AKTIS ISLAND HOUSES AND HOUSEHOLDS:

AN ETHNO-ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE KA:'YU:'K'T'H HOME-BASE

by

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Abstract

This community-based project combined ethnography, history and archaeology to chronicle the life history of the houses and households at Aktis village, the historical home-base of the Ka:'yu:'k't'h (Kyuquot) confederacy on the northwest coast of Vancouver Island. Though there are connections between the material house and the social household, they are not synonymous. Despite changes in architecture at Aktis village, there is continuity in social form. A diachronic perspective extending from the deep past to the present-day was used to examine this transformation. Archaeological mapping and percussion-coring were used to explore the distant past of the site. This revealed deep house depressions, suggesting that the locations of house sites at Aktis village were preserved through time. Core samples indicated shell midden deposits as deep as 3.5 metres, and almost uninterrupted occupation since 1686±126 BP (calibrated radiocarbon years before present), with a possible break between 1627±118 BP and 1384±107 BP. Interviews and historical documents suggest that the big houses and the lineage properties on which they stood acted as powerful symbols for extended family households. Though nuclear families moved out of the big houses, they continued to live in family groups, building smaller homes on their lineage properties. The centrepiece of the lineage properties were the externally-ornate dance houses, which, though vacant, represented family prestige and solidarity. The dance houses were torn down around 1930. However, lineage properties (and the family ties they represented) were maintained. The move away from Aktis village in the 1970s eliminated the community's daily encounter with the lineage properties, a tangible symbol of household groups. Even so, the traditional ideology of kinship that bound together members of a house persists: Ka:'yu:'k't'h extended families continue to exhibit considerable social solidarity at key moments in the lives of their members.

Preface

This dissertation is an original, unpublished, intellectual product of the author, Melinda Ogden. I designed the research program, performed the various parts of the research (with assistance from volunteer community members), and analysed the research data (with assistance from a volunteer undergraduate student).

Linguist Adam Werle kindly transcribed house names that were recorded in an interview with Elder Hilda Hansen. These appear in Table 2 and in Appendix C.

Figure 3A (Image PN 11608) is used with permission from the Royal BC Museum, BC Archives. The sketch map in Appendix C is used with permission from family members of the late Robert Peter. I created Figure 6B, which incorporates information from this same map. I also created Figure 6C, which is, in part, modified from Figure 7 in Kenyon (1980:98), permission for which is implicit under Crown Copyright. I created Figure 7, which is modified from data made available by the OpenStreetMap project. I created Figures 1, 2, 4, and 6, which are modified with permission from British Columbia TRIM base maps 092L003 and 092L004 (File Number 7200003109).

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Note on Linguistic Transcription

Throughout this work, I refer to a number of Nuu-chah-nulth terms. For the majority of them, I have followed the terms used by Drucker (1951). He recorded them using the simpler system of the methods for transcription of Indian languages, as outlined by the Smithsonian (Drucker 1951:5, footnote). Though Drucker's transcriptions do not employ the current conventions of the Nuu-chah-nulth alphabet, I decided to use them for the sake of simplicity, as a number of the family group, tribal, and place names only occur in his works. However, I have capitalized these terms out of respect. Though Drucker refers to the village site that is the focus of this research as "aqtīs", I refer to it throughout as "Aktis" as this is the accepted spelling within the community. Similarly, though Drucker refers to the current location of the main Ka:'yu:'k't'h village as "hōpsitas", I refer to it as "Houpsitas", the accepted local spelling.

Table 2 provides a list of house names transcribed according to modern Nuu-chah-nulth conventions by linguist Adam Werle and based on a recorded interview with elder Hilda Hansen. This same table also includes the house names as written by Robert Peter in 1957. Peter's original spellings have been left as is for the purposes of corroboration between Drucker, Peter, and Hansen. Peter's sketch map in Appendix C also includes his original spellings.

Finally, though legally termed the Kyuquot / Checleseht First Nations, I refer to them by their orthographic renderings, Ka:'yu:'k't'h and Che:k:tles7et'h', as is their indicated preference. When referring to the inlet, however, I have chosen to return to the modern spelling—"Kyuquot Sound"—as this is referring to the location not to the people.

Acknowledgements

For the warm and welcoming people of Ka:'yu:'k't'h /
Che:k:tles7et'h', who inspired this research, and
for my ever-supportive husband,
who introduced me to them.

Introduction

This project focused on the relationship between the material house and the social household at the historical home-base of the Ka:'yu:'k't'h confederacy, Aktis village (EaSu-2). I found that, though there are strong connections between the house and the household, they are not synonymous. Despite drastic changes in architecture at Aktis village, including the abandonment of communal living, continuity in the family group as a social unit can be traced.

The territory of the Ka:'yu:'k't'h / Che:k:tles7et'h'[1] First Nations is located on the west coast of Vancouver Island and is the northernmost region occupied by the Nuu-chah-nulth (formerly "Nootkan") peoples. Historically the Ka:'yu:'k't'h and the Che:k:tles7et'h' were separate polities; however, they amalgamated in the 1950s. Though the two groups are now united, individuals still distinguish themselves as either Ka:'yu:'k't'h or Che:k:tles7et'h'.

At the time of European contact[2], the Ka:'yu:'k't'h were a confederacy of four winter tribes, sharing a seasonal summer village on Aktis Island, at the mouth of Kyuquot Sound. In the winter, each tribe lived in their own village in a more protected location up the inlet. The winter tribes were further broken down into smaller family groups[3], each of whom owned a separate territory (usually centring around a salmon stream) up the inlet. The number one chief when the Ka:'yu:'k't'h tribes confederated is said to have designated lots on Aktis Island to the chiefs of the family groups on which to build their houses, replicas of their winter village homes (Drucker 1951:222-223). These lineage properties ran in tracts from the beach to the forest. Elders still

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[1] Pronounced Kie-YOU-cut and TSHEH-kleh-szet (Kyuquot / Checleseht First Nations 2006). The numeral "7" represents a glottal stop.

[2] Europeans first visited Nootka Sound on the west coast of Vancouver Island in the 1770s; though the Ka:'yu:'k't'h had some contact with European traders in the years following this event, the first recorded instance of contact with the Ka:'yu:'k't'h wasn't until 1862 (Hankin 1862).

[3] Drucker's (1951:219) "local groups", discussed in more detail in Section 1.3 Ethnography.

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remember the locations of lineage properties on Aktis Island, which was the primary home of most community members until the 1970s, when the village was relocated to nearby Houpsitas.

This community-based project grew out of the longstanding relationship between members of the Ka:'yu:'k't'h / Che:k:tles7et'h' Nations and myself, following their expressed desire to explore the history of Aktis village through the lens of archaeology. This research was planned following consultations with members of the community and the Ka:'yu:'k't'h / Che:k:tles7et'h' Cultural Executive, the governing body of the First Nations.

Overwhelmingly, individuals with whom I spoke expressed interest in Aktis village, for many of them, the home of their childhood. I shared this keen interest in Aktis village, as a historical site with established social complexity, coupled with a more recent expression of those social realities in living memory. During the consultation-phase of my research, I was presented with a sketch map of the village circa 1920, drafted by elder Robert Peter in 1957 (see Appendix C). This sketch map displayed a transitional period in village layout. The traditional big houses[4] had been replaced with what I term "dance houses"[5]—uninhabited buildings constructed in the European-style, which contained traditional regalia and were used to host ceremonies, dances, and feasts. Nuclear families did not live in these buildings, but rather in single-family dwellings built in groups behind the dance house on the family lineage property.

This distinctive arrangement led me to ask: Was the social structure of Aktis village encoded in the layout of the settlement? If so, what is the antiquity of this structure? What happened to extended family household groups following the transition to single family dwellings? Interestingly, Aktis village was occupied into modern times, providing a window into how such systems endured and evolved alongside European influences. The move away from this settle-

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[4] Often referred to as "long houses"; however, locally "big house" is the preferred term.
[5] Marshall's (2000) "potlatch houses".

ment in the 1970s to one nearby, but differently arranged, provides a comparison that helps evaluate the relationship between settlement-encoded social structure and the retention of family group identity.

I investigated these questions through three main avenues: 1) a review of relevant historical and ethnographic records; 2) collaboration and interviews with community members, and; 3) mapping, coring, and radiocarbon dating of the material remains of the village, now an archaeological site.

Chapter 1 provides a whirlwind overview of the relevant ethnographic, historical, and archaeological material related to this site. Given these extensive materials, I only included information that is directly relevant to the study.

Chapter 2 establishes the theoretical framework through which I interpret this research. I rely primarily on Indigenous archaeology and what I have termed "house theory". The latter is a combination of household archaeology and various theories concerning house and household developed in other fields.

Chapter 3 reports the methods and results of the archaeological investigation carried out on Aktis Island. I discuss the settlement history of the site, from initial occupation to confederation through to more recent times.

Chapter 4 presents methods and results of ethnographic interviews and observations, framed around a discussion of the changing relationship between houses and households over time at Aktis village. I compare Robert Peter's sketch map with the map of the village surface produced as a part of this study. I also discuss the persistence of extended family social units in relation to houses and family lineage properties.

Chapter 1: Background

1.1   Geographic Location

The west coast of Vancouver Island features five deep inlets, making a notable contrast to the relatively linear mainland coastline further south. Figure 1 shows the location of the inlets and the groups that inhabited them during the nineteenth century. The inlets allowed for a seasonal movement from protected "inside" sites (up inlet) during stormy winter months to "outside" sites (close to the open water) for the calmer summer season (Drucker 1951). The west coast climate is wet and mild. Winters are characterized by high, often torrential, rainfall, and powerful southeasterly winds (Kenyon 1980). Summers are cool and relatively dry. Protruding headlands along the coast make ocean navigation challenging in some areas. Cape Cook, just north of Kyuquot Sound, marks the territorial and cultural division between the Nuu-chah-nulth and the Kwakwaka'wakw. Estevan Point, further south, served to divide the northern Nuu-chah-nulth groups from their neighbours further south. Though the Nuu-chah-nulth did travel across these headlands, it was risky, especially in poor weather conditions (Kenyon 1980).

People have lived on the west coast of British Columbia for at least 11,000 years (Mackie et al. 2011). During this time, relative sea levels have greatly fluctuated. Globally, sea levels rose following the last ice age; however, local contexts are influenced by more than eustatic effects. Isostatic rebound, the uplifting of land masses as the weight of the ice is relieved, can cause sea levels to decrease and increase differentially across short horizontal distances (Friele and Hutchinson 1993). In the absence of sea level data from Kyuquot Sound, information from elsewhere on the west coast of Vancouver Island can be used as a proxy, since the primary axis of isostatic effects parallels the margin of the Pleistocene continental ice sheets that followed the

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Figure 1. Nuu-chah-nulth, Ditidaht, and Makah Groups
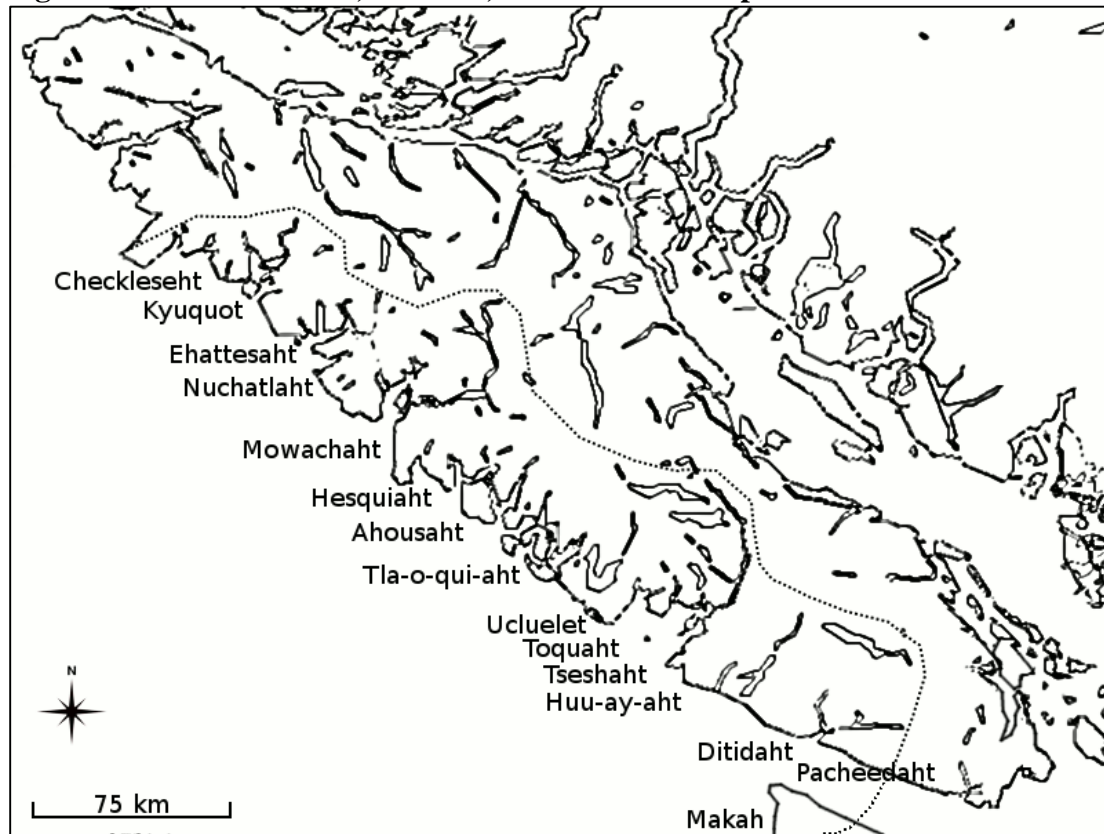
coastline. Evidence in Barkley and Clayoquot Sounds are consistent, suggesting that sea levels

rose quickly following early Holocene lows, stabilizing at three to four metres asl (above mean

sea level) from 6000 to 4800 BP (calibrated radiocarbon years before present), and then slowly

receded to present levels (Mackie et al. 2011; Friele and Hutchinson 1993:838). Geographical

features suggest that this data is applicable further north at Yuquot and Hesquiat Harbour (Friele

and Hutchinson 1993:839). It doesn't seem unreasonable to expect a similar sea level curve,

slightly further north in Kyuquot Sound, although recent research (McLaren et al. 2014; Shugar

et al. 2014) notes considerable local variation even in the context of regional patterns.

1.2   Previous Archaeological Work

Little archaeological work has been carried out in Ka:'yu:'k't'h traditional territory. James Haggarty and Richard Inglis of the B.C. Provincial Museum were the first to conduct archaeological studies in the area in the early 1980s (Haggarty and Inglis 1984). They completed only a preliminary reconnaissance, paying particular attention to defensive sites, and it is likely that many existing sites (such as rock art, intertidal features, human burials, and culturally modified trees) remain unidentified (Arcas Consulting Archaeologists and Archeo Tech Associates 1995). Aktis village (EaSu-2) was recorded at this time. Haggarty and Inglis (1984) describe it as a large shell midden along the eastern shoreline of Aktis Island. They note a number of well-defined big house depressions, arranged in three parallel rows facing the beach. They did not produce a map.

Haggarty and Inglis (1984) also recorded a number of sites on nearby islands including several defensive and village sites and a burial site[6]. Though they may not all be contemporaneous, it nonetheless suggests that this was once a major centre. The defensive sites are small sites adjacent to larger villages (a typical pattern for the west coast of the island). They served as lookout points, places of refuge, or even as vantage points for sea mammal hunting (McMillan 1999). Nothing is known beyond the location and, in some cases, the surface features of these sites. Given the paucity of archaeological information available in Kyuquot Sound, one can look to the rest of Nuu-chah-nulth territory as an archaeological baseline.

Though once an "archaeological *terra incognita*" (McMillan 1996:73), a number of large-scale excavations have now been carried out in Nuu-chah-nulth territory and their close neighbours to the south, the Ditidaht, and Makah. These include (from north to south): Yuquot in Nootka Sound (Dewhirst 1980), several Hesquiat Harbour sites (Haggarty 1982), T'ukw'aa,

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[6] A map of the locations of these sites is not included at the request of the Ka:'yu:'k't'h / Che:k:tles7et'h' Cultural Executive.

Ch'uumat'a, Ts'ishaa, and Huu7ii in Barkley Sound (McMillan 1999; McMillan and St. Claire 2005; McMillan and St. Claire 2012), Shoemaker Bay at the head of Alberni Inlet (McMillan and St. Claire 1982), and, Ozette and Hoko River on the Olympic Peninsula (Samuels 1991). This has left a notable absence of archaeological data in northern Nuu-chah-nulth territory.

Evidence from these recent projects supports the long-term continuity of Nuu-chah-nulth houses (and presumably households) over time. During the Yuquot excavations, 18 rock-rimmed firepits were found, dating between 2300 -1900 BP. The majority of these firepits occurred in two clusters and were directly superimposed, suggesting that the firepits were in a dwelling (Dewhirst 1980:50). Similarly, at Ozette, firepits, postholes, and house floors in three dwellings were directly superimposed, despite the fact that layers of sterile sand separated these superimposed house floors (McKenzie 1974). This suggests that the house layout was carefully replicated in each successive rebuilding of the house (Marshall 2000). In Barkley Sound, deposits from the same house (Huu7ii House 1) date between 1,500 and 400 years ago (McKechnie 2013), once more suggesting long-term continuity of house placement.

The deep, well-defined house depressions typical of Nuu-chah-nulth villages provide further evidence that houses were not frequently moved. To demonstrate this, Marshall (2000) points to an 1874 photograph of a Yuquot house frame. As the planks are removed, one can see a ridge along the outer border of the house, forming a house depression, just like the ones we see today at abandoned village sites. Marshall (2000:79) notes that the rocks that make up the bulk of these ridges are not found in the surrounding soil, suggesting that the ridges were formed over time, as people discarded refuse, including boiling and hearth rocks, outside their houses. These distinct house depressions are evidence of "the long-term maintenance of house structures in established positions" among the Nuu-chah-nulth (Marshall 2000:79).

**1.3	Ethnography**

The Nuu-chah-nulth exhibited all the typical northwest coast traits, including social stratification, sedentism, high population density, full-time specialists, ownership and control of property, elaborate technology, and monumental architecture (Ames and Maschner 1999). They were known for the dangerous and prestigious practice of active whaling, the valuable dentalia shell harvested in their waters, and their large ocean-going canoes (Drucker 1951). Here, I will focus on houses and family groups, topics that pertain directly to this research.

During the early contact period, explorers report few external markers of higher status houses. Totem poles came late to the Nuu-chah-nulth, being introduced from their northern neighbours, the Kwakwaka'wakw (Curtis 1915). Rather, the insides of houses tended to be embellished (Marshall 200). In 1788, Meares described a Clayoquot house interior as follows:

Three enormous trees, rudely carved and painted formed the rafters, which were supported at the ends and in the middle by gigantic images, carved out of huge blocks of timber… Our curiosity as well as our astonishment was on its utmost stretch, when we considered the strength that must be necessary to raise these enormous beams to their present elevation. [Meares 1967:138]

Indeed one of the requirements of a chief was the charisma and influence to compel a number of people to help build such remarkable houses. However, after initial construction, big houses were not often entirely rebuilt, unless they were destroyed through natural disaster or warfare. Rather, the Nuu-chah-nulth tended to employ partial renewal: "over a long period, the entire roof and siding of a house might be renewed, and one by one the posts and beams would be replaced, but it would be the same old house" (Drucker 1951: 73). When groups moved seasonally, house

posts would be left in place and the siding would be transported to homes up inlet. Marshall (2000) points out that such practices would result in a striking permanence of house placement. It seems reasonable to assume that the enduring nature of the physical house would have fortified it as a symbol for the household group. In most cases, one family group occupied one house. However, high status family groups were sometimes large enough to occupy several houses.

The family group was the primary social unit of the Nuu-chah-nulth. The family group was organized primarily around hereditary rank and kinship ties (no matter how distant), and consisted of a family of chiefs, their speakers, war chiefs, clowns, commoners, and slaves (Drucker 1951). In Kenyon's (1980:84) words, it is "an idealized family, expanded over time, which owned a distinct territory and shared common ceremonial or ritual property". Privileges, both economic and ceremonial, were owned corporately by family groups, but held in trust by the heads of each family group. As is common along the northwest coast, the Nuu-chah-nulth had strict regulations concerning ownership: "Not only rivers and fishing places close at hand, but the waters of the sea for miles offshore, the land, houses, carvings on a house post… names, songs, dances, medicines, and rituals, all were privately owned property" (Drucker 1951:247).

Though conceived of as being based on kinship, Kenyon (1980) argues that family groups were actually based on the *ideology* of kinship. She notes that family groups tended to be very fluid, especially among the commoner class (Drucker's [1951:279] "perpetual transients), who could stress different (and sometimes distant) paternal or maternal consanguineal bonds when it suited them. Marshall (2000) too, criticizes anthropologists for being preoccupied with kinship, when considering the family group. Rather than seeing kinship as the *basis* for household composition, she sees it as a *social rationalization* to produce group solidarity. For Marshall, the house is far more permanent than its occupants.

Chiefs could appeal to this ideology of kinship to tempt individuals to move to a different house. As one of Drucker's (1951:279) informants reported: "if a man stayed too long in one house, his other relatives became jealous". Chiefs would offer incentives (such as the use of a fishing ground) to attract new members or convince those already present to stay. Sometimes chiefs would have bidding wars, trying to recruit individuals with valuable skills. The narratives of kinship were necessary to create solidarity in a group whose membership was so fluid. This solidarity, though temporary, was ardent: "with whatever group a man happened to be living, he identified himself completely" (Drucker 1951:279).

The family group was most often named after its territory (ḥaḥuulhi) or salmon stream. Several family groups made up the tribe, living together in a common winter village. Tribes sometimes formed larger polities, such as the Ka:'yu:'k't'h confederacy.

In the village, the largest house, usually front and centre, was generally an indication of the highest-ranking family group (Ames and Maschner 1999). Within the house, space was also patterned. The chiefs (often brothers) occupied the four corners, with the highest ranking chief (taayi ḥawilh) in the back right-hand corner. The close kin and loyal supporters of the chief (his mamutswiniłim) shared these corner locations. Between the corners lived the commoners, or tenants (maiyustsa) (Drucker 1951:279). The living space along the walls was subdivided, such that each nuclear family had its own space, but these partitions were not substantial (and were often moveable), thus allowing for visibility during ceremonies (Curtis 1915).

The ceremonial season followed the last salmon run, beginning when family groups re-united in their winter village. Feasts[7] were given for a variety of reasons, such as a coming of age ceremony, a marriage or a divorce, all of which included the transfer of rights. During a feast the

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[7] "Potlatch" is the most well-known term for these ceremonies. However, "potlatch" is something of a misnomer, because of its Chinookan origin, and because it engenders the misconception that a "potlatch" represents a single event, when in reality the term comprises a number of different events.

host group gave many gifts to the guest group(s), and in exchange, the guest group(s) served as

witnesses for the event. The order of seating during these feasts was a formal display of rank:

> these 'seats'…. were arranged in a definite order, and each chief had to be formally conducted to
> his proper place before the affair could begin. The order of seats… indicated the relative rank of
> the various chiefs by a tribe or confederacy, and thus was the visible symbol of their nobility.
> [Drucker 1951:260]

These events took place in the big houses, combining both private and public space.

However following contact, public and private space were fully separated when nuclear families

moved into single-family dwellings, and built dance houses to host feasts.

1.4   Post-contact History

Following contact, life did not change dramatically for the Ka:'yu:'k't'h. Though their

economy was affected, their ideology was not, and they did not have much direct interaction with

Europeans. With missionization and colonization, more significant change took place.

Europeans first visited the west coast in the 1770s (first by Juan Perez, and then by James

Cook). The potential profit of the sea otter trade was immediately recognized following Cook's

voyage, and soon many more trading vessels arrived (Cook 1968). Several powerful Nuu-chah-

nulth chiefs[8] had a monopoly on the sea otter trade, forcing other groups to trade through them

(McMillan 1999). As such, the Ka:'yu:'k't'h had little contact with Europeans in this early period.

By the late 1700s, sea otters were becoming scarce and fewer ships ventured into Nuu-chah-

nulth territory. Trade picked up again in the 1850s when dogfish oil was in high demand

(McMillan 1999). Around this time, the majority of Ka:'yu:'k't'h began to live year-round on

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[8] The Ka:'yu:'k't'h likely traded through the powerful Chief Maquinna of Yuquot to the south.

Aktis Island, as it was more accessible to schooners (Drucker 1951). However, people continued to make short trips to their tribal and family group territories up inlet.

Gilbert Malcolm Sproat arrived on Vancouver Island in 1860 to help establish a sawmill in Alberni Inlet. He describes the 1855 raid of Aktis village, which was recounted to him (Sproat 1987[1868]). The only motivation Sproat offers for the attack was a "bad feeling" between the Clayoquot and the Ka:'yu:'k't'h. Whatever the reason, the Clayoquot decided to attack and travelled north, recruiting allies from all groups north of Barkley Sound save Ahousaht. They even hired a European schooner to transport a number of warriors and ammunition. The Ka:'yu:'k't'h had apparently been expecting the raid for some time, but they had given up the watch, and one of the four tribes had already departed for the winter. The assailants were meant to attack simultaneously from either side of the village, with a third group attacking in the middle during the confusion. The Clayoquot planned for the total obliteration of the Ka:'yu:'k't'h; however, one of the groups lost their nerve and did not attack, and the schooner never arrived (Drucker 1951). Sproat describes most of the destruction taking place on the "west end"[9] of the village. The Ka:'yu:'k't'h were able to rally their forces and send for help from those up inlet, successfully resisting the attack, but many died and half of the houses were burned down.

This devastating event, known as the Last Battle, is still remembered today. Sarah Short recounted to me the version that she heard from her father-in-law years ago: all the young men of the community had gone trapping up inlet, as was the custom in autumn. Only the elderly, the women and children were left. An old man was warned that the war ships were coming so he waited on his front porch with his bow and arrow. The first canoe pulled up and the chief of the Clayoquot set foot on land. The old man shot him through the heart with an arrow, killing him, and throwing the attack into confusion.

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[9] I believe this corresponds to the north end as it tilts slightly to the west.

Despite the losses suffered during the attack, the Ka:'yu:'k't'h continued to be the most numerous tribe on the coast. Only seven years after this attack, the HMS Hecate arrived in Kyuquot Sound to survey the area. Lieutenant Hankin (1862) remarked on the large size of the settlement, estimating that there were "between 700 and 800 people living here". He also noted that "with the exception of occasional visits from trading schooners, they have seen but little of the whites" (Hankin 1862).

This relative isolation changed with missionization. In 1875, Rev. Brabant of the Catholic Church established the first sustained mission among the Nuu-chah-nulth at Hesquiat Harbour. Brabant approached the Ka:'yu:'k't'h chief about establishing a mission there as well. He reported that "the chief not only told me that he was anxious to have a resident priest, but he promised to grant all the land required" (Brabant 1977:81). This eagerness may have been because the presence of a priest would ensure protection from other tribes (Nicholaye 1913). In addition, the adoption of Christianity wasn't considered a rejection of traditional spirituality, but rather as an increase in spiritual wealth. For instance, at a feast held at Aktis in 1884, the priest's sermon was effectively part of Ka:'yu:'k't'h's performances, though the priest was likely unaware of how his message was regarded (Kenyon 1980). In 1880, a church and school were established at Kamils Island[10], immediately adjacent to Aktis, under the direction of Rev. Lemmens and then Rev. Nicholaye (Brabant 1977). Missionization was slow-going, likely due to the importance of rank, which was at odds with the Christian emphasis on equality (Kenyon 1980:56).

One of the changes typically attributed to the influence of missionaries is the move into single family dwellings. Though this began early in Kyuquot, I argue that it did not result in the abandonment of family groups. Rather, nuclear families continued to build on the lineage property behind the family big house. The big houses also underwent a significant change. They

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[10] known locally as Mission Island.

were rebuilt in the European-style and repurposed. They became "dance houses"[11], vacant except for ceremonial gatherings and other communal activities. Marshall (2000) notes that at Yuquot, rather than continuing in the tradition of partial renewal, dance houses were rebuilt entirely on a relatively frequent basis and elaborated as chiefs attempted to "one up" their neighbours. This ended around 1930, when the government began to enforce the potlatch ban[12] more proactively, and required that the dance houses be torn down.

The move to single family dwellings coupled with changing economic opportunities led to increased financial independence for nuclear families. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the trade of sealskins became very profitable. Many Nuu-chah-nulth men, who were considered sealing experts, were hired on sealskin schooners. At first, chiefs of family groups acted as contractors and hired out their members, thus continuing in the tradition of a communal economy (Marshall 2000:90). However, individuals increasingly gained control of their incomes and, by the end of the century, some individuals made large sums and owned their own schooners. Being otherwise employed prevented individuals from preparing enough winter stores, and they became quickly dependent on imported European goods, especially foodstuffs such as flour (Indian Affairs 1889). The beginning of the 20th century saw further commercial enterprises infiltrating the west coast, such as canneries, salteries, and whaling stations.

In 1930 a cooperative fishing camp was set up in Walter's Cove in Kyuquot Sound. Kenyon (1980:53) sees this neighbouring Caucasian community as the agent that "ultimately resulted in far-reaching changes in society and life-style", as the Ka:'yu:'k't'h were exposed to their "feelings of superiority" and as they were admitted into a fulltime market economy through the commercial fishing industry (Kenyon 1980:53).

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[11] Marshall's (2000) "potlatch houses".
[12] This ban began in 1885 and was terminated in 1951, with an amendment to the Indian Act.

In the 1920s, a second Catholic mission was set up on the northwest side of Aktis. This was replaced in 1945 by a church building near the centre of the village. Missionization efforts were also invested in the operation of residential schools, and many of the children of Ka:'yu:'k't'h' were taken from their parents by force, as attendance was compulsory until 1948. One individual recounted being hidden away the first year she was old enough to be sent to residential school, but being found the second year. She recalls feeling confused, as she didn't speak any English. She was placed on a boat in a room with no windows and no bathroom, and left there overnight until her arrival at the school. Most of the children of Ka:'yu:'k't'h were sent to either Christie Indian Residential School in Tofino (operated by the Catholic Church) or Alberni Indian Residential School in Port Alberni (operated by the Presbyterian and then United Church). Though some individuals have fond memories of residential school, overwhelmingly the memories are negative, due to the physical and emotional abuse suffered there and due to the disruption of their traditional lifeways (Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council 1996).

In 1951, a day school was built in Aktis village beside the church, and children no longer had to leave home to go to school. Access to this school was one of the main reasons the Che:k:tles7et'h' amalgamated with the Ka:'yu:'k't'h. The amalgamation was considered temporary at the time, and the Che:k:tles7et'h' were only granted land on Kamils Island on which to live, as lineage properties on Aktis continued to be recognized by the Ka:'yu:'k't'h. Finally in the early 1970s, the majority of the Ka:'yu:'k't'h/Che:k:tles7et'h' people moved to nearby Houpsitas (the winter village of the La'a'àth tribe, one of the four tribes of Ka:'yu:'k't'h), directly across from the white settlement at Walter's cove. The move ensured access to more reliable electricity and better drinking water (Kenyon 1980). The last person moved away from Aktis in the 1990s, and the village is now abandoned with only a few houses left standing.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Considerations

Indigenous archaeology heavily influenced *how* I conducted this study, and is reflected in my attempts to make this research as collaborative and as inclusive as possible. In analyzing the results of this research, I relied heavily on "house theory", a combination of household archaeology and various theories concerning house and household developed in other fields. In this chapter, I discuss these two theoretical frameworks and their usefulness for the current study.

2.1   Indigenous Archaeology

Indigenous Archaeology emerged out of the post-modern movement in anthropology, which questions totalizing theories produced by the privileged voices of academics. The majority of archaeologists still come from a western tradition, and are often unaware of their own ethnocentrism, which makes their arbitrary views seem to them "universal, natural, normal or commonsensical" (Martindale and Nicholas 2014:442). Martindale and Nicholas (2014:442) refer to this as the "human orthodoxy, manifest in archaeology, that one's culturally constructed way of knowing reality is reality while different versions of this are simply culturalist constructions." To combat this natural temptation, Hodder et al. (1995:242) encourage "multivocality, experimentation, and the empowerment of marginal political and cultural constituencies" while practicing archaeology.

Indigenous people constitute one such group of people marginalized by archaeology. Their ways of knowing have often been contradicted or ignored by archaeologists. In fact, whether consciously or not, some archaeologists have aided in the disenfranchisement of Indigenous

peoples. Those who practice Indigenous Archaeology see this as evidence of academic collusion with the colonial enterprise. In orthodox archaeological practice, knowledge doesn't often return to benefit the descendent community where it was produced, but rather is converted into capital and prestige for the researcher in the form of publications and degrees (Nicholas and Hollowell 2007). To counteract these problems, Indigenous archaeologists consciously seek to "decolonize" archaeological practice by enacting a more collaborative and inclusive archaeology, giving Indigenous peoples voices and taking into consideration the political outcomes of their research (Smith and Wobst 2005; Nicholas and Andrews 1997).

Pronounced critic of Indigenous Archaeology, McGhee, questions the credibility of archaeologists who are also Indigenous activists. He states that "the central purpose of archaeology… is the increase of knowledge regarding human history," a topic which seems "of little relevance" to Indigenous archaeologists (McGhee 2008:581). He implies that greater knowledge about human history cannot be achieved while at the same time focusing on improving the effects of archaeological practice on Indigenous communities. However, in reality, these two goals often overlap. Giving voice to Indigenous perspectives both empowers Indigenous peoples and offers important insight when interpreting archaeological data. Furthermore, partnerships with a descendent community from the beginning of the decision-making process can do much to avoid situations where archaeological and Indigenous perspectives deviate. If such differences do nonetheless occur, both perspectives should be presented as valid understandings of the past. Unfortunately, in such instances, there is a tendency to assign a hierarchy of value, in which archaeological explanation is more greatly esteemed than Indigenous explanation (Martindale and Nicholas 2014). Martindale and Nicholas (2014) encourage archaeologists to allow for more uncertainty in their results, relinquishing "the

burden of being singularly authoritative". Rather than explaining data with traditionally accepted causal explanations in archaeology (explanations which are not generally thoroughly tested, and which may encompass western assumptions about humanity), archaeologists should use their data to test these explanations (Martindale and Nicholas 2014:455).

In this project, I have attempted to incorporate these principles as much as possible. My previous relationship with a number of the people of this community facilitated mutual cooperation and helped to establish trust. I visited the community in the summer of 2012 to conduct exploratory interviews to ascertain people's interests and opinions about the project. I then considered these views in devising a research proposal, which reflected these interests before returning to the field in the summer of 2013. After considering the community's responses to my interview questions (see Appendix A), I suggested three research options: 1) an ethno-archaeological study of Aktis village, 2) a more archaeological-focused study of Aktis Island as a whole, or 3) a wider archaeological survey of the Mission Group islands. The Ka:'yu:'k't'h / Che:k:tles7et'h' Cultural Executive selected the first option and provided me with support and approval. During the archaeological study, a number of community members volunteered with me on site. I interviewed many of the community's key elders, and used their insight to inform my interpretations. I also had the wonderful opportunity to present in the grade 4 – 6 class in the elementary school, and to host an on-site picnic and walking tour at the end of the 2013 field season. Copies of all recorded interviews will be provided to the school and band office, so that others can benefit from them. In my interpretations, I have attempted to be aware of my own vulnerability to ethnocentrism and have considered other viewpoints and have been skeptical of untested causal explanations in the archaeological literature.

2.2   House Theory

The topic of houses and households has been explored through a number of different lenses—including archaeology, architecture, and sociology—making this body of theory very rich.

Archaeologists began to afford a greater focus on the household as a unit of inquiry beginning in the 1980s. Prior to this, entire cultures or settlement patterns were the primary focus of archaeological analysis (Wilk and Rathje 1982). In Wilk and Rathje's (1982:618) influential article, they argue that households are a valuable unit of study because they "are the level at which social groups articulate directly with economic and ecological processes". They also note that anthropologists have frequently used households as their basic unit of analysis, allowing for easy ethnographic comparison (Wilk and Rathje 1982:619).

A little over a decade later, Coupland and Banning (1996:2) argued that the "archaeology of big houses" was a distinct subfield of household archaeology, as big houses allow for extended-family, multi-family or polygamous units, which are much more complex than nuclear family units. Coupland and Banning further note that:

a big house can… be a symbol of affluence that may signal to others the relative success of its owner, a person who can regularly hold feasts and ceremonies within his house… Even the prospect of building a big house may be a demanding task of production [Coupland and Banning 1996:3].

The house is a good proxy for wealth, because the enormous labour investment in house construction makes it difficult to falsify; whereas, other prestige goods, such as furniture or clothing, are relatively low cost and can be used deceptively to create the impression of affluence (Blanton 1994:13-14).

Wilk and Rathje (1982) identified four functions of the household: 1) production, 2) distribution, 3) transmission, and 4) reproduction. Many studies are framed around these categories, particularly production and distribution, which are the most archaeologically visible. In fact, Matson (1996) and Coupland (1996) both argue that cooperation during production was one of the primary motivations for the initial formation of big households on the northwest coast. They argue that such households are most likely to form when there is competition for access to an important resource, when the technology for acquiring an important resource requires many people, or when tasks must be performed simultaneously. These conditions existed on the northwest coast – salmon streams were owned and controlled, technology for salmon procurement, such as reef-netting, required many people, and the salmon had to be processed immediately in large quantities, requiring many people to work at once (Coupland 1996:122). However, as Martindale and Nicholas (2014) warn, such causal explanations often encompass Eurocentric assumptions. This study has found that the Ka:'yu:'k't'h display persistence in the social cohesion of family groups, even after the economic independence of nuclear families within those groups. If economics truly constitute the primary incentive for the cohesion of family groups, then one would expect that after the removal of any economic motivation, the family groups would disappear; however, this was not the case among the Ka:'yu:'k't'h.

This sort of functional economic-oriented archaeology offers little insight into the social realities of communal living. Anthropologists Carsten and Hugh-Jones (1995:3), on the other hand, consider the house "an extension of the person: like an extra skin, carapace or second layer of clothes, it serves as much to reveal and display as it does to hide and protect."

Other academics conceive of the house as a communication medium. In a study of houses worldwide, Blanton (1994) argues that the house conveys information: 1) among house residents,

structuring day-to-day interactions, and enforcing social norms, and; 2) to the larger community, asserting a statement of relative status as compared to other households. Similarly, Rapoport (1982) suggests that the built-environment of any group acts as a mnemonic device, fostering appropriate behaviour, reproducing cultural norms, and communicating rank and social identity.

Houses are of particular interest, then, on the Northwest coast, as they formed the bulk of the built environment. The house was the setting for a variety of activities:

Houses… were the physical manifestation of the household and its social rank; they were the theatre and stage for social and spiritual rituals, but they were also shelter in the Northwest's dank climate; they were food processing factories, in which food resources were butchered, roasted, smoked, rendered, dried, boiled, stored, and consumed; and they were the objects of enormous effort and skill. Their interior arrangements were often a map of the relative status of the household's members [Ames and Maschner 1999:147].

Evidently, a focus on the northwest coast households reveals much about the society as a whole. In fact, Lévi-Strauss (1983) found it necessary to create a new societal category – the house-based society – when confronted with Kwakwaka'wakw social norms (such as fictitious kinship), which he could not fit into conventional kinship categories. Goldman (1975:64) describes how the Kwakwaka'wakw themselves considered the house a container for the "spirit incarnate of the lineage ancestors" to the extent that when the chief died, they would say that the house had died (until it was taken up by the next chief).

The house comprises all these things. It is a centre of production, an extension of the self, a status symbol, a mnemonic device, a social identity, a mediator and generator of social relations, and a unifying agent. It is a particularly useful unit of analysis among the Nuu-chah-nulth, as family groups (usually comprising a single household) formed the basic unit of society. As mentioned above, archaeological evidence supports the continuity of Nuu-chah-nulth houses (and presumably the family groups who inhabited them) over time.

Chapter 3: Archaeology: Mapping, Coring, and Dating

3.1   Methods

This project encompassed three different lines of archaeological research: 1) total station

mapping; 2) percussion coring, and; 3) radiocarbon dating. These methods of research seemed

the most fitting as the layout and antiquity of Aktis village were the two primary research

interests that emerged from interviews with community members. Despite the historic settlement

on Aktis Island, I knew that there were a number of well-defined big house depressions, as

indicated in Haggarty and Inglis's (1984) report. I hoped that some of these depressions might

align with the dance houses depicted on Robert Peter's sketch map, two of which did[13].

One of the conditions of the permission granted to me by the Ka:'yu:'k't'h /

Che:k:tles7et'h' Cultural Executive was that a volunteer from the community work with me as

often as possible. I recruited volunteers via a sign-up sheet in the band office and by personal

request. I knew that the site measured approximately 500 by 100 m and I hoped that four weeks

of fieldwork would be sufficient for mapping and coring the site. Prior to total-station mapping, I

determined the boundaries of the site using an auger and recorded them with a GPS (Global

Positioning System). Unfortunately, prior to entering the field, I did not realize how extensively

dense bushes and brambles engulf the site. In some areas the brush exceeds three metres in

height. As the target stick for the total station extended to only 2.15 metres, these conditions

were extremely challenging. I fashioned an *ad hoc* extension, which brought the target height up

to three metres. However, this likely introduced some error (several centimetres at most) into the

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[13] These results are available in Section 4.2 Houses.

measurements, as the taller pole is more difficult to hold level. We cleared transects of brush in lines perpendicular to the beach, approximately one metre wide and one metre apart, to allow for mapping; this ensured that we were able to capture the front and back edges of the house depressions. Unfortunately, clearing the brush was very time-consuming, and mapping proceeded slowly. The brush would have been less challenging at a different time of year; however, other challenges would have taken its place. During the stormy winter months, one can become stranded on Aktis Island for days or weeks at a time (Kenyon 1980). Furthermore, extensive rainfall dominates the fall, winter, and spring months, making fieldwork difficult.

As I realized I would not have enough time to complete the map, I decided to focus on mapping the first two rows, because: 1) the most distinct house depressions were in the first row; 2) the Robert Peter sketch map suggested that the dance houses occurred in the second row, and; 3) the third row was the most disturbed as most of the recent houses were built there. Even so, I did map those areas of the third row that were clear of brush, and thus undemanding to map. In the end, we were able to map the first two rows for a span of about two thirds of the site.

My second line of research was percussion coring. This method can provide estimates on the age and some data on the developmental history of a site, without having to embark on a full-scale excavation (Martindale et al. 2009). Core samples are collected vertically in a polyester tube. The material in the tube can later be extracted and dated. My primary goal in carrying out percussion coring was to determine site depth and to obtain a sample for radiocarbon dating from the basal levels of the site to provide an age estimate for initial occupation. I took three core samples in the back ridge of the site, three in the second row of house depressions, and one in the first row of house depressions (seven in total), the locations of which were recorded via GPS. I decided to map these core samples to locate possible stratigraphic transitions that occurred across

the site, but this was only a secondary aim. Shell midden stratigraphy is complex and often

mottled. I knew that the limited number of samples would likely be insufficient to reveal a

discernable pattern. I mapped the cores in the lab by noting the percentage of shell and charcoal,

the type of soil, and the thickness of each layer. Material is compressed in the tube during the

coring process and so an expansion factor must be calculated to reflect actual depth. However,

without an adjacent test pit or excavation unit, compression factors across different materials are

impossible to determine. Therefore, I assumed an equal compression factor across different

materials, with the exclusion of sand and gravel, which are known to have a compression factor

of one (Martindale 2012, personal communication).

   Three radiocarbon samples were taken from a core in the lab. After selecting the desired

sample lenses, a small portion of material was extracted, cleansed with distilled water, and

examined under a microscope. A suitable sample was chosen, and sent to the lab for dating.

3.2 Mapping

Though incomplete, the surface map (Figure 2) depicts three terraces, comprising five full and

five partial big house depressions. The first row is the best preserved, followed by the second and

then the third row. Ultimately, we mapped 85% of the site, comprising approximately 2.8

hectares. In total, 4663 data points were taken and were then interpolated to create the surface

map. The surface map was geo-referenced and overlaid onto a BC Trim map to indicate its

precise spatial location and to depict what portions of the site were excluded.

   A fresh water swamp lies directly behind the site, extending for approximately two thirds

of the site's length, and preventing any further expansion back into the forest. Though the swamp

does not extend to the southern end, there is, in its place, a steep incline directly behind the terraced area. This portion of the site is narrower than the rest, only wide enough to accommodate two rows of houses. In fact, the first row begins about one fifth of the way up from the south end, extending all the way up to the northern margin. There is no longer any trace of the house depressions on the south end, as this area was levelled for use as a field when the Aktis Day school opened (Kenyon 1980). The back ridge of the site was also levelled off here. I believe it was pushed backward, making it appear as if the site extends farther back in this area. A core sample in this area revealed that the midden deposits were shallow and mottled.

Peter Hansen, who grew up on Aktis Island, described seeing these house depressions:

When I was growing up there, there were big timbers on the ground, from the big houses [dance houses] that… the government had… torn down – all the way across the front there. Totem poles on the ground. All the frames were there, where they were dug out earlier. They were all there when I was a kid. I remember, the field was already done in front of the school…They flattened it for a play field. We used to play ball there… I know right on the end by where my place was [the southernest house, Mȧtsūwai] there was one [big house] and probably two or three where the field was. Another four or so beside the field, just all the way across. There were frames [depressions] all over… If you go, you'll see where all the hills are marking out these places.

Others have noticed these depressions as well, though without realizing what they were. Natalie Jack described sledding at Aktis village as a child, starting at the third row of house depressions and sliding down over the second row and first row, which she and her friends called "first bump" and "second bump" respectively.

The fact that a number of house depressions are still preserved at Aktis is noteworthy. Yuquot, further south, is a similar site to Aktis: it was also a summer village and the headquarters of a confederacy; it also continued to be occupied into modern times. However, at Yuquot, no trace of house depressions remains due to "surface disturbances, modern dwellings, overburden, and vegetation" (Dewhirst 1980:22). The changes in housing in the early twentieth century

Figure 2. Aktis Village Surface Maps

A. Aktis Village 3D Surface Map
(Tilted 26 degrees, Vertical Scale exagerrated)

vertical scale (metres)
10
5
0

0 20 40 60 80100
horizontal scale (metres)

N ▶

B. Aktis Village 3D Surface Map with House Depressions (No Tilt)

0 20 40 60 80100
(metres)

N ▶

C. Aktis Village Contour Map with House Depressions

0 20 40 60 80100
(metres)

N ▶

LEGEND

▼ Augur Locations indicating site boundaries
◆ Total Station Datum
— Contour Lines (every 0.5 m)

■ Standing Structure
☐ Big House Depression

that occurred in Kyuquot were mirrored in Yuquot: individuals moved out of big houses into single family dwellings, and the big houses were replaced with dance houses. The dance houses were frequently torn-down and rebuilt as neighbours competed to have the largest, most elaborate structure (Marshall 2000). This frequent building and rebuilding diverges significantly from the traditional practice of partial renewal, which preserved the precise location of the big houses over time. The trend of demolition and renewal, on the other hand, often included enlargement of the original structure and likely obscured many of the big house depressions.

Though similar, the situation at Aktis was different in several key ways. Robert Peter's sketch map reveals that the dance houses occurred in the second row of big house depressions. Therefore, the first row of big house depressions would not have been affected by the competitive building and rebuilding of dance houses. Even after the Ka:'yu:'k't'h people were forced by the Indian agent to demolish their dance houses in 1930, they tended not to build in the front area of the site. As Kenyon (1980:19) notes, "[Aktis] is distinctive in Kyuquot for the broad stretch of grass between the beach and the forests on which the village sits."

Drucker (1951) records only a single row of big houses at Aktis (with the exception of two houses, which he does not specify); however, there are three discernable rows of big house depressions at Aktis. Figure 3 depicts an early and a recent photograph of Aktis village. Figure 3A (Aktis village circa 1863) portrays a number of big houses in a line across the entire beach front. It is difficult to discern whether or not there was a second row of big houses at this point, but there appears to be only one. On the left side of the photograph (depicting the south end of the village), only the frames of the big houses have been left standing, suggesting that when this photograph was taken the members of these houses were occupying a different part of their territory up the inlet, and had taken the siding of their houses with them. These house frames also

Figure 3. Aktis Village Photographs

A. Akits Village circa 1863

B. Aktis Village 2012
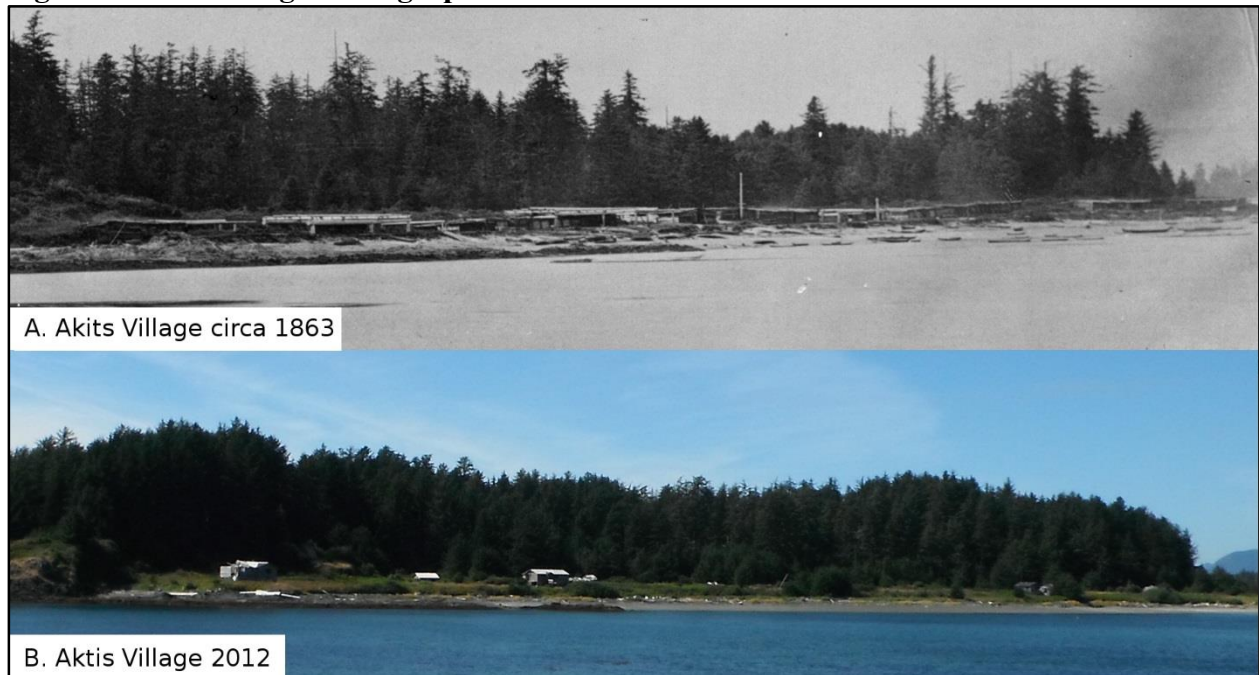
The upper image (Figure 3A) is PN 11608, courtesy of Royal BC Museum, BC Archives

indicate that the Ka:'yu:'k't'h were still using traditional building techniques, and had not yet switched to the European-style fixed plank housing. This photograph also confirms that there were big houses in the southern portion of the village, where there are no longer any depressions.

It is unclear whether or not all three of rows of big house depressions were inhabited simultaneously. The Ka:'yu:'k't'h were reportedly the largest Nuu-chah-nulth group in historic times; it is completely plausible that the entire site was occupied at once.

3.3   Percussion Coring

Core samples revealed shell midden deposits as deep as 3.5 metres, and what appears to be almost uninterrupted occupation. As noted above, three core samples were taken in the back ridge of the site, three in the second row of house depressions, and one in the first row of house

depressions. Figure 4 indicates the locations of core samples taken, which were recorded with a

GPS. The GPS data is accurate between three to five metres horizontally, however, the vertical

error is plus or minus ten metres. Indeed, some of the elevation information was clearly flawed

(one reading was negative thirty-four feet), so I discarded the GPS elevation data and substituted

in the elevation data from the nearest total station point.

Figure 4. Core Sample Locations
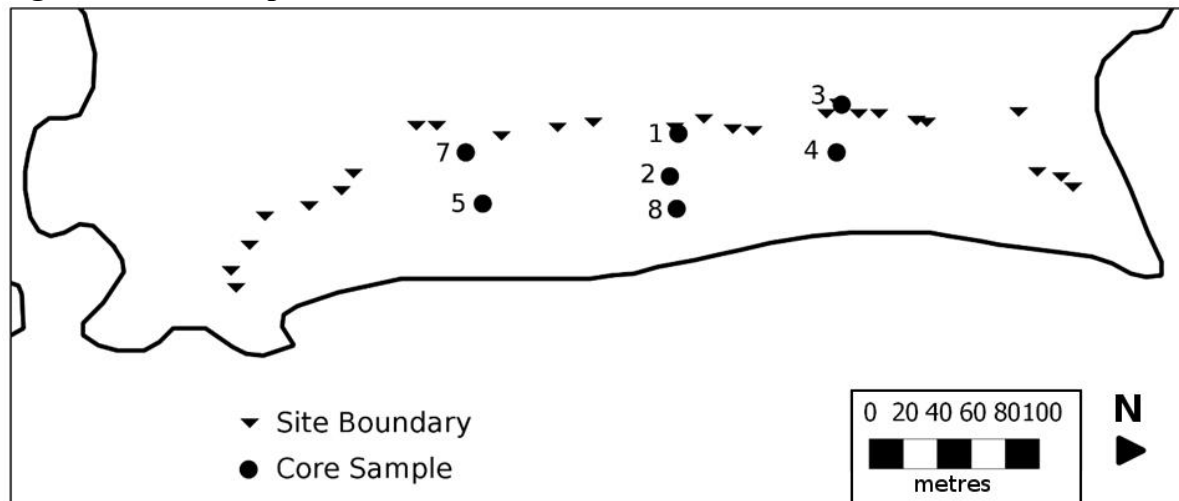
Figure 5 depicts the soil type, shell percentage, and depth of each core sample, corrected

for surface elevation. All three core samples taken in the second row of house depressions were

quite deep, ranging between 3.37 to 3.55 metres below the surface, suggesting that the second

row was occupied for the longest period of time. Core 1 in the middle back of the site was of a

similar depth, 3.34 metres. However, to the south and the north along the back ridge (core 7 and

3), core samples revealed much shallower midden deposits, 2.21 and 1.82 metres respectively.

The core sample taken in the first row was also relatively shallow, 1.62 metres deep. These

varying depths might provide some hints as to the order of occupation of the site, assuming that

the subsurface was level.

It is likely that Aktis was initially a smaller site, which expanded rapidly at the time the

Ka:'yu:'k't'h confederated. Such a pattern is evident at Kupti, one of the Yuquot confederacy's

Figure 5. Aktis Village Core Samples Summary

Location of Cores	South Side of Site 3rd Row --- 2nd Row		Middle of Site 3rd Row --- 2nd row --- 1st Row			North Side of Site 3rd Row --- 2nd Row	
Core Number	Core 7	Core 5	Core 1	Core 2	Core 8	Core 3	Core 4
Percent Shell	0 50 100	0 50 100	0 50 100	0 50 100	0 50 100	0 50 100	0 50 100

Legend
- Humus
- Shell
- Soil
- Sand
- Gravel
- Samples for C14 Dating
- Silt/Clay
- Charcoal
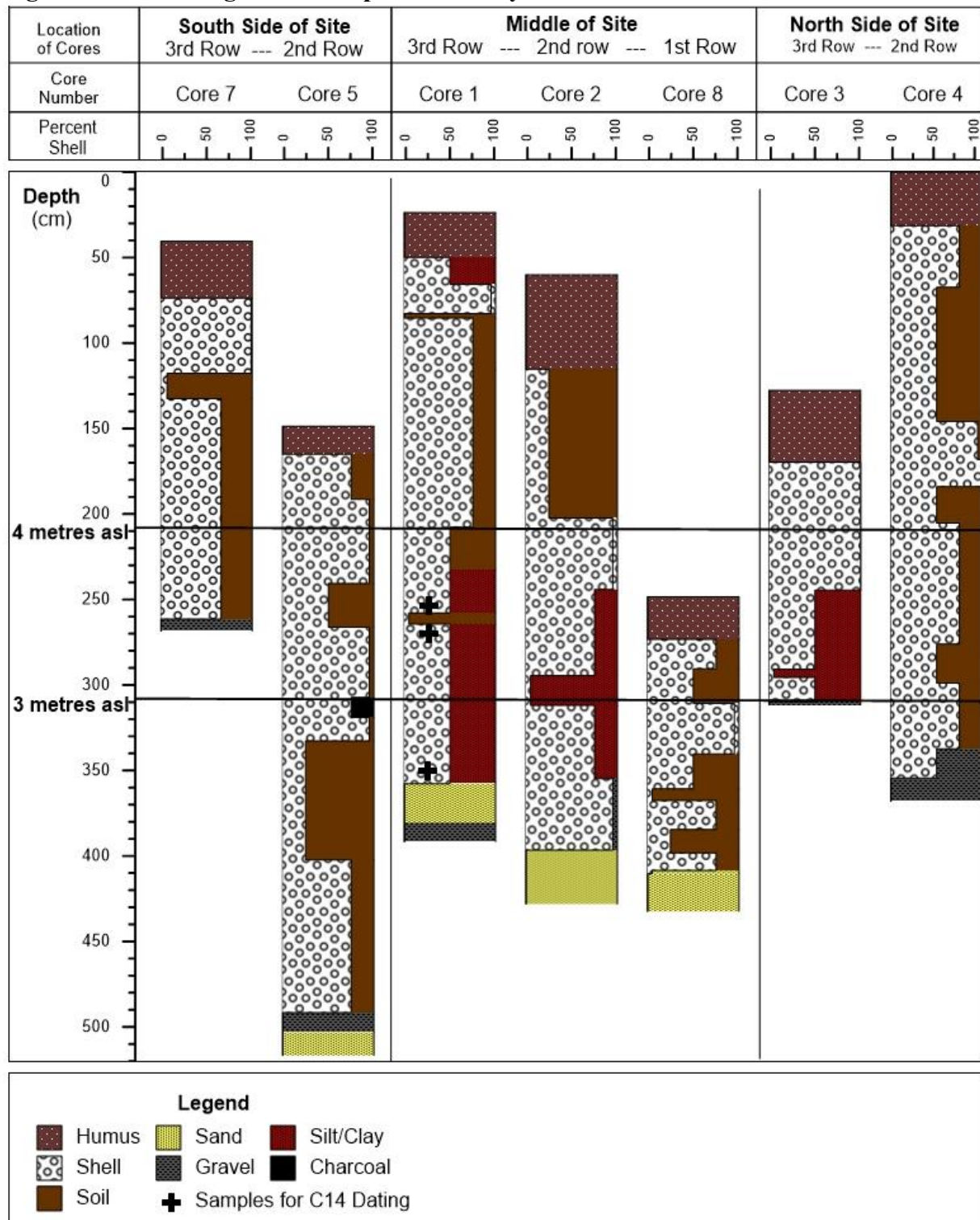
winter villages, which appears to have undergone rapid growth in late precontact times, 300 to 400 years ago (Marshall 1993). Drucker (1951) hypothesizes that the Ka:'yu:'k't'h were the first to form a confederacy among the Nuu-chah-nulth, as they exhibited the greatest stability over time. Ka:'yu:'k't'h oral tradition also suggests that confederation took place early, only shortly after the mythical Transformation of the World, when humans and animals took on their current forms (Drucker 1951:223). By the time of John Jewitt's captivity in the early 1800s, the Ka:'yu:'k't'h were certainly a cohesive unit, as he refers to them as one group (Jewitt 1974 [1824]). According to oral tradition, the Qwɔwinasáth family group was created on Aktis Island during the Transformation of the World, and thus the island and adjacent dentalia fishing ground were part of their territory (Drucker 1951). This supports the possibility that there is a smaller site underneath the confederated village site. The different depths of the cores possibly support this proposition, however, only excavation or a more extensive program of percussion coring can confirm this. The second and mid-back row appear to be the first to be occupied, as they are the deepest. When this area was initially occupied, the first row of house depressions may have still been inundated, and thus unavailable for habitation. The shallower cores (7, 8 and 3) are of similar depths and thus could represent expansion at the time of confederation. Confederation then likely occurred after the front row was made available for habitation by receding sea levels.

The horizontal lines in Figure 5 denote the three and four metre mark above modern sea levels, indicating projected sea level during the mid-Holocene. Only the basal levels of Core 7 would have been occupiable during this period, suggesting that the site was occupied only after the tide receded, sometime after 4800 BP. This is in line with radiocarbon data.

It is difficult to determine whether or not any stratigraphic patterns are discernible with so few cores. I noticed a thin sterile lens that could indicate a break in occupation, in six out of

seven cores. However, whether this actually represents a site-wide pattern can only be determined by a more extensive program of percussion-coring or a full-scale excavation. If the sterile lens is in fact a site-wide pattern, it indicates that at some point all three rows were inhabited simultaneously.

3.4   Radiocarbon Dating

Three samples were selected for radio-carbon dating. As the site was occupied into recent times, I deemed it unnecessary to send in a date to determine the terminal occupation of the site. Taking into consideration the advice of my committee, I decided to send in samples from a single core, as they would be the most internally consistent and directly comparable. I decided to use core 1, as it is situated in the back row (and thus potentially the oldest) and is among the deepest cores. I took samples from the basal layers of the site and from directly below and above the sterile lens, which possibly represents a break in occupation. The sample from the basal layer dates to 1686±126 BP. The possible break in occupation dated to between 1627±118 BP and 1384±107 BP. These dates are displayed in more detail in Table 1.

Table 1. Radiocarbon Dates

Sample	Location	Elevation (m abl)*	Material	^{14}C Lab number	^{14}C age	±	Delta R**	Calibrated Yr BP Upper	Calibrated Yr BP Lower
AKC14-001	Core 1: 9U 614917 5541008	2.26	Shell	D-AMS 004480	2308	23	200±40	1811	1560
AKC14-002	Core 1: 9U 614917 5541008	3.27	Shell	D-AMS 004481	2249	20	200±40	1744	1509
AKC14-003	Core 1: 9U 614917 5541008	3.20	Shell	D-AMS 004482	2023	24	200±40	1490	1277

Calibrated upper and lower age estimates shown are at the 2-sigma range and were calibrated using Calib 7.0.4 (Reimer et al. 2013). *Metres above barnacle line. **Delta-R values estimated based on Southon and Fedje 2003, and following personal communications with Martindale (March 2015).

Chapter 4: Ethnography: Houses and Households

4.1   Methods

As mentioned above, I conducted my first series of interviews in the summer of 2012, prior to a more extended period of fieldwork in the summer of 2013, as means of taking into account community members' insights when planning my specific research questions and goals. As a result of the community's continued interest in family lineage properties and the existence of the Robert Peter sketch map (Appendix C), I decided to make houses and household groups at Aktis village the focus of my research. As one of my committee members put it, the sketch map was "every archaeologist's dream", making interpretation of site layout much less speculative than it would otherwise be. My 2013 interview questions reflected this change of focus. Interview questions from 2012 and 2013 are available in Appendix A and B respectively.

4.2   Houses

In this section, I consider the placement of the physical houses that once stood at Aktis. I compare the locations of house depressions, dance houses, and more recent homes at Aktis village, and have been able to trace at least four houses over time, demonstrating the continuity of house placement and lineage properties[14]. Though some intermixing occurred as time passed, I argue that lineage properties were maintained in that only family groups with a legitimate claim to a vacated property could move in.

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[14] Though community members spoke of family "properties" or "plots", I chose to use the term "lineage property" following Drucker (1951), as I found it the most descriptive.

Appendix C displays Robert Peter's original sketch map (traced digitally) of Aktis Village. From this, I was able to identify the two most well-preserved house depressions in the second row as the number one chief's house, Naniqs, and the number two chief's house, Qats tsàksk (unfortunately, Robert Peter's map cannot help to identify the house depressions in row one, as these are representative of an earlier time). It is not unusual that the two most well-preserved depressions would belong to high status families as noble households were the most likely to resist the change to single family dwellings given their wealth and position (Efrat and Langlois 1978). Several individuals told me that there were two dance houses that remained standing for several years after the demolition of the others in 1930[15]. It is likely that these were the two.

Figure 6 depicts Aktis village through time. I was able to overlay Robert Peter's sketch map (Appendix C) onto the BC TRIM map, with a few adjustments, as the map was not to scale. Kenyon (1980:98, Figure 7) also created a sketch map of Aktis village, depicting the layout of homes in the early 1970s. She was able to link four of the homes to specific houses listed by Drucker (1951), two of which are Naniqs and Qats tsàksk, which I identified among the house depressions. As Kenyon did not include any personal names in her analysis, I was unable to further associate houses between Robert Peter's and Kenyon's maps. However, Kenyon (1980) does note that houses were arranged in family clusters, as is indicated by the dotted lines on her map. Though Kenyon was only able to associate four houses with traditional house names, this does not mean that lineage properties were not maintained. It is not surprising that as English became the dominant language, traditional house names were forgotten by the younger generation. However, interviews overwhelmingly demonstrate that all members of the village

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[15] It is unclear why or how they were able to preserve these houses even after the orders from the Indian agent, but perhaps their status afforded them some special influence.

knew which family owned which property, even if traditional names were not frequently used.

Figure 6 depicts these different stages in the life history of Aktis village: 1) Aktis prior to European contact, consisting only of big houses; 2) Aktis circa 1920, during a transitional time, consisting of dance houses and single family dwellings, and; 3) Aktis in the 1970s just prior to

Figure 6. Aktis Village through Time

A. Aktis Village Big House Depressions

B. Aktis Village circa 1920 (adapted from Robert Peter's Sketch Map; houses not to scale)

C. Aktis Village circa 1970 (adapted from Susan Kenyon's Sketch Map; houses not to scale)
– – – – Family Clusters (as identified by Kenyon)

Naniqs (no. 1 chief's house, circa 1920)   Màtsūwai   ⋯⋯ Site Boundary
Qats tsȧksk (no. 2 chief's house circa 1920)   Qwɔwinas   N ▶

0 20 40 60 80 100
(metres)

abandonment.

Respected elder Hilda Hansen, explained that when she was a child in the 1920s, there was a row of dance houses in the front, which were backed by single family dwellings belonging to individuals from that family group. She describes how the people of Ka:'yu:'k't'h were forced to tear down most of these dance houses by the Indian agent in 1930:

There were big houses [dance houses] – all in the front row – they were the chiefs' houses. All over, all along the whole reserve. And there were small houses later on in the back… The properties were [in the same spot they had always been]. Most of that was in the front row. The back was just newly built… I wasn't home when they [the dance houses] came down; it was 1930. I went to school, and in nine months, those houses were gone already... The Department of Indian Affairs didn't like our dos. They tried to take away all the Indian stuff, like masks and shawls and everything that they used for Indian dancing.

In another interview, she reiterated: "There were big chief's houses along the front – just enough walking space to get by. The other houses, there were two to three rows. Some people had built their own housing". This led me to believe that the row of dance houses remembered historically and the most recent in time were those in the first row. However, Robert Peter's sketch map clearly indicates that there were some structures in front of the dance houses along the middle and northern sections of the site. These two pieces of information appear to contradict each other. However, Hilda lived at Màtsūwai, the southernmost house, in the more narrow section of beachfront land. Here, where there is only space for two rows of houses, the dance houses would have been right along the front edge of beach, likely with "just enough walking space to get by". Extended further north, this row lines up with the second row of house depressions, in the central and northern portions of the site.

Table 2 identifies the dance houses in Robert Peter's sketch map. It compares the houses, as listed by Drucker in the 1930s, as depicted by Robert Peter in 1957, and as recalled by Hilda

Table 2. Aktis Village Houses

No. in Figure 6B	House Names, as per:			No. in Figure 6B	House Names, as per:		
	Drucker (1951:223)	Robert Peter (1957)	Hilda Hansen (2013)		Drucker (1951:223)	Robert Peter (1957)	Hilda Hansen (2013)
1 🟨	Màtsūwai	Mutsway-a	macwee	13 🟦	Qwɔwinas	Quawinswaht	qaaxšiiłatḥ*
2	Cilsyap	Shi tlapa-et	qaaxšiiłatḥ		Làtɔwɔstakàmł	n/a	n/a
3	Hūp-kinstīnim	Hoopkinstin-im	hupkistinim*	14	Tcītcītqinił	Shinquash-kiml	n/a
4	Tūpksàth or Sūtcpiɔł	Toops.saht	tupksaatḥ*	15	Name Forgotten	Choomupsaht	šuumeečk
5	HōɔàtsisLàth	Houet.sisclaht	huʔacisƛatḥ*	16	Nàtcasàth	Nachasaht	načqaa
6	Hictsōqtanł	Cah ook qaht	n/a	17 🟦	Qats tsàksk	Tla-ah-aht kaht tsahts saak	qaacċaqsk
	Cawisàth	n/a	n/a		Name Forgotten	n/a	tawa
7	Nūɔū̄ł	A-mi-yaht (No.ouele)	ʔaamaayaʔtḥ (nuʔuuł*)		n/a	n/a	ṁamiis
8 🟥	**Naniqs**	**Neetskiele**	**ṅiicqiʔli**				
	n/a	n/a	našuuł	18	Yàɔqōɔaɔàth	Yahkoaht	ẏaaqsuwis
9	A'Licàth	Ahtlesaht	n/a	19	Amaiàth	Amiyaht	
10	Tiłath	Teel-h-aht	tiiłḥ*		Kūtsū'takàmł	n/a	kuuċuutqimł*
11	Qaqcīłàth	Kakshitleaht	n/a		Kūtsū'takàmł	n/a	kuuċuutqimł*
	Qwinai-kinctakàmł	n/a	n/a		Hiłinatōàth	n/a	hiłinḥtoʔtḥ*
12	Qīmiłuqtakàmł	Kaymilelok-tkimlu	kimłuktqimłatḥ		Hiłinatōàth	n/a	hiłinḥtoʔtḥ*

House names as remembered by Hansen were transcribed by Adam Werle. House names by Peter and Drucker are spelt as they appear in the original documents. Only the houses that appear in Peter's sketch map are numbered as these correspond with the icons in Figure 6B. *House name that Hansen remembered upon recognition, not recall.

Hansen in 2013. An extended version of this table, including house name meanings, family groups, tribes, and winter village sites is available in Appendix D. The three lists in Table 2 serve to corroborate each other. Robert Peter's sketch map contains nineteen of the twenty-seven houses Drucker recorded, all of which occur in the same order. Differences in spelling suggest that Robert Peter did not use Drucker as a reference when drafting the sketch map. In some instances Robert Peter and Hilda Hansen refer to the houses by the names of the family groups who inhabited them, rather than by house name itself (hence the apparent contradiction between

names for houses 6 and 7 for instance). However, since Drucker (1951) also recorded the family groups, I was nonetheless able to correlate the lists. Interestingly Robert Peter listed two house names that Drucker did not; however, the order of houses suggests that they correspond with Drucker's two instances of houses whose names had been forgotten.

As is evident from Figure 6, the dance houses were much smaller than the big houses of earlier times. Indeed, it is difficult to conceive of twenty-seven full-sized big houses fitting in a single row. It is likely that family groups moved into a single row over time, as space opened up. This does not mean that lineage properties were not carefully maintained, but rather that different groups inherited lineage properties to which they had a claim, when another group died out. Indeed, the fact that the Qwɔwinasàth[16] family group's house (number 13) is front and centre supports the notion that lineage properties and house sites have been maintained over time, as this family group was initially the highest ranking of the confederacy. Drucker (1951:224) notes that this status was passed onto the chief of Tacīs as part of a marriage dowry at some point; however, the Qwɔwinasàth evidently maintained their prime central house plot.

Houses seem to be roughly grouped by tribe, with the Cawispàth to the left, the Qanōpittakàmł in the centre and finally the La'a'àth to the right, as is depicted in Figure 7. The three Qwixqɔ'àth houses are dispersed throughout the middle section of site. It is likely that at the time of confederation, houses were arranged in tribal groups, and that intermixing occurred, as people moved into a single row. Given the degree of depopulation following contact, entire households would have been wiped out, allowing others with the close ties to the deceased family group to inherit their land. This may explain the dispersion of the Qwixqɔ'àth houses. The chief of the Qwixqɔ'àth was the lowest ranking among the tribal chiefs (Drucker 1951), so this

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[16] The suffix "àth" means "person, or peoples of…"; in this case, people of the family group Qwɔwinas (Drucker 1951:222).

Figure 7. Ka:'yu:'k't'h Family Group, House, and Village Sites

Tribes and Family Groups:

☐ Tribal Winter Village Site
○ Family Group Territory

A. Ca'wispa (Cawispáth Winter Village)	K. Qwixqɔ (Cachalot) - Qwixqɔ'áth Winter Village
B. Ca'wis	L. Amai
C. Qa'yōkw	M. Tiɫ
D. Qaqcīɫ	N. Na'mint
E. Qa'opīnc	
F. Maxqet (Markdale) - Qanōpittakámɫ Winter Village	O. Hōpsitas - La'a'áth Winter Village
G. Yá'qō	P. Yá'qats
H. Tacīs	Q. Kūtsū'
I. A'Lic	
J. Qa'ōq	R. Aqtīs (Aktis) Village - Summer Confederacy Site

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tribe's houses may have initially been excluded from the front row, which was reserved for the highest ranking families. They then could have moved forward as space became available.

4.3   Households

In this section, I consider the continuity of Ka:'yu:'k't'h family groups. Though Aktis village underwent a number of changes in architecture, including the move to single family dwellings, I argue that family groups as a social unit have persisted. Even after the relocation of the village, I have observed strong kinship ties unify family groups. The material house then cannot be considered synonymous with the household that inhabits it.

Coupland and Banning (1996) remind us that people who live in the same structure do not inevitably constitute a household. One house may contain several households, or, alternatively, a household may encompass several adjacent buildings. The latter was the case at Aktis, as nuclear families left the big house, but continued to associate themselves with their larger family group, by building their homes behind the dance house on the lineage property. Families continued to live in discernable groups into the 1970s at Aktis (Kenyon 1980).

The situation was different at Yuquot, where Efrat and Langlois (1978:26) observe that "the settlement pattern does not adhere closely to the single-row arrangement by lineage property as in earlier years". Efrat and Langlois (1978:24) claim that "the basic social unit most affected by Nootkan [Nuu-chah-nulth] participation in Euro-Canadian society was the lineage household or 'house'". However, they mistakenly suppose that the retention of communal living is a prerequisite for the persistence of household groups.

For Marshall (2000:74-75) too, cohabitation is essential, because household identity is "performed into existence" through the inhabitants' "actions as co-residents". As noted above, Marshall maintains that narratives of kinship are merely a pretense that justify the cohesion of house residents. By this argument, the house as a physical structure is indispensable to the household as a social unit. She argues that ethnographers have mistakenly emphasized kinship, because of their limited synchronic view, and that a diachronic perspective demonstrates the persistence of houses and the fluidity of household groups. However, her purported diachronic perspective does not extend into the present. My observations of the Ka:'yu:'k't'h indicate that these so-called narratives of kinship persist into the present despite the absence of big houses. Perhaps, they began as Marshall (2000) asserts, as a means to create house cohesion. But if so, these narratives have outlived the houses for which they were created.

The switch to single family dwellings began early in Ka:'yu:'k't'h, starting in the 1880s: "The Kyukahts… are beginning to erect frame houses on their reserve land instead of "rancheries", which is the style of building generally used by the Indians of the Coast" (Indian Affairs 1884:lix). Kenyon (1980:59) describes the system as follows:

The people of Kyuquot appear to have begun adopting smaller houses before some of the other tribes of the Coast. Each house, however, was replaced by a line of three smaller structures which stretched from the beach to the woods. Facing the beach was the ceremonial or dance house, behind this stood the smokehouse and finally at the back was the dwelling.

Though Kenyon describes only one residential structure on each family property, community members reported multiple homes, in some cases, as many as would fit. The many small structures behind the dance houses in Robert Peter's sketch map support this proposition. The switch to single family dwellings was remarkably fast. In only ten years, from 1881 to 1891, the average house size in Kyuquot decreased from 18 to 9 occupants (Marshall 2000).

Table 3 depicts this dramatic change in household size. Pressure from missionaries and economic conditions that encouraged individual accumulation of wealth are most often cited as the main causes for this change (Efrat and Langlois 1978). An alternative explanation is that increased participation in the market economy would have significantly limited the availability of individuals to help construct big houses, which demanded much time and energy. Following the 1855 raid and house fires at Aktis, it is not surprising that the Ka:'yu:'k't'h were among the first to switch to the much less labour-intensive European-style homes. Given this explanation, it does not necessarily follow that family groups were disrupted by this switch in housing.

Table 3. Ka:'yu:'k't'h Household Size

Year	Pop.	No. of Houses	Household Size					
			40+	**30+**	**20+**	**10+**	**1+**	**Average**
1881	655	36	2	4	12	7	11	18
1891	469	55	-	-	3	17	35	9

Adapted from Marshall 2000: 85-87

I argue that this change was not as significant as is often believed. Nuclear families were always the building blocks of the larger family group, each having their own partition within the big house. With the change to single family dwellings, the big house was, in a sense, inverted and emptied out onto the lineage property. The family partitions became small individual houses in back; the central hearth became the smokehouse and; the dance floor became the dance house.

The dance house was the public symbol of the family group, facing the water, welcoming visitors, and storing the family treasures. One way that it differed significantly from the traditional big house was its emphasis on external ornamentation. This is dramatically illustrated by a case in Yuquot: the Tūkwit takảmɫảth house had a beautiful ridgepole of a carved sea lion, which was entirely enclosed in their traditional big house. When they transitioned to a dance house, they reused the pole, reorienting it such that it jutted out over the door, fully visible from

the outside (Marshall 2000). Marshall (2000) implies that external elaboration was a sort of desperate attempt by house chiefs to retain their power, as they lost control of those who moved out of the big house. However, I do not see this external elaboration as essentially different from the internal elaboration of earlier years. When living inside the big house, internal elaboration would have acted as a mnemonic reminding occupants of their history, family ties, and social expectations. When individuals moved out, the embellishments too, moved to the outside of the building, where family group members would continue to see them daily. Furthermore, the external elaboration made a statement to other households about their relative status. Although, Nuu-chah-nulth houses were traditionally internally embellished, these adornments would be publicly visible every fall, when household groups removed the siding from their homes and moved to their villages up the inlet. It does not seem extraordinary that once people began to build permanent structures with fixed planks that they would decorate the exteriors.

The fact that nuclear families built their dwellings on the family group lineage property suggests that house chiefs continued to have significant influence over their people, and that chiefs' property rights continued to be respected. In fact, family groups may have actually become more permanent at this time: as nuclear families chose whose lineage property on which to build, they were essentially committing to a chief and a family group for the long-term. Individuals could still move onto a different lineage property (so long as they had rights to it), but it would have been at a much higher cost, especially if it required constructing a new house.

After the destruction of the dance houses in 1930, a new type of house was built as a clever solution to the potlatch ban: "the dwelling and dance house were merged in either a large single-room house or a multi-room building with a living room large enough to hold the whole village"

(Kenyon 1980:59). Sophia Billy describes one such multi-use house: "We had an old house… I was five years old when we got a new [one]… Kept the old house for occasions like dances."

As previously mentioned, lineage properties were maintained after the demolition of the dance houses. Al Vincent, who was born after the dance houses had been torn down, explained:

We always had to make sure we built on our own properties. Different families had each little section… everybody just knew [the boundaries of each property]. I don't remember any markings… If there was room for other houses, members of the family would build on the same property… It stopped when everybody moved here [to Houpsitas].

One elder described Aktis village as being "more orderly [as compared to Houpsitas]… People knew where they could build, where they could live". Alec and Sarah Short, who were married in the 1950s, described living on a houseboat in Barter Cove, until the chief's wife gave them an unused lot on Aktis on which to build. Despite the fact that there were unoccupied lots, they could not build there until specifically given permission. Similarly, when the Che:k:tles7et'h' people amalgamated with the Ka:'yu:'k't'h in 1951, they were given land on Kamils Island, rather than on Aktis. Even after the relocation to Houpsitas, families continued to assert property rights at Aktis. Daisy Hansen recounted that after the relocation, a second cousin of her husband's had to request permission to build on their lineage property.

When Kenyon (1980) was conducting fieldwork at Aktis village in the 1970's, she observed that the property designations continued even onto the beach, noting that families would only have barbecues in front of their own houses, and that the community dock was directly in front of the church and school, and thus on communal land.

The people of Ka:'yu:'k't'h believe that these property divisions date back to the foundation of their confederacy, which occurred shortly after the world was transformed into its

current state (Drucker 1951). Several people described to me a similar account of the process of

allotting lineage properties on Aktis. As one elder recounts it:

All the families were from up the inlets and years ago the head chief of the day said it would be
best if they all had a place at Aktis, rather than him going up to all the different places up there.
In the wintertime, he was always invited to different functions and he would have to travel up the
inlet… So, each family had a lot that was given to them to live on. And it represented where they
were from... [Aktis is] where the *taayi* [head chief] lived at the time.

Thus, the people of Ka:'yu:'k't'h believe that the lineage properties are ancient in origin.

This rigidity of lineage property was mixed with a seemingly contradictory flexibility of

residence. Kenyon (1980:100) notes that her household chart:

represents a constantly changing picture. Although the senior families of each cluster have
occupied their homes for a considerable period, the occupation and the composition of many of
the other houses might change frequently. Individuals may have a right to several sites and a
large number of reasons can cause them to move from one to the other.

What is of note here, is that this flexibility of residence was nonetheless restricted by an

individual's "right" to different house sites. This frequent movement between houses is actually

the continuation of a much older cultural pattern, in which non-pivotal house residents moved

between big houses to which they had some tie (Drucker 1951). One might suppose that such

fluidity of abode would eventually obliterate any recollection of the lineage properties I've

described, but this is evidently not the case. Even without fences or other delimiters, lineage

properties and the family groups who owned them were maintained as long as people lived at

Aktis.

When the community relocated from Aktis to Houpsitas, the houses were no longer

arranged in family groups. Because the lineage properties at Aktis served as such a powerful

mnemonic for family groups, I wondered if the move served to erode these groups. Kenyon

(1980:97), who had the unique experience of conducting fieldwork before and after the move

from Aktis to Houpsitas, herself stated: "It thus seems that the situation I am describing here for

Actis [Aktis], which has direct links with the past, is about to disappear".

Patsy Nicholaye describes the importance of situating one's identity in one's family, a

teaching that she believes occurred more organically at Aktis:

The older generation would teach us, through the longhouses [big houses] or just story-telling…
It's not the same here… The most important thing: we knew who we were, where we came from,
who our relatives were, in-laws, where they were from, what family they were from, how we
were connected to that family.

Her wording—to be taught "*through* the longhouses"—is illuminating. These houses were

not merely a physical dwelling; they were also a medium of communication, conveying

information about family and identity, a symbol for the family group.

The geography of Houpsitas prevented the replication of this village arrangement. Kenyon

(1980:101) notes that "the whole settlement at Houpsitas is in rows rather than a single line, a

formation dictated by the size and shape of the reserve". At the time that people moved *en masse*,

the majority of the beach-front property was already in use by several families[17]. The rest of the

available properties at Houpsitas were allocated at a band meeting on a first-come first-serve

basis (Kenyon 1980:101). In Hilda Hansen's words: "This is all mixed. No, we don't [live in the

same family groupings as before]." Sophia Billy explained, "No, [the old groupings did not

continue]. We had a choice." When asked what changed when the village relocated, Alec Short

responded immediately, "Houses not in family groups". Interestingly, Houpsitas now has several

duplexes and split-level homes, a solution to the housing shortage there. These structures are not

always shared by close family members, as one might expect.

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[17] A few families lived at Houpsitas, the winter village of the La'a'áth tribe, as early as the 1920s, though they also
had plots of land at Aktis (Kenyon 1980:101-102).

The elders of Ka:'yu:'k't'h evidently regret that the pattern of living in family groups was not continued, as it was a tangible symbol of family groups, which are clearly very important to them. However, it is evident that family groups are not gone. During my time at Houpsitas, I observed extremely strong family ties. The "narratives of kinship" that tied together family group households persist. Ka:'yu:'k't'h extended families continue to act in solidarity with one another in ways that would be surprising among other Canadian families. First cousins still refer to each other as brothers and sisters, a carry-over from the Nuu-chah-nulth language. "Auntie" and "Uncle" are terms that children may adopt for any adult who is close to the family, a reflection of the "fictitious kinship" noted historically (Levi-Strauss 1983). Feasts are still hosted communally by family groups. Family groups work together to organize care for elders who can't be left alone. Entire family groups are willing to travel to support sick members (in one case upwards of twenty-five travelled eleven hours to visit a relative). Individuals are always ready to advocate for, encourage and defend their various family members. Though the younger generation may not know the traditional name of their family group, they look to their elders as knowledge holders, with whom they can check at any time. Family groups have changed and adapted, yet they continue to be proud of their origins and are fiercely loyal to each other.

Conclusion

This project was designed with special attention paid to the advice and opinions of members of the Ka:'yu:'k't'h / Che:k:tles7et'h' First Nations. Their guidance lead me to focus on the antiquity and layout of Aktis village, with particular attention focused on the continuity of houses and households over time. Although there are connections between the material house and the social household, they are not synonymous such that changes in architecture constitute the downfall of the household as a social unit. Rather, the family groups of Aktis village and the ideology that supports them have persisted long after the move out of communal big houses.

Mapping of the surface of the Aktis village archaeology site revealed that there are three rows of big house depressions, where only one is recorded historically. These may or may not have been occupied simultaneously. However, as the Ka:'yu:'k't'h were ethnographically the largest polity among the Nuu-chah-nulth, it is entirely plausible that all three were occupied at once. There is a sterile lens, possibly representing a break in occupation, present in six out of seven cores, across all three rows. In one core, it dated to between 1627±118 BP and 1384±107 BP. If this is a site-wide pattern then, it supports the proposition that all three rows were simultaneously occupied. Severe population loss at contact likely resulted in the reduction to a single row of houses. The houses appear to have been roughly ordered by tribe, with intermixing occurring as the population decreased and different family groups inherited others' properties.

Deep cores of equal depth across the second row and in the mid-back of the third row suggest that a large part of the site was inhabited from early on in its occupational history. The basal layers of the centre-back core dated to 1686±126 BP, likely the date of initial occupation. The front row of house depressions may have been unoccupiable at this time due to sea levels

that had not yet fully receded. The cores in the front row and the outer edges of the back row are shallower, possibly indicating expansion at the time of confederation.

The first row of house depressions are the most well-preserved, outlining the traditional big houses that once stood there. Little historic building occurred in this area, resulting in excellent preservation. The second row exhibits less distinct house depressions. As is evident from the Robert Peter sketch map, this was the location of the historic dance houses of the early twentieth century, which were frequently built and rebuilt, often expanded. This would have obscured many of the original big house depressions. There were nonetheless two well-preserved depressions, which correspond to Naniqs and Qats tsȧksk, the number one and number two chiefs' houses, the last to be torn down. This is corroborated by the Robert Peter sketch map. Nuclear family dwellings were built behind the dance houses in the third row of house depressions. Even after the dance houses were torn down, most nuclear family dwellings continued to be built in this area, resulting in poor preservation of big house depressions. There are no house depressions left in the southern portion of the site, which was levelled in the 1950s for a field.

Though the move out of family big houses has traditionally been interpreted as the disintegration of the family group, I argue that this was not the case at Aktis. Though nuclear families gained financial independence as they entered the full-market economy, it doesn't follow that the family group as a social unit collapsed. The decision to build on family lineage property indicates that despite a change in type of residence, individuals continued to consider themselves part of the family group. This was also a recognition of the authority of other chiefs, which precluded them from building elsewhere at Aktis. Family groups may have actually become more permanent at this time, as nuclear families made a long-term commitment to a

particular group by building on that property. These nuclear family homes replaced the family partitions of the traditional big house. The smokehouse replaced the central hearth and the dance house, built in the European style with fixed planks, replaced the dance floor. The dance houses were an important symbol of family groups. Though big houses were traditionally decorated in the interior, dance houses were decorated on the exterior. With important family symbols still in sight, family group members were continually reminded of their ties.

In 1930, most of the dance houses were torn down by order of the government. Despite the destruction of the houses, family lineage properties were carefully maintained up until village relocation in the 1970s. These acted as an important mnemonic for family groups. The persistence of family groups in the absence of economic interdependence calls into question causal explanations like that of Coupland's (1996) and Maston's (1966), which prioritize economics as the main motivation for the formation of large households.

When the Ka:'yu:'k't'h left Aktis, they moved to a new settlement at Houpsitas, which was not arranged in family groups. Community members report feelings of nostalgia for the arrangement of houses on lineage properties at Aktis, as they were a tangible reminder of family ties. However, it is evident that family groups are not gone. Though not as visible as previously, family groups are still important and act as a collective at pivotal moments in the lives of their members. The "narratives of kinship" that initially served to unify members of a big house have persisted long past the houses themselves. The extended families of Ka:'yu:'k't'h continue to act as social units.

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Appendices

Appendix A. 2012 Interview Questions

1. Date of birth?

2. Male/Female?

3. Where do you live?

4. Have you ever visited or lived on Aktis Island? How well would you say you know the island?

5. What would you consider is the historical importance of this island?

6. What would you consider is its contemporary importance?

7. Do you know any oral stories connected to the island? Where did you hear this story?

8.
   a. Are there any gathering places for particular resources on or near the island? (ie. dentalia shell, clams, herring, salmon, sea otters, etc.)

   b. How was/is this resource used? How was/is it harvested?

   c. Why was/is this resource important?

9. Are there any places on the island that are important for spiritual reasons?

10. What more would you like to know about the island's past? Do you think archaeology can help to find this out?

11. During next summer's archaeology project on Aktis Island, is there any protocol you would like to see followed?

12. After the project is over, how would you like to see the results of the research shared with the community?

13. What format do you think would be most useful to community members: video, website, text?

14. Is there anything else you think I should know about Aktis Island?

15. Do you have any other thoughts or opinions you'd like to share about how the archaeology project should be carried out or how the research data should be shared?

16. Is there any information that you have shared with me that should not be made public

Appendix B. 2013 Interview Questions

1. Date of birth?

2. Male/Female?

3. Have you ever visited or lived on Aktis Island? How well would you say you know the island?

4. Can you describe how the village used to be laid out? Can you draw it out on this map? What period of time would you say this represents?

5. Do you remember any of the names of the family groups that lived in the village? Can you show me where they lived?

6. Why do you think the village was laid out this way?

7. How formal were these divisions?

8. Do you recognize any of these names – do you know where these houses were? Do you know anyone who still identifies with any of these names?

House Name (Meaning)	Occupants
Matsuwai	qa'yok people
ciLsyap	qa'opinc people
hupkinstinim ("round" - between 2 big houses)	qa'oq people
tupksath ("dark people") sutcpił ("big tree left growing in house")	qa'opinc chief
hoatsisLath ("came back" house, drifted back from flood)	tacis people
hictsoqtanł	qa'oq chief
cawisath	cawis people
nuouł ("always singing")	amai people
Naniqs ("grandfather to all")	tacis chief
aLicath	alic people
tiłath	tił people
qaqciłath	qaqcił people

House Name (meaning)	Occupants
qwinaikinctakamł (ancestral chief's name)	tił people
qimiłłuqtakamł ("long-haried woman")	qayoq people
qwawinas ("first people there")	yaqats people
Latcwostakamł ("taking off boards for dance)	yaqats
Tcitciłqinił	tacis people
natcasath ("always looking for canoe" used to own beach)	tacis
qa:tstsaksk (Queen's house. "3 lengths of roof's boards on each side)	yaqats
yaqo'a'ath (from yaqo river)	tacis people
amaiath	amai people
kutsuattakamł (from kutsu river)	kutsu people
kutsuatakmł	kutsu people
hiłinatoath (always on the outside: don't go to inlets people)	yaqats
hiłinatoch	yaqato

9. How did these groupings affect daily life?

10. Can you describe the village politics of Aktis?

11. When people moved to Houpsitas, did the same groupings continue?

12. Are/were there any special rights or privileges that a particular family group owned?

13. Do you know of any old stories connected with Aktis Island?

14. Do you know of any stories about the creation or origins of the Kyuquot people? (Thlaathluktiinlth – two hundred mouths?)

15. Do you know of any stories about how or why (or when) the confederacy of Kyuquot formed?

16. How has life in Kyuquot changed during your lifetime?

17. What role do you think the Canadian government has had in bringing about change in Kyuquot?

18. What role do you think the church has had in bringing about change in Kyuquot?

19. What other sources of change do you see?

20. After this project is over, how would you like to see the results of the research shared with the community?

21. If you could say one thing to the children of Kyuquot about their past, what would it be?

22. Is there anything else you think I should know about Aktis island village?

23. Do you have any other thoughts or opinions you'd like to share about how the research data should be shared?

24. Is there any information that you have shared with me that should not be made public?

Appendix C. Ka:'yu:'k't'h "Indian City" circa 1920 - Robert Peter Sketch Map

Swamp

Church

Store

Store

AHTLESAHT

TEEL-H-AHT

Store

KAKSHITLEAHT

KAYMILELOKTKIMLU

QUAWINSWAHT

SHINQUASH-KIML

CHOOMUPSAHT

NACHAHSAHT

YAHKOAHT

AMIYAHT

NEETSKIELE (No. 1 CHIEF'S HOUSE)

A-MI-YAHT (NO.OUELE)

CAH OOK QAHT

HOUET-SISCLAHT

TOOPS-SAHT

HOOPKINSTINIM

SHI TLAPA-ET

MUTSWAY-A.

TLA-AH-AHT KAHT TSAHKS SAAK (No. 2 CHIEF'S HOUSE)

This was
Kyuquot Indian City

By Robert Peters

**Information presented on Tuesday, July 11, 1957
at Qaayuuk-ath by ath-caa:**
1) Makuuwas [stores] at aq'tiis
2) Hahuulthee [territory]
3) Tiikuu'it/ or seating

Personal names have been excluded at the request of the Ka:'yu:'k't'h / Che:k:tles7et'h' Cultural Executive. Spellings of house names left as Robert Peter originally wrote them. The emboldened houses mark the number one and number two chiefs' houses.

Appendix D. Aktis Village Houses, Family Groups and Tribes

No. on Fig. 6B	House Names, as per: Drucker (1951:223)	Robert Peter (1957)	Hilda Hansen (2013)	House Name Meaning	Family Group	Family Group Site	Tribe	Winter Village Site
1	Måtsūwai	Mutsway-a	macwee	n/a	qa'yōkw	Stream at Easy Creek	šaaẇiisatḥ	Cawispa
2	Cilsyap	Shi tlapa-et	qaaxšiiłatḥ	Refers to ciLa roots	qaʔuupinš	Stream at Kaowinch	šaaẇiisatḥ	Cawispa
3	Hūpkinstīnim	Hoopkinstinim	hupkistinim*	Between two houses	qaʔuk	Stream Kaouk at Fair Harbour	Qanōpittakåmł	Maxqet
4	Tūpksåth or Sūtcpiɔł	Toops.saht	tupksaatḥ*	Dark people	qaʔuupinš	Stream at Kaowinch	šaaẇiisatḥ	Cawispa
5	HōɔàtsisLåth	Houet.sisclaht	huʔacisƛatḥ*	Floated back	ṫašiis	Tahsish Stream	Qanōpittakåmł	Maxqet
6	Hictsōqtanł	Cah ook qaht	n/a	Abalone shell inlay in beams	qaʔuk	Stream Kaouk at Fair Harbour	Qanōpittakåmł	Maxqet
	Cawisåth	n/a	n/a	n/a	šaaẇiis	Stream in Chamiss Bay	Cawis	Cawispa
7	Nūɔūł	A-mi-yaht (No.ouele)	ʔaamaayaʔtḥ (nuʔuuł*)	Always singing	ʔaamay	Stream at Amai	Qwixqɔ'åth	Qwixqo
8	**Naniqs**	**Neetskiele (no. 1 chief's house)**	**ṅiicqiʔli**	**Ancestor**	**ṫašiis**	**Tahsish Stream**	**Qanōpittakåmł**	**Maxqet**
	n/a	n/a	našuuł	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
9	A'Licåth	Ahtlesaht	n/a	n/a	ʔaaƛiišatḥ	Artlish Stream	Qanōpittakåmł	Maxqet
10	Tiłath	Teel-h-aht	tiiłḥ*	n/a	tiiłḥatḥ	Stream in Narrowgut Inlet	Qwixqɔ'åth	Qwixqo
11	Qaqcīłåth	Kakshitleaht	n/a	n/a	qaqcīł	Stream at Kashittle	Cawis	Cawispa
	Qwinai-kinctakåmł	n/a	n/a	From chief's name	tiiłḥatḥ	Stream in Narrowgut Inlet	Qwixqɔ'åth	Qwixqo
12	Qīmiłuqtakåmł	Kaymileloktkim-lu	kimłuktqimłatḥ	Long-haired women	qa'yōkw	Stream at Easy Creek	Cawis	Cawispa

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No. on Fig. 6B	House Names, as per: Drucker (1951:223)	Robert Peter (1957)	Hilda Hansen (2013)	House Name Meaning	Family Group	Family Group Site	Tribe	Winter Village Site
13	Qwɔwinas	Quawinswaht	qaaxšiiłatḥ*	n/a	yaqac	River in McKays Cove	La'a'àth	Houpsitas
	Làtɔwɔstakảmł	n/a	n/a	Taking down house boards for dances	yaqac	River in McKays Cove	La'a'àth	Houpsitas
14	Tcītcītqinił	Shinquash-kiml	n/a	n/a	tašiis	Tahsish Stream	Qanōpittakảmł	Maxqet
15	Name Forgotten	Choomupsaht	šuumeečk	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
16	Nàtcasàth	Nachasaht	načqaa	Always watching for canoes	tašiis	Tahsish Stream	Qanōpittakảmł	Maxqet
17	**Qats tsảksk**	**Tla-ah-aht kaht tsahts saak (no. 2 chief's house)**	qaaććaqsk	**Three lengths of roof boards on either side**	**yaqac**	**River in McKays Cove**	**La'a'àth**	**Houpsitas**
	Name Forgotten	n/a	tawa	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	n/a	n/a	ṁaṁiis	On the beach	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
18	Yàɔqōɔaɔàth	Yahkoaht	ẏaaqsuwis	Yaɔqō river people	tašiis	Tahsish Stream	Qanōpittakảmł	Maxqet
19	Amaiàth	Amiyaht	n/a	n/a	amai	Stream at Amai	Qwixqɔ'àth	Qwixqo
	Kūtsū'takảmł	n/a	kuućuutqimł*	Kūtsū' river people	kuućuu	Kutsu River	La'a'àth	Houpsitas
	Kūtsū'takảmł	n/a	kuućuutqimł*	Kūtsū' river people	kuućuu	Kutsu River	La'a'àth	Houpsitas
	Hiłinatōàth	n/a	hiłinḥtoʔtḥ*	Always on outer beaches	yaqac	River in McKays Cove	La'a'àth	Houpsitas
	Hiłinatōàth	n/a	hiłinḥtoʔtḥ*	Always on outer beaches	yaqac	River in McKays Cove	La'a'àth	Houpsitas

House names as remembered by Hansen were transcribed by Adam Werle. House names by Peter and Drucker spelt as they appear in the original documents. Only the houses that appear in Peter's sketch map are numbered as these correspond with the icons in Figure 6B. The number one and two chiefs' entries are emboldened. *House name that Hansen remembered upon recognition, not recall.