

IDEOLOGY, POLITICS AND POWER:  
THE SOCIO-HISTORICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGY  
OF THE D'ARCY ISLAND LEPER COLONY, 1891-1924

BY

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A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
(Department of Anthropology and Sociology)

We accept this thesis as conforming  
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

JUNE, 1995

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Date June 30 / 1995

## **ABSTRACT**

The D'Arcy Island leprosarium, located in Haro Strait off the east coast of southern Vancouver Island, B.C., was first established in 1891. During its thirty-four years of operation it was administered by three governments: the Victoria municipal government from 1891 to 1904, the B.C. provincial government during the year 1905, while the federal government was in charge until closure of the institution in 1924. The colony now comprises three archaeological sites, the earliest phase DdRt 29 on Little D'Arcy Island, where predominantly Chinese males were incarcerated, DdRt 28 the remains of the caretakers' facilities built in 1907 on D'Arcy Island, and the latest phase of the colony DdRt 31, located to the south of the caretakers.

The purpose of this research is to examine why and how social inequality is created and how it is maintained. Specifically, it will evaluate the historical socio-political circumstances surrounding the establishment of the colony, explain why it was created, and why and how the form of the institution changed over its thirty-four years of existence.

Archaeological investigations are employed to illuminate the ongoing material and social conditions of the unfortunate lepers, in contrast to those of the colony caretakers. Historical research is used to provide a

meaningful context to understand colony developments. Historical data are also used to complement the gaps in the archaeological record.

In my research, I combine aspects of two theoretical approaches employed in contemporary archaeological theory. Processual archaeology is used to provide a framework for evaluating the relationship between racist ideology and the material manifestations of the D'Arcy Island leper colony. Changes in both the location and the architectural form and function are linked to changes in government policy and legislation to exclude Chinese immigrants. Apparently deliberate actions of the medical community to ignore available knowledge about leprosy are also associated with changes in the colony.

Symbolic archaeology is employed to illustrate how portable material culture, cultural landscape and architectural form are utilized to symbolically reinforce the ideology of White dominant society. Inferior status based on perceived racial and social difference are reinforced by the cultural manifestations of the facilities.

It is my contention that racist ideology is the prime mover in the creation and evolution of the D'Arcy Island leprosarium. It was fueled by stereotypical views of the Chinese immigrants held by White dominant society of the late 19th and early 20th century. The unwarranted fear of leprosy was seized upon by those in power to further incite racism in the general public. It was also used to



support the belief that Chinese should further be excluded from mainstream Canadian society.

The timing of the establishment of the colony followed a decade of strong anti-Oriental agitation. Other developments in the colony may be directly linked to federal and provincial actions or changes in immigration legislation. Further proof that racism was involved is that there were alternate means available to deal with the issue of the Chinese lepers: care in the Victoria Chinese Hospital, deportation, or transfer to the leprosarium at Tracadie, New Brunswick. Differential care of non-Chinese lepers also indicates that the provision of appropriate medical care was not a consideration in the maintenance of the colony.

The D'Arcy Island leper colony was part of an historic process which contributed to racist ideology. The location, landscape, and architectural design all reflected the perceived inferior and outcast status of the Chinese lepers. They also reinforced the power and dominance of Euro-Canadians, maintaining social distance and creating social inequality.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank staff members of the Royal British Columbia Provincial Museum for their assistance and support during all phases of my research. I am particularly grateful for the use of lab and office space during data analysis, and the generous loan of boat, motor, and other equipment. Margo Chapman Kendall of Langara Community College kindly lent additional field equipment.

The efforts of the field crew members on D'Arcy Island, Gayell Horsfall, Douglas Glaum, Dan Tetrault, John MacIntosh and Ann Tighe are greatly appreciated. All contributed to the project beyond the call of duty. John Dewhirst and Ken Williams also volunteered assistance in the field. Douglas Glaum continued to assist me in the cataloguing and analysis of artifacts, funded by the Federal Summer Student Employment Programme.

The Heritage Trust of British Columbia was the major source of funding for the project.

Alan Philip of Philip Forest Mapping drafted the final version of the field maps and recreated the archival blueprint drawings. Susan Crockford of Pacific Identifications carried out the faunal analysis. Sharon Keen was most generous in providing advice and loaning her historical archaeology sources critical to artifact analysis.

Permission to camp on D'Arcy Island, and the cooperation of the staff from the B.C. Parks Office at Goldstream were critical to the logistics of conducting fieldwork in a Marine Park. Mr. and Mrs. P. Middleton, owners of Little D'Arcy Island, kindly allowed us access to their property.

I would like to thank the administrative staff, and members of the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at Okanagan University College for their support of my academic leaves. In particular, I would like to acknowledge Dr. Naomi McPherson for her continuous encouragement and editorial assistance in the completion of my dissertation.

I am grateful to former committee members Dr. Edgar Wickberg and Dr. Robin Ridington for their input during the initial stages of my research. Current committee members Dr. David Burley, Archaeology Department Simon Fraser University, and Dr. Michael Kew and Dr. Michael Blake of University of B.C. provided ongoing advice and support. I would especially like to thank my supervisor Dr. Michael Blake for his useful comments and editorial assistance during the past year.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge my family members for their patience and moral support during my pursuit of a doctoral degree.

## Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION

My discovery of an article in the B.C. Provincial Archives on the D'Arcy Island leper colony was purely accidental. Originally published in a medical journal written in the late 19th century, it contained stereotypical racist comments about the unfortunate victims of leprosy or Hansen's Disease, who were all Chinese (Hall and Nelson 1898). Other features of the colony described raised many questions about the nature of the institution. My curiosity inspired me to investigate the Visual Records Division of the Archives on the off chance I would find further documentation. Much to my surprise, I found six photographs. The sadness in the eyes of the Chinese men shown in the pictures clearly indicated a story of human suffering begging to be told.

The central questions in this study are why and how social inequality is constructed and how it is maintained? Specifically, it will evaluate the historical socio-political circumstances surrounding the establishment of the D'Arcy Island leper colony and explain why it was created. This research will also address why and how the form of the institution changed over its thirty-four years of operation.

Ideas commonly held by one dominant ethnic group about another minority group customarily focus on cultural practices which are viewed as grounds for exclusion from the mainstream dominant society. They may also be used to



reinforce racism. In some circumstances, racist ideology may play a major role in determining political actions manifested in changing government policy and law. It also exists at the populist level of society.

During the late 19th and early 20th century, racism was both prevalent and overt in Canadian society. I believe that there is a direct relationship between political action, prompted by anti-Asian sentiment, and changes in both the form and function of the leper colony operation. This sentiment was fueled by stereotypical views of the Chinese held by the dominant Euro-Canadian society; one of the commonly held perspectives was that they brought with them life-threatening diseases, including leprosy. Little was done by the medical profession to counter these beliefs, and politicians were able to use the fear of contagion, propagated by the media, to gain support for the exclusion of Chinese immigrants.

Prevailing ideology is found not only in historical documents but is also symbolized in material culture (Hodder 1982; Miller and Tilley 1984). This study will evaluate how racist ideology, derived from stereotypical views of Chinese culture and perceived threatening biological differences, is symbolized in the material manifestations of the leper colony. This institution comprised three sites. Two were occupied by those afflicted with the disease, mainly Chinese males, the third by a series of Euro-Canadian caretakers. Architectural form can be used to symbolize status

differences (McGuire and Schiffer 1983; Monks 1992).

Therefore, significant differences in the construction and design of houses would be expected between the caretaker facilities and those occupied by the lepers.

The quality and types of portable material culture should also vary as a means of reinforcing status differences (Ferguson 1980; Otto 1984; Orser 1988, 1991; Singleton 1985, 1988). Cultural landscape can also be used to symbolize inequality and reinforce predominant ideas about social relations (Leone 1984; Beaudry 1986). Therefore, differences in the location of the sites as well as landscape modification should further reflect social inequality, and help to maintain racial relations constructed by the dominant White ethnic group.

This research addresses a further question. The leprosarium was occupied by an atypical population; they were male, predominantly Chinese, and they were suffering from a stigmatized disease. I will also evaluate to what extent archaeological patterning may evidence this distinctive population.

Lastly, historical and archaeological investigations of the D'Arcy Island leper colony provide an opportunity for a case study to examine the relationship between information collected from archival sources and archaeological data from the field. Research will evaluate the extent of the interdependence of these two data sets in reconstructing the social history of the leper colony.

During the late 19th century, there were varying medical opinions and practices relating to the treatment of leprosy. If ideology about the disease and a genuine concern for the care of afflicted individuals was the reason for the formation and maintenance of the colony, then I would expect changes in its form and function to be related to changing medical policies and ideologies towards the disease. On the other hand, if racism was the prime mover in the initial establishment and changing form of the institution, then developments would be related to other socio-political factors that have nothing to do with medical care or knowledge about the disease. This could include the formulation of government policy and other political activity or other events taking place in society at large. Additionally, if the treatment of non-Chinese victims of Leprosy at the contemporaneous Tracadie leprosarium in New Brunswick was significantly better, then this would support the contention that the remains of the D'Arcy Island facilities may be considered symbolic of racist ideology.

The disease of leprosy is also known as Hansen's Disease after the doctor who first identified the bacillus in the 1870's (Hastings 1975). Although this is the preferred term because of the stigma attached to leprosy, I am using the terms leper and leprosy as they were used in the historical context in which this study is set. The term D'Arcy Island leper colony is used to refer to facilities found on both Little D'Arcy and D'Arcy Islands, as was the

medical opinions and practices relating to the treatment of practice during the historic period under discussion.

Selecting an appropriate research topic for one's dissertation is not an easy task. It was particularly difficult for me because I had only recently embarked on a new area of study: historical archaeology. Most of my previous archaeological field experience had involved the study of North American native peoples before European contact. The methodological and theoretical approaches used vary considerably from those employed in post-contact research, where written documents generally form an integral part of the research process.

One of my major objectives in electing to do historical archaeology was to respond to the challenge of some critics of this discipline to make it more anthropological. Schuyler (1988) for example, strongly condemns historical archaeologists for not using their birthright as anthropologists. He also calls for an equal treatment of both documentary sources and the archaeological record. If this is done, he suggests, then archaeologists can "act like anthropologists" and produce "historic ethnography" (Schuyler 1988:36).

I was particularly interested in excavating a Chinese immigrant site, an area of research that has been widely overlooked in Canadian archaeology, although an important focus of American historical archaeology. My interest was inspired by my studies of the ethnography and

archaeology of China, and the realization that investigations of Overseas Chinese can contribute to a broader understanding of the history and culture of the Chinese people.

A further consideration in selecting a research area was to find a topic that would lend itself to a contemporary archaeological theoretical perspective. As an Anthropology Masters student, I was very interested in structuralism. Archaeologists have also developed structuralist models for application to prehistoric archaeological problems (for example, Leroi-Gourhan 1965; Marshak 1977; Conkey 1978). Structural studies were also carried out in the 1970's in historical archaeology (Glassie 1975; Leone 1977; Ferguson 1977). A major criticism of such studies is that they fail to explain particular historical contexts (Deetz 1983). Additionally, they do not consider the actions of individuals who contribute to the processes of social change (Hodder 1982:8-9).

Another school of thought which appears to have emerged in the early 1980's as a response to the shortcomings of structural archaeology, is symbolic archaeology (Hodder 1982; Miller and Tilley 1984). This was an approach that I found stimulating and that appeared to have more widespread applicability than the structural models. I wished to use this theoretical perspective in my research. Since investigations focussed on a specific historic time period, during which there were a number of social and political

changes, this approach could ostensibly provide a theoretical framework for interpreting the symbolic meaning of the material manifestations of the leprosarium. Not only would symbolic archaeology enable an examination of how material culture may be used to legitimize power and ideological practices, it could also facilitate the development of a critique of social order (Tilley 1989:114).

The study of the D'Arcy Island leper colony had potential to fulfill all of these requirements. However, there were other reasons for pursuing this topic. First, I saw this as an opportunity for "ethnic consciousness raising" at a time when racist attitudes were once again becoming prevalent in Canadian society. I believed that I could generate public awareness about the problems faced by earlier as well as contemporary Chinese immigrants to Canada, and their contributions to the Province's economic and socio-cultural development.

Another socially relevant aspect of this research concerns the social construction of knowledge and attitudes about stigmatized disease. There are a number of parallels between the treatment of lepers 100 years ago and AIDS victims today. Many lessons can be learned from studies of social and medical policies from the past, although they are commonly ignored. Contemporary studies of AIDS, for example, show how regardless of available medical knowledge, disease can be used as a strategy for both moral and social exclusion (Epstein 1988). This point is well illustrated by

a recent report presented during BCTV News on 28 March, 1994. This was followed by an article in the Vancouver Sun (30 Mar. 1994). With the discovery of the growing incidence of AIDS in the province, an unnamed Minister of the Legislative Assembly is alleged to have suggested that not only victims of the disease, but also all homosexual men should be incarcerated on Bentinck Island. This location was used by the provincial government as a treatment centre for lepers, following the closure of the D'Arcy Island facilities in 1924.

This research would have one last practical application. Information collected could be used for public interpretation programmes by park officials, who now administer D'Arcy Island as a Marine Park.

The location of the leper colony was selected over a hundred years ago because of the relative isolation of D'Arcy and Little D'Arcy Islands in the Gulf of Georgia, off the coast of Vancouver Island. Situated at the northern end of Haro Strait, these islands mark the southern limits of the Gulf Islands. Saanich Peninsula on Vancouver Island is located 6 km to the west, while the United States International Boundary is 3.5 km to the east. The closest neighbouring islands are James and Sidney Islands, located approximately 2 km to the north. The city of Victoria is 25 km to the south, while the community of Sidney lies 12 km northwest of D'Arcy Island (Fig. 1).

Accessibility to Little D'Arcy and D'Arcy islands is

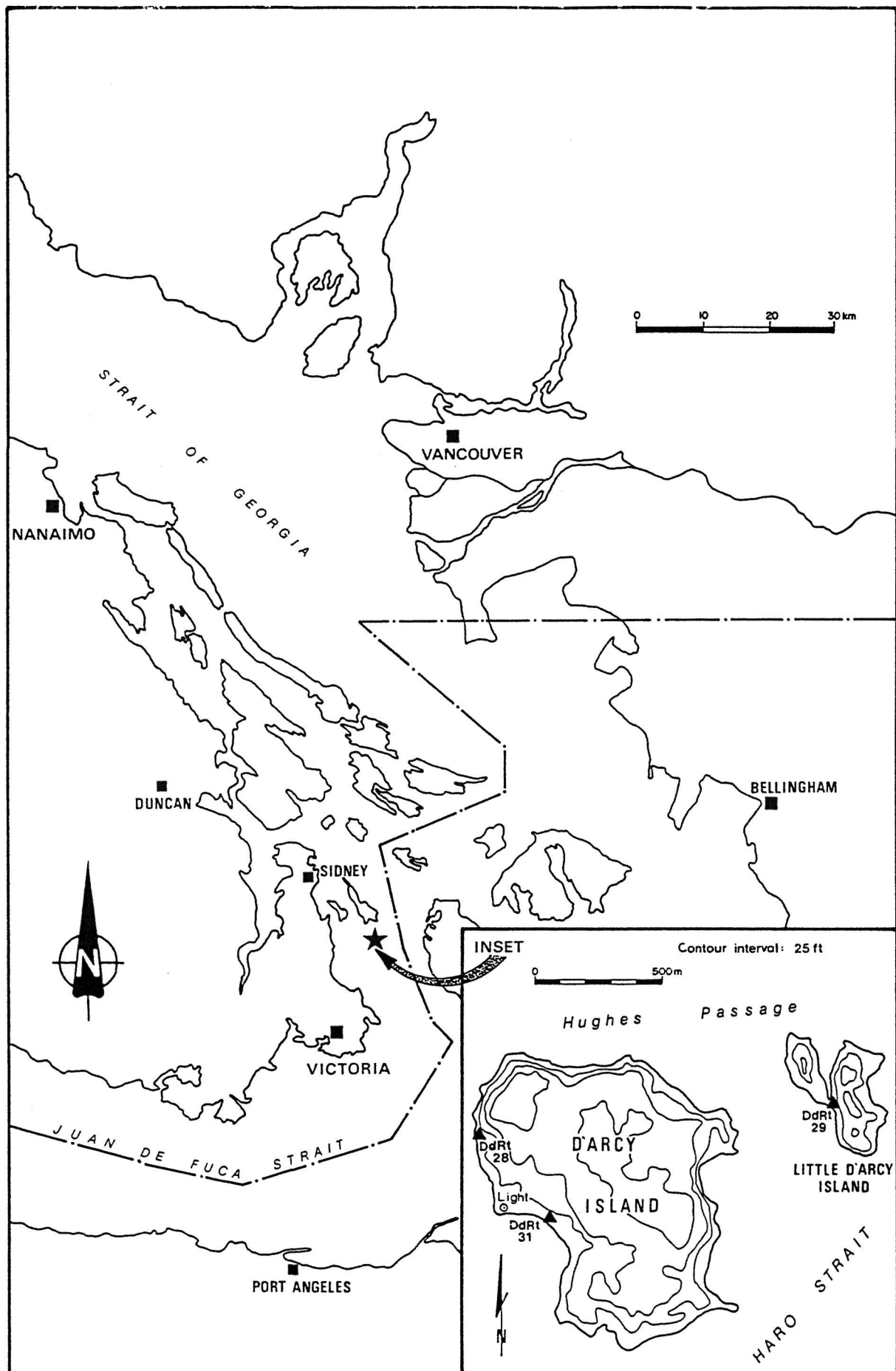


Figure 1. Map showing location of D'Arcy Island leper colony.



affected by the presence of reefs, and by unpredictable tides and currents. These waters are subjected to one large and one small tide every twenty-four hours. However, for one third to one half of the month, a single tide occurs making navigation unpredictable (Mitchell 1971:5). Periodic high winds also affect transportation to and from the islands. All of these factors made attempted escape from the colony very difficult.

The former occupants of D'Arcy Island were not the first to be isolated in a Canadian leprosarium. The earliest known cases of leprosy in the country were discovered about 1815, in New Brunswick. Both victims were women, one living in a district contiguous to the Miramichi River, the other a resident of Tracadie. By 1830, the disease had spread to friends and relatives. Several decades later, another female victim was identified, this time in Cape Breton. None of the lepers had knowingly been in contact with another infected person (Losier and Pinet 1984:xi).

There are many myths surrounding the first introduction of leprosy to eastern Canada. A commonly told story is that one of the first victims became infected by fraternizing with diseased sailors from the East. Another story suggests that two sailors, escapees from a Norwegian leper colony, were shipwrecked in Chaleur Bay, passing the disease on to the local population. Still another unsubstantiated account blames surviving "leprous Orientals" who were shipwrecked

from a French boat in 1758. They sought shelter with the local people of the Miramachi River, spreading leprosy bacilli (Stanley 1982:14).

An additional recent explanation is based on the deportation of the Acadians from the Maritimes to the southern United States. On their arrival in the 1750's, leprosy was prevalent among both slaves and early settlers. It is possible that the new immigrants may have contracted the disease, and unwittingly introduced it to Canadian relatives and friends when return visits were made (Losier and Pinet 1984:5). The outbreak of leprosy in New Brunswick resulted in the establishment of Canada's first leper colony on Sheldrake Island in 1844 (Losier and Pinet 1984:4). This was later replaced by better and more accessible facilities at Tracadie, in 1849. During 1867, conditions improved once again, when the Sisters of Charity took over the care of the patients (Losier and Pinet 1984:65). They continued to assist with the running of the leprosarium until its closure in 1965 (Losier and Pinet 1984:158).

The discovery of leprosy in British Columbia and the circumstances surrounding the establishment of the first leper colony were very different. Plans were initiated for the building of the colony nearly fifty years later than the first on the East coast, where the lepers were predominantly French Canadian and included men, women and children; in British Columbia, they were, with very few exceptions, Chinese men. Additionally, while the number of

incarcerated lepers on the East coast ranged between thirty and forty (Losier and Pinet 1984), the maximum number to be placed in the D'Arcy Island facilities never exceeded nine people.

The D'Arcy Island leper colony operated between 1891 and 1924. During the thirty-four year history of the facilities there were many changes. It was initially administered by the Victoria municipal government from opening until the end of 1904. During 1905, the Province of British Columbia took charge, then from 1906 until closure in 1924, the federal government formulated policies and administered funding. There are, consequently, significant differences in the quantity and nature of the records that were kept during these various administrations.

One of the unfortunate limitations in reconstructing the history of the colony was that I was unable to find any documents written in Chinese, which would have provided a Chinese perspective. The Chinese community apparently paid little attention to the plight of their fellow countrymen, particularly during the first fifteen years of colony operation. The isolation of the colony made any regular contact with the outside world very difficult. In addition, the nature of the disease which often resulted in the loss of use of the hands was not conducive to keeping records or writing letters. Another consideration is that the lepers were likely to be illiterate, although I did find limited evidence to the contrary. However, any correspondence which

may have left the islands, carried by government officials to be forwarded to friends and families in China, is untraceable.

The collection of oral history relating to the colony was also not possible. The lepers left no known descendants in Canada, and the authorities associated with the colony are long deceased.

One of the justifications for incorporating archaeological research into the study of the D'Arcy Island leper colony was to use the data collected in an attempt to fill some of the many anticipated gaps in the historic documents. Archaeological investigations were intended to contribute to the illumination of the ongoing material and social conditions of the lives of these unfortunate individuals. Documents on the other hand would provide only an intermittent and outside view of what life was like for the lepers.

The former leprosarium now comprises three archaeological sites. The earliest, DdRt 29 comprising two phases, was occupied between 1891 and 1916. It is located on the west side of Little D'Arcy Island. The caretaker's facilities, DdRt 28, were first developed in 1908. They are situated on the northwest side of D'Arcy Island. The third site, DdRt 31, evidenced by the remains of the two leper houses, is also found on the larger island 500 m south of the caretaker's home. It was inhabited between 1917 and 1924.

Prior to fieldwork, only two of the three sites had been recorded in the B.C. Archaeological Site File. These were DdRt 28 and DdRt 29. All of the historic records investigated up until the point of fieldwork described the colony as being located on D'Arcy Island. No mention of Little D'Arcy Island had been found, although DdRt 29 was recorded in the site file as part of the colony. The function of DdRt 29 and its relationship to the other site remained unclear at the beginning of the investigations. The discovery of an additional site, DdRt 31, on D'Arcy Island further confused the issue.

One of the major objectives of archaeological research therefore, was to pinpoint the location of the 1891 buildings, and to clarify the relationship between the three sites. Another important objective was to determine the nature and extent of archaeological deposits at each location, to evaluate the long term research potential of each, and to maximize the recovery of archaeological data given time and funding limitations. Regardless of the outcome of archaeological research, survey and resulting maps of the sites were viewed as a minimal contribution.

The historic photographs were of little use in determining the original location of the colony. Both vegetation and landscape had altered considerably over the last 100 years. Local folklore supported the idea that the imposing concrete remains on the large island were those of "the leper hospital." Therefore, I thought that DdRt 28 was

the original location of the facilities described in the early historic records.

Accordingly, archaeological investigations were started there. Immediate goals were to document the remains of the two buildings and associated features, to determine use of space within the house in the absence of historical documentation, and to determine the function(s) of the second structure. After a short period of time it became clear something was very wrong. The amount of labour evidenced by the care of the grounds and its features, and the status of the inhabitant(s) of the house reflected in the archaeological data were simply not commensurate with images of disabled and poverty stricken Chinese lepers portayed in the historic records.

After fieldwork was initiated, some historic documents that had long been buried in a satellite storage area of the B.C. Provincial Archives eventually emerged. Buried in the numerous papers were hints that confirmed my growing suspicions. The original location of the colony was on Little D'Arcy Island. We then turned our investigations to the site on the smaller island. The major objective here was to find the remains of the house and other features of the colony described in the documents.

Additionally, the historic records confirmed that two dwellings had been constructed south of the caretaker's facilities on the larger D'Arcy Island; they had been used by the lepers. One had been built for the Chinese, the

other for the Whites. The final phase of the project focussed on archaeological investigations at DdRt 31.

Prior to fieldwork I thought that the archaeological aspects of the project would be the most important source of information concerning the colony. I believed that the original location in particular would be important as a source of Chinese material culture from the late 19th and early 20th century. I was wrong. Not only were there few material remains of the sites occupied by the Chinese, there were far more historical documents available than I had anticipated. They also contained many long forgotten sad stories from British Columbia's past. The discovery of these records provided an opportunity to evaluate the social history of the D'Arcy Island leper colony using both material culture and historical data in a complementary manner, as advocated by Deetz (1983, 1988).

This discussion consists of eight chapters. Following the introduction, in Chapter 2, I outline the historical background for interpreting the events in the evolution of the D'Arcy Island leper colony. This includes a brief history of the Chinese in British Columbia, attitudes towards leprosy in the late 19th and early 20th century, and the treatment of leprosy cases in B.C. before the establishment of the D'Arcy Island facilities. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical background for my research, while the fourth chapter discusses methodology: historical research, archaeology, laboratory methods and faunal

analysis. Chapter 5 describes the three archaeological sites comprising the colony in the order in which they were occupied: DdRt 29, the original location of the colony on Little D'Arcy Island, DdRt 28, the caretaker's facilities on D'Arcy Island and lastly DdRt 31, the remains of the nearby leper huts. Historical and archaeological data are combined in these descriptions.

The sixth chapter outlines the historical development of the colony; it discusses municipal administration from 1891 to 1904, official provincial administration during 1905, and finally the three phases of federal administration, the first from 1906 to 1907, the second from 1907 to 1916, the latter from 1916 to closure in 1924. The next chapter describes the material culture of the three sites, using data from photographs, historic records, and archaeological excavation. Discussion and conclusions are presented in the final Chapter 8.



## Chapter 2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The establishment of the D'Arcy Island leprosarium in 1891 followed several decades of growing anti-immigrant hostilities in the province of British Columbia. It also emerged at a time when there were differing medical opinions concerning the nature of the disease of leprosy.

### Chinese in British Columbia to 1923

Beginning in the late 1850's, Chinese immigrants first came to British Columbia in search of gold (Chan 1983; Li 1988). By the early 1860's, as many as 7,000 Chinese had reportedly arrived in Canada. Most of them were miners, while others provided services such as operating restaurants and laundries, selling vegetables and cutting cord wood (Tan and Roy 1985:7). A few were businessmen who remained in Victoria (Sedgewick 1973:12). During the 1860's, their trading and transportation companies began operating in many small communities throughout the province (Con et al. 1982:18).

Although the Chinese had little to do with white society and rarely competed with white men for jobs, the development of anti-Chinese sentiments was almost immediate as the first formal measures to exclude them occurred as early as 1863. All Chinese votes in a Cariboo election were cancelled. The first anti-Chinese motion introduced by government was in 1865. A head tax was urged by the

Vancouver Island assembly for all incoming Chinese. In 1871, the concept of a head tax to deter immigration was first introduced in the B.C. legislature (Ward 1990:30).

During the 1870's, many of gold mines in the Interior were exhausted. The majority of the Chinese miners returned to the Coast to settle in the Fraser Delta and on Vancouver Island (Chan 1983; Li 1988). Many found work in the newly created salmon canning industry, some became domestic servants, while others found employment in the coal mines (Roy and Tan 1985:7). A small number remained in the more lucrative mining areas and a few Chinese formed their own mining companies in the Cariboo. These had reached a total of thirty by the year 1875 (Con et al. 1982:19).

The visible presence of the Chinese in growing numbers on the Coast provoked some provincial politicians to become leading Sinophobe spokesmen. There was a series of attempts to introduce racist legislation to limit immigration and to impose a poll tax. By 1875, both Chinese and native Indians had been disfranchised from the provincial vote. Public and political hostilities continued against the Chinese throughout the 1870's, although general support was not widespread (Wynne 1978; Roy 1989).

A second wave of immigration occurred during the 1880's, as new Chinese arrived to work on the Canadian Pacific Railroad (Li 1988:31). Many were recruited from experienced labourers in the United States, while others came directly from Hong Kong. A total of more than 17,000

immigrants arrived in British Columbia between 1881 and 1884 (Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration 1885:v). Racial tension in the province increased, as both politicians and the public at large became more and more agitated with the growing population of Chinese. Major attacks were mounted by provincial legislature members. They sought to impose restrictions on the Chinese already living in the province, as well as to impede further immigration, culminating in the writing of the Chinese Immigration Act. This was overruled by the federal government, which recognized the importance of cheap labour for construction of the new railroad. The Prime Minister, however, did agree to an inquiry into the validity of concerns about the growing Chinese population in Canada. Consequently, the Chinese Immigration Hearings were held in 1884 (Li 1988; Ward 1990).

The results and recommendations of the Hearings were not to the liking of many B.C. residents. While they believed that the Chinese did not conform to the moral and health standards of White society, the presence of the immigrants was supported for the purpose of cheap labour. They were important not only for railroad construction, but an increasing number of Chinese were being employed as domestic servants and as casual labourers in the logging, farming, and canning industries (Lai 1973; Wynne 1978).

In response to the failure of the federal government to halt the influx from China, provincial politicians again attempted to introduce the Chinese Immigration Act; and once

more it was disallowed by the federal politicians (Roy 1989:54).

During the same year, an anti-Chinese union was formed in Victoria. This was no accident; the largest Chinese community in Canada was developing in this city (Lai 1988). In a mass demonstration, banners which were displayed included the comment "Let no lepers cross our threshold." It is noteworthy that a Victoria city councillor was the president of this group (Ward 1990:41). Another well-known city Sinophobe, Noah Shakespeare, the former Major, was elected to federal politics, providing a strong outlet for the frustrated racist citizens on the west coast.

Eventually, under persistent pressure from both the public and legislators, the federal government finally passed the Chinese Immigration Act. The key components were the introduction of a \$50 head tax for immigrants and the restriction of one immigrant per 50 tons of cargo on each ship entering Canada (Canada Statutes 1885, Chapter 71:48-49). The new Act also reflected concern about the Chinese bringing health hazards into the country. Bearers of infectious diseases including leprosy, and prostitutes were banned from entry. Immigration slowed, although the Chinatown of Victoria continued to swell as many workers from the railroad flocked to the Coast.

This incited further anti-Chinese measures. For example, in 1890 a petition was presented to the legislative assembly calling for the prohibition of Chinese employment

in Public Works. A second petition requested similar restrictions in the coal mines (B.C. Sessional Papers for the Year 1890:391-393). The main reason given for these requests was that the Chinese were perceived by Euro-Canadians to be a non-progressive race. The reality, however, was that B.C. was facing an economic depression, and that the Chinese were viewed as a threat to White employment (Wynne 1978). These petitions eventually formed part of a very restrictive piece of legislation passed in 1897 by the province. This was the Alien Labour Act, which restricted work by both the Chinese and Japanese in many areas of private and public employment (Ward 1990:55). The legislation, however, was disallowed by the federal Laurier government.

During the years 1899 and 1900, Chinese immigration reached a new peak, as close to 9,000 new entries into Canada were counted (Con et al. 1982:296). As the numbers grew, so did opposition to them. When a B.C. provincial election was called at this time, the immigration issue became very much a part of the political campaign. Following the election, the new Premier Dunsmuir requested further restrictions on Oriental employment and immigration. In response, the federal government in an attempt to appease the citizens of the West Coast, raised the head tax from \$50 to \$100 (Canada Statutes 1900, Chapter 32).

With its own impending election, the federal Liberals were further pressured to consider the issue of immigration,

and in 1901 organized a second commission to look into it. The results of the commission were condemning. Both Japanese and Chinese were now considered to be very serious competition to the workers of B.C. The commissioner also stated in very strong terms that Asians were not assimilable and would clearly impede the development of a racially homogenous society. The beliefs that the Chinese were highly immoral and that they presented a serious menace to public health were once again reiterated. Additionally, a recommendation was made to raise the head tax to \$500; this would ostensibly further deter Chinese immigration (Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration 1902).

During the late 1890's and early 1900's, the public also continued to express their anti-Oriental attitudes in sporadic outbursts. Among the many incidents were four separate mob actions which occurred in the Slocan Valley, and the communities of Atlin, Salmo, and Penticton. These vigilante activities were in response to the arrival of small numbers of Chinese or Japanese labourers. They were driven out of the communities, and in only one case did the immigrants return (Ward 1990:64).

In 1903, immigration reached its highest level in many years. The federal government reacted and raised the head tax to \$500 (Canada Statutes 1903, Chapter 8). Although it initially resulted in a dramatic decrease in the influx of Chinese, numbers began to climb again in 1906. Racial tensions reached a climax in 1907. The year before, East

Indian immigrants had been the subjects of racial persecution. With the arrival in Canada of many Japanese, Indian, and Chinese immigrants in the summer of 1907, public protest reached new heights. Following ongoing public debate, and unheeded pressure on political figures to halt immigration, violence erupted in Vancouver's Chinatown. Reportedly, between 300 and 400 rioters attacked the Chinese. While injuries were minimal, property damage was extensive, and the Chinese were left in a state of fear and shock (Morton 1974).

Frustrated with the lack of formal political support, the Asian Exclusion League became the major outlet for racial hostility in the province on the part of the Europeans. Its popularity, however, was short-lived, since federal restrictions had effectively curtailed the influx of Oriental immigration.

In 1908, the federal government passed further legislation, prohibiting immigrants from coming to Canada unless they travelled straight from their country of birth with tickets purchased in their own country, which brought them to Canada on a continuous trip (Canada Sessional Papers 1909:100-101). This was aimed primarily at Japanese and Indian immigrants, who were the focus of much of the racist activity over the next few years (Ward 1990:76).

During 1911, another royal commission was formed to investigate alleged irregularities concerning Chinese immigration into the port of Vancouver. At this time, the

Chinese population in British Columbia had reached nearly 20,000 (Con et al. 1982:300). Scrutiny of incoming immigrants became more severe (Anderson 1991:135). However, the rate of immigration increased, and now included many women and small children (Con et al. 1982:94).

Anti-Orientalism was mainly dormant in the province during the early years of World War I. The war, however, had a severe effect on Canadian Chinese communities in the form of widespread unemployment and many people returned to China (Con et al. 1982:118).

As Asian participation grew in both retail trading and farming after the war, prejudice once more became overt. It has been suggested that this was a response to economic and social disruption in B.C. brought about by returned veterans and the decline of industry. Asians were again accused of taking work away from Whites (Li 1988).

At this time, there were many interest groups in place which served as vehicles for expressing hostilities towards Orientals. The need for exclusion leagues by this time had grown obsolete (Ward 1990:129). By the early 1920's, there was little else provincial politicians could do to legislate racial discrimination other than tighten existing laws. The federal government, however, introduced one more piece of legislation in 1923, which revised the Chinese Immigration Act. Although the head tax was finally abolished, the new policy permitted only students, Chinese born in Canada, Government representatives and their staff, and some



merchants to enter the country (Canada Statutes 1923, Chapter 38, Section 5). Regardless, the public was still protesting the presence of Asians at the time the D'Arcy Island colony was being moved to Bentinck Island in 1924.

During the many years of legislative exclusion of the late 19th and early 20th century, the Chinese did little to fight back. The Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association was formed in 1884 by the merchants of Victoria, in response to the oppression of the dominant White society. One of its mandates was to fight discriminatory laws in the courts. Its other main functions were maintain general order in Chinatown, and to provide social services (Lai 1972). However, since the members of the organization were primarily merchants, they did little to protect the interests of their fellow countrymen who were labourers (Lai 1975). Although racial disputes were many, few cases ended up in the courtroom (Li 1988:75).

Secret societies had already been in existence for several decades before the formation of Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association. Other associations based on clan origins began to appear, and were important to the welfare of the Chinese community (Con et al. 1982). However, they could do little to fight the restrictive and oppressive laws of the federal and B.C. provincial governments.

From the earliest arrival of the Chinese in the province until the mid-1920's, stereotypes changed little. Recurring comments about them focussed on such evils as

opium smoking, prostitution, and gambling (Con et al. 1982). Their burial habits were viewed with disgust, as were their gardening practices, which involved the use of human and animal fertilizer. Most relevant to the present discussion are the views of Chinese living conditions which were considered extremely unsanitary. Comments such as the following circulated widely:

Their filthy habits, unsanitary surrounding, indoors and out, raw, half-cooked unwholesome or insufficient food, are all circumstances and conditions which predispose to infectious disease and serve to spread it rapidly when once it is roused into activity." (Report of Royal Commission on Chinese and Japanese Immigration 1902:20).

The Chinese were accused of being not only carriers of leprosy, but also smallpox, typhoid fever, syphilis, and other venereal disease. Additionally, the type of leprosy they brought to the country was believed to be different. In a discussion of the condition of John Bedoff, the Russian leper discovered in 1916, the doctor responsible for determining he had the disease was sued \$10,000 for misdiagnosis. A Vancouver paper noted that:

The particular form of leprosy as diagnosed by Dr. Patton in this instance was the early anesthetic type which is distinct from the advanced and more repulsive types seen in Oriental countries. (Province 26 Aug. 1916:23).

There was little doubt in the minds of British Columbians of the late 19th and early 20th centuries that the Chinese were a repulsive, disease ridden and immoral race. Exclusion on this basis had a widespread appeal, while arguments based solely on economic matters were popular in only a small segment of society (Tan and Roy 1985:12).

#### Attitudes Towards Leprosy in the Late 19th and Early 20th Century

From the first discovery of leprosy in British Columbia in the early 1870's, to the closure of the D'Arcy Island colony in the mid-1920's, there was much confusion about the nature of the disease and its potential threat to public health. The medical profession, as well as newspaper reports, added to its mystery.

Concurrently with the discovery of the first known lepers in British Columbia, pioneering research was being carried out in Norway. Gerhard Hansen, whose name is now used in medical circles to refer to leprosy, was the first to isolate the bacilli which causes it. His findings were published in 1875 (Hastings 1985:8). He was convinced that the disease was contagious, rather than hereditary as was commonly believed. What he was unable to find out, however, was how the bacilli were transmitted from one person to another (Gussow 1989). He did discover, during a study of Norwegian peasants, that the incidence of leprosy was on the

decline amongst them, although they continued to eat large quantities of badly cured fish. Therefore, he concluded as early as 1872 that blaming a fish diet as a cause of leprosy was completely unfounded (B.C. Sessional Paper 15, 1905:17).

The commonly held belief on the American Mainland at the time was that leprosy resulted from generations of syphilis, transmitted from one generation to the next (Report of the Joint Special Committee to Investigate Chinese Immigration 1877:131). However, there was evidence to the contrary. Father Damien, a Roman Catholic priest who was working with the lepers of Molokai in Hawaii, contracted the disease. Since there was no history of leprosy in his family, this supported Dr. Hansen's findings that leprosy was not inherited (Hastings 1985:9).

Regardless, the disease was viewed as "the most fearful, loathsome and terrible disease with which civilization has been infected, and which of itself is a sufficient menace to justify you in keeping a family and race from the continent that might possibly introduce it into the Saxon or American bloods" (Report of the Joint Special Committee to Investigate Chinese Immigration 1877:13).

Nine years after this commonly held belief was documented in the American hearings on Chinese immigration, similar hearings were carried out in western Canada, in 1884. An examination of statements given by doctors called to give evidence provides some insight into differing North

American medical opinions of the times. Dr. Helmcken of Victoria supported the idea that the disease was neither infectious nor contagious, and argued that it was not necessary to lock a leper up (Chinese Immigration Hearings 1885:54). Another witness, the Health Officer from San Francisco, similarly believed the disease to be non-contagious (Chinese Immigration Hearings 1885:198). Arthur Stout, physician for the State Board of Health for California, had a differing view and believed that it could only be contracted through close and extended contact, and that it was curable. Therefore, he considered the cry about leprosy as threat to the health of the general population to be a farce (Chinese Immigration Hearings 1885:318).

In 1885, the Health Officer for Victoria also stated that the disease was difficult to contract and essentially non-contagious. He recognized that there was more than one form of the disease, and suggested that one type of leprosy was more contagious than the other. A local Chinese interpreter agreed with the doctor, noting there were hundreds of cases in China.

A medical opinion supporting the theory of contagion offered by a Chinese doctor, described the disease as a form of dry rot, which commenced at the extremities and ate away slowly over 15-20 years. He also believed that the germ could be in the system for one, two, or more years before it was recognizable (Daily Colonist 16 Oct. 1885:3). The Chinese people in general thought that leprosy was

incurable. Lepers were usually driven from their villages, and were not treated kindly by their clansmen (Ritchie 1986:74).

After a long term of illness, Father Damien finally died in 1889. His death brought "the loathsome disease" to the attention of many newspaper readers in the western world. A book published in 1866 about the communicable nature of leprosy was reissued in 1889, and fueled widespread alarm in Great Britain. The following year, there was a record number of references to leprosy in the London Times, reflecting public concern (Gussow 1989:113). This was when plans for the D'Arcy Island leper colony were first initiated.

Ignoring the medical knowledge available, in 1891 a notable Canadian authority on the disease stated that leprosy was hereditary, and that women were less likely to contract it. He also considered leprosy to be contagious, and a fish diet was supposed to make symptoms visible (Daily World 7 Nov. 1891:1). This report was clearly stimulated by the detention of the two alleged lepers in Vancouver.

Later that month, the Victoria Daily Colonist (17 Nov. 1891:4) also attributed the disease to diet. The newspaper article suggested that poison was introduced into the blood by food. Stale fish was again suspected. Isolation was viewed as the only means of controlling the spread of the dreaded disease.

In early 1892, the idea that the disease was a problem particular to the Chinese was suggested:

The bacillus may come from the laundry, the kitchen or Chinese merchandise, but if it gets into the system it will do its deadly work; slowly, perhaps, but none the less surely. (Daily World 29 Feb. 1892:2).

The belief that fish was the cause of the disease was upheld for many years, since in 1905 in a letter from Dr. Fagan of the B.C. Provincial Board of Health to the Attorney-General's Office dated 13 December, Fagan reported the following. According to Dr. Jonathon Hutchison of London, the disease was not contagious. However, it was definitely caused by eating tainted and decomposed fish. There appear to have been no attempts made in the public press to dispel these beliefs, although Dr. Hansen had provided evidence to the contrary thirty years earlier.

More progressive opinions as to the nature of leprosy began to emerge with the federal interest in D'Arcy Island. On being asked how the disease was transferred, Dr. F. Montizambert, the Director-General of Public Health, stated "By inoculation alone" since germs do not fly through the air. He added that there must be direct contact with the pus from the ulcers. Discharge must enter body through a skin abrasion or natural passage until an ulcerous stage is reached. There was therefore no danger to the public.

In 1909, the Province reported that "If leprosy has not yet been proved to be curable, it at least has been robbed

of its terrors by the administration of a wonderful remedy, chalmooogra oil obtained from India." The article documented that this drug had been administered to patients at Tracadie. Two had been discharged as cured (Province 6 Aug. 1909:3).

A new outbreak of the disease in Hawaii in 1912, brought an unfavourable response from the Canadian Government towards immigration, as well as another opportunity for the media to use scare tactics. In the Vancouver Sun 9 April 1912, a reporter argued for "Strict Quarantine Against all Ships from Leprous Zone." The myth that infections may easily be carried through short conversations with diseased individuals was once again revived.

In the same article, Dr. Schaffer "an eminent authority,... calculated that a leper has only to speak aloud for 2 minutes to inject for a distance of a metre and a half (about two yards) from 40,00 to 185,00 bacilli." He added that infection can spread through the mouth and nose by coughing and sneezing. He also believed that in countries where climates were hot, and people walked barefoot, lesions break out on the feet as a result of deposits of bacilli from other lepers. In colder countries, according to the doctor, the disease was transmitted by air.

Four days later in the same paper, in response to this ostensible new threat from Hawaii, the headline read "Need Publicity for Prevention of Leprous Evil." Dr. Underhill,



Head of Public Health in Vancouver, thanked the Sun for its contribution to public awareness (Sun 13 April 1912:1).

Having raised the public awareness about leprosy, the Sun was compelled to carry another story on the discovery of a leper in the Vancouver General Hospital, noting the "new theory that leprosy is no more contagious than scurvy."

Once again the intake of improper food emerged as the causal factor of the disease, which was amenable to treatment (Sun 26 Aug. 1912:1).

The leper who precipitated the news story was erroneously identified as the "First known case in B.C." This Chinese man had gone to the out-patient section at the Vancouver General Hospital, and was then taken to the Isolation Hospital. Authorities took this opportunity to announce that leprosy "... is not so contagious as many people believe, and under modern sanitary conditions, its spread is an exception" (Daily World 24 Aug. 1912:4). Several days later, this victim was sent to William Head to await deportation back to China. He was, however, terrified "as he was a poor man, he would be killed when he got there" (Daily World 26 Aug. 1912:19).

Public fear was so great at this time it was reported that another leper who had been living in a Vancouver store, caused great terror among customers who were afraid they would catch germs from items on the shelves (Sun 12 July 1913:1).

Concern with the importation of the disease into Canada was not limited to the West. Following the discovery of thirty cases of leprosy in London, the Quarantine Officer on the East Coast was told to watch carefully boats from England (NAC, Press Release RG 17 AV 3 Vol 2461:281).

Various reports on the "dreaded disease" continued to appear throughout the second decade of the 20th century. For example, in response to continuous reports of the possibility that D'Arcy Island leper colony might be moved to William Head, the local MP, in a letter to Frederick Montizambert, 11 Jan. 1919, said "leprosy is looked upon as one of the most loathsome diseases which it is possible to contract." He insisted that the lepers be deported. In reply, Montizambert assured him that "leprosy was passed by sores into cut and abraded surfaces" or by sharing cups, spoons, and towels (Frederick Montizambert, letter to Rundle Nelson, 17 Jan. 1919). Clearly, it was not a public threat.

Although medical opinions such as this were readily available, the public paid no heed. For example, in the Victoria newspaper in 1917, a full page advertisement was taken out in one issue, with the headline "leprosy" written in large capital letters. The remainder of the page contained information on the perils of taking laundry to a Chinese facility, where loathsome germs could be lurking. Of course, the solution was to take one's dirty washing to a clean White laundry (Times 17 July 1917:8).

The fear of leprosy appears to have died down in the 1920's, perhaps because of the low incidence of cases and the fact that the disease was now treatable.

#### Leprosy Cases Before the Establishment of D'Arcy Island

The first mention of leprosy in B.C. found in newspaper accounts occurred in 1872. A Chinese victim was described dying in the bushes outside Victoria. He had "a horrid appearance", with "fingers and toes dropping off at their joints, teeth falling from their sockets and other unmistakable signs of the dread disease." His fellow countrymen had, according to the report, turned him out to die (British Colonist 12 June 1872:3).

The disease is again mentioned in the British Colonist, seven years later. In a brief article, a reporter expressed surprise about the existence of a leper settlement in Canada, with reference to Tracadie. He also took the opportunity to note the presence of Chinese lepers in British Columbia (British Colonist 6 May 1879:3).

During the 1884 Chinese Immigration Hearings, the incidence of leprosy among the Chinese, and the potential threat of the disease spreading into the White population was a major concern. Among the local experts questioned about this problem was Dr. Helmcken, a well-known physician in Victoria. He reported that the first known case in British Columbia may have occurred as early as 1870. He stated that he had identified an Indian leper "before the

Chinese arrived." At the time of the hearings, this was "fourteen or fifteen years ago." The doctor had also diagnosed a second leper "eight to ten years ago" (Report of Chinese Immigration Hearings 1885:55). He was not aware of any other cases, although he did suggest that the Chinese were perhaps keeping other victims out of sight of White authorities.

Additional cases of leprosy were also documented in the Immigration Hearings. According to the testimony of Police Superintendent Bloomfield:

Leprosy cases, but not very bad, have been here. I have known ten or twelve cases of male leprosy within the past ten years (Chinese Immigration Hearings 1885:3).

The whereabouts of the majority of these victims and their fate was not discussed. However, Bloomfield did report that about eight years previously, a leper had been forced to live in the bushes outside Victoria city limits. He survived by stealing, and eventually died there. Local merchants also contributed to his support. This is perhaps the same person reported in the British Colonist in 1872.

Superintendent Bloomfield also stated that three or four other individuals with the disease must have died. One suspected case was found in a burned building, with hands and feet that had dropped off. The latter may refer to an incident reported in the British Columbian in 1882. A Chinese man was discovered in New Westminster in appalling

condition. He had been hanged then burned. According to newspaper accounts, he was suffering from a sore foot possibly caused by leprosy.

During the same Hearings, Sergeant Flewin of Victoria noted that he had had contact with only one leper in the city, who had been in and out of jail (Chinese Immigration Hearings 1885:15). This is probably the same man described in the Sanitary Officer's report for 3 September 1885. Following a tip that a leper was living in Chinatown, a man was discovered with the disease described "in its most appalling form," with the victim's feet falling off. The City official also reports: "In a hovel adjoining the miserable creature we found a privy overflowing with filth under the flooring of the adjoining tenements." A second Chinese was located during this reconnaissance. He was described as a vagrant who had been sent on a number of occasions to the city jail, where he came in close contact with fellow prisoners. From time to time he also roamed the streets of Victoria. The following month, it was reported in the Colonist that the former prisoner had once again found his way into jail (Daily Colonist 16 Oct. 1885:3).

In 1888, the Chinese community in Victoria was approached about the fate of one of the lepers. The Mayor and the Chairperson of the Police Committee met with a large number of Chinese merchants concerning the disposition of Chinese lepers. The City at this point positively refused to take care of them. The man presently imprisoned had been

caught selling liquor to the Indians. He had subsequently been sent to the provincial penitentiary. It was the opinion of the municipal officials that the wealthy Chinese should look after him on his release until he could be shipped back to Canton. Eventually, the Chinese agreed to pay his way back to China and for his care in a hospital in Canton (Daily Colonist 8 Sept. 1888:5).

During the same year, Dr. Helmcken noted in his journal entry dated 30 June, that two sick Chinese, one a confirmed leper, were continually being picked up by the police to get rid of them. He added that the prison would soon be crammed with diseased people and would sooner or later become unfit for prison use (Copy of Dr. Helmcken's journal sent by R. John, Warden Provincial Gaol to A. Davie, Attorney-General 9 July 1888).

No further information relating to the treatment of lepers in Victoria was found for the late 1880's. However, it is clear that the discovery of these two cases appears to have precipitated discussion by the Victoria municipality as to the best course of action to take.

Several years later, western Canada's first leprosarium was established at a time when racist attitudes prevailed, and medical opinions on leprosy were diverse.

### Chapter 3 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The nature of historical archaeology and its relationship to anthropology and history has generated much literature over the past three decades. The definition, scope and objectives of the discipline have all been hotly debated. Recently, considerable discussion has focussed on the kinds of research questions historical archaeologists should ideally address. A number of studies have emerged which concern the archaeological manifestations of social inequality.

There are different degrees and varying forms of inequality. Differences in status and class, race, sex, age, ethnicity, and socio-cultural background, as well as individual qualifications may contribute to its emergence (Fallers 1973; Roberts and Brintnall 1982; Matras 1984). Stigmatized disease associated with low socio-economic status is an additional dimension of social inequality (Goffman 1963; Berreman 1981).

The study of ethnicity has generated considerable interest not only within the disciplines of Anthropology and Sociology, but has also been a focus of attention in historical archaeology, during the last decade. There are many definitions of this phenomenon, but ethnicity is commonly viewed as the categorization of groups of people according to cultural characteristics (Van den Berghe 1975). Ascription to a specific ethnic group frequently results in

the creation of a dominant ethnic group which maintains power relations over a perceived lower status minority group.

There are various anthropological and sociological approaches to the understanding of ethnicity and ethnic relations. One of the most frequently cited theories in the anthropological literature concerning ethnicity is Barth's (1969) theory of boundary maintenance. His central argument is that boundaries are maintained on the basis of stable social relations resulting from the definition of clearly contrasting ethnic groups. According to Barth (1969:15), this "entails criteria for determining membership and ways of signalling membership and exclusion." Implicit in the definition of an ethnic group is the sharing of criteria for evaluation and judgement. In order for boundaries to persist there must be a structuring of interaction in situations of social contact (Ibid:16).

Spicer's (1971) approach to understanding ethnicity goes beyond discerning aspects of material culture in order to define ethnic groups. He suggests that a more fruitful way to understand ethnicity is to look for symbols which a group may use to identify itself. These symbols may be either material or non-material; and they help to maintain group identity regardless of cultural change.

Both Barth and Spicer's theories emphasize internal identity. Other approaches focus on the external ascription of cultural characteristics which are employed in the



definition of ethnicity. A recent sociological study illustrates how ethnicity is not only a matter of ascription of identity by one group to another, but also concerns the identification of factors which help to maintain identities, and which ones result in change (Li 1990:5). This model, however, appears limited in explaining the complexities of ethnicity. Both external and internal processes of identification should ideally occur simultaneously; group identity may then be understood from within and without.

Ethnicity may also be used as a strategy as a means to an end. Depres (1973), in his study of ethnic groups in Guyana, examines what happens when different groups are in competition for scarce resources. One of the significant points illustrated by Depres is that in a competitive framework, ethnic groups are ranked according to their access to resources. Ethnicity then results in social stratification, and ultimately dominance and power structures are operationalized. In some cases, inequality is created and maintained by formal political structures such as government legislation (Bolaria and Li 1988).

The definition of ethnicity and problems of ethnic relations are also addressed by historical archaeologists. McGuire (1982:161)) suggests that there are two major approaches to the study of ethnicity: "Understanding variation in the formation, maintenance, and interaction of ethnic groups" or "by tracing sets of ethnic relationships through time." It is the second approach which McGuire

believes holds considerable potential for historical archaeology.

However, most studies of ethnicity undertaken to date emphasize the presence of perceivable cultural traits which differ between ethnic groups. Other criteria such as distinctive butchering techniques are commonly used to evidence the identity of the ethnic group under investigation. Many studies of Blacks in the United States have been addressed in this manner (e.g. Bower 1991; Deetz 1977, 1988; Otto 1977, 1980; Orser 1987, 1988; Shephard 1987). Studies of Chinese have been conducted using a similar approach (e.g. Briggs 1974; Chace and Evans 1979; Lagenwalter 1980; Lalande 1981, 1982; Teague 1980; Teague and Shenk 1977). With several notable exceptions (e.g. McGuire 1982; Praetzellis et al. 1987), the use of appropriate anthropological models to understand ethnicity is limited. Without the application of more developed research strategies, Babson (1990:26) suggests that studies of ethnicity in and of themselves are simply not enough: "they categorize much, describe more, and explain nothing."

One of the more fruitful lines of enquiry concerning ethnicity, used by prehistoric archaeologists, is a symbolic approach to material culture. For example, several archaeologists have concerned with how social identity is expressed in artifact style (e.g. Wobst 1977; Conkey 1978). According to such studies, artifact attributes and the artifacts themselves can convey important social

information. Historical archaeologists have been slow to pursue this approach. Several significant exceptions include Burley (1989) who shows how ceramics that are used among the Hivernant Metis have a symbolic role in social interaction and integration. Burley, Horsfall, and Brandon (1992) also employ a similar symbolic approach in their broader study of Metis ethnicity.

While anthropological and archaeological models generally emphasize the role of observable cultural differences in the demarcation of ethnicity, several recent sociological theories focus on the complexity of the identification of ethnicity and ethnic groups. Some authors argue that both cultural and physical characteristics are used in defining groups, when they are recognized as socially important. For example, Bolaria and Li (1988) point out that superficial physical differences are often used to justify the mistreatment of minority groups, which are produced and maintained by unequal access to power by a dominant and subordinate group.

The complexity of the relationship between the categorization of people according to physical or cultural characteristics is addressed by Miles (1982:58). He argues that the absolute use of cultural or phenotypical criteria cannot be maintained in making ethnic group or racial category distinctions. Furthermore, he suggests that racist categorization may combine both types of characteristics. The complexity of the interrelationship between these two

processes is aptly stated by Washbrook (1982:143), "any historian who ventures into the sociology of ethnicity and racism soon discovers he is entering a theoretical minefield."

The use of observable physical differences to categorize people is at the root of racism, another process of social inequality. During the mid and late 19th century, racism was an international phenomenon resulting from biologically derived theories of racial inferiority and superiority (Wolf 1994).

This concept generally refers to the doctrine that human behaviour is determined by stable inherited characteristics deriving from separate racial stocks, having distinctive attributes and usually considered to stand to one another in relations of superiority and inferiority (Banton 1970).

The signification of phenotypical features may be effected for particular purposes, including the enabling of exclusionary practices. According to Miles, the resulting patterns and structures of material inequality including social relations are created in the context of class differentiation. He employs the term racialization to refer to "a process of categorization, a representational process of defining Other..." (Miles 1989:72).

Representations of other vary with historical and social circumstances. Distinctions made between the east and west have been grounded in the European concern with

setting apart its own culture and identity. Said (1979:3) identifies Orientalism as a corporate institution, which perpetuates a western style "for dominating, restructuring and having authority over the Orient." These ideas are embodied in texts which both create and maintains these interests in order to perpetuate relations of superiority over the other.

The spread of immigrant workers to various parts of the world in the 19th century provided a major impetus for racism, as categories of "us" and "them" were created in response. Stereotypical images of immigrants, including the Chinese, were widely held. A common image of the Chinese labourer at this time was one of a backward, ignorant, and inferior and alien being. Images of squalor, unsanitary conditions, and deprivation involving prostitution, opium smoking, and gambling were additional elements of the Chinese stereotype.

One of the strongest stereotypes of the new immigrants in western Canada was that they were unassimiable (Ward 1990:19). The establishment of the Vancouver and Victoria "Chinatowns" was viewed as confirmation of this by many British Columbians. According to Anderson (1991:104), Chinatown embodied all of those characteristics which set the Chinese apart. It was a construct of Western cultural dominance and power, and in the eyes of the Europeans this type of settlement was proof that Chinese society was almost everything that White society was not.

Western images of Asia, differences in values and customs, economic competition, along with the growing presence of Chinese in British Columbia all fuelled racial tensions (Ward 1990). Popular racial attitudes and movements in the mid 19th to the mid 20th century, according to Ward (1990:169), derived from a problem in the social psychology of racial relations. British Columbians yearned for a racially homogenous society. Without cultural homogeneity, White Canada and all that it stood for was threatened. While Ward views prejudice as the root of racial tensions, it does not explain them. Anderson suggests that it is the ideology of racial differences which creates the prejudice (Anderson 1991:19).

Ward's explanation has also been criticized for not paying enough attention to the economic and political circumstances of racist attitudes (Roy 1989). Roy argues that racism stemmed from the concern of "a few demagogues and working men" who were worried about Asian competition in the labour market and in business. While the Chinese were originally tolerated and even welcomed by some employers, as economic conditions declined, they were no longer wanted. The perception that the Chinese were a threat to the average worker became widespread, hostilities grew, and racist attitudes prevailed (Roy 1989).

While racism is identifiable in the historical literature, the identification of racism in the archaeological record presents a major challenge. Babson

(1990:23) suggest that observations can only be indirect, noting that "with certain exceptions racist artifacts, artifact patterns, features or sites will not be found." The solution, he argues, is that racism and specific racist ideologies can provide a context for understanding interactions between groups.

At the same time that immigrant labourers were migrating to various parts of the world, the disease of leprosy came to the attention of the international public. In Great Britain, the exclusion of the Chinese from all western centres of civilization was called for by British politicians because they carried the disease (Gussow 1989). Leprosy was seen as particular to a perceived inferior race, and to White dominant society was even more repulsive than the reported cultural practices of the Asian immigrants. In the United States, the Chinese were especially discriminated against. Leprosy appears to have become a convenient physical criterion to exclude this group of immigrants.

A study of the social construction of knowledge about leprosy in a cross-cultural perspective indicates that the stigma of leprosy is not universal, and that social and moral definitions of the disease vary considerably from society to society. Variations in these definitions may be linked to specific historical events (Waxler 1981:170). Similar to the situation in the United States, many British Columbians believed that the Chinese carried life threatening and infectious diseases.

Inaccurate medical knowledge can also be used to charge individuals with spreading disease. Comparable to accusations of witchcraft with intent to harm, it could be used as a grounds for exclusion (Douglas 1991). During the late 19th and early 20th century, there is enough historic documentation to suggest that medical knowledge was being deliberately overlooked. There is accompanying evidence to suggest that the fear of leprosy was also being used to fuel racism as outlined in Chapter 2. Therefore, it may be argued, given the details of the particular historical context in which the D'Arcy island leprosarium evolved, that it is racist ideology being symbolically expressed in its material manifestations.

In order to evaluate the archaeological remains of the D'Arcy Island leper colony, in this research I am combining aspects of two theoretical approaches used in contemporary archaeological theory. These are processual and symbolic archaeology. Theory consists of basic premises, postulates, or assumptions that specify certain fundamental entities, processes, or mechanics, often implicating phenomena that themselves are unobservable at the time of theory formulation (Schiffer 1987:62). I am using the term process to mean "a series of actions or operations conducing to an end (Webster's Seventh New Collegiate Dictionary 1969:678).

The differences in the methodological and theoretical approaches of symbolic and processual archaeology vary considerably, and have generated much debate between the



leading proponents of these differing archaeological schools. Wylie (1989, 1993) critically evaluates both positions, suggesting that neither is tenable in pure form, but scientific objectivity and generality can be reconciled with contextual analysis. Patterson (1990:197) similarly calls for "coherent explanations of the different perspectives and critical assessments of their assets, liabilities, and implications for the constitution of different sets of historically specified social relations and conditions."

The processual approach in anthropological archaeology was developed in the 1960's and 1970's (Binford 1962; Binford and Binford 1968; Clarke 1968; Fritz and Plog 1970; Watson, LeBlanc and Redman 1971). The primary goal of this approach is to explain the past in terms of valid general statements, which are based on deductively oriented research and hypothesis testing. It is concerned with discovering deterministic causal relations between human behaviour and archaeological evidence.

Recognition of the need for processual historical archaeological studies has been noted by Rowlands (1982). South (1988:27) also calls for the need to explore the processes responsible for human behaviour, noting that in archaeological studies "What is most frequently missing are arguments of relevance linking historical or processual concepts to the archaeological data or patterns." However,

the use of the processual approach in historical archaeological studies has been quite limited. A major research focus has been on acculturation (for example, Deetz 1963, 1965; Deagan 1974; Hobler 1986). Processes related to colonization have been examined by Lewis (1977) and Honerkamp (1980). Exemplary studies using the scientific method advocated by processual archaeology includes South (1977), who relates patterns of refuse disposal to ethnic background. Carillo (1977) presents similar findings.

The theoretical approach of processual archaeology is used in this study to provide a framework for evaluating the relationship between racist ideology and the material manifestations of the D'Arcy Island leper colony facilities. Changes in the architectural form and the location of the colony are related to political decisions which were external to the operation of the colony and the well-being of its occupants. Policy and legislation to exclude Chinese immigrants are linked to administrative changes in the functioning of the institution and how this relates to its material form. Additionally, the deliberate actions of the medical community to ignore prevailing knowledge about the disease may also be associated with developments within the society at large.

Processual archaeology shares several features in common with Marxist archaeology. Both are concerned with understanding processes of cultural change using general

principles, both address questions which relate material culture to the social conditions of a society, and both are interested in the complexities of total systems and the relationship of its parts. However, Marxist archaeologists have frequently been criticized for their inability to link the basic principles of Marxism to archaeological data (Renfrew and Bahn 1991:415).

Several recent studies in archaeology have been influenced by neo-Marxist or structural Marxism (e.g. Gilman 1981; Leone 1984). The main departure from traditional Marxist studies is found in the view of the relationship between ideology and material culture. Marx believed ideology or the superstructure of society was determined by the nature of the infrastucture or economic base of a society (Marx 1970). Neo-Marxists, on the other hand, view ideology and the material infrastucture of a society as interdependent; neither is dominant or inferior. This principle is integral to my interpretation of material culture within the theoretical framework of the post-processual school of symbolic archaeology.

Symbolic archaeology is a recently developed theoretical approach (Hodder 1982, 1986, 1987; Miller and Tilley 1984). There are varying schools of thought within this area of post-processual archaeological theory (Shackel and Little 1992). However, the primary goal is to understand the symbolic meaning of material culture within

its particular cultural and historical context (Hodder 1982; Leone 1987).

According to Hodder (1982), material culture has three types of meaning. Firstly, it conveys information about how it was used, about religious beliefs, social characteristics and personal feelings. Secondly, objects also have meaning because they form part of a code. A third type of meaning is concerned with the association of objects in their particular historical context. Since objects symbolize meaning, "Within a particular ideology, the constructed world can be used to legitimize the social order" (Hodder 1982:10).

Rapoport (1982) suggests that elements of the built environment are quite close to the concept of material culture as employed in archaeology. He uses the term built environment to mean "systems of settings including fixed-feature and semi-fixed feature elements." If this is the case, then the built environment may be subjected to analyses used in material culture studies. The built environment would further reinforce the prevailing ideology.

An important aspect of the built environment is architectural form. According to McGuire and Schiffer (1983:278), architectural design "is a process whereby social groups make choices concerning several recurrent sets of activities." These activity sets comprise production, use and maintenance. However, during the process of design all of the goals of these activity sets cannot be achieved

at once, and compromises are made. The authors argue that content and weighting of goals are closely related to a society's social structure adaptation. Social differentiation and social inequality would affect both the symbolic and utilitarian requirements of a structure. In the construction of a building the elite would have greater access to resources and labour, and would be able to reinforce their dominant status in society using architectural design (McGuire and Schiffer 1983:283).

The meaning of power has generated some recent discussion among archaeologists (e.g. Miller and Tilley 1984; Giddens 1987; McGuire and Paynter 1991). However, according to McGuire and Paynter (1991:1), generally little attention has been paid to how people exercise social power. There are some exceptions found in studies of the origins of food production, and of the evolution of social ranking and the state (Ibid:4). Additionally, significant research by Shanks and Tilley (1982) and Miller and Tilley (1984) demonstrate how material culture is used to define and reinforce ideology which determines social relations. Tilley (1984) in a study of Swedish Neolithic sites, argues that the existing social order collapsed because of the failure of ideological practices held by dominant groups and individuals. Both dominance and power may be signified in material culture, which may serve power strategies at a practical level of consciousness (Shanks and Tilley 1987:133).

Cultural landscape may also be used to define power and power relation. Orser (1991), for example, illustrates how the use of house construction and its placement on the landscape can demonstrate differential power. This is similarly illustrated by Leone's (1984) interpretation of the Annapolis garden of William Paca, who signed the Declaration of Independence. The landscape was carefully created to rationalize time and control space, exemplifying the contradiction of a society which advocated slavery, while proclaiming independence and freedom (Leone 1984:25). Harrington (1988) demonstrates how another wealthy politician during the 18th century in Plymouth used house, property, furnishings, diet, and slaves to reinforce social and political relationships.

Other archaeologists concerned with the built environment and the material expression of inequality include McGuire 1982; Beaudry 1986, 1989; Isaacs 1982; Harrington 1989; and Rubertone 1989. Their studies also show how landscapes both shaped and reinforce political and social ideology by a deliberate manipulation of the physical environment. A recent study by McGuire (1991) shows how the building landscape within the context of late 19th century capitalism can be a model of and model for social action. The landscape "fulfilled expectations of the ideology, and guaranteed the continuation of the relations which created the reality" (McGuire 1991:104).

These studies of portable material culture, cultural

landscape, and architectural form all demonstrate the symbolic value of these data sets in expressing and reinforcing prevailing ideologies. In this research, I am using symbolic archaeology to demonstrate that these phenomena were effectively used to reinforce the ideology of "us" and "them", where the former is the dominant White society and the latter, immigrant labourers. Poorer quality artifacts, and more limited quantity and types of artifacts could be used to symbolically express imposed inferior status based on racial differences. Similarly, landscape modification within the colony could be manipulated to reinforce distinctive perceived differences between the lepers and the series of White caretakers, and help to maintain social distance. Variation in architectural form inhabited by these two populations could further reinforce ideology about race and perceived status differences.

Recent discussion in the literature on the potential scope for historical archaeology research indicates that there is a need for the study of nations as total cultural systems. For example, Mrozowski (1988) believes that both particularist studies and ones which have cross-cultural applicability are equally important. World urbanization and environmental history involving social and politically significant questions are viewed as meaningful areas of research. The study of New World colonialism and the rise of capitalism and related issues, and the manifestation of economic inequality among classes should be of central

importance according to Deagan (1988).

My research may be considered timely in light of the above comments, since it directly or indirectly relates to all of these concerns. Firstly, the historical developments and archaeological manifestations of the D'Arcy Island leper colony can only be understood as part of a national cultural system. The interplay between municipal, provincial, and federal politics and interests played a major role in what evolved. An evaluation of the processes involved, however, has broader cross-cultural applicability.

This study also relates to issues concerned with the growth of capitalism in British Columbia and Canada. The exploitation of Chinese labour, the exclusion of immigrants, and the imposition of economic inequality were central to the the creation of the historical context in which the D'Arcy Island leper colony must be understood.

Research also addresses the topic of ethnic relations, and represents an attempt to evaluate to what extent racism may be patterned in the archaeological record in a known historical ideological framework. It will also contribute to research on the subject of Hansen's Disease, a subject that has been widely overlooked by social scientists in North America. Canadian studies concerning the East Coast leprosaria have been limited to historical and descriptive accounts (Stanley 1982; Losier and Pinet 1984). Only brief and inadequately documented articles have been produced on the West Coast leprosaria (e.g. Ford 1990).



In the United States, literature available on the treatment of those inflicted with leprosy is similarly limited. Two exceptions are studies of the colony-hospital located at Carville, Louisiana. Gussow and Tracy (1968), examine status, ideology, and adaptation to stigmatized disease at the institution. A recent study by Gussow (1989), inspired by earlier work at Carville, looks at the history of the disease, and argues that the modern Western stigmatization of leprosy is a recent one and does not result from biblical times.

The present project under discussion is the only archaeological investigation to date of a North American leprosarium or Quarantine Station. It will make a contribution to the study of the history and treatment of stigmatized disease in a Canadian context. Although the victims were predominantly Chinese, only three artifacts of Chinese origin were found during excavations. Two appear be unique to D'Arcy Island; therefore, literature relating to the archaeology of Oversease Chinese in North America is not presented here for contextual or comparative purposes.

Regardless of the outcome of the present archaeological investigations, this study is the first in British Columbia to excavate a Chinese occupation site outside of resource management or Chinatown contexts. Its focus is on a unique group of sites which were constructed during the height of anti-Chinese attitudes and policy in British Columbia's history.

## Chapter 4 METHODOLOGY

### Part 1: Historical Research

Before undertaking historical research, I anticipated finding only limited historical data relating to developments in the leper colony. I knew that newspaper clippings were quite numerous. However, I thought that since the establishment of the facilities occurred approximately 100 years ago, few documents would exist today. The quantity of documents discovered, and the type of data they contained necessitates a discussion of how they have been employed in this study.

During the long term debate concerning the nature of historical archaeology, an ongoing issue among archaeologists themselves concerns the way in which historical documents are used in research. Least productive studies begin with documents, and then attempt to find reflections of these data in the archaeological record (Deetz 1988). Similarly limiting is the excavation of archaeological information which is simply cross-checked with historical literature.

Deetz (1977, 1983, 1988) emphasizes the complementary nature of data generated by the historic and archaeological records. He suggests that the material record should be used as a point of departure for research. Historical documents can then be used to provide explanations which in turn may generate further questions of the archaeological

record. More productive research can be achieved if archaeological and historical data are viewed as totally independent sources of information. Documents may then be used to generate archaeologically testable hypotheses (see for example, Klein 1973).

Another approach is that of Leone and Crosby (1987). Adapting Binford's (1987) Middle Range Theory, they argue that historical documents may be used as an organizational framework to give meaning to archaeological data. They further suggest that data generated by historical and archaeological records should be considered as separate systems with no necessary relationship between them, since they were formed by very different processes. According to these authors, fuller explanation can be realized by explaining ambiguities between the two systems.

One of the criticism of this approach is that these authors have presented an erroneous view, in stating that there is no relationship between the historical and archaeological records. Additionally, making one to one match-ups between writers of documents and users of excavated materials has only limited utility in providing adequate and meaningful interpretation (Beaudry et al. 1991).

Some historical archaeologists use documents in their research to study problems similar to ethnohistorians (i.e. the study of minority groups without their own written records). They rarely, however, achieve the "ideal

perspective" found in Trigger (1976). Few authors have realized an ethnohistoric-archaeology using a multi-disciplinary approach in the study of native peoples. Excellent examples of such integrated approaches include Brown (1973), Adams (1977), and Kent (1984). Ethnohistoric research, however, need not be limited to the study of native peoples.

In my research, I am using documents to provide a meaningful historical context for understanding the developments in the D'Arcy Island leper colony. Historic data are also used where appropriate to explain, as well as complement, the archaeological record. Most historical archaeologists separate their historical and archaeological data in their presentations. Below, I will combine historic and archaeological data in my description and analysis to create a meaningful integrated perspective. Both data sets are treated as equally important and interdependent.

Historical research was undertaken at the B.C. Provincial Archives, the Victoria and Vancouver Municipal Archives, the Legislative Library of British Columbia, Special Collections, University of British Columbia, the Victoria Public Library, and the National Archives of Canada. Primary sources included correspondence, government reports, Sessional Papers and newspaper clippings.

In the Provincial Archives, Record Groups examined included Attorney-General's correspondence files, Department of Lands and Public Works, Department of Health, Map

Collections and Visual Records. Federal records comprised relevant documents from the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Immigration, Ministry of Health, and Public Works. Municipal documents examined were primarily annual reports for Vancouver and Victoria relating to health and sanitation of the respective cities.

A number of methodological problems were encountered during research. Accessing some of the Federal records was very time consuming. The older ones were located in satellite storage areas, and had never been studied before. Medical files, as well as some of the other files were confidential, and it took many days for document security clearance. Some of the 100 year old materials were very fragile, and could not be xeroxed. Others were hand written and often very difficult to read.

A major unanticipated problem was found in the Victoria Municipal Archives. Although the original quarterly reports for the Sanitary and Medical Committees were available from 1891 to 1893, the remainder of the documents had been destroyed in the 1960's. For the period 1894 to 1904, only the very brief year end reports were used.

Newspaper clipping were accessed under the major index headings for "D'Arcy Island," and "leprosy." Additional sources were listed under "Chinese." Newspapers investigated were the British Columbian, The Victoria British Colonist and the Daily Colonist, the Victoria Times, the Vancouver Province, the Sun and the Chinese Times. The

customary frustrations of working with newspaper microfilm were experienced. Missing pages and illegibility were the two main problems. Incorrect page or date citations in the indices were also common.

In this research, I am using the anthropological perspective of ethnohistory to attempt to recreate a Chinese view of conditions in the colony. Efforts to locate original documents written by Overseas Chinese relating to D'Arcy Island and its occupants were unsuccessful. I am also applying the historical method outlined by Pitt (1972) and Schafer (1969) to the historical data. Careful attention was given to the cross-checking of the varied sources employed in the reconstruction of conditions at the former leper colony and its history.

## Part 2: Archaeological Methods

Before commencing excavations, intensive foot surveys were conducted of the foreshores of both Little D'Arcy and D'Arcy Islands, to locate any further features possibly associated with the colony. Investigations on the latter island were generally limited to within 20-30 m of the shoreline. The houses occupied by the lepers during the latter phase of the colony were located and recorded at this time. On the smaller island, game trails facilitated a more thorough examination of interior localities.

Archaeological methods were designed to maximize the recovery of data from all three sites for comparative

purposes, which might evidence social inequality.

Differences in architectural form and associated cultural landscapes were considered prime sources of information. The recovery of faunal remains and portable artifacts was also an important overall objective.

Standard artifact catalogue sheets, artifact, faunal, level, and unit sheets provided by the Royal British Columbia Museum were used in the field. Excavations were conducted by trowel. Deposits were screened using either 2 mm or 4 mm mesh depending on the soil type. All excavation units were photographed, profiled, and soil samples taken. Sites were mapped using a theodolite and metric stadia rod. The provenience of all artifacts recovered was recorded metrically in three dimensions using the bottom of the northwest corner stake as a unit datum. Site datum elevations were tied in to 0 sea level according to the tide tables for June, 1989 (Government of Canada 1989).

Archaeological methodology specific to the three archaeological sites comprising the D'Arcy Island leper colony are described below.

## DdRt 28: Caretaker's Facilities

### Structure 1: House

As noted in the introduction, at the time that archaeological investigations were initiated at the caretaker's homestead, I had been lead to believe by both local folklore and by the historic records that this site

had formerly been occupied by the Chinese lepers. The real function of the site was clarified by the delayed discovery of additional documentation, and archaeological objectives were subsequently modified. The historical records indicated that the site represented the remains of the caretaker's facilities. However, they provided little information about the features of the property. Additionally, no plans for the house were found. Therefore, the primary purpose of archaeological research was to recover as much information as possible about site use. The extent and nature of cultural modifications of the landscape, and the function of buildings and features were also important concerns.

Four 1 x 1 m excavation units were initially placed in and around the house. The purpose of these units was to assess the research potential of deposits for determining use of space within the structure, and construction features in the absence of building blueprints. Additionally, I hoped to find material culture and faunal data which would provide information about the status and lifestyle of the former custodians who lived here.

Unit 1 was placed inside the building in an attempt to find a base for the stairwell. This would have assisted in determining the plan of the ground floor. Unit 2 was added south of the first unit to find the location of the wall, which would likely have been between the hallway passage and the probable dining room to the south. The third unit was



placed in the northwest corner to assist in determining the function of this part of the house. Unit 4 was established in front of the house as a control unit. All units were excavated in 10 cm arbitrary levels and in four quadrats for each level until bedrock or sterile soil was reached.

Further excavation was not carried out because of the high degree of disturbance of deposits discovered within the house. Vandals had not only defiled the walls, but continuous camping activities and the building of campfires had extensively disturbed deposits, making the recovery and interpretation of cultural materials difficult. In addition, the house had caught on fire at some point in the past. This may have been associated with a forest fire evidenced by burned trees, on the west side of the island.

#### Structure 2: Workshop

The purpose of this building was not documented in the historic records. The main objective of excavations was to determine function by examining the nature and distribution of artifactual materials and architectural features.

The visible foundations were divided into three areas: the floor, porch, and pad. The latter was gridded into 1 x 1 m units. They were numbered alpha-numerically with letters from north to south and numbers from west to east, commencing with A1 in the southwest corner. Alternate squares were initially uncovered in a checkerboard pattern beginning with unit A1 (Fig. 13).

Five additional units were placed in other areas of the structure. Unit 1 was situated on the east side of the steps against the wall. The second unit, oriented north to south extending from the south wall to the centre of the building, was for the purpose of determining the nature of the floor, and possible function of the area. A third unit was placed immediately behind the house to determine the extent of the concrete floor and to test for the presence of a refuse disposal area. The fourth was situated on the east wall to include a possible brickfall. The final unit was excavated on the south of the pad area to determine how the edge of the building was constructed.

Units were excavated in 10 cm arbitrary levels until sterile soil was reached.

#### Feature 1: Well

In order to facilitate the recording of this feature, litter mat was removed from the western portion of the concrete surface pad. It was also removed along with humic soils from the eastern side, to a maximum depth of 21 cm below surface in the northeast corner. Deposits were excavated in 5 cm arbitrary levels.

#### Feature 2: Rubble Pile

The nature of this feature was not initially clear. The purpose of excavations was to determine its function. Moss was first removed from the entire surface of the

mound. A unit datum was established at the centre and highest point. The edge was 31 cm below unit datum on the north side, 18.5 cm at the east edge, 48 cm on the south, while the deepest point was on the west at 58 cm.

The feature was divided into four pie-shaped quarters. The northeast section was selected for excavation because of the high concentration of artifacts visible on the surface. It was excavated in 5 cm arbitrary levels, due to the high concentration of rock and to insure that artifacts retained their original surficial context. Nine levels were excavated until bedrock was reached.

Only a single section of the mound was excavated because the interpretation was possible from investigations of one portion. Additionally, due to the high concentration of artifacts, excavation was very time consuming and other priorities dictated we focus our attention elsewhere.

### Feature 3: Cultural Depression

Situated behind the house, the function of this circular cultural depression was in question. A single 0.5 x 0.5 m test unit was placed in the centre of the depression. It was excavated by shovel in a very wet and humic deposit to 80 cm below surface. At this point, a rock lining was uncovered. This and the consistency and smell of the deposits indicated that the feature was in all probability a drainage pit for dirty water from the house. No further excavations were carried out.

### Faunal Unit 1

An excavation unit was placed on the edge of the terrace to the north of the workshop, where faunal remains were clearly eroding from the edge. At first, I thought this would provide information on animal husbandry as well as diet practiced by the custodians. The unit was excavated in 5 cm arbitrary levels and in quadrats. Individual faunal remains were initially recorded on separate numbered faunal sheets. However, after three levels, it became evident that considerable disturbance had occurred. For the remainder of levels, the provenience of bones was plotted on level sheets. Bones were then placed in faunal bags. Because of the disturbance and questionable association with the caretaker's house, no further excavations in this area of the site were carried out.

### DdRt 29: Little D'Arcy Island

The purpose of excavations at the original location of the leper colony was to determine where the houses and outbuildings had been placed. I also hoped to recover architectural information, artifacts and faunal remains associated with the Chinese occupation. Identification of the garden area and the burial grounds were other priorities.

The exposed foreshore was first visually examined for evidence of historical archaeological deposits, and their relationship to DdRt 15, a previously recorded precontact

archaeological site.

A small diameter probe was then used for further assessment of deposits. A survey line was established along the beach at 82 from the site datum, located northwestwards of the house. Probe holes were placed every 2 m along the line, to an approximate depth of 50-60 cm below surface. In addition, random probing was carried out immediately behind and to the east and west of the building. Six shovel tests, 0.4 m square were excavated behind the house, to a depth of 50 cm below surface.

On the basis of the above assessment, two excavation units were established to further evaluate the archaeological potential of the site. Unit 1, 1 x 1 m in size, was placed close to the edge of the bank on the southeast side of the house. This appeared to be one of the few undisturbed areas on the site. Unit 2 was placed on the west side of the house, because of the presence of charcoal and burned soil in the probe hole, possibly evidencing the location of the former razed house.

Both units were excavated in 10 cm arbitrary levels. Unit 2 was excavated to a depth of 50 cm below surface. Close to the top of level 5, undisturbed prehistoric midden deposit was found. No further work was carried out in this unit as stipulated under the conditions of the project Heritage Conservation Act Permit. Sterile soil was reached in the other unit at 90 cm below surface. Disturbance was found in all levels.

An evaluation of probe holes, test units, foreshore exposures, shovel tests and surficial observation indicated that the main historic house found in archival photographs must have been situated right underneath the contemporary dwelling. Surrounding deposits were extensively disturbed, and no further excavation was carried out.

#### DdRt 31: Patient Facilities on D'Arcy Island

Similar to investigations of the other two archaeological components of the D'Arcy leprosarium, the primary objective of excavations at this site was to recover information which would illuminate the status of its former inhabitants. The foreshore was first examined to determine if the historic occupation was visible in subsurface deposits. A thorough surficial examination was made of the total bay to delineate the extent of historic activity within the site. Excavations were then conducted as follows.

#### Structure 1

Three 1 x 1 m excavation units were placed in and around Structure 1. Unit 1 was placed behind the house for evidence of outside activities. Unit 2 was subjectively placed on the basis of the perceived floor plan of the building to attempt to find the location and nature of the chimney base. An additional Unit 3 was situated to attempt to uncover areas where floor joists might cross, providing

additional construction information.

Units were excavated in 10 cm arbitrary levels until sterile soil was reached. The recovery of archaeological data was very limited, and provided little information evidencing the historic occupation of the structure.

### Brick Feature

A small number of bricks found behind Structure 1 appeared to be a possible stove or cooking area. Littermat and underlying soil were removed from the immediate locality, and the bricks were found to cover a much larger area. The complete feature was then gridded into 1 x 1 m units, using string as reference points, to plot bricks and artifacts recovered in relation to the back wall of the house. The total area uncovered was 5 x 8 m. It then became clear that the feature represented a chimney brickfall, which had been disturbed by site visitors since abandonment. Many of the bricks were missing, indicating that they had likely been collected and removed from the site by Marine Park visitors.

### Structure 2

The inside of the concrete foundations was gridded into 1 x 1 m units. The datum was the northwest corner of the house. Units were numbered consecutively beginning with 1 in the northwest corner, with the high number for each row on the east.

Littermat and thick humus 20-30 cm deep was systematically removed from the floor of the house, beginning on the north wall, peeling it off towards the front of the building. Uncovered artifacts were marked with red flagging and left in situ on the floor. The exposed floor of the house was then brushed with a whisk broom, and features and artifacts plotted on a house plan. They were subsequently removed and catalogued in the field. The area behind the house was also systematically cleared in 1 m square units. Fallen lumber was swept, and the ground cleared back from the east wall of the foundations. Artifacts and features were similarly plotted and catalogued on the same map.

#### Large Circular Depression: Well

The larger depression, 2 m in size, was shovel tested in the centre. This test unit 0.4 m square in size, revealed part of a concrete slab. It confirmed suspicions that the depression was the well reported in the historic records. The entire bottom and sides of the depression were then systematically cleared of littermat and top soil. Four broken sections were uncovered, measured, and described.

#### Small Circular Depression

One shovel test 0.4 m square was excavated to a depth of 80 cm below surface. Nothing was found, and the nature of the depression remained undetermined.



### Refuse Area

A small deposit of refuse was found eroding from the foreshore in front of Structure 2. It was faced with a trowel and excavated in 10 cm arbitrary levels until sterile soil was reached.

## Part 4: Laboratory Analysis

### Artifacts

All artifacts were cleaned and labelled in the Royal British Columbia Museum. Items were then identified and described where appropriate using terminology found in the Parks Canada Historic Sites Artifact Manual. Measurements were made in inches in keeping with sizes used during the particular historic period the sites were occupied. MS WORKS computer programme was used to compile data for statistical analysis and to create a permanent catalogue. A typology was created on the basis of functional classes, rather than by materials, as is common in historical archaeology. The purpose was to facilitate the comparison of sites which were used for different purposes and at different times. Artifacts were categorized according to class, category, type, and material followed by description. The twelve classes are defined in Table 1. Categories are listed for each class.

During the first two days of excavation, all artifacts including nails were given separate artifact numbers. However, because of the high number of nails recovered, this

**Table 1**  
**Typology of Artifact Classes and Categories**

1. Architectural: of or relating to the design of the building; part of permanent fixtures.  
 a) window b) door c) roof d) unidentified
2. Arms: means of offense or defense.  
 a) ammunition
3. Hardware: fittings or physical components of devices used in building.  
 a) construction b) plumbing c) electrical d) building e) unidentified
4. Household: of or relating to a household; domestic items.  
 a) kitchenware b) furnishings c) containers d) tableware
5. Machinery: the working part of a machine designed to transmit or modify the application of power, force or or motion.  
 a) machine part
6. Personal: of or relating to or constituting personal property.  
 a) clothing b) miscellaneous c) toiletry
7. Post-occupational: relating to items that had not been invented at the time of the leper colony.  
 a) post-occupational
8. Prehistoric: refers to cultural materials clearly associated with the former occupation by aboriginal people.  
 a) subsistence
9. Scrap: manufactured articles or parts rejected or discarded, useful only as materials for reprocessing; include items which no longer have enough worth or effectiveness for which it was originally made.  
 a) metal
10. Tool: an instrument or part used or worked by hand for making, manufacturing or working; excludes cutting or shaping part of a machine.  
 a) woodworking b) metalworking c) mechanical
11. Transportation: artifacts formerly part of a means of conveyance or travel of people or goods.  
 a) boat b) wagon
12. Unidentifiable: items which are incomplete or too fragmentary to determine function, or the specific function remains unclear.  
 a) unidentifiable

practice was discontinued. Individually recorded nails were incorporated into the appropriate level bags.

Nails were inventoried using the Artifact Analysis Manual for Historic Archaeology (Grainger n.d.). They were first separated into identifiable and non-identifiable groups, according to level and quadrats where appropriate. Each group was then weighed as a measure of relative preservation in the three archaeological sites.

Identifiable nails were classified as to mode of manufacture, which refers to the method by which the shank of the nail is formed. In this study two modes were identified, a) wrought nails characterized by a shank with a square cross section, with irregular surfaces tapering on all four sides b) machine cut, differentiated by the shank which has two parallel and two tapering sides with commonly visible machine shear marks.

Material type was identified, which refers to the metal forming the major part of the artifact. Head form was not described because many of the nails although intact were heavily corroded on the head. Nails were then measured from the tip to the point in inches.

#### Faunal Remains

Laboratory analysis of faunal remains was carried out by Pacific Identifications, University of Victoria. Each bone was categorized according to mammal, bird, or fish species (NISP). Mammal bones were then identified according

to age: adult, subadult, juvenile/subadult, juvenile, newborn and undetermined. The minimal number of individuals (MNI) was then calculated.

Individual identifiable fish and bird remains were determined. Species lists for shellfish found in sites were also made. No further analysis of shellfish was carried out because of the mixture of prehistoric disturbed deposits with the historic occupations.

## Chapter 5

### HISTORY OF THE D'ARCY ISLAND LEPER COLONY ADMINISTRATION

#### Municipal Government

#### Administration

For several years, nothing was done about the so-called leper problem. Initially, Victoria City officials hoped that it would eventually take care of itself. As long as the disease was limited to only several Chinese individuals who had little contact with the White citizens of the community, they believed it was not their responsibility. However, events in early 1891 proved them wrong. Following the initiation of plans to build a new city market place, some Chinese buildings were razed. Many sick and homeless were left with nowhere to go but the alleys of Chinatown (Daily Colonist 7 May 1907:13). Alleged victims of leprosy were among them, and Victorian citizens called for action, since it provided an opportunity to denigrate the Chinese.

It is not quite clear how the federal Government became involved. However, a local official must have contacted Dr. Frederick Montizambert, the Director-General of Public Health in Ottawa. He then wrote to Dr. A. Smith, the leprosy specialist at the Tracadie leprosarium in New Brunswick. The latter was requested to travel to Victoria to assist with the lepers (Dr. A. Smith, letter to J. Lowe, 28 April 1891).

Accompanied by various City officials and a Chinese interpreter, Dr. Smith searched the streets of the city for victims of the disease. Five cases were discovered (Department of Agriculture Annual Report, 2 May 1891).

Immediate action was taken by the Victoria municipal government. The City Clerk was requested by the Council to notify the provincial government to set aside D'Arcy Island for municipal purposes (Sanitary Committee's Report, 22 April 1891). On 13 May, by an Executive Order-in-Council, on the recommendation of the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, D'Arcy Island was officially set aside. This appeared in the B.C. Gazette 14 May (Vol 31 No 19:322) where notice was given that "Darcey Island" had been reserved from sale or pre-emption and set apart for sanitary purposes.

The municipal government immediately proceeded to construct facilities described in Chapter 6. However, unknown to government officials for many years to come, the buildings were erected on Little D'Arcy Island. This was to create many administrative problems during the history of the institution.

Initial funds for the colony came from the coffers of the City of Victoria. The costs for the first year totalled \$1,253.86 (Memo of Cost, City Auditor's Office, 16 May 1895). However, City officials did not have the authority to spend taxpayers' money (H.A. Munn, Chairman of Sanitary Committee, Victoria, letter to Thomas Earle M.P, Ottawa).

Therefore, efforts were initiated to persuade the Federal Government to take over the institution (Thomas Earle, letter to Sir John Carling, Minister of Agriculture, 8 July 1891).

Carling then consulted with Sir John Thompson, the Minister of Justice. The latter advised the Minister of the Department of Agriculture that he had no right to interfere with developments concerning the newly created leper colony. When informed of this, B.C. Members of Parliament asked for the evidence on which this decision was based (Copy of an Undated Memo of Fact entitled "On the Subject of Lepers in B.C." prepared for the Federal Deputy Minister of Agriculture).

Meanwhile, suspected lepers were discovered in the City of Vancouver later in 1891. Alarmed at the ostensible threat to public health, the Mayor of Vancouver contacted the Victoria City Council for advise. A delegation of council members travelled to the Mainland at the mayor's request. Following an examination of the two men by the Medical Officers from both cities, a meeting was held. Two proposals were made as to the most appropriate line of action. The first recommended that Vancouver should construct its own building on D'Arcy Island to house its lepers. Another suggestion put forward was that the two cities should pay for the existing facilities and their upkeep on a pro rata basis. Only one steamer would then be needed to transport goods (Daily World 14 Nov. 1891:2).

It was moved at this meeting to urge that the Dominion Government fund the leper colony. A resolution was first to be forwarded to the provincial government for endorsement, before being sent on to Ottawa.

The Department of Agriculture immediately came under further pressure to provide funding. In December of 1891, two B.C. Members of Parliament protested to the new Minister of Agriculture, Angers, who was more sympathetic than his predecessor. He requested a \$1000 grant from the Public Health portion of the Quarantine vote to aid Victoria. He also implied that this would be an annual grant, although this was never put in writing (Copy of Undated Memorandum of Fact entitled "On the Subject of Lepers in B.C." prepared for the Federal Deputy Minister of Agriculture). This grant for \$1000 was issued directly to Victoria in January 1892, retroactive to 1 July 1891.

In July 1892, a Health Act was passed by the Provincial Secretary's Office. The purpose was to establish local Boards of Health in the cities of Vancouver, Victoria, Nanaimo, and New Westminster. These boards, in cooperation with the Provincial Board of Health, were to deal with endemic or contagious diseases (B.C. Sessional Papers for the Year 1892, Provincial Secretary's Office, 9 July:255). They played an important role in the handling of lepers for many years to come.

It was also during 1892 that the unfairness of the distribution of the head tax between the federal and



provincial governments was first noted in the context of Chinese immigrants with leprosy. As part of a general complaint concerning the presence of Chinese in British Columbia, a statement was made that "on their account alone the Province and municipalities have been obliged to establish a hospital and home for lepers, several of whom have developed amongst the Chinese." These comments were addressed to the federal Minister of Justice, who was also informed that this situation increased the cost of justice and crime. Recommendations were included that the Province receive 100% of the head tax (B.C. Sessional Papers, Part 1, 1894:1014).

In 1893, surreptitious attempts were made to convince the lepers to return to China. On the orders of the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Dr. McNaughton Jones, the Secretary of the Board of Health, secretly visited Little D'Arcy Island. He was instructed to find out if the lepers would voluntarily be deported to China. Apparently, they would have been happy to be returned to Shanghai or Hongkong, especially on receipt of \$100 per man (Dr. McNaughton Jones, confidential letter to J. Lowe, 27 Mar. 1893).

Lowe initiated enquiries into finding suitable transportation for the lepers. He was informed in a confidential letter from the Vice-President of the Canadian Pacific Railroad that it would be impossible to transport them on the company's steamships. It could not be held responsible, because none of the lepers came on that line

(T. Shaughnessy, letter to J. Lowe, 12 April 1893). The local agent in Vancouver was then contacted, since he replied to the Vice-President of the line in Montreal that he would watch out for a willing captain (C. Brown, letter to T. Shaughnessy, 16 May 1893). Nothing seems to have evolved from these efforts.

While negotiations were being carried out, an Order-in-Council was passed to establish regulations for the prevention of entry of lepers and others with contagious diseases at the inland ports of Canada (Report of the Committee of the Honourable Privy Council, approved by his Excellency the Governor-General-in-Council, 1 Sept. 1893). Another Order-in Council dated 18 April 1893 was made to pay an additional \$1000 to the Victoria municipal government for taking care of the lepers.

When the City of Vancouver heard that Victoria had once again received a grant, the City Clerk wrote to the Minister of Agriculture complaining. He requested a grant proportionate to the amount given to Victoria for taking care of the expenses of two lepers (Charles McGuigan, letter to the Minister of Agriculture, 23 April 1894). He was informed by the Secretary to the Department of Agriculture that the \$1000 was not specifically intended for Victoria, but to cover the care of all lepers in B.C. (H.B. Small, letter to Charles McGuigan, 2 May 1894). McGuigan again contacted the Minister's Office, this time requesting that the \$1000 be regranted, making clear the proportionate

amounts to go to each city according to the number of lepers maintained by each (Charles McGuigan, letter to H.B. Small, 20 July 1894).

Direct correspondence was also made between the City Councils, resulting in no cooperation.

Nothing appears to have come of these negotiations, since in April 1895, the Vancouver City Clerk repeated his request for a separate sum of money (Charles McGuigan, letter to the Minister of Agriculture, 11 April 1895). He was informed that during the next fiscal year, proportionate grants would be available (H.B. Small, letter to Charles McGuigan, 13 May 1895). In the meantime, Victoria was instructed to share the grant for the fiscal year ending 30 June 1894 with the City of Vancouver (H.B. Small, letter to W. Dowler, Victoria City Clerk). Victoria continued to ignore the problem.

Ultimately, squabbling over funding for the colony resulted in a complete rejection by the federal government of any financial responsibility concerning D'Arcy Island. In a Memo from the current Acting Minister of Agriculture, Mr Ouimet, to the Minister of Agriculture, 2 July 1895, a recommendation was made that the Dominion refuse to make any further payments for care of the West Coast lepers. Ouimet noted that the leper colony was a Public Health concern, not part of the Quarantine Office under the Department of Agriculture. According to the terms of the Quarantine Act

of 1872, problems of sickness in the provinces were relegated to provincial governments. The fact that Victoria was granted no further money is confirmed in the Memo of Costs of Maintenance of D'Arcy Island 6 Feb. 1902, showing that the City received only \$2000 from the Dominion in all its years of operation.

The B.C. Legislative Assembly responded to the withdrawal of federal support by passing a resolution that the Department of Agriculture be memorialized on the subject of the leper colony on D'Arcy Island. Subsequently, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture requested the opinion of Dr. Smith at Tracadie. His response was that "these foreigners be returned to China" or their maintenance would become a very heavy cost to the government. An alternative recommendation was to transport the lepers to Tracadie, as long as they weren't "put in the same apartment as our lepers." Dr. Smith saw the benefits of the second plan as a way of encouraging other lepers to go home of their own accord, if they knew they might be placed far from their countrymen. The final decision, he added, should be made on an economic basis (Dr. A. Smith, letter to the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, 6 April 1896).

In 1897, the B.C. Provincial Board of Health also passed a resolution requesting the station become a federal concern. At the same time, the Victoria City Council maintained its harassment of the Dominion government. This

time, G. Maxwell, a new local Member of Parliament, was instructed to argue for a federal takeover (Victoria City Council, letter to G. Maxwell, 23 August 1897).

The appointment of a new Medical Health officer in 1898 was an important impetus for colony developments. He immediately began to urge that the lepers be moved to better facilities, where they would be properly cared for. One suggestion was that they be moved to Tracadie, supporting Dr. Smith's earlier contention. Another alternative suggested by the Mayor of Victoria was that the Province of British Columbia assume control of the colony.

In response to continuous pressure concerning conditions on the island, the Minister of Agriculture made the following announcement to the newspapers. He asserted that there were constitutional reasons why the Tracadie leprosarium was a federal responsibility. Control was assumed by the Dominion under the original terms of Confederation. On the other hand, matters relating to public health were under the terms of the Confederation Act vested in control of local legislatures. The Minister did acknowledge that if the lepers were ill-treated they could be moved to Tracadie (Daily Colonist 22 Jan. 1899:4).

Therefore, the Mayor's recommendation was acted upon. The Local Board of Health passed a resolution in early 1899 that the provincial government assume control (Daily Colonist 10 Jan. 1899:3). Similar resolutions were passed

by the city councils of Nanaimo, Kamloops, and New Westminster.

The Victoria City Council continued to agitate for any form of assistance. In a resolution dated 25 June 1900, it claimed that unless the federal government adopt an example set by Health authorities in New York, that Victoria would "do away" with the institution. Again it was noted that the federal government collected a poll tax from the Chinese, and they accordingly should be responsible for immigrant problems.

That year, the federal government did respond by once again granting \$1000 to Vancouver and Victoria. However, it was withdrawn by the newly elected Liberal Government (Daily Colonist 29 May 1901:5). Again in 1902, the government agreed to compensate for the lepers (Daily Colonist 20 June 1902:5). However, payments were not transferred.

It is clear that negotiations between the three levels of government must have continued, although specific documentation was not found. In a Memo dated 15 September 1903 from the Minister of Trade and Commerce, it was noted that after considering the provisions of Chapter 5 of the Statutes of 1902, entitled "An Act to Amend the Chinese Immigration Act, 1900," that it provided for the payment of a portion of the tax to the provinces. The Minister recommended that 50%, rather than the customary 25%, be refunded to B.C. for the year 1902-03. This amounted to \$226,950 (Chief Controller, Ottawa, Memo to Provincial

Treasurer of B.C., 19 July 1904). The payment would only be made if British Columbia refunded all of the monies that municipalities had spent on D'Arcy Island since it opened.

#### Staff and Medical Policy

During the first fifteen years of the colony administration, little assistance was provided for the inhabitants. There was no caretaker, and no resident doctor available. The lepers were visited once every three months by Victoria City officials. These included the Sanitary and Medical Officers, who reported back to the Victoria municipal government (Hall and Nelson 1898). The Medical Officer from Vancouver also made visits to the colony on occasion. He was responsible for the health of lepers discovered in the City of Vancouver (Province 26 Sept. 1904:1).

This inattention to the plight of the lepers did not go unnoticed. Shortly after the institution was opened, news of the fate of the lepers on D'Arcy Island began to spread. In a letter from Emma Barrett, Port Townsend, Washington, to Reverend E. McLaren of St. Andrews Manse of Vancouver, a woman named Mrs. Hansel reportedly wished to live with and nurse them. The Reverend contacted the Attorney-General's Office, responsible at that time for provincial health matters, and passed on this information (Rev. E. McLaren, letter to the Attorney-General, 8 July 1892). The reply from the government was that this woman could better serve

humanity elsewhere. Since the lepers were isolated and they were few and "well attended," there was no need for any further attention (Charles Wilson, Attorney-General, letter to Rev. McLaren, 13 Aug. 1892).

In 1898, Dr. Fraser, the newly appointed city doctor, was shocked at the conditions he found in the colony. There was no medical policy concerning the care of the lepers. The only relief provided was in the form of opium. This was supplied along with Chinese whiskey for the purpose of relieving pain (Dr. Fraser, letter to Senator Templeman, 7 April 1898). Amputation was a drastic alternative measure (Daily Colonist 31 May 1902:6).

Cursory examinations were given by the visiting doctors. Occasionally, bandages were provided. Skin samples were periodically scraped from the victims for analysis, and limbs pricked to determine the extent of deterioration (Hall and Nelson 1898).

### Food Supplies

During the first seven years operation of the colony, supplies along with the city officials were taken out to the island on the tug, Sadie, once every three months. Initial food for the colony included sugar, flour, meat, bacon, potatoes, tea, and dried fish. Chinese merchants also donated rice along with \$40 towards supplies (Daily Colonist 19 May 1891:5). On the second trip to Little D'Arcy Island,



half a dozen chickens were taken over. Later that year, a large hog as well as Chinese merchandise were added. The chickens by that time numbered thirty (Daily Colonist 28 Oct. 1891:2).

Several years later sixteen ducks were counted, and the lepers had "more eggs than they knew what to do with." Among the supplies taken out when these observations were made were numerous articles contributed by private citizens (Daily Colonist 2 Nov. 1893:5). These likely contained both food and goods.

In 1898, following a Victoria City Council debate instigated by the new doctor concerning the welfare of the lepers, a recommendation was made to improve conditions. Weekly visits were suggested (Daily Colonist 15 Sept. 1898:6). Arrangements were then made for a resident from Sidney to visit the lepers in a row boat (Daily Colonist 6 Oct. 1898:5). A local man, Captain Johnson, was hired to visit the Island twice a month. He reported back to the city officials in writing about deaths, requests, and other conditions at the colony (Medical Officer's Report for the Year 1898).

According to Hall and Nelson's (1898) report, food at this time was described as fifty pounds of rice per month per man, and all the pork, tobacco, tea, oatmeal, etc. they could use, not to exceed an expenditure of \$1000 for the year (Hall and Nelson 1898:9). The chickens had increased to as many as 150, with thirty to forty ducks. The swine,

however, had been discontinued because the colony residents could not raise the hogfeed required. Furthermore, they were too weak to slaughter the animals.

Other kinds of food delivered to the island included wheat, and "various bags and boxes from loaves of bread to boxes of oranges" (Daily Colonist 31 May 1902:6). Luxuries were also provided, such as canned fruit, jam, honey, and condensed milk (Daily Colonist 16 June 1895:3), and "A very liberal supply of Chinese delicacies of their own choosing" (Dr. Fraser, letter to Senator Templeman, 7 April 1898).

An historic photograph showing the landing of supplies on the island documents large sacks and bundles of goods, as well as crates and a tea chest. One of the crates contains beef and pork products according to the label, while a second is marked "Australia," and perhaps contains fruits of some sort. A large sack comes from Enderby, B.C. and is marked "Roller" (British Columbia Provincial Archives, Visual Records Division, Catalogue #93306).

In addition to the food shipped in and fresh garden produce, it was reported that "They had also been able to vary their diet with clams, which were plentiful" (Daily Colonist 12 Jan. 1892:8). This is substantiated by the recovery of shellfish remains found in archaeological deposits. While these are commonly associated with prehistoric midden deposits, it is probable that at least some were deposited by the Chinese inhabitants of the island (Appendix Tables 15 and 16).

According to a letter from a Victoria doctor to William Osler, 20 Jan. 1898, diet was also supplemented by fishing. It is not clear how the lepers fished, but since they had no boat they likely jigged from the rocks.

### Population History

The first placement of a leper on Little D'Arcy Island, according to newspaper sources, occurred in 1890 (Daily Colonist 2 Sept. 1890:10). On discovery, he was detained at William Head Quarantine Station, and was later sent to the Island before there were any permanent facilities. However, his stay was shortlived. It was rumoured that he was rescued by relatives; his subsequent fate was never documented.

On completion of the leprosarium facilities, the first long term residents were moved to Little D'Arcy Island (Table 2). The five Chinese lepers identified by Dr. Smith and Victoria City employees were officially incarcerated on 21 May 1891 (Daily Colonist 21 May 1891:3). In July of the same year, another Chinese leper was discovered in Nanaimo. Following a meeting of the Victoria City Council, an agreement was made to allow his admittance to the facilities on Little D'Arcy Island with the understanding that the city of Nanaimo would pay his expenses (Daily Colonist 9 July 1891:3). However, he escaped custody before he could be transported to the Island (Daily Colonist 23 Aug 1892:3).

According to the Daily World (3 Nov. 1891:4), the City

of Vancouver also detained two possible lepers in 1891. They were en route home to China, when they were apprehended by authorities. They had been in New York, and were being transported along with sixty-three other men from Montreal. They were identified on arrival in Vancouver on a Canadian Pacific train, and subsequently locked up in a hovel in the railroad yards (Daily World 4 Nov. 1891:4).

When these individuals were finally examined by the Vancouver City doctor, one was diagnosed as having syphilis. The second more elderly confinee definitely had leprosy, although he appeared to have venereal disease as well (Daily World 12 Nov. 1891:3). The first man was released on 19 November, which caused a great stir in Vancouver. The fact that he was poorly treated by both his fellow countrymen and local residents was of no concern to the citizens of Vancouver (Daily World 19 Nov. 1891:4). The second individual was transported to Little D'Arcy Island. He continued to insist that he had only syphilis which he had caught from a New York prostitute (Daily World 18 Feb. 1892).

Later that year, according to the Daily Colonist (23 Aug. 1892:3), six lepers remained in the colony. One was expected to die shortly. Seven inmates were reported in the Medical Health Officer's Report at the end of 1892.

During the year 1893, the only reported non-Chinese leper detained by municipal government administration was identified (Daily Colonist 2 Aug. 1893:5). He was a

former resident from Victoria of Russian descent, who had been arrested in Alert Bay. He was then locked up in the provincial jail (Daily Colonist 18 Mar. 1893:5). The detainee was taken out to D'Arcy Island on a special trip made by the steamer Sadie. There were six Chinese there at the time (Daily Colonist 21 Mar. 1893:5); therefore, the anticipated death must have occurred.

The Russian was reportedly shunned by the other residents; he died within a very short period of time. The Chinese, however, refused to bury him. Only after city officials threatened to cut off their opium supply did they place him in a coffin and inter his body. He had reportedly contracted the disease from the Chinese while working in the Alaska canneries (Daily Colonist 7 May 1907:13).

An additional leper was detained in Victoria during 1893, but died before his removal to the island. Suicide was suspected (Daily Colonist 15 Feb. 1893:8).

During the first seven months of 1894, the six Chinese lepers remained. A Chinese man from Nanaimo was added in August. He was towed to the island in an open boat (Daily Colonist 16 Aug. 1894:5), ostensibly to protect the local officials from catching the disease. This is likely the individual who had earlier eluded capture. Another man with symptoms of leprosy was discovered in Kamloops at about the same time (Daily Colonist 16 Aug. 1894:5). However, he was not immediately incarcerated on Little D'Arcy Island. This man had been working for the Canadian Pacific Railroad,

cutting wood, when he was first identified. He was later transported in a wooden box, with a hole cut in the top, and placed on a train to Vancouver. Similar to the leper from Nanaimo he was then towed in a rowboat out to D'Arcy Island (Daily Colonist 14 Oct. 1895:1).

On 25 September, an additional Chinese man from Victoria was added to the group against his will. He had been employed by a Chinese firm on Government Street (Daily Colonist 26 Sept. 1894:5). The population of the leprosarium then stood at nine, the highest in its history.

The Victoria paper reported in late May, 1895 that there were seven lepers on the island. The man known as the "New York" leper had recently died (Daily Colonist 21 May 1895:5). There had been a total of four deaths since the opening of the colony (W. McNaughton Jones, telegram to J. Lowe, 29 May 1895). One leper had managed to escape six months earlier. He had been carried off by friends in the middle of the night and hidden in Chinatown until he was sent back to China. According to the other lepers, they never believed he was a victim of the disease (Daily Colonist 16 June 1895:3).

No records concerning D'Arcy Island were found for 1896; however, in 1897, a leper was discovered by authorities in Steveston. On 8 September, he was "dumped on D'Arcey Island" with three days of supplies (Daily Colonist 18 Sept. 1897:5). This was apparently accomplished without permission from the Victoria City health officials.

In 1898, there were once again seven Chinese detainees (Medical Health Officer's Report, 31 Dec. 1898). One of them was new and came from Vancouver (Daily Colonist 5 May 1898:8). According to the Daily Colonist (24 May 1898:5), one leper died during the first part of the year.

Two of the confinees died during 1899. The first was the man from Vancouver (Daily Colonist 21 Feb. 1899:5). The other reportedly died in the fire which destroyed one of the cabins, although an examination of his body by any official was never recorded (Medical Health Officer's Report, 23 Dec. 1899). He was one of the original Chinese to be sent there (Daily Colonist 24 June 1899:5).

During the same year, two other lepers were identified. One Chinese was found on a steamer, and detained at William Head until he could be deported to China (Daily Colonist 8 June 1899:6). The other was discovered in Saanich later that year. The local paper reported that "The unfortunate Celestial will be removed to the D'Arcy Island lazaretto without delay" (Daily Colonist 8 Nov. 1899:6).

The remaining five people were still alive in 1900. However, a Victoria paper noted that "With the exception of one, a recent arrival, the patients were found to be in the last stages of the disease and barely able to move around." By May, only three of the lepers were alive (Daily Colonist 29 May 1901:5). Later that year one new Chinese man was added (Daily Colonist 27 Aug. 1901:6). These four were still living in the Spring of 1902; one had been reportedly

been there for five years (Daily Colonist 31 May 1902:6).

By February of 1903, there had been two more deaths, one of which aroused considerable suspicion. According to the Sanitary Officer, the red flag on the Island had been raised, indicating a death. He went out to the colony, and found the men acting in a strange manner. The body of the of the dead man had already been wrapped up and placed in a coffin before the officer's arrival. This was not customary. The allusive comments made by the other lepers concerning the death of their fellow countryman, and the extent of decomposition of his remains raised questions concerning cause of death. The Sanitary Officer believed, therefore, that the lepers had deliberately delayed notifying him of the death so that he would be unable to accurately determine cause. Consequently, he reported that perhaps foul play was involved (Daily Colonist 21 Feb. 1903:8). Nothing further came of the incident.

One of the remaining lepers was in chronic condition (Medical Health Officer's Report, 31 Dec. 1903). In 1904, three new patients were added, two from Vancouver, the other found wandering the streets of Victoria (Medical Health Officer's Report, 31 Dec. 1904). This brought the total to five for the year preceding the provincial takeover of the colony.

Table 2 summarizes admittances to the colony, and deaths recorded between 1891 and 1907, when surviving inhabitants were deported to China.



**Table 2**  
**Population Figures for Little D'Arcy Island**  
**1891-1907**

Year	Admittances	Deaths	Total
1891	6	-	6
1892	1	-	7
1893	1	2	6
1894	3	-	9
1895	1*	2	7
1896	-	1	6
1897	1	-	7
1898	1	1	7
1899	-	2	5
1900	1	2	4
1901	1	1	4
1902	-	-	4
1903	-	2	2
1904	3	-	5
1905	1	-	6
1906	2	-	8
1907	-	-	8
Total	22	13	

Note: Population figures are for year end

\* This individual was rescued by friends

### Provincial Government

Following the lobbying by both municipal and federal officials, the provincial government finally agreed in principle to take over the administration of the leper colony. On 24 April 1902, Sir Richard Cartright announced that the Province would assume responsibility. An agreement was made to reimburse the municipalities which had spent money on the leprosarium since it was first established. In exchange, the Province would receive 50% of the federal head tax collected from Chinese immigrants who lived in British Columbia (Province 24 April 1902:1).

The financial responsibility was formally acknowledged by the Province, by Order-in-Council, 29 September 1903. The municipal government, however, continued to make its quarterly visits to D'Arcy Island (Medical Health Officer's Report 31 Dec. 1903). This arrangement continued throughout 1904.

The provincial government on the other hand failed to live up to its agreement. For example, in a letter from Charles Fagan, the Secretary of the Provincial Board of Health to Charles Wilson, the Attorney-General in charge of public health, 21 October 1904, recommendations were made that the City of Vancouver should not be reimbursed for temporarily taking care of two lepers. In another letter to the Attorney-General's Office, Dr. Brydon-Jack, Chairman of the Vancouver Board of Health, urged that conditions be improved at the leper colony. He also suggested that

deportation of the lepers might be a more favourable policy. D'Arcy Island could then be maintained as a temporary deportation station. This letter was similarly ignored.

Official takeover of the institution finally occurred on 13 Jan. 1905 (Daily Colonist 11 Jan. 1905:5). It then came under the jurisdiction of the Provincial Board of Health. These bureaucratic changes, however, made little difference to the inhabitants of Little D'Arcy Island. Initially during the one year of official control, there were five lepers (Medical Health Officer's Report 31 Dec. 1905). An additional patient was added later that year (C.J. Fagan, letter to the Attorney-General, 1 Aug. 1905). The only apparent improvement was the delivery of food supplies on a weekly basis.

Although the provincial government had been in charge since the beginning of the year, it was not until July 1905, that Charles Fagan visited the Island to assess the situation. He found conditions deplorable. Although food and clothing were described as adequate, "There is no bath, no closet, in fact no accomodation beyond what is barely necessary to live" (Charles Fagan, letter to the Attorney-General, 1 Aug. 1905). He also expressed concern about the lack of medicine and absence of any form of medical care. Included in Fagan's letter was the suggestion that the leper station be moved closer to Victoria, in order to provide better care for the patients.

After Fagan's visit to the Island, a brief report appeared in the Daily Colonist on 5 August stating that the provincial government was considering the possibility of sending the D'Arcy Island lepers to Tracadie. A proposal to pay a share of the costs with the Dominion government was put forward. A further report noted that if Dr. Fagan found "treatment and facilities up-to-date, he will remove the lepers to the Atlantic" (Daily Colonist 23 Aug. 1905:6).

On 25 August, the Attorney-General received a letter from the Minister of Agriculture, reaffirming his position on D'Arcy Island. He insisted that it was not possible to consider a federal takeover for constitutional and legal reasons. One month later, the B.C. Attorney-General again urged the Minister to assume the responsibility, arguing that "these people are not our people, but foreigners" (Charles Wilson, letter to Sidney Fisher, 5 Sept. 1905).

At some point during these communications, the Attorney-General requested that Dr. Fagan travel across the country to visit Tracadie, New Brunswick. Here, he was provided with information concerning the treatment of patients, and administrative policy of the leprosarium. This information was relayed to the Attorney-General in a letter dated 13 Dec. 1905.

Fagan then travelled to Ottawa, where he met with Dr. F. Montizambert, Director of Public Health (Charles Fagan, letter to the Attorney-General, 13 Dec. 1905). He continued to try to convince federal officials to assume control. In

a telegram from Fagan to Montizambert dated 6 Jan. 1906, Fagan persistently begged the latter to pressure the Minister of Agriculture for an answer concerning the fate of the colony.

In early March 1906, the first indication that federal administrators had changed their minds was reported in the Daily Colonist 3 Mar. 1906:5). In a press release, the Honourable William Templeman of Victoria was authorized to tell the B.C. Provincial Secretary that the federal government planned to take over the colony. In a copy of a Memorandum dated 9 March, the Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works informed the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council that the provincial government was prepared to accede and to carry into effect the transfer of the administration of the colony to the Dominion. Subsequently, on 10 May the provincial government passed an Order-in Council transferring the reserve of D'Arcy Island to the federal government. The fact that the institution was located on Little D'Arcy Island continued to remain undetected.

In a letter to Dr. Watt, Superintendent of the Quarantine Office at William Head, dated 23 May 1906, Dr. Montizambert informed him of the pending change in legislation. A new Act entitled "An Act Respecting Leprosy" would enable the government to take care of leprosy generally throughout the country. Under the conditions of the legislation, all facilities devoted to the care and treatment of individuals with the disease were to come under

the control of the Minister of Agriculture of Canada (R.S. 1906, Chapter 136:2277-2282).

Dr. Watt was also asked to provide his opinion on whether D'Arcy Island should be maintained, or a new station built at Albert Head. This location was the original site of the federal Quarantine Station before it was moved to William Head. Similar to D'Arcy Island, it had been set aside for sanitary purposes. However, following relocation, the order was rescinded, and the property reverted back to the provincial government.

In a letter to Frederick Montizambert 28 May 1906, Alfred Watt favoured improving D'Arcy Island, over the relocation of the colony. He also emphasized the need for medical attention. He did not approve of Albert Head, because it had no water. He additionally introduced the idea that Bentinck Island would be a suitable place for the institution, although his advise was not taken until long after his death. In the same letter, Watt also suggested that deportation of the lepers should be considered, since in the long term it would be less costly.

A final decision concerning the fate of the D'Arcy Island lepers was not made until after the official transfer from the provincial to the federal government.

#### Federal Government

The colony was finally turned over to federal jurisdiction on 11 July 1906. Administration may be divided

into three phases. The first from July 1906 until May 1907 maintained the original facilities built by the City of Victoria. This was followed by the second phase which lasted until the end of 1916 and was characterized by deportation of lepers. The final phase began in January 1917 and ended with the closure of the institution in 1924. During this time, there were many changes not only in the facilities provided, but also in the care of the lepers and their quality of life.

#### Phase 1: 1906 to 1907

The colony was officially transferred to the federal government on 11 July 1906. Similar to the leprosarium at Tracadie, D'Arcy Island became the financial responsibility of the Department of Agriculture. The Superintendent of British Columbia Quarantines at William Head, Dr. Alfred Watt, was the local administrator of the colony, and was responsible to Dr. Frederick Montizambert, the Director-General of Public Health. The latter administered matters of health concerning quarantine and immigration for all of Canada.

The transfer of the leprosarium to the federal government was accompanied by the enactment of the Leprosy Act, which as noted above gave the Dominion the right to control all matters relating to the disease. It also explicitly stated that individuals identified with the affliction had no rights whatsoever. They were subject to

the rules and regulations of the Act, including confinement against their will. Moreover, individuals harbouring lepers were deemed guilty of an offense. They were

liable to a penalty not exceeding one hundred dollars and not less than ten dollars, or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months and not less than one month with or without hard labour, or to both. (R.S., 1906, Chapter 136:2279).

On the same day the administrative transfer was made, Dr. Watt was informed that the Minister of Agriculture had decided the lepers would definitely be moved to Albert Head. He was asked to provide plans in consultation with Public Works for the new facilities (Frederick Montizambert, letter to Alfred Watt, 11 July 1906).

News of the possible development of a leper colony this close to Victoria was met with heated public outcry, especially by local farmers (Daily Colonist 28 July 1906:7). A commonly held belief was expressed in a letter to the Editor (Daily Colonist 1 Aug. 1906:4) that "one would quickly find that in the mouths of her enemies Victoria would be inseparably associated with lepers." The writer noted that there were dozens of other locations where they could be housed.

The City of Victoria also passed a Resolution in the Council Meetings of 1 August, vigorously protesting the relocation of the colony. Several days later, local politicians expressed their concern to the Minister of Agriculture (Senator Marchibaud, letter to Sidney Fisher,



Aug. 1906). The Board of Trade was similarly opposed (Daily Colonist 2 Aug 1906:4), and a petition was sent to the Premier of B.C. (G.R. 29, File 13, B.C. Provincial Archives).

Continuous pressure from both government officials and the public at large appears to have had an effect, since the development of Albert Head was abandoned following a visit to the province by Dr. Montizambert (Daily Colonist 30 Aug. 1906:1). Instead, Watt's earlier proposal to consider the deportation of the Chinese was followed up. In the interim, a caretaker was appointed to D'Arcy Island. Mr. A.E. Wilson who had formerly helped in the care of patients at William Head Quarantine Station, was also a plumber and initially hired to construct the new concrete buildings on Little D'Arcy Island. He was also involved in the construction of the guardian's facilities and landscaping of the property on D'Arcy Island. His pay was \$90/month, plus room and board (Alfred Watt, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 28 July 1907). He was originally assisted by a Mr. Tuck whose employment was terminated in 1907.

A Chinese interpreter and assistant, Lee Zy, was then hired in April, 1907. He was paid \$35 per month, plus an additional \$10 in lieu of being supplied with provisions (Alfred Watt, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 7 Oct. 1907).

The population of the colony at the time of the federal takeover stood at seven. Later in 1906, a Chinese leper who was being hidden in Chinatown from the authorities by his friends was found by the Victoria Police. He was betrayed by a local resident who had requested a Police officer to look from his bedroom window across the Johnson Street ravine to Chinatown. The victim was seen sitting, apparently with visible signs of the disease. He was subsequently taken to the Isolation Hospital to await transport to D'Arcy Island (Daily Colonist 7 Aug. 1906:2). Following his delivery, there were then eight lepers living in the miserable conditions of Little D'Arcy Island.

With Dr. Montizambert's approval, Dr. Watt began investigations during the late Fall as to whether the lepers would consider being deported back to China. Initially, they all wished to remain in Canada (Dr. Frederick Montizambert, letter to Dr. Andrew Beattie, 20 Mar. 1907). Later, two lepers in the separate shack were willing to be deported if they received \$300 each to buy land in China. "The others were determined to stay with the sure thing where they were." Dr. Watt, however, believed that all of the lepers would willingly go home, once arrangements had been made. He suggested that if Mr. Wilson, the guardian, was asked to accompany them back to China, they might be further encouraged to leave (Alfred Watt, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 28 Nov. 1906).

In the same lengthy letter, Watt noted that it

remained difficult to find a steamer for transporting the men, since agents feared that odium would be attached to their shipping line. He also rationalized deportation of the Chinese because "the cost of keeping the lepers at Canton would be but a fraction of what it is now costing here."

During these negotiations, there must have been some communication concerning the fate of the lepers, between Dr. Watt and Dr. Beattie, a Presbyterian minister visiting North America from Canton. In a letter dated 20 Nov. 1906 addressed to the Quarantine Station Superintendent, Dr. Beattie stated that "I can assure you that if the Chinese lepers are returned to the Chinese Government they will not be well cared for nor will they receive the money sent by the Canadian Government." Preliminary plans, therefore, appear to have involved the Chinese government.

In another letter written shortly before Christmas of 1906, the guardian of the D'Arcy Island institution revealed his kindness and personal concern for the Chinese victims, and agreed to accompany them to China (A.E. Wilson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 20 Dec. 1906). Communications between Dr. Montizambert and Dr. Beattie were then initiated. Through continued negotiations, an agreement was made that the Presbyterian Church would provide a new building for the lepers next to an existing colony in Canton, at a cost of \$4000 (Dr. A. Beattie, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 28 Mar. 1907).

Finally, on 6 May 1907 a large print headline appeared in the Times entitled "Chinese Were All Deported." They were placed on a barge at D'Arcy Island and towed out to a steamer, anchored at Royal Roads. Special quarters had been prepared for them (Times 6 May 1907:1).

Mr. Wilson, the guardian, changed his mind at the last minute and did not wish to leave the country as planned (Daily Colonist May 7, 1907:13). This momentarily halted the deportation, until Dr. Watt convinced one of the sailors to care for the lepers. There were apparently other problems with the arrangements such as the question of payment to the ship's captain. These were taken care of by Victoria's Senator Riley, who may have been on the scene for political leverage.

The captain received \$2700 for passage of the lepers (Times 6 May 1907:1); each leper was given \$300 in gold (Alfred Watt, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 20 May 1907).

## Phase 2: 1907 -1916

Shortly after the occupants of the leprosarium had been deported, an additional leper was discovered in Ladysmith. Immediate attempts were made to deport him on the Empress of Japan which was in port. He was also to go to the Chinese mission in Canton. However, the shipping company refused to take him. After a short detention in the Victoria Isolation Hospital, he was to be sent to Little D'Arcy Island (Daily

Colonist 11 July 1907:7). He was taken to the colony on 27 July, (Alfred Watt, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 5 Oct. 1907), and was deported in mid-September (Alfred Watt letter, to Frederick Montizambert, 18 Sept. 1907).

Two other lepers, one from Vancouver, another from Saanich on Vancouver Island, were detained without being sent to Little D'Arcy (Alfred Watt, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 1 Feb. 1908). Before these men could be deported, Wilson made two trips to Puget Sound to arrange the trip because of the continued reluctance of the shipping lines to transport the lepers (Alfred Watt, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 5 Oct. 1907). They were finally shipped out in December.

One Chinese and one Japanese citizen also returned voluntarily to their own countries of origin (William Head Annual Report, 31 Mar. 1908).

During 1908, three new cases of leprosy were reported. One was a Chinese laundryman from Austin, Manitoba, who was shipped back to Canton. He was deported in August, and was taken care of by well-to-do relatives in China (Frederick Montizambert, letter to Sidney Fisher, 2 Sept. 1908). Another was a vegetable gardener from New Westminster, whose stay on Little D'Arcy Island was very brief (William Head Annual Report 31 Mar. 1909).

The last case, discovered at a Sechart whaling station, was housed in the City Isolation Hospital, but escaped before he could be sent to the island (Alfred Watt, letter

to Frederick Montizambert, 18 Mar. 1909).

The year 1909 marked the first time in nearly twenty years that no new cases of leprosy were found in B.C. (William Head Annual Report 31 Mar. 1910). However, in 1910 one "Hindu" was located in Kamloops in a railroad construction camp (William Head Annual Report 31 Mar. 1911). He had been working in a sawmill, and went to seek medical assistance for another reason. Leprosy was discovered (Daily Colonist 8 July 1910:2). He was then removed to Little D'Arcy Island in July (Frederick Montizambert, letter to Alfred Watt, 26 Jan. 1912). He was eventually deported to India, after one year of incarceration on the island (Frederick Montizambert, letter to Alfred Watt, 13 June 1911).

No new lepers were placed on Little D'Arcy Island in 1911 (William Head Annual Report 31 Mar. 1912). The Chinese interpreter and assistant left during the year because of the low pay (Alfred Watt, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 11 Mar. 1911). He was replaced by a Japanese man, T. Tsumara, who was hired in February 1911. The main purpose of the assistant at this time was to help get the newly purchased launch out of the water and to watch the lepers while the caretaker was off the island, although there were none to guard when he was first employed. Tsumara's role as an interpreter was limited since he understood only a little Chinese (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 15 May 1914).

Additionally in 1911, new federal legislation was passed with important implications for victims of leprosy. This was The Law and Regulations of Canada respecting Immigration and Immigrants, April 18th. 1911, Sections 40 and 45. This law gave the Department of the Interior the right to deport undesirables within three years of entering Canada. Additionally, every person under this Act who had been brought in by ship, was to be reconveyed free of charge by the railway company which brought him to the place in Canada where he was being detained, to the ocean port where he was landed or to the nearest available winter ocean port. The Act then called for his return by the transportation company free of charge to his country of birth or citizenship.

In 1912, a young Chinese leper was discovered and detained in the Toronto General Hospital. He was the first case to be deported under the terms of the new regulations, since he had not been in the country three years (Frederick Montizambert, letter to W. Maughman, CPR Ticket Agent, 22 April 1912). Two other lepers were also deported immediately without being sent to the leprosarium (Alfred Watt, letter to Frederick Montizambert 22 Oct. 1912). All three had been in the country less than three years, and their expenses were paid by the CPR steamship company which had brought them to Canada. These men were given the address of the Presbyterian Mission Hospital in Canton, along with some money. A fourth was also deported from Montreal but

died on arrival in China (William Head Annual Report 31 Mar. 1913).

During 1913, an application was made by Mr C.C. Fox, a returned soldier from the Boer War, to purchase Little D'Arcy Island. It was listed as unreserved Crown land at this time, since only D'Arcy Island had been mapped. It was subsequently surveyed, and designated as Lot 69, Cowichan District. Neither the government officials involved nor the prospective owner were aware that the leper houses were on this rather than the larger D'Arcy Island. Little D'Arcy therefore was sold at \$10.00 per acre for the 22.8 acres, and became the property of Mr. Fox on 11 September 1914 (William Henderson, letter to R.C. Wright, 20 Oct. 1922).

Although the property did not remain in Mr. Fox's hands, this sale eventually lead to a law suit against the government for exposing property owners to an alleged health hazard. The furor eventually died down and the Island has remained in private ownership.

In the fiscal year 1913-14, there was a change in the Superintendent's position of the Quarantine Station at William Head. Dr. Watt died, and Dr. H. Rundle Nelson assumed the position (William Head Annual Report 31 Mar. 1914). The latter appeared to be more sensitive to the needs of the lepers as reflected in the policies he introduced. For example, in a letter to Frederick Montizambert, dated 4 December 1914, Dr. Nelson suggested the removal of the leper station from D'Arcy Island to the



vicinity of William Head adjoining the existing Quarantine Station. He argued that this should be done for humanitarian reasons, and that the lepers should not be treated as criminals. There appears to have been no response from the Department of Agriculture, perhaps because there were no newly discovered lepers.

Throughout the year 1914, one lone leper stayed on Little D'Arcy Island. He had been found in Duncan and was sent to the colony on 19 March (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert 26 Mar. 1914). He was deported on the Blue Funnel liner Cyclops on 13 May 1914, after great difficulty finding him transportation (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 15 May 1914). There were no other lepers in the colony from the time of his departure until the end of the next fiscal year (William Head Annual Report 31 Mar. 1916).

In 1915, an employee of the Department of Customs suggested that Wilson become a Preventions Officer of Customs in addition to his role as caretaker. A telegraph line to the house on D'Arcy was recommended. The outcome of this suggestion remains unclear.

Lastly, before developments in the colony took a major turn, a Chinese leper was discovered in Winnipeg. He was transported by box car to Vancouver, and then held by authorities in Victoria, awaiting deportation on the Yokohama Maru (Times 27 May 1915:5). He was the final leper to be deported before the initiation of the final phase of

the federal government administration (Table 3).

### Phase 3: 1916-1924

Beginning in 1916, there were major changes in the administrative policy and the form of the colony. This was in part a response by the discovery of White lepers in British Columbia, the first since 1893.

Initially, a significant event was the death of Mr. Wilson the guardian of the colony, who died suddenly of a heart attack on 19 April 1916 (William Head Annual Report 31 Mar. 1917). The qualifications for his replacement were quite stringent, and called for "certain knowledge of disinfectants and their uses, some past contact with lepers or knowledge of electrical plant gasoline engine and launches such as are now installed on Darcy Island" (Frederick Montizambert, CPR Telegram to Rundle Nelson, 4 May 1916). The new replacement was W. Young, (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 7 Feb. 1917), surprisingly accompanied by his wife and small children.

At about the same time as Wilson's death, a Russian immigrant by the name of John Bedoff arrived in Vancouver from a logging camp (Daily Colonist 11 May 1916:3). He had reported to a doctor because he felt unwell, and was subsequently diagnosed as having leprosy. He was immediately transferred to the custody of the Vancouver Police. After being detained in his home for a short period, which was very unusual, Bedoff was picked up by the

**Table 3**  
**Deportations from Little D'Arcy Island, 1907-1915**

Year	Deportations From L.D.I.	Other*	Total
1907	8	5	13
1908	2	1	3
1909	0	0	0
1910	1	0	1
1911	0	0	0
1912	0	4	4
1913	0	0	0
1914	1	0	1
1915	0	1	1
Total	12	11	23

\* Deported from Canada without being held at Little D'Arcy Island

William Head launch, and was taken to D'Arcy Island (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 11 May 1916).

Unlike the first Russian placed on Little D'Arcy who was expected to die very shortly after his incarceration, Bedoff was considered to be in relatively good health. The nature and term of his confinement was quite different from previous colony inhabitants. He was kept on the island for only three months (William Head Annual Report 31 Mar. 1917). He was then released into the care of his solicitor and friends. However, he was ordered to report to a medical authority in Vancouver on a regular basis. According to the Director-General of Public Health, this form of action was provided for "in such cases" in the Act respecting leprosy (Frederick Montizambert, letter to the Minister of Agriculture, 18 Sept. 1916). This was surprising, since it had originally been suggested that Bedoff be deported to Vladivostock (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 15 May 1916).

At approximately the same time that Bedoff was released another case of the disease was found in Victoria's Chinatown. This leper had arrived from Toronto one year earlier. On discovery, he was also turned over to the police. He was reportedly kept inside during the day, but roamed the streets at night, where he collected cigarette stubs and other refuse "materials that are used by the Chinese" (Province 19 Aug. 1916:18). He was taken to the colony in early September, where it appears that he was

housed on Little D'Arcy Island (Department of Health Memorandum, 27 June 1922).

Another serious case of the disease was discovered in August by the Dominion authorities in Victoria. This one, a native of Chile, was placed in the Isolation Hospital, since he was too ill to be transported to the leper colony (Times 30 Aug. 1916:5).

Upon the discovery of the Chilean leper, Frederick Montizambert ordered the deportation of the Chinese leper (Frederick Montizambert, letter to Rundle Nelson, 15 Sept. 1916). However, he suggested that the Chilean should be sent to D'Arcy Island and housed in a temporary shack near Guardian Young. According to Dr. Montizambert, it was far cheaper to keep the Chilean in this manner, than to pay \$2000 to transport him to Tracadie, where predominantly Caucasian lepers were hospitalized.

A month later, in a letter dated 17 October 1916, Dr. Montizambert informed J.B. Hunter, the Deputy Minister of Public Works, that the Chilean leper remained at William Head, but needed to be sent to D'Arcy Island. The idea that he should be housed near the guardian was reiterated, since "To be placed alone does not seem compatible with ordinary ideas of humanity." This had never been a concern when dealing with the Asian lepers. Both Indian and Chinese had spent time in solitary confinement on the island, and this had never before been a consideration. It should

also be remembered that at the time this comment was made, there was a lone Chinese leper already on Little D'Arcy Island.

The removal of the existing cabins, and the construction of a new building was suggested in the same letter. This indicates that the federal administration continued to be unaware that the buildings on Little D'Arcy Island for the lepers, and the guardian's home on D'Arcy Island were located on two entirely different islands.

Meanwhile, the Chilean was detained at William Head from October, 1916 to 17 January 1917 when his house was finally ready for habitation (William Henderson, Resident Architect, letter to T. Fuller, Acting Chief Architect, 27 Oct. 1916). He was also provided with special care in the form of a personal attendant, who looked after his daily needs. The latter stayed on the island only two weeks.

During the month of February, a Japanese on a ship departing for Japan was diagnosed as a leper. He was put ashore in Victoria, where he wandered uptown and was eventually apprehended by the police. He was described as "an intelligent and well dressed Oriental" (Daily Colonist 17 Feb. 1917:6). These were adjectives never used to describe the Chinese.

The Japanese leper was sent to D'Arcy Island on 17 February, accompanied by the new assistant, John Mathews (William Head Annual Report 31 Mar. 1918). Tsumara, the assistant since 1911, left because of the poor pay. In

addition, he did not like the idea of the lepers being moved on to the big island (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 20 Jan. 1917).

The lone Chinese leper from Little D'Arcy was also moved to the large island at this point. However, the Chilean became deranged on the arrival of the two new lepers, and attacked Guardian Young by beating him on the head with a wooden club. He was moved back to William Head several days later (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 20 Feb. 1917). Dr. Montizambert suggested that he be removed to the provincial insane asylum, although this was never carried out (Frederick Montizambert, letter to Rundle Nelson, 1 Mar. 1917).

February 1917, was a busy month for the colony administrators, since another Chinese leper was discovered working in the Fraser Mills in Vancouver (Province 24 Feb. 1917:19). He was admitted to D'Arcy Island on 27 February. The Japanese leper was deported shortly after in early March, his passage paid for by friends (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 3 Mar. 1917), after arrangements had been made by the Japanese consulate (Frederick Montizambert, letter to Rundle Nelson, 13 Mar. 1917). Although this man had been in the country two years, the company responsible for him refused to pay his way, as required under the Immigration Act (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 20 Feb. 1917).

On 30 April, a Canadian by the name of Arthur Davis was diagnosed as having leprosy and was sent to William Head. His father was a missionary who died at Tracadie in May, 1916. The initial plan according to Dr. Nelson's recommendations was to take Mr. Davis to the big island, and remove the two Chinese already living there back to Little D'Arcy. Apparently the displacement of the Chinese was to be an interim measure. The captain of the boat who took the Japanese on his steamer promised that he would assist in the deportation of the two Chinese, on his next trip to China. No action was taken, however, since in the Fall of 1917, Dr. Nelson noted that two White lepers were living in a tent, one Chinese camped in a wood shed, while two others lived in the house (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 3 Aug. 1917). The Chilean must therefore have been returned to the colony. An additional leper by the name of Lim Sick had also been added (Dr. C. Brown, letter to Dr. D. Clark, Assistant Deputy Minister of Health, 17 July 1922). With five lepers on D'Arcy Island, it was considered advisable by the quarantine officials to have separate quarters for the Whites and Chinese (William Henderson, letter to R.C Wright, 20 Oct. 1922). A new house was proposed.

Only several days after Nelson's comment, Jack Joe the Chilean, tried to escape. He floated on a log from D'Arcy Island, but was recaptured in Cadboro Bay and removed to the Victoria Isolation Hospital (Times 7 Aug. 1917:5).



Again, Jack Joe received preferential treatment. Dr. Nelson called a Board of Health Committee together to examine him. He was found to be free from infection and was to be given his liberty. Furthermore, Dr. Montizambert recommended that he be paid an allowance of \$40.00 per month to work on the Madge, the federal launch (Frederick Montizambert, Memorandum to the Minister of Agriculture, 17 Sept. 1917).

The other White leper also received favours. For example,

There is another matter which concerns Mr. Davis, whose comfort I know you have at heart: he wishes to have a boat for fishing and amusing himself. I gave him an old one from the Station but it was wrecked in a storm and I have not another available, might I buy one for him at a cost of up to say \$35.00 (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert 3 Aug. 1917).

Dr. Nelson also showed some kindness to the Chinese. In November 1917, Nelson noted that he had sent \$25 to China at the request of Fong Hop. He had claimed his wife was likely to starve without his support. Wong, the leper from Vancouver, also asked for help.

At some point during the year, both the recently appointed guardian and assistant resigned. H.T. McKee was hired as the new guardian, accompanied by his wife, who was a nurse (William Head Annual Report 31 Mar. 1918).

During 1918, two other Chinese joined the group. One had been diagnosed in Fernie, and was shipped to the island

on 4 Oct. 1918. The second was found in Victoria, also during the Fall (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 22 Jan. 1919). This brought the total Chinese cases to five. An additional man detained by the Victoria Medical Health Officer, escaped (Nelson Rundle, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 4 Dec. 1918).

With six lepers in custody, Dr. Nelson was concerned about the isolation of the colony and continued to agitate for the removal of the lepers from such a desolate spot. Again, in a letter dated 4 December 1918, he recommended their transfer to the neighbourhood of William Head, suggesting the acquisition of extra land and the appointment of a nurse (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert 4 Dec. 1918). Dr. Montizambert replied on 14 December, asking for a cost estimate for the land.

On 18 November 1919, Wong Yee was officially considered as cured and released from custody. The most recent assistant guardian left, and was replaced by Mrs. McKee, the guardian's wife (William Head Annual Report 31 Mar. 1920). Also during the year, negotiations must have been carried out to transfer all of the federal Quarantine Stations to the administration of the Department of Health. William Head Annual Reports were subsequently submitted to the Minister of Health in Ottawa.

In 1920, the health of Davis became progressively worse and he was removed temporarily to William Head for extra x-ray treatment. Dr. Nelson noted that "He is a bad case

and every means should be employed to help him;" the same means, he added, should be available to the other fellows (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 4 Dec. 1920). Regardless of the extra attention, Davis disappeared on 20 August 1920. A letter from his sister indicated that he was now safe in a more congenial and warmer climate (Department of Health Memorandum, 27 June 1922).

Lum Bark, alias Lim Bo, a Chinese leper was added from Vancouver in 1920; the colony population therefore remained at five (William Head Annual Report 31 Mar. 1921). During the same year, a Swedish woman from Regina was sent to Tracadie along with a Jamaican girl from Toronto (D.A. Clark, Assistant Deputy Minister, letter to Dr. Langis, 27 Dec. 1920). The reason for these decisions was that D'Arcy Island was a place "where only Chinese can be kept" (Dr. J. Amyot, letter to Dr. J. Reid, 23 Dec. 1920).

In early 1921, Dr. Amyot, the Deputy Minister of Health questioned the payment of \$25.00 in gold half yearly to leper dependents in China. This indicates that Nelson's earlier request to send money to China had been agreed to by officials in Ottawa.

Another example of very different treatment for Whites and Chinese is illustrated by events in late 1921. In Winnipeg, a Russian was found to have leprosy, and on examination, his wife also showed symptoms of the disease. They were both transported West by first class accomodation on the Canadian National Railway, at a cost of \$1,343.75,

plus \$15.00 for fumigation (General Ticket Agent, letter to Dr. Amyot, Deputy Minister of Health, 11 Nov. 1921). They arrived at Victoria and were delivered to the William Head Quarantine Station. Here, the man stated that he "does not approve he and his wife be moved to Darcy Island". Consequently, they were kept at the Station (Chief, Division of Quarantine, Ottawa, letter to Rundle Nelson, 2 Feb. 1922).

Other events in 1921 included the release of Lim Sick, who had been on the island since 1917. Chin Kim, "a very bad case" was added to the colony (William Head Annual Report 31 Mar. 1922).

According to Dr. Page, Head of Dominion Services, there were six patients on D'Arcy Island in 1922. Five were Chinese. At some point "one whiteman, a native of Central Europe" was reported in the colony (Daily Colonist 10 Oct. 1922:5). While no specific records concerning this were found, what appears to have happened is the Russian who had been detained at William Head with his wife must have finally been sent to the island. The fate of his wife remains unclear, but in all probability she died.

During the year 1923, one of the few reported female Chinese lepers to be discovered in the province was found in Vancouver. Originally, plans were made to take her to D'Arcy Island (Assistant Deputy Minister, letter to Dr. Brydon-Jack 24 Oct. 1922). However, her friends raised the money for her deportation, and she was sent home without

being detained in the colony (Province 15 Dec. 1923:4).

Additionally in 1923, another Chinese named Leon Jack was discovered in Vancouver, where he had been treated in the General Hospital (Medical Health Officer, Vancouver, letter to C.P. Brown, 25 July 1923). Lim Bo who had arrived in 1920 was now causing many problems for the other colony inmates. Not only did he threaten his fellow lepers, but he also chased the caretaker through the woods. Reportedly, he also "comes around the house to attempt the satisfying of sexual appetite (C.P. Brown, letter to Dr. Page, 5 Oct. 1923). He was removed in October, and kept locked up in the Immigration Buildings in Victoria (A. Cox, letter to C.P. Brown, Mar. 1924).

In the William Head Annual Report 31 Mar. 1924, five Chinese, one Russian Jew, and a Duokhobour were reported in the colony. The latter had been sent out from Saskatchewan. Low Ark who was admitted in early 1919 was released.

### Medical Policy

With the federal takeover of the leprosarium, some medical attention for the lepers was finally provided. However, there is little mention of it in the historic records for the period 1907-1916. This may be due in part to the deportation policy.

In the William Head Annual Report 31 March 1907, it was noted that a treatment that had been used for Hansen's disease in other parts of the world for many years, had

finally been introduced to western Canada. This involved doses of chalmogra oil, which were swallowed on a daily basis. Local applications of dressings were reportedly also made. When and where these treatments were administered remains unclear.

When the lepers were housed permanently on D'Arcy Island, medical care greatly improved. A major change occurred in 1917, when the new custodian was hired. He was accompanied by his wife who was a trained nurse. She not only applied local dressings, but was also able to administer newly discovered drug treatments. Three of the Chinese patients were given what was referred to as the Heiser treatment (William Head Annual Report 31 Mar. 1918). This cure had apparently been in use in Hawaii and the Philippines since 1911. It was a form of chalmogra oil, which was injected rather than swallowed (Times 9 July 1924:16).

A new treatment, gynocardate of sodium discovered by Sir Leonard Rogers of Calcutta, was also tried for a short period, but it was difficult to get supplies. This appears to have been used at least minimally since Wong Yee was described as so much improved under the gynocardate treatment from India, that he was considered cured on 18 November 1919.

According to Dr. Page, Head of Dominion Services, the inmates of D'Arcy Island had greatly improved by the year 1922. "The dread disease leprosy, scourge of the ages, is

being treated in very effective fashion at D'Arcy Island." (Daily Colonist 10 Oct. 1922:4). He was keeping in touch with "all the great leper colonies in the world," to facilitate the cure of the lepers, noting that the B.C. island was a veritable Eden compared to other institutions.

Archaeological investigation indicate that the Chinese also had their own medicines. Two glass bottles were excavated near one of the leper homes on D'Arcy Island. These identical bottles were manufactured in Aydong District, Macao City, and were labelled "medicine for leprosy." (Fig. 24). Two small, broken glass vials were also found close to the well at the caretaker's facilities.

By 1923, the lepers were receiving weekly visits from medical officers. They were also given preparations of ethyl esters (William Head Annual Report 31 Mar. 1923).

### Supplies

One of the immediate changes that occurred in 1907 was that weekly supplies of fresh meat, fish, fruit, and vegetables were provided (Alfred Watt, letter to Minister of Agriculture, 1 April 1907). Later, following the implementation of the deportation policy, Wilson the caretaker was getting his groceries and meat in Sidney once every two weeks. For a brief period in 1910, D'Arcy Island was supplied by a transportation company, which ran a launch service from Victoria to the Gulf Islands. It was not a successful business and lasted only several weeks (Alfred

Watt, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 18 Oct. 1910). The caretaker, therefore, had likely resumed his trips by boat to Sidney. A launch was purchased for his use, shortly after this.

The caretaker's diet was supplemented by vegetables from the garden, although no historic descriptions were found. Domestic apple trees were cultivated as evidenced by the field data. Chickens were also kept, since chicken houses were called for in the plans for the facilities, and chicken wire was listed as part of the inventory of goods left behind by Mr. Wilson when he died. Canned goods were liberally used, as indicated by the sample of tin can remains found in the site.

Another questionable source of information concerning food supplies is derived from the faunal remains found at the caretaker's homestead. A total of 270 bones were recovered. The majority came from the northeast of the house, where they were found eroding along the edge of a cultural terrace. Only one unit was excavated, because the predominance of cow bones may have evidenced the use of D'Arcy Island in 1880's for cattle grazing. A copy of a lease dated to 1886 was found in the B.C. Provincial Archives (Vertical Files, D'Arcy Island).

Faunal remains were found in two other areas of the site. Structure 2, Unit 1 contained 4 pieces of mammal and 3 bird bones. The rubbish pile contained an additional 27 calcined or burnt pieces: 1 bird and 26 mammal. The latter



were identified as either sea mammal bone or large mammal skull fragments. Again, the association of these bones with the caretaker occupations is in question; faunal remains are tabulated in the Appendix, Tables 17-19.

Gardens and vegetables were also reported at the new huts location on D'Arcy Island (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 3 Aug. 1917). In 1917, the lepers were allowed to fish from boats. According to Dr. Nelson, the White leper, Mr. Davis was in charge "and the fresh fish he is able to catch is quite an addition to the daily menu of the lepers." At this time, the lepers were also supplied with the same food delivered to the caretaker. Limited faunal remains from this site were recovered from behind the house. Six bones were found: two each of pig, unidentifiable ungulate, and unidentified mammal.

The D'Arcy Island colony was finally closed on 20 March 1924, when all the lepers were moved to Bentinck Island (Daily Colonist 20 Mar. 1924). Following the departure of the lepers, it was recommended that the facilities be kept for six months to a year (Dr. Milne, letter to Dr. Brown, 22 Feb. 1924). D'Arcy Island was never used for other purposes; today it is a Marine Park.

## Chapter 6

### DESCRIPTION OF THE D'ARCY ISLAND LEPER COLONY SITES

The D'Arcy Island leprosarium comprises archaeological remains at three different locations. The earliest buildings were constructed on Little D'Arcy Island. The caretaker's facilities built in 1907 and the lepers' huts constructed in 1916 are located on the West side of D'Arcy Island. Both historical and archaeological data are combined below in the following site descriptions.

#### Little D'Arcy Island: DdRt 29

##### Location and Contemporary Site Description

The earliest phase of the leper colony is located in a southwest facing bay on the west side of Little D'Arcy Island. The larger neighbouring D'Arcy Island is approximately 400 m to the west, across a narrow channel (Fig. 1).

Little D'Arcy has been privately owned since 11 September 1914 (William Henderson, letter to R.C. Wright, 20 Oct. 1922). It has been sold a number of times since it last served as a leprosarium. The present owners have recently constructed a house on the island, which was built to incorporate the remains of the concrete cabins first inhabited in 1907. This one story building now forms the ground level basement of the new house.

The dwelling is situated in the central protected locality of the bay. Considerable ground disturbance is found in the immediate vicinity. This results from both

past and present land altering activities. The land has been levelled on the north, and prehistoric midden deposit of site DdRt 15 cleared away from the concrete floor in the rear of the house. This has led to the formation of a trough 20-25 cm deep, and an embankment 80 cm wide. Another embankment is found along the east side of the building.

A 1 m high ridge extends westward for approximately 60 m which rises to a 6 m bluff. Behind the ridge is a protected lagoon, which becomes a mud flat at low tide. The landscape also rises to 7 m, on the southeast. A 2 m high cliff extends along the back of the bay, 25 m southeast of the building (Fig. 2).

Considerable beach erosion has occurred since historic photographs were taken in 1898 (Hall and Nelson 1898). The previously shingled beach is currently composed of mixed gravel and sand, becoming predominantly sand in front of the house. Changes in vegetation are also noticeable. Some trees have matured, while both past and present clearing is observable.

In the area surrounding the contemporary house, the dominant tree species are Douglas fir (Pseudotsuga taxifolia) and arbutus (Arbutus menziesii). Grand fir (Abies grandis) is also present. Most of the trees are relatively young, as evidenced by trunk diameters, ranging 8-40 cm at a height of 1.5 m above the ground surface. The high proportion of arbutus, as well as the age of the trees is indicative of former clearing.

# CONTOUR MAP OF

## DdRt 29

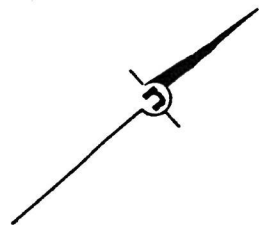
### LITTLE D'ARCY ISLAND

SCALE 1:600

CONTOUR INTERVAL 0.5m

SITE DATUM IS 5.1m ABOVE 0 SEA LEVEL

AS MEASURED ON 1989 TIDE TABLES



- LEGEND**
- Cliff
  - Edge of vegetation
  - Excavation unit
  - Well
  - Rail
  - Site datum

Figure 2. Contour map of archaeological DdRt 29, Little D'Arcy Island.

The dominant ground cover in the house area is Oregon grape (Mahonia aquifolium). Other shrubs includes waxberry (Symphoricarpos alla), ocean spray (Holodiscus discolor), dwarf wildrose (Rosa gymnocarpa) and trailing blackberry (Rubus utifolius).

In the vicinity of the well, 33 m behind the house, the Douglas fir are larger in size. Grand fir, arbutus, Douglas maple (Acer glabrum), ocean spray, trailing blackberry, swordfern (Polystichum munitum), golden honeysuckle (Lonicera cilioe), and salal (Gaultheria shallon) are also found. Some contemporary selective clearing associated with the present occupation of the island is evident, and there is little tangled undergrowth.

Behind the well, flora is similar with the addition of bracken (Pteridium aquilinum pubescens). However, vegetation is very dense and tangled. On the south side of the house, away from the lagoon, extending back from the shoreline approximately 40 m, is a flat open area. Soil is thin, with considerable rock exposure. Dominant flora here includes grasses, waxberry, Douglas and grand fir, and a large number of arbutus.

#### Description of Historic Facilities

The first official development of this site occurred on 13 May 1891. Lumber and construction supplies were taken out to the island by the steamer, Alert. Construction of the first leper house was to be completed within ten days,

under the supervision of Mr. Northcott, a Victoria City employee (Daily Colonist 13 May 1891:5).

According to the Daily Colonist (15 May 1891:3), "The cabin will be run lengthwise, due east to west, facing the south, and along the entire front will be a verandah." It was to be protected from the wind, and have a beautiful view to the south. The structure comprised six cabins described as "large and commodious," each 5 x 8 ft. in size. They were lined with dressed lumber; the cracks were filled with sawdust to keep the building warm. A door, window, and chimney were planned for each cabin (Daily Colonist 15 May 1891:3).

Nine months after completion, the building was described as strong, substantial, and well-built. One of the six good-sized rooms was used to pile up spare provisions. The remainder each had a cooking stove, table, an iron bedstead with a spring mattress, and plenty of bed clothing (Daily Colonist 29 Feb. 1892:1).

According to the minutes of the Vancouver City Council Meeting for 19 Nov. 1891, another frame house was prefabricated in Vancouver to be shipped to D'Arcy Island. It was described as 12 x 16 ft. in size, with two compartments. Rustic or untrimmed logs were to be used on the outside and the inside was to be lined with dressed lumber. The house was designed for the New York leper (Daily World 29 Feb. 1892:4).

During 1894, six additional "shacks" were erected to

house the increased colony population (Daily Colonist 14 Oct. 1894:5). It is highly probable that this second structure was similar in form to the original.

An examination of historic photos taken in 1898 during a routine supply trip to the colony, indicates that one of the houses was built right at the edge of the beach. It is not clear which of the houses is shown, and there is no sign of a second dwelling in the pictures (Fig. 3).

The house in the photographs is raised off the ground, with steps accessing the veranda on both ends. Vertical planks, shorter in length on the west side, provide skirting under the house. The sloping hip roof is shingled and supported by seven wooden beams which extend down to the veranda floor. Eleven rafters are visible. Three brick chimneys, comprising five courses each, are spaced evenly across the roof top. A large railing extends along the front of the house, while a ladder rises from the beach level to the roof, possibly to access a fish drying rack. Doors open inward; each room also has a window comprising four large glass panes (Fig. 4).

On the north end of the row housing is a lean-to with a shed roof. It is built of vertical planks, which contain three large holes placed horizontally across the structure. The purpose is unclear. A large door opens inwards, and is characterized by an oversized grip handle (Fig. 5).



Figure 3. Historic photograph of location of main house with recently landed supplies, Little D'Arcy Island (photo courtesy Visual Records, B.C. Provincial Archives: catalogue No. 93306).



Figure 4. Close-Up photograph of main dwelling, Little D'Arcy Island (photograph courtesy Visual Records, B.C. Provincial Archives catalogue No. 93305).





Figure 5. Lean-to and colony inhabitant at north end of main dwelling, Little D'Arcy Island (photograph courtesy Visual Records, B. C. Provincial Archives, catalogue No. 93304).

On 15 June 1899, a fire was reported on Little D'Arcy Island (Daily Colonist 24 June 1899:5). A passing boat had viewed the ruins and informed government officials in Victoria. According to the City Medical Officer's Annual Report for the Year 1899, the building known as the east wing was completely burned. "Fortunately there still remained plenty buildings (sic) to comfortably house all the patients." One man was reported living in a separate shack at the time. The fire was blamed on another leper who died in the fire. It was rumoured that he had probably dropped a hot coal in the middle of the night (Daily Colonist 24 June 1899:6). New buildings were subsequently erected and were "a great improvement on the old." These continued to be used during provincial government administration until the federal government takeover in 1906.

Immediately prior to the official federal takeover, a report to the Director-General of Public Health stated that the buildings were of little value. In addition to a row of six cabins or single rooms, one separate cabin was noted (Alfred Watt, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 28 May 1906). This may refer to the building erected in 1899. The buildings were of wood, unplastered and unpainted, and badly in need of repairs. The presence of various small wood-sheds and chicken houses made from drift wood were described close to the cabins. Recommendations were made in this report to burn all structures.

However, they continued to be inhabited until the following May, when the lepers were finally deported according to the new policy. Following the final decision not to close the colony, the Director-General of Public Health ordered Alfred Watt, the B.C. Quarantine Officer, not to burn the cabins until new ones could be erected. In the meanwhile the "Siwashes could look after them" (Frederick Montizambert, letter to Alfred Watt, 31 May 1907). Who these native people were remains unclear, although they were likely fishermen or shellfish collectors from either the Saanich Peninsula or from one of the nearby Gulf Islands.

A week later, in another letter dated 8 June, Watt was informed that the local Department of Public Works architect had been ordered to destroy the old cabins, and to build two new ones at a cost of \$500 each. These were to be constructed by a Mr. Wilson and a hired hand "with view to economy, expedition and efficiency" (Frederick Montizambert, letter to Alfred Watt, 8 June 1907).

By 28 October 1907, the two concrete cottages were completed, one leper living in a tent at this time (W. Henderson, Resident Architect, Memorandum of Fact to Minister of Agriculture, 7 Oct. 1922).

According to archival blue prints entitled "Proposed Leper Home" prepared by the Department of Public Works, the house was 28 ft. square in size, including the veranda. Five concrete beams supported the ridge tiled roof.

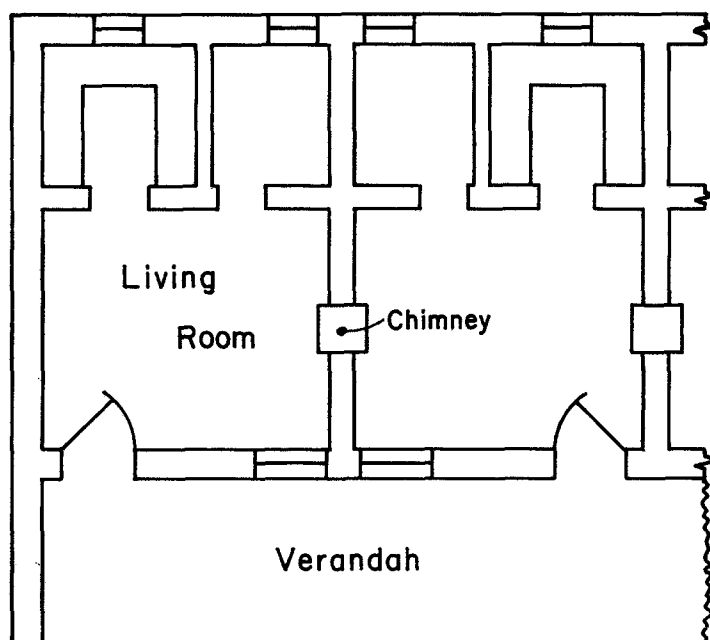
Foundations were to be of concrete, supports of iron pipe, and the sides of sheathing.

The inside comprised two identical sections. Each contained a 12 x 10 ft. living room and two smaller rooms on the back. The outside ones were slightly larger than the inside rooms and had two built-in bunk beds. The small rooms, which were 6 x 6 ft. in size, contained three rows of storage shelves. Each back room had a 2 ft. wide window. Both sections had separate wooden front doors, and a 3 ft. wide four-paned window fronting on to the concrete veranda (Fig. 6).

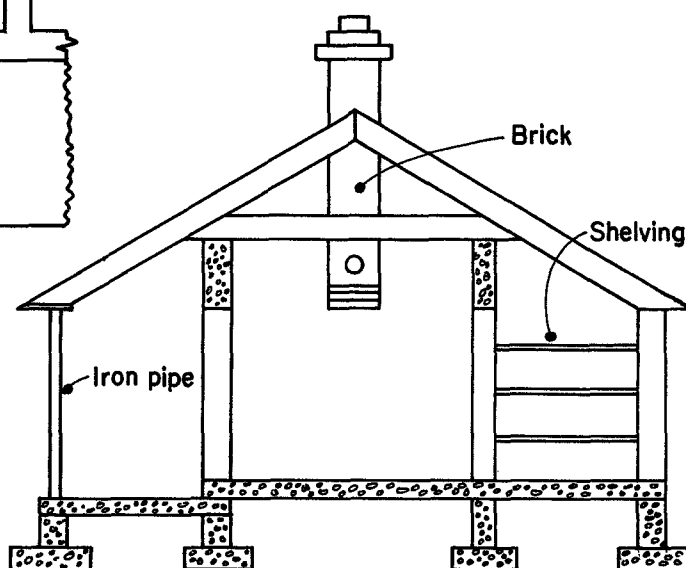
Two chimneys are also drawn on the plan. However, archaeological evidence shows that only one chimney was constructed in the centre of the building, and was shared by the two rooms. Additionally, the roof was flat and covered with pea gravel and tar, with no gutter as called for in the plans. The supports for the veranda found on the site comprised discarded rail sections encircled by concrete.

#### Description of Other Facilities

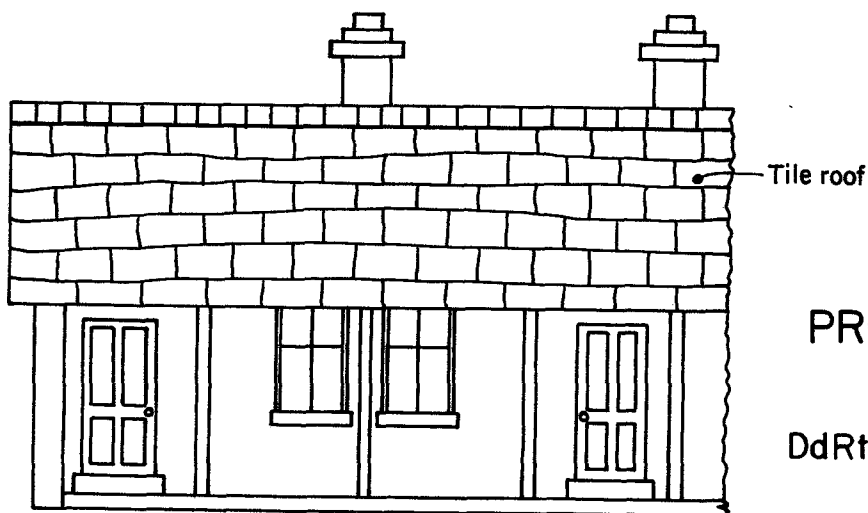
During the first fifteen years of operation of the colony, there were few amenities on the island. For example, there were apparently no toilet facilities provided for the patients. In 1899, much to the horror of the newly appointed medical officer, he discovered that the area on the slope behind the house was used as a latrine, which was washed clean by the daily tide (Daily Colonist 2 Sept.



PLAN



CROSS-SECTION



ELEVATION

## PROPOSED LEPER HOME

DdRt 29 LITTLE D'ARCY ISLAND

Scale:  $\frac{1}{8}$ " = 1 foot

Figure 6. Redrafted copy of archival blueprints for "Proposed Leper Home" Little D'Arcy Island (National Archives of Canada RG 29 Vol 768, File 414-5-1).

1979:18). There was also no running water. Water from a spring was reportedly carried 300 yards to the main building, "and there is consequently not the amount used which cleanliness requires" (Alfred Watt, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 28 May 1906). Water was also drained from the house gutter into a rain barrel, for cooking and washing (A. Wilson, letter to Alfred Watt Watt, 20 Dec. 1906).

A well was finally constructed at the same time as the new concrete cabins (Alfred Watt, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 19 Dec. 1907). It is located 33 m northeast of the present house.

Archaeological investigations provide the following information on the construction and form of the well. It comprises a surface square concrete slab, a rectangular off-centred opening, and a cylindrical shaft.

The concrete slab is 152 cm N/S, 150 cm E/W; it is 19 cm thick. The concrete is composed of a large number of small pebbles with minimal concrete mix. Fine facing is absent. The well opening is rectangular, 68 cm N/S, 49 cm E/W, off-centred to the west. The shaft is 113 cm in diameter, extending to an approximate depth of 2.15 m where debris has accumulated in the water.

This feature has been capped with two moveable irregular-shaped concrete slabs 14 cm thick, finished with fine surface concrete. They are very heavy and difficult to

move, and it is unlikely that they are associated with the original well. They are most probably part of the concrete floor of the cabins erected in 1907.

Although the leprosarium had no running water, it did have a garden first described shortly after the colony was established. According to a reporter for the Daily Colonist (23 June 1891:5), the inhabitants proudly showed off a three quarters of an acre garden. It contained potatoes, onions, and other vegetables. The Chinese cut down trees, took out stumps, burned the brush, and cleared the land (B. Bailey, Sanitary Officer, letter to Alderman Holland, 11 Aug. 1891). Four months later, the garden was described as having "A variety of vegetables, with not a weed among them, and planted in small beds, with foot paths intersecting." (Daily Colonist 28 Oct. 1891:2).

A visit to the island by the Victoria Sanitary Officer and Alderman Holland in January 1892, led to a report describing a slashed area of a comparable size (Daily Colonist 12 Jan. 1892:8). By August later that year a "fine kitchen garden" had grown in size to one and a half acres (Daily Colonist 23 Aug. 1892:3). In November 1893, a strawberry patch was also noted, along with two large pits which had been dug for storage of potatoes (Victoria Sanitary Officer's Report, 2 Nov. 1893).

Several years later, an orchard containing apple, pear, and apricot trees was described (Daily Colonist 16 June 1895:3). It is highly unlikely, however, that the colony

could have produced a successful orchard in such a short period of time. No existing evidence of these trees was found during fieldwork, although apple trees still survive in the caretaker's garden.

News of the supposed productivity of the garden, reported to be two acres in size by the spring of 1898, reached as far afield as San Francisco. According to a newspaper article, vegetables grown by the leper colony were allegedly being transported by boat to Vancouver and New Westminster twice a week, where they were traded for opium. Government officials quickly responded to these allegations by visiting Little D'Arcy Island. They found that the crops for the year had barely begun to break the ground surface, dispelling all rumours about the colony garden (Daily Colonist 5 May 1898:5).

In the same year of 1898, a "rude fence of pickets" was described, which had been erected to keep out the chickens. It was along a little foot-path, which led back to the enclosure (Hall and Nelson 1898:7). The fence may have been there for a number of years.

It would appear that the garden eventually fell into disuse, since orders were given in 1907 for some slashing to be done around the new quarters and for a new garden to be established (Frederick Montizambert, letter to Alfred Watt, 8 Dec. 1907).

No historical documents provided specific information about the garden location. A field study of the



distribution patterns of contemporary floral species indicates the following. Clearing extended back from the present house to the vicinity of the well, and also to the northeast. It was irregular and covered approximately two acres. The cultivated area was most likely on the northeast of the house, where prehistoric midden deposits would have contributed to vegetable growth. Soil in other localities is either sandy or rocky and far less suitable for gardening.

Trees cleared for the garden were probably used for firewood, which was described as being "piled around the the shanties" (Daily Colonist 28 Oct. 1891:2).

Other early features of the leprosarium noted in the historic records include a flagpole and a burial ground. The flagpole was situated on a nearby knoll "not far from the little burying ground where the leper dead were buried" (Daily Colonist 7 May 1907:13). The red flag could be raised up the pole in times of distress, with the hope that passing boats would see it. This knoll is probably the small rise to the west of the former cabin location.

The burial ground, which was not found during field research, probably lies in the tangled underbrush to the north of the knoll. There are no visible markers or depressions, and the graves remain deliberately undetected by archaeological investigations.

## DdRt 28 Caretaker's Facilities, D'Arcy Island

### Location and Contemporary Site Description

The caretaker's homestead is located on the northwest side of D'Arcy Island, 400 m north of the lighthouse. The dominant feature is the concrete walls and foundations of the custodian's house (Structure 1), first constructed in 1908 (Fig. 7). This building faces westward and is situated on a promontory 4 m above a small cove to the south. The remains of a second building (Structure 2) are found 6 m to the east (Fig. 8).

The grounds comprise approximately two cleared acres, extending 80 m east and 120 m to the south. A wire fence formerly surrounded the property. The majority of fence posts 1.54 m high, have fallen and some evidence burning. Nearly half of the posts remain standing on the southeast side of the grounds.

A series of rock alignments and earthen terraces characterize the property (Fig. 9). Rock alignments are found along the front of the house, extending in a line eastward towards and along the south side of the building continuing around the periphery. Another is found inside the fence on the north, while a double alignment extends along the back eastern edge. A single rock formation runs 14 m E/W along the main clearing, while two small L-shaped constructs are located on the upper bench, 26 m northeast of the house.

Short earthen embankments are found southwest of the



Figure 7. Photograph of caretaker's house, facing northeast.



Figure 8. Photograph of Structure 2, caretaker's workshop, facing northeast.

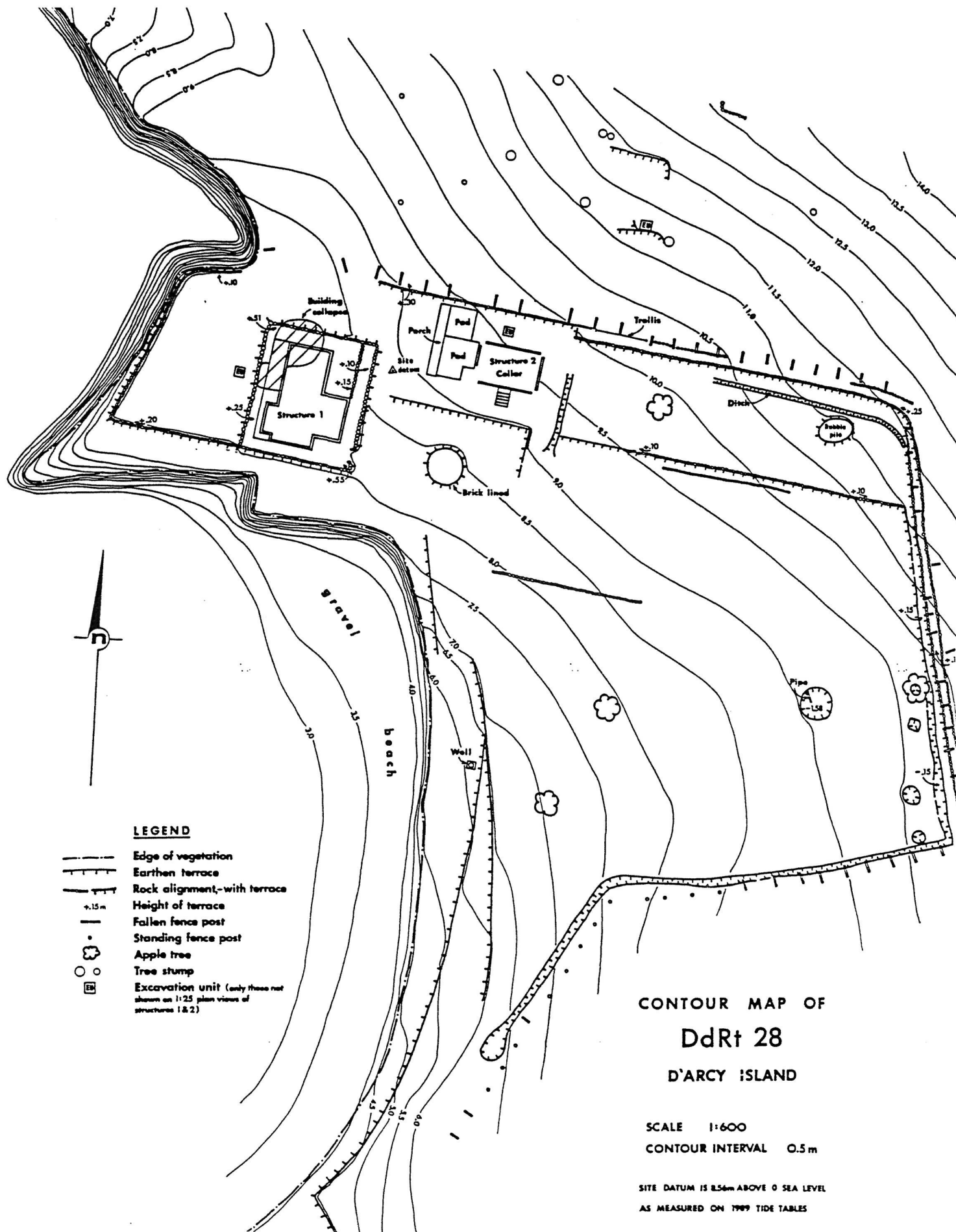


Figure 9. Contour map of DdRt 28, D'Arcy Island. 149

L-shaped rock alignments, oriented E/W. They are also placed along the south edge of Structure 2, for a short distance along the west edge of the orchard area, joining up with a rock alignment, and along the northwest back edge of the fenced area. Earthen embankments also exist along the beach side, possibly resulting from construction of a wagon road.

Three ditch features are also present. They are 30-40 cm deep. A short ditch parallels the beach, 4 m directly east of Structure 2, a second one runs along the north side of the grounds, south of the fenceline and rock alignment. A third larger ditch drains the southeast corner. It runs the total length of the fence to the beach, in the vicinity of the former boathouse.

Other significant cultural features on the site include a well (Feature 1), a rubble pile (Feature 2), a drainage pit (Feature 3), two unidentified circular cultural depressions, a brick-lined flower bed, and a garden trellis. Clearing and an earth embankment on the extreme southeast of the property likely indicate the location of a former boathouse and wharf area.

The dominant tree species in the immediate vicinity of the caretaker's house and garden are Douglas fir (Pseudotsuga taxifolia), domestic apple (Malus spp.), and arbutus (Arbutus menziesii). Other trees represented include Grand fir (Abies grandis), willow (Salix spp.), Pacific crab-apple (Malus diversifolia), Douglas maple

(Acer glabrum), and western red cedar (Thuja plicata).

Shrub species identified includes ocean spray, (Holodiscus discolor), Saskatoon berry (Amelanchier florida), mock orange (Philadelphus gordonianus), dwarf wild rose (Rosa nutkana), waxberry (Syphonicarpus albanus), broom (Cytisus scoparius), thimbleberry (Rubus parviflorus), red flower currant (Ribes ganquieu), purple honeysuckle (Lonicera hispidula) and English ivy (Hedera helix).

Both broom and the ivy are introduced species, although the former is commonly found wild in this area of the province. They predominate in the immediate environs of the house. The ivy is growing against and near the house. Mock orange, although an indigenous species, has also been cultivated. A pair of shrubs is placed parallel to the northern fenceline east of the workshop, and a row is planted at the top of the road embankment.

Other introduced domestic species include the poppy (Papaver spp.), evergreen blackberry (Rubus navalis), and naturalized St. John's-wort (Hypericum perforatum). Grass and a variety of daffodils are also found around the house.

Selective clearing of large trees immediately outside the fence is indicated by the presence of stumps. Underbrush has also been thinned out. Natural vegetation beyond the site is dominated by Douglas fir and arbutus. Some of the largest fir have charred bark, evidence of a forest fire. The most common associated large shrub is ocean spray.

## Description of Historic Buildings

### Structure 1: Caretaker's House

In a document outlining the requirements for new facilities on D'Arcy Island, the B.C. Quarantine Officer requested the construction of a caretaker's cottage. This was to be a frame building on a concrete foundation with "plumbing and sewage complete." It was to include quarters for a Chinese assistant, and to cost no more than \$2250 (Alfred Watt, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 15 May 1906).

Watt was advised to proceed with the construction of a modest house. In January, 1908, Watt requisitioned additional money for D'Arcy Island. This was for the purpose of completing the house and outbuildings, including a woodshed, chicken houses, a boathouse, a landing, water services, and drains (Alfred Watt, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 17 Jan. 1908).

The construction of the building was completed 1 April 1908 (Alfred Watt, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 26 June 1908). It was located without the knowledge of the Director-General of Public Health on D'Arcy Island, some distance from the new leper facilities on Little D'Arcy Island. It was placed here facing the channel in order that the guardian might more easily obtain supplies from steamers going across to Sidney (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert 17 Oct. 1916).

According to a description of the caretaker's facilities made in 1923, the house comprised four rooms. It was constructed of drop sheathing, and the roof was shingled (Resident Architect's Report, Department of Health 14 Jan.-4 Feb. 1923). A later report states there were five rooms, a pantry, and a bathroom (J.G. Brown, Acting Resident Architect, letter to Mr. Cathcart, Department of Lands, 29 Aug. 1924).

Little documentation and no architectural plans were found concerning the house; however, archaeological data provide information on both construction techniques and features. The walls of the building are constructed of concrete courses. Concrete is made from locally available beach gravel and salt water, resulting in noticeably different mixes. Wooden posts are used for horizontal and vertical supports in the walls. A sill runs along the inside of the east and west wall.

The front of the building extends 9.58 m (31.13 ft.) from corner to corner. The veranda is 6.62 m (21.62 ft.) in length, extending 1.2 m (3.9 ft.) outwards from the front wall. Four postholes placed evenly along the front indicate there was a veranda roof. The remains of one support were found lying on the ground, and consisted of railroad track embedded in concrete. It is similar to the support posts found on Little D'Arcy Island.

The building has both a front and back door. The former is on the north side of a small bay window, while the



latter opens on to a small porch on the southeast side of the building. There are single windows, 1 m (39 in.) wide on the north and south walls. Smaller windows 0.8 m (32 in.) wide are found on the back wall. The bay window on the front of the house has two small 0.5 m (32 in) wide windows on the sides, with two larger 0.8 m (39 in.) ones on the front. The windows apparently boasted fly screens.

Ventilation vents are recorded on the house plan. Evidence of floor joist marks are also shown (Fig. 10). Holes in the back wall are attributed to a water intake on the west and a sewage outflow on the central section of the wall.

An examination of house plans from around the turn of the century was made to assist in interpreting use of space in the caretaker's house. These plans were published in the journals The House, House Beautiful, House and Garden, and Architectural Record.

In this house, what may be considered a medium-sized passageway led from from the front door, directly to the kitchen area on the back of the house. The location of the stairs remains unclear.

According to Herbert (1907:126):

The entry of the old-fashioned house was wider or narrower as the dignity of the house might seem to make necessary, and where wide it might contain a sofa,... Yet..it still had, to light it, only the open door and the narrow side lights, and it was still furnished or left unfurnished as a passageway. The stairs went up one side against the wall with no pretense at shutting off or concealment.

Scale: 1 Metre

# Legend

- I = Interior Wall
- P = Porch Wall or Support
- S = Sewage Outflow (retrofitted)
- U = Possible Water Intake (retrofitted?)
- V = Ventilation Vent
- W = Window
- WI = Water Intake
- ▨ = Excavation Unit

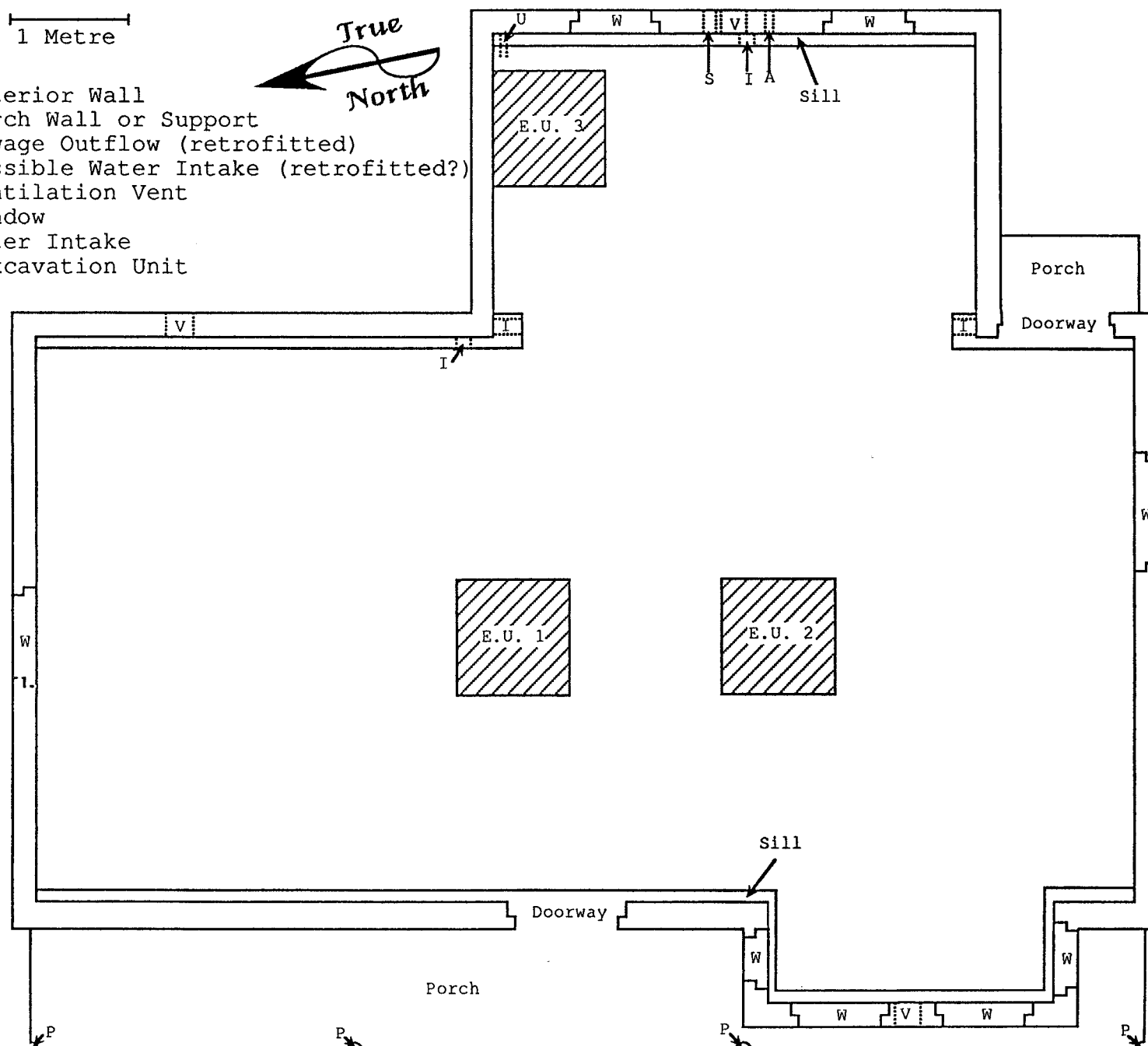
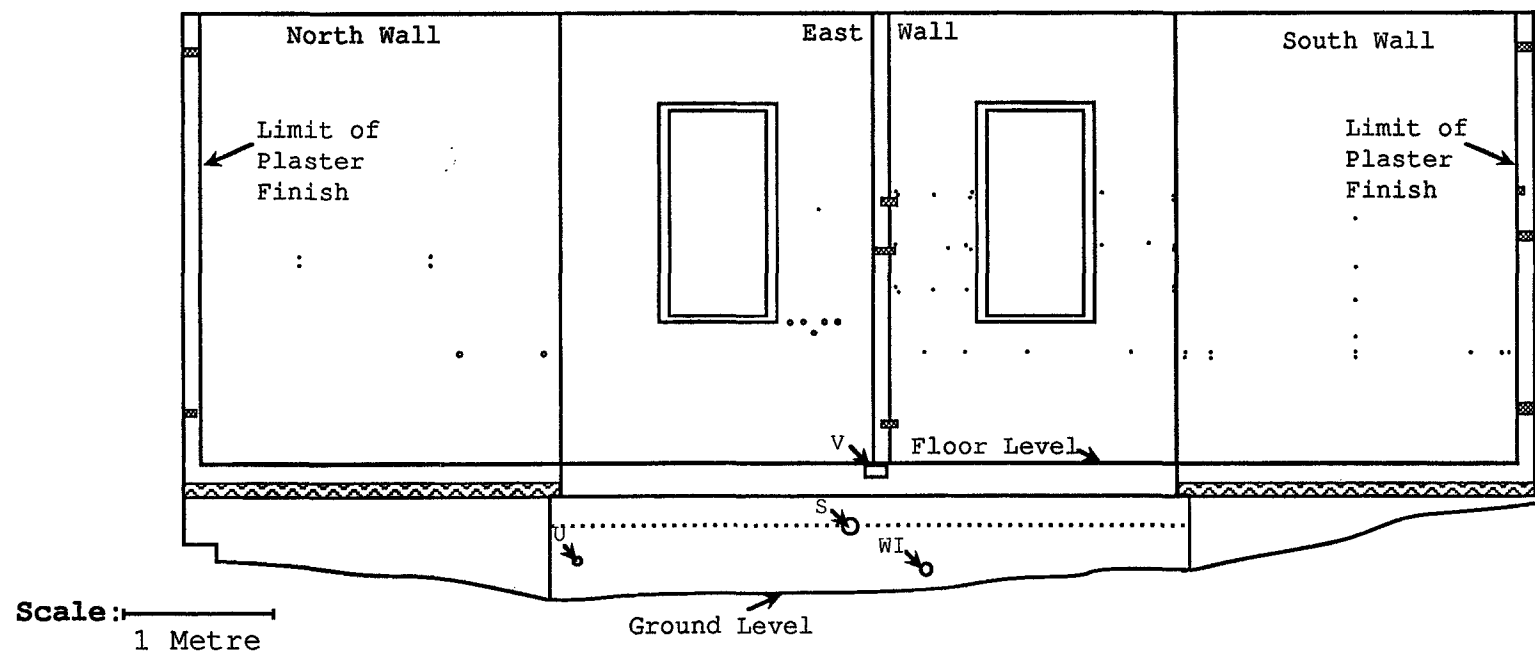


Figure 10. Plan of caretaker's house, Structure 1

The presence of the two dowel holes on the north wall of the northern section of the alcove probably evidences attachments for faucets. Advertisements in the journals for the same time period show hot and cold water taps were generally separate. Plumbing was customarily exposed. The water and sewage outlets on the north must have connected to upstairs bathroom plumbing.

The water supply for the kitchen and bathroom came from the well south of the house. A pump was installed in the kitchen for the purpose of supplying hot water, and for culinary and drinking purposes. Sewage was not treated and was discharged into the sea (Resident Architect's Report, Department of Health, 14 Jan.- 4 Feb. 1923).

Other published features of kitchens for the time period show the use of shelving and tables, rather than cupboards for storage. Nail patterns on the walls indicate this is the case in this kitchen and pantry area (Fig. 11). The custom of placing the pantry between the kitchen area and dining area was commonly found in early 20th century houses (House and Garden 1916, Vol 20). The dining-room was likely on the south side of the house, where it could be accessed from the pantry and kitchen area. The larger living room was therefore on the north. The bathroom was upstairs, probably over the kitchen area. Since the house was described as one and a half stories, the bedroom was in all likelihood situated over the living room.



### Legend

- S = Sewer Outflow (retrofitted)
- U = Possible Water Intake (retrofitted?)
- V = Vent
- WI = Water Intake
- = Nail or Nail Hole
- = Hole for Wooden Dowel
- ▨ = Charred Timber set into wall
- ⌞ = Timber Impressions
- ... = External Ground Level

Figure 11. Features of East wall, caretaker's house.

The floors of the pantry, kitchen, and bedroom were covered with linoleum. According to Rundle Nelson, in a letter to Frederick Montizambert, 11 May 1916, there were 24 yards in the kitchen, 9 yards in the pantry, and 9 yards in the bedroom. The first measurement may in fact refer to the kitchen and dining area. Oilcloth in the amount of 34 yards was used in the hall and stairway.

Archaeological information reveals that the other walls were of lathe and plaster. It was difficult to determine colour because of the fire. Floors were made of pine. The house was originally lit by acetylene gas. However, the first caretaker, Mr. Wilson, feared an explosion or fire, and installed electric light at his own cost. This was run from a gasoline plant (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 12 May 1916).

The present condition of the caretaker's house is poor. Vandalism has occurred and grafitti on the walls dating back to 1935 is extensive. A fire has also contributed to the deterioration of the building. Walls have collapsed on the north and west (Fig. 12).

A memorandum written in 1924 states that the kitchen sink, stove, and toilet were removed when the colony was closed (J.G. Brown, Acting Resident Architect, letter to Mr. Cathcart, Department of Lands, Victoria, 29 Aug. 1924). This explains the absence of any kitchen or bathroom equipment.



Figure 12. Photograph of caretaker's house, showing extent of collapse and vandalism, facing east.

## Structure 2: Workshop

The building located 8 m behind the house was used by the first caretaker of the leprosarium as a workshop and storage area. It was constructed in 1910, along with the chicken houses and new wharf. It was also reportedly used to temporarily house the interpreter/assistant. It may have been used for housing a female leper upon occasions, according to one report (Resident Architect's Report, Department of Health, 14 Jan.- 4 Feb. 1923). No documentation was found to substantiate this.

Archaeological investigations provide the following information. The building comprises three sections: the living area and cellar on the east, two concrete pads which form the workshop area, and a porch which extend along the western side (Fig. 13).

The cellar area on the east is approximately 5 x 3 m (16.8 x 9.8 ft.) in size. The walls range from 20 to 24 cm (8 to 9.5 in.) in width and comprise a mixture of concrete, sand, and coarse gravel. The wall on the south is rock and cement. The remains of a chimney are found on the east wall, while stairs are found on the south, with a small cement pad at base level with the ground. This part of the building has brick corners on the northeast, northwest, and southeast. The entrance to the cellar is on the southwest.

Immediately to the west of the cellar is a floor 3.65 x 3.6 m (12 x 11.8 ft.) in size which aligns with the front side of the cellar. On the north side of this floor is a

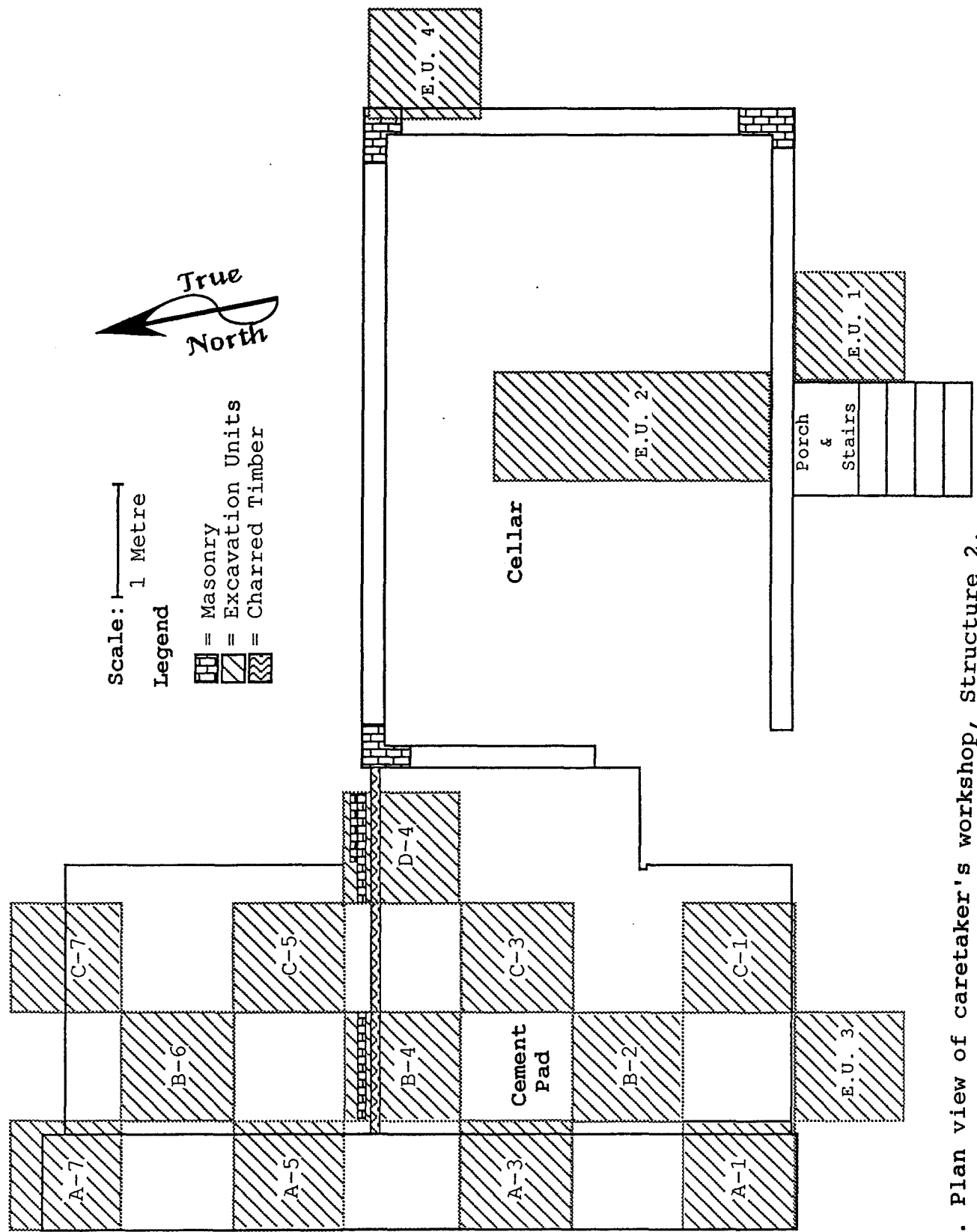


Figure 13. Plan view of caretaker's workshop, Structure 2.



second pad which is 2.45 x 3.05 m (8 x 10 ft.), 8-10 cm higher than the floor. The porch is 7.3 m (8 ft.) N/S and 2.9 m (10 ft.) E/W. It is aligned with the front side of the floor and cellar. The porch and floor are separated by an artificial gap 12 cm wide. A similar gap is found between the cellar floor and wall. A 5 cm (2 in.) deep and 5 cm (2 in.) wide sill, which is part of the wall construction, runs along the side of the west wall.

The pad is 8 cm (3.19 in.) thick, while the floor is 15 cm (6 in.) thick, made of poor quality concrete and beach sand and gravel. The concrete is finished with mortar applied after it had set. A row of vertical bricks was uncovered underlying the south edge of the pad. There is a 13.5 cm gap to the cement facing from the bricks. It is filled with charcoal, which may be the remains of wooden siding. Distribution of window glass inside the structure suggests that it was vandalized, before it was burned in the localized fire.

The bricks used in the construction of both Structures 1 and 2 are made of soft mud, with vertical water marks on the edges and ends. Similar marks run across the width of the bottom faces. These bricks also have a blade or stick struck face with strike marks running the length of the face. Striking may have been done by hand.

Watermarks on the bottom face and the presence of airpockets on the bottom face and/or lower edges of some bricks suggest that the moulds were machine filled. The

colour of the bricks ranges from salmon-orange to "brick red," to almost black, due to differences in firing temperature. Some are over-fired. Median size is 6.4 x 10.5 x 21.5 cm. The quality of the brick is good for construction, but not for facing or decoration (Gurcke 1987).

#### Description of Other Facilities

There are no archaeological remains of the reported driftwood wharf, the boat house, or chicken house. The well, rubble pile, and circular depression are described below.

##### Feature 1: Caretaker's Well

The well is situated 35 m southeast of the house, 4 m from the edge of the present shoreline. It is on the eastern edge of a former wagon trail, leading from the beach up the terrace to the buildings. An embankment on the east of the well rises to the orchard terrace.

This feature is centred on a N/S axis, offset to the east of centre on the E/W axis. The surface opening is 0.58 m wide, tapering to 0.47 m at the top of the first brick course, 0.27 m below the well mouth surface. The opening is approximately 0.10 m higher than the outer edges of the concrete pad which surrounds it. The pad is slightly domed from the edges towards the mouth, and is 1.34 m thick.

It is faced with a smooth concrete over a coarse gravel base.

The interior of the well consists of a square shaft of bricks, 1.2 m square at the bottom. It extends three brick courses (0.19 m) above the present water level. This shaft is corbelled in to a cylindrical shaft 0.47 m in diameter, 0.53 m deep, comprising eight courses of bricks. These are capped by a pad 0.3 m thick.

A 2 in. (5 cm) diameter galvanized iron water line extends from the well running along the road 1.0 m towards the house entering the well 0.16 m below the surface of the pad.

#### Feature 2: Rubble Pile

A large oval mound 3.4 m N-S, and 3.8 m E-W in size is found behind the house (Fig. 14). It was covered with moss at the time of discovery, and overlies a large section of bedrock. It is 45 cm high at the central datum point. Excavation showed that this was a garbage dump, comprising artifacts, faunal remains, grass cuttings, and rocks.

#### Feature 3: Circular Depression

This depression is located slightly down slope and 50 m from the house. It is 4 m N/S, 3.7 m E/W, and 1.58 m deep at the centre. The sides are bare and indicate slumping. Ferns are growing along the top edge; one large tree is growing on the south side, while littermat covers the



Figure 14. Photograph of caretaker's rubble pile, partially excavated, facing east.

bottom. Evidence of burning is found in the soil profile.

Galvanized piping 2 in. (5 cm) in diameter, with a circumference of 8 in. (20 cm), enters the depression on the north-west, 15 cm B.S. It extends 1.36 m outward from the side, connecting with an elbow joint downwards 60 cm. The lower 36 cm of pipe is rusted, and appears to have been below the water line. The location of the feature in relation to the house and the condition of the pipe suggest that it was used for collecting dirty run-off water from the house.

#### Archaeological Site DdRt 31 D'Arcy Island

##### Location and Contemporary Site Description

This site is located in a southwest facing bay on the west side of D'Arcy Island. It is approximately 500 m southeast of the caretaker's facilities. The main features are the foundations of two houses. Structure 1 is the more recent house on the west, while Structure 2 is to the east. They are located at the west end of the bay, near the edge of a 3 m high terrace. Both face towards the gravel beach.

The difference in the condition of the remains of the two buildings is worthy of comment. Structure 1 has clearly burned down; the other building has collapsed, since much of the lumber is still intact.

This site is characterized by a well, a small circular depression, and a lumber cluster found on the east. A small area of refuse disposal is located in front of one of the

houses and a brick fall feature behind the other. A ditch runs north to south through the site, immediately to the west of Structure 2. It appears to have been excavated to drain a seasonal wetland located 20 m behind the houses (Fig. 15).

The vegetation in the area of the houses include several large Douglas fir (Pseudotsuga taxifolia) and a single arbutus (Arbutus menziesii). These trees predate site abandonment. They are the predominant species in the locality, which are additionally represented by younger specimens. Willow (Salix spp.) is common along the embankment. Lodgepole pine (Pinus contorta latifolia), grand fir (Abies grandis) and Pacific crab-apple (Malus diversifolia) are the other trees present.

The dominant ground cover is salal (Gaultheria shallon). Broom (Cytisus scoparius) and waxberry (Symphoricarpos albanus) were also dominant until recently, but have died off for unknown reasons. Other common vegetation noted include wild rose (Rosa spp.), tall mahonia (Berberis equifolium) and ocean spray (Holodiscus discolor). Purple honeysuckle (Lonicera hispidula), trailing blackberry (Rubus ursinus) and saskatoonberry (Amelanchier florida) were also identified.

It is significant that the trees growing within the foundations of Structure 1 are different from those of Structure 2. The trees are larger in the western hut; one Douglas fir is 26 cm in diameter, while several lodgepole

# CONTOUR MAP OF

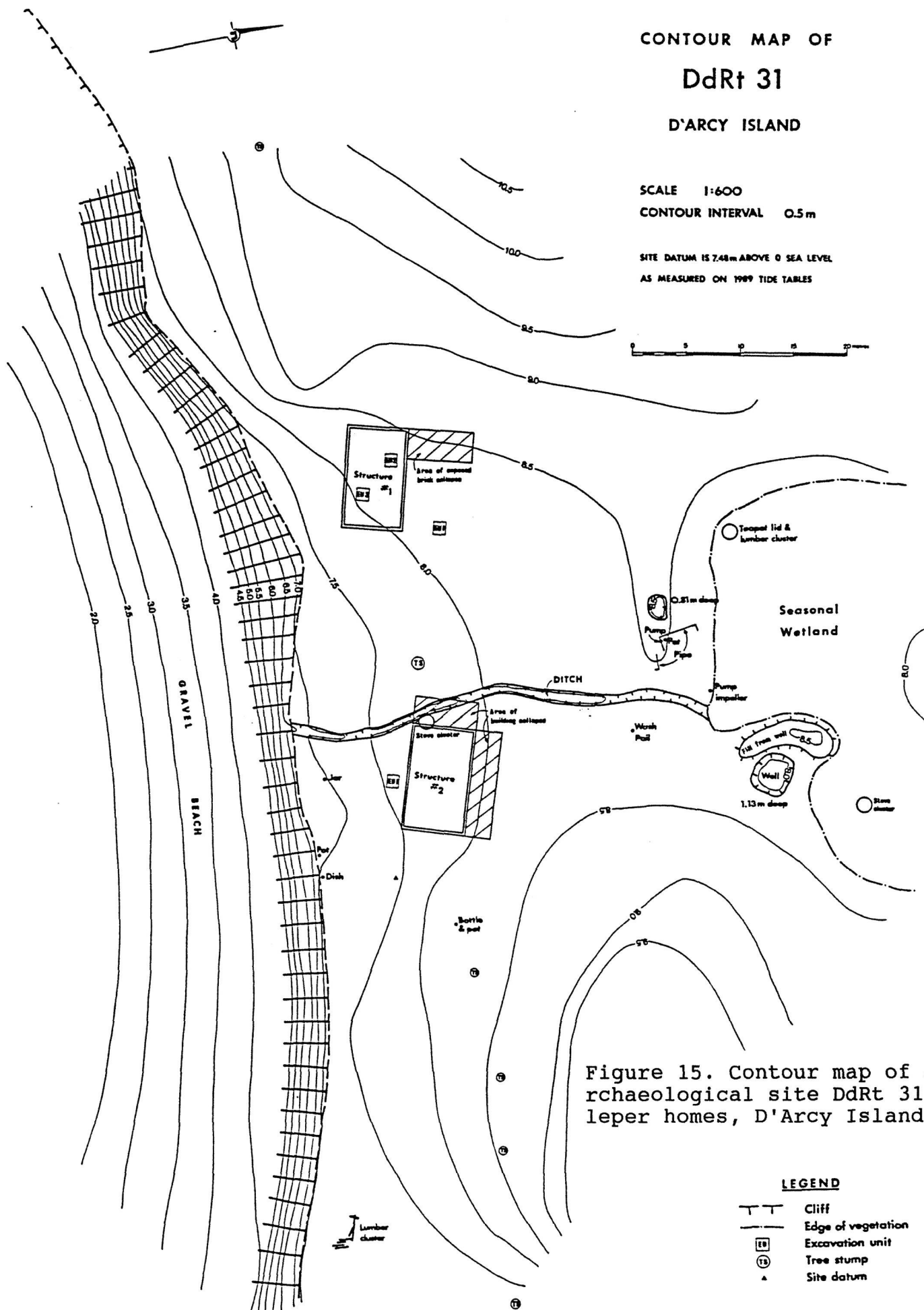
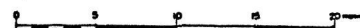
## DdRt 31

### D'ARCY ISLAND

SCALE 1:600

CONTOUR INTERVAL 0.5 m

SITE DATUM IS 7.48 m ABOVE 0 SEA LEVEL  
AS MEASURED ON 1989 TIDE TABLES



pine are over 20 cm in size. In the other hut, there is only one tree, a Douglas fir, with a trunk diameter of 16 cm. This size differentiation between buildings would be expected if the western hut burned prior to the collapse of the other. An alternate explanation is that the western building collapsed before the fire, and thus the relatively intact floor impeded conifer growth.

The area east of the buildings is more open than surrounding areas, and appears to have been substantially cleared. This was probably the garden area.

#### Description of Historic Buildings

The construction of the first dwelling was initiated in late 1916 (Structure 2, Fig. 16). On 10 November, Mr. Henderson, the local Department of Public Works Resident Architect, was authorized to build the house. He stated that foundations were to be constructed a few inches above the ground. The floor was to be lined with boards put on horizontally. The cost of the building was not to exceed \$850.00 (Frederick Montizambert, letter to Rundle Nelson, 11 Nov. 1916). The house was ready for occupation in January 1917.

The building was described as consisting of three rooms side by side, the two lateral rooms being entered from the centre. It was originally occupied by two Chinese patients. When a third leper was added, one of the former men moved out because the three did not get along. He built himself





Figure 16. Remains of Structure 2, DdRt 31,  
D'Arcy Island, facing northeast.

a shed (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 3 Aug. 1917). This may be the unidentified lumber cluster on the western edge of the site.

In order to improve conditions, Rundle Nelson recommended renovations to the building. He suggested the windows in each of the end rooms be replaced by doors, providing three separate rooms approachable from the veranda. In addition, he also recommended a building be built for the two White lepers, currently living in a tent. Nelson also wanted the Chinese lepers to work on the houses themselves, in order to send money back to China for their families (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 3 Aug. 1917).

The second house was to cost \$900, \$50 more than the first one, although the same plan would be followed. The amount covered increased costs of lumber, and higher wages for the carpenter and painter. The second house was completed 12 November (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 27 Nov. 1917).

A description made of both huts when the colony was closed in 1924 states "The huts consist of one room with verandah and built in series of three under one roof, size 12 X 10 X 8 (feet) high and verandah 6 wide." The huts are of wood construction, "matched inside including ceiling and built on dwarf concrete walls." The outside walls are covered with drop sheathing, the roof shingled (J. G. Brown,

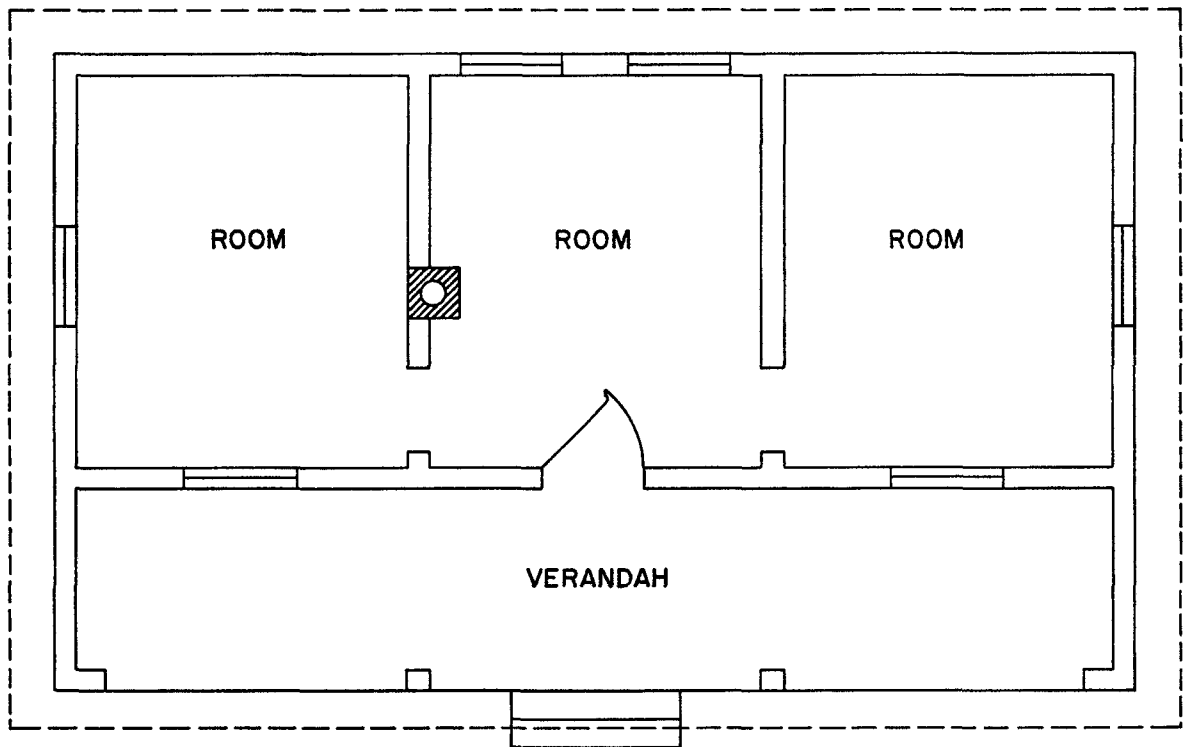
Acting Resident Architect, letter to Mr. Cathcart,  
Department of Lands, 29 Aug. 1924).

The original blueprint for the houses, drawn in 1916, calls for a 32 x 19 ft. (9.8 x 5.8 m) foundation. The height from the floor to the top of the roof at the base of the chimney is 14 ft. The rooms are 8 ft. (2.46 m) high, and 9 x 12 ft. ( 2.8 x 3.7 m) in size. The three rooms are accessed through the front door, and a 6 ft. (1.8 m) wide veranda. The central room contains the chimney, and two 3 ft. (.9 m) wide windows. Doorways to the bedrooms are on the south side of the inside walls, while 3 ft. (.9 m) wide windows front on to the veranda. Four posts support the veranda roof. There is a contradiction in the plans. The Section shows a door on one side; the End Elevation illustrates a window. However, the Plan indicates windows on both sides. The Section also calls for four concrete pads for the beams. Building materials required include rough lumber, double dressed lumber, and shiplap. Construction details are shown in Fig. 17.

On the basis of archaeological data, the concrete foundations of Structure 2 are 0.40 m high and 0.20 m wide. They contain local beach pebbles. Five irregular cement foundation pads, approximately 0.40 m square in size, are placed across the house, spaced 1 m apart. The base of a chimney stack ca. 0.40 m in size is located on the northwest central area of the building. Steps comprising three



ELEVATION



PLAN

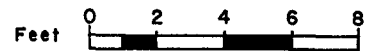


Figure 17. Redrafted copy of archival blueprints for "Leper House" on D'Arcy Island (National Archives of Canada RG 29 Vol 768, File 414-5-1).

runners and risers of 2 x 6 in. boards led to the front door.

Exterior sheathing is 1 x 8 in. tongue and groove shiplap. Around the window on the east side, 1 x 6 in. boards were used vertically. Windows and doors are framed with varying sizes of 1 in. lumber. There is no evidence of indoor plumbing or electricity. Both houses were lit with oil lamps.

Test excavations in Structure 1 provide only minimal information on construction, since the building had been burned. Structure 2 is unquestionably the one occupied by the Chinese. All three Chinese artifacts were associated with this building and there is evidence to suggest that it was used far more extensively than the other. Why this second building, which is very close to the other house, escaped the fire remains a mystery.

Bricks used in construction at this site are made of soft mud. The sample came from the base of Structure 1. The bricks are characterized by very smooth edges, ends and bottom faces. This suggests that sand rather than water lubricated moulds were used in manufacture. The brick bottoms have frogs (indentations) 0.3 x 4.4 x 12.5 cm in size. The struck faces show pronounced lengthwise marking, suggesting a blade strike. These bricks were probably made with more sophisticated machinery than the bricks found at the caretaker's facilities, since there is no evidence of

air pockets and no perceptible lipping around the struck face.

They are good quality utilitarian bricks, but perhaps somewhat less expensive, since frogged bricks are supposed to be slightly cheaper to make because less material is used. The median size of the bricks is 6.0 x 9.5 x 12.5 cm.

#### Description of Other Features

##### Circular Depression: Well

The purpose of the larger depression located behind Structure 2 was initially unclear. Test excavations uncovered the remains of a well mouth, which had been broken into sections and covered in. An approximate size of 1.16 x 1.16 m was reconstructed. The concrete is 20 cm deep and 23 cm wide at the rim. The whole structure appears to have been crudely made, with large rocks on the bottom of the rim, and mostly concrete poured on top.

The remains of a wooden platform on the east side of the well were noted.

##### Brickfall

Immediately behind Structure 1, an area 6 x 6 m in size was uncovered to reveal a chimney brickfall. The bricks had obviously been disturbed by visitors since site abandonment. Tin cans and a few nails were found within the limits of the feature.

Archaeological investigations on Little D'Arcy Island contribute little information about the occupation of the early phases of the leper colony. There are no remains of the first houses and associated features, and the concrete structures built in 1907 and incorporated into the contemporary house are undetectable. The only visible feature of the former leprosarium is the well, built in 1907.

On the other hand, archaeological data from the caretaker's property is significant for reconstructing the architecture of the house and outbuildings, for enabling the description of associated features, and the cultural landscape. Similarly, the details of the houses built for the lepers in 1916, and the features of the associated landscape on D'Arcy Island are possible to document only through fieldwork research.

## Chapter 7 MATERIAL CULTURE

Information concerning material culture at the site first occupied by the lepers on Little D'Arcy Island is based primarily on historical documents and photographs. Archaeological data are very limited. On the other hand, there are very few written records relating to artifactual materials at the caretaker's property, and most of the information collected comes from excavations. No descriptions were found of supplies or personal belongings entering into the final phase of the colony evidenced by the remains of the huts on D'Arcy Island, and only limited archaeological materials were recovered.

### DdRt 29: Little D'Arcy Island

With the exception of personal items presumably taken by the lepers to Little D'Arcy Island, all other goods were supplied by government officials. In a memorandum listing the initial expenses for supplying the leper colony, dated 7 July 1891, signed by the Treasurer of the City of Victoria, goods included furniture, pots, and kettles at a cost of \$100.85. "Provisions" cost \$62.71 and clothing \$9.00. A flag at \$5.25 and furniture worth \$70.50 were added on 1 June. Opium and "medical" goods totalled \$10.50.

The need for new materials was ongoing. In the only other detailed budget statement found among archival documents, for the year ending 31 Dec. 1897, clothing alone



cost \$106.80, while furniture and crockery totalled \$81.32. Other items listed were tobacco \$14.50, cartridges \$16.00, stationery \$1.00, while coffins cost \$16.25. Opium and medical supplies totalled the same amount as previously reported in 1891. Material culture accounted for only a small portion of the total annual budget for the colony during municipal administration (Table 4).

There are two sets of undated photographs from Little D'Arcy Island in the Visual Records Division of the B.C. Provincial Archives. The earlier ones were most probably taken in 1892. This was one of the few times when there were six lepers in the colony, as shown in the photographs. Four of the six have visible queues. Two of the men are wearing clothing typical of Chinese workers of the period. Notable are the short wide pants with fold-over fronts. One individual is wearing a three-piece striped cotton suit, which was likely made by a Chinese tailor (pers. com. Virginia Careless, Human History Division, Royal British Columbia Museum). Hats and leather boots which have been taken off for the group picture are also visible. Another man looks distinctively different. He may be the "New York leper" referred to in the newspaper articles of late 1891 and 1892. He is wearing more western looking clothing with a white shirt and waistcoat (Fig. 18).

The other set of pictures was most probably taken in 1897 or 1898, since several of the same photos appeared in Hall and Nelson's (1898) published article. Six lepers are

**Table 4**  
**Little D'Arcy Island Maintenance Cost of Leper**  
**Colony Municipal Administration 1891 - 1904**

Year	Total Cost
1891	\$1253.86
1892	\$ 994.10
1893	\$ 577.91
1894	\$1724.12
1895	\$ 826.88
1896	\$ 835.12
1897	\$ 947.59
1898	\$1116.82
1899	\$ 905.05
1900	\$ 774.60
1901	\$ 796.13
1902	\$ 527.17
1903	\$ 831.00
1904	\$ 400.00 (approx.)

Note: these figures are found in the Victoria  
municipal Medical Officer's Annual Reports



Figure 18. Historic photograph of the original occupants of the Little D'Arcy Island facilities (photograph courtesy of Visual Records, B.C. Provincial Archives catalogue #93302).

visible, and all are wearing western clothing: waistcoats, shirts, and pants; one with a two button fly. Two of the men wear waistcoats with laces rather than buttons. Jackets have large lapels. Five of the men are wearing round brimmed hats, while one sports a peaked cap. Several are wearing rubber gumboots to protect their toes (Figs. 3, 4, and 6).

Additional visible items of material culture include a wooden pail, a cast iron fryingpan, a round metal pot, a crudely woven wicker basket, and a whisk broom.

A few items supplied to the lepers are described by newspaper reporters. For example, shortly after their incarceration, the Chinese were "making the best of it." The only requests they had were for a looking glass, a razor, one dozen chickens, and a few hankies, "a pound of opium having been left with them as a special treat" (Daily Colonist 23 June 1891:5).

The only mention of Chinese cultural items is found in a newspaper article from 1892. Chinese novels were described lying around the cabins (Daily World 29 Feb. 1892:2), suggesting that at least one if not more of the inhabitants were literate. Missionaries also reportedly left bibles on the island, written in Chinese. In another article, the presence of old copies of the Colonist was noted, along with "New Years visiting cards" in their glory of black characters which were pasted on the walls (Daily Colonist 29 Feb. 1892:1).

Additional items are described at the time of the 1907 deportation. One report states that when the lepers were deported they took with them "their belongings, including clothing, mattresses, buckets, shovels, bags of rice, hatchets, spades, knives and various other personal effects." (Daily Colonist 7 May 1907:13). Another comment notes:

Like all Chinese who fare forth from what has been their home for a time, they carried their usual array of bundles and impediments, including everything from an alarm clock to a roll of frayed matting (Times 7 May 1907:1).

Archaeological material culture recovered from Little D'Arcy Island is very limited, totalling 37 artifacts (Table 5). Most of them were found in the upper two levels of Unit 1 (Table 6). The predominant class is Hardware, with 15 nails of varying sizes comprising the total. Thirteen are wire, one is galvanized wire, while a single nail is cut. The latter came from the burned soil of the evaluative test pit one. With the exception of the cut nail, all are likely associated with the post-1907 occupation of the site.

Samples of building materials include wall plaster sheeting, a concrete wall sample, a piece of roof cross section comprising concrete and tar, tar roof caulking, and a fragment of green painted cedar. These samples are likely from the concrete cabins built in 1908.

Prehistoric artifacts are two barbed bone hooks which have been mixed into the historic deposits.

**Table 5**  
**DdRt 29: Artifacts Recovered by Class**

Artifact Class	Number of Artifacts
Architectural	5
Arms	1
Hardware	15
Household	8
Post-occupational	3
Prehistoric	2
Scrap	2
Unidentifiable	1
Total	37

**Table 6**  
**DdRt 29: Provenience of Artifacts**

Provenience	Number of Artifacts
<b>Excavation Unit 1</b>	
Level 1	11
Level 2	10
Level 3	7
Level 4	-
Level 5	4
<b>Excavation Unit 2</b>	
Level 1	-
Level 2	1
Level 3	-
Level 4	1
<b>Surface</b>	1
<b>Evaluative Test Unit 1</b>	
Level 3	2
Total	37

Post-occupational artifacts refer to fragments of safety glass, a piece of discoloured plastic, and a piece of clear plastic which were not manufactured at the time the leper colony was occupied. The single piece of ammunition recovered is the end of a 12 gauge Remington shotgun shell.

Two household kitchenware artifacts are of earthenware: a rim fragment of a white plate which was glazed and hand painted, and a fragment of white cup comprising the base and handle. Household containers are all fragments: a piece of identifiable bottle glass, a rim of a clear glass jar with ground finish, fragments of clear bottle glass, and dark green bottle glass, unidentifiable container fragments of light green machine made glass, and the body shoulder fragments of an unidentifiable machine made amber glass container with ghost seams.

Items of scrap comprise a fragment of metal plate and fragments of steel tubing.

#### DdRt 28: Caretaker's Facilities

The only mention of material culture in the historic records found for this site is found in an inventory of electrical apparatus left at D'Arcy Island following Mr. Wilson's death (Untitled Memorandum, 11 May 1917). The majority of materials listed include electrical equipment and tools such as a gasoline motor and dynamo, an Eldridge dynamo, an amperemeter, voltmeter, cell tester, a clock, a small lathe, 2 stocks and dies, 6 square dies, augers, 3



hand saws, 2 seven foot cross saws, assorted tools, taps, bites, clamps, axes, chisels, mason tools, torch planes, various pipe fittings, and a ladder.

Archaeological investigations provide further information. A total of 277 artifacts was recovered from the surface and excavations (Table 7). Most of them were from the rubble pile feature.

A comparison of artifacts from Structures 1 and 2 indicates that only four artifact classes are present in the house, while a limited number of items are found in four additional classes in Structure 2 (Table 8).

Architectural remains are limited to fragments of window pane glass from only one locality inside the house, while window glass is distributed throughout most of the other building. Four of the ammunition items are .22 caliber casings with one .44 caliber casing from Structure 1. They all come from the control unit outside the house. This suggests that these result from target practice in more contemporary times. The ammunition from Structure 2 is a 12 gauge shell base similar to one found on Little D'Arcy Island.

An interesting comparison of hardware categories is shown in Table 9. In Structure 1, construction hardware comprising nuts, screws, and washers are all from Unit 3 at the back corner of the house where renovations had been carried out. Construction materials are distributed throughout the workshop, and include wood screws, and 6 in.

**Table 7**  
**DdRt 28: Provenience of Artifacts**

Provenience	Number of Artifacts
Structure 1	35
Structure 2	60
Feature 1, Well	2
Feature 2, Depression	1
Feature 3, Rubble Pile	161
Faunal Unit	4
Surface Collection	14
Total	277

Note: Surface Collection refers to all other areas of the site which are not part of named structures or features.

**Table 8**  
**DdRt 28: Structure 1 and Structure 2**  
**Artifact Comparison by Class**

Artifact Class	Structure 1	Structure 2
Architectural	1	9
Arms	5	1
Hardware	12	31
Household	14	13
Personal	-	1
Tool	-	1
Unidentifiable	-	2
Total	35	59

**Table 9**  
**DdRt 28: Structure 1 and Structure 2**  
**Comparison of Hardware**

Category	Structure 1	Structure 2 Pad	Cellar
Building	-	1	-
Construction	4	6	12
Electrical	4	9	1
Plumbing	3	-	2
Unidentifiable	1	-	-
Total	12	16	15

Note: Pad includes Excavation Unit 3

nails which were catalogued separately from other nail sizes. Building hardware comprises a door bolt from the house and a corroded door hinge from the workshop.

Electrical items consist of two fragments of copper wire and two porcelain knobs excavated from inside the house. There is a distinctive difference in the distribution of items from Structure 2. Nine of the ten artifacts from this category are from the pad: porcelain six knobs, a fuse, a rosette, and an insulator are broken or fragmentary (Fig. 19). A single porcelain knob fragment comes from the cellar. Plumbing artifacts found in both buildings suggest that not only the house but also the workshop had running water.

Household items from within the house include fragments of four glass containers from inside and one from outside, in Unit 4. Fifty-one fragments of brown machine-made glass may be a liquor bottle. Two pieces of a wet cell battery were also found on the surface. A castor from a medium sized piece of furniture was also found. In the workshop, items of this class included tin can fragments (2), a piece of trunk molding, a lantern wick mechanism marked "P & A Co. 1168B," a fragment of a lantern chimney, a small piece of white porcelain tableware, and fragments of melted glass.

A total of 161 artifacts came from the rubble pile (Table 10). Architectural remains are limited: a sample of burned plaster residue, two wood fragments possibly cedar shakes, a fragment of window pane, and two samples of window



Figure 19. Photograph of porcelain electrical fixtures, caretaker's facilities.

**Table 10**  
**DdRt 28: Rubble Pile**  
**Artifacts Recovered by Class**

Artifact Class	Number of Artifacts
Architectural	6
Arms	3
Hardware	43
Household	32
Machinery	8
Personal	21
Scrap	14
Tools	17
Transportation	6
Unidentifiable	11
Total	161

caulking. Personal items, with the exception of two, comprise clothing. Fourteen are buttons; six are four-holed yellow metal but are not identifiable. Four manufacturers were identified: "Ne plus ultra" (2), "Best Ring Edge" (3), "Our Own Make" (1) and "Liverpool Rainer" (2). "Best Ring Edge" were identified as suspender buttons; others may have served the same purpose.

Additional clothing items include fragment of a leather shoe sole, a piece of suspender strap, and a clothing buckle. The remaining personal items are a safety pin, a bone china toilet brush handle, and two pencil leads.

Tool categories are Woodworking, Metalworking, and Mechanical. The latter comprises a small ratchet and a lever of questionable function. The distribution of the first two categories is shown in Table 11.

**Table 11**

**DdRt 28: Tool Types From Rubble Pile**

Woodworking		Metalworking	
Saws		Files	
Crosssaw	2	Rat-tail	1
Hacksaw	2	Triangular	3
Bucksaw	1	Flat	6
Total	6		10

Transportation artifacts are two pieces of leather harness, a wagon rod with threaded eye, a cast iron threaded strap loop, a tire patch, an aluminum cap for a fuel tank, and a steel two-hole flange. Scrap refers to assorted pieces of metal plate, bars, and mesh.

Surface collection from the caretaker's grounds comprise 14 artifacts, from various areas of the site; proveniences have been recorded on the site map. It is unlikely, however, that they were found where they were originally left at the time of site abandonment. Included are six items of hardware; four comprise plumbing apparatus - a taper seal, two sections of water pipe, and a steel collar, possibly for the sewer. Two porcelain rosette fragments were also left on the surface.

Four stove parts were found scattered on the grounds. One piece is of particular interest, since the make is identifiable. It is a cast iron leg from a Nanaimo No. 6 stove made by the Victoria Albion Iron Works (Albion Iron Works Catalogue n.d.). A steel bar, fragments of window glass, a complete 9 in. flat file, and a fragment of a fluted magnesium tinged sauce bottle with a "B.B.1500" makers mark complete the surface inventory. The name of the manufacturer of the latter could not be identified, although an extensive search was made of the glass literature.

Additional artifacts from the caretaker's facilities include the remains of a grey enamel bowl found in the circular depression feature. Four artifacts were uncovered



in the faunal unit: unidentified glass, a lid from a 10 in. can and a possible garter or suspender buckle and a piece of scrap metal. A glass vial and fragments of amber glass similar to those found in the caretaker's house were found in association with the well.

A summary of nail types analyzed from the caretaker's grounds is shown in Fig. 20. Approximately the same number of wire nails were excavated from Structures 1 and 2. Size distribution is very similar. The number of cut nails is far less than wire ones, and limited to only two sizes (Fig. 21).

#### DdRt 31: D'Arcy Island

No historic records containing descriptions of material culture were found for this site. All information available comes from archaeological collection. A total of 71 separately catalogued artifacts were recovered (Table 12). The majority came from the floor of Structure 2 (Table 13).

Architectural remains comprise a mortar sample from the chimney base of Structure 1, and seven fragments or groups of fragments of window pane glass from the interior of Structure 2. Two thickness of glass are noted, 2 mm and 4 mm; the latter is predominant. The single Arms artifact consists of a .22 caliber "d" head stamp cartridge found on the surface of the site in the vicinity of Structure 2. Similar to cartridges found at the caretaker's facilities, this likely results from recent target practice. Hardware

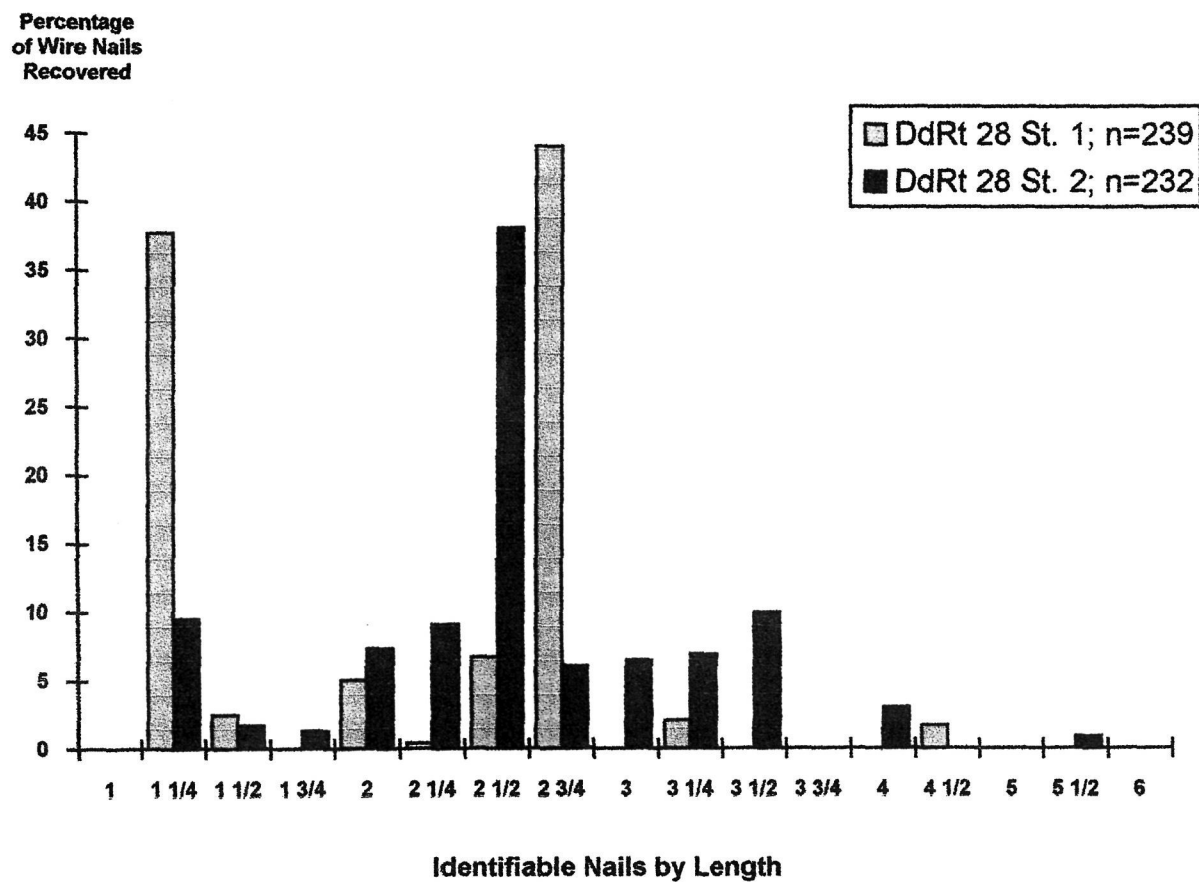


Figure 20. Graph showing comparison of wire nail sizes, Structure 1 and Structure 2, DdRt 28, caretaker's facilities.

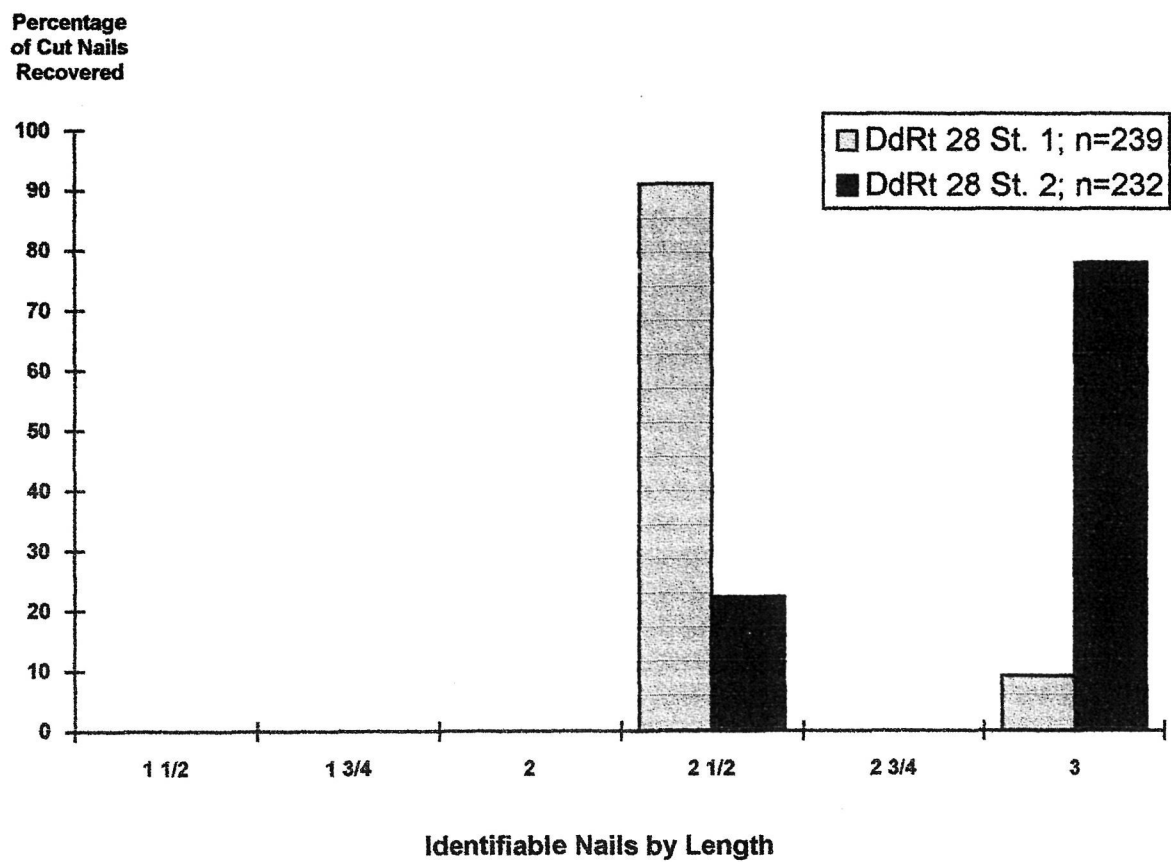


Figure 21. Graph showing comparison of cut nail sizes, Structure 1 and Structure 2, DdRt 28, caretaker's facilities.

Table 12

DdRt 31: Artifacts Recovered by Class

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Artifact Class	Number of Artifacts
Architectural	13
Arms	1
Hardware	10
Household	47
<hr/>	
Total	71

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comprises a small piece of copper wire; the remaining artifacts are 6 in. and 2.25 in. sized nails and a blind hook.

The predominant artifact class at this latest phase of the leper colony is household goods (Table 14). Tin can remains are very fragmentary. One comes from inside Structure 1, while five are associated with the brick feature behind. They comprise both rims and unidentifiable fragments. Two were found behind the other house; one is a slip lid commonly used on tobacco cans, the other unidentifiable. Two others were found in the cutbank feature in front of Structure 2; one is a base with an interlocked side seam, the other unidentifiable fragments. An additional can fragment was part of the surface collection.

Glass containers are parts of four bottles from inside Structure 2, two from the east wall feature, one from the cut bank. Two additional ones were from surface collection. Of the total, three are liquor bottles, one found with the cork intact (Fig. 22), three are unidentifiable, while the remaining two are of special significance. Found behind the second house, these small bottles are identical. They are marked with Chinese characters which state they came from Aydong District in Macao, and that they contained medicine for leprosy (Fig. 23).

**Table 13**  
**DdRt 31: Provenience of Artifacts**

Provenience	Number of Artifacts
<b>Structure 1</b>	
Excavation Unit 1	2
Excavation Unit 2	-
Excavation Unit 3	1
Brick feature	10
<b>Structure 2</b>	
Excavation Unit 1	2
Interior Floor	30
Exterior East Wall	12
Cutbank Feature	3
Surface Collection	11
Total	71

**Table 14**  
**DdRt 31: Household Goods by Category**

Category	Number of Artifacts
<b>Containers</b>	
Bottles	10
Tin Cans	13
Furnishings	16
Tableware	2
Kitchenware	6
Total	47



Figure 22. Photograph of liquor bottles, DdRt 31, leper huts, D'Arcy Island.



Figure 23. Photograph of Chinese medicine bottles used in the treatment of leprosy from DdRt 31, D'Arcy Island.



Other household items of interest include a variety of different sized and coloured enamel ware. All are broken. Pans, saucepans, and coffee and tea pots are included. A small brown ironstone one-cup teapot with a "CS" makers mark was discovered behind Structure 2 (Fig. 24), while the bottom of a soya paste pot was found in front. The Chinese makers mark translates into "happiness" (Fig. 25). An additional household item was a fragment of a white saucer, similar to earthenware recovered from both the other two sites.

All of the household furnishings are part of a cast iron stove. These were collected in clusters of fragments over the inside of the second house floor. Of the parts recorded, only a portion of the grill and broken grate were identifiable, as well as the insignia of a Nanaimo No. 6 stove from the Albion Iron Works, in Victoria.

A total of 126 wire nails were recovered from Structures 1 and 2. The most common size is the 2.25 in. nail (40%), with close to equal numbers of both 3.25 in. and 2.25 in. nails as the second most common sizes (Fig. 21).

Fig. 26 compares the distribution of wire nails from both house sites on D'Arcy Island. Nails vary greatly in size from the custodian's house and include brads, (found only in the workshop), and shingle and lathe nail sizes indicative of construction finishing. Shingle nails, along with cut nails, are not found in the leper houses.



Figure 24. Ironstone teapot, from behind  
Chinese dwelling, DdRt 31, D'Arcy Island.



Figure 25. Bottom of a soya paste pot, DdRt 31, D'Arcy Island.

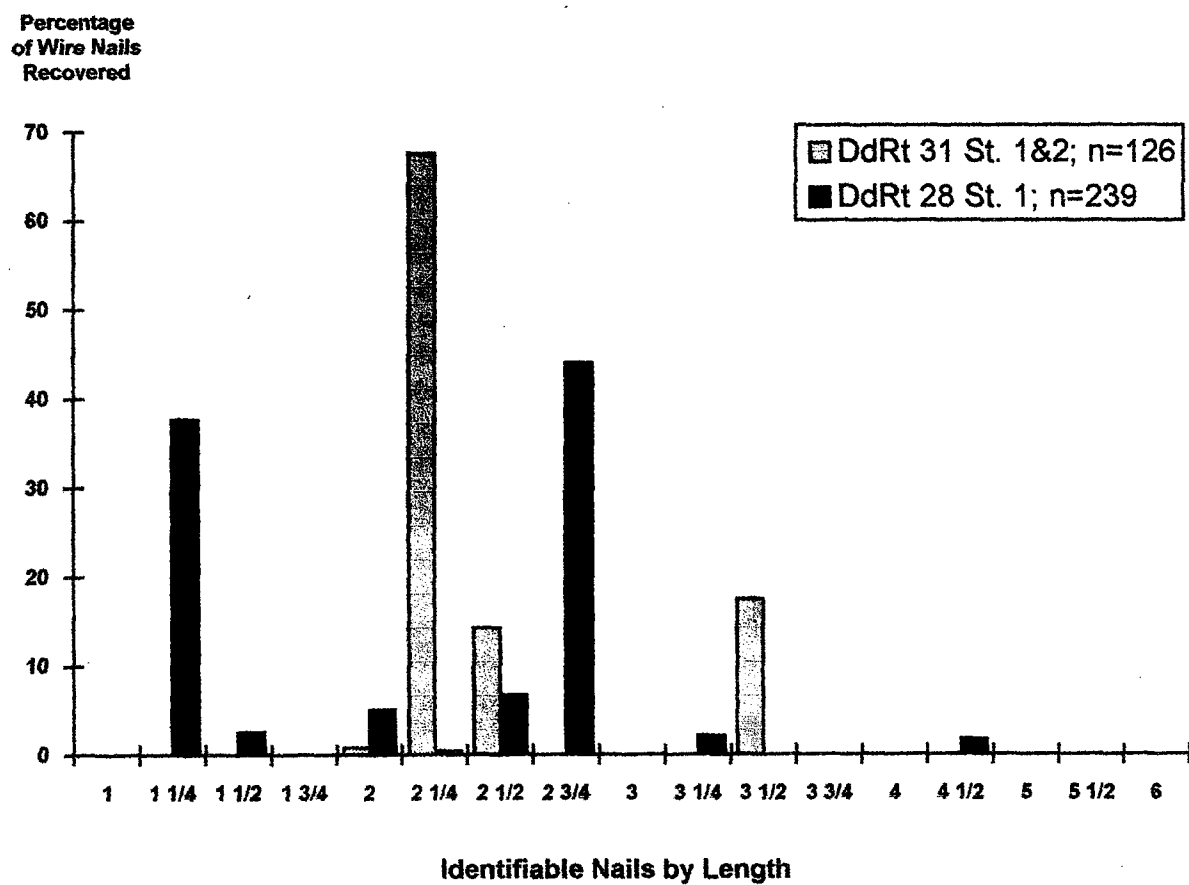


Figure 26. Graph showing comparison of cut and wire nails recovered from DdRt 28 and DdRt 31, D'Arcy Island.

There are several general observations that can be made concerning the portable material recovered from excavations at the three archaeological sites comprising the D'Arcy Island leprosarium. First, relatively few artifacts were recovered. Second, the majority of items recovered were either fragmentary or broken. The minimal evidence of the former Chinese occupants is a third general observation.

The interpretation of the archaeological record must include an evaluation of both non-cultural and cultural site formation processes (Schiffer 1987). Cultural processes such as refuse disposal patterns (South 1977; Carillo 1977) and site abandonment behaviour (Stevenson 1980) as well natural transformation processes may be used to explain the artifact distribution.

One of the surprising results of these investigations was the virtual invisibility of the former Chinese occupants of two of the sites. Artifacts of Asian origin at Little D'Arcy are non-existent; only three are associated with the later huts on D'Arcy Island. There are several possible explanations. First, the quantity of Chinese material that went into the colony was likely very limited to begin with. Newspaper reports indicate that the first men to be incarcerated in the leprosarium had all been in the country for a short period of time. If they were working on the Canadian Pacific Railroad, it is unlikely they had accumulated many possessions.

Other later immigrants were likely to be comparably poor. According to the evidence presented at Chinese Immigration Hearings (1902:17), when immigrants first arrived in Canada:

Their clothes are mostly composed of cotton goods, that is the lower class. They bring some little bedding, a piece of matting, a blanket, and perhaps two quilts. The whole outfit worth perhaps \$5.00.

The photographs of the first Chinese on Little D'Arcy Island show Chinese clothing. However, these and other items of Chinese origin would have been replaced over the years by government officials who supplied the colony. It is also possible that any distinctively Chinese personal items may have been buried with the lepers as they died. The few artifacts of Chinese origin which were described in the records such as paper charms would not be found in the archaeological record.

A consideration of refuse disposal patterns are also important in explaining both the invisibility of the Chinese as well the general lack of recovered material culture. On Little D'Arcy Island, it was noted by the Health Officer in 1898 that the lepers used the beach as a latrine (Hall and Nelson 1898). It is highly probable that the beach was also used as a primary refuse disposal area, which was a common practice a century ago.

Another cultural process must also be considered in explaining the paucity of archaeological materials recovered

from the site. According to Victoria newspapers when the surviving Chinese lepers were deported in 1907, they took all their belongings with them. Anything left behind would have been burned when the original cabins were razed, on orders from the William Head Quarantine Superintendent for fear of contagion. It is even possible that much of the debris left on the site was thrown on the beach to be washed out by the tide.

The construction of the new cabins in 1908, and recent property development have further contributed to the disappearance of the historic occupation. The former colony has also been subjected to pounding waves and on going foreshore erosion over the last 100 years. It is not surprising, therefore, that little archaeological evidence remains.

The small quantity of material culture at the caretaker's facilities on D'Arcy Island may best be explained by cultural processes. Refuse disposal patterns and site abandonment behaviour are the two most important ones. Although the site was occupied from 1908 to 1924, there is no evidence of the use of a regular refuse disposal area. Part of the explanation may again be found in the historic records. In a memorandum assessing the property of the leper colony and recommendations of its worth, the Architect notes the untidy appearance of the caretakers. He further stated that refuse was thrown over the cliffs, giving the area an untidy and unkempt appearance. Small

pieces of water worn tableware and glassware were found on the beach below the house, attesting to this practice.

The interpretation of the rubble pile behind the house is that the artifacts reflect a single event. The large number of fragments and broken items including tools and personal artifacts, possibly represents the clearing out of the house at the time of Mr. Wilson's death. Grass cutting and rocks from the garden appear to have been added later.

Few cultural materials were found in the house itself. Again this is not surprising, since orders were given the William Head Superintendent to remove all items of value. The few items left behind were fragmentary and apparently worthless. Additionally, perhaps more would have been found if the building had not been the object of fifty years of vandalism.

Similar to the other two sites, refuse disposal patterns and site abandonment are key processes in accounting for the lack of material culture at the latest phase of the colony. The cut-bank feature in front of Structure 2 suggests that garbage was customarily thrown over the bank into the ocean in front of the Chinese house. Unfortunately, due to foreshore erosion, it is likely that a considerable amount of evidence has been lost from the archaeological record. Minimal garbage was found also discarded in the swamp behind the houses, and immediately behind Structure 2.

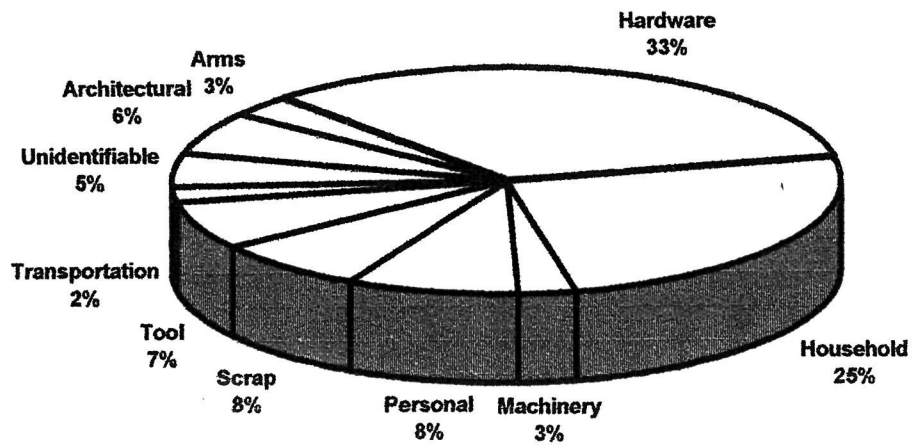


Also comparable to the custodians' facilities, household goods were moved from the D'Arcy Island location to Bentinck Island when the former facilities closed. Artifacts found in the site for the most part appear to be broken or incomplete, suggesting that there was a selective process in the removal of items.

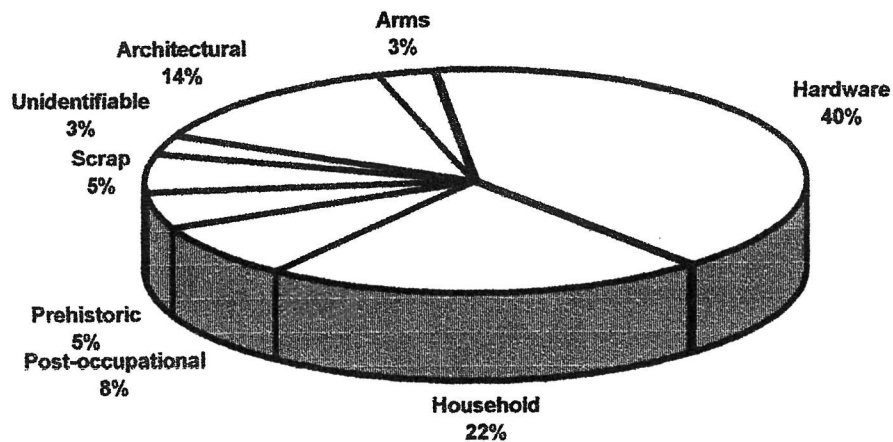
Unlike the earlier site on Little D'Arcy Island, there is minimal evidence of the Chinese on D'Arcy Island. More was expected, however, given the eight year occupation, the preservation at the site, and the presence of eight Chinese men who intermittently occupied the desolate bay.

A meaningful inter-site statistical analysis of artifacts from the three archaeological sites comprising the leper colony is difficult to make. Different sampling techniques, varying degrees of disturbance of archaeological deposits, and differences in the size of assemblages are not conducive to making a meaningful comparison. Quite illuminating, however, is the difference in the number of classes of artifacts found at the caretakers, and at the more recent leper houses (Fig. 27). The former location evidences a much wider range of classes reflecting both the function of the site and the status of its former occupants. Four classes are present in the final leper house phase of the colony, while the caretaker's facilities contains an additional six classes. Included are transportation, machinery, tools, scrap and personal. With the exception of the latter all of these classes may be considered symbolic

**DdRt 28**      Caretaker's Facilities, D'Arcy Island



**DdRt 29**      Original Facilities, Little D'Arcy Island



**DdRt 31**      Leper Homes, D'Arcy Island

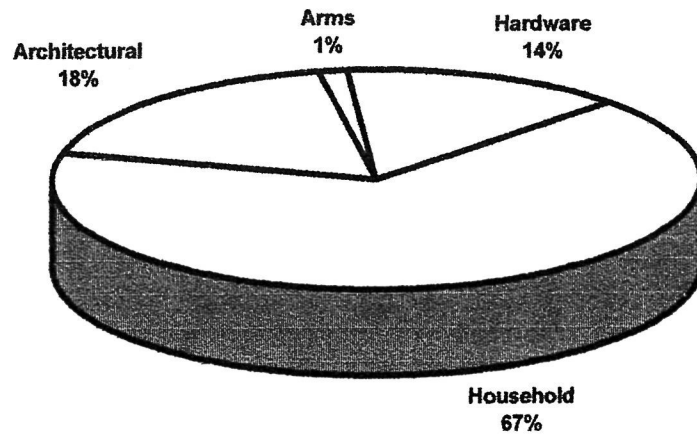


Figure 27. Graph showing comparison of artifact classes, DdRt 28, DdRt 29, and DdRt 31.

of the power and status of the White caretaker. Each man controlled access to and from and on the island as evidence by the transportation artifacts. The presence of tools, machinery and associated scrap also attest to his status, leaving no doubt as to who was in control of the internal running of the institution.

In sum, the overall paucity of material culture at the sites formerly occupied by the lepers serves to signify their low status and poverty, and the austere way of life which was imposed upon them by the changing government administrations.

## Chapter 8 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

More than one hundred years after the establishment of the D'Arcy Island leper colony, little has changed. The dominant White society in Canada continues to control the political power to define and maintain varying forms of social inequality. Differences in ethnicity and race remain significant factors in limiting access to both resources and opportunity, and racism still prevails in many sectors of contemporary society.

During its thirty-four years of operation, the D'Arcy Island leper colony represented the socio-political power of Euro-Canadian society. It was also part of a process which fuelled racist ideology and enabled the rationalization of excluding the Chinese from society at large.

The leprosarium conveyed many meanings and varying images to those who came in contact with it. In the absence of written records, I can only attempt to reconstruct a Chinese perspective. Some insight is provided by the following quote which appeared in the Daily Colonist (21 May 1891:3), the day the first Chinese lepers were incarcerated on Little D'Arcy Island.

All of them made strenuous objections to leaving the city.... They begged for delay... They dreaded the fate in store for them, and tried hard to avert what they regarded as a fearful punishment. So fired were they with terror regarding their future, that one of them- Ng Chung- just before the steamer left the dock, seized a large, sharp carving knife and attempted to cut his throat.

While this quote ostensibly relates the fear of the men in facing an unknown future, I believe it carries greater significance. The fear of leprosy and death was far outweighed by the dread that the lepers would die ignominiously on an isolated island, far from relatives and friends of their own cultural origin. Part of their grief possibly sprang from the knowledge that when they died, there was to be no ritual concern with their graves, a practice critical to Confucian tradition of the historical period (Baker 1979).

Once on the island, there was likely some relief in finding living conditions that were far better than those of the streets of Chinatown, where most of these men had been living. This initial response must have ultimately turned to dread, as some of the lepers died and others became progressively weaker. Not only was it difficult to escape from the island, it was also impossible to avoid the inevitable outcome of the disease itself.

Although the Chinese immigrants who arrived in Canada came from the same region of southeast China, they were of different clans and lineage villages (Lai 1975). From a Chinese perspective, there must have been some difficulties living in close quarters with individuals with whom, in other circumstances, they might not interact. An example of tension and distrust is exemplified in the report that Fong Hop, one of the Chinese lepers, was living in a tent alone, during the latter phase of the colony. He was reportedly

not considered to be of the same class as the other lepers (Rundle Nelson, letter to Frederick Montizambert, 3 Aug. 1917).

The varying types of historical documents used in this research convey different perspectives on the D'Arcy Island leprosarium. Some of the information was gleaned from newspaper articles. Many of the reporters in the late 19th century were little different from some of their contemporaries. They frequently engaged in providing their readers with scandals, and stories of human suffering. From a reporter's perspective, the leper colony was an ideal topic to write about, especially because the inhabitants were predominantly Chinese. This made it an interesting target for the Victoria Colonist, which was notorious for its racist opinions.

The reporters dramatized events concerning the colony, simultaneously repelling the public while eliciting a certain level of sympathy, as exemplified in Fig. 28. One of the few sensitive reports was written in 1891 (Daily Colonist May 21 1891:3), in which the writer took the time to collect information on the five lepers who were waiting for the steamer to take them to the colony. Brief life histories about each man was given, along with sympathetic but graphic descriptions of the condition of their disease. This article was also one of the very few written about the inhabitants of D'Arcy Island to use personal names of the

## The Isle of The Unclean

Quarterly Visit of City Officials  
to Lepers of Darcey  
Island.

Four Unfortunates Show the In-  
creased Ravages of the  
Disease.

On a small island, 17 miles from Victoria, and in the course of steamers plying up and down the Gulf, are four prisoners for life—Chinese lepers who are immured on Darcey island because of their fell disease. Yesterday was a red letter day with these unfortunates, for the tug Sadie left the city at 3 p.m. and took up their quarterly supply of provisions, and the city health officers and a small party made their periodical visit. To three of the unfortunates the visit brought gratification; to the other disappointment. The three were glad because of the new boots, the clothing, foods, pork, chicken, wheat and the various bags and boxes, from loaves of bread to boxes of oranges, which the city officials took up for them and landed on the verandah of their row of cabins; the fourth disappointed and despairing because the health officers refused to take him from the island to another one. He had his blankets and effects rolled up, and was ready to go, but the interpreter explained that he must remain—he was immured for life on the island—and the unfortunate cried in his despair.

The disease has made rapid advancement since the last visit of the steamer. The young man who was taken up from this city less than a year ago, who is suffering from the disease in the scaly skin form, has much more of his body covered than when the officials made the last trip; the unfortunate man from Vancouver, who has been five years on the island, has had more of his diseased body mortified, and now his left hand, which is swollen up three times its natural size, is dead. The fingers are doubled up on the terribly swollen palm, and the hand covered with leprosy is without feeling or use to the wrist. His other hand is minus the fingers, which have fallen off, and his right foot is twisted sadly out of shape by the diseased nerves—for this unfortunate man has both the skin and nervous forms of the disease. His face is plainly indicative of his suffering from the nervous leprosy, long furrows being drawn down the cheeks, his wide-open eyes pleading vainly for relief.

Daily Colonist  
21 May 1902

## LEPER MADE ESCAPE FROM DARCY ISLAND

Arrived in Cadboro Bay After  
Travelling Fifteen Miles on  
Large Log

An incident such as rarely occurs in the environs of Victoria took place this morning when the City Police Department was informed by Mr. Simpson, of Cadboro Bay, that a Mexican had reached shore on a large log. The fact that the individual in question appeared to be of a suspicious character immediately prompted Mr. Simpson to call the police.

Constable Coburn was dispatched to the scene and it was soon learned that the Mexican was an escaped leper from Darcy Island. He had propelled himself on a log a distance of fifteen miles to the shores of Cadboro Bay.

City Sanitary Inspector Lancaster was then summoned to the Bay and the afflicted man was removed at once to the Isolation Hospital, pending the arrival of the Government boat that will convey him back to the island.

About a year ago it was discovered that the man had developed the terrible disease. At the time he was confined to his bed in a local hospital and when it was learned that he was a leper he was immediately removed to the isolation department and from there to the station at Darcy Island, where he had remained until taking leave during the night.

Times  
7 Aug. 1917

Figure 28. Excerpts from newspaper articles about D'Arcy Island leper colony.

unfortunate men. Customarily, the absence of names further served to dehumanize the unfortunate men.

Most of the time, however, the newspaper articles served several purposes. One was to remind the citizens of Victoria that the "loathsome disease" of leprosy was being brought to the shores of the province by the "Mongolian hordes." Another was to ensure that the tax paying public would not forget that the lepers were costing it money. The reporters also used the plight of the lepers to provoke interest in the social columns written about the elite of Victoria. It was not uncommon for socialites to accompany the city officials on their trips to Little D'Arcy Island, where they gazed upon the lepers with great dread and curiosity. Lastly, the continual racist comments printed in the daily newspaper both reflected and supported the racist attitudes of the times. Favourite topics focussed on the perceived threat of the new immigrants to the job security of Euro-Canadians, and their supposed inferiority and disgusting customs.

For the municipal government officials of Victoria, the leper colony must have been a continuous source of frustration. Once the institution had been established, it was clearly not their agenda to maintain it for an extended period of time. In my opinion, there were two levels of concern. For the clerks actively involved in keeping track of the funds and their continuous harassment of provincial and federal governments for more money, problems were



primarily administrative ones. On-going conflict with the cities of Vancouver, Nanaimo and New Westminster was also time consuming. This is reflected in the kinds of documents found for the period of municipal administration. They are primarily letters and memoranda exchanged between cities and varying levels of government, calling for financial assistance.

The Sanitary and Medical Officers of Victoria, on the other hand, had to deal with the lepers face to face when they made the quarterly trips to Little D'Arcy Island. This could not have been a pleasant task. The winter trips appear to have been irregular, contingent on weather and water conditions. On arrival at the colony, the officials would never know what to expect. Their reports also contain racist comments directed at the Chinese. The medical report of Hall and Nelson (1898) typifies the attitude of members of the medical profession towards people they considered to be sub-human, and undeserving of appropriate medical care.

For the provincial government, the colony was clearly a temporary concern, used only for financial gain and political leverage as indicated in the correspondence relating to this phase of the institution. For the federal government, it became a logistical problem, inextricably tied to issues of immigration and international and national politics expressed in letters, memoranda, telegrams, government reports, and legislation.

The central questions in this research are to examine why and how social inequality is constructed and how it is maintained? Specifically, research has addressed how racial oppression was used to create a sub-culture of exclusion manifested in the D'Arcy Island leper colony.

From its original inception up until the final phase of federal administration, the D'Arcy Island leprosarium was used to further convince both federal and provincial politicians to impede the flow of Chinese immigrants into the country. Racist ideology was already a widespread reality in British Columbia. The fact that a small group of Chinese men were unfortunate enough to have been burdened with a stigmatized disease was most convenient for members of White society. In the minds of British Columbians this was considered further proof that the Chinese were racially inferior. The unwarranted fear of leprosy was manipulated to gain public support. It was viewed as another legitimate reason to formally legislate the exclusion of Chinese from mainstream Canadian society, and to restrict their rights to gainful employment.

The timing of the establishment of the initial colony in 1891 supports this argument. It followed ten years of strong anti-Oriental agitation in British Columbia. It appeared immediately in the wake of the establishment of the Chinese head tax; plans were also initiated in the same year of legislation to exclude the Chinese from working in the coal mines.

During the year 1892, smallpox broke out in Vancouver and Victoria. Oriental immigrants were blamed, and there was growing public outrage at the reported unsanitary and disease ridden conditions of B.C.'s Chinatowns. The existence of the D'Arcy Island leper colony was certainly confirmation for White society that the Chinese should have no place in mainstream city life.

Other significant changes in the form of the colony can be linked to provincial and federal political action (Table 15). It was no accident that the colony administration was transferred from the Victoria municipal to the B.C. provincial government in the early 1900's. The agreement struck between the federal government and the Province of B.C. subsequent to the increase in the Chinese head tax to \$100, and the agreement that 50% of the tax collected would be returned to B.C. suggests collusion between federal and provincial politicians. With the possibility of increasing provincial revenues, the B.C. government gave in to pressures of the Victoria officials by agreeing to the takeover.

Not only could the federal government gain political leverage in ostensibly making Chinese immigration more difficult, the provincial government could also bolster public support by collecting nearly a quarter of a million dollars from the federal coffers. Both Liberal governments could only gain from any action perceived of as restricting the Chinese, and the growing number of other Asian

**Table 15**

**A Comparative Summary of the History of the Chinese in British Columbia with the History of Leprosy and D'Arcy Island Leper Colony**

Year	Chinese Events	Leprosy Related Events
1858	First Chinese in B.C.	
1860's	First anti-Chinese measures	
1872		Leprosy in B.C. reported
1875	Disfranchisement from vote	Discovery of leprosy bacillus
early 1880's	Chinese on the CPR	Leprosy in Victoria reported
1884	Chinese Immigration Hearings	Report on leprosy in Hearings
1885	Immigration restrictions First head tax	
1889		Death of Father Damien
1890	Anti-Chinese labour laws	Widespread fear of leprosy in Europe
1891		Establishment of facilities on Little D'Arcy Island
1900	Increase in headtax to \$100	
1903	Headtax increased to \$500 Peak immigration	B.C. agrees in principle to colony takeover
1905		Official provincial takeover
1906		Leprosy Act; Phase 1 of federal administration
1907	Anti-Chinese riots in Vancouver	Deportation of lepers from Little D'Arcy Island
1908		Phase 2 of federal control Construction of deportation facilities
1911	Royal Commission on Immigration	
1916		Phase 3 of federal control
1918	End of war and strong anti-oriental agitation	Improved medical care for lepers
1924		Closure of D'Arcy Island colony

immigrants in the early 1900's. Their policy was supported by the 1902 Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration. It confirmed what the public wanted to hear: that the Chinese continued to be a threat to the public health of Canadians (Ward 1990:60).

Similar to the municipal government of Victoria, the B.C. provincial government appears to have had no real interest in the plight of the D'Arcy Island lepers. During the one year of administration, there must have been a considerable amount of back room politics going on, concerning the future of the colony. I believe it is highly significant that the Leprosy Act was passed by the federal government in 1906. While it placed the D'Arcy Island facilities under national care, it also empowered the government to restrict entry into the country, made being at large with the disease illegal, and facilitated deportation of unwanted lepers.

The deportation of the Little D'Arcy Island lepers in 1907 is further evidence of the close relationship between racism, leprosy, and politics. Although the deportations occurred prior to the infamous Vancouver riots, they happened amidst growing alarm on the part of British Columbians. Both Japanese and East Indian immigration had steadily increased, and there were many racial incidents on the West Coast (Ward 1990:65). The attendance at the deportation by provincial and federal politicians, and the

degree of media attention it received could have been nothing but positive publicity for the two levels of governments. They were considered by the voters to be doing something about "unwanted" immigrants.

The link between immigration policy and leprosy is further substantiated by changes to The Law and Regulations of Canada Respecting Immigration and Immigrants, 18 April, 1911. All undesirables including lepers could now be deported at the expense of the company which had already transported the individual. This must have put considerable onus on the shipping companies, which regularly transported the immigrants.

By 1915, immigration became less of a public issue. While anti-Chinese sentiments continued, the fear of leprosy declined. The west coast leprosarium was no longer a concern of the Department of Agriculture and its associated issues of quarantine and immigration, but was transferred to the Ministry of Public Health in 1920.

Regardless of the varying perspectives on western Canada's first leprosarium and the historical circumstances surrounding its development, the existence of the facilities cannot be viewed as essential. There were alternate means of treating and dealing with the limited number of identified lepers, making it clear that the colony was not a medical solution. It was a convenient device for scapegoating Chinese immigrants as sources of disease, and

undeserving of rights comparable to those of White Canadians.

In the United States, during the 1870's when leprosy first became quite prevalent, Chinese lepers in San Francisco were sent to the almshouse or pesthouse. They were given no special treatment (U.S. Sessional Papers 1878:180). In some cases, lepers were returned to China without the knowledge of the Chinese Government.

In the City of Victoria during the late 1880's, municipal officials had coerced the Chinese merchants into paying for the keep and subsequent deportation of a single leper. It seems possible that similar arrangements could have been made for the first five colony occupants. There were a number of Voluntary Associations in Victoria at the time which could have financially assisted in returning the lepers to China. There was also a Chinese Hospital available to take care of the men (Lai 1991). However, the Chinese community appears to have paid little heed.

One other solution to the problem was apparently not considered in the early 1890's. The leprosarium at Tracadie had been in operation for nearly fifty years. It would have been far more efficient, as well as cheaper, to transport the afflicted men to the East Coast, where they would have received far better care. During my archival research in Ottawa, I was amazed to find a journal dating back to 1844, in which carefully handwritten records documented the dates of admittances and deaths, as well as the "race" of the

patients admitted to Tracadie. Among them were both Blacks and Chinese, although the latter were not present until the second decade of the 20th century (NAC RG 44).

There is no indication in the historic records that any alternate solution in dealing with the Chinese lepers was considered appropriate. Instead, there was a deliberate attempt by Victoria municipal officials, in collusion with sympathetic provincial and federal politicians, to use the lepers to prove a point. Not only were the Chinese in their opinions a threat to the jobs of White society, they were also bearers of a disgusting and life threatening disease.

Regardless of the initial expense of constructing the facilities and the on-going expense of maintenance, the D'Arcy Island leper colony became a reality. It is interesting to note that the cost of keeping a prisoner in the Victoria provincial jail during the early 1890's was considerably more. In the Attorney-General's Report in the B.C. Sessional Papers for the Year Ending 31 October 1891, the keep of one prisoner per diem for food and clothing was 12 3/4 cents. With the inclusion of all expenses such as salaries and prison maintenance, keep was estimated at 82 1/4 cents per diem. The lepers of D'Arcy island, on the other hand, cost the taxpayers of British Columbia approximately 55 cents per diem, all expenses included.

A comparison of the history and conditions of the leprosarium in New Brunswick with those of D'Arcy Island also supports the idea that the interest and well-being of



patients at the latter was not a consideration. Since the establishment of the first leprosarium on Sheldrake Island in 1844, where conditions were far from ideal, the lepers did receive medical care and visits from the clergy on an irregular basis (Losier and Pinet 1982:14). They were also attended by a keeper and a matron (Ibid:28). Regardless, "economy and security" rather than medical treatment were the prime concern (Ibid:52).

The first attending doctor was employed in 1864. He was later replaced by Dr. Smith (Ibid:58), the physician who travelled to B.C. to aid in the identification of lepers in Victoria. During the 1860's, the idea to involve a religious group in the care of the lepers was also first examined. In 1867, they officially came under the care of the Sisters of Charity, who provided both spiritual and medical relief (Losier and Pinet 1982:58).

In 1878, following persistent pestering by the Province of New Brunswick, the federal government provided a \$1500 grant for repairs and improvements of the facilities (Ibid:92). During 1879, the leprosarium officially came under the federal Department of Agriculture funding. While this may sound inappropriate, this Ministry was responsible for all issues concerning quarantine; this included contagious disease.

The Tracadie facilities were visited by a constant stream of politicians, reporters and clergy (Ibid:93), who appeared genuinely concerned about the well-being of the

lepers. The fact that their health was a priority is indicated by the early introduction of the use of chalmogra oil first used as a form of treatment in 1900.

In 1906, when the situation at D'Arcy Island was being assessed, Dr. Watt, the Chief at the William Head Quarantine Station, travelled to Tracadie. He was greatly impressed with the care of the lepers there. He noted that "They were accorded every care and attention and everything possible done to make their lonely lives as pleasant as circumstances permit." The patients lived in brick buildings surrounded by beautifully kept gardens (Daily Colonist 14 Nov. 1906).

The lepers of D'Arcy Island, on the other hand, received virtually no attention. Although they were visited more frequently once the province of B.C. took charge, for the first fourteen years of the colony operation, they were seen only infrequently. Medical attention was most cursory, and medicine was limited to opium, reinforcing the stereotype of the opium smoking Chinese. The fact that leprosy was being treated elsewhere in the world, including at Tracadie, suggests that the medical practitioners of B.C. cared little for the well-being of their leprosy charges, since there is no evidence in the historic reports that comparable treatment was being provided.

What is also telling is that during the final phase of the D'Arcy Island leprosarium, non-Chinese patients received preferential treatment. Both their medical care and civil

liberties were superior to those of the Chinese lepers, as documented in Chapter 5.

The prevailing ideology of the White dominant society of the late 19th and early 20th century is found not only in the historic records, but is also manifested in the material remains of the colony. The locations selected for the facilities, and differences in architectural form and associated landscape modifications are all very convincing lines of evidence. They support the maintenance of status differences within the colony; moreover, they appear to symbolically reflect the racist ideology of government officials and the public at large by physically excluding the lepers from mainstream society.

The original choice of D'Arcy Island by provincial and municipal officials for the location of the colony is an interesting one. Perhaps one of the outstanding historical questions is why the original colony was not located at Bentinck Island. It was close to the existing Quarantine Station at William Head, and more readily accessible to the officials of Victoria. For whatever reasons, D'Arcy Island was selected instead, although it is clear from the historic records that the original intent was to place the lepers on the larger D'Arcy Island.

It is impossible to state with any certainty what went through the minds of the group of carpenters and officials who went out to D'Arcy Island to build the first house in 1891. Someone, however, made the decision to place the

colony on the smaller Little D'Arcy Island, rather than on the main D'Arcy Island, which had been set aside for sanitary purposes. On Little D'Arcy, the space available to the lepers was more limited. Additionally, the colony was completely out of site of inhabitants of the Vancouver Island peninsula and from passing fisherman. The very existence of the institution was masked by the larger island. The location also served to exclude and isolate the lepers further, since their view of "civilization" was similarly limited.

In contrast, the location of the custodian's homestead built in 1907 was situated on the most highly visible landform on D'Arcy Island. It could be seen from Saanich Peninsula, and by fishermen passing through Haro Strait. The size and nature of the facilities were a constant reminder of the superiority and dominance of White society. The house not only had a commanding view, but was also conveniently sheltered from local strong winds. Strikingly, the houses for the lepers constructed in 1916 were hidden from sight in a windswept bay to the south. The associated swamp behind the dwellings added to the unpleasantness of the location.

Similar to studies of landscape in New England (Isaacs 1982; Beaudry 1989; Harrington 1989; Rubertone 1989), the selection of locations for the leprosarium facilities and associated landscape modification reinforce the prevailing ideology. The site locations help to maintain social

distance between the White caretakers and the Chinese lepers. The nature and extent of landscape modification reinforce and symbolize the power and dominance of those in charge.

The use of architectural design as a means of symbolizing social inequality (McGuire and Schiffer 1982), is clearly present in the D'Arcy Island leprosarium. Variation in house form found in the three sites is highly significant. The buildings convey clear symbolic messages about their former occupants. In the 1902 Royal Commission report, the following comment was made in the B.C. Sessional Papers (1902:15) describing the houses commonly inhabited by Chinese in British Columbia.

These dwellings are of the most primitive character, one story high, usually containing one small window, and often but one small pane of glass. The material used in construction is the commonest rough lumber, with no attempt at architectural design or taste, simply thrown together as if intended but for temporary occupation, somewhat resembling a railroad or lumberman's camp, and certainly no improvement upon either.

This description is very close to that of the building first provided for the lepers on Little D'Arcy Island in 1891. Not only did it conform to the image of housing considered to be the habitual Chinese type, it was most definitely economical. Furthermore, similar buildings were generally

used for temporary purposes such as for labour camps, reinforcing the idea that the colony was not considered a permanent solution to the perceived problem of leprosy. The fact that no other facility was provided, not even a well or an outhouse during the first years of operation, also clearly demonstrates the lack of concern for the Chinese inhabitants.

The form of the 1907 concrete cabins which replaced the original log buildings is considered here as indicative of the government's intent in dealing with further unwanted lepers. The building was small and compartmentalized. This suggests that administrators expected only limited use of the facilities, and that the number of anticipated inhabitants would be small. No garden or other facilities were maintained, reinforcing the idea that the problem of leprosy remained a passing one.

The caretaker's house, on the other hand, symbolizes dominance and a sense of permanence. The imposing concrete walls, and the amenities of the building contrast significantly with the small and meager facilities provided for the lepers. The quickly constructed apartment-like homes were barely comparable. The absence of electricity, inside plumbing, interior finishing, and the relative inexpense, reinforce, and symbolize the perceived inferior status of the inhabitants.

It is also noteworthy that little remains today to indicate the gardening efforts of the former inhabitants of

Little D'Arcy Island. Only deliberate observation of tree species distribution allows for an estimate of where the former gardens of the Chinese lepers were once carefully tended. There is little to suggest that this was once the site of a leper colony. Only those informed would know that the concrete structure of 1907 is now incorporated into the presently inhabited home.

Landscape modification of the other site occupied by the lepers on D'Arcy Island is also difficult to detect. The drainage ditch, some evidence of clearing, and the remains of the cultural depressions associated with the house foundations do indicate an historic occupation. However, these landscape modifications are minimal when compared to those of the caretaker's property. Modifications such as the rock alignments are extensive, lasting, and remain highly visible. The small orchard and the daffodil beds continue to thrive after seventy years of neglect.

Differences in both the quality and types of portable material culture recovered from the three archaeological sites comprising the leprosarium were predicted as a means of reinforcing status differences reflecting racist ideology. However, little variation was noted in the quality of supplies. The enamel ware, for example, was the cheapest available, at both the caretaker's and the lepers' facilities. The iron stoves found at both locations were similar, and there is no evidence to suggest that an attempt was made to provide more inexpensive goods to the lepers.

This research also addresses the question to what extent the atypical population of predominantly Chinese males with the stigmatized disease of leprosy is evidenced in the archaeological record? One of the limiting factors in answering this question is that only minimal archaeological data was recovered as discussed in Chapter 7.

There is no indication whatsoever on Little D'Arcy Island that it was once a small Chinese community, occupied for a period of sixteen years. From the latest phase of the colony on D'Arcy Island, there is a shred of evidence that the Chinese were present in the form of the medicine bottles and the soy paste container. The bottles marked as leprosy medicine are unique, and are the only material evidence that individuals with leprosy were present at this site. It is not possible to infer the gender of the lepers from the archaeological record.

Cultural and natural processes which account for the scanty material culture have been discussed in Chapter 7. In addition, I would also like to suggest that the very nature of the institution is symbolized by the paucity of material culture recovered. The commonly held belief that leprosy was highly contagious may in part account for the absence of artifacts on Little D'Arcy Island. While historic records indicate that very few items entered the colony to begin with, the razing of the site, ostensibly to deter contamination, further contributes to the limited archaeological record.



The results of this research raises several important issues. In conducting this particular historical archaeology research, the complementary nature of the archival and archaeological data is highly significant. Without both data sets, it would have been most difficult to adequately reconstruct developments within the colony and describe its features.

Archaeological investigations would have contributed little to an understanding of conditions during the early history of the colony. No evidence of the original buildings and associated features can be found on Little D'Arcy Island. The existence of the concrete structure used during the deportation period of the colony would not be recognized by the casual observer, and the historical context of the old well behind the contemporary house would also remain unknown. The recovery of minimal material culture from primarily disturbed deposits on Little D'Arcy Island provides no insight into several decades of occupation by mostly Chinese men. There is absolutely no indication at all that the site served as a leprosarium. The archival materials, on the other hand, provide the detailed accounts of both the buildings and material culture supplied to the lepers, as well as the dates of occupation, not possible to determine from the archaeological record.

Without historic records, there would also be no indication that the former site of the custodian's house on D'Arcy Island was part of the institution. The size and

characteristics of the house and its associated landscape and features are more suggestive of a well-to-do family than a working class caretaker. The archaeology provides important data on the details of the house and surrounding grounds, and an insight into the nature of the caretaker's lifestyle.

It is only in the final phase of the colony developments on D'Arcy Island that the archaeological data indicate the nature of the occupation, where the presence of both Chinese and lepers is evidenced by the recovery of diagnostic artifacts in the form of the Chinese leprosy medicine bottles. The use of historic documents enables the clarification of the nature and the relationship between the three leper colony sites. However, the sense of isolation the lepers must have experienced, and the construction of the social distance accomplished by the government officials can only be derived from the field investigations.

The results of this study also have methodological implications for pre-contact archaeology. The particular cultural patterning of the D'Arcy Island sites can be explained by the historic records, which fill in many of the gaps in information not retrievable from the archaeological record. This calls in to question the reliability of the reconstructions of past lifeways and cultural chronologies of pre-contact sites which may also yield an incomplete record of past human behaviour. It also indicates the need

for caution when attempting to associate a specific ethnic group or post-contact culture with pre-contact material culture, illustrated by the virtual absence of the Chinese in the leper colony archaeological record.

This research also reveals how a consideration of the particular historical context is critical in the interpretation of the archaeological record. Additionally, it demonstrates the problems in the identification of the processes of social inequality reflected in material remains. Similar to the blurring of ethnicity and race in the anthropological and sociological literature, it is also an issue in archaeological research (Orser and Fagan 1995). In this case, an argument for the symbolic representation of racism can only be made with a careful consideration of the socio-political context.

During the latter part of the 19th century when plans for the construction of D'Arcy Island leper colony were first conceived, in the minds of western Canadians, leprosy was not a disease that they could catch. It was very much a part of a widely shared popular image of "other." As Ward (1990) has argued, White Canada was threatened by a disintegrating racially homogenous society. Many workers and businessmen may have also felt threatened by Asian competition for jobs (Roy 1989). However, the idea of a physically distinguishable and reportedly life threatening disease such as leprosy could be seized upon by people from all walks of life, and provide yet another reason to foster

racist attitudes towards the Chinese.

In conclusion, the establishment of the D'Arcy Island leprosarium represents a successful attempt by the Victorian elite to further exclude Chinese from Canadian society. It was accomplished by an apparent suppression of medical knowledge about leprosy, and by reinforcing stereotypical racist ideas about Asian immigrants. Under public pressure, racist ideology was embedded in government policy and legislation in dealing with undesirable immigrants. These administrative views were linked to changes in the form of the D'Arcy Island leprosarium. Developments were unrelated to evolving medical knowledge about leprosy.

The material remains of the D'Arcy Island leper colony are a product of the dominance of White society and its power to exclude those of different racial and ethnic origins. Leprosy was viewed as a disease which afflicted only inferior races. The locations, landscape, and buildings of D'Arcy Island all reflect the perceived inferior status of the Chinese lepers, reinforcing the power and dominance of Euro-Canadians, maintaining social distance, and contributing to social inequality as products of the process of racialization.

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## **ARCHIVAL REFERENCES**

### **Abbreviations**

VMA Victoria Municipal Archives, Victoria, B.C.  
NAC National Archives of Canada, Ottawa  
BCPA British Columbia Provincial Archives  
BCLL British Columbia Legislative Library

### **GOVERNMENT REPORTS AND PAPERS**

B.C. Sessional Papers 1890-1915, BCLL

B.C. Orders-in-Council 1890-1915, BCPA

Canada Statutes 1885-1915, BCPA

Medical Health Officer's Annual Reports, VMA

Report of the Joint Committee to Investigate Chinese Immigration 1877, United States Sessional Papers, copy on file Ministry Library, Ministry of Culture and Recreation, Victoria, B.C.

William Head Annual Reports 1908-1923, BCPA

Residents Architects Report, Canada Department of Public Health, Reports of the Division of Quarantine, British Columbia, NAC

Report of the Royal Commission on Chinese Immigration 1885, BCPA

Report of the Royal Commission on Chinese and Japanese Immigration 1902, BCPA

### **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT LETTERS AND OTHER CORRESPONDENCE**

NAC RG 29 Vol. 768 File 414-5-1  
NAC RG 29 Vol. 769 File 414-5-2  
NAC RG 29 Vol. 14, File 93015, Pt. 3

### **PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT LETTERS AND MEMOS**

Attorney-General's Incoming Correspondence, 1893-1906  
RG 429, BCPA

## **APPENDIX**

### **Tabulation of Faunal Remains**

**Table 16**  
**DdRt 29 Distribution of Faunal Remains, Unit 1**

Species	Level	1	2	3	4	Total
<b>Mammal</b>						
Unid. V. Lg.		-	-	-	2	2
Unid.		-	1	-	-	1
Total NISP		1		2		3
<b>Bird</b>						
Duck (Sp.) lg.		-	1	-	-	1
Duck (Sp.) med.		-	-	-	1	1
Total NISP		1		1		2
<b>Fish</b>						
Cabezon		-	-	-	1	1
Salmon		-	-	-	3	3
Total NISP					4	4

**Table 17**  
**DdRt 29 Distribution of Faunal Remains, Unit 2**

Species	Level 1	2	3	4	5	Total
<b>Mammal</b>						
Unid. lg.	-	-	1	-	-	1
Unid.	-	-	-	1	5	6
Dog	-	-	1	1	1	3
Total NISP			2	2	6	10
<b>Bird</b>						
Unid.	-	-	-	-	1	1
Total NISP					1	1
<b>Fish</b>						
Herring	-	-	-	-	4	4
Rockfish	-	-	-	3	7	10
Red Irish Lord	-	-	2	3	14	19
Greenling	-	-	-	-	8	9
Salmon	-	-	4	12	12	28
Lingcod	-	-	1	-	1	2
Unid. fish	-	-	1	17	15	33
Total NISP			8	36	61	105

**Table 18****DdRt 28 Faunal Remains: Surface Collection**

Species		NISP	MNI
<b>Mammal</b>			
Cow	adult	3	1
	subadult	-	-
	juvenile/sa	1	1?
	juvenile	4	1
	newborn	1	1
	undetermined	3	-
Sheep/goat undetermined		1	1
<b>Unidentified</b>			
medium ungulate		1	-
large mammal		4	-
mammal		1	-
Rabbit		1	1
Total Mammal NISP		20	
<b>Bird</b>			
Chicken		1	1
Total Bird NISP		1	1



**Table 19**  
**DdRt 28 Excavation Unit Faunal Remains Birds and Fish**

Species	Provenience: Levels					Total	%	MNI
	1	2	3	4	5			
<b>Bird</b>								
Chicken	-	4	8	5	-	17	89.5	3
Grebe Sp.	1	-	-	-	-	1	5.3	1
Unident.	-	-	-	1	-	1	5.3	1
Total	1	4	8	6	-	19	100.00	
<b>Fish</b>								
Rockfish	-	5	13	3	-	21	60.00	
Cabazon	-	2	6	-	-	8	22.9	
Dogfish	1	-	-	-	-	1	2.9	
Salmon	-	1	-	-	-	1	2.9	
Unident.	-	2	2	-	-	4	11.4	
Total	0	10	22	3	0	35	100.00	

**Table 20**  
**DdRt 28: Excavation Unit Faunal Remains Mammal**

Species	Levels					Total	MNI	%
	1	2	3	4	5			
Cow								
adult	-	-	1	2	-	3	1	
subadult	1	-	-	-	-	1	1?	
juvenile/sa	-	8	4	2	-	14	1	
juvenile	1	4	4	3	-	12	1	
newborn	-	4	-	-	-	4	1	
undetermined	1	5	2	2	1	11	2	
Total	3	21	11	9	1	45		28.0
Goat/Sheep								
adult	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	
juvenile/sa	-	4	-	-	-	4	1	
juvenile	-	1	-	-	-	1	1?	
undetermined	-	1	1	1	-	3	-	
Total	0	6	1	1	0	8		5.0
Unidentified								
med. ung.	1	2	11	2	-	16		
v. lg. mam.	-	19	10	10	8	47		
lg. mam.	-	4	-	-	-	4		
mammal	4	7	6	8	-	25		57.1
Rabbit	2	8	5	1	-	16	3	9.9
TOTAL MAMMAL	10	67	44	31	10	161		100.0