

**Ethnographic Overview of Stó:lō People and the  
Traditional Use of the Hudson's Bay Company Brigade Trail Area**

Brian Thom, Anthropologist  
Stó:lō Nation

with Appendix by Kenneth Favrholt, Historian  
Favrholt and Associates

Prepared for Chilliwack Forest District, Ministry of Forests  
For Contract No. 12015-20/CS96DCK-002

August 1995

## *ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS*

This study, which has been prepared to be used in the development of the Hudson's Bay Company Heritage Trail Management Plan, has been made possible with the generous support of the Chilliwack Forest District. Sharon Hadway of the Chilliwack Forest District initiated the project and coordinated the completion of the contract. The Chilliwack Forest District kindly provided maps and a Ministry of Forests vehicle for a visit to Manson's camp at the trail head.

Keith Carlson, historian at Stó:lō Nation provided invaluable historical information during his research at the Hudson's Bay Company Archives in Winnipeg. Mr. Carlson led the initial research into this topic, and helped make all parties aware of the importance of this Heritage Trail to the Stó:lō people.

Stó:lō Elders Harold Wells, and Tilly and Alan Guterrez gave me their time and knowledge about history and culture. These elders were patient through my sometimes frustrating interviews about names they could not recall, and places they had not recently visited. The words of Elder Frank Pat which were recorded on audio tape by Sonny McHalsie in 1988 also added much to the project. The participation of these elders connects the heritage of the past to people living today.

The interest and support of the Stó:lō Nation, and in particular Grand Chief Clarence Pennier, Sonny McHalsie and Gordon Mohs has enabled this kind of research to take place. It is through their wisdom and foresight that much of this heritage is being recorded and shared with the non-Native community.

## *INTRODUCTION*

The western portion of the Hudson's Bay Company Brigade Trail which connected Fort Hope and the Fraser Valley to the interior region of British Columbia extends through part of the eastern edge of traditional Stó:lō territory. The trail and the surrounding territories have historical and cultural significance to Stó:lō people. The Stó:lō people live west of the Cascade Range along the watershed of the Fraser River. The oral traditions of the Stó:lō people speak of their living in this land from time immemorial. Today, Stó:lō people have an active interest in preserving their heritage for future generations and sharing it with non-Stó:lō communities. This project is part of that sharing.

This paper gives an overview of who the Stó:lō people are and illustrates what the traditional lifeways of the people living in the area at the western terminus of the Hudson's Bay Company Brigade Trail were like in the first half of the 19th century. The oral traditions that Stó:lō Elders carry today connect them to the land and the history of the region. Remembrances of Stó:lō Elders who have lived in the area illustrate further the continuing traditional importance of this area to the Stó:lō people.

## *STÓ:LŌ PEOPLE AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO THE LAND*

The Stó:lō people who live at the upper end of the Fraser Valley and in the Fraser Canyon are collectively known in Halq'eméylem at the "Tait" people. The Tait live in villages from Seabird Island in the Upper Fraser Valley to Sawmill Creek in the Fraser Canyon. The centre of the economy of the Tait people is the fishery in the Fraser Canyon. Each summer and fall, millions of salmon spawn up the Fraser River and pass through the narrow, rocky, turbulent Fraser Canyon. Almost every rock and eddy marks a fishing location owned by a family. Dip net platforms and gill nets have traditionally been set out into the Fraser River to harvest the salmon. Fish drying racks line the banks of the Fraser River preserving many of the fish caught for the winter months.

## *HALQ'EMÉYLEM PLACE NAMES*

Place names in the Halq'eméylem language mark an important relationship to the land. Halq'eméylem place names give the land a voice through the meaning of the names and the stories that are associated with them. Many geographical features and areas, as well as villages and sacred spots, have Halq'eméylem names associated with them. The map in Figure 1 (see end of report) indicates the names which have been recorded for the area around the Hudson's Bay Company Brigade Trail. Many of the names which are known by the Elders have not yet been recorded, and this work is ongoing. Access to the Hudson's Bay Company Brigade Trail provides further wilderness areas which can be visited by Elders and researchers while recording these things.

As mentioned above, many important elements of Stó:lō traditional culture can be found through place names. Of most significance to the present-day Hudson's Bay Company Brigade Trail are the place names for the features and locations which can be seen from the trail area. The Halq'eméylem language is spoken fluently by very few people today, and many of the names have been lost. Much of this language loss is due to the assimilation process, particularly that of the residential schools, where children were forbidden for speaking their language. The map shown in

Figure 1 (see end of report) lists all of the known place names in the region. Below each of these names is defined and the stories connected with them mentioned. Much of this information was first recorded by Brent Galloway in 1976 and is one file at the Stó:lō Nation.

**Ai-hyen** (village) - No meaning for this word has been obtained. This name is indicated on the map made by George Gibbs in 1858 for the U.S. Boundary Survey.

**Áthelets** (valley) - The word means "bottom". A small valley at the old Othello RR stop. It was an excellent berry gathering ground and had lots of game.

**Ee-shal-lul-lum** or **Yusóló:luk** (mountain peak) - *McLeod Peak* - Ee-shal-lul-lum was taken from George Gibbs 1858 U.S. Boundary Survey map. Elders suggested that this would properly be said Yusóló:luk, and that Gibbs wrote the word wrong. This word means "two-headed" and refers to the two-headed mountain.

**Iwówes** (village) - *Aywanwis Indian Reserve No. 15* - Literal meaning not recorded. During the high waster times this was the place to catch spring salmon. At this time the water rushes through the rocks and down over the sand bar between the island and Iwówes.

**Kawkawa** or **Q'áwq'ewem** (lake) - *Kawkawa Lake* - Home of loons. There were two loons who lived here: q'ewq'weelacha and q'ewq'ewelot. When you passed by Kawkawa Lake you had to name yourself. There are many stories about Kawkawa Lake. There is a story of the sxwayxwey mask, the story of how the trail was made from the lake to the river. On the north side of the lake there are bluffs. It was here that a young man jumped into the lake. He dropped way down to the bottom and landed on a pit house. One lady once saw lights from this pit house. She was travelling by on a frozen, wintery night. She saw a faint light, like a glowing campfire, coming from way below the icy water. It was remembered that when the whites put in the dam, it ruined the salmon run of the Coquihalla. The lake was one of the few places where the Stó:lō caught Kokanee.

**Kw'ikwi'yá:la** (rock in river) - This word means "stingy container" from skw'ikw'i (y) - "stingy", t-ale or t-ala = "container, place". Refers to black-haired, dark-skinned water babies about 2 ft. tall that lived in a pool at this spot. At the first wooden bridge across the Coquihalla there was a deep pool where these water babies lived. This was also a good pool for suckerfish which were fished with spears. The water babies, however, were stingy with the fish and would pull on the spears making it difficult to catch any fish. There were two other pools further up the Coquihalla where the water babies lived. The water babies left when the whites came around too much and they are no longer found there. It is also important to note that this is where the word "Coquihalla", now applied to a river, a valley, a highway, a toll booth and a number of other things, comes from. Many Elders have commented on the misuse of this word by non-Natives. Such appropriation of Halq'eméylem terms without consideration to their meaning and proper use indicates, in part, the lack of respect for Aboriginal culture and world view.

**Lexwtl'atl'ekwèm** (village) - *Klaklacum Indian Reserve No. 12* - The meaning of the name has to do with how the waters of the Fraser River come down through the rapids here, and make a series of peaked waves.

**Lhitheltalets** (village) - The name is from "lhaltem" which means "spray" because creek forms an island in front during the high water time. The river water comes against this and causes a spray. There was a village, a church, and lots of gardens here at one time. The church still remains. In former times there were many pit houses here also, but these got washed away in the flood.

**Nica-lá-owm** (river) - *Nicolum Creek* - This name was recorded by A.C. Anderson during his 1846 journey to establish a bridge trail through the Cascade Range. No meaning has been obtained.

**Nuk-a-lah-woom** (mountain) - This refers to a peak lying southwest of the headwaters of the Nicolum and Sumallo Rivers. This name is indicated on the map made by George Gibbs in 1858 for the U.S. Boundary Survey. No meaning has been obtained.

**Qemqemō** (mountain peak) - *Mt. Ogilvie* - The word means "breasts" and refers to the peak on Mt. Ogilvie.

**Quiqemqemel** (village) - The word has a double meaning, "tide", and "a little bay". At this site there was a small inlet where the river water would flow in and out like a tide. This was once a large pit house village.

**Schkam** (village) - *Schkam Indian Reserve No. 2* - The word means "calm water", or just "calm".

**Skhâ-ist** (peak) - This refers to the peak between Mt. Ford and Mt. Dewdney. It was called such by the Aboriginal guide of A.C. Anderson, on his 1846 journey to establish a brigade trail through the Cascade Range. Anderson records this word as meaning "a peak standing between two ridges". In Halq'eméylem this word for this would be Kw'kwas "poking out".

**Semall-á-ow** (river) - *Sumallo River* - This word was given to A.C. Anderson by his Aboriginal guide in his 1846 journey to establish a brigade trail through the Cascade Range. This is not a Halq'eméylem word. It is likely that the guide was Nlaka'pamux.

**Skōkel** (river) - *Sowaqua Creek* - The word means "loon".

**Stámiya** (mountain) - *Hope Mountain* - The word means "hermaphrodite", but no one was sure how it got his name.

**Ts'qó:ls** (village) - *Hope Indian Reserve No. 1* - Names comes from "bare, skinned rocks" (ts'eq - bare, skinned off), because most of the rocks in the Fraser here are bare of moss. This was a large village with many pit houses.

**Welk'ámex** (village) - *Greenwood Island Indian Reserve No. 3* - Literal meaning not recorded. This was a village site with many pit houses. One side of the island there was a cemetery. By 1860 there were only a few pit houses left though there were some gardens. The cemetery contained tombs where bodies were wrapped. As the water rose in the 1894 flood, the tombs were vacated and the bodies moved to Union Bar, American Bar, and Katz, and Squatets so that they would not be washed away.

**Wowés** (village) - Literal meaning not recorded. In the middle of the river, just across the Wowés

there is a large back eddy where in the fall hundreds of geese would land while on migration. It was often used as a hunting place.

**Xwyó:qwem** (village) - The sand bar along this place was such a good place for salmon that the dead fish from here and the ones that had spawned, floated down stream, and washed up on this bar and would give off a stench that could be smelled way up on the mountain. The meaning of the name has to do with the smell of the dead fish.

**Wha-whilt-sun** (creek) - No meaning for this word has been obtained. It was recorded in the 1878 Minutes of Decision regarding the size of Indian Reserves in the Fraser Valley.

These place names, their meanings, and the stories attached to them communicate much of the history, beliefs and traditions of the Stó:lō people. Knowing these names gives a different cultural landscape to the one which has been largely denied by the non-Native community.

#### *TRADITIONAL SETTLEMENTS IN THE COQUIHALLA REGION*

As can be seen in the map in Figure 1, there are 10 traditional villages in the area around Hope and the Coquihalla River. These villages were all occupied at sometime in the past 150 years. Archaeological evidence indicates that the specific location of these settlements has changed over long periods of time, but that the occupation of the area reaches far back into antiquity. The density of traditional villages and archaeological sites in the area at or near the mouth of the Coquihalla River indicates the importance of this region to the lifeways of Stó:lō people.

However, there are no villages recorded for the upper Coquihalla River area, further east than Kawkawa Lake. Although inventories have been limited and much of the level areas have been disturbed by roads, no archaeological sites have been recorded in this area<sup>1</sup>. In this region Stó:lō villages were generally near or on the Fraser River. With the excellent fishery available on the Fraser River in the area around the mouth of the Coquihalla River, there was no need to establish communities at any great distance from this resource.

#### *TRADITIONAL USE OF THE COQUIHALLA REGION*

The Coquihalla River area was used for hunting, fishing and gathering rather than an area of settlement. Individuals and families travelled from their villages on the Fraser River at various times of the year up into the Coquihalla Valley and camped for a few days while doing their activities.

##### *Hunting and Traditional Use of the Coquihalla Region*

Although the mountain slopes may have been good for hunting some game, the Coquihalla

---

<sup>1</sup> K. Bernick did a preliminary inventory of some of the area for the Westcoast Transmission Pipeline loop survey in 1978. She observed that "No indicators of conflicts with heritage resources were noted". In a letter written in 1980, R. Kenny of the Archaeology Branch suggested that the area of the Coquihalla Highway in the Peers Creek portion of the valley "is of low potential for containing [archaeological] remains". The only archaeological site recorded in the immediate area of the trail is the route itself, designated DiRh 1. Both documents on file at Stó:lō Nation, Sardis.

Valley east of Kawkawa Lake was frequently considered too far away from settlements to bring the game back to the village. Stó:lō people have long been a largely sedentary people. Their journeys into distant areas for hunting would have been limited, unlike their neighbours to the interior who led much less sedentary lives. However, some hunting by Stó:lō people likely did occur in this area. While discussing this area with elders Tilly and Alan Gutierrez, they did talk about a great hunter who got game for the Stó:lō people from this region and gave it all away:

TG: That man up there. That's Yō:a'la.

BT: You know his name?!

TG: Yea, that's what dad calls him, Yō:a'la...

AG: That's one of our last great hunters. And he didn't hunt for himself, he hunted for the people. He was the last hunter. Yō:a'la. He was a guide for the white man whenever they wanted to go up the mountain.

TG: He used to hunt for everybody and anybody. He had tents all along the way, dad he said. Grandpa I mean, my husband. He said that he had camps here and there. Gets down to Chilliwack and then he comes down and says "Come meet us up there."

AG: At a certain camp.

TG: Yea, well...

AG: Well they had all Indian names for the camps, and we don't know them.

TG: ... that's Yō:a'la. Yō:a'la.

BT: Yō:a'la.

TG Yea!

AG: That's the last of the great hunters, you said that. The last of the great hunters throughout here. And he hunted for the people, not for himself. But he used what he could.

TG: Yea... You know that... so he went hunting and if they wanted meat they would have to climb for it.

AG: And he would dress it and put it in a certain camp so they didn't have to look for it. They know where to go.

BT: And he would provide that for the people, just give it away?

TG: Yea!...

AG: They would get it themselves. They would go up and get it. It was theirs.

TG: ... wanted it they had to climb for it. He hunted for it, you know, and left it up there. If anybody wanted it they had to climb up there. That was neat.

These Elders also suggested that Yō:a'la may also be "Blackeye", the Similkameen hunter who guided A.C. Anderson out of the Punch Bowl and onto "Blackeye's Portage" which leads up to Kamloops.

The only direct account Stó:lō participation in hunting along the Hudson's Bay Company Brigade Trail regard obtaining birds for roasting on the journey. During H. Spencer Palmer's 1860 expedition to the country between Fort Hope and Fort Colville, he travelled along the Hudson's Bay Company Brigade Trail with some Aboriginal guides from the Fraser River, likely Stó:lō people. On his arrival at Campment de Chevreuil he states:

Its name is likely to disappoint the expectations of the hungry traveller, as deer are

very scarce, but white ptarmigan [sic] abound, and some of these birds which were shot by our Indians and broiled over the camp fire, made an excellent supper after our weary day's march<sup>2</sup>.

Specific to the Peers Creek area, which the western portion of the Hudson's Bay Company Heritage Trail passes through, elder Frank Pat recalled having no success hunting in the area during the middle of the 20th century:

Back in that mountain, that high one here, the next one. You can go way back there [into the Peers Creek Valley], I don't know how many miles, and there's nothing up there. Not even an animal. No deer. Not even a goat. I seen one, one time. It was George Kane, Clarence and I. We went way back in there one summer. Then it [the H.B.C. Trail] was just like a wagon road... We were looking around, you see. George Kane wanted to see the country up that way. Whether he had memories or not I don't know because he was way old then. So we were glad to go up there with him.

From the accounts collected, it would seem that these trails did not play a very important role in Stó:lō life for hunting, in the past 80 years or so. This function would have been much more important for their neighbours the Nlaka'pamux and the Similkameen, with whom the Stó:lō had relations. Stó:lō involvement in Hudson's Bay Company employment required them to use their hunting skills in the region. In his journal written during an brigade trail exploration trip in 1846, Anderson notes that Aboriginal people hunted beaver in this area to supply the Forts. By 1846 much of the beaver appeared to be gone. Changes in the amount of game in the area after more intensive resource extraction by non-natives also appeared to limit the hunting that occurred along the trail by Stó:lō people.

#### *Fishing and Traditional Use of Coquihalla Region*

A major run of Steelhead goes up the Coquihalla River each fall. However, Stó:lō people tend to prefer salmon species other than steelhead and did not have a fishery to harvest this run. Kawkawa Lake, a small lake at the lower reaches of the Coquihalla River, has Kokanee which were taken in the late fall and either eaten fresh or smoked. Urban development in this area has prevented this fishery from continuing. Elder Harold Wells from Union Bar recalled fishing in Kawkawa Lake:

As far as the fishing goes, the only fishing I got involved with wasn't actually up there [at the mouth of Peers Creek], it was at Kawkawa Lake. There's three little streams that come in at the head of the lake there. And the Kokanee used to go up in there. And my brother-in-law used to go over there and catch the odd one, you know, take it home, and eat him. [Looks at map of Kawkawa Lake - it doesn't show the streams]. It's all built in now. And the old people, they used to go in there and catch the... they were plentiful then, the Kokanee was plentiful then, and get in a good supply and smoke them and then take them home and they

---

<sup>2</sup> Palmer, H.S. RE, "Report on the country between Fort Hope and Fort Colville," in *Papers Relative to the Affairs of British Columbia*, London, 1859-1862, part III.

had them for the winter. [The old people] used to get their winter supply after they'd smoked them. When my brother-in-law used to go up there, it wasn't that built up. There was one... I think there was a resort there at that time. That was the only thing that was down there. Then people moved in and built summer homes.

The lower reaches of the Hudson's Bay Company Brigade Trail in the Coquihalla Valley did provide some fine fishing locations. The present-day designated portion of the trail, however, was not likely regularly used for fishing.

### *Berry Picking and Traditional Use of Coquihalla Region*

The vegetation of the Coquihalla River valley has been the most important economic resource of the area. Many elders from the Tait area recall going to the Coquihalla to pick berries. The following is an account of Elder Harold Wells talking with Brian Thom and Keith Carlson about picking huckleberries (*kwxwó:méls*) far up in the Coquihalla Valley:

BT: And how about berries and things? Did you get most of those off the local area, or did you ever go up to the Coquihalla?

HW: We used to hop the freight in Hope and go up the Coquihalla to pick the huckleberries up there. I guess it would be about this time of year [middle of August].

BT: Hop a freight? So there was a train that goes up the...

HW: Yea, yea. The old railway. The Kettle Valley.

KC: How far up did you go berry picking?

HW: There is a couple of lakes there, at the Coquihalla. The berries were right along-side the track. You didn't have that far to go to get them.

KC: Do you know how far up the Coquihalla it went though? You said it was right by a lake?

HW: Yea. There's two little lakes right at the top. It would be up by the [present-day] toll booth. The present highway goes right through the biggest part of the berry patch. Wiped it out completely.

KC: What kind of berries were they?

HW: Huckleberries! The blue and the red. You could get the red ones too, but then we had a preference for the blue.

BT: Who would go up there? You and your family...

HW: My brother and I. The Indians used to come in from Merrit. And there was some way they used to get in there with a wagon, you know... a horse and wagon. We'd pick them and head back home again.

KC: How did you hear about it then? Was it like your grandmother or someone telling you, or the people in Merrit or...

HW: Oh, I don't know... My mother. She was aware of the huckleberries up there. She used to go up on the train. Take the passenger train and go up there. Spend a couple of days [camping] and then come back.

KC: Was there any fishing when you were up there?

HW: No. No. We never did any fishing. The nights get cold. It's cold every night on the Coquihalla. The elevation is 3600 feet. And when I was working for the rail road, we lived in Brookland, and that was 3100 feet. The elevation there is 3100 feet. And I had a pick-up,

and used to park it outside. Froze the radiator in the middle of July. Nights would get really cold.

KC: What would you guys do with the berries?

HW: Can them. bring them home and make preserves... After I was working on the rail road... I used to go o the Coquihalla picking them for pies. Just put them in a jar... don't add anything to it, just straight berries alone. And then made the pie. Sweeten up the berries.

The location near the summit of the Coquihalla was but one of a number of berrying places that have been frequented by Stó:lō people. The *kw̓wó:méls* (black mountain huckleberries - *vaccinium membranaceum*) are one of the most delicious and important berries found in the territory. One method of harvesting these berries is to rap or knock the branch and the berries would fall off. Thus the name *kw̓wó:méls* may be broken down into *kw̓wó* - 'rap, knock'; *ó:mé* - 'berry'; *-els* 'doing continuously'.

Many Stó:lō people in the 1920s and 1930s went by freight train, hopping off at the berry patches, to collect these things. Prior to the logging, road and rail building in the Coquihalla Valley, many of the other locations were utilized throughout the late summer and fall. As these berry areas continue to rejuvenate, they are becoming increasingly important to contemporary Stó:lō people.

#### STÓ:LŌ INTERREGIONAL TRADE AND INTERACTIONS

Likely the most important, historically documented use of the Hudson's Bay Company Brigade Trail for the Stó:lō people is the interregional trade network that it was a part of. Stó:lō people have had virtually all of their subsistence and ceremonial needs immediately around them - particularly those provided by the Fraser River. However, Stó:lō social life is much more complex than the relations developed in a subsistence economy. Extensive traditional trade and social networks provided Stó:lō people with access to goods and ideas from people living in other parts of western North America.

Stó:lō people were frequently visited by people from the interior regions of British Columbia to take part in trade. The interior peoples (Nlaka'pamux and Similkameen in particular), would bring goods such as buckskin, "Indian Hemp" and other plants found in the drier climates of the interior, to exchange for dried fish caught in the Fraser Canyon. These exchanges often occurred within the traditional context of feasting and potlatching. The visiting groups would give away their goods to people during a feast. In return, the hosts would thank them for their gifts with fish and other goods to take home with them. Anthropologist Marian Smith was told about one such event by an elder in the 1940's:

The Palakwa [Pilalt] and Teltit [Tait] people eat with Thompson [Nlaka'pamux] people, have a good meal, good talk and so on. The Thompson didn't want to pack any of it home. They need the horses to pack salmon. They call in the Palakwa and Teltit tsiem [siya:m - respected community leaders] to accept the leftovers... Then everyone dances fun dances... Paltutwa [sic] and Teltit people put these [dried fish] backs and heads and put them in the saddles of the Thompson people. But you can't beat them Thompson people. They're bound to give

you more...<sup>3</sup>

The opening of the Hudson's Bay Company Brigade Trail caused some concern among the Stó:lō people living on the Fraser River. This has been documented by A.C. Anderson in a letter to the dated June 23, 1846 where he recalls Blackeye informing him:

...that there exists a reluctance on the part of the Fraser's River Indians to our opening a road in this direction; from a dread of its affording facilities to the Indians of the Similkameen to make war on them.<sup>4</sup>

Although this concern was felt by the communities on the Fraser River, there is little evidence to show that the Similkameen people acted violently on the Fraser after the trail opened. If anything, the opening of the Hudson's Bay Company Brigade Trail to horses must have created a new level on intensity of trade among the Aboriginal people of the region. Many more people could have gone along these routes and more items could have been traded and brought back home, with the use of horses along them. By all accounts, it appears that the Stó:lō people were generally the hosts to these occasions. In 1860 H. Spencer Palmer of the Royal Engineers encountered some Similkameen people on horseback on the trail, and noted the absence of "Fish Indians" or people from the lower Fraser River:

We camped this evening on the left bank of the Similkameen one mile below the forks, and shortly after our arrival were visited by some of the natives of the district. These were the first mounted Indians I had met with...<sup>5</sup>

That these areas were not well known to all of the Stó:lō people living on the lower Fraser is further well documented in a series of entries in the journal of A.C. Anderson, who looked for the first Brigade trail along the Nicolum/Sumallo/Snass drainages in 1846. He hired a Stó:lō guide in Langley and one in Chilliwack who were to lead him to the other side of the mountains. While at the foot of Skhâ-ist Peak he notes:

Fell into the lass crossing with our Indian from the Forks of the Thompson River who is hunting beaver in this neighbourhood. As he appears to possess knowledge of the country superior to our other pseudo-guides (who are miserably at a loss) I have engaged him under the promise of some ammunition and some tobacco to accompany us for a day or two.<sup>6</sup>

Later while along the upper Similkameen River Anderson further notes:

---

<sup>3</sup> Smith, Marian. Field notes. MSS. Book 9, p. 41. On file at Coqualeetza Archives, Sardis.

<sup>4</sup> A.C. Anderson to the Board of Management, Fort Vancouver, June 23, 1846. MSS., BCARS.

<sup>5</sup> Palmer, Pp.82.

<sup>6</sup> Anderson, A.C. *Journal of an Expedition under the command of Alex. C. Anderson of the Hudson's Bay Company, undertaken with the view of ascertaining the practicability of a communication with the interior, for the import of annual supplies.* BCARS, MSS.

The Indians are quite at a loss as to our position, knowing nothing of the country, and puzzling themselves at the interpreter, Montiguine, with 50 silly conjectures. Sometimes supposing themselves upon a fork of the branch of the Thompson River that falls in near its junction with Fraser's River. In fact all of them appear to be much disputed.<sup>7</sup>

Finally, Anderson meets "Blackeye", an old hunter from the interior, who successfully guides them to the best trail to Fort Kamloops:

Two Indians, who prove to be old Blackeye, the Similkameen, and his son-in-law, on their way to visit their deer-snares. It [sic] appearing that we were still about 20 miles from the red-earth fork, the appointed rendezvous. The old man sent his son-in-law on horseback to have our horses brought to us, promising to guide us by a shorter and better road to fall upon the track to Kamloops.<sup>8</sup>

In 1848, James Douglas wrote a letter to James Murray Yale at Fort Langley to instruct Mr. Peers to build a Fort at the mouth of the Coquihalla to enable the brigade trail to be pushed through. Douglas, aware of the extensive use of these trails by the Aboriginal people living in the interior, instructs Yale that:

Mr. Tod [of Fort Kamloops] should send an Indian guide to meet Mr. Peers on the So-o-qua River and to conduct him there by the best route to the Similkameen valley, a part of the road that is better known to the Shushwaps than to the Indians of the Fraser River.<sup>9</sup>

Both the historical record and the Stó:lō oral traditions which talk about the use of these trails, refer to their being used by interior people to access Stó:lō communities on the Fraser, and by interior people in their hunting activity. These traditional uses of the trail connected Stó:lō people to a larger interregional social and trade network, and gave them access to prestige goods which could be exchanged for the bountiful resources of the Fraser River. It must be remembered that there are many stories that the historical record and that present-day oral traditions do not tell. The use of these trails by Stó:lō people may have been more intense, but merely poorly documented. Given that most of the lower Fraser River guides that the Hudson's Bay Company hired were from west of Chilliwack, this is quite a plausible situation. Further historical and ethnographic research may reveal more on this situation.

### *STÓ:LŌ PARTICIPATION IN THE LABOUR ECONOMY*

Once the Hudson's Bay Company Brigade Trail was put through, there became new opportunities for the involvement of Stó:lō people in the Euroamerican labour economy. Stó:lō people worked for the Hudson's Bay Company along the trail as trappers, cooks, packers, guides,

---

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Douglas to Yale. In *Fort Langley Correspondence Book. Correspondence Inward 1844-1855*. MSS. H.B.C. Archives, Winnipeg.

paddlers, and postal carriers. Stó:lō people continued to be employed on the trail after it ceased to be used by the Hudson's Bay Company by private families moving into the interior and as guides and assistants to sports hunters. These changing economic uses of the trail demonstrate the adeptness of Stó:lō people in applying their traditional practices, knowledge and skills to their advantage in the European introduced economy. These continually changing uses of the Hudson's Bay Company Brigade Trail provide it with significant heritage value to the Stó:lō people. The heritage of the mid- to late- 19th century is one which can be continually explored through projects connected with the Hudson's Bay Company Trail.

#### *RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRAIL MANAGEMENT AND FUTURE RESEARCH*

Strategies for the next state of implementation of this plan include producing brochure, signage documenting place names and stories, and an Aboriginal interpretive guide program through this part of the Hudson's Bay Company Brigade Trail. The brochure could be produced in conjunction with the Stó:lō Nation and other interested First Nations to give an idea of the complex traditional uses of the area from different perspectives. A similar or combined brochure could be produced to present a historical perspective from the point of view of the Hudson's Bay Company. Such information could be available on a rack at Manson's Camp for distribution. Signage produced in conjunction with the Stó:lō Nation and other interested First Nations could be provided at Manson's Camp, Fools Pass, Bushby Creek, O'Reily Creek, Matthew Creek, Sowaqua Crossing Campsite and Campment du Chevreuil. Cultural and historical information would also enrich the cultural landscape of the heritage trail. An interpretation program, which would offer Aboriginal guides for hikers who book ahead would provide the richest context to present the cultural and historical information. Such a program would be beneficial to First Nations communities as it would provide meaningful employment and instil pride in the cultural heritage of Aboriginal people.

Future archival and ethnographic research topics should include the investigation of the location of the Fort Hope journals and the 1849 Journal of Henry Peers. Interviews with Stó:lō Elders who have knowledge about place names, traditional use, or those who have worked and lived in the later part of the 20th century should be conducted. Research on these issues will broaden our understanding of the changing cultural landscape of the trail.

*APPENDIX 1 - HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY BRIGADE TRAIL BETWEEN HOPE AND TULAMEEN AND BEYOND.*

*By - Ken Favrholt, Historian - Favrholt and Associates*

The "Hudson's Bay Company Brigade Trail" between the present town of Hope and village of Tulameen is so-called because of its use by brigades of pack-horses that made periodic treks across the Cascade Mountains by that fur trade company between 1849 and the early 1860s.

The Hudson's Bay Company utilized a system of trails to transport fur returns from its interior posts of New Caledonia, Thompson's District and Colville districts to the coast; supplies were transported in the opposite direction from the coastal forts to the interior. Before the establishment of the boundary between British and American territories in 1846, the Hudson's Bay Company brigade trail crossed the Interior Plateau from New Caledonia to the Okanagan and down the Columbia River. Fort Vancouver was the major depot between 1845 and 1846.

The brigades consisted of strings of pack-horses, variously reported to average 200 animals in a train, each horse carrying two 90-lb. bales, and twenty men. Generally, a clerk or other officer was in charge of the annual shipment of outbound fur returns and inbound supplies. The voyageurs were French-Canadians, Kanakas (Hawaiians), Metis and Iroquois; in later years local native people were employed. A variety of goods were supplied to the forts, including guns, foodstuffs, Native trade goods and servants' requisitions. Given the number of accidents, it is possible that artifacts may be found along the steep slopes of the trail. William Yates reported that Angus McDonald transported a cannon (presumably on the back of a horse) from Fort Hope to Fort Colville.<sup>10</sup>

With the settlement of the boundary question between the United States and Great Britain along the 49th parallel, the search for an "All-British" route began Alexander Caulfield Anderson volunteered to look for a trail that would provide a connection between Kamloops (on the old brigade route through the Okanagan) and the lower Fraser Valley where Fort Langley was already established (1827). On Anderson's return trip in 1846, his party proceeded up the Coquihalla to the Nicolum River, thence down the Sumallo to Skagit River; then up the Skagit and Snass to the East Fork of the Snass to the divide to the "Punch Bowl," then down the Tulameen River to Otter Creek. At Otter Lake, Anderson met "Black-eye"<sup>11</sup> who offered to guide Anderson's party by "a better and shorter road to fall upon the track to Kamloops."

In the fall of 1848 Fort Hope was established at the mouth of the Coquahalla River and its junction with the Fraser by H.B.C. clerk Henry Newsham Peers. The name of the post refers to the "hope" that it would provide the successful outlet for the brigade route from the interior. Peers was

---

<sup>10</sup> "Reminiscences of William Yates," BCARS, in Ormsby, *A Pioneer Gentlewoman...*, p. 125.

<sup>11</sup> According to Anderson, Black-eye was "an old man" from Thompson's River (Kamloops) who informed Anderson "that there exists a reluctance on the part of the Fraser's River Indians to our opening a road in this direction; from a dread of its affording facilities to the Indians of the Similkameen to make war upon them." A.C. Anderson to the Board of Management, Fort Vancouver, June 23, 1846. MS BCARS.

responsible for locating the final route across the Cascades which incorporated part of Anderson's route along "Blackeye's trail." The section between Lodestone Lake and Campement des Femmes was described by Anderson in his 1846 Journal as "Blackeye's" Trail or portage.

The final route of the brigade trail followed the Coquihalla Valley, passing by Kawkawa Lake, to Peers Creek, up that Creek and over Manson Ridge to Sowaqua Creek and over the height of land to Podunk Creek following the left bank to the Tulameen River which was forded.<sup>12</sup>

The 1849 out-going brigade from Kamloops returned to Fort Hope, the transshipment point on the lower the Fraser River, by the old route but the return supplies were sent via Peers' trail. The new route was reported on by H.B.C. Governor Eden Colville; his report provides the first detailed chronicle of the trail:

The only difficulties to be found on this route are a range of wooded hills that lie between the Similkameen River and Fort Hope. I crossed them with loaded pack horses in three days, although the road had only been opened that season. It was through some of the heaviest timbered land I ever saw. I measured one tree that was forty-two feet in circumference, and the avoidance of such trees as had fallen across the road necessarily consumed much time.<sup>13</sup>

In fact, it took longer. Colville left Horseguard at 9 a.m. on 4 October; at 9 A.M. on 5 October "breakfasted on the main stream of the Similkameen River"; encamped on the top of the "first range of Mountains at 5 p.m.; on the 6th camped at Campement de Chevreuil (Deer Camp); on the 7th started for Hope at 6 a.m.; camped at Peer's River at 6 p.m. after crossing five times; on the 8th crossed and recrossed the Coquihalla River and arrived at Fort Hope at 10 a.m.<sup>14</sup>

Colville mentions how improvements were later made to the road; "the ascents of hills rendered less abrupt" [by zig-zags]; and "grass seeds sown at the different encampments, so as to afford an abundant supply of forage for horses. This would seem to suggest that the trail was not previously used by horses by the aboriginal people who travelled by foot.

There were five usual camps along the trail at Manson Mountain (14 miles from Hope); Campement du Chevreuil on Mt. Davis (33 miles), Horseguard [Corral] (48 miles) at the mouth of Podunk Creek, Lodestone (60 miles) and Campement des Femmes (72 miles), the present village of Tulameen, at which point the trail divided for Kamloops and Colville.

---

<sup>12</sup> For a detailed description of the trail, see Province of British Columbia, Ministry of Forests, *Hudson's Bay Company Heritage Trail Draft Management Plan February 1992*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>13</sup> E. Colville, London to the Governor, Deputy Governor and Committee of the Honble. Hudson's Bay Coy., 21st Oct. 1852.

<sup>14</sup> E. Colville, Fort Victoria to Sir J.H. Pelly, London, 15 October 1849. In *Eden Colville's Letters, 1849-52*. London: The Hudson's Bay Company Record Society, 1956, pp.3-5.

Another detailed account of the trail is provided by Lieutenant H. Spencer Palmer, RE, and Arthur Thomas Bushby, Registrar, in 1859. Other prominent members of their party included Judge Matthew Begbie, Peter O'Reilly, J.P., and Angus McDonald leading the H.B.C. brigade. As well there were a dozen Indians along.

The climb heading east up Manson Ridge was the most difficult part of the trail, involving a series of zig-zags, "very steep and rocky." As well, there was no grass for the horses of the brigade to feed on. "Horses had to be fed on barley brought for the purpose, there being no grass in the neighborhood or indeed anywhere on the mountain slopes." However, it was reported that there was water, firewood and "abundant grass in quantities sufficient to afford subsistence for horses." There was no much game but "white ptarmigan abound, shot by our Indians."<sup>15</sup>

According to Palmer, "Campement des Femmes" was so-named "from the custom prevalent among Indians en route from Fort Hope of leaving their women and children while they perform the journey across the mountains." Presumably, Palmer is referring to Indians who were employed by the Hudson's Bay Company brigades. The native name for Tulameen was *Tseistn*.<sup>16</sup> There was a report of a large cache used by the H.B.C. at the site of Tulameen.<sup>17</sup>

One of the most famous incidents on the trail was the death of Paul Fraser in July 1855 when a tree was felled by his men and landed on the tent where he was resting. He died at the site and his body was buried and marked. Palmer noted the site on his trip in 1859: "...a neat pile of rough hewn logs mark his lonely grave." According to E.P. Creech in 1941, "his grave can still be seen by the traveller."<sup>18</sup>

With the Fraser River gold rush, the trail was also used by miners en route to Kamloops. A party of 150 took the trail in the summer of 1858. "The trail is reported to be passable."<sup>19</sup>

Susan Allison in her recollections mentions her "first sight of a Hudson's Bay Brigade train coming in from Colville ... on the Hope-Similkameen trail."<sup>20</sup> It is not clear here whether she is referring to the old brigade trail or the new Hope-Similkameen Road (the Dewdney Trail). However, she also states, "In crossing the Hope Mountains the Hudson's Bay Company Brigade always took twice as many horses as were needed and went well armed. The horses were taken to enable them to

---

<sup>15</sup> Palmer, *Okanagan Historical Society, 36th Report*, pp. 17-19.

<sup>16</sup> See map in *Papers Relative to the Affairs of British Columbia*, 1859.

<sup>17</sup> "Notes and Comments", *B.C. Historical Quarterly* Vol. II, 1938, p. 303.

<sup>18</sup> "Similkameen Trails," *B.C. Historical Quarterly*, Oct. 1941, p. 262.

<sup>19</sup> *Victoria Gazette*, July 21, 1858.

<sup>20</sup> Allison, p. 10

negotiate "the Slide" on Mansen's [sic] Mountain where they invariably lost half their horses."<sup>21</sup>

Such accidents are corroborated. Apparently, Donald McLean, who was in charge of Fort Hope between 1858-59, in the fall of 1857 or 1858 had a "very disastrous trip and lost 60 to 70 horses in the snow."<sup>22</sup>

After the construction of the Dewdney Trail between Hope, Princeton and beyond in 1861, the old H.B.C. trail fell into disuse by the Company. By 1862 the H.B.C. was using mules on the Dewdney Trail for its brigades to and from the Colvile district. In 1860 the H.B.C. closed Fort Okanogan in Washington Territory and moved its property to Fort Similkameen (Keremeos) with Francois Deshequette in charge until his death in 1862, followed by Roderick McLean until 1867 and John Tait (1832-1911) until 1871 when the post was closed along with Fort Colville.

Allison still reports pack trains (presumably H.B.C.) from Colville, Kootenais, Osoyoos and Keremeos coming to Hope. "Mr. Tait rode in [to Princeton] from Hope where he had breakfasted and asked my husband to lend him a horse to ride on to Keremeos to the Hudson's Bay post there. William Charles was in charge of Fort Hope between 1860 to 1864, followed by William Yates from 1865 to 1887. The post was closed in 1892 along with Fort Yale.

The brigade trail was still used in later years by trappers and prospectors. In 1887 Clive Phillipps-Wolley, a British big-game hunter mentions stopping at "the fourteen-mile house" [possibly the site of the first H.B.C. camp out of Hope], "a rough log cabin, kept by a white man."<sup>23</sup>

Many of the place-names date from the Hudson's Bay Company use of the trail; the French place names such as the campsites are all of H.B.C. origin when most of the labourers were French-Canadians. Other names commemorate officers of the H.B.C. Ogilvie's Peak, for example, is named for J.D.B. Ogilvy, Hudson's Bay Company agent at Fort Hope in 1859. Manson Ridge was named by Henry Peers after Chief Trader Donald Manson (1798-1880) who took part in exploring the Hope-Similkameen area with A. C. Anderson. Black Mountain thirty miles northwest of Tulameen on early maps is likely named after the chief named "Black-eye."

---

<sup>21</sup> Susan Allison, *A Pioneer Gentlewoman in British Columbia*, pp. 9-10.

<sup>22</sup> Palmer, *O.H.S. 36th Report*, p. 18.

<sup>23</sup> *A Sportsman's Eden*, p. 53.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anderson, Alexander Caulfield. *Journal of an Expedition under the command of Alex. C. Anderson of the Hudson's Bay company undertaken with the view of ascertaining the practicability of a communication with the interior, for the import of annual Supplies.* BCARS, MSS.

Anderson, Elton A. (compiler) *Writings of A.C. Anderson and Other Historical Material.* MSS, in possession of K. Favrholt.

Creech, E.P. "Similkameen Trails, 1846-61." *B.C. Historical Quarterly*, October 1941, pp. 255-267.

Fraser, Paul. Hudson's Bay Company. "Thompson River Journal 1850-1852." BCARS/Kamloops Museum & Archives.

Goodfellow, J.C. "Fur and Gold in the Similkameen." *B.C. Historical Quarterly*, Vol. II, 1938, pp. 67-88.

Hatfield, Harley R. "Brigade Trail Fort Hope to Campement des Femmes." In *Okanagan Historical Society 3th Report*, pp. 37-48.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Old Trails of the Cascade Wilderness from the Days of Blackeye the Similkameen to Those of the Royal Engineers." *Okanagan History. 51st Report of the Okanagan Historical Society.* 1987.

\_\_\_\_\_. "On the Brigade Trail," *The Beaver* (Summer 1974), pp. 38-43.

Howay, Judge F.W. "The Raison d'Etire of Forts Hope and Yale." *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada.* Section II, 1922

Mayne, R.C. *Four Years in British Columbia and Vancouver Island* (London, John Murray, 1862)

Okanagan-Similkameen Parks Society. *Old Pack Trails in the Cascade Wilderness.* 1982 edition.

Ormsby, Margaret A. (ed.) *A Pioneer Gentlewoman in British Columbia: The Recollections of Susan Allison.* Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1976.

Palmer, H.S. RE, "Report on the country between Fort Hope and Fort Colville," in *Papers Relative to the Affairs of British Columbia*, London, 1859-1862, part III.

*Papers Relative to the Affairs of British Columbia*, includes "Sketch showing the different routes of communication with the Gold Region of the Fraser River chiefly compiled from the routes of A.C. Anderson Esqr.," Victoria: Government Printer, 1859.

Phillipps-Wolley, Clive. *A Sportsman's Eden.* London: Richard Bentley & Son, 1888.

Province of British Columbia. Ministry of Forests. *Hudson's Bay Company Heritage Trail. Draft Management Plan February 1992.*

Rich, E.E. and A.M. Johnson, editors, *London Correspondence Inward from Eden Colvile, 1849-1852* (London, The Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1956), pp. 1-6.

Smith, Dorothy Blakey (ed.) "The Journal of Arthur Thomas Bushby, 1858-1859." *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, Volume XXI, 1957-1958.

*Victoria Gazette*, July 21, 1858