Chapter Two: TSESHAHT ORAL HISTORY AND ETHNOGRAPHY

Tseshaht Creation and Oral Traditions of Ts'isaa

The central role the site of Ts'ishaa plays in the history of the Tseshaht people is evident from their name, for the Tseshaht (*Ts'ishaa7ath*) are literally the "people of Ts'ishaa." For most of their history, this was the primary Tseshaht community, the "capital" of the Tseshaht people. Furthermore, Tseshaht oral traditions tell of their creation, specifying that this is the location where the Tseshaht people first came into being. A version of this story was told to Edward Sapir, a prominent anthropologist working among the Nuu-chah-nulth of Barkley Sound, by Tom Saayach'apis, an elderly and respected Tseshaht chief and one of Sapir's principal informants, in 1922.

> We Tsishaa people learned things because of the Day Chief[1], who created us at Hawkins [an earlier name for Benson] Island. Because of that we know for sure that he is the chief in the sky. Yet we do not know his name. He is an old man. She became aware, as tho [sic] awakened from sleep, that there were two people, one old man and one a shaman with bars painted across his eyes. The one who awoke there was a young woman. She realized she was a young woman. The old chief stood on a wide board and cut at the front of his thighs. The shaman scraped up the blood in his hand. He blew into it. He did that to the blood and it turned into a boy. The girl watched; they were doing this inside a house at the rear. Both the little girl and the little boy were growing rapidly. "You shall be named Day-Down"[2], they told the boy. "You shall be named Sky-Day"[3], they told the girl. Then the chief made a river. It became a real channel, the mouth at Village [Effingham] Island. The other side of the mouth would be Standing Point[4]. The

river formed a lake, well closed at the head of the canal near Rocky-Shore.[5] Then they instructed the brother and sister as to the various things they would eat. They showed them all kinds of sea food. They mentioned bad things not to be eaten. They told them, "Use an instrument like this, tied along its shaft, for catching the big things of the sea". Because of that, sure enough, the whaling harpoon is tied along the shaft.

> The two quarrelled. The shaman became angry and scattered the river and channel everywhere. That is why the islands are scattered about now.[6] What had been a lake went into the ground, which is why Water-on-Wall never dries up, for they say there is a lake inside Hawkins [Benson] Island. That is why we have our seats at the rear end of the house. They were seated by the rear house post. It is because we were created there by my ancestor. The old man and the shaman left things so; before they went up to the sky, they finished instructing the two they had created. "You must pray to me at times for I will always hear what you want," he told them before he went. Many came from the two, being born of the womb, as a tribe which grew up fast. From the start they built a house, and that house has been copied. They came to have a canoe. Their adzing tool for felling trees was an elk bone. They got sea mammal spears. They started to hunt hairseals. They hunted porpoises. The spear line was made of hairseal guts. They hunted sealions. The tribe became numerous, reaching to the other end of the village on Hawkins [Benson] Island. They hunted sea otter. They clothed themselves in sea otter skins.

> The tribe was for a while called Cut Tribe (Chichuu), derived from the fact that the girl saw the old chief cut the front of this thigh. Originating from that they came to be called the Tsishaa Tribe. It became a big tribe. There were many sea otters all over

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[1] In another version of this story (Golla 2000:138–39), told to Sapir by Saayach'apis in 1910, the Day Chief is identified as Kapkimyis. This figure appears in various Tseshaht stories as either the brother or son of Kwatyat, the primary creator or transformer of the Barkley Sound Nuu-chah-nulth (St. Claire 1998:8).

[2] Naasiya7atu

[3] Naasayilhim

[4] *Tlakishkuuwa,* a pinnacle rock on the northeastern end of Reeks Island, at the northeastern edge of the Broken Group.

[5] *Mukw'aa7a,* on Turret Island

[6] This refers to the origin of the Broken Group islands.

the passes. There was a constant noise of kiikkiik as the sea otter broke up mussels. People would come home with five or six sea otters in a night when they went hunting. When Day-Dawn was first created, he was given a war club with blood along this edge. He was told, "You will keep it on the beach and your tribe will never die out in future generations" (Sapir and Swadesh 1955: 52–53)

Saayach'apis' account notes that the Tseshaht "became numerous" and the village grew large. As the population increased, separate named component groups emerged. The basic autonomous socio-economic unit in Nuu-chah-nulth society is termed a local group, which Drucker (1951:220) has described as:

> … centering in a family of chiefs who owned territorial rights, houses, and various other privileges. Such a group bore a name, usually that of their 'place' . . , or sometimes that of a chief; and had a tradition, firmly believed, of descent from a common ancestor.

Each local group was composed of a number of subgroups known as *ushtakimilh*, each with a chief at its head, representing different descent lines from the original founding ancestor.

Sapir's Tseshaht informants described three *ushtakimilh* resident at Ts'ishaa. The head chief (called the *taayii hawilh*) was from the highest-ranking *ushtakimilh*, the *Ts'ishaa7ath*, who "owned the island" (Sapir 1910–14, notebook IV: 34) and whose name was applied to the entire local group. The other groups came from them, eventually moving to adjacent beaches as the main portion of the village became too crowded. Along the western portion of the village were the *Lha7ash7ath*, who took their name from a large rock which was shaped like an overturned carrying bag or basket (*lha7aash* in the Nuu-chah-nulth language) (Sapir 1913, notebook XV:41; St. Claire 1991: 140). At the eastern end of the village were the *T'ukw'aktl'a7ath*, whose name was said to mean "narrow mouth (bay) in the rocks," referring to their location at the head of a small cove (Sapir 1913, notebook XV: 41; St. Claire 1991: 141). Continued over-crowding caused the chiefs to build houses at nearby Himayis, where they sent their slaves and low class people to live (Sapir 1913, notebook XVII:1). This eventually gave rise

to a fourth *ushtakimilh*, the *Himayisath* ("Gliding-about-Beach people"; Sapir and Swadesh 1955: 386, 413). Himayis and Ts'ishaa would have been considered part of the same village community, although their physical separation has resulted in designation as two separate archaeological sites. Each *ushtakimilh* had its own house or houses in the village. Although the exact number and location of the houses are unknown, Sapir's Tseshaht informants indicated the general area of the village occupied by each *ushtakimilh* (Figs. 5 and 6: 3–6).

Originally the *Himayis7ath* were not considered a separate *ushtakimilh* as they had no chief of their own and continued to be members of their original households at Ts'ishaa. Eventually a man named Kwaayaats'ikshilh, an outsider who drifted into Ts'ishaa from "an unknown place," was made chief of the *Himayis7ath* by the Tseshaht *hawilh* (Sapir l913, notebook XVII:1). Although this marked the beginning of the *Himayis7ath* as a fully formed *ushtakimilh*, they remained the lowest ranked Tseshaht component group. Additionally, as they were an amalgam of people from the other *ushtakimilh*, they were the first Tseshaht *ushtakimilh* unable to trace their origin back to a specific child of Naasiya7atu and Naasayilhim, the first man and woman in the Tseshaht origin story. In the numerous listings of the ranked order of the Tseshaht *ushtakimilh* given by various Sapir informants between 1910 and 1922, the *Himayis7ath* are seldom mentioned and if referred to are always of the lowest rank. This persistent low status is confirmed by Sapir's informants when they stated that the *Himayis7ath* never had any high level potlatch seats in their own right, although at one point their chief was given a personal right to such an honour by his grandfather, the *Ts'ishaa7ath* head chief. Somewhat unusually, this privilege belonged to him as an individual and was not a perpetual right bestowed upon the *ushtakimilh* as a whole, a confirmation of the enduring low status of the *Himayis7ath* (Sapir 1913, notebook XV:45a).

In 1913 Saayach'apis provided Sapir with a detailed description of a house which once stood at Ts'ishaa (Sapir 1910–14, notebook XV: 39, 39a, 40a). As this was the home of the head chief of the highest-ranking *ushtakimilh*, the *Ts'ishaa7ath*, it stood somewhere in the central portion of the site. On the side of the house facing the beach two painted Thunderbirds faced each other, each with an image of the Lightning Serpent (*hiy'itl'iik*), which served as the Thunderbird's whaling harpoon, on top (Fig. 7). Two large cod-fish flanked
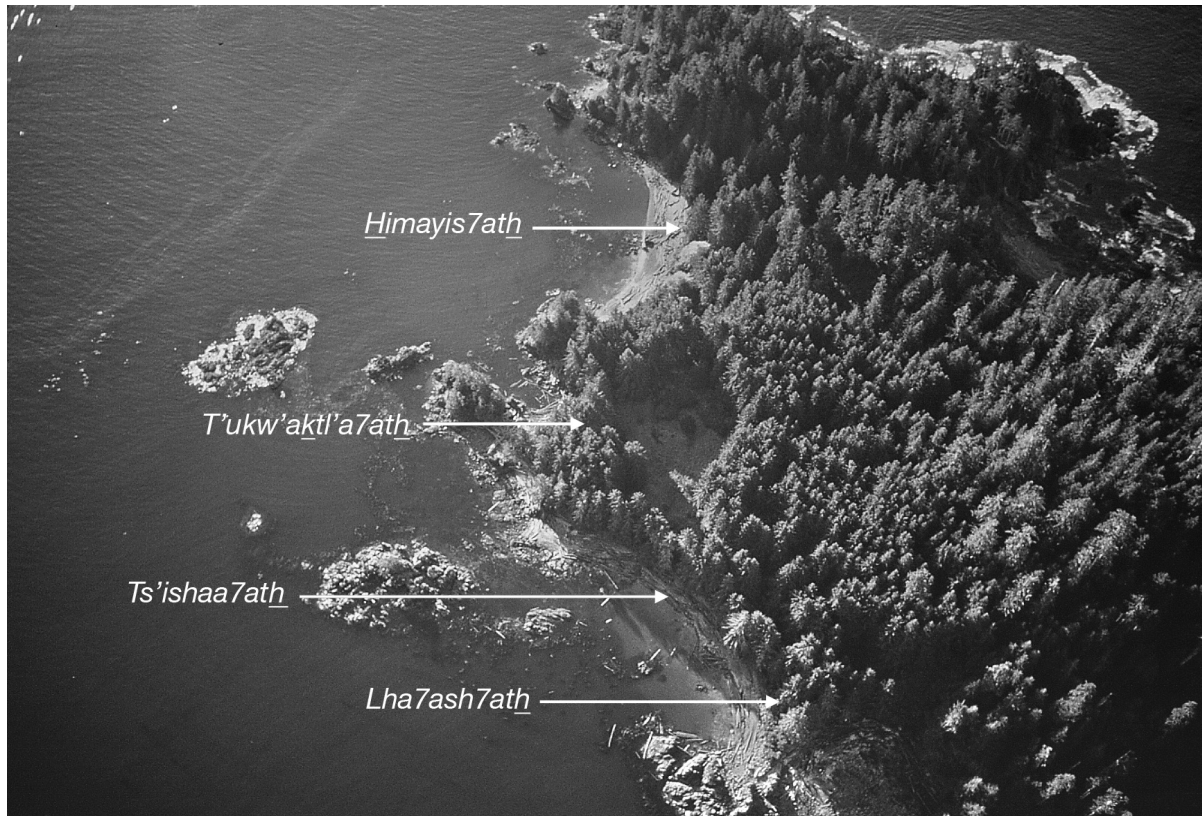
Figure 5. Aerial view of Benson Island showing the locations of the four _ushtakimilh_.

a large round hole which provided an entrance to the house. Ten smaller round holes cut through the boards represented moons. Inside, the chief's whaling vision was painted on a rear wall screen. This displayed two pairs of Thunderbirds and Lightning Serpents, with each Thunderbird holding a whale; lines representing hail indicated the storm in which this vision was experienced (Fig. 8). The main centre beam which ran the length of the house, known as _hast'ahasanulh_ ("bright star all along it," referring to the Milky Way), displayed cut-out and painted circles representing stars, as well as painted geese in flight. In the middle rear of the house, the post holding the centre beam was carved to represent the first Tseshaht man, who held a chiefly whalebone war club (_ch'it'uul_) and had a carved and painted crescent moon on his forehead. Another support post carved in the shape of a man was closer to the front of the house, facing the rear. This image represented Kapkimyis, who created the first man and woman, holding a whale in his hands. In addition, the vertical faces of the sleeping platforms lining the inner walls of the house had full moons cut through at different places and sets of painted wolves facing each other. Circles representing full moons were cut through the roof

boards as smoke holes over each of the four fires inside the house.

The ethnographic accounts indicate that the chiefs at Ts'ishaa were great whalers. The rocky islets around Benson Island, particularly the Pigot Islets (_Ts'ishaanuu7a_; Fig. 6:1) and Sail Rock (_Ts'utsiit_; Fig. 6:12), were favoured whaling locations, as well as good places to hunt sea otter (Sapir, 1913, notebook XVII:24; St. Claire 1991:140–2). Sapir's notes contain numerous references to whales being brought onto the beach in front of Ts'ishaa. The whales were tied to a rounded rock sticking up on the beach, called _Kapkimyis_ after the creator of first man and woman, to prevent the carcasses from drifting away. The pass in front of the village, between Benson Island and Clarke Island, was known as _hamuta_, meaning "bones" (St. Claire 1991:140). This refers to stories of great Tseshaht whalers who attempted to fill the pass with the bones of the many whales that they had taken, as a monument to their whaling successes. Saayach'apis told Sapir of the exploits of a great Tseshaht hunter of gray (_maa7ak_) whales, who took ten whales at a time, stating: "The passage at Ts'isha' got dry on account of [being filled up with] the bones of _ma?ak_ whales" (Golla 2000:150). A contemporary
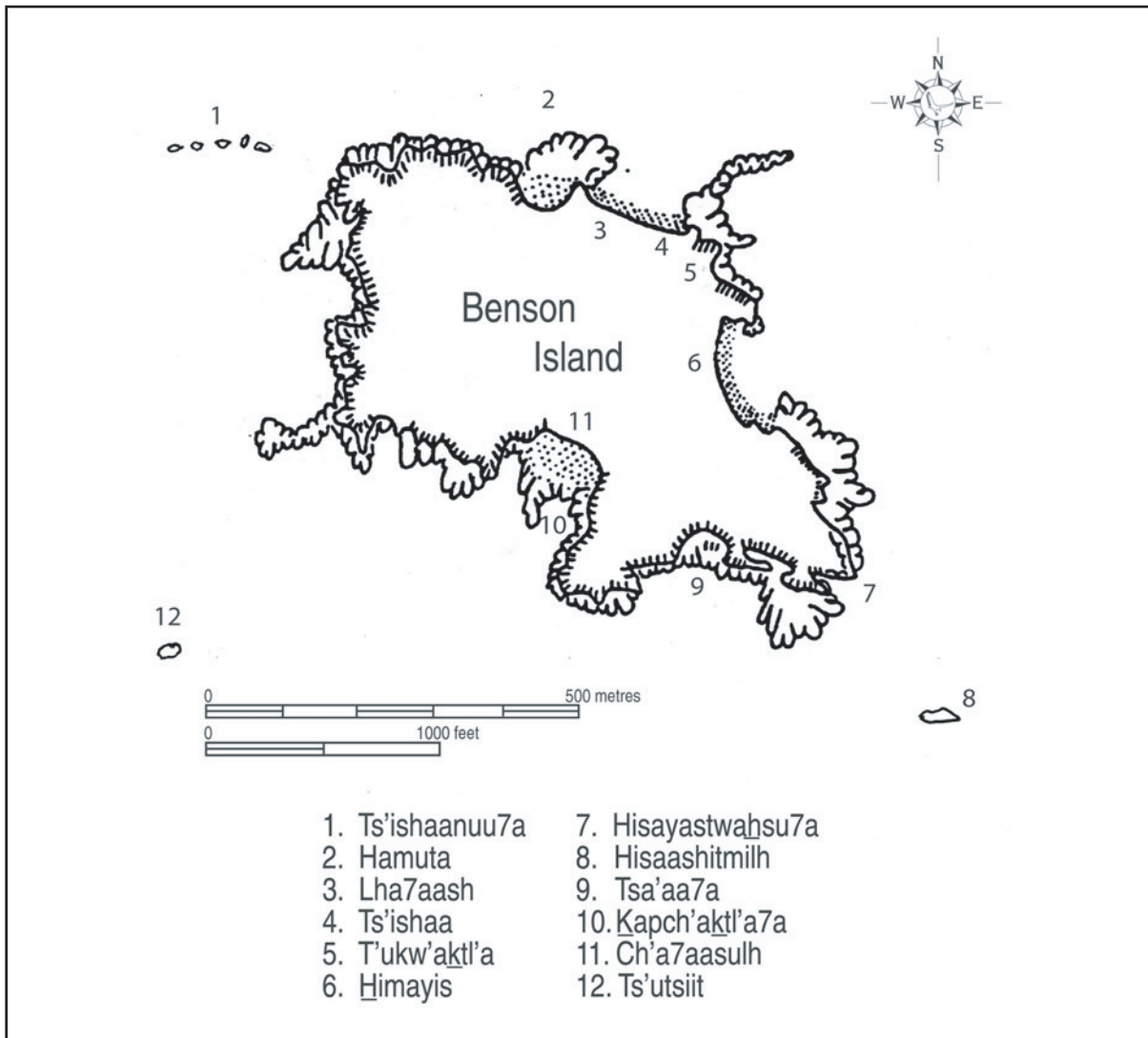
Figure 6. Map of Benson Island with known place names including the locations of the four *ushtakimilh* (Nos. 3-6).

1. Ts'ishaanuu7a
2. Hamuta
3. Lha7aash
4. Ts'ishaa
5. T'ukw'aktl'a
6. Himayis
7. Hisayastwahsu7a
8. Hisaashitmilh
9. Tsa'aa7a
10. Kapch'aktl'a7a
11. Ch'a7aasulh
12. Ts'utsiit

Tseshaht informant, Mabel Taylor, insisted that the meaning of their name relates to "stinking" or "rancid smell," referring to the odour of whales rotting on the beach at Ts'ishaa (St. Claire 1983; 1991:45), although Saayach'apis derived it from *Ch'ichu7ath*, translated as "cut-person," referring to the creation story where the shaman cut his thighs (Sapir and Swadesh 1955: 52).

Changes to the Tseshaht Local Group

As time went on and the population grew, two additional *ushtakimilh* were added to the Tseshaht local group, bringing the total to six. Sapir's Tseshaht informants described the formation of these new social units in considerable detail.

The Creation of the Naanaatsukwilh7ath

Sayaach'apis described a second instance of a stranger or "foreigner" arriving at Ts'ishaa and being welcomed and accorded a high status position (Sapir 1913, notebook XV:45a). This occurred immediately after a great flood had inundated the village, temporarily causing its abandonment. Soon after the water receded, allowing the Tseshaht to return to Ts'ishaa, a canoe with a number of people in it appeared and the Tseshaht *taayii hawilh* (head chief) invited them ashore. They spoke an unknown language and whenever the Tseshaht chief asked their leader a question he would just answer with the word *Naanaatsukwilh* and so this was given to him as his name. As the
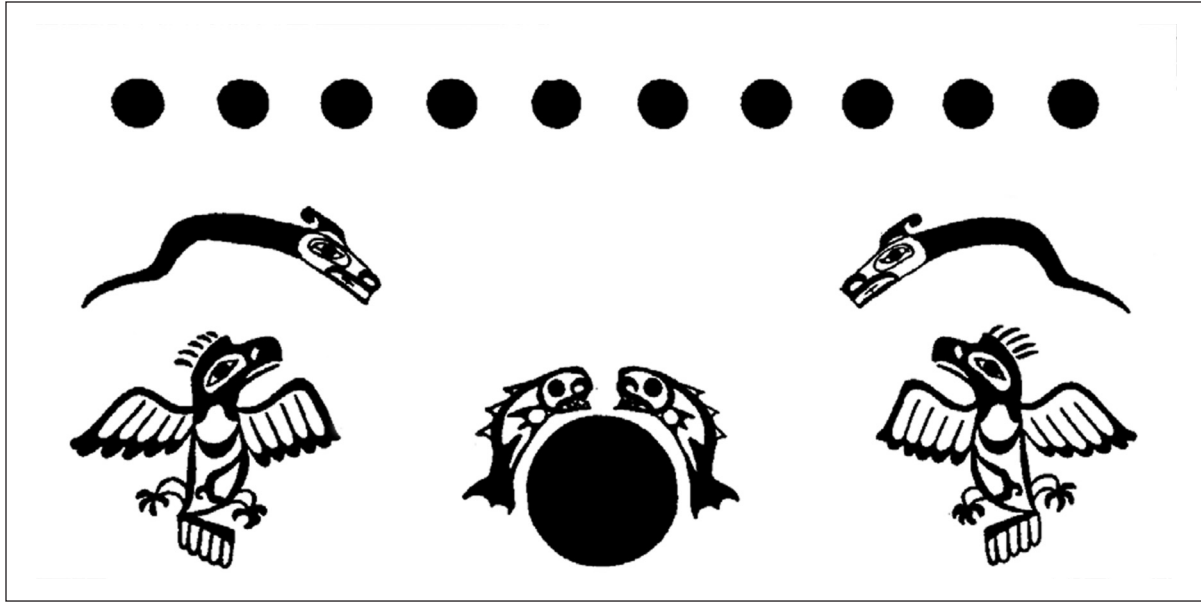
Figure 7. Painted images on the head chief's house that once stood at Ts'ishaa as described by Tom Saayach'apis to Edward Sapir in 1913.
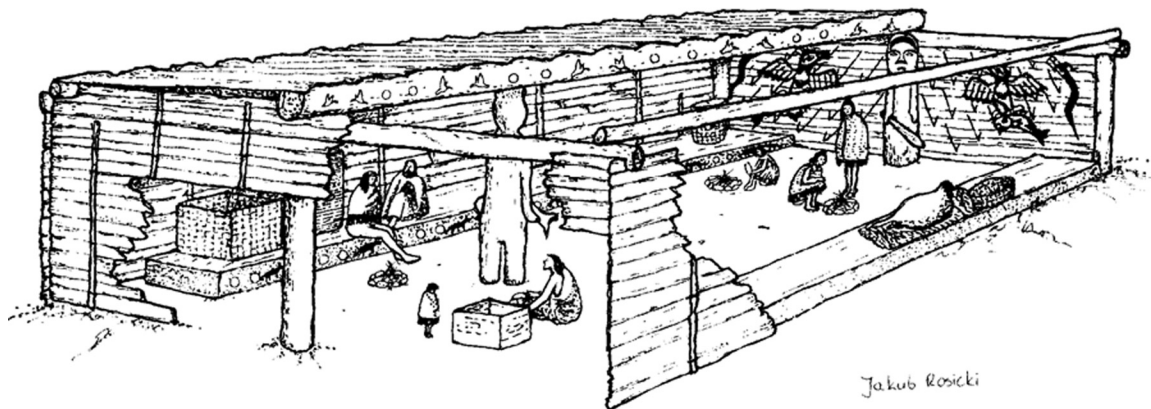

Figure 8. Artist's interpretation of inside of head chief's house at Ts'ishaa as described by Tom Saayach'apis to Edward Sapir in 1913.

Tseshaht re-established themselves at Ts'ishaa, Chief Tlatlaaḵukw'ap:

> … began to rejoice in his mind then, because they had not lost their home. He started to build a house in the place where it was before. When they had been there for four days he saw a canoe, and brought the men up the beach. "You build a house" said Lalaqok!wap [Tlatlaaḵukw'ap] … "build a house! Put yours here" … The one that came to live with them was called Nanasukwil

[Naanaatsukwilh]. Thus began a new family line. The Ts!icya atHᵃ [Tseshaht] became numerous again. (Sapir 1910, notebook II)

Naanaatsukwilh was instructed to build a house right next to that of the Tseshaht *ḥawilh*, with their doors facing each other (Sapir 1913, notebook XV:45a). Eventually this outsider married Naasayilhim, the *ḥawilh's* daughter, and with the birth of their son, a new *ushtaḵimilh*, the *Naanaatsukwilh7atḥ*, was created (Sapir 1913, notebook XV:46). An indication of the high rank

of the *Naanaatsukwilh7ath*, and the lack of a direct heir of the *hawilh*, is that the son of Naanaatsukwilh and Naasayilhim was given the right to receive the first gift in potlatches by inheriting the seat of his grandfather (the *hawilh*) at the center rear of the house. Unlike other Nuu-chah-nulth groups, where the highest ranking seat was in a rear corner (Drucker 1951:71), among the Tseshaht it was located at the center rear of the house (opposite and facing the door). This distinctive feature comes from their creation story, as it commemorates where Kapkimyis stood when he created the first Tseshaht man and woman (Sapir 1913, notebook XV:47a).

Oral traditions of sudden and dramatic floods, which inundated coastal villages and scattered human populations, are widespread among the Nuu-chah-nulth and their neighbours (McMillan and Hutchinson 2002). These occurrences are not related to the biblical flood tradition and clearly predate the arrival of Europeans. They likely refer to past seismic events, as it is known that great earthquakes, with a magnitude of 8 or larger, have been a recurrent hazard in this region over the last 3000 years, with the most recent occurring in AD 1700 (Clague 1997; Hutchinson and McMillan 1997). Such powerful earthquakes would have produced great tsunamis, possibly 10 to 15 metres in height, causing widespread damage and loss of life in the low lying Nuu-chah-nulth coastal villages. Undoubtedly, these catastrophic events would have caused great social upheaval, perhaps destroying entire local groups or reducing populations to levels that were no longer viable, forcing the survivors to seek shelter among neighbouring groups. The devastating impact of these past seismic events is evident in an oral tradition of the Huu-ay-aht (*HuuZii7ath*), who occupy the southeastern portion of Barkley Sound. An earthquake, followed by a "big wave," destroyed a village and swept the people out to sea; only those who had built their house on higher ground survived (Arima et al. 1991:230–31).

The story of Naanaatsukwilh, specifically linked as it is to his immediate post-flood arrival, may well relate to such a seismic event and subsequent social dislocation. At an earlier time, Kwaayaats'ikshilh, who became chief of the *Himayis7ath*, is also said to have drifted into Ts'ishaa after a flood. Perhaps these two men were the leaders of surviving remnants of once autonomous groups that sought protection and assistance from the Tseshaht. Social upheaval caused by an earthquake and associated tsunami

certainly provides a plausible explanation for how Naanaatsukwilh, a stranger who initially spoke an unintelligible language, could have been accepted into Tseshaht society, married the *hawilh's* daughter, and started a new *ushtakimilh*, which, with the birth of his son, became the senior component group of the Tseshaht.

The Creation of the Mukw'aa7ath

The Nuu-chah-nulth system of inheritance was based on the concept of primogeniture. Chiefly prerogatives, rights and rank were typically passed on to the oldest son. However, such hereditary rights could be acquired from both the paternal and maternal families. Although personal names and prerogatives associated with ceremonial activities could be used by all with demonstrable rights, regardless of location of residence, chiefly rank and authority could only be exercised by living within the territory to which these rights pertained.

Daughters, if the oldest offspring, held the highest rank but could never assume the role and obligations of a chief. Typically chiefly families married outside their natal group in order to create economic, ceremonial and military alliances with neighbouring peoples. Usually daughters moved away to live with their husband's family, becoming members of that group and losing their senior rank in their natal group. A chief without a son could choose to pass his position to a younger brother or a nephew. If no brothers or nephews existed, a situation which became more common in the period of severe population decline following contact with Europeans, the problem of the continuation of the descent line became more complex.

A chief's position could be passed on through a daughter who remained in her father's village after marriage. In such a marriage the husband would come to live with his wife's family. Such a practice was somewhat unusual and undoubtedly caused some loss of prestige for the husband's family, but this was more than compensated for by the knowledge that any son from the marriage would inherit the chieftainship. This method of maintaining the continuity of the chief's descent line could result in the formation of a new *ushtakimilh* based upon the descendants of a son resulting from the marriage. This is known to have occurred among a number of Barkley Sound Nuu-chah-nulth groups, and was the way in which the *Naanaatsukwilh7ath* of the Tseshaht came into being.

A slightly different scenario occurred with the creation of the *Mukw'aa7ath*, the sixth Tse-

shaht *ushtakimilh*. Tlatlaakukw'ap, later called Naasiya7atu, the head chief (*taayii hawilh*) of the *Ts'ishaa7ath* had three daughters and a son, Taapush'in7is. Shortly after Tlatlaakukw'ap passed his chieftainship to his son, Taapush'in7is died childless. Tlatlaakukw'ap, who had been out whaling, saw evidence of a funeral fire when he rounded the point at Ts'ishaa and immediately realized that his son had died (Golla 2000:154–155; translation from Sapir notebook II, "Legendary History of the Tsishaht"). As an expression of grief over the loss of his son, Tlatlaakukw'ap destroyed his whaling gear on the beach and refused to go up to his house. Instead, he left Ts'ishaa and, accompanied by some family members and a number of commoners, built two houses at *Mukw'aa7a* on nearby Turret Island. With the establishment of a new village and the birth of additional children to Tlatlaakukw'ap, a new *ushtakimilh*, the *Mukw'aa7ath*, was created, taking its name from that of the new village.

Traditionally a chief could not retain his position if he did not reside in the place where that rank and authority applied. Tlatlaakukw'ap relinquished his position as *taayii hawilh* by moving to *Mukw'aa7a*. As he had no surviving son of his own, he could pass the chieftainship to a younger brother or to a son of his elder daughter Naasayilhim, who married a secondary chief within the *Ts'ishaa7ath*. However, she only had a daughter and no sons. The second daughter, Tuutayilhim, also married a *Ts'ishaa7ath* man (Haayuupinuulh) and had a son, Wiihswisan7ap. It was through Tuutayilhim to this grandson that Tlatlaakukw'ap passed his chieftainship. [7]

> Tutayilim [Tuutayilhim] came to own the house full of slaves. Tutayilim got everything then, all that was left there in the house. Tutayilim had a child then. He then became the Ts'ish?atH Chief. He got the place that had belonged to N'a'siya!ato [Naasiya7atu][8] and the beach, while he did not get the land. (Golla 2000:155, translated from Sapir 1910, notebook II, "Legendary History of the Tsishaht": 3–159)

From this account it is clear that Tlatlaakukw'ap passed ownership of his house and its contents to his daughter Tuutayilhim. This act symbol-

izes the passing on of the right to be leader of the *Ts'ishaa7ath ushtakimilh*, the most highly ranked in the Tseshaht local group. As women could not be chiefs, regardless of their high rank, this refers to Tuutayilhim receiving the chieftainship as "dowry," the position and its associated rights to be held until the birth and maturation of a son to whom the title and its prerogatives would be passed. With the chieftainship went Tlatlaakukw'ap's "place," meaning his hereditary right to sit in a specific ranked position during ceremonial or potlatch activities.

The unusual nature of such a transfer of rank and authority and its perceived difficulties is shown when, at least initially, only leadership of the *ushtakimilh* and certain ceremonial prerogatives were transferred. Sapir's informant stated that Tuutayilhim got the rights to the "place" that had belonged to Tlatlaakukw'ap and the beach, but not the "land". The word "land" refers to the entire territory, called the *hahuulhi*, of the local group under the stewardship of the head chief. Although he was no longer residing in Ts'ishaa village, the center of Tseshaht *hahuulhi*, and consequently could not remain *hawilh*, Tlatlaakukw'ap did not assign this position to Haayuupinuulh, his daughter's husband, as a sort of regent for his son, presumably as he was not close enough to the senior descent line. Instead he appears to have followed the accepted practice of temporarily assigning these duties to his younger brother, Kwiisaahitchilh.

Elsewhere in Sapir's notes ("Legendary History of the Tsishaht" 1910, notebook 2:3–159, translated by Golla 2000:161), Kwiisaahitchilh is said to have given Wiihswisan7ap, Tuutayilhim's son, "land … and the rights to the *chakwa'si* [*tsakwaasi*]." The *tsakwaasi*, a whale's dorsal fin and the surrounding saddle of blubber and meat, was an important prerogative of the head chief. Thus, once Wiihswisan7ap was of a suitable age, his great-uncle Kwiisaahitchilh transferred to him the *hahuulhi* and the associated ceremonial honours and privileges of the Tseshaht head chief, clearly representing the final transferal of powers.

Unlike the case of the previously mentioned *Naanaatsukwilh7ath*, no new *ushtakimilh* was created with the birth of Wiihswisan7ap. His parents were both members of the *Ts'ishaa7ath ushtakimilh* (Golla 1987:96) and the chieftainship of the *ushtakimilh* was passed to him through his mother. The descent line and its name continued as before. Of course, Tlatlaakukw'ap's departure and residence at *Mukw'aa7a* did result in the creation

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[7] The present Tseshaht hereditary Chief, Ed Shewish, is a direct descendant of Wiihswisan7ap.

[8] The Chief formerly called Tlatlaakukw'ap.

of a new *ushta<u>k</u>imilh*, the *Mu<u>kw</u>'aa7at<u>h</u>*, the first not to reside at the village of Ts'ishaa.

Post-Contact Socio-Political and Territorial Changes

Shortly following contact with Europeans in the late eighteenth century, dramatic changes restructured much of Nuu-chah-nulth social and economic life. Drastically reduced populations, a result of introduced diseases and intensified warfare, forced amalgamations of neighbouring groups. This required new economic strategies to deal with much larger combined territories. Absorption of another group and its territory through warfare (*his7ukt*; "obtained by striking") was relatively straightforward, as all territories, possessions and ceremonial prerogatives belonging to the *hawilh* of the defeated group were transferred to the head chief of the victors. Secondary chiefs, the heads of *ushta<u>k</u>imilh*, could likewise acquire possessions and privileges from their captured or killed counterparts. However, peaceful amalgamations were a far more complex situation. The *taayii hawilh* of the subordinate member in the merger would have to accept a lower position as a secondary chief. Difficult issues that had to be resolved include the ranking of secondary chiefs and their *ushta<u>k</u>imilh*, as well as ownership of territorial and ceremonial rights. Such mergers were delicate and complicated affairs, which undoubtedly created considerable social tension until all the vital issues were resolved.

Original Tseshaht Territory

Precisely demarcated territorial boundaries are a characteristic feature of Nuu-chah-nulth land use. These generally involve prominent features of the landscape and lines of sight between them, although Sapir's informants also described the use of yew wood posts approximately one foot in diameter and four feet high, called *kakimiitt'u* ("to be evident"), as boundary markers (Sapir 1914, notebook XXIV:6). They also described a flat rock held up by a post on a point of land (1914, notebook XVIII:2a). Blenkinsop (1874:23) stated that two immense boulders on top of each other with a flat rock in between were used to mark the later Tseshaht – Uchucklesaht (*Huuchu<u>k</u>wtlis7at<u>h</u>*) boundary at Nob [Chup] Point, near the entrance to Alberni Inlet. However, territorial boundaries were not static but changed through time, reflecting the rise and fall of socio-political fortunes and the processes of amalgamation and fissioning of groups.

The exact extent of Tseshaht territory prior to post-contact expansion and amalgamations is difficult to discern precisely. A 1982 archaeological survey of the Broken Group Islands identified ten large midden sites (or clusters of sites) thought to represent the location of major villages (Haggarty and Inglis 1985:38). Their extent and depth are such that they cannot all belong to the same local group, as one group alone could not have used and built up so many large midden deposits in such close proximity. The accounts of Sapir's informants and the information supplied by more recent elders make it clear that the Broken Group Islands and the adjacent Barkley Sound shoreline were the territories of numerous autonomous groups which one by one disappeared or were absorbed by the Tseshaht during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Prior to historic expansion, Tseshaht territory appears to have been restricted to the southwest corner of the archipelago, centering upon the villages of Ts'ishaa and Mu<u>k</u>w'aa7a on Benson and Turret Islands. Precise territorial delineations recorded by Sapir in 1914 (notebook XXIV:4) relate to a later period when some amalgamation of groups had already occurred. However, these same accounts do contain a description of the boundary with the *Ma<u>k</u>tl<u>7</u>ii7at<u>h</u>,* the local group which occupied the outer islands of the Broken Group to the east of the Tseshaht. The Tseshaht – *Ma<u>k</u>tl<u>7</u>ii7at<u>h</u>* interface began with the island of *iitsmakiits*, today a small unnamed island to the north of Batley Island (Fig. 9). To mark the location of the boundary, a strip down the center of the island was cleared of vegetation, with Tseshaht land to the west and *Ma<u>k</u>tl<u>7</u>ii7at<u>h</u>* to the east. From this island the boundary continued to the northeast, passing just to the west of Camblain Island (*Kw'a7atu<u>k</u>ulh<u>h</u>*) and the Faber Islets (known as *Aayapiiyis*) (Sapir 1914, notebook XXIV:4). At this point the boundary is uncertain but probably turned to the west along Thiepval Channel to include Turret Island (St. Claire 1998:20). The adjacent cluster of Willis, Turtle, Chalk and Dodd islands immediately to the north probably was not part of the original Tseshaht territory (*ha<u>h</u>uulhi*), as Dodd Island contains a large midden and a complex of smaller ones which was likely another local group's village. The Tseshaht would not have needed or been able to use three large villages (Ts'ishaa, Mu<u>k</u>w'aa7a, and *Aalhachma<u>k</u>is* on Dodd Island) in such close proximity. If this island cluster was indeed the

Figure 9. *Ts'ishaa7ath, Maktl7ii7ath,* **and** *Nash'as7ath* **original territories.**

hahuulhi of another autonomous local group, its name and history have not survived.

Amalgamation with the Maktl7ii7ath

The first Tseshaht territorial expansion through the peaceful absorption of another local group involved the *Maktl7ii7ath*. Although there are no oral traditions of conflict between the Tseshaht and the *Maktl7ii7ath*, it was warfare that caused their amalgamation. The *Hach'aa7ath*, who occupied the northeastern Broken Group Islands and adjacent sections of the northern Barkley Sound shoreline, were aggressive and expansionistic, seizing territory from neighbouring Barkley Sound groups such as the *A7uts7ath* of Effingham Inlet and the *T'umaktli7ath* in the northeastern Broken Group. They also raided considerable distances,

both north and south of Barkley Sound (St. Claire 1991:28). One of their long list of conflicts involved the *Maktlʑii7ath*. Probably in the latter years of the eighteenth century, the *Maktlʑii7ath* suffered heavily at the hands of the *Hach'aa7ath* and were so reduced in population that only 15 adult men remained (Sapir 1913, notebook XV:47). In an attempt to ensure their survival, the *Maktlʑii7ath* sought protection with their immediate neighbours, the Tseshaht, and ceased to be an autonomous local group.[9]

The *ushtakimilh* of the *Maktlʑii7ath*, although greatly reduced in population, retained their internal ranking and could host potlatches. However, they were not provided for in the seating scheme of the amalgamated Tseshaht (Sapir 1913, notebook XV:41). In order to more fully integrate themselves into their new social reality, the two senior *ushtakimilh*, the *Nach'imuuwas7ath* and the *Maktlʑii7ath* proper, potlatched the Tseshaht, asking to be given seats within the broader ceremonial structure. As a result of this potlatch, the *Maktlʑii7ath* were accorded seats at the left hand side of the rear of the house "so that no Ts!icá'atHª [Tseshaht] proper would be displaced" (Sapir 1913, notebook XV:47a). Even with this further step in the merger of the *Maktlʑii7ath* and the Tseshaht, their integration was not complete, as the *Maktlʑii7ath* head chief retained drift rights throughout his former *hahuulhi*. This was an important distinction which elevated his status above the chiefs of the other local groups which later joined the Tseshaht.

Amalgamation with the Wanin7ath and Nash'as7ath

The *Nash'as7ath* were centered at their village of *Ukwatis* on Sechart Channel, at what is today the Tseshaht reserve of Equis. Their territory (Fig. 9) included the western portion of Sechart Channel and a number of islands in the northwestern Broken Group. Their merger with the Tseshaht followed that of the *Maktlʑii7ath*, as is shown by comments of Sapir's informant who, when describing the *Maktlʑii7ath* amalgamation, stated:

All this happened before the T!icya'atHª [Tseshaht] moved to Hikwis [Equis]. The Nash!as'atHª [*Nash'as7ath*] were

not yet incorporated. The Natcimwasa-tHª [*Nach'imuuwas7ath*], MakLai'atHª [*Maktlʑii7ath*] and Wanin'atHª [*Wanin7ath*] formed one with the T!icya'atHª on the island of T!icya [Ts'ishaa] (Sapir 1913, notebook XV:47a)

The *Wanin7ath* mentioned in this reference were a relatively recently formed *Nash'as7ath ushtakimilh* with very close ties to the *Maktlʑii7ath*. Oral traditions recounted to Sapir indicate that they were created when a secondary chief of the *Maktlʑii7ath* called Huhinikwup married the daughter of the *Nash'as7ath hawilh*. Huhinikwup's marriage was somewhat unusual in that he chose to reside in his wife's village of *Ukwatis*[10]. The inducements to do so were considerable. The *Nash'as7ath taayii hawilh* gave him the creek called *Wanin* as dowry. Such a creek would have been very attractive to someone whose group's territory consisted of small exposed offshore islands with no salmon streams and limited sources of fresh water. Also, as the *Nash'as7ath hawilh* had no sons, by taking up residence at *Ukwatis*, Huhinikwup ensured that any son he might have would inherit this position. When eventually a son was born a new *ushtakimilh* (the *Wanin7ath*) was created, taking its name from the creek (Sapir 1913, notebook XV:48a).

The *Wanin7ath* retained close ties with their *Maktlʑii7ath* kin, as indicated by references to them participating in mutual feasting (Sapir 1913, notebook XV:48a). However, it is somewhat puzzling that, following disastrous warfare with the *Hach'aa7ath*, the *Wanin7ath* joined the Tseshaht as part of the *Maktlʑii7ath*, rather than the *Nash'as7ath*. Two of Sapir's informants indicated that the *Wanin7ath* held high rank within the *Maktlʑii7ath* (Sapir l913, notebook XV:47), although it does not seem possible that an *ushtakimilh* could have a place in the social structure of two separate and autonomous local groups. However, a possible explanation exists.

A war which eventually resulted in the destruction of the *Hach'aa7ath* was precipitated by a quarrel between the *Hach'aa7ath* and the Toquaht (*T'ukw'aa7ath*) over the possession of a small cove, called *Tl'aatl'aathtsuwat'a7a*, between Lyall Point (*Aatushap*) and *Hiikwis* (Equis) village on Sechart Channel (St. Claire 1998:32). As the location of *Tl'aatl'aathtsuwat'a7a* (Fig. 10:10)

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[9] Golla has reconstructed a genealogy based upon Sapir field notes that suggests this union occurred between 1780 and 1800 (pers.com, 1983)

[10] Such an uxorilocal marriage is called *lhuchchi* by the Nuu-chah-nulth.
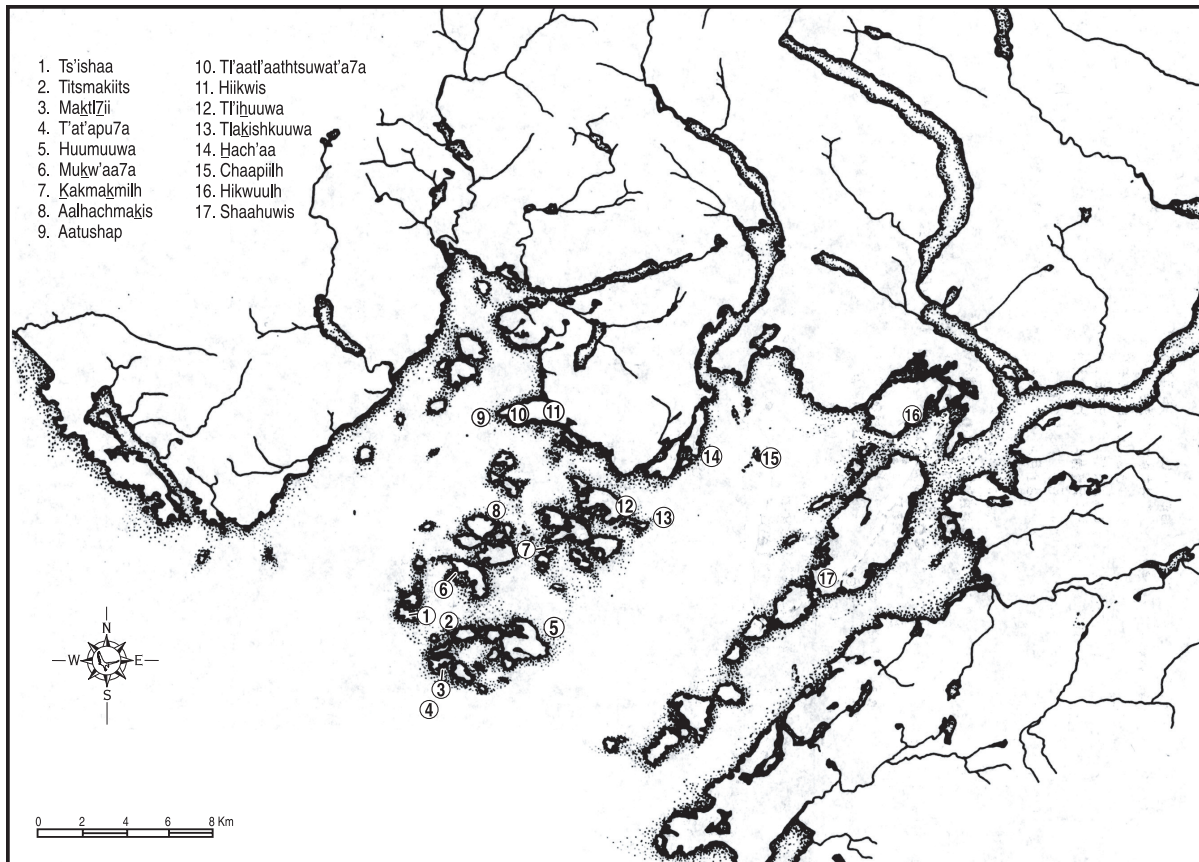
1. Ts'ishaa
2. Titsmakiits
3. Ma<u>k</u>tl<u>7</u>ii
4. T'at'apu7a
5. Huumuuwa
6. Mu<u>k</u>w'aa7a
7. <u>K</u>akma<u>k</u>milh
8. Aalhachma<u>k</u>is
9. Aatushap
10. Tl'aatl'aathtsuwat'a7a
11. Hiikwis
12. Tl'i<u>h</u>uuwa
13. Tla<u>k</u>ishkuuwa
14. <u>H</u>ach'aa
15. Chaapiilh
16. Hikwuulh
17. Shaahuwis

Figure 10. Barkley Sound showing place names mentioned in the text.

is well within *Nash'as7ath* territory, the Toquaht – *Hach'aa7ath* struggle over it only makes sense if the *Hach'aa7ath* had previously subjugated the *Nash'as7ath*. If this was the case, the *Wanin7ath* may have moved to join their *Ma<u>k</u>tl<u>7</u>ii7ath* relatives in order to escape *Hach'aa7ath* domination, only to suffer again their at hands when the *Ma<u>k</u>tl<u>7</u>ii7ath* found themselves at war with the *Hach'aa7ath*. The *Ma<u>k</u>tl<u>7</u>ii7ath* – *Wanin7ath* were decimated in the ensuing conflict and were forced to seek the protection of the Tseshaht. Although no oral traditions persist of war between the *Nash'as7ath* and the *Hach'aa7ath*, such a conflict does offer the most plausible explanation for the *Wanin7ath* enigma. This explanation assumes that the *Nash'as7ath* remained under *Hach'aa7ath* control for a period after the *Ma<u>k</u>tl<u>7</u>ii7ath* – *Wanin7ath* amalgamation with the Tseshaht.

Sapir states that the *Wanin7ath* held the second highest position among the *Ma<u>k</u>tl<u>7</u>ii7ath ushtakimilh* (Sapir 1913, notebook XVII:1). However, when the *Wanin7ath* and the *Ma<u>k</u>tl<u>7</u>ii7ath* joined the Tseshaht at the village of Ts'ishaa, only the *Wanin7ath* were assigned potlatch seats. This was

a result of their close kinship, as the chief of the *Wanin7ath* was married to the daughter of Uutsaxaayas, the Tseshaht *taayii <u>h</u>awilh*. Uutsaxaayas, representing the *Naanaatsukwilh7ath ushta<u>k</u>imilh* of the Tseshaht, appears not to have had a son as a direct heir, for upon the absorption of the *Wanin7ath* he assigned them the potlatch seat of the *Naanaatsukwilh7ath* (Sapir 1913, notebook XV:48a). In this manner the *Wanin7ath* were completely integrated within the Tseshaht social structure.

It appears that the *Nash'as7ath* coalesced with the Tseshaht during the *Hach'aa7ath* hostilities with the Toquaht and their allies. As the *Hach'aa7ath* faced attacks from a number of enemies, they likely concentrated their forces in the center of their territory, at their village of *Hach'aa* and its associated defensive site of *Tayaanita* on the northern Alma Russell Island (Fig. 10:14). This withdrawal and preoccupation with the alliance's attacks may have enabled the *Nash'as7ath* to reassert some independence and freedom of action, possibly approaching the Tseshaht about protection and amalgamation. Because European firearms

still had a very limited distribution when the war began, *Nash'as7ath* union with the Tseshaht must have been around the last decade of the eighteenth century. Support for this time frame comes from the assertion of Sapir's informant Sayaach'apis, who was born in 1843 (St. Claire 1998:36), that the *Nash'as7ath* head chief at the time of the amalgamation was his maternal great-grandfather.

Sapir's informants stated that the mother of Yaayuukwi7a, the *Nash'as7ath tyee hawilh*, was part *T'ukw'aktl'a7ath*, one of the original Tseshaht *ushtakimilh* which had died out. Yaayuukwi7a and the *Nash'as7ath* were then given the *T'ukw'aktl'a7ath* potlatch seat upon their amalgamation (Sapir 1913, notebook XV:50). Thus both the *Nash'as7ath* local group and the *Wanin7ath ushtakimilh* lost their autonomy and their *hahuulhi* was absorbed into that of the Tseshaht. However, they retained their names and positions of relative importance by replacing two of the original Tseshaht *ushtakimilh* (the *T'ukw'aktl'a7ath* and *Naanaatsukwilh*) which had died out. In this way their absorption into the Tseshaht was complete, minimizing any potential social tension caused by such a merger. The lands of the *Uukwatis7ath* and *Tl'asimiyis*, two *ushtakimilh* of the *Nash'as7ath*, and the *Wanin7ath* now "belonged" to the Tseshaht Chief.

> These three tribes had their own secondary chiefs and places to live but owned no country. They were masticim[11] of the Ts!icá'atHᵃ and always moved where the Ts!icá'atHᵃ moved. (Sapir 1914, notebook XXIV:4)

Amalgamation with the Hach'aa7ath

The *Hach'aa7ath* occupied the northeastern Broken Group Islands and an adjacent section of Barkley Sound shoreline that included Julia Passage and the Alma Russell Islands (Fig. 11) (Sapir 1914, notebook XXIV:5; St. Claire, 1991:28). They were described by Sapir's informants as the biggest and most aggressive tribe on the coast (Sapir 1914, notebook XXIV:5a). Their military

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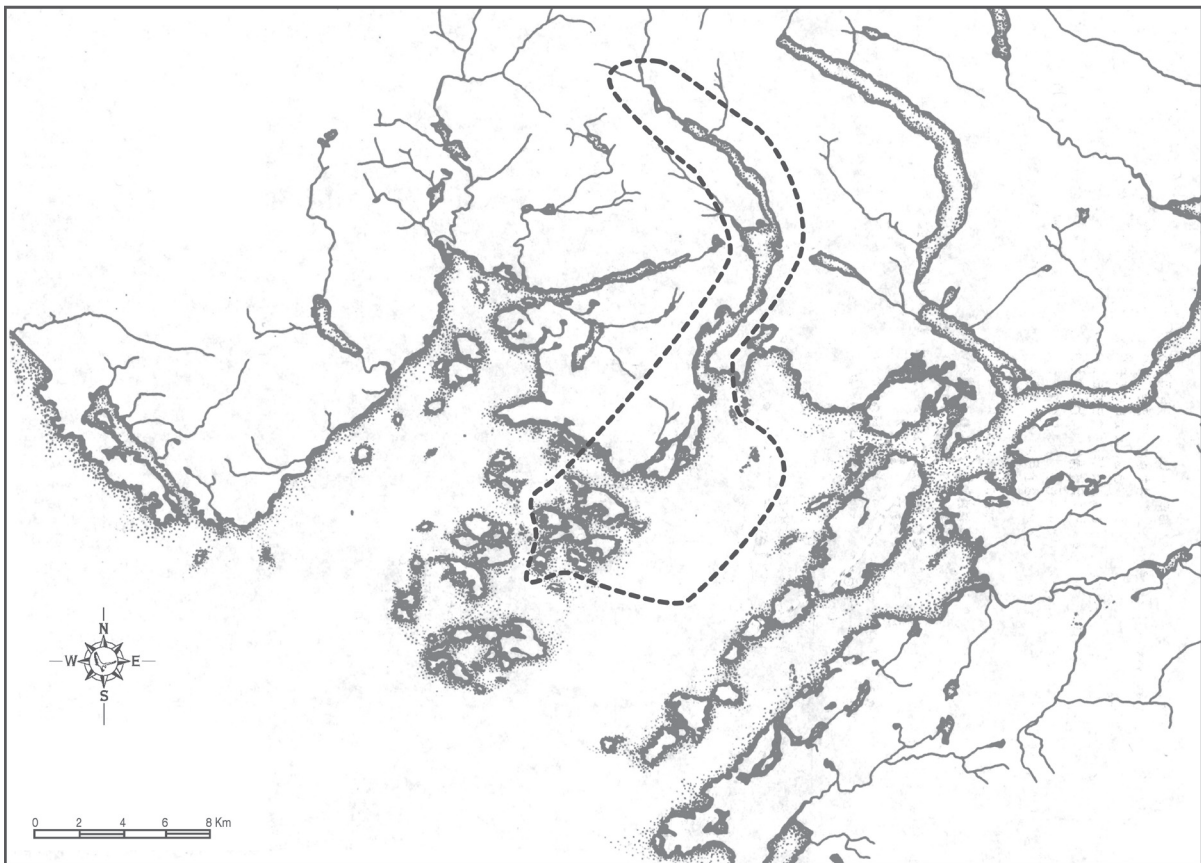[11] "Those lower in rank" (Sapir, Notes on Customs, Miscellany Part 1).

Figure 11. *Hach'aa7ath* original territory.

adventures were clearly widespread as contemporary elder John Jacobsen stated that they frequently raided the Ditidaht (*Niitiinaa7ath*) far to the south, and Peter Webster described the location of three *Hach'aa7ath* attacks within Ahousaht (*Ẕaaḥuus7ath*) territory to the north (St.Claire 1998:39). *Hach'aa7ath* aggressions in Barkley Sound were at times countered by a coalition of the Tseshaht, Huu-ay-aht (*HuuẔii7ath*), and Uchucklesaht (*Huuchukwtlis7ath*) (Sapir 1914, notebook XXIV:5a).

The *Hach'aa7ath* quarrel with the Toquaht (*T'ukw'aa7ath*) quickly expanded in scope and intensity when a *Hach'aa7ath* raiding party inadvertently killed a Ucluelet (*Yuulhu7ilh7ath*) man (Sapir and Swadesh 1955:373–377). The Ucluelet were determined to seek revenge and enlisted the help of their powerful neighbours, the Tla-o-qui-aht (*Tla7uukwi7ath*). The *Hach'aa7ath* were at a serious disadvantage as the Tla-o-qui-aht had obtained guns through trade with Europeans, but none had yet reached the Barkley Sound groups. A series of battles over a period of years revealed the broad scope of the anti-*Hach'aa7ath* alliance, as groups as distant as the Mowachaht (*Muwach7ath*) of Nootka Sound and the Ahousaht are noted as participating in attacks upon them (St. Claire 1998:41). The Ditidaht also took part in the alliance, according to contemporary elders Alex Williams and John Jacobsen (St. Claire 1984b).

The *Hach'aa7ath*, battered by a series of devastating attacks, were finally overwhelmed. From that point the *Hach'aa7ath* ceased to exist as an autonomous group, although some individuals were taken by the victors as slaves and others managed to escape to relatives in neighbouring groups. Adam Shewish, the late Tseshaht *taayii hawilh*, stated that the Tseshaht did not participate in the war against the *Hach'aa7ath*, perhaps because they were closely related by high level marriages (Shewish, pers com.1982). It is probably these marital connections, as well as close geographic proximity, that caused many of the *Hach'aa7ath* survivors to flee to the protection of the Tseshaht. Although the *Hach'aa7ath* ceased to exist as an independent local group, there are numerous references to them surviving as a component group of the Tseshaht.

Because the war began before firearms had reached the Barkley Sound groups, it is likely that the conflict dates to the final years of the eighteenth century. There are indications that it lasted for a lengthy period, perhaps as much as a decade, placing the *Hach'aa7ath* amalgamation near the beginning of the nineteenth century. The *Hach'aa7ath* are known to have joined the Tseshaht after the *Nash'as7ath*, as Sapir's informants gave a very detailed account of the Tseshaht-*Hach'aa7ath* territorial boundary (Sapir 1914, notebook XXIV:4), in which the area described as Tseshaht territory includes that formerly held by the *Nash'as7ath*.

Unlike the *Nash'as7ath* and the *Wanin7ath*, the *Hach'aa7ath* did not replace a previously existing Tseshaht *ushtakimilh*, nor did they receive an existing potlatch seat, so they were not initially as completely integrated into the Tseshaht social order. Their *ḥaḥuulhi* would have been entirely absorbed by the Tseshaht. Their great losses in the war that ended their independence resulted in the destruction of much of their internal social structure. Rather than joining the Tseshaht as a group comprised of a number of *ushtakimilh*, they would only have had sufficient remaining population to act as a single unit within the amalgamated Tseshaht.

Amalgamation with the Hikwuulh7ath

The *Hikwuulh7ath* originally held territory extending from the mouth of Effingham Inlet in north-central Barkley Sound, east to the mouth of Alberni Inlet and south along the western half of Tzartus and Fleming Islands in the Deer Group archipelago (Fig. 12). They were the last of the formerly autonomous local groups in Barkley Sound to amalgamate with the Tseshaht, following severe population loss through warfare and disease.

Prior to European contact the *Hikwuulh7ath* seized control of upper Alberni Inlet and the Somass River from the *Ts'umaaẔas7ath*[12]. Some uncertainty exists as to whether the *Hikwuulh7ath* or the *Hach'aa7ath* were the first of the coastal people to expand up to the Alberni Valley. Sapir informant Tyee Bob thought the *Hach'aa7ath* were first, followed by the *Hikwuulh7ath* (Sapir 1913, notebook XIX:3a), but elsewhere Sapir suggests that they moved simultaneously (Sapir 1913, notebook XIII:27a), a view shared by contemporary elder Robert Sport (St. Claire 1981). However, the preponderance of evidence suggests that the *Hikwuulh7ath* initiated the move up Alberni Inlet with the *Hach'aa7ath* in a supportive role, as

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[12] A local group that eventually became part of the Hupacasath (*Huup'ach'is7ath*), an amalgam of the three original autonomous Alberni Valley groups: the *Ts'umaaẔas7ath, Muuḥuulh7ath* and the *Tl'ikut7ath*.
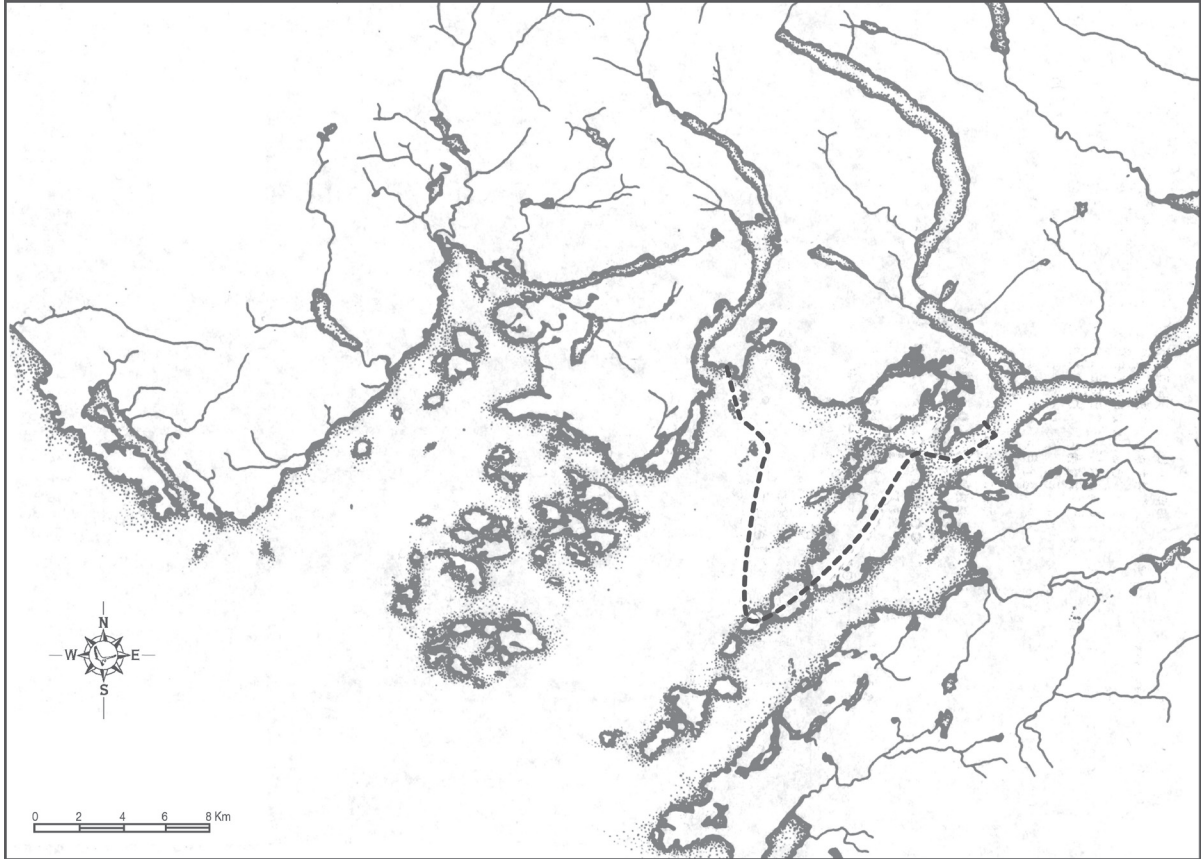
**Figure 12.** *Hikwuulh7at̲h̲* **original territory.**

suggested by Sapir informant Hamilton George (Sapir 1910, notebook I:9) and contemporary elders Ernie Lauder, John Jacobsen and Martin Edgar (St. Claire 1982, 1984). The *Hikwuulh7at̲h̲* appear to have kept sole control of upper Alberni Inlet but shared the Somass River up to just downstream from the confluence of the Sproat and Stamp rivers (St. Claire 1982). They occupied the west bank of the river while the *Hach'aa7at̲h̲* held the east (Sapir 1914, notebook XIX:3a; notebook XXIV:4).

Although the Tseshaht were not involved in the initial seizure of upper Alberni Inlet and the Somass River, they would have acquired user rights when they absorbed the *Hach'aa7at̲h̲* survivors and gained control of their *hah̲uulhi*. Initially they appear to have only used *Tluushtluushuk*, a site close to Coos Creek (*k'uu7as*), several kilometers from the head of the inlet (Fig. 13). Once the *Hikwuulh7at̲h̲* were reduced to a marginal population, dropping to only 48 people (Blenkinsop 1874:41) following a devastating attack by the Qualicum Salish from across the island (Brown 1896:26), they too were forced to surrender their

independence. In 1874, Blenkinsop (1874:41) described their situation:

> About sixty years since being hard pressed by other Indians, and having, through sickness and war become unable to cope with their enemies, they of their own accord joined the Se.shah.ahts [Tseshaht], as they say for protection only and did not at the time surrender the right to control their own lands. The latter however seem to look on them as a conquered race.

According to Nuu-chah-nulth custom, once a group surrendered its autonomy, either by peaceful agreement or as the result of hostile actions, their full territory (*hah̲uulhi*) was absorbed into that of the dominant group. Thus Tseshaht territory reached its fullest extent by approximately 1815 with the absorption of the *Hikwuulh7at̲h̲*. Although the *Hikwuulh7at̲h̲* sought to maintain some autonomy even at the time of Blenkinsop's visit, effective control of their territory had passed to the Tseshaht. The Tseshaht then controlled
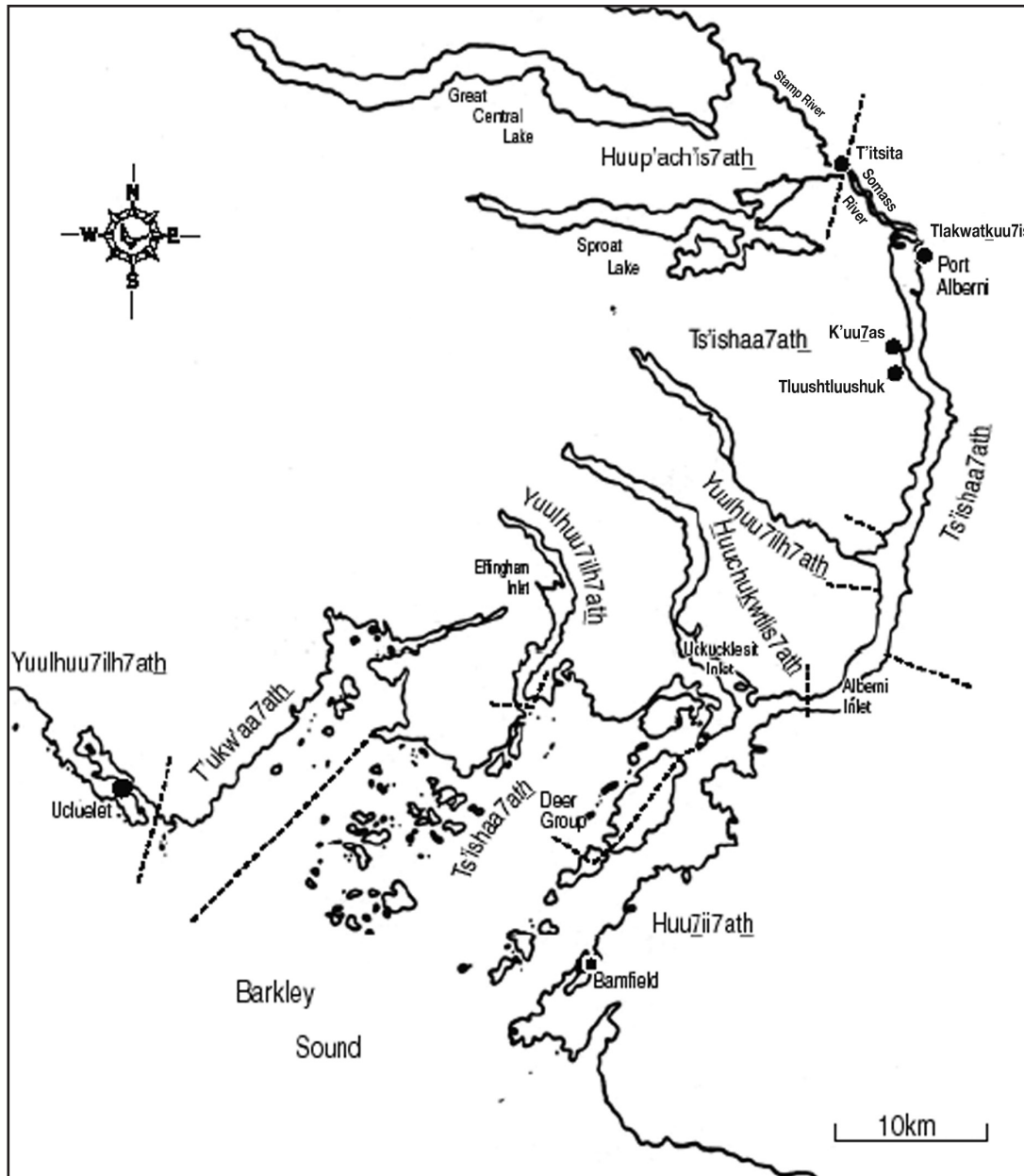
Figure 13. Local group territories in Barkley Sound and Alberni Inlet circa 1815 with place names mentioned in the text.

lands which extended from the outer islands of the Broken Group in Barkley Sound to the salmon-rich Somass River at the head of Alberni Inlet.

The Post-amalgamation Tseshaht

With the completion of this series of amalgamations early in the nineteenth century, the Tseshaht world was fundamentally transformed. From their origins as a small autonomous local group with a restricted territory in the outer Broken Group Islands, in only a few decades of rapid and far-reaching changes they had absorbed numerous neighbouring groups and expanded their territory many-fold. With the final absorption of the *Hikwuulh7ath*, Tseshaht territory encompassed the islands of the Broken Group, much of the northern and northeastern shoreline of Barkley Sound, the western half of Tzartus and Fleming Islands in the Deer Group archipelago, much of Alberni Inlet and the Somass River in the Alberni Valley up to a point just downstream of the confluence of the

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Sproat and Stamp Rivers (Fig. 13). This enormous expansion of territory produced profound changes in Tseshaht life.

So severe was the population loss during the period of amalgamation that many Tseshaht *ushtakimilh* completely disappeared. Each of the original Tseshaht, *Nash'as7ath*, *Maktl7ii7ath*, *Hach'aa7ath* and *Hikwuulh7ath* local groups are known to have had at least four *ushtakimilh*. Of these at least twenty *ushtakimilh*, Sapir's informants never list more than ten and usually fewer when discussing the post-amalgamation period. As populations declined at a catastrophic rate, whole descent groups ceased to exist. Surviving individuals, once belonging to separate *ushtakimilh*, more frequently identified themselves simply by the name of their local group as the only level of identity left to them. If a perhaps conservative population estimate of approximately 400 to 500 people is assigned to each of the five local groups prior to severe population loss, then the original total for all the local groups that eventually coalesced into the "Greater Tseshaht" would have been 2000 to 2500. Yet in 1874 Blenkinsop recorded the entire amalgamated Tseshaht population as a mere 209 persons, less than that of a single precontact local group, providing a shockingly clear indication of the magnitude of the catastrophic depopulation of the Tseshaht and the Nuu-chah-nulth in general.

In many ways the post-amalgamation Tseshaht fit Drucker's (1951:220) description of a tribe: a union of several local groups which shared a common winter village, a fixed system of ranking for their chiefs, and a name. The local groups forming the tribe cooperated in joint economic, ceremonial, and military activities. Unlike the *ushtakimilh* of a local group, a tribe's component parts did not trace descent from a common ancestor or place. In reality, however, despite profound changes, the Tseshaht continued to function in many ways as a local group. In contrast to Drucker's description of a tribe, where each component local group maintained ownership of its traditional territory and the primary rights to its resources, the local groups merging with the Tseshaht lost control of their *hahuulhi* to the Tseshaht head chief. As a rapid series of changes over a relatively short period of time was thrust upon them, it was natural for the Tseshaht to attempt to accommodate these within their traditional structures and practices. The declining populations of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries meant that the merging local groups were at best the former size of a single *ushtakimilh*. As a result, these once autonomous local groups actually came to function within the larger Tseshaht polity much as *ushtakimilh* had done earlier. Sapir (1922:307) described the Tseshaht at this stage in their history as:

> … a cluster of various smaller tribal units of which the Ts'isha'ath, that gave their name to the whole, were the leading group. The other subdivisions were originally independent tribes that had lost their isolated distinctiveness through conquest, weakening in numbers, or friendly removal and union. Each of the tribal subdivisions or "septs" had its own stock of legends, its distinctive privileges, its own houses in the village, its old village sites and distinctive fishing and hunting waters that were still remembered in detail by its members. While the septs now lived together as a single tribe, the basis of the sept division was really a traditional local one.

Saayach'apis told Sapir that Ts'ishaa had been their principal village, which they occupied throughout the year (Sapir 1910–14, notebook IV: 33). All economic resources within their territory were exploited from this permanent base. Sapir's notes show that the *Maktl7ii7ath* and *Wanin7ath* joined the Tseshaht at Ts'ishaa. After the absorption of the *Nash'as7ath*, however, the Tseshaht began wintering at the large village of *Hiikwis* (near the former *Nash'as7ath* village site of *Ukwatis*), along Sechart Channel on the upper shore of Barkley Sound (Fig. 10: 11). This provided a much more sheltered location, as well as access to a wide range of resources and abundant sources of fresh water. Saayach'apis described major ceremonial events taking place at *Hiikwis* (Sapir and Swadesh 1955:27–29, 39, 43–44). Ts'ishaa was reduced to a summer fishing and sea mammal hunting camp used by a relatively small number of people, particularly those who were descendants of the original Tseshaht local group. Himayis was also being used seasonally at this time (Sapir and Swadesh 1955: 45). Saayach'apis, who was born around 1843, told Sapir that the great houses which once stood at Ts'ishaa were all gone when he was a child (Sapir 1910–14, notebook XV: 40a)..

The acquisition of *Hikwuulh7ath* territory led to a further changes in economic and residence patterns. By the second half of the nineteenth century the Tseshaht were wintering along the lower Somass River, near the growing Euro-Canadian community of Port Alberni, using the islands in

Barkley Sound only as resource camps from spring through fall. A well-developed pattern of seasonal movement had developed to manage the resources of this large territory. In August the Tseshaht began to move up Alberni Inlet to exploit the rich runs of salmon returning to spawn in the Somass River system, briefly staying at several resource locations along the inlet (McMillan and St. Claire 1982: 22). By September they were installed along the Somass River, harvesting large numbers of coho, spring and chum salmon. Throughout much of November and December most of the Tseshaht were resident at the village of *Tlukwatkuuwis*[13] (Fig. 13), where important winter ceremonies, such as the *Tl'ukwaana* or wolf ritual, were carried out. By January they began to move back down Alberni Inlet to the inner, more sheltered, portions of Barkley Sound. There they occupied a number of sites, including *Hiikwis*, *Tl'ihuuwa* on Nettle Island, and *Kakmakmilh* on Keith Island (Fig. 10: 11, 12, 7) (McMillan and St. Claire 1982: 19). From May to August the Tseshaht were dispersed to a number of sites throughout the Broken Group islands, including Ts'ishaa and Himayis. The sites utilized and the people who resided at them often reflected the original autonomous local group patterns. Saayach'apis described to Sapir the mid-nineteenth century pattern of movement:

> … the Tsishaa moved apart. The Maktlii tribe went to Maktlii. The Tsishaa Band was with the Nachimwas at Tsishaa. The Himayis people went to Himayis. The Wanin people went to Wanin. The Nashas people went to Dutch Harbour[14]. The Tlasimyis people went to Tlasimyis[15]. The Hachaa people lived on Village Island[16] … the Hikuuthl people went to Shaahuwis[17]. I used to live at Mokwa'a[18]. (Sapir and Swadesh 1955:44–45).

Thus, despite losing their autonomy through amalgamation with the Tseshaht, the various component groups continued to recognize their separate origins throughout much of the nineteenth century by returning to their traditional sites during the summer months. They retained their names and separate traditions, in some cases with their chiefs holding ranked potlatch seats within the larger grouping. To a large extent, however, they had become ceremonial units among the amalgamated Tseshaht. This is evident in Saayach'apis' description of the ceremonies taking place at *Hiikwis*:

> When living there, when all had come together, someone gave a potlatch. They went to dance with the other divisions possessing names in the village. When a Nashas [*Nash'as7ath*] person gave a potlatch, the whole Tsishaa [Tseshaht] Band danced into the house … Then the Wanin Band [*Wanin7ath*] danced in . . Then the large Maktlii Band [*Maktlʔii7ath*] would all dance in. And they gave gifts to the Nashas. The Nachimwas Band [*Nach'imuuwas7ath*][19] also danced in. The Hikuuthl people [*Hikwuulh7ath*] also danced in. The Hachaa people [*Hach'aa7ath*] also danced in. That was the complete number of bands in the village at Hiikwis. (Sapir and Swadesh 1955:43–44)

Tseshaht Resource Use

The head chief (*taayii hawilh*) of a local group occupied his position through hereditary right. He was considered the "owner" of his group's territory (*hahuulhi*) and was expected to manage it in the best interests of his people. Drucker (1951:244) described a head chief's duties as being executive in nature, stating: "The activities of his people were in his charge: he decided on the time of the seasonal movements, directed group enterprises such as construction of large traps and weirs, planned and managed ceremonials, and had the final voice in matters of group policy." As steward of his group *hahuulhi*, a *taayii hawilh* oversaw and to a certain extent controlled all its resources, from the land, rivers, and sea, and directed their harvesting. The sea, of course, was at the centre of Nuu-chah-nulth economic life, providing countless food sources from its intertidal, subtidal and offshore zones.

Secondary or lineage chiefs (heads of *ushtakimilh*) owned the houses they occupied and could have specific and limited territorial or resource harvesting rights, such as the right to con-

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[13] Near the foot of present day Argyle Street, Port Alberni.

[14] *Ukwatis/Hiikwis* village complex.

[15] A part of the *Ukwatis* village.

[16] *Huumuuwa* village on Effingham Island.

[17] Village site on the southern tip of Tzartus Island, Deer Group.

[18] *Mukw'aa7a* village on Turret Island.

[19] A senior *Maktlʔii7ath ushtakimilh*.

struct fish traps or weirs in specific locations, or to control particular berry or root collecting areas or sea mammal hunting locations. These rights were usually hereditary. However, the *taayii ḥawilh*, by virtue of his position as head of the senior descent line in the local group, was considered the leader, the representative of the group as a whole, and as such was in overall control of the *ḥaḥuulhi*.

Salvage rights were fully included in territorial ownership. Sapir noted that, "If something of value was found drifting on the sea it also went to the Chief as he owned the sea as well as the land. Such salvage objects are called talmalni [*tamalhni*]" (Sapir 1913, notebook XVIII:2). If a drift seal or sea lion was found it was not cut up but given whole to the chief, with the expectation that he would then feast the village (Sapir 1913, notebook XVII:24a).

If a drift whale (*huu7ni*) was found, it was cut up and shared among the secondary chiefs on a prescribed hereditary basis. The person officially charged with the accurate partition of the carcass was called *ḵaaḵhsi* (from *katsilh*, "to measure"). Among the Tseshaht, the hereditary right to this position came from the *Naanaatsukwilh ushtaḵimilh* (Sapir 1913, notebook XVII:24a). Sapir's informant (1910, notebook IV:34–36) described the division of a drift whale at Ts'ishaa among the original, pre-amalgamation Tseshaht as follows:

1. The Chief of the *Ts'ishaa7ath ushtaḵimilh* received the most prestigious portion, called the *tsakwaasi*. This constituted the dorsal fin and surrounding "saddle" of blubber and meat. It was believed that inside the fin resided a man for whom the whale was a canoe. The *tsakwaasi* was put on display and songs called *ts'its'iḥiimik'yak* were sung to it to induce the man to leave and enter another "canoe." After four days it was cooked and eaten in the Chief's house (Sapir 1910, notebook I:1).
2. The *T'ukw'aḵtla7ath* chief got one half of all the whale forward of the shoulders, which was cut vertically from front to back.
3. The Chief of the *Lha7ash7ath* received the tail.
4. The *Ḥimayis7ath* had the other half of the head. Even the tongue was cut in half.
5. The area between the dorsal fin and the tail, called *k'ukwts'a*, belonged to the people who lived in the house next to and south of the chief of the *Ts'ishaa7ath*.
6. The lower fins (called *kwikwiniku*) went to two

lower chiefs with houses south of the *ḥawilh*. Each received one fin.
7. The belly went to the head of the *Naanaatsukwilh ushtaḵimilh*, who lived in the house next to and north of the *ḥawilh*.
8. The area below the *tsakwaasi* section around the dorsal fin and which extended from one side of the whale to the other went to the *ḥawilh's* next oldest brother. This section was called the *lhuk'wanin*.
9. The region around the navel belonged to no one in particular and a canoe load of it would be given to the person who found the drift whale. This payment was called *ta7aa7ukt* (Sapir 1913, notebook XVIII:1a).

The social mosaic of the Tseshaht became far more complex following the series of amalgamations. According to Sapir's informant, whales were then butchered into 19 portions that were assigned to specific high status individuals (Sapir 1913, notebook XVII:24a,25;XVIII:1,1a). The finder of the drift whale was no longer paid with a portion as this would have interfered with the assigned rights. Instead, the *ḥawilh* would pay him with a canoe, or house boards, or strings of dentalium shells (Sapir 1913, notebook XVIII:1a). The senior person of the component group entitled to a particular cut could keep the blubber to distribute at feasts or divide it up among his kinsmen in chunks approximately 35 cm long and 20 cm wide. The less-prized meat was shared more widely (Sapir 1913, notebook XVIII:3).

As highly skilled whalers, the Nuu-chah-nulth did not depend solely upon dead drift animals. Whaling was a highly prestigious activity and as such was restricted to individuals of chiefly rank. Long arduous ritual preparations were necessary prior to the actual hunt. Successful hunts demonstrated a chief's inherited rights and control of supernatural power. Gray whales (*maa7ak*) and humpback whales (*iihtuup*) were the main prey species. Adult whales of up to 12,000–16,000 kilos provided large quantities of meat and their blubber and bones provided thousands of litres of oil. The latter served as a highly prized condiment and was a valuable item of trade.

After a successful hunt, the whale would be towed back to Ts'ishaa village, where butchering took place on the beach at low tide (Sapir 1913, notebook XV:32). The apportioning of the blubber and meat would differ from the case of a drift whale as it would be divided only between the head whaler and his crew. The whaling chief

would hold a feast in the village, giving out the leftovers (called *mamuut*) in an informal distribution. The bones were often left on the beach, stacked with those of earlier kills as a monument to the whaler's prowess (Drucker 1951:55). Other bones, however, were boiled for the all-important oil, and were likely discarded in the village area. Stacks of whalebone also provided convenient sources of raw material for the manufacture of various tools.

Ts'ishaa was ideally suited for whaling as it sat astride the gray whale migration route. During the spring the whales moved north from their calving areas off northern Mexico. Their migration route took them around Cape Flattery and across the mouth of Juan de Fuca strait to Ditidaht (*Niitiinaa7ath*) territory near Clo-oose. From there they proceeded close to shore up the west coast of Vancouver Island, passing Pachena Bay, Cape Beale, and into Barkley Sound past the outer islands of the Deer Group and Broken Group. At this point their migration route took them close to Cree (*Ch'ituukwachisht*), Wouwer (*Maktlʒii*) and Benson islands. They than crossed the mouth of Loudoun Channel and up the outside of Ucluth peninsula (Sapir 1913, notebook XVIII:II). Other than a few stray individuals, they apparently did not enter the upper portions of Barkley Sound. Their predictable arrival each year was eagerly awaited, and was viewed in much the same way as the annual salmon spawning runs (Drucker 1951:48). In the late autumn, their return migration south was much farther offshore and thus difficult to access.

It is likely that the humpback whale was even more important than the gray as it was plentiful, somewhat larger, had a considerably higher oil content, and was available, at least in Barkley Sound, year-round. During summer they fed on the La Perouse bank, just outside of Barkley Sound. Sapir's informants stated that these whales began to go into the inner portions of Barkley Sound and its associated inlets during October, feeding upon large schools of herring. They remained in Alberni, Uchucklesaht, and Effingham Inlets and in upper sound areas such as Baeria Rocks (*Chaapiilh*) and Rainy Bay (*Hikwuulh*) until March, when they moved into the Broken Group Islands and Loudoun Channel as the herring began to spawn in those areas (Sapir 1913, notebook XVIII:II). Their importance in the archaeological record is clear from the excavated remains from two major Toquaht (*T'ukw'aa7ath*) villages at the western edge of the sound, where they comprised approxi-

mately 80% of the total identifiable whale bones, while grays averaged only 13% (Monks et al. 2001:73). When a commercial whaling station opened on Sechart Channel in the upper sound it quickly depleted humpback populations. In its first six years of operation, from 1908 to 1913, between 250 and 474 whales were taken each year, of which humpbacks made up between 79% and 93% of the total (Kool 1982:34). Thus historic records, as well as archaeological and ethnographic data, clearly indicate the predominance of humpbacks in the Barkley Sound area.

A number of areas within the Broken Group Islands, by virtue of the meaning of their names or by direct anecdote, can be identified as whaling locales. These include the Pigot islets adjacent to the village of Ts'ishaa, Cree and Wouwer islands (Sapir 1913, notebooks XVII:24 and XVIII:1), the area around *Mukw'aa7a* village (Turret Island), Gilbert Island (whose name *ihwitis* means "whale oil on it"), and an area of shoreline on Dodd Island called *ihinitsulhh* (meaning "where there are many whale skins") (Sapir n.d., Miscellaneous Nootka Material:35, 38, 40). Also, although Sapir's informants did not indicate any specific locales or site names, they stated that there were certain sandy places containing small clams where:

> Má'ak [*maa7ak*; Gray] whales would beat up the sand with their flukes allowing it to be washed away by the sea. When the clams were exposed, the whales would eat them. Such places were good ones for hunting má'ak because when their heads were down in the sand they couldn't see the canoes approaching. Such places were called tushumis meaning "place of shaking (tail) on the beach" and the right to hunt there was generally restricted to the Head Chief. (Sapir 1913, notebook XIII:29a)

Despite ethnographic accounts that Nuu-chah-nulth whaling occurred primarily in the spring with additional limited opportunities in the summer, the Tseshaht appear to have been able to hunt whales throughout much of the year. While resident at Ts'ishaa village, the Tseshaht had access to both gray and humpback whales in March and April. During the summer humpbacks were primarily on the offshore halibut banks and some juvenile grays lingered in Barkley Sound. In the autumn months humpbacks moved inshore following the schools of herring. During the winter, the Tseshaht also presumably had occasional opportunities to hunt

some strays from the humpback whales feeding upon herring in the inshore waters of the upper sound and inlets. After they absorbed the territory of other local groups in upper Barkley Sound and along Alberni Inlet, the Tseshaht would have had full access to humpback winter feeding areas. Frank Williams, a Tseshaht who worked with Edward Sapir, provided specific accounts that placed these whales in Alberni, Uchucklesit, and Effingham inlets during the winter months (Sapir 1913, notebook XVIII:11). The whales were so numerous in these inlets that Williams described tapping the canoe thwarts to frighten them away while he was raking for herring.

Other sea mammal species were also numerous in Barkley Sound (Fig. 14). Sea otter, valued primarily for their luxurious pelts, were hunted in November when their fur was at its finest (Sapir 1913, notebook XVIII:3a). Sapir's informants describe November to March as the main hair (harbour) seal and sea lion hunting period, as harsher offshore weather and winter storms caused them to seek the more sheltered waters of the inner islands, bays, and inlets (Sapir 1910, notebook I:208 and 1913, notebook XVIII:30). However, Swadesh states that the Tseshaht moved in May to Ts'ishaa, *Huumuuwa*, and *Maktlʒii*, where they hunted seals (Swadesh 1949, fieldnotes:32). Drucker (1951:45) also describes hair seal hunting in the late spring.

Fur seals are migratory and pelagic, passing by Vancouver Island a considerable distance offshore (Banfield 1974:360). Drucker (1951:46) maintained that they were not hunted by the Nuu-chah-nulth until the commercial seal hunts of the late nineteenth century. This is clearly in error, as fur seal remains dominate the vertebrate fauna found in archaeological sites along western Vancouver Island and the Olympic Peninsula (McMillan 1999:140; Crockford et al. 2002). Saayach'apis told Sapir that fur seals came into the sheltered waters in the late winter to feed on the herring gathered prior to spawning (Sapir and Swadesh 1955:45). The presence of very young fur seal elements in the faunal remains from Ts'ishaa suggests that there once was a fur seal breeding colony in the vicinity of Barkley Sound, raising the possibility that these animals would have been available year round (Crockford et al. 2002).

Porpoises were taken opportunistically, by harpooning, whenever the possibility presented itself. Although not as prized as whale oil, the oil rendered from the fat of all sea mammals was a valued commodity. Sayaach'apis described the customary procedures at sea mammal feasts:

Someone who brought in a porpoise would give a feast. They steamed it on stones under wild currant branches with the fat cut up in strips a span long, and placed in layers of four… each person ate two such strips… Further, those who brought in two hair seals had eight people eat the flippers and the hind part. The children of the chiefs ate the limbs and the hind part, but the fathers ate the body… Those who gave a sea lion feast would cut the breast into ten strips. Ten children of the chiefs would be singled out to receive the thick fat breast cuts. (Sapir and Swadesh 1955:29)

During the winter, herring (*tlusmit*) congregated in large schools in sheltered bays and inlets prior to spawning in March. Although unlikely to spawn in the outer islands of the Broken Group, they could be harvested by way of rakes, called *chuch7yak*. In the more sheltered parts of Barkley Sound they spawned in enormous numbers. The area around the nearby village sites of *Ukwatis* and *Hiikwis*, on Sechart Channel, was a major spawning location, as clearly indicated by a place name at the eastern end of *Ukwatis* (*kiina7aa*; "Herring-guts-on-the-rocks") (St. Claire 1991: 133). Many herring were taken by dipnets, called *ts'ima*, as they crowded into the shallows to spawn (Sapir 1913, notebook XV:43). However, the major importance of herring was the spawn itself, as described by Saayach'apis:

While they were still at Hiikwis, the herring began spawning. All the people put branches under water at the sandy shore to get herring spawn… Spawning herring attached it to that kind of thing… When it was thick enough, it was brought up out of the water. They would get as much as four or even ten canoe loads in four fathom canoes. It would get thick and heavy, for fresh herring spawn is very heavy. Then they would dry it outside in the sun. It was like many blankets stretched out to dry the whole length of the village front at Hiikwis, because the whole Tsishaa Tribe would be drying spawn… When it was perfectly dry, it went into storage baskets… They did this, first drying herring and afterward herring spawn, to prepare food for later on. The chief ate it and gave feasts in the summer. (Sapir and Swadesh 1955:30)
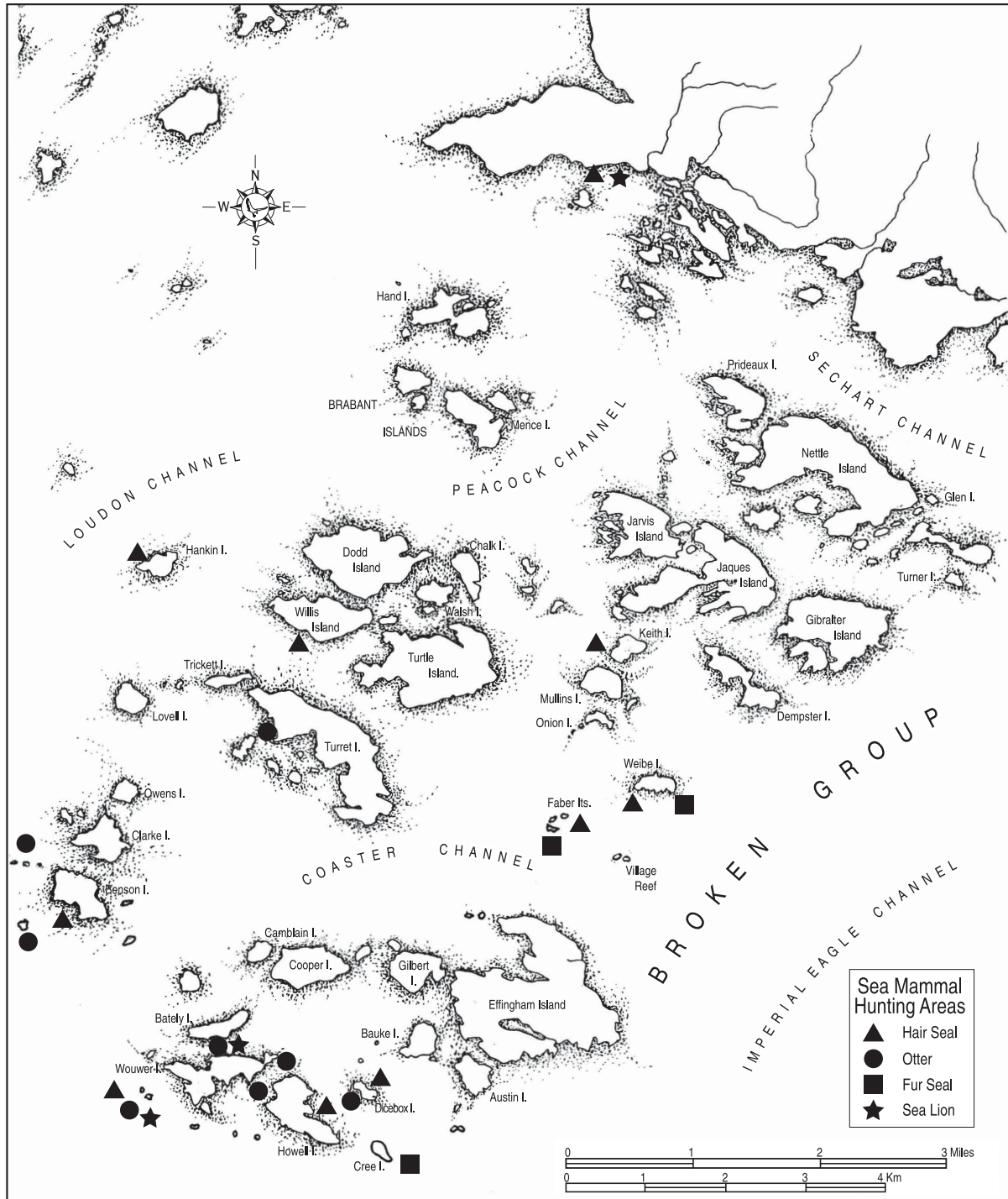
Figure 14. Known sea mammal hunting locations in the islands of the Broken Group.

The massive concentrations of herring attracted predators, which presented additional opportunities for Tseshaht hunters and fishers. Large numbers of spring salmon fed on the herring and were caught by trolling, providing a welcome source of fresh salmon after a winter of mostly dried fish. Seals, sea lions and even whales were also attracted by the huge biomass formed by the spawning herring, bringing large concentrations of sea mammals into reach of the hunters.

Small fish were also taken in stone-walled tidal fish traps, called *tiinow7as* (St. Claire 1991:151).

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They were constructed in shallow protected bays, where schools of small fish such as perch, herring, pilchard or anchovy habitually collected. Two or more walls of stone were built so as to enclose a small embayment, often incorporating a natural depression or bedrock outcrop. An opening was generally left between the arms of the trap. As the tide rose and filled the area contained by the stone walls, schools of fish would enter the enclosure. To keep them within the trap a wooden gate-like structure would be fitted into the opening, allowing water but not the fish to pass through. To retain the fish within the enclosure until the tide receded to a level lower than the height of the walls, fishers in one or more canoes could place themselves adjacent to the traps, banging their paddles onto the water to create enough commotion to frighten the fish. Eventually the tide lowered sufficiently to drain the trap, making the collection of the fish an easy task. Thirty-nine of these sites have been identified within the Broken Group Islands (Fig. 15), clearly indicating their importance in the local economy (Haggarty and Inglis 1985). However, although Tseshaht elder Mabel Taylor (1910–1984) knew the name for these traps and how they were used, she had never seen them in use herself, nor did she think that they were employed by her parent's or grandparent's generation. The apparent abandonment of the traps in the nineteenth century likely reflects the massive depopulation and consequent economic shifts that occurred in this area.

Drucker also described "fish drives," called *sacha7uk*, in his field notes (1935–36). He noted that men would form a line of canoes across the mouth of small bays where perch congregate in late summer. The men held fir boughs, weighted at the tips with stones, over the sides of the canoes and gradually worked their way sideways towards the shore until the fish were sufficiently concentrated to be harvested with dip nets or rakes. Contemporary *Huuchuktlis7ath*/*Huu7ii7ath* elder Ella Jackson has described similar techniques used in Barkley Sound (St. Claire 1984).

In the early spring large numbers of ducks, geese and swans arrived on their annual northern migration. Periods of bad weather led to large concentrations in more sheltered bays and along protected shorelines. Working cooperatively on dark moonless nights, a number of canoes would surround a flock of birds, slowly herding them together by the use of torches and small fires lit on sand-covered crosspieces at the stern of the canoes. As the canoes approached the birds, mats were raised at the bow, creating an area of shadow from the torches and fires. The shadows attracted the birds, which were confused and agitated by the lights, and as they neared the canoes they were caught in scoop nets (Sapir and Swadesh 1955:31–32). Substantial numbers of birds could be caught in this manner. Saayach'apis described the ensuing feasts:

> The people of Hiikwis ate fowl as the torch hunters gave feasts. They ate them cooked with steam. Only the fat was boiled. The people of Hiikwis ate well, with everyone giving feasts. (Sapir and Swadesh 1955:32).

Sayaach'apis also described feasting on cormorants, fern roots (*shitl'aa*), clover roots (*7aZiitsu*) and cinquefoil roots (*tlits'yup*) while at Hiikwis (Sapir and Swadesh 1955:14,32)

In April, after the herring spawn was completed, Pacific sardines (*t'achkumik*), also known as pilchards, appeared in large numbers. As with herring, they could be harvested with dipnets and rakes. More importantly, their presence maintained the concentration of feeding salmon and sea mammals and the opportunities for further harvesting by the Tseshaht (Sapir and Swadesh 1955:30). By the end of the month the schools of pilchard scattered and went out to sea, followed by the salmon. In the post-amalgamation period, this movement of the salmon to offshore feeding areas and the arrival of favorable weather led to increased Tseshaht use of the outer islands.

As early as March some halibut (*p'uu7i*) were caught at *T'at'apu7a* (Janit Reef), on the seaward side of the outermost Broken Group Islands (Fig. 16). More frequent exploitation of such offshore resources occurred later in the spring with improved weather conditions. By May halibut and cod were caught on the offshore La Perouse Bank (*Lhulhumalhni*). Because the fishing locales were a considerable distance out in the open ocean, large canoes with four man crews were employed. At nightfall the fishers would set out, paddling all night to reach the fishing grounds at dawn. Set lines, each with five hooks baited with octopus (*ti-ilhuup*), were lowered to the ocean floor. Weather permitting, the fishing would continue until midday when the fishers, using bearings on the distant mountaintops, would plot their return route to the below-horizon islands of the Broken Group. Upon returning to their villages the people feasted on the halibut heads and prepared the rest for drying (Sapir and Swadesh 1955:41).
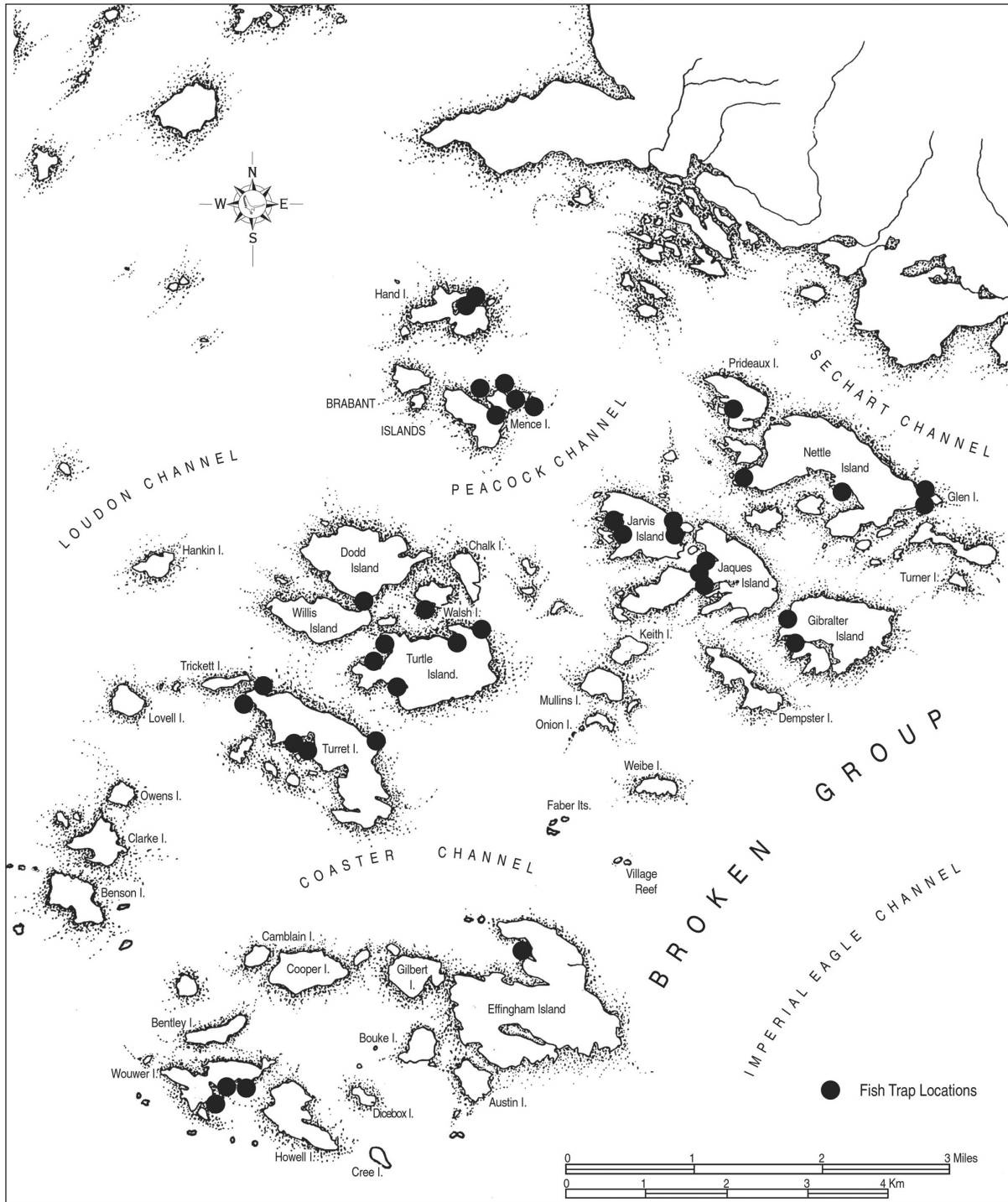
Figure 15. Stone tidal fish trap locations in the Broken Group islands (after Haggerty and Inglis 1985: 246).

Small reddish rockfish called *suuma* were caught in basket traps baited with mussels. These fish were kept alive to be used as bait for lingcod (*tushḵwuuh*). The upper and lower lips of the *suuma* were pierced with a root and attached to a line of dried kelp in a process called *nichiilh* (Sapir and Swadesh 1955: 20,40). At dawn the fishers paddled offshore to the cod banks, towing their *suuma* bait alongside their canoes. Once at the fishing areas the *suuma* were attached by way of the root

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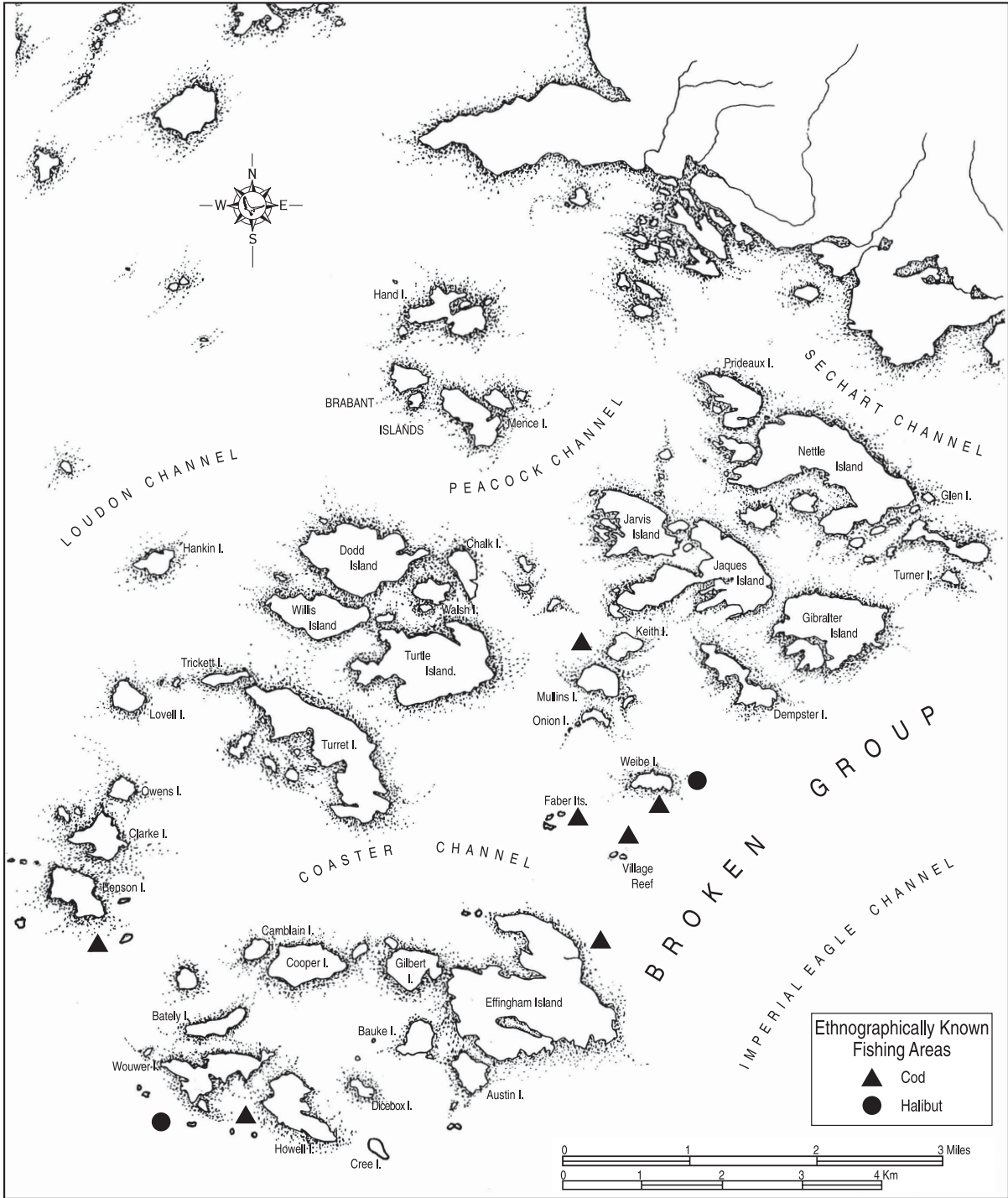
Figure 16. Known inshore cod and halibut fishing locations in the Broken Group islands.

through their lips to a long kelp line fastened to a stone sinker which was lowered to the bottom. The fisher held the end of the line in his hand and when he felt it being jerked pulled it to the surface. The lingcod was not caught by a hook but would not release its prey, so it could be reeled in. As it reached the surface it was struck with a two pronged spear. This method of live bait fishing was called *mamiita* (Sapir and Swadesh 1955: 20,21,40). Other fishers worked closer to the shoreline of islands, using the live bait technique or wooden lures resembling shuttlecocks to lure the lingcod or rockfish to the

surface where they could be speared. Trolling close to islands and reefs also produced large quantities of rockfish, particularly the black rockfish called *kwikma*. As with halibut, feasts were given with the heads of lingcod while the bodies were dried. Rockfish were steam cooked (Sapir and Swadesh 1955:40,41).

The original Tseshaht territory, confined to small outer islands of the Broken Group, had excellent access to rich offshore resources. However, it contained no salmon spawning streams, so salmon played a much smaller role in the diet than for those groups along the shoreline of the sound. Undoubtedly, a significant benefit for the Tseshaht of the major territorial expansions of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was the acquisition of such streams and rivers. Until those expansions occurred, however, the Tseshaht were restricted to acquiring salmon through trolling, a much less productive method than the use of fish traps and weirs in spawning streams. In July and August coho (*tsuwit*) and then spring salmon (*suuha*) appear in the Broken Group Islands en route to their natal spawning streams. Many areas were suitable for trolling for salmon, particularly those with kelp beds, a prime habitat for the small fish on which salmon feed. Chum salmon (*hinkwuu7as*) began to appear in Barkley Sound in September and were caught with the same trolling technique.

Despite their generally exposed position, the islands of the Broken Group archipelago have a wide variety of sheltered and semi-exposed locations with different substrata that provide favourable habitat for clams and other shellfish (Fig. 17). Indeed, some of the most productive bivalve locations are located in the outer islands (Lee and Bourne 1976:13). The great abundance of bivalves in easily accessible locations, plus the ease with which they could be collected, resulted in them becoming a major source of protein in the Tseshaht diet. Sayaach'apis described the collection and preparation of clams while resident at *Huumuuwa* (on Effingham Island), stating that the women:

> … would dig and dry horse clams [*Zamiik*] and small clams [butter clams, *ya7isi*]. A strong energetic woman made many dried clams… They call it splitting when they take off the shells. They put the inner flesh into pack baskets. They would then fix them on whittled sticks. These were set across little poles by the fire … It became well

cooked and brown as if slightly burned. Then they put it between layers of fern root and thimble berry. They cooked it all. Then they spread it out on the floor for one night. It became sweet, because of the fern root and thimbleberry. Next day they put it all in the sun till completely dry. (Sapir and Swadesh, 1955:41).

Sayaach'apis also described the collection and preparation of mussels (*tl'uchim*):

> Then they would travel about in whaling canoes to pry off shellfish, a man and wife together or two women in the middle of each canoe … The whaling vessel would be low in the water as they returned home full of mussels. They again heated stones and cooked them by steam… They put them on spits to roast … they became well cooked, brown and slightly burned. (Sapir and Swadesh 1955:41).

Although much knowledge about the location of specific resource sites has been lost, many other intertidal and subtidal foods were collected, adding variety to the Tseshaht diet. These included the black katy chiton, (*haayishtuup*), red chiton (*p'aZam*), red sea urchin (*t'uts'up*), green sea urchin (*nuuschi*), purple sea urchin (*hiix*), purple-hinged rock scallop (*tl'iihawachi*), abalone (*7aptsZin*), barnacle (*tlaanulh*), gooseneck barnacles (*ts'a7inwa*), blue mussel (*kw'utsim*) and sea cucumber (*taaZinwa*).

Tseshaht patterns of resource use clearly shifted dramatically during the historic period of population loss and political amalgamations described earlier in this chapter. For several millennia the Tseshaht had intensively exploited the resources of their restricted outer-coast territory from their year-round village of Ts'ishaa. Then, within approximately a single generation, political amalgamations resulted in a combined territory that covered a vast area. This greatly enlarged *hahuulhi* provided unrestricted access to a wide spectrum of resources, from the offshore fishing banks and sea mammal hunting areas of the outer coast, to the varied resources and sheltered village sites of the inner islands and upper sound, to Alberni Inlet and the enormous salmon runs of the Somass River. Yet, at the same time, disease and warfare had greatly reduced the number of people occupying Barkley Sound. To harvest the wide range of resources throughout
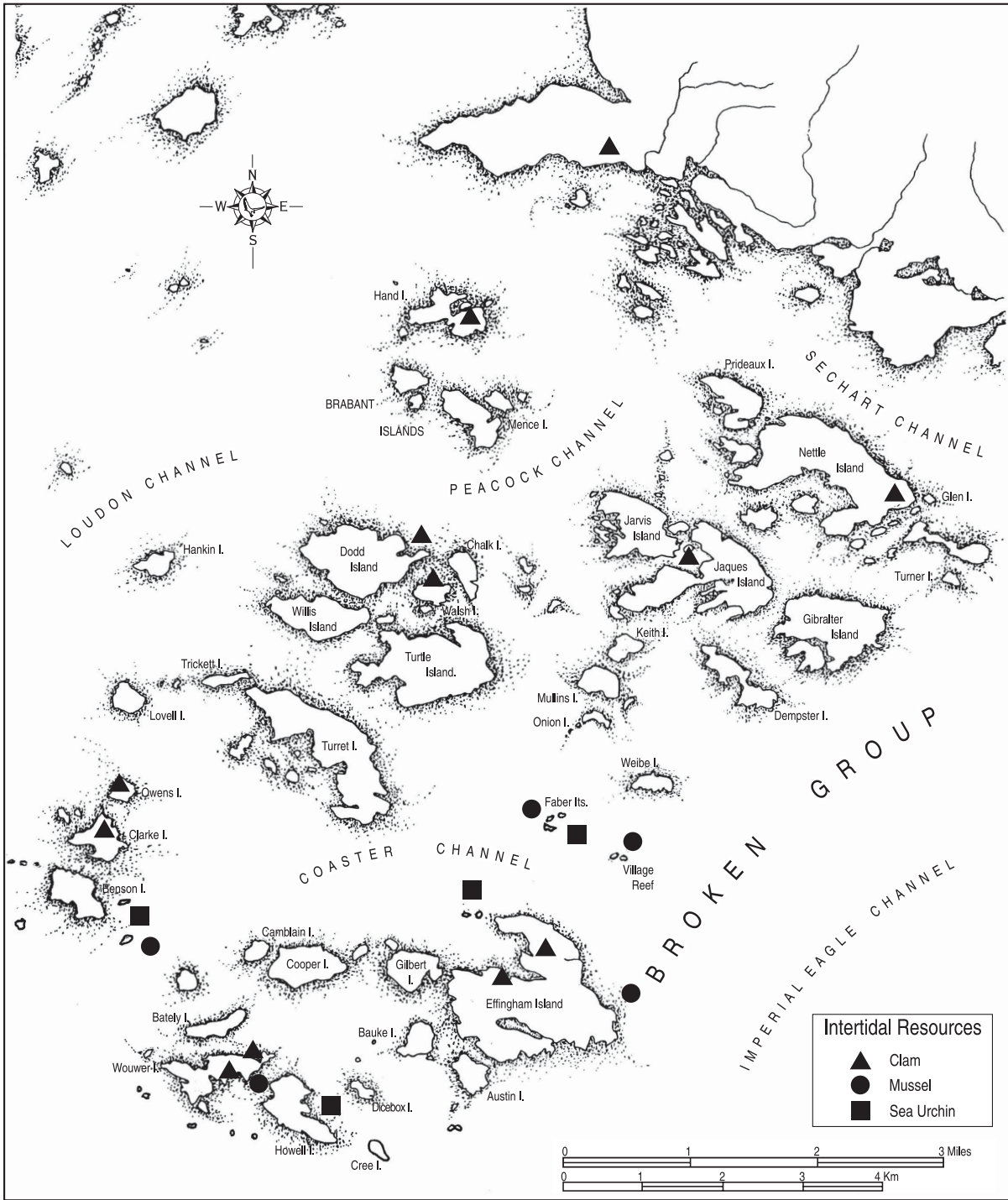
Figure 17. Known ethnographic shellfish collection locations in the Broken Group islands.

their enlarged _haḥuulhi_, the surviving Tseshaht adopted a seasonal pattern of movement with residence in a series of villages and camps based on the availability of specific resources. By the early nineteenth century, their major village of Ts'ishaa was reduced to a summer fishing and sea mammal hunting location, while the political and ritual centre of the Tseshaht people shifted first to the upper sound, then to the Alberni Valley.

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