

Coast Salish Mountain Goat Horn Bracelets:
Evidence of Change and Continuity in Coast Salish Art Production and Use during the
Early Contact Period on the Northwest Coast of America.

by

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to the required standard




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Abstract


This thesis is an ethnohistorical consideration of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets. This study presents three primary themes: the significance of bracelets in Coast Salish society, the replacement of mountain goat horn bracelets with trade materials, and the ultimate disappearance of the mountain goat horn bracelets. These themes are addressed through a consideration of the general historical context, the collection history of twenty-two examples of mountain goat horn bracelets, a stylistic analysis of the same twenty-two bracelets, and an analysis of the impact of certain indigenous Coast Salish cultural practices on the bracelets' history.

Major findings include the identification of standard compositional types used for the decoration of the bracelets, a relationship between Coast Salish funerary practices and the disappearance of the bracelets, and the speculative conclusion that the development of an environment of popular culture during the land-based fur trade produced changes in Coast Salish material culture.

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Abbreviations:

- BM – British Museum
 DAM – Denver Art Museum
 PE – Perth Museum and Art Gallery, Perth, Scotland
 PH – Peabody Museum, Harvard University
 PR – Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford University
 VM – Vancouver Museum, Vancouver, Canada

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Housed in museums of Great Britain, Ireland, the United States, and Canada are twenty-two mountain goat horn bracelets collected on the Northwest coast of North America by European explorers and Euro-Canadian fur traders between 1778 and ca. 1830. Though not completely unknown, these bracelets have not enjoyed the same attention as many other examples of Northwest Coast art. Perhaps the most significant cause of the bracelets' obscurity is the fact that they were only recently acknowledged as being examples of Coast Salish art production.¹

The term Coast Salish is applied to the speakers of a range of Salishan languages who occupy territories on the mainland and Vancouver Island coast of the Strait of Georgia; the mainland and Vancouver Island coasts of the Strait of Juan de Fuca; inland along the Fraser River as far east as Yale; and south through Puget Sound to the Pacific coast of Washington State. With reference to the mountain goat horn bracelets, however, based on the pattern of collection (discussed in chapter 3) and the style of decoration (discussed in chapter 4), I use "Coast Salish" to refer to the more limited geography of the southern Strait of Georgia, Fraser River, Strait of Juan de Fuca, and Puget Sound. Culturally, this region makes up part of the traditional territories of the Central and Southern Coast Salish (see map, figure 1).

Writing on the topic of Central Coast Salish art in 1980, anthropologist Michael Kew noted that the Central Coast Salish were "among the least familiar" of the Northwest

Coast peoples and that “their art is almost completely unknown.”² In part, Kew attributed this situation to the history of early and intensive colonisation of the Coast Salish region by Europeans and the consequent disruption of Coast Salish cultures.³ This, according to Kew, was compounded by the traditionally “less abundant” production of art by the Coast Salish in comparison with more northern Northwest Coast groups.⁴ Produced in limited quantities to begin with and subject to early disruption by colonisation, Coast Salish arts went uncollected and were therefore poorly represented in the museum collections that later formed the basis of both academic and popular knowledge of Northwest Coast arts and culture.⁵

Given the circumstances presented by Kew, I believe that the Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets offer an important opportunity for the study of Coast Salish arts. There are, however, some very real challenges that complicate the study of these bracelets. Leading these challenges is the limited number of bracelets that survive for study. As I discuss in chapter 3, of the twenty-two known examples of these bracelets, only seventeen are reasonably documented, and these represent only three general opportunities for collection. Fortunately, these collection opportunities are well distributed both historically and geographically, and the restrictions of the small sample are somewhat mitigated.

¹ Thomas Vaughan and Bill Holm, *Soft Gold: The Fur Trade & Exchange On The Northwest Coast Of America*, (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1982), p. 156.

² J. E. Michael Kew, *Sculpture and Engraving of the Central Coast Salish Indians*, (Vancouver: UBC Museum of Anthropology, Museum Note No. 9, 1980), not paginated.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

Adding to the problems represented by the small number of surviving bracelets is the virtual absence of specific references to mountain goat horn bracelets in the historical record. As I discuss in chapter 2, there are a variety of records that provide accounts of the contacts between the Coast Salish and visitors to their territories during the 1778 - ca. 1830 period when the bracelets were collected. Unfortunately, though, nowhere in these accounts is there a reliable description of the use of mountain goat horn bracelets among the Coast Salish.

One further source of information that might be expected to compensate for the challenges described above, the various ethnographies of the Coast Salish, are also found to offer no information on mountain goat horn bracelets. Further complicating the situation, these ethnographies are also weak on the topic of bracelet use by the Coast Salish in general. For example, anthropologist Diamond Jenness, while working among the Saanich in the 1930s, was unable to learn anything regarding the former use of bracelets or anklets by this group.⁶ Other anthropologists such as Homer Barnett (1935-36) and Hermann Haeberlin and Erna Gunther (1916-17) were not much more successful than Jenness, though Barnett did report the use of "a few copper-band bracelets" among the Gulf of Georgia Salish, and Haeberlin and Gunther noted the "recent" practice of wearing shell bracelets by the Puget Sound Salish.⁷

⁶ Diamond Jenness, "The Saanitch Indians of Vancouver Island," (Manuscript [No. VII-G-8M], Canadian Ethnology Service Archives, National Museum of Civilisation, Ottawa, [1934-35]. Photocopy available at Sidney Museum, Sidney, British Columbia), p.50.

⁷ Homer Barnett, *The Coast Salish of British Columbia*, (Portland: University of Oregon Press, 1955), p. 76; and Hermann Haeberlin and Erna Gunther, *The Indians of Puget Sound*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1930), p. 41. Though Barnett's ethnography was published in 1955, it was based on research conducted in 1935 and 1936: Barnett, *The Coast Salish of British Columbia*, p. iii.

Relying on these ethnographies alone could lead to the mistaken impression that bracelet use among the Coast Salish was rare. It should be remembered, however, that these ethnographers were motivated to acquire only information regarding the "aboriginal conditions" of Coast Salish culture and chose to "exclude everything known to be due to white influence."⁸ By the time these ethnographic studies were undertaken, the Coast Salish had experienced approximately a century and a half of contact and much of their traditional material culture was gone.⁹ As Barnett described it, "the ancient handicrafts are modified or have ceased altogether to be practised."¹⁰ It may be that some indications of past braceleting practices could have survived in the use of modern bracelets and ornaments, but these would probably have been excluded as the products of "white influence." It is therefore regrettable, but not surprising, that the ethnographic record offers little in the way of information regarding bracelet use by the Coast Salish.

Faced with this lack of specific information regarding Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets and the limited information concerning the general use of bracelets by the

⁸ Barnett, *The Coast Salish of British Columbia*, p. 5.

⁹ Some limited ethnographic work among the Coast Salish was conducted by Franz Boas late in the nineteenth century and by Charles Hill-Tout early in the twentieth century. Suttles describes the product of Boas's work with the Coast Salish as "only a few short articles." More detailed study of the Coast Salish did not occur until the period between 1920-1950. See Wayne Suttles, "The Ethnographic Significance of the Fort Langley Journals," in *The Fort Langley Journals 1827-30*, Morag Maclachlan, ed., (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998), p. 165. My comments on ethnography refer mainly to the later 1920-50 period of more detailed study. My review of the earlier work by Hill-Tout, as presented in Ralph Maud, *The Salish People: The Local Contribution of Charles Hill-Tout. Volumes III and IV*, (Vancouver: Talon Books, 1978), has shown it to be of little value in a consideration of Coast Salish bracelets. Articles by Franz Boas, including comments on the *Lku'ngen* (Songhees) in "Second General Report on the Indians of British Columbia," in *Sixth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, (London: British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1890), pp. 11-30 and "Notes on the Snanaimuq [Nanaimo]," in *American Anthropologist*, volume II, number 4, (October 1889), pp. 21-28, are very general and offer no information on bracelets. However, Boas's "The Indian Tribes of the Lower Fraser River," in *Eighth Report on the North-Western Tribes of Canada*, (London: British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1892), pp. 454-463, offers a more detailed treatment and includes a useful comment on the place of bracelets in Coast Salish burial practices.

¹⁰ Barnett, *The Coast Salish of British Columbia*, p. 2.

Coast Salish, it is unlikely that a full understanding of the meaning and function of the bracelets in their original context can ever be had. This does not, however, diminish their significance as examples of historic Coast Salish art, nor does it render them unsuitable for study. Rather, as a distinctive example of Coast Salish art production, the manufacture and use of which is assumed to have ended in the first half of the nineteenth century, these bracelets offer the opportunity to study an example of change in Coast Salish art production and use during the early contact period. It is also possible that a better understanding of the history of these bracelets might provide some insights into the effects of contact on Coast Salish culture.

For the purposes of this study I will consider the early contact period to refer to the period of exploration and fur trade that began in 1774 and preceded British and American settlement of the Coast Salish region. This settlement began in limited form in 1849, though the full impact of settlement and colonisation developed only after the Fraser River gold rush in 1858. The issue of change during this early contact period is particularly interesting. In *Contact and Conflict* (1977/92), historian Robin Fisher argued that the Northwest Coast peoples and their foreign visitors were equal participants in the events of contact preceding settlement. Referring specifically to the land-based fur trade, Fisher concluded that the “Europeans and Indians were part of a mutually beneficial economic symbiosis.”¹¹ Change in Northwest Coast societies was a part of this relationship, but given Fisher’s view that the fur traders were largely unwilling and unable to force change on their native trading partners, it was a process of “non-directed cultural

¹¹ Robin Fisher, *Contact and Conflict: Indian European Relations in British Columbia, 1774-1890, Second Edition*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992), p. 47.

change.”¹² Under these circumstances the change that did occur “was change that the Indians directed and therefore their cultures remained intact.”¹³

Fisher’s emphasis on the equality of this period is, of course, open to question. Wayne Suttles, for example, has commented that “while some Natives were for a time in control of the trade and making a profit from it, some . . . must surely have been learning that dealing with Europeans meant risking one’s dignity and autonomy.”¹⁴ However, on the topic of changes in Coast Salish culture associated with the fur trade, Suttles also noted that they “were largely quantitative and significant mainly in what they foreshadowed of qualitative changes that lay ahead.”¹⁵ This appears to support Fisher’s view that aboriginal cultures largely remained intact during this period.

In general then, I believe that Fisher’s characterisation of the land-based fur trade as a period of non-directed change is reasonable, and that changes in the use and production of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets are part of this process of non-directed change. Change, however, is not without its consequences, and as I discuss in chapter 6, I believe that while the disappearance of the mountain goat horn bracelets is a product of the continuity of indigenous Coast Salish practices and beliefs, their disappearance itself may have contributed to a subsequent disruption of Coast Salish cultural knowledge.

I view changes in Coast Salish bracelet use as a product of both historical and indigenous cultural influences during a period when the opportunities for contact and its associated effects were limited and identifiable. Under these circumstances, ethnohistory,

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹⁴ Suttles, “Ethnographic Significance of the Journals,” p. 210.

with its emphasis on the integration of a broad range of historical and anthropological materials as a means of addressing the issue of culture change, presents itself as the most appropriate means of pursuing a study of these bracelets.¹⁶

In keeping with the goals of ethnohistory I propose to draw on both historical and ethnographic resources in attempting to develop an understanding of the circumstances that led to the disappearance of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets. My organisational approach, however, will have an historical emphasis. Reflecting this historical emphasis, chapter 2 of this thesis presents an historical overview of the events of contact up to the beginnings of settlement. Observations of this period include the opportunities for contact, the use of bracelets by the Coast Salish, and the introduction and use of trade goods among the Coast Salish. The primary sources of information for these chapters are the accounts of the various visitors to the Coast Salish region during the early contact period and include personal and official journals and trade records. Of use in interpreting these records are the many histories of the period that have been written.

Chapter 3 is also primarily historical in emphasis and provides a focused consideration of the collection of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets. One of my goals in this chapter is to assess the reliability of the existing collection history of the bracelets and to develop it through further research. I also give some consideration to the context of collection, including situations where the bracelets were and were not collected, to determine the circumstances under which the collection of the bracelets occurred. I

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 206-7.

¹⁶ I derive this definition of ethnohistory from comments made by James Axtell in "Ethnohistory: An Historian's Viewpoint," *Ethnohistory*, Volume 26, Number 1, (Winter 1979), p. 3. Also contributing to my understanding of the methodologies of ethnohistory is Vinson H. Sutlive, et al., eds., *Ethnohistory: A*

believe the awareness of these circumstances that develops can contribute to a better understanding of the time frame in which the bracelets disappeared. Key resources for this chapter include existing collection records supplemented by the same historical accounts used in chapter 2.

Chapter 4 is perhaps best described as art historical and addresses the issue of the bracelets themselves in terms of material, physical form, and decorative style. For this chapter the twenty-two surviving bracelets are the most significant resource. Collected over approximately fifty years, these bracelets provide the opportunity for a consideration of indications of change and continuity in Coast Salish art production during this time. Unfortunately, of the twenty-two known examples of these bracelets, I have been able to directly examine only the single bracelet in the collections of the Vancouver Museum (figure 15). As eighteen of the bracelets are located in Ireland, Scotland, and England, and three are in the United States, direct examination would entail considerable cost. I have therefore relied on photographs as the basis of my stylistic analysis and as a consequence my analyses are necessarily conservative.

Chapter 5, which deals directly with the issue of the disappearance of the bracelets, is the most ethnohistoric in this thesis. In this chapter I draw on the historical awareness developed in the preceding chapters and apply it to a consideration of available ethnographic information concerning the role and treatment of material culture in Coast Salish society. The result is the presentation of a possible scenario that explains why the Coast Salish ceased producing mountain goat horn bracelets and why these bracelets disappeared so completely. Of particular interest here are the economic effects of the fur

trade and the possibility that an environment of popular culture developed among the Coast Salish as a result of these effects.

In *In Small Things Forgotten*, James Deetz describes popular culture as demonstrating rapid change over time and “similarity over large areas,” as contrasting with the regional variation and limited change over time which characterises folk culture.¹⁷ For the purposes of this study, I have chosen to equate traditional Coast Salish material culture with Deetz’s folk culture, and the conditions of the fur trade with popular culture. As I discuss in greater detail in chapter 5, I believe that effects of Hudson’s Bay Company trading practices combined with indigenous aspects of Coast Salish social structure led to the development of this environment of popular culture.

While an understanding of specific aspects of Coast Salish ethnography is a key to developing an understanding of the history of mountain goat horn bracelets, I do not provide a full ethnographic overview of the Coast Salish in this thesis. This is a consequence of my decision to organise this study historically, and I will instead include discussions of relevant aspects of Coast Salish cultural practices and beliefs where they are most appropriate. I believe that this will allow the issue of the disappearance of the mountain goat horn bracelets to be most clearly illustrated as an *historical* process.

Also absent from this study are comprehensive considerations of contemporary Coast Salish perspectives on mountain goat horn bracelets and traditional Coast Salish knowledge of the bracelets. The reasons for these absences are largely addressed by comments made by Deborah Sparrow, a Musqueam weaver and engraver, during a

Department of Anthropology, College of William and Mary, March 1986).

¹⁷ James Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten: The Archaeology of Early American Life*, (New York: Anchor Books, 1977), p. 41.

conversation conducted as research for this thesis.¹⁸ It is important to note that while Ms. Sparrow is a member of the Coast Salish Musqueam First Nation I am not presenting her comments as representative of the whole of the Coast Salish community. Rather, Ms. Sparrow's comments reflect the observations of a Coast Salish individual who is aware of and interested in historic Coast Salish arts in general, and Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets in particular.

Through speaking with Ms. Sparrow I learned that Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets, like the distinctive Central Coast Salish art style itself (discussed in chapter 4), are a recent rediscovery among the Coast Salish. In a 1983 article on Coast Salish relief carving, Norman Feder noted that the then "present-day Salish people" knew nothing of the style and that knowledge of it had disappeared by the beginning of the twentieth century.¹⁹ Ms. Sparrow herself, who produces engraved silver bracelets that replicate the decorative style of the mountain goat horn bracelets, has only been aware of the bracelets for the past fifteen years. Faced with this circumstance, specific historical knowledge of the bracelets cannot be learned from living Coast Salish individuals.

Though knowledge of the mountain goat horn bracelets and other historic examples of Coast Salish arts may be recent in the contemporary Coast Salish community, it should not be assumed that this diminishes their significance. For Deborah Sparrow the bracelets are a source of pride and an indication of what the Salish people were capable of before contact. Ms. Sparrow believes that the bracelets and other examples of historic

¹⁸ The following comments attributed to Deborah Sparrow are derived from a telephone interview conducted June 25, 1998.

¹⁹ Norman Feder, "Incised relief Carving of the Halkomelem and Straits Salish," *American Indian Art Magazine*, Volume 8, Number 2, (Spring 1983), p. 47.

Coast Salish arts play an important part in the re-establishment of a Coast Salish sense of self, both now and in the future.

For Deborah Sparrow, Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets are more than just historical objects; they are *her* history. As such, the bracelets are more than just objects; they are a tangible connection to the past. For me, on the other hand, the bracelets are evidence of the historical effects of contact and offer an opportunity to gain an understanding of the past through an object-oriented academic approach. This is not to deny a sincere appreciation of the bracelets as examples of exceptional artistic accomplishment. It remains, however, an outsider's appreciation. The contrasts between these two positions are obvious and present two separate but equally valid projects. Therefore, my decision to largely exclude the contemporary Coast Salish view is entirely a product of my objectives in this study.

Given the fact that Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets have been the subject of only limited study, it is necessary to establish some preliminary understandings regarding the bracelets before proceeding. Addressed primarily in three points, these understandings are that Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets disappeared early in the contact period; that their disappearance is related to the replacement of indigenous ornaments with trade materials; and that the bracelets were in some way significant to their Coast Salish owners. These points are based on conclusions drawn in the few references to mountain goat horn bracelets that I have found and on my understanding of the place of material possessions in Coast Salish society.

The belief that Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets disappeared in the early contact period is based largely on the fact that the last dated collection occurred ca. 1830

and that there is no later knowledge of the bracelets.²⁰ While this is a reasonable conclusion to draw, the collection of Coast Salish artifacts was anything but consistent. As noted above, I will address the issue of collecting in chapter 3, but it is useful to note here that the last dated collection of the bracelets in ca. 1830 also marks the last collection of Central Coast Salish objects for a period of approximately thirty years.²¹ As the shift from fur trade to settlement eras occurred during this thirty-year period, it is necessary to attempt to determine the reliability of this belief of early disappearance.

Related to the issue of disappearance is the understanding that Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets were replaced by introduced trade goods.²² Trade, of course, was a defining feature of the early contact period, and an important aspect of chapter 2 is a consideration of the use of introduced goods and materials by the Coast Salish. There are, however, several problems when the issue of replacement by trade goods is given close consideration. For example, even before contact with Europeans, indigenous goods were produced from materials that were only available to certain groups through trade. Significantly, mountain goat horn is one of these materials (discussed in chapter 4). Added to this is the problem that not all foreign goods were entirely unknown or unavailable on the Northwest Coast before these same contacts. Of particular interest here is the aboriginal use of copper which was available in its elemental form from southeastern Alaska, and iron which probably drifted ashore on wrecked Japanese boats.²³

²⁰ Robin K. Wright, "Masterworks of Washington Native Art," in *A Time of Gathering: Native Heritage in Washington State*, Robin K. Wright, ed., (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), p. 92.

²¹ Feder, "Incised Relief Carving," p. 47.

²² Kew, *Sculpture and Engraving of the Central Coast Salish*, not paginated.

²³ T.A. Rickard, "The Use Of Iron And Copper By The Indians Of British Columbia," *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, Volume III, (1939), p. 36 for the native sources of copper. For a detailed discussion

Continuing the list of problems is the basic definition of replacement. Does replacement mean the direct substitution of a locally produced object such as a goat horn bracelet with a directly equivalent trade object such as a brass bracelet; or can a bracelet be replaced by a ring, pendant, or other ornament? Also, would the significance of this type of replacement change if the brass bracelet was locally manufactured from brass traded in some other form than an actual trade bracelet? A basic question that results is whether it is the introduced object or the introduced material that is of significance.

Given the range of questions associated with this issue, it is necessary to develop a basic understanding of the meaning of 'replacement by trade goods' in the context of this thesis. To begin with, I am interested in the Coast Salish use of trade materials for their own manufactures as well as their use of manufactured trade goods. As for the definition of a trade good, I refer specifically to goods and materials that the Coast Salish themselves would have associated with the early explorers and fur traders with whom they were in contact. This, I believe, should include copper and iron, despite their pre-contact use, as their availability among the Coast Salish undoubtedly increased as a result of contact-related trade. The Coast Salish use of bracelets manufactured of trade materials, whether of local or foreign manufacture, is of considerable interest, but the possible replacement of mountain goat horn bracelets by other types of trade-related ornament will be subject to similar consideration.

The final point, that the bracelets held some significance for their Coast Salish owners, is a product of my own belief there would be some reason for Coast Salish artists to have produced and used these bracelets and that they responded to a particular Coast

Salish interest. As I noted above, the ethnographic record offers little specific information regarding the use of bracelets by the Coast Salish, and therefore there is little direct support for a belief in their significance. These ethnographies do, however, offer some indirect support, as in Barnett's observation that due to their expense, "body ornaments were not worn as a part of everyday dress" and that they "were reserved for ceremonial occasions."²⁴ Though not explicitly referring to bracelets, Barnett's presentation does include bracelets as a type of body ornament.

Also supporting this assumption of significance is anthropologist Wayne Suttles' general view of the role of material possessions for the Coast Salish. In a study of post-contact culture change among the Lummi, a Straits Salish group, Suttles observed that for the Coast Salish material possessions served as a reference to an individual's non-material possessions.²⁵ These non-material possessions, which included inherited rights; private knowledge; and supernatural power, were the traditional sources of wealth for the Coast Salish.²⁶ In general terms, then, as material possessions, ornaments such as bracelets served as indications of wealth and of the owner's access to the sources of wealth.

In her 1940 ethnography of the Puyallup-Nisqually of southern Puget Sound, anthropologist Marian Smith defined three categories of material property recognised by these Coast Salish communities. These categories included personal property, inherited property, and excess property.²⁷ Both personal and excess property could include ornaments, but, as I discuss in greater detail in chapter 5, I believe that bracelets should be

Indians of the Northwest Coast," *Arctic Anthropology*, Volume 22, Number 2, (1985), pp. 7-15.

²⁴ Barnett, *Coast Salish of British Columbia*, p. 76.

²⁵ Wayne Suttles, "Post-Contact Culture Change Among The Lummi Indians," *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, Volume XVII, (1953), p. 34.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

considered personal property.²⁸ An object was recognised as personal property as a result of its exclusive use by a particular individual and the resulting close association between the object and that person.²⁹ In contrast, excess property was accumulated wealth that could be ceremonially redistributed as a means of gaining prestige.³⁰ As I discuss in chapter 5, my determination that bracelets were personal property is based on the Coast Salish practice of interring objects of personal property, including bracelets, with their deceased owners.³¹ An effort to confirm this assumption that bracelets were significant to the Coast Salish, whether manufactured from mountain goat horn or any other material, is a primary aspect of this thesis.

These three points, disappearance, replacement, and significance, will reappear as consistent themes throughout this thesis and will be subject to constant re-evaluation. Each chapter, with individual focuses on history, collection, style, and disappearance, represents a unique approach to these three points. Other, more subtle issues will also appear, but they are subordinate to these primary themes. This is a very broad but necessary approach to a particularly obscure topic and it involves an obvious element of speculation. It is however, reasoned speculation based on the application of established ethnohistoric methodologies and is, I believe, the only available means of gaining a more complete understanding of the history of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets.

²⁷ Marian Smith, *The Puyallup-Nisqually*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940), p. 143.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 143 and 145.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

Chapter 2

Historical Context

A consideration of the historical record will be the first step in my study of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets. As I have already noted, information regarding these bracelets is largely absent from the historical record. Despite these limitations, a consideration of the historical context in which the bracelets existed and from which they eventually disappeared does provide some very useful insights. As my focus in this study is the issue of change in a particular aspect of Coast Salish material culture, historical factors that illustrate and potentially influenced that change will be emphasised. Within the context of a general historical overview I will note observations of bracelets, their use, and the materials they are made of; the availability of trade materials and their uses; and opportunities for the introduction of trade materials.

There are already numerous histories of the period under consideration here and it might be argued that such an effort on my part is redundant. One notable example is Erna Gunther's *Indian Life on the Northwest Coast of America* (1972), which provides a detailed (if sometimes unreliable) consideration of the historical and collection record in an effort to develop an image of indigenous Northwest Coast cultures at the time of initial contact.¹ In contrast, my focus is the actual occurrence of change over an extended period of time. Other works, such as Robin Fisher's *Contact and Conflict* or Wilson Duff's *Indian History of British Columbia*, are of some use and offer a generalised

¹ Erna Gunther, *Indian Life on the Northwest Coast of America : As Seen by the Early Explorers and Fur Traders during the Last Decades of the Eighteenth Century*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972.

consideration of the effects of contact on the Northwest Coast.² However, given that a notable aspect of the contact history of the Northwest Coast is the variability of its effects, the value of these generalised efforts is limited in a focused analysis of a specific aspect of Coast Salish material culture.³ Therefore, I see the development of a basic overview of the progress of contact in the Coast Salish region and the associated historical process of change as a necessity.

In this overview, the period during which Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets were collected, 1778-ca.1830, will receive the most detailed discussion. The beginning of this period predates direct contact between Europeans and the Coast Salish and ends during the era of the land-based fur trade. These years saw a significant shift from the indirect and sporadic encounters between the Coast Salish and European explorers and maritime fur traders to the establishment of permanent trading posts by Euro-Canadian fur traders within Coast Salish territories. Despite this emphasis, my consideration of the historical context will not end at 1830 as I believe that an awareness of the context in which the bracelets were *not* collected is also important in attempting to understand their history. Therefore, I will include some brief comments on the early settlement era (roughly 1850-1880) and its significance to the history of the Coast Salish region.

Douglas Cole comments that this source "must be used with great caution." See Douglas Cole, *Captured Heritage: The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1985), p. 313, note # 2.

² Robin Fisher, *Contact and Conflict*. Wilson Duff, *The Indian History Of British Columbia. Volume 1. The Impact Of The White Man*, (Victoria: Provincial Museum of British Columbia, 1964).

³ Douglas Cole and David Darling, "History of the Early Period," in *Handbook of North American Indians: Northwest Coast. Volume 7*, Wayne Suttles ed., (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1990), p. 133.

As my-sources for this historical overview of the early contact period are records kept by visitors to the Coast Salish region, and not by the Coast Salish themselves, some comment on the reliability of these records is required. All of these records are a product of limited opportunities for visitors to the Northwest Coast to observe the Coast Salish and their cultural practices. In the restrictive context of the early contact period these visitors had little opportunity to gain a comprehensive understanding of Coast Salish cultures, and their observations offer only fragmentary views of the Coast Salish. Therefore, any interpretations of Coast Salish behaviour made by these observers is suspect unless confirmed by other sources of information. Simple observations of ornament usage or material preferences are more reliable, but only for the circumstances in which the observations were made.

Indirect Contacts with Europeans

Though European exploration of the Northwest Coast began as early as 1774 with the voyages of the Spaniard Juan Perez, it was not until 1787 that Europeans first located the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca and direct contact with the Coast Salish became possible. Prior to this, there was some indirect European and Coast Salish interaction. An example of this indirect contact was the acquisition of a variety of examples of Coast Salish material culture by the Cook expedition at Nootka in 1778, including two mountain goat horn bracelets and a mountain sheep horn rattle.⁴ In all likelihood the Coast Salish

⁴ A general comment on the collection of Coast Salish objects by Cook at Nootka is provided in Norman Feder, "Incised Relief Carving," p. 54, note # 4.

traded these and other objects to the inhabitants of Nootka or their neighbours by way of trade routes along the Strait of Juan de Fuca,⁵ or across overland trails.⁶

Though Nootka is clearly outside of the Coast Salish culture area it is useful to note some of the braceleting practices that early European visitors observed there. According to William Ellis, an assistant surgeon on the Cook voyage, bracelets were made of horn and copper, and necklaces of hair and leather were also worn on the wrists and ankles.⁷ Ellis also noted that the people of Nootka particularly valued “bright” metals in the form of bracelets, and that they even tied buttons to their wrists as bracelets.⁸ Judging by these comments, horn bracelets were not uncommon at Nootka and coexisted with copper bracelets at the time of contact. Also, trade metals such as “brass, copper, tin, and pewter” were in immediate demand for use as bracelets.⁹

Just as indigenous goods could be traded out from the Coast Salish, introduced trade materials could find their way into Coast Salish territories by the same routes. Later, both Spanish and English explorers would find introduced goods in the possession of the Coast Salish where no previous direct contact was known to have occurred.¹⁰ Though the quantity of materials traded to the Coast Salish in this manner was probably small, this

⁵ See discussion below, this chapter p. 28.

⁶ For one example of such a trail see Robert Brown’s “Journal of the Vancouver Island Exploring Expedition 1864,” which records the expedition’s course from Cowichan Bay to the west coast of the Island at Nitinat by way of native routes. In John Hayman, ed., *Robert Brown And The Vancouver Island Exploring Expedition*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1989), pp. 35-155.

⁷ William Ellis, *An Authentic Narrative Of A Voyage Performed By Captain Cook and Captain Clerke In His Majesty’s Ships Resolution and Discovery During the Years 1776 To 1780 In Search Of A North-West Passage Between The Continents Of Asia And America. Volume 1*, (New York: Da Capo Press, 1969), p. 215.

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 223.

⁹ *Ibid*, p. 223.

¹⁰ See discussion below, p. 24 and 28.

trade may have helped familiarise the Coast Salish with the availability of European trade materials and contributed to establishing a demand for those materials.

The same trade routes that allowed for this indirect introduction of European trade goods may have also played a role in the introduction of epidemic disease amongst the Coast Salish. It is believed that a smallpox epidemic occurred among the Coast Salish population of the Strait of Georgia and Puget Sound prior to the arrival of the first Europeans in the Coast Salish region. Though differing on the exact date of this epidemic and its route of introduction to the Coast Salish region, both Cole Harris and Robert Boyd argue that this epidemic resulted in a significant reduction of the pre-contact Coast Salish population.¹¹ In contrast, Robin Fisher questions the accuracy of pre-contact population estimates and sees the potential for exaggeration in determining the subsequent population decline.¹² Though he questions the demographic affects of introduced disease, Fisher does not dismiss the issue entirely. Rather than focusing on numbers, however, Fisher calls for a consideration of “the social and psychological effects of epidemics.”¹³

Leaving aside the contentious issue of precise demographic impact, I have found no reason to challenge Harris’s and Boyd’s arguments for a precontact epidemic among the Coast Salish. Similarly, I recognise that introduced diseases continued to play a role

¹¹ Cole Harris, “Voices of Smallpox around the Strait of Georgia” in *The Resettlement of British Columbia: Essays on Colonialism and Geographical Change*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), pp. 3-30, and Robert Boyd, “Demographic History, 1774-1874,” in *Handbook of North American Indians: Northwest Coast, Volume 7*, Suttles, ed., pp. 135- 148, and particularly sections on “Olympic” and “Georgia-Puget” epidemic areas, pp. 145-146.

¹² My comments are derived from Fisher’s views as presented in “Preface to the Second Edition,” *Contact and Conflict*, pp xv-xvii.

¹³ Fisher, *Contact and Conflict*, p. xvii. It should also be noted that Boyd has rebutted some of Fisher’s criticisms in Robert Boyd, “Smallpox in the Pacific Northwest: The First Epidemics,” *BC Studies*, No. 101, (Spring 1994), pp. 26-34.

throughout the early contact period.¹⁴ I will therefore proceed on the conclusion that through the indirect introduction of disease and trade goods, the Coast Salish were introduced to the processes of change associated with contact at least one decade before their own direct encounters with Europeans.

Initial Direct Encounters with Europeans

The opportunity for direct encounters between the Coast Salish and European visitors to the coast arose only after the 1787 discovery of the entrance of the Strait of Juan de Fuca by the English fur trader Charles Barkley.¹⁵ Following this discovery, a few maritime fur traders made short excursions into the strait but if they ventured far enough to meet any Coast Salish people their records offer no clear evidence of it. It was not until the Spanish expeditions of Quimper, Eliza, and Galiano and Valdes in 1790, 1791, and 1792, and Britain's 1792 Vancouver expedition, that any direct observations of the Coast Salish and their material culture were recorded. Individually, these four expeditions provide many useful observations of the peoples they encountered in Coast Salish territories. However, as each expedition covered slightly different areas within a relatively condensed time frame, I will combine the details of all four in the interest of developing a more complete impression of the circumstances that existed at the time.

¹⁴ Boyd, "Demographic History," pp. 145-146. See also George M. Guilmet, Boyd, Whited, and Thompson, "The Legacy of Introduced Disease: The Southern Coast Salish," *American Indian Culture And Research Journal*, Volume 15, Number 4, (1991), pp. 11-15.

¹⁵ While I realise that the word 'discovery' is contentious when used to describe initial encounters with already occupied territories, I have elected to use it as it is accurate in terms of the experience of the Europeans involved in these encounters and it is their experiences that form the basis of this historical overview.

The progress of these expeditions involved an initial survey of both the north and south shores of the Strait of Juan de Fuca by Manuel Quimper in 1790.¹⁶ This effort was followed the next year by an expedition under the command of Francisco Eliza. Expanding on Quimper's work, members of Eliza's party conducted surveys through the Strait of Georgia as far north as Texeda Island. Then, in 1792, the Vancouver expedition arrived on the coast to settle the question of the existence of a Northwest Passage and to implement the settlement between the British and Spanish regarding the Nootka Incident.¹⁷ Searching for a passage through the continent, Vancouver entered the Strait of Juan de Fuca and followed its southern shore, eventually entering the area now known as Puget Sound.

After completing his work in Puget Sound, Vancouver continued north into the Strait of Georgia where he encountered the Spanish ships *Sutil* and *Mexicana* in English Bay. These Spanish ships were under the command of Dionisio Alcala Galiano and Cayento Valdez who had arrived on the coast as members of the Malaspina scientific expedition.¹⁸ Prior to their meeting with Vancouver, they had been attempting to survey the mainland coast off the entrance to the Fraser River. Unfavourable currents had forced them across the Strait into the Gulf Islands and eventually brought them to the Nanaimo area.¹⁹ Returning to the mainland coast and their meeting with the British, the two expeditions joined together in surveying the inland passage between Vancouver Island and

¹⁶ Unless otherwise noted, the following summary of events is taken from Margaret Ormsby, *British Columbia: a History*, (Vancouver: The MacMillan Company, 1958), pp. 21-25.

¹⁷ The Nootka Incident resulted as a consequence of the seizure of British property and ships by the Spanish at Nootka who sought to assert their sovereignty over the area: Ormsby, *British Columbia: a History*, pp. 16-19.

¹⁸ Gunther, *Indian Life*, p. 93.

the mainland. These four expeditions provided the initial documented context for contact in the Coast Salish region, with the exception of the Fraser River.

For details of the three Spanish expeditions I am relying primarily on documents translated and published in Wagner's *Spanish Explorations In The Strait of Juan De Fuca*. While regarding Wagner as a definitive work, Mary Gormly noted that Wagner "was not interested in the Indians and often left out data concerning them."²⁰ Still, Wagner provides much useful information and, short of the very involved process of acquiring and translating the original Spanish accounts, his work remains a valuable and accessible resource.

As for the Vancouver expedition, excerpts of many of the crew's journals have been published in a variety of forms. Those portions of the journals that record the exploration of Puget Sound have been very popular. Useful examples include the journals of Peter Puget,²¹ Archibald Menzies,²² Edward Bell,²³ and of course Vancouver's official record which has been published in full and excerpted.²⁴ Perhaps the most disappointing aspect of these records is the fact that while at least eight mountain goat horn bracelets

¹⁹ Henry R. Wagner ed. and trans., *Spanish Explorations In The Strait Of Juan De Fuca*, (Santa Ana: Fine Arts Press, 1933), p. 252-256.

²⁰ Mary Gormly, "Early Culture Contact On The Northwest Coast, 1774-1795: Analysis Of Spanish Sources," *Northwest Anthropological Research Notes*, Volume 11, Number 1, (Spring 1977), p. 5.

²¹ Bern Anderson, ed., "The Vancouver Expedition: Peter Puget's Journal of the Exploration of Puget Sound, May 7-June 11, 1792," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Volume 30, Number 2, (April 1939), pp. 177-217.

²² Charles Newcombe, ed., *Menzies' Journal of Vancouver's Voyage, April to October, 1792*, (Victoria: Archives of British Columbia, 1923).

²³ Edward Meany, ed., "A New Vancouver Journal," *Washington Historical Quarterly*, Volume 5, Number 2, (April 1914), pp. 129-137, Number 3, (July 1914), pp. 215-224, Number 4, (October 1914), pp. 300-308, and Volume 6, Number 1, (January 1915), pp. 50-68. The author of the "New Vancouver Journal" is not known, though based on comments made in the text of the journal Edward Bell is accepted a likely author. See Meany, ed., "A New Vancouver Journal," Volume VI, Number 1, (January 1915), p. 50.

were collected during the Vancouver expedition, the journals make no mention of their collection or existence. Similarly, the Spanish journals provide no comments on this type of bracelet.

From the very beginning, members of the Spanish and British expeditions observed a mix of indigenous and introduced materials in the possession of the Coast Salish they encountered. Characteristic Coast Salish wool blankets, rush mats, bone and stone pointed arrows and spears, hide armour, and shell ornaments are complemented by iron pointed arrows and spears, brass and copper bracelets, beads, and coins used as ear ornaments. In fact, the available records give the impression that metal, and in particular copper, was the most common form of ornament. Caution must be exercised, however, given the failure of these journalists to record the presence of goat horn bracelets. In all of these journals the popularity and use of metals among the Coast Salish are a general preoccupation. This, coupled with the failure to record the presence of mountain goat horn bracelets, provides some indication that the journals reflect the particular interests of their authors and do not offer a complete impression of the indigenous aspects of Coast Salish material culture.

One explanation for the failure to record more complete observations of the indigenous material culture is indicated in the following comment from the 1792 journal of Edward Bell. "Their Garments, Canoes and fishing implements are their chief workmanship and of these I procured samples that will better show their ingenuity than I

²⁴ I have relied primarily on the excerpt of Vancouver in Edmond S. Meany, ed., *Vancouver's Discovery of Puget Sound: Portraits And Biographies Of The Men Honored In The Naming Of Geographic Features of Northwestern America*, (Portland: Binford & Mort, 1957).

can explain it."²⁵ As this comment indicates, Bell perceived little need to provide extensive descriptions of the objects he received in trade or even a full accounting of those objects, as he regarded the objects themselves as the most effective record. Judging by the sparse references to collections in the other journals, Bell was not alone in this opinion. Unfortunately, only a small portion of the material from the Vancouver expedition is known, and as of 1989 nothing from the Spanish collections had been located.²⁶

Despite the limitations of these records it is still possible to address the issue of metal bracelets during the initial contact period. The use of wrist and ankle ornaments, of which copper formed some part, was noted by Peter Puget but without further elaboration.²⁷ Looking to the Spanish accounts, though, some sense of the value that the Coast Salish placed on bracelets is indicated. For example, Pantoja reported that in 1791 off Point Roberts, members of the Eliza expedition encountered a group of "Indians" in whose possession they observed "some bracelets of very fine brass engraved apparently with a burin [an engraving tool], which they would not exchange."²⁸ Approximately one year later, near Nanaimo, an encounter between the Galiano and Valdez expedition and "39 canoes with 2 or 3 indians in each" produced another comment on bracelets.

The man who appeared to be chief wore a woolen blanket on top of a deerskin, a truncated cone hat, five brass bracelets on the right wrist and a hoop of copper around his neck, very similar to one we had seen at lat 60° the year before.²⁹

²⁵ Meany, ed., "A New Vancouver Journal," Volume 6, Number 1, p. 62.

²⁶ For the Vancouver collections see J.C.H King, "Vancouver's Ethnography: A preliminary description of five inventories from the voyage of 1791-95," *Journal of the History of Collections*, Volume 6, Number 1 (1994), p. 35. For the Spanish material see Robin K. Wright, "A Collection History," in *A Time Of Gathering*, Wright, ed., p. 32.

²⁷ Anderson, "Peter Puget's Journal," p. 182

²⁸ Wagner, *Spanish Explorations In The Strait of Juan De Fuca*, p. 187.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 255.

While it is difficult to be certain, it does appear that the Spanish viewed this individual's attire, including the bracelets, as a mark of distinction. This conclusion is supported by the earlier incident where the Spanish were unable to trade for two engraved brass bracelets.³⁰

A discussion of Coast Salish preferences in trade goods allows for a more general consideration of the value and use of introduced metals. Both the Spanish and British had a variety of trade goods at their disposal. For the Spanish, copper sheet and abalone shells were the staple trade goods, though iron cask hoops, beads, knives, and buttons were also used.³¹ The British also carried copper sheet, rough iron, beads, knives, and buttons, but also added copper medals, looking glass, cloth, hawk's bells, and possibly more to their list of 'trifles' and 'trinkets'.³²

Of all the goods available for trade, copper, which Vancouver described as "the article most valued and esteemed amongst them,"³³ was the most desired through the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Puget Sound. A better sense of the particular significance of copper in this area is provided by comments made by Vancouver regarding a visit by two "superior people" on board the *Discovery* at Restoration Point.

I again presented them with some valuables, amongst which was a garment for each of blue cloth, some copper, iron in various shapes, and such trinkets as I thought would prove most acceptable. In this respect either my judgement failed, or their passion for traffic and exchange is irresistible; for no sooner had they quitted the cabin, than, excepting the copper, they bartered away on deck nearly every article I had given them, for others of infinitely less utility or real value, consisting of such things as

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

³¹ The Eliza expedition is an exception and carried no trade goods other than copper sheet and abalone shells. Wagner, *Spanish Explorations In The Strait Of Juan De Fuca*, p. 167.

³² In general, the words trifle and trinket appear more frequently than do actual descriptions of the goods being offered in trade.

³³ Meany, ed., *Vancouver's Discovery of Puget Sound*, p. 131.

they could best appropriate to the decoration of their persons and other ornamental purposes, giving uniformly a decided preference to copper.³⁴

Copper appears to have been valued for ornamental purposes and was not used for more utilitarian purposes such as arrow points, as was iron.³⁵ In contrast, and much to Vancouver's surprise, iron-pointed arrows were offered in trade more readily than stone or bone-pointed examples.³⁶

While the demand for copper dominated the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Puget Sound, iron was in greater demand further to the north in the Strait of Georgia. At Descano, Galiano and Valdez found a preference for "beads + Monterey shells . . . and pieces of rough iron,"³⁷ while near the Fraser River he observed a party in seven canoes who were well armed with "iron pointed spears half a yard long, [and] quivers of arrows tipped with the same metal."³⁸ However, unlike at Descano, beads were of no interest³⁹ and a canoe was purchased with copper.⁴⁰

Meanwhile, Vancouver found that the people at English Bay "shewed much understanding in preferring iron to copper,"⁴¹ and in Burrard Inlet he found little in the way of foreign goods "excepting some rude ornaments apparently made from sheet copper . . ."⁴² Moving north into Howe Sound, Vancouver continued to find a preference for iron which, "in all its forms, they judiciously preferred to any other article we had to offer."⁴³ Also in Howe Sound, Vancouver noted that the materials offered in trade included copper

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 132-133.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

³⁷ Wagner, *Spanish Explorations In The Strait Of Juan De Fuca*, p. 255.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 260.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 260.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 261.

⁴¹ Meany, ed., *Vancouver's Discovery of Puget Sound*, p. 186.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 189

ornaments.⁴⁴ Here, as in the more southern parts of the Coast Salish region, copper appears to have been primarily used for ornament despite the increased demand for iron.

During each of these four expeditions the European observers found metals, namely copper and iron, in the possession of Coast Salish people whom the explorers believed had no prior contact with Europeans. As discussed in the introductory chapter, European trade and contact was not the only source of metals on the Northwest Coast. However, the coin earrings observed by Quimper in the Strait of Juan de Fuca,⁴⁵ and the pair of engraved brass bracelets observed near the Fraser River during the Eliza expedition, are clearly the indirect product of European trade that predates the direct European exploration of the Coast Salish region. According to the Spanish accounts there was a regular traffic in indigenous goods out of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and it is not difficult to imagine foreign trade goods returning along this route.⁴⁶ The Spanish also received an account of the overland trade of "iron, copper, and blue beads"⁴⁷ by Native traders and even a possible visit to the Coast Salish region by maritime traders, though this is far from certain.⁴⁸

In summary, then, during this period of initial contact it appears that their Spanish and British visitors supplied the Coast Salish with significant quantities of trade goods and that copper in particular was valued for personal ornamentation. In addition, the Vancouver expedition's experience in Puget Sound indicates that the use of copper for

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 193.

⁴⁵ Wagner, *Spanish Explorations In The Strait Of Juan De Fuca*, p. 109.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 131 offers one example.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 187, note # 92. In the footnote Wagner describes the sentence containing the reference to an earlier visit by foreign ships to the area as "enigmatical."

ornament was established prior to direct contact. Therefore, while increased availability and use of copper may have been products of contact, the Coast Salish preference for copper and its use was probably an indigenous feature of Coast Salish society. This conclusion is further supported by the fact that both copper and iron appear to have been in demand as raw materials for use in the manufacture of Coast Salish goods.

As for bracelets, based on the collection of mountain goat horn bracelets by members of the Vancouver expedition and information contained in the historical record, mountain goat horn and copper or brass bracelets coexisted within the Coast Salish region at the time of initial contact. The significance of the metal bracelets is strongly indicated in the historical record and it is likely that this significance is a product of both the value of the material and its use as bracelets. The historical record and the collection of Coast Salish horn and antler bracelets also indicates that as a general form of ornament the bracelet was an indigenous feature of Coast Salish material culture.⁴⁹ Bracelets made by the Coast Salish from trade brass or trade copper can therefore be interpreted as an example of the continuation of the production of an indigenous type of Coast Salish ornament using the most valuable materials available. It might therefore be concluded that a similar significance would have existed for the mountain goat horn bracelets.

One final point regarding the use of bracelets among the Coast Salish during this initial period of contact with Europeans is the observation of who was wearing bracelets. For example, near Nanaimo in 1792, Galiano and Valdez encountered a man who wore five brass bracelets. In general, though, while bracelets were observed by the British and Spanish on a variety of occasions, the gender of the wearer or wearers is not indicated.

The lack of specific information on this topic may indicate that bracelets were not exclusive to either gender.

It is important to note that the Spanish believed the individual they encountered near Nanaimo was a leader. Assuming that the Spanish chose to describe this individual's attire because it was distinctive, it is possible that his clothing and ornaments played some role in marking his identity as a leader. This may indicate that bracelets, in this specific case trade bracelets, could exist as markers of status. These conclusions, regarding the possible gender of bracelet wearers and the significance of bracelets are, of course, preliminary and they will receive additional consideration throughout this chapter.

The Land-Based Fur Trade Era

Following the three-year period of investigation by the Spanish and British there is no record of activities in the Coast Salish area for another fifteen years. This is surprising since the maritime fur trade, in which ship-borne traders cruised the coast and traded for highly valued sea otter pelts, was at its height during this same period. The apparent absence of maritime fur traders from Coast Salish waters is generally attributed to the limited availability of sea otters. However, given the number of ships travelling to the Northwest Coast to engage in the maritime fur trade, the possibility of at least a few entering the Straits of Juan de Fuca must be considered.⁵⁰ Similarly, indigenous trade from the outer coast or overland into the Coast Salish region would have continued.

⁴⁹ An antler bracelet was collected by George Hewett in 1792 along with seven mountain goat horn bracelets. See p. 61 of this thesis.

⁵⁰ Wayne Suttles, "Post-Contact Culture Change" p. 38.

However, in respect to the history of contact in the Coast Salish region, it would be by an overland route that the next recorded direct contacts would occur.

The overland approach to the Northwest Coast began in 1793 with Sir Alexander MacKenzie's journey to the Pacific coast at Bella Coola. MacKenzie's presence on the coast was a product of the land-based fur trade. Unlike the mobile ship-borne maritime fur trade, the land-based fur trade was characterised by the establishment of relatively permanent trading posts. Both the Northwest Company, headquartered in Montreal, and the Hudson's Bay Company, headquartered in London, played roles in the history of the Coast Salish. Not until after their merger in 1821 as the Hudson's Bay Company, however, were any trading posts established in the Coast Salish region.

MacKenzie undertook his 1793 journey in the interest of the Northwest Company in the hope of locating a port and supply route to serve the Northwest fur trade, but he was unsuccessful in this respect.⁵¹ For this same purpose Simon Fraser set out in 1808 to descend the Columbia but instead became the first the Euro-Canadian fur trader to descend the Fraser River to the Strait of Georgia and to encounter the Coast Salish of the Fraser River.⁵² As with Mackenzie's earlier journey, Fraser's route to the Pacific was not suitable for the fur trade. Only in 1811, following David Thompson's successful descent of the Columbia River to its mouth and the subsequent efforts of David Stuart in the employ of John Jacob Astor, did a practical overland route to the coast become available.⁵³

⁵¹ Ormsby, *British Columbia: a History*, p. 33.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.39-41.

By 1814, the Northwest Company was established at Fort George on the banks of the Columbia River near the Pacific. Rather than venturing out from the fort to engage directly in the acquisition of furs, the Northwest Company traders at Fort George relied on Native intermediaries to conduct the trade.⁵⁴ In 1824, following the amalgamation of the Northwest Company with the Hudson's Bay Company, the governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, Sir George Simpson, travelled to Fort George. Commenting on the situation that he found there, Simpson noted that little was known of the "Coast natives & resources" beyond Fort George and that "our ignorance of which after being established on the Coast upwards of Fourteen years [was] a disgrace to the whole concern."⁵⁵ Accordingly, a party travelled north by land that same fall to determine the site for a new fort on the Fraser River.⁵⁶ In the next year, 1825, the Hudson's Bay Company ship *William and Ann* undertook a survey of the coast, including a passage through the Strait of Juan de Fuca to the mouth of the Fraser River and engaged in trade with the Coast Salish people there.⁵⁷

This history of intermittent contact in the Coast Salish region eventually came to an end with the establishment of Fort Langley on the Fraser River in 1827.⁵⁸ Fort Nisqually, at the southern end of Puget Sound, soon followed in 1833 and later, in 1843, Fort Victoria was established on the southern tip of Vancouver Island (see map, figure 1 for fort locations). Though created to serve the interests of the fur trade, the resulting

⁵⁴ Morag MacLachlan, ed., *The Fort Langley Journals 1827-30*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998), p. 6.

⁵⁵ Frederick Merk, ed., *Fur Trade and Empire, George Simpson's Journal: Remarks Connected with the Fur Trade in the Course of a Voyage from York Factory to Fort George and back to York Factory 1824-25; together with Accompanying Documents*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931), p. 39.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

⁵⁷ Morag MacLachlan, "The Founding of Fort Langley," in *The Company on the Coast*, E. Blanche Norcross, ed., (Nanaimo: Nanaimo Historical Society, 1983), p. 13.

network of forts and routes also facilitated visits to the region by missionaries and others such as the botanist David Douglas in 1833 and the artist Paul Kane in 1847.⁵⁹

It was also during the fur trade period that in 1841 the United States Exploring Expedition commanded by Charles Wilkes, representing the United States interest in the area, travelled through the region and surveyed Puget Sound. By 1846 the international boundary dividing the Pacific Northwest between Britain and the United States was set at the 49th parallel; this was followed by the relocation of the Hudson's Bay Company headquarters to Victoria in 1849. Also in 1849, the first British efforts at organised settlement in the region began with the establishment of the Colony of Vancouver Island, while at the same time to the south, American settlement began in Puget Sound.⁶⁰

Unlike the short three-year time frame for the late 18th century Spanish and British expeditions to the Coast Salish regions, a period of forty-one years elapsed between Simon Fraser's 1808 descent of the Fraser River and the 1849 establishment of the Colony of Vancouver Island. The circumstances of contact between the Coast Salish and the various visitors to their territories underwent considerable change during this period, varying both with the time of contact and the motivation for contact. In general, the fur traders' emphasis was on furs and the opportunity for trade at favourable rates, and this interest is reflected in their records. However, while the motivation of trade remained constant, the actual conduct of trade changed considerably between MacKenzie's 1825

⁵⁸ For the locations of Forts Langley, Nisqually, and Victoria see map, figure 1.

⁵⁹ Despite their presence during the fur trade era, I am not looking to the activities of the Missionaries as a significant factor in the history of mountain goat horn bracelets as their presence was intermittent and their effective influence over Coast Salish cultural practices at this early date was probably limited. See Suttles, "The Lummi Indians," p. 40.

⁶⁰ Suttles, "The Lummi Indians," p. 41.

experiences on board the *William and Ann* and Tolmie's 1833 experiences at Fort Nisqually.

Demonstrating a much different motivation are the written and visual records of Paul Kane's effort to record what he believed to be a vanishing indigenous way of life.⁶¹ Unlike the commerce-oriented fur traders, Kane emphasised indigenous lifestyles in his records. This diverse history of the fur trade makes it difficult to combine the various accounts of the period into one unified entity. I will therefore address this aspect of Coast Salish contact history according to the differing types of activities that occurred during the fur trade era.

Just as the extended time frame of the fur trade allowed for an increased variety of contexts for contact between the Coast Salish and visitors to their territories, it also provided a much wider range of historical resources. These are, of course, too many to list, though of particular value are Simon Fraser's journal for his 1808 descent of the Fraser River and the journals of Francis Annance and John Work, which record the next visit to the river in 1824.⁶² Next there are Dr. John Scouler's and Alexander MacKenzie's accounts of the 1825 survey by the *William and Ann*, while the early years at Fort Langley are recorded in the fort's journal.⁶³ The Fort Langley Journal is supplemented by a range of Hudson's Bay Company records as well as secondary considerations of the Fort's

⁶¹ J. Russell Harper, ed., *Paul Kane's Frontier, Including Wanderings of an Artist Among the Indians of North America*, (Austin: University of Texas, 1971), p. 15.

⁶² W. Kaye Lamb, ed., *The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser 1806-1808*, (Toronto: MacMillan Company, 1960), Francis Annance, "A Journal of a Voyage from Fort George," *Cowlitz Historical Quarterly*, Volume XXXIII, Number 1, (1991), pp. 10-31, and T.C. Elliott, ed., "Journal Of John Work, November And December, 1824," *Washington Historical Quarterly*, Volume III, Number 3, (July 1912), pp. 198-228.

⁶³ Alexander McKenzie, "Journal of a Trip in the William and Ann, 1825," B. 223/a/I, Hudson's Bay Company Archives (hereafter HBCA); F.G. Young, ed., "Dr. John Scouler's Journal Of A Voyage To N.

history. Conditions during the first six months at Fort Nisqually, as presented in the personal journal of William Fraser Tolmie, offer some valuable insights.⁶⁴ Also of considerable importance are Wilkes' *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition* and Paul Kane's *Wanderings of an Artist* and the sketches made during his travels.⁶⁵ These various accounts form the basis for a consideration of the state of Coast Salish material culture during the land based fur trade era.

When Simon Fraser made his descent of the Fraser River, he and his men were the first Europeans that most of the Coast Salish peoples residing there had ever encountered. Unfortunately, Fraser's primary purpose was to locate a supply route from the ocean, and his comments are more oriented to the practicalities of travel than to observations of Coast Salish material culture. Still, Fraser does make some brief but important observations. Among these was the observation that, as was the case for the British and Spanish explorers, European goods and materials had preceded Fraser's advance into the area.⁶⁶

An important aspect of Coast Salish material culture that Fraser observed was the presence of blankets made of both dog's hair and "wild goat" wool, some of which he compared to "Highland plaid."⁶⁷ Fraser also noted that personal ornaments were

the same as the Hacamaugh nation [the people commonly known as the Thompson and now more properly as *Nlha7kápmx*] make use of; that is to say, shells of different kinds, shell beads, brass made into pipes hanging

W. America [1824-'25-'26.], Part II," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Volume VI, Number 2, (June 1905), pp. 195-205, and Morag Maclachlan, ed., *The Fort Langley Journals 1827-30*.

⁶⁴ William Fraser Tolmie, *Physician And Fur Trader*, (Vancouver: Mitchell Press Limited, 1963).

⁶⁵ Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition. During the Years 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842. Volumes IV and V*, (Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard, 1845). For Paul Kane's writings and sketches I am relying on Harper, ed., *Paul Kane's Frontier*.

⁶⁶ See discussion below, p. 36.

⁶⁷ Lamb, ed., *Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser*, p.101.

from the neck, or across the shoulders, bracelets of large brass wire, and some bracelets of horn . . .⁶⁸

Fraser's reference to horn bracelets is particularly exciting as it is the only account of the use of horn bracelets in Coast Salish territory that I have found. There is some reason for caution, though, as Fraser uses the term 'horn' most frequently in reference to items that might also be made of antler.

While Fraser's comments lack certainty regarding the actual material identified as horn, they again provide clear evidence that the Coast Salish used introduced metals for ornaments. Fraser does not single out the metal objects as European or "christian goods,"⁶⁹ but instead simply presents them as part of the range of materials used for ornament, without distinguishing between those of local or foreign origin. This might suggest that while the material is foreign, the brass objects themselves were of local manufacture. In contrast, a copper kettle, an English hatchet, and some red and blue cloth seem to be set apart from materials of local manufacture and therefore appear to carry a different meaning for Fraser.⁷⁰ For this fur trader, and possibly those that followed later, it appears that to be considered a European trade good, the object needed to be recognised in its original manufactured form. Coast Salish manufactured objects, though using trade materials, might therefore escape mention in fur trade accounts when the presence of European trade goods is discussed.

Though serving the interests of the fur trade, Fraser does not seem to have engaged in much trade during his expedition. For the most part, the exchanges that occurred appear to be in the context of gift exchanges or payment for equipment and

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 99-100.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

services. On one occasion Fraser presented a calico gown as a gift in return for a "coat of mail to make shoes,"⁷¹ while on another he left a blanket as payment for a canoe.

Apparently the canoe's owner considered the blanket to be insufficient payment, however, and, after pursuing Fraser and his party, reclaimed the canoe.⁷² As limited as Fraser's trade may have been it is of consequence as it marks the introduction of some of the staple goods of the land-based fur trade and prepared the way for the subsequent trade of those goods.

In the sixteen years between Fraser's journey and the 1824 and 1825 surveys of the Fraser River area by the Hudson's Bay Company, the Coast Salish indirectly participated in the land based fur trade. Goods originated from Fort George to the south and from interior fur trade posts to the east and reached the Coast Salish via native intermediaries.⁷³ When the Hudson's Bay Company's surveying parties travelled to the Coast Salish region in 1824 and 1825, they observed the products of this trade, specifically guns and blankets, in use among the Coast Salish. Locally made objects, however, including blankets, bows and arrows, and spears were more frequently observed.

The available accounts of these two surveys offer only superficial comment about personal ornamentation. In his description of the people of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the Strait of Georgia, Dr. John Scouler noted that "They are more addicted to painting

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 101 for the kettle and hatchet, p. 104 for the cloth.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 108-110.

⁷³ The opportunity for a trade in goods between Fort George and the Strait of Juan de Fuca was noted by McKenzie, while Work received information regarding the movement of goods originating from the interior down the Fraser River. See McKenzie, "Journal of a Trip in the William and Ann," p. 26 verso and Elliot, ed., "Journal of John Work," p. 220.

themselves than the natives of the Columbia are," but offers little else.⁷⁴ Similarly limited is Francis Annance's reference to a "large Chinook hat ornamented with white shells . . ." worn along with a trade blanket by a prominent individual in the Puget Sound area.⁷⁵

Obviously, the observations made by the fur traders were primarily intended to represent factors relevant to the fur trade. The volume of trade goods observed and their general type was of consequence; precise details of ornamental practices were not.

However, while these accounts lack detailed observations of the Coast Salish, they do offer useful descriptions of the trade that occurred. For example, during the 1824 survey of the Fraser River, John Work recorded the distribution of knives, fish hooks, looking glasses, vermilion, and clothing as gifts, while some axes and beads were exchanged for furs.⁷⁶ For this same expedition, Annance noted the payment of guides with blankets.⁷⁷

Perhaps of greatest value in this respect is Alexander MacKenzie's record of the voyage of the *William and Ann*, where he not only recorded exact rates of exchange for furs but also included an inventory of all the goods available for trade.⁷⁸ Without question, blankets and cloth were the primary commodities of exchange through the Strait of Juan de Fuca and into the Strait of Georgia. Gunpowder and shot were also popular, as were knives, and there was also some trade in tobacco, Canton beads, rings, needles, awls, Hawk bells, vermilion, axes, and gun flints. On various occasions during the voyage MacKenzie distributed bread and molasses, thimbles, Hawk bells, ammunition, knives, rings, axes, beads, and needles as gifts. MacKenzie noted that all of the Company's trade

⁷⁴ Young, ed., "Dr. Jonn Scouler's Journal," p. 201.

⁷⁵ Annance, "Journal of a Voyage from Fort George," p. 25.

⁷⁶ Elliot, ed., "Journal of John Work," p. 221.

⁷⁷ Annance, "Journal of a Voyage from Fort George," p. 19.

⁷⁸ MacKenzie, "Journal of a Trip on the William and Ann," pp. 38 recto - 41 verso.

goods were in demand and that among the Cowichan “almost any trifle will sell for furs.”⁷⁹ There were limits, of course, and he was unable to trade a beaver trap among the Lummi. ⁸⁰ While copper and brass wrist bands and brass wire are listed in the ship’s inventory of trade goods, none of these items appears as part of the exchanges with the Coast Salish.

Unlike Fraser, Work, and Annance, who travelled into Coast Salish territories to prepare the way for future trade, MacKenzie was equipped to establish that trade. At MacKenzie’s disposal was the Hudson’s Bay Company’s regular inventory of trade goods for which he quickly established regular ‘tariffs’ or rates of exchange.⁸¹ Despite MacKenzie’s frequent comments regarding the isolation of the Coast Salish, it is clear that the Coast Salish were already familiar with the products and conduct of the fur trade.⁸² The Coast Salish regularly greeted the ship with beaver skins, and soon after entering the Strait of Juan de Fuca the Clallam informed MacKenzie he “would soon meet with a great many others who had several skins . . .”⁸³ The value of goods remained high, however, and a single blanket could command the price of ten beaver skins.⁸⁴ By the conclusion of the visit of the *William and Ann*, a clear pattern of direct trade was established and would continue with the establishment of Forts Langley, Nisqually, and Victoria.

Beginning in 1827 with the construction of Fort Langley, the intermittent encounters that characterised the history of contact within the Coast Salish region came to

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 32 recto.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 30 recto.

⁸¹ Once set, there was considerable reluctance on the part of the traders to vary the tariff. See for example *Ibid.*, p. 34 recto.

⁸² See *Ibid.*, p. 27 recto where while off New Dungeness McKenzie commented that “Nor from all the information I could learn on this subject do I believe that a single vessel has come this far since Vancouver’s time of whom several of our visitors today had a perfect recollection.”

an end with the forts representing a permanent context for contact between the Coast Salish and the fur traders. The trading posts offered a relatively reliable source of trade goods in exchange for furs. For most of the Coast Salish population this was the primary significance of the forts, though for those who resided nearby, the forts also came to represent a source of goods in return for labour. Native labour was used for the construction of the forts, clearing of land for agriculture, loading and unloading of ships, and many other tasks.⁸⁵

The establishment of trading posts had a variety of effects. There was an increase in contact between the Hudson's Bay Company employees and the local Coast Salish, which resulted in marriages between Company men and Coast Salish women.⁸⁶ In addition the forts probably promoted increased contact between the various Coast Salish communities.⁸⁷

The trade posts were part of the company's effort to create a monopoly on the Northwest Coast and this was eventually accomplished.⁸⁸ As a result, the Hudson's Bay Company represented the only source of introduced trade goods available to the Coast Salish. The effect of this was a standardisation of trade and of the goods available through trade. Local Coast Salish preferences could affect which aspects of the Hudson's Bay Company trade inventory were most in demand, but the Company set the rates of

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 26 recto.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31 verso.

⁸⁵ It is difficult to represent the full range of commercial endeavours undertaken by the Hudson's Bay Company that created economic opportunities for the Coast Salish in this limited context. For a more complete consideration of the subject see Richard S. Mackie, *Trading Beyond the Mountains: The British Fur Trade On The Pacific 1793-1843*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), particularly Chapter 9 "Beyond the Mere Traffic in Peltries."

⁸⁶ Wayne Suttles, "The Ethnographic Significance of the Fort Langley Journals," p. 189-190.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

⁸⁸ Fisher, *Contact and Conflict*, p. 26-27.

exchange and determined the range of choices available. In general, though, the fur trade produced an increase in the total wealth available to the Coast Salish.⁸⁹ Outside of the narrow context of trade, however, the ability of the forts and their personnel to influence or observe the practices of the Coast Salish remained limited.

It might be expected that the increased contact that occurred as a result of the establishment of these forts produced some useful descriptions of Coast Salish material culture. Unfortunately this is largely not the case. Apparently the appearance of their Coast Salish neighbours was somewhat commonplace for the fur traders and not worthy of comment. Exceptions do exist, as comments made by William Fraser Tolmie in 1833 suggest:

There is also a skatatchet [Skagit] chief, who from dressing in European style & sporting bushy wiskers, is styled "The Frenchman."⁹⁰

In addition there was "Jack," who "dressed in a blue jacket and trousers," and who was a well known participant in the fur trade.⁹¹ The fact that Tolmie found the practice of wearing European clothing worthy of comment suggests that it was uncommon, and we might therefore assume that the more traditional modes of dress still dominated.

As always, the fur traders recorded good accounts of the Coast Salish preferences in trade goods. At Nisqually blankets and cloth continued as the preferred trade staples and once exhausted of these commodities the trade could end.⁹² Rings, wire, and beads are also noted as complementing the trade in woollens. All these goods could also be used as pay for labour, though ammunition seems to have been a preferred form of payment

⁸⁹ Suttles, "Post-Contact Culture Change," p. 45

⁹⁰ Tolmie, *Physician and Fur Trader*, p. 214.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 224.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 220.

along with blankets, cloth, clothing, rings, tobacco, and food. Similarly, at Fort Langley, where salmon was an important commodity of exchange, axes, knives, brass rings, looking glasses, buttons, files, fish hooks, beads, wrist bands, chisels, combs, vermilion, awls, tobacco, cloth, and wire were all used to purchase native caught salmon during the month of August 1829.⁹³

In addition to the exchanges discussed above, which were between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Coast Salish traders and labourers, there were also private exchanges that made trade goods available to the Coast Salish. For example, Tolmie contracted with one Latchalet and his nephew for the price of one blanket and some ammunition to accompany him on a botanising excursion to Mt. Rainier.⁹⁴ Similarly, Tolmie purchased a "a large wooly dog," for some ammunition.⁹⁵ And, in one of his more detailed accountings of a private transaction, Tolmie paid off his washer-woman with "a blanket, a shirt, 4ft stripped Cotton, a cotton neckcloth & stiffener, a pair of old trousers & a vest - 7 knives & a gross & a half gilt rings besides a multitude of trinkets."⁹⁶

Just as with the trade in furs, in these private transactions Coast Salish preferences influenced the form of payment. Again it is Tolmie who provided an illustration of the prevailing situation when he discussed the disposal of a collection of chains, buttons, clasps, and the like that he brought with him to the coast.

These formed pt. of a parcel made up for me by Alick of articles unsaleable in my father's warehouse, which Dr. Scouler informed me would be useful in trading curiosities from the Indians, but I find that Ammunition is

⁹³ Mary K. Cullen, "The History of Fort Langley," *Canadian Historic Sites: Occasional Papers in Archaeology and History*, No. 20, (Ottawa: Parks Canada, 1979), p. 58.

⁹⁴ Tolmie, *Physician and Fur Trader*, p. 230

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 200.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 251.

esteemed here, more than trinkets or bijouterie of any kind & is moreover much cheaper . . .⁹⁷

Clearly, the circumstances of trade had changed between the time of Scouler's 1825 visit to the coast and Tolmie's 1833 stay at Fort Nisqually. Not only were trinkets of a diminished value, but the blankets which McKenzie traded for ten skins had declined to a value of two skins by 1831 at Fort Langley.⁹⁸

One problem I have encountered in reviewing the available Hudson's Bay Company trade records is the fact that metal bracelets do not appear as a common trade item. As I noted earlier, copper and brass wrist bands were carried on board the *William and Ann* in 1825, but there is nothing to indicate the Coast Salish received any in trade.⁹⁹ In 1829, at Fort Langley, two pair of wrist bands formed only a small part of the goods traded for salmon, while later records include no mention of bracelets or wrist bands.¹⁰⁰ The rare mention of bracelets in these records can be interpreted as an indication that the Coast Salish did not make common use of metal bracelets. This is contradicted, however, by the 1841 observations of Charles Wilkes who noted in his *Narrative of the United State Exploring Expedition* that the "Sachet" [Skagit] "are fond of wearing brass rings on their wrists and fingers . . ."¹⁰¹

Given the existence of a trade monopoly, the only source of the brass ornaments observed by Wilkes was the Hudson's Bay Company. The brass rings are easily accounted for as they are represented in large quantities and receive frequent mention in

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

⁹⁸ Cullen, "History of Fort Langley," p. 25.

⁹⁹ McKenzie, "Journal of a Trip on the William and Ann," pp. 40 verso and 41 recto.

¹⁰⁰ Cullen, "History of Fort Langley," p. 88. The same transactions are presented in Maclachlan, ed., *The Fort Langley Journals*, p. 124, but as "2 yds. Cop and brass W. Bands." I am uncertain how the reference to "2 yds." of wrist bands should be interpreted.

most of the fur-trade-related sources. For example, at Fort Langley in 1829, “5-1/2 gross Brass Rings” appear in the list of goods traded for salmon while an 1856 invoice lists ten gross of finger rings shipped to Fort Langley.¹⁰² Tolmie also provides references to the use of rings as trade goods.¹⁰³ Wilkes’ observation of the finger rings is therefore accurate and confirms the popularity of this particular trade good.

The absence of brass bracelets might in part be explained by the fact that the records that I have access to do not address the years 1833 to approximately 1850.¹⁰⁴ It may be that large quantities of brass bracelets were traded to the Coast Salish during this time and that the records are simply unavailable. Another possibility, and one that is supported by the available records, is that the Coast Salish manufactured bracelets from other trade materials. Of particular interest is the appearance of brass collar wire as a trade good.¹⁰⁵ This wire was probably quite fine, given its use for bird snares, so if bracelets were made from it they would not be of the type observed by Simon Fraser in 1808 which were made of “large brass wire.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition, Volume IV*, p. 481.

¹⁰² Cullen, “History of Fort Langley,” p. 50. Also, “Invoice Of Sundries . . . for Fort Langley,” 1856, Fort Langley Miscellaneous Items, 1830-58, B133/z/1, HBCA is but one of a number of examples in these records.

¹⁰³ For examples see Tolmie, *Physician and Fur Trader*, p. 222 and 235.

¹⁰⁴ Many Fort Langley records were destroyed when the original fort burned in 1840. Maclachlan, ed., *The Fort Langley Journals*, p. 18.

¹⁰⁵ References to collar wire are numerous. See for example see Tolmie, *Physician and Fur Trader*, p. 222 where wire is listed among the goods received and “Invoice Of Sundries . . . for Fort Langley,” 1856, Fort Langley, Miscellaneous Records, 1830-58, which includes 100 pounds of brass collar wire. As with the finger rings, this is but one of numerous references to collar wire in the Fort Langley Miscellaneous Records.

¹⁰⁶ Maclachlan, ed., *The Fort Langley Journal*, note 53, p. 248 and Lamb, ed., *Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser*, p.101.

Bracelets of other metals have also been found in archaeological digs on sites connected with Fort Langley.¹⁰⁷ These appear to be bracelets manufactured by the Coast Salish from trade metals.¹⁰⁸ A common source for sheet metals used for the manufacture of ornaments among the *Nlha7kápmx* was trade kettles.¹⁰⁹ Kettles were also available to the Coast Salish, with both copper and tin kettles appearing in the 1856 invoice of goods shipped to Fort Langley.¹¹⁰

It is difficult to understand why the Coast Salish would choose to manufacture bracelets rather than trade for finished examples, if this was the actual case. One possibility is that the quantity of brass, copper, or tin in the form of wire or kettles needed to manufacture a given number of bracelets cost less than the same number of finished bracelets. Alternatively, it is possible that the trade bracelets did not entirely satisfy Coast Salish tastes. Whatever the reason, it does appear that during the fur trade period the Coast Salish traded for bracelets and manufactured bracelets from trade metals for their own use.

Given that the purpose of Wilkes' presence on the Northwest Coast was exploration and not trade, his observations provide an important alternative to those of the Hudson's Bay Company employees. In addition to the wearing of brass rings, he recorded the use of muskets, iron and bone pointed arrows, Hudson's Bay Company blankets and knives, dog's hair blankets, dentalium shells, small brass bells as ear ornaments, and pieces of bone and silver worn through the cartilage of the nose. While at Port Discovery,

¹⁰⁷ Ann Corner, Education/Programming Officer, Fort Langley National Historic Site, personal communication, August 5, 1998.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ James Teit, "The Thompson Indians Of British Columbia," *Publications of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition 1(4)*, *Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History* (New York, 1900), p. 222.

Wilkes and his party were approached by a group of Natives (probably Clallam) whose leader was dressed in trade clothing while the remainder wore blankets or skins.¹¹¹ Also, while among the Skagit, Wilkes noted that the women ornamented themselves “with small brass bells, or other trinkets . . .”¹¹²

I will close my discussion of the fur trade period with Paul Kane’s 1847 visit to Fort Victoria and his associated travels throughout the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Puget Sound region. Like Wilkes, Kane arrived on the coast with motivations that contrasted with those of Hudson’s Bay Company. Kane’s purpose in travelling to the Northwest was to produce a record of the indigenous Northwest lifestyles and customs that he believed would vanish in the face of colonisation.¹¹³ Given Kane’s intentions, it is not surprising that he emphasised what he considered evidence of the indigenous in his writings, possibly at the expense of fully acknowledging the effects and influences of the fur trade. Kane presented a Coast Salish culture characterised by bent wood fish hooks, kelp fishing lines, dog’s wool blanket clothing, and superstition, among other ‘authentically’ native features. Surprisingly, Kane made no reference to bracelets and we might therefore conclude that he either saw none or did not see any that he believed to be authentically Coast Salish.

While Kane’s writings provide no help on the topic of bracelets, his sketches are another matter. In one sketch, depicting a Clallam woman weaving a basket, Kane depicted some form of ankle ornament, with small cone or bell like objects suspended from a band.¹¹⁴ Also, in a sketch of Chaw-u-wit, bands of some sort are worn around

¹¹⁰ “Invoice Of Sundries . . . for Fort Langley,” 1856, Fort Langley, Miscellaneous Records 1830-58.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 279.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 481.

¹¹³ Harper, ed., *Paul Kane's Frontier*, p. 15.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, plate XLV.

both ankles.¹¹⁵ Most importantly, in a sketch titled *Studies of figures inside a lodge* (Figure 24), two women are shown wearing numerous bands around their wrists, and one has two bands around her ankle.

As for other depictions of personal ornament in Kane's paintings, a sketch portrait of Cul-chil-lum, the son of the Cowichan chief Saw-se-a, shows him wearing a medicine cap, blanket, and no other ornaments.¹¹⁶ It is interesting that Kane recorded that Cul-chil-lum described this medicine cap as being worn only on significant occasions and that he was unwilling to sell it to Kane.¹¹⁷ Contrasting with the sketch of Cul-chil-lum is a sketch of Lock-hi-num, a Whidbey Island chief, who is shown wearing a cloth trade shirt and no sign of indigenous ornaments.¹¹⁸

Considering the use of ankle and wrist ornaments depicted in Kane's sketches, it might be concluded that little had changed between 1792 and 1847. Just as Peter Puget recorded the use of ankle and wrist ornaments, so did Kane.¹¹⁹ Based on this indication of a continuity in the general type of ornaments used by the Coast Salish, along with Wilkes' comments on the presence of metal ornaments, it can be reasonably assumed that while the traditional Coast Salish ornament types such as bracelets and anklets were retained, the materials used to manufacture them had changed. Also significant is the fact that while copper was the Coast Salish material of choice during the later eighteenth century, brass

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, fig. 178, p. 251. As this is a sketch of a young girl, it is possible that in this instance the ankle bands are not ornamental but are instead bands intended to constrict growth and ensure slim ankles, Homer G. Barnett, *The Coast Salish of British Columbia*, (Eugene: University of Oregon Press, 1955), p. 75.)

¹¹⁶ Harper, ed., *Paul Kane's Frontier*, Plate XLVII.

¹¹⁷ Paul Kane, "Wanderings of an Artist Among the Indians of North America from Canada to Vancouver's Island and Oregon through the Hudson's Bay Company's Territory and Back Again, a reprint of the edition of 1859," in *Paul Kane's Frontier*, Harper, ed., p. 103.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, fig. 175, p. 249.

¹¹⁹ See p. 25 of this thesis regarding Puget's comments.

appears to have been more common during the fur trade period. As for the question of who wore bracelets, Kane shows only women wearing bracelets while Wilkes does not distinguish whom among the Skagit he saw wearing bracelets. However, the fact that Wilkes did specifically refer to the wearing of other ornaments by women may indicate that bracelets were worn by all.

While answers to the more specific questions regarding the use of bracelet use may be out of reach, the more general issue of the value of trade goods can be addressed. Quite clearly, the prevailing demand for trade goods in any form that characterised the early phases of the fur trade quickly ended following the establishment of the regular trade associated with permanent trading posts. During this period, blankets and other woollens represented the majority of goods introduced into Coast Salish societies and consumable goods, such as tobacco and ammunition, became increasingly important. Bracelets, or the materials from which they were made, rings, and other manufactured metal goods continued to make up part of the trade, but to what extent is unclear as are the changes that occurred over time. It is clear, however, that the cost of trade goods in general quickly declined following the establishment of trade posts and regular patterns of trade.

Settlement

The final period of the history of contact in the Coast Salish region I will consider is the early settlement period. Since, however, the last recorded collection of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets occurred some ten to twenty years before this period, I will not address it in the same detail as the earlier phases of contact. I do believe it deserves some consideration, however, since it is a significant aspect of the history of the area and

may help illustrate some of the continuing processes of change that were affecting the Coast Salish.

The settlement of the region began in the 1840s with the founding of the Colony of Vancouver Island and the arrival of American settlers in the Puget Sound region. In 1853, south of the international boundary, the United States created the Washington territory. To open the way for further settlement, the government of the United States concluded treaties with and created reservations for the Coast Salish of the area.¹²⁰ North of the border, Victoria remained the focus of settlement until the discovery of gold brought on the Fraser River gold rush of 1858. This led to the establishment of the Colony of British Columbia and the rapid influx of settlers to the Fraser River. Settlement in the Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia also resulted in the establishment of reserves by the colonial authorities, though for the most part without the benefit of treaties.¹²¹

The effects of settlement are many and varied, and I cannot attempt to address them adequately in this limited context. In general, however, it is believed that the advent of settlement brought about marked changes in the lives of the Coast Salish (and other First Nations) through the alienation of lands and resources, the enforcement of new political and legal systems, pressures from missionaries, and a changing economy.¹²² With the demise of the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly that came with settlement, the availability of goods and material of all types, both in quantity and variety, probably increased for the Coast Salish.

¹²⁰ Wayne Suttles and Barbara Lane, "Southern Coast Salish," in *Handbook of North American Indians: Northwest Coast, Volume 7*, Suttles, ed., p. 500.

¹²¹ This issue is discussed at length in Paul Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics: The Indian Land Question in British Columbia, 1849-1989*, (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1990).

Contained within some of the early accounts of settlers and visitors to the newly settled Northwest Coast are a few references to the use of bracelets among the Coast Salish. These observations of bracelet use will be my focus here. First I refer to comments made by Matthew MacFie in an 1865 account of his experiences while residing at Victoria for five years. Presumably in Victoria, Macfie observed that “Bracelets and anklets of brass are profusely displayed by the native women.”¹²³ Unfortunately, it is not clear if MacFie meant Coast Salish women or Native women in general, but considering the long-standing use of bracelets and anklets by the Coast Salish it is reasonable to assume that they should be included. In a more specific comment, MacFie also noted that “some of the Songhies manufacture elegant rings and bracelets out of gold and silver.”

In a somewhat later account, Myron Eells, who resided on the Skokomish Reservation in Puget Sound beginning in 1874, makes some similar observations.¹²⁴ In *The Indians of Puget Sound* (1894), Eells wrote that the people of Puget Sound “gladly obtained and used” bracelets and finger rings “and made them from the best material they could procure.”¹²⁵ Still on the topic of bracelets and finger rings, Eells also noted that, “they make many from brass and copper and buy silver ones, which are excellently made by the Makah and British Columbia Indians, as well as those of American make.”¹²⁶ Eells also included an account of a wedding involving a Cowlitz woman who was described as being “dressed in all her finery,” which included dentalium, beads, rings, earrings, and

¹²² The standard source for the impacts of settlement on the Northwest Coast is Fisher, *Contact and Conflict*, particularly chapters 3-8. Also see Duff, *Indian History of British Columbia*.

¹²³ Matthew MacFie, *Vancouver Island And British Columbia: Their History, Resources, And Prospects*, (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, & Green, 1865), p. 442.

¹²⁴ George Pierre Castille, ed., *The Indians of Puget Sound: The Notebooks of Myron Eells*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1985), p. 5.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 128.

“brass and silver bracelets” which covered “her arms from the wrist to above the elbow.”¹²⁷

Though brief, these comments provide some interesting facts about the use and production of bracelets during the early settlement period by the Coast Salish. It is clear that the Coast Salish continued to use bracelets and to produce them for their own use. Metals, including copper, brass, silver, and gold, are all identified as being used for the manufacture of bracelets. In addition, the Coast Salish used bracelets of ‘foreign’ manufacture, whether Native or ‘American’ in origin. MacFie specifically noted that women wore bracelets, while Eells’ comments are largely ambiguous. Finally, the wedding description indicates that bracelets had a function in at least one ceremonial context.

Conclusions

The historical record offers very little concerning mountain goat horn bracelets. It does, however, provide some useful insights regarding the history of Coast Salish ornamental practices and of bracelet use in general. This, taken into consideration with the known collection of mountain goat horn bracelets does allow for some preliminary conclusions. Most importantly, based on the collection of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets during the earliest phases of contact, it is clear that the production of these bracelets was a feature of Coast Salish artistic production prior to contact.

The historical record does provide evidence that while the materials used to make bracelets and other ornaments used by the Coast Salish may have changed over time, the

¹²⁷ Miss S. A. Beatty, in *Californian*, (November 1882), cited in Castille, ed., *The Indians of Puget Sound*,

general use of those ornaments appear to have remained fairly consistent. There is insufficient information to form any definite opinions about who wore bracelets, though most probably bracelets were worn by both men and women. The precise function of bracelets is not indicated in the historical record, but the presence of bracelets throughout the period under consideration suggests that the function, whatever it might have been, continued.

Explicit indications of the significance of bracelets are also difficult to find in the historical record. Again, the continued use and manufacture of bracelets by the Coast Salish during the early contact period and into the settlement era suggests that bracelets were of some significance. Perhaps the strongest indication of the significance of bracelets is the use of valued materials for their manufacture. As Vancouver observed in 1792, copper was highly valued by the Coast Salish and they used it for ornaments. The Coast Salish manufactured bracelets from trade material during the fur trade and later in the nineteenth century Myron Eells also indicated that they made bracelets from the best available materials. The prominent display of bracelets in a ceremonial context such as a wedding further supports the conclusion that bracelets, as a general form of ornament, did hold some significance for the Coast Salish.

Evidence of the significance of mountain goat horn bracelets is also suggested by their history. Of particular interest is the fact that they remained in use despite the hypothesised devastation of the pre-contact smallpox epidemic and the rage for copper that was recorded during the initial contact period. Not only did they survive these events, but they were still available for collection some forty years later. I believe that this

continued presence indicates a high and resilient value for mountain goat horn bracelets within Coast Salish society. However, while the bracelets survived the effects of an hypothesised single devastating epidemic, the potential impact of a generally increased mortality rate over an extended period of time remains to be considered and will be addressed in chapter 5.

Though it is not entirely certain, it is probable that the disappearance of mountain goat horn bracelets did occur during the era of the land based fur trade (this issue is discussed more thoroughly in chapter 3). Assuming this to be true, the disappearance of the mountain goat horn bracelets is best addressed through a consideration of those aspects of Coast Salish experience during the fur trade that differentiate it from the earlier contexts of contact. In particular, following the establishment of permanent trading posts and a trade monopoly, the Hudson Bay Company represented the only source of foreign trade goods for the Coast Salish. To obtain these goods the Coast Salish adapted to the fur trade economy through the sale of furs and labour and other goods to the Hudson's Bay Company forts. In this fur trade economy large quantities of commonly available trade goods would have entered use among the Coast Salish. I believe this widespread access to a common range of trade goods contributed to the development of a popular form of material culture among the Coast Salish during the Fur Trade era.

As I introduced in chapter 1 and discuss more fully in chapter 5, the issue of popular culture is an important aspect of my consideration of the disappearance and replacement of mountain goat horn bracelets with trade materials. As the historical record indicates, however, the argument that trade materials replaced Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets is complicated by the fact that the Coast Salish never used only one material

for bracelets. At the time of initial contact, bracelets of mountain goat horn and antler coexisted with copper and brass bracelets. The collection of mountain goat horn bracelets decades after these early contacts indicates that this coexistence of a range of materials continued for some time despite the increased availability of metals. The disappearance of mountain goat horn bracelets, then, might be more accurately described as a shift in Coast Salish bracelet preferences.

While I have assumed that Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets disappeared during the fur trade, the accuracy of this assumption must still be determined. The last collection occurred around 1830 and there are no documented observations of the bracelets after this date, but even during the collection period a reference to the observation of horn bracelets was the exception at best. A preliminary conclusion, however, is that given his motivations, Paul Kane's failure to record the presence of these bracelets probably suggests that they were absent from the areas he travelled in. It is important to remember, however, that Kane's travels were limited to Puget Sound and portions of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and entirely excluded the Fraser River, which was the site of the latest collection of the bracelets. A more detailed consideration of the actual collection history of the goat horn bracelets may provide some additional clarification of this issue. This will be the topic of the following chapter.

Chapter 3

Collection History

As the previous chapter demonstrated, the historical record offers little evidence of the collection of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets. If not for the few that were collected there would be no surviving knowledge of the existence of these bracelets.

Given this situation, close scrutiny of the specific circumstances of collection of the known bracelets is warranted. First, however, I will discuss the collection of Coast Salish artifacts in general. As was the case for the history of the region, the collection history of Coast Salish artifacts is poorly documented. There are some useful considerations of the collection of Coast Salish artifacts, but they focus on limited geographic or culture areas, or individual collections, and therefore present a fragmented view of this topic.

The collection history closely follows the history of contact in the Coast Salish region. During the 1778-ca.1830 period under discussion, the collection of artifacts was an adjunct to the primary pursuits of visitors to the area and, as a result, its history is erratic and poorly documented.¹ This is particularly true for Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets, the collection of which occurred entirely within the period of early exploration and the fur trade. Among the earliest expeditions to the Northwest Coast the collection of indigenous artifacts was quite common. The collections of the 1778 Cook and 1792 Vancouver voyages are particularly significant for the fact that they occurred so early in the contact period. Collections made during the Spanish investigations of

¹ For a general discussion of the prevailing circumstances of collection during this period see Douglas Cole, *Captured Heritage*, pp. 1-8.

Vancouver Island's inland waters, were their whereabouts known, might be equally valuable.

Moving on to the fur trade, it is surprising how little collecting of Coast Salish materials occurred during thirty years of close contact that began with the establishment of Fort Langley in 1827, and the preceding twenty years of intermittent contacts. There was some collecting, of course, and the Roderic McKenzie (pre-1818) and Colin Robertson collections (ca. 1830) are particularly valuable in the consideration of mountain goat horn bracelets. There were other visitors to the coast, however, such as John Scouler and William Fraser Tolmie, who appear to have had both the interest and the opportunity to acquire Coast Salish objects but did not. Both of these individuals were in the Coast Salish region roughly within the period of goat horn bracelet collection but seem to have been more interested in the collection and investigation of botanical and natural history specimens than in the collection of artifacts.² Later, some time after his departure from Fort Nisqually, Tolmie did forward artifacts to Scouler and the Inverness museum, but Coast Salish artifacts do not appear to be represented.³

Towards the end of the fur trade period, other visitors with interests unrelated to the fur trade travelled to the coast. Paul Kane and the United States Exploring Expedition are prominent examples and each made collections. Neither, however, collected goat horn bracelets. Casual collecting also occurred during the early settlement era, but the records

² References to this interest in natural history specimens are scattered throughout both of these men's journals. See Tolmie, *Physician and Fur Trader*, and Young, ed., "Dr. John Scouler's Journal, Part II."

³ Tolmie, *Physician and Fur Trader*, p. 333 lists skulls, pipes, dishes, and masks along with boots sent to Scouler in 1838 while pp. 327-8 lists a Haida basin, pipes, and a dagger, winter ceremony masks, and a wooden dish sent to the Inverness Museum also in 1838. Cole, *Captured Heritage*, p. 6 identifies the Scouler pipes and dishes as argillite, indicating that these too were Haida objects.

of these collections require considerable study.⁴ I will therefore rely on general comments on the collections of this period made by Norman Feder.⁵

By its very nature, the process of collecting is biased both by the interests of the collector and by the interests of the individual making a given object available for collection. With respect to the trade of mountain goat horn bracelets, it was probably the bracelets' individual Coast Salish owners who made them available for collection. The brief outline of the collection history demonstrates that even within the known mountain goat horn collection period there were opportunities for collection where no actual collection occurred. For these occasions of non-collection we might assume that the potential collector was not interested in collecting, the owner did not make the objects available for collection, or that the objects themselves no longer existed. The challenge here is to attempt to determine which of these factors influenced the collection of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets and if this might assist in the determination of how long the production and use of the bracelets continued.

The twenty-two examples of mountain goat horn bracelets presented in this thesis are currently held in seven different institutions. The majority of the bracelets are located in England, Scotland, and Ireland, while only four are located in North America. Of these four, only one, now held by the Vancouver Museum, has found its way back to the general region of its creation.

Given that the collection of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets occurred as a secondary product of exploration and the fur trade, it is not surprising to find that collection records from this period are at best vague and at worst non-existent. Despite

⁴ J.C.H. King, personal communication, April 4, 1998.

these limitations, the collection records do provide some basis for a cautious consideration of the collection history of the bracelets. Of the twenty-two mountain goat horn bracelets being considered here, seventeen are associated with records that indicate the general location and date of collection. This information, in combination with a close consideration of the general historical record, serves as a basis for reasonable speculation on the circumstances under which the bracelets were collected.

In pursuing this topic I will, where possible, provide a detailed consideration of the history of each collection of bracelets organised according to institution and date of collection. I will critically assess the records associated with each collection with reference to available historical records in an effort to determine their reliability. Collections that are adequately documented, both in terms of date and location of collection, are referenced on the map shown in figure 1. Also, as stated above, this process will allow for the development of a more comprehensive consideration of the circumstances of collection than is possible using the collection records alone. Bracelets without provenance are presented last. The catalogue that develops from this process will serve as the basis of general analysis of the collection history of the bracelets with an emphasis on the identification of any common patterns or circumstances of collection.

The Collections

National Museum of Ireland

The National Museum of Ireland collections include two bracelets (NMI 1880: 1887 and 1882: 3657, figures 4 and 5), acquired from Trinity College, Dublin. Collected

⁵ Feder, "Incised Relief Carving," p. 47.

at Nootka in 1778, these bracelets were donated to Trinity College by James King, one of Cook's officers.⁶ As noted in the previous chapter, William Ellis observed the use of horn and copper bracelets at Nootka. There are no mountain goats on Vancouver Island and therefore mountain goat horn bracelets and mountain goat horn itself would have only been available at Nootka through trade. Based on the style of their decoration, both of these bracelets are considered to have a Coast Salish origin.⁷

Another bracelet possibly collected at Nootka in 1778 and that may also be made from mountain goat horn is in the collections of the Florence Museum but is not of the same style as the Coast Salish type of bracelet.⁸ The origin of this bracelet is unknown, and it is possible that it was manufactured at or near Nootka or was traded from a Northwest Coast group other than the Coast Salish.⁹ As a consequence of this stylistic difference and the uncertainty of the bracelet's origin I do not include it in my consideration of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets.

The collection of two Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets at Nootka in 1778 is particularly valuable as it demonstrates that the Coast Salish were producing these bracelets prior to contact. Also, as examples of Coast Salish artistic production, their presence at Nootka indicates they were valued within indigenous trade practices. The

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁸ Enrico Hillyer Giglioli, "Notes on an Ethnographic Collection: Made during the Third Voyage of Cook and Preserved until the End of the Last Century in the Royal Museum of Physics and Natural History in Florence," *Cook Voyage Artifacts in Leningrad, Berne and Florence Museums*, in Adrienne L. Kaeppler, ed., (Honolulu: Bishop Museum Press, 1978), p. 161. Giglioli identifies the bracelet as being made from elks hoof, but in footnote 175 on the same page it is noted that it is "probably mountain goat horn." See p. 91 of this thesis for additional discussion of this bracelet.

⁹ J. C. H. King, *Artificial Curiosities from the Northwest Coast of America: Native American Artefacts in the British Museum Collected on the Third Voyage of Captain James Cook and Acquired Through Sir Joseph Banks*, (London: British Museum Publications, 1981), p. 83 presents the Kwakiutl as an alternative source of mountain goat products.

bracelets are also useful for the stylistic analysis of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets that will be a focus of chapter 4. Their collection from a non-Salish group, however, renders them less useful in a consideration of the conduct of trade between the Coast Salish and the foreign visitors to their territories and they will not be used for this purpose.

British Museum

The British Museum possesses eight examples of mountain goat horn bracelets, seven of which belong to the George Goodman Hewett collection (BM VAN 210A-D and VAN 211B-D, figures 6-9 and 11-13) and one to the Christy collection (BM 2294, figure 14). The Hewett collection also includes an antler bracelet (BM VAN 211A, figure 10) collected in association with the horn bracelets. I have not attempted any analysis of this bracelet or its style, and include it only as an indication that the Coast Salish may have used a range of indigenous bracelet types.

Hewett Collection:

During the 1792 Vancouver expedition, Hewett served as the assistant surgeon on board the *Discovery*.¹⁰ In 1891 his descendants sold the artifacts he collected to the British Museum, along with an inventory written by Hewett himself.¹¹ It is believed that

¹⁰ Erna Gunther, "Vancouver and the Indians of Puget Sound," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Volume 51, Number 1, (January 1960), p. 1.

¹¹ King, "Vancouver's Ethnography," p. 44.

Hewett compiled this inventory at least five years after his return to Britain and, though useful, it may not be entirely accurate.¹²

Both the usefulness and challenges of this inventory are apparent when considering the Coast Salish bracelets. Of considerable value is the fact that horn and ivory bracelets are listed in association with the village on Restoration Point. During Vancouver's survey of Puget Sound, the *Discovery* remained at anchor near this village for approximately one week while surveying parties investigated the area in both the *Discovery's* and the *Chatham's* boats. This stay represents a rare occasion when the expedition enjoyed an extended association with an occupied village site. As a result, members of the expedition may have had access to a broader range of objects for trade than was available from the small travelling parties that were more frequently encountered.

Shortly after arriving at Restoration Point, Vancouver visited the village located there, and in his journal he provided a limited description of the people he encountered.

These people varied in no essential point from the natives we had seen since our entering the straits. Their persons were equally ill made, and as much besmeared with oil and different colored paints, particularly with red ochre, and a sort of shining chaffy mica, very ponderous and in color resembling black lead; they likewise possessed more ornaments, especially such as were made of copper, the article most valued and esteemed among them.¹³

Unfortunately, Vancouver characteristically fails to elaborate on the nature of the ornaments he mentions, nor does Hewett, in his personally annotated copy of *Vancouver's Voyage*, provide any clarification.¹⁴ Even Peter Puget, whose journal

¹² *Ibid*, p. 44.

¹³ Meany, "Vancouver's Discovery of Puget Sound," p. 131.

¹⁴ Hewett's copy of *Vancouver's Voyage* is in the collections of the British Columbia Archives and Record Service (hereafter BCARS).

contains some detailed descriptions of the Salish people he encountered, contributes to the frustration when he writes of the village and its inhabitants.

In the evening we visited the Indian village, the Inhabitants of which were busily employed in preparing Clams & fish for the Winter - NB (the Amount [Account?] of the People & Village I have by some accident lost).- however to the best of my recollection they did not differ from what I have already described.¹⁵

In the end, only Hewett's inventory survives to link these bracelets to Restoration Point and, as there is no evidence to the contrary, Hewett's record is commonly accepted as accurate. I believe there is some reason for caution, however, considering Hewett's inventory was written some years after the act of collection. Since artifacts might have been exchanged between members of the expedition, it is possible that Hewett acquired some of these bracelets from members of the surveying parties on their return to the ships.¹⁶ As is indicated in the various journals, trade between the small surveying parties and the local Salish they encountered was a common practice. Faced with the possibility that Hewett's collection of bracelets may not be the product of direct trade by Hewett at Restoration Point, it might be safer to view the bracelets as representing the products of trade in the Puget Sound area in general.

¹⁵ Anderson, "Peter Puget's Journal," p. 195.

¹⁶ The possibility of exchanges between members of the expedition is raised by both King and Gunther and supported by the presence of a mountain goat horn bracelet in the Thomas Dobson collection (see below). King, "Vancouver's Ethnography," p. 43 and Gunther, "Vancouver and the Indians of Puget Sound," p. 1.

Christy Collection:

The museum records attribute this bracelet to the Queen Charlotte Islands.¹⁷ Unfortunately, the collection history for this bracelet is far from clear, and the possibility that this attribution is incorrect must be considered. According to J.C.H. King, Assistant Keeper at the British Museum, the bracelet became part of the Christy collection before 1868 from an unknown source. King proposes two possible sources for the bracelet: the Leverian Museum, which received Cook voyage materials; or the Royal United Service Institution, which is known to have received at least one object from Edward Bell, the author of "A New Vancouver Journal." Also included in the Christy collection is a Coast Salish comb, which King believes to be characteristic of other eighteenth-century examples and which is catalogued in sequence with the goat horn bracelet.

Though far from certain, I believe the case for Bell as the collector of the Christy bracelet is reasonable and I will therefore consider it as a possibility. I am not certain enough, however, to place any reliance on this example in the consideration of collection circumstances that follows this catalogue.

Vancouver Museum

The Vancouver Museum possesses one bracelet (VM AA2430, figure 15), acquired at auction from Sotheby's in 1983. This bracelet and the collection it is a part of are attributed to Thomas Dobson.¹⁸ Dobson was a midshipman aboard the *Daedalus*, the Vancouver expedition supply ship. This ship joined the *Discovery* and *Chatham* at

¹⁷ All information presented for the Christy collection bracelet is derived from J.C.H. King, personal communication, March 24, 1998.

¹⁸ King, "Vancouver's Ethnography," p. 52.

Nootka following Vancouver's first season of surveying on the Northwest Coast. At Nootka, in September of 1792, Dobson was transferred to the *Discovery* to serve as Vancouver's Spanish translator.¹⁹ Though brief, this partial history of Dobson's service with the Vancouver expedition excludes him as the original collector of the Vancouver Museum bracelet if it was collected in Coast Salish territory. The survey of the coastline within Coast Salish territories was completed before Dobson transferred to the *Discovery*, and the *Daedalus* played no part in this survey.

Fortunately, there is a surviving list of the Dobson collection that is believed to have been produced prior to his death in 1805.²⁰ Included on this list, under the heading "Straits of De S. Fuca," is the entry "1 Whalebone carved bracelet."²¹ As this is the only bracelet referred to on the list, it is in all likelihood the goat horn bracelet held by the Vancouver Museum. The mistaken identification of the material as whalebone is understandable given the similarity of appearance between some types of baleen (whalebone) and mountain goat horn.²² As for the bracelet's association with the Strait of Juan de Fuca, one must conclude that Dobson received the bracelet from some other member of the *Discovery's* crew. Therefore, while the date of collection can be reasonably established as 1792, the location of its collection cannot be precisely determined. In all probability, though, the Strait of Juan de Fuca association indicates that the bracelet was collected from the Coast Salish.

¹⁹ W. Kaye Lamb, ed., *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific and Round the World, 1791-1795. Volume I*, (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1984), p. 103.

²⁰ King, "Vancouver's Ethnography," p. 52.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University

The Peabody Museum has in its collections two mountain goat horn bracelets, one acquired from the Boston Athenaeum (PH 67-9-10/130, figure 16) and one from the American Antiquarian Society (PH 95-20-10/48405, figure 17).²³

Boston Athenaeum:

Very little information is available regarding this bracelet (PH 67-9-10/130) and its collection. It was donated to the Peabody Museum at Harvard in 1867, and an inventory of the materials donated then is still held by the Boston Athenaeum.²⁴ The objects represent a diverse geographic range, coming from Africa, China, the South Pacific, the Middle East, and the Northwest Coast of America. Included on this inventory are the names of a number of individuals who may be donors, though this is not clear. One useful piece of information included in the inventory is the presence of item # 143, described as a "Fish Hook - from Puget Sound." Of the many objects identified as coming from the Northwest Coast, this is the only one that is associated with a specific geographical location. If this entry is accurate, then some individual was present in Puget Sound to collect this fish hook and this may also indicate an opportunity for collection of the mountain goat horn bracelet. However, given the absence of a collection date or a reliable

²² Though not identical to mountain goat horn, the baleen of the Humpback whale is similarly dark in colour and flexible. I have examined the Dobson bracelet and it is not baleen.

²³ Susan Haskell, Archivist, Peabody Museum, Harvard University, personal communication, May 9, 1996.

²⁴ Boston Athenaeum, "A Catalogue of the objects deposited by the Boston Athenaeum in the collections of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology at Cambridge," Fine Arts Dept. [Fine arts accessions and loans], 1826-1877.

identification of the location of collection, it is not possible to include this bracelet in a focused consideration of the collection history of goat horn bracelets.

American Antiquarian Society:

This bracelet (PH 95-20-10/48405) is believed to be part of a collection donated to the American Antiquarian Society by Roderic McKenzie, a partner in the Northwest Company, in 1818. The original inventory for this collection, dated Feb. 4, 1818, and written by John McKenzie by order of Roderic McKenzie, is still held by the American Antiquarian Society.²⁵ This list includes forty entries, including entry # 8, a "Wristband from the Western Coast."²⁶ Though this entry fails to describe the material from which the wristband is made, this is the only object on the list that appears to correspond with the bracelet in the Peabody Museum collection. Objects from the American Antiquarian society were transferred to the Peabody Museum on two occasions (1890 and 1895), with the McKenzie inventory materials forming part of both of these transfers. The bracelet in question arrived at the Peabody Museum as part of the later of these two transfers.²⁷

Art historian Bill Holm has accurately described the records associated with the McKenzie collection as being unclear.²⁸ Regarding the American Antiquarian Society material, the Peabody Museum's ledger states "Most of these objects from N.W. Coast were obtained by Am. Antiquarian Soc. From Roderic McKenzie, Esq., Terrebonne,

²⁵ John McKenzie, "Articles from the North West, Pacific Ocean + c for the American Antiquarian Society," AAS Correspondence, 1812-1819. This collection is commonly attributed to 1819, the date that it entered into the American Antiquarian Society records. In general, however, I will refer to the 1818 date.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Susan Haskell, Personal communication, March 20, 1997.

²⁸ Vaughan and Holm, *Soft Gold*, p. 76.

Lower Canada and acknowledged in the report [AAS's] for 1819."²⁹ Unfortunately, while the entry in the AAS's report for 1819 simply reproduces the contents of the 1818 McKenzie inventory, there are many objects in the two transfers that are not included in that document.³⁰ Despite this inconsistency, it appears that normal practice continues to associate all of the Northwest Coast material with the McKenzie donation.

After reviewing the available information regarding the Peabody Museum materials commonly attributed to McKenzie, I have decided that for the purposes of this study only those objects included in McKenzie's inventory will be considered part of the McKenzie donation. I base this decision on the inconsistency of the collection records described above, and on the evidence of a clear collection pattern represented in McKenzie's original inventory.

In the inventory, locations such as New Caledonia, Fraser's River, McKenzie's River, Columbia beyond the Rocky Mountains, and the Western Coast all reflect the progress of the land-based fur trade carried out by the Northwest Company prior to 1818. McKenzie himself was not directly involved in the trade beyond the Rocky Mountains, but he had access to the region through the activities of Northwest Company traders. In 1806 McKenzie requested reports from the Northwest Company's trading posts on the neighbouring native populations.³¹ A number of the replies to this request are reproduced

²⁹ Susan Haskell, Personal communication, March 20, 1997.

³⁰ American Antiquarian Society, *Address To The Members Of The American Antiquarian Society; Together With The Laws And Regulations Of The Institution, And A List Of Donations To The Society Since The Last Publication*, (Worcester: William Manning, 1819), p. 32.

³¹ W.F. Wentzel, "Letters To The Hon. Roderic McKenzie 1807-1824," in *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-Ouest Vol. 1*, Louis Masson, ed., (Quebec: A. Coté, 1889-1890), p. 77. I am assuming the request was issued in 1806 based on Wentzel's comment in this 1807 letter where he refers to McKenzie's request of "last Fall."

in *Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord-ouest*, and it is entirely reasonable to assume that objects may have accompanied the written accounts.

Not until after the amalgamation of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Company in 1821 did the land-based fur trade extend beyond the limited confines of Fort George at the mouth of the Columbia River. Assuming that McKenzie's primary source of objects was the network of land based fur trading activities and the individuals so engaged, he would not have had access to the more northern culture areas as early as 1818. The possibility remains, however, that McKenzie may have acquired the northern coast objects through other means or that they may reflect a later collection date. The possibility that those Northwest Coast objects received from the American Antiquarian Society but not included on McKenzie's inventory are mistakenly attributed to him must also be considered.

Five entries on the McKenzie inventory are of particular interest here. Three of these, the "Wristband," a "Striped Blanket of Dog Hair," and a "Mat of rushes," are associated with the "Western Coast," while the remaining two objects, a "Bracelet of Shells" and a "Blanket of Dog hair" are associated with "Fraser's River." Comparing these 1818 descriptions with the current records of the Peabody Museum, possible matches for four of these five objects can be found. These are items # 95-20-10 / 48405 - Horn bracelet, # 90-17-10 / 48410 - Blanket of dog's hair, # 90-17-10 / 56927 - Rush mat for drying berries, and # 90-17-10 / 48411 - Blanket of woven mountain goat wool.³²

³² Peabody Museum Accession Ledger volume 11, Peabody Museum Collections Department, Harvard University.

Of these four objects, the first three are identified by the Peabody Museum as being Salish and correspond to Western Coast designation in the McKenzie inventory.³³ The fourth object, the mountain goat wool blanket, is identified as "Thompson Indian" and may be the inventory's dog hair blanket from Fraser's River.³⁴ If this comparison is accurate the Western Coast described in McKenzie's inventory probably falls within Coast Salish territory, and the Peabody's "Thompson Indian" blanket may have been collected on the Fraser River. In view of this conclusion - along with the date of McKenzie's donation to the A.A.S., the history of contact in the Coast Salish region, and McKenzie's apparent reliance on the fur trade for the collection of artifacts - a likely source of the Salish objects in McKenzie's collection is Simon Fraser's 1808 expedition to the coast by way of the Fraser River.

The existence of a direct relationship between McKenzie and Fraser (beyond their common partnership in the Northwest Company) is indicated by the fact that Fraser had at the very least shown the journal of his 1808 expedition to McKenzie before February 1815 and that the journal ultimately became part of McKenzie's collection.³⁵ It is impossible to know whether any objects accompanied the journal, though the pre-1815 contact between Fraser and McKenzie does present an opportunity for a transfer of objects prior to the date of McKenzie's donation to the A.A.S.

As was discussed in chapter 2, Fraser's journal of his expedition to the coast records some very useful observations of the material culture of the peoples he encountered. Of considerable importance, of course, is his reference to the existence of

³³ *Ibid.* The identifications appear to be based on stylistic evaluations and not on original collection information.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

horn bracelets in the Coast Salish area. Unfortunately he does not provide any additional description of these bracelets, nor does he make any mention of the collection of any bracelets. However, a link between the collection and the objects described in Fraser's journal is indicated by a consideration of the blankets in the McKenzie collection.

First there is McKenzie's "Blanket of Dog hair from Fraser's River." Referring to Fraser's journal, on July 9, 1808, while in *Hacamaugh* territory (the people commonly known as Thompson and now more properly known as *Nlha7kápmx*) he commented on the acquisition of "a few articles of curiosity."³⁶ Among these articles is "a blanket of Dog's hair," which appears to match the description given in the McKenzie inventory.³⁷ Supporting this is the reference to the "Thompson Indians" in the Peabody catalogue for object # 90-17-10 / 48411, a blanket of woven mountain goat wool.³⁸ There is a discrepancy in the description of the material from which the blankets are manufactured, but it is possible that the original identification as dog hair was a misunderstanding on the part of the collector. In his journal Fraser does mention the use of wild goat wool,³⁹ but he most often describes blankets as being made of dog hair.

There is no other direct reference to the collection of blankets in Fraser's journal, but based on his general comments on blankets it does seem possible to establish a connection between the second blanket in McKenzie's collection and Fraser's journey. "They make rugs," Fraser wrote, "of Dog's hair, that have stripes of different colours

³⁵ Lamb, ed., *Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser*, p. 38.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

³⁸ Peabody Museum Accession Ledger volume 11, Peabody Museum Collections Department, Harvard University.

³⁹ Lamb, ed., *Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser*, p. 99.

crossing at right angles . . .”⁴⁰ Comparing this description with McKenzie’s “Striped Blanket of Dog Hair,” and the Peabody’s “Blanket of dog’s hair” some similarity is certainly indicated. This similarity is confirmed on considering a photograph of the Peabody blanket (# 90-17-10/48410) (Figure 25) which clearly shows perpendicular stripes that appear to match those described by Fraser.⁴¹ If this association is correct, and McKenzie’s striped blanket was collected by Fraser, then the Western Coast of McKenzie’s inventory most likely refers to the Coast Salish region on the lower reaches of the Fraser River.

Unfortunately, Fraser’s journal includes no references to collecting while in this Coast Salish territory. There were, however, several stops made at villages along the route, and one occurrence of a gift exchange is recorded. In all, Fraser recorded stops at six different village or campsites while travelling through Salish territory to the sea. Excluding a hostile encounter at Musqueam following a tour of the houses there, Fraser was received favourably at these various villages. He and his party received food and transportation, and twice Fraser was presented with “coats of mail” (hide armour) which he valued for the manufacture of shoes.⁴² Given these good relations and the exchanges that are recorded, some unrecorded collection may have occurred. Perhaps the documentation of the events associated with his approach to the sea, the hostile encounter there, and the subsequent harassment as he continued upriver simply took precedence over the documentation of a secondary activity such as collecting.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 101.

⁴¹ A photograph of this blanket appears in Paula Gustafson, *Salish Weaving*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1980), p. 56. The caption for this photograph mistakenly attributes it to Puget Sound, Susan Haskell, personal communication, March 4, 1998.

⁴² Lamb, ed., *Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser*, p. 103 and 104.

Other possible, but less likely sources of the 'Western Coast' objects include both Alexander Mackenzie's voyage to the coast in 1793, and indirect trade of Coast Salish goods or a visit by a Coast Salish individual to Fort George. If this were the case, particularly if the objects were collected at Fort George, I believe there would be some indication in the inventory as there is for a bridle collected at Fort Desprairies.⁴³ Therefore, I will proceed on the cautious assumption that the American Antiquarian Society bracelet was collected by Simon Fraser in 1808.

Perth Museum and Art Gallery, Scotland

The Perth Museum and Art Gallery collections include seven mountain goat horn bracelets (1978.489.1-7, figures 18-21) donated to the Literary and Antiquarian Society of Perth in 1833 by Colin Robertson.⁴⁴

Though a member of both the Northwest and Hudson's Bay Companies, Robertson does not appear to have ever been on the Northwest coast and therefore he cannot have been the original collector.⁴⁵ Dale Idiens, Curator of Ethnography at the Royal Scottish Museum, has identified James Murray Yale as the collector, based on the presence of the signature "Jas M Yale" on one of the collection's packing lists titled

⁴³ Mckenzie, "Articles from the North West."

⁴⁴ Dale Idiens, "Northwest Coast Artifacts In The Perth Museum And Art Gallery: The Colin Robertson Collection," *American Indian Art Magazine*, Volume 13, Number 1, (Winter 1987), p. 46, and Dale Idiens, *Catalogue of the ethnographic collection: Oceania, America, Africa*, (Perth: Perth Museum and Art Gallery, 1983), p. 46.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

“Curiosities from Fraser’s River Gulf of Georgia North [west] coast of America ie.”⁴⁶ On this list are a variety of Coast Salish objects, including item # 13, “wristbands.”⁴⁷

There was a long-standing relationship between Robertson and Yale and Robertson played a role in Yale’s entry into the employ of the Hudson’s Bay Company. Evidence of this relationship appears in letters to Yale and in a manuscript about Yale held by the British Columbia Archives.⁴⁸ Unfortunately, there are no direct references to a request from Robertson for Yale to collect objects for him, though Robertson’s July 13, 1827, letter to Yale does end with the following comment: “Farewell, my Good Fellow. Take care of yourself and as far as my little interest is concerned, I will not lose sight of you.”⁴⁹ In this comment Robertson might be making a reference to a prior request that Yale collect curiosities for him. There is, of course, no way of knowing if this is the case, though the comment does indicate that for some reason Robertson was aware of and interested in Yale’s activities.

Yale’s first encounter with the Coast Salish occurred during the latter part of June and early July 1827, as a member of the so called Clallam Expedition.⁵⁰ Travelling from Fort Vancouver, by way of Puget Sound to the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the purpose of this expedition was to punish those Clallam believed responsible for the murder of Alexander McKenzie, an Hudson’s Bay Company trader, and three others. Francis Ermatinger

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

⁴⁷ James M. Yale, “Curiosities from Frasers River Gulf of Georgia North[west] coast of America ie,” Archive 79, Perth Museum and Art Gallery.

⁴⁸ James Andrew Grant and Helen Beatrice Yale Kemster, “An Unsung Pioneer: Life and Letters of James Murray Yale + his 30 years at Fort Langley,” Yale Correspondence, Add. Mss. 182 (Vol. 2), folders 43-47, BCARS.

⁴⁹ Colin Robertson to James M. Yale, July 13, 1827, Yale Correspondence, Add. Mss. 182 (Vol. 2), Folder 6, BCARS.

recorded the events of this expedition but made no mention of the collection of curiosities. This is not surprising given the nature of the expedition, though the opportunity for the collection (or pillage) of objects may have presented itself following two assaults on Clallam villages. Yale's packing list, however, makes no mention of either Puget Sound or the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and therefore it seems unlikely that the bracelets were collected on this occasion.

As Idiens has indicated, the most likely opportunity for Yale to have acquired the objects in the Robertson Collection was while he was stationed at Fort Langley, the Hudson's Bay Company post on the banks of the Fraser River. Yale arrived at Fort Langley in October 1828 and quickly assumed a prominent place in activities there.⁵¹ Soon after his arrival, in November 1828, the company officers decided that Yale should marry the daughter of the Kwantlen chief Nicameus.⁵² The woman's Kwantlen name is never given and following the marriage she is identified only as Mrs. Yale. The Kwantlen were described as being "the principal Indians of this neighbourhood & who at all exert themselves to Collect Beaver."⁵³ It was therefore thought to be "good policy in Mr. Yale to form a family connection with them."⁵⁴ In securing the union, "all liberal presents" were provided to the bride's family by the traders.⁵⁵ If any gifts were given in return, they were not considered worthy of mention in the journal.

⁵⁰ The details of this undertaking are presented in Lois Halliday McDonald, ed., *Fur Trade Letters of Francis Ermatinger: Written to his brother Edward during his service with the Hudson's Bay Company 1818-1853*, (Glendale: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1980), pp. 97-114.

⁵¹ Maclachlan, ed., *The Fort Langley Journals*, p. 81.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

There are no references to collecting activities conducted by Yale or any other member of Fort Langley's personnel in the fort journal, though it does reveal the close interactions between the traders and local population that would have made it possible for Yale to have collected the variety of objects represented in the Robertson collection. Yale's duties at Fort Langley also included regular travel up and down the Fraser River and its tributaries. Yale's marriage to a Kwantlen woman is of considerable significance as this may have given him access to or knowledge of objects which might not have presented themselves in the normal conduct of trade. Similarly, the attendance of eight of the Fort's personnel, including Yale, at a "feast" given by Lepitchin, of "a Village a little above" the Fort gives further evidence of the opportunities for Yale to encounter and acquire aspects of Coast Salish material culture.⁵⁶

The fact that Yale was so active in his travels away from Fort Langley complicates the issue of determining where he collected the seven mountain goat horn bracelets. Another complication is the close proximity of the Nanaimo summer village only three miles from the fort, not to mention the Musqueam, Saanich, and Cowichan only slightly further away.⁵⁷ However, the close relations between the fort personnel and the Kwantlen, and Yale's own marriage to a Kwantlen woman, cannot be ignored. Therefore, I view the Kwantlen as being the most probable source of the Coast Salish objects included on the Yale packing list.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p.94. Suttles identifies this feast as a potlatch or a preparatory event for a potlatch, Suttles, "Ethnographic Significance of the Journals," p. 193.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 172.

Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford University

The Pitt Rivers Museum possesses a single bracelet (1919.44.2, figure 22) donated in 1919 by J. Ritchie.⁵⁸ The museum's *Catalogue Of The Native American Collection* lists it as being from Nootka Sound but no actual collection information is recorded. As there is no collection date available for this bracelet it is of little use in a consideration of the collection history.

Denver Art Museum

The Denver Art Museum possesses a single bracelet (JS1-4-G / 1971.549, figure 23) purchased at a Sotheby's auction in London and donated to the Denver Art Museum in 1971.⁵⁹ This bracelet has no provenance, but, considering the number of Vancouver expedition artifact collections now lost, the possibility that a stray bracelet such as this might have originated from one of them can be considered. The bracelet's purchase at auction in London seems to fit this possibility. Speculation aside, for the purposes of the collection history this bracelet is of little use.

Conclusions

Of the twenty-two possible Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets represented, all but five are associated with the 1778-ca. 1830 period by their collection records. These seventeen bracelets represent three primary contexts for collection: the 1778 Cook expedition (2 bracelets, one collector), the 1792 Vancouver expedition (8 bracelets, two

⁵⁸ Linda Mowat, *Catalogue Of The Native American Collections*, (Oxford: Pitt Rivers Museum, 1993), p. 83.

⁵⁹ Denver Art Museum, Catalogue Card JS1-4-G.

collectors), and Yale's collecting activities at Fort Langley ca. 1830 (seven bracelets, one collector). Of the remaining five bracelets, two more (the Denver and Christy collection examples) may also be products of the Vancouver expedition. The Peabody Museum's American Antiquarian Society's bracelet, possibly collected by Simon Fraser in 1808, also falls within the 1778-ca. 1830 collection period. This leaves only two bracelets (the Pitt Rivers and Peabody Museum's Boston Athenaeum examples) whose collection records are insufficient to allow any speculation on where they fall with respect to the 1778-ca. 1830 collection period.

Of the three primary contexts for collection identified above, only two occurred in the Coast Salish region. The possible collection of one bracelet by Simon Fraser in 1808 can be added, but this still leaves a very limited basis for an analysis of the patterns and circumstances of collection. The following discussion is therefore speculative and its conclusions are presented as possibilities.

In general, the collection history provides a rough pattern of the geography and chronology of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelet collection. Generally speaking, the geography of collection covers the Fraser River, Puget Sound, and possibly the Strait of Juan de Fuca within Coast Salish territory and out to the Nuu-chah-nulth at Nootka Sound on the west coast of Vancouver Island. There is no documentation of the collection of bracelets among the Halkomelem speakers of Vancouver Island, though they were regular visitors to the Fraser River salmon fishery and shared many cultural traits

with the Fraser River Halkomelem.⁶⁰ Quite probably, this is more a product of the pattern of collection than an indication that the bracelets were absent from this area.

The collection history may also suggest that the bracelets disappeared in a pattern that reflects the progress of contact in the Coast Salish region. Aside from the collection of seven bracelets on the Fraser River by Yale ca. 1830, all of the documented collection of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets occurred as a consequence of initial contact between the Coast Salish and their European visitors. Given this scenario, it is possible to interpret the disappearance of the bracelets as a rapid process closely linked to the effects of contact. The later collection at Fort Langley may be explained as a product of the relative isolation of the Coast Salish in that area. This interpretation is quite reasonable, given the available information, and it may to some extent be true. However, this pattern of disappearance is based on the assumption that the non-collection of bracelets is evidence that they no longer existed, and I believe there are other reasons that might explain why the bracelets were not available for collection.

As I indicated earlier in this chapter, there are a number of circumstances that can affect collection. One of these is interest on the part of the collector. For example, the Vancouver expedition is responsible for the collection of approximately one half of the surviving bracelets and therefore represents the most active collecting context. Two individual collectors, Hewett and Dobson, are clearly indicated in the collection records with Bell a possible third. Obviously the members of Vancouver's crew were avid collectors and found the bracelets of interest.

⁶⁰ See map, between pp. 24 and 25 in Barnett, *Coast Salish of British Columbia*.

Interest on the part of the collector, as demonstrated by Vancouver's crew, is a significant aspect of the collection process, but it is entirely dependant on the availability of the desired object. With respect to the disappearance of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets, availability is a key issue. Once they ceased to exist, mountain goat horn bracelets would not be available for trade. Physical existence, however, is not the only factor affecting availability. There is also the effect of a bracelet owner's willingness or unwillingness to make a bracelet available for trade.

The assumption that the Coast Salish exercised control over the objects they made available for trade is supported by the historical record, which includes references to occasions where the trade of personal property, including bracelets, was declined.⁶¹ Considering the changing circumstances of contact, it is equally likely that the Coast Salish trade motivations could also change. Under these conditions, then, it might be possible to view the collection of mountain goat horn bracelets as a product of a set of unique or extraordinary historical circumstances where collectors were interested in acquiring bracelets and the Coast Salish owners were interested in making them available for trade.

It is significant that many of the goat horn bracelets that survive were collected by the 1792 Vancouver expedition, which along with Simon Fraser's 1808 descent of the Fraser River was one of the earliest occasions for contact in the Coast Salish region. Just what the Coast Salish experience of these early contacts was is difficult to know, but there are some indications. Anthropologist Wendy Wickwire, for example, has drawn on

⁶¹ For example, in 1791 the Coast Salish encountered by members of the Eliza expedition refused to trade their brass bracelets, while in 1792 the crew of the *Mexican* and *Sutil* were unable to trade for clubs which were held "in such high esteem that it was not possible to get one in exchange for knives or Monterey shells." Wagner, *Spanish Explorations of the Strait of Juan de Fuca*, pp. 187 and 260. Also, see comments on Paul Kane's efforts to acquire a 'medicine cap' in chapter 2, p. 47 of this thesis.

indigenous oral accounts in a study of Fraser's journey.⁶² In these accounts the *Nlha7kápmx*, an Interior Salish group, interpreted the presence of Fraser and his companions according to *Nlha7kápmx* mythology.⁶³ Wickwire also noted that metal ornaments were presented as "a source of fascination" in the stories.⁶⁴ It is possible that fascination may have in part been a consequence of the perceived mythical source of the objects.⁶⁵

The Coast Salish perception of the Vancouver expedition may have played a similar role in determining how the Coast Salish received these visitors. According to Andrew Paull, an early twentieth-century Squamish leader, Vancouver's arrival coincided with a prophesied "visitation from a great people, from a very powerful body of men."⁶⁶ Vancouver's arrival was therefore interpreted as a potentially "fateful visitation," and he received a ceremonial welcome and was presented with gifts.⁶⁷ Vancouver describes a similar ceremonial welcome at Restoration Point, the supposed source of Hewett's seven goat horn bracelets.⁶⁸

As I noted in chapter 1, Homer Barnett's ethnography of the Coast Salish indicated that personal ornaments were only worn on special occasions. These ceremonial welcomes were probably such occasions and the full range of ornaments available to the

⁶² Wendy Wickwire, "To See Ourselves As The Other's Other," *Canadian Historical Review*, Volume LXXV, Number 1 (1994), pp. 1-20.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁶⁵ A more detailed consideration of this issue with respect to the aboriginal inhabitants of the North-East appears in Christopher L. Miller and George R. Hamell, "A New Perspective on Indian-White Contact: Cultural Symbols and Colonial Trade," *The Journal of American History*, Volume 73, Number 2, (September 1986), pp. 320-322.

⁶⁶ J. S. Matthews, *Conversations with Khatsahlano 1932-54: Conversations with August Jack Khatsahlano, born at Snauq, False Creek Indian Reserve, circa 1877, son of Khaytulk and grandson of Chief Khahtsahlanogh*, (Vancouver: Vancouver City Archives, 1955), p. 196.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 196-197.

Coast Salish participants would likely be on display. The historical record supports this conclusion. During his 1792 survey of the southern reaches of Puget Sound, Peter Puget visited a small village where a considerable amount of personal ornamentation, notably face painting, was displayed. Commenting on his reception by these people, Puget stated his belief that “the above mentioned Ornaments were of a Ceremonious Nature for our Reception at the Village.”⁶⁹

The presence of ships such as Vancouver’s was not a common occurrence for the Coast Salish in 1792. As a consequence of this unfamiliarity, it appears that at least some Coast Salish interpreted the presence of the Vancouver expedition as a significant event. At the very least, the ceremonial greetings and associated use of personal ornaments would have given members of Vancouver’s crew increased access to Coast Salish ornaments. At the same time, the trade material offered by the British explorers carried a high value for the Coast Salish because of its rarity and possibly because of its association with significant visitors. As a result, it is possible that the objects offered in exchange by the Coast Salish could have carried a correspondingly high indigenous value. Add to this the obvious interest of Vancouver’s crew’s in acquiring curiosities and the necessary extraordinary circumstances for the collection of bracelets are realised.

Fraser’s descent of the Fraser River may have also satisfied the needed extraordinary circumstances for bracelet collection, at least on the more inland portions of the river. As noted earlier, Wendy Wickwire has suggested that the *Nlha7kápmx* interpreted Fraser’s presence according to their own beliefs. I am not aware of any similar analyses of Fraser’s travel through the Coast Salish regions of the Fraser River, but his

⁶⁸ Meany, *Vancouver’s Discovery of Puget Sound*, p. 132.

journal does present a number of receptions that might be interpreted as ceremonial in nature.⁷⁰ This treatment was not universal, however, and as Fraser and his party approached the Strait of Georgia he noted that “These Indians are not so hospitable as those above.”⁷¹ He also concluded that the people of the lower Fraser River “must have been in the habit of seeing white people,” as “they evinced no kind of surprise or curiosity at seeing us, nor were they afraid of our arms.”⁷²

Both the Spanish and British encountered and traded with groups off the mouth of the Fraser in the 1790's. Some of these may have been among those encountered by Fraser, or possibly knowledge of the earlier encounters was communicated to these groups. Similarly, if any maritime fur traders had ventured into the Strait of Georgia, this would again provide an opportunity for the Coast Salish to become more familiar with these visitors to their territories. As a result, the significance of future European visitors would be diminished. Comments made by Vancouver following his reception by the Makah at Classet near the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca appear to support this conclusion.

They spoke the same language [as at Nootka], but did not approach us with the formality observed by those people on visiting the *Resolution* and *Discovery*; which may probably be owing to their having become more familiar with strangers.⁷³

⁶⁹ Anderson, “Peter Puget’s Journal,” p. 204-205.

⁷⁰ See for example, Lamb, ed., *Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser*, pp. 101 and 102-103.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 103.

⁷³ Meany, *Vancouver’s Discovery of Puget Sound*, p. 76.

Vancouver was quite right - the Makah had been involved in the maritime fur trade since 1788 and probably were very familiar with their European visitors.⁷⁴ As a result, rather than appearing to the Makah as being unique or significant, Vancouver and his crew were received as just another group of foreign traders.

By the time of the land-based fur trade, the Coast Salish also came to view visitors in terms of the fur trade. In 1825 on board the *William and Ann*, Alexander MacKenzie was greeted with furs and the promise of future trade, while much later, in 1841, Wilkes was also received as a trader and caused some disappointment on declining to trade for furs.⁷⁵ Clearly, a more pragmatic and regularised relationship developed between the Coast Salish and their visitors during the land based fur trade that contrasted with the excitement of the initial contacts. On the part of the traders as well, a greater sense of familiarity with the Coast Salish existed and probably resulted in a diminished interest in collecting Coast Salish artifacts. Thus, the Robertson collection is all the more interesting.

To explain the Robertson collection it is necessary to develop a new set of extraordinary circumstances that corresponds with the conditions of the land-based fur trade. As for the motivation of the collector, Yale probably arrived on the coast with instructions from Robertson to collect objects of native manufacture. While the fur trade created the opportunity for collection, the collecting of artifacts was a private activity for Yale. For the Coast Salish who traded the objects to Yale, however, the decision to make certain objects available for collection may have directly related to the fur trade. For example, Fort Langley was the first trading post established in the Coast Salish region and

⁷⁴ Ann M. Renker and Erna Gunther, "Makah," in *Handbook of North American Indians: Northwest Coast*, Suttles, ed., p. 427.

⁷⁵ Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition Vol. IV*, p. 297.

Yale was, I believe, the first officer of the Hudson's Bay Company to marry a Coast Salish woman. For both the Company and the Kwantlen, the marriage of Yale and Whitlakenum's daughter was the means of securing an advantageous trade relationship.

In any circumstance, extraordinary or not, the Coast Salish were under no obligation to trade. Particularly in the case of personal objects such as bracelets, the decision to trade was an individual one and the full range of factors influencing individual actions cannot be known. More generally, though, if I am correct in believing that the Coast Salish valued mountain goat horn bracelets and traded them only in extraordinary circumstances, then the fact that bracelets were not collected on occasions of ordinary circumstance cannot be viewed as evidence of the bracelets' disappearance. However, if an occasion that might be defined as extraordinary did occur and bracelets were not collected, it might be reason to assume that the bracelets were no longer available.

Complicating the issue is the possibility Coast Salish attitudes towards trade could have changed over time. If, as a result of continuing contact, the Coast Salish became more liberal in their trading practices, this could allow for the trade and collection of valued or significant objects on more ordinary occasions. Evidence of this type of collection, where mountain goat horn bracelets were not collected, might therefore be interpreted as an indication of the bracelets' disappearance. Alternatively, the Coast Salish may have become more restrictive in their approach to the trade of valued objects such as bracelets, with the result that they would not be traded under any circumstances.

Again, the limited collection of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets makes it difficult to determine with any certainty which, if any, of the above factors are of consequence. Another challenge is the definition of a significant object. As I introduced

in chapter 1 and discuss more fully in chapter 5, the Coast Salish recognised three general types of property: personal, inherited, and excess. I consider significant property, with respect to the issue of collection, to be those objects which would not be casually traded by their Coast Salish owners. This includes inherited property and those personal objects that were of particular significance to their owners, as they were the least likely to be objects of trade.⁷⁶ I do not consider excess property significant in this context, though it was valuable, as it was property that was oriented towards exchange and redistribution and was therefore more likely to be an object of trade.⁷⁷

Using this definition of a significant object, it is possible to conduct an assessment of later collecting activities among the Coast Salish in which mountain goat horn bracelets played no part. Beginning with the Wilkes expedition, the disappointment with which the local Clallam population received it at Discovery Bay does not present the impression of an extraordinary circumstance. As for the expedition's collecting of Coast Salish artifacts, the acquisition of traditional Salish textiles that may be a form of excess property was a common activity through the early contact period and later.⁷⁸ However, two carved wooden combs collected by the Wilkes expedition may be personal property and may suggest some trade in significant objects.⁷⁹ Paul Kane's 1847 activities provide a valuable visual record of that time, but the fact that he was unable to acquire Cul-chil-lum's 'medicine cap', a highly valued personal ornament, indicates that his presence was not significant enough to allow such an exchange. In general then, it would seem that there

⁷⁶ Smith, *The Puyallup-Nisqually*, pp. 141-142.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

⁷⁸ Objects described in Wright, "A Collection History," p. 36. Smith identifies baskets and blankets as examples of excess property, Smith, *Puyallup-Nisqually*, p. 145.

⁷⁹ Wright, "A Collection History," p. 36 and Wright, "Masterworks of Washington Native Art," p. 108.

was some variation in the existence of extraordinary circumstance and the collection of significant objects.

Moving on to the early settlement era, there is some indication of the collection of significant objects. As Norman Feder noted of the collection of objects among the Halkomelem and Straits Salish, there is a clear shift in the types of objects collected during the exploration and fur trade periods before 1833 and the settlement period after 1860.⁸⁰ Specifically, the collection of “goat horn bracelets, decorated fish clubs, and double-ended combs” gave way to the collection of “spindle whorls with animal form designs and sxwayxwey masks.”⁸¹ Whether the change in collections is an example of a change in the availability of objects or a change in the tastes of the collectors is difficult to know. However, both spindle whorls, as objects of personal property, and Sxwayxwey masks, as objects related to inherited property, can be considered significant objects.⁸² Their collection might therefore indicate an increased availability of significant objects, including mountain goat horn bracelets if they were still in use.

The trade of significant objects by the Coast Salish, and the absence of mountain goat horn bracelets, would appear to suggest that the bracelets were no longer in use in Puget Sound by 1841 or among the Coast Salish in general by the 1860s, or at the very least were exceptionally rare. This supports the assumption that the bracelets disappeared during the fur trade era, though exactly when cannot be determined. Their collection at Fort Langley before 1833 is an obvious indication that, on the Fraser River at least, they

⁸⁰ Feder, “Incised Relief Carving,” p. 47.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

⁸² Wayne Suttles, in “The Halkomelem Sxwayxwey,” *American Indian Art Magazine*, Volume 8, Number 1, (Winter 1982), p. 59, identifies the rights and knowledge associated with the Sxwayxwey performance

remained in use. Also, the fact that Yale was able to acquire seven examples might suggest that the bracelets were still in common use at that time or that the Coast Salish were discarding the bracelets in large numbers.

Just as the collection history cannot indicate precisely when Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets disappeared, it cannot answer the closely related question of why they disappeared. Was there an ongoing tradition of mountain goat horn bracelet production and use among the Coast Salish in the 1830s that was disrupted by the fur trade, or do Yale's bracelets represent the cast-offs of a tradition that was disrupted by some earlier influence? A close consideration of the bracelets themselves, which is the topic of the next chapter, offers the best opportunity for finding an answer to this question.

Chapter 4

Stylistic Analysis

Considering the very limited nature of the historical and collection records regarding Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets, it is perhaps the bracelets themselves that are the most reliable source of information. It is only as a consequence of their survival that the material from which they are made, their physical form, and their style of decoration are known and available for evaluation. Just what form an evaluation should take is not clear. Some bracelets were originally not even identified as Coast Salish and were believed to be products of the South Pacific.¹ Though now widely recognised as Coast Salish, there is still little knowledge of the bracelets, and a limited debate over whether their engraved designs are decorative or representational has been the primary topic of discussion.²

In general, Coast Salish art is poorly understood and to date has been the subject of little discussion. This may partly be a consequence of the fact that some authorities on Northwest cultures labelled Coast Salish arts as derivative or imitative of more northern Northwest Coast art styles.³ More recently, Coast Salish arts, and in particular the Halkomelem style which will be a focus here, have been recognised as a fully developed

¹ For example, the Denver Art Museum bracelet was originally catalogued as being from New Guinea. Denver Art Museum, Catalogue Card JS1-4-G.

² Both Michael Kew and Norman Feder concluded that the designs were non-representational while Robin Wright has proposed that there are grounds to consider that the designs might be representational. J. E. Michael Kew, *Sculpture and Engraving of the Central Coast Salish Indians*, not paginated. Feder, "Incised Relief Carving," p. 54, note 9. Robin K. Wright, "Collection History," p. 32.

³ Wayne Suttles, "Productivity and its Constraints: A Coast Salish Case," in *Indian Art Traditions of the Northwest Coast*, Roy L. Carlson, ed., (Burnaby: Archaeology Press, Simon Fraser University, 1983), p. 67.

art style that is related to but not a derivative of the northern formline style.⁴ Discussion of Coast Salish arts, however, remains limited. As Feder noted, Paul Wingert's 1949 *American Indian Sculpture: a study of the Northwest Coast* addresses the topic of Coast Salish sculpture, but ignores the type of two-dimensional incising that decorates the mountain goat horn bracelets.⁵ More useful are Kew's *Sculpture and Engraving of the Central Coast Salish*, Feder's "Incised Relief Carving of the Halkomelem and Straits Salish," and Suttles' "Productivity and its Constraints: A Coast Salish Case." These represent some of the more comprehensive considerations of Coast Salish incising.

An important aspect of any consideration of art production is the role of the artist. In keeping with the slight knowledge of Coast Salish art, however, I have found very little information regarding Coast Salish artists. In general it can be said that the Coast Salish artists who produced mountain goat horn bracelets were male and that the manufacture of bracelets was a specialised task.⁶ Training as an artist, or specialist in any activity, resembled an apprenticeship with a practising artist selecting a promising young member of the community to train.⁷ At any given time, the number of practising artists was probably quite small.⁸

As I discuss below, the dominant style of decoration found on the bracelets is closely related to the style of two-dimensional relief carving or incising used to ornament Central Coast Salish objects such as wooden spindle whorls, combs, and mountain sheep

⁴ Bill Holm, "Form in Northwest Coast Art," in *Indian Art Traditions*, Carlson, ed., p. 36.

⁵ Paul Wingert, *American Indian Sculpture: A Study of the Northwest Coast*, (New York: J. J. Augustin, 1949) and Feder, "Incised Relief Carving," p. 51.

⁶ Smith, *Puyallup-Nisqually*, p. 139, indicates that that work in bone, horn, and stone was performed by men as part of a general discussion on the topic of specialisation, pp. 139-142. Barnett, *Coast Salish of British Columbia*, addresses the topic of specialisation in his chapter 6, "Occupations," pp. 77-127.

⁷ Smith, , p. 140.

horn rattles (see figures 26 and 27). Whether an artist specialised in the production of the specific objects, or specialised in the use of the decorative style is unclear. In the case of woodworking, one of Barnett's informants remembered a man whose prominence as a woodworker was linked to his ability to produce a wide range of wooden objects.⁹ In another situation, however, a Sechelt family was notable for its specialisation in the practice of canoe manufacturing alone.¹⁰

With respect to horn products, the manufacturing techniques of heating and bending were probably similar for both sheep horn rattles and goat horn bracelets (see description below, p. 97). A specialisation in the manufacture of all horn products decorated in a similar style is therefore a possibility. The execution of the decorative incising on the bracelets and rattles is different enough, though, to suggest the possibility of a slightly different course of training. Whereas the decorations on bracelets appear to be abstract compositions, the rattles are clearly ornamented with representational figures. This difference may indicate a separate specialisation. As a result of these uncertainties I will for the purposes of this study consider the bracelets as the products of a specialist without attempting to define the degree of specialisation.

Given the uncertainties that exist with respect to Coast Salish art and its production, I believe the most effective approach to a stylistic analysis of the bracelets is essentially material in orientation. I will consider the material, form, and decoration of the bracelets in an effort to identify common traits and decorative themes that might link these bracelets together as a distinctive Coast Salish art form. This approach largely excludes

⁸ Smith, , p. 141.

⁹ Barnett, *Coast Salish of British Columbia*, p. 107.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

the role of the artist, but I will, where appropriate, acknowledge the ability of individual artists to vary their interpretation of more general stylistic patterns. Regarding the above-mentioned decorative/representational debate, I believe that such considerations are premature and simply present the given authors' opinions rather than a comprehensive consideration of the designs presented on the bracelets. I am of the same opinion regarding the issue of meaning. While I suspect there were some specific meanings associated with the use of these bracelets I do not believe that this is an appropriate area of speculation. The general issue of significance, as it relates to style, is more accessible, however, and will receive some consideration.

Mountain Goat Horn

The use of mountain goat horn was not unique to the Coast Salish. Perhaps the best known application is the use of mountain goat horn by more northern Northwest Coast groups for the manufacture of spoons with intricately carved handles.¹¹ Similarly, the Coast Salish were not alone in using mountain goat horn for bracelets. In *Indian Life On The Northwest Coast*, Erna Gunther described a goat horn bracelet produced by the Tsimshian and, as was noted in the previous chapter, a goat horn bracelet of a type different from the Coast Salish was also collected at Nootka by the Cook expedition.¹² The simple virtue of being manufactured from mountain goat horn does not distinguish these bracelets as being Coast Salish.

¹¹ Erna Gunther, *Art in the Life of the Northwest Coast Indians*, (Portland: Portland Art Museum, 1966), p. 24.

¹² Gunther, *Indian Life on the Northwest Coast*, p. 33. In this same passage Gunther refers to other mountain goat horn bracelets in ethnographic collections, but does not identify the locations of either

Though it may not be a distinguishing feature in terms of identifying the origin of the bracelets, the availability and use of mountain goat horn in the Coast Salish region may provide some insight respecting the bracelets. As for its availability, there is little information regarding the procurement of mountain goat horn. Mountain goat wool, however, is much discussed in the ethnographic record and it can be assumed that the availability of mountain goat horn and mountain goat wool were closely related.¹³ While mountain goat wool could be gathered from the ground as it was shed during the spring, the hunting of the animals for their wool, meat and horn is of greater relevance here.¹⁴

Some mainland Coast Salish, such as the Squamish, Katzie, and other Upper Stalo groups, had access to mountain goat hunting territories, while others, especially the Vancouver Island, Strait of Juan de Fuca, and Puget Sound Coast Salish, depended on the trade in mountain goat wool.¹⁵ A significant trade in mountain goat wool, and presumably horn, also existed between the Coast Salish and Interior Salish groups such as the Lillooet and *Nlha7kápmx*.¹⁶

these or the Tsimshian bracelet. Nor does she cite any other sources of information concerning these bracelets.

¹³ Gunther, *Art in the Life of the Northwest Coast Indians*, p. 24.

¹⁴ The acquisition of mountain goat wool through hunting or through the gathering of wool shed during the spring is discussed in, Elizabeth Lominska Johnson and Kathryn Bernick, *Hands of Our Ancestors: The Revival of Salish Weaving at Musqueam*, (Vancouver: U.B.C. Museum of Anthropology, Museum Note No. 16, 1986), p. 11

¹⁵ Homer G. Barnett, "Culture Element Distributions: IX Gulf Of Georgia Salish," *Anthropological Records 1: 5*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1939), p. 232 for the Squamish, Wayne Suttles, *Katzie Ethnographic Notes*, (Victoria: British Columbia Provincial Museum, 1955), p. 25 for the Katzie, and Wilson Duff, *The Upper Stalo Indians Of The Fraser River Of B.C.*, (Victoria: British Columbia Provincial Museum, 1952), p. 71 for the Upper Stalo. Regarding the trade of mountain goat wool to Vancouver Island see Barnett, *The Coast Salish of British Columbia*, p. 120, and Suttles and Lane, "Southern Coast Salish," p. 490 for Puget Sound.

¹⁶ James Teit, "The Lillooet Indians," *Publications of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition 2(5), Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History*, (New York, 1906), p. 232-233 and "The Thompson Indians," p. 222.

Some variability in the quantity of mountain goat products may have existed, with dog hair and other products supplementing mountain goat wool. But, while mountain goat wool may have been rare in some areas, it was available and that availability may have increased following contact. For example, Barnett reported that access to large quantities of mountain goat wool on Vancouver Island was a late occurrence and resulted from the marriage of a Sechelt woman and Nanaimo man.¹⁷ The possibility that mountain goat products became more available following contact was also mentioned by Diamond Jenness, who noted that the Saanich hunt of mountain goats while visiting mainland fishing sites increased following the introduction of firearms.¹⁸

As a final comment on the availability of mountain goat products, there is this 1914 reminiscence from W.W. Walkem. Assuming that the horns remained attached to the head, this passage represents a rare mention of the availability of mountain goat horn in an unprocessed form.

In 1875, the year in which this story lies, the head and entire skin could be purchased for the sum of two dollars. They are, of course, much more expensive now, for the Rocky Mountain goats were hunted in all the mountains of the coast range in those days.¹⁹

Considering these various sources, then, there can be little doubt that mountain goat horn remained as an accessible product for the Coast Salish and in all likelihood increased in availability for many following contact.

While my focus in this thesis is mountain goat horn bracelets, the Coast Salish also had other uses for the material. In his 1952 ethnography of the Upper Stalo, Wilson Duff

¹⁷ Barnett, *Coast Salish of British Columbia*, p. 120. Barnett does not provide a date for this event, but a clue is the fact that his research was conducted in the 1920s and that he said it was a "recent" event.

¹⁸ Diamond Jenness, "The Saanitch Indians of Vancouver Island," p. 15 and 47.

¹⁹ W.W. Walkem, *Stories of Early British Columbia*, (Vancouver: News-Advertiser, 1914), p. 118.

recorded the use of mountain goat horn for the valves of composite harpoon points and for spear points.²⁰ Duff also noted that the Coast Salish of the Fraser River did not manufacture mountain goat horn spoons. Working in the Puget Sound region ca. 1920, however, T.T. Waterman found that mountain goat horn spoons were quite common.²¹ Nowhere in the ethnographic literature have I found any reference to the use of mountain goat horn for ornaments by the Coast Salish. Based on the available evidence, then, it would seem that at one time mountain goat horn had both utilitarian and ornamental uses, and that only the utilitarian use survived into the ethnographic period of the early twentieth century. The reason that mountain goat horn ceased to be used for ornaments by the Coast Salish is unknown. Its continued availability and use for more utilitarian objects long after the disappearance of mountain goat horn bracelets, however, indicates that availability of mountain goat horn is not an issue in determining the cause of the disappearance of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets.

Another question regarding the use of mountain goat horn for ornaments is whether this use implies that the Coast Salish considered the material itself to be significant. In the later part of the nineteenth century, Myron Eells noted that among the Puget Sound Salish bracelets were highly valued and made "from the best materials they could procure."²² This comment appears to correspond with Vancouver's 1792 observation that copper, a highly valued material, was used for ornamental purposes, and

²⁰ Duff, *Upper Stalo*, p. 60.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 59 and T.T. Waterman, "Notes On the Ethnography Of The Indians Of Puget Sound," *Indian Notes And Monographs, Miscellaneous Series No. 59*, (New York: Museum of the American Indian, 1973), p. 41.

²² Castille, ed., *The Indians of Puget Sound*, p. 128.

suggests that by virtue of its use in the manufacture of bracelets, mountain goat horn must similarly have been viewed by the Coast Salish as a valued material.

A complicating factor in determining the value of goat horn is the use of copper and shell inlay on some of the Hewett collection bracelets. Robin Wright has commented that a "pitch-like glue" can still be found on some of the incised areas of the bracelets and as can be seen on bracelet BM VAN 211B (figure 11), a piece of shell (dentalia) remains in place.²³ What is not known, however, is if this inlay was part of the artist's original design or if the bracelet's Coast Salish owner added it later. Appearing as a small rectangle, the surviving fragment of shell inlay certainly does not conform to the flowing curvilinear decorative style of the bracelet. I have also not seen any references to inlay for any of the other collections of bracelets. Obviously this issue requires a closer examination of the bracelets than can be performed using photographs and for that reason I will not attempt to resolve it here. What I will propose, however, is that in the case of the Hewett examples the use or addition of valuable materials such as copper and dentalia does suggest a certain value for the bracelets themselves.²⁴

The issue of value in Coast Salish society is an important one and may be one of a number of factors contributing to the disappearance of these bracelets. In particular, I have found Carolyn Marr's discussion of value in respect to Coast Salish mountain goat wool textiles very useful. In her thesis, "A History of Salish Weaving: the Effects of

²³ Robin Wright also indicates that pieces of copper inlay are present on one of the other Hewett bracelets, see Robin K. Wright, "Masterworks of Washington Native Art," p. 92.

²⁴ For a general comment on dentalium as a wealth material see Wayne Suttles, "Environment," in *Handbook of North American Indians: Northwest Coast. Volume 7*, Suttles, ed., p. 28. Within the Coast Salish region, however, there is some variation in the importance of dentalium, with the Southern Coast Salish treating it as a form of wealth while among the Central Coast Salish of the Fraser River region it may have been less important. See Suttles and Lane, "Southern Coast Salish," p. 493 for the value of

Culture Change on a Textile Tradition,” Marr discussed the effects of the introduction of large quantities of trade blankets among the Coast Salish. During the fur trade, European manufactured blankets became a primary commodity of exchange and the Coast Salish accumulated them as a form of wealth that could be redistributed as part of the prestige economy.²⁵ In this role the introduced trade blankets largely replaced the indigenous Coast Salish mountain goat wool blanket.²⁶

Despite the impact of trade blankets, local Coast Salish weaving traditions did not entirely disappear. Marr proposes that the Coast Salish adapted to the changes associated with contact and that the Coast Salish organised blanket developed as a result of the new wealth and materials made available through the fur trade.²⁷ Of particular interest here, though, is the survival of the Coast Salish practice of weaving mountain goat wool. Marr argued that mountain goat wool blankets survived the introduction of trade blankets because the basic material itself, mountain goat wool, held ceremonial value in Coast Salish society.²⁸

dentalia in this region, and Suttles, “The Ethnographic Significance of the Fort Langley Journals,” p. 194 for comment on the apparent insignificance of dentalia in the vicinity of the Fraser River.

²⁵ Carolyn J. Marr, “A History of Salish Weaving: The Effects of Culture Change on a Textile Tradition,” (Unpublished MA Thesis, University of Denver, 1979), though Marr does not explicitly state this it is implied in her discussion of the role of trade blankets in the potlatch, p. 143-144.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 148-149.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 149-152. Marr describes Coast Salish organised blankets as being characterised by brightly coloured geometric patterning of “triangles, zig zags, stepped diamonds and checkerwork,” *Ibid.*, p. 151. This style of blanket has been compared with Navajo “eyedazzler” blankets, but no connection is known to exist, Wright, “Masterworks of Washington Native Art,” p. 44. Though presenting these blankets as a development of the fur trade and the introduction of new wealth and materials, Marr believes the blankets represent an adaptation of existing Coast Salish textile and artistic practices. Marr, “A History of Salish Weaving,” p. 151-152. In contrast, Paula Gustafson, in *Coast Salish Weaving*, p. 48, suggested the organised blanket style was derived from introduced patchwork quilts, but the early collection date of some these blankets disputes this, see Wright, “Masterworks of Washington Native Art,” p. 44.

²⁸ Marr, “A History of Salish Weaving,” p. 182 for comment on the continuation of weaving. On p. 44-45 of her thesis Marr discusses the role of mountain goat wool textiles in Coast Salish winter dances. In these dances, mountain goat wool was closely associated with the attire of “new dancers” or initiates, leading Marr to conclude that the mountain goat wool “symbolized the new dancer’s relationship to his

If Marr's conclusions regarding the survival of mountain goat wool weaving are applied to mountain goat horn, the end of its use for ornaments may suggest that mountain goat horn itself was not ceremonially significant. As a valuable material it may have been used by the Coast Salish to manufacture ceremonial objects, but other valuable materials, including trade metals, could replace it in that function. Alternatively, if the bracelets did have some significance in a ceremonial context, their disappearance might indicate that the context was disrupted.

Form

Apart from a slight variation in size, all twenty-two of the bracelets are generally consistent in form.²⁹ As Bill Holm has described in *Soft Gold*,

The bracelets were ingeniously made of a strip cut from the outer curve of the black, tapered horn. After soaking, the horn was heated, probably by boiling, and bent to shape. A simple, but very effective, clasp was made in which the small tip of the horn was inserted in a hole cut in the broad end and locked in place by a clever system of offsets.³⁰

This form is well illustrated by the Vancouver Museum bracelet (figure 15) which is shown unclasped. The tapering form of the bracelet, the hole in the broad end, and the offset cut on the inside of the tapered end are clearly visible. It should be noted, however, that there are two exceptions to this basic form. Both the British Museum's Christy collection bracelet (figure 14) and Hewett collection bracelet BM VAN 210B (figure 7) have a prominent step cut in the tapered end of the bracelet.

newly-acquired spirit power." A ceremonial significance for mountain goat wool is also indicated by its use on ritualist's mountain sheep horn rattles. For example see figure 27.

²⁹ The general of sizes for the bracelets are indicated by the scales included in most of the photographs of the British Museum bracelets (figures 4-12). The photographs of the remaining bracelets are not to scale.

³⁰ Vaughan and Holm, *Soft Gold*, p. 156.

While I have not personally conducted a thorough review of all available examples of Northwest Coast bracelets, my general enquiries have not informed me of any other bracelets that have this form or use this type of clasp.³¹ Of the mountain goat horn bracelets I have seen illustrated or described, only these twenty-two examples use this type of clasp. For example, the possible mountain goat horn bracelet collected at Nootka by the Cook expedition and now held by the Florence Museum is open, with two rounded ends and no clasp. The Tsimshian bracelet described by Gunther is said to use "a simple catch," but it is unclear if this is the same type of closure used for the Coast Salish bracelets.³²

If it can be determined that this type of clasp is unique to the Coast Salish, then J.C.H. King's suggestion that the Christy collection bracelet might have been collected by Edward Bell in the Coast Salish region would gain some support. Also, the fact that the form of the Christy bracelet is a variant type that matches another variant type collected in Puget Sound lends additional support to this proposition.

Decorative Style

Of the twenty-two bracelets under consideration here, nineteen are decorated in a style that is commonly attributed to the Central Coast Salish, or more specifically, the Halkomelem Salish. The remaining three bracelets are decorated in a style that I have chosen to identify as geometric. As the Halkomelem style bracelets are the most numerous and present the greatest opportunity for discussion, I will begin with them.

³¹ Robin Wright, for example describes this type of clasp as being "distinctive." Wright, "Masterworks of Washington Native Art," p. 92.

³² Gunther, *Indian Life on the Northwest Coast*, p. 33.

Halkomelem Style Bracelets:

As with Coast Salish art in general, little has been written about this style of incising and the definition of the style as Halkomelem is far from consistent. It is also commonly referred to as the Central Coast Salish style or as the Halkomelem and Straits Salish style.³³ However, as the style appears to have been most closely associated with the Halkomelem language group, whose traditional territories extended from the southeast coast of Vancouver Island across the Strait of Georgia to Burrard Inlet and up the Fraser River as far as Yale, I will rely on the term Halkomelem to identify the style.³⁴ The use of this definition does not exclude the possibility that other Central Coast Salish groups participated in the production of art using this style on a more limited scale.

As the collection histories in chapter 3 demonstrated, not all of the Halkomelem style bracelets were collected in the Halkomelem or even the larger Central Coast Salish region. Based on the evidence of the style of decoration, I assume these bracelets are products of Halkomelem or Central Coast Salish artists and that their presence among other groups is a consequence of trade. My discussion of the bracelets' style and its significance, then, is with respect to the communities in which the bracelets' were produced and not necessarily from which they were collected.

³³ While Kew, *Sculpture and Engraving of the Central Coast Salish*, uses the general term Central Coast Salish, other references to the style as Central Coast Salish are usually qualified as referring to only the Halkomelem and Straits Salish, see Wright, "Masterworks of Washington Native Art," p. 92. Feder also used the Central Coast Salish reference, but specifically attributed it to the Halkomelem and Straits Salish, based apparently on the collection of examples of the style in these regions, Feder, "Incised Relief Carving," p. 48.

³⁴ I have elected to rely on Suttles and Holm in specifying this style as belonging mainly to the Halkomelem Salish. This identification is based on the fact that most known examples of this style have a Halkomelem origin. Wayne Suttles, "Central Coast Salish," p. 470 and Bill Holm "Art," in *Handbook of North American Indians: Northwest Coast. Volume 7*, Suttles, ed., p. 611.

This distinction is of consequence with respect to the two National Museum of Ireland bracelets collected in 1778 at Nootka and five of the British Museum's Hewett collection bracelets collected in 1792 in Puget Sound. The Nuu-chah-nulth of Nootka and the Coast Salish were culturally and linguistically separate, and while their art styles were related, they were distinctive.³⁵ The Coast Salish of Puget Sound belong to the Southern Coast Salish culture area, and, though sharing many traits with their Central Coast Salish neighbours are not believed to have produced art in the Halkomelem style.³⁶

The Halkomelem style of incising is characterised by the decoration of a two-dimensional field using relieved negative areas in the form of crescents, concentric circles or ovals, and wedges, arranged in compositions that define raised positive forms. For specific discussions of this style I have relied primarily on the works by Kew, Feder, and Suttles referred to earlier in this chapter (p. 89). In many cases the raised forms that result are representations of human or animal figures, as seen in figures 26 and 27, though the meanings are unknown.³⁷ As for the decoration of the bracelets, the combinations of negative and positive forms create what appear to be abstract compositions.

With respect to Northwest Coast art styles, including the Halkomelem style, Bill Holm has cautioned against focusing on the negative defining areas at the expense of the raised positive forms, as it was the positive form that was the subject of the decoration.³⁸ It is the relationship between these positive and negative forms, acting together to realise a

³⁵ Feder, "Incised Relief Carving," p. 47.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

³⁷ Wayne Suttles, "Central Coast Salish," in *Handbook of North American Indians: Northwest Coast*. Volume 7, Suttles, ed., p. 470.

³⁸ Bill Holm, "Form in Northwest Coast Art," p. 33-34.

full composition, that Holm presents as the basis of Northwest Coast art styles.³⁹ I believe this is particularly true for the abstract patterns found on the bracelets where the development of an overall composition as opposed to the representation of an identifiable figure appears to have been a particular objective.

Looking beyond these general discussions of Halkomelem decorative style, there is the specific evidence provided by the mountain goat horn bracelets themselves. As there are no comprehensive considerations of all of the known examples of these bracelets, I will undertake a brief stylistic review of these bracelets here. I will conduct this stylistic analysis on a collection by collection basis, using the same order as in the collection history. As I proceed through the various collections I will consider the bracelets as products of a specific collection context and also as products of a broader art tradition. I will therefore attempt to identify consistencies and variations in the decorative style. My emphasis here is on the bracelets as evidence of Coast Salish stylistic traditions as opposed to unique works by individual artists. Evidence of possible variations that result from the interpretation of the compositions by individual artists are noted but are a subordinate consideration. Using this approach I will demonstrate that there were definite compositional conventions used to decorate the bracelets through the identification of recognisable compositional types.

As I noted in chapter 1, my analysis of the bracelets is based on photographs. The photographs reproduced in this thesis were my primary reference, but since they provide only one view of each bracelet they were in some cases of limited value. Additional views of the bracelets that made up for some of these limitations were available on the laser disk

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 33-34.

Pacific Northwest Native American Art in Museums and Private Collections, a copy of which was made available to me at the University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology.⁴⁰ Drawings of the five Halkomelem style bracelets in the British Museum's Hewett collection published in Gunther's *Indian Life on the Northwest Coast* were also useful, as was a photograph of the Denver Art Museum bracelet published in Kew's *Sculpture and Engraving of the Central Coast Salish*.⁴¹ This reliance on photographs and the limitations they impose contributed in part to my decision to limit myself to an analysis of general compositional conventions.

In the interest of making my discussion of the decoration on the nineteen Halkomelem style bracelets easier to follow, I have provided simplified illustrations of the general compositional patterns and basic design elements used. Figure 2 presents line drawings of the basic patterning of the three compositional types that I have identified. In these three illustrations I emphasise the longitudinal and diagonal bands or stripes in which the decorative elements shown in figure 3 are arranged. In general, the decorative bands in the Type A and Type B compositions are composed of concentrics (figure 3 A-C) alternating with hourglass-shaped reliefs (figure 3 E) which serve to both define and join the concentrics to form the full band of decoration.

As the illustrations in figure 3 indicate, there is some variation in the appearance of the concentrics and the hourglass reliefs. Beginning with the concentrics, I have provided three general types. The first (figure 3 A) is a true symmetrical concentric. This type of

⁴⁰ Robin K. Wright, ed., *Pacific Northwest Native Art in Museums and Private Collections: the Bill Holm and Robin K. Wright Slide Collections*, (Seattle: Thomas Burke Memorial Washington State Museum, 1995).

⁴¹ Gunther, *Indian Life on the Northwest Coast*, p. 228 and Kew, *Sculpture and Engraving Of the Central Coast Salish*, not paginated.

concentric most often occurs in the larger central band of the Type A compositions.

Figure 3 B shows an asymmetrical concentric. These concentrics often appear in the outer bands of the Type A composition. The final type of concentric, as shown in figure 3 C, is a concentric formed with crescents. Essentially a vertically compressed symmetrical crescent, this element is widely applied and can be found in both the central and outer bands of the Type A bracelets and on the Type B and Type C bracelets.

What I describe as an hourglass relief appears to be a combination of two wedges (figure 3 D) joined at a single point. As applied to the bracelets, these hourglass reliefs vary considerably in their appearance (figure 3 E). Some retain the appearance of a pair of wedges, with a very slender joint, while others approach the form of a rectangle. Either type can be shortened or elongated, as the particular composition requires. In some cases a pair of wedges fulfils the role of an hourglass but are not joined. In terms of compositional patterns, however, I generally consider these non-joined wedges to be the same as hourglasses.

The Type C composition differs from the Type A and Type B compositions in its presentation of diagonal stripes of decoration as opposed to longitudinal bands. In addition, the hourglass reliefs, a defining feature of the Type A and Type B compositions, are absent from the diagonal stripes of the Type C composition. Instead, the decorative stripes of the Type C composition are composed of single concentrics flanked by rows of relieved crescents and wedges. The Type C composition is the most difficult to recognise in the photographs available for reproduction in this thesis.⁴²

⁴² For my identification of this compositional type I relied primarily on the sketches provided in Gunther (see previous footnote).

Of the three compositional types identified, Type A is the most common. In general, the presentation of three bands of decoration formed from alternating concentrics and hourglass reliefs is consistent, but there are variations. While these variations are addressed in the specific discussions of the individual bracelets, the identification of the general compositional type is emphasised. As the photographs show only a portion of each bracelet it is in some cases difficult to recognise immediately the overall pattern of the composition. I therefore recommend that the photographs be used in association with the illustrations in figures 2 and 3 to aid in the recognition of the specific patterns and design elements identified for each bracelet.

National Museum of Ireland

The two National Museum of Ireland bracelets, both collected in 1778, present examples of the Type A and Type B compositions. Bracelet NMI 1887.1880 is a Type A composition. As shown in figure 4, the central band of decoration includes a partially visible concentric on the extreme left, an hourglass relief leading to the right, with a second concentric following to the right of the hourglass. The two outer bands of decoration are represented by the pair of concentrics that fall above and below the narrowing of the central hourglass relief. Leading to the left from the upper of this pair of concentrics (but not fully visible in this photograph) is an hour glass relief. To the right of this same concentric, the upper outer band continues to the right with a pair of wedges that fail to connect but approximate an hourglass relief. This in turn leads to another partially visible concentric on the extreme right. Though it is not clear in this photograph, the lower outer band of decoration generally mirrors the upper band.

A characteristic feature of the Type A composition is the alternation of a single concentric in the central band with the paired concentrics of the outer bands. It is this alternation that gives rise to the undulating pattern of the decorative bands shown in the Type A composition illustrated in figure 2.

The second National Museum of Ireland bracelet, NMI 3657.1882, is a Type B composition. As shown in figure 5, an upper band of decoration is indicated by the concentric at the left of the photograph, which is joined to a partially visible concentric to the right by an elongated hourglass relief. The hourglass relief is, unfortunately, partially obscured by a label applied over the decoration. This label also covers the majority of a concentric that forms part of the lower band of decoration. Leading to the right and left of this crescent are hourglass reliefs. As with the Type A composition, an undulating pattern is created in the Type B composition (illustrated in figure 2) through the alternation of the placement of the concentrics in the adjacent bands of decoration. With respect to both the Type A and Type B compositional styles, another common characteristic is the large relieved areas, which define consistently slender positive forms.⁴³

British Museum

Five of the British Museum's bracelets, all belonging to the Hewett collection, are decorated in the Halkomelem style but demonstrate a wide variation in compositional style. Despite these variations, though, three of the bracelets: BM VAN 210C (figure 8), BM VAN 211B (figure 11), and BM VAN 211D (figure 13), generally conform to the Type A composition. Of these three, BM VAN 211D conforms most closely with the

Type A compositional features. The three bands of decoration are well defined and there is a clear emphasis on the use of concentric circles. Similarly, the relieved hourglass device is effectively used to develop the banded patterning. One difference, however, between this bracelet and the National Museum of Ireland's Type A bracelet is that bracelet 211D contains raised circular forms at the centre of its concentrics unlike the relieved centres of the National Museum of Ireland example.

Bracelet BM VAN.210C (figure 8) also follows the Type A composition, though there is some variation in the outer bands. While the relieved hourglass device is used to define the central band, it does not appear in the outer bands. Rather than connecting the two adjacent wedge forms to complete the hourglass, the artist who decorated this bracelet has instead rounded the end of the wedge and added a row of crescents. The pattern is most visible above the centre band concentric at the left in figure 8. The effect of this treatment is to create outer bands composed of expanded but distorted concentrics isolated by small positive areas roughly in the form of an hourglass. Though difficult to see in the photograph, this effect is visible to the right in figure 8, in both the upper and lower bands of decoration. The overall effect of the composition, however, is the creation of three undulating bands of decoration with an emphasis on the use of concentric circles. Like BM VAN 211D, this bracelet also uses the raised forms at the centre of the concentrics.

Though I have classed bracelet BM VAN 211B (figure 11) as a Type A composition, I have not done so without some reservations. On this bracelet the relieved hourglass areas that develop the central band are absent and instead the artist has

⁴³ Norman Feder commented that Coast Salish 'form lines' normally maintain a consistent width for their

developed a composition resembling that found in the outer bands of bracelet BM VAN 210C (figure 8). What would otherwise be the central band is instead broken into segments by the same small roughly hourglass-shaped positive forms found on BM VAN 210C. This very short hourglass form is visible at the left of the photograph in figure 11, between the pair of outer band concentrics.

Another feature of this segmented central band is the artist's use of what appears to be a pair of inset wedges to define the concentrics. This effect is best illustrated to the left of the centre band concentric at the centre of the photograph in figure 11. Bracelet BM VAN 211B is also differentiated from bracelets BM VAN 210C and BM VAN 211D by the presence of negative reliefs at the centre of its concentrics. Despite its deviations from the typical composition, I continue to consider this a Type A bracelet based on the alternation of large central concentrics with pairs of smaller outer concentrics, which develops the general appearance of three bands of decoration.

Bracelet BM VAN 210D (figure 9) is similar to Types A and B in that slender positive forms are developed through the use of relatively large areas of relief. Unlike Types A and B, though, the bracelet BM VAN 210D does not present the same regularised patterning. There is some suggestion of banded patterning, but it is incomplete. Though it is not clear in the photograph shown in figure 9, the placement of some of the concentric circles seems to conform to the Type A composition while others are closer to the placement in a Type B composition. A more notable difference is the artist's use of relieved crescents that do not appear to define concentric circles. Also, the artist elected to arrange some of these crescents in a manner that leads to the development

of positive 'S' forms.⁴⁴ Comparatively speaking, the composition of this bracelet is difficult to categorise and I have therefore chosen not to associate it with a compositional type.

Bracelet BM VAN 211C is a Type C composition bracelet with diagonal stripes of decoration as opposed to the longitudinal bands of decoration found on the Type A and Type B bracelets. As it appears in figure 12, one of three diagonal stripes of decoration can be seen. The primary feature of this decorative stripe is a concentric with a row of crescents and extending down to the left and a pair of wedges extending up to the right. The remaining stripes, though not visible in this photograph, follow the same general pattern. Bracelet BM VAN 211C also differs from the Type A and Type B bracelets in terms of the balance between the areas of negative relief and positive forms. Though still relying on the use of relieved wedges, crescents, and concentric circles, here it is the positive form that dominates, defined by reduced and more simplified areas of negative relief with the overall effect being a less intricate but bolder composition.

Vancouver Museum

The Vancouver Museum bracelet, VM AA2430, (figure 15) is very clearly a Type B bracelet. There are, however, some subtle differences between it and the National Museum of Ireland's Type B example (figure 5). For example, the artist responsible for the Vancouver Museum bracelet centred the concentric circles, while the concentric circles on the National Museum of Ireland bracelet are slightly asymmetrical with the centres offset towards the adjacent band of decoration. One additional difference in the

⁴⁴ This issue is more fully discussed below with reference to the Perth Museum bracelets, p. 111.

concentrics is that the Vancouver Museum bracelet has a negative relief at its centre while the National Museum of Ireland bracelet has a positive form at its centre.

Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University

Of the two bracelets in the collections of the Peabody Museum, bracelet PH 95-20-10/48405 (figure 17) is most like the Type A composition. The three-band pattern of decoration is fairly typical, as is the use of concentric circles and hourglass reliefs in the central band (only portions of the hourglass reliefs are shown in figure 17). Similarly, there is the typical use of relatively large relieved areas to define slender positive forms. One variation can be found in the outer decorative bands where the artist framed the concentrics with pairs of inset wedges reminiscent of the central band of decoration on the British Museum's bracelet BM VAN 211B (figure 11). As for the centres of the concentrics, this bracelet incorporates the negative relief.

Turning to bracelet PH 67-9-10/130, (figure 16) an atypical composition is found. Like the British Museum's bracelet BM VAN 210D (figure 9), this bracelet does possess some of the characteristics of the Type A and Type B compositions. As with the Type A bracelets, the artist carved a roughly three-band pattern with large concentric circles occupying the central band. The relatively slender positive forms similarly conform to the Type A and Type B compositional types. There are, however, no complete hourglass reliefs to link the concentrics in a fully developed band of decoration. In addition, there are no alternating paired concentrics in the outer decorative bands as is typical of the Type A composition. Instead, a series of relieved crescents fill these areas.

While bracelet 67-9-10/130 does present an atypical composition, it does in many respects conform to the Type A composition. For that reason I have chosen to identify it as a Type A variant so as not to lose sight of these similarities.⁴⁵

Perth Museum and Art Gallery, Perth, Scotland

Of all the bracelet collections considered in this study the seven bracelets owned by the Perth Museum, though showing some variation, are the most stylistically consistent. Beginning with bracelets PE 1978.489.3 (figure 20 bottom), PE 1978.489.4 (figure 21 bottom), PE 1978.489.6 (figure 21 top), and PE 1978.489.7 (figure 20 top), four very obvious Type A bracelets are found. These bracelets differ slightly from the earlier examples in that the three bands are roughly equal in prominence and the undulation of the bands is diminished, but the use of concentric circles linked by hourglass reliefs is unmistakable. Of particular interest here is the striking similarity between the execution of the Type A composition on the four bracelets and I do not believe it is too great a stretch of the imagination to suggest that these bracelets were all produced by the same individual.

The next two Perth Museum bracelets, PE 1978.489.1 (figure 18 top) and PE 1978.489.2 (figure 19), also appear to follow the Type A composition, and I have chosen to identify them as Type A variants. Like the four bracelets above, they include three roughly equal bands of decoration and make use of concentric circles and hourglass reliefs. They differ from the first four bracelets, however, in that the three bands no longer

⁴⁵ My decision to emphasise the similarities between the two Peabody Museum bracelets is contrasted by Bill Holm's decision to differentiate them. Nonetheless, despite their obvious differences I do believe they

undulate and are essentially parallel. They also depart from the Type A composition in the distribution of the concentrics. This is most clearly demonstrated on bracelet PE 1978.489.1, where the artist has replaced an expected pair of outer concentrics with a modified wedge relief. A similar treatment seems to occur on the extreme left of bracelet PE 1978.489.2 as it appears in figure 19.

One very notable feature of these two bracelets is the use of crescent reliefs to develop positive 'S' forms that cut across the three bands of decoration and diminish the longitudinal emphasis of the composition. This technique was first noted on the British Museum's bracelet BM VAN 210D but it was not nearly so prominent. Similarly, limited examples of this device can be found on the Perth Museum bracelets PE 1978.489.3, PE 1978.489.4, and PE 1978.489.7. As was the case for the first four Perth Museum bracelets, bracelets PE 1978.489.1 and PE 1978.489.2 are similar enough to each other to suggest the possibility that they are the products of a single individual. There are enough differences between the two groups of bracelets, however, that I am hesitant to argue that all six are the work of one artist.

The final Perth Museum example, bracelet PE 1978.489.5 (figure 18 bottom), is very similar in execution to bracelets PE 1979.489.1 and 2 but is compositionally different. Like these other Perth Museum bracelets, this bracelet uses equal parallel bands of decoration, though in this case only two. This bracelet also differs in the artist's decision not to use any concentrics, though the repeated crescents interspersed with modified wedges receive limited use on bracelets PE 1978.489.1 and PE 1978.489.2. It

are compositionally related. For Holm's comments on the bracelets see Vaughan and Holm, *Soft Gold*, p. 156.

may in fact be possible that this bracelet and bracelets PE 1979.489.1 and 2 are all the work of the same artist.

With respect to this bracelet's compositional type, it is possible to view it as a variation on the Type B composition, with the alternating concentrics replaced by the alternating series of crescent reliefs. This replacement of concentrics with crescent reliefs is similar to the use of crescents in the outer bands of the Peabody Museum's bracelet PH 67-9-10/130 (figure 16). For this reason I will cautiously consider bracelet PE 1978.489.5 as a possible Type B variant.

The two groups of bracelets represented in the Perth Museum collection demonstrate two similar but different executions of the typical bracelet compositions. All were collected by Yale while he was assigned to Fort Langley ca. 1830. As I discussed in the collection history, Yale appears to have enjoyed a fairly close relationship with the Coast Salish residing near the fort. It is possible that he met directly with Coast Salish artists and acquired the bracelets from them. This might in part explain his ability to acquire such a consistent collection.

Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford University

Though the available photograph (figure 22) shows only a small portion of the carved decoration, the Pitt Rivers bracelet (PR 1919.44.2) is a fairly typical Type A composition with positive centres in its concentrics.

Denver Art Museum

Though the available photograph presents a very limited view, the Denver Art Museum bracelet (JS1-4-G/1971.549, figure 23) is a Type C composition. The composition is somewhat altered, however, by a large concentric circle that forms a second incomplete band of decoration above the diagonal striping. Though the majority of the diagonal striping is hidden in this photograph, an indication of it appears at the right of the photograph below the large concentric where a pair of wedges is visible. The wedge on the left angles down and to the right while its pair angles up and to the left. On the opposite side of the bracelet, stripes composed of concentrics with rows of crescents and wedges follow this same orientation. Also, though not quite as bold as BM VAN 211C (figure 12), the Denver Museum bracelet does present a similar increase in the weighting of the positive forms.

As the above stylistic considerations of the bracelets demonstrate, the most notable feature of their decoration is the consistent use of an identifiable set of compositional types. Discussions of the Halkomelem style as it is found on mountain goat horn bracelets are generally vague and have failed to recognise this use of standard compositions. Instead, Norman Feder observed that the decoration was “purely decorative and not representational,” while Michael Kew commented that “there is no information to suggest that these charming little ornaments [mountain goat horn bracelets] had anything but decorative significance.”⁴⁶ As I noted earlier, I do not believe that this decorative vs. representational debate offers much in attempting to understand the bracelets. The more important question, I would suggest, is what exactly is decorative significance?

Wayne Suttles, in a discussion of this decorative style, proposed that the style was used to decorate objects associated with ritual practices and the production of wealth.⁴⁷ Margaret Holm, however, questions Suttles' conclusion as he only considered ritual objects and failed to address the full range of objects that carried this style of decoration.⁴⁸ As an alternative, she chose to consider the deep incising of the Halkomelem style as an indication of the high status of the objects' owners with the actual function of the object being unrelated to the style of decoration.⁴⁹

Margaret Holm's view of the significance of deep incising is derived from a consideration of art style as a means of "information exchange where distinct classes of objects are chosen to broadcast information."⁵⁰ In a culturally diverse area such as the Northwest Coast, a feature of this information exchange is the creation of a class of objects that are standardised in the interest of allowing their message to be broadcast to and understood by the widest possible audience.⁵¹ To illustrate this point, Holm presents northern painted bent-wood boxes, Chilkat blankets, Tsimshian raven rattles, and Coast Salish *sxwayswey* masks as examples of standardised objects that allowed for the communication of the status and wealth of their owners across cultural lines.⁵² This might best be described as a generic function of style that existed in addition to the other more culturally specific functions of the objects.⁵³

⁴⁶ Feder, "Incised Relief Carving," p. 54, note 9, and Kew, *Sculpture and Engraving*, not paginated.

⁴⁷ Wayne Suttles, "Productivity and its Constraints," pp. 67-87. This concept is most clearly articulated with respect to Suttles discussion of the decoration of spindle whorls, p. 86.

⁴⁸ Margaret Ann Holm, "Prehistoric Northwest Coast Art: A Stylistic Analysis of the Archaeological Record," (Unpublished MA thesis, University of British Columbia, 1990), p. 331

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 331-332.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 333.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 333.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 333.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 333.

The issue of the standardisation of design is particularly relevant in a consideration of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets given my identification of three standardised compositional types represented by the nineteen Halkomelem style bracelets. The existence of standardised and recognisable compositions would have allowed the bracelets to serve as generic marks of status outside of as well as within the culturally diverse Coast Salish region. Though all of the nineteen Halkomelem style bracelets were probably produced in the Central Coast Salish region, the collection history indicates that they were used by the Nuu-chah-nulth at Nootka, and by both the Southern and Central Coast Salish. It is therefore possible that on one level these bracelets played a role in the information exchange described by Holm.

Holm's argument is useful in attempting to understand the broad distribution of the Halkomelem style mountain goat horn bracelets. With respect to the question of their disappearance, however, it is necessary to develop a better understanding of the factors within Coast Salish culture that led to their production. While I agree with Holm's contention that there are some flaws in Suttles' discussion of the Halkomelem art style, I believe that it may still be of some value in attempting to understand the significance of the decoration of the mountain goat horn bracelets. A key issue here is the link that Suttles presents between the decoration of spindle whorls and the production of wealth.⁵⁴ As was noted in the introductory chapter, Suttles has described material wealth among the Coast Salish as being a product of non-material possessions such as inherited rights, ritual

⁵⁴ Suttles, "Productivity and its Constraints," p. 86.

knowledge, and spirit power. As a result, the ownership and display of material wealth is an indication of an individual's access to those sources of wealth.⁵⁵

Given this function of material objects, it does not seem unreasonable to propose that the decoration of the bracelets, particularly in respect to its similarity to the decoration of known ritual objects, might also serve as a reference to the owners' possession of ritual or otherwise non-material sources of wealth. However, I am not proposing that the bracelets were themselves ritual objects. There is no evidence to support this and much to dispute it (see discussion p. 130). Nor do I propose that this interpretation in any way answers the question of meaning regarding these decorations. What this interpretation does provide, however, is a better understanding of a possible Coast Salish significance of these bracelets and a context in which their decoration can be discussed.

Geometric Style Bracelets:

The three other bracelets, the British Museum's Christy Collection bracelet and two belonging to the Hewett Collection, do not conform to the Halkomelem style discussed above. In terms of their decorative style the Hewett bracelets are quite consistent with each other but differ greatly from the Christy bracelet. Both of the Hewett bracelets are decorated with hatched borders that appear to enclose a field of lightly incised design. Bracelet BM VAN 210B (figure 7) shows this most clearly, with a flowing leaf-like pattern filling the central field. It is more difficult to find this or any other pattern in the central field of bracelet BM VAN 210A (figure 6) and it is unclear if the marks that

⁵⁵ Suttles, "Post Contact Culture Change," p. 34-35.

can be seen are badly worn decorations or if it is a plain field showing evidence of surface flaws. Looking to the Christy bracelet (BM 2294, figure 14), there are no hatched borders and its decoration is composed of a series of horizontal parallel lines separated by vertical rows of roughly gouged oval marks. Based solely on style then, there is no basis to link the Christy bracelet with the Hewett examples.

Unlike the nineteen Halkomelem style bracelets, the decoration of these three examples is difficult to describe as typically Coast Salish. In *Indian Life on the Northwest Coast*, Gunther viewed all of the Hewett bracelets as being foreign to the Puget Sound Salish.⁵⁶ Regarding the two under discussion here, she compared their decoration to Athapaskan-made goat horn spoons and 'Eskimo' carvings.⁵⁷ The possibility that the two Hewett bracelets and even the Christy bracelet were traded from outside the Coast Salish region must therefore be considered.

While I am willing to consider a possible foreign origin for the Hewett bracelets and the Christy bracelet, I do not believe that there is sufficient information to prove that they were not produced in the area of their collection. For example, Feder noted the existence of a purely geometric style of incising used by the Coast Salish, but failed to adequately define it.⁵⁸ Marr also made reference to the use of geometric decorations on a wide range of Coast Salish objects and described the style as typically incorporating "triangles, zigzags, stepped diamonds, and checkerwork."⁵⁹ Though the two Hewett bracelets and the Christy bracelet do not appear to present typical examples of geometric

⁵⁶ Gunther, *Indian Life on the Northwest Coast*, p. 82.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

⁵⁸ Feder, "Incised Relief Carving," p. 51.

⁵⁹ Marr, "History of Salish Weaving," p. 151.

decoration as-defined by Marr, they do contain geometric elements and I have therefore chosen to associate them with this style.⁶⁰

There are also archaeological samples of antler brow bands showing hatched borders similar to the Hewett bracelets and horizontal lines reminiscent of the Christy bracelet have been found in the Lower Fraser Region.⁶¹ True, these archaeological samples are very old (1600 - 2400 years),⁶² but they do suggest the potential for this style of decoration in the area and it may be that the 'foreignness' of the Hewett bracelets is simply an illustration of how unfamiliar contact-era Coast Salish art generally is.

Conclusions

Keeping in mind the limited number of bracelets available for consideration and the limited number of opportunities for collection that they present, I will now attempt to provide some concluding observations concerning my stylistic analysis. First, to restate my conclusions regarding the use of mountain goat horn and the form of the bracelets, it does appear that while mountain goat horn may have been a valuable material, the disappearance of the bracelets may indicate that mountain goat horn did not hold specific ceremonial significance. Also, it may be that the type of clasp used on these bracelets is unique to the Coast Salish and can be regarded as an identifying feature. This cannot be stated with any certainty, however, and requires a much more thorough review of Northwest Coast bracelet collections.

⁶⁰ Additional research might support or dispute this attribution. However, as only three bracelets are involved, and my discussion is largely focused on nineteen Halkomelem bracelets, I have chosen not to pursue this research at this time.

⁶¹ Charles E. Borden, "Prehistoric Art of the Lower Fraser Region," in *Indian Art Traditions*, Carlson, ed., p. 143 provides illustrations of these objects.

Moving on to the discussion of the style of decoration used on the bracelets, I found two groups. The smaller of these, which I cautiously described as geometric bracelets, potentially includes only three bracelets and therefore represents too limited a sample for the determination of any realistic conclusions. However, I question the assumption that these bracelets are of a foreign origin and propose that there is insufficient information on which to base such an assumption.

The larger group of bracelets, composed of the nineteen Halkomelem examples, offers the greatest opportunity for discussion and will be the focus of my following comments. The fact that these bracelets were collected from the very beginning to the end of the collection period and throughout the collection region allows for an historical and geographical analysis of the style. Aiding in this analysis is the existence of a number of identifiable compositional types that allows for the comparison of otherwise disconnected bracelet collections.

One of the most surprising observations is the prevalence of the Type A composition bracelets. Of the nineteen available bracelets, nine closely correspond to this compositional type while an additional three appear to be variants of it. The Type A composition bracelets were collected throughout the collection area, from Nootka Sound on the West Coast of Vancouver Island, to Puget Sound and the Fraser River. This type also appears to have been present through the entire collection period, and still appears to have dominated at the time of the latest collection.

Another important aspect of the Type A composition bracelets is the fact that while I have generalised them as a Type A composition, they do present a number of

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 143.

individual variations. An obvious conclusion is that these variations represent varying interpretations of the composition by different artists and possibly different regions of production. Also, considering the unique stylistic attributes of the Perth Museum bracelets and the fact that they were the last to be collected, it may suggest that the styles varied over time.

Looking to the other compositional types, it is more difficult to draw any firm conclusions. The type B composition is represented by three and possibly four bracelets (if the Perth Museum example is accepted as a variant of the type). If this is the case, then it is also possible that the Type B composition endured through the entire collection period. Unfortunately, though, there is no certainty for the location of collection of the Vancouver Museum or the Pitt Rivers Museum bracelets, and there is no collection date for the Pitt Rivers bracelet. Add to this the fact that the Perth Museum example is only a possible variant of the Type B composition, and there is very little to go on. Facing this situation, I will accept that while this is clearly a distinctive compositional type that may be represented through the entire collection period, there is not enough information to allow for any reasonable conclusions.

Much the same situation exists for the Type C composition. Only two bracelets conform to this type, and of those, the collection date and location are only known for one. Therefore, as was the case for the Type B composition bracelets, I will go no further than to acknowledge that this is a distinctive compositional type.

The existence of three identifiable compositional types is also significant. There is the possibility that this range of types is representative of different regions of production. The close similarity between the Type A variants and the possible Type B variant in the

Perth Museum collection may argue against this if they are, as I discuss below, the products of a single artist or local artistic tradition. Another possibility is that the range of compositional types is an indication of variation in the meanings of the designs decorating the bracelets. This, of course, assumes that the bracelet designs had some specific but now unknown meaning.

Another opportunity for analysis exists if the stylistic variations of bracelets within individual collections are considered. In particular, the Perth Museum's Robertson collection and the British Museum's Hewett collection lend themselves to this type of analysis. Between them, these two collections include fourteen of the twenty-two bracelets under consideration. Beginning with the Hewett collection, the earlier of the two, we find a collection that contains bracelets of the Halkomelem group and bracelets of the geometric group. Referring to the five Halkomelem examples in this collection, a notable feature is the variation in the execution of their decoration. Even among the three Type A bracelets (BM VAN 210C, BM VAN 211B, and BM VAN 211D) there is a clear range of individual styles presented.

The range of style in the Hewett collection leads to a number of possible conclusions. For one, it can be seen to indicate that at or before the time of the Vancouver expedition bracelets were being produced by a number of different artists and that these may have represented different locations of bracelet production. I base this conclusion on the knowledge that the Halkomelem style was not produced in Puget Sound and that the bracelets of this style collected there were introduced through indigenous trade practices. As trade products, the bracelets were more likely acquired as generic wealth items, demonstrating the potential role of the bracelets as standardised markers of

status. The same may be the case for the two National Museum of Ireland bracelets collected at Nootka in 1778.

In marked contrast to the mixed nature of the Hewett collection, the seven bracelets of the Perth Museum's Robertson collection are all Halkomelem examples and display a remarkable degree of stylistic consistency. The general diminution of the undulation in the bands of decoration, a consistent use of positive forms at the centre of the concentric circles, and the predominant use of crescents as opposed to complete circles to define those concentrics tend to tie these bracelets together.

As noted earlier, though, it is possible to define two sub-groups within the Perth Museum collection. Bracelets PE 1978.489.3, 4, 6, and 7 are virtually identical in presenting the Type A composition. Bracelets 1978.489.1, 2 and 5, however present variations of the Type A composition and a possible variation of the Type B composition but do so through the consistent use of parallel bands of decoration and the tendency towards a diminished use of concentrics in favour of rows of crescents.

Given the differences between the two groups of bracelets, it is difficult to argue that all were created by a single individual. The similarities, however, do at the very least allow for the conclusion that all the bracelets in the Robertson collection are representative of a group of artists working in specific local tradition. And, given the location of Fort Langley and the close relations between the Fort's personnel and the neighbouring Kwantlen people, it is possible that these bracelets represent a Kwantlen style. I would also propose that, based on the quality of these seven bracelets and the consistency of their execution, the production of mountain goat horn bracelets remained a

healthy artistic tradition on the lower Fraser River at least until ca.1830. Just how widespread that tradition was by that date is, unfortunately, impossible to know.

As a result of this analysis of the bracelets' decoration, and the obvious endurance of at least the Type A composition over the entire collection period, a reasonable conclusion is that the decoration of these bracelets was of some significance on a variety of levels. The wide distribution of the bracelets, even outside of their region of production, and the standardisation of their decoration suggests a generic significance corresponding with that described by Margaret Holm. However, the use of the Halkomelem style of decoration and its possible association with ritual and the creation of wealth, may indicate a more specific meaning in a strictly Central Coast Salish context. Also, the existence of more than one compositional type may indicate possible variations in that meaning. Finally, the existence of an ongoing tradition of bracelet production ca.1830 can also be seen as evidence of a continuing significance for the bracelets at and after that date. An important question that remains then, is if these bracelets were objects of significance, why do they seem to disappear so completely?

Chapter 5

Disappearance and End of Production

The question of why Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets disappeared, and why they disappeared when they did, is important. A number of other Coast Salish objects, notably goat wool blankets and sheep horn rattles, that are represented in the earliest collections and historical accounts survived long after the goat horn bracelets fell from use. It is reasonable to assume, then, that there must be some factor that distinguishes these objects from the bracelets. Also, there is the time-frame during which the bracelets disappeared. As I discussed in chapter 1, the land-based fur trade is largely regarded as a period of undirected acculturation, during which changes in Coast Salish society and presumably material culture occurred according to indigenous Coast Salish principles and practices. Therefore, the question of the disappearance of the mountain goat horn bracelets can likely best be approached through a consideration of certain Coast Salish cultural practices in association with the historical events of the early contact period.

When speaking of the disappearance of the mountain goat horn bracelets, I am in effect conflating two separate issues. On the more basic level there is the question of the physical removal or disappearance of existing bracelets from a functional context within Coast Salish society. The much more complex aspect of disappearance, and one that perhaps cannot truly be answered, is the question of why the production of mountain goat horn bracelets ended. I believe the question of physical disappearance can be adequately approached through a consideration of Coast Salish concepts of property and the

treatment of property within Coast Salish society. As for the end of production, I also believe that it is possible to develop a probable scenario to explain this occurrence. It is, however, a highly speculative scenario that relies on an integration of the various analyses of the bracelets that have preceded this chapter. As the issue of the physical disappearance of the bracelets is also part of this integrated scenario, I will proceed with a consideration of this issue first.

Physical Disappearance

In the introduction to this chapter I noted that while Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets disappeared during the early contact period, other aspects of Coast Salish material culture survived. In chapter 4, while discussing the possible value of mountain goat horn, I commented on Carolyn Marr's contention that the ceremonial associations of mountain goat wool contributed to the survival of mountain goat wool blankets and weaving and suggested that, conversely, the disappearance of mountain goat horn bracelet might therefore indicate and be a product of the absence of a similar significance for mountain goat horn. However, while I believe this may be a factor in considering the end of the bracelets' production, it does not provide a mechanism of removal.

A mechanism that allows for the physical disappearance of mountain goat horn bracelets and the survival of objects such as mountain sheep horn rattles is provided by a consideration of Coast Salish concepts of property and the treatment of differing types of property. As I discussed in chapter 1, Marion Smith identified three classes of property, "personal, inheritable and excess," among the Puyallup-Nisqually of southern Puget

Sound.¹ Personal property, as its name implies, was property closely associated with a particular individual which could be given away or, on the occasion of the owner's death, be interred with the body or burned.² Inheritable property, on the other hand, was property that is more accurately described as family or lineage-owned and, as its name indicates, was retained as family property through inheritance.³ The final class of property, excess property, was property associated with concepts of prestige and was accumulated for the purpose of redistribution on ceremonial occasions and could include ornaments that were not considered personal property.⁴ On the death of the owner, excess property was redistributed, thus keeping "durable articles a permanent part of the economic exchange."⁵

In the following discussion, I will argue that bracelets should be considered personal property and therefore subject to destruction on the death of their owners. As a result, once they were no longer produced they would disappear. In contrast, objects such as mountain sheep horn rattles which were "passed on to descendants and became exclusive family possessions," were inheritable property.⁶ As inheritable property, these rattles had a much longer life span and depended only on the continued practice of inheritance for their survival.

To complicate matters, some types of personal property, and in particular tools and ceremonial paraphernalia, could be passed on through a mentor/pupil relationship.⁷

¹ Marian W. Smith, *The Puyallup-Nisqually*, p. 143.

² *Ibid.*, p. 143.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 144.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 145.

⁶ Kew, *Sculpture and Engraving of the Central Coast Salish*, not paginated.

⁷ Smith, *The Puyallup-Nisqually*, p. 143.

Survival through this relationship, however, depended on the continuation of the functional context in which the tools or paraphernalia were used or the continuation of the mentor/pupil relationship. Spindle whorls are one example of this type of personal property, with their survival into the twentieth century being a product of the endurance of Coast Salish weaving traditions. Once the functional context for these objects disappeared and the mentor/pupil relationship broke down, however, this type of personal property would also disappear with the death of its final owner.⁸

Though Smith's definitions of property are very useful, they refer specifically to the Puyallup-Nisqually and must therefore be compared with the practices of other Coast Salish groups before they can be generally applied. Looking north, to the Upper Stalo of the Fraser River, Duff provided a similar if less clearly defined image of property with the primary distinction being made between family and personal property.⁹ Similarly, with respect to the Gulf of Georgia Salish, Barnett also addressed the issue of property in terms of personal and family-owned.¹⁰

Regarding the treatment of property at death, both Duff and Barnett generally agree. For them family property was the equivalent of Smith's inheritable category and remained the property of a particular family through inheritance.¹¹ Again, both Duff and Barnett are in general accord with Smith in the case of personal property, with both reporting the destruction of an individual's personal property as a funeral rite. There is a

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 143-144.

⁹ Duff, *Upper Stalo*, p. 77-79

¹⁰ Barnett, *Coast Salish of British Columbia*, p. 250-251.

¹¹ Duff, *Upper Stalo*, pp. 77-79 and Barnett, *Coast Salish of British Columbia*, pp. 250-251.

slight discrepancy, however, in that Duff indicated only favourite belongings were burned while Barnett reported that in general, all personal possessions were burned.¹²

The historical record also provides evidence of the inclusion of personal property in the funerary context during the early contact period. As early as 1792, the discovery of bows and arrows in the remains of canoe burials at Port Discovery was a source of speculation for Vancouver and members of his crew.¹³ Similarly, while near Strawberry Bay, Peter Puget noted "we found a Canoe suspended to a Tree by Ropes with a skeleton in & Bows Arrows fishing Implements & c."¹⁴ Some sixteen years later, at the eastern limit of Coast Salish territory on the Fraser River near Yale, Simon Fraser noted the presence of "Tombs" on the opposite side of the river and gained permission to visit them. "Around the tombs," he noted, "were deposited all the property of the deceased."¹⁵ Still later, in 1841, Charles Wilkes observed in Puget Sound at Port Orchard, "boxes about three feet square, supposed to contain the articles which are deposited by the Indians near the bodies of the dead . . ."¹⁶

While there may be some variations in the treatment of personal property and even the possibility of outright exceptions,¹⁷ I believe that the information provided above indicates that it is reasonable to proceed on the understanding that in the broader Coast Salish context during the early contact period, at least some objects of personal significance were destroyed during funerary rites. An important step that remains is to

¹² Duff, *Upper Stalo*, pp. 78 and 94 and Barnett, *Coast Salish of British Columbia*, p. 218.

¹³ Meany, *Vancouver's Discovery of Puget Sound*, p. 124.

¹⁴ Anderson, "Peter Puget's Journal," p. 215.

¹⁵ Lamb, ed., *Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser*, p. 97.

¹⁶ Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition, Vol. IV*, p. 479.

demonstrate that bracelets were among those objects destroyed as part of these funerary rites.

I have found three references commenting on the interment of bracelets with their deceased owners. The first of these was recorded by Pym Nevins Compton some time around 1869 when he wrote that "Various articles are placed in the box with the corpse such as pipes, tobacco, soap, bracelets, beads, & c . . ." ¹⁸ Unfortunately, Compton relies on the term "Southern Nations" to identify the groups who carried on this practice. I am assuming that this includes the Coast Salish but, based on my reading of Compton's comments, it does not appear to refer exclusively to the Coast Salish.

Compton's lack of precision is, however, made up for by the two remaining references to the inclusion of bracelets in burial rites. In 1892, Franz Boas recorded details of the preparation of the deceased for burial among the Coast Salish of the lower Fraser River:

He [an old man] washed the body, painted it red, put on the bracelets and other ornaments of the deceased, doubled it up, so the knees touched the chin, and wrapped it in blankets or mats. ¹⁹

Similarly, while writing of the Coast Salish of Puget Sound, Myron Eells noted that "both finger rings and bracelets" were highly valued and that both were buried with the dead. ²⁰

The fact that Compton, Boas, and Eells identify bracelets as being included in individual funerary rites appears to confirm that bracelets were considered personal

¹⁷ Diamond Jenness, *The Faith of a Coast Salish Indian*, (Victoria: British Columbia Provincial Museum, 1955), p. 95, where it was noted that regarding personal property "it was not the custom of the Katzie Indians to destroy it or to deposit it on the grave."

¹⁸ Pym Nevins Compton, "Account of an early trip to Fort Victoria and Life in the Colony," (Add. Mss. 2778, file 2/2, ca.1869, BCARS), p. 21.

¹⁹ Boas, "The Indian Tribes of the Lower Fraser River," p. 459.

²⁰ Castile, ed., *Indians of Puget Sound*, p. 128.

property and very probably significant personal property. I do not see any reason to believe that mountain goat horn bracelets would have been treated any differently than the metal bracelets referred to by Eells, and I contend that their physical disappearance can be directly linked to this funerary practice. If this is correct, then the relatively early disappearance of the bracelets was directly related to their value as personal property and their rapid removal from society following the death of their owners. It is also important to keep in mind the possibility that if a generally increased mortality rate among the Coast Salish followed the establishment of the land based fur trade, bracelets would have been buried or burned in larger numbers over a shorter time than usual.

The identification of mountain goat horn bracelets as personal property also has implications for the analysis of their decoration. In particular, while the decoration found on the Halkomelem style examples resembles the style of decoration on ritual objects, the destruction of bracelets through funerary rites differentiates them from inherited ritual objects like mountain sheep horn rattles. Similarly, Eells' comments on bracelets give no reason to believe that they were passed on through a mentor/pupil relationship. However, the treatment of bracelets in the funerary context does indicate significance and I remain convinced that, given the stability of the decoration over time and its wide distribution, the decoration of the mountain goat horn bracelets would have in some way contributed to that significance.

While I have emphasised the physical effect of Coast Salish funerary practices on the disappearance of mountain goat horn bracelets, it may also be that these practices had an impact on the survival of Coast Salish knowledge of the bracelets. It is again useful to return to the work of Marian Smith, who commented that, after being placed at a grave,

such an object “passed out of circulation and was as though it had never been.”²¹ If I am interpreting this comment correctly, then it would appear that the practice was not to retain knowledge of the objects involved in this funerary rite, thereby allowing them to entirely disappear, both as physical objects and as memories. This may in part explain the general mystery surrounding these bracelets and may also have contributed to the circumstances that led to the end of their production.

End of Production

The question of why the Coast Salish ceased producing mountain goat horn bracelets is challenging. If, as I have argued above, the bracelets continued to have value until their disappearance, then why weren't new ones produced? One possibility, of course, is that there were no artists left who were trained in their production. Again, the issue of introduced disease and the possible affect an accelerated mortality rate might have had on the transfer of specific knowledge and the training of young artists is an issue here. This certainly would be a strong argument if the production of mountain goat horn bracelets was a unique speciality limited to a small number of artists.

I am doubtful of this particular option, however, for a number of reasons. For one, I have been unable to determine if the production of mountain goat horn bracelets was a unique speciality or if it was related to the production of other horn products. Given the continued production of other horn objects, such as mountain sheep horn rattles, a disruption of the training process related to mortality would require that mountain goat

²¹ Smith, *Puyallup-Nisqually*, p. 143. Smith does not indicate if this was her interpretation of the effects of the destruction of personal property or if it is a concept that she learned from her informants. If it was simply her interpretation, however, the significance of the comment would be diminished.

horn bracelet production was a separate speciality. However, other indigenous bracelet forms, such as the antler bracelet collected by Hewett, also appear to have disappeared.²² It seems unlikely, though, that an artist who specialised in the production of mountain goat horn bracelets to the exclusion of other horn products would also produce bracelets manufactured in a different style and of different materials. The disappearance of antler bracelets must therefore also be seen as the disruption of a unique training relationship.

Even if bracelet or ornament production represented unique specialities in Coast Salish society, it seems unlikely that the training relationships related to these specialities would be so disproportionately vulnerable to disruption by disease-related mortality. This, however, is the situation that presents itself in the previous paragraph. Therefore, while I accept the possibility that disease-related mortality could affect the rate at which the bracelets ultimately disappeared, it did not in itself cause the production of mountain goat horn bracelets to end.

One of the challenges in attempting to determine a possible explanation for why the production of mountain goat horn bracelets by the Coast Salish ended is understanding why their production would end if their value remained intact throughout their existence. As in the above scenario, where the death of artists is proposed as a possible factor, it is natural to assume that given the existence of a continuing value for the bracelets, their disappearance must be the result of a problem of supply or, in this instance, a problem with the artist. Or, put more simply, the production of the bracelets ended despite a continuing demand. This, however, assumes that continuing value can be equated with

²² In "Masterworks of Washington Native Art," p. 92, Wright indicates that the Hewett bracelet is the only example of an antler Coast Salish bracelet known.

continuing demand, and in the case of Coast Salish Mountain goat horn bracelets I do not believe this was true.

To explain my assertion that demand and value are not necessarily alike in a consideration of the disappearance of the mountain goat horn bracelets, I must return to the treatment of bracelets in the Coast Salish context. As I discussed above, as a result of their close association with their owners as significant personal property, bracelets were commonly interred with their deceased owner or otherwise destroyed. As a consequence of this practice it would seem logical to assume that there would be a regular demand for new bracelets among the Coast Salish. These new bracelets, however, would take a form that responded to values or preferences that predominated at the time of their production or introduction into use. In contrast, the value of the bracelets at the time of the death of their owner is a product of the time of their production or acquisition and may therefore be considered to represent the preferences of an earlier time. Based on the time frame in which mountain goat horn bracelets disappeared, the collapse in demand may be the product of a generational shift in preference, from bracelets made of indigenous materials to ones made of materials related to the fur-trade.

While it is quite reasonable to assume that the disappearance of mountain goat horn bracelets can indicate a shift in braceleting preferences among the Coast Salish, there can be very little certainty in attempting to understand the basis of that shift. Nonetheless, I believe that it is possible to present a speculative scenario that takes into consideration both the historical evidence and later ethnographic information.

To begin with, I will briefly review some of the relevant issues. First, there is the issue of bracelet use among the Coast Salish during the early contact period. As was

discussed in chapter 2, variety appears to have been a characteristic of Coast Salish braceleting practices from the time of the earliest contacts. Metals, some introduced and some possibly of indigenous origin, were observed in use by the Coast Salish for bracelets and other ornaments in company with locally produced materials such as shell, horn, and antler. Also, this variety continued despite the sustained introduction of trade goods and metals from the date of the earliest contacts in the Coast Salish region and into the land-based fur trade era.

If Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets did disappear during the land-based fur trade era, then it is likely that the disappearance of the bracelets occurred as a consequence of some new development in the circumstances of contact during that time. As I noted above, the availability of trade goods among the Coast Salish was not unique to the land based fur trade. Nor, as I discussed in chapter 4, did mountain goat horn, or other indigenous materials for that matter, become unavailable. Given this situation it would seem sensible to conclude that the shift in preference from mountain goat horn to trade material bracelets is not a simple issue of the availability of the respective materials. Instead, I propose, this shift in preference was a result of what the trade materials represented to their Coast Salish users in the context of the land-based fur trade.

To understand this shift it is first necessary to briefly return to the topic of Coast Salish culture and the role of material wealth. As was discussed in chapter 1, Wayne Suttles has proposed that in traditional Coast Salish cultures, material wealth was an indication of an individual's possession of non-material forms of wealth. "It was the non-

material possessions,” Suttles wrote, “that brought him the wealth.”²³ Therefore, material possessions were a reference to an individual’s access to these sources of wealth. In all probability the introduction of trade materials during the initial phases of contact did little to affect this concept of wealth. The earliest contacts were brief and intermittent and probably did little to affect the production of wealth in Coast Salish societies. As a result the new materials were simply incorporated into the existing concepts of wealth and practices of ornamentation.²⁴

While it can be said that the early phases of contact had little effect on Coast Salish economies, the same is not true for the land-based fur trade. Even if, as Suttles has commented, “the aim of the fur-traders was not to revolutionize native culture,”²⁵ the economic shifts that accompanied the establishment of trading posts in the Coast Salish region were not without their consequences. As I described in chapter 2, at these posts the Coast Salish were able to exchange their furs, labour, and other products for a range of goods provided by the Hudson’s Bay Company. Unlike the trade associated with earlier contacts, this trade was a new economic opportunity. It represented a significant and new source of wealth for the Coast Salish and brought with it changes in Coast Salish society.²⁶

Given the above situation, where the land-based fur trade introduced a new source of wealth to the Coast Salish, and given the Coast Salish practice of using material

²³ Suttles, “Post Contact Culture Change,” p. 34.

²⁴ The incorporation of trade materials into existing aboriginal contexts on the Northwest Coast is discussed in Victoria Wyatt, *Shapes of Their Thoughts: Reflections Of Culture Contact In Northwest Coast Indian Art*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984), and in the Northeast of the continent in Miller and Hamell, “A New Perspective on Indian-White Contact.”

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

²⁶ Suttles, “Ethnographic Significance of the Journals,” p. 208.

possessions to indicate wealth, it would seem reasonable to assume that the new economy of the fur trade would have had some effect on Coast Salish material culture. In her study of Coast Salish blankets, Carolyn Marr proposed that the Coast Salish organised blanket, with its large input of labour and incorporation of trade materials, was one development in Coast Salish material culture that served to represent the prestige derived from the new fur trade derived wealth.²⁷ Following this line of reasoning, I would see a shift in braceleting practices in a similar light.

Bracelets, like other forms of ornament, probably continued to serve as indications of the wearer's access to wealth. However, given that the fur trade was a new source of wealth, it required the display of ornaments that were specific to the fur trade. Therefore, while the actual shift may have been from mountain goat horn and other indigenous products to metal, it was not simply a result of the value of the metal. As I discussed above, metal had always been valuable. Rather, the shift in preference was to specifically fur-trade-related products that served as a reference to the wearer's access to this source of wealth.

As significant a source of wealth as the fur trade might have been, it would be unrealistic to suggest that it eliminated the significance of the more traditional Coast Salish sources of wealth. As I already noted, these traditional sources of wealth in all likelihood played a significant role in securing access to the fur trade wealth. For a time, however, I suspect there was a disproportionate emphasis on the display of objects that indicated access to the new wealth represented by the fur trade as a result of the development of what I described in chapter 2 as an environment of popular culture.

²⁷ Marr, "A History of Salish Weaving," pp. 149-152.

In *In Small Things Forgotten*, James Deetz describes popular culture as demonstrating rapid change over time and "similarity over large areas," as contrasting with the regional variation and limited change over time which characterises folk culture. For the purposes of this study, I believe that traditional Coast Salish material culture, both in terms of the variety of materials used for ornament and more specifically the varying compositional types of mountain goat horn bracelets and their stability throughout the collection period, can be equated with this concept of folk culture.

Similarly, I believe that Coast Salish material culture during the fur trade can be considered a form of popular, as opposed to folk, culture. With respect to the issues of rapid change and "similarity over large areas," the presence of trade posts in Coast Salish territories and the contact between the Coast Salish that was stimulated by the forts would have increased the opportunity for this similarity to develop.²⁸ Changes in the preferred means of displaying wealth could be quickly communicated through this new level of Coast Salish interaction, making the changes that occurred widespread and relatively swift.

An important contributing factor to the possible development of an environment of popular culture among the Coast Salish is the nature of Coast Salish social structure. Wayne Suttles has presented Coast Salish societies of the Straits of Juan de Fuca and Georgia and northern Puget Sound as being structured along class lines.²⁹ Three classes were represented. The "upper or respectable class" was numerically the largest of the

²⁸ The increased contact between the Coast Salish is discussed in Suttles, "Ethnographic Significance of the Journals," p. 208.

²⁹ Wayne Suttles, "Private Knowledge, Morality, and Social Classes among the Coast Salish," in *Coast Salish Essays*, (Vancouver: Talon Books, 1989), pp. 3-14.

three classes.³⁰ The remaining two classes, the lower class and slaves, were numerically small compared with the upper class.³¹

With respect to the development of an environment of popular culture, the large upper class is of greatest interest. It was members of this group that possessed wealth through their association with the inherited rights, private knowledge, and supernatural powers that were the basis of wealth in traditional Coast Salish society.³² Status within this upper class was fairly fluid and depended on the production of wealth.³³ Those who possessed the greatest wealth and, by association, prestige gained the highest status and assumed leadership roles.³⁴ Potentially any member of the upper class could rise to a position of high status if excelling in the production of wealth. In the economy of the fur trade, a new source of wealth, and therefore a new means of achieving high status, was introduced.³⁵

With respect to the issue of popular culture, the effects of Coast Salish social structure are quite direct. In a society where material objects serve as indications of an individual's access to wealth, symbols of access to a significant new source of wealth would be in high demand. In Coast Salish society, where the majority of the population belonged to a single upper class of potentially wealthy individuals, the demand for the symbols of access to the new wealth would become widespread.

This concept of popular culture is perhaps best demonstrated by the popularity of Hudson's Bay Company blankets. In chapter 4 (pp. 95-96) I briefly discussed the

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

³² *Ibid.*, see diagram p. 12.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, see diagram p. 12.

replacement of locally produced Coast Salish blankets with trade blankets as a form of wealth. During the fur trade the Hudson's Bay Company blanket became the standard of exchange against which the value of all other trade goods was measured.³⁶ Clearly, the role of blankets as wealth was an indigenous feature of Coast Salish society, but to a great extent, the ability to standardise the value of the blankets was a result of the trade practices of the Hudson's Bay Company. Through the development of an effective trade monopoly, the Company's trade inventory defined the range of trade materials available to the Coast Salish and standardised them throughout the region.

Importantly, the same range of goods was standard at all the Hudson's Bay Company trading posts. Ornaments, or trade materials that could be used to manufacture ornaments, were similarly standardised. As a result of its standard availability, a Hudson's Bay Company trade ornament would be instantly recognisable as such throughout the Coast Salish region. Therefore, if my interpretation of the significance of ornaments is correct, the recognition of an ornament as being a trade product would serve as a clear statement of the owner's access to this significant new source of wealth.

While standardisation is an important aspect of popular culture, so is widespread access. I have already discussed this issue with respect to the various Coast Salish groups' access to trade at the Hudson's Bay Company posts. There is also, however, the issue of availability on a more individual level. As I discussed earlier, the traditional sources of wealth for the Coast Salish were products of inheritance or esoteric knowledge and might therefore be considered exclusive sources of wealth. The land based fur trade, however, made wealth available to those who had nothing more to offer than their labour.

³⁵ Suttles, "Ethnographic Significance of the Journals," p. 20.

True, the greatest wealth might still have fallen to those individuals or families who controlled particular resources or who possessed the knowledge to be successful hunters, but the sale of labour would, at the very least, have broadened individual access to some aspects of this new wealth.

One possible example of this less substantial but widespread type of wealth is the brass finger rings that Wilkes observed in use among the Skagit in 1841. As I noted earlier (p. 43-44) the company traded these rings in large quantities. They were not considered valuable items by the Company, however, and were used to pay for salmon and to pay for labour.³⁷ Though considered cheap by the Hudson's Bay Company, Wilkes' observations indicate they were very popular among the Coast Salish and therefore may have been more important to them than their actual cost might indicate. Again, I believe that these rings, as easily recognisable trade items, would have served as an indication of the wearer's access to the fur trade wealth, even if on a limited scale. Most importantly, the ability to acquire the rings in return for labour effectively made it possible for almost anyone to express their access to this source of wealth.

Conclusions

While it is speculative, I believe that the above discussions of the indigenous mechanism for the removal of bracelets from use and the impact of the influx of trade wealth and the resulting shifts in Coast Salish economic activities provide a reasonable explanation for the disappearance of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets. As a

³⁶ Marr, "A History of Salish Weaving," p. 44.

consequence of the new trade wealth that was introduced to the Coast Salish economy, the traditional practice of indicating wealth through the display of material wealth shifted to emphasise the new significance of fur trade wealth. This, in association with the standardised nature of Hudson's Bay Company trade materials produced an environment of popular culture that further reinforced the emphasis on the display of trade related wealth.

Coupled with this new emphasis on the display of a particular type of wealth was the continuing Coast Salish practice of the destruction of significant items of personal property on the death of its owner. Under more traditional circumstances, where there continued to be a demand for the new production of the types of objects being removed from use, this would not have a significant impact on the survival of a particular object type. But, in an environment of popular culture where the demand for all but a narrow range of objects declined, survival of any objects not defined as popular was threatened. Though significant to their existing owners, there was no demand for new production and, as a consequence, no new artists would be trained in the production of these objects. And, once all the existing examples had been removed from use on the death of their owners, there would be no surviving examples on which any resurgence of interest could be based when and if the popular environment introduced with the fur trade ended.

It is important to remember that the above scenario would not apply to all Coast Salish objects. As I noted earlier, the production of objects such as mountain goat wool blankets, which were manufactured from a ceremonially significant material, continued,

³⁷ MacKie, *Trading Beyond the Mountains*, p. 224 comments on the low value attached to items used to purchase salmon. Tolmie, *Physician and Fur Trader*, includes a number of references to the use of rings along with other items to pay for labour. See for example pp. 235 and 251.

while specialised implements, such as the ritualists' mountain sheep horn rattles, survived through inheritance. As for mountain goat horn bracelets, though, they would appear to have been specifically personal objects and, I suspect, wealth related objects whose production required specialised knowledge. As such, the Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelet represented the type of object that was most threatened by the economic shifts occurring within Coast Salish culture during the land based fur trade era.

One question that I have not addressed is if the disappearance of the mountain goat horn bracelets indicates the disappearance of the Coast Salish concepts or values of which the bracelets were a product. This is a very difficult question to answer, both in terms of the level of speculation that an answer requires, and with respect to the implications that the answer might have on an understanding of the effects of contact on the Coast Salish. Despite these challenges I will attempt to address this question as part of the concluding chapter.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

At the end of chapter 1, I presented three preliminary understandings respecting Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets. These three understandings, that the bracelets were significant, that they disappeared relatively early in the contact period, and that they were replaced by trade materials, have served as recurrent themes throughout this study. I will now provide a summary of my findings regarding these themes. This summary will be followed by a consideration of the implications my conclusions might have on the broader issue of the effects of the early contact period on Coast Salish history.

One of my primary tasks in this thesis has been to provide evidence that mountain goat horn bracelets were significant. Each avenue of investigation I have used indicated some support for this belief. With respect to the general historical context, I have demonstrated that, based on their collection between 1778 and ca.1830, use of the bracelets continued despite the potentially disruptive effects of devastating epidemics and the introduction of trade materials. My consideration of the collection history, though far from conclusive, suggested that mountain goat horn bracelets were only collected under what can be considered extraordinary circumstances. My interpretation of these extraordinary circumstances leads me to believe that the bracelets were not traded casually by their Coast Salish owners and that the bracelets were only made available for trade under conditions considered significant by the Coast Salish. Examples of these significant conditions are the very earliest contacts with European explorers and Coast Salish efforts to establish favourable trade relationships with the Hudson's Bay Company.

Perhaps the strongest evidence that the bracelets were an important type of ornament is the bracelets themselves. Though there are only twenty-two known examples of the bracelets, covering a collection period of approximately fifty years, they are surprisingly consistent in both form and style of decoration. As I discussed in chapter 4, all of the bracelets present the same basic form characterised by a unique clasping mechanism. In addition, the incised decoration of nineteen of the bracelets conforms to the Halkomelem or Central Coast Salish style.

My analysis of these nineteen bracelets indicates that a number of conventionalised compositions were used to decorate these bracelets. I have identified three compositional types, with one, the Type A composition, being represented throughout the collection area and from the very beginning to the very end of the collection period. The appearance of identifiable compositional types and their consistent application over the duration of the collection period strongly suggest that these decorations were not random and that they carried some form of meaning in their original functional context. Based on this information I have proposed that the bracelets served as objects indicating general status or wealth. I also suspect that there was a more explicit but now lost level of meaning associated with the bracelets and their decoration.

The final evidence of the importance of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets was their disappearance. If I am correct in my analysis, the disappearance of mountain goat horn bracelets is closely associated with Coast Salish funerary practices. As a valued form of personal property, bracelets were destroyed on the death of their owners. In a type of paradox, in the changing environment of the early contact period, the continued

practice of one aspect of Coast Salish culture apparently contributed to the disappearance of another.

The early disappearance of the bracelets was another of my preliminary understandings. The collection history presented in chapter 3 was the most relevant to this issue and indicated that the bracelets most probably disappeared during the era of the land based fur trade (1827-1858). Contributing to this conclusion was my stylistic analysis of the Perth Museum and Art Gallery bracelets collected at Fort Langley ca. 1830 by Murray Yale. The number and consistency with which the decoration on these bracelets was executed caused me to conclude that they represented a continuing tradition of bracelet production at that time on the Fraser River.

The fact that Charles Wilkes (1841) and Paul Kane (1847) both failed to record any observations of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets may suggest that the bracelets were disappearing by as early as the 1840s. As I noted in chapter 3, however, neither of these individuals visited the Fraser River. It is therefore possible that bracelet use continued there unrecorded until a later date. Supporting this possibility is the style of decoration used on the majority of the bracelets. Since nineteen of the twenty-two bracelets are decorated in the Halkomelem style, it may be that they had a more enduring level of meaning within the Halkomelem region. Outside of the Halkomelem region, in Puget Sound for example, the bracelets may have been valued only for their more generic status or wealth-oriented meanings, thereby allowing them to disappear more quickly. This idea, of course, is entirely speculative and cannot be proven.

The final understanding that I presented in chapter 1 concerned the replacement of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets with trade materials. The historical context

presented in chapter 2 clearly indicated that trade materials were in demand for use as ornaments, including bracelets, from the very earliest occasions of contact between the Coast Salish and their European visitors. However, metal bracelets and ornaments apparently coexisted with the mountain goat horn bracelets before contact and for at least forty years following contact in the Coast Salish region. This long coexistence can be interpreted to indicate that the mountain goat horn bracelets and metal bracelets satisfied different needs within Coast Salish society. Only when the underlying social motivation for the display of ornaments changed, as I argued in chapter 5, did the conditions that allowed for the disappearance of mountain goat horn bracelets arise.

Based on the circumstances presented above, I do not consider the disappearance of mountain goat horn bracelets and the survival of metal bracelets to be an indication that direct replacement occurred. As I have indicated previously in chapter 2, I prefer to describe the situation as demonstrating a shift in Coast Salish braceleting preferences. On a more general level, the goat horn and trade metal bracelets carried roughly equivalent meanings as symbols of status and wealth. This general meaning survived through the continued use of metal bracelets.

As for their more explicit meanings, it is quite likely that in the environment of popular culture I believe developed during the fur trade, trade bracelets represented a quite different meaning from that indicated by the goat horn bracelets. Whereas the goat horn bracelets may have specifically represented access to the more traditional sources of Coast Salish wealth, the trade bracelets would have indicated an individual's access to fur trade wealth. I believe this important underlying shift in motivations that is indicated by

the disappearance of goat horn bracelets in favour of metal trade bracelets is obscured when described as a process of replacement.

The question that remains, as I noted at the end of chapter 5, is whether the shift to metal bracelets and the disappearance of mountain goat horn bracelets is indicative of the disappearance of the underlying values of Coast Salish society that gave rise to the mountain goat horn bracelets. In general, my response to this question is no; I do not equate the disappearance of the mountain goat horn bracelets with the disappearance of traditional Coast Salish cultural values. Instead, I see the disappearance of the bracelets as evidence of the incorporation of the new cultural influences of the land based fur trade by the Coast Salish.¹

In chapter 5 I argued that as a result of the new economic conditions created by the land based fur trade an environment of popular culture developed among the Coast Salish. As a result of this environment of popular culture, aspects of Coast Salish material culture that were closely associated with or served as indications of wealth were reoriented to reflect the new influence of fur trade wealth. The use of fur-trade-related materials was a key part of this wealth indicating process.

If I am correct in my reasoning, this new emphasis on the material representation of fur-trade-wealth contributed to the disappearance of objects, mountain goat horn bracelets included, which may have represented the more traditional Coast Salish sources of wealth. The traditional sources of wealth, however, probably survived and contributed to an individual's success in the fur trade. Representations of fur trade wealth, then, may

¹ My feelings on this point are in part influenced by Wayne Suttles argument that subtle shifts in cultural emphasis can result in much more significant variations in art production. See Suttles, "Productivity and its Constraints," p. 87.

have been recognised by the Coast Salish as including traditional sources and types of wealth.

It is important to remember that mountain goat horn bracelets were only one part of a larger artistic tradition. Other aspects of this tradition, such as the ritualists' rattles and the spindle whorls which I discussed earlier, survived and were used by the Coast Salish long after the bracelets disappeared. I believe that all of these objects, though representing very different uses in Coast Salish society, were products of the same system of values and beliefs. The survival of these other stylistically related object types suggests to me that the effects of the environment of popular culture extended only to the material expression of wealth. This expression of wealth, in itself, was consistent with Coast Salish cultural practices and therefore should not be interpreted as evidence of radical cultural change.

Although the disappearance of Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets may not indicate radical cultural change, their disappearance does indicate change in Coast Salish artistic production. Though it is impossible to know for certain, the artists who produced mountain goat horn bracelets probably did not produce metal bracelets. One indication of this is that the style of decoration found on the mountain goat horn bracelets is not known to appear on metal bracelets.² This suggests that the training of artists working in metal did not include instruction on the use of the Halkomelem art style. The end of the production of mountain goat horn bracelets can therefore be interpreted as the loss of a context in which the knowledge of the use and perhaps the meaning of the Halkomelem art style was communicated from one generation to the next.

The situation I describe for the training of Coast Salish artists who produced mountain goat horn bracelets can probably be applied to other artists as well. As Feder noted in "Incised Relief Carving of the Halkomelem and Straits Salish," other object types, including double ended combs decorated in the Halkomelem style, also disappeared during roughly the same period as the mountain goat horn bracelets. Though it is not clear, the disappearance of double ended combs and other decorated objects may also be related to the fur trade.³ The loss of these object types would also result in the loss of contexts for the training of young artists. The ultimate effect of this loss of a range of object types would be a serious narrowing of the opportunities for aspiring artists to train as practitioners of traditional Coast Salish art styles during and as a result of the land-based fur trade.

In addition to the loss of a context for training artists, the disappearance of the mountain goat horn bracelets may have resulted in the loss of the types of knowledge that were specifically expressed through the designs incised on them. I have generally restricted myself to a discussion of the general significance of the bracelets and what they may have communicated. Earlier in this chapter I noted that I suspected there was a more explicit but now lost level of meaning associated with the bracelets and their decoration. I suspect, but cannot prove, that each recognisable compositional type used to decorate the bracelets would have carried a different meaning. Unlike the general status and wealth

² At this point I know of no examples of historic metal bracelets decorated in this style and in the course of my research I have been given no reason to suspect that there are any to find.

³ Feder, "Incised Relief Carving," p. 47. Though I have not pursued the topic of double ended combs in this thesis, I suspect that their history is similar to that of the mountain goat horn bracelets. It is interesting to note that horn combs appear regularly in the lists of goods shipped to Fort Langley and in the list of goods traded for salmon in 1829. This would be another interesting avenue of research. See Cullen, "History of Fort Langley," p. 58 or Maclachlan, ed., *The Fort Langley Journals*, p. 88. for the

indicating function of the bracelets, I believe these more specific meanings disappeared with the bracelets.

To conclude, Coast Salish mountain goat horn bracelets truly are evidence of both change and continuity. Paradoxically, their disappearance as a consequence of Coast Salish funerary practices demonstrates their continued value to their owners. Their disappearance is also evidence of the impacts of the changing Coast Salish economy during the land based fur trade. I believe the effects of this change were limited, however, and were conditioned by the existing practices and underlying values of Coast Salish society. These changes, and in particular the diminishing of contexts for the communication of artistic practices and their meaning, probably contributed to the more pronounced and destructive changes that followed British and American settlement of the Coast Salish region following the close of the fur trade.

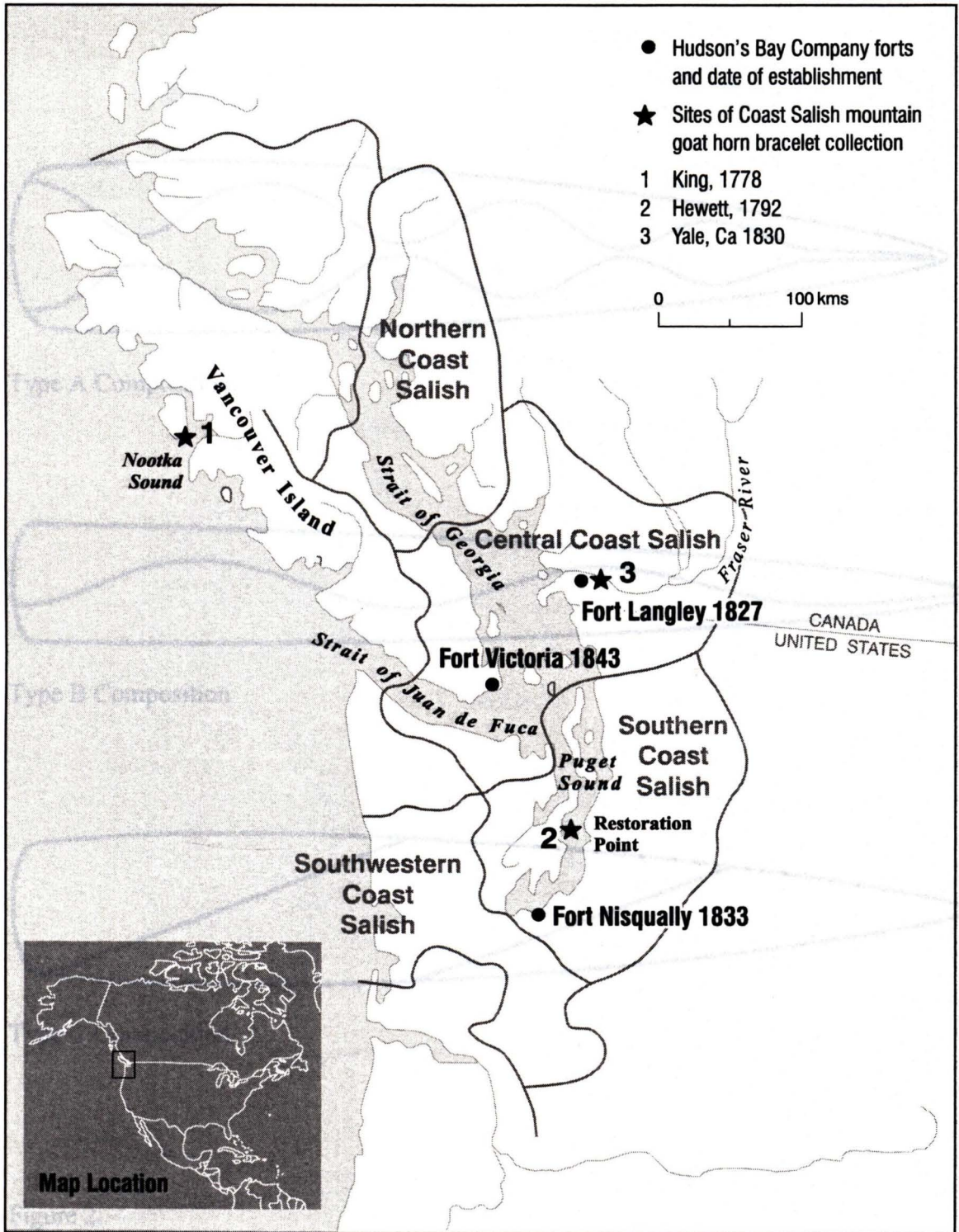
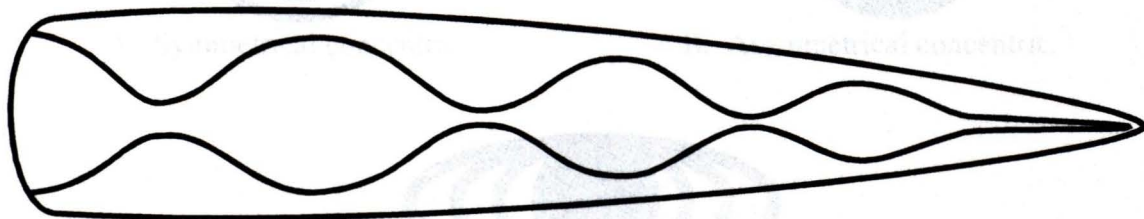


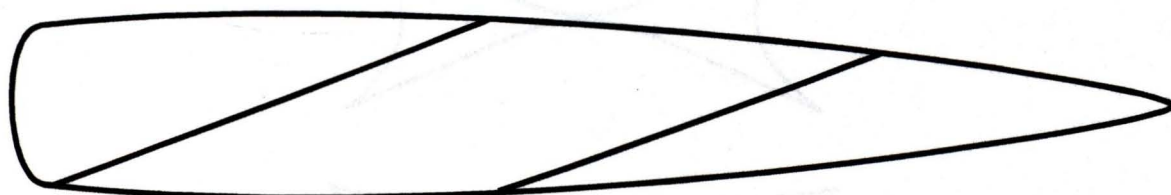
Figure 1.
Map of Coast Salish region.



Type A Composition.



Type B Composition



Type C Composition

Figure 2.

Simplified illustrations of the Type A, B, and C compositions showing banding patterns.



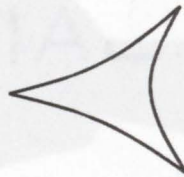
A. Symmetrical concentric.



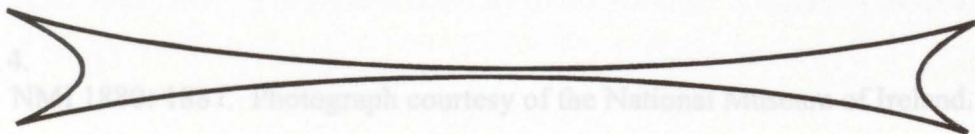
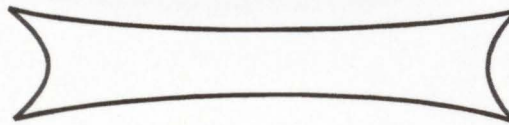
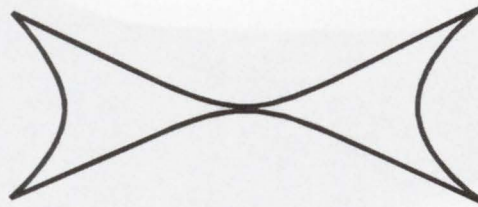
B. Asymmetrical concentric.



C. Concentric formed with crescents.



D. Wedge.



E. Variations of hourglass relief.

Figure 3. Variations of the basic design elements used in the decorative compositions.



Figure 5.
NMI 1882: 3657. Photograph courtesy of the National Museum of Ireland.

Figure 4.
NMI 1880: 1887. Photograph courtesy of the National Museum of Ireland.



Figure 5.

Figure NMI 1882: 3657. Photograph courtesy of the National Museum of Ireland.

BM VAN 210A. Photograph courtesy of the British Museum.

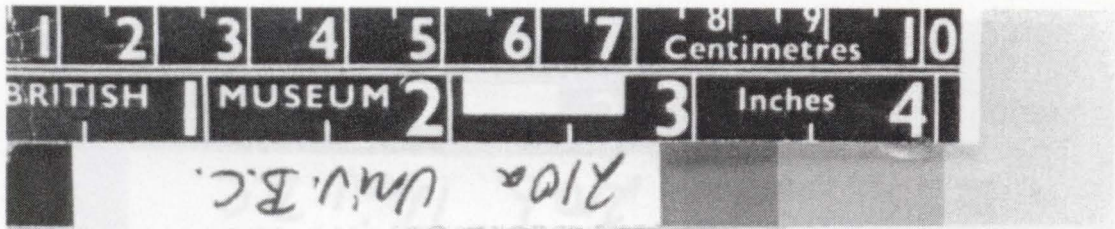


Figure 6.

BM VAN 210A. Photograph courtesy of the British Museum.

Figure 7.

BM VAN 210B. Photograph courtesy of the British Museum.

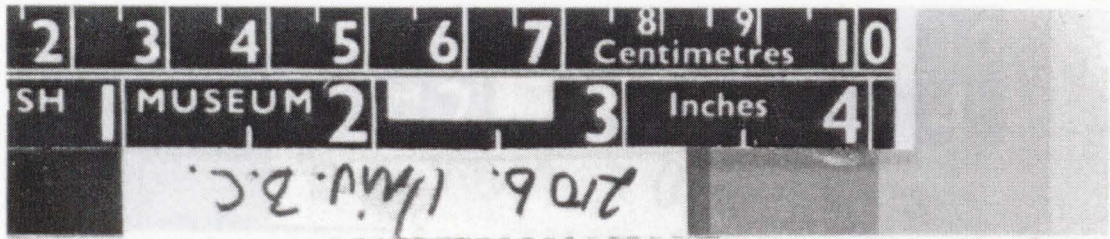


Figure 7.

BM VAN 210B. Photograph courtesy of the British Museum.

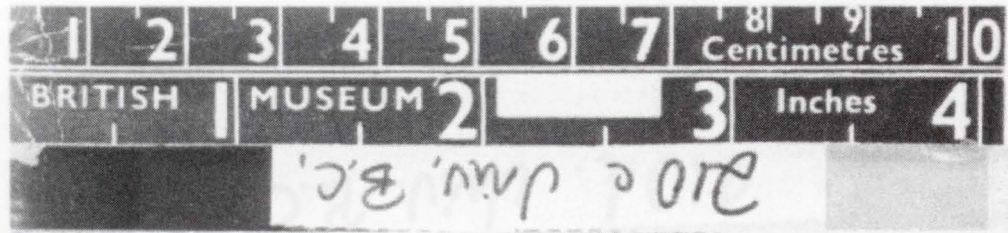


Figure 8.

BM VAN 210C. Photograph courtesy of the British Museum.



Figure 10.

BM VAN 211A. Photograph courtesy of the British Museum.

Figure 9.

BM VAN 210D. Photograph courtesy of the British Museum.

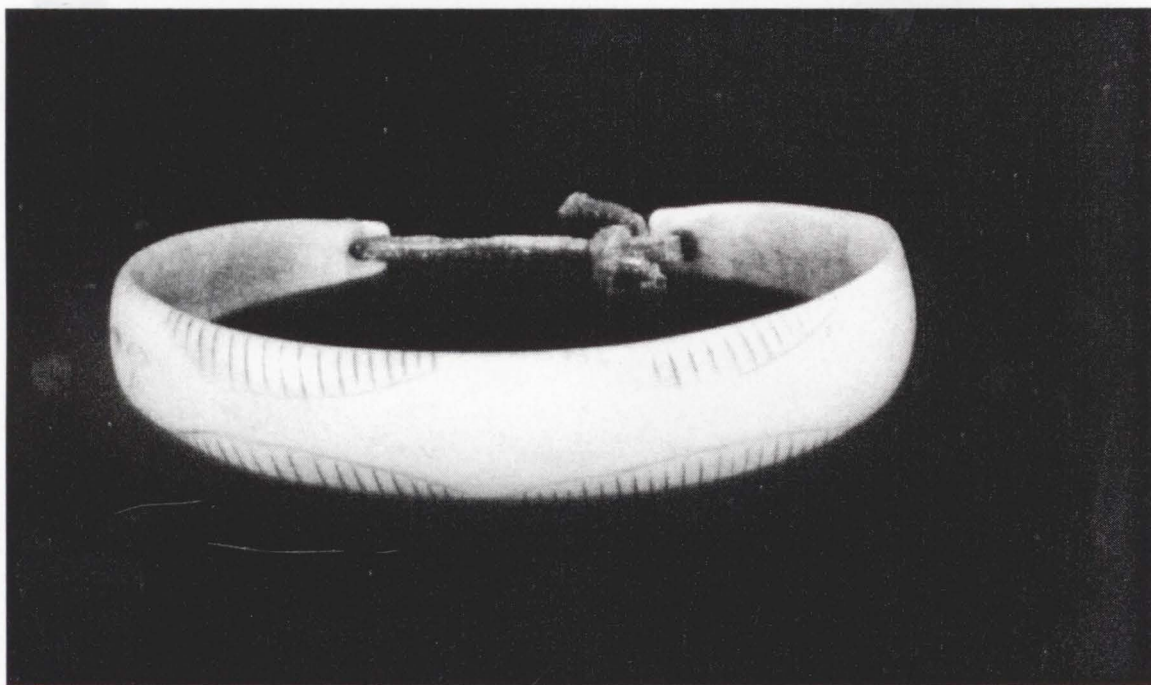


Figure 10.

BM VAN 211A. Photograph courtesy of the British Museum.

Figure 11.

BM VAN 211B. Photograph courtesy of the British Museum.

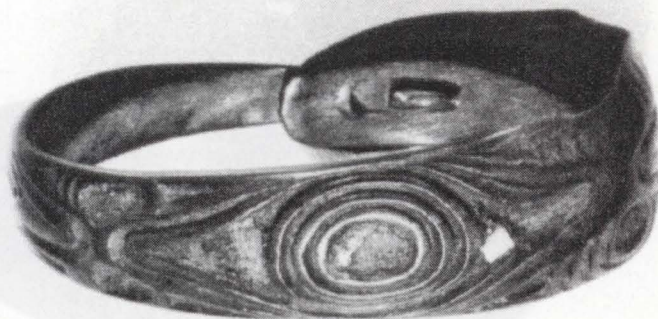
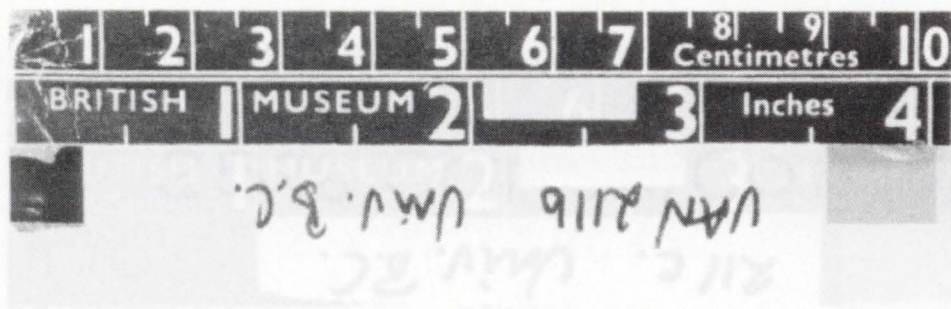


Figure 11.

BM VAN 211B. Photograph courtesy of the British Museum.

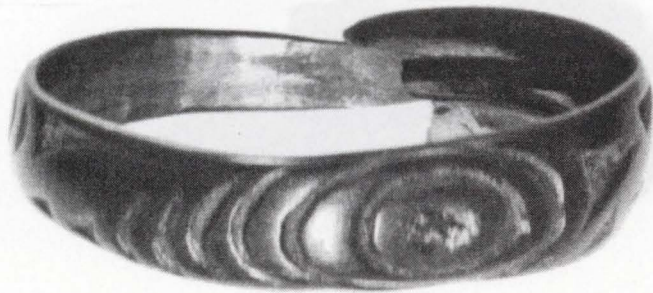
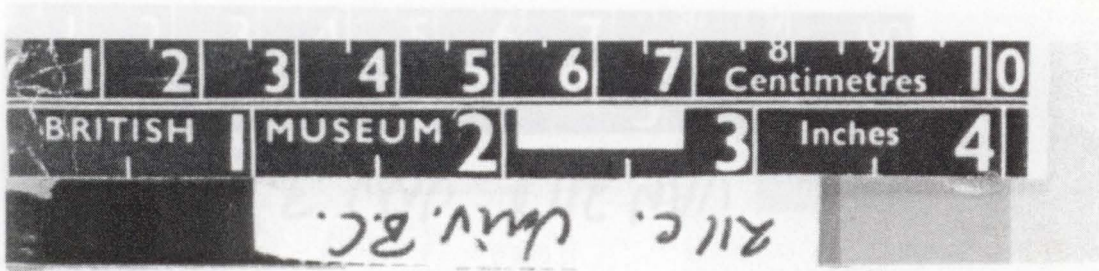


Figure 12.
 BM VAN 211C. Photograph courtesy of the British Museum.



VAN 211D. VAN B.C.

2294. VAN B.C.

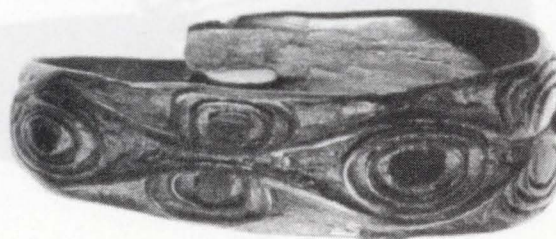


Figure 14.

BM 2294. Photograph courtesy of the British Museum.

Figure 13.

BM VAN 211D. Photograph courtesy of the British Museum.

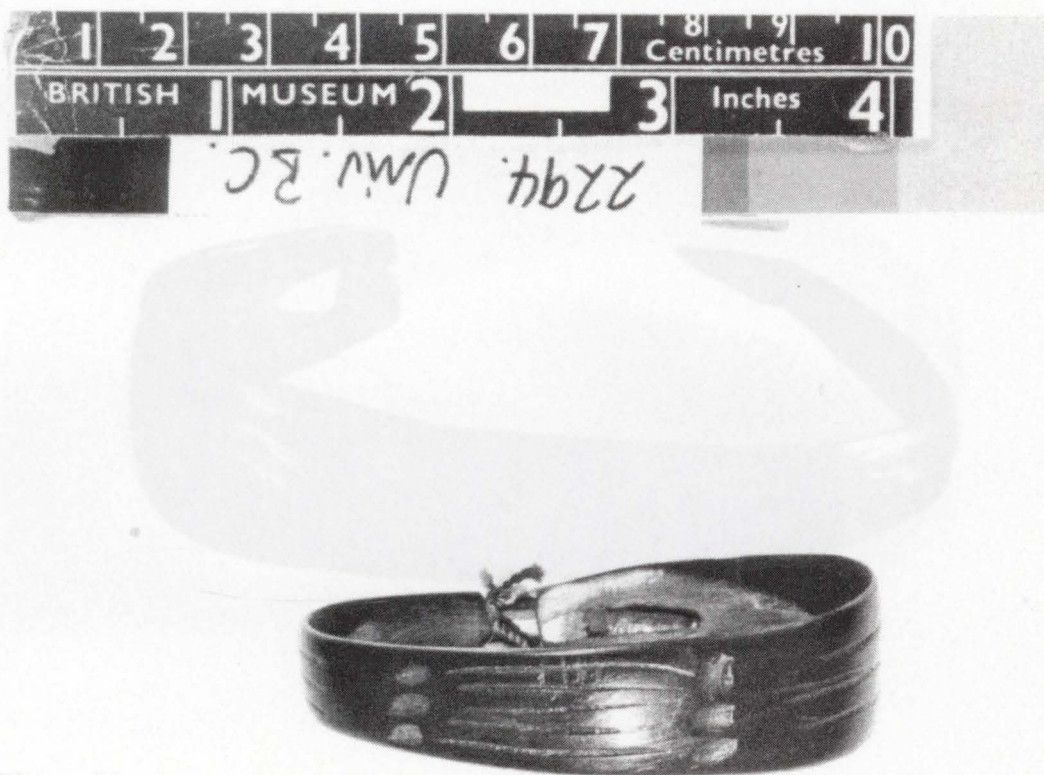


Figure 15.

VM AA2430. Photograph courtesy of the Vancouver Museum, Canada.

Figure 14.

BM 2294. Photograph courtesy of the British Museum.



Figure 15.

VM AA2430. Photograph courtesy of the Vancouver Museum, Canada.

Figure 16.

PH 67-9-10/130. Photograph courtesy of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, (N30059).



Figure 16.

PH 67-9-10/130. Photograph courtesy of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, (N30059).



Figure 17.

PH 95-20-10/48405. Photograph courtesy of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, (N30058).

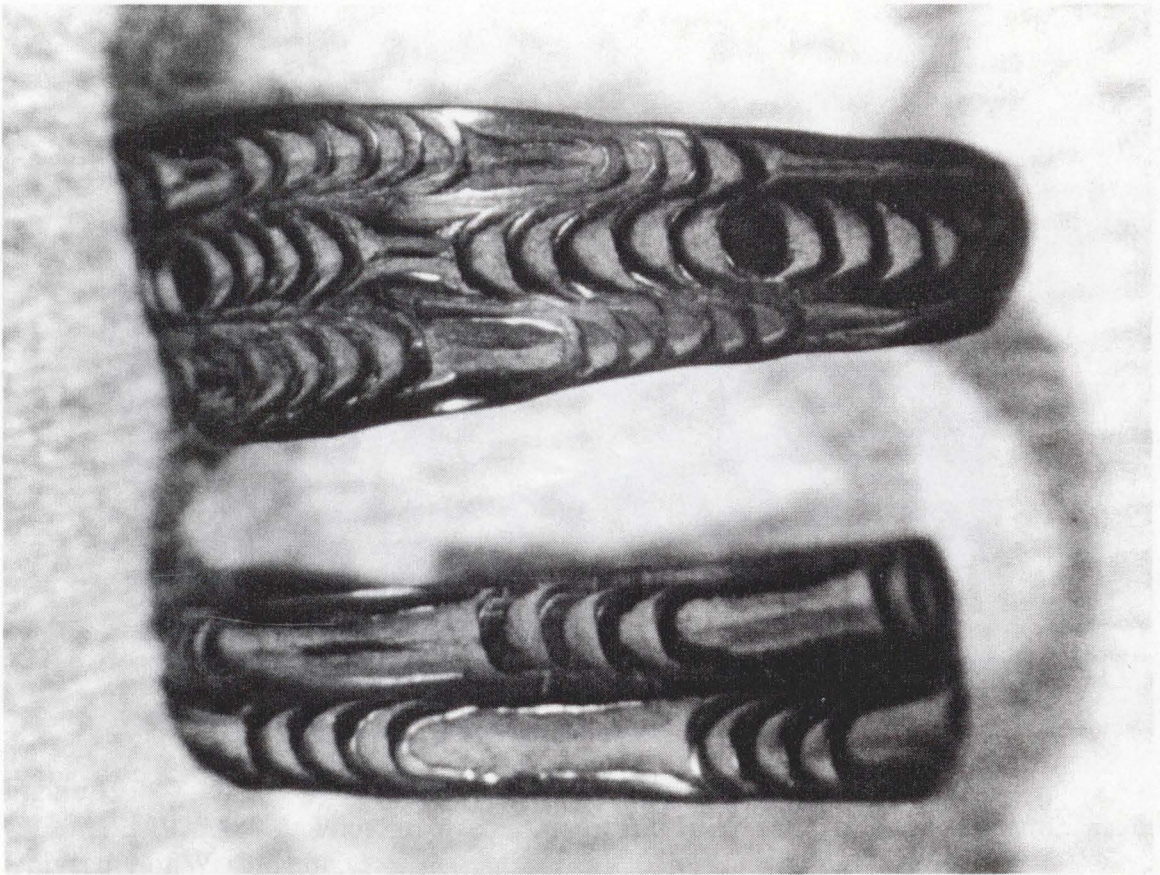


Figure 18.

PE 1978.489.1 (top) and PE 1978.489.5 (bottom). Photograph courtesy of Bill Holm and the Burke Museum, University of Washington.

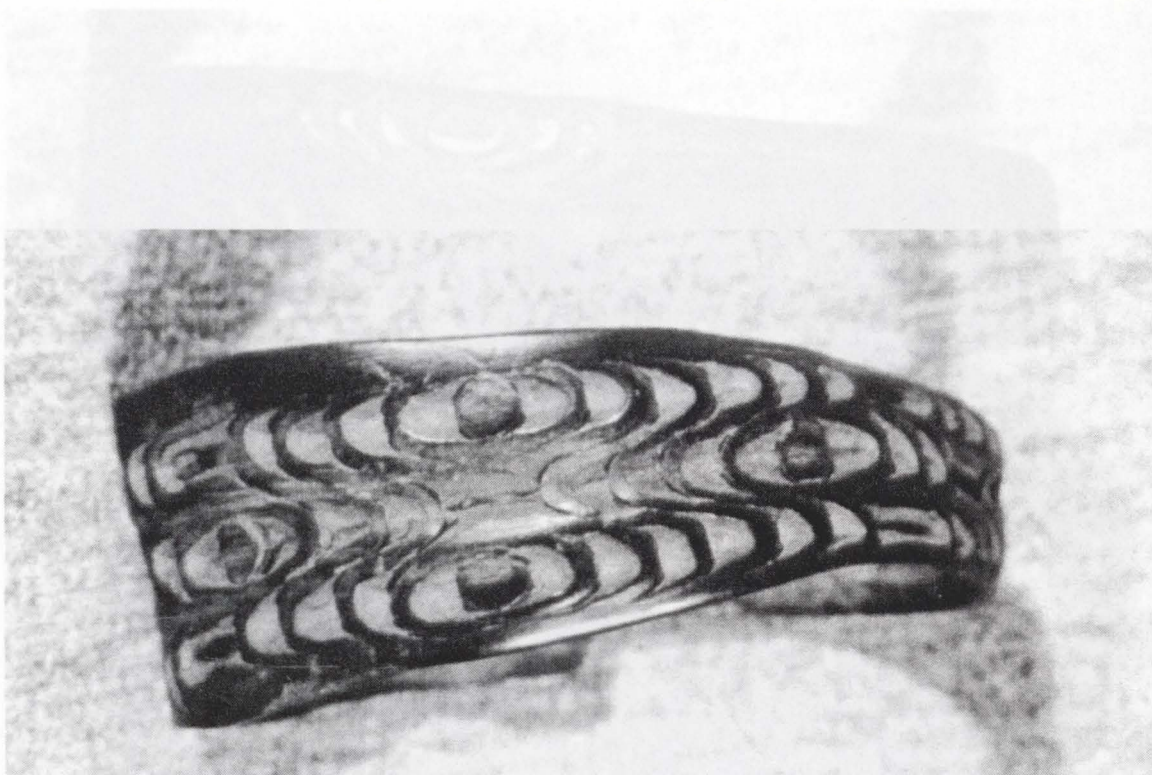


Figure 19.

PE 1978.489.2. Photograph courtesy of Bill Holm and the Burke Museum, University of Washington.

Figure 20.

PE 1978.489.7 (top) and 1978.489.3 (bottom). Photograph courtesy of Bill Holm and the Burke Museum, University of Washington.



Figure 20.

PE 1978.489.7 (top) and 1978.489.3 (bottom). Photograph courtesy of Bill Holm and the Burke Museum, University of Washington.

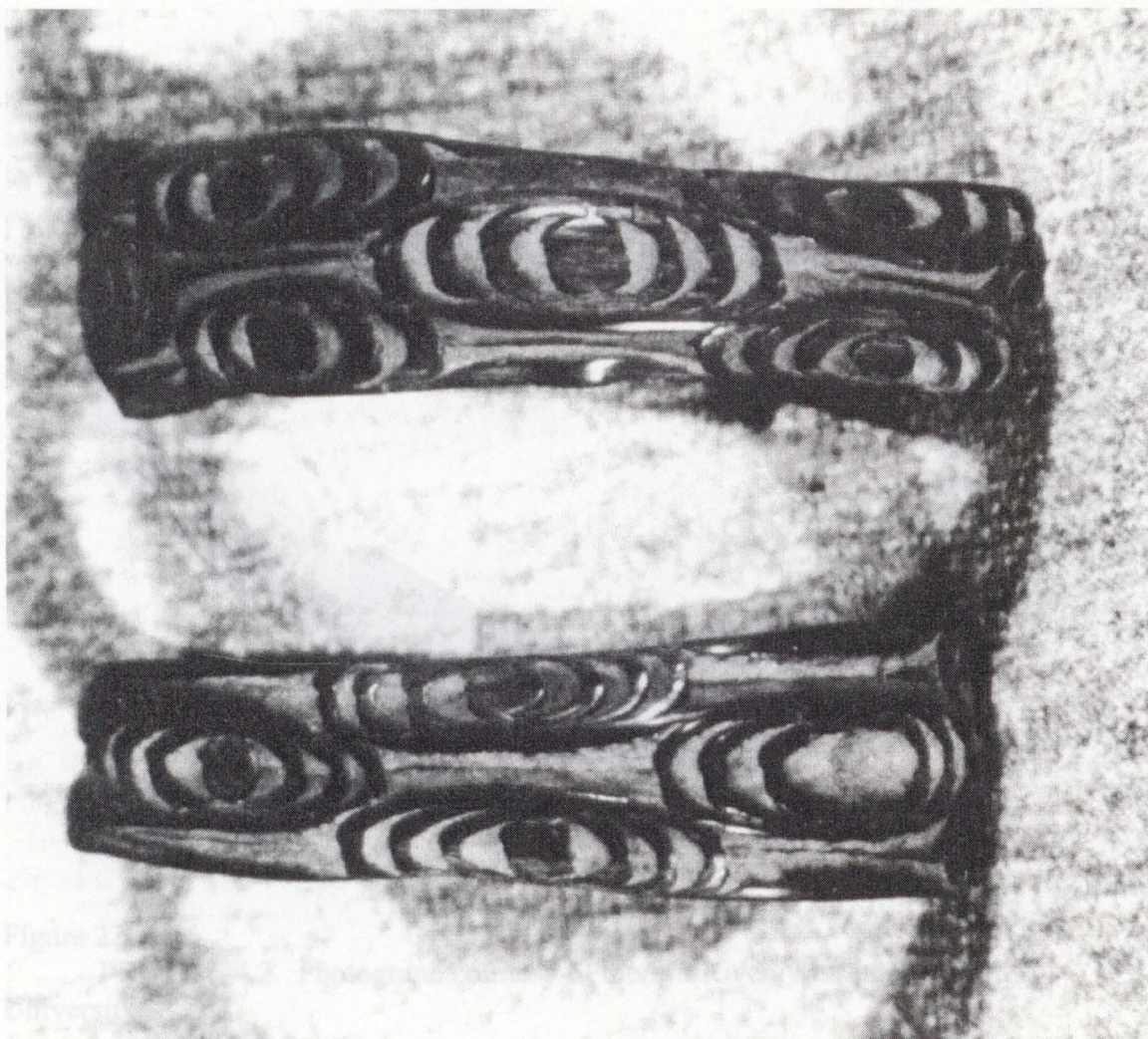


Figure 21.

PE 1978.489.6 (top) and PE 1978.489.4 (bottom). Photograph courtesy of Bill Holm and the Burke Museum, University of Washington.



Figure 23.

DAM JS1-4-G/1971.349. Photograph courtesy of the Denver Art Museum.

Figure 22.

PR 1919.44.2. Photograph courtesy of the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford University.

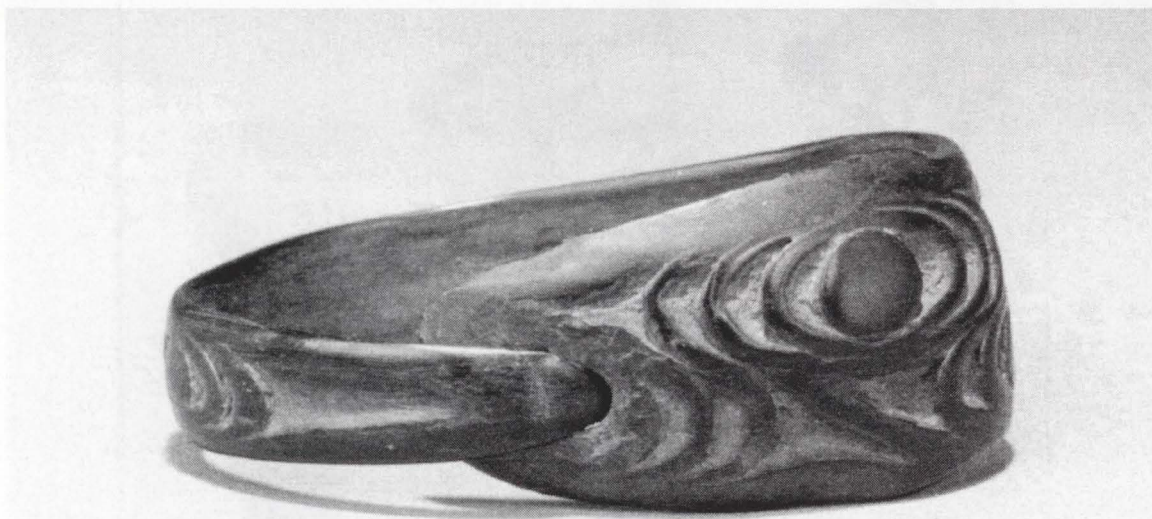


Figure 23.

DAM JS1-4-G/1971.549. Photograph courtesy of the Denver Art Museum.

Figure 24.

Paul Kane, *Studies of figures inside a lodge*. ROM 946.15.227. Photograph courtesy of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Canada.

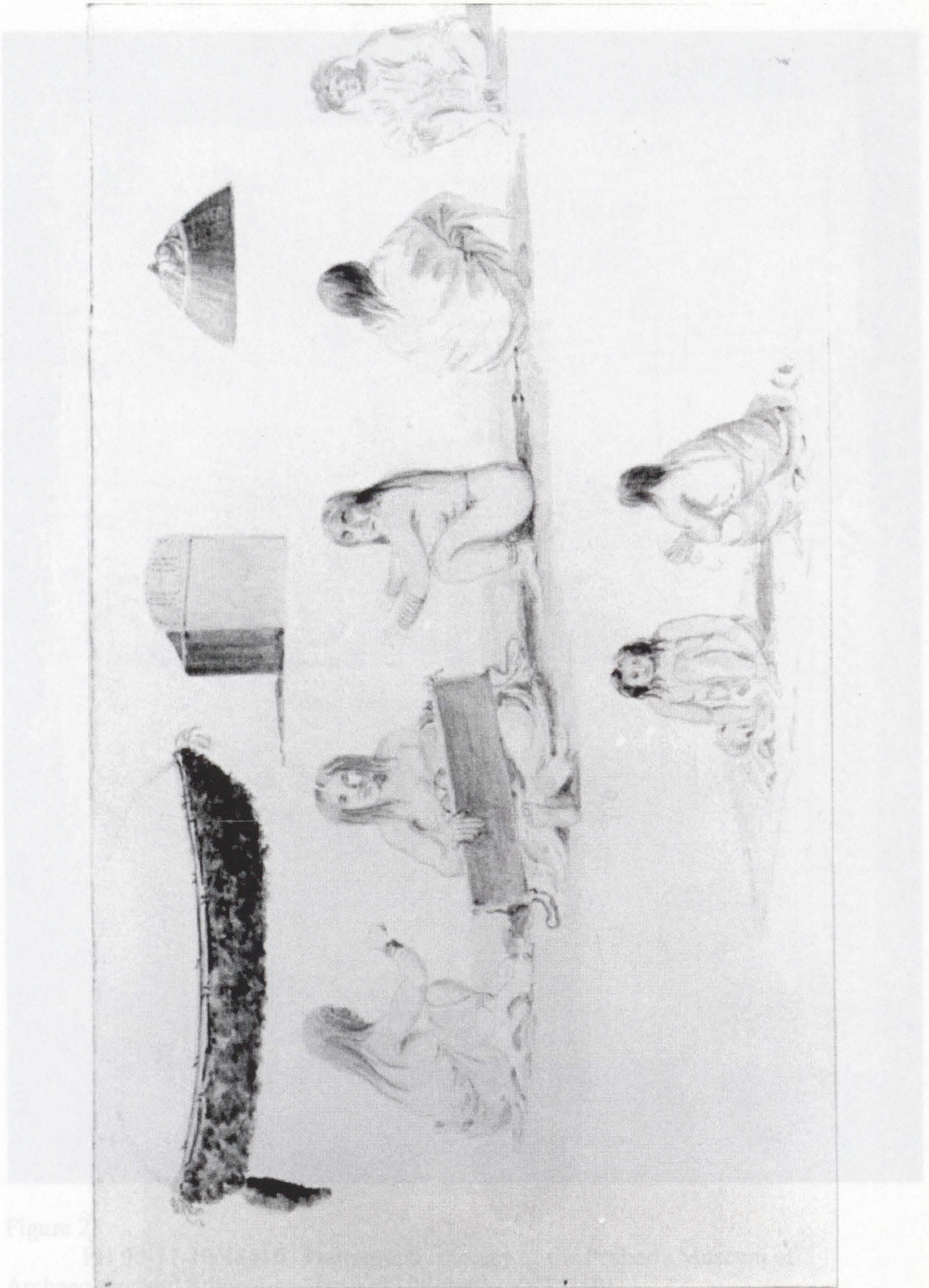


Figure 24.

Paul Kane, *Studies of figures inside a lodge*. ROM 946.15.227. Photograph courtesy of the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Canada.



Figure 25.

PH 90-17-10/48410. Photograph courtesy of the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University, (N34360).



Figure 26.

Spindle Whorl, Cowichan, collected 1912. Photograph courtesy of the Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, (CPN 2454 V. 2).

Figure 27.

Mountain sheep horn rattle. Acquired 1982. Photograph courtesy of the Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, (CPN 17223).



Figure 27.

Mountain sheep horn rattle. Acquired 1982. Photograph courtesy of the Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada, (CPN 17223).

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