

FROM NEGATIVE TO POSITIVE:

B.A. Haldane, Nineteenth Century Tsimshian Photographer

by

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ABSTRACT

Metlakatla, Alaska, was established in 1887 by eight hundred and twenty-three Tsimshian people who, under the guidance of lay missionary, William Duncan, migrated from British Columbia in quest of government-sanctioned land rights and the liberty to follow non-denominational Christianity. Through a strategic dissemination of texts and images by Duncan and his supporters, such as Henry Wellcome, Metlakatla was positioned as the epitome of “successful assimilation” of Indigenous people into the wider colonial project. Today, this depiction continues to be the dominant representation of Metlakatla in the literature on the Northwest Coast.

I am a direct descendant of the Tsimshians who founded Metlakatla. Based on my life experiences and our oral history, I believe that this colonial narrative, which depicts our conversion to Christianity as a complete rejection of our cultural traditions, has been socially detrimental to our community, by excising our stories of resistance and cultural continuity from written accounts of our history. The primary objective of my thesis is to challenge and disrupt this colonial narrative by bringing to light a counter-narrative that was captured through the life and photographic lens of one of our people, Benjamin Alfred (B.A.) Haldane (1874-1941).

Having opened a portrait studio in Metlakatla in 1899, Haldane became the first professional Native photographer on the Northwest Coast. Few publications, however, discuss his work and none explore his life and career extensively. This thesis not only provides the first in-depth analysis of Haldane’s photography but it also documents a counter-narrative which until now has only existed in our oral history. Through archival and community-based research into Haldane’s life, as well as the lives of some of the people he photographed, such as Sidney Campbell and Joseph Hayward, I complicate assimilationist paradigms that are prevalent in the

study of the Northwest Coast First Nations. By framing Haldane's practice as performing strategic acts of "photographic sovereignty", as defined by Navajo photographer Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie (2003), this thesis demonstrates the complex and subversive ways in which photography was used by Haldane and other Tsimshian people in Metlakatla, who incorporated it into our cultural practices, as a significant means of resisting colonial authority.

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To my Gram – Corrine Reeve (1924-2006)

*Whose knowledge of our history and culture,
and love for our community, inspired the writing of my thesis.
(Figure 1)*

INTRODUCTION:

Bringing Light to a Counter-Narrative of Metlakatla, Alaska

*Shgu goad Lax Skeek di waayu. Rachael Askren waas noayu. Corrine Reeve waa
ndi nts 'i'dzu. Lax Skeek'm Gispaxlo 'ots di pdeegu.
Metlakatla, Alaska di wil 'waatgu.*

In *Sm'algyax*¹, I have shared with you my ceremonial name, the names of my mother and grandmother, and that we are Tsimshian from the Eagle Clan of Metlakatla, Alaska.²

Metlakatla, Alaska was founded in 1887 by eight hundred and twenty three Tsimshian people who, under the guidance of lay missionary William Duncan, migrated from Metlakatla, British Columbia in quest of government-sanctioned land rights and the liberty to follow nondenominational Christianity.³ In the wider missionary project that followed European colonization in many parts of the world, Metlakatla was considered to be a Christian utopia. The structure of this community was used as a model of conversion that missionaries of several denominations attempted to emulate among other Indigenous peoples.⁴ Photographs and stories of Metlakatla were circulated in books and newspapers throughout Canada, the United States, and Britain as evidence of one of the most successful missions – the formation of an economically self-sufficient, Christian, Native community.⁵ The dissemination of these materials and later anthropological publications positioned Metlakatla as the epitome of the colonial

¹ *Sm'algyax* is the name of our language. Dialects of *Sm'algyax* are spoken by the Tsimshian, Nisga'a, and Gitksan peoples of Northern British Columbia and the Tsimshians of Metlakatla, Alaska.

² Metlakatla, Alaska, is located on Annette Island in southeast Alaska. The core of our social organization is based on the inheritance of one of four matrilineal clans: *Lax Skeek* (Eagle Clan), *Lax Gibou* (Wolf Clan), *Gispuwada* (Killer Whale Clan), and *Gunhada* (Raven Clan).

³ Duncan preferred non-denominational Christianity because he was opposed to his Tsimshian converts participating in high church Anglican rituals, such as drinking wine at communion. He also thought that its symbolic reference to the body and blood of Christ would be misunderstood. This assertion was one of the many disputes between Duncan and his superiors at the Church Missionary Society of England, which led to his dismissal by them.

⁴ For the purpose of this thesis, Indigenous will be used as an umbrella term referring to Native peoples of North America.

⁵ The term Native, short for Alaskan Native or Native American, will be used in the context of the United States and First Nations will be used to refer to the Indigenous people of Canada. In my community, Native is the term that is most widely used because of our status as Alaskan Natives.

agenda of missionization and assimilation of Indigenous peoples.⁶ Today, this depiction continues to dominate Metlakatla's representation in written histories of the Northwest Coast.⁷

I am a direct descendant of the Tsimshians who moved to Metlakatla, Alaska with Duncan in 1887. My great-great grandparents were married by him.⁸ My great-grandmother, who passed away when I was 14 years old, attended his school.⁹ This history is recent to us. Based on my life experiences and our oral history, it is my opinion that this colonial narrative, which depicts our conversion to Christianity as a complete rejection of Tsimshian cultural practices and so-called assimilation into Euro-American culture, has overshadowed the stories of resistance and cultural continuity that persist in our community. This exclusion has negatively affected how we view ourselves as Tsimshians and how we are viewed by others of our Nation.

In our community there is a commonly accepted version of this colonial narrative that we learn as children: when our ancestors came over from British Columbia they gave up "our culture" for Christianity and then in the 1970s and 1980s these "traditions" were revived.¹⁰ As simple as this distorted historical synopsis may sound, it continually produces a pessimistic

⁶ See George Davis, *Metlakatla: A True Narrative of the Red Man* (Chicago: The Ram's Horn Company), 1904; Philip Drucker, *Cultures of the North Pacific Coast* (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Company, 1965), 199-204; Homer G. Barnett, "Personal Conflicts and Cultural Change," *Social Forces* 20, no. 2 (1941): 160-171; William Beynon, "Tsimshian of Metlakatla, Alaska," *American Anthropologist* 43, no. 1 (1941): 83-88.

⁷ See Edward Delor Kohlstedt, *William Duncan, Founder and Developer of Alaska's Metlakatla Christian Mission* (Palo Alto: The National Press), 1957; Phylis Bowman, *Metlakatla-The Holy City!* (Port Edward: Phylis Bowman Publishing), 1983; Peter Murray, *The Devil and Mr. Duncan: a History of the Metlakatlas* (Victoria, BC: Sono Nis Press), 1985; John A. Dunn and Arnold Booth, "Tsimshians of Metlakatla," in *Handbook of North American Indians, Vol. 7: Northwest Coast*, ed. Wayne Suttles (Washington: Smithsonian, 1990), 294-297; The Reader's Digest association, *Through Indian Eyes: The Untold Story of Native Americans Peoples* (Pleasantville: The Readers Digest Association Inc., 1995), 254-255; Time-Life Books, *Keepers of the Totem* (Alexandria: Time-Life Books, 1993), 160-167.

⁸ Charles and Sarah (née Milton) Brendible Sr. and Harry and Sara (née Usher) Lang.

⁹ Cora (née Brendible) Lang-Booth.

¹⁰ I acknowledge that the word "culture" has been highly contested by scholars for its assumptions that there exists an unchanging and definite way of life and beliefs that is shared by groups of people, which can be easily segregated and categorized. See James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnology, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), 1988. In this thesis, my use of the word "culture" specifically refers to how its meaning has been generated and continues to be used in Metlakatla, Alaska. This is not to say that there is only one definition of culture in my community. Rather, these are my observations of how this word functions in our everyday lives in creating a sense of what constitutes our "traditions."

outlook on our cultural practices. Of its many negative affects, it has caused an unremitting insecurity in each generation in Metlakatla that our connections to our cultural traditions are not as strong as those of our Nation who remained in Canada. It is common to hear us discredit our own knowledge by saying that “we are just learning our culture” or that “we need to return to British Columbia to learn the real ways,” as if colonial forces somehow left Canada with us in 1887. When in fact, at the time of our move to Alaska, Canada’s Indian Act and the United States’ Dawes Act both grew out of, and were enforced with, the same colonial impetus - to corral and control First Nations and Native American people for the process of assimilation. No Indigenous community was immune to, or excluded from, these colonizing efforts but each maintained its cultural practices through adaptive measures. Our struggle to be recognized and have confidence in the ways that our cultural practices have evolved in Metlakatla is further compounded by the fact that Tsimshian people in Canada predominantly treat our ways as inferior versions of what is “real.”¹¹

I believe that we, the Tsimshians of Metlakatla, Alaska, have unknowingly internalized the colonial narrative of our history and its representation of us as assimilated to the extent that we learned to view ourselves as they saw us – having completely lost “our culture.” This is evident in the fact that we have come to narrowly define “our culture” by the “traditions” that were once used to judge our level of assimilation – dancing and potlatching.¹² As incredibly important and complex as these cultural practices are, our focus on these “traditions” in “our

¹¹ This criticism is primarily based on the fact that we hold potlatches in Metlakatla without retaining hereditary chiefs to govern our protocols or act as witness to validate our claims.

¹² Potlatches are ceremonial events held where hereditary privileges, their associated histories, and kinship are asserted through speeches, dances, totem pole raisings, and validated through feasting and the distribution of gifts to witnesses and invited guests. Potlatches in Metlakatla are usually held as memorials or to commemorate significant anniversaries.

cultural revival” has caused us to overlook the innumerable ways in which long-standing Tsimshian practices, beliefs, and values have always been a part of our community.

I acknowledge that I am implicated in perpetuating our version of this colonial narrative and “cultural revival.” I was born two years before what we consider to be the first potlatch and totem pole raising in our community.¹³ This potlatch in 1982, along with the creation of a children’s dance group in 1973, is considered the beginning of our cultural revival.¹⁴ When I was a child, my sister began taking me to an after-school program to learn Tsimshian songs and dances from the women who led our children’s dance group, the *Git Lax Lik’staa* Dancers.¹⁵ By 1987, the centennial anniversary of our migration from Metlakatla, BC, we had raised two more totem poles. This is when a sizable part of our community began to focus on creating regalia, studying carving and basket-weaving, creating songs and dances, and organizing potlatches.¹⁶ Like many of the teenagers in my community, I learned Tsimshian design, painting and carving in the class offered in our high school and I joined our adult dance group, the Fourth Generation

¹³ This potlatch was held by David Boxley as a memorial for his grandmother, Dora Bolton, and to honor his grandfather, Albert Bolton. It was the first totem pole to be raised by Tsimshian people in Metlakatla. There were Tlingit totem poles raised by the *Taant’akwaan* (Tongass Tlingit) before our arrival in 1887.

¹⁴ In 1973, Margaret Bolton, then Director of Metlakatla’s Head Start (early childhood education) Program, contracted Mrs. Margaret Harris of British Columbia to teach Tsimshian songs and dances to her staff and the parents of the three- to five-year old students. Some of the first people to learn these songs from Mrs. Harris were Mel and Ruth Booth and their children. Her husband, Gitksan Chief Ken Harris gave the songs to our community to use in our education system. It was later made a part of the Johnson O’Malley Indian Education Program and the name *Git Lax Lik’staa* (People of the Island) Dancers was given to the group by the late Alfred “Blit” Eaton, one of our most highly respected elders and historians.

¹⁵ I am grateful to my sister, Kathleen Patterson, for beginning my involvement in this group and my love for dancing. The *Git Lax Lik’staa* Dancers were led by Elaine “Sissy” Guthrie, Barbara Fawcett, Sarah Booth and Patricia Beal. I inherited the leadership of this dance group in 2002 and held a potlatch in 2003 to honor these women along with Margaret Bolton, Margaret Harris, and our elders Evelyn Littlefield and the late Violet Booth, for their years of dedication.

¹⁶ Not everyone in Metlakatla is involved in these activities. A small portion of our community believes that our cultural practices conflict with Christian teachings. Potlatches in Metlakatla have, however, developed to be a combination of both Christian and Tsimshian protocols. Christian prayers are usually given before the feast. Some of our songs refer to Christianity. Christian crosses or references to the bible have been incorporated into the designs on many of our totem poles and individual regalia.

Dancers.¹⁷ I traveled with both dance groups throughout the United States and Canada to perform at schools, colleges, and museums, as well as to participate in potlatches and cultural events. From the early 1990s until today, there is an incredible community-wide effort to hold potlatches or cultural celebrations in Metlakatla nearly every year. There are currently four dance groups and a dozen totem poles that have been raised by our community.¹⁸ I feel fortunate to have grown up during what I also consider “our cultural revival” because my role as a witness and participant in these events has given me a strong Tsimshian identity that has shaped the direction that I have taken in my life and career.

After receiving my Bachelor’s degree in 2002 from the University of Washington, I moved back home and was asked to teach *Sm’algyax* to our elementary and Head Start students and to write a curriculum on Metlakatla’s history and Tsimshian culture for our high school. I took this opportunity to spend time with my grandmother, Corrine Reeve, and other people of her generation to learn our community’s history.¹⁹ Although I have done this throughout my life, our conversations took on different connotations as I was developing this curriculum. In high school and college, I read books such as *Mission to Metlakatla*, *Apostle of Alaska*, and *The Devil and Mr. Duncan*, which our community treats as prized possessions because they are about us.²⁰ However, re-reading these books to write my curriculum, the Tsimshian beliefs, values, and cultural knowledge that were expressed by my grandmother and other elders profoundly contrasted with these authors’ assertion that all Tsimshian ways of being were eradicated by

¹⁷ This class was started in the 1970s by Tsimshian artist and carver Jack Hudson, who continues to teach the course in Metlakatla High School. The Fourth Generation Dancers were established in 1987. The name of this group refers to its founding members, who were primarily fourth generation descents of our ancestors who established Metlakatla, AK in 1887. This was the first adult dance group in our community.

¹⁸ The *Gitlaxlik’staa* (People of the Island) Dancers, The Fourth Generation Dancers, the *Git Gil Howlie* (People of the Forest), The Killer Whale Dance Group.

¹⁹ I visited with my grandmothers Corrine Reeve and Sarah Wellington and my great aunt Edna Booth, aunt and uncle, Mel and Ruth Booth, and uncle Arnold Booth.

²⁰ Elaine Wentworth, *Mission to Metlakatla* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company), 1968; John W. Arctander, *The Apostle of Alaska: The Story of William Duncan of Metlakatla* (New York: Fleming H. Revel Company), 1909.

Duncan's governance in the early generation of our community. This is when I began to understand the tremendous impact our community's internalization of this colonial narrative has had on our ability to perceive and acknowledge the endurance of Tsimshian practices in Metlakatla beyond those that we have made central to "our cultural revival." In my class, I made a strong effort to incorporate a broader, more encompassing concept of "our culture" by inviting our elders to be guest speakers.²¹ I also used the works of authors such as Margaret Seguin Anderson, Marjorie Halpin, Jay Miller, John Dunn, and Viola Garfield, among others, to address the complexities of both historical and contemporary Tsimshian life.²² Yet, in terms of assigning readings about our community, none of these texts addresses the continuation of cultural practices in Metlakatla specifically.²³ What choice did I have but to give my students texts that reiterated this colonial narrative while teaching them to be critical of what they read? To overcome the lack of current literature on our history, I created a unit called "Metlakatla Culture History," which taught students about every potlatch, totem pole, and dance group in our community from 1973 to 2003.²⁴ As a graduate student, I have come to realize that in order to counteract the insecurities in our knowledge and practice of Tsimshian traditions caused by this colonial narrative, our stories of resistance and cultural continuity need to be told. This thesis is one part of my effort.

²¹ My aunt and uncle, Mel and Ruth Booth, uncle Arnold Booth and Sarah Booth, were guest speakers in my class.

²² Among the large number of publications on the Tsimshian, I critically used the following texts while being aware of their own various biases: Margaret Seguin, ed. *The Tsimshian: Images of the Past; Views of the Present*. (Vancouver: UBC Press), 1984; *The Tsimshian and Their Neighbors of the North Pacific Coast*. Jay Miller and Carol Eastman, eds. (Seattle: University of Washington Press), 1984; Jay Miller, *Tsimshian Culture: A Light Through the Ages* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press), 1997; Viola Garfield and Paul S. Wingert, *The Tsimshian and Their Arts* (Seattle: University of Washington Press), 1966; Margaret Anderson and Marjorie Halpin, eds. *Potlatch at Gitsegukla: William Beynon's 1945 Field Notebooks* (Vancouver: UBC Press), 2000.

²³ The only book that has been published specifically on potlatching in Metlakatla, Alaska is a children's book: Diane Hoyt-Goldsmith, *Potlatch: a Tsimshian Celebration* (New York: Holiday House), 1997. *Alaska Geographic* has also published a short article about our potlatches and artistry: L. J. Campbell, "Tsimshian." *Alaska Geographic: Native Cultures in Alaska* 23, no. 2 (1996), 84 – 87.

²⁴ The title of this curriculum is Tsimshian Studies; the copyright belongs to the Johnson O'Malley Indian Education Program of the Annette Island School District in Metlakatla, Alaska.

The primary objective of my thesis is to challenge and disrupt the colonial narrative of our history by bringing to light a counter-narrative that was captured through the life and photographic lens of one of our people, Benjamin Alfred (B.A.) Haldane (1874-1941).²⁵ Our ancestors had decisive roles and were active participants in their conversion to Christianity, the formation of Metlakatla, BC, the move to Alaska, and the establishment of our community. While they did not create the publications which presumed to speak for and represent them during this time, B.A.'s photography was a medium through which they could construct the telling of their own histories. His images serve as a visual record of Metlakatla, Alaska, and other Alaskan Native and First Nations communities spanning nearly fifty years.²⁶

I argue that an examination of B.A.'s photographic practice along with his various leadership roles, many of which were oppositional to Duncan's authority, disputes this colonial narrative by demonstrating our community-wide resistance and continuation of Tsimshian cultural practices in the early years of Metlakatla. I believe that giving this counter-narrative the critical attention it deserves and sharing it with my community is crucial to strengthening confidence in our already strong knowledge and practice of our cultural traditions. This not only demands that our history be told from our own various perspectives, but also that the agenda behind the construction of this narrative and its representation of us as assimilated people is investigated. For this reason, I have devoted my first chapter to a critical analysis of this agenda. I also hope that the distribution of this thesis beyond our community, in the University setting in

²⁵ Throughout my life I have heard aunts, uncles, grandparents, and elders talk about his musical abilities, photography, and the general store that he owned. They referred to him not as Benjamin, but rather by his first two initials: B.A. It is for this reason that I refer to him as B.A. in my own work.

²⁶ I am indebted to Dan Savard, Senior Collections Manager at the Royal British Columbia Museum (RBCM), for bringing my attention to the interest in B.A.'s photography outside of Metlakatla in a paper that he presented at the "Borders in the Art of the Northwest Coast" Conference at the British Museum in London in 2000. He then sent to me copies of the photographs that are housed at the RBCM that are attributed to B.A.

particular, will hinder the perpetuation of this colonial narrative and empower our own voices and perspective on our history.

Adhering to the protocols of researching in First Nations communities, I have received permission from B.A. Haldane's family and Metlakatla's council to do this research. I have also met UBC's Research Ethics Board regulations by undergoing their ethical review process and obtaining a certificate of approval.²⁷ When I began my research in the summer of 2005, only a few of B.A.'s photographs remained in our community. Most of the memories shared with me by elders and his family members involved grief over the loss of his photographs in house fires and by people who unknowingly discarded them in the fires of the local waste facility. We also have a tradition of burning the important personal belongings of loved ones who have passed away. Many of B.A.'s photographs have made this journey. In 2003, one hundred and sixty-three glass plate negatives were salvaged from the waste facility in Metlakatla by Dennis Dunne, one of our community members. We are grateful to Dennis not only for saving the negatives, but also for ensuring their preservation by placing them in the archives of the Tongass Historical Museum in Ketchikan, Alaska. These negatives are of portraits taken in B.A.'s studio around 1910 of men, women, and children. Their edges have been scarred by the heat and flames from which they were rescued, the traces of which act as permanent reminders of our near loss of this rich source of our history (Figure 2).

Until recently, there were ten crates of glass plate negatives that survived in two make-shift archives in Metlakatla. Neither facility was equipped with the type of climate control and conservation methods needed for their preservation. In 2005, I sought and received permission from my community to relocate the negatives to the Tongass Historical Museum in Ketchikan, Alaska, and to place them on loan until we have our own museum. We are thankful to Richard

²⁷ See Appendix 1 – Letter of Support from Metlakatla Indian Community and BREB Certificate of Approval.

Van Cleave, Senior Curator of Collections for Ketchikan museums, for inventorying and scanning these negatives, along with those salvaged by Dennis. In my research, I have been assembling a corpus of B.A.'s photographs in digital copies from collections in the United States National Archives, the Royal British Columbia Museum, Alaska State Library, University of Nebraska and University of Washington archives and other institutions and museums across North America.

In preparation for addressing the complexities of researching within my own community, I have drawn critically upon works that explore the issues of Indigenous research methodologies by authors such as Maori theorist Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Natihalie Piquemal, James Clifford, and others.²⁸ Smith asserts that Indigenous research methodology is not simply about who is doing the research - Indigenous or not - but the way in which Indigenous cultural protocols, values, and behaviors are honored and made an integral part of the research, its reflexivity, and results.²⁹ Central to this methodology is the act of sharing all research results, theories, and analyses in a way and language that is culturally appropriate to, and receptive of the feedback of the community.³⁰ Piquemal refers to this as "completing the circle" and contends that this is an ethical responsibility of all researchers that work in Indigenous communities.³¹ In continuing my life-long effort to give back to my community, and based on Smith and Piquemal's reflections on this act as a part of the research process, I have made it a priority to bring B.A.'s photographs back to Metlakatla and to distribute my written work in open community forums where I have

²⁸ Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous People* (London: Zed Books), 1999; Natihalie Piquemal, "Free and Informed Consent in Research Involving Native Americans," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 25, no. 1 (2001): 65-79; James Clifford, "Introduction: Partial Truths," in *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, eds. James Clifford and George E. Marcuse (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986): 1-26; Sandy Grande, "American Indian Identity and Intellectualism: the Quest for New Red Pedagogy," *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 13, no. 4 (July-August 2000): 343-359; Luke Eric Lassiter, "Authoritative Text, Collaborative Ethnography, and American Indian Studies," *American Indian Quarterly* 24, no. 4 (2000): 601-614.

²⁹ Smith, 15.

³⁰ Ibid., 16.

³¹ Piquemal, 76.

presented my research at its various stages. Thirty to sixty men, women and children, most of whom are B.A.'s family members, have participated in these forums. I would like to thank some of the elders of the Haldane family for their participation and support: B.A.'s granddaughter, Loretta Baines (daughter of Wilfred and Fannie Haldane), and B.A.'s great grandchildren, who are the grandchildren of Wilfred and Fannie Haldane: Fran Majors (daughter of Clara (née Haldane) Chalmers - Dundas), Alice Ann Nelson (daughter of Pauline (née Haldane) Dundas) and Wayne Hewson (son of Mary (née Haldane) Hewson). I would also like to thank B.A.'s granddaughter, Lindarae Shearer (daughter of Raymond "Ray" Haldane) for inviting me into her home to discuss my research and B.A.'s grandson, Francis Haldane (son of Boyd Anthony "Tony" Haldane) for his beautiful words of encouragement in *S'malgyax* during our meeting in Anchorage, Alaska.

In December of 2006, I will hold a final open forum and presentation to distribute hard copies of my completed thesis and CDs containing all of B.A.'s images that I have located. Photo theorist, John Berger, has eloquently stated that, "if the past becomes an integral part of people making their own history, then all photographs will re-acquire a living context instead of being arrested moments."³² Part of enabling BA's photography to re-acquire a living context requires bringing his images and their history home to Metlakatla through presentations, emails, CDs, prints and so on. This act in itself will become a part of the social biography of these images. As B.A.'s family and our community bring his photographs into their homes, these photographs will continue to have active social lives beyond the contribution of my thesis.

James Clifford has noted there are "different rules of the game" for Indigenous researchers working within their own community that both empower and restrict in unique ways,

³² John Berger, *Uses of Photography* (London: Writers Cooperative, 1980), 57.

with the end result offering new angles of vision and depths of understanding.³³ I believe that these forums have empowered our community by initiating a dialogue about our ownership of our history and the need to have our voices heard. Linda Tuhiwai Smith also asserts that one major difference from the outsider model of research for the Indigenous insider, is that that their families and communities have to live with the consequences of their research processes on a daily basis.³⁴ Essential to the “different rules” that Clifford and Smith refers, is that the majority of my community is aware of and/or agrees with the content and direction that I take in my research since it will affect our everyday lives and interactions with one another. For our community, researching B.A.’s photography is a way of repatriating his work, restoring names to these beautiful people, families, and children, and empowering our voices by placing them at the forefront of our history.

Since very few of B.A.’s photographs have been published, I have focused on including his unpublished images. My priority is to circulate the rare examples of B.A.’s work for which the subjects have been identified so as to offer their family members an opportunity to view these images. I use his photographs in different ways, some to illustrate his life, work, and travel, while others are subjected to deeper analysis. This wide range of images also creates a comparative analysis, which demonstrates B.A.’s development as a photographer, as well as the diversity of his subjects and his portraiture style. My analysis focuses, however, specifically on images that I argue perform strategic acts of what Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie defines as “photographic sovereignty.”³⁵ Of Diné, Seminole, and Muskogee heritage, Tsinhanjinne is an internationally renowned photographer, a professor at University of California Davis, and a

³³ Clifford, *Writing Culture*, 9.

³⁴ Smith, 137.

³⁵ Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie, “When is a Photograph Worth Thousand Words?” in *Photography’s Other Histories*. eds. Christopher Pinney and Nicolas Peterson (Durham: Duke University, 2003), 40-53.

Director at the CN Gorman Museum. In her essay, “When is a Photograph Worth a Thousand Words?” which appears in the book *Photography’s Other Histories*, Tsinhanjinne locates agency in what she identifies as photographic sovereignty of the Indigenous subjects in ethnographic images taken by non-Indigenous photographers. Empowering the vantage point of the subject, Tsinhanjinne challenges the so called “expert narrative” of the image by contextualizing Indigenous peoples in the various epistemologies, ceremonies, spiritualities, oral histories, and biographies in which they functioned at that time and to which they continue to be connected today. Reading photographs in this manner, she “takes on the responsibility” of reinterpreting these images for their stories of resistance, resilience, and survival.³⁶ Tsinhanjinne’s assertion of “responsibility” to the people in the images and to their communities that this analysis requires is implicit in the Indigenous methodology that I employ when conducting research and in speaking and writing of B.A.’s images.

Although her use of this concept is primarily confined to images taken by non-Indigenous photographers, Tsinhanjinne makes space for further examination of photographic sovereignty as it applies to the interpretation of images taken by early Native photographers such as B.A. To expand on this notion of photographic sovereignty, I will draw on Elizabeth Edwards’ assertion that people confronting the nature of their colonial past through photographs cannot restrict their analysis to identifying structures of signification. She argues that the analysis must also include the signifying role of photography in relation to the whole nature of the object and its social biography.³⁷ I also acknowledge that the dynamics between B.A. and the Alaskan Native and First Nations people which he photographed may be distinct from those of the non-Native photographers who were taking images in these communities. For this reason it is necessary to

³⁶ Ibid., 41.

³⁷ Elizabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology, and Museums* (New York: Oxford, 2001), 1-2.

explore B.A.'s photography as what Allan Sekula describes as a social practice in which the photographer is a social actor who is neither completely innocent nor objective in the institutions and relationships of the life-world in which he/she participates.³⁸ In addition, John Tagg's analysis of the nature of photography asserts that as a practice it is dependant on the institutions and agents which define it and set it to work, and in which it functions as a mode of cultural production. This production then ties the photograph to distinct conditions of existence that render it meaningful and legible only within particular currencies.³⁹ In order to build upon and complicate Tsinghahjinne's notion of photographic sovereignty, I will use analytical tools derived from the work of Sekula, Tagg, and Edwards to show how the cultural production of B.A.'s photographs, their social biography, and his role as social actor assert a particular type of photographic sovereignty within the socio-political currencies of Alaska and British Columbia.

³⁸ Allan Sekula, *Photography Against the Grain: Essays and Photo Works 1973-1983* (Halifax: Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, 1984), ix.

³⁹ John Tagg, *The Burden of Representation: Essays on Photographies and Histories* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 63.

Chapter One:

Developing the Negative: Colonial (Mis-) Representations of the “Metlakatlans”

As I stated in my introduction, it is crucial that the agenda behind the construction of Metlakatla’s colonial narrative be examined in order to counteract its negative affects on our community. Therefore, in this chapter I will explore the roots of the literary representation of the “Metlakatlans”⁴⁰ in order to demonstrate its premeditated use by colonial figures such as William Duncan and Henry Wellcome. My analysis will focus on the first publication to construct and circulate this representation to wide scale audiences, *The Story of Metlakahtla*,⁴¹ written in 1887 by Henry Wellcome.⁴² It is through this publication that the colonial narrative of our history began. My objective is to demonstrate how Wellcome and Duncan strategically represented Metlakatlans as assimilated in order to avoid the Indian policies of the United States government and to achieve the colonial agenda of securing land rights in Alaska.

I define this goal as a “colonial agenda” because I believe that our ancestors did not recognize the United States government as owners of this territory, just as they did not recognize the Canadian government as the owners of our land. It is maintained in our oral history that we traveled, traded, subsisted, and owned land in both British Columbia and Alaska long before these borders were imposed upon us.⁴³ Metlakatla, Alaska is in the territory of the Tongass Tlingit – the *Taant’akwaan*.⁴⁴ It is the paternalistic colonial apparatus of these governments that took control over these territories. Wellcome and Duncan complied with their assertion.

⁴⁰ After Wellcome’s discussions with officials from United States government on how to proceed with the request for land in Alaska, he advised Duncan to use the term “Metlakatlans” in his writing and speaking engagements.

⁴¹ “Metlakahtla” is an older spelling. For the purpose of this thesis the current spelling, Metlakatla, will be used.

⁴² Henry S. Wellcome, *The Story of Metlakahtla* (London: Saxon & Co.), 1887.

⁴³ My *ya-ya* (grandfather) Buddy Lang, had such a strong conviction for people to know that we were in Alaska before William Duncan was ever in British Columbia that he asked me to include it in the eulogy which I gave at his funeral in October, 2005.

⁴⁴ *Taquan* is the Tlingit name for the island upon which Metlakatla is located. It was primarily used by the *Taant’akwaan* as a summer fish camp. They marked it as their territory with totem poles, which Duncan cut down

Before entering into a more extensive critique of Wellcome and his book, I will give a brief history of Duncan and Metlakatla, BC, to contextualize the release of this publication. Wellcome was a wealthy business owner of a successful British pharmaceutical company who learned of Duncan's missionary work while traveling through the Northwest on business trips in the 1870s.⁴⁵ A lay Anglican missionary, Duncan was sent to Fort Simpson by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) of England in 1857. The Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) established Fort Simpson in 1834 in an area of Tsimshian territory known as *Lax K'walaams*. Upon the HBC's incursion, nine Tsimshian tribes from villages on the lower Skeena River, *Gilust'aaw*, *Ginadoiks*, *Ginadoiks*, *Gispaxlo'ots*, *Gitando*, *Gitlaan*, *Gitsiis*, *Gitwilgyoots*, and *Gitsaxlal*, moved to the area surrounding the fort to further secure and protect their positions in a trade-based economy.⁴⁶ Living in such close proximity to each other caused the boundaries that separated and maintained the hierarchical social structure of each tribe to become less distinct.⁴⁷ This resulted in an increase of the competitive type of potlatching to be held around the fort in order to negotiate and confirm rank.⁴⁸ Tsimshian control of trade around the fort, in addition to this intense potlatching, was threatening to the HBC and visitors, such as the British Royal Naval Captain James Prevost, who appealed to CMS to send a missionary.

Duncan was twenty-two years old and had not yet completed his missionary training when he was sent to Fort Simpson from London, England. He reported that there were 2,300 Tsimshians living in one hundred and forty houses at Fort Simpson at the time that he arrived in

and shipped to Sheldon Jackson, a Presbyterian missionary who worked as a general agent for the Bureau of Education. Jackson placed them on display in his museum in Sitka, Alaska.

⁴⁵ Murray, 189.

⁴⁶ I am *Lax Skeek* (Eagle Clan) from the *Gispaxlo'ots* tribe.

⁴⁷ Miller, *Tsimshian Culture: A Light through the Ages*, 133.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

1857.⁴⁹ He dedicated his first year to learning to speak and preach in *Sm'algyax* from a Tsimshian man named *Clah*, to whom he later gave the name Arthur Wellington.⁵⁰ Most depictions of Duncan's first attempt to convert Tsimshians at Fort Simpson portray him as an instant success who quickly accumulated hundreds of followers. However, during his first three years in Fort Simpson he had virtually no converts and it was between July of 1861 and 1862 that he baptized fifty-eight Tsimshians.⁵¹ Only nine of these first converts were over the age of thirty.⁵² In the winter of 1862, Duncan moved with this group to Metlakatla, a former central winter village that had been abandoned after the establishment of the fort. Duncan's intent behind this move was to isolate them from the influences of their unconverted relatives and the vices introduced by the traders, such as alcohol and prostitution. Soon after this move, the population of Metlakatla increased to three times its original size with people who were seeking refuge from the smallpox epidemic.⁵³ Of the nine tribes at Fort Simpson, the majority of the *Gitlan* moved to Metlakatla.⁵⁴ From 1862 until the 1880s, Metlakatla was sustained by revenue from its stores, local industries such as the salmon cannery and sawmill, and donations from all over the world, as well as the financial support of the CMS.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ Marjorie Halpin and Margaret Seguin, "Tsimshian Peoples: Southern Tsimshian, Coast Tsimshians, Nishga, and Gitksan," in *Handbook of the North American Indians, Vol. 7: Northwest Coast*, ed. Wayne Suttles (Washington: Smithsonian Press, 1990), 267.

⁵⁰ *Clah* is also known by the name *T'amk*. His descendants in Metlakatla, Alaska, led by their matriarch, ninety-six-year-old Sarah Wellington, proudly assert that without the assistance of a man of Arthur Wellington's stature our community would not exist. Many books and articles have focused on his life and the extensive journals that he kept. See R.M. Galois, "Colonial Encounters: The World of Arthur Wellington Clah, 1855-1881," *BC Studies* 115/116 (Autumn/Winter 1997/98): 106-147; Peggy Brock, "Building Bridges: Politics and Religion in a First Nations Community," *Canadian Historical Review* 81, no.1 (2006): 67-96; Susan Neylan, "The Self Reflections of Arthur Wellington Clah," in *The Heavens are Changing: Nineteenth-Century Protestant Missions and Tsimshian Christianity* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen University Press, 2003), 161-174.

⁵¹ Clarence R. Bolt, "The Conversion of the Port Simpson Tsimshian: Indian Control or Missionary Manipulation?" *BC Studies* 57, (Spring 1983), 42.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Miller, 139.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

Duncan governed the people of Metlakatla with fifteen rules that he devised to outlaw Tsimshian practices including potlatching, belief in supernatural powers and medicine men, and face painting. These rules made it mandatory to attend religious instruction, send children to school, to be industrious, build nice houses, and pay the village tax.⁵⁶

Although Duncan banned certain cultural practices, he allowed the continuation of our matrilineal clan system and the incorporation of its associated crests in his church. Saint Paul's Church in Metlakatla claimed to seat one thousand people and was the largest church north of San Francisco and west of Chicago at this time. While the exterior of the church adhered to the conventions of Anglican Churches, on the interior two carved totem poles flanked its entrance (Figure 3). In this same manner, the houses and community hall in Metlakatla also combined both European and Tsimshian practices. The exterior of the uniform cottages in Metlakatla gave a sense of separated nuclear families; however, the first floor of each house connected to another house to provide communal space for gathering of clan members similar to that of a long house. In a letter to the CMS, Duncan states, "I am encouraging the Indians to keep their ancient carving and our village Hall (now being erected) is to be almost entirely Indian in style"⁵⁷ Thus, while interiors of each of these buildings allowed for the Tsimshian practices to persist, their façade concealed it by conveying European and Christian ideals.

Duncan focused primarily on the economic value of Tsimshian forms such as carving and weaving. He frequently sold or gave away these objects to visitors to Metlakatla, including other missionaries, and he shipped lists of items available for sale to various people throughout British

⁵⁶ See Appendix 2 – Rules of Metlakatla, BC.

⁵⁷ Joanne MacDonald, "From Ceremonial Objects to Curio: Object of Transformation at Port Simpson and Metlakatla, British Columbia in the Nineteenth Century," *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 10, no. 2 (1990), 203.

Columbia.⁵⁸ However, he was not in complete control of their use and production. In an 1876 visit to Metlakatla, BC, by Governor General Dufferin, the Metlakatlans gifted him a mask and woven cedar hat, neither of which Duncan had seen before.⁵⁹ Also telling of Duncan's lack of authority over these practices is the fact that in the late 1870s, a group of Metlakatlans continued to participate in neighboring ceremonies and potlatches.⁶⁰ Some of them refused to relinquish ownership of their longhouses at Fort Simpson.⁶¹

The continuation of these cultural practices was not included in Duncan's journal writings and reports for the CMS. Instead Duncan's utopian image of Metlakatla elicited much support and donations for the mission. Excerpts from these documents were avidly followed by readers of the *Church Missionary Intelligencer*, *The Gleaner*, and *Missionary Leaves*.⁶² While public support for the mission increased, Duncan began to lose the support of the CMS after a series of disputes. One of the main issues was Duncan's refusal to teach High Church rituals, such as drinking wine at communion; another was his teaching-oriented approach to Christianity. In 1879, the CMS sent Bishop William Ridley to Metlakatla to be Duncan's superior.⁶³ Duncan had not been under direct supervision for over twenty years and was not willing to concede his authority to Ridley. In 1881, he began to argue for Metlakatla's independence from the CMS and was dismissed by Ridley from the mission the following year.⁶⁴

Duncan continued to live in Metlakatla and turned his effort toward regaining control over the mission by lobbying for the rights of the Tsimshian people to their territory on which it

⁵⁸ Ibid., 202.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Andrew Rettig, "A Nativist Movement at Metlakatla Mission," *BC Studies* 46 (Summer 1990), 32.

⁶¹ Susan Neylan, "Longhouses, Schoolrooms, and Worker's Cottages: Nineteenth-Century Protestant Missions to the Tsimshian and the Transformation of Class Through Religion," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 11 (2000), 82.

⁶² Jean Usher, *William Duncan of Metlakatla: A Victorian Missionary in British Columbia*. (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1974), 2.

⁶³ Murray, 140.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 147.

was constructed. Duncan accompanied three Tsimshian chiefs to Ottawa to meet with Prime Minister MacDonald about the controversy over ownership of the land.⁶⁵ This resulted in a legal battle that played out in the courts of Victoria, BC. In 1885, Duncan met Wellcome during a periodical trip back to London, England.⁶⁶ Wellcome quickly became his most influential supporter. In August of 1886, Duncan received a verdict from Chief Justice Matthew Begbie that supported the CMS's takeover of the Metlakatla mission and denied the Tsimshian people their aboriginal claim to the land.

Begbie's verdict led to Duncan's decision in 1886 to approach the United States Government about securing land in Alaska.⁶⁷ The following December, he made his first formal appeal to the U.S. Government and was denied.⁶⁸ As a result, Wellcome took over the management of the campaign and promptly sent Duncan on an east coast tour of the US to raise public support for the move to Alaska. He then formed a committee of twenty five prominent men - including US diplomats, Chief Justices, Associate Justices, Governors, and Publishers - to advocate for the Metlakatlans at the Congressional level.⁶⁹ A year later, in 1887, during a crucial time in their negotiation with the US government, Wellcome's *The Story of Metlakahtla* was published. It received significant attention in more than one hundred and sixty newspapers and magazines in places such as New York, Salt Lake City, Los Angeles, Toronto, Victoria, and London, which published reviews, editorials, or full news stories.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ Paul Tennant, *Aboriginal People and Politics: The Indian Land Question in British Columbia, 1849-1989* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1990), 55.

⁶⁶ Murray, 189.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 184 -187.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 190.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 190.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 195.

Wellcome made the purpose of the book clear by stating that its chief objective was to place the story of Metlakatlangs before the American people to enlist public sympathy.⁷¹ In the first paragraph of the introduction to *The Story of Metlakathla*, he immediately positions the Metlakatlangs and Duncan by declaring:

“A CIVILIZED [his emphasis] Christian community of native British Columbians, is now seeking refuge under the American Flag from gross, and malicious persecution of Church and State. This people, only thirty years since, consisted of some of the most ferocious Indian tribes of this continent, given up to constant warfare, notorious for treachery, cannibalism, and other hideous practices. Although incurring great personal risk, and several times narrowly escaping assassination, Mr. William Duncan, with rare fortitude, and genius, began single-handed a mission among them: he educated them, taught them Christianity, in the simplest possible manner; at the same time gradually introducing peaceful industries; and by these means he wrought in a single generation a marvelous transformation. A work that stands absolutely without parallel in the history of missions.”

In this passage, Wellcome has loaded his description of the Metlakatlangs with traits that exemplify assimilation, which were further emphasized by his description of their past “heathen” state. Setting up this stark comparison, he influenced the reader to see the “native British Columbians” not as Indians but as civilized people who were “peaceful” capitalists, simply educated, and in desperate need of help from the United States. In various places throughout his book, Wellcome further elaborates on Duncan’s teaching of various industries, such as those at the cannery, sawmill, soaphouse, and blacksmith shop, to stress their importance in the Metlakatlangs’ entry into a cash-based economy as the impetus behind their “progress.” Using this type of model to convey the progress of Indigenous people has been highly criticized by Richard Wilk. Referring to this model as the “modernization paradigm,” Wilk asserts that it is based on “the assumption that there is a direct and evolutionary cultural progression from traditional to

⁷¹ Wellcome, xiii.

modern that parallels an economic change from an isolated indigenous system to one that is open and attached to world capitalism.”⁷² He contends that it is a pervasive model in United States culture and that North Americans in particular have difficulty recognizing or rejecting their subscription to it.⁷³ Even in the 1880s, this model appears to be the dominant way of conveying the “progress” of Indigenous people. Thus, Wellcome underpinned his plea to the United States by appealing to views that were commonly held in that country.

The strategic way in which Wellcome used terminology to represent the Metlakatlangs is further supported by a dispute between Wellcome and the New York *Herald*. In March of 1887, Wellcome complained to the editor about its use of the words “tribal exodus” to describe the proposed move to Alaska because he wanted the public to know that the “Metlakatlangs had given up their tribal bonds.”⁷⁴ In a hand-written letter he sent from Washington, DC on March 3, 1887, Wellcome also made Duncan aware of his feelings that the terminology used was critical to their success in securing land rights in Alaska:

One point is very important: avoid in every way calling them Indian. The term “natives” or “Aboriginies” or “Metlakatlangs” or “Tsimshians” will serve every purpose but in order to avoid the bringing of them under the Indian acts – the term Indian must be avoided. The Interior Department does not regard Alaskans as Indians. They impressed this matter upon me very emphatically – therefore please make careful note of this and in speaking or writing guard yourself.

This letter clearly demonstrates Wellcome’s reasons for making a conscious effort to keep the representation of Metlakatlangs within a framework that enabled the public to perceive them as completely separate from Indians, not White, but another Other: “Metlakatlangs.” Wellcome further reinforced this construction by excising the continuation of Tsimshian cultural practices in Metlakatla, BC from his text, using only his own appalling accounts and illustrations of these

⁷² Richard R. Wilk, *Household Ecology: Economic Change and Domestic Life among the Kekchi Maya in Belize* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1991), 3-4.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁷⁴ Murray, 192.

past “hideous practices” to emphasize their assimilation. In her thesis, *Imaging the Metlakatlangs: Shifting Representations of a Northwest Coast Mission Community*, Monica Pastor argues that Wellcome’s use of illustrations depicting “savage” practices, placed in contrast to individual portraits of “civilized” Metlakatlangs, adheres to the notion held in the US that “external appearance affected internal identity.”⁷⁵ Employing visual examples of “progress” was a common device to demonstrate successful assimilation in the late nineteenth century United States.⁷⁶ Thus, Wellcome built upon established colonial devices, both textual and visual, to construct the Metlakatlangs as assimilated for the American public as a strategy to achieve a colonial agenda that was unprecedented anywhere in North America – to secure land rights in the United States for Canadian First Nations. Four years after our migration to Alaska on August 7, 1887 and seventy-four years before Alaska was made an official American state, our community was established as the Annette Island Indian Reserve under an 1891 act of Congress.

This exploration of the initial construction of the colonial narrative of our history does not diminish the fact that we cherish and protect the land rights and sovereignty granted by our Reserve status in Metlakatla, Alaska. Rather, my intent is to contribute to our community’s ability to see through this representation by knowing the agenda behind its construction. This analysis is also essential in discerning the expectations that early visitors had of our community, which caused them to be less perceptive of our resistance and continuing cultural practices. The following chapters will show that although this construction was further perpetuated by the publications which grew out of the public interest in Metlakatla, Alaska, an analysis of B.A.’s

⁷⁵ Monica Leigh Pastor, “Imaging the Metlakatlangs: Shifting Representations of a Northwest Coast Mission Community” (M.A Thesis, University of British Columbia, 1995), 40.

⁷⁶ A well documented 19th Century example of the use of “before and after” images as evidence of assimilation is the Carlisle Residential School in Pennsylvania.

life and images reveals our resistance to colonial forces and the continuation of Tsimshian cultural practices even in these early written accounts of Metlakatla, Alaska.

Chapter Two:

A Portrait Composed of Light, Learning, and Music: the Life and Career of B.A. Haldane

Although B.A. is considered one of the first professional Native photographers on the Northwest Coast, few publications have discussed his work and none explore his life and career extensively.⁷⁷ Thus, many early details of his life are not readily available to his descendants. My effort to reconstruct B.A.'s biography is one of the ways that I have chosen to give back to his family in return for their support. In this chapter, I present aspects of B.A.'s family life, show the development of his career both as a musician and photographer, and explore his involvement in Metlakatla's civic affairs. I argue that B.A.'s growth in stature in our community gave him qualifications and authority that enabled him to strengthen Metlakatla's long standing resistance to Duncan's governance and allowed his photographic practice to flourish in opposition to colonial authority. Through a close study of the details of B.A.'s life, I will also demonstrate the ways in which Tsimshian cultural practices, beliefs, and values were manifested in the daily activities of our community.

As this biography is a work-in-progress, it is by no means the only or absolute account of B.A.'s life. He lived from 1874 to 1941. Thus far, I have drawn from a body of primary documents from archives in Alaska and Washington and a variety of secondary sources to reconstruct B.A.'s biography from his birth until the mid-1920s. I have had difficulty finding material on the later years of his life. The diverse nature of both the character and content of these sources requires that I elaborate on my use and understanding of these materials. Among the most useful and reliable primary sources are the unsolicited letters written by B.A. in the

⁷⁷ Tom Sexton, "A Sampling of 19th Century Alaskan Images: A Photographic Reading," *The Alaska Journal* 9, no. 3 (Summer 1979): 60 – 71; R. Bruce Parham, "Benjamin Haldane and the Portraits of a People," *Alaska History* 11, no. 1, (Spring 1996): 37-45; Dan Savard, "Changing Images: Photographic Collections of First People of the Pacific Northwest Held in the Royal British Columbia Museum, 1860-1920," *BC Studies* 145 (Spring 2005): 54-91.

early 1900s.⁷⁸ These letters, and many other documents regarding B.A., are a part of the Sir Henry Wellcome Collection at the National Archives – Pacific Alaska Region in Anchorage, Alaska. This archive also holds the largest assemblage of B.A.’s photographs.⁷⁹ One of the most important documents in this collection is an interview with B.A. conducted in 1917 by Wellcome for the “Metlakatla Case,” a wide-ranging investigation concerning a variety of controversies that occurred in our community from the 1890s until Duncan’s death in 1918.⁸⁰ Details of this case are provided later in this chapter. Wellcome interviewed many people in our community in regards to the Metlakatla Case. Both his questions and the response of the interviewees were recorded verbatim by a stenographer. B.A.’s interview is the most extensive documentation of the actual words that he used to describe his experience in Metlakatla and his perception of its controversies. This is an essential resource for collecting dates for the chronology of B.A.’s life, details of his occupational history, and information about his relationships with other members of our community. However, when comparing the opinions that B.A. asserted in his letters and other accounts with those he expressed in this interview, I believe that Wellcome was manipulative in his line of questioning which in turn has made this document a less reliable source for B.A.’s views on these controversies.

In 1930, anthropologist Viola E. Garfield was in Metlakatla, Alaska for six weeks to conduct her fieldwork for her Master’s thesis, *Change in the Marriage Customs of the*

⁷⁸ B.A. Haldane to Elmer E. Brown, US Commissioner of Education, May 22, 1909, “A-L File,” Folder 329, Document 1, Box 112, Sir Henry S. Wellcome Collection, 1856, Group Record 200, National Archives – Pacific Alaska Region, Anchorage; B.A. Haldane to William Duncan, February 29 1904, “A-L file,” Folder 295, Document 3, Box 109, Sir Henry S. Wellcome Collection, 1856, Group Record 200, National Archives – Pacific Alaska Region, Anchorage.

⁷⁹ I am grateful to the Department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory at UBC for their award of a travel scholarship which allowed me to spend a week at the National Archives – Pacific Alaska Region in Anchorage, Alaska.

⁸⁰ Benjamin Haldane, Native Statement, January 17, 1917, “A-L File,” File 279, Box 108, Page 11, Sir Henry S. Wellcome Collection, 1856-1936, Record Group 200, National Archives – Pacific Alaska Region, Anchorage.

Tsimshian.⁸¹ Garfield had a level of familiarity with the people in our community from her year-long position as a teacher in Metlakatla in 1922. This experience is said to have sparked her interest in anthropology.⁸² As a teacher, she observed that despite strong colonizing efforts we faced, “in many ways the Metlakatlans displayed attitudes, beliefs and behaviors that were foreign and incomprehensible to the teachers.”⁸³ Despite the superintendent’s injunction, she refused to punish students for speaking *Sm’algyax*.⁸⁴ Garfield is the only anthropologist who took an active interest in the continuation of Tsimshian practices in our community, rather than focusing on aspects of our lives that were thought to reflect our assimilation. In her 1930 survey, she recorded the clan and tribal genealogy, Tsimshian name and rank, level of education, and the details of the pre-marriage, marriage, and post-marriage arrangements of nearly every Tsimshian family in our community.⁸⁵ In her thesis, she stated that all Tsimshian people in Metlakatla “preserve their tribal affiliations so that any individual can give both the name of his clan and tribe.”⁸⁶ Currently housed in the special collections at the University of Washington library, these surveys and Garfield’s thesis are extremely valuable for their specific information on the cultural practices and lineage of B.A. and other people from our community.⁸⁷

It is rare to find a book written about our community that does not mention or discuss B.A. and his various roles in Metlakatla to some degree. The earliest books are George G. T. Davis’s 1904 publication *Metlakahtla: A True Narrative of the Red Man* and John W.

⁸¹ Viola E. Garfield, “Change in the Marriage Customs of the Tsimshian” (M.A. Thesis, University of Washington, 1931).

⁸² “Biography of Viola Garfield,” *Guide for Viola Garfield Papers*, University of Washington Libraries. No date.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Viola Garfield, “1930 Notes - Tsimshian Marriage – Clan and Tribal Affiliation,” Box 4, Folder 3, Viola Garfield Papers, Accession number 2027-72-25, University of Washington Libraries.

⁸⁶ Garfield, “Change in the Marriage Customs of the Tsimshian,” 8.

⁸⁷ I would like to thank the Bill Holm Center for the Study of Northwest Coast Art for their award of a visiting researcher position which allowed me to utilize the archives at both the Burke Museum and the University of Washington.

Arctander's 1909 *The Apostle of Alaska: The Story of William Duncan of Metlakahtla*. Both Davis and Arctander had direct contact with B.A. and used some of his photographs to illustrate their books. I have some difficulties with these texts, which will be brought out in full in the next chapter. However, in regards to B.A.'s biography, these books provide information that has not been documented elsewhere. Later works such as William Gilbert Beattie's 1955 book *Marsden of Alaska: a Modern Indian*, and Peter Murray's 1985 book, *The Devil and Mr. Duncan: a History of the Two Metlakatlas*, are valuable for their in-depth discussion of B.A.'s role in the civic affairs of our community and its various controversies. All of these books, however, are permeated with the biases that accrue from their subscription to Metlakatla's colonial narrative, which I described in my introduction and analyzed in Chapter One. Gathering information on B.A.'s life from his family has been difficult since many of them were small children when he passed away in 1941. I hope that the biography presented in this chapter will spark memories that they will share with me in my future research.

Of the *Lax Gibou* (Wolf Clan) from the *Ginadoiks* tribe,⁸⁸ B.A. (Benjamin Alfred) Haldane was born to Matthias (a.k.a. Matthew) and Ada Haldane on June 15, 1874 in Metlakatla, British Columbia.⁸⁹ He was baptized in 1875 by Robert Tomlinson, a medical missionary assisting Duncan at this time.⁹⁰ B.A. was thirteen years old when he participated in the move to Metlakatla, Alaska in 1887. Some of his memories of this event and the first years of our community are documented in Wellcome's 1917 interview. Since this is the only verbatim record

⁸⁸ Chris Roth. <cfroth@earthlink.net> "Genealogy of Benjamin Alfred Haldane," 2 August 2006, personal e-mail (6 August 2006). I would like to thank genealogist Chris Roth for his assistance in deciphering B.A.'s tribal affiliation from conflicting documentation. I am grateful to Chris along with B.A.'s grandchildren Loretta Baines and Francis Haldane and his wife Kathy, for providing me with the names and birthdates of each of B.A.'s children.

⁸⁹ Registrar of Infant Baptisms 1875, Metlakatla Christian Church, Metlakatla, BC.

⁹⁰ Ibid. An Irishman from Dublin, Tomlinson was a well known medical missionary who worked in Tsimshian, Gitksan, and Nisga'a villages throughout Northern BC and in Metlakatla, Alaska. See George Tomlinson and Judith Young, *Challenge the Wilderness: A Family Saga of Robert and Alice Tomlinson Pioneer Medical Missionaries*, (Anchorage: Great Northwest Publishing), 1991.

of B.A.'s account of this experience, I will use direct quotes as much as possible. In discussing his arrival in Metlakatla, B.A. stated:

You see, we landed here during the night, the second trip of the boat that was bringing the people over. That was the Nell...I was with my father and my step mother...It was sometime in September.⁹¹

From the harbor, B.A. and his family could see the few lights and log huts that had been erected by the first group of people who landed in August.⁹² B.A. recounted that soon after his arrival he witnessed the men of our community making plans to build the school and church:

They had a meeting in the open air on the rock right near where the Cannery was. Now, the same winter, you know, they put up a big log house...[it was] something about close to a hundred feet long by twenty or thirty feet wide. That was used for a store in the first place⁹³

One of the functions of this large log cabin was as a church. B.A. remembered, "We had Thanksgiving service in there, the very first time" and then during "Christmas we used it again until another building was erected – the main cannery building."⁹⁴ B.A. described the order in which each of the buildings were constructed and how their functions adapted to the needs of our community. When the main cannery building was finished, it "was used as a school and church and the old one was used for a store."⁹⁵ The only other building that B.A. said was constructed the first winter was the "Union Hotel."⁹⁶ He proudly claimed to have a photograph of both the hotel and the large log cabin, indicating that he was a collector of photographs before he became a photographer.⁹⁷ In reference to the dates that these building were completed, B.A. jokingly made reference to his age at that time, "I am not sure about the dates at that time, because I was

⁹¹ Haldane, Native Statement, 1. B.A.'s biological mother, Ada, died when he was young. His father remarried a woman named Edith sometime before the move to Metlakatla, Alaska. I have not been able to find either of their maiden names. According to Garfield's survey, Edith was a *Lax Gibou* (Wolf Clan) from Kitselas, BC.

⁹² Ibid., 1.

⁹³ Ibid., 3.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 2.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 2.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 3.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 2-3.

putting in my time in playing, you know.”⁹⁸ He estimated that by the end of the first year, there were a half-dozen cottages and between one to two hundred log cabins built along the beach of our community.⁹⁹

As an early resident of Metlakatla, B.A. lived under the “Declaration of Residents,” eight regulations constructed by Duncan. Similar to the “Rules” that he used to govern Metlakatla, BC, Duncan outlawed attending or supporting “heathen festivals” (potlatches) and made it mandatory to observe the Sabbath, attend school, and to be clean, industrious, and honest, with additional rules regarding land ownership and loyalty to the United States government.¹⁰⁰ Also paralleling Metlakatla, BC, Duncan continued to tolerate our adherence to our matrilineal clan system and our creation of Tsimshian art, if only in particular forms. This is evident from Duncan’s own account in the November 1889 edition of *The Metlakahtlan*, a newsletter he produced to correspond with patrons of the mission. In this edition, Duncan answers an inquiry about the symbolism of a silver spoon made by and purchased from a Metlakatlan named Abel Faber, whose Tsimshian name he recalled as “Tsah-am-sheg-ish (the Power that Draws Shore-ward).”¹⁰¹ In a three-page response, Duncan describes in detail the crests represented on this spoon, their association with the four clans of our community, and origin in our *Adawx* (oral history). He also elaborates on “practical uses, the natives apply to their crests,” including: the use of crest design to distinguish clan and individually owned property, clan restrictions on marriage, regulations on Tsimshian names, and protocols on feasting. After his thorough discussion of our clan system, Duncan awkwardly concludes his newsletter by stating:

⁹⁸ Ibid., 3.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 4.

¹⁰⁰ See Appendix 2 – “Declaration of Residents, Metlakatla, Alaska.”

¹⁰¹ William Duncan, *The Metlakatlan I*, no. 4, (1889), Accession no. 1970-17/96c, The Burke Museum of History and Culture, University of Washington, 2-4.

In writing of these matters, it must be understood, that I have kept in view the natives, in their primitive state. The Metlakatians, who are civilized, while retaining their crest distinctions and upholding the good and salutary regulations connected therewith, have dropped all the baneful and heathenish rivalry with which the clannish system was intimately associated.

When comparing this statement with our adherence to the protocols of clan and rank that was documented in Garfield's 1930 survey, I contend that Duncan's closing statement is an inept retreat following his disclosure of information which conflicts with his, and Wellcome's, assertion that we were assimilated. Textually, Duncan's unusual attachment of "-ish" on the end of "clan" and "heathen" is not found anywhere else in his discussion, which I believe conveys his loss of composure. It is also important to note that this is the first time in this newsletter that he alluded to his distinction between "heathenish" or "good and salutary regulations."

B.A.'s marriage arrangement, which occurred two years prior to Duncan's newsletter, demonstrates the degree to which clan lineage was acknowledged and its protocols were integral to life in our community. When B.A. was twenty-two years old, he married nineteen year old Martha Calvert, daughter of Aldolphus and Matilda (née Benson) Calvert of Metlakatla, Alaska, in a ceremony conducted by Duncan in the Metlakatla Christian Church on November 17, 1896.¹⁰² During B.A.'s interview with Garfield, B.A. stated that his father, Matthew Haldane, made his pre-marriage arrangements. She wrote, "Haldane's father selected three families in the community, each of which had two girls, and had him [B.A.] work for the father of each and then make his own selection. This took about a year."¹⁰³ This type of competition for a bride could have been considered the type of "baneful and heathenish rivalry" of which Duncan indirectly spoke. The recognition of individually inherited ranks such as chief, noble person, commoner and all the distinctions in between, Garfield noted as being an integral part of our community.

¹⁰² Viola Garfield, "1930 Survey of Benjamin Haldane: Notes - Tsimshian Marriage - Clan and Tribal Affiliation," Box 4, Folder 3, Viola Garfield Papers, Accession number 2027-72-25, University of Washington Libraries, 3.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 2.

This contradicts the dominant portrayal that the hierarchical structure of Tsimshian social order had been replaced in Metlakatla by the Christian value of equality of all men. Garfield recorded that B.A.'s father, Matthew, was a *Lax Skeek* (Eagle Clan) Chief of the *Gitlan* tribe,¹⁰⁴ who at one time owned slaves.¹⁰⁵ The girls that he selected as possible wives for his son, including Martha Calvert, were chosen based on their noble rank being parallel to that of B.A.'s as well as being members of different clans. Martha was *Gispudwada* (Killer Whale Clan) from the *Gitlan* tribe.¹⁰⁶ After B.A. selected her as his bride, gifts were exchanged between the Haldanes and Calverts and preparations for the marriage ceremony were made by their parents.¹⁰⁷

B.A.'s and Martha's wedding, as with the majority that Garfield surveyed, was a combination of both Christian and Tsimshian protocols. The wedding adhered to Christian customs, such as the bride wearing a white wedding gown with the ceremony held in a church, whereas the reception was more indicative of Tsimshian practices.¹⁰⁸ B.A.'s father, Matthew Haldane, was the reception's master of ceremonies and stories were told by both families in order to further their clan's status.¹⁰⁹ After the reception, the female relatives of B.A.'s clan distributed gifts.¹¹⁰ A dance was held at Matthew Haldane's house to celebrate their wedding. B.A. stated that the music was played by a "string band of which he was the director."¹¹¹ An outstanding musician, director, and composer, this is the earliest account of B.A. conducting music.

In our community today, B.A. is predominately remembered more for his talent as a musician, director, and composer than for his photography. Since the introduction of band

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 1.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 2.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 2-3.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 2-3.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 3.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 6.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 3.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 6.

instruments and choir-style singing in Metlakatla, BC, music has been an important part of our community. An avid reader with remarkable aptitude for learning, B.A. told Garfield that he taught himself both music and photography from books.¹¹² He played the piano, pipe organ, cornet, trombone, and violin.¹¹³ B.A. was photographed with Metlakatla, Alaska's Brass Band in a picture taken in our community in 1890 (figure 4). About sixteen years old, he is shown in his uniform holding a cornet. From the time he was a young adult until late in his life, B.A. held the positions of band and choir master, and pipe organist for the Metlakatla Christian Church as well as leader of several brass bands. He was said to be able to play on the piano, "with great skill and feel difficult compositions of Grieg, Tchaikowsky, Brahms, and Chopin" without sheet music.¹¹⁴ He was known for composing orchestral music as well as translating the singing of ancient Tsimshian songs, such as love and canoe songs, to sheet music.¹¹⁵

In the late 1890s, B.A. started to teach music and take photographs in Alaskan Native and First Nations communities in southeast Alaska and Northern British Columbia. As a teacher of music, B.A. was often called Professor Haldane.¹¹⁶ He and Martha had their two oldest children Wilfred, an infant, and Ann, a newborn, when in 1899 B.A. worked to support his family by teaching music in villages surrounding the Nass River in British Columbia for the winter.¹¹⁷ In the years following, he traveled extensively throughout the United States touring with Metlakatla's Brass Band. B.A. was photographed with other members of the Brass Band and Duncan on the wharf in Metlakatla (Figure 5). In 1901, they performed in several towns in states

¹¹² Ibid., 1.

¹¹³ Murray, 264.

¹¹⁴ Arctander, 388.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 338-339.

¹¹⁶ Parham, 37.

¹¹⁷ Haldane, Native Statement, 9. Wilfred Walter was born January 30, 1897, and Anna Laura was born June 24, 1899.

in the southeast.¹¹⁸ That year, Martha gave birth to their second son Oscar and two years later they had a third son, Tony.¹¹⁹ In 1904, B.A. conducted the Metlakatla Brass Band in a series of concerts held in Seattle, Tacoma, and Chehalis, Washington and Portland, Oregon.¹²⁰ In this same year, B.A. spent a few months in Kasaan, Alaska organizing and teaching brass bands.¹²¹ He also took photographs of their school and sawmill (Figures 6-7). By this time he was said to own one of the two pianos that were in Metlakatla.¹²² By 1905, B.A. helped to organize bands in Ketchikan, Saxman, and Howkan, Alaska.¹²³ A 1909 photograph taken in front of the town hall in Metlakatla shows B.A. in the conductor's position in front of sheet music for the "Messiah," with members of the choir, including his wife Martha, and the Christian Church band (Figure 8). At the time this photograph was taken, Martha and B.A.'s family had grown to six children with the birth of two more sons, Ray and Francis.¹²⁴ This same year, B.A. opened a grocery and convenience store. In his interview with Wellcome, he proudly stated, "I started [the store] with thirty dollars, and I have raised a big family."¹²⁵

B.A.'s responsibility as a father combined with his own childhood experience may have made him passionate about Metlakatla's education system. As a child in Metlakatla, BC, he started to attend Duncan's school at the age of nine under the tutelage of Tomlinson and a young Tsimshian student named Edward Marsden.¹²⁶ He was a student at Duncan's school in Metlakatla, Alaska for only two or three years when, around 1889, his formal schooling was cut

¹¹⁸ Patricia Roppel, *Southeast Alaska: A Pictorial History* (Norfolk: The Donning Company, 1983), 70.

¹¹⁹ Egbert Oscar (a.k.a. Oscar Egbert) born December 30, 1901, and Boyd Anthony (a.k.a. Anthony "Tony" Boyd) born September 28, 1903.

¹²⁰ Roppel, 70.

¹²¹ B.A. Haldane to William Duncan, February 29 1904, "A-L file," Folder 295, Document 3, Box 109, Sir Henry S. Wellcome Collection, 1856, Group Record 200, National Archives – Pacific Alaska Region, Anchorage.

¹²² Davis, 123.

¹²³ Roppel, 70.

¹²⁴ Raymond "Ray" Victor was born on February 13, 1907, and Francis Floyd was born on September 22, 1908.

¹²⁵ Haldane, Native Statement, 28.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 11.

short due to his aptitude for learning. Like other missionaries at this time, Duncan tried to keep his Native converts at a level of education that would not challenge or threaten his position and authority. However, B.A. did not allow this experience to discourage him from continuing his education on his own. Working in the cannery from sixteen until nineteen, he studied "every day of the year."¹²⁷ B.A. stated, "I got all kinds of books and learned out of them myself and that's how I got ahead of other girls and boys."¹²⁸ His expulsion, however, remained a point of contention between B.A. and Duncan throughout his life. B.A. and Martha's oldest son Wilfred was twelve years old, the age when children in Metlakatla were either near completion of Duncan's school or sent away to residential schools in Alaska and Oregon, when B.A. wrote a letter to the Commissioner of Education to ask for a greater opportunity for his children's education:

Metlakahtla, Alaska.
May 22, 1909

Hon. Elmer E. Brown, Ph. D.,
Commissioner of Education, Washington, D.C.

My dear Sir:

I shall take the liberty of introducing myself to you, as a full-blooded Indian inhabitant of Metlakahtla, Alaska, at the age of 35 years. I am at present, a head of one family, consisting of myself, wife and six small children. And upon the thought of my little ones, I am to say something important, that is in the bottom of my heart.

First of all, I will say that we are well as any other Indian inhabitants of Alaska. Can and did support and maintain ourselves in all our provisions, clothing, homes and many other necessities of family living, excepting only one so-called "Education" which will bring us to the highest possible standing with the civilized "American."

Now, I was educated under the expenses of one man, Mr. William Duncan, the founder of this very Indian village of Metlakahtla, of whom both my parents and myself belonged to; and I am very grateful for what Mr. Duncan has done for us in the past; but the said education which Mr. Duncan carries on is somewhat diminishing in effect than at the time I first went to school at my age of nine, being 26 years ago. Then at my ages of 15 and 16, after going through and through third reader, I was expelled from the school

¹²⁷ Ibid., 10.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

room after I got to the third grade; he told me that there was nothing more to learn. But from that time till now, I by myself, studied and picked up the rest of my learnings to the full extent as you will judge from this my very handing writings, and it is the best I can do now.

In consideration to the fact that Mr. Duncan's school shall at once end with the time he may leave here to the next world or anywhere else, for by this time he is at the nearest point through ages.

Therefore, the very question with ourselves is, how shall we educate our children better than it is, or ever was. Why surely we must have an aid from our bountiful United States Government; who has "Education" of any form right in their hands, ever ready to grant it to poor, helpless, and ignorant Natives of Metlakahtla. (I mean "poor, helpless, ignorant" in education).

As I have said before, we can help ourselves little in business, industry, and religion. But our only earnest plea is for better "Education" to be established by the U.S. Government right in the heart of our settlement; which will prevent our worries of sending our children to any school in any port or town, causing their delicate health to come in contact with various contagious diseases, which make our population to decrease instead of increasing healthful "Americans".

Now, will you kindly let me hear a word from your honor, if any motion will ever take place to this very matter.

With ever so much gratitude, I beg to remain, yours very respectfully,

Benjamin A. Haldane¹²⁹

On June 22 1909, a petition signed by one hundred and thirty-nine Metlakatians was sent to Commissioner Brown asking for the establishment of a government school. Duncan was strongly against it because he wanted school and church to remain a part of the same educational instruction. In 1910, B.A. and Martha's seventh child, Alexander, was born.¹³⁰ Their growing family may have fueled B.A.'s desire to petition the government until the new school was built. That year, he headed a delegation from Metlakatla to Seattle to advocate for their case with William Lopp, the Alaska Superintendent for the Bureau of Education.¹³¹ Lopp then traveled to Metlakatla the following October to investigate the allegations against Duncan's education

¹²⁹ B.A. Haldane to Elmer E. Brown, US Commissioner of Education, May 22, 1909, "A-L File," Folder 329, Document 1, Box 112, Sir Henry S. Wellcome Collection, 1856, Group Record 200, National Archives – Pacific Alaska Region, Anchorage.

¹³⁰ Alexander Fredrick was born on April 22, 1910.

¹³¹ Murray, 268.

system. Lopp reported that in his interview with Duncan that he “condemned all government schools especially Carlisle and Chemewa” and spoke “unsparingly and unmercifully” in abusive terms about “his own people” comparing them to “babbling children whose babblings were of no more consequence than droves of ravens which hover about the village.”¹³² Duncan was “especially bitter” toward Mark Hamilton, Edmund Verney, B.A. Haldane, and the committee of council members who approached him in Seattle.¹³³ People in Metlakatla requested that Duncan attend the community meeting with Lopp, however he declined with the remark that “the babblings of such children were unworthy of his attention and consideration.”¹³⁴

Members of our community used this meeting with Lopp not only as a platform to voice their grievances about the education system but also to assert their concerns about control over Metlakatla’s industries and their desire to have US citizenship. The speeches were given in *S’malgyax* and interpreted to Lopp. He stated, “their speeches were eloquent, logical, and to the point. They knew what they wanted and presented their cause in the best possible manner. Eight white men in an average village in the States could not have done so well.”¹³⁵

At the end of the meeting, Sidney Campbell stood up and sang a Tsimshian grieving song that was used at the death of a chief, signifying the end of Duncan’s rule and their approach for governmental assistance. Lopp included this event in his 1911 report to the US Commissioner of Education:

Mr. Campbell in making the closing speech said their present situation recalled to his mind a very old funeral dirge which was only sung on occasions of great distress, when their chief was dead, and they were asking other chiefs for help. He then proceeded to sing it. The other members of the council seemed very much

¹³² W. T. Lopp to Commissioner of Education, Washington, D.C., January 14, 1911. “A-L Files,” Folder 329, Document 1, Page 1, Box 112, Sir Henry S. Wellcome Collection, 1856, Group Record 200, National Archives – Pacific Alaska Region, Anchorage.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

surprised and deeply affected by it. But one of them had ever heard it before. It was weird, plaintive, and mournful. Although I could not understand a word, it seemed to carry me back into past centuries. I could imagine a whole tribe of these fine people mourning for the loss of a great chief and asking for help. – The significance of the singing of this ancient song was not difficult to understand.¹³⁶

Sidney Campbell, who will be discussed in the next chapter, was a leader in the continuation of Tsimshian cultural practices in our community. His use of our songs during this meeting conveyed many powerful messages. One message, which was understood by Lopp, was that this song symbolized our grief over these circumstances and our need for the government's assistance. It also communicated an even stronger assertion which validated the use of our language and songs in our battle to gain control of the future of our community.

In the annual council election in Metlakatla in 1913, B.A. and Sidney were elected as councilmen (Figure 9). Duncan objected to their election as well as that of Mark Hamilton and Fred Verney, who both petitioned for the government school and the establishment of businesses against Duncan's orders.¹³⁷ After trying to establish a mill in our community, Mark Hamilton and Peter Simpson started a saw mill a few miles south, on Gravina Island, in 1892. Duncan would not allow them to build a mill in Metlakatla because it would compete with the one that he operated.¹³⁸ He was upset that they went forward with their plans nearby. Following the establishment of the Hamilton and Simpson mill, Fred Verney and his brothers, Edmund, Francis, and Joseph, started the Verney Brother's mill and store in 1899 near Saxman, Alaska.¹³⁹ With his adversaries in positions of power, Duncan's behavior became more erratic and extreme. With progress being made from Metlakatla's petitioning for the government school, Duncan shut

¹³⁶ Ibid., 1-2.

¹³⁷ Beattie, 163.

¹³⁸ Haldane, Native Statement, 23-24.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 25-26.

off the pipeline that supplied water to the community, closed off the wharf for eight months, and threatened to dismantle the cannery unless the petitioning stopped.¹⁴⁰

In the 1913 election in Metlakatla, B.A. was elected Secretary of the town council. B.A.'s rise in leadership was apparent in the fact that he received the largest number of votes of all the candidates.¹⁴¹ In the same year, the town council, with B.A.'s signature as secretary, wired a request to the Secretary of the Interior to have Duncan removed from the community.¹⁴² Duncan, now eighty-four years old, blamed the revolts against his leadership on a group of men he referred to as the "seven black rascals," who he claimed were B.A., Sydney Campbell, Adolphus Calvert (B.A.'s father-in-law), Mark Hamilton, Edmond Verney, John Tait, and Edward Marsden.¹⁴³ B.A.'s drive to see the government school completed may have been heightened by the births of his and Martha's youngest daughter, Emma in 1913 and their last child Denny in 1915.¹⁴⁴ As the time approached for the school to be built, Duncan again shut off the pipeline supplying water to the community and closed off the wharf, but this time he threatened to cut the ropes from boats tied to the dock.¹⁴⁵ Duncan even considered making a third move with fifty of his loyalists to establish another community.¹⁴⁶ Agents from the Bureau of Education were forced to seize the main pipeline from Duncan in order to restore the community's water supply.¹⁴⁷ Our community sent another petition to the United States government requesting that

¹⁴⁰ Murray, 279.

¹⁴¹ Beattie, 173.

¹⁴² Ibid., 169.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 169.

¹⁴⁴ Emma Louise was born on July 14, 1913, and Dennis "Denny" Everett was born on September 11, 1915. In total, B.A. and Martha had eleven children. Two of their daughters died in infancy.

¹⁴⁵ Murray, 276.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 289.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 280.

they enforce Duncan's immediate retirement.¹⁴⁸ He did not retire, however, and much to his dismay the government school was built in 1915.

This was a victory for our community in many ways. However, the same agents hired by the government to build the new school also forced their way into and destroyed many of our community's building including the school, the town hall, carpentry shop, and the doctor's office. They also broke the doors and windows of the cannery and sawmill. The reasons for these destructive acts have never completely surfaced. This controversy, along with verbal and written protests against Duncan's authority, including accusations against him for misallocation of community funds, and the petitions for two new churches in Metlakatla (Presbyterian and Salvation Army) resulted in Wellcome's launch of the "Metlakatla case" in 1916. This case was essentially Wellcome's personal crusade to vindicate Duncan from all wrongdoings and reestablish him as in a position of authority over the religious, educational, and civic affairs of our community. Wellcome decided to open the Metlakatla Case Office in Washington DC, when, at Duncan's death in 1918, agents from the Bureau of Education temporarily seized his home, guest house, and the church. They put the superintendent of the government school in the position of manager of Metlakatla, its businesses, and schools.¹⁴⁹ The Metlakatla Case Office was open for nearly twenty years. It never filed a specific law suit and was finally closed at Wellcome's death in 1936.

B.A. was one of twelve people in Metlakatla interviewed by Wellcome in 1917. Impacted by the devastating conduct of the agents from the Bureau of Education and manipulated by Wellcome's line of questioning, B.A. changed his recollection of his experience in Duncan's school by stating, "I finished what they taught in school and I had to go back over it every time

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 280.

¹⁴⁹ Garfield, "Change in the Marriage Customs of The Tsimshian," 7.

so I got disgusted and I quit myself because I got old enough to quit.”¹⁵⁰ Sadly on November 3rd of the following year, with the youngest of their nine children being three years old, B.A.’s wife Martha passed away.¹⁵¹ Five years later, B.A. remarried on March 20th, 1923 to Margaret “Maggie” Wellington of Port Simpson, BC.¹⁵²

B.A.’s opposition to Duncan’s authority and his various leadership positions in our community, such as councilman and secretary, band master, and choir director, provide a context for my argument that his agency as a Native photographer also asserted resistance to colonial authority. In the following section of B.A.’s biography, I will outline his development as a photographer and demonstrate the ways in which his images and practice assert what Tsintahjinnie refers to as photographic sovereignty. In order to show the development of B.A.’s early portraiture styles, it is necessary that I utilize the rare instances in which he recorded the names, dates, and locations of his subjects. These details are primarily found with his early portraits of Tlingit or Haida people who traveled to his studio in Metlakatla or who he photographed during his travels. Since he rarely documented the names of the people that he photographed from our community, his effort to record identifying information of these people and places may indicate that he was less familiar with them. Even though many portraits are not of people from Metlakatla, I have included these images in my thesis because they are essential to reconstructing his development as a photographer.

In his interview with Wellcome, B.A. indicated that he was a collector of photographs before he became a photographer. According to historian, Carol Williams, the act of collecting

¹⁵⁰ Haldane, Native Statement, 41.

¹⁵¹ As of my research thus far, I have not found the cause of Martha Haldane’s death.

¹⁵² John Hudson to Henry Wellcome, May 1, 1923. “A-L file,” folder 309, Document 12, Box 110, Sir Henry S. Wellcome Collection, 1856-1936, Record Group 200, National Archives – Pacific Alaska Region, Anchorage.

photographs became common among Native people on the Northwest Coast as early as 1862.¹⁵³ She states that Native people's habits of consumption, acquisition, and commissioning of photography changed and adapted to suit their own needs.¹⁵⁴ The emphasis on the pursuit of business ventures in our community, and B.A.'s enthusiasm for learning, may have resulted in his consumption of photographs as a collector to develop into his desire to be a photographer. B.A. began to teach himself photography soon after he was expelled from school by Duncan. In the early 1890s, he started to take portraits of families in Metlakatla using homes in our community as backdrops. The compositions of his early family portraits are consistently arranged with the door of the home placed at the center and the family arranged on the stairs or in chairs flanking each side (figures 10). At this time, his photography may have been a hobby rather than a source of income since he was also traveling between Metlakatla and Gravina Island to work at the Hamilton and Simpson sawmill, which he also photographed (Figure 11).¹⁵⁵

By 1894, B.A.'s portrait style began to change to adhere more closely to the contemporary conventions of studio photography, such as using a backdrop behind the sitter. The earliest known example is a portrait of Peter Williams (Figure 12). However, he did not restrict himself to seated studio portraits. B.A. also used elements in the environment to complement his compositions (Figure 13-14). It is clear from the clarity of these images, as compared to the grainy quality of his beginning portraits, that B.A. had mastered the developing process soon after learning photography. By the late 1890s, he established a business as a "Scenic and Portrait Photo-Grapher" and opened a portrait studio in Metlakatla with the standard props, backdrops, and floor décor of the period (Figure 15). The earliest dated portrait taken in his studio is an 1899

¹⁵³ Carol Williams, *Framing the West: Race, Gender, and the Photographic Frontier in the Pacific Northwest* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 138.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵⁵ Haldane, Native Statement, 24.

image of George McKay, a Tlingit from Saxman, Alaska (Figure 16). Senior Collections Manager at the Royal British Columbia Museum, Dan Savard, has deduced that B.A. was “the lone professional” among other First Nations photographers active at this time, such as George Hunt (Kwakwaka’wakw) and Louis Shotridge (Tlingit), because he was the only one who owned a studio.¹⁵⁶ Since by the 1890s Native people and families were commissioning studio portraits in unprecedented numbers, B.A. may have been adjusting his business to meet this demand.¹⁵⁷ Williams has argued that this increase in Native commissioning of portraits indicates an increase in their desire for control over their representations.¹⁵⁸ This pursuit of positive representation in particular made them purposeful and strategic consumers.¹⁵⁹ Native consumers who traveled from various communities throughout Southeast Alaska and British Columbia to B.A.’s studio may have found additional prestige and meaning in their images being made in the only Native-owned portrait studio at this time. B.A.’s portraiture style also adhered to conventions emphasizing wealth and respectability, that were commonly reserved for images of Euro-American settlers (Figure 17). By showing Native people as affluent and sophisticated, B.A.’s portraits challenged the visual stereotypes that were perpetuated by the commercial production of images that gave the impression that Native people were uniformly impoverished (Figure 18-19).¹⁶⁰

B.A. also used a portable set-up to take pictures in villages along the Northwest Coast in areas such as Southeast Alaska, Vancouver Island, Washington State, and communities along the Nass and Skeena Rivers of Northern British Columbia (Figure 20). His images in the Nass River are particularly revealing of the way in which B.A. used his photographic practice as a means of

¹⁵⁶ Savard, 84.

¹⁵⁷ Williams, 138.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., 141.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 141.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 165.

resistance against colonial authority. In Duncan's "Declaration of Residence," rule five instructed: "to never attend heathen festivities, or to countenance heathen customs in other villages."¹⁶¹ In light of this rule and the 1884 Canadian legislation outlawing potlatching, the socio-political context in which B.A.'s practice functioned as a means of photographic sovereignty is apparent.

In 1903, and again in 1914, B.A. took pictures of what Duncan had referred to as "heathen festivities." The 1903 image is of a high-ranking Nisga'a family of the village *Laxgaltisap*, now known as Greenville (Figure 21).¹⁶² In his study of Raven's Tail weaving on the Northwest Coast, Steven Hendricks has found that, "this is the only the known photograph of a ravens tail robe in ceremonial use."¹⁶³ The 1914 photographs were taken in *Gitlakdamiks*, now known as Aiyansh, of *Simoget Ksdiyaawk*, Chief James Skea, and his family (Figures 22-23).¹⁶⁴ Strikingly different from most of B.A.'s images, the Nisga'a people in these photographs are wearing and displaying their traditional forms of wealth. By the time that these images were taken the Canadian ban on potlatching had been in place for over twenty years. However, the large amount of eagle-down that is noticeably dispersed on the floor, people, and ceremonial objects in both photographs indicates that these images were taken directly after a potlatch or ceremony. By 1905, colonial authorities viewed photographs taken at potlatches as concrete

¹⁶¹ Edward Delor Kohlstedt, *William Duncan: Founder and Developer of Alaska's Metlakatla Christian Mission* (Palo Alto: The National Press, 1957), 47.

¹⁶² This photograph was identified as taken in *Gitlakdamiks* (Aiyansh). However, in 2001, Chief Morris Haldane (not related to B.A.) of *Gingolx* (Kincolith) BC wrote in the notes that accompany this image at the RBCM that his grandfather Peter Calder, who is the third person from the left in this image, told him that it was taken in *Laxgaltisap* (Greenville).

¹⁶³ The Raven's Tail robe is worn by the woman who is the fourth person from the left. Steve Hendrickson, "Yeilkooowu: The Reemergence of Ravens Tail Weaving on the Northwest Coast," *American Indian Art* 18, no. 1 (Winter 1992), 65.

¹⁶⁴ Daniel Francis, *Copying People 1860-1940: Photographing British Columbia First Nations* (Sakatoon: Fifth House Publishers, 1996), 53.

evidence of illegal activities.¹⁶⁵ In a 1907 court case a group of Kwakwaka'wakw people were prosecuted as violators of the Potlatch law using photographs taken years earlier as evidence.¹⁶⁶ The Nisga'a people in these images, and possibly B.A., were putting themselves at risk of prosecution. Thus in the socio-political conditions of both Canada and Alaska, the commissioning and creation of these images asserted their sovereignty by continuing to hold and witness potlatches in the face of the Potlatch Ban and Duncan's governance.

Living under Duncan's Declaration of Residence, B.A. could have also put in jeopardy his home and business in Metlakatla by witnessing these potlatches and taking images. However, his already well-established position as a leader in our community allowed his work not only to flourish against Duncan's "authority" but also to strengthen Metlakatla's long standing resistance. This is particularly evident in the images which he took of Edward Marsden's and Lucy Kinninook's wedding reception in 1901. This image shows four people from our community, identified as Solomon Burton, Henrietta Dundas, Alice Mather, Mrs. Adam Gordon, Sr., and Mrs. Edward Chalmers, openly wearing ceremonial regalia which were prohibited by Duncan (Figure 24).¹⁶⁷ Mrs. Adam Gordon and Mrs. Edward Chalmers are also wearing nose rings, signifying that they are of high rank. They are shown in an area of Metlakatla commonly referred to as "the ball field," where many of our community events still happen today. This regalia may have been even more appropriate at this wedding since both Edward and Lucy's fathers were chiefs.¹⁶⁸ Edward Marsden, who took part in the migration from Metlakatla, BC, in 1887, had recently graduated from Marietta College in Ohio and was ordained at Lane

¹⁶⁵ Williams, 149.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 72.

¹⁶⁷ Beattie, 119.

¹⁶⁸ Beattie, 119. The son of Samuel and Catherine Marsden, Edward Marsden was born on May 19th, 1869 in Metlakatla, BC. I have yet to find which tribe Samuel Marsden had chiefly rank in. His Tsimshian name was said by Beattie to be "Shooquanah" (Ibid., 15). He also stated that Lucy Kinninook was the daughter of a Tlingit chief of the Tongass tribe (Ibid., 119).

Theological Seminary. In 1897, he became the first Native person in the United States to receive a license to preach. Against the wishes of Duncan, and many of the people in Metlakatla, Marsden began the movement for a Presbyterian Church in our community. The church was completed in 1922. Marsden's invitation to members of our community to wear their regalia to his wedding was an outward protest against Duncan forcing people to give to him all of their ceremonial objects upon being baptized and moving to Alaska. It is evident in this image, and in B.A.'s photographs of potlatches in villages on the Nass River, that the cultural production of his imagery and his role as social actor functioned as a dual means of exercising photographic sovereignty, both from his perspective as a photographer and the perspectives of those he photographed. In this way, photography was used by B.A. and other Native people as a significant means of resisting colonial authority and continuing cultural practices.

Chapter Three:

Producing the Positive: Viewing Metlakatla, Alaska through B.A.'s Lens

The publicity surrounding both Wellcome's *The Story of Metlakatla* and our subsequent migration to Alaska positioned our community as a spectacle where people could witness the grand possibilities of successful assimilation of Indigenous peoples in the wider colonial project. Excited by the thought of seeing first hand this "veritable fairy tale,"¹⁶⁹ visitors to Metlakatla were intently focused on aspects of our personal appearances, style of homes, type of industries, and other parts of our lives that were represented as evidence of our assimilation. One visitor to our community compared his trip to that of the Queen of Sheba's visit, "to the court of King Solomon to see the marvels of which she had heard so much."¹⁷⁰ The notion that Native communities were "marvels" which necessitated their viewing in-person was common during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century. Following the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, and similar expositions, where Native and First Nations people were placed on display in "live exhibits," colonial audiences actively pursued opportunities to be spectators of the lives of Indigenous people.¹⁷¹ "Progress" being the theme of this Exposition, the live exhibits were arranged to assert the concept that there was an evolutionary process from savage to civilized by showing a range of Indigenous people who lived and performed songs and dances from re-created pre-contact domestic settings to exhibits of Native students at boarding

¹⁶⁹ Arctander, 7.

¹⁷⁰ Davis, 116.

¹⁷¹ The Paris Exposition Universelle in 1889, preceded the Worlds Columbian Exposition in Chicago, 1893, by four years, but only a few years after the massacre at Wounded Knee. Paris was the first world's fair at which both life groups, or dioramas, and real people living in reconstructed villages from the French colonies, were put on public display. See Robert W. Rydell, *All the World's a Fair: Visions of Empire at American International Expositions, 1876-1916* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 1984; and Douglas Cole, *Captured Heritage: The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts* (Seattle: University of Washington Press), 1985.

schools.¹⁷² These superficial physical manifestations of “progress” were used to advertise to millions of tourists the legitimacy of government policies that were created to control and assimilate Indigenous people. Consequently, our community and other well-known Native missions on the Northwest Coast, such as Metlakatla, BC and Sitka, Alaska, became spectacles for colonial audiences to witness such “progress” in real life.

Scholars have recently begun to complicate this late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century view of Metlakatla, BC and Sitka, Alaska. Paige Raibmon has asserted that the outward forms of Christian life in both of these communities distracted missionaries and tourists from the continuities of Indigenous cultural practices and values within the “civilized cottage settings” which they inhabited.¹⁷³ This point has been argued extensively in the case of Metlakatla, BC, by Susan Neylan in her book *The Heavens are Changing: Nineteenth-Century Protestant Missions and Tsimshian Christianity*.¹⁷⁴ Metlakatla, Alaska, however, has not been included in such an analysis. I believe that this gap in scholarship is primarily due to the dominance of the colonial narrative of Metlakatla’s history in academic publications. In order to contribute a counter-narrative to this scholarship and, most importantly, to strengthen my efforts to help counteract the negative affects of this colonial narrative on our community, it is crucial that I examine Metlakatla’s position as a spectacle and how it influenced the early publications that were written about our history.

I argue that the pervasiveness of Metlakatla’s colonial narrative and its positioning of our community as a spectacle of “progress” produced biases which inhibited visitors from perceiving

¹⁷² Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter from the Late-Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast* (London: Duke University Press, 2005), 34.

¹⁷³ Paige Raibmon, “Living on Display: Colonial Visions of Aboriginal Domestic Spaces,” *BC Studies* 140 (Winter 2003/2004), 85.

¹⁷⁴ Susan Neylan, *The Heavens are Changing: Nineteenth-Century Protestant Missions and Tsimshian Christianity* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press), 2003.

the extent to which Tsimshian practices, values, and beliefs were manifested in our daily lives. To demonstrate this occurrence, I will explore two early twentieth-century examples that were published out of this impetus: George G. T. Davis's, 1904, *Metlakahtla: a True Narrative of the Red Man* and John W. Arctander's, 1909, *The Apostle of Alaska: the Story of William Duncan of Metlakahtla*. Davis and Arctander's subscription to Metlakatla's colonial narrative led to their efforts to observe our community first-hand, the biases of which are apparent in their writing. Yet, during each of their visits, these men were confronted by situations that caused them to advertently or inadvertently document Tsimshian cultural practices that persisted in our community. They also had direct contact with B.A. and included some of his photographs in their books.¹⁷⁵ However, the images that Davis and Arctander selected were to illustrate their stance on our "assimilation." This excluded a range of B.A.'s photographs that conveyed the opposite. Using these photographs and B.A.'s other unpublished work, I will expand on Davis's and Arctander's observations of our cultural practices and disclose activities not written about by them or later authors.

First, it is essential that I further explore the approaches Davis and Arctander used to write about our community in order to demonstrate how their subscription to Metlakatla's colonial narrative inhibited their perception of our community. Compared to Arctander, Davis was more explicit about his desire to witness our community's "progress." He claimed to have traveled 6,000 miles from Chicago around 1903 with the goal of "seeing the wonderful model city of Metlakahtla inhabited by Red Men, who yesterday were wild savages, today are well-dressed exemplary Christians" and whose "fame has reached around the world."¹⁷⁶ Indicative of

¹⁷⁵ Davis did not give B.A. credit for his photographs. However, many of them were obviously taken in his studio. Arctander, on the other hand, recognized B.A.'s contribution by stating that some of his images were produced by "Mr. Benjamin A. Haldane, the native photographer at Metlakahtla." Arctander, 8.

¹⁷⁶ Davis, 116-118.

Metlakatla's position as spectacle, on the steamship that Davis boarded in Ketchikan, Alaska were five members of the United States Senatorial Committee who had just returned from, "a special visit to New Metlakahtla to enable the committee to see the famous Indian settlement."¹⁷⁷ Davis's book, *Metlakahtla; a True Narrative of the Red Man*, is essentially a summary of Wellcome's *The Story of Metlakahtla* in both its organization and content. Its only departure is the final chapter titled, "On the Isle of Paradise," where Davis records his observations of the eleven days he spent in Metlakatla as Duncan's guest.¹⁷⁸

As in the majority of publications at this time, Davis's descriptions of Metlakatla are primarily of our houses, church, schools, town hall, and industries, such as the cannery and sawmill. He remarked that our houses were, "considerable finer" than those in most villages of its size and that most homes were two stories with plentiful windows and verandahs.¹⁷⁹ Davis described the church as "the most handsome and pretentious building in town" and "constructed entirely by the Indians themselves under Mr. Duncan's direction."¹⁸⁰ Also typical is Davis's portrayal of Duncan as a being both a gentle shepherd and the authority over all of our community's affairs. After stating that Duncan was the main pastor and teacher in Metlakatla, Davis remarked "he is also the also the spiritual leader and temporal adviser and counselor of his people, and his office, where he spends many hours daily as active manager of the cannery, saw mill and store, is a natural resort of anyone in trouble or difficulty."¹⁸¹ The idea that Duncan's home was a sanctuary for people in difficult circumstances is an extremely distorted account of his actual method of dealing with conflict, as was discussed in the previous chapter.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 117.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 116.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 119.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 119.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 122.

Although Davis was undoubtedly under Duncan's influence, he observed cultural activities that occurred amongst our community members at night that can be expanded on using B.A.'s images to demonstrate our continuation of Tsimshian cultural practices. Davis noted that many people in Metlakatla had two jobs – one that they performed during the day with the rest of our community, such as working in the cannery or sawmill, and one that was performed at night in their homes. He used B.A. as an example,

The village photographer, Benjamin A. Haldane, does not hesitate to work in the cannery when it is running and looks after his picture-making and developing after or before work. Mr. Haldane is a versatile and talented young man. In addition to being an excellent photographer, he is the leader of the village band, and plays the pipe organ in church.¹⁸²

Other than B.A.'s photography, Davis's list of these night occupations primarily consisted of producers of Tsimshian art such as silversmiths, wood carvers, and basket weavers.¹⁸³ He stated, "the blacksmith at the cannery, Mr. Edward K. Mathers, works at night at his home carving queer figures on silver spoons."¹⁸⁴ Davis dismissed the connection of these art forms to Tsimshian values and beliefs by saying, "it is typical of the people that they learn any art or trade with astonishing ease and rapidity."¹⁸⁵ However, Garfield's observations of these night activities during her time as teacher in Metlakatla in 1922 reveals that Davis unknowingly observed other cultural practices. In her thesis Garfield noted,

Many teachers and village heads leave the village without realizing any of the current aboriginal belief, thought, and practices possessed by the people. They do not know of the night ceremonies with weeping and feasting for the dead, nor of the clan affiliations which color many village activities, especially those of the church.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸² Ibid, 123.

¹⁸³ Ibid, 123.

¹⁸⁴ Davis, 123. Davis spells Edward's last name with an -S at the end. However, it is spelled Mather by his family in Metlakatla today.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, 123.

¹⁸⁶ Garfield, "Change in the Marriage Customs of the Tsimshian," 10.

Garfield's account confirms that the "night ceremonies" were long-standing practices in our community. Unlike other "teachers and village heads," Garfield realized the complex and subversive ways that our cultural practices adapted to colonial pressures and she returned to our community to conduct fieldwork. Davis, on the other hand, viewed these activities as merely an additional source of income. Though his only emphasis was on the economic value of baskets, he states,

There are several excellent silversmiths in the village, and at least one skilled wood carver. In addition most older women weave handsome baskets out of a certain kind of bark which finds a ready sale to the tourists.¹⁸⁷

Although Davis did not elaborate on the functions of wood carvings in our community, their inclusion in B.A.'s photographs asserts that these items continued to be displayed for the purpose of validating clan membership. In a self-portrait made around 1900, B.A. represents his career, both as a photographer and musician, and declares his Tsimshian identity (Figure 25). Placing himself at the center of the composition, B.A. is flanked by his photography equipment on his left, including a large camera, a lantern, and a Kodak Brownie camera on the floor. On his right are objects relating to his teaching and love for music including a megaphone, a gramophone with five sets of earphones, and an open case of cylinders. Although B.A. had a variety of props that he could use to hold himself up, he chose to attach visually to his body a model totem pole with his *Lax Gibou* (Wolf Clan) crest represented by the bottom figure. In this image, B.A. confidently positions himself as physically and metaphorically supported by our cultural values and beliefs and looks directly at the viewer to assert its importance.

Two of B.A.'s photographs of children in Metlakatla include both carvings and regalia in the same manner. In his portrait of two little girls, a model totem pole has been placed in the center to make a visual reference to their clan (Figure 26). The placement of the crocheted

¹⁸⁷ Davis, 123.

garment over the chair in front of the model totem pole edits the other figures to emphasize their connection to the crest represented at the top. In another of B.A.'s images, also taken outside of a home in Metlakatla, a young boy is shown dressed in a button robe and holding a paddle (Figure 27). The strings of beads hanging off each side of his paddle are the same style as those that are used in dancing. Its large size along with the adult sized button robe indicates that these are being handed down to him. Unlike the re-occurring props seen in B.A.'s studio, it is clear that the families who commissioned these images brought with them carvings and regalia to be photographed with their children. These are visual testaments to the fact that adherence to clan protocols and participation in our cultural practices was not reserved for a particular generation, but rather that its teaching continued to be transgenerational. How these images circulated is unknown. However, from their composition and the activities surrounding clan membership in our community, I believe that these images must have circulated internally serving the same function as bringing out crest objects at a potlatch to publicly validate ancestry and rights. For this reason, these photographs may have been made purposely unavailable for publication.

Although these images show cultural practices that were contemporary to the time that both Davis and Arctander were in Metlakatla, only Arctander explicitly took interest in them. The objective of his book, *The Apostle of Alaska: the Story of William Duncan of Metlakahtla*, was to give a "true history" of the mission from Duncan's perspective.¹⁸⁸ Yet, he devotes eight chapters to aspects of Tsimshian worldview, traditions, kinship system, language, songs, and *adawx*¹⁸⁹ that he recorded during his four summers in Metlakatla (1904 –1908). His desire to "study" us as "Indians" is evident in the introduction of his book,

The opportunity I have had, through these many moons, to study the Indians, their peculiarities, their customs and manners, past and present, to listen

¹⁸⁸ Arctander, 8.

¹⁸⁹ *Sm'algyax* for oral history.

to their tales of past history and life, and to their interesting legends, I have of course fully availed myself of.¹⁹⁰

Arctander's nostalgia is symptomatic of a commonly held belief that Native peoples and cultures at this time were near the point of extinction. As this passage makes clear, although he gathered this information from people who maintained Tsimshian beliefs and practices in the "present," his subscription to Metlakatla's colonial narrative framed his view more in terms of their existence in the "past." Also typical of widely shared assumptions about Native peoples and cultures, Arctander was unable to reconcile that we could be Christian and yet express strong convictions for our Tsimshian beliefs. Seemingly desperate to maintain that our conversion to Christianity replaced the "religion of the Tsimshian," he would belittle the intelligence of those who obviously possessed both. This is clear in these two examples,

One of the most intelligent of the Metlakahtla Indians, who was converted in his early youth, and therefore, got away from their heathenish influences before they could have had a chance to take very deep root in him, told me the following story with all evidences of belief in the supernatural powers of the medicine-men. In fact, he stated that he did not know what to believe, but that he knew for certain that what he told me was the truth.¹⁹¹

Similarly, in his collection of *adawx* concerning the creation of earth, Arctander seems astonished by, and even jests at, John Tait's "moral certainty" in our beliefs. In his introduction to a collection of *adawx* concerning the creation of earth, he states:

The first one, related to me by John Tait, a very intelligent and lovable Tsimshian Indian of Metlakahtla, who in his youth belonged to the dog-eating club, really has more to do with earthquakes, and the primitive Indian idea of what causes this natural phenomenon; but curtly recites the creation of the earth by the Heavenly Chief, as if it were a well-known and established fact. The moral certainty with which the once much-mooted question of the earth being flat is established is amusing.¹⁹²

¹⁹⁰ Arctander, 8.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 98.

¹⁹² Ibid., 101.

Arctander's struggle to deal with the complexity of the combination of Tsimshian and Christian practices in our community is also found in his description of B.A.'s home. He categorized it in a list of houses that could "do honour to any little New England village" and gives details such as the year it was built, the color of the paint, trim, and roof.¹⁹³ Arctander then abruptly ends his chapter by noting,

The monument in front of his house was placed there in honour of his deceased father, Matthew Haldane, one of Mr. Duncan's most trusted friends, who is not however, laid to rest at this place. He was buried at the cemetery.¹⁹⁴

B.A.'s placement of a Christian grave marker as a memorial outside of his home was not a Christian practice but distinctly Tsimshian (figure 28). As stated in the previous chapter, B.A.'s father was a *Lax Skeek* (Eagle Clan) chief of the Gitlan tribe.¹⁹⁵ Thus, B.A. placed this memorial acknowledging his rank in the same manner that totem poles were raised in front of long houses as memorial for a chief.

Although Arctander was patronizing about our beliefs, his inclusion of Tsimshian cultural practices in his description of our community inadvertently caused a shift in the public representation of Metlakatla. His publication contradicted Wellcome's construction that we were assimilated. While Duncan was complicit in Arctander's interviews, when the book was published he tried to seize and destroy the entire first edition.¹⁹⁶ He claimed that Arctander misquoted him. However, this shift in the representation may have been the real cause of Duncan's reaction. Arctander did not respond to his allegations since he had provided Duncan with several opportunities to make changes to the book before it was published. Fanatical about

¹⁹³ Ibid., 303.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 304.

¹⁹⁵ Haldane, Native Statement, 16.

¹⁹⁶ Murray, 255.

stopping its distribution, Duncan banned its sale in Metlakatla. In spite of this, B.A. received three hundred copies of the book to sell in his store, which Duncan quickly seized.¹⁹⁷ He specifically told B.A. that he could not sell the book in his store. Unwavering in his effort, B.A. ordered more and sold them from a booth he constructed on a main road in Metlakatla.¹⁹⁸ This battle persisted over months with B.A. continuing his sales regardless of Duncan's many attempts to stop him. By contributing to and selling Arctander's book, B.A. made a strong effort to exert control over our community's representation as being inclusive of our Tsimshian beliefs and values. Those of B.A.'s images that were not included in Arctander's publication, however, are even more revealing of cultural practices in Metlakatla.

Artistic production in our community was not limited to objects that were associated with the tourist trade, such as baskets, silver jewelry, and model totem poles. At least one carver, Sidney Campbell, was making full-size totem poles. Sidney, who was one of the leaders in the movement against Duncan, was photographed by B.A. with one of his totem poles in a work shed in Metlakatla (figure 29). A close reading of his images of Sidney, and others such as Joseph Hayward, is revealing for its visual information on not only artistic practices in Metlakatla but also the ways in which B.A.'s photography was used by them to assert ceremonial and hereditary privileges.

Compared to the photograph taken of Metlakatla's councilmen in 1913 (Figure 9), where Sidney is an older man with graying hair, this image shows him as a younger man with dark hair, suggesting that it was taken circa 1905 or earlier (Figure 29). Although unpainted, the carving of the totem pole is complete. Yet, Sidney posed for B.A. holding a large adze that is used to remove large amounts of wood in the initial carving process. This is typical of images taken of

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

carvers with their work at this time. There is no evidence that this totem pole was raised in Metlakatla. However, Sidney raised two fully carved and painted totem poles in Ketchikan, Alaska, a city fifteen miles south of Metlakatla (figure 30-31). The creation and raising of these totem poles occurred at least seventy years before this practice was thought to have been “revived” in our community. In the previous chapter, I described Sidney’s role in the education controversy and how he strategically sang a Tsimshian grieving song during the meeting with Lopp to privilege our language and values in the fight for control of our education system. Now, I will focus on his role as a leader in maintaining the knowledge of our cultural practices, values, and beliefs in Metlakatla.

Of the Gispudwada (Killer Whale Clan) of the Ginadoiks tribe, Sidney (ca. 1849-1934), was born at Fort Simpson.¹⁹⁹ He was a young boy when Duncan arrived in 1857. It is not known when Sidney moved from Fort Simpson to Metlakatla, BC, however, he did participate in the migration to Metlakatla, Alaska in 1887. Garfield utilized Sidney’s knowledge to gather “much of the information concerning practices and traditions of the days before the influx of whites” in her 1930 fieldwork.²⁰⁰ She noted that Sidney was B.A.’s uncle through the marriage of his aunt Sáxámhagum, who had passed away some years earlier.²⁰¹ Garfield did not note his aunt’s English name, if she had one. This is probably due to the fact that Josephine (née Hewson) Hayward, a young woman from Metlakatla, translated Sidney’s interview with Garfield from *Sm’algyax* to English. Josephine worked for Garfield as both an interpreter and informant.²⁰² According to Garfield, Josephine was “very well versed in the history of families and all of the

¹⁹⁹ Viola Garfield, “1930 Survey of Sidney Campbell: Notes - Tsimshian Marriage – Clan and Tribal Affiliation,” Box 4, Folder 3, Viola Garfield Papers, Accession number 2027-72-25, University of Washington Libraries, 1.

²⁰⁰ Garfield, “Change in the Marriage Customs of the Tsimshian,” 1-2.

²⁰¹ Garfield’s Sidney Campbell survey, 1. She noted that the name Sáxámhagum made a reference to “white gulls.”

²⁰² Garfield, “Change in the Marriage Customs of the Tsimshian,” 1.

old traditions concerning them; the clans and the tribes.”²⁰³ Sidney was photographed with both Garfield and Josephine during her fieldwork (Figure 32-33).²⁰⁴ In each image Sidney is holding a different model totem pole, both of which are similar in style to the full-sized poles he carved in Ketchikan and the three models are held in the collection of his family members in Metlakatla (figure 33).²⁰⁵

Garfield noted that Sidney had ancestral names and rights that were given to him early in his life,

He is the son of a chief's councilor and had gone through two ceremonies for the purpose of receiving ancestral names and privileges of his class in order to raise him in social scale, before he came under the influence of the Duncan school. He is a full blood Tsimshian.²⁰⁶

Sidney's *S'malgyax* name was *Neeshlut*.²⁰⁷ It was given to him during his initiation in and activities as a *Gitsontk* at Fort Simpson.²⁰⁸ An exclusive society of powerful carvers among the Tsimshian, Nisga'a, and Gitksan people, the *Gitsontk* made objects that were used in the dancing and initiation ceremonies of secret societies.²⁰⁹ These activities were formed around the concept of *Halaayt*, a complex set of beliefs and practices concerning the supernatural and its powers. Sidney is one of the few identified members of the *Gitsontk*.²¹⁰ Sometime referred as “chief Neesh-loot” in recognition of his rank, he was also known for his vast knowledge of

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ These images are dated as circa 1923 in the digital collections at the University of Washington libraries. However, after having viewed a photo album of her time as a teacher in Metlakatla in 1922 where she is noticeably much younger, I believe that these photographs were taken during Garfield's 1930 fieldwork. I am grateful to Myranell Bergtold of Metlakatla, for sharing this album with me.

²⁰⁵ I am extremely thankful to Myranell Bergtold, Sol and Tamara Guthrie, and Delbert Dunn Jr. for sharing these rare pieces of Sidney Campbell's work with me and allowing their inclusion in my thesis.

²⁰⁶ Ibid, 2.

²⁰⁷ Garfield's Sidney Campbell survey, 1. Sidney's Tsimshian name was spelled by Garfield as “Ni'asluits.” I have seen his name spelled “Ni.sluut” and “Neesh-loot” in other sources. I prefer the spelling Neeshlut because it reflects how his name is remembered by his family in our community. Myranell Bergtold, Personal Interview, Metlakatla, Ak., 26 May 2006

²⁰⁸ Audrey P. M. Shane, “Power in Their Hands: The Gitsontk,” in *The Tsimshian: Images of the Past; Views for the Present*, ed. Margaret Seguin (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1984), 163.

²⁰⁹ Ibid, 160.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

Tsimshian songs and *adawx*. In a photograph that was taken by B.A. on the outskirts of Metlakatla it is apparent that Sidney had a group of apprentices that he shared his *Gitsonk* teachings with (figure 35). In this image Sidney, who is the fourth person from the left, is shown wearing an *amhalaayt*,²¹¹ a painted hide or canvas apron and legging, and *gwishnapala*.²¹² In another image of Sidney that was taken around 1880 in British Columbia, he is shown wearing the same apron, leggings, and *amhalaayt*, but with a painted robe instead of the *gwishnapala* (figure 36). These two images confirm that not only did Sidney bring this regalia over from British Columbia, which was prohibited by Duncan, but he continued to use it in Metlakatla. The 1880 portrait was part of B.A.'s personal collection of images. It was included in Arctander's book without Sidney's name and instead the caption of this image is "regalia of a Tsimshian Chief."²¹³ Some of the history of Sidney's *gwishnapala* was recorded in Garfield's thesis. At his marriage ceremony, "Sidney received from his uncle the dancing blanket which had been the property of his father."²¹⁴ In figure 35, Sidney is surrounded by other men in regalia from our community, of whom I have identified Paul Mather (the furthest to the left), Thomas Eaton (on the left of Sidney) and B. Simpson (the last on the right). Paul, who was also a councilman, is also shown in figure 9. The remote location in which B.A. took this photograph compared to his images of people in regalia at Edward Marsden's wedding alludes to the effort of Sidney and these other men to remove themselves from public, just as the *Gitsonk* did for their ceremonies. These men may have also been carving with Sidney since the sign between his two totem poles in Ketchikan, Alaska, indicates that he was working with a group: "these totems were carved by Chief Neesh-Loot and his native tribesmen" (figure 31).

²¹¹ *Sm'algyax* for chief's headdress.

²¹² *Sm'algyax* for button robe.

²¹³ Arctander, 76.

²¹⁴ Garfield, "Change in the Marriage Customs of the Tsimshian," 39.

While the ceremonial activities of Sidney and these men were kept secret, other people in Metlakatla made it their objective to reinstate their hereditary positions as Chiefs more public. In 1924, there was correspondence between a missionary and teacher who had worked closely with Duncan, Matilda Minthorn, and Wellcome concerning the movement in our community to reestablish a chief system. In several of her letters to Wellcome, Minthorn accused the Bureau of Education of the return of "heathen customs" in Metlakatla by claiming that they encouraged "the revival of customs which belong to the primitive state of Indian society."²¹⁵ Minthorn, who neither understood nor spoke *Sm'algyax*, told Wellcome that people in Metlakatla were organizing and holding these practices by "speaking in their native tongue."²¹⁶ She stated: "we had hoped that they were growing away from the old customs and traditions, but it seems the efforts of the Bureau to eradicate every trace of the Mission would succeed in some respects even better than they might wish."²¹⁷ Minthorn told Wellcome that specifically John Hayward was making an effort to "revive the chieftainship he claims in his own tribe."²¹⁸ Rather than giving agency to the individuals and family who were supporting the idea of making the chief system a public part of Metlakatla's affairs, Minthorn blamed another adversary of Duncan's, the Presbyterian Church. Reporting to Wellcome about these activities, in a letter written on January 31st 1925, she states:

"Mrs. Hudson told me that Moses [Hewson] had spoken to them of the fact that his tribe had offered to choose him for the chief in the place of Alfred Atkinson. That tribe almost in a body went to the Presbyterian Church. This looks like a scheme of Marsden's to cripple Mr. Duncan's church or to combine the two. They tell me that when Mr. Duncan was leaving Fort Simpson to begin the new colony of Old Metlakahtla, that this tribe were not intending to go, but an epidemic of

²¹⁵ Matilda Minthorn to Henry Wellcome, No date, "A-L File," Folder 266, Document 16, Box 108, Sir Henry Wellcome Collection, 1856-1936, Record Group 200, National Archive, Pacific Alaska Region, Anchorage.

²¹⁶ Matilda Minthorn to Henry Wellcome, March 26, 1924, "A-L File," Folder 265, Document 12, Box 107, Sir Henry Wellcome Collection, 1856-1936, Record Group 200, National Archive, Pacific Alaska Region, Anchorage.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ Matilda Minthorn to Henry Wellcome, April 21, 1924, "A-L File," Folder 265, Document 18, Box 107, Sir Henry Wellcome Collection, 1856-1936, Record Group 200, National Archive, Pacific Alaska Region, Anchorage.

small pox broke out and they fled to Mr. Duncan for refuge. They came without convictions, and never were willing even under his teaching to drop the office of chief. Of course it affects others, and Joseph Hayward, whose father gave it up under Mr. Duncan, is now desiring to claim his station in that line.”²¹⁹

According to Garfield, Joseph Hayward was of the Gispudwada (Killer Whale Clan).

Joseph was two years old when his family moved to Metlakatla, BC.²²⁰ He was fourteen years old when he came to Metlakatla with his mother, who he identified as “sister of Saoks, Kitkatla Chief.”²²¹ In 1919, he returned to his mother’s village of Kitkatla, BC in order to receive his uncle’s name and chiefly position.²²² In the mid-1920s, Joseph was photographed by B.A. wearing chief’s regalia, *amhalaayt*, *gwishalayt*, and holding two raven rattles (Figure 37).²²³ Joseph’s commissioning of this image substantiates that B.A.’s photography was used by members of our community not only to validate their clan membership but also their hereditary positions, such as chief, and other ceremonial rights and privileges such as those of Sidney Campbell.

²¹⁹ Matilda Minthorn to Henry Wellcome, January 31, 1925, “A-L File,” Folder 265, Document 15, Box 107, Sir Henry Wellcome Collection, 1856-1936, Record Group 200, National Archive, Pacific Alaska Region, Anchorage.

²²⁰ Viola Garfield, “1930 Survey of Joseph Hayward: Notes - Tsimshian Marriage – Clan and Tribal Affiliation,” Box 4, Folder 3, Viola Garfield Papers, Accession number 2027-72-25, University of Washington Libraries, 1.

²²¹ Ibid.

²²² Ibid.

²²³ *Sm’algyax* for the woven robe now known as “Chilkat Blanket.”

CONCLUSION:

Bringing Ourselves into Focus: Strengthening the Frame that Supports “Our Culture”

On February 28th 2006, I brought these images home to B.A.’s family and our community in a digital presentation held in Metlakatla. Among the fifty men, women, and children who were in attendance there was a strong response of pride and amazement in B.A.’s career as a photographer. His images provide us with visual affirmations of the ways in which our ancestors strengthened and maintained Tsimshian cultural traditions, values, and belief in our community. In response to my presentation, B.A.’s great grandson, carver and artist Wayne Hewson, stated:

It made me proud of the fact that my grandfather helped record history, not just ours but all the people he traveled to, and that he continued to attend potlatches. In our family, the descendents of Haldane women, we were always told by our mothers that we are from the Killer Whale Clan of the *Git Laan* and to be proud of who we are. These photographs show that our people were proud and that we didn’t give up our culture.²²⁴

Wayne has eloquently summarized the overall objective of my thesis. Through the viewing of B.A.’s work and the finding of my research, he is reflecting back on the clan and tribal identity that his mother, grandmother, and aunts made integral to the identity of their children. Through acknowledging these cultural teachings, knowing our history from our ancestors’ perspectives, and being aware of the inherent biases of Metlakatla’s colonial narrative, we can strengthen “our culture” by recognizing its persistence.

In my analysis of B.A.’s photography, I have shown that our cultural knowledge and traditions have continued through complex and subversive practices in resistance to colonial authority. Although not referred to with terms like “Potlatch” or expressed in dances, Tsimshian protocols have always been an essential part of our community. This does not discredit the dedication of those who are leaders in what is considered the

²²⁴ Wayne Hewson, Personal Interview, Metlakatla, Ak., 28 February 2006.

“revival of our culture” but shows the potency of their efforts as a part of a continuum. The lives of B.A. Haldane, Sidney Campbell, and Joseph Hayward illustrate this point.

The personal histories that I have explored in this thesis are only a few examples of those that have been marginalized or excluded from the written accounts of our history. Many more are still waiting to be told. Each is a valuable resource for deepening the understanding of early lived experience in both Metlakatla, BC and Alaska and the continuation of Tsimshian cultural traditions in our community. These avenues of inquiry, some of which I intend to explore in my doctoral studies, would enrich the literature on these areas, as well as further the investigation of B.A.’s photography.

My close examination of B.A.’s career as a photographer and the images on which I have focused in this thesis provide a foundation from which additional research can be pursued in numerous directions. An issue that is of particular importance to me is re-attributing B.A.’s name to his images. Like the work of many of photographers, B.A.’s photographs have passed through many hands and through their circulation these images often became detached from their association with their maker. In working with B.A.’s glass plate negatives in Metlakatla this became particularly evident to me in one specific image (Figure 38). This is a well-published photograph of a Haida argillite carver named John Robson (ca.1846 -1924) of Skidegate, British Columbia.²²⁵ As it was published the evidence of B.A.’s more formal studio backdrop was edited out of the image and the caption reads, “John Robson at a studio table with the argillite box from this collection, posed for the photographer as if he were at work on the object.”²²⁶ Fortunately, the

²²⁵ Robin K. Wright, *Northern Haida Master Carvers* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001), 252.

²²⁶ See Robin K. Wright, “HLGAS7AGAA: Haida Argillite,” in *The Spirit Within: Northwest Coast Native Art from the John H. Hauberg Collection*, Helen Abbott, Steve Brown, et al., eds. (Washington: Seattle Art Museum, 1995), 138. This photograph has been published many times. This is just one example of its use.

negative from this image along with many others of B.A.'s work was kept in our community, which provides the means to restore his much deserved credit. My objective is to familiarize myself with his work well enough to attribute B.A.'s work whether or not the glass plate negative is in Metlakatla's collection.

Also growing from my initial research of B.A.'s studio portraits, which only covers the first fifteen years of his work, is my interest in the later composition of his portraiture. I am especially grateful for the studio portrait that B.A. took of my own family, circa 1920 (Figure 39). It is apparent in this image compared to figures 15-19 that there were some dramatic changes in his use of lighting and style of backdrop. Another genre of B.A.'s work which demands analysis are the scenic images that he took through Alaska and British Columbia. B.A. placed a considerable amount of emphasis on this aspect of his work by advertising his business as a "Scenic and Portrait Photographer."²²⁷ The visual difference between B.A.'s scenic photographs and the work of Euro-American scenic photographers of this period would be another fertile topic for investigation.

Through my study of B.A.'s life and images, I have been able to identify a group of Tsimshian carvers and silversmiths from our community, Sidney Campbell, Edward K. Mather, Eli Tait, and Abel Faber, who are unknown in the field of Northwest Coast art history. An exploration of their lives and work would make a significant contribution to this field in addition to our own knowledge of our community's history. One of B.A.'s images in particular, taken around 1930, of the interior of the Davis family boat shop, has led to my interest in researching early Tsimshian artists from Metlakatla in more depth (Figure 40). For three generations, from 1900 to 1950, the Davis family was the dominant

²²⁷ Parham, 38.

small craft builder in Southeast Alaska.²²⁸ To this day, their style of double-ended rowing boats is called the “Davis Boat” by contemporary boat builders.²²⁹ Largely unknown to our community and others that know of their work, is that while the Davis’s were building boats they were also making bentwood boxes, models houses, and Tsimshian style paddles, which can be seen on left side of this image.

Of these artists, I will continue to research Sidney Campbell’s knowledge of, and teaching of, Tsimshian songs as it continues to influence our community today. In 1994, one of our most highly respected elders, the late Solomon Guthrie, passed down to the *Gunhada* (Raven Clan) a Tsimshian song that he learned from Sidney. Solomon was Sidney’s grandnephew.²³⁰ This song was brought out publicly that same year by *Gunhada*, with a dance that they created to accompany it, at a four day potlatch held in Metlakatla. Since Sidney was in contact with Garfield and William Beynon, a Tsimshian from Canada who collected ethnographic material for anthropologist Marius Barbeau, recordings of his songs and additional information on his life may exist in their records.

Another fruitful area of study would be a comparative analysis of B.A.’s work in relation to other early Native photographers such as, George Hunt (Kwakwaka’wakw), Louis Shotridge (Tlingit), George Johnston (Tlingit), Daniel Quedessa (Makah) and Shobid Hunter (Makah).²³¹ This examination would provide a wider context from which to understand the ways in which photography was used by Native people as a method of

²²⁸ No Author. *The Center for Wooden Boats*. < www.cwb.org/BoatDatabaseRowboats.htm > (6 September 2006).

²²⁹ Ibid.

²³⁰ Sidney’s sister Elizabeth (née Campbell) Sumner was Solomon Guthrie’s grandmother. Myranell Bergtold, Personal Interview, Metlakatla, Ak., 26 May 2006

²³¹ For more information on Daniel Quedessa and Shobid Hunter, see Carolyn J. Marr, “On Interpreting Native American Photographs of the Southern Northwest Coast,” *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* (April 1989), 52 – 61.

recording family histories. It would also be useful in exploring the climate of reception and demand for their work in general.

I anticipate that my work on these areas will be able to expand upon, and contribute to the work of scholars such as Victoria Wyatt (1989, 1991, 1993), Margaret Blackman (1982), Martha Black (1992), Carolyn Marr (1989, 1990, 1996) and Carol Williams (2003) on the role of photography of and by Native people on the Northwest Coast. Clearly, it is premature to speculate where these and other areas of research will lead as they are rich and full of potential in their contribution to the study of the Northwest Coast and related fields.

As I have stated throughout this thesis, my aspiration for my work is that it should empower my community's perspectives on our history and contribute to the wider recognition of the long-standing Tsimshian traditions in Metlakatla. I am indebted to, and thankful for, the resolve of B.A. and many others of his generation, and of my great-grandmother's, and grandmother's generation, to have been offered this extraordinary opportunity (Figure 41).

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APPENDIX 1

LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM METLAKATLA INDIAN COMMUNITY

BREB CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

APPENDIX 2

RULES FOR METLAKATLA, BC

DECLARATION OF RESIDENTS, METLAKATLA, ALASKA

Rules for Metlakatla, BC

1. To give up their "Ahlied," or Indian devilry
2. To cease calling on "Shamans," or Medicine Men, when sick
3. To cease gambling.
4. To cease giving away property for display.
5. To cease painting their faces.
6. To cease indulging in intoxicating drinks.
7. To rest on the Sabbath.
8. To attend religious instruction.
9. To send their children to school.
10. To be cleanly.
11. To be industrious.
12. To be peaceful.
13. To be liberal and honest in trade.
14. To build neat houses.
15. To pay the village tax.

- From Jay Miller, *Tsimshian Culture: A Light Through the Ages* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 170.

Declaration of Residents

We, the people of Metlakatla, Alaska, in order to secure ourselves and our posterity the blessing of a Christian home, do severally subscribe to the following rules and regulations of our conduct and town affairs:

1. To reverence the Sabbath, and to refrain from all unnecessary secular work on that day; to attend divine worship; to take the holy bible for our rule of faith; to regard all true Christians as our brethren; and to be truthful, honest, and industrious.
2. To be faithful and loyal to the Government and laws of the United States.
3. To render our votes, when called upon, for the election of Town Council, and promptly to obey the by-laws and orders imposed by the Council.
4. To attend to the education of our children, and keep them at school, as regularly as possible.
5. To totally abstain from all intoxicants and gambling and never to attend heathen festivities, or to countenance heathen customs in other villages.
6. To strictly carry out all sanitary regulations, necessary for the health of our town.
7. To identify ourselves with the progress of this settlement, and to utilize the land we hold.
8. To never alienate, give away, or sell our land, or building lots, to any person or persons who have not subscribed to these rules.

- From Edward Delor Kohlstedt, *William Duncan, Founder and Developer of Alaska's Metlakatla Christian Mission* (Palo Alto: The National Press, 1957), 47-48.

APPENDIX 3
ILLUSTRATIONS



Figure 1. My Gram, Corrine Reeve (née Lang) at four years old in front of her home in Metlakatla, Alaska. This picture was taken in 1928 by B.A. Haldane for my great-grandmother Cora Lang (née Brendible).

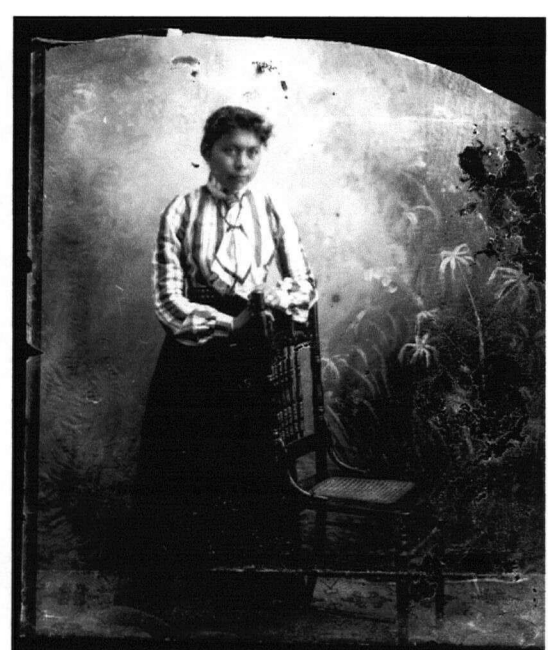
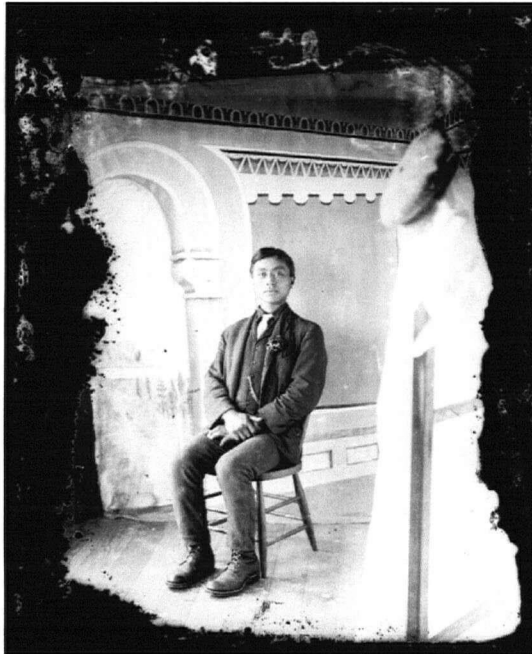


Figure 2. Four examples from the one hundred and sixty-three of B.A.'s glass plate negatives salvaged by Dennis Dunne in 2003. They are currently housed at the Tongass Historical Museum in Ketchikan, Alaska.

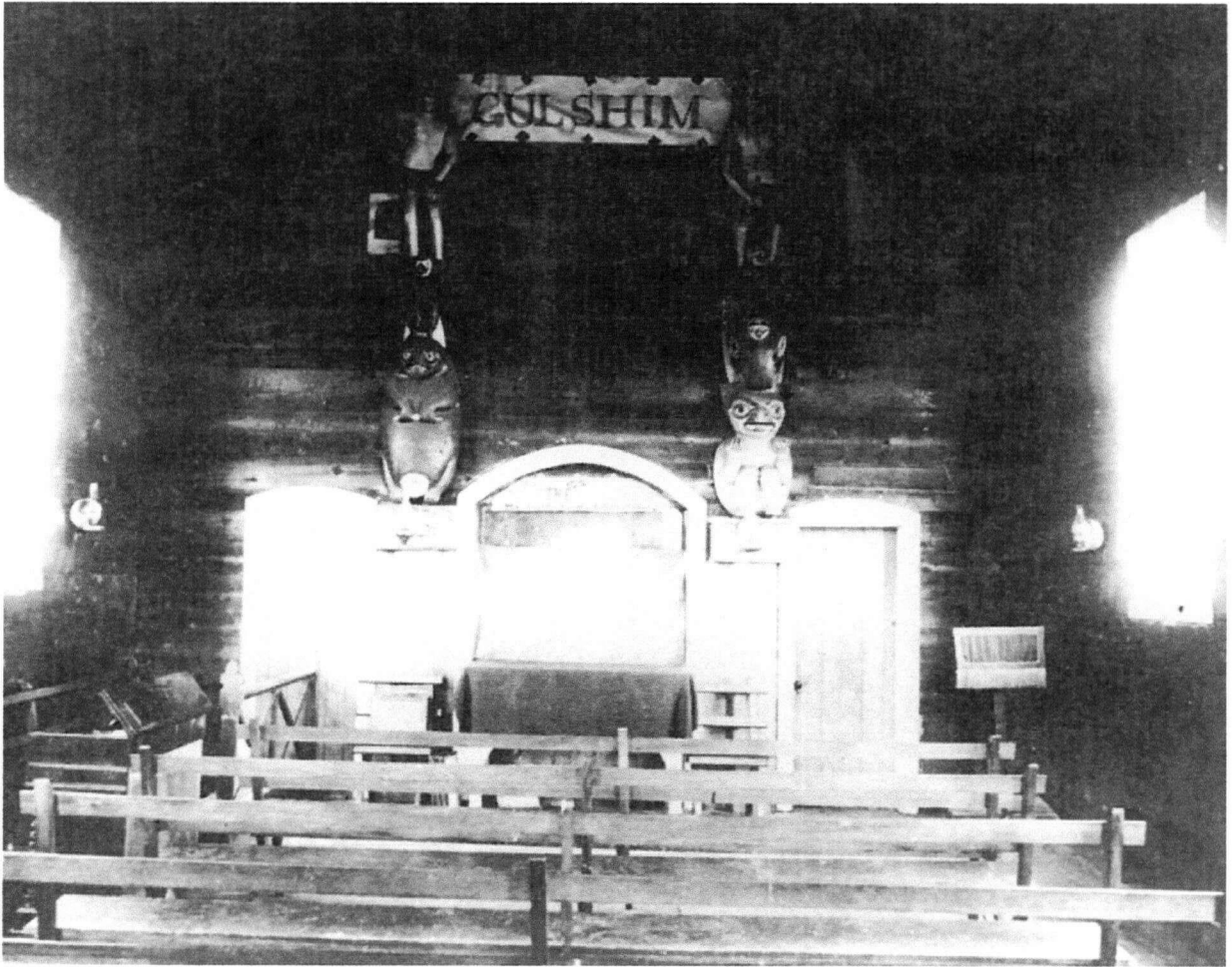


Figure 3. Interior of Church Metlakatla, BC. from Jay Miller, *Tsimshian Culture: A Light Through the Ages* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997) 142.



Figure 4. "Metlakatla Band in uniforms, 1890." No. 688, Duncan Cottage Photograph Collection, ca. 1857-1916; Alaska State Library, Juneau, Alaska
In the documentation accompanying this image, B.A. Haldane is identified as the third person from the left, next to him is Alfred Gordon, Sr., and John Hudson.



- Detail of B.A. from Figure 4.



Figure 5. ARC#297271, Sir Henry Wellcome Collection, 1856-1936; National Archives-Pacific Alaska Region. (hereafter cited as Wellcome Collection)

Accompanying this image was a hand written note by the late Ira Booth, one of our most respected elders and community historians. He identified these men as: (left to right) Paul Mather, Robert Ridley, unknown, Moses Hewson, Solomon Dundas, Benjamin Dundas, Sam Eaton, George Eaton, Alfred Gordon, unknown and B.A. Haldane holding the clarinet.



Figure 6. "Sawmill and Cannery, Kasaan, Alaska. Taken by B.A. Haldane of Metlakahtla, Alaska, 1905," ARC#297380, Wellcome Collection.



Figure 7. "School at Kasaan, Alaska. Taken by B.A. Haldane, 1905," ACR#297665, Wellcome Collection.



Figure 8. "Part of Metlakahtla Orchestra." ACR #297982, Wellcome Collection. A copy of this image is also in the Tongass Historical Museum in Ketchikan, Alaska (Print #2003.2.49) under the title "William Duncan's Christian Church Choir - 1909" with the following list of names:

Back row (left to right): Abe Nelson, Rose Baines, Jessie Atkinson, Agnes Buxton, Lilly Benson, Lydia Pawsey, B. Dundas, J. Buxton,

Center row: R. Gordon, E. Webster, M. Allen, E. Mather, S. Hayward, J. Hayward, H.J. Hamilton, R. Murchison, Mary Hudson, Sarah Lang*, M. Ridley, Martha Haldane (B.A.'s wife), M. Maitland, Matthew Eaton, George Eaton

Front row: R. Ridley, Solomon Dundas, L. Peebles, Martha Leask, Walt. Calvert, Fred Verney, John Hudson Frank Hamilton (bass) J. Baines, M. Hewson, Alf Gordon (violins) B. A. Haldane (Conductor) S. Campbell (clarinet), B. Simpson (trumpet), Paul Mather (baritone), John Hayward (trombone)

*Sarah Lang is my great-great grandmother.

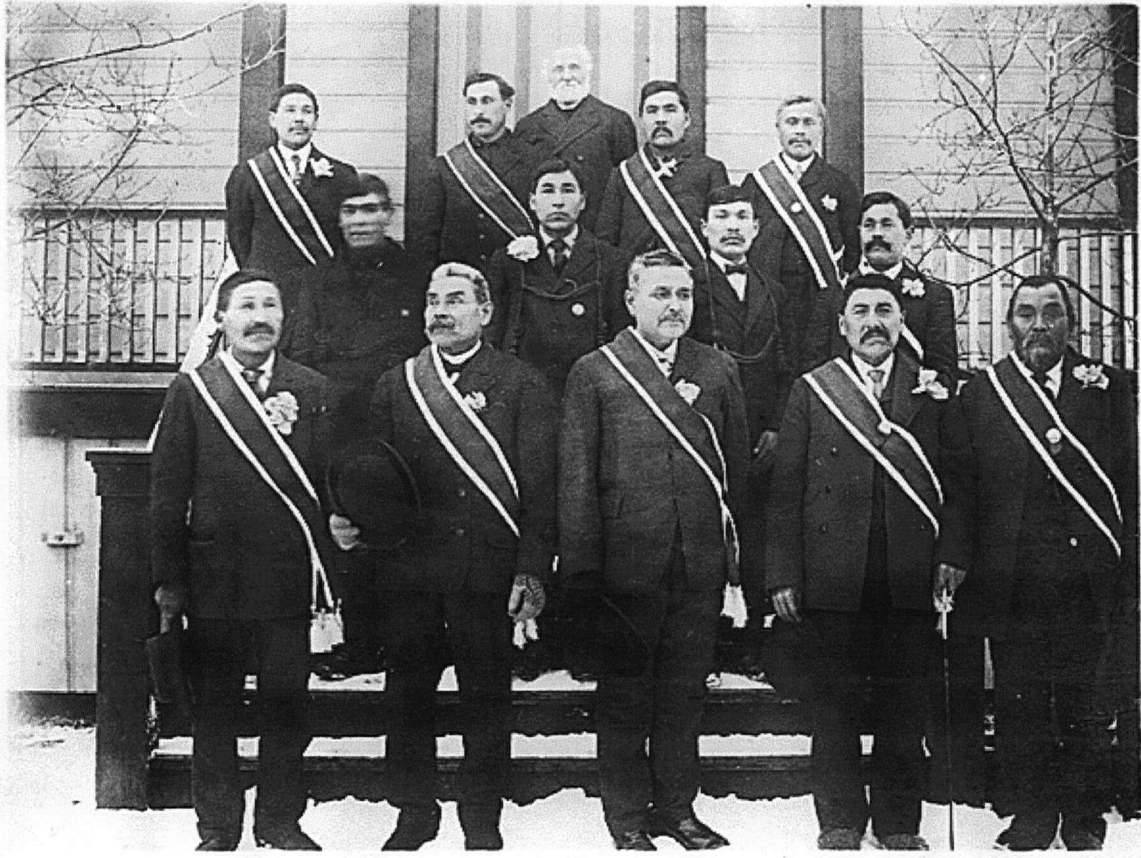


Figure 9. Councilmen of Metlakatla, Alaska, 1913, ARC #297659, Wellcome Collection.

Back row: Fred Verney, Charles Brendible*, William Duncan, Jacob Scott, and Frank Allen.

Center row: James Leask, Paul Mather, B.A. Haldane, Edmund Verney.

Front row: Sam Auriol, Sidney Campbell, Mark Hamilton, Adolphus Calvert and Henry Ridley Sr.

*Charles Brendible is my great-great grandfather



Figure 10. Above ARC #297465, Below ARC # 297474,
Wellcome Collection.





Figure 11. "Hamilton and Simpson Sawmill, Port Gravina, Alaska. Taken by B.A. Haldane of Metlakatla, Alaska, 1895," ARC#297380, Wellcome Collection.



Figure 12. "Peter Williams, Thlinket (Tlingit) Indian at Metlakatla. Later removed to Ketchikan, Alaska. Taken by B.A. Haldane, 1894." ACR#297517, Wellcome Collection.



Figure 13. "Mr. Johnson, Thlinket (Tlingit) from Ketchikan, Alaska. Taken by B.A. Haldane 1895," ACR# 297514, Wellcome Collection.



Figure 14. "Starsh" Thlinket (Tlingit) Indian of Saxman, Alaska. Taken by B.A. Haldane, 1897." ACR# 297529, Wellcome Collection.



Figure 15. Family Portrait ca. 1910. ACR# 297620, Wellcome Collection. I have identified the man in this image as Matthew Eaton (see Figure 8).



Figure 16. "George McKay. Thlinket (Tlingit) Indian of Ketchikan, Alaska. Taken by B.A. Haldane, 1899." ARC# 29751, Wellcome Collection.

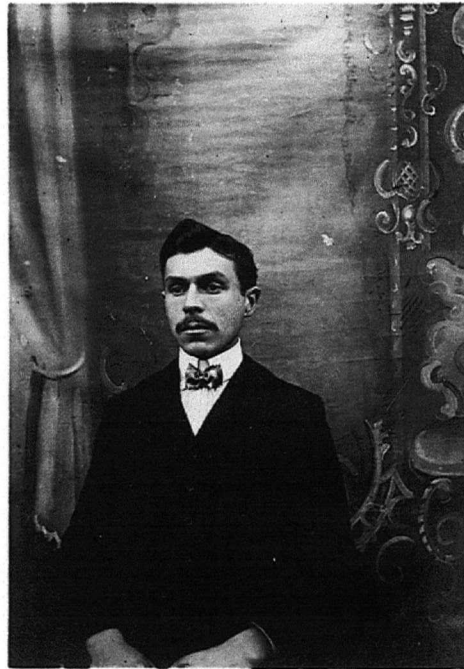


Figure 17. "Louie Jones. Haidah (Haida) Indian of Kasaan, Alaska. Taken by B.A. Haldane, 1905." ARC 297518, Wellcome Collection.



Figure 18. "David Kininnook of Saxman, Alaska. Taken by B.A. Haldane, 1907." ARC#297521, Wellcome Collection.



Figure 19. "Frederic Ridley, Metlakatla, Alaska. Carpenter who built the Girls' Home. Taken by B.A. Haldane." ARC# 297527, Wellcome Collection.



Figure 20. "George Hamilton, Haidah (Haida) from Howkan, Alaska. Taken by B.A. Haldane, 1906." ARC# 297515, Wellcome Collection.



Figure 21. Nisga'a family, *Laxgaltisap* (Greenville B.C.), 1903. #PN 16970, Royal British Columbia Museum.



Figure 22. Chief James Skean and his family, *Gitlakdamiks* (Aiyansh B.C.), 1914, PN 4330, Royal British Columbia Museum.



Figure 23. Chief James Skean, *Gitlakdamiks* (Aiyansh B.C.), 1914, #PN 4329, Royal British Columbia Museum.



Figure 24. "Group in native dress taken on occasion of Edward Marsden's wedding day at Metlakahtla." ACR# 297646, Wellcome Collection.

Left to right: "Solomon Burton, Henrietta Dundas, Alice Mather, Mrs. Adam Gordon Sr., Mrs. Edward Chalmers."

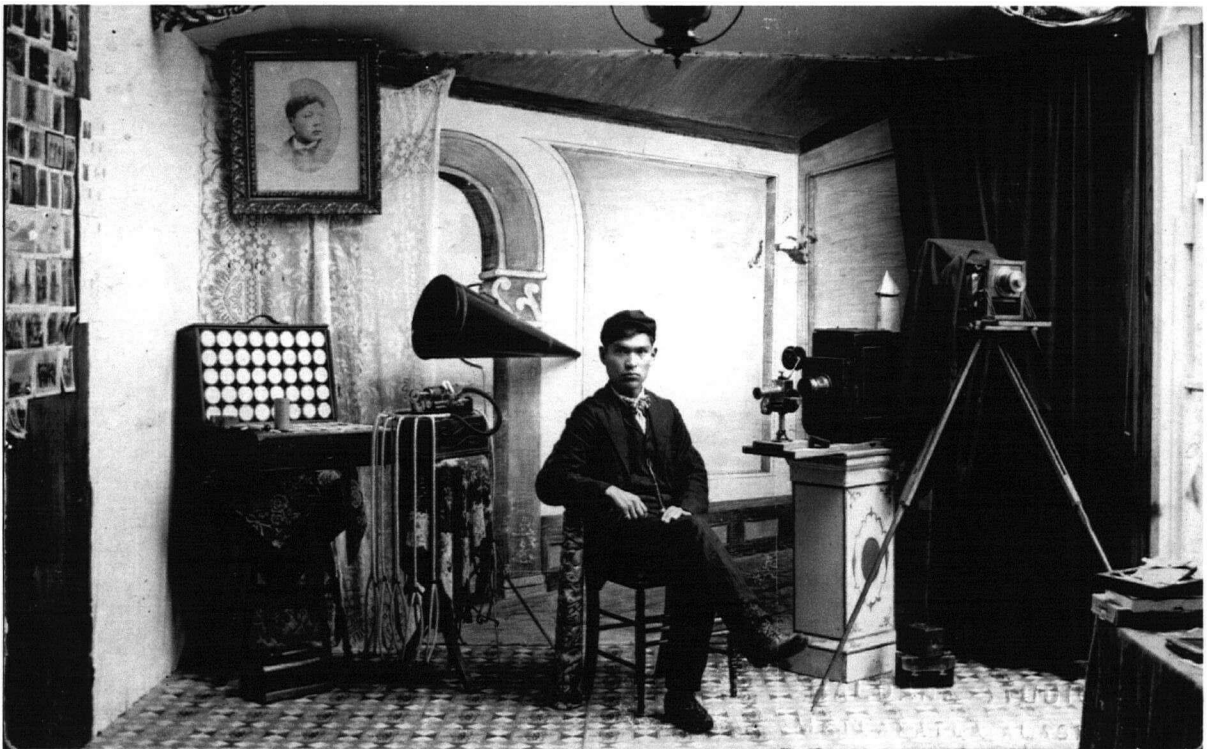
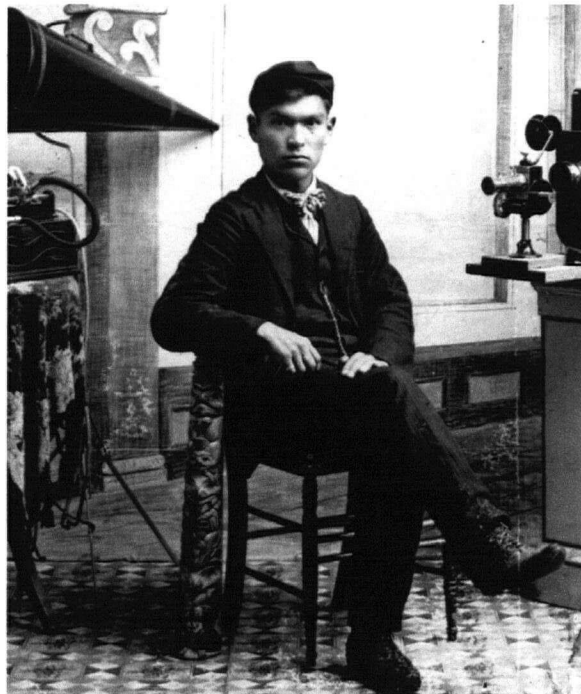


Figure 25: B.A self-portrait inside his studio. #88.1.71.2, Tongass Historical Museum, Ketchikan Alaska.



- Detail of Figure 25.



Figure 26. Young girls with model totem pole.
ARC#297489, Wellcome Collection.



Figure 27. Boy wearing button robe and holding a paddle.
ARC#297489, Wellcome Collection.



Figure 28.B.A and Martha Haldane's home ca. 1909. The funerary monument is in the lower right corner. From John W. Arctander, *The Apostle of Alaska: The Story of William Duncan of Metlakahtla* (New York: Fleming H. Revel Company, 1909), 302.



Figure 29. Sidney Campbell posed with his totem pole in Metlakatla, Alaska, ca. 1905. Image from glass plate negative, William Duncan Memorial Church Archives, Metlakatla, Alaska.



Figure 30. Sidney Campbell totem poles, Ketchikan, Alaska ca. 1935.
#9270-039, Alaska State Library, Juneau, Alaska.



Figure 31. The sign between the totem poles reads, "These Totems were carved by Chief Neesh-Loot and his Native Tribesmen." # 9270-039, Alaska State Library, Juneau, Alaska.



Figure 32. Sidney Campbell and Viola Garfield, ca. 1930.
#UW28374Z, University of Washington Libraries, Seattle.



Figure 33. Sidney Campbell and Josephine (Hewson) Hayward, ca. 1930.
#NA3546. University of Washington Libraries, Seattle.



Figure 34. Sidney Campbell's model totem poles in his family's collection
in Metlakatla, Alaska 2006.

Owners: model totem pole on left - Sol and Tamara Guthrie,
Center - Delbert Dunn Jr., right - Myranell Bergtold.



Figure 35. Sidney Campbell is identified as the fourth man from the left in a hand written note by "M. W. Minthorn, 1926." I have identified Paul Mather (first man on the left), George Eaton (on the left of Sidney), and B. Simpson (last man on the right).



Figure 36. Sidney Campbell, ca. 1880.
#PCA 43 -28, Alaska State Library, Juneau.



Figure 37. Joseph Hayward, Metlakatla, Alaska ca. 1920.
#NA3456, University of Washington Libraries, Seattle. This image was part
of an album of images from B.A.'s studio.



Figure 38. Haida Argillite Carver, John Robson having his portrait taken in B.A.'s Studio with his tools and artwork. Image from glass plate negative, Duncan Church Archives, Metlakatla, Alaska.



Figure 39. My family's portrait taken in B.A.'s studio, ca. 1920. My great-great Grandparents - Sarah and Charles Brendible (seated), Evelyn Evans (child), Minnie and James Evans (couple on the left), my great grandmother – Cora (Brendible) Lang, her brother - Charles Brendible Jr.



Figure 40. Interior of Davis Boat Shop. A bentwood chest, three model houses, and several paddles are shown on the left side of this image. ARC#297672, Wellcome Collection.



Figure 41. B.A. with his camera, ca. 1925.
Collection of his grandson, Francis Haldane.