that's okay, the few trees that were on there were cut down and sold."[46]

The McKenna/McBride Commission in 1914 also refers to the lands as not being fit for cultivation because of the mountains and large amounts of brush.[47]

"More than 100 young Sto:lo men and at least one Sto:lo woman served in the Canadian military during World War II."[48] It is possible that because several males from Iwowis went to fight in the Second World War that their families left at home were forced to disperse. They may have moved to live with other members of their family groups in order to raise their families and take care of themselves. This would directly affect the abandonment of Iwowis because living in relative isolation would be a difficult environment to raise a family. All five of

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[44] Fisher, Contact and Conflict, 105.
[45] Colin Duffield, "Transportation Infrastructures, 1866-2000," A Sto:lo Coast Salish Historical Atlas. Ed. Keith Thor Carlson, (Chilliwack: Sto:lo Heritage Trust, 2001) 96.
[46] Wells, Personal Interview, 23 May 2005.
[47] "Meeting with the Union Bar Band or Tribe of Indians at Union Bar I. R. Near Hope, B. C," Royal Commission on Indian Affairs For the Province of B. C., McKenna – McBride Commission, November 20, 1914.
[48] Keith Thor Carlson, "*Stó:lō* Soldiers, *Stó:lō* Veterans," You Are Asked to Witness: The Stó:lō in Canada's Pacific Coast History, Ed. Keith Thor Carlson, (Chilliwack: *Stó:lō* Heritage Trust, 1997) 131.

Roy Wells' brothers went overseas to fight in World War Two. Roy Wells spoke about his family leaving Iwowis because his mother could not take care of herself and her home and chose to move into the nearby town of Hope. This move was preceded by five of Roy's older brothers going to Europe to fight in the war.[49] Moving to a larger centre or to be closer to family or friends or was not uncommon for Native people during the Second World War and this mobility drastically changed the dynamics of the Iwowis reserve.

A main reason that the community of Iwowis was abandoned could be the shift in demographic from Sto:lo people to non-native in the Lower Fraser Valley region. In the early years "[s]maller, but still regularly occupied settlements ("villages") were established along the tributary river systems, usually at junctions with streams and side channels."[50] "These patterns demonstrate a close connection between Sto:lo settlements and major rivers (the primary avenues of transportation and communication) that extends back into earlier pre-contact times."[51] Transportation networks have redefined the valley's cultural landscape, creating an orientation away from the river. What were once community centres are now often marginal reserves."[52] The change in routes of transportation was a key factor in the abandonment of Iwowis. When the river was the main route for transport, Iwowis was in a central location. When cars became the main mode it

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[49] Wells, Personal Interview, 23 May 2005.
[50] David M. Schaepe, "Village Arrangements and Settlement Patterns," A Sto:lo Coast Salish Historical Atlas, Ed. Keith Thor Carlson, (Chilliwack: Sto:lo Heritage Trust, 2001) 36.
[51] Schaepe, "Village Arrangements and Settlement Patterns," 36.
[52] Brian Thom and Laura Cameron, "Changing Land Use in *Sólh Téméxw* (Our Land): Population, Transportation, Ecology and Heritage," You Are Asked to Witness: The Stó:lō in Canada's Pacific Coast History, Ed. Keith Thor Carlson, (Chilliwack: *Stó:lō* Heritage Trust, 1997) 178.

was isolated. In the same way, the coming of the railroad further displaced the traditional transportation of the Native people.

Another issue that the Iwowis reserve faced was that it was not as modern or technologically advanced as some of the Native communities in British Columbia. At present time Wells speaks of his fish camp on his traditional land, "I got no electricity, I got no running water, I got no telephone."[53] "Although Sto:lo communities are located along major rivers and sloughs, these are no longer the main means of travelling between communities. Some of these communities, now off the major arteries of transportation, receive few services and attention."[54] There would have been minimal access to schools and medical help for the Native families living on reserves, including in the community of Iwowis. In the mid-twentieth century, the Department of Indian Affairs was encouraging Native peoples to relocate to more central and serviceable locations. When Wells was asked where the families moved to he responded, "Some went across to the States. Nobody got them to build a house."[55] There may have been a shortage of suitable housing options on the reserve.

When the reserve started to disperse there were not any roads built to make the community easily accessible. According to Wells, "[t]he only transportation was by the water, or walk down the railway tracks and we were, I think, the furthest ones up the track, which was about 3 miles from Hope."[56] He continued,

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[53] Wells, Personal Interview, 23 May 2005.
[54] Thom and Cameron, "Changing Land Use in *Sólh Téméxw* (Our Land)," 168.
[55] Wells, Personal Interview, 23 May 2005.
[56] Wells, Personal Interview, 23 May 2005.

> There was no way of getting up there transportation wise. See '59, was when, now people can drive just an ordinary car, your car can make it up there... Up until then, nobody had the jam, so to speak, to build this road above the railway you got the railway down there... The railway down there, nobody, so we had a Japanese fella, he built the road... and he did it without hindering the railway just down there. Now, everybody and his dog is just whistling through there.[57]

Critique of Source Material:

Past records of this community are problematic because up until the 1950s, the names Union Bar and American Bar were used interchangeably. According to Fred Quipp, "[w]ell they used to call this American Bar this whole thing, now they call it Union Bar. Before, even in the '50s they call this American Bar."[58] Union Bar is described as "[s]even reserves near the Fraser River, north of Hope."[59] This provides a problem for research into this area because Union Bar is not just the community of Iwowis but it includes other reserves in the area as well.

As well, historical maps that were created and used by early ethnographers prove to be somewhat inaccurate at present time. As observed by Mackie and Mitchell in their DiRi 2 Update of 1986, although Gordon Mohs claims that the site at question "represents Aywawwis village as described by Duff (1952) as Tait: 13. A glance at Duff's map...shows his placement of that village is well upstream of the island, in the vicinity of DiRi 10."[60] Describing a

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[57] Wells, Personal Interview, 23 May 2005.
[58] Fred Quipp, Personal Interview with Pat John and Ernie Victor, 15 January 1997. Transcript on file at Sto:lo Nation Archives, 19.
[59] Muckle, The First Nations of British Columbia, 115.
[60] Donald Mitchell and Quentin Mackie, British Columbia Archaeological Site Inventory Form; Site No. DiRi 83, Sto:lo Nation Archives.

location in the Fraser Valley is a challenge because natural landmarks can be subject to change and the interpretation of those who analyze them.

Conclusion:

Today, all that remains of the Union Bar reserve are iron crosses and a broken down fence indicating the cemetery, several pithouse depressions, remnants of the logs from the Catholic Church that stood on the island of Lhilhetalets, and several old buildings that housed the most recent inhabitants. Some combination of the previous theories touched on in this paper may have worked together to cause the abandonment of the community of Iwowis. We will never be able to fully define why the residents of I.R. #15 left their homes to move elsewhere. "The former position of this...community... is now relegated to oral tradition"[61] and the speculation of those interested in the history of Iwowis; including the theories surrounding the slow dispersal of the reserve's inhabitants in the mid-twentieth century.

[61] Mohs, Spiritual Sites, 99.

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