

Subsistence and Survival

The Makah Indian Reservation, 1855-1933

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Declining natural resources and the government's refusal to supply modern equipment slowed but never stopped Makah maritime activities. (MOHAI, Wilse no. 1077)

Makah (Kwi-dai-da'ch, people who live on the cape) cosmology teaches that animals first inhabited Cape Flattery at the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca. When a star fell from heaven and united with these animals, their offspring became the Nitinaht, Clayoquot, and Makah peoples. The first sea hunter was a great Thunderbird that descended from the Olympic Mountains and grasped in its mighty talons an enormous whale, which it lifted bodily from the ocean. On wings so powerful they produced "peals of thunder," the eaglelike creature carried its prey back to the highest peak and devoured its flesh. In this way, the Thunderbird showed the Makah that they could capture whales for their own use.¹

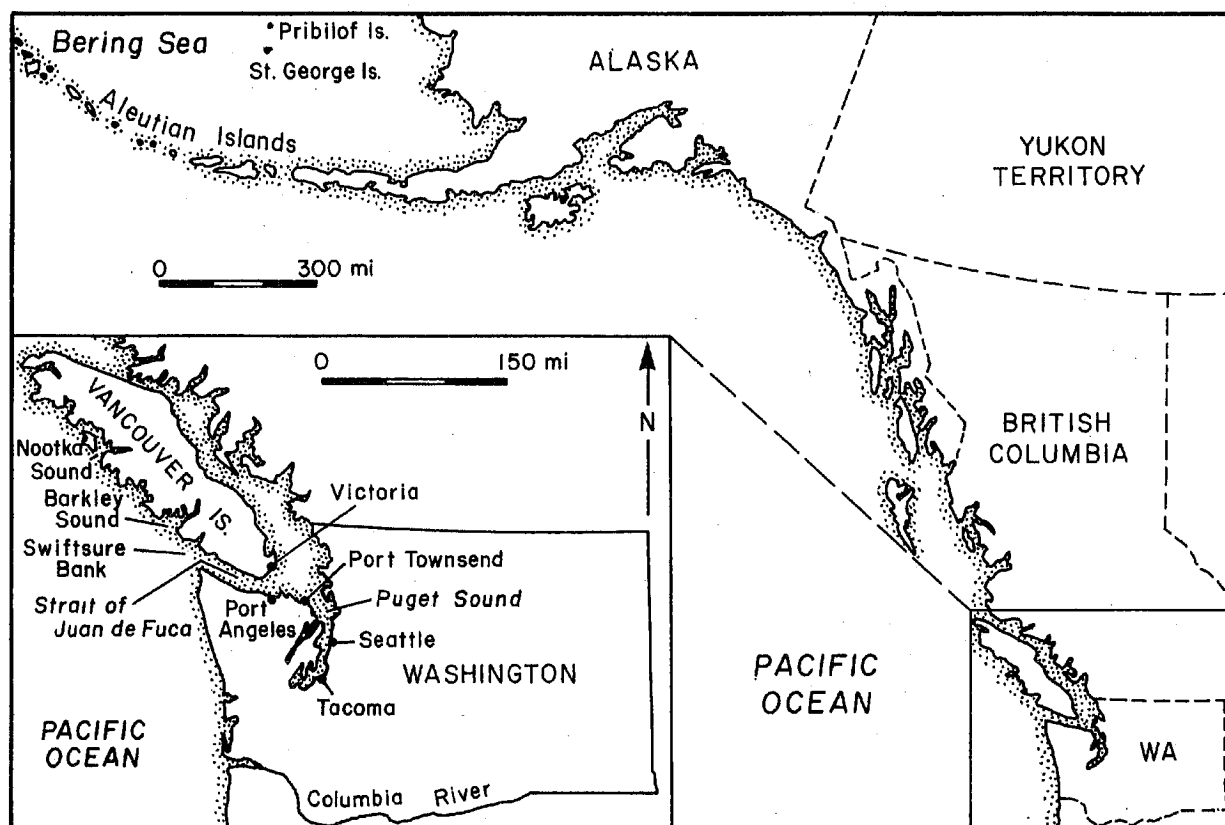
For more than 2,000 years, the vast and seemingly unlimited marine assets of Cape Flattery provided for the Makah's physical needs and shaped their world

view. After coming under federal bureaucratic control in the mid-1850s, however, and pressed by the rising tide of immigration, the tribe no longer had undivided dominion over its land, its resources, or even itself. But its members quickly learned that they were not powerless against external influences. Colonialism and the arrival of Euro-American capitalism brought opportunities as well as troubles. Keenly aware that white entrepreneurs would compete for Cape Flattery's resources and that modern equipment would insure their success, the Makah recognized that to refuse to adapt to the larger economy would result in dependence and deprivation. Tribal members therefore readily embraced those aspects of American society that they perceived to have benefit and value.

Commercial competition required them continually to alter their traditional methods and to reinvent them-

selves in significant and meaningful ways: they spoke English, wore white man's clothing, acquired and used modern implements, and labored in a market economy. Yet they never surrendered their native culture. Indeed, to an extent rare among Indians on American reservations, the Makah managed to circumvent the much-promoted agrarian component of the federal government's assimilationist program. Maintaining vigorous whaling, sealing, and fishing activities that had sustained their ancestors for centuries allowed for their continued self-sufficiency and preserved their cultural autonomy. These people prospered, a result that has prompted the tribal elder Edward Claplanhoo to assert that "early contact with Anglos was all to the benefit of the Makahs."²

The federal government established the majority of Indian reservations in Washington Territory in the mid- and late 1850s in order to bring the region's aboriginal population under United States control. Bureaucrats viewed reservations as assimilation centers, or schools, that would bridge the gap between Indian "barbarism" and white "civilization." Preparation for integration into mainstream American society required that native peoples undergo an intense indoctrination in non-Indian culture. Charged with that indoctrination, a staff of employees assigned to each reservation by the Indian Office in Washington, D.C., taught reading, writing, and the English language, exposed native peoples to Christianity, and provided instruction in agriculture. Policy makers believed that by laboring on reservation farms tribal members "would not only



Map prepared by Sarah Moore, Pullman, Wash.

learn the work ethic and a sedentary agricultural lifestyle, but also produce profits that would be used to make the reservations self-sustaining.²³ Successful acculturation would reduce the need for reservations and eventually result in their being abolished.

Treaties that Washington's territorial governor and superintendent of Indian affairs Isaac Ingalls Stevens negotiated with tribal groups formed the foundation on which assimilationist policy in the Pacific Northwest became based. The Makah's seemingly smooth transition from pre- to postcontact society, their role in the Pacific Coast's early 19th-century trading economy, and Cape Flattery's richness of marine resources likely influenced Stevens's decision to allow the Makah to continue their accustomed way of life. In fact, the governor's laconic conversations with tribal members who at-

tended the Neah Bay treaty council in late January 1855 focused almost entirely on the tribe's maritime activities and the federal government's willingness to facilitate them.

This accommodation departed significantly from the governor's stance in other negotiations. In previous and later treaty councils, Stevens dogmatically insisted that native peoples agree to abandon aboriginal subsistence practices gradually for agrarian life-styles, and he viewed salmon fishing largely as a subsistence rather than a commercial occupation. In stark contrast, in an informal meeting of Indian and government conferees aboard his schooner the evening before the Neah Bay council's official start, Stevens advised Makah headmen "that so far from wishing to stop their fisheries, he intended to send them oil kettles and fishing apparatus." Any

possibility of convincing these Indians to turn their attentions landward and become farmers must have vanished when the head chief Tsekauwtl—the son of a slave whose expertise as a whaler had catapulted him into the leadership position—announced that "he wanted the sea—That was his country." In formal council next morning, Stevens responded by expressing the Great Father's intentions: "He knows what whalers you are, how you go far [out] to sea, to take whales. He will send you barrels in which to put your oil, kettles to fry it out, lines and implements to fish with." So pleased were the Makah with this promise of assistance and convinced that the U.S. government planned to support their way of life that, after negotiating for what in aggregate scarcely amounted to one full day, they enthusiastically presented the governor with a white flag of peace, gave three cheers,

and signed the treaty.⁴

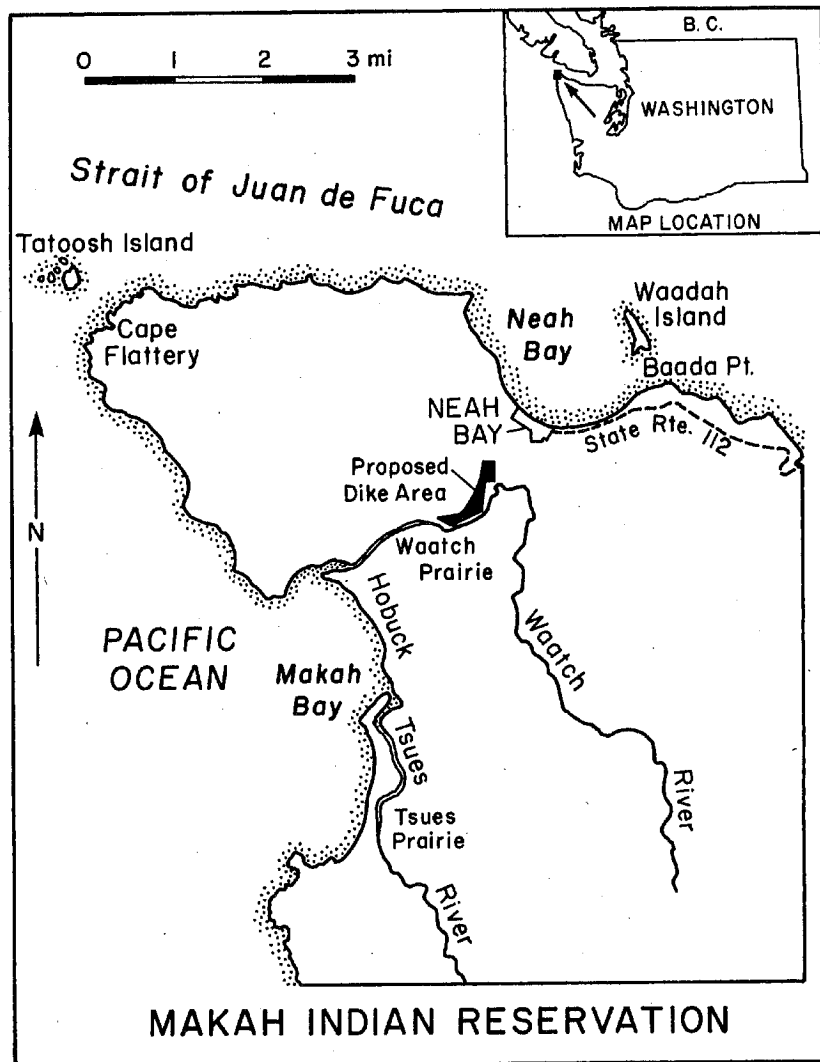
Stevens's apparent concession to the Makah denoted no retrenchment on his part from federal assimilationist policy, however. Far from it. Like all of Stevens's treaties, the Neah Bay document obligated the federal government to provide the reservation with such acculturationist machinery as a carpenter, a blacksmith, a doctor, farmers, teachers, and an agricultural and industrial school. The Makah interpreted the treaty quite differently. They believed that the treaty, together with Stevens's verbal guarantees, required the government to furnish the materials they needed to modify their traditional subsistence system to meet the exigencies of market competition.

Perhaps no other United States Indian reservation was more isolated than the one at Neah Bay. Until 1931, when for the first time paved road connected it to Port Angeles, access could be gained only by sea. Markets were distant. The reservation lay by water 52 miles from Port Angeles, 88 miles from Port Townsend, and 137 miles from Seattle. In winter, fierce Pacific storms, packing strong winds and heavy rains, pounded Cape Flattery. Inordinate precipitation from October to May—more than 100 inches of rainfall during 199 days each year—leached the soil; relatively dry summers provided inadequate water to sustain crops.⁵ The reservation included only two agricultural areas, Baada Point and the Waatch prairie. Each posed problems. Baada Point (where the Neah Bay Indian agency was headquartered, facing the Strait of Juan de Fuca) comprised only a few acres of cultivable soil, most of which were used for the school farm. Four and one-half miles away, accessible at high tide solely by canoe and fronting the Pacific Ocean, the Waatch prairie had some 1,600 acres, just a small portion of which were free from tidal overflow. Without a dike to hold back the ocean, these lands could generally be

used only for pasturage and vegetable and hay production. Just south and inland from the mouth of the Waatch River was the agency farm at Hobuck, 70 acres of poor, sandy ground that after years of continual cropping, in vegetables mostly, had become virtually "valueless for cultivation" by 1881.⁶ The remainder of the 23,040-acre reservation—steep mountains covered with dense cedar, hemlock, spruce, and Douglas fir forest—was unfit for any type of agricultural production.⁷

Federal officials understood the ad-

vantages and drawbacks associated with Neah Bay's environment and resources. That the Makah could possibly derive profits from their aboriginal modes of subsistence caused administrators to view them differently from the way they did other Pacific Northwest native groups. Disdainful of both the Makah's centuries-long dependence on the sea and the sea's prominent role in aboriginal culture, policy makers nonetheless realized that, without soil or a climate conducive to agriculture, traditional maritime occupations represented, in reality, the



Map prepared by Sarah Moore, Pullman, Wash.

Makah's only viable economic option. Comprehension, unfortunately, leads not always to the creation, implementation, and carrying out of effective strategy.

The inability of bureaucrats to respond to the myriad of circumstances encountered on reservations across the country was a noticeable weakness of federal Indian policy. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that despite environmental conditions and Stevens's assurances, Indian agents never dismissed agriculture as a desirable subsistence activity at Neah Bay. But farming proved consistently unsatisfactory at best. One official reported that, in the three decades from the agency's establishment in 1862 until August 1892, not one bushel of oats, barley, rye, or corn had been produced—only hay and vegetables for home consumption.⁸

Besides environmental factors, cultural influences impeded large-scale agricultural development. Tribal members who through hereditary privilege participated in the prestigious, highly ritualized whaling expeditions and, for that matter, even the less celebrated but equally important sealers and fishermen looked with scorn upon males cultivating the soil, an occupation considered within the female domain. James G. Swan, the noted observer of Pacific Northwest native peoples and Indian agency teacher at Neah Bay from 1862 to 1866, noted in March 1863 that "from the first" the Makah "opposed all improvement, and have thrown every obstacle in the way to prevent the young from working the land, jeering and ridiculing them for digging the earth like squaws, instead of going in their canoes and attacking whales, or catching halibut or salmon."⁹ Yet environmental and cultural impediments aside, field workers persisted in recommending as late as 1920, as they had prescriptively since the 1860s, that the government construct a dike as a first step in con-

verting Neah Bay's tidelands to cultivable prairie.¹⁰

Federal agrarian policy as applied on the Makah reservation clearly lacked consensus. Many officials offered little hope of making the Indians husbandmen; others, probably swayed by national policy, maintained that agriculture and fishing could harmoniously coexist as twin components of a single economic structure. The Makah, however, exhibited no uncertainty. They never viewed farming as anything more than a secondary occupation that would at most supplement with vegetables their principal diet of fish. While government officials vacillated over the feasibility of husbandry, tribal members steadfastly continued to develop the reservation's marine resources.

Whaling had served as Cape Flattery's economic cornerstone for 1,500 years, supplying a substantial portion of tribal nutritional requirements.¹¹ Oil and blubber existed in such quantities that, before coming under treaty, the Makah were the kingpins of a vast trading network that extended from Cape Flattery north to Nootka Sound and south to the Columbia River. Beginning in 1844 and continuing for a number of years, whaling ships came to Neah Bay at a rate of several per year.¹² George Gibbs, a lawyer, ethnologist, and assistant to Isaac Stevens, averred that, at the time of the Neah Bay treaty council, Makah tribal members produced to sell to visiting trading vessels there and at Victoria, British Columbia, as much as 30,000 gallons of whale oil per year.¹³ After 1850 the number of whales inhabiting Pacific waters diminished, and by 1870, that resource was of only minor commercial significance. Nevertheless, whaling held immense symbolic importance: it was a vivid reminder that the Makah had prospered on the sea for centuries and a visible indication of their resolve to remain a seafaring people.¹⁴

Whaling was so entrenched in Makah culture that almost three-quarters of a century of intense assimilationist pressure was required to stop it, and even then, shrinking resources may been the most significant factor in its cessation. At least until century's end, annual yields remained fairly constant: in 1888, 9; in 1891, 12; in 1892, 3; in 1893, 2; and, in 1897, 10 whales.¹⁵ (Three or four whales could supply a village for an entire year.)¹⁶ The Makah dried the meat for winter use and sold the oil to neighboring coastal peoples. An 1891 report highlighted a Makah life-style steeped in whaling: "When the dead whale is safely beached there is great rejoicing in the village; the blubber is divided among the villagers, and they regard it as an article of food as highly as the whites do . . . pork."¹⁷ Samuel G. Morse, Indian agent at Neah Bay, reported in 1897 that whale oil still made up one of the Makah's "chief articles of diet."¹⁸

Isaac Stevens had pledged in 1855 to supply the Makah with fishing equipment; tribal whalers intended to hold the government to that commitment. Wanting to trade in their cedar canoes and yew-wood spears for steamships and harpoon-cannons, in 1867 they sought through the agent Henry A. Webster a 50- to 75-ton whaleboat.¹⁹ Still using traditional methods almost three decades later, they appealed again, this time for a \$2,000 schooner. Their agent, W. L. Powell, conjectured optimistically, if sarcastically, that if provided with the vessel the Makah would not exchange it "for the best 500-acre farm in Pennsylvania or the valley of Virginia."²⁰ Perhaps preferring to impede than to support whaling at Neah Bay or, more likely, unwilling to make a special appropriation not in keeping with agrarian policy, the Indian Office ignored the petitions. But the Makah refused to let Washington, D.C., destroy their aspirations. To one degree or another until 1928, tribal members continued to whale and to subsist at least par-



The village of Neah Bay, indeed the entire Makah Indian Reservation, was accessible only by water until 1931; that isolation fortified native resistance to United States Indian policy. (Royal British Columbia Museum, Victoria, PN6105)

tially upon whale meat, blubber, and oil, exhibiting a dogged determination to engage in their accustomed work despite adverse conditions.²¹

Reluctance to buy fishing apparatus speaks to how the federal government used funds for the Makah reservation. Evidence shows that the Indian Office allocated almost nothing for the tribe's maritime activity. In September 1880, the agent C. A. Huntington—apparently ignoring his own advocacy of husbandry—bitterly complained that the government had spent \$200,000 to assimilate the Makah and convert them to agriculture, an undertaking that he claimed had achieved no perceptible effect. “Munificent appropriations,” he said, “have been expended to no purpose.”²²

Historians have justly focused much attention on Makah whaling activities. Yet pelagic sealing constituted the tribe's primary revenue source in the assimilationist period. In fact, one Neah Bay official plainly admitted that “the chief obstacle in the way of the agent, while endeavoring to carry out the wishes of the government, in leading the Indians to the cultivation of

their lands, is the sealing business.”²³ Nor could other customary subsistence activities compete. “So lucrative for the Makah and West Coast native hunters” was sealing, concluded one historian, “their traditional whaling expeditions virtually ceased” as a consequence.²⁴ The U.S. Indian inspector W. J. Pollock fittingly remarked that “seal catching is to these Indians what the Buffalo chase formerly was to those on the plains.”²⁵

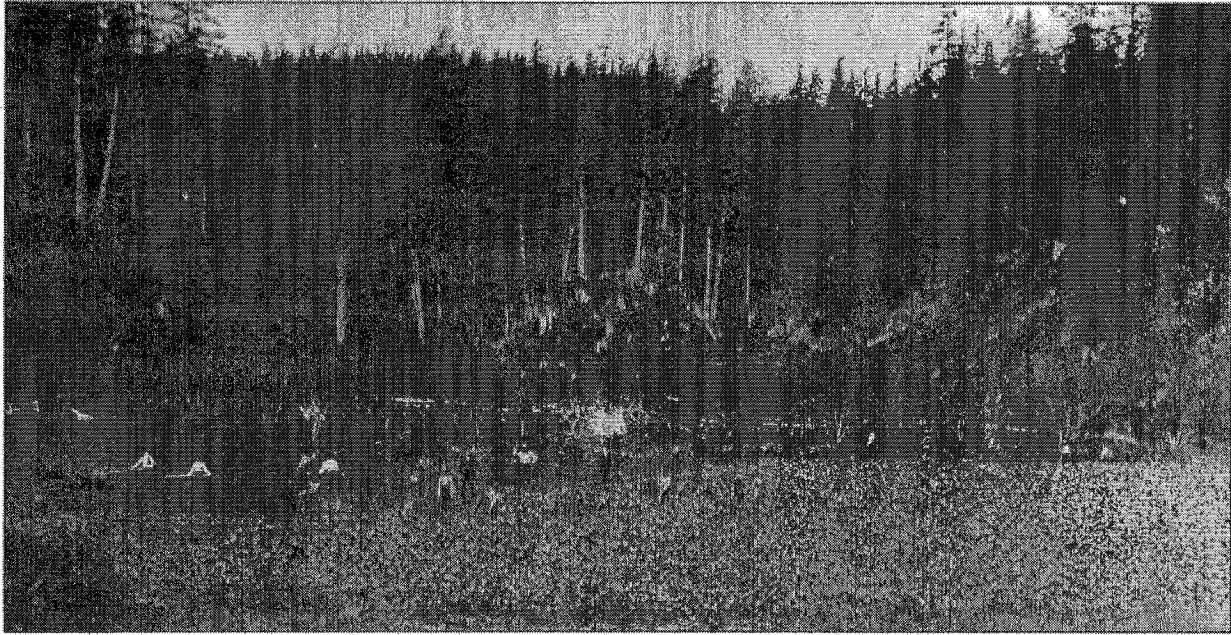
The Makah's pursuit of fur seal both as food source and trading article dates back farther than whaling, at least two millennia, although activity heightened between 1869 and 1896. In what represented not an unprecedented occurrence but an unusual one in Indian-white relations in the late 19th century, many Makah became small-scale entrepreneurs and hired whites to labor on the schooners they owned. A mariner named Charles Scammon noted in 1874 the rapid appearance of commercial sealing at Cape Flattery:

It is but a few years since the Indians have turned their attention to taking seals solely to procure their skins and oil for barter; and what may seem surprising, it is but a few years since the animals have been

known to resort to the vicinity of the strait in such large numbers. We have it from the most reliable source, that there were but a few dozens of Fur Seal skins taken annually by the Indians, from 1843 to 1864; after which period, the number of skins sold by them at Victoria, Vancouver Island, Nee-ah Bay, and points on Puget Sound, has steadily increased, up to 1869, when the number in the aggregate amounted to fully five thousand skins.²⁶

Burgeoning demand and ample supply, heightened nonnative participation (providing employment and new methodology), and the emergence of Victoria, Vancouver, Seattle, and Port Townsend as sealing ports accounted for the growth. Makah sealing peaked in the mid-1890s when European price reductions, coupled with anxiety over the diminution of pelagic seals in the northern Pacific Ocean—leading in turn to federal and international legislation limiting annual procurement allowances—seriously retarded the business.²⁷

Commercial sealing began at Neah Bay as a symbiotic relationship between Makah and American fishermen. In 1869 white schooner owners hired tribal members for the first time to accompany them to the Bering Sea. In describing the arrangement, a Neah Bay agent said: “The schooners engaged in this trade take from eight to sixteen canoes on board, each canoe manned by two Indians, and cruise on the sealing-grounds, coming into harbor only when the weather is bad, their trips ranging from two to eight days in length.”²⁸ Native American sealers also harvested their home waters of Cape Flattery and the Strait of Juan de Fuca and hunted herds migrating north between the Columbia River and Barkley Sound. Wages depended on the quantity and quality of furs obtained. Often earning handsome salaries, Makah hunters received two-thirds of the catch, and schooner operators one-third. Annual incomes of \$20,000 to \$30,000 for the tribe as a whole were not uncommon.²⁹



Here Makah boys hoe the school farm's turnip field at Baada Point, one of only two small cultivable areas on a reservation poorly suited to agriculture. (National Archives 075-IP-1-56)

Like whalers, sealers appreciated the benefits to be derived from new technology. To promote both safety and efficiency, several agents had urged that the Indian Office allocate funds to purchase a schooner to replace the Makah canoes. Frank Armstrong, the U.S. assistant commissioner of Indian affairs, also wanted to alter the scope of federal involvement. He recommended that a boatbuilder—who would “do more to civilize them than any other person”—be added to the agency’s staff, supplanting the farmer.³⁰ The Indian Office, however, refused to act. Undaunted, the sealers chose to arbitrate their own fates. In 1880 a Makah invested his earnings in a small schooner, the tribe’s first. By late 1893 Makah owned ten 25- to 50-ton craft.³¹

No longer obligated to share the proceeds of their labor and now better equipped to compete with their white counterparts, the Makah sealers worked, and profits soared. The head chief Peter Brown owned three schooners in 1893 and was said to be worth \$100,000.³² In March 1894, an Indian

inspector considered it “doubtful whether a given number of whites can be found who earn a better living”; he reported individual incomes as large as \$5,000 annually.³³ Another inspector learned that the “catch of seal is quite large, and the revenue derived from these resources is quite large and they all have plenty of money; far more than if they attempted to make a living by farming their reserve.”³⁴ In the 1980s an elderly Makah told an interviewer: “My mother said we [Makah] always had gold coins in our pockets.”³⁵ Similarly, 75-year-old Frank Smith, son of a Makah who owned interest in a schooner, recalled his father’s saying that on “paydays seal hunters had to pack their money home in satchels because their pockets couldn’t hold it all.”³⁶

Clearly, the Makah’s decision to hunt fur seal rather than to farm their lands made eminent economic sense. Only small incomes could be gleaned in agriculture, whereas sealing provided generous returns. According to one source, the \$17,000 earned in 1892 en-

abled “the whole tribe” not only “to live in luxury and affluence” throughout the winter but also to “add two new schooners to their fleet.”³⁷ Bragged the agent Charles Willoughby, “It is no uncommon thing for a couple of Indians to leave the deck of a schooner in the morning and before nightfall return with a catch worth, say, \$40 to them.” He noted the effect: “Flushed with their success, and the money they have earned, they look coldly upon work harder and less remunerative, and the proceeds of which must be waited for, and uncertain.”³⁸ Seconding Willoughby, James Swan, now a private citizen, said that

when the season for planting arrives they are willing to put a few potatoes into the ground, because their experience has taught them that they can reasonably expect a harvest. But potatoes are esteemed by them rather as a luxury than as ordinary food, and, when they know how easily they can draw their subsistence from the ocean, and how much labor is required to till the earth, they prefer to continue in their old course, and let the white man’s agriculture alone.³⁹

The Port Townsend press confirms the

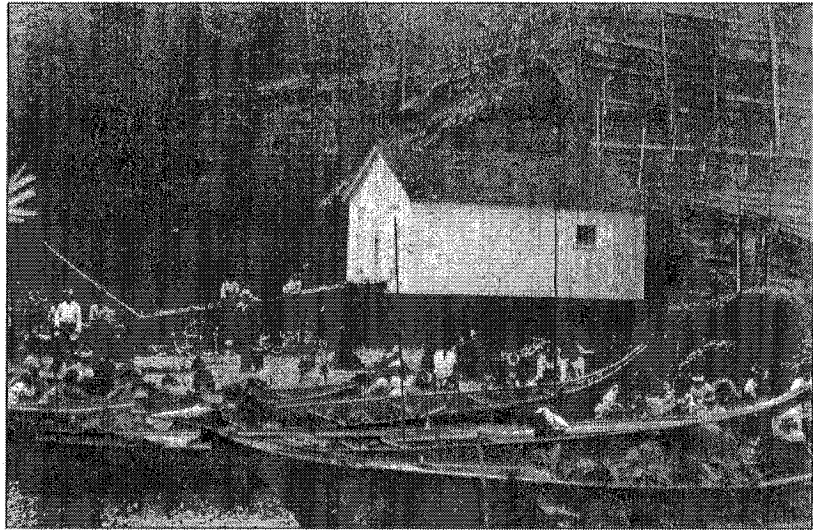
Makah's accomplishment. The editor of the *Daily Leader* urged his town "to be as enterprising as Neah Bay and start up this [sealing] business, and not let the Makah Indians beat us out of sight any longer."⁴⁰ Another commentator similarly admonished local citizens to

wake up from their Rip Van Winkle sleep and stretch out their sluggish arms, and stop the trade which is fast passing their doors to a more wide awake community. There will be, I have no doubt, over twenty thousand dollars paid to the Indians of Cape Flattery this season for fur-seal skins. Perhaps, with the proper inducements, a share of this money might find a lodgment in Port Townsend.⁴¹

The newspaperman underestimated how profitable sealing was: in some years the Makah earned twice what he had projected.⁴²

Cape Flattery in the 1890s became a source of employment for white fishermen. Americans from Port Townsend typically worked for the Makah through the sealing season from January to June. In particular, the Makah hired navigators—no tribal members had training in that field—to pilot their schooners on trips to the Bering Sea and Japan. Here the agency school might better have served the Makah by educating them to become independent seal-boat operators. Since navigation study was not a part of the curriculum, sealers had to rely on non-Indians to perform a service that they could very well have done for themselves.⁴³

Sealing's peripatetic nature hampered the ability of federal officials to control and influence native behaviors. During the sealing season—schooners operating in the Far East could remain at sea for a year and sometimes two—most Makah left the reservation. Not only men but women and children worked in the marine harvest.⁴⁴ The characteristic drop in attendance at the agricultural and industrial school, indeed the drop in population on the



When in the early 1890s the Indian agent prohibited potlaches on the reservation, the Makah simply transferred their rituals to Tatoosh Island, shown, where they had long maintained a fishery. (NA 075-IP-1-53)

reservation, was a source of complaint for federal inspectors, who often made the long trip only to find Neah Bay virtually deserted.⁴⁵ Absenteeism, inspectors knew, made it difficult, if not impossible, for Indian agency employees to inculcate assimilationist ideas.⁴⁶

Although the Makah readily accepted new fishing methodologies, other areas of their lives were little altered. In 1889 an inspector concluded: "This Agency has come as near running itself as it could in the past four years." He meant that the Indians were largely free to live and work as they chose. As a result, he detected few discernible inroads in their so-called barbarism. Whalemens, sealers, and fishermen, he lamented, "are of the dirty, filthy class. There has been no attention paid to the sanitary condition of their villages . . . [which] are in fearful condition; dirt and filth of every description is uppermost; [there is] nothing to compare to it anywhere."⁴⁷

Federal agents had strongly promoted the concept of individual accumulation of wealth, yet through cultural mechanisms the Makah had continued

to disseminate earnings across the breadth of their population. In this regard, James Swan in 1878 condemned sealing for hindering the acculturation process: "I think the business as now conducted is a positive detriment to these Indians. They neglect all other avocations during the sealing season . . . and the money they receive . . . is either gambled away or is spent for flour, bread, sugar, &c, [which are] distributed in potlaches [sic] to their friends."⁴⁸ The same year Swan commented further: "I find these Indians, with but few exceptions, and those principally of the school children, the same breechless savages they were when I first came here as an employee in 1862."⁴⁹

John P. McGlenn, another agent, echoed a similar refrain in August 1891: virtually every Makah over the age of 50 on the reservation still adhered "tenaciously to their old barbarous habits."⁵⁰ In addition, nearly all tribal members were, in his opinion, "as superstitious as the natives of Central Africa," being "firmly convinced that the medicine men have power to blast their lives or kill them by the



The Indian school at Neah Bay was dedicated to assimilation, but the Makah's sealing undercut that mission by drawing pupils away for seasonal work. (NA 075-IP-1-55)

power of their magic." "You may reason with them," he lamented, "laugh and scoff at their fears, but all is [to] no avail, their superstitions still remain"—and this while the Makah in turn mocked and scorned the teachings of Christianity. Especially disturbing was what McGlenn termed the Indians' "cloqually dance," a ritual he ruefully characterized as "a cross between the devil's dance and the can-can."⁵¹ The agent believed that only "by laying down the law at the beginning of my term and enforcing it by imprisonment with labor" had he managed to create "a wholesome respect for the sanctity of the marriage tie."⁵²

Still another official determined that the contempt of older Makah for graduates of the agency school who tried "to live like white people" all too frequently undid almost overnight the benefit of even 10 years of training. So acute became this agent's frustration, he recommended that the Indian Office create a separate reservation where all Makah over the age of 55 could "live and die together, having no inter-

course with the younger ones except at long and rare intervals."⁵³ Until 1878 at least, agents tendered reports indicating that Makah parents "beat their offspring for speaking in any but their own tongue."⁵⁴

Whenever the Makah perceived no apparent advantage in non-Indian methods, they fought vigorously to maintain traditional practices. McGlenn sought to prevent a variety of potlaches that had previously taken place without agency interference. In response tribal members simply transferred their rituals to nearby Tatoosh Island off Cape Flattery. Three decades later, in the 1920s, sheriff's deputies armed with shotguns attempted to stop cultural activities there; the Makah retaliated, successfully pressuring the Indian Office to remove the agent responsible for the police action.⁵⁵

Sealing profits allowed the Makah to increase their control over the reservation. In 1892 tribal members purchased Neah Bay's two food stores, and another Makah paid \$3,000 to buy out the reservation's trader. Yet another

acquired the area's only hotel, within months saving \$1,000 to invest in improvements.⁵⁶

So large became the annual fur seal catch from the 1880s on—more than 100,000 skins in peak years—that the United States, with other nations, took energetic action to stop what many officials believed would result in the Pribilof herd's ultimate extermination. First indication of heightened American involvement appeared in the mid-1880s: the federal government claimed exclusive jurisdiction over the eastern Bering Sea. When U.S. officials seized several sealing schooners of Canadian registry operating in those waters in 1886, the Bering Sea controversy erupted. Half a decade of negotiations between the U.S. and Great Britain resulted in the litigants in 1891 agreeing to a temporary *modus vivendi* to prohibit sealing in the Bering Sea. A year later, in 1892, a treaty was signed submitting the issue to arbitration. The next year an international tribunal convened in Paris to take testimony. In December 1897, the federal government banned the killing, capturing, or hunting of pelagic seals by all U.S. citizens except native hunters using traditional weapons. In 1911 the North Pacific Fur Seal Convention obligated Britain, Japan, Russia, and the United States to the same conventions the Americans had unilaterally adopted in 1897.⁵⁷

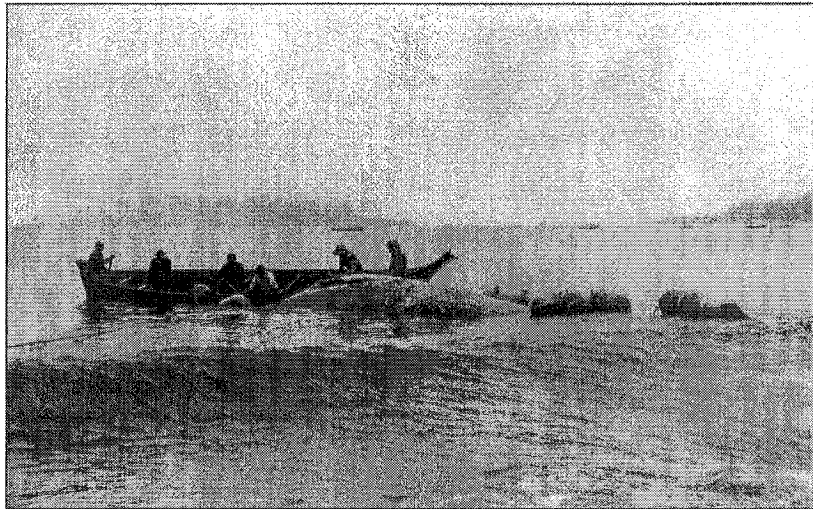
Ramifications of the government's assertion of authority over the Bering Sea reached Cape Flattery in July 1889. Federal officials seized the 59-ton sealing schooner *James G. Swan*, owned and operated by a 21-year-old Makah named Chestoqua Peterson, for breaking U.S. laws restricting pelagic sealing. Seventy miles off St. George Island in the Bering Sea, the revenue cutter *Rush* had spotted the crew taking seals in violation of a statute forbidding such activity in Alaskan waters under penalty of forfeiture of vessel, tackle, and cargo.⁵⁸ Sharply contesting the

The Makah life-style was steeped in whaling; when whalers landed their trophy (kept from sinking by sealskin floats), the entire village turned out to divide up the carcass. Asahel Curtis photographs, ca. 1910. (Top and bottom, nos. 19220 and 19239, Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma; middle, Special Collections and Preservation Division, University of Washington Libraries, neg. WA721)

confiscation, the Makah sued. Their counsel was James Swan (for whom the schooner was named); though he considered sealing to be contrary to assimilation, its economic importance compelled him to defend it. Swan argued that the seizure violated the 1855 treaty, which, he believed, guaranteed the tribe's right to hunt and fish on the high seas. As the basis for his position, he cited Article 4 of the treaty:

The right of taking fish and of whaling or sealing at usual and accustomed grounds and stations is further secured to said Indians in common with all citizens of the United States, and of erecting temporary houses for the purpose of curing, together with the privilege of hunting and gathering roots and berries on open and unclaimed lands: *Provided, however,* That they shall not take shell-fish from any beds staked or cultivated by citizens.⁵⁹

The Peterson case was a precursor to later treaty adjudication, a congeries of similar suits that appeared before the courts in the mid- and late 20th century. In 1952, *Makah Indian Tribe et al. v. Schoettler* determined that state fishing regulation could displace treaty provisions only if states proved that the legislation was necessary as a conservation measure. The controversial *United States v. Washington* (commonly known as the Boldt decision) in 1974 defined procurement allowances for harvestable salmon. *United States v. Washington* in 1984 disallowed a treaty right to fishing venues made accessible by arrival of modern technology but not established in 1855 as "usual and accustomed" places.⁶⁰



Whether the Makah's treaty superseded covenants made between the United States and foreign governments formed the crux of the 1889 dispute. Swan maintained, in *United States v. The James G. Swan*, that the treaty gave tribal members a higher claim, or special license, to seal as they always had, except now with modern equipment, which international agreement could not abridge. However, Cornelius H. Hanford, district judge for the Ninth Circuit, disagreed, finding it "obvious . . . that the treaty secures to the Indians only an equality of rights and privileges in the matter of fishing, whaling, and sealing." The treaty, he ruled, insured for the Makah "rights in common with all citizens of the United States, [but] certainly such treaty stipulations give no support to a claim for peculiar or superior rights or privileges denied to citizens of the country in general." He ordered Peterson to forfeit ownership of the schooner.⁶¹

Despite the unfavorable judgment, the Makah remained determined to continue sealing in the northern Pacific Ocean. Their efforts met with no better results, however. Customs officials seized two more schooners in June 1894, and in August 1896, the *James G. Swan* (now under different ownership) was again detained.⁶² Without doubt, the regulations and confiscations impaired Indian seal harvests; in fact, the Makah's bold penetration of the white man's economic system had seemingly come to an abrupt halt. A Seattle newspaper sympathized, commenting in May 1894 that the Cape Flattery Indians had successfully transformed their traditional mode of living to fit the Anglo-American economy only to be suddenly told that their labors and investments had largely been wasted:

Since white men have gone into the business these Indians found it impossible to follow it up successfully unless they adopted the white men's methods, so they have invested thousands of dollars in the purchase of seagoing sealing schooners, which they have fitted up, manned and

provided with improved firearms.

They are now informed that they cannot pursue this business any longer, but must abandon their schooners and fall back on their primitive methods.⁶³

Two weeks later the paper editorialized that federal restriction "practically compels [the Makah] to abandon the [sealing] business altogether."⁶⁴

The journalist overstated the damage. Though bowed, the Makah's sealing economy did not break. Yet the requirement that tribal members use only traditional accouterments, together with a sharp downturn in fur seal prices—20 percent in 1896 alone—diminished profits. Moreover, the statutes, though effective in the long run, proved ineffectual in preserving the herds in the short term. One historian stated bluntly after examining the evidence: "The regime of seal protection introduced by the regulations of the Paris Tribunal and special agreements that soon followed proved a total failure."⁶⁵ The Makah continued to hunt fur seal, but annual communal earnings rarely rose above a few thousand dollars.⁶⁶

Pelagic sealing's decline neither raised a ground swell of support for agriculture nor produced disastrous consequences. Instead, another resource, halibut, ascended in importance. From the 1880s to the 1930s, Cape Flattery's waters literally teemed not only with vessels owned by Makah fishermen but with those belonging to American maritime companies, on which tribal members labored. Unfortunately, the unregulated vivacity of the early halibut industry proved detrimental to long-term sustained yields. Within less than 50 years of its commercial appearance, the once great North Pacific halibut fishery "had been depleted to about one-fourth [its] former size."⁶⁷

Makah halibut fishermen, even more than Makah sealers, faced fierce non-native competition. More than 1,000

fishing boats—compared with between 30 and 60 sealing schooners—could typically be found anchored in Neah Bay. Cape Flattery quickly became a magnet for an industry of regional and even national significance. "Tacoma is reaching out for the fishing banks off Cape Flattery," a newspaper story announced in early 1890. The halibut industry, while "still in its infancy, is rapidly growing. It was twice as large in 1889 as in 1888, and with the present facilities for handling we may expect that it will more than double again this year." The newspaper informed readers that the Tacoma Fishing Company would have three 30-ton schooners operating off the cape by year's end.⁶⁸ So lucrative had become halibut fishing by 1895 that the most successful operators could recoup the cost of a boat in just one season.⁶⁹

Fishermen—as many as 2,500 a year—converged on Cape Flattery from as far away as New England. Halibut was shipped from Seattle and Tacoma to markets in Minneapolis, Kansas City, Omaha, Chicago, and other points east. To supply demand, Cape Flattery's waters, particularly Swiftsure Bank, 18 miles offshore, offered up extraordinary stocks. In four days of fishing, for example, one white operator secured some 20,000 pounds of fish. The Makah were not idle. In 1880 tribal members landed 1,586,200 pounds of fresh halibut; in 1893 they were shipping 12 to 60 tons of halibut and cod weekly; in August 1898, the Neah Bay agent reported daily cargoes of 10,000 pounds; in 1905 halibut and other fish sales netted the Makah \$32,000.⁷⁰

Though remarkable, the Indians' share in the fishery would have been larger but for regulations that worked against the tribe. To prevent overharvest, the International Fisheries Commission (later the International Pacific Halibut Commission) in 1925 divided the West Coast into 35 statistical units

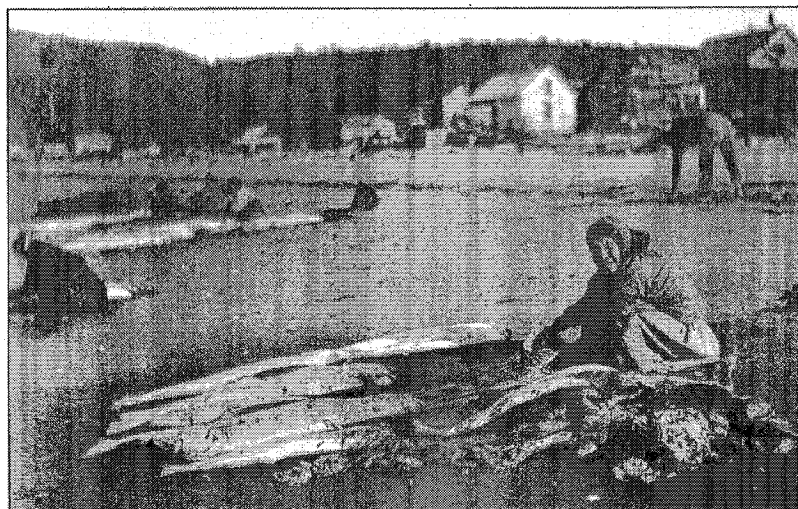
Ever adaptable, the Makah turned to halibut fishing when commercial sealing ceased to be viable; here women receive the day's catch. Samuel G. Morse photographs. (Right, no. 3, Tacoma Public Library; below, no. 34, WSHS)

and set limits on catches for each area. According to the tribal elder John Hottowe, American fishermen from Puget Sound who possessed large boats navigable even in inclement weather often exhausted the quota established for Cape Flattery before Makah fishermen, in their smaller craft, got out of the harbor.⁷¹

Statistics show the inequity of the regulatory policy. In 1933 the value of all fishing at Neah Bay totaled \$300,000. Of that sum, tribal members made \$5,600 from sales to a Port Angeles cannery and a "considerable" additional amount from sales to floating scows (canneries). The latter claimed at most a gross income of \$45,000, which meant that the Makah were obtaining only one-sixth of the entire catch.⁷²

The non-Indian presence begot other problems. Huge annual yields greatly deflated market prices. In the mid-1890s, fresh halibut sold on the open market for one to two cents per pound, and commercial buyers, such as the Seattle Fish Company, paid only two and one-half cents.⁷³ The Neah Bay agency superintendent reported in January 1932 that "there was a much better outlook for the fishing industry in 1920 than there is today. Prices for fish have been the lowest this year than ever before in the past twenty years, and the coming season will also see them lower."⁷⁴ Indian-white competition also sparked animosities. The Makah complained that whites frequently violated federal and state fishing laws without penalty whereas Indians faced criminal prosecution for the same conduct.⁷⁵

Although halibut fishing did not bring



the Makah as lavish an income as sealing, it allowed the tribe to remain independent. For decades tribal members had required no federal assistance other than small allocations for the aged and infirm. The superintendent in charge of the reservation observed in 1932 that, "as a whole, the economic status of these Indians is exceptionally good when one stops to consider the fact that it has all been through their own efforts and industry."⁷⁶ In 1931 the average income of each Makah family was \$600 (\$150 per capita), a figure bolstered by the Indians' low cost of living: they took fish from the sea, raised their own vegetables, and owned their own houses and land.⁷⁷ As

their superintendent put it, creativity and hard work, not "unearned money," sustained the Makah through adversity and setbacks. "They are fishermen," he said, "and in normal times will earn their living."⁷⁸

Repeated resource depletion—not an uncommon or unexpected occurrence in market competition—undoubtedly posed a significant threat to Makah survival. Cape Flattery had supplied abundant fisheries, but tribal members had to recognize, particularly with the successive exhaustion of whales, seals, and halibut, the finite nature of those resources. The prosperity of the 1880s and 1890s would

perhaps never again be attainable. Yet, the Makah's resource base had served them well through a most critical period of their history, the assimilationist era, which gave way in the 1930s to a major change in federal policy known as the Indian New Deal.

Resiliency in the face of adversity was clearly a defining Makah characteristic. "There was no sadness when sealing or even halibut fishing faded out in the 1950s," Frank Smith said recently; "we simply did other things." As they had earlier, the Makah "during the Depression did really well and after—there were all the jobs you needed." Salmon replaced halibut fishing and remained a primary occupation until the 1970s. Sealing remained an economic activity for some tribal members. Fish canneries hired both men and women. Each summer Makah traveled to north Puget Sound to pick strawberries and blackberries; each fall they went to the Yakima Valley to harvest hops. Women made and sold traditional basketry, which brought in

several thousand dollars annually. In the 1920s Makah began selling timber stumpage, and many found employment with the Crown Zellerbach Lumber Company. The federal government became another source of jobs: tribal members built roads, gun emplacements, and a breakwater. Like their forebears who negotiated the 1855 treaty and each succeeding generation of whalers, sealers, and fishermen, the Makah altered or discarded economic activities that no longer had relevance. "These are hardy people," Smith commented, "and will always find something to do."⁷⁹

The Neah Bay reservation from 1855 to 1933 provides a case study in Native American initiative, resistance, and accommodation. Eighty years of agrarian assimilationist pressure failed to dislodge the Makah from a maritime way of life. Time and again they exploited the opportunities that colonialism brought, developing resources outside the parameters of national Indian policy and maintaining tribal

self-sufficiency. To be sure, Makah whalers, sealers, and fishermen adjusted the manner in which they carried out traditional occupations in order to improve efficiency and competitiveness, but they firmly resisted assimilating into the dominant American culture. The federal government could not force its Indian policy at Neah Bay. Avoiding the demoralization and dependency common on reservations, the Makah hewed out their own economic destiny. With neither aid nor countenance, they proved that they could successfully compete in the white capitalist system and remain, above all else, Makah.

Cary Collins, a Ph.D. student in public history at Washington State University, completed the research and principal writing for this essay while a graduate student at Central Washington University; he gratefully acknowledges financial support from WSU's Pettyjohn Endowment. The focus of his current research is the Chemawa Indian School, Salem, Oregon.

1. James G. Swan, *The Indians of Cape Flattery, at the Entrance to the Strait of Fuca, Washington Territory*, Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge, No. 220 (Washington, D.C., 1868), 7-8 (qtn., 7); Frances Densmore, *Nootka and Quileute Music* (1939; rpt. New York, 1972), 1-2.
2. Edward Claplanhoo, interview, Feb. 2, 1995. Transcripts of all interviews cited are in author's possession.
3. Todd Benson, "The Consequences of Reservation Life: Native Californians on the Round Valley Reservation, 1871-1884," *PHR*, Vol. 60 (1991), 224.
4. For the federal government's account of the Neah Bay treaty council, see Records of the Washington Superintendency of Indian Affairs, 1853-74 (WSIA), pp. 43-49 (qtns., 43, 44, 45), Records Relating to Treaties, Dec. 7, 1854-June 9, 1863, RG 75, National Archives (NA), microfilm M5, roll 26. The best scholarly history documenting Isaac Stevens's dealings with the far western tribes remains Kent D. Richards, *Isaac I. Stevens: Young Man in a Hurry* (1979; rpt. Pullman, 1993). Makah today "marvel at what [the Makah headmen in 1855] were able to negotiate in the treaty," which "stands out stronger than any other treaty ever made"; Claplanhoo interview, Aug. 30, 1995. For the Treaty of Neah Bay, see Charles J. Kappler, comp., *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, 7 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1903-41), II, 682-85.
5. Charles E. Hoonan, *Neah Bay, Washington: A Brief Historical Sketch* (Seattle, 1964), 27; Ann M. Renker and Erna Gunther, "Makah," in *Handbook of North American Indians*, Vol. 7: *Northwest Coast*, ed. Wayne Suttles (Washington, D.C., 1990), 422-30.
6. Charles Willoughby, annual report, in 47th Cong., 1st Sess., 1881, H.E.D. 1 (Serial 2018), 221.
7. Potatoes, carrots, turnips, beets, peas, and onions were the only crops raised at Neah Bay; Oliver Wood to E. A. Hayt, Aug. 2, 1879, Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1824-81 (LRIA), RG 75, NA, microfilm M234, roll 919. Vegetables in aboriginal times made up only about 10 percent of the diet of western Washington coastal peoples; Tom E. Roll, "The Archaeology of Minard: A Case Study of a Late Prehistoric Northwest Coast Procurement System," Ph.D. dissertation (Washington State University, 1974), 33.
8. J. P. McGlenn, annual report, in 52d Cong., 2d Sess., 1892, H.E.D. 1 (Serial 3088), 494.
9. J. G. Swan to H. A. Webster, March 31, 1863, WSIA.
10. In November 1920, a member of the Board of Indian Commissioners suggested that a dam be constructed to reclaim Waatch Prairie so the Makah could become truck farmers and supply fresh fruit and vegetables to visiting fishermen; Malcolm McDowell to George Vaux, Jr., Nov. 1, 1920, in *Annual Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners* (Washington, D.C., 1921), 89.
11. Richard Kool, "Northwest Coast Indian Whaling: New Considerations," *Canadian Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 3 (1982), 31.
12. Robert Lloyd Webb, *On the Northwest: Commercial Whaling in the Pacific Northwest, 1790-1967* (Vancouver, B.C., 1988), 106-107, 110.
13. George Gibbs, "Tribes of Western Washington and Northwestern Oregon," in *Contributions to North American Ethnology*, Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C., 1877), 175.
14. David R. Huelsbeck, "Whaling in the Precontact Economy of the Central Northwest Coast," *Arctic Anthropology*, Vol. 25 (1988), 1-15, and *idem*, "Mammals and Fish in the Subsistence Economy of Ozette," Ph.D. dissertation (Washington State University, 1983). See also *Sunday Oregonian* (Portland), Sept. 15, 1889.
15. See the annual reports of the Neah Bay agents: 50th Cong., 2d Sess., 1888, H.E.D. 1 (Serial 2637), 225; 52d Cong., 1st Sess., 1891, H.E.D. 1 (Serial 2934), 448; 52d

- Cong., 2d Sess., 1892, H.E.D. 1 (Serial 3088), 495; 53d Cong., 2d Sess., 1893, H.E.D. 1 (Serial 3210), 326; 55th Cong., 2d Sess., 1897, H.D. 5 (Serial 3641), 292.
16. Herbert Taylor and James Bosch, "The Makah Whalers," in *The Pacific Northwest and Beyond: Essays in Honor of Howard J. Critchfield*, ed. James W. Scott, Occasional Paper No. 14 (Bellingham, Wash., 1980), 31.
 17. J. P. McGlinn, annual report, in 52d Cong., 1st Sess., 1891, H.E.D. 1 (Serial 2934), 448.
 18. S. G. Morse, annual report, in 55th Cong., 2d Sess., 1897, H.D. 5 (Serial 3641), 292. In 1891, Makah hunters killed six whales in a three-week period; see Port Townsend *Morning Leader*, Aug. 5, 1891.
 19. H. A. Webster, annual report, in 40th Cong., 2d Sess., 1867, H.E.D. 1 (Serial 1326), 44.
 20. W. L. Powell, annual report, in 53d Cong., 3d Sess., 1894, H.E.D. 1 (Serial 3306), 317.
 21. Webb, 287.
 22. C. A. Huntington to G. H. Atkinson, in Huntington to L. W. Hayes, Sept. 27, 1880, LRIA. The Makah petitioned the Indian Claims Commission, claiming that the United States had failed to fulfill its treaty obligation to supply fishing gear; they eventually accepted Tatoosh and Waadah islands as compensation: see Robert H. Ruby and John A. Brown, *A Guide to the Indian Tribes of the Pacific Northwest* (Norman, Okla., 1986), 126-28. In 1920 the federal government provided the Makah "reimbursable" loans to purchase larger fishing boats, but the policy was abandoned after it proved unsuccessful; G. E. E. Lindquist to R. L. Wilbur, Sept. 1, 1932, *Annual Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners* (Washington, D.C., 1932), 37.
 23. Charles Willoughby, annual report, in 47th Cong., 2d Sess., 1882, H.E.D. 1 (Serial 2100), 215.
 24. Webb, 145. See also Briton Cooper Busch, *The War against the Seals: A History of the North American Seal Fishery* (Kingston, Ont., 1985), 130-31.
 25. W. J. Pollock to S. J. Kirkwood, April 7, 1881, Reports of Inspection of the Field Jurisdictions of the Office of Indian Affairs, 1873-1900 (RIFJ), RG 48, NA, microfilm M1070, roll 28.
 26. Charles M. Scammon, *The Marine Mammals of the North-Western Coast of North America, Described and Illustrated, Together with an Account of the American Whale-Fishery* (1874; rpt. New York, 1968), 154.
 27. Busch, 130; Carl E. Gustafson, "Prehistoric Use of Fur Seals: Evidence from the Olympic Coast of Washington," *Science*, Vol. 168 (1968), 49-51; Karl W. Kenyon, "Last of the Tlingit Sealers," *Natural History*, Vol. 64 (1955), 294-98.
 28. Charles Willoughby, annual report, in 46th Cong., 3d Sess., 1880, H.E.D. 1 (Serial 1959), 277.
 29. Oliver Wood, annual report, in 49th Cong., 1st Sess., 1885, H.E.D. 1 (Serial 2379), 414; for Makah pelagic sealing, see *Bering Sea Tribunal of Arbitration*, 16 vols., in 53d Cong., 2d Sess., 1893, S.E.D. 177, Vol. 3 (Serial 3166-3), 352-99. For an account describing the sealing grounds in and around Cape Flattery and Tatoosh Island, see *Leader*, Sept. 19, 1890.
 30. Armstrong quoted in *Leader*, Aug. 9, 1893.
 31. *Ibid.*, Dec. 16, 1893.
 32. *Spokane Review*, Dec. 15, 1893.
 33. Province McCormick to Hoke Smith, March 18, 1894, RIFJ.
 34. R. A. Gardner to J. W. Noble, Sept. 16, 1890, *ibid.*
 35. Ruth Kirk, *Wisdom of the Elders: Native Traditions on the Northwest Coast; The Nuuchah-nulth, Southern Kwakiutl and Nuxalk* (Vancouver, B.C., 1986), 225.
 36. Frank Smith, interview, Feb. 10, 1995.
 37. *Leader*, Sept. 11, 1892.
 38. Willoughby, annual report, 1882, p. 216.
 39. Swan, *Indians of Cape Flattery*, 33.
 40. *Leader*, Dec. 16, 1893.
 41. Port Townsend *Weekly Argus*, April 24, 1875.
 42. In aggregate the Makah earned \$44,000 from sealing in 1896; J. C. Keenan, annual report, in 54th Cong., 2d Sess., 1896, H.D. 5 (Serial 3489), 314.
 43. *Leader*, Dec. 16, 1893. In 1873, a U.S. Indian inspector recommended that the government provide the agency school at Neah Bay with a ship and an instructor in navigation; E. C. Kemble to E. P. Smith, Oct. 29, 1873, RIFJ, roll 56. The Congregationalist minister Myron Eells, who spent over a decade on the nearby Skokomish reservation, defended the agency school training—specifically, it taught skills necessary to glean economic news from regional newspapers, write business correspondence, and keep accounts—as an important component in preparing the Makah to compete in the fur seal industry. "The Indians at Neah Bay," Eells said, "want to know the value of sealskins at Victoria and Seattle, so that they may know whether it is better for them to sell to the agency trader, or take them to some other place"; *Oregonian*, March 25, 1886.
 44. Makah women served as cooks and skimmers on sealing schooners. *Chehalis Valley Vidette* (Montesano), Aug. 28, 1884.
 45. See, for example, the *Seattle Times*, June 24, 1897: "Some of the Neah Bay Indians will go to [the] Bering Sea sealing again this season, but it is understood that the majority will go to the Fraser River. It is said the city will be almost depopulated for a short time."
 46. E.g., Kemble to Smith.
 47. James H. Cisney to J. W. Noble, Nov. 12, 1889, RIFJ, roll 28.
 48. Swan quoted in Busch, 131.
 49. Swan quoted in U.S. Dept. of Treasury, *Seal and Salmon Fisheries and General Resources of Alaska*, 4 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1898), IV, 75.
 50. McGlinn, annual report, 1891, p. 447.
 51. McGlinn, annual report, in 51st Cong., 2d Sess., 1890, H.E.D. 1 (Serial 2841), 223-24.
 52. *Ibid.*, 1891, p. 447.
 53. W. L. Powell, annual report, in 50th Cong., 1st Sess., 1887, H.E.D. 1 (Serial 2542), 293.
 54. Charles Willoughby, annual report, in 45th Cong., 3d Sess., 1878, H.E.D. 1 (Serial 1850), 628.
 55. Kim Keister, "In the Native Tongue: Members of the Makah Tribe Learn through the Language of Their Elders about Their Remote Northwest Domain and about Themselves," *Historic Preservation*, Vol. 44 (1992), 41.
 56. McGlinn, annual report, 1892, p. 495.
 57. Jozo Tomasevich, *International Agreements on Conservation of Marine Resources with Special Reference to the North Pacific* (Palo Alto, Calif., 1943), 80-89. See also Webb, 145-46; *Bering Sea Tribunal*, I, 1-8; 37 Stat. 1538-47 (1911); Alice Felt Tyler, *The Foreign Policy of James G. Blaine* (1927; rpt. Hamden, Conn., 1965), 302-45; A. Y. Roppel and Stuart P. Davey, "Evolution of Fur Seal Management of the Pribilof Islands," *Journal of Wildlife Management*, Vol. 29 (1965), 448-63.
 58. *Leader*, June 12, 13, 1890; *United States v. The James G. Swan*, 50 F.1st 108 (1892).
 59. Kappler, II, 682. Swan served as an aide to Isaac Stevens at the Chehalis River treaty council in February-March 1855 and possessed substantial knowledge of Indian policy in Washington Territory.
 60. *Makah Indian Tribe v. Schoettler*, 192 F.2d 224 (1952); *United States v. Washington*, 384 F.Supp. 312 (1974); *United States v. Washington*, 730 F.2d 1314 (1984).
 61. *U.S. v. The James G. Swan*, 111 and 112. *Leader*, March 29, 1892.
 62. *United States v. The James G. Swan et al.*, 77 F. 473 (1896).
 63. *Seattle Press-Times*, May 26, 1894.
 64. *Ibid.*, June 9, 1894.
 65. Tomasevich, 89.
 66. *Leader*, Dec. 17, 1896. In 1923, for instance, 40 Makah sealers earned \$6,210, or \$155.25 each; A. D. Dodge, annual report, Nov. 26, 1923, p. 34, Superintendent's Annual Narrative and Statistical Reports from Field Jurisdictions of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, 1907-38 (SANSR), RG 75, NA, microfilm M1011, roll 91. Fur seal prices in the late 1890s dropped from \$20 to \$5 per skin; *Times*, April 23, 1897. For the next several decades, sealing regulation became a source of bitter complaint for the Makah. In 1929, for example, tribal members, "very much exercised over their right to kill fur seals," tried to gain "the right to go sealing in modern motor boats." Commissioners to R. L. Wilbur, Sept. 1, 1929, *Annual Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners* (Washington, D.C., 1929), 44.
 67. Elizabeth Colson, *The Makah Indians: A Study of an Indian Tribe in Modern American Society* (Minneapolis, 1953), 8n. For an informative report on the Cape Flattery halibut fishery, see *Chehalis Valley Vidette*, Aug. 31, 1888.
 68. *Leader*, Feb. 27, 1890.

69. *Times*, July 30, 1895.
70. Superintendent's 1912 annual report, n.d., pp. 1-2, SANSR, roll 90; McGlinn, annual report, 1891, p. 447; Daniel Dorchester, annual report, in 53d Cong., 2d Sess., 1893, H.E.D. 1 (Serial 3210), 391-92; S. G. Morse, annual report, in 55th Cong., 3d Sess., 1898, H.D. 5 (Serial 3757), 301; Edwin Minor, annual report, in 59th Cong., 1st Sess., 1905, H.D. 5 (Serial 4959), 358. For the extent of halibut fishing at Cape Flattery, see *Puget Sound Weekly Argus* (Port Townsend), July 5, 1888; *Leader*, Aug. 12, 1890, and July 17, 1891; *Seattle Times*, July 30, 1895.
71. Robert J. Trumble, Gilbert St.-Pierre, Ian R. McGregor, and William G. Clark, *Evaluation of Pacific Halibut Management for Regulatory Area 2A*, International Pacific Halibut Commission Scientific Report No. 74 (Seattle, 1991), 7-8; John Hottowe, interview, Feb. 2, 1995.
72. R. H. Bitney, annual report, Jan. 1, 1933, p. 6, SANSR, roll 91. Until a fish plant opened at Neah Bay in November 1931, the Makah could market fish for only six months of every year. Without an ice factory, they had no means of preserving their catch. Referring to diminished profits, their agent informed the Indian Office in 1900 that the Makah lacked a "stable and fair market for their fish." Bitney to C. J. Rhoads, May 29, 1931, Tahola Indian Agency Correspondence, Neah Bay: Superintendent's Daily File, 1924-33, box 558, RG 75, NA-Pacific Northwest Region, Seattle. See also S. G. Morse, annual report, in 56th Cong., 2d Sess., 1900, H.D. 5 (Serial 4101), 396.
73. *Times*, July 30, 1895, Aug. 7, 1896.
74. Bitney to Rhoads, Jan. 22, 1932, Tahola Indian Agency Correspondence.
75. McDowell to Vaux.
76. Bitney to G. E. E. Lindquist, July 7, 1932, Tahola Indian Agency Correspondence, Neah Bay: Superintendent's Miscellaneous Daily File, 1932-33, box 560, RG 75, NA-Pacific Northwest Region.
77. R. H. Bitney, annual report, Jan. 1, 1931, p. 9, SANSR, roll 91.
78. McDowell to Vaux. Per capita income in Washington State in 1931 was \$528. U.S. Department of Commerce, *State Personal Income, 1929-1987: Estimates and a Statement of Sources and Methods* (Washington, D.C., 1989), 255.
79. Smith interview, Aug. 8, 1995. Edward Claplanhoo described times as "tough" for the Makah during the depression era, but "everybody had a rack and a smokehouse in their backyard," he said, "and everybody looked out for each other." Claplanhoo interview, Aug. 30, 1995.

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