

ANLAGASIMDEEX: THE HISTORY OF A GITXSAN SETTLEMENT

by

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ABSTRACT

The recent discovery (1995) of a petroglyph located within the traditional territories of the Gitx̱san people leads me to an investigation of settlement at this site and the relocation of the residents. Information about the settlement at Anlagasimdeex̱, located on the Babine River three kilometers west of the village of Gisaga`as, is researched in the ethnographic, historical, and archaeological literature. As well, interviews with Gitx̱san and non-Gitx̱san informants are conducted, to add to the description of Anlagasimdeex̱ obtained from these secondary sources. Settlement at Anlagasimdeex̱ is shown to have extended over a time period of at least two hundred years, and possibly much longer. The settlement was notable for its excellence as a salmon harvesting site, of which the petroglyph may be a graphic representation. The relocation of Gitx̱san people from Anlagasimdeex̱, and, at a later date, from the village of Gisaga`as, during the period 1880-1950, is found to be the result of a number of factors. Finally, village residency is understood to be of secondary importance to the overarching definitions of Gitx̱san identity through adaawk, wilp, and wilnaa`tahl.

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For Delia, to give back a little of what you have given over the years

Figures 1 and 2: Location maps of the study area.



Fig. 1. Within British Columbia.



Fig. 2. Map locating Gitksan communities in the study area (Sterritt et al. 1998, 8).

Beginnings

Brigitta van Heek is the first one to tell me about the petroglyph at Anlagasimdeex; she is a person who is first in many respects. “You’re interested in petroglyphs, aren’t you?” she asks. This is the winter of 1999 in Hazelton, B.C., where snow and temperatures in the –20’s C. are a regular occurrence, so it’s not a good time to go. We decide to go up on the Babine River to have a look when winter’s over, but this does not happen.

It’s June of 2000 and Richard Daly is staying with Brigitta, moving books and papers out of his little old-timer house across the street. The house is tilting, twisting, subsiding. It has been disintegrating for decades; age and the undercutting of the Skeena River, whose sinuous breadth rolls by, no, under the back porch, have finally gained the upper hand. The house has begun its death-watch, but Richard is philosophical, and he takes time for a trip up the Babine to look at the petroglyph. As co-author of They Write Their Dreams on the Rock Forever, his interest in rock art is profound. Brigitta reports in: “We went up there and the petroglyph is really something! Richard waded out in the river and made a drawing of it, and we were looking at it last night. Sooo... we’ve got to go up there. But not now. The water’s getting too high... maybe this Fall.” But again, we don’t go.

Spring of 2001 rolls around, and Brigitta says, “I want to go up the Babine and have a look for that petroglyph. You’d like that, wouldn’t you, and now’s the time ... before the water gets too high and the bush gets too thick. That Devil’s Club can be bad stuff” (van Heek 1999-2001). I spend the night before our trip making blocks of coloured wax, and preparing some pieces of white cotton sheeting for making rubbings, thinking about the last time I impaled myself on Devil’s Club.

It’s April and the snow is gone from the bush as we head up the Salmon River Road

in Brigitta's vehicle, the aptly named Pathfinder. We turn off and follow the road to Gisaga`as, once narrow and almost impassable in places, now wide and engineered to accommodate the logging trucks hauling loads to the Hazelton mills. We leave the Gisaga`as road and the roads we take, Sam Green and Shedin Mainline, the bridges across the Babine River and Sam Green Creek, are all new to me. They too have been developed only within the last seven years, for the logging. Logging has "opened up the country," as we say up here. Now people can drive through in family sedans and pickups, where access once was limited to those with strong legs, snowshoes, riverboats, four-wheelers, and, I think, a lot of fortitude.

At the Babine River bridge we stop and look upriver, where the Sam Green Blockade took place in the fall of 1988. To halt construction of a bridge at this spot, Gitxsan hereditary chiefs, elders, and supporters occupied the site until they won their injunction. We look downriver to the flats at the confluence of the Babine and Skeena Rivers, where giant old cottonwood trees stand in evenly spaced ranks. This place looks really interesting, and almost on cue Brigitta says, "We should have a look down there some time. There's all sorts of cache pits down there, hundreds of them, they say" (van Heek 2001). But not today. We roar over the bridge, then hang a right up Shedin Mainline, cross Sam Green Creek and begin to climb up to the plateau above the Babine River. Now we are heading back toward Gisaga`as but on the north side of the river. We pull up at a pile of logs marked with surveyors' tape where we rendezvous with Jim and Joanne Clifford and their niece.

We put on our little backpacks, and start to walk in. The woods are open and not too wet, a good thing as we begin to descend the long narrow trail which angles down from the plateau to the flats beside the river. This trail has been recently cut by Charlie Muldon's

Gitksan Watershed Authorities work crew: Rennie Green, Hallie and Eli McLean, and Willie Mowatt (Muldon 2004). Down here it's a little more difficult to wade through the fallen bush and gaunt, prickly stalks of Devil's Club that cluster at convenient height for you to inadvertently grab as you slip from a moss-covered log, or stumble in the burrow of a long-departed something. Brigitta disappears into the trees. I hear voices dwindling away ahead of me. We are moving upriver along the flats, with the steady roar of the Babine to our right as we follow Charlie's trail through a forest of cottonwoods, cedars, red willows and other water-loving plants. Then I hear the voices getting louder and know that the others have stopped. They stand in a large clearing where the sun shines, crisping the drifts of poplar leaves caught in the long dry grass. Brigitta thinks this is the place, so we scramble down the last little slope, and out onto the riverbank.

There is an outcropping of rock right on the edge of the water, grey-black in colour, with one large flat plane created by fracturing at some time in the distant past. I am impressed by the size of the petroglyph, which covers the whole of this large and fairly smooth face, and I am amazed at the figures themselves, some of which are very different from anything I've seen before. We look and speculate, as is natural, about their "meaning." It's difficult to see the petroglyph in the bright sunshine, and frustrating to photograph, as the images incised in the rock seem to disappear. We sit on the rock, feeling the lines and holes with our hands, and a sense of other smaller images is transferred to our inner eyes, but it's a fleeting and indefinite impression. The others begin to move away, Brigitta and Jim crossing the ice in the shallows to explore the rocky island in mid-stream. I get out my largest piece of cloth and the chunks of wax I concocted last night and start to make a rubbing.

I pull off some of the bigger tufts of moss, stretch a double bed-sized sheet over the rock face, and being careful not to drag the cloth, rub with my chunk of wax. Where the cloth lies directly touching it, the rough texture of the rock is defined by the wax rubbing onto the cloth; where the cloth does not directly touch the rock, over cracks, holes, and the incised grooves of the petroglyph images, no wax is rubbed and the cloth remains white. It's a kind of magical process seeing the images gradually gain definition as the rubbing progresses. Small figures not even discernible to the eye take shape; what seemed to the fingers to be a confusion of rough textures defines itself as a small leaf-shaped figure with delicate rib lines. Gradually the lines and holes so laboriously pecked in the rock face long ago reveal themselves as the negative white space in the rubbing. The images begin to stand out clearly and precisely; the regularity and evenness of the lines and circles indicates the care with which they were made.

By this time the others are becoming intrigued with this procedure and soon we're all working on the rubbing. We work steadily for an hour or more. Joanne starts a smaller rubbing of the "wolf" on a separate piece; we've begun to name the images by now... the wolf, the man, the little guy, the leaf, the holes which might be fish, the circles. It's a little crowded on the rock, and Jim and Brigitta leave to do some more exploring. We decide we're finished and pack up, so I head back up the bank to the clearing to stretch my legs and look around, curious about signs of human occupation. There are a lot of cache pits away from the river at the upper end of the clearing. Jim is trying to count them but gives up when he reaches thirty. The sun is angling into the clearing from the southwest, casting shadows that almost seem to define long mounded ridges in the level leaf strewn grass; could these be the collapsed walls of houses, or is my mind "just seeing things"? The petroglyph images

are also much easier to see and photograph now, when the angle of the light causes shadows in the peck holes and lines grooved in the rock face. I suggest dousing the rock with water, which I know will enhance the definition of depth even more. Better photographs are taken, to everyone's satisfaction, and we walk out to the cars.

When I get home I spread out the petroglyph rubbing on my living-room carpet and look at it, thinking back to my petroglyph mentor, Dave Walker of Terrace, B.C. and the first time I saw petroglyphs. In 1967, Dave, other local history teachers, and friends had been poking around the deserted townsite of Kitselas, looking for relics of the turn-of-the-century steamboat era on the Skeena River. They had seen the archival photos of steamboats lining themselves up through the rapids at Kitselas Canyon by means of capstan cables attached to large metal ringbolts embedded in the rocks of Ringbolt Island, so they made a trip to the island to try to locate and photograph the ringbolts. Dave told me that they were just sitting on the mossy rocks above the river when one of them stuck his fingers under the moss and felt a very regular groove. He followed it with his fingers, becoming aware that it seemed to be something carved into the rock, rather than anything natural in origin. He alerted the others, and they started peeling off chunks of moss, following the grooves in the rock with their fingers, until one image, and then another and another was exposed to the light (Walker 2001). Dave and others began making regular trips to the island, uncovering a large number of petroglyphs which they drew, photographed, rubbed, and studied (Walker 1979, 167-180). They experimented with wax mixtures, and made a scientific study of night photography with various light sources to improve their ability to record the images on film, a technique which Dave, Jack Hepplewhite, and Gary Dickson perfected (Walker, Hepplewhite, and Dickson 1977, 341-364). In 1971, when I first went up the river to Ringbolt Island with

Dave, Jack, and Ben Bolton of Kitsumkalum in Ben's riverboat, I knew nothing about petroglyphs, but I was immediately caught up in the process of making rubbings. I had the benefit of the knowledge Dave and his friends had accumulated, including the ideal rubbing wax which Dave and his wife, artist Mary Walker, had developed through a trial-and-error process on the kitchen stove. It was an immersion course in the little tricks of using water and waiting until the sun was at the right angle before taking photos, things which I learned but which still do not interest me as much as the rubbings. I thought about these events before, during, and after our trip to the petroglyph on the Babine in 2001, but I began to think more seriously about other questions as well, such as "Why is this petroglyph here?" which lead to "What is the significance of this place?" and then "Was there a settlement here, and if so, when?"

I was prompted to ask these questions by the association of petroglyph sites at Prince Rupert Harbour and Kitselas Canyon with major archaeological discoveries in the 1960's and subsequently. A development parallel to the rediscovery of the petroglyphs took place in Kitselas Canyon as the result of Dave contacting George MacDonald of the National Museum of Man, after finding deeply buried artifacts exposed by erosion of the riverbank at Gitaus. The National Museum archaeologists were already working at Prince Rupert Harbour, but after Dave's phone call and George MacDonald's visit to the canyon, they began a series of archaeological explorations at Gitaus, the Paul Mason site, and the fortress at Gitlaxdzawk (Walker 2001). Their findings at Kitselas (Inglis and MacDonald 1979; Coupland 1988) and at Prince Rupert Harbour (Beynon 2000, 192) demonstrate thousands of years of human occupation. Because of my interest in Kitselas, I had read Gary Coupland's Prehistoric Cultural Change at Kitselas Canyon, which postulates the emergence of social

stratification as shown by the archaeological evidence from Kitselas Canyon sites dating from 5000 B.P. I was struck by the association of petroglyphs with places that had been occupied for such a long period of time.

But petroglyphs are truly enigmatic; the one thing about them that is definitely not “carved in stone” is their age. It’s almost impossible to date them using any physical method such as carbon 14 dating. In the future, an exhaustive analysis of their art styles may allow us to attach dates to particular petroglyphs (Carlson 1982; Lundy 1982), but right now they simply slip through our analytical matrix. Wilson Duff liked to indulge in what he called “insightful speculation” about petroglyphs (Meade 1971, 7), but he also told Dave Walker that he found them frustrating because he “could never get a handle on them” (Walker 2001). One non-speculative activity open to us is to try and situate petroglyphs in their human environment. This then becomes the focus of my research: I will try to find out as much as I can about Gitx̱san settlement at the petroglyph site. I also want to document contemporary interactions with this petroglyph, including my part in its modern story.

One of the first parts of this story I’m interested in recording is the discovery of the petroglyph, so, following Brigitta’s advice, in the summer of 2001 I go to talk to Brian Muldon, Charlie’s older brother. I take the rubbing we’d made in April and Brian brings out his photos, of which he has many. We sit and compare notes and he tells me his recollections of how he, George Simpson, and Rudy Johnson had found the petroglyph in the summer of 1995. It was August and they had gone up the Skeena River from Hazelton in a riverboat. These long narrow boats, made of wood or metal, are similar to the one belonging to Ben Bolton that we used to travel up to Ringbolt Island in 1971. They are equipped with one or two large outboard engines or an inboard jet engine, necessary in the powerful river

currents where they are used by Gitxsan to travel to fishing sites and work nets for fish harvesting. Where the Babine River joins the Skeena, Brian and the others spent some time looking at the flats, checking to see if this would be a good place for beach seining in the next fishing season. Then they headed up the Babine toward Gisaga`as. The river was still fairly high and fast, and after they got up past the island, they pulled into the back eddy on the north side of the river and beached the boat. They were right beside the petroglyph rock. Brian can't remember who first saw something that didn't look natural, perhaps the curve of one of the circles, through a hole in the moss.

He remembers:

Someone said, "Hey! Come and look at this!"

The moss was thick, really deep.

We started cleaning it off. You could roll it back,
just like a carpet.

At first there was just one. Then we kept taking off the moss, and
then there were more, all over the rock.

Brian warns me that others will say that they actually knew about the petroglyph all along, or that they were the ones who found it. He's pretty insistent, "That's bull. We were the ones who found it. If they knew about it, why didn't they say something about it before?" (Muldon 2001). This reminds me of a discussion I had with Dave a few weeks previously, when he said almost the same words about their discovery of the petroglyphs at Kitselas (Walker 2001).

Brian and I move on to talking about the petroglyph, the different figures, and their possible meanings. Brian describes "bird figures, like maybe an owl. Up on the top, above the face. Yeah, we didn't see them at first either." These are images I'm not even aware of!

I ask Brian for his interpretation of the other images, especially the geometric figure in the center, the design of interconnected lines and circles that looks to me like some kind of map. He interprets it as the diagram of a complex of weir and fish traps built across the river right at this site, utilizing the island as a stabilizer for the log framework. This complex would enable night fishing with torches, spearing or dip-netting, or the use of smaller basket-type fish traps. Brian talks about fishing just upriver from this location, and how it is not a good dipping site. "The fish just spook," he says. A fence across the river would "slow them down. Or it might even bring them into something like a pen or a trap where you could dip them out. Maybe that's what these circles are, and these dots are all the fish inside. And these rows of dots up here are all the fish just piling up against the fish fence. It's pretty interesting" (Muldon 2001). I make a sketch of Brian's idea and ask his permission to write about our discussion. Brian also wants to know more about settlement at this place. He tells me that there are cache pits on both sides of the river, but to be careful about going in the bush, because of the grizzlies. I promise to deliver copies of the Wilson Duff notes I've been looking at. We say goodbye.

This is just the beginning.

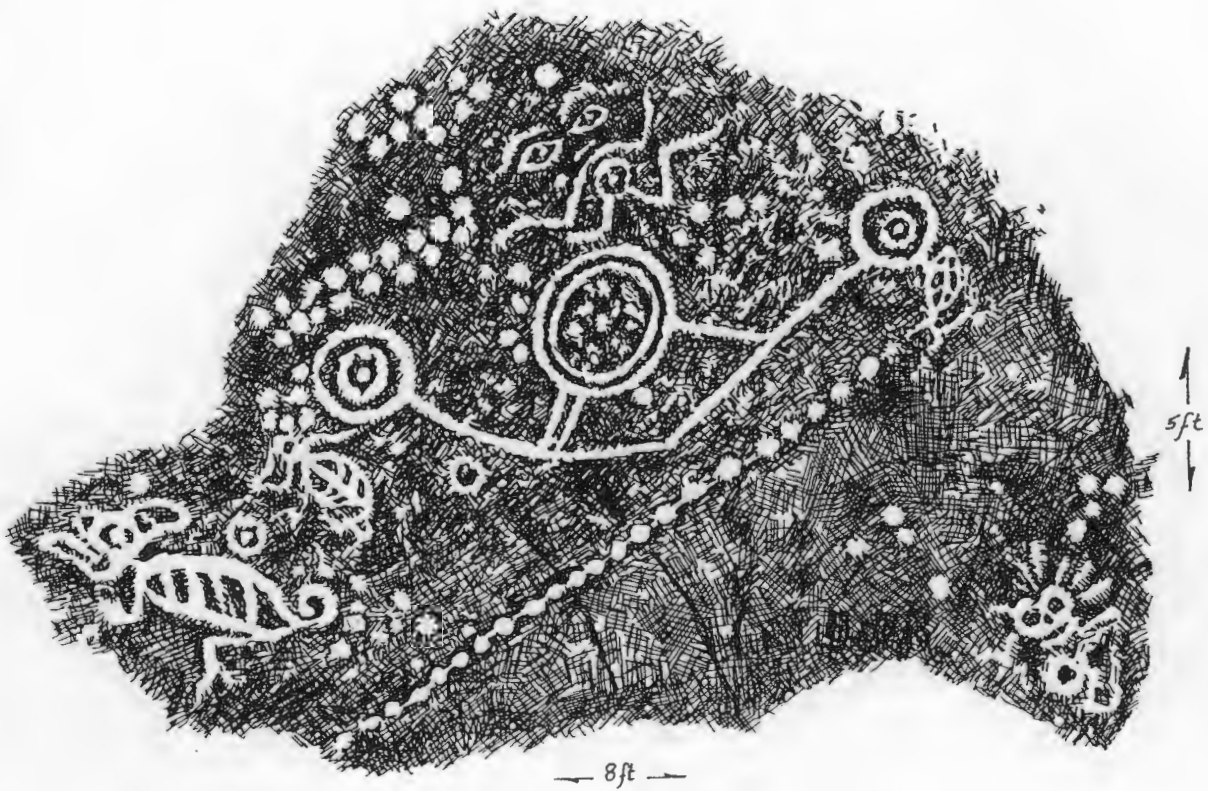


Fig. 3 My sketch of the petroglyph at Anlagasimdeex based on our rubbing.



Fig. 4 Making a rubbing of the petroglyph (van Heek 2001).



Fig. 5 Joanne and I work on a smaller rubbing of the "wolf" (van Heek 2001).



Fig. 6 A good picture of the petroglyph (van Heek 2001).



Fig. 7 A close-up of the main geometric figure, the "fish traps" (van Heek 2001).

“A Journey Through Time: The Petroglyph”

By fall of 2002 my research on Anlagasimdeex is progressing. I decide that I will make this study the focus of my project for a Master of Arts degree in First Nations Studies, the course I am taking with the University of Northern British Columbia. I ask Sadie Harris, hereditary chief xGwoimtxw of Anlagasimdeex, to act as my one of my faculty advisors, as I know that her support and contributions to the project will be valuable. She consents, the appropriate forms are signed, and we discuss the protocols of my research, visiting the petroglyph site, making rubbings, and being at the village site. I obtain Harris' approval to continue with my research, and she encourages me to pursue the possibilities of taking my class of B.C. First Nations Studies 12 students on a field trip to Anlagasimdeex, now that the Babine River bridge has reopened, after repairs during 2001 (Harris 2002).

It never seems to stop raining, and the days are slipping by. Then Brigitta flashes past me one day and drops a paper in my lap: “Aboriginal Multimedia Presentation Challenge,” sponsored by the First Nations Schools Association. It's a contest, with prizes to be awarded for the best use of some form of media to “expand awareness of an aspect of aboriginal culture” (Ramsay 2003, C7). I discuss this with my students in “FNS 12,” and there is general agreement that this could be interesting, even fun. Over the next few days we pick groups and work on ideas, ranging from “Hazelton in the Old Days” to “The History of Bingo.” Some groups are ambitiously planning videos and power-point presentations; others are more comfortable with posters or written projects. We agree that the decision to actually submit entries to the contest will rest with each group after their projects are completed, and we set our deadlines.

I know that Jaye Turley, grandson of Eli McLean of Gisaga`as, is interested in Gisaga`as, has spent time there camping, and has actually made a raft trip down the river to the petroglyph. I bring the rubbing made in 2001 into class one day so we can look at it, and Aaron Good suggests that a video about the petroglyph might be a neat thing to do. We begin to brainstorm ideas, work out the logistics, and Aaron begins to write a script. Ruth Namox decides to join the group. I scurry around to borrow a video camera from the French Immersion Department, and discuss the idea with Brigitta. I ask her, and she agrees, to take the group in to the petroglyph site one day while school is in session. As Work Experience Coordinator at Hazelton Secondary School, Brigitta does not teach classes and can be away from the school without the additional expense of a substitute teacher, unlike me. Also, her job normally consists of time out of the school, arranging work experience for students at different job sites in the community, and driving students to and from the more remote locations. The trip to Anlagasimdeex is not too much of a variation on this pattern, and we have no problem getting it approved by the principal. Plus, Brigitta has the Pathfinder! We talk it up and make some tentative plans for the trip. Then everything gets bumped ahead by the weather, which suddenly changes to snow and the beginning of winter. I spend the weekend getting the camera and film ready and phoning the group to let them know what's happening. On Monday morning, they're all ready, dressed for the weather, and enthusiastic about the trip with Brigitta. Aaron has recruited his cousin, Brent Good, so the group now consists of four. They load up with equipment, some snacks, and a few extra clothes, and have some last minute discussion about the script. Then they're off.

Everyone is a little worn out when they reappear five hours later. Brigitta says it went well, nobody got lost or fell in the river, and she describes some of the different events

of the day. She is impressed that everyone seemed to know what he or she was doing, that they didn't waste time, and that they shared out the filming and the acting. Aaron is quite pleased to report that they shot about an hour of video, but didn't exactly "stick to the script." Ruth tells me she just about froze up there, but it was fun. Brent and Jaye agree, and by now, it's time to get on the buses and head home.

In the next two weeks, Aaron spends time after school and during class, hunched over the school's antiquated video editing machine, constructing a fifteen minute video. This is not an easy task, but he becomes good at it, cutting nanoseconds on scenes and splicing shots into a story sequence. Ruth and Jaye act as critics and fans, watching the process on the monitor, as each scene comes together. The video tells their story of hiking into the site, making a rubbing of the petroglyph, exploring the surrounding area and looking at the cache pits, and then hiking out again. The rubbing scene is a "fake," using the rubbing made in 2001, as we knew it would be too cold and time consuming to even attempt to make another, but it's seamlessly inserted into the storyline and ends up looking believable. Brent drops in periodically, although he's not a member of our FNS 12 class, and offers his opinions about what's shaping up. Aaron comes up with the title, "A Journey Through Time: The Petroglyph," and the group agrees it's good. Titles are filmed and added, as well as a sequence shot at the school. Jaye and Ruth darken the wax designs on the original rubbing so that they show up better in the closing scene, where the group stands in front of the school signpost and unfurls the petroglyph rubbing. When I ask if they want to submit it to the contest, the decision is a unanimous "Yes!" While I finish up with the last of the projects being completed by the rest of the groups, Aaron, Jaye and Ruth construct another video from the bits on the cutting room floor. "Bloopers" is also quite a hit, and copies of

both videos are made for everyone in the group.

We submit our entries and wait patiently for the results. Months pass. The semester is long over, and the students have successfully passed their class in First Nations Studies, so I no longer see them on a regular basis. But every now and then one of them asks me if I've heard anything. Summer arrives, and just before the end of the school year I get a phone call from Jennifer White of the First Nations Schools Association. She tells me that "Journey" is one of four finalists they have chosen to win a prize of a thousand dollars. This money is for the school, to purchase media equipment, and will be spent on a digital video camera, so Brigitta and I persuade the principal to pick up the tab, and take the group out for lunch to celebrate their accomplishment. As well, they receive recognition at a school assembly, and the local paper includes their photo and story in the next issue. I phone Sadie Harris to let her know that the video is a winner, which makes her happy, and to obtain the approval necessary for the Schools Association to use "Journey" video clips on their website, including some that show the petroglyph.

The media competition is an unplanned component in my project on Anlagasimdeex, but it turns out well. Aaron, Brent, Jaye, and Ruth enjoy the process as well as the boost in esteem from their triumph. For Jaye, because of his ancestral connection to Gisaga`as, this experience may be more profound. Aaron decides to think about a career in media, and elects this as a possible training program while serving in the Canadian Armed Forces. I had certain expectations about how things would unfold, and for most of the groups working on their Media Challenge projects, these are greatly exceeded, and I am happy with the outcomes.



Fig. 8 Brent Good, Ruth Namox, Jaye Turley, and Aaron Good at the petroglyph. (van Heek 2002)



HEATHER RAMSAY/INTERIOR NEWS

FROM STONE TO SHEET: Hazelton Secondary students stand behind the wax rubbing of the petroglyph they made as part of their prize-winning video. From left: Jaye Turley, teacher Erica Ball, Aaron Good, Brigitta van Heek and Ruth Namox. Team member Brent Good was away on the day of the photo.

Fig. 9 Newspaper photo of the prize winners. (Ramsay 2003)

La'oooy – The Ancient Time

I find only one reference to the petroglyph at Anlagasimdeex in the ethnographic, historical, and archaeological literature that I research. There is no record of its identification in the archaeological site reports filed with the Archaeology Department of the provincial government in Victoria, B.C. (Whitbread 2001). This is not surprising when we consider how recently Brian, George, and Rudy made their discovery. The decision to register the petroglyph as a Heritage Site with the provincial government rests with Gitxsan House authorities, and there are arguments to be made on both sides of the issue. As a registered archaeological site, the location of the petroglyph would enter the public domain of knowledge and therefore become accessible to any person with the interest to make inquiry, or, possibly, to make mischief. As an identified site it would, however, be somewhat protected by laws designed to preserve it, and to prevent misuse or misappropriation of cultural property. The decision to register this site is worth consideration, I feel, but I understand why Gitxsan people may view this as an unnecessary piece of government authority within Gitxsan territory.

There are a number of references to an historic Gitxsan settlement downriver from Gisaga`as in the ethnographic, historic, and archaeological literature. The first to catch my eye while I research the ethnographic literature is “Legasmde`ek (‘fish trap’), a depopulated village site downriver from Gisgagas” from information given the editors, Anderson and Halpin, in 1997 by Olive Mulwain, Gertrude Watson, and Joan Ryan (Beynon 2000, 224). The descriptive, “fish trap,” immediately catches my attention. Was the use of traps at this place or, a weir/trap complex such as Brian hypothesized, so significant that it is still used to characterize this settlement, or this location on the Babine River? In “The Tsimshian Crest

System,” Halpin states, “About 1880 another small tribe, the Anlag.asemdE’x joined the Kiskag.a.’s” (1973, 17). Halpin (1973, 321-326) also lists three clans and four or five Houses at Anlagasimdeex, based on her research of Wilson Duff’s notes on the Barbeau/Beynon fieldnotes.

Wilson Duff’s notes on the Barbeau/Beynon fieldnotes contain a number of references to Anlagasimdeex. In the summer of 1920, Marius Barbeau travelled to Gisaga`as from Hazelton and camped for one night at Anlagasimdeex, which he locates “2 ½ mi. From Gisg.agas.” (Duff n.d.Gitksan, 13). He also notes, “A village on left side 2 ½ miles below Gisg.ag.as. 40 years ago they moved to Kiskagas. Always a small village”(Duff n.d.Anlag as mdex 21a, 1). Barbeau travelled with three guides and informants: John Brown, Gwiiyeehl, Giskaast, of Kispiox (Sterritt et al. 1998, 101); Paul Dzius [Tsiiwus] “of the Lax kibu phratry - Wolf of Kiskagas.” (Barbeau n.d. Gitkcan of the Upper Skeena–Specimens, 1); and Simon Morrison, Waiget, Giskaast of Gisaga`as (Sterritt 2004). Barbeau recorded information on five huwilp (Houses) and three pdeek (clans) at Anlagasimdeex. This information is summarized below, using Barbeau’s spelling.

<u>House/Clan</u>	<u>Origin</u>	<u>Informant</u>
Wiget (Giskaast/ Fireweed)	-“from the Babine Indians very long ago.”	Paul Dzius & [Simon] Morrison
	-“from Gitanga`sx. They do not come from Babine. Tsiyu’s (Paul Dzius) is confused on this. They have big hunting grounds near Qaldo, which proves they are from Gitanga`sx.”	John Brown

Yuamo` .tus/Widemg.e`s (Lax See`l/Frog-Raven)	-“from G`aldo very long ago.”	Paul Dzius
	-“from Gitanga`sx, and stopped for a while at G`aldo before coming to Anlaga semdex. They made themselves relatives recently with family of Solomon Johnson in Kispiox..[Hag.`e]”	John Brown
Xkwo`.yemtu (Lax Gibuu/Wolf)	-“from the Nass, from Gitlag.a`us village.”	Paul Dzius
	-“Nass. Gitxatin.”	John Brown
Tsi`yus (Lax Gibuu/Wolf)	-“same as Xkwo`.yemtu. Nass. Came together.”	Paul Dzius
	-“from Gitanga`sx. They divided (from Xkwo`.yemtu) after they reached Anlaga semdex.”	John Brown
Tsa`bux (Lax Gibuu/Wolf)	-“same. All Laxgibu were the same house when they came from the Nass. Separated into three here.”	Paul Dzius

(Duff n.d. Anlag as mdex 21a, 1-6)

Sadie Harris, current Gitxsan hereditary chief xGwoimtxw [Xkwo`.yemtu], states that Barbeau was incorrect in noting the origin of Wilps xGwoimtxw as “from the Nass.” A quick look at what the informants said, or what Barbeau recorded, indicates that there is disagreement between Paul Dzius and John Brown on the origins of other Houses as well. Harris states, “This [statement about origins] is controversial, because there is nothing in the House history which says we come from the Nass. We were never on the Nass. I do not know this to be. According to our family history, we were in the Gisaga`as/ Anlagasimdeex area for a great number of years” (Harris 2004).

Duff goes on to list 29 personal names associated with Anlagasimdeex. Twenty-six of these names recorded by Barbeau in 1920 are from two Houses only, Wiget, and Yuamo`.tus. While looking at these names, I notice the man's name "Ata`semde`x," from Wilps Wiigyat, and ponder its similarity to the settlement name. A list of crests is also provided by the informants, including one belonging to Xkwo`.yemtu described by Paul Dzius "sudag.a`nu, House on posts (as on coast). He was only one who made such a house here." John Brown refers to this crest as "yak`yag.a wa`lp suspended house" (Duff n.d. Gitksan, 2 (1)). I conclude from what Dzius told Barbeau that, in addition to using this crest, at some time Xkwo`.yemtu built an actual house at Anlagasimdeex which was raised above the ground on posts, a wise decision given the rapidity and extent that the Babine River can rise during peak flooding .

Isaac Tens [Danes], another of Barbeau's informants, connected Wilps Txemsem, of Galdo`o, with Anlagasimdeex. "From `Anlag.asedex, separated from house of Wiget, have same myth" (Duff n.d. Galda 22.3, 3). John Brown connected Wilps Tsiwaa (Wa` a), also of Galdo`o, saying "They have the same mother in common with Yu`amo`.t (of Anlag.asedex)" (Duff n.d. Galda 22.2, 6). Brown also connected Wilps Luus: "An independent house related to Xwo.yemtu (Anlag.asede`x)" (Duff n.d. Galda 22.1, 6). Harris states: "This is not correct. Luus and xGoimtxw are not related, although both are Wolves [Lax Gibuu]. A lot of his [Barbeau's] information was misinterpreted; his translator was not fluent in English" (Harris 2004).

Barbeau elsewhere writes of the appointment of Su`ens "of the Fireweed crest at Anlarasemdaerh, and belonging to the family of Weegyot" as head-chief at Kispiox when a leadership dispute arose (1929, 98). Of this event, Neil J. Sterritt relates: "This is quite

complicated. House of Laan (later became Geel) and House of Suens (which also originated in Anlagasimdeek) were separated at one time. House of Laan became extinct, then later House of Suens split in two and re-established the House of Laan again. It was after this that Suens changed his name to Geel” (Sterritt 2001). In Barbeau’s reference, he locates Anlagasimdeex “on the southern bank of the Skeena about 4 miles below Kisgagas, near the mouth of Babine (or Kisgagas) river” (1929, 98). In discussing the origin of Wiigyat’s House, Barbeau calls it “the Wild-rice Clan of Fireweed,” from Gitanga’sx, an ancient village located north of Gisaga’as, near the headwaters of the Skeena River (Fig. 1). The name of this village derives from the Gitxsan word “gasx,” meaning “unpleasant” or “bitter,” used to name the edible bulb of the chocolate lily (*Fritillaria camchatcensis*). The bulb, which is gathered in late spring, is served boiled or toasted, often with oolichan grease, and resembles a clump of white rice kernels (People of Ksan 1980, 77). Hrkwayemtu (xGwoimtxw) is described by Barbeau as “the second Wild-rice Clan” of Lax Gibuu from Gitanga’sx, so it would seem that by 1929 he had clarified in his mind this question of origin. Barbeau also records the adaawk of a legendary ancestor of Wilps xGwoimtxw, Gwee-Saedzan [Gwits’aagan (Harris 2004)]. Gwee-Saedzan is one of the warriors who accompanied Su wee raus (Suwiiguus) on a raid against the Tsetsaut (1929, 156). Through the name Gwee-Saedzan a relationship to Wilps Wii Gaak is established by Barbeau’s informant Charles Martin, who gave him a brief history of the name: “Once the chief of this house died and two people wanted to replace him. They settled it by giving the chieftainship to one man (Wig.a`.ix) and the name Gwixsedzan to the other (the former chief’s name)” (Duff n.d. Kisga ga as 21.2, 18).

The adaawk of Suwiiguus, a nephew of Gyologyat, was told by Isaac Tens and

translated by William Beynon (Duff n.d. Kuldo Galda 22, 7-10). It is also included in Tsimshian Narratives Vol. 2 in a slightly different version told by Simon Gunanoot to Barbeau in 1923 (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b, 24-26). It appears again in Tribal Boundaries of the Nass Watershed (Sterritt et al. 1998, 36-41). In the Beynon translation, Suwiiguus' brother-in-law, Nurhs, was "another brave man who lived at Anlarasemdaerh." He marries 'An leharh at Gitanga`sx, then returns with her to Anlagasimdeex. Tsetsaut raiders attack Gitanga`sx, killing many and taking captives, including a woman of Suwiiguus' house. One year later she escapes and returns to Gitanga`sx, telling Suwiiguus about the underground houses of the Tsetsaut and the habit of the warriors of sleeping with their feet stretched over a long pole, in the direction of the fire. Suwiiguus prepares to attack the Tsetsaut by calling on the brave man Nurhs, the woman to guide them, and "many people of Qaldo." Sterritt refers to warriors being recruited from Gisaga`as and Kispiox, in all, over 100 warriors. On the trail they encounter a huge naked Human/Monster whom Nurhs is able to subdue; Nurhs gives this Semilaw`i to Suwiiguus as a crest. They find the village of the Tsetsaut, thanks to their guide, and wait until night to attack. Nurhs, Suwiiguus, and another "brave warrior" enter the houses and break the legs of the warriors as they sleep "with their feet on the sleeping boards." Then they kill them and take many captives (Duff n.d. Kuldo Galda 22, 7-10).

Sterritt dates this adaawk to 200 or 300 years ago when the Tsetsaut began hunting groundhogs in Gitanga`sx territory (Sterritt et al.1998, 35). He also refers to the statement of John Brown to Barbeau and Beynon in 1923 that the continual warfare forced the southward movement to Galdo`o and the gradual abandonment of Gitanga`sx. Sterritt states that Gitanga`sx was totally abandoned only in recent times, as the houses of xGwoimtxw of

Anlagasimdeex and Niik`yap of Gisaga`as left about four generations ago, or in the early 1800's (1998, 41). What is revealed in this adaawk is that Anlagasimdeex was coexistent with Gitanga`sx, at least as early as 200 or 300 years ago, and that it existed at the time that people began moving south to Galdo`o from Gitanga`sx.

Another adaawk concerning Anlagasimdeex was told by Jimmy Williams of Kispiox to Barbeau in 1920 (1987b 17-18). In "A Raid by the People of the Nass," a brave warrior, Tsixtsap, from the House of Laan, was killed while on a trip to the Nass. A brother of this man was a brave warrior named Kalan ["Galan" (Harris 2004); "Galli Skalan" (Sterritt 2004)] who was living at Anlagasimdeex. Kalan and a band of warriors retaliate for the killing of his brother at Gitxatin by raiding the village of Sqatiin and killing "all the family." In revenge, the Nisga`a attack Anlagasimdeex, arriving there while it is snowing. They surround one house where all the people were gathered to gamble. "At one place where the doorway was hidden from view, there were two of the Nishga coming up toward the village from below on the river. It gave the local people the impression that these were from Kisgegas." Kalan and two other brave warriors were prepared, as they expected a return of their raid. The Nisga`a were afraid to attack, because of these warriors, and during this pause, the people of Anlagasimdeex "took flight," leaving only the three warriors behind. One warrior, Hislasentu, rushed out and although the Nisga`a shot at him, none of the arrows took effect. So he escaped. "Then Hisnoots did the same thing. He ran among them, but was not wounded. He also made good his escape." Kalan was left to face the attackers alone. He ran among them and they shot him in the arm. Kalan "hid between the boulders in the river above the village. From this spot, he would take the arrows and put the string in his mouth [because of his wounded arm] to shoot arrows over to the Nishga. After a long time,

they attacked him and captured him alive.” They asked him if it was he who killed Sqatiin and he admitted he had done it “in a crazy spirit.” Then the Nisga`a said, “ ‘If you are a brave man, you will laugh, for we are going to cut your head off.’ He did it. He was laughing while they were cutting his head off. The Nass people deemed him to be the bravest of all men, saying that even though the Haida were very brave, when their heads were cut, they always howled. Kalan was laughing at them.”

The adaawk continues, relating that the Nisga`a were unsuccessful in killing any other warrior. “They only got the very old people who had been left behind...They were able to pursue many of the people of Anlaxagemdax into the hills, where they attacked and killed many women and older people.” They prepared to attack the house of Miluulak at Laxwilpcin (18), but instead made peace when they encountered Wii Minoosik and his three brave brothers. The Nisga`a left with “a number of captives of Anlaxagemdax, women and children.” Later, Wii Minoosik and his brothers followed the raiders to try and rescue their captives. They returned to their village when they came upon the camp of the raiders and saw that they had roasted the babies of Anlagasimdeex.

According to Neil J. Sterritt, this adaawk connects Galli Skalan, of Wilps Dawamuukw to a settlement at Anlagasimdeex. When I ask Sterritt about the connection of Dawamuukw, he tells me, “They live in Kispiox now and they’re sort of connected with Geel. What the connection with Geel is, is hard to know, but they originally came from Anlagasimdeex. They go back a long time there” (Sterritt 2004). This adaawk also seems to me to occur at an early date because of the weapons mentioned. There is no mention of guns, unlike adaawk recorded by Barbeau and Beynon describing later events, such as “A Peace Ceremony Between the Nishga and the Kisgegas” (1987b, 164-166). “A Raid by the

People of the Nass" would situate settlement at Anlagasimdeex as contemporary with the summer home of Miluulak at Laxwilpcin, or "summer house." Laxwilpcin, according to elders of Gisaga`as, was the summer location of the village on the heights above the canyon, the place that we think of today as Gisaga`as. In winter, the villagers would withdraw "about a mile"^s into the surrounding forest, where they were protected from the winter winds and had access to ample firewood (Sterritt 2004). Miluulak's first two villages, after migrating from Gitanga`sx, were further down the Babine at Anye`xta`wis [An geeks dawis- "where you sharpen your adze" on a large stone (Sterritt 2004)], not quite a mile below Gisaga`as, and another at the confluence of the Babine and Skeena rivers. Laxwilpcin, or Gisaga`as, is designated as the most modern village of Miluulak (Albright 1987, Fig. 23) and was occupied at least as early as the beginning of the historical period. In another adaawk entitled "Tsetsaut Raid on Meluleq" (Barbeau and Beynon 1987b, 160-163), Miluulak is killed and his niece captured by Tsetsaut and given shelter at a fur trade fort "because they were afraid the Tsetsaut would molest her" (160). This fort is identified by John Brown as Bear Lake [Fort Connelly] (160). When she returns, she tells the people about her "discovery of the White people" and a group from Gisaga`as, lead by Waiget, Niik`yap, and Wii Minoosik, travel "to where the white people live!" John Brown's recounting of this adaawk identifies this fort as Fort St. James (162), established in 1806. When they return from this first encounter with the traders, a feast is given by Waiget at Laxwilpcin/Gisaga`as and the new Miluulak takes the fort palisade, Yas [Ts`im Yes], (represented as small pickets in a fence) as a crest (162). Duff speculates that the fort may have been Fort Macleod, also established in 1806, but it could as well have been another of the palisaded forts established to the east in the early 1800's. Another crest adopted as a result of the same encounter with

the fur traders is Mr. Ross' dog ("the dog of Maselaws, Ansem Midaw" [Ansui` Mis Loos]), taken by Waiget (Duff n.d. Kisga ga as 21.1, 36; Barbeau and Beynon 1987b, 162). Charles Ross, ("Maselaws"), was clerk in 1825 at Fort Kilmaurs on Babine Lake, and then stationed at Fort Connelly on Bear Lake as chief trader in 1827 (Morice 1978, 125-134). Sterritt (2004) confirms the location of this fur fort as Bear Lake, stating that both of the crests derive from this location, circa 1830.

Research of the ethnographic literature reveals that Anlagasimdeex is described as a small village, viable until the 1880's, when, apparently, its people amalgamated with Gisaga`as. The names, crests, and origins of those associated with Anlagasimdeex were known and related to Barbeau and Beynon in the 1920's. A network of relationships with other Gitxsan Houses, the wilnaa`tahl sharing a common heritage from Galdo`o and Gitanga`sx, is apparent, as well as relationships with Houses most closely associated with the villages of Gisaga`as and Kispiox. On one of the many occasions when I talk to my mentor, Delia O'Brien, about Anlagasimdeex, she says something that changes my thinking about the settlement. "Anlagasimdeex was a big place, something like Temlaham. Because it seems like everyone comes from there or is connected. Gyologyat is connected in there; Suwiiguus is Gyologyat, so we're connected there too" (O'Brien 2004). That a settlement at Anlagasimdeex was contemporary with the summer place of Miluulak at Laxwilpcin/Gisaga`as is shown in the adaawk of the Nass raiders, and Laxwilpcin/Gisaga`as is seen to have been occupied at least as early as the beginnings of the fur trade in the northwest, from the adaawk concerning the acquisition of the fort palisade crest. As to the beginning, or duration of a settlement at Anlagasimdeex, that is much harder to determine. The adaawk of Suwiiguus establishes the existence of a settlement called Anlagasimdeex

during the period when people began moving from Gitanga`sx to Galdo`o as a result of pressure from Tsetsaut incursions, 200 or 300 years ago. Whether this Anlagasimdeex was located at the same site as the petroglyph is not known. How long a settlement existed at the same location as the petroglyph is very hard to determine without archaeological evidence, or more specific references in the adaawk and early historic literature.

Researching the historical record for mention of Anlagasimdeex proves to be both frustrating and rewarding. There is almost a total absence of references to this settlement, which may be due to the fact that there are few historical documents contemporary with its existence, or that their focii tend to be the "Skeena Forks," the convergence of the Skeena and Bulkley rivers, where the colonial settlement of Hazelton was established in the 1870's. Reading through Hudson's Bay Company fur trade journals, accounts of early exploration in the area, and the diaries of Arthur Wellington Clah is a fascinating exercise in its own right, but not too rewarding in terms of my specific interest in Anlagasimdeex. However, these records do illuminate some of the factors associated with the early fur trade which may have lead to realignments or relocation of Gitxsan settlements, what Marsden and Galois (1995) have referred to as the geopolitics of the region.

In 1822, William Brown lead a small group of Hudson's Bay Company employees west from Fort Fraser to establish Fort Kilmaurs, a trading post on Babine Lake, at the location now known as Old Fort. He was chief trader at Kilmaurs, with the responsibility to secure and enhance the trade in furs with the neighbouring First Nations. In 1825 he recorded a trip he made down the Babine River to visit the "Atnahs," the "Indians of Simpson's River," or, the Gitxsan. He was the first European to travel into this country, to the best of our knowledge.

He noted “two principal villages of the Atnahs who inhabit the Upper parts of the Babine River...Weep sim [Laxwilpcin?] and Chil do call [Galdo`o?]. They are five miles asunder and lie one hundred and fifteen miles to the West, or perhaps rather to the Northwest of this Establishment...[Ft. Kilmaurs]. There are a number of other villages within a short distance of them, where the different bands reside particularly during the salmon season...last spring I saw at the village of Weep sim about three hundred men, none of whom where (sic) past their prime....There are three Chiefs Need Chip [Niik`yap] – Sojick [Tsabux?] – and Quo`em” [xGwoimtxw]. Brown’s description of five other Atnah villages is quite accurate, but does not record his own observations, as he makes no claim to have travelled any further to the west. Rather, he records what is told to him: “The first [Kispiox?] is two days march below Chil do call – and the second [Gitanmaax?] is at the Forks which is two days march further. The other three are below the Forks, and are each two days journey asunder [Gitsegukla, Gitwangak, Gitanyow?]. From the upper of which [Gitanyow?] there is a track overland to another large river, where the Nation called the Ute sin nal [Nisga`a?] reside” (Brown 1826, 8-9).

Brown writes at length about the trade between the Atnahs and “traders from the seacoast” who journey upriver to the Forks [Gitanmaax], and he writes in 1825, “last fall they came as far up as the Upper Atnah Village, and traded the whole of the Furs and Siffleux [marmot] Robes the Natives had to dispose of” (Brown 1826, 13). Brown’s concern was the manner in which furs were systematically being traded out of the Ft. Kilmaur’s “catchment area” along traditional trading trails and canoe routes linking Wet`suwet`en, Gitxsan, Nisga`a, and Coast Tsimshian peoples with ship-based traders at the coast, representing a number of competing companies from Great Britain, Russia, and the United

States of America. The developing trade network was one in which First Nations traders benefited from their control, to the detriment of the commercial monopoly desired by the Hudson's Bay Company, and to the dismay of Brown. His recommendation was the establishment of a trading post at the Forks to intercept the movement of furs from the interior to the coast (Brown 1826, 13). The immediate consequence of his report was the establishment of Fort Nass/Simpson in 1831 to interrupt the ship-based trade at the coast and ensure that this HBC post was the destination of furs from the interior. His recommendation to establish a trading post at the Forks was not acted upon until 1866, and this small concern, established by Thomas Hankin on the south bank of the Bulkley River at Mission Flats, was not a financial success, closing in 1868.

What is of interest to me in Brown's record is the mention of the two villages, "Weep Sim" and "Chil do call," located on the Babine River within five miles of each other, and his encounter with three principal chiefs at this place. "Weep Sim" may be referring to Miluulak's summer home, Laxwilpcin, located near Gisaga`as, which is the area Brown tells us he journeyed to, descending the Babine River from its outlet from Babine Lake near Ft. Kilmaurs. The name of the village a scant five miles distant is given as "Chil do call," which is baffling, as this name most closely resembles the pronunciation of the name Galdo`o (Gull-doa-ah). Yet Galdo`o is located on the Skeena River, not the Babine, and some forty kilometres to the north, definitely not in the immediate Gisaga`as area. I wonder what was lost in translation; were Gitxsan informing Brown about another large village which he mistook as the name of the village only five miles downriver from "Weep Sim"? If so, could this second village actually have been Anlagasimdeex? Perhaps they were referring to their winter village, Galdo`o, from which they had travelled south to harvest

salmon during the summer. Neil Sterritt (2004) tells me, “I think Brown got confused. I’m sure Anlagasimdeex was the lower of the two villages mentioned but not recorded, or one of the above [Weep Sim or Chil do call] was mistakenly recorded instead of Anlagasimdeex.” The reference to “a number of other villages within a short distance” concurs with the picture painted for me by Don Ryan, of a scene of intense salmon harvesting within the Babine corridor over a long time frame (Ryan 2001). It also confirms the archaeological evidence in this area indicating intense and continuous occupation for millennia.

Brown records the names of three chiefs at “Weep Sim”: “Need Chip,” “Sojick,” and “Quo’em.” The most recognizable of these is “Quo’em” or xGwoimtxw, the Lax Gibuu House and chief associated with Anlagasimdeex by Barbeau’s informants in the 1920’s. “Need Chip” may be understood to refer to Niik’yap, the Lax Gibuu House and chief associated with Gisaga’as and Bear Lake, and “Sojick” may be interpreted as Tsabux, another Lax Gibuu House and chief associated with Anlagasimdeex. What emerges from Brown’s journal is an historical record of a number of villages on the Babine River, two of which were within five miles of each other, and one of which may possibly have been Anlagasimdeex. This speculation is given more credence when we consider the names of the two chiefs associated with Anlagasimdeex which Brown also recorded.

Hunting for Gold is the title of the book published by Major William Downie in 1891, one chapter of which describes his ascent of the Skeena River in 1859. The first European to make this journey from west to east, Downie’s record of his journey from Fort Simpson through to Fort Kilmaurs does not contain any reference to Anlagasimdeex. He left the Skeena River at Gitanmaax (“Kittamaks”) and travelled overland with two other Europeans and two Indian guides until he rejoined the Skeena (sic) at a village he calls Naas

Glee. From Naas Glee he then canoed upriver “about ten miles” to the village of “Whatatt,” and shortly after, came to Babine Lake. From this description it’s possible to locate Downie at the village of Wud’at, “also known as Tsa Tesli (where the river begins), ...the principal salmon season village on Babine and Nilkitkwa Lakes...located primarily on the Babine River right bank...currently partly overlaid by DFO’s counting weir camp” (Rabnett 2002, 3). Within one day, he was able to canoe and sail south to old Ft. Kilmaurs, located approximately 25 kilometers south of Wud’at. Downie refers to Naas Glee as “a center where all the upcountry Indians meet at certain seasons” and to which the head factor at Ft. St. James “sends a boat... at certain times, and a large trade in dried fish and other articles is carried on” (1893, 222-228). It is possible that Downie may have been guided overland from Gitanmaax to Gisaga`as [Naas Glee?], where he began to follow the Babine upriver to its source in Babine Lake. If this is so, he was certainly in the area of Anlagasimdeex, although he makes no mention of it. However, judging by its proximity to the village of Wu`tat, “Naas Glee” is too far upriver to be Gisaga`as, and therefore Downie was nowhere near Anlagasimdeex. It seems more probable that Naas Glee is Downie’s corruption of the name Tsa Tesli and that his overland journey did not connect with the Babine River until they were many kilometres above Gisaga`as and Anlagasimdeex.

The daily journals of Arthur Wellington Clah, a Coast Tsimshian trader and sometime employee of the Hudson’s Bay Company at Fort Simpson, contain his records of occurrences while engaged on numerous trips by canoe and foot up the Nass and Skeena Rivers to trade with the Gitx̄san and Wet’suwet`en, usually terminating at Gitanmaax or Hagwilget. In 1868, seeking to improve his fur trading ventures, he decided to travel further upriver to Gisaga`as. He travelled on foot from “Lagh-tamax” on the Nass River with a

company of six “my employmen. At paid 50c a day” to trade “above Skeenah River to Skakash” [Gisaga`as]. This was the first and only time that Clah ventured this far upriver, travelling overland from the Nass River to the Skeena which they crossed and followed upstream to “15 miles below Skackash place,” where they camped for the night. On Friday, May 15, 1868, Clah records, “The shower. Wind. Southeast. We passed Anleg.kasham⁸thex this afternoon. We stay at one hour in this place. But again go up to one place we got Skackash at 4 oclock this evening” (Clah Diaries, May 6-23, 1868). Clah does not record stopping at Anlagasimdeex on his way home after trading for two days at Gisaga`as. Nor is it entirely certain from what he has written that Anlagasimdeex was, in fact, inhabited at this time, although I wonder why else he would choose to stop here when he was so close to Gisaga`as. I would like to speculate that Anlagasimdeex was inhabited at this time, and that Clah stopped here to trade and visit. This he concluded quickly, and continued upriver to his main enterprise at the larger village. However, it may be that this was merely a convenient place in which to have a brief rest and a general “sprucing up” before entering Gisaga`as (Anderson 2004).

Researching the archaeological record of the Babine corridor, from the mouth of the Babine River to the Atna Pass in the east, reveals that there have been many occupation sites based on intensive salmon harvesting, and that these indicate long term use of this area, possibly dating to the deglaciation period of 10,000-8,000 BP. It also reveals that there have been many archaeological surveys and “impact assessments” in the corridor, but very little intensive archaeological activity. The closest “in-depth” research in any proximity to this area has been at Hagwilget Canyon, a narrow gorge located five kilometers above the convergence of the Bulkley River with the Skeena, some sixty kilometers southwest and

downriver from the convergence of the Babine River with the Skeena. At Hagwilget, sequences dating to 4500 BP, corresponding to the Zone 6 sequences at Gitaus in Kitselas Canyon have been identified (Ames 1979, 208-210). In 1966, George MacDonald conducted a survey in the Babine corridor for the National Museum (Whitbread 2001). In 1985, Sylvia Albright (1987) excavated a site east of Gisaga`as consisting of over 200 cache pits, and synthesized the ethnoarchaeological evidence of historic village sites for the Gitksan Wet`suwet`en Tribal Council in preparation for their land rights case. Lindberg and Moyer (1998), Anfossi, Hewer and Nicholls (1999), and Ian Wilson Consultants (1994-2000), and Mathews and Wilson (2001) have conducted a number of impact assessments, working for the Kispiox Forest District or local forestry companies. This work is concerned with identifying and registering Heritage Sites threatened by timber harvesting and forestry access roads. A summary of the archaeological site records is given below, as well as maps showing their locations (Figs. 10 and 11).

Moving from GkSw grids in the west to GkSv grids in the east, the records are as follows:

- GkSw 1 G.F. MacDonald (Nat.Museum) 1966
 -Informant identified this as the first village on the Babine occupied by Gisaga`as people.
 -100+ cache pits (Wilson 1994:9)
- GkSw 2 Wilson and Coates (Repap) 1995
 -this site subsumed with GkSw 1 as it appears they are basically the same site
 -increased estimation of cache pits to 200 to 300
- GkSw 3-7 Wilson and Coates (Repap) 1995
 -a total of 61 cache pits, 50 located at GkSw 4
- (*GkSw 6, not shown on Fig. 8, is located some distance north of the Babine corridor)

- GkSv 1 G.F. MacDonald (Nat. Museum) 1966
 -"5.4" miles from the confluence of Babine and Skeena Rivers
 -Informant identified this as the second village of Gisaga`as people, abandoned about 1900; stated three poles still standing at this time; artifacts found by road crews in 1954.
 -cache pits
 -"1 km" east of the mouth of Sam Green Creek (Wilson 1994:10)
 -village site Panlegesm (Albright 1987:27)
- GkSv 2 G.F. MacDonald (Nat. Museum) 1966
 -Informant described this as the third location of the Gisaga`as band.
 -cache pits
 -500 m. east of Shedin Creek (Wilson 1994:11)
 -village site (Albright 1987:27)
- GkSv 5 Wilson (Repap) 1994
 -north side of Babine River, west side of Sam Green Creek
 -39+ cache pits
- GkSv 6 Wilson (Repap) 1994
 -north side of Babine River, 150 m. east of Sam Green Creek
 -52 cache pits
 -terrace high above the river

(*GkSv3 refers to the site of Gisaga`as village, recorded by G.F. MacDonald; GkSv4 refers to a recent Gitxsan fishing camp opposite the mouth of Sam Green Creek. Ian Wilson registered it as a Heritage Site because of seven cache pits located at the western edge.)

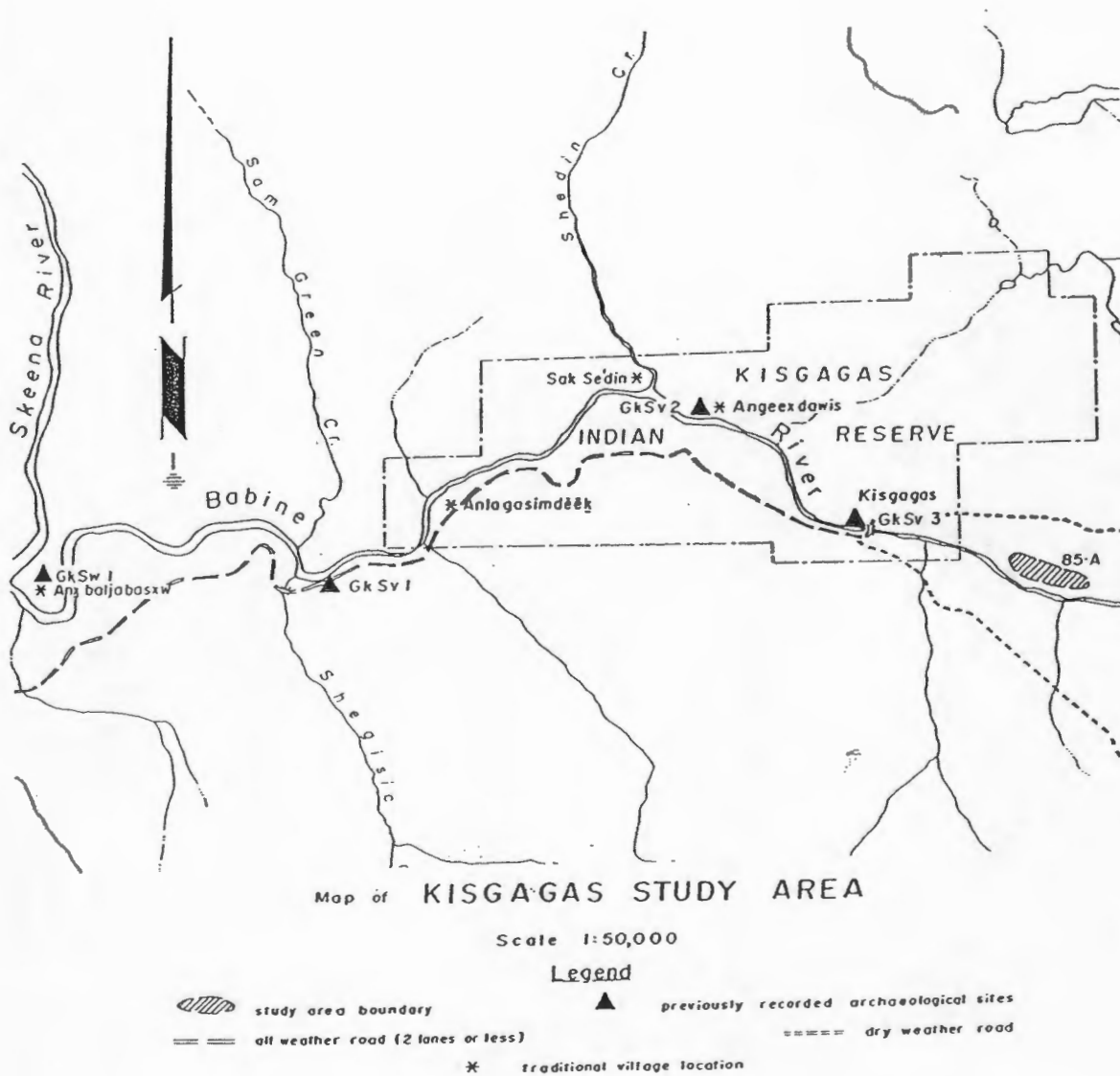


Fig. 10 Albright's map of Gitxsan traditional villages (Albright 1987, Fig. 23).

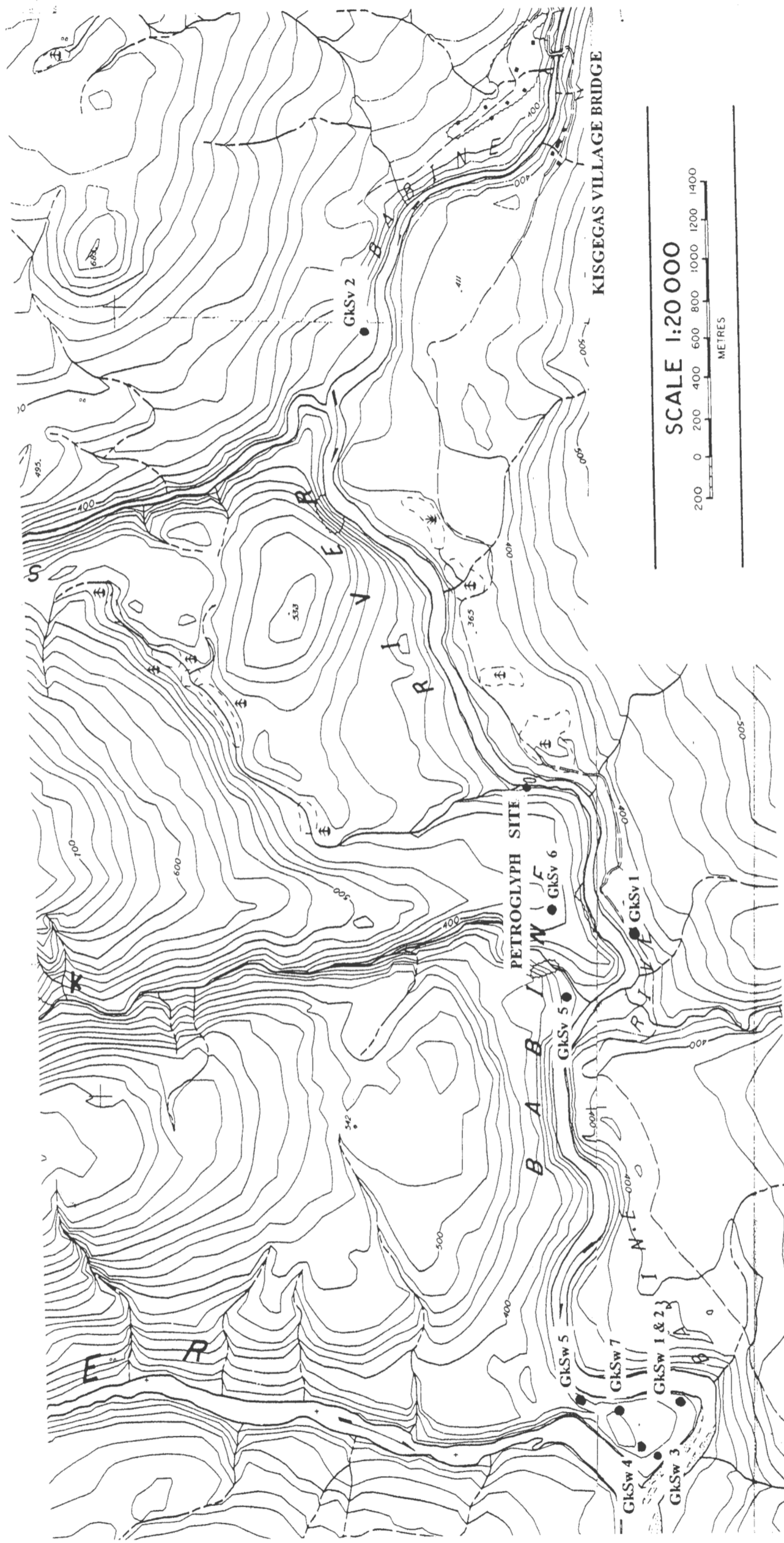


Fig. 11 A map of the petroglyph site showing the island, recorded archaeological sites, and the bridge and buildings at Gisaga's. This information is overlaid on a 1:20 000 scale map provided to me by B.C. Ministry of Forests, Hazelton, B.C.

As can be seen by studying these site records, fairly superficial surveying includes a large number of possible village sites, as indicated by the presence of cache pits, and the information given by the informant(s). Expanding the study beyond the immediate Babine River area reveals a similar picture of intense resource use. GkSv 7-10, immediately north of Gisaga`as village, is a 1700 hectare area containing an estimated 16,000 culturally modified trees, mainly bark stripped hemlock and pine, for the collection of cambium ("noodles") for food. There are some cedars showing evidence of bark stripping and plank removal, as well as several arborgraphs (Mathews and Wilson 2001, 127). Toward Galdo`o in the north, obsidian flakes and a microblade core were turned up in shovel tests on the east bank of the Skeena River (Mathews and Wilson 2001, 80 and 150). One of the recommendations of the impact study done in 1999 in the area reads, "Due to the very high site return in the Shedin area, it is felt that additional intensive survey is warranted" (Anfossi, Hower and Nicholls 1999, 87). The Shedin area, in "forestry parlance," is the area serviced by the Shedin Mainline access road, which begins north of the bridge crossing the mouth of the Babine River and proceeds eastwards beyond Gisaga`as village, crossing the Atna Pass Trail. In other words, it includes the whole area immediately north of the Babine River.

A very comprehensive report and location map detailing the cultural heritage features identified in the Babine watershed has been compiled by the Gitksan Watershed Authorities (2004). This resource identifies geographic features, trails, camps, village and fishing sites, two petroglyphs, and tree food, berry harvesting, and hunting areas within the watershed. In addition to the information obtained from archaeological sites registered by the Heritage Branch of the provincial government by MacDonald, Albright, and the various impact

studies conducted in the watershed to facilitate timber harvesting, the report is based on research and testimony for the Delgamuukw land rights case, and the prior and continuing research being conducted by the Gitksan Watershed Authorities. Of particular interest to me are features 50020, the petroglyph at Anlagasimdeex; 50021, “village site thought to be a portion of Anlagasimde’ek”; and 50023, “D. Green: Island in river. Fishing weir was placed across both channels of river at upstream end of island” (Gitksan Watershed Authorities 2004, 7).

Albright’s map (Fig. 10) and the GWA cultural heritage map (not shown) allow one to locate the Babine River villages referred to in the adaawk: Anye’xta’wis/Angeexdawis, Sax ksetin/Sak Se’din above Shedon Creek, and Gisaga’as/Kisgagas, the villages of Miluulak; and Anlagasimdeex/Anlagasimdeek. The location they give for Anlagasimdeex is consistent with the distance of “2 ½ miles below Kisgagas,” Barbeau’s situation of the place in his 1920’s research. As the basis for this location of Anlagasimdeex by Albright, on the south or left bank of the river, she cites the ethnographic literature of Barbeau and Beynon, and Wilson Duff (1987, 13-14 Appendix B-4), as well as her informant of 1985, Neil Sterritt (1987, 18 Section 3); this is Neil J. Sterritt Jr., joint-author of Tribal Boundaries of the Nass Watershed. How long the settlement existed in this location, and whether it ever extended to the north or right side of the Babine River, where the petroglyph and numerous cache pits are located, is not certain. Feature 50021 on the GWA map identifies, from anecdotal information and field observation, a “village site thought to be a part of Anlagasimde’ek” on the north side of the river, slightly east of the petroglyph. What is certain, from Albright’s work and the evidence compiled by Gitksan Watershed Authorities, is the positioning of a settlement on the opposite or left side of the river from the petroglyph site, at the only place

on the lower Babine River where a mid-stream island exists, as can be seen in the 1:20,000 scale map of the river (Fig. 11).

I talk with Don Ryan, the son of Olive Mulwain and brother of Joan Ryan, about the location of Anlagasimdeex. Don's knowledge of la'oooy and the traditional territories of the Gitxsan people is extensive, because of his involvement with the research and proceedings of the Delgamuukw land rights case. He confirms the picture that emerges from the ethnographic and archaeological evidence: that there were small villages all along the Babine River, that they moved around rather than remaining in static locations for millenia, and that it was quite possible that Anlagasimdeex had extended across the river or been located on the north side at one time. He also stresses the importance of the Babine area and the territories north as a "transitional zone" between peoples. The Babine and Bear Lake peoples east of the Atna Pass, the Tahltan and Tsetsaut in the north, and the Nisga'a from the west, as well as Gitxsan people, used traditional trails and river routes in this area to move back and forth across Gitxsan territories, from the interior to the coast and from north to south, for trade, travel, and warfare. Neil Sterritt (2004) relates that the Bear Lake people included Gitxsan, many of whom intermarried with the Sekanni, and that Niik'yap's territory is right at Bear Lake. Don Ryan has interesting insights on the spiritual significance of this area, specifically the mountain behind Gisaga'as, as a location of shamanic and vision quest activities, and for the predicting of such events as oolichan runs [Nass River] and the success of caribou and mountain goat hunts.

Don also talks about the importance of this area as "a big producer for the fish weirs," especially the Sam Green and Shedin Creek areas, immediately west and east of Anlagasimdeex (Ryan 2001). The Babine River is such an extremely productive salmon

river because it drains Babine Lake, the longest, largest natural lake in B.C.; the river is a “fish funnel” leading to a huge spawning ground. Writing in 1905, R.E. Loring, who was appointed Indian Agent for the Babine Agency in 1889, gives us this description of the volume of salmon available for harvesting.

That there are plenty of salmon in the lake [Babine], I found while camping along its tributaries during the spawning. One could not see the water for salmon in transit and when wanting, my man merely had to stoop over the bank and place his finger into the gills of one. In the canyon on the Babine river at Kisgegas, I saw the salmon, in transit to its source (the lake), so thick that they seemed to actually have displaced the water of that big river....

(N.A.C. RG 10, Series A, vol. 1584, file 121, April 1, 1905)

In his study of settlement patterns along river systems, Ames notes “...the river provided optimal conditions for taking salmon. Narrow gorges including Kitselas canyon (occupied by Coast Tsimshian), Hagwilget canyon, and the Bulkley canyon at Moricetown, and several rocky narrows above Hazelton, provided excellent places for using traps, nets, and gaffs” (1976, 226-227). Both Gitx̱san and their Dakelh neighbours to the east traditionally used weirs and traps to harvest salmon. The importance and extent of these “barricades” is seen in the fact that they were outlawed in the 1906 Barricades Agreement, when commercial salmon canners on the lower Skeena blamed them for declining salmon runs (Encyclopedia of British Columbia 2000, 41). A description of such a “barricade” can be found in “The Raven Crest from Temlaxam” as told to Barbeau by [Simon?] Morrison of Kispiox in 1920.

The people were all living in Temlaxam, in the month of leaves, May. They all helped in making a fish fence. They dammed the Skeena River right across with the fence. Each man had a small section of his own to build up. Everybody brought roots and slats and reeds to make the fence with. After this was ready, they began to

make the fish basket; each man furnishing thin poles, and the women were sent to pull up roots for tying. Other women made the roots pliable by running smooth stones on them, so that they would be easily tied. The work was all divided up between them. The heads of the Houses were given a portion of the fence. All those that belonged to the Raven crest took care of one fish basket. Every family had its own part. After it was built, it was divided between the different crests. And, once finished, everybody waited for the arrival of the salmon. This took place in the month of leaves.

(Barbeau and Beynon 1987a, 255)

Such a weir was still being used on the Kitwancool River in 1918 (Fig. 14). That it would be possible to build a weir across the Babine River at Anlagasimdeex is a matter for conjecture. To find out if such a weir had ever existed would require some very serious archaeology. Don Ryan suggests that I “get some scuba gear and go look” (Ryan 2001); I’m holding off on that suggestion. But the presence of the rocky island at this spot, splitting the river into two smaller channels, does make it seem feasible. And then there is that original reference, to “Legasmde’ex (‘fish trap’)” in Potlatch at Gitsegukla. The most significant piece of evidence is that recorded in GWA’s cultural heritage report, identified as site 50023. In an interview conducted September 4, 1979, on file at the GWA office in Hazelton, B.C., David Green gave the following information:

An laga sim daik or an lag`i simdeek

Loc: approx. 2 road mi. downstream from J. Morrison cabin

Do`otsup: island in river. Fishing weir was placed across both channels of river at upstream end of island

Simoget: Xkoimtw (Lax gibuu)

Smokehouse (possibly more than one) in clearing on right bank above island.

Deek: post for fish weir

K`eph: fish weir

(Green 1979)

This information is valuable for a number of reasons. I am very interested in the location of the smokehouse on the right or “petroglyph side” of the river, as this is the first specific reference I find to buildings on this side of the river. The word “do’otsup” I interpret as “ta’awdzep,” or “fortress.” The use of mid-channel islands as fortress strongholds by Gitxsan, Tsimshian, and other Northwest Coast peoples is well documented, most notably in George MacDonald’s Kitwanga Fort Report (1989), Marsden (2001, 74-80), and in the adaawk recorded by Barbeau and Beynon, collected in Tsimshian Narratives, Vol.2: Trade and Warfare (1987b). However, in the adaawk previously referred to, “A Raid by the People of the Nass,” no specific mention is made of retreat to a fortress by the people of Anlagasimdeex. In the GWA report, site 50024 indicates the island ta’awdzep, identified on the basis of David Green’s description and another by James Morrison, recorded in 1984 (GWA, 7). When I ask Neil J. Sterritt what he has heard about this ta’awdzep he simply says, “That’s right. A cave or some sort of a fortress on the island. That’s where Galli Skalan hid out.” Neil retrieves his notebook and relates to me information on the ta’awdzep that he had collected from Henry Wright, James Morrison, David Green and Joshua McLean while researching the area in 1979. We look at his sketch of the island and the diagram he drew in 1979, showing a square pit in the center of the island with logs laid along the edges. “There’s a hole. There’s trees laid along either side. It’s twelve feet by twelve feet and about six feet deep. That’s where Skalan, Galli Skalan, stayed. Him and his family were in that hole. Right on the bank [south or left side], the Nisga’a were standing here and waiting for Skalan. And when they got him they kept hitting him, shooting him, but he just laughed. You remember that part, about the laughing?” (Sterritt 2004).

For me, another most valuable piece of information for my research purposes is

contained in David Green's description of the fish weir spanning the river above the island. I ask Neil about his thoughts on a weir spanning the whole river and he says, "It's possible. Possible. I don't think that they actually went right across. It's hard to know what the seasons were like when they had done that for a while. So maybe if the water was low they could get away with it, but it's such a volatile river. When it'll rain, it takes out the bloody bridge!" (Sterritt 2004). Neil is talking about the Gisaga'as bridge, at "normal" water levels at least twenty feet above the river. I also talk to Les McLean, a descendant of Eli and Joshua McLean from Gisaga'as, about his thoughts on a weir across the river. Les has been working with the Department of Fisheries for a number of years and is also interested in the revival and use of traditional traps and weirs. He too is skeptical about a weir spanning the Babine River, because it is just too fast. He tells me that what he has seen being used in the Skeena is what he calls "wing" traps, where natural rock formations projecting from the bank are extended with post and slat fences or nets set out and angling downstream to create dipping sites (McLean 2003). This is very similar to a bana (fish trap) at Anlagasimdeex, located on the left bank, which Neil also recorded and sketched in 1979. We study this sketch and he says, "It's a type of trap they set up there using that little point sticking out. Just down [stream] from there." Several "stick fish" are drawn in this little cove, and his notes read, "The fish point downstream" (Sterritt 2004). We ponder this for a while.

When I talked to Brian Muldon about the petroglyph, he interpreted the central geometric design as a depiction of the fish trap at Anlagasimdeex. He sees it as a graphic representation of a weir, traps, and dip-net sites that were constructed at this location. He speculates on the possibility of using the rocky island as the base, or brace point, for a V-shaped weir that spanned the river at the exact site of the petroglyph (Figs. 15 and 16).

When I ask Brian for his interpretation of the other three larger figures, he identifies them possibly as crests of the people using the fish trap, the territorial markers of those who were using this site at the time when the designs were carved. Aside from the figure which he identifies as Lax Gibuu/Wolf, the others are not so obvious (Muldon 2001). That petroglyphs often occur at major fishing sites is well documented. Richard Daly quotes Doris Lundy on this phenomenon: "Along the Fraser River, petroglyphs are only found in the vicinity of important salmon fishing localities" (Lundy 1978, 23-25). As Lundy points out, '...the valued salmon resources of the Middle Fraser appear to have been a major motive behind the creation of the petroglyphs of the region' p.23" (York, Daly and Arnett 1993, 216). The use of petroglyphs as territorial markers is also the subject of much speculation, especially in those "transition zones" between different groups of people, such as Kitselas Canyon (MacDonald 1982; Hill 1974, 12 and 286) and the very well documented sites at the Dalles on the Columbia River (Hill 1974; Dreyfuss 1983). The site of the petroglyph at Anlagasimdeex qualifies as such an area of contact. Another interpretation of the petroglyph is as a spiritual site, a point of power for shamanic activity, puberty rites, or vision quests. Beth Hill refers to these activities as "animal rites," to propitiate salmon or other resources, and rites to exploit the spiritual world (1974, 37-41).

To my question, "Why is the petroglyph located at this place?", there do seem to be some answers. There was at least one settlement of Gitxsan people at the petroglyph site. It was called Anlagasimdeex and survived, according to Barbeau's informants of the 1920's, until the 1880's, when the people moved away, to Gisaga`as. The settlement is referred to by name in one adaawk recorded by Barbeau and Beynon, the adaawk of Suwiiguus, indicating its existence during the period of warfare between the Gitxsan and the Tsetsaut which lead to

the movement south from the northern villages of Gitanga'sx and Galdo'o. It is also referred to in another adaawk, the story of Kalan, which describes events contemporary with the early fur trade period in the Babine Lake area. HBC fur trader William Brown's journal of 1826 records a number of villages in the Babine corridor, one of which may have, in fact, been Anlagasimdeex. As well, he lists the names of two chiefs and Houses, xGoimtxw and Tsbux, associated with Anlagasimdeex, whom he met while in the immediate area. In his diary of 1868, the intrepid Arthur Wellington Clah records his brief stop at Anlagasimdeex while trading for furs in the Gisaga'as area. The archaeological record indicates that there may have been more than one settlement at this location, over the long period of time that humans have lived in and utilized this exact spot on the river. A group of people may have settled and stayed here continuously, or a sequence of occupation and abandonment may have occurred many times over the years. The site may have been used variously at different times, as a permanent "winter village" or as a "salmon season village" occupied only during peak fishing months. Harris states, "It was a permanent village. People do not usually move all their belongings, when they go on their territories" (Harris 2004). The people were attracted to this place because of its abundance of resources, particularly salmon. They may have chosen this exact location because of the island in the middle of the river, to use as a fortress, and most importantly, to facilitate the building of a weir spanning the whole river.

Neil Sterritt tells me, "I haven't found a single person who mentioned that petroglyph yet. It must be very ancient and it indicates that some of these people came later or they would have had it in their history. How could they lose memory of it?" (Sterritt 2004). The petroglyph may be a record of a giant fish trap or a weir spanning the Babine River, a territorial marker, a point of spiritual power. These are the guesses about petroglyphs which

Wilson Duff called “insightful speculations.” Perhaps it is their enigmatic nature that attracts us to petroglyphs. They mystify us; we can’t pin them down. We try to answer the questions “Why?” and “Who?” but retain a perverse pleasure in the mystery.

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Fig. 12 The mid-stream island where the ta'awdzep was located (van Heek2001).



Fig. 13 Looking down from the island to the petroglyph boulder (van Heek 2001)

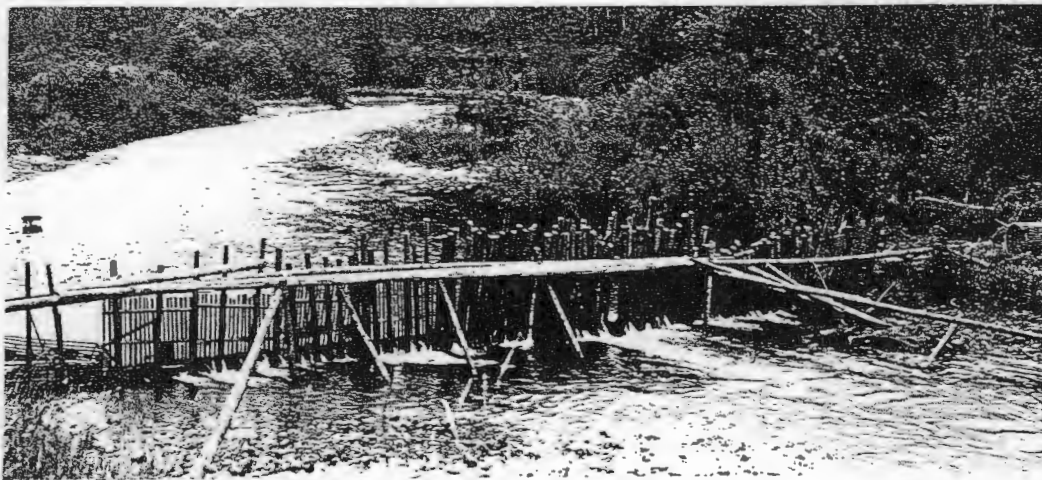


Fig. 14 A fish weir near Kitwancool, 1918 (NMC 71-8442 MacDonald 1989, 73).

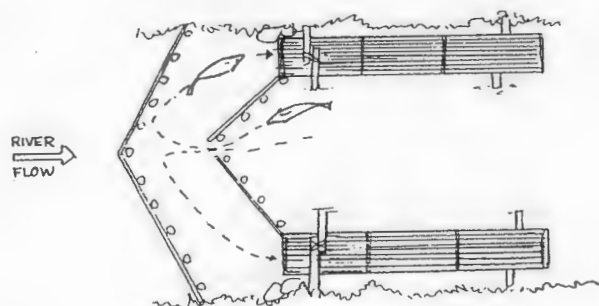


Fig. 15 A V-shaped weir used in conjunction with fish traps (Stewart 1977, 115).

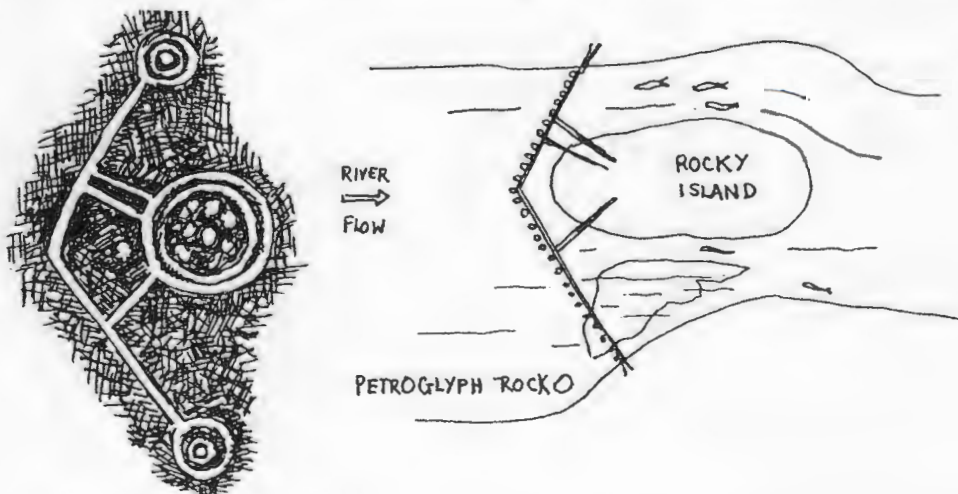


Fig. 16 Diagram of a V-shaped weir as it may have been constructed on the Babine River and portrayed in the petroglyph, as conceived by Brian Muldon (2001).

Relocation

“About 1880 another small tribe, the Anlag.asemdE`x joined the Kisgag.a.`s” (Halpin 1973, 17), and “40 years ago they moved to Kisgagas” (Duff n.d. Anlag as mdex 21a. 1). These are the scant and rather abrupt notations I find in the literature, based on information gathered on Barbeau’s trip to Anlagasimdeex and Gisaga`as in 1920. But I would like to know more. Why did the people leave, and what was this relocation like? What did relocation mean to the people of Anlagasimdeex? It is now more than a century since this event occurred, so finding the answers to my questions might be difficult. And so it proves...almost.

It’s amazing what one can reconstruct from snippets of information from people’s memories, and the ethnographic and historical literature. For example, I read in Duff’s notes that, camping overnight at Anlagasimdeex, Barbeau, John Brown, Paul Dzius and Simon Morrison, slept under a big spruce tree located on the edge of the clearing (n.d. Anlag as mdex 21a, 1). For some reason, I store this piece of information away. I retrieve it and start thinking about it after I talk to Neil J. Sterritt about stories I had heard describing spirits at Gisaga`as and at Galdo`o. He tells me:

There’s one big spruce right in here, not very far in. My uncle Percy [Sterritt] went out with the surveyor when they surveyed...this would be in the 30’s. They ended up getting there [Anlagasimdeex] at night, so they camped under the spruce tree. They were bothered all night by spirits and the surveyor was just going nuts. Anyway, they got up the next day and they moved on up to Gisaga`as. They told them about this when they got there. Anyway, they told them never to camp under that tree, as it was known to have spirits.

(Sterritt 2004)

“Could it be the same tree?” I wonder. It’s possible, as only ten years had elapsed between

these two stops at Anlagasimdeex; and it's true that there are certain spots, often near big trees, where people will repeatedly choose to camp. If we could be that tree, I wonder, what events would we have witnessed? Other small pieces of information lead me to begin to think about the meaning or, I could say (without any intention of being derogatory), the lack of meaning, the relative unimportance, of the relocation from Anlagasimdeex.

Perhaps it was on this same trip in 1920 that Barbeau purchased a large number of masks, baskets, and other cultural items at Gisaga`as from William Jackson (Wiiseeks, Giskaast), Mrs. Paul Dzius (also Giskaast), and others. Included were two stone adzes (#51 and 52, VII C1009 and C942) which Barbeau describes as having been found "a foot underground about 3 miles below Kisga gas village, on the same side of the river on an old village site, it was dug up about 20 years ago, when working at a garden, by William Jackson" (n.d. Gitkcan of the Upper Skeena-Specimens, 11). Barbeau bought "a maple bark basket used for berries (#107, VII C996) made by Mrs. Paul Dzius, at Kisgegas, in 1919. The black stripes are obtained through soaking the bark in a spring at `An lagasemdex, 2 ½ miles below Kisga gas; the bark is left in the spring one day; and it is the only place of the kind in the neighbourhood" (Specimens, 19). From these small details, it's possible to reconstruct a picture of people continuing to use this area after relocation; around 1900, William Jackson was gardening at or near Anlagasimdeex, and in 1919 Mrs. Dzius was using the spring to dye her basket materials. These would be prerogatives of people connected to Anlagasimdeex through their wilp, and adaawk, despite relocation to Gisaga`as. From these small details, I begin to understand the relationship to territories that supersedes residency in villages, and which is continuous regardless of relocation, through wilp and wilnaa`tahl.

The wilp, or House, is the primary social, political, economic, and spiritual unit of Gitxsan society. Children are born into their mother's wilp or lineage; all members of a wilp claim descent from a common ancestral matriarch or supernatural being. Every Gitxsan wilp holds rights to use and authority over their territory and its resources, in accordance with laws governing its use. "The House always bears the name^s of its chief..." (Sterritt et al. 1998, 272), so Barbeau's guide, Paul Dzius, was not only a member of Wilps Tsiwus but was also its head at this time. Although he was not living at Anlagasimdeex but lived in Gisaga`as, he continued to use this village site as did his wife, as was their prerogative as members of, or "married into," a House associated with this village before its abandonment. William Jackson held the name Wiiseeks at this time. "Wii-Seex is from the House of Wii-Gyat (Lloyd Morrison) of the Giskaast Clan (Fireweed)" (Gitksan-Carrier Tribal Council 1982, 16). Although he too was living in Gisaga`as, William Jackson continued to use this site, because of his House's ancestral rights. Rights to the use of territories are independent of residency once a history of residency and use of territory becomes part of the adaawk of a House. The adaawk of each House records its history on ancestral territories, including migrations and other events such as encounters with supernatural beings (Gisday Wa and Delgam Uukw 1992, 32-35), so it might be described as a "deed" to the land, as well as a record of the "deeds" of the ancestors while moving around the land.

An even larger group of people connected with Anlagasimdeex comes into focus when we consider the wilnaa`tahl of Houses named by Barbeau's informants. Wilnaa`tahl describes "a related group of Houses or a subgroup within a phratry comprised of Houses of shared origin" (Anderson in Beynon 2000, 254). Delia O'Brien, Wilps Gyologyat/Lax Gibuu, gave me a description of wilnaa`tahl that clarified this grouping for me, and Bruce

Rigsby liked it too. According to Delia, “You know how a cow goes around a field, leaving a plop here and a plop there? All of these things are all over the field. So, all of these things are wilnaa`tahl—they all come from the same cow” (O’Brien 2002). In the outline of the Houses of Anlagasimdeex provided to Barbeau by John Brown, Simon Morrison, and Paul Dzius, the Lax Gibuu Houses are wilnaa`tahl, sharing a common origin before splitting into distinct Houses at Anlagasimdeex. Both cooperation and competition characterize relations between Houses and wilnaa`tahl, according to Richard Overstall.

Over time, a number of legal procedures have evolved to enable each lineage to preserve its unique spiritual connection with its land while maintaining the working House group at a size for optimal human interaction and economic production. If a House becomes unstable because of decreasing population, one option is to allow itself to fuse with another closely related House....An absorbed lineage, however, will remember its particular origins, adaawk and crests so that when its numbers rebuild, it will be able to reassert its independent identity.

(Overstall 2001, 13)

In its ultimate extension wilnaa`tahl could extend to the whole pdeek or clan. The Gitxsan have four pdeek; Giskaast, Lax Seel, and Lax Gibuu are the three pdeek recorded as belonging to Anlagasimdeex. Exogamous marriage to a partner from a pdeek other than one’s own is a fundamental law among Gitxsan people, as seen in the marriage of Paul Dzius, Lax Gibuu, and his wife, Giskaast, a pattern which is accommodated by, or results in the reality that villages had members of at least two pdeek residing in them. Anlagasimdeex, which is characterized as “always a small village,” reflects the Gitxsan norm of three pdeek being represented within the village. Whether Mrs. Dzius was Giskaast from Anlagasimdeex, from Gisaga`as, from Kispiox, or from another village, I do not know. Inter-marriage with people from other villages was a common occurrence, providing an extension of the rights to use a husband’s/father’s territories to wife and children, in

accordance within generally acknowledged privileges extended by each House.

What emerges from this discussion of social structure, and my attempt to relate it to the capsule description of Anlagasimdeex at a particular point in time, is an appreciation of the complexity and flexibility of intra/inter-relations of wilp, wilnaa`tahl, and pdeek, and the way that they influence and structure settlement patterns and the use of territories. Writing about Coast Tsimshian villages, Louis Allaire describes it this way: "...this type of local group must have been very flexible, old villages often abandoned and new ones established frequently, somewhat in contrast to the greater stability of the kinship and social groups that integrated so many other aspects of Tsimshian society" (1984, 82). For Gitxsan people, village residency is a part of the complexity of these relationships, but of secondary importance. The adaawk record movement around the territory, including periods of residency at particular village sites, but as Virginia Morgan (Wilps Haluus/Ganeda) said to me, "That's not how Gitxsan define themselves as a people" (Morgan 2002). Residency in a particular location or village at a specific point in time does constitute a part of the definition of territory held by each wilp in its adaawk, and therefore is worthy of consideration. Harris confirms that, "Traditionally, families lived close to their territories" (Harris 2004). But relocation of village sites may be viewed as an ongoing historic process, occurring for a variety of reasons

After the people of Anlagasimdeex moved to Gisaga`as, they continued to use the settlement site for different purposes. The most intensive use of the site continued to be seasonal salmon harvesting. R. E. Loring, newly appointed Indian Agent for Babine in 1889, gives two descriptions of this activity.

I have taken a trip to Ilie-sam-dake, this side of Kiss-ge-gass, where a friction of factions of two crests sprung up as to possession of a fishery, after the death of Ne-

ast [Niis't] a Chief of Gal-doe.

(N.A.C. RG 10, Series A, vol.1585, file 38, May 31, 1890)

I have the honour to report that on the 2nd of the month I left here [Hazelton], on foot, accompanied by Mrs. Loring, as Interpreter, and with two Indian packers for the Ilie-sam-dagh fisheries, about fifty-nine miles up the Skeena and situate on its right and left banks. There, of late years, many contentions have arisen, after heads of families^s dying, as to hereditary rights to fishing stations, smoking, or curing houses, implements etc...At Ilie-sam dahg are nineteen fishing stations and eleven smokehouses, the most of the former considered the best on the Skeena, and the latter are kept in good condition and, by the way, twenty-three families are depending on the use of both.

(N.A.C. RG 10, Series A, vol. 1584, file 3132, Oct. 31, 1896)

Here we are painted a picture of a thriving fishery, geographically separate from Gisaga`as, and located on both banks of the river. There is no description of a weir, and no mention is made of a permanent settlement or an abandoned village. In both references, the death of House chiefs is mentioned, and consequent disputes over the use of privileges; it sounds like there may have been an exceptional number of deaths, and perhaps an unusual amount of disputing, a "friction of factions," but I can't be sure I'm not just reading between the lines. After hours of studying the letterbooks, journals and papers of the Babine Agency, these are the only references to Anlagasimdeex I am able to find, and in no instance are its people identified by Loring as separate or distinct from the people of Gisaga`as, although there are hundreds of documents mentioning Gisaga`as in one respect or another. Perhaps this is not surprising, when we consider that Loring was writing at least ten years after the 1880 relocation date given by Barbeau's informants. Loring did not habitually report to A.W. Vowell, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, about "histories" or past events except as they affected current affairs in the Agency. Having said this, however, I begin to notice details in his references to Gisaga`as that might refer to events surrounding the relocation. Loring

reports, on what was probably one of his first trips to Gisaga`as:

On arrival found, that all the people had left for a few miles distant and were encamped through the woods taking advantage of its shelter and fuel, as their village is exposed to the cutting winds. This site had been chosen to enable them to be more on the defensive and less liable to a surprise, since the massacre of most of the inhabitants by the Nass-river Indians in the old village, which stands totally deserted on a sheltered plateau nearer to the forks of the Skeena and Babine Rivers.

(N.A.C. RG 10, Series A, vol. 1586, file 4239, January 31, 1890).

The phrase “massacre of most of the inhabitants by the Nass-river Indians” sounds a lot like “A Raid by the People of the Nass,” with Kalan laughing as his head was cut off, and the old people, women and children either killed or taken captive. Whether it is the events contained in this adaawk that Loring is referring to is hard to say, but it opens the door for some ideas about why people relocated. I speak to Don Ryan about the relocation, trying to connect the picture of a flourishing salmon fishery at Anlagasimdeex with a reason to relocate or amalgamate with Gisaga`as. Don’s explanation of the amalgamation also can be summed up in one word: depopulation (Ryan 2001).

Depopulation, if this is a causal factor, was the result of a number of different events occurring over a considerable period of time, or a combination of these. Firstly, women often moved to other villages through the process of “marrying out” of their wilp and pdeek; traditionally a woman would live in her husband’s village, just as, in the adaawk of Suwiiguus, the wife of Nurhs moved to Anlagasimdeex from Gitanga`sx. If the proportion of women to men were greater, this could lead to a steady depletion of village population, unless women consistently married within their village. In a situation of ongoing warfare, such as was the case in the retaliatory raids with the Tsetsaut and Nisga`a, such a proportional shift could have occurred, assuming that men were most frequently the victims.

However, we know that women and children were often taken captive, tending to further depopulation. To offset this loss of villagers, there was redeeming of captives, and intermarriage with neighbouring peoples, sometimes with former enemies. The attrition of men through warfare would also mean that fewer women would be “marrying into” a village from outside; as a consequence of the smaller numbers of women, regardless of the varying strengths of Houses, the overall population of the village would decline.

Interwoven with this first factor is the steady depopulation caused by warfare itself, as John Brown explained to Barbeau in reference to the movement of people from Gitanga`sx to Galdo`o. Both Yvonne Lattie and Ken Rabnett have described to me their experiences of walking around the ancient village site at Gitanga`sx, wondering at the large number of cultural depressions, which are smaller than others they have seen. Yvonne hypothesizes that these are cremation pits, where the remains of the dead were placed for cremation, or after. She says, “You really get an idea of how many people were dying in those wars when you start counting up these cremation pits, if that’s what they are. They’re all around the village up there” (Lattie 2003; Rabnett 2004). An increasing necessity to form marriage alliances with stronger or more populous Houses, or to amalgamate with another village, would occur where strength in numbers was important. In an extended period of warfare, the ability to be able to call upon support from strong allies is crucial, as seen in the *adaawk* of the raid of Suwiiguus, and “A Raid by the People of the Nass.” Wilson Duff’s analysis of these events refers to Gitanyow/Kitwancool, but also exemplifies the depopulation of this period through warfare. “Kitwancool...must have been a large village, especially before the Tsetsaut wars, but by the 1880’s it was down to a little over 200 people. In 1890 only 85 lived there; about 115 others had moved to the Nass (n.d. The Gitksan).

While the motivations to move to the Nass were varied, the weakening of the village through warfare had already occurred. Warfare may be seen in both instances as a direct or indirect cause of depopulation and relocation: through actual losses, and through the necessity to establish a power base through marriage alliances or amalgamation with numerically stronger groups.

A third causal factor for depopulation occurring in at this time is disease. Although more research has been done recently, little is specific to the impact of disease upon Gitx̱san people. The well-established interior/coastal trading networks referred to by William Brown in 1825, and researched by Marsden and Galois (1995), most certainly provided an opportunity for the introduction of disease from European ship and land-based centers to the interior. In epidemic periods, such as 1836-38, smallpox originating at Ft. Simpson may have penetrated to interior villages, causing significant loss of life. Galois (1996) has described the measles epidemic of 1847-50, the "first modern epidemic in B.C. history," as a significant factor in the depopulation of interior peoples. He traces its spread via two routes, both connected to the HBC and native trade routes. By January 1848 measles had appeared at Ft. Kamloops and spread north to Ft. Alexandria. By summer, it had appeared in Ft. Simpson, carried there by the HBC steamship Beaver. By February of 1849 the epidemic was "raging" at Ft. St. James, Ft. Fraser, and Ft. Kilmaurs, having been carried from Ft. Simpson to the Skeena and Bulkley Rivers by Gispaxlo'ots traders to the Gitx̱san and Wet'suwet'en. Galois estimates "...a mortality rate of about 10 percent. However, in many areas, the aftershock of fever and/or influenza likely increased this rate" (1996, 42). Among Tahltan people he estimates its effect as being in the order of 30 percent, writing "some resource areas could never be used again" (42), namely major fishing sites where there were

no longer enough people to process or utilize the large numbers of fish. Two other epidemic periods may have caused similar population losses, the smallpox epidemic of 1862, and another measles epidemic in 1887 (Boyd 1999, 314-315), but incidents of disease and numbers of deaths among Gitx̱san people are not well recorded. In 1878, Anglican missionary W.H. Collison visited Gisaga`as with Robert Tomlinson to conduct the first Sunday services ever held in the village. He writes:

...in two days time we reached the Kitsgagas village near Babine Lake. The tribe continued to follow the custom of cremating the dead...Several funeral pyres were still burning, and the plain extending away from the village was covered over with piles of charred wood where the dead had been consumed.

(Collison 1981, 211)

That these were cremation sites is impressed upon Collison by the people of Gisaga`as, who warned him of his disrespect for the dead, "a breach of Indian law" (211), when he began to collect some of the charred wood to use in his campfire. These sites are similar to one described to Neil Sterritt by Solomon Jack: "He did not mention a pit. Wood is piled high and the body is placed in the timber where it will burn. There is a cremation area near Salmon River turn-off [near Gitanmaax] and there are no pits there" (Sterritt 2004). The phrase "covered over" depicts to me an abnormally high death rate during this period of history, and I wonder if Collison was recording the evidence of warfare and disease endemic to this time. In the period from 1835 to 1890, Duff estimates (n.d. The Gitksan "Population") an overall population decline for Gitx̱san from 2600 people to 1409. By deducting the movement of an estimated 115 people from Gitanyow to the Nass, a decline in the order of 40 percent is my estimate for this time period. A significant outbreak of influenza was recorded in December of 1893 by Agent Loring, in which he attributed a further ninety-eight deaths among the Gitx̱san to what he calls "la grippe." I compare this

number to the loss of fifty lives, recorded by Loring during the Spanish influenza epidemic of 1919. I mentally note the fact that in this almost forgotten 1893 epidemic, thirty-five of the ninety-eight who lost their lives were from the village of Gisaga`as, which by this time included the people of Anlagasimdeex (N.A.C. RG 10, Series A, vol.1584, file 4402, December 30, 1893). Adams cites the population of Gisaga`as in 1891 as 295, from Loring's Babine Agency reports (1973, 8), which indicates to me a decline of nearly 12 percent of the village population from this single outbreak of influenza in 1893.

I have a mental picture of people from Anlagasimdeex, through marrying out, or moving as family groups or Houses, gradually leaving the settlement over a number of years during the 1880's. But, when I talk to Neil Sterritt about this event I find I'm quite wrong.

The story of them leaving Anlagasimdeex is quite interesting. The priest was just sitting there one morning having his breakfast and suddenly realized that the village was empty. This was supposed to have happened about 1880, that they all of a sudden all moved out. I don't know if there was actually a missionary in Anlagasimdeex, although if he was there, he wasn't there long because he would have to move with them. It could have been any time in the eighties. It was that fast, literally. James Morrison and David Greene told me. Suddenly, they weren't there! He got up and either he saw the people going, but for some reason they moved to Gisaga`as. Then, after that, they started to shift into Kispiox and here [Gitanmāiax] and wherever. The leaving of Anlagasimdeex was like...that. It happened one day. I don't think it was a big deal. They just up and moved. I don't think there were that many people. A gradual shifting...that's usually the way it is, but that's not the way it was told to me.

(Sterritt 2004)

I immediately wonder, "Who was 'the priest'?" I always need to pin down the details.

I do more research and find that there were quite a number of missionaries active in the area at this time, who could have visited Anlagasimdeex. From 1872 to 1879, Robert Tomlinson travelled twice yearly to the Upper Skeena villages from Kincolith (Tomlinson

and Young 1991, 113), and from 1879 to 1883 conducted the Anglican mission at Ankitlas, just north of Kispiox (201). W.H. Collison was sent to Hazelton in 1880 to establish a mission there and forestall the encroachment of the Methodists, in the person of Thomas Crosby, who also arrived that year, for a brief tenure of one year (Collison 1981, 204). As previously noted, Tomlinson and Collison made at least one trip to Gisaga`as, in 1880, when Collison was warned not to help himself to the cremation firewood. Also in Hazelton from 1880 to 1881 was the newly appointed Anglican Bishop of Caledonia, the Right Reverend William Ridley, who, according to Tomlinson (207), "spent weeks travelling ...visiting heathen villages and mission villages, mingling with the natives." In the spring of 1882, Rev. W.G. Faulkner ["Falconer" (Large 1996, 90)] arrived in Hazelton and also travelled with Tomlinson "to visit some of the more remote villages" (Tomlinson and Young, 210). Finally, the thirty year tenure of Reverend John Field began in 1886 (Maclean 1993, 37). So, there definitely were a number of priests in the area at this time. Their missionizing activity could be said to epitomize the development that was occurring in the Upper Skeena region, and in the nascent village of Hazelton, around which the Gitxsan village of Gitanmaax also continued to grow.

Gitanmaax is the one village that does not appear to have ever suffered a significant population decline during the 1800's. Because of its "important location" as a trading center, Duff writes of Gitanmaax, "People joined them from the surrounding villages, and it was not long before this became the largest band of Gitksan" (n.d. 18. Kitamaks). Marsden and Galois (1995, 181) ascribe the development of Gitanmaax to the geopolitical ascendancy of the Coast Tsimshian, Gitselasu, and Gitxsan in the early fur trade period. "It was probably in this period (1805-1825) or somewhat earlier, that the Gitanmaaks established

their village closer to the Tsimshian's river route at the confluence of the Bulkley and Skeena Rivers." As middlemen in the coastal/interior trade network, the importance of this location was apparent to the Gitx̱san, introducing a fourth factor in the movement of people from their traditional village sites, including the people of Anlagasimdeex̱, before, but particularly after, their relocation to Gisaga`as. We might call this the "economic factor," because it is characterized by increasing participation of Gitx̱san in the colonial economic expansion beginning in the fur trade period (McDonald 1984). I prefer to think of this as the "novelty" factor, an expression I learn from Sadie Harris. When I ask Harris for her explanation of why people "moved in," or tended to relocate at Gitanmaax and Kispiox from Galdo`o, and Gisaga`as, her answer is, "I think it was for the novelties. By that I mean all the new things coming in, the stores and all of the many things people saw. When people saw those things, they wanted to have them too" (Harris 2004).

In his memoirs, Father Nicholas Coccola, who came to serve as Catholic OMI priest to the "Carriers" in 1905, provides a capsule history of the developing colonial interests which further established Gitanmaax, the "Forks," or Hazelton, as a magnet attracting both Gitx̱san and non-Gitx̱san for economic gain. In 1864 construction of the Collins Overland Telegraph established the Forks as a supply depot and employed Gitx̱san packers to move supplies along the telegraph line. The HBC trading establishment advocated by William Brown in 1826 became a reality in 1866, although it was short-lived, closing in 1868, to be re-established in 1880. Influxes of settlers and traders followed successive gold rushes to Omenica (1869), Cassiar (1872), Omenica (1896), and the Klondike (1898). In 1889 R.E. Loring was appointed Indian Agent for Babine Agency, with his headquarters in Hazelton. Steamboat traffic flourished in the period from 1891 to 1912, with Hazelton the head of

navigation. In the first decade of the new century there were fourteen canneries operating at the mouth of the Skeena River. These drew Gitx̱san people to seasonal employment, travelling to Prince Rupert by steamboat, and later, by rail. By 1911 a car had “driven” from Seattle to Hazelton, and by 1914, GTP trains were meeting a weekly schedule from Prince Rupert to eastern Canada (Coccola 1988, 39-42). Gitanmaax had developed in this short period into a center of trade and employment which attracted people, both Gitx̱san and non-Gitx̱san, in a classic “boom town” scenario.

What occurred at this time was therefore a second relocation of the people from Anlagasimdeex, as they were swept up in the relocation from Gisaga`as which occurred over the space of the next sixty years. From a population of 295 in 1891, Gisaga`as became an “abandoned” village by 1949, with no permanent residents (Adams 1973, 8). In 1899, Loring noted the population of Gitanmaax Band as “only 63, but with the addition of members from other bands, numbering 232” (N.A.C. RG 10, Series A, vol. 1586, file 178-80), and in 1903, he writes:

Regarding the Indians of the Skeena above Kispiox, here I must mention that for the last few winters not a few of the Kuldoe and of Kisgegas, begin gravitating toward Kispiox and indications have the semblance of more coming, with a few getting to be inhabitants of that village. Hazelton, for years, had its quota from that source...The facilities of profitable employment hereabout, is the solution [reason].

(N.A.C. RG 10, Series A, vol. 1586, file 3174, November 30, 1903)

John Adams refers to a pattern of relocation of Gisaga`as Lax Gibuu and Lax Seel to Gitanmaax, joining with the two “sides” or corresponding pdeek there. Giskaast from Gisaga`as joined with Giskaast at Kispiox, according to Adams (1973, 23). My understanding is that Adams is generalizing; there were variations in these broad patterns,

depending on marriage alliances and individual choices of residency. Further research would clarify if this pattern also applied to Lax Gibuu, Lax Seel, and Giskaast from Anlagasimdex, and whether relocation to Kispiox or Gitanmaax actually preceded or was only a part of the later relocation from Gisaga`as. The instance recorded by Barbeau of the "recruitment" of Su`ens from Anlagasimdex to Giskaast in Kispiox would seem to predate the general movement from Gisaga`as, and establish a connection between these two villages long before the expansion of Gitanmaax. Other factors worthy of consideration in the movement of people from Anlagasemde`ek and Gisaga`as are tied to a time frame much more recent than this period.

I ask Don Ryan his opinion of the effect of the Barricades Agreement of 1906 on the economic, and consequent social and political viability of Gitxsan villages in the Babine corridor. In his opinion the federal restrictions on the use of weirs and fish traps, and restrictions on the commercial sales of fish, were not significant factors in the movement of Gitxsan people out of their villages in the Babine area (Ryan 2001). Antonia Mills suggests another factor for consideration with the diabolically obvious observation, "Well, there was no road, was there!" (Mills 2002). I spent some time thinking about this factor, and talking to older residents of the area to find out how significant it was. Fortuitously, I am lucky enough to have spent seven years from 1973 to 1980 listening to stories of the early days in Hazelton told to me by Alan Benson, who owned one of the first cars in Hazelton, and operated the first taxi business and gas station from the early 1920's to the 1950's. He emphasized that cars were not very numerous in Hazelton until the 1950's: that during the period of 1920 to 1940 Benson Brothers Jitney Service, (later known as Triangle Taxi) provided taxi, ambulance, funeral, and police transportation as well as hauling teachers and

nurses twice a year between Hazelton and Vancouver. Of course, cars and trucks became more numerous with time, but he also maintained a large heated warehouse for the storage of vehicles over winter, as the roads were in such poor condition with snow and Spring break-up that they were almost impassable for a good part of the year (Benson 1973-80). The fact that there was only a trail, or at best a wagon road, between Gisaga`as and Hazelton, and that access was by foot, horseback, or wagon, was not really an anomaly in the early decades of the century, in the period when most people relocated from Gisaga`as. Ease of access to Gitanmaax was not in and of itself a crucial factor; people had already made the choice to relocate for other reasons, before transportation by car or truck was a common feature of life.

However, despite their scarcity, cars and roads can be seen as epitomizing phenomena in the adoption of "Europeanized," or "modern" lifeways that began with the first influx of fur trade merchandise in the early 1800's, or before (MacDonald and Cove in Barbeau and Beynon 1987b, vii-xix). The ability to access new things, ideas, and people, which Sadie Harris terms "the novelties," is evidenced in the continuous movement of people to Gitanmaax, Kispiox, and elsewhere from outlying villages. It was accelerated by the establishment of new centers of social, economic, and institutional power (schools, churches, Indian Agencies, government offices, post offices, stores, banks, sawmills, hospitals etc.) constructed by colonial authorities and local entrepreneurs, including Gitx̄san people themselves (Galois 1993-1994). Shifts in residency were a result of choices made at this time, to align with these new centers of power and to participate in these activities. Speaking of American Indians, Dr. Beatrice Medicine's description of this flexibility can also be applied to what was happening for Gitx̄san people at this time:

...our sheer survival has hinged upon a flexible ability to segment, synthesize, and act in changing situations. Although this should be understood and respected by

anthropologists and others, a lack of sensitivity and perception has been a main tragedy of comprehending Native life. There is often a unidimensional aspect of power. The indigenous society is seen as a target population for manipulation and change, with no attempt to understand the textured and realigning configurations of persons and ideas through time, that have allowed for Native persistence.

(Medicine 2001,13)

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Once the movement of people from Galdo`o and Gisaga`as had reached a certain “critical mass,” there would be great incentive for the dwindling numbers of people remaining in the villages to join their relatives in their new locations. At a certain point in time, these villages would no longer be viable economic or social entities and the few remaining people would choose to “move in.” When I ask Neil Sterritt about the abandonment of Gisaga`as, he confirms the “novelty” factor that Sadie Harris talks about.

I think that’s true. We’re social people and after a while there’s not many people out there. So that would be a good way to put it. They wanted the school. More amenities, the hospital and so on. Nobody ever said; this is what I’m saying. Some of the older people were still there, William Jackson, you know, Robert’s grandfather. Or going in, like the McLeans, the whole family. My dad had a logging camp and we were living out there by the road. We used to see the whole family going by with their bikes or on foot, with a horse, when we were kids in the fifties. That was the last family that was actually there. But then David Gunanoot and some of the McLeans, after they’d grown up, were out there, trapping. When they built the road, the road crew were just ransacking the village. Walking off with you name it. The houses were unlocked. They were full of guns, regalia, everything. It marched. It was gone. This was the Department of Fisheries road crew. They came in from outside. They were from all over the place. There was a copper. Tom Marshall brought it in and they put it in the museum at Ksan. I don’t know whether they knew what they had. After the fifties it just became what you see today.

(Sterritt 2004)

The school at Gisaga`as was initially run as an adjunct of the Anglican Church mission, and, as nearly as I can determine, opened in 1895. It operated continuously until 1916, when

difficulty obtaining a teacher caused it to close for a number of years. In the 1920's and early thirties it opened sporadically, depending on the availability of teachers. Then it closed again for a number of years. In 1938-1939, it reopened with twenty pupils. A letter signed by "we, the undersigned Chiefs of the Kisgagas Indian Reserve, Chief William Jackson, Chief Sam Green, Chief Simon Morrison," written in March of 1939, requests that the school remain open for eight months, instead of the usual five months, from October to the end of February. This request was not granted. Also included in the National Archive files concerning this school are the registers of pupils enrolled during the last years of its operation. The Gisaga`as school was finally closed February 28, 1942. The last school register lists the following pupils:

Thomas Green

Moses, Joshua, Roy, and Billie McLean

Howard, Wilfred, Freddie, Thelma, and Sadie Wale [Sadie Harris]

Moona and Alaviner (?) Wright

The last teacher was William Wale, Sadie Harris' father.

(N.A.C. RG 10, vol. 6420, file 864-1, part 1)

The 'Robert' mentioned by Neil is Robert Jackson Sr., Xsimgitgiigenix, Lax Seel whom I was fortunate to know. Robert was the son of Alan Benson and the grandson of William Jackson, Wiiseeks/Wilps Wiigyat, originally from Anlagasimdeex. In the 1980's he told me the story of how he "moved in" from Gisaga`as.

Born in 1926, Robert grew up in Gisaga`as and spent most of his childhood there with his grandparents. There were others living in the village year-round, but not that many. Most people came out in the summer to fish. Robert and his grandparents made trips to

town to trade furs and buy supplies, walking in, sometimes with dogs packing supplies, and sometimes staying with relations in Gitanmaax for short periods of time. They lived a very traditional life on the land. Robert grew up helping his grandmother on the trapline as his grandfather was getting quite blind and stayed closer to the house. This situation suddenly changed when Robert was fourteen. His grandmother died, and William told Robert that they must go into Gitanmaax and stay there, as they could not "make it" by themselves. Robert described to me how he walked in, leading his grandfather along the trail through the snow in the middle of winter. They camped for one night at a flat down by the river where there were a lot of big poplars, and Robert laughed about how cold it was, that the poplars were cracking in the cold, and he could still remember the loud, loud sound of them exploding in the silence of the night (Jackson 1984-88).

Robert spent a lot of time at Gisaga'as as he grew older. He was one of the first to build a new cabin out there, and he encouraged his sons to stay out at the cabin and work with him on his trapline during winters in the 1980's and early 90's. He continued to use his territories as long as his health permitted, one example of the way that the connection to territory continues despite the movement away from a village. Robert gave his support (Jackson 1988), and was there at the Sam Green roadblock in 1988, when the hereditary chiefs, led by xGoimtxw, Kathleen Wale, stopped the construction of a bridge by Westar Timber, the major player at that time in the extraction of resources in the Hazelton area. Despite the fact that the rights to authority and control of the territory and its resources were "in the courts," being prosecuted in the Delagamuukw case, Westar and the Ministry of Forests were planning to extend their activities into the untouched area north of the Babine River, logging territories "in the Shedin Valley at Sam Green Creek, near the ancient

Gitksan villages of Kisgagaas and Anlagasimdeek” (Sterritt 1989, 287). The chiefs who “asserted their authority and responsibilities over their lands” included:

xGwoimtxw-Kathleen Wale
 Miluulak-Alice Jeffrey
 Xsimgitgiigenix-Robert Jackson
 Wiigyat-LloydMorrison
 Wiiseeks-RalphMichell

As well, many others supported the blockade, which continued for almost a month (Sterritt 1989, 289).

The roadblock had immediate consequences. One was the boost in morale which occurred when the courts upheld the chiefs with an injunction stopping bridge construction at this location (Reasons for Judgment 1988). The Babine crossing was subsequently relocated, after consultation with Gitksan authorities and further archaeological assessment, to minimize the destruction of Heritage Sites (Wilson 1994; Wilson and Coates 1995). There was a concession by Ministry of Forests of the need for further archaeological studies in the Babine corridor, to minimize the impact of access roads and subsequent logging activity, and a dawning awareness, on the part of the non-Gitksan participants, of the depth of cultural activity and involvement in the Babine corridor by Gitksan people, in the past, the present, and the future. Lack of residency in the area was not a factor alienating the chiefs from interest or involvement with their territories, as their connection is continuous through *adaawk*, *wilp*, and *wilnaa`tahl*.

Shifts in the residency of individuals, and the migration of peoples from village site to village site can be characterized as a continual process for Gitksan people. In the case of *Gitanga`sx*, *Galdo`o*, *Gisaga`as*, and *Anlagasimdeex* the factors of intervillage marriage

alliances, depopulation from warfare and disease, and the changing geopolitical situation tied to the fur trade and colonial development, acted in concert to promote the relocation of people into the Babine corridor at certain periods in time, and then away from it, as the picture changed. Today, the picture is changing again, with the re-establishment of residency in the Babine corridor and at Galdo`o. What does not change for Gitksan people is the continuity of connection to the land through wilp, wilnaa'tahl, and adaawk.

So, what remains at Anlagasimdeex?

The geographic features are almost the same: the river, the benches above it on either side where the buildings once stood, the rocky island where the ta`awdzep was hidden. Now, the Shedin Mainline access road, patches of logged over cut-blocks, and the trail to the river made by Charlie Muldon's crew can be found on the right bank, as well as remains of the cache pits and the old trails documented by the Gitksan Watershed Authorities. There are the traces of more trails on the left side, more cut-blocks, and, of course, the road to Gisaga`as. Freddie Wale has built a cabin on the left side, up on the cliff top overlooking the island.

Right at the site of Anlagasimdeex, as late as the nineteen thirties, if you looked on the edge of the ravine near the Gisaga`as road, you would see a totem pole belonging to Wilps xGwoimtxw lying on the ground. Henry Wright described it as "short, with a crest on it, made different from today." At an earlier time, this is probably where xGwoimtxw's house stood, with the pole in front of it (Sterritt 2004).

And, if you look closely at a particular boulder on the right bank, especially when the sun is beginning to go down, you will see a petroglyph.

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