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Impressions of Indian River

A Landscape History of Sitka National Historical Park

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The cover photograph, taken between 1886 and 1888, is a view looking up the Indian River channel towards the rustic footbridge built by U.S. marines stationed in Sitka at that time.

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A Landscape History of Sitka National Historical Park

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Alaska Systems Support Office
Anchorage, Alaska

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FOREWORD

This landscape history of Sitka National Historical Park comprises only one part of a larger, multidisciplinary endeavor to document the park's cultural resources. Several other studies have been or are being conducted by researchers on the provenience of the original totems, on Tlingit culture, and on specific Tlingit ties to the park. These projects, along with a recently updated administrative history and several studies of the park's natural resources, will be synthesized by the authors in the second phase of the landscape study. In the Phase Two document, character-defining features will be defined within the park and their integrity evaluated. Management alternatives arising from the analysis of these character-defining features will then be provided for the various components of the park's cultural landscape.

The park currently includes two units: the Russian Bishop's House Unit located within the city of Sitka, and the Fort Site Unit, located about one mile southeast of the town. The latter, comprising approximately 57 acres of land that encompasses the mouth of the Indian River and 49.53 acres of surrounding tidelands, is the subject of this study. Because the park's significance as an historic ethnographic and vernacular landscape derives from cultural activities that extend well beyond that small area, its history is viewed within the context of the regional natural and cultural environment. Indeed, throughout its history, the significance of the land adjacent to the Indian River has been inextricably tied to the community of Sitka.

Consequently, the story of the town is a theme that runs through this history. Information about the settlement is particularly helpful for the early periods of the park's history when documentation about the specific Indian River landscape is scarce. The regional approach allows for the possibility of informed and fruitful inference in those periods. In this study, the perspective gradually narrows as the park takes on greater autonomous significance. After the area became a designated public park in 1890, other cultural components, including the ideas and values of preservation, have played a role in the shaping of the cultural landscape that is Sitka National Historical Park. Although the physical components of the park's cultural landscape form the major focus of our study, its cultural meanings impart crucial significance that will be traced throughout this report.

Following an initial chapter on the ecology of the region and the park, which provides an overview of the region and the park's dynamic natural environment, the report is organized chronologically. The historical landscape analysis begins prior to 1803, when the area was occupied by the Tlingit people, but before they built their fort at the mouth of the Indian River. An overview of Tlingit traditional practices is provided as context for understanding how the Indian River area likely was utilized. In addition, evidence about which clans historically occupied the Sitka area is synthesized so as to gain a clearer picture of who most likely would have used the land adjacent to the river. Finally, within that context, we present the documentation currently available to us as to specific pre-1803 Tlingit activities within the area near the Indian River. It is hoped that the forthcoming Traditional Use Study of the park will provide more data on such activities.

The data gathered for this endeavor come from a wide variety of primary sources, including letters, diaries, maps, drawings, photographs, travel accounts, and official government records in numerous archival collections in the United States, Russia, and Finland. These include unpublished transcriptions of Tlingit oral traditions; documents and recorded oral interviews in the archives of Sitka National Historical Park; unpublished translations of Russian American Company records; and both unpublished and published accounts of many early visitors and inhabitants, written in English, Russian, Swedish, Finnish, and other languages. A number of oral interviews were also conducted. The broad range of sources reflects the diverse cultural mixing that occurred in the region as numerous European and American settlers and visitors travelled to Sitka and interacted with the native inhabitants. The park landscape formerly held and continues to hold great significance for members of the Sitka Tlingit community, as well as for the early immigrants, their descendants, and others who settled within the enclave and its vicinity; the same is true, of course, for the many visitors who travel to Sitka. The shape and story of those meanings are traced in this account of the park's landscape history.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study traces the history of Sitka National Historical Park, both in terms of the changes that took place in its physical landscape, and of the role that the land has played in the dynamic community in which it is situated. Situated within the mountainous Alexander Archipelago of southeastern Alaska, the park occupies a low, relatively level site encompassing the mouth of the Indian River as it flows into Sitka Sound. Currently functioning both as a local park and as a tourist destination, the park has a cultural history that is long and rich: it has been an important locale for the Tlingit, the native people of the region, then to Russian fur-hunters and colonists, and ultimately to American settlers. This historic landscape study of the site encompasses all of these periods of occupation, and addresses a series of specific research objectives:

> To document Tlingit accounts of the battle of 1804 and, whenever possible, native use of the landscape just prior to 1804.
>
> To determine the character and use of what is now the park during the period of Russian occupation (1804-1867).
>
> To determine, to the extent possible, what was occurring at the site during the latter part of the nineteenth century and the very early twentieth century (1867-1904).
>
> To determine the landscape setting and context for the site when the totem poles were erected in the park during the early twentieth century, and evaluate the landscape changes that have occurred over time.
>
> To document the changes that occurred to the site prior to 1940, during, and following World War II.

This document, which reports the results of that research, will supply the baseline historical and cultural information to facilitate the development of management guidelines for the park.

Tlingit use of the study site spans hundreds of years, beginning several centuries prior to European arrival in the mid-eighteenth century and continuing to the present. According to oral tradition, a winter village at one time extended from Jamestown Bay, just southeast of the park, to the river's mouth, although it appears to have vanished by the time of Russian arrival. Part of what was a much larger area of Kiks.ádi clan territory in the Sitka vicinity, the river landscape was an important locale for the native inhabitants, an importance that is conveyed in the Tlingit name for the stream, *Kaasda Héen*. Being a salmon stream, the river provided several species of the fish that comprised the mainstay of the Tlingit diet. Numerous fish camps were located along its banks and on the beach. Additionally, many other resources, derived from the beach, river, and surrounding forests within and beyond the study site, were utilized seasonally by the Tlingit both for food and material production; these included other fish species, shellfish, seaweed, various fern, herb, and berry species, spruce wood and roots, hemlock, and alder for firewood, all of which were obtained as part of a complex seasonal subsistence pattern that sustained their rich culture.

When Russian fur hunters established outposts in Tlingit territory and began intensive sea-otter hunting in these waters during the late 1700s, conflicts inevitably arose. In 1802, resentment of Russian behavior ultimately led to a Tlingit attack on the Russian fort at what is now Old Sitka. Expecting retaliation for their offensive, the Sitka Tlingit then constructed a fort within what is now the park.

After the Russians returned to re-establish an outpost in Sitka Tlingit territory, a battle ensued there in the fall of 1804. The Russians bombarded the fort with their ships' cannon and landed artillery to attack, but the Tlingit held off the onslaught and eventually drove the invaders back to their ships. After several days of negotations, during which time the Tlingit waited in vain for their allies to come to their aid, they evacuated the fort during the night, and marched to the other side of the island. Both the battle and march are remembered as tragic events in the history of the tribe: the lives of many young warriors, old people and children were lost, as well as the clan regalia that had to be left behind. The study site has sacred significance as the location of this tragic event.

The Russians destroyed the fort and constructed a hunting oupost, New Archangel, on the former site of the Tlingit winter village on and around present day Castle Hill. From its beginnings as a crude stockaded fort, the settlement grew into the bustling capital of Russian America. The Tlingit returned in

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1821, established a village outside the Russian stockade, conducted trade with the new inhabitants, and played an important role in supplying the colony with fresh food.

Situated beyond the Russian stockade, the Indian River area was not frequented to a great extent by the colonists until relations with the Tlingit had stabilized. However, sometime before 1827, on the northeastern side of the river, the Russians had erected a "memorial column" for their men who were killed in the 1804 battle. By that year, they also had built a wooden footpath through the forest to the river, which most likely was used as a route for gathering wood and water. Early descriptions and drawings of the area testify that at the time, the forest near Indian River was an ancient, lush old growth stand, while shrubby growth had become established on the Tlingit fort site.

Beginning during 1830s, and continuing through and beyond the end of Russian control of the settlement in 1867, the Indian River area began to be used by Sitka's inhabitants as a pleasure ground—a place to picnic, walk, pick berries, and relax away from the bustle of the town. Several homesteads were built for retired company workers near the river's mouth in the 1840s, but they were soon destroyed during a conflict with the Tlingit in 1855; hence, by the end of Russian tenure in New Archangel, little evidence of their activities in the area remained outside of the paths they had constructed and the large amount of timber they had cut.

With the American purchase of Alaska in 1867, little change occurred near the Indian River. The Army, sent by the U.S. government to administer the new territory, improved the roads through the forest and constructed new ones for the purpose of gathering wood and water. Sections of the Indian River, upstream from what is now the park, were logged extensively during this period, while at least one brewery operated along its upper banks.

American residents and visitors continued the Russian traditions of using the area as a pleasure ground; in 1868 they held Sitka's first Fourth of July celebration in a grove near the river's mouth. As tourism and the population of the town increased in the 1880s, the Indian River area continued to be a favorite site for enjoying the beauties of the area. The U.S. Marines stationed there at the time built two rustic log bridges over the river and constructed paths along the river banks for the enjoyment of visitors. This continuous use, the effects of the improvements that were made, and the civic pride in what became known as Indian River Park, ultimately culminated in the site being set aside as a government-owned public park in 1890.

In 1902, totem poles were erected in the park under the direction of Alaskan Governor John Brady. A large totem pole, four houseposts, and a war canoe were donated by the Haida elder, Saanaheit, to the State of Alaska and Brady; they were to be "preserved as historic relics," were grouped in the grass clearing at the mouth of the river as they would have been in their original setting, and quickly became a popular attraction for visitors.

In 1906, Brady added more poles to the park after he had collected them from Haida and Tlingit villages located to the south of Sitka for display in the Louisiana Purchase and Lewis and Clark expositions. He then asked local photographer E.W. Merrill to arrange them within the park. Although he left no records of his work, Merrill is reported to have considered his design carefully. Merrill sited most of the totems in openings among the trees situated along the trail that led from the upper edge of the beach out to Indian River point. One pole was placed at the western end of the footbridge that crossed the river, and several others were situated in open areas above the beach. Most of the poles would have been visible from the beach and water at the time Merrill sited them.

Protection of the poles from vandalism, as well as efforts to curtail wood cutting in the park, led community members to seek national monument status for the site in 1910. This was granted by a Presidential Proclamation on March 23rd of that year. With this order, the river, forest, historic battle site, and totem poles were afforded official protection by the federal government.

The monument was maintained by the Alaska Road Commission through an agreement with the National Park Service until 1940. The road commission built new bridges across the river, and in 1925 moved two totems to the park entrance, thereby creating a gateway that would block vehicular traffic from entering the site. In 1939, the U.S. Forest Service brought in a native CCC crew to repair and, in some cases, to replace the deteriorating original totem poles. Other than that restoration project, along with regular maintenance of trails and bridges and the repeated construction of log cribbing along sections of the Indian River, particularly adjacent to the footbridge, little change took place in the land-

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scape. In 1940, the entrance area was formalized and a parking lot constructed adjacent to the totem gateway. The greatest alteration to the overall landscape was the continual growth, both in density and height, of the forest stand. It was a quiet period in the monument, a time when tourism grew steadily and the community, including its native residents, used the site as a town park and playground.

World War II abruptly disrupted life in Sitka, including activities in the park, and led to major disturbances to the Indian River. To construct a Naval air station in Sitka, thousands of cubic yards of gravel were dredged from the Indian River channel. This operation brought the jarring intrusion of industrial activity into the monument, and radically disturbed the southeastern end of the Indian River. The gravel removal increased the channel gradient within the park, and exacerbated flooding and erosion, so much so that a series of erosion control projects was undertaken to stabilize the banks in that area. The existing estuary on the northeastern side of the river's mouth was also created during the dredging operation. Erosion continues to be a problem in the park, particularly along the northern bank of the river's mouth.

At the height of the military threat to Alaska, a large section of the park, including the southwestern end of the Indian River peninsula, was closed to the public, and the U.S. Army set up a post that included the construction of temporary barracks and other facilities. Their activities, terminated in 1943, left little mark on the site other than the gun emplacements that were constructed around the perimeter of the area; the remnants of these can still be discerned today.

Following the quiet years immediately after the war, the preparation of a Mission 66 master plan for Sitka National Monument resulted in the construction of visitor facilities within its boundaries. These facilities included the visitor center, the present footbridge, and the picnic area. The footbridge is located farther upstream than its predecessors, but continues what always has been an important historic activity in the park. The construction of the visitor center, which exhibits architectural features reminiscent of a Tlingit winter house, was an important step in the development of park interpretive programs. A native arts and crafts demonstration area was included in the center, which has grown to be a very active and important facet of the present park. Known as the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center, it is the site of arts and crafts demonstration as well as a center for research into Tlingit history and culture.

Since the monument was renamed Sitka National Historical Park in 1972--the year the NPS purchased the Russian Bishop's house in Sitka--localized change has occurred in the landscape. The visitor center parking area has been expanded, several maintenance and storage sheds have been put up in that area, and some of the totem poles were moved to the lawn around the center. Most recently a new totem pole that commemorates the history of the Sitka Tlingit, which was commissioned by the Cultural Center, was erected on the grassy slope overlooking the visitor center, beach, and Sitka Sound.

Change has also occurred at the base of the Indian River peninsula over the past several decades. A combination of isostatic rebound and the build-up of drift logs from a nearby pulp mill has caused the uplift of what was an historically important expansive beach meadow (the site of the 1804 battle), into a series of ridges and swales that have become vegetated with alders, shrubs, and other terrestrial vegetation. In the 1980s, a trail was constructed through the area, and the battle is interpreted at the point where it emerges from the alders onto the top of the present beach.

The most dramatic change to the entire park landscape that has occurred since it acquired national monument status in 1910 results from the development of the natural forest. The present park forest has become tall, dense, and structurally more uniform than the typical old growth stand. The totems, originally set in openings among immature spruce and hemlock, are presently overtopped and overshadowed by the trees that loom around them.

The park landscape was changed significantly by the dredging and flooding that occurred in the Indian River during and after WWII, and by the development of visitor facilities in the 1960s. In addition, the growth of the forest and the development of beach ridges have dramatically transformed the Tlingit fort and battle site. Nevertheless, despite these localized changes, the overall character of the site is very similar to its historic character at the time the monument was created. The natural processes of forest growth remain the largest agent of change. Protecting that process, and at the same time, preserving the intact cultural features will be the objective of future landscape management recommendations.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, cultural landscape preservation has become a primary concern of individuals interested in historic preservation and cultural conservation. The cultural landscape model provides a particularly useful approach for pursuing such preservation action because it incorporates the analysis of both the natural and cultural components that together make up a culturally significant place; this thereby facilitates the application of preservation methods that take into account the intimate relationship between nature and culture.

The cultural landscape, which encompasses the symbolic meanings of a landscape in addition to its physical features, also provides a truly holistic conception of the cultural significance of place. This study traces the evolution of the cultural landscape at Sitka National Historical Park in Sitka, Alaska—a landscape that has been shaped and valued by several cultural groups throughout its history.

In its broadest definition, a cultural landscsape is one that has been shaped in some way by human interaction with the land. The concept was articulated in 1925 by geographer Carl Sauer in his essay, "The Morphology of Landscape." Sauer wrote that the "cultural landscape is fashioned from a natural landscape by a culture group. Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape the result."[1] The components of the cultural landscape include everything from the buildings situated therein to the changes in vegetation brought about through the myriad day-to-day activities that have occurred there. As Sauer related, "Man's record upon the landscape," in all its myriad forms, comprises the subject of cultural landscape study.[2] More than a set of discrete locales, cultural landscapes are dynamic inter-related systems. Again, according to Sauer, "the objects which exist together in the landscape exist in interrelation. . . . they constitute a reality as a whole that is not expressed by a consideration of the constituents parts separately."[3] The elements of the cultural landscape must be analyzed in relation to one another and within the context of a larger cultural and natural system.

Although the theoretical separation of the natural and cultural elements that make up this system is in itself an artificial simplification, it is useful when analyzing the dynamics within the landscape. Continual change results from the dialectic relationship between human cultures and the environments they inhabit—a relationship in which the environment influences the evolution of culture and culture shapes the environment. Environmental historian William Cronon has described this process in his book, *Changes in the Land*:

> Environment may initially shape the range of choices available to a given people at a given moment, but then culture reshapes environment in responding to those choices. The reshaped environment presents a new set of possibilities for cultural reproduction, thus setting up a new cycle of mutual determination.[4]

This ongoing relationship results in continuing change, both to culture and the environment. The strength of such a perspective lies in its recognition of the dynamic nature of culture, "nature," and the intimate relationship between them.

Embedded into the tangible natural and cultural elements of this model of the human enviroment is its social dimension. Indeed, landscape is fundamentally a social creation, ladened with different meanings for different cultural groups. Thomas Greider and Lorraine Garkovitch, in their study of the social dimension of landscapes, wrote that "cultural groups socially construct landscapes as reflections of themselves. In the process, the social, cultural and natural enviroments are meshed and become part of the shared symbols and beliefs of members of the groups."[5] The traces of those meanings often can be read in the physical features of the cultural landscape, although they also may not be apparent—except to members of that group. Thus, the study of cultural landscapes can reveal the

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intricate patterns of meaning that people create and perceive in the land they occupy, and the many ways these individuals tie themselves to the land; this is accomplished both through their modes of production and through their cultural constructions—including social institutions, myths and beliefs, ideologies, and so forth.

The breadth of the cultural landscape approach makes the concept particularly useful for multicultural resource preservation. It has been applied to resource preservation, with some success, by American Indian and other cultural groups.[6] In general, Native American groups traditionally perceive land and resources as being interrelated, and culture and place ultimately as being inseparable. For the Tlingit of southeastern Alaska, the indigenous people who have a long history with the study site, social identity and being are continuous with the places in which they dwell. Their social structure creates a form of "social geography" through which individuals identify and interact with the landscape: it is a struture that underlies and shapes all other environmental interactions. This connection with places in the landscape is maintained through acts of everyday living--hunting, fishing, and gathering of food and materials--and in the landscape symbols that form part of the language and visual art of the Tlingit tradition. One Sitka Tlingit man recently expressed this connection when he stated: "These lands are vital not only to our subsistence, but to our sense of being."[7] The social dimension of the cultural landscape perspective recognizes these intangible ties to place.

Recognition of the rich stories that cultural landscapes can relate has led to increasing efforts to preserve and interpret them in this country. The National Park Service (NPS), steward of many important cultural landscapes, has been a leader in the movement. Indeed, the management of cultural landscapes has become a significant component of the NPS cultural resources program. The most recent NPS definition of a cultural landscape is "a geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with a historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values."[8] This definition reflects the fact that many of Ameica's national parks are historic sites, but it also incorporates other kinds of cultural landscapes. Within this broad category, the NPS has defined four types of cultural landscapes.

- **Historic designed landscapes** are defined as places "consciously designed or laid out by a landscape architect, master gardener, architect, or horticulturist according to design principles, or an amateur gardener working in a recognized style or tradition."

- **Historic vernacular landscapes** are those "that evolved through use by the people whose activities or occupancy shaped that landscape."

- **Historic sites** are landscapes "significant for [their] association with a historic event, activity or person."

- **Ethnographic landscapes** contain "a variety of natural and cultural resources that associated people define as heritage resources."[9]

These obviously are not rigid, mutually exclusive categories, but are intended as guidelines for studying cultural landscapes.

Most of the extensive NPS lands in Alaska protect natural and wilderness areas that have national and international significance. Though less well known, many of Alaska's sites also include important cultural resources and landscapes, but none are as rich as the area included within the boundaries of Sitka National Historical Park. The approximately 57 acres of land that make up the park have been shaped by a series of disparate and dynamic cultures which have deposited many layers of meaning and significance upon its surface.

The park contains elements of all four cultural landscape types as defined by the NPS. E.W. Merrill's work in siting the original totems and benches in an artistic manner within the park

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represents the work of an important individual artist who shaped a portion of a distinctive *historic designed landscape*. The trails, picnic spots, historic bridges, structures, and other social areas in the park comprise the elements of its *historic vernacular landscape*. Of course, the park is an important *historic site*, since it was the place where a battle occurred between the Russians and Tlingits in 1804. And finally, the park is an especially rich *ethnographic landscape*, where Tlingit people historically conducted their traditional practices—practices that continue to have meaning to the contemporary Tlingit community.

In order to describe most simply how the park's cultural landscape has evolved over time, we have divided the park into a series of landscape areas (component landscapes) that are defined according to physiographic, vegetative, and cultural qualities. Defined as follows, they are illustrated in Diagram 1.

- **Indian River Area**

  Having both natural and cultural significance, this component landscape encompasses the channel and the banks of the Indian River as it runs through the park. The area includes the present bridge and the sites of numerous historic bridges that crossed the river in the past.

- **Forested Area**

  This area, which includes the largest proportion of the park landscape, encompasses the interstitial wooded areas between trails and other landscape features on both sides of the Indian River. As integral components of the ethnographic and historic vernacular landscape, these areas have cultural as well as natural importance.

- **Beach and Tidal Flat Area**

  Shaped by wave action, tidal inundation, wind, and salt spray, the beaches and tidal zones surrounding the Indian River peninsula are distinctive ecological communities. Historically, this area has also been an important gathering, fishing, and recreational locale for the residents of Sitka.

- **Uplifted Beach Area**

  A relatively recent feature of the park landscape, this area includes the uplifted beach at the end of the Indian River peninsula. After being raised to elevations above tidal influcences, the former beach now supports terrestrial plant communities, including deciduous shrubs, alders, grasses, and umbels. The beach historically located in this area formed the battlefield where Russian and Tlingit forces met in 1804. The transformation of the historic battlefield results from a complex of human and natural influences on the coast.

- **Fort Area**

  This area has been defined to include the base of the Indian River peninsula, encompassing both the presently designated Tlingit fort site and a possible alternate fort site location situated close to the southwestern tip of the peninsula.

- **Russian Walk/Totem Trail Area**

  This culturally significant area includes the section of the historic Russian walk that led into the woods in the vicinity of the present visitor center, proceeded along the edge of the beach for a short distance, and then cut across the peninsula to the river. The historic Totem Trail, laid out in the early years of this century, follows the same path into the park, but continues along the edge of the beach to the base of the penisula; it then heads to the mouth of the river on what was the edge of the historic beach, but which is now flanked by the uplifted beach vegetation.

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- **Forest and River Trail Area**
  This area includes the other trails that traverse the park on both sides of the Indian River. It includes the trails along the river banks that yield views and glimpses of the stream through the trees, and trails that pass through the forest enclosure.

- **Russian Memorial Area**
  This culturally significant site includes the Russian Memorial and its immediate setting.

- **Monument/Park Entrance Area**
  The entrance area presently encompasses the visitor center and parking complex that was constructed in the 1960s. It is culturally significant as the site of the park museum and Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center, and for the display of a number of totem poles. The area has historic significance as the former site of missionary cottages that were constructed in the late nineteenth century for Presbyterian Tlingit families.

- **Picnic Area**
  Also constructed in the 1960s, the picnic area complex includes a picnic shelter, tables, and toilets all within a woodland setting.

Some of the landscape areas, such as the picnic area and uplifted beach sections, are of relatively recent origin. Others, such as the Indian River, the forests, and the tidal flats, have been components of that landscape for eons. The following chapters trace the evolution of these areas throughout the park's history, and detail their character and changes that occurred within them. We chose this method of partitioning the park in order to depict, as clearly as possible, how the various elements of the landscape have changed. That these elements are part of a complex, integrated, and dynamic environment that comprises the unique landscape of Sitka National Historical Park should be emphasized.

A series of landscape condition and plant community diagrams have been prepared to illustrate changes in the park landscape throughout its history. The landscape condition diagrams depict the general landforms and cultural features, whereas the vegetation maps depict the distribution of the major plant communities in the park. These plans derive from our synthesis and interpretation of numerous historic maps and documents. The historic maps that we utilized exhibit a great deal of variation both in their depiction of the landforms around the Indian River and the location of specific cultural features. This variation undoubtedly results, in part, from the fact that most of the historic maps are very large-scale surveys. It probably also reflects the dynamic nature of the Indian River landscape. Regardless of the cause, this variation frequently precluded us from determining the precise locations of certain historic features.

To create meaningful landscape plans for the periods depicted by these varying historic maps, we derived a standardized landform from both the Sitka National Monument map created in 1910 and the geomorphologic study of the park conducted during the early 1990s. To best locate the landscape features, we overlapped this landform with the historic maps. The intent of these historic site maps is to depict, as well as can be determined, the general location of the historic natural and cultural landscape features, and the spatial relationships that occur between them.

The other series of diagrams depict the vegetation types in the park during each historic period. Written accounts, illustrations, and photographs have yielded important clues as to the character of the vegetation near the Indian River, and a few of these sources record species observed there. These accounts, nonetheless, include only a smattering of information about the specific location and distribution of vegetation communities. Because of the paucity of documentation, particularly in the nineteenth century, the illustrated plant community distribution for these early periods is based upon a synthesis of the historical data and inferences

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D

UPLIFTED
MONUNCH AREA
ENTRAWESTERN
TED AREA
EASTERN
TED AREA

DE FLATS

N RIVER/
A SOUND

M TRAIL

N WALK

CH TRAIL

FOREST
R TRAILS
FOREST
R TRAILS

UNDARY

EM POLE

AL AREA

SERVICE
IGNATED
FORT SITE

RT AREA

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grounded in models of contemporary ecological change in the region and park. Often, however, the precise boundaries of these historic communities is impossible to know. These maps are also intended to convey the sense of place displayed by the landscape during the various historical periods.

The primary aim of this study, therefore, is to unearth the many layers of meaning and significance in the landscape of Sitka National Historical Park and to provide a picture of the changes that have embodied those meanings. The text tells the story of Sitka's cultures and their interaction with the park landscape. The maps and illustrations graphically demonstrate the changing shape of the landscape. This documented landscape evolution will provide the foundation for the development of an overall approach to cultural landscape preservation for the site. In large part, the historic and ethnographic significance and integrity of the park's landscape will be defined by measuring the site's present conditions and associations against its historic ones. That process of analysis, to be undertaken in the second phase of the project, will lead to the selection of appropriate landscape management and treatment alternatives for the site.

ENDNOTES

[1] Carl Sauer, "The Morphology of Landscape," in *Land and Life: A Selection from the Writings of Carl Ortwin Sauer*, edited by John Leighly (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963), 342-343; the essay originally appeared in 1925.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*, 321.
[4] William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1983), 13.
[5] Thomas Greider and Lorraine Garkovich, "Landscapes: The Social Construction of Nature and the Environment," *Rural Sociology* 59 (No.1, 1994): 8.
[6] Klara Kelley and Harris Francis, "Places Important to Navajo People, "*American Indian Quarterly*, 17 (No. 2, 1993): 151-69; Richard W. Stouffle, David B. Halmo, and Diane E. Austin, "Cultural Landscapes and Traditional Cultural Properties: A Southern Paiute View of The Grand Canyon and Colorado River," unpublished manuscript, Southwestern Field Area, National Park Service, Sante Fe, NM, 1995.
[7] Quoted in Thomas F. Thornton, "Place and Being Among the Tlingit," unpublished PhD Dissertation (Seattle: University of Washington, 1995), 1.
[8] Charles A. Birnbaum, *Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment and Management of Historic Landscapes, Preservation Briefs No. 36* (Washington, DC: National Park Service, 1994), 1.
[9] *Ibid.*, 2.

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CHAPTER 1

THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

"We have in front of us, magnificent nature, an archipelago full of cliffs and islands, with a huge, old forest. In the background are pyramid-like mountains covered by glimmering white snow."

Hjalmer Furuhjelm, 1854

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CHAPTER 1

THE ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

The components of the natural environment comprise the "medium" with which humans shape the landscape. Additionally, the "natural" dynamics of the physical environment play a central role in the history of a cultural landscape. With an understanding of the dynamics of the park's environment, the consequences of human activities that occurred there can be understood, and to some extent, predicted, making inferences possible when re-constructing past landscapes that have limited historic documentation. To that end, and despite the dangers of making an artificial and simplistic separation between natural and cultural environmental components, we begin this study with an overview of the regional environment and then discuss, in more detail, the ecology of Sitka National Historical Park.

THE REGIONAL ECOSYSTEM

Sitka lies on Baranof Island in the Alexander Archipelago of southeastern Alaska within the Pacific Northwest Coast Biome (major ecological region) of North America.[1] This biome extends approximately 2,300 miles along the Pacific Coast of North America from central California to the Gulf of Alaska (Figure 1-1), and ranges from a few miles in width at both its northern and southern ends to a width of almost 200 miles near the United States-Canada border. The region's distinctive climate is characterized by mild wet winters and warm dry summers. The abundant rains, as much as several hundred inches per year in some areas, fall on the biome primarily in winter, with less than 20 percent falling between April and September.[2] Summer drought and mild temperatures, together with the infrequency of catastrophic storms in that region, are currently thought to be important among the unique climatic conditions that have fostered the development of the distinctive vegetation that defines the biome—the temperate coniferous rainforest.

These magnificent rain forests, which have the highest biomass of any natural community in the world, are unique to the North American continent.[3] They occur in a band from near sea level to elevations under 5,000 feet in Oregon and under 2,000 feet in Alaska.[4] Although the forest species change throughout the extent of the biome, the mature rainforest stands are characterized by the predominance of very large, long-lived coniferous trees. They are commonly 60 to 70 meters (197 to 230 feet) tall and frequently have diameters of 100-200 cm (3.33 to 6.66 feet) dbh.[5]

Old growth forest stands, which typically develop in approximately 200 to 250 years, exhibit a multi-layered canopy, with large trees being scattered throughout specimens of many different sizes. Down and standing dead trees play a significant role in these forests, both as nursery beds and as sources of nutrients. In addition, they create canopy gaps which allow secondary trees, shrubs, and herbs to grow in areas of more light. Branches in the upper forest canopy provide habitat for many moss and lichen species, while the understory in these old growth forests consists of a lush growth of ferns, mosses, and herbs.[6] Beneath the vegetation a deep layer of duff and organic soil typically develops on the forest floor.[7]

The distribution of the dominant[8] coniferous species varies throughout the extent of the biome. In California, the southernmost section, the redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*) is the dominant species, while in the central section, which extends roughly from northwestern California to approximately 51° North Latitude near the northern end of Vancouver Island, the dominant species are Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), western red cedar (*Thuja plicata*), and western hemlock (*Tsuga heterophylla*). In the northernmost section of the biome, which extends from northern Vancouver Island to the Gulf of Alaska,

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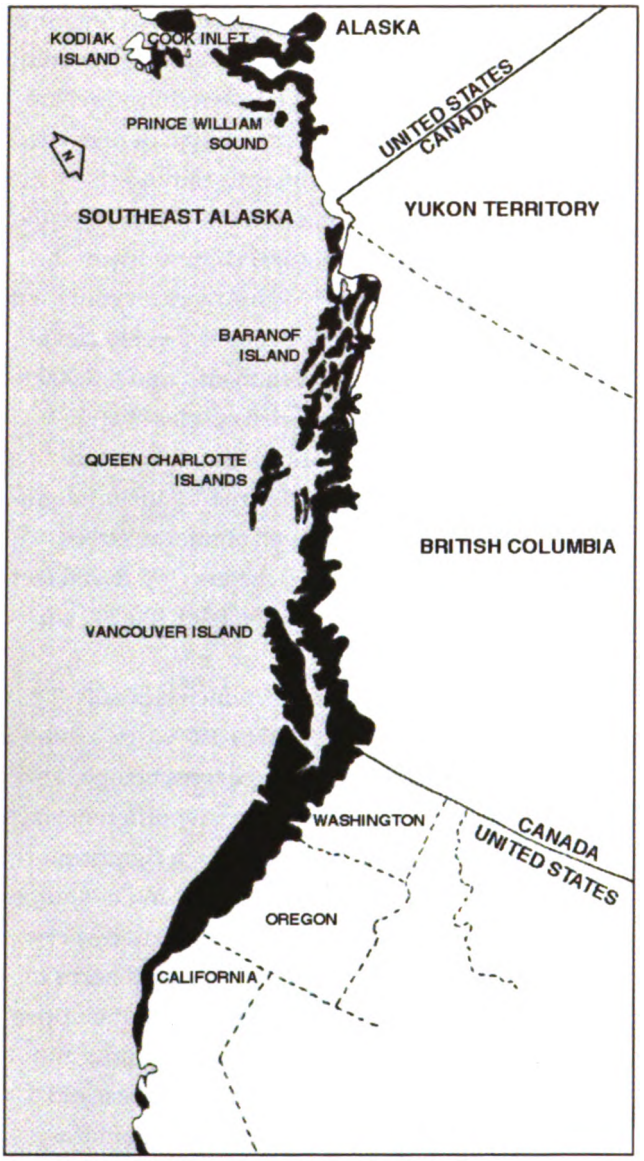

Figure 1-1. Pacific Northwest Coast Biome.

western hemlock and Sitka spruce (*Picea sitchensis*) are the dominant rainforest species.[9] This distribution is influenced by the moisture differential along the coast. In the southern and central sections of the biome, where less rain falls than in the north, fire plays an important role in the maintenance of the redwood and Douglas fir dominance. The greater year-round rainfall in the northern section prevents regular conflagration.[10]

SOUTHEASTERN ALASKA

Southeastern Alaska, the regional context for Sitka National Historical Park, extends from approximately 55° N. Latitude at the Dixon Entrance to Icy Bay at 60° N. Latitude, and comprises the majority of the northern subsection of the Pacific Northwest Coast biome (Figure 1-2).[11] Approximately 520 miles long, it is comprised of a 30-mile-wide strip of mountainous mainland and an 80-mile-wide chain of over one thousand islands that form the Alexander Archipelago.[12] The physiography of the region is dominated by the Chugach and St. Elias coastal mountains in the north on the mainland, and by mountainous barrier islands that form extensive archipelagos in some areas; within these barrier islands, numerous islands and steep mainland fjords exist. The terrain is rugged, with mainland mountain peaks that reach as high as 18,000 feet and island mountain tops that range from 2,000 to 4,000 feet in elevation.[13] The mountains are usually steep, often ascending from sea level to a height of 4,000 feet within the span of a short distance.[14] Over 65 percent of the land in this temperate rainforest region is covered with trees, primarily western hemlock and Sitka spruce that extend upward to elevations of about 2,000 feet, after which subalpine forests, meadows, and alpine communities predominate.[15] Both marine and terrestrial wildlife are abundant throughout, although because of the numerous islands that comprise the region, the distribution of terrestrial species is uneven.[16]

Runoff from the abundant precipitation mingles with spring waters and flows down the mountainsides in numerous streams and rivers that lead to the Pacific. The large mainland rivers, such as the Stikine, the Taku, the Chilkat, and the Alsek, originate in Canada and are primarily glacially fed (Figure 1-2). The many island streams are commonly short (less than 15 miles in length), and although a few are fed by mountain glaciers, most originate from high surface runoff. In addition, there are over 20,000 lakes and ponds in southeastern Alaska.[17] In other poorly drained, relatively

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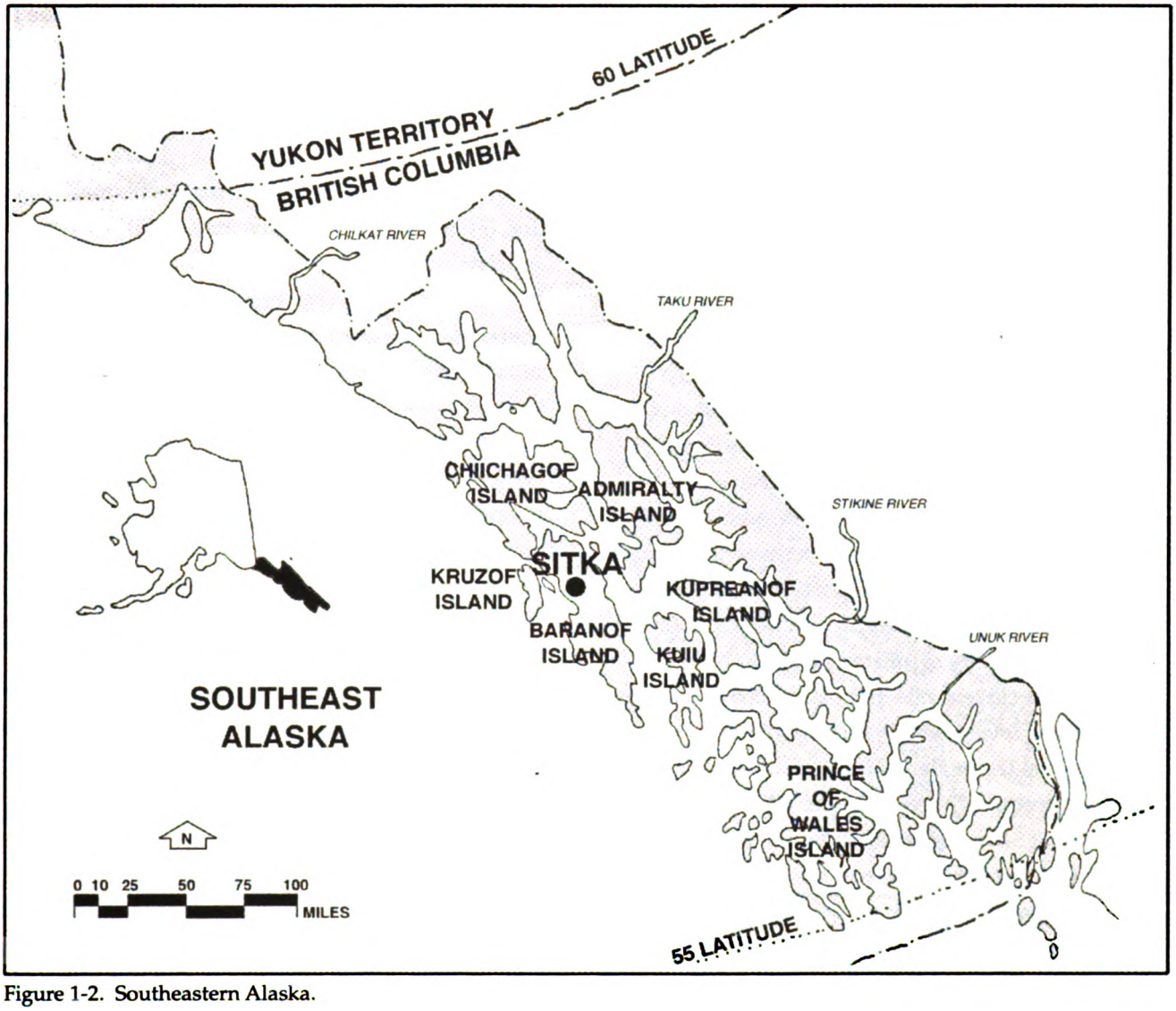

Figure 1-2. Southeastern Alaska.

level pockets in the terrain, water collects and creates numerous freshwater marshes and peatlands.[18]

GEOMORPHOLOGY

Although the exact chronology and extent of glaciation are not presently known, it is clear that the topography of the region was shaped extensively during the Pleistocene.[19] Late Wisconsin glaciation probably reached its maximum in the Alexander Archipelago from 14,000 to 16,000 years before present (BP).[20] The glaciers flowed down the river valleys of the mainland and reached an elevation from 2,600 to 3,600 feet on the islands and 6,500 to 8,200 feet on the mainland.[21] A later glacial advance is thought to have occurred between 9,000 and 13,000 years BP.[22] By the time of their maximum retreat, approximately 6,000 to 8,000 years ago, the glaciers had sculpted a landscape of numerous cirques and U-shaped valleys, and created till plains, outwash plains, hanging valleys, and fjords.[23] Marine transgression (flooding of the land by the sea) that accompanied deglaciation resulted in the inundation of many fjords and valleys with sea levels as much as 200 meters (about 667 feet) above

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the present situation.[24] A most recent cool period, the Little Ice Age, reached its maximum around 1750 AD as the glaciers grew again and caused the lowering of the sea level. The current trend in the region, except for some active glaciers on the mainland and at high altitudes, is one of deglaciation.[25]

Several other geologic forces affect the shape of southeastern Alaska's present topography. The amount of regional uplift that has occurred since deglaciation ranges throughout the region from 60 to 500 feet. The uplifting process is traditionally thought to be a consequence of isostatic rebound that occurs when the massive glaciers retreat. However, tectonic forces may also be a factor. Several locales in the region experienced dramatic episodic uplift during seismic events in the historic period. As a result, there may be no linear correlation between the rate of uplift and deglaciation. Rates of uplift vary significantly throughout the region. The current rate at Sitka is -.008 feet per year (drop in sea level), which, if constant since deglaciation (estimated at 9,000 years ago), would amount to about 70 feet of uplift. Other physical evidence at Sitka, however, indicates that uplift there has ranged from 50 to 65 feet.[26]

Post-glacial volcanic eruptions on Kruzof Island also have been a factor in the development of the present landforms. Mount Edgecombe has erupted several times since deglaciation, including about 4,200 and 5,.800 years ago.[27] There also is some evidence of possible historic eruptions.[28] These eruptions spread ash and small rock as far as southeastern Chichagof Island, with most concentrated on Kruzof, southwestern Chichagof, and northwestern Baranov islands.[29] Ejection of such materials, and changes in the volume of magma chambers, could possibly have caused shifting of land surfaces in the area.[30] Additionally, volcanic landforms are common on the southern end of Kruzof Island. The volcanic component in the evolution of the regional landforms contributes to the complex processes of deglaciation and plate tectonics, all of which have created and continue to shape the dramatic and dynamic landscape of southeastern Alaska.

MARINE INFLUENCE

The Pacific Ocean and its many channels, bays, and inlets play a central role in the southeastern Alaskan environment. Its currents shape the climate, the force and energy of the ocean's waves shape the shorelines, and its biota provide food for much of the terrestrial life in the region. The Alaska Current, an eddy of the warm westward flowing Kuroshio Drift, moderates the temperatures of southeastern Alaska by buffering the winter sea temperatures; this current maintains an average temperature of approximately 42° F, and keeps the sea relatively cool in summer, at an average of 55° F. The warm current also produces heavy cloud cover that brings great amounts of annual precipitation and obscures the sun for some 85 percent of the year.[31]

CLIMATE

The rugged topography of the region results in a high degree of local variability in the climate of southeastern Alaska. Higher elevations in the region experience greater temperature ranges and mainland areas show more continental and glacial climatic influences. In coastal locations, however, average maximum summer temperatures range from 55 to 66° Fahrenheit and winter temperatures rarely drop below 20° F.[32]

The amount of precipitation dropped by air masses as they rise over the coastal mountains varies from place to place, depending on topography, the jet stream, and proximity to the ocean. Coastal regions receive an average of 80 to 100 inches per year, whereas island areas may receive from 150 to 200 inches or more annually (Figures 1-3 & 1-4). Precipitation is generally heaviest in October and lightest in June. Snowfall is extremely variable throughout the region, ranging from a mean annual amount at sea level of 40 inches per year, to 200 inches per year or more on mountain peaks.

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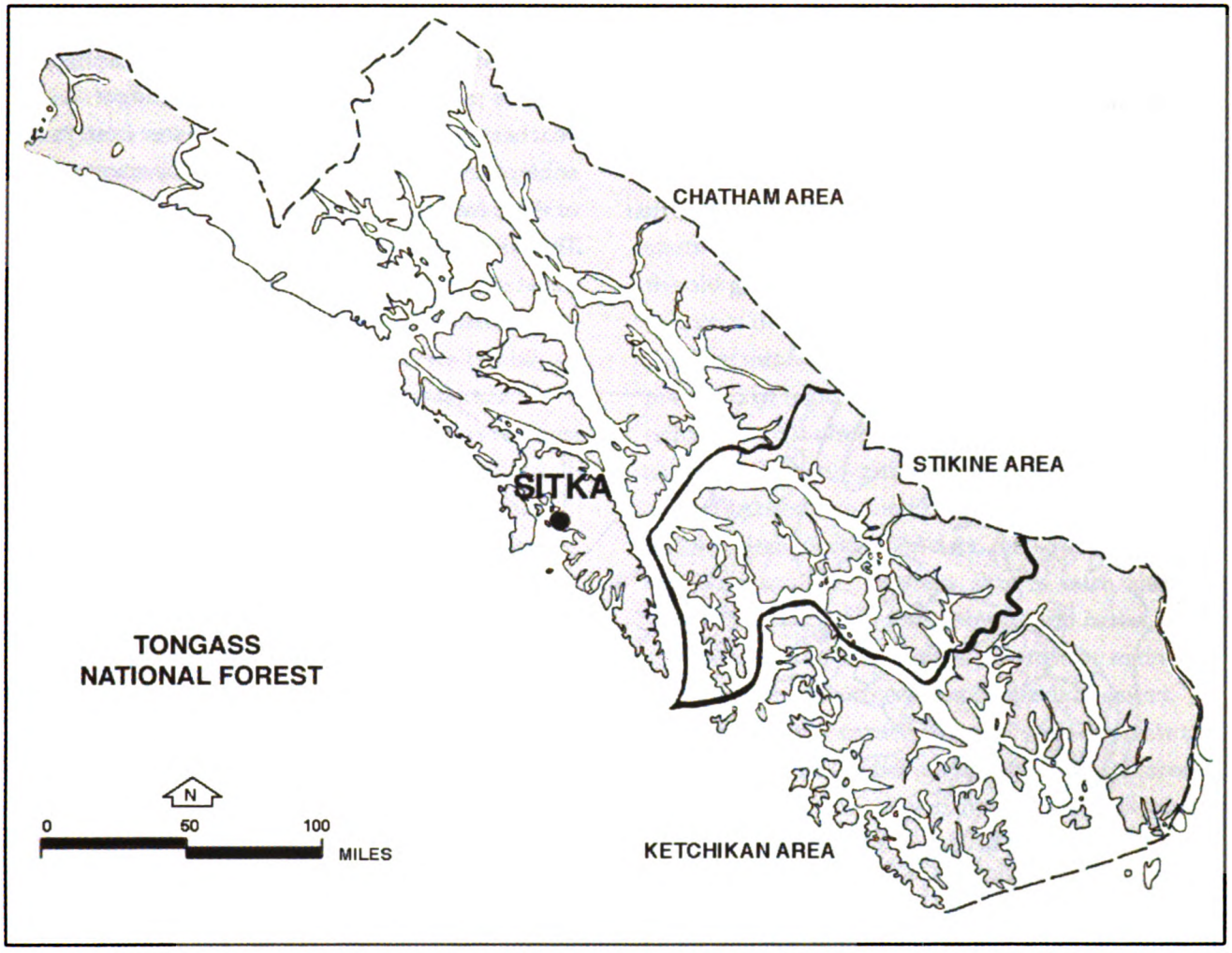

Figure 1-3. The shaded areas comprise the three components of the Tongass National Forest in southeastern Alaska.

Whereas the peaks on southern Baranov Island and the mainland can receive up to 400 inches per year, coastal areas may not receive any snow at all during mild winters. During fall and winter, strong storms are frequent in southeastern Alaska, bringing heavy winds and precipitation that often result in flooded streams and rivers and forest blowdowns.

Day length and light intensity are important factors in creating the regional climate. The length of the day in southeastern Alaska varies from about 7 hours in winter to approximately 18.5 hours in summer. As mentioned above, persistent cloud cover is common in the region. The low light intensity and short day length during the winter season create an environment in southeastern Alaska that is predominately wet and cool.[33]

SOILS

Soil formation is influenced by the geological parent material, topography, climate, and vegetation of the region. In southeastern Alaska, weathered bedrock and surficial deposits—primarily glacial till, alluvial (stream deposited), and colluvial (gravity deposited)—make up the majority of parent soil material. Glacial till is extensive throughout the region up to 1,500 feet of elevation and varies in depth from one foot on the upper slopes to as much as 30 feet in valleys. The region's cool, wet climate fosters a slow rate of organic decomposition, so that a thick layer of organic material accumulates under the forest vegetation. Consequently, most plant roots are concentrated in that 6- to 10-inch layer. Soils are generally acidic (pH around 5.0), high in

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organic carbon and iron, and low in available nitrogen and phosphorus.[34] The formation of soil is a continual process in terrestrial habitats and the specific mosaic of these soils within the region reflects the interaction of the geological parent material, the climate, and the plant communities that are present.[35]

VEGETATION

In southeastern Alaska, coniferous forested habitats predominate from the upper edges of beaches and beach meadows to the tree limit in the subalpine zone of the mountains. The composition of these forests changes elevationally and locally. The Sitka spruce-western hemlock temperate rain forest occurs throughout the region below elevations of approximately 1,500 to 2,000 feet. However, within that general category and depending upon local conditions, numerous forest communities occur. In general, Sitka spruce trees dominate the coastal forests subject to wind-borne salt spray, as well as those situated on flood plains or alluvial fans that receive surface and subsurface flooding. Western hemlock is the most widespread dominant species of the rainforest, extending from low hills to steep mountain slopes. Throughout this elevational range, however, other coniferous species such as yellow-cedar (*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*) and shore pine (*Pinus contorta*) dominate in areas that have poor soil drainage or cold temperatures. Western red cedar (*Tjuga plicata*) occurs only in the

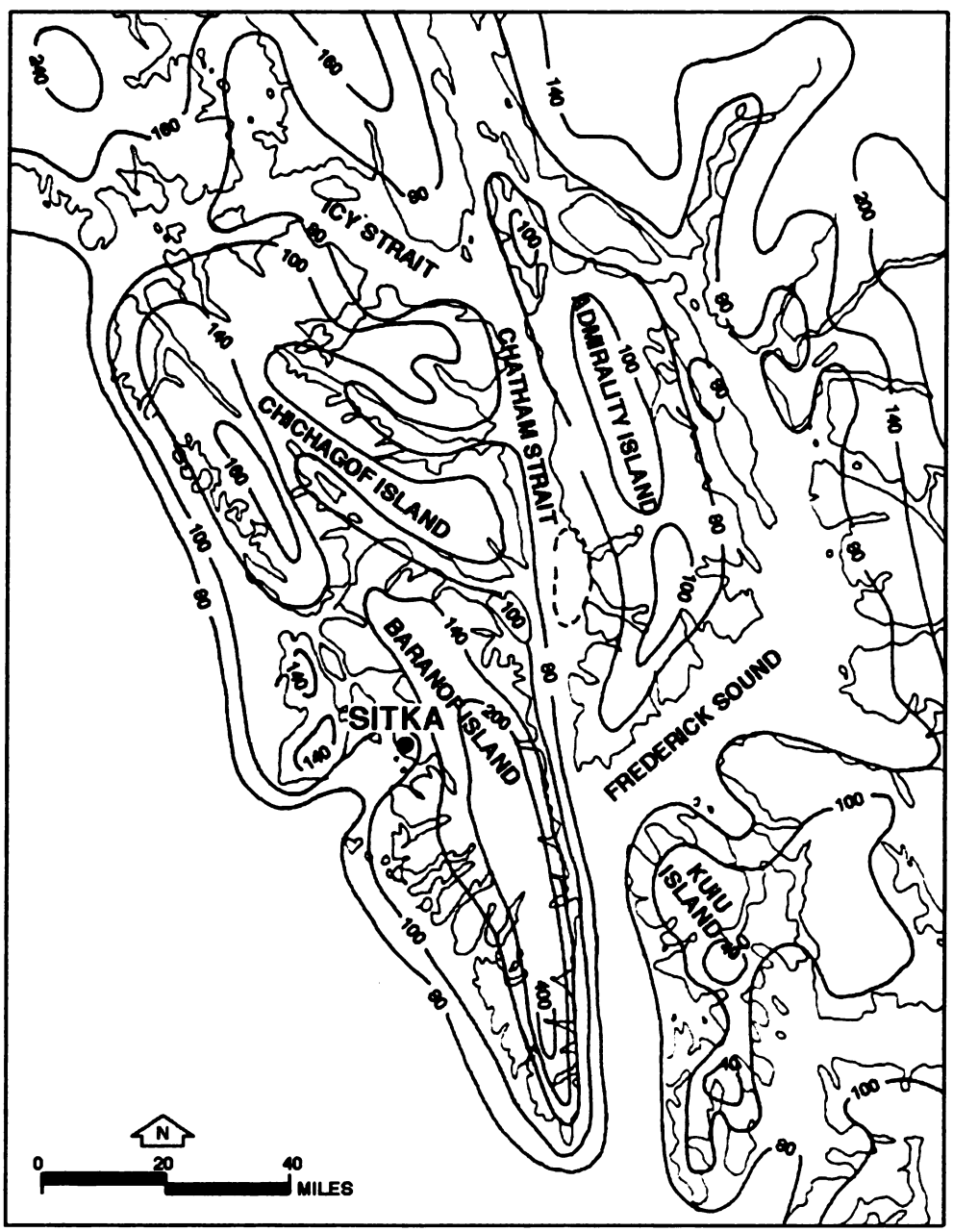

Figure 1-4. Precipitation (mean inches/year) for the Chatham Area, Tongass National Forest.

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southernmost forests of southeastern Alaska. In addition to these forest associations, red alder (*Alnus rubra*)-dominated plant communities occur along floodplains or on other recently disturbed and unstable sites, such as landslide areas. These alder communities often are transitional communities that develop into spruce associations after time and soil stabilization have occurred. [36]

The structure of the rainforest also varies depending on the age of the stand as well as its response to local conditions. In some stands, particularly young ones, the tree canopy is so dense that the shrub and groundlayers are not well developed. Typical old growth stands exhibit a multi-canopied structure comprised of a well developed secondary tree, shrub, and herb layer beneath the dominant canopy. Most Sitka spruce and western hemlock communities have a canopy cover that ranges from 60 to 100 percent. Fallen and standing dead trees, frequently blown over in heavy winds, not only create gaps in the canopy that allow the understory to develop, but they also play a primary role in the dynamics of the forest ecosystem as habitat for insect and animal populations, as seedbeds or nurseries for seedlings, as sites of nitrogen fixation, and as critical sources of nutrients and energy.[37]

The extent and composition of the shrub and groundlayers in the forest communities vary in response to the amount of light that penetrates the canopy, as well as to soil and climatic conditions. A number of the most common shrubs such as several species of blueberry (*Vaccinium* spp.) and rusty menziesia (*Menziesia ferruginea*), are members of the Ericaceae family that thrive on the acidic forest soils. Blueberry species are commonly the dominant shrubs throughout the forest, and range from sea level to the subalpine zone. Devil's club (*Oplopanax horridum*), another common forest shrub, occurs in areas with subsurface water movement, as is common in riparian areas, but also on low mountain slopes. Beneath the shrubs, ferns such as deer and oak fern (*Blechnum spicant* and *Gymnocarpium dryopteris*), and herbs, such as bunchberry (*Cornus canadensis*), five-leaf bramble (*Rubus pedatus*), and fern leaf goldenthread (*Coptis asplenifolia*) occur.[38] In addition, several saprophytic orchid species flourish in the densely shaded areas of old growth forests. Such moist shade is also favored by the abundant mosses that occur in the old growth forests of southeastern Alaskan. Mosses and lichens inhabit the old growth canopy as well, surviving on the nutrients they receive from rain, fog, and dew.[39]

The rainforest provides important habitat for many of the region's mammals, particularly in winter when it offers cover from heavy storms and snows and when warm season forage is not available. The most common mammals of the forest include Sitka black-tailed deer, red squirrels, northern flying squirrels, martens, shrews, mice, and voles. The evergreen forest shrubs and herbs, such as blueberry and bunchberry, provide the mainstay of deer forage in winter. Red squirrels consume large numbers of spruce cones. Flying squirrels feed on the epiphytic lichens and mosses that colonize the upperstory. In addition, numerous birds inhabit the forest. Sharpshinned hawks and northern goshawks hunt and nest in old growth forests, while woodpeckers, chickadees, and owls nest in the cavities of old trees and dead wood. Marbled murrelets nest in the forest, as do bald eagles; the latter generally choose large spruce trees along the coast. Many other bird species also breed in the forest. The rainforest provides habitat and seasonal resources for many southeastern Alaskan species, and it is especially critical for the winter survival of the Sitka deer.[40]

HABITATS OF SOUTHEASTERN ALASKA

The marine landscape of southeastern Alaska comprises a diverse group of inter-related habitats. Moving generally from the lowest elevation to the highest, they include the following: the marine habitats, which embrace the aquatic marine environment and the intertidal zones; the upland habitats, which include the beach, forest, sub-alpine, and

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Table 1-1
Marine Habitats of Southeastern Alaska

Habitat	Location	Important Physiographic Characteristics	*Important Biota
Marine	Elevations below tidal zone.	Permanent salt water submergence.	Humpback & minke whales, orcas, porpoises, seals, sea lions, sea otters, salmon, cod, halibut, herring.
Lower Intertidal	Low elevation tidal zone.	Long periods of salt water submergence and exposure to wave action.	Octopus, shrimp, crab, sea cucumbers, kelp and red algae.
Middle Intertidal	Mid-elevation tidal influence.	Shorter periods of inundation and exposure to wave action.	Anenomes, barnacles, limpets, chitons, mussels, and rockweed.
Upper Intertidal	Highest reaches of tidal influence.	Salt spray and brief periods of inundation and exposure to wave action.	Invertebrates such as barnacles, limpets, periwinkles. Salt tolerant lichens. Salt tolerant herb such as goose-tongue.

* The species listed represent a sampling of biota that are found within the habitats.
Sources: Derived from O'Clair, et al., *The Nature*; Martin, et al., *Forest Plant Associations*; Schultz, *The Northwest Coast*.

alpine habitats; and the wetland habitats, including riparian zones, fresh water marshes, peatlands, and salt marshes. While these habitats are all intimately interconnected and interdependent, they can be envisioned as a series of biotic zones that occur in specific physical conditions in the landscape. Within these simplified zones, a mosaic of micro-environments creates local variation. Also, the habitats frequently grade into one another, creating ecotones between major habitat types. Tables 1, 2, and 3 illustrate the important characteristics of each habitat, including their relative locations, distinctive physical conditions, and the important biota that occur there.

DYNAMICS OF THE SOUTHEASTERN ALASKAN ENVIRONMENT

In southeastern Alaska many natural forces, both allogenic (those from outside the community) and autogenic (those originating from community biota), contribute to continual change in the natural landscape. They are critical in shaping both present and past landscapes. A discussion of the most important factors driving these changes concludes this overview of southeastern Alaskan ecology.

Ecological change occurs in southeastern Alaska on a range of scales, much of it deriving from the allogenic effects of geologic and climatic processes. Beginning with the most fundamental, the process of regional uplift that is occurring—especially in the northern sections of southeastern Alaska—is raising land from one habitat zone to an elevation where the development of another zone will occur. Thus the uplifted intertidal may be transformed into a beach meadow community; a beach community, in turn, may become a young forest. New communities are continually developing as a result of this uplift process. In addition, other dramatic geologic forces

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Table 1-2
Upland Habitats of Southeastern Alaska

Habitat	Location	Distinctive Physiographic Characteristics	Important Biota
Beach	Just above the upper limits of tidal influence.	Exposure to wind, salt spray, and storm waves.	Herbs such as goose-tongue, hairy cinquefoil, coastal strawberry, northern riceroot, dune grass, beach pea, and giant vetch. Numerous shorebirds.
Beach Meadow	Between beach and forest.	Exposure to sun and wind.	Grasses, herbs such as cow parsnip and angelica, shrubs such as salmonberry, and trees such as alders. Numerous birds and insects.
Temperate Rainforest	From upper edge of beaches and beach meadows to about 1,500 feet in elevation.	Above level of direct marine influence; stable, well-drained sites.	Dominant tree species are Sitka spruce and western hemlock. Shrubs include blueberry, rusty menziesia, and devil's club. Ferns and mosses. Mammals such as deer, squirrels, martens, and voles. Birds such as hawks, woodpeckers, owls, marbled murrelets, and bald eagles.
Montane Forest	Between 1,500 and 2,000-2,500 feet in elevation.	Earlier frost date, colder temperatures, exposure to wind; stable, well-drained slopes.	Dominant tree is mountain hemlock. Ferns and meadow herbs in openings. Alpine plants, such as deer cabbage and Merten's cassiope in understory. Deer, bears, mountain goats.
Subalpine	Above elevations of 2,000-2,500 feet.	Short growing season, cold temperatures, heavy snow.	Some mountain hemlock below tree limit. Above tree limit, meadows with cow parsnip, fireweed, deer cabbage, gentian. Deer, mountain goats, bears, and marmots.
Alpine	Above subalpine zone.	Cold, wind, extreme temperature fluctuations.	Low shrubs such as cassiope, dwarf blueberry, and arctic willow. Herbs such as saxifrage and moss campion. Wolves, wolverines, ptarmigans.

Sources: Derived from O'Clair, et al., *The Nature*; Martin, et al., *Forest Plant Associations*; Schultz, *The Northwest Coast*.

that occurred in the past, such as volcanic eruptions and earthquakes, have had profound effects in shaping the land and the communities thereon.

Climatic forces drive much of the dynamics within the regional communities. The violent winds and heavy rains of many southeastern Alaskan winter storms can cause dramatic alterations to the landscape. During these events, storm waves pound the shoreline and storm tides flood into higher elevations. In the heaviest rains, streams and rivers overflow their banks, pick up and carry debris downstream, deposit sediment in some areas, and erode others. Waterlogged soils can let loose and slide down the steep mountain slopes, toppling the forest beneath it, while at higher elevations, heavy snows can result in avalanches. Storm winds

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Table 1-3
Wetland Habitats of Southeastern Alaska

Habitat	Location	Distinctive Physiographic Characteristics	Important Biota
Riparian	From sub-alpine to sea level.	Presence of flowing water for at least part of the year.	Varies throughout elevation. Herbs include speedwell, marsh marigold, and yellow monkey flower. Trees include red alder, willow species, and Sitka spruce. Several aquatic plants. Salmon, trout, Dolly Varden, invertebrates, insects, and birds.
Fresh water Marshes	Fringes of lake and ponds, floodplains of rivers and streams.	Relatively shallow fresh water submergence.	Sedges, bulrush and horsetail, pond lily, burreed, and spike watermilfoil. Ducks, geese, sand hill cranes, herons, beavers, muskrats, bog lemmings, and voles.
Peatlands	Areas of poor soil drainage.	Saturated soil, acidic conditions, and low oxygen.	Sphagnum mosses, shore pine, sedges, bog kalmia, bog rosemary, and Labrador tea. Numerous insects, jays juncos, blue grouse, raptors, masked shrews, bog lemmings, wolves, bears, weasels, wolverines, and deer.
Salt Marshes	Intertidal zones at river and stream mouths.	Extended salt water submergence; protected from wave action.	Sedges, goose-tongue, and grasses. Invertebrates, small fish, shorebirds, geese, ducks, crows, ravens, bald eagles, deer, and bears.

Sources: Dervied from O'Clair, et al., *The Nature*; Martin, et al., *Forest Plant Associations*; Schultz, *The Northwest Coast*.

frequently blow down forest trees, creating gaps in the forest canopy that range from a small opening to the blowdown of an entire stand. Whatever the cause, many factors, including the extent and severity of the change, the nature of the surrounding communities, and the subsequent allogenic conditions, will affect the character of the new community that develops in the altered landscape.

Autogenic factors that play a role in the dynamics of ecological communities occur over long periods of time, operate on a broad range of scales, and have profound effects on the habitat. Within a community, organisms exert influence upon other organisms, creating a complex web of interactions, such as those that occur in an undisturbed plant community over time. On a typical southeastern Alaskan uplifted beach that has been raised beyond the influence of salt spray and regular inundation, grasses and forbs will colonize the sunny beach cobble. In their annual cycle, the herbs, along with the insects, birds, and animals that may feed upon them and one another, drop organic material onto the ground and build a stabilizing and nutritious organic layer of soil. These sunny, enriched, and stabilized conditions favor the generation of shrubs and trees such as salmonberry (*Rubus spectabilis*) and red alder. These species, however, begin to make conditions less favorable for some of the herbs by creating shadier conditions for them. If the shrubs thrive and begin to dominate the community, herbs

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that need sunnier conditions become less numerous. At the same time, the shadier, stable conditions favor the germination of spruce seedlings. As the spruce seedlings mature, they create shadier conditions that discourage the sun-loving shrubs, and favor shrub species that tolerate less light. This development of spruce forests on uplifted beaches is a very common type of community transformation in southeastern Alaska.

Many factors influence the specific community that will develop. In addition to the influence of plants and soil emphasized in this simplified example, fauna effect community characteristics as well. Deer herbivory, for example, is an important factor in the temperate rain forests of southeastern Alaska. Without their presence, the forests would exhibit different structural and compositional characteristics. Also, allogenic forces that create different conditions may occur at any time. In addition, these climatic and geologic factors exhibit a mosaic of local variation, such that the communities that also develop reflect those variations as well. These factors complicate the reconstruction of historic vegetation.

In addition to these intricate dynamic processes, human activities in southeastern Alaska have resulted in environmental change. Like other species, humans alter the environment just in the course of living. Traditionally, the Tlingit made constant changes to their environment, primarily at a relatively small scale. The Europeans and Americans brought the influences of their market economies into the region, shaping their towns and environments around different modes of production. Russian settlements were sited and designed in the interest of sea otter hunting. Access to market resources shaped the development of many towns. The construction of harbors and roads during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, for example, changed the physical fabric of many areas and biota, and altered the flow of winds and waters around them. Although these and a multitude of other activities may be locally limited in their effects, their sum total has a pervasive influence upon the environment.

At least since the introduction of the market economy in southeastern Alaska, the extraction of its resources has had long-lasting effects on the character of the natural communities: Russian hunting practices reduced the sea otter population to near extinction; commercial fishing and whaling operations resulted in great reductions among these populations; and hydraulic mining wiped away entire hillsides. Beginning with the Russians and continuing to the present, commercial logging has resulted in drastic environmental change; it has both altered the habitats within and adjacent to the harvested area, and has affected more distant communities through erosion, sedimentation, and pollution. So despite the fact that southeastern Alaska has been *relatively* unaltered by humans when compared to other regions of the world, various peoples, throughout their long history in the region, certainly have played an important role in modifying the ecological habitats accessible to them.

It is therefore obvious that change in ecological communities, limited in southeastern Alaska by certain physical and climatic constraints, is a continual process that arises from a complex interplay of forces. As inhabitants of the ecosystem, humans also have had and continue to have both allogenic and autogenic effects. The habitats that comprise Sitka National Historic Park display all of these dynamic dimensions of ecological transformation.

ECOLOGY OF SITKA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

Sitka National Historical Park occupies a relatively small, low elevation coastal site within this regional landscape. The park lies about one mile southeast of Sitka on the western coast of Baranov Island; it is situated near the center of southeastern Alaska at approximately 57° North Latitude (see Figure 1-2). Although Sitka lies on the western edge of the panhandle, the area, including the park, is buffered from the full force of the Pacific by the

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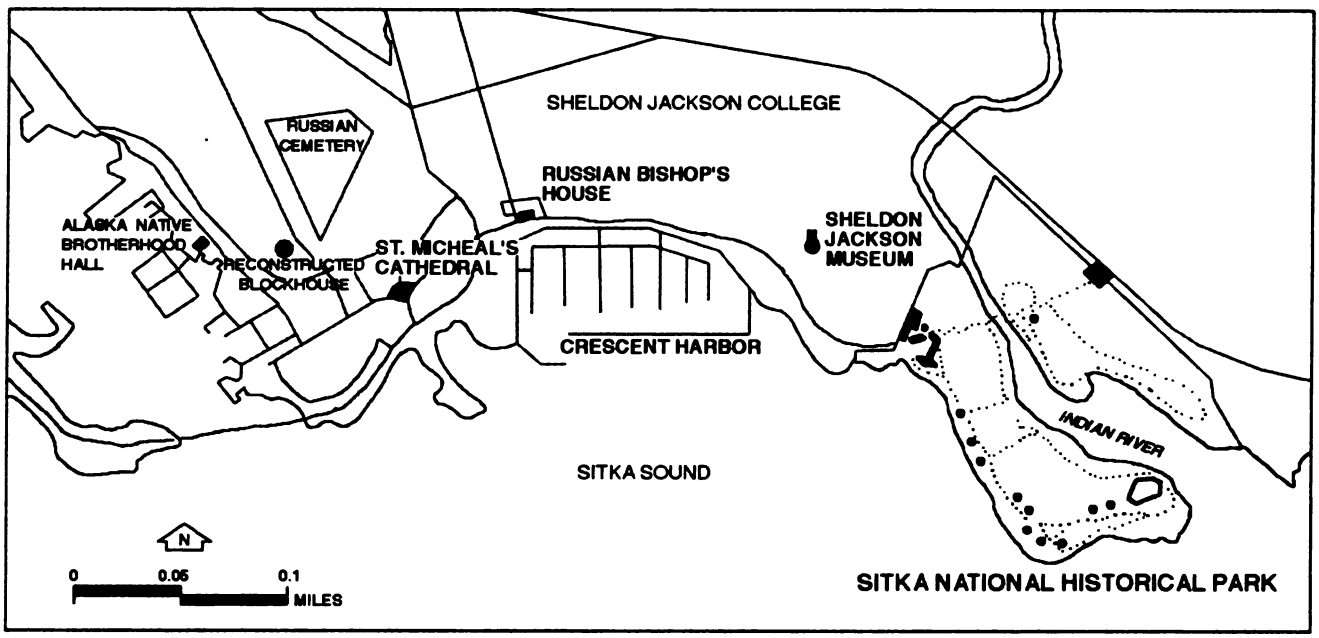

Figure 1-5. Sitka, including major landmarks, and Sitka National Historic Park.

numerous small forested islands scattered throughout Sitka Sound. The park comprises approximately 57 acres of land, encompassing the mouth of the Indian River as it flows into Jamestown and Crescent bays (Figure 1-5). It includes several habitat types: the riparian zone and estuary of the Indian River; western hemlock/Sitka spruce forest habitat that occurs on each side of the river; beach meadow and beach habitats; and intertidal zones on the southern and southwestern perimeter of the Indian River peninsula. Sitka National Historical Park is also the site of the dynamic ecological processes discussed above. Following an overview of its geomorphology, each of the park habitats is discussed in the following, as well as the natural processes of change that occur therein.

GEOMORPHOLOGY AND SOILS

The landforms of Sitka National Historical Park are comprised of alluvium deposited by the Indian River that has been reworked by marine processes.[41] The sources of these deposits are the steep mountain slopes and cirques at the head of the Indian River and its tributaries.[42] The forces of Indian River deposition, along with regional uplift, and marine waves, have combined since glaciation to form the present landforms. Waves have transported sediment along the beach, which has shifted the mouth of the river back toward Jamestown Bay and away from the main source of wave energy, and formed the uplifted sediments into a series of beach ridges. The landforms on the western side of the park are the result of these processes.[43]

In their excellent study of the geomorphology of Sitka National Historical Park, Chaney, Betts, and Longenbaugh define five current geomorphological regions in the park: 1) active beach, 2) uplifted beaches, 3) active river channel, 4) abandoned river channel and floodplains, and 5) bedrock outcrops. Based upon their fieldwork, research, and analyses of soil and tephra samples taken from within the park, the investigators developed a chronology of park landform development. According to their findings, before 3600 BC, the Indian River delta was probably north of the present location of the Sheldon Jackson Museum. They describe an episodic uplift that occurred in conjunction with Mt. Edgecombe's eruption around 2485 BC, in which the tidal flats of the Indian River uplifted. In a series of eight maps, dating from around 2600 BC to 1804 AD, the authors illustrate the formation of land as the region contin-

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ued to uplift and as a series of beach ridges formed the Indian River peninsula. Their study provides a thorough analysis of the dynamic geomorphological processes that shaped Sitka National Historical Park and illustrates graphically a characteristic type of land formation in southeastern Alaska.[44]

HABITATS WITHIN THE PARK

The gradual emergence of the Indian River peninsula that occurred over thousands of years and the concomitant evolution of ecological communities has led to the present conditions that characterize the park landscape. The geomorphological regions described by Chaney et al. underlie the ecological habitats that occur in the park. This discussion of those habitats includes the park ecological units defined by the U.S. Forest Service on the basis of landform, geology, soil, and vegetation, as well as habitats they did not include (see Figure 1-6 for the location of the units).[45] The location, extent, and physical and biotic character, as well as the natural dynamics within each habitat of the park landscape, are treated in the following section.

Riparian Habitat

The Indian River is the central component in the ecology of Sitka National Historical Park. Its waters have created, shaped, and continue to form the park's landforms; they dramatically effect vegetation in the floodplain and provide habitat for many important species in the faunal community. The Indian River watershed encompasses 12.6 square miles as it drains the post-glaciation mountain valley formed by Mt. Verstovia, Arrowhead Peak, the Sisters, and Gavan Hill.[46] The mountains, reaching as high as 3,880 feet in elevation, accumulate heavy snowpack. Several streams drain the steep mountain slopes, converge into one channel about 2.5 miles upstream from the river's mouth, and continue southwest to Sitka Sound and the Pacific. Throughout its course down to 1.4 miles from the mouth, the river flows through western hemlock forest habitat. The steep topography of the watershed results in a rapid streamflow response to rainfall and often causes large daily fluctuations in the amount of water in the river. The character of the upper river is that of a rushing mountain stream until, upstream approximately 0.2 miles from the park boundary, the river cascades through a last rocky gorge known as the "lower falls," and then begins a more gradual descent through the park.[47]

The approximately 0.4 mile of Indian River that runs through the park averages about 80 feet in width, and is relatively flat.[48] The stream bed is comprised mostly of medium to coarse gravel and cobble, with interspersed areas of sand, fine gravel, and boulders. The northern section of the river within the park, which runs for approximately 700 feet from the northern border of the park to just north of the footbridge, is contained by bedrock. The next section, approximately 600 feet in length, flows through a broad alluvial channel over a gravel bottom. Most of the boulders and organic debris have accumulated along the western bank of the river, while shallow cobble and gravel bars occur on the eastern bank. The final section of the river consists of a large estuary, with a broad alluvial fan that is confined on the west by large boulders and rip-rap installed by the NPS to control bank erosion.[49] Tidal forces influence the flow in this segment.

A floodplain subject to flooding during the kind of heavy storms that may take place once every 20 to 50 years occurs on both sides of the Indian River and ranges in elevation from 5 to 15 feet. The U.S. Forest Service describes the soils in the floodplain as follows: an association of Typic Cryumbrepts, which occur in areas that receive little or no runoff from surrounding areas and generally consist of about a half inch layer of peat over deep mineral layers; and Aquic Cryumbrepts, which develop in areas that receive runoff and consist of about one inch of peat and mucky peat over the very deep mineral layers.

Both the well and poorly drained soils in the floodplain support a red alder-salmonberry community in which alders form the overstory, salmonberry the understory, and forbs the groundlayer. Some young spruce are coming up under the alders.

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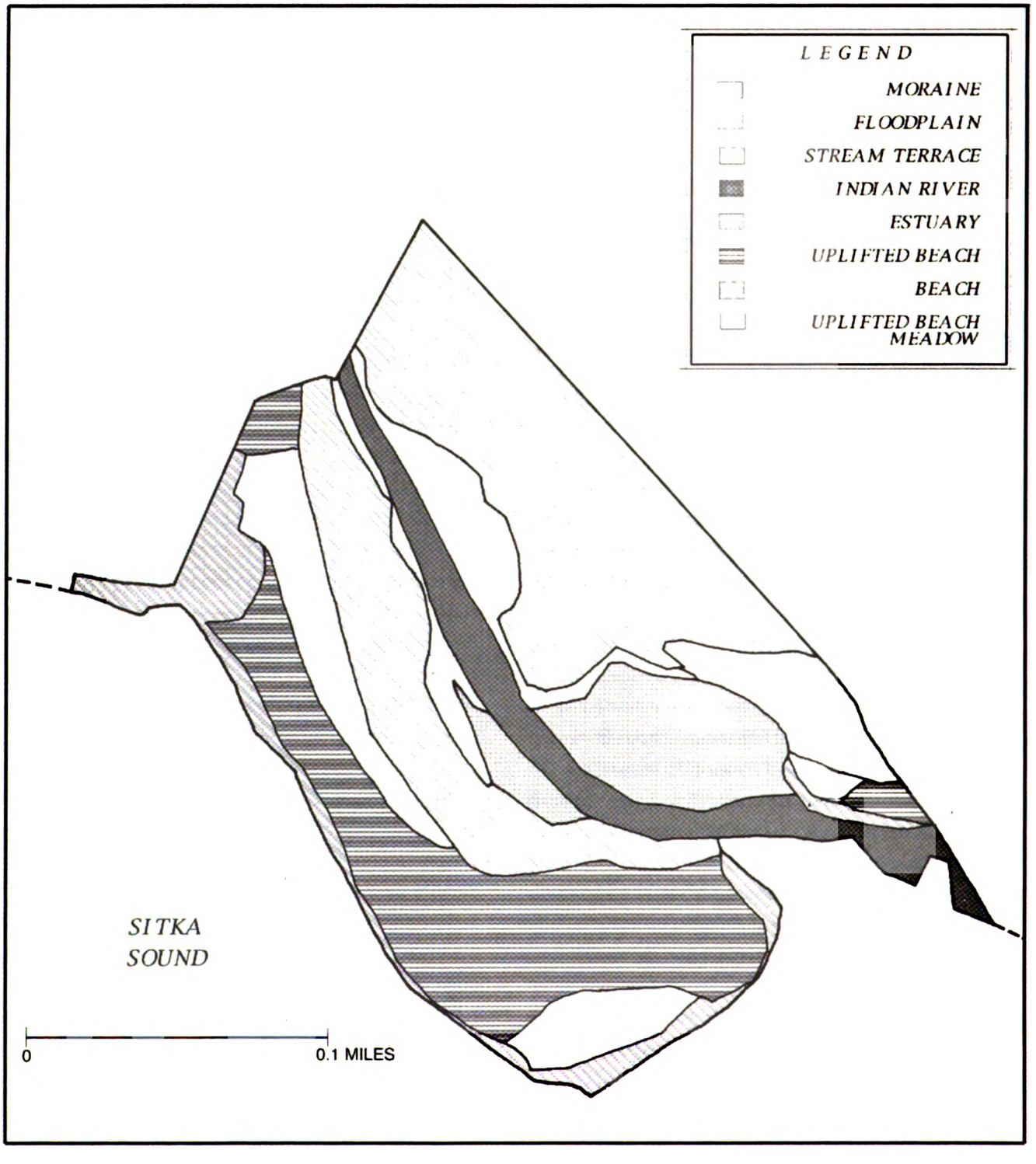

Figure 1-6. Ecological units of Sitka National Historical Park, defined by Brad Krieckhaus, et al., *Ecological Inventory*, U.S. Forest Service, 1993.

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Given enough time and stability, a spruce association probably will develop in the future. The deciduous red alders help to stabilize the floodplain by their ability to fix nitrogen and by dropping an annual load of organic matter into the soil.[50]

The Indian River supports a diverse faunal community. Anadromous fish species—including coho, pink, and chum salmon, steelhead trout, and Dolly Varden—utilize Indian River habitats for spawning, incubation, the early stages of their life cycle, and migration. The central gravelly section of the river situated within the park provides the most attractive salmon spawning habitat. Pink and chum salmon generally enter the river to spawn in the gravels from mid-July through September. Coho salmon usually arrive in late September through November to spawn in the upper portions of the watershed. The juvenile coho then remain in freshwater from one to three years.[51]

The river also supports resident populations of non-andromous fish, including rainbow trout, coast range sculpin, and Dolly Varden. In the estuarine . and intertidal waters, marine fish and invertebrates are common. All of these species provide food for a number of bird species in the park, including bald eagles, ravens, crows, great blue herons, and many species of gulls and waterfowl. During fall salmon runs bald eagles, ravens, and crows concentrate along the river to feed on the spawning fish.[52]

Estuary

The Indian River estuary comprises the final approximately 800 feet of the river where the elevation is less than 5 feet. An estuary occurs on both sides of the river, although its extent on each side differs as a consequence of extensive dredging in the channel, and subsequent bank stabilization, which the NPS installed along the western river bank. The main channel presently skirts the western bank, while an estuarine salt marsh has developed on the eastern side of the Indian River (see Figure 1-6).

In their ecological study of the park, U.S. Forest Service personnel describe two soil subgroups in the marsh, both formed in alluvial sand and reworked by river and tidal action. Typic Cryaquepts occur on the less frequently flooded sections; they generally consist of a 3-inch surface layer of gravelly loam, on top of about 10 inches of gravelly sandy loam, which overlies 60 inches or more of gravelly coarse sand. Within the lower portions of the estuary, subject to more frequent submergence, Typic Cryaquents occur, which have a sand surface layer and a deep, very gravelly coarse sand below.[53]

The salt marsh vegetation supported by these soil groups is arranged within the habitat according to their tolerance for marine inundation. On the upper elevations of the habitat a more diverse flora occurs, dominated by hairgrass (*Deschampsia caespitosa* and *D. beringensis*) and forbs such as sandwort (*Honkenya peploides*) and yarrow (*Achillea millifolium* var. *borealis*). In the mid-elevation community, which comprises about 65 percent of the Indian River salt marsh, hairgrass dominates the canopy over several groundcover species. In the most frequently flooded zone of the estuary (about 12 percent of the marsh), a dense and highly productive sedge community occurs. Other species that occur within that zone include goose-tongue (*Plantago maritima* var. *juncoides*) and Pacific alkaligrass (*Puccinellia nutkaensis*). The marine algae rockweed (*Fucus distichus*) is abundant in the lowest, permanently flooded estuarine zone.[54]

Forest Habitats

Most of the land within Sitka National Historical Park, ranging in elevations from 10 to 40 feet, is covered by a western hemlock-dominated temperate rainforest. On the western side of the river, except for small open areas like the beach meadow, fort clearing, and paths, the forest extends from the edge of the beach to the edge of the floodplain, while on the eastern side it occurs from the floodplain to and beyond the park boundaries. Although one area on the northeastern side of the Indian River exhibits a more typical old growth structure, the great majority

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of the park forest is relatively young, exhibiting fairly even aged stands of hemlock and spruce. Blueberry forms the dominant forest shrub species, although devil's club is dominant in wetter locations.

Krieckhaus et al. divided the park forest habitat into four ecological units based on landforms, and described the soil and plant associations within each of the units. The majority of the forest on the Indian River peninsula, west of the river, comprises the unit they term "uplifted beach"; the researchers indicate that this area of the park emerged as an uplifted beach, which agrees with the interpretation of the park's geomorphology by Chaney et al. The soils within the uplifted beach forest, formed in beach gravel and sand, now consist of about a 5-inch surface layer of peat, mucky peat, and muck situated over deeper layers of gravelly loamy sand and gravelly to very gravelly coarse sand.

The majority of the remainder of the forest habitat occurs on what Krieckhaus et al. identify as a "stream terrace" landform—the previous Indian River floodplain that presently is only very rarely subject to flooding. The area is dissected with numerous small runoff channels. The soils within this section of the forest are identified as a 50/50 association of two soils formed in alluvium, differentiated primarily by the amount of sand and rock they contain. The Typic Cryochrepts consist of a typical surface layer of 1.25 inches of mucky peat overlying a 6-inch layer of loam and silt, beneath which are thick layers of sandy loam and gravelly loamy sand; the Typic Cryochrepts within the unit have a thicker surface layer of peat and mucky peat, about 3 inches, situated over a 4-inch layer of loam and sandy loam and a deep layer of gravelly loamy sand.[55]

Two additional small areas in the park support forest habitat, identified by Krieckhaus et al. as "moraine" and "lowland" landforms. The area they identified as moraine, based on the shape and orientation of the landform, may instead be derived from water-born deposits, as Krieckhaus, et al. concede. Chaney and his colleagues suggest that further research is needed to determine the origins of this landform. The area identified as possible "moraine" parallels the Indian River on both sides between the uplifted beach and stream terrace landforms. The soils in this area contain a deep peat and muck layer, approximately 8.5 inches in depth, overlying deep layers of gravelly coarse sand and gravelly loam.[56] Whether or not they are of glacial derivation remains to be investigated.

The final forested landform in the park, termed the "lowlands" by Krieckhaus et al., is a small area near the northern border of the park on the western side of the Indian River. It occupies the highest elevation in the park, from 20 to 40 feet above sea level; the investigators identified an association of three soils therein. Two of these soils, Humic Cryorthods and Spodic Haplocryands, comprise the majority of the area (50 and 35 percent respectively), with the third, identified as the McGilvery series of the dysic Lithic Cryofolists, occurring over a small bedrock knob. The Humic Cryorthods are the same soils found in the possible "moraine," while the Spodic Haplocryands derive from volcanic ash and glacio-marine sediments. They typically consist of a fairly deep, approximately 13-inch layer of peat and muck over loam and sand mineral layers extending approximately 45 inches to bedrock. The McGilvery soils are shallow, with an 11-inch surface layer of peat over 3 inches of sandy loam over bedrock.[57]

The forest vegetation within the park has been sampled and classified into plant associations (discrete potential natural plant communities) based upon information described by Martin, et al. for the Chatham area of the Tongass National Forest. The great majority of the forest is composed of one of the most common southeastern Alaskan forest communities: the western hemlock/blueberry association. This closed canopy forest community (the average canopy cover in the park is 65 percent) is dominated by western hemlock and includes Sitka spruce as a minor overstory component. The understory is dominated by young hemlocks, blueberry (*Vaccinium alaskaense* and *V.ovalifolium*), red huckleberry (*V. parvifolium*), and rusty menziesia. The

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groundlayer species that occur in canopy gaps commonly include bunchberry, foamflower (*Tiarella trifoliata*), and five-leaf bramble, as well as deer, oak, and shield fern (*Dryopteris austriaca*).[58]

In a small percentage of the park's hemlock forest where subsurface water movement occurs—an area located just north of the present fort site and on the western side of the Indian River just below the bridge—devil's club dominates the understory. Salmonberry, blueberry, and rusty menziesia are also present, but in limited amounts. The groundlayer in these areas is commonly dominated by foamflower and ferns.[59]

A small fraction of the park's coniferous forest, located primarily in old stream channels and areas of hummock and hollow terrain along the trail on the eastern side of the Indian River in the stream terrace, is dominated by Sitka spruce. Numerous mature hemlocks may also be present beneath the moderately open spruce canopy of this association. The understory is dominated by devil's club and salmonberry, although blueberry may also occur. Deer, oak, and shield fern, as well as bunchberry, foamflower, and five-leaf bramble are common groundlayer species. A very similar but more open stand of spruce-dominated forest occurs in a small area near the Russian Memorial and old asphalt plant site; here the understory is dominated by dense salmonberry growth.[60]

Except for one small area in the northeastern corner of the park, where the hemlock-dominated stand has a multi-storied canopy created by trees of various ages, large limbed trees, and dead wood on the ground, the park's temperate rainforest habitat does not exhibit old growth structure. It is predominantly comprised of hemlock and spruce of relatively uniform heights and diameters, which form dense canopies with limited shrubs and herbs underneath. Where gaps occur in the canopy, as a result of windthrow, for example, the shrub and groundlayer species are more abundant. Krieckhaus, et al. also found that trees in the park were, on average, taller and had greater diameters than those sampled in old growth stands. The blueberry layer in the park also was taller than in the unmanaged stands, which is probably due to the limited deer herbivory that occurs in the park.[61]

The analysis of the proportional cover and constancy of forest species by Krieckhaus, et al. reveals compositional differences between the park's forests and typical stands in the Tongass National Forest. In all of the forest plant associations they compared, park stands exhibited low proportions of shrub and groundlayers when compared to unmanaged stands. These findings reflect both the shaded conditions of denser, even aged stands and the effects of human activity in the park. When analyzed for constancy (the degree to which a species occurs in separate stands of an association), the park's forest stands have low values for a number of undergrowth species, such as bunchberry and deer fern. At the same time, the park's stands of western hemlock/blueberry association show a much greater constancy of red huckleberry than unmanaged stands; in addition, this probably reflects the lack of significant deer herbivory in the park.[62]

Within these relatively young forests and openings, the faunal population is less numerous or diverse than in unmanaged stands. Deer only occasionally browse in the park during winter, and bears are very rarely seen. Squirrels, however, are numerous; evidence of their activity can be seen in the impressive mounds of cones they accumulate at the base of spruce trees. Many birds frequent the park, including the ubiquitous ravens, and bald eagles, whose combined calls of raucous chuckling and sweeping whistles frequently can be heard along the forest paths. The eagles roost and possibly nest in the park's large spruce trees.

Beach Meadow and Beach Habitats

Beach communities occur in southeastern Alaska at the upper limits of tidal influence, especially in the northern section of the region where uplift has raised salt marshes and intertidal zones above tidal influence. In the south, where the old-growth forest often grows down to the high-tide

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line, they are less extensive. These transitional communities usually occur in a narrow band between the intertidal zone below and the young forest above.

The most extensive beach meadow in the park occurs between the beach and forest at the southwestern tip of the Indian River peninsula. This area exhibits the typical characteristics of a transitional beach meadow community that commonly occurs on uplifted beaches in the region. The meadow extends across the level and slightly concave uplifted beach at elevations of less than 10 feet. The soils in this young landform contain little organic matter. They belong to the Cryofluvent subgroup, which are formed in beach sand and gravel and are generally comprised of extremely gravelly coarse sand to loam.

The plant communities that occur in the beach meadow change elevationally. In the lowest elevations (approximately 30 percent of the meadow), which may flood during storms and extreme high tides, a grass-umbel community predominates in which somewhat salt tolerant, sun-loving forbs, grasses, and ground level species occur. The common tall umbelliferous species include cow parsnip (*Heracleum lanatum*) and angelica (*Angelica genuflexa and A. lucida*), beneath which grow the grasses and groundcovers. Both the diversity and productivity of this community are high. On the higher elevations, red alder forms the overstory, young spruce are coming up beneath them, and salmonberry appears below the spruce. The ground layer is not well developed in this area.[63] Without major disturbance, it is likely that this community will develop into a spruce-dominated forest stand.

The Indian River peninsula is skirted by a cobble beach along its western perimeter where the waters of Crescent Bay meet the shore. The majority of the beach is comprised of exposed cobble with sparse vegetation, but it grades into a narrow upper fringe bordering the forest that includes numerous common southeastern Alaskan beach grasses and forbs. An historical account of the beach plants near the Indian River was recorded by Aleksander Postels, a naturalist who visited Sitka in 1827. Postels described the plants he encountered on an excursion to climb Mount Verstovaia; beginning with the the specimens on the beach, he found these to be "exactly like those which one finds on the beaches of Europe." He listed a number of species, including *Arenaria* (now known as seabeach sandwort or *Honkenya peploides*), *Glaux maritima* (sea milkwort), *Veronica serpyllifolia* (actually var. *humifusa* or Thyme-leaf speedwell), and *Potentilla anserina* (actually ssp. *pacifica* or silverweed), all of which occur on the park beach today.[64] He praised the "slim stem" of beach rye grass (*Elymus mollis*), calling it "the most beautiful of the coast." Postels described the progression of species from beach to forest edge as follows:

> A few rocks on the beach are covered with the pretty *Potentilla villosa* [hairy cinquefoil], while in their crevices grow a Campanula with blue flowers (*Campanula heterodoxa Vest*?) [?], the *Ligusticum scoticum* [var. *hultenii* or sea-lovage], as well as an umbealiferous [sic] plant with ternate leaves (*Osmorhiza brevistylis* Decand.) [probably *O. chilensis* or *O. depauperata*, mountain or blunt-fruited sweet-cicely]. Finally, under the shelter of these same rocks but on the edge of the forest grows a false Angelica (*Pleurospermum Gmelini* Bongard) [probably *Angelica genuflexa* or *A. lucida*], the Heracleum (*Heracleum lanatum* Mich x) [cow parsnip], the Sarana or Kamchatka lily (*Lilium Kamtschatcense* L.) [*Fritillaria camschatcensis*], the root of which is edible; the *Pisum maritimum* [?] with purple flowers, the *Cochlearia oblongifolia* [*Cochlearia officinalis* or scurvy grass], *Ranunculus recurvatus* [probably *R. uncinatus*, Bongard's buttercup], *Calium trifidum* [?], *Geum macrophyllum* [large-leaf avens], some *Rumex* [*R. acetosella*, sheep sorrel] and *Arabis hirsuta* [hairy rockcress].[65]

All but a few of the species Postels described are listed in the vascular plant inventory of the park conducted by the U.S. Forest Service in the late summer of 1992. Of course, neither list provides a comprehensive inventory of the habitat, for certainly Postels included only a fraction of the complete beach flora.[66] In addition, as Krieckhaus, et al. state, their 1992 survey undoubtedly omitted numerous

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species not apparent during late summer.[67] Nevertheless, these sources provide an account of the diversity and range of species that occur on the beach and upper beach habitat.

Intertidal Habitats

The rocky intertidal habitat, occurring at the interface between the marine and terrestrial communities, comprises the majority of the southeastern Alaskan shoreline. As the name implies, tidal submergence defines the extent of these communities. In southeastern Alaska two high tides and two low tides occur each day, all at different levels. They vary in height throughout the year and region, with the highest ranging from 12.6 feet at Sitka to 20 feet at Juneau.

The habitat can be understood as a set of elevational zones defined by the duration of submergence and exposure, which form horizontal bands within the shore community. On steep slopes, the horizontal extent of the intertidal habitat is limited and the transitions between the habitat zones are quite abrupt.[68] The composition of the intertidal zones is also affected by latitudinal and local changes. The salinity of the marine waters, for example, varies throughout the region, being greater on the outer coasts and lower in the inner waters that receive freshwater runoff. Species that have a greater tolerance of low salinity are more common in the inner intertidal zones, and certain species are found only on the outer coasts. Also, the degree of exposure to wave action affects zonal characteristics. Overall, however, this wave-pounded habitat is dominated by seaweed and invertebrates.[69]

The intertidal zone within the park is comprised of gravel and cobble shoals that descend very gradually to greater depths, creating expansive tideflats when the tide drops as much as twelve feet, as it does in Sitka. The upper regions of the intertidal near the mouth of the Indian River and at the tip of the peninsula are vegetated with sedges, which thin out in the more frequently flooded elevation where algae, including rockweed, occur. Clams, cockles, and other invertebrates are that found in the tidal flats attract numerous gulls, shorebirds, and other animals to the area.[70]

DYNAMICS OF THE PARK'S ENVIRONMENT

Both allogenic and autogenic forces of ecological change operate within the landscape of Sitka National Historical Park, affecting the kinds of habitats that are present, including their structure, composition, and dynamics. Geomorphological processes evident within the park include regional uplift, marine wave action, and Indian River deposition and erosion. Over thousands of years these combined forces created the landforms within the park, bringing about slow changes in ecological conditions.[71] Presently, the effects of these on-going forces can be discerned in the characteristics of the upper beach/beach meadow and the Indian River habitats. The upper beach and beach meadow communities exhibit the structure and composition of a southeastern Alaskan habitat recently removed from the marine influences of salt spray and submergence. The grasses and forbs that occur there thrive in the sunny, exposed positions and can tolerate occasional storm inundation. As elevation and distance from the marine influences increase, a change in structure and composition takes place as shrub and young spruce species begin to dominate the community.

Evidence of storm-driven ecological change is apparent in several habitats within the park. Within the forest communities on both sides of the Indian River are areas of blowdown, which, based on the age of the young trees now present, probably resulted from a storm that occurred 30-40 years ago (i. e., sometime from the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s). On a smaller scale, windthrow continues to be an important dynamic in the park's forest. The U.S. Forest Service reported that throughout most of the park's coniferous forest stands, scattered trees are continuing to up-root and break in storm winds.[72]

Flooding brought about by heavy storms also has caused dramatic changes in the communities of the Indian River floodplain. The red alder stand that

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presently exists there is estimated to be approximately 30-40 years old, indicating that a major flood occurred during the 1950s. Indeed, flooding and dramatic erosion have occurred periodically in the park throughout its history, repeatedly transforming floodplain communities. In addition, less dramatic fluctuations in the Indian River streamflow occur more frequently, driving more numerous but smaller scale transformations in river and floodplain communities.

Community transformation through autogenic factors of change, brought about by the influence of community constituents on one another, occurs throughout park habitats. Transformation of this kind, driven by both the flora and fauna, is continual and ubiquitous. Plant community transformation within the park, such as that which occurs in the beach meadow, has already been described. A parallel process occurs in the sunny gaps that windthrow creates in the forest. Faunal influence on community structures is apparent in the park when considering the effects of the low level of Sitka black-tailed deer herbivory. Not only does the forest exhibit a different structure than stands where deer are present, but it also has a significantly higher proportion of red huckleberry in the shrub layer.[73]

Many changes in the park's habitats have resulted either directly or indirectly from human activities. Sitka area developments, for example, have impacted park habitats. Clearing and construction on Sawmill Creek Road, along the eastern boundary, has resulted in increased winds through the park, which may be causing a higher rate of windthrow.[74] Construction of the jet runway on Japonski Island decreased the direct marine wave energy that shapes the park's beaches.[75] Diversion of water from the Indian River upstream of the park has altered its streamflow, thereby affecting the salmon spawning habitat and rates of sediment deposition.[76] Large mill logs from a nearby pulp mill (now closed) have washed onto the beach at the mouth of the Indian River, and are extending the upper beach meadow community at the tip of the peninsula.

In addition to the numerous effects upon the park from these local activities, humans have made many *direct* changes to park habitats throughout their long relationship with the landscape proximate to the Indian River. Their activities transformed the natural and dynamic communities within the park, and shaped the cultural landscape. The nature of the human activities within that landscape, their physical manifestations upon the land, and the meaning they have imparted to the park form the subject matter for the following chapters.

ENDNOTES

[1] Victor E. Shelford, *The Ecology of North America* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963), 211.

[2] Due to the rugged topography of much of the biome, rainfall amounts vary tremendously over short distances; in general, more rain falls a short distance inland than on the coast where air masses rise up the mountain slopes; *Ibid.*, 211-13.

[3] Rita M. O'Clair, Robert H. Armstrong, and Richard Carstensen, *The Nature of Southeast Alaska* (Anchorage and Seattle: Alaska Northwest Books, 1992), 19.

[4] *Ibid.*

[5] Richard Brewer, *The Science of Ecology* (Fort Worth: Saunders College Publishing Company, 1994), 494.

[6] *Ibid.*, 496.

[7] Shelford, *The Ecology of North America*, 211; O'Clair, et al., *The Nature*, 34.

[8] According to pioneer plant ecologist John T. Curtis, a dominant species is one that is "of great importance in a community due to size, number or other characteristics which enable it to receive the brunt of external environmental forces and modify them before they affect the lesser members of the community"; see John T. Curtis, *The Vegetation of Wisconsin: An Ordination of Plant Communities* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1971), 600.

[9] *Ibid*; Shelford termed this subsection the Western Hemlock-Sitka Deer-Sitka Spruce association.

[10] O'Clair, et al., *The Nature*, 19; according to O'Clair, et al., fire approximately every five centuries will maintain redwood or fir dominance.

[11] The following discussion of soil types and specific plant associations is based upon studies done by the U.S. Forest Service within the Chatham Area of Tongass National Forest. Occupying about 16.8 million acres, the Tongass comprises approximately 77 percent of southeastern Alaska, and is nearly coterminous with the extent of traditional Tlingit territory. The Chatham Area, equivalent to about 48 percent of Tongass National Forest, includes Admiralty, Baranof, Chichagof, and Kruzof islands.

[12] O'Clair, et al., *The Nature*, 11; Emmons, 3.

[13] O'Clair, et al., *The Nature*, 12.

[14] *Ibid.*

[15] Jon R. Martin, Susan J. Trull, Ward W. Brady, et al., *Forest Plant Association Management Guide: Chatham Area, Tongass National Forest* (Sitka, AK: U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Forest Service, Alaska Region, March 1995), pp. 1-6.

[16] Brad Krieckhaus, Rick Foster, and Susan Trull, *Ecological Inventory: Sitka National Historical Park* (Sitka, AK: U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, Chatham Area, February 1993), 3.

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[17] O'Clair, et al., *The Nature*, 23.
[18] Martin, et al., *Forest Plant Association*, 1-3.
[19] Gregory P. Chaney, Robert C. Betts, and Dee Longenbaugh, *Physical and Cultural Landscapes of Sitka National Historical Park, Sitka, Alaska* (Douglas, AK: Vanguard Research, 1995), 9.
[20] Krieckhaus, et al., *Ecological Inventory*, 4.
[21] Martin, et al., *Forest Plant Association*, 1-2.
[22] Krieckhaus, et al., *Ecological Inventory*, 4.
[23] Martin, et al., *Forest Plant Association*, 1-2.
[24] Krieckhaus, et al., *Ecological Inventory*, 3-4.
[25] Martin, et al., *Forest Plant Association*, 1-2; there currently are a few advancing glaciers on the mainland, as well as mountain glaciers and ice fields on Baranov and other islands.
[26] Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, 9.
[27] Martin, et al., *Forest Plant Association*, 1-3.
[28] Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, 12.
[29] Martin, et al., *Forest Plant Association*, 1-3.
[30] Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, 9, 12.
[31] O'Clair, et al., *The Nature*, 12; Stewart T. Schultz, *The Northwest Coast: A Natural History* (Portland, OR: Timber Press, 1990), 33.
[32] Martin, et al., *Forest Plant Association*, 1-3.
[33] *Ibid.*
[34] *Ibid.*, 1-6.
[35] The U.S. Forest Service defines eight major soil groupings within four topographic and drainage categories of the Chatham area of the Tongass National Forest, which include Baranof, Admiralty, Chichagof, and Kruzof islands. Soils found on nearly level sites that are subject to flooding comprise one of the major soil categories in the area. These soils occur along stream courses, in alluvial fans, on tidal mudflats, and in the uplifted river mouth deposits of estuaries. They are comprised of deep and well-drained Cryorthod-Cryofluvent soils, which are formed in alluvial deposits, and deep and somewhat poorly or poorly drained Aquent-Cryaquept soils formed in marine sediments. They comprise approximately 7 percent of the Chatham area soils.

Sites that range from nearly level to moderately steep slopes and contain poorly drained soils subject to ponding comprise the second topographic category. The soils in these locations consist of histosols (very poorly drained hydric organic soils), which occur on level and gently sloping mountainsides, on till plains, on plateaus, in old lake beds, on marine terraces, and on uplifted coastal forelands at elevations from 50 to 1,000 feet; and Histic Cryaquepts and Lithic Cryosaprists, which occur on till plains, and along valley foot slopes and hill and mountain slopes at elevations from 50 to 1,200 feet. They comprise 23 percent of the soils in the Chatham area.

The third category consists of moderately well to well-drained soils that occur on moderately steep to very steep sites. These soils occur at elevations from 50 to 1,200 feet; derive from colluvium, ablation till, and residuum; range in depth from one to several feet thick; and comprise 9 percent of the Chatham soils.

The final group consists of very poorly to well-drained soils that occur on gently sloping to very steep sites. They are comprised of spodosols formed in volcanic deposits that make up 4 percent of the Chatham area soils; cool spodosols that occur on mountain slopes and summits at elevations from 900 to 1,500 feet and comprise 11 percent of Chatham area soils; and rock outcrop-Lithic Cryorthents and cold histosols that occur on mountain summits and high slopes at elevations above 1,500 feet, and which comprise 35 percent of the Chatham area. In addition, 9 percent of the Chatham area is covered with year-round ice and snow; see *Chatham Area of the Tongass National Forest Ecological Inventory*, 1996 (draft manuscript), U.S. Forest Service, Sitka, AK.
[36] Martin, et al., *Forest Plant Association*, 1-10, 3-7.
[37] Jerry F. Franklin and Richard H. Waring, "Distinctive Features of the Northwestern Coniferous Forest: Development, Structure and Function," in *Forests: Fresh Perspectives from Ecosystem Analysis, Proceedings of the 40th Annual Biology Colloquium*, edited by Richard H. Waring (Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press, 1979), 61.
[38] Martin, et al., *Forest Plant Association*, 1-10 through 1-16.
[39] O'Clair, et al., *The Nature*, 34.
[40] *Ibid.*, 34-36, 89-101.
[41] Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, 8.
[42] Krieckhaus, et al., *Ecological Inventory*, 3.
[43] Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, 14-15, 76.
[44] *Ibid.*, 41, 80. Chaney, et al. also mention possible moraines, as identified by the USFS in its ecological inventory of SITK; it is not clear that these are indeed moraines, and the authors recommend further research to determine the origin of those landforms.
[45] Krieckhaus, et al., *Ecological Inventory*, 5. For more detailed information also see Jim Russell and Bill Dougan, *Vegetation Inventory and Forest Health Assessment: Sitka National Historical Park* (Sitka, AK: U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, Chatham Area, March 1994).
[46] Krieckhaus, et al., 1; Richard L. Nadeau and Steve M. Lyons, *Instream Flow Investigation: Indian River, Sitka National Historical Park* (Anchorage: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, August 1987), 4.
[47] Nadeau and Lyons, *Instream*, 4.
[48] *Ibid.*, 4; this distance is calculated from the mean low tide line.
[49] *Ibid.*, 4, 6.
[50] *Ibid.*
[51] *Ibid.*, 16.
[52] *Ibid.*, 17.
[53] Krieckhaus, et al., *Ecological Inventory*, 10.
[54] *Ibid.*
[55] *Ibid.*, 14.
[56] *Ibid.*, 15; Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, 9.
[57] Krieckhaus, et al., *Ecological Inventory*, 16.
[58] *Ibid.*, 31-34.
[59] *Ibid.*, 12, 14, 34-35.
[60] *Ibid.*, 14, 15, 35-37.
[61] *Ibid.*, 13, 15, 33-34; Krieckhaus, et al. suggest that the larger size may result from good drainage conditions in the park, but that a larger sample size is needed to confirm this pattern.
[62] *Ibid.*, 34-37; Curtis, *The Vegetation*, 599.
[63] *Ibid.*
[64] Frederick Litke, *A Voyage Around the World, 1826-1827: To Russian America and Siberia*, Vol. 1, Richard Pierce, ed. (Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press, 1987), 210-11; see the list of SITK vascular plants in Kreickhaus, et al., 40-46.
[65] Litke, *A Voyage*, 210-11.
[66] Postel's companion on the 1827 voyage, Karl-Heinrich Mertens, the ship's doctor, compiled comprehensive notes on the flora of Baranof Island, which were published by the German botanist, H. G. Bongard, one year after Mertens' death in 1831; see M. [H.G.] Bongard, *Observations sur la Vegetation De L'lile de Sitcha* (Lu le 4 Mai 1831).
[67] Krieckhaus, et al., *Ecological Inventory*, 39.
[68] Schultz, *The Northwest Coast*, 108; also see Schultz for a detailed discussion of intertidal zonation.
[69] *Ibid.*, 26, 62-63.
[70] *Ibid.*, 11. The following contemporary informants report collecting invertebrates in the park: Isabella Brady, interview with Holly Smith-Middleton, Sitka, AK, July 6, 1995; Gill Truit and Herb Didrickson, interview with Holly Smith-Middleton, Sitka, AK, July 5, 1995.
[71] See Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*.
[72] Russell and Dougan, *Vegetation Inventory*, 9, 14, 18.
[73] Krieckhaus, et al., *Ecological Inventory*, 13, 15, 34-35.
[74] *Ibid.*, 9, 14.
[75] Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, 15.
[76] Nadeau and Lyons, *Instream*, 53-54.

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Chapter 2

A Tlingit Landscape

"One day a canoe entered the stream at high tide. The wind was blowing upstream. A man on the bank shouted, 'Gudax yaku sawe'h' (Where from canoe come?"). A frog woman in the canoe answered, 'Tca'u han a i ya'h kasdehnedii' ca a ya uha'n' (It is we, kasde stream people women we are," i.e. We are just the women from the Kasdeh River). The moment this was said all the women disappeared into the water and the canoe had become only a log. So it is that the Frog People gave the name to the stream."

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CHAPTER 2

A TLINGIT LANDSCAPE

The Tlingit people of Sitka have inhabited the area that now constitutes Sitka National Historical Park for centuries, well before the arrival of Russian fur-trading companies in the late eighteenth century; thus, the site is an ethnographic landscape that has great historical and contemporary significance to the Tlingit. Throughout the turmoil and dramatic change that first the Russian and then the American presence in southeastern Alaska brought to their lives, the Tlingit have sustained much of their traditional culture. Interest in maintaining the native culture has increased in recent decades, leading to the teaching of traditional arts and ways to younger Tlingit generations, and to an increased effort to record and interpret their own history at Sitka.

Throughout the years since Russian settlement began at Sitka in 1804, the relationship between local Tlingits and the landscape of the park also has changed. What was historically a village site, a locale where salmon were caught and preserved, and where many other subsistence activities took place, became an important historic site after the 1804 battle with the Russians. Once the landscape adjacent to the Indian River became a national monument, many Tlingit subsistence activities ceased to occur there. World War II, which resulted in serious changes to the park's landscape, further disrupted those activities. Even the traditional Tlingit memorial gatherings that had been conducted in the park to commemorate the 1804 battle were discontinued during the war and only recently have been held in the park once again. However, with the establishment of the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center in the park's visitor center, the Tlingit have re-affirmed their ties to that landscape, thereby creating a new native community at Indian River that is maintained in concert with the Park Service. A totem erected in 1996, named the *Haa leelk'u has Kaa sta heeni deiyi Pole* (the Indian River Tlingit History Pole), is an important symbol of the continuing relationship that exists between the Native people of Sitka and the park and its landscape.[1]

The subject of this chapter covers the social, spiritual, and material relationship between the Tlingits who live in the Sitka area and the landscape now included within the borders of Sitka National Historical Park; this relationship was historically borne out in the day-to-day activities of their lives. It is important to remember, however, that while those practices have discontinued in the park, the social and spiritual relationship between the Tlingit and that landscape continues to be strong. Additionally, it should be emphasized that many traditional practices which historically occurred in the park continue today throughout much of southeastern Alaska. Following a brief overview of what is known about the prehistoric peoples who preceded the Tlingit in the area, the social, spiritual, and material dimensions of the landscape associated with the Tlingit at the Indian River are explored.

ARCHEOLOGICAL ANTECEDENTS OF THE TLINGIT

The relationship between native people and the southeastern Alaskan landscape is ancient. People have inhabited the region from the time that the first migration to North America occurred across the expanses of Beringia. And, despite relatively little current knowledge of these earliest inhabitants, archeologists have been able to construct a chronology of "prehistoric" cultural developments in the region, beginning with the earliest known human inhabitants who occupied the region from between 11000 -10000 years BP to approximately 6500 years BP. Evidence of this early occupation has been found at several points throughout the region,

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including the Hidden Falls site on the eastern side of Baranof Island. Artifacts and remains excavated from the early components of these sites indicate that by 9500 years BP, the population subsisted primarily on marine resources and had developed a micro-blade technology.[2]

The next period of human occupation in southeastern Alaska, which extended from approximately 6500 BP to 5000 BP, is as yet poorly documented. It is clear, however, that a major transition occurred in the technological base from a microlithic to a ground stone tradition. At sites from this period a decrease occurs in the microblades that have been found, while the occurrence of ground stone increases. It is not clear whether this new technology was invented or had diffused into the region, but it gradually became the dominant form.[3]

The latest cultural stage in the chronology, extending from 5000 years BP to the time of European contact, is thought to have been the precursor to the ethnographically documented Tlingit people. It shares many elements with the ethnographically described Northwest coast tradition. In this phase, excavated at many sites around the Alexander Archipelago, a ground stone and bone technology is evident, as well as large shell middens, fortifications, and house features; all of these indicate that the residents were inhabiting more permanent settlements.[4]

By the time of the latest sites of this phase, such as the Starrigavan site on Baranof Island among others, the assemblages included items similar to those described ethnographically—for example, labrets, chisels, adzes, copper arrowheads, knife blades and nails, stone lamps and bowls, and obsidian tools. The settlement pattern also appears similar to that of the ethnohistorically documented Tlingit pattern, consisting of large permanent village sites, forts, and specialized camps.[5] Fortifications seem to increase after AD 1000, indicating a possible increase in warfare among the Tlingit at that time.[6]

These findings suggest a Northwest Coast cultural continuity that extended from 5000 BP to the time of European contact. There is not yet enough evidence, however, to establish a definite developmental sequence. It has been established, nevertheless, that the precursor of the contact period Tlingit settlement pattern was in place for at least the past 1,600 years.[7]

The extent of prehistoric settlement in the park is not currently known. Two cobble choppers were discovered in the park during geomorphological fieldwork conducted in 1994. However, because this type of tool is found in sites dating from as early as the Holocene period to as recently as historic period sites, it does not necessarily provide evidence of prehistoric activity. Tlingit oral tradition relates that prior to European arrival in southeastern Alaska, the Tlingit moved into the area from the south, but it is not clear just when that migration occurred. Nevertheless, a shell midden associated with a fort site on Jamestown Bay, just southeast of the park, recently was dated to AD 1200-1400, indicating occupation of the area for at least six to eight hundred years.[8]

THE TLINGIT LANDSCAPE

Like other indigenous cultures, Tlingit culture is inextricably tied to the landscape in which it occurrs. Their traditional subsistence practices and material culture require a detailed knowledge of the resources available in that environment, their season of availability, and the skills necessary to obtain and process them. The multitude of acts involved in obtaining and producing their foods and materials occupied the majority of the traditional Tlingit lifestyle and evolved into an intimate relationship between the people and the environment they inhabited.

This intimate relationship to the landscape is reflected in the spiritual and social dimensions of their culture as well. The traditional Tlingit clan property system allowed control and exchange among clans of the natural resources in areas of the landscape. Clan property ownership was validated in oral traditions relating clan origins and clan crests to these locations. Frequently crests originated from animal spirits that inhabited those areas in the ancient past. Thus present ownership and current

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activities needed for survival are inextricably tied to ancient connections with the spirit world that took place in these very same places.

One Tlingit man recently expressed this connection when he stated: "These lands are vital not only to our subsistence, but to our sense of being."[9] Tlingit social identity and being are continuous with the places in which they dwell. The social structure of the Tlingit creates a form of "social geography" through which individuals identify and interact with the landscape—a structure that underlies and shapes all other environmental interactions. This connection with places in the landscape is maintained through acts of everyday living—hunting, fishing, and gathering of foods and materials—and in the landscape symbols that form part of the language and visual art of the Tlingit tradition.

Landscape also had a spiritual dimension, which the Tlingit engaged in while carrying out their daily activities. The Tlingit traditionally believed that they inhabited an animate world in which spirits existed in every landscape feature. Swanton wrote the following about their cosmology in 1904:

> The number of spirits with which this world was peopled was simply limitless. . . . there were one principal and several subordinate spirits in everything. . . . There is said to have been a spirit in every trail on which one traveled, and one around every fire; one was connected with everything one did.[10]

The people talked to the spirits and commonly brought various offerings to propitiate them. Throughout their activities they would ask the spirits for such things as luck, safety, or a good harvest. Emmons reported that when a tree was cut down, an offering was made to the tree spirits and eagle down was scattered as a sign of peace. De Laguna wrote that hunters would bribe the bushes near a bear's den not to warn the bear.[11] Thomas Thornton's contemporary informant, Herman Kitka, recalls that part of his grandfather's fishing activities included prayers "to the 'Holy Spirit,' giving thanks for the bountiful fish and other resources at Deep Bay," their traditional fishing place.[12]

Thornton calls this spiritual dimension of everyday Tlingit life "the sacrament of production." He describes the sacramental quality of activities carried out in the sacred context of ancestral lands. The places where the Tlingit people fished and gathered their food were territories that the clans traced back to their mytho-historic past. The act of carrying out a traditional behavior in these locales enacted and made real the connection between past and present, between identity and being. Places in the landscape became sacred through these interactions.[13]

The spiritual dimension of traditional Tlingit ties to the landscape is complex. An ancient past in which humans and other beings interacted was at the heart of Tlingit identity. These ancient relationships are manifested in the crests, regalia, songs, and stories of every clan and establish the clan perogative to its own particular geography. The spiritual dimension is also manifested in the everyday experiences and efforts of the Tlingit—especially in the enactment of traditional subsistence activities within those ancestral lands. In this sense, the interaction between humans and the animate world is sacred; the Tlingit enact the connection between past and present, between human and spirit. The sacred permeates the human and non-human world to such an extent that all aspects of Tlingit life have a sacred dimension, with each conducted in a sacred context.

The social structure of the Tlingit culture defines their relationship to the landscape, creating a form of "social geography" that is built upon kinship ties to place. A basic understanding of their social structure is necessary in order to comprehend the Tlingit view of the land. The Tlingit people (*Lingit'aanî*), defined by distinct language and cultural practices within the larger Northwest coast cultural group, were traditionally divided into some 12 to 13 regions or *K̲wáans*,[14] stretching from the Dixon Entrance in the south to Yakutat Bay in the north (Figure 2-1).

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The term, which translates roughly to "inhabitants of," was most commonly understood to mean a particular geographic region controlled by those Tlingit who resided in one or several closely related winter villages within that region.[15]

Within and across these broad and dynamic territories, the Tlingit people are divided into two exogamous moieties (descent groups): the Raven and the Eagle (in the south, the Raven and the Wolf). These moieties served as a way to regulate marriage, and to regulate the exchange of goods and the performance of social and ceremonial services that are central to the functioning of the Tlingit community.[16] The reciprocal exchange between the clans of these opposing groups comprises the framework for the dynamic social processes of Tlingit culture.

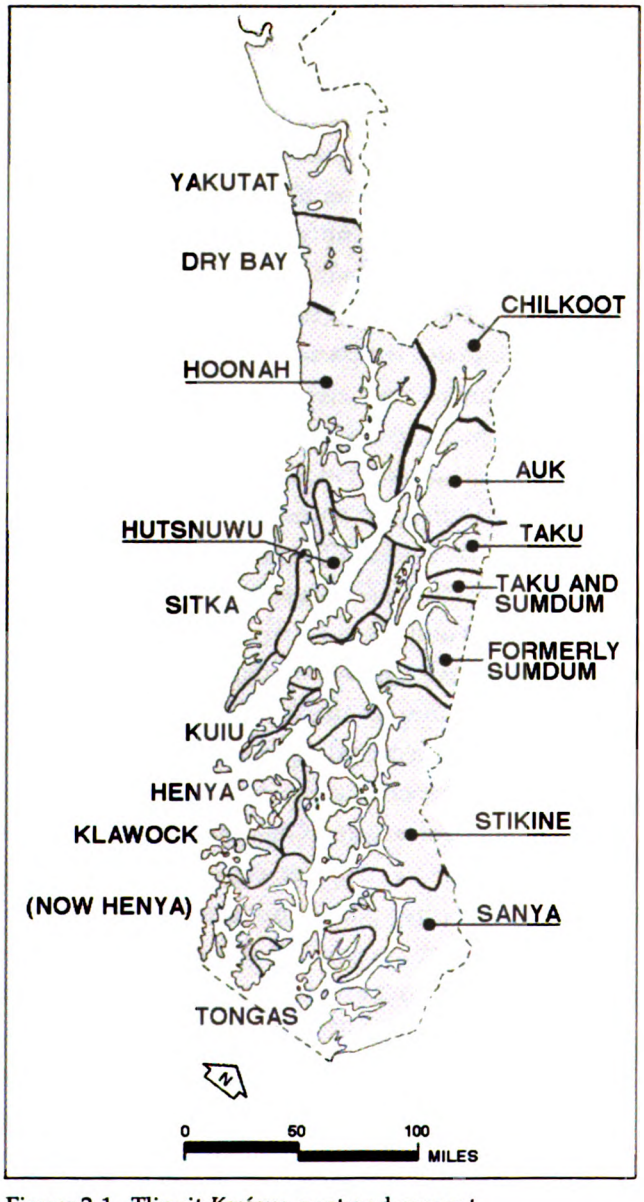

Figure 2-1. Tlingit *Kwáans*, past and present.

Each moiety consists of a number of clans—matrilineal descent groups that are the most important Tlingit social group. Within Tlingit society, individuals primarily identify with and function within their clan groups. A Tlingit individual belongs to the clan of his or her mother, but is also importantly known as a "child of" his or her father's clan. Within Tlingit villages, clans were informally ranked, based upon the number of members, the length and character of their history in the area, their success in war, the frequency and scale of their potlatches, and other signs of wealth.[17]

Clans are subdivided into house groups (*hit*), a lineage historically based in both residence and kinship, but which now refers to kinship relationships only. Housegroup membership is avunculocal—traditionally, normal residence at marriage was with or near a maternal uncle or other male matrilineal relative of the husband. The house groups usually consisted of from two to eight families per dwelling, which included members of at least two clans. These ranked groups were led by their own house chiefs. Additionally, these clan houses were the traditional economic units of Tlingit society—subsistence and production were carried out on a house group level.[18] Contemporary Tlingits inhabit nuclear residences, but both clans and house groups remain fundamental to an individual's social identity; this identity is borne out in the exchange of clan tradition and property.[19]

The clan was the basic property holding and political unit of Tlingit society.[20] Clan property, which is both symbolic and material, and includes territory, subsistence and ceremonial objects, and crests, myths, dances, songs, and names, is known in Tlingit as *at.oow*.[21] Richard and Nora Dauenhauer assert that this concept is the "single most important concept in Tlingit culture and is reflected in all aspects of the social structure, oral literature, visual

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arts, and ceremonial life." *At.oow* translates literally as "an owned or purchased thing" that can be acquired with money, by trade, or through personal action. The process of this purchase is central in concretizing and legitimizing Tlingit clan identity: "an event happens in the life of an ancestor or progenitor, some aspect of a combination of aspects of the event becomes a 'thing'—an *at.oow*—the ancestor, the design, the spirit of the animal, the song, the story, etc., and the land where it happened."[22]

When the story or object is ritually "brought out," it becomes the *at.oow* of that particular clan. The narrative may be told or acted out at potlatches, and can provide themes for songs and regalia that portray the tradition as the prerogative of that particular clan. Although once the "thing" has achieved such status and a member of another clan may use that particular *at.oow*—with permission and proper acknowledgment of its ownership—traditionally only those individuals who were members of the same clan or whose fathers were, could relate a narrative that was considered clan *at.oow*.[23]

Clan property also included land. The Tlingit *Kwáans* divided up the Northwest coastal landscape into geographic regions that usually were centered around one or more permanent villages located on important rivers or bays. The land within those *Kwáans* was divided among clans, except for the communally owned open waterways and less productive areas near those villages where people could gather wood. More powerful clans controlled the most convenient productive streams, forcing the weaker groups to travel farther.[24] Within the territory of those commonly held clan lands was a matrix of household or lineage-owned regions centered around the salmon streams, other kinds of important fishing or hunting grounds, and productive berry patches. These regions were inclusive of the resources that they contained throughout the year, ranging from the gathering of eggs and berries to the hunting of deer. The boundaries of fishing grounds and areas along the coast included whatever washed up on the beach and extended way out to sea.[25]

These property rights were highly respected among the Tlingit. The family chiefs administered the rights and had such powers as to define the hunting season, the number of game to be taken, and the assignment of specific fishing spots.[26] The perogative of territorial control was established in ancient clan history and legitimized in the performance of stories and songs and other *at.oow* that manifested this history. The ownership of territory often manifested itself in a prerogative of the clan to the first harvest of the season and then, if resources were plentiful, the place would be opened to other groups. At that point anyone could hunt, fish, or pick berries in such territory, but only after obtaining permission—permission that in Tlingit society cannot be refused—from the owning clan.[27] The complex, nested system of social geography created both a web of connections between those individuals and groups that made up Tlingit society, as well as serving as a defining mesh that separated and identified those same individuals and groups.

The Tlingit system derives from social structure and social geography. The social structure of Tlingit society functioned as a structural mechanism for the control and distribution of regional resources. Clans controlled territories and the biota within them, a control that was tied to the clan's historical connection to those places in the landscape. Subsistence, then, is intricately tied to clan membership. It is the practice of these activities that created the stories associated with each place within the clan's territory. As Thornton says, kinship shapes a person's geographic knowledge and his/her interaction, both material and symbolic, with the landscape.[28]

The most important clan property is the clan crest, a symbol of an animal or object that has both spiritual and social significance for clan members. Each Tlingit clan owns at least one major crest, as well as several secondary ones.[29] The crest is displayed on ceremonial objects, totem poles, and other clan property. Tlingit anthropologist Rosita Worl describes the role of the Tlingit crest as follows:

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> [Crests] identify social membership in a house, clan, moiety, and in turn, they define relationships to other groups; they symbolize a relationship with animals, fish, birds or objects they depict; they bond living Tlingit to their ancestors; they record the event in which the crest was acquired. Finally, they serve as titles to land and objects on which they are depicted, as well as stories, songs, and names associated with the acquisition of the crest.[30]

The crest symbolizes the social identity of the Tlingit individual in the present, while at the same time signifying the clans' relationship to animals, ancestors, and places in the land.

Primary crests were acquired when an animal or physical being interacted with ancestors in the ancient past. According to De Laguna, this adventure may have involved

> finding the creature, killing it, marrying it, or living with it. Sometimes only a visit between man and the totemic animal is cited, or the animal is befriended. In other cases, the human being may be transformed into the animal. This supernatural adventure may entitle the sibmates of the man or woman involved not only to utilize the creature itself as an emblem, but to adopt as perogatives other features associated with it.[31]

Crest objects symbolize the spiritual relationship between humans and animals. The *at.oow* and *shagoon* they embody represent a continuation of these past supernatural connections, and carry on a vital spiritual sense of being.

In doing so, the crests serve as a title that validates the ownership of places in the landscape where those interactions occurred. Many Tlingit oral traditions recount those ancient contacts, and serve both to validate the claim to a crest and to places in the landscape. Most Tlingit oral traditions referring to events in the past, as well as many myths and legends, are the *at.oow* of particular clans.[32] These clan histories relate the origin or lineage of the clan, the conflicts they may have had with other groups, and the journeys they conducted to end up where they are. A Tlingit and Tagish elder, Angela Sidney, in her collaboration with anthropologist Julie Cruikshank, "made it absolutely clear that the proper way to talk about the past is to begin with clan history."[33] Frederica De Laguna described the importance of history to clan identity in her study of the Yakutat Tlingit, when she wrote that the history of the Tlingit, like their mythology,

> is only fully understandable if we recognize that their [clans], established at the beginning of time, are the fundamental units of history. These were not only the groups that commanded native allegiance, and with reference to which people acted... to the native, the clans are not only deeply rooted in the mythical past, they are embodiments today of the very origins of the world and of humanity, reflecting the natural order and linking men to it by totemic bonds.[34]

Clan identity is critical to the shaping and transmitting of Tlingit oral traditions. Those traditions keep history alive through the continued use of personal names, also part of clan *at.oow*, which have been derived from these historical or legendary events, the contemporary bearers being reincarnations of their dead ancestors.[35] These histories serve to establish individual identity within clan traditions that extend into the remote past, which in turn establish present prerogatives within Tlingit society.

Places in the landscape—past and present territories—are central to clan identity. This relationship between place and social identity is symbolized in clan names, the majority of which derive from the place of clan origin. Thus, speaking the clan name invokes both its history and geography, thereby fusing social and geographic identity in time and space.[36]

Since location in space is a central, repeated theme in Tlingit oral narrative, landscape provides the physical place and narrative framework for clan histories. The connection between location in space and time is common in oral traditions: places in the landscape serve as mnemonic devices.[37] The metaphor in Tlingit oral traditions of the past is movement through the landscape. De Laguna has described the Tlingit view of the world as that of a traveler, "especially a mariner, who is concerned with places and the routes between them." She

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contrasted the western view of space as a series of adjoining areas to the Tlingit view of territory that was conceived of in terms of particular spots or points in space.[38]

Clan histories are frequently narrated as a journey from place to place, with toponyms providing a map through time. In her clan history, as cited by Cruikshank, Angela Sidney "locates each clan at a specific place and traces a journey to other named places and an eventual fresh beginning in the new territory." Kitty Smith, another of Cruikshank's native collaborators, often began her accounts with an assertion that stories give meaning to the landscape, such as, "I am going to tell you how Indians lived and what way this ground we call it," or "These stories are true stories, how this ground came to be."[39] Elizabeth Nyman, a Tlingit elder of the Taku River Clan, traces her clan history in the Taku River valley, saying: "If only you were taken by boat along the Taku River/ you could write the whole story down in a book."[40]

Places in the landscape embody meaning as the sites of past "historical" or legendary events. In the oral narratives, personal names, clan names, and place names provide a framework upon which the identity and past of the individual are mapped. Kinship and landscape provide more than just the setting for an account: they actually "frame and shape the story."[41] De Laguna asserts that in Tlingit oral traditions the clan provides a "unity to geography and history, a 'logic' which may prove to be more important than a purely spatial and temporal framework."[42]

An oral tradition relating the acquisition of the Kiks.ádi crest, the Herring Rock, illustrates how a crest and an oral tradition surrounding a place in the landscape serve to validate clan claims to that territory. One version of the story was related by Peter Nielson. According to Nielson, the crest was acquired when the ensuing event occurred:

> A Kiks.ádi woman had a dispute with her mother-in law, a loud dispute, over a share of herring brought in. The woman felt hurt and dejected. It was the time of the herring run, and she noticed the herring swimming around what is now the Herring Rock. She went down and sat on the rock at low tide and became fascinated by the herring. Sitting on the edge of the rock, she dangle her legs in the water up to her knees. The herring came close to her feet. She bent over and put her long hair in the water and to her delight, the herring spawned in her hair.
>
> She visited the rock when the herring appeared each season. The people were very much displeased with her because of her supernatural relationship with the herring. But because of her, the herring rock was adopted as one of the signs [crests] of the Kiks.ádi clan.[43]

According to Esther Littlefield, another Kiks.ádi clan member, the girl, whose name was *Kaxatjaashaa* ("Flipping girl," in reference to the fish flipping around her) went to the rock each morning and "sang lullabies to the herring."[44] Every herring season the Kiks.ádi people would go to the rock in anticipation of the fish. The clan tradition recounted that every year the herring would first spawn at the rock and then spread throughout "the village, to the Jamestown Bay where the Park Service is, and then all among the islands, and therefore it became known as the Herring Rock."[45]

Both storytellers assert that the rock became a source of strength for the clan. Littlefield remarked that the Herring Rock crest brings "about the respect of nature that was taught to our young and old." Neilson related that "young men would go to the rock where their uncles would whip them with branches to make them strong." Littlefield summed up the meaning of the Herring Rock to the Kiks.ádi clan when she said, "the rock stands for knowledge, strength, peace and truth also weakness itself."[46] The oral tradition, the rock, and the crest are the property of the Kiks.ádi clan. The story and the crest validate the Kiks.ádi claim to the area, while the rock is an important landmark and territorial marker for the Sitka clan.

The Kiks.ádi's relationship to the Indian River landscape is signified in both their name for the river and in several oral accounts of ancient and historical events that occurred there. The Tlingit name for the river, *Kaasda Héen*, derives from *Kaasda*,

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the name of the stream among the Frog people. An ancient interaction with the Frog people at the river validates the Kiks.ádi claim to the frog as their primary crest. One recorded account relates this brief and mysterious encounter:

> One day a canoe entered the stream at high tide. The wind was blowing upstream. A man on the bank shouted, "*Gudax yaku sawe'h*" ("Where from canoe come?"). A (frog) woman in the canoe answered, "*Tca'u han a i ya'h kasdehinedi'h ca a ya uha'n*" ("It is we, *kasde* stream people women we are," i.e., We are just the women from the *Kasdeh* River). The moment this was said all the women disappeared into the water and the canoe had become only a log. So it is that the Frog People gave the name to the stream.
>
> And so it is that the Kiks.ádi can back their claims to the other places they own. Only they know the stories behind the names.[47]

The story provides the foundation for the Kiks.ádi claim to *Kaasda Héen*. It establishes their connection to that river in an ancient time when other beings interacted with people, a time when the mysterious transformations that De Laguna referred to occurred.[48] The crest, the river, and the story are Kiks.ádi *at.oow* and determine Kiks.ádi *shagoon*. As such, they are central to past, present, and future Kiks.ádi identity and being.

Oral traditions about the battle with the Russians in 1804 also feature the importance of the Indian River. The symbolic importance of *Kaasda Héen* to Kiks.ádi strength and identity is suggested by the choice of that area for the construction of their fort in 1803 and 1804. Certainly there were practical reasons for the selection of this fort site, but oral tradition emphasizes the central symbolism of that area to the Kiks.ádi. Herb Hope, a contemporary Kiks.ádi and a member of the Point House group, relates that after a Point House shaman, Stoonookw, had a vision of the Russian return to Sitka, he urged them to build their fort near the river. Hope states that Stoonookw could "feel Baranof to the north," that he directed the construction of the fort, and that warriors and the general population, many of whom were at fish camps at the time, were told to go to the Indian River fort. According to Hope, the power of Stoonookw's vision brought the Kiks.ádi together at *Kaasda Héen* to construct the fort and fight the Russians.[49]

The power of *Kaasda Héen* to the Kiks.ádi is further demonstrated in the tradition that K'alyáan, the Kiks.ádi leader in the battle of 1804 against the Russians, submerged himself in the river and floated down with the current towards the mouth, where the fort was and where Russians and Aleuts were landing; he then emerged in the middle of those landing forces and killed many of them. After his immersion in *Kaasda Héen*, the source of clan sustenance, power, and identity, K'alyáan was able to surprise the Russians—and to be victorious in his battle with them.[50]

Oral tradition provides rich evidence of the symbolic power of the Indian River to the Kiks.ádi people of *Sheet'ká Kwáan*. Its meaning and power to the clan are manifested in many dimensions of Kiks.ádi *at.oow*—in the frog crest, and in mythological and historical clan traditions. This symbolic connection was also manifested in the physical interaction between clan and landscape in the day-to-day activities that comprise the Tlingit way of life.

SETTLEMENT PATTERNS

The Tlingit are a maritime people. They developed a settlement pattern in the southeastern Alaskan environment that facilitated the enactment of their lifeways. In winter the Tlingit traditionally inhabited permanent villages sited along the coast of the rugged island landscape of southeastern Alaska, most frequently on sheltered sand or gravel beaches facing the sea. In these villages the clan houses were arranged in rows parallel to the beach. These locations were easily reached by canoe, and provided direct access to the abundant marine species that formed the mainstay of their diet. Proximity to fresh water and salmon streams was an important factor in the siting of a settlement, as well as offering conditions that allowed good visibility of the ocean (and direction of potential attack). Often a fortifica-

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tion on a bluff or other defensible site was constructed nearby where the Tlingit could retreat in the case of such attack.

In spring, summer, and fall the Tlingit would travel to fishing camps located along salmon streams and rivers and other fishing spots. Tlingit fish camps consisted of smokehouses and summer houses where clan groups both lived and smoked the salmon they caught. La Perouse described a fish camp he observed near Hoonah in 1786:

> I have given the appellation of a village to three or four sheds of wood, twenty-five feet long, by fifteen or twenty wide, and closed with planks or bark of trees only on the side exposed to the wind. In the middle was a fire, over which hung salmon and halibut drying in the smoke.[51]

Emmons described these structures as often "without flooring, built directly on the ground, and covered with slabs of bark instead of boards. . . . In the better structures the frame was permanently put together; in others, it was lashed with withes of spruce root."[52]

Hunting camps located higher in the mountains were frequented by men for shorter periods of time, primarily in the fall. From these base settlements they would travel to a multitude of locations scattered throughout the regional habitats to obtain specific foods and materials. Extensive trading networks were also maintained with other *Kwáans* and groups to acquire materials not available in their territory.

Tlingit Subsistence Practices

Tlingit social geography is borne out in their continual interactions with the habitats of their landscape. It involves the gathering and putting up of foods, the production of material implements and tools, and the creation of material symbols. In the environment of southeastern Alaska, the Tlingit people developed an annual cycle of moving between habitats, gathering foods and materials in the seasons of their abundance, and preparing them for storage and later use. The seasonal round was the major focus of their lives. As Thornton has written, "food production was the dominant project in time and ideology in Tlingit society."[53] De Laguna's image of the Tlingits as travelers is apt in that they traditionally moved throughout the year from place to place "putting up" their foods. In doing so, they created a distinct pattern of settlement and activity in the landscape.

Tlingit subsistence activities are timed in accordance with the cycle of plant and animal abundance in southeastern Alaskan. These times of abundance and corresponding activities vary within the different regions of the Tlingit range, exhibiting a very general south to north continuum as the seasons progress. Some traditional activities undertaken by individuals and others required the cooperation of groups of people who worked together in a series of tasks. Overall they formed an intricate pattern of interactions with the seasonal resources of the landscape.

Although Tlingit subsistence relied primarily on marine resources, they also utilized floral and faunal species from all of the southeastern Alaskan habitats for food and production throughout the spring, summer, and fall of the year, preparing them both for immediate sustenance and later consumption. The foundation of their annual seasonal round, however, was the intensification of salmon harvesting and storage, which, when coupled with berries, comprised the mainstay of the Tlingit diet.

Table 4 provides a summary of the major resources used and the season of their acquisition. (A capital letter X in the table denotes the primary months of procurement, while a lower case x indicates secondary periods.)

The Extent and Population of the *Sheet'ká Kwaan*

The theme of movement in the landscape that permeates Tlingit oral tradition not only reflects the fact that their subsistence practices involved moving daily and seasonally through the landscape, but also relates that Tlingit people periodically migrated

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Table 2-1
Selected Resources of the Tlingit Seasonal Round

RESOURCE	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
FISH											
Halibut	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Herring	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Herring eggs			X	X	x						
Salmon, chum						x	X	X	X	X	X
Salmon, king	x	x	x	x	x	X	X	X	x	x	x
Salmon, pink						x	X	X	x		
Salmon, red						x	X	X	x	x	x
Dolly Varden			X	X	X	X	X	X			
LAND MAMMALS											
Brown Bear			X	X	X	x	x	x	x		
Deer			x	x			x	x	X	X	X
Squirrel			X	X						x	X
INTERTIDAL											
Butter Clams	X	X	X	X	x	x	x	x	X	X	X
Cockles	X	X	X	X	X	x	x	X	X	X	X
Mussels				X	X						
Octopus	x	x	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	x
Sea urchins	x	x	x	X	X	X					x
Black seaweed			x	X	X	X	x				
PLANTS											
Devil's Club	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fern roots			X	X	x						
Goose-tongue			X	X	X	X	X	X			
Hemlock Bark			x	X	X	x		x	x		
Hudson Bay Tea	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Indian Rice			X	x	x	x	x	X			

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Table 2-1
Selected Resources of the Tlingit Seasonal Round (cont.)

RESOURCE	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov
PLANTS											
Skunk Cabbage			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Spruce roots				X	X	X					
Wild celery				x	X	X					
Wild Sweet Potato						X	X	X			
BERRIES											
Blueberry							X	X	X		
Cranberry, highbush							X	X	X	X	x
Cranberry, lowbush							X	X	X	X	x
Currant, gray							x	X	X	x	
Elderberry							X	X	X	x	
Huckleberry							X	X	X	x	
Nagoonberry, rock cranberry							X	X	X		
Raspberry							X	X	X		
Salmonberry						x	X	X	x		
Soapberry						X	X	X	X		
Strawberry							X	X	X		
BIRDS											
Bird Eggs					X	X					
Canada Goose				x	x			x	X	X	X
Ducks				x	x			x	X	X	X
Grouse, spruce	X	X	X	X	x	x		x	X	X	X
Ptarmigan, Willow	x	x	X	X	x	x			X	X	x

Source: Derived from Thornton, "Place and Being," 179-81.

Note: A capitol X denotes the primary months of procurement, while a lower case x indicates secondary periods. The seasonal round illustrated in this table portrays a general regional pattern of subsistence activities. The specific activities that occurred within the study site will be described by Dr. Tom Thornton in a forthcoming traditional use study of the park.

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throughout the landscape to establish new villages or temporary camps. Consequently, the extent of Tlingit *Kwáans* and the location of settlements and camps within them were dynamic. Nevertheless, the general location and extent of the *Kwáan* territories were described by Swanton in 1906 and mapped by Goldschmidt and Haas in 1946, the latter based upon the testimony of Tlingit informants. The Tlingit group that owned the Sitka area, *Sheet'ká Kwáan*, occupied the western coasts of Baranov and Chichagof islands. According to Goldschmidt and Haas, the *Sheet'ká Kwáan* extended "the full length of the Pacific coast of Chichagof and Baranof Islands from Point Urey in the north to Cape Ommaney," including all the islands off the coast as well. They reported that it also extended "inward up Peril Strait between Chichagof and Baranof Islands into Hoonah Sound as far as Patterson Bay" (Figure 2-2).[54]

Prior to Russian settlement at Sitka in 1804 and the subsequent consolidation of the Tlingit population at the site in the 19th century, several villages were spread throughout the territory. Swanton reported learning of eight *Sheet'ká Kwáan* villages besides Sitka, which he referred to as "ancient and modern," but evidently most of these were abandoned in the early historic period.[55] Swanton commented that some of these places were "probably little more than camps."[56] Table 5 shows the settlements listed by Swanton and the translations he provided for some of the Tlingit names. The locations given were reported by Goldschmidt and Haas. In the 1880 census, Petrov recorded five Tlingit settlements of the Sitka tribe, with a population of 540 people recorded in the Sitka village, and small groups residing at a number of what were most likely not permanent villages, but camps, including 39 individuals at Silver Bay, 26 at Hot Springs, 43 at the Indian River, and 73 at Old Sitka.[57] Through their interviews in 1946, Goldschmidt and Haas learned of other settlements, camps, and important gathering places throughout the *Kwáan*. Important Kiks.ádi clan places will be described later in this report.

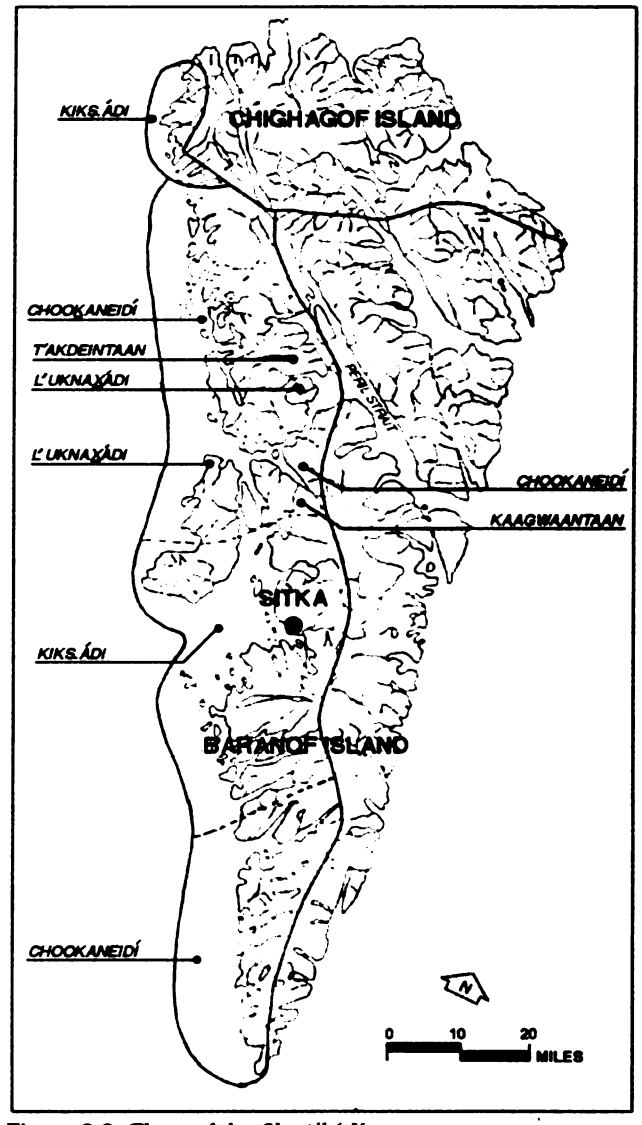

Figure 2-2. Clans of the *Sheet'ká Kwaan*.

The Kiks.ádi clan was considered the first Tlingit clan in the region; they migrated northward from the Kiks Bay in the Nass estuary. Swanton has suggested that the antiquity of the clan is evidenced by the fact that two important Tlingit mythological heros have Kiks.ádi names. He calls the Kiks.ádi "one of the great clans that moved up from the south," and asserts that in 1906 they were the most important Raven clan both at Wrangell and Sitka.[58] According to clan tradition, the Kiks.ádi moved north—some to Chilcat, others to Wrangell and then on to Sitka—where they called the island *Ci*. Just

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when they established the village *Noow Tlein* (Big Fort) on present-day Castle Hill is unclear. Swanton reports that before moving to the present site of Sitka, the Kiks.ádi lived in a village on Halleck Island called *Kastaxe'xda-an [Gasdaxeix Ta.aan]*.[59] Goldschmidt and Haas also reported that when the Russians "first arrived, the Kiks.ádi were living in a village of four tribal houses, called *qussa'an [Qus.a'an]*, at Point Brown on Kruzof Island."[60]

Various sources report differing accounts of which clans occupied *Sheet'ká Kwáan* besides the Kiks.ádi. Emmons includes seven Raven clans and five Wolf clans as comprising the inhabitants of the *Kwáan* (Table 2-3).[61] Swanton listed the Raven clans in Sitka as being comprised of the Kiks.ádi, the Watane'di (which he labels.part of Kiks.ádi), the L!uk!naxa'di [L'uknax.ádi] (which he called the king-salmon people), and the Q!at!kaa'yi (island people). The Wolf clans were listed as the Kag'wantan [Kaagwaantaan], the Kuk hit tan (part of the Kaagwaantaan), the Q!aq!a' hit tan (probably a part of the Kaagwaantaan), and the Katagwa'di.[62] Because these lists were compiled in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, they certainly include more clans than would have been evident during the pre-Russian or American presence in the area.

The early *Kwáan* population is not well documented, although there are some references to the group living at the village near present-day Sitka. Swanton's informant, Katishan, testified that "the first families to settle in Sitka were the Kiks.ádi, the Katagwadi and the Ges hit tan (Iron house people) the last a part of the Kagwantan [Kaagwaantaan]."[63] According to contemporary Tlingit informant Herb Hope, the seven to nine clan houses that existed in Sitka in 1804 accommodated six Kiks.ádi house groups and several Eagle clans.[64] Tlingit elder Mark Jacobs, Jr., stated that other clans, in addition to the Kiks.ádi, included the following in the village: the Kaagwaantaan, the Chookaneidí, the L'uknax.ádi, and the T'akdeintaan.[65] The Sitka winter village also included a fortified section on a high rocky point (now known as Castle Hill) that enclosed several clan houses of the Kiks.ádi and which was, according to Emmons, a common type of Tlingit fortification. He wrote that Tlingit forts were usually adjacent to a village "on some rocky island or precipitous headland, and belonged to a single family [clan]."[66] Lisiansky remarked on the defensibility of the Sitka fort, noting that "by its very siting the fort could be considered impregnable."[67] According to Tlingit oral traditions, four Kiks.ádi clan houses existed within the fort, *Noow Tlein* (Big Fort), on the site known presently as Castle Hill.[68]

It is impossible to know the exact population of the Sitka winter village in the fall of 1804. Large community houses such as those owned by the most powerful clans would have accommodated as many as 50 or 60 individuals.[69] Some houses in the village were undoubtedly smaller. As mentioned above, the British trader George Dixon estimated the population around Sitka Sound to be about 450 people in 1787, but many factors, including inter- and intra-clan conflict, response to the problems with the Russians, disease, as well as the season of the year, may have caused fluctuations in the number of Tlingits occupying the village.

After Russian settlement at New Archangel, the Tlingit population was recorded periodically. In 1834, Russian priest Venianimov reported 750 Tlingit individuals resided in Sitka.[70] In 1861, Russian Lieutenant Verman estimated that 1,344 Tlingit men and women resided there.[71] In 1880, Petrof estimated that a total of 721 Tlingit individuals occupied five villages on Baranof Island.[72] In 1890, a total of 814 Tlingit men and women lived at Sitka.[73] These fluctuating numbers undoubtedly reflect real changes in population due to events such as epidemics, the general concentration at Sitka that occurred during the period of Russian occupation, as well as the comings and goings of the Tlingit people in the daily patterns of their lives.

Because the Kiks.ádi was the original clan in Sitka, had the largest population, and was the most powerful, they controlled most of the bays, streams, and other valuable resources in the area.[74] Outside of the winter villages, the Kiks.ádi had camps along the bays, streams, and other important food gather-

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ing locations throughout their territory. Goldschmidt and Haas reported that the Kiks.ádi had smokehouses and residences in the northernmost section of the *Kwáan* at Surge Bay, but that by 1946 this area was now Hoonah territory. They also reported Kiks.ádi territory on Katlian Bay. George Lewis, their informant, stated the following:

> There were smokehouses at Katlian Bay, which belonged to the Kiks'adi. Got humpies, dog salmon, mountain blueberries, salmonberries and wild currants. The humpies were obtained from the Coxc River. We also gathered a potato-like root called *tset [tsáats]*. We went up to the head of the river to get cohoes because they taste better. We still go there to fish, but we bring them back here to smoke them.[75]

Not far from there was the "old Sitka village," called *Gajaa Héen* on Starrigavan Bay, where, according to Goldschmidt and Haas, "Sitka people lived. . . at the time the first Russians came," and where the new colonists established Fort St. Michael in 1799.[76] Herman Kitka also reported to Thornton that the Kiks.ádi had a camp at Old Sitka. Kitka said that "Katlian had a camp at Old Sitka right where they have the cross sticking up. And the people that used that smokehouse belonged to my father-in-law's clan [Kiks.ádi]. That smokehouse building was there even before Russians came."[77] The Kiks.ádi also owned Silver Bay and Redoubt Bay where they had camps and smokehouses. There were two forts on Redoubt Bay, and a village "called *gustdaXqaon* which had nine tribal houses."[78] Necker Bay was Kiks.ádi territory and the site of their smokehouse as well as Red Fish Bay, where there were smokehouses and a fort "in the old days."[79] As they proceeded along their seasonal rounds, the Kiks.ádi were scattered throughout the territory, moving from place to place in the production of foods and the concomitant confirmation and enactment of their social and spiritual identities.

THE TLINGITS AT INDIAN RIVER

Encompassing the mouth of *Kaasda Héen*, Sitka National Historical Park is presently situated on what is traditionally land that belongs to the Kiks.ádi clan of the Sitka Tlingit.[80] At the time of Russian arrival, the Sitka winter village was located on and adjacent to Castle Hill. Oral traditions, however, indicate that prior to this time there was a Tlingit village in the vicinity of the Indian River. According to a native account of the Kiks.ádi migration to the area recorded in 1943, the clan moved from the Wrangell area to Jamestown Bay and then on to the present site of Sheldon Jackson College, before proceeding to Castle Hill.[81] This account agrees somewhat with the description of the Tlingit village in the Sitka area given to Goldschmidt and Haas, which asserts that the village, called *Casayeon [Sha'sa'ye'on]* by the Tlingits, extended from the mouth of the Indian River to Jamestown Bay.[82] It is neither known, at this time, just how many houses were part of that village, nor where they specifically were located. However, archeological material excavated along Jamestown Bay dated to AD 1200 to 1400 may be related to a village site. More ethnohistorical and archeological research is recommended for additional information on the village.

In order to utilize the salmon that run up the Indian River, the Tlingits certainly would have had fish camps in the area that were similar to those described above. George Lewis, one of the informants cited by Goldschmidt and Hass, reported that "in the old days there were many smokehouses at the mouth of this river.[83] According to Herb Hope and other Tlingits, Kiks.ádi fish camps existed along and near the Indian River prior to 1804.[84] The precise location of these fish camps along the Indian River is not known, although Hope indicated some possible locations (see Diagram 3). And during the summer and autumn months that they occupied those camps, the Tlingit would have gathered foods and materials from the nearby forest and intertidal habitats. The area was close enough to winter villages, additionally, to have been a regular source of resource during those months, both for consumption and manufacture. The park landscape, just prior to Russian arrival, is the subject of the follow-

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Table 2-2
Sheet'ká Kwáan Settlements Recorded by John R. Swanton

Settlement Names	English Translations
Cit!ka [Sheet'ká]	"Behind Baranof island (Ci)"
LA'Xq!xo-an	"Town where one does not sleep much"
Kastaxe'xda-an [Gasdaxeix Ta.aan]	South end of Halleck Island
Lana'xk [Tlenaxk]	Redfish Bay
Qona' [Qun's]	Redoubt Bay
Q!eckunuwu'	"Blue jay fort"
Daxe't [Daxéit]	"Fallen stunned"* Nakwasina Passage
L!uxa'cayîk-an	"Town straight opposite Mount Edgecombe"

*So named "because a man there once ate so much halibut that he fell down as if stunned"; see Swanton, "Social Condition,"397.
Sources: Swanton, "Social Condition"; Goldschmidt and Hass, *Possessory Rights.*

Table 2-3
Clans of the Sheetká Kwáan

Raven	Wolf
Luknaxadi [L'uknax.ádi]	Kagwantan [Kaagwaantaan]
Xatka ayi	Kadagadi
Quskedi	Qukhitan
Kiks.ádi	Cukanedi [Chookaneidí]
Anxakitan	Gayeshittan
Taqdentan [T'akdeintaan]	
Kaskqan	

Source: Emmons, *The Tlingit.*

ing discussion. The three major habitats of that landscape are described, followed by an overview of the activities that would have occurred within them.

THE INDIAN RIVER AREA

The Indian River area of the park landscape is comprised of the river itself and the banks that flank it. As a riparian habitat, the river constitutes the central feature in a dynamic landscape that is periodically altered by dramatic flood events. The amount of water flowing within its banks and the morphology of the channel would have been in continual flux. Although no historical evidence exists as to the specific conditions just prior to 1803-1804, we can reasonably assume that the dynamics of the river were very similar to its historically documented conditions prior to the 1940s, and would have supported the same types of biota.

The river would have been flanked by the Sitka spruce/western hemlock rainforest, interspersed with patches dominated by decidous red alders where high water or windthrow had unearthed the conifers, and included other sunny openings where grasses, herbs, and shrubs had colonized the bank. Salt tolerant forbs, grasses, and sedges would have been growing in the estuary at the river's mouth . The fish that spawned in the river would have included several species of salmon. Goldschmidt

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and Haas reported, in 1946, that the Indian River was a source of pink salmon (also known as humpback salmon or humpies, *Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*), cohoes *(O. kisutch)*, and dog or chum salmon *(O. keta)*. Many mammals would have visited the water to drink. Others would have been drawn by the salmon spawn. Waterfowl and sea birds also would have utilized the area.

As a source of salmon, the mainstay of the Tlingit diet, the Indian River would have been an important Kiks.ádi locale. As Emmons wrote, "the most valuable property of the Tlingit was the fishing ground or salmon stream."[85] However, it is not clear if the Indian River was traditionally a major locale for drying fish. George Lewis' statement that at one time there had been many smokehouses at the mouth of the river implies that it was an important place for such activity. Several contemporary Tlingit, however, contend that at least some salmon from the Indian River were preferred fresh. Mark Jacobs asserts that the pink salmon from Indian River were better suited for boiling than smoking.[86] Despite Herb Hope's assertion that fish camps existed along the river, he also suggests that the Indian River was mainly used as a source of fresh fish in winter, and was not an important drying location.[87] These differing accounts may reflect fluctuating fish populations in the river, as well as changing practices among the local Tlingit.

Emmons reported that traditionally salmon "were taken in traps, with spear or gaff, or with hook and line, depending upon the variety and the water in which they were caught." On some streams barricades were constructed out of logs or stakes that controlled or stopped the passage of the spawning fish. Various types of wooden traps often were used in conjuction with these barricades. In some streams channels were created out of boulders that forced the fish into long narrow baskets. At other times boulders were used to create basins that would flood and fill with fish at high tide, and then confine the fish when the tide fell.[88]

Besides their ingenious and effective traps and dams, the Tlingit used spears and gaffs (large hooks mounted on long poles) to catch the fish. Emmons reported that they "relied chiefly" upon those devices.[89] According to his account, the Tlingit used several types of spears for fishing in shallow clear water, but that the gaff was even more commonly employed. He wrote that while the gaff was "equally efficient [as the harpoon] in clear water, it was absolutely necessary in glacial streams and in deep holes under the banks or log-jams. He described the gaff as follows:

> The shaft was . . . fully eighteen feet in length, and not so carefully selected, indeed being sometimes quite bent, and was little more than a sapling with the limbs removed. At the end was fitted an iron hook that superseded the older one of deer antler or wood. . . . The iron hook itself was from three to eight inches long. Its shank was longer and the width of the opening was about three inches. The hook was rounded [in cross section], the shank more often flattened, with a lip to prevent its slipping from the lashing that attached it to the shaft.[90]

One fished with the gaff by throwing the pole out and pulling it back in short quick jerks.

Just where and how the Kiks.ádi fished in *Kaasda Héen* is not known precisely. If more than one group used the river, they may have marked their sections of the watercourse by driving stakes into its bed.[91] Hope suggested that because of shifting gravel at the bottom of the river, the Kiks.ádi would have used "directional traps" or gaffs.[92] He remembers that as a child (around the time of World War II), gaffing for humpback salmon occurred in the river.[93] Bill Brady, another Tlingit informant, also remembers gaffing for salmon in the Indian River at about the same time.[94]

After the men had caught the fish, the women prepared and dried the catch on or near the banks of the river in open areas situated along the edge of the shady forests. The Kiks.ádi cut the fish open, cleaned them, removed their heads, and then laid them out on outdoor drying racks for two to five days. Protection against the rain was often provided

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by constructing a structure built out of boards, bark, or brush; sometimes a canoe sail or mats served as a cover. After this period of drying, the fish were cut into smaller strips and then hung in the smokehouse. Here, over a continuously smoldering fire, the strips of flesh were hung in rows, moved farther from the fire as they dried, and then when they were dry, taken down and tied into bundles for storage.[95] This typical fishing and curing process provided the mainstay of the Tlingit diet; if the fish population in the river was sufficient, fishing and curing certainly would have been carried out by the Kiks.ádi in and on the banks of *Kaasda Héen*.

Besides curing enough salmon for winter consumption, the Tlingit ate it fresh, as well as other fish species, such as Dolly Varden, that inhabited the Indian River. Fresh fish was frequently boiled, but also roasted over the fire. Additionally, salmon spawn was prepared in a number of ways: the roe either was cooked, dried, stored in grease, or buried in the sand below the tideline and allowed to ferment. Salmon heads were also fermented in this manner.[96]

Plants growing on and along the river banks also would have been utilized by the Tlingit.[97] Alder wood was used commonly as fuel for smoking salmon.[98] It was valued as a good carving wood, ideal for spoons and platters because of its smooth texture, but also was used to make many other objects, including rattles, masks, arrow points, labrets, and paddles.[99] Red alder served as an important dye plant for the Tlingit. Containers carved out of the wood were filled with urine, which gradually took on a red shade as the color leached out of the alder. Materials could then be dyed in the red solution.[100]

Wild celery (commonly known as cow parsnip) also would have been found in sunny areas along the river. It was commonly eaten raw by the Tlingit. Hope reports that the Point House Kiks.ádi gathered this plant around the Indian River, usually toward the end of June.[101] Other Tlingit informants report that when they were children in the 1930s and 1940s, wild celery was gathered in sunny spots along the river.[102] Emmons wrote that wild celery was "often skinned with the fingernail and eaten raw, or sometimes the stalks were mashed to a pulp and mixed with grease." De Laguna added that "young wild celery stalks are still (1980) a favorite with Tlingit children."[103]

Animal and plant resources also would have been obtained in the Indian River estuary. Emmons noted that the Tlingit ate waterfowl, such as geese and ducks and some terrestrial bird species, in addition to using their feathers for manufacture and adornment. He reported that the natives did not eat the albatross, oyster catcher, raven, crow, owl, hawk, small song birds, nor apparently the eagle, unless they had no other food.[104] Eagles were hunted for their wings, which were used for brooms, while their down was "scattered on all peaceful, ceremonial occasions."[105] Plants in the Indian River estuary also would have been gathered by the Tlingit. Tufted hair grass, found in the upper elevations of the habitat, was used to embroider spruce root baskets.[106] The leaves of goose-tongue, another common plant that occurs in the lower elevations of the estuary, were gathered and eaten in spring and summer.[107]

Forested Areas on Both Sides of the Indian River

The character of the forests near the Indian River prior to 1804 is not documented. Given the kinds of plant communities that occur in the region and the park today, however, and the historical descriptions of the forest published by European visitors in 1827, it is reasonable to assume that the majority of land at elevations above 10 feet within what is now the park, was forested with an old growth stand of Sitka spruce/western hemlock. A finer scale determination of the plant communities within the forest at that time is not possible without historical documentation of disturbance. Small openings certainly would have been present. Additionally, the Tlingit may well have cut some of the trees from behind the historic village site situated on the beach at the mouth of the river. The

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majority of land, however, was undoubtedly forested and inhabited by mammals such as Sitka black-tailed deer, squirrels, and voles, and many bird species, including woodpeckers, hawks, owls, bald eagles, ravens, and hummingbirds.

Throughout the year, the Tlingit would have utilized many of the species, both plant and animal, that inhabited the forest in what is now the park. Wood was used for fuel and manufacture, many plants were used for food, medicine, and manufacture, and birds and mammals were hunted for their flesh and skins. Their most common uses are described below.

The large hemlock and spruce trees that dominated the forests were utilized for the manufacture of structures, canoes, and the many implements crafted by the Tlingit. Spruce was generally employed for the construction of the permanent clan houses, but hemlock was used, according to Emmons, for the outer planks, if other wood was not available.[108] Probably the wood and bark of both species were used in the construction of camp shelters. Sitka spruce also was used to create the typical canoes the Tlingit employed for their hunting and fishing endeavors.[109] Both spruce and hemlock were carved into tools and implements and spruce roots were woven into baskets.

Sitka spruce and western hemlock also were important food plants for the Tlingit. Emmons has provided a detailed description of the gathering and use of the inner bark of the spruce and hemlock trees:

> The inner bark of the hemlock, spruce and pine was gathered in the spring and eaten fresh with oil, but that of the hemlock alone was prepared and preserved for winter. . . . The tree trunk was debarked in slabs one or two feet wide and four or five feet long by means of wedges made of the limbs of hemlock, spruce, or cedar, pointed at one end and sharpened to a flat edge at the other. . . . The bark [to be detached] was cut across at the bottom with the pointed end, and pried off upwards with the wedge-shaped end of the stick. Then the women scraped off the fine inner bark with her crescent-shaped knife, originally of mussel shell, later of metal. These shavings were dried or steamed in the earth oven between layers of skunk cabbage leaves, then mashed in wooden dishes with the woman's hand hammer, or rubbed soft with her hands. Then they were formed into cakes and pressed between pieces of hemlock bark, sun dried on the canoe cover, and stored in boxes or strung up on the wall. The preserved bark was softened in boiling water and then mixed with oil before being eaten.[110]

That bark was used near the Indian River is evidenced by a number of culturally modified trees (trees scarred by human removal of sections of bark) located during the recent geomorphological field work conducted at Sitka National Historical Park. Six of the seven CMT's they identified were Sitka spruce.[111]

Devil's club, a common shrub in the forest near the Indian River, was utilized by the Tlingit for medicinal and ceremonial purposes.[112] The Tlingit used Devil's club as a medicinal agent in a number of ways. To treat external wounds, they applied a paste made of roasted inner bark, the gum of the white pine, and some grease; the bark was chewed and applied as an antiseptic. For internal ailments, the inner bark was dissolved in water to serve as both a purgative and an emetic, and the outer bark was scraped, dried, ground into a powder, and drunk with water. Parts of the plant also were used for other ritual cleanses and protections. De Laguna mentioned that branches hung around doors and windows were thought to keep away the evil spirits of illness.[113]

Berries comprised the mainstay of the Tlingit vegetable diet and would have been abundant in the openings and understory of the forest along the Indian River. Historical evidence for the presence of such species is provided by Aleksandr Postels, one of the naturalists on the 1827 Russian circumglobal expedition led by Capt. Frederick Litke. He recorded the species they observed in the woods near the Indian River as follows:

> Among the most common shrubs one must include the *Rubus spectabilis*,[salmonberry] the *Alazea*, and two species of *Ribes* (*Ribes bracteosum and R. affine Dougl.*)[currants] . . . I

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> saw also . . . much *Vaccinium* (*Vaccinium ovalifolium*, [blueberry] *parvifolum*, [huckleberry] *uliginosum* [blueberry] and even *myrtillus)* the fruit of which is much esteemed by the natives.[114]

In a drawing of the forest near the river, Postels depicted (and identified in his text) a red-berried elder [*Sambucus racemosa var. aborescens*], the fruit of which the Tlingit ate.[115] Baron von Kittlitz, a member of the same expedition, reported that Tlingit women often were seen gathering in the forest near the river. He stated: "The women . . . were often seen in little groups in the forest collecting all kinds of smaller foodstuffs, among others of importance, the spicy fruit of the *Rubus spectabilis* [salmonberry] that ripens in July."[116] Goldschmidt and Haas also reported that berrying occurred along the river. George Lewis told them that "native people still go up the river. . . to gather wild currants [*Ribes bracteosum*] and blueberries [*Vaccinium ovalifolium*]."[117] Other berries that currently grow within the present park boundaries, and which traditionally were likely to have been gathered by the Tlingit in that area, included the thimbleberry [*Rubus parviflorus*], raspberry [*R. pedatus*], sorrel berries [*Rumex spp.*], trailing black current [*Ribes laxiflorum*], and lowbush or mountain cranberry [*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*].[118] The forests and meadows in the vicinity of the Indian River were berrying grounds where the inhabitants collected numerous species that formed an important component of their diet.[119]

Other plant species that grow in the openings and edges of the park's forests would have been eaten. Postels recorded seeing what he called the "Sarana or Kamchatka lily (*Lilium Kamtschatcense* L.)," now named *Fritillaria camschatcensis*, growing at the edge of the forest.[120] These plants are still common in the park.[121] Emmons describes Tlingit use of the lily as follows:

> The Kamchatka lily, *kuh*, known as "wild rice,". . . which is found in open patches, was dug in midsummer with a digging stick, or potato digger. The roots were pickked over, washed, cooked in open-work baskets in boiling water and eaten with grease. Or they were mashed with the blue or red huckleberry, mixed with seal oil and stored in boxes. The roots were also hung up and dried. The cooked and mashed root was used like putty to fill the seams and corners in the sides and bottoms of the oil boxes to prevent leakage.[122]

In addition, several species of fern roots and fiddleheads were gathered in the forests. Emmons and De Laguna listed both lady fern (*Athyrium filix-femina*) and licorice fern (*Polypodium vulgare* L., ssp *occidentale*) as important food items. Both are currently found growing in the park.[123]

Mammals, such as deer and bear, in addition to squirrels and other small creatures, would have been hunted in the forests. Emmons reported the following about the Tlingit consumption of terrestrial mammals:

> The flesh of such animals as bear, deer, marmot, porcupine and beaver was eaten fresh, but occupied a secondary place as compared with fish. The liver of the deer was most esteemed [and ground squirrels, when obtainable, were also relished]. The porcupine was eaten fresh and also dried.[124]

Goldschmidt and Haas reported, in 1946, that Tlingit people still went "up the river to hunt brown bear and deer."[125] It is unlikely that, in the twentieth century, these large mammals were still common in the area that now comprises Sitka National Historical Park, but they probably were hunted farther up the watershed in the mountains. They are, however, occasionally spotted in the park today.

Beaches and Tidal Flats

The exposed cobble beach that extended along the Indian River peninsula below elevations of approximately ten feet would have been very similar in character to the historically documented beach. A fringe of grasses and forbs probably occupied the upper elevations adjacent to the forest, while closer to the tidal zone, vegetation would have been limited to more salt tolerant herbs and lichens. Seabirds certainly gathered and scavenged on the beach.

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As mentioned above, the beaches were the most common sites for winter village and fish camps. They also were important access routes to and from these centers of activity. Additionally, seabird hunting and plant gathering took place on the beaches. Many of the plants that occurred along their upper stretches were utilized by the Tlingit. The roots of Pacific silverweed or wild sweetpotato (*Potentilla pacifica Howell*) were a valuable traditional food.[126] Goose-tongue would have been harvested on the beaches as well as in the estuary. The cottony seeds of fireweed (*Epilobium angustifolium*), growing in the sunny fringe adjacent to the forest, were gathered and stored in seal stomachs so they could be used as tinder for lighting fires.[127] Several species of grasses commonly found along the upper beaches, including blue joint grass (*Calamagrostis canadensis*), tufted hair grass (*Deschampsia caesptosa*), and beach rye grass (*Elymus arenarius* L., spp. *mollis*), were embroidered onto spruce root baskets. The grasses were gathered in early summer, stripped of their leaves, soaked in boiling water until they faded, and then bleached in the sun for several days before being immersed in dyes made from other mineral, plant, and animal products.[128]

Many important foods would have been gathered in the broad intertidal zones framing the park at the intersection of land and sea. A large number of invertebrates inhabit those zones, in addition to seaweed and other species traditionally harvested by the Tlingit.

Several types of seaweed were gathered, including black seaweed (*Porphyra perforata*), which occurs in the lower elevations of the intertidal zone, red or ribbon seaweed (*Palmaria palmata*), which grows in the intertidal and sub-tidal zones, and bull kelp (*Nereocystis luetkana*), which grows in the subtidal zones.[129] In his description of the Tlingit diet, von Langsdorff mentioned that seaweed was eaten in spring and summer, "which, when cooked, produce a bitter soup."[130] Likewise, Emmons described the seaweed collecting and processing procedure vividly:

> The Tlingit obtained their salt from seaweed which the women gathered in the spring on the outer rocks below the high tide line. There are two [edible] varieties: the purple-black seaweed and the lighter colored [ribbon] seaweed. These were pressed into flat cakes like those of berries or bark, sun dried, and packed in boxes, or were rolled up in bundles the shape and size of a large sweet potato and dried. To prevent mold, the cakes or bundles of seaweed were spread out on boards [in the sun] on bright days. Like the bark cakes, they were softened in boiling water and eaten with oil.[131]

That seaweed was collected in the park's intertidal habitats is testified to by Herb Hope, who says it was collected there in May and June while other contemporary Tlingit informants remember gathering the plant in the tidal flats of the park.[132]

Shellfish comprise another important intertidal resource commonly utilized by the Tlingit. Clams and cockles would have been dug in the tideflats adjacent to the park. Several contemporary Tlingit recall collecting them from the Indian River peninsula intertidal zones before the time of World War II.[133] Clams were traditionally dug for immediate consumption, whereas cockles most often were boiled and then strung up and smoked.[134]

In early spring, when herring were spawning in the intertidal zones, they would have been caught with a rake-like implement. The spawn itself was a highly valued food. It could be gathered by picking seaweed to which the spawn had fastened, or by placing hemlock boughs into the water during the spawn so that the roe would fasten to the branches. The eggs could be eaten fresh, after a quick immersion in boiling water, or sun dried. Emmons related the following account of the traditional method for preserving herring spawn:

> To prepare the eggs for winter use, they were put in a box of water, together with the material to which they were attached, and when the eggs swelled, they were stripped from the broad leaves of the seaweed or from the moss. Spawn on sea moss was often packed away as gathered, since the moss does not decay and is tasteless. The eggs on hemlock branches had to be stripped very soon, before becoming impregnated by the pungency of the needles. This was done by breaking the twigs, rubbing

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> them together, and dropping them in water, where the eggs separated and sank, while the needles and woody particles floated to the surface and were easily removed. After the eggs had been separated and cleaned, they were sun dried on boards, canoe covers, or so forth, and then packed away in boxes for the winter.[135]

The importance of the herring spawn within the Tlingit subsistence cycle is conveyed by the Kiks.ádi Herring Rock crest and the story of its acquisition.

Undoubtedly, many other resources were used by the Tlingit in the Indian River vicinity. This discussion only provides a survey of some of the major activities that made up the intimate and wide-ranging interaction between the Kiks.ádi clan of Sitka and the park habitats. As the source of Tlingit sustenance and material culture, the number of potential interactions between the people and that environment was remarkable. Necessarily, many specific probable uses of particular species were not mentioned in this survey. Additionally, this account of Tlingit subsistence practices within the park landscape is necessarily historical because traditional fishing, hunting, and gathering practices ceased in the park before World War II. Other specifically documented Tlingit activities in the park will be discussed in greater detail in the chapters that cover those chronological periods in which they occurred. In addition, further research in the form of a Traditional Use Survey is currently being conducted on the specific practices conducted in the park. The results of that investigation will provide more data on just how the Kiks.ádi interacted with the landscape that now comprises Sitka National Historical Park.

CONCLUSION

As Kiks.ádi ancestral territory, the Indian River and its vicinity comprise an important landmark in the social geography of the Sitka Kiks.ádi clan. Oral tradition and history testify to the depth and breadth of their relationship to that landscape—land that not only provided many of the resources they needed for survival, but also served as the site of transforming events for the Tlingit, both in ancient and historical times. Embodying their social identity, their history, and their source of sustenance, *Kaasda Héen* and its surrounds became more than a place where the Tlingit lived: it signified who they were. The Tlingit man who described these lands as vital to their "sense of being" referred to a deep and inseparable connection between the identity of a people and the places where they have dwelled.

Because of cultural changes and the preservation of their land as a national park, Tlingit traditional practices have been disrupted in the Monument. The spiritual and symbolic ties to that landscape, however, may even increase in importance with the loss of such material interactions. These dimensions of the park's ethnographic landscape are still being explored. Further studies will reveal more fully the breadth and depth of Kiks.ádi ties to *Kaasda Héen* and its surroundings.

ENDNOTES

[1] Whenever possible, the most recent Tlingit orthography has been used throughout this document. We have been assisted in this regard by Dr. Tom Thornton and the Sitka Tribe of Alaska. For the historical place and clan names, if we could readily locate the recently accepted spellings, we included them in brackets following the original spelling. An exhaustive orthography of these important names, while highly desirable, is beyond the scope of this undertaking.

[2] Gregory P. Chaney, Robert C. Betts, and Dee Longenbaugh, *Physical and Cultural Landscapes of Sitka National Historical Park, Sitka, Alaska* (Douglas, AK: Vanguard Research, 1995), 98; Stanley D. Davis, "Prehistory of Southeastern Alaska,"in *Northwest Coast, Volume Seven of the Handbook of North American Indians*, edited by Wayne Suttles (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1990), 197-98; Katherine L. Arndt, Russell H. Sackett, and James A. Ketz, *A Cultural Resource Overview of the Tongass National Forest, Alaska, Part One: Overview* (Fairbanks: GDM, Inc., 1987), 63.

[3] Davis, "Prehistory,"199.

[4] Ibid.; Arndt, et al., *Cultural Resource* Overview, 3.

[5] Madonna L. Moss, Jon M. Erlandson, and Robert Stuckenrath, "The Antiquity of Tlingit Settlement on Admiralty Island, Southeast, Alaska," *American Antiquity* 54 (1989): 541.

[6] *Ibid.*

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] Erlandson, Jon, Madonna Moss, and Robert Stuckworth, "Radiocarbon Dates from a Tlingit Fort in Sitka Sound, Southeast Alaska, " draft report for publication in the *Proceedings of the 1990 Alaska Anthropological Meetings*, (cited in Chaney, et. al).

[9] Quoted in Thomas F. Thornton, "Place and Being Among the Tlingit," Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation (Seattle: University of Washington, 1995), 1.

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[10] John R. Swanton, "Social Condition, Beliefs and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians," *Twenty-sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1904-1905* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1908), 452.
[11] De Laguna, *Under Mount St. Elias*, 822-23.
[12] Herman Kitka, cited in Thornton, *Place and Being*, 327.
[13] Thornton, "Place and Being," 225.
[14] Arndt, et al., *Cultural Resource Overview*, 89; according to Sergei Kan (*Symbolic Immortality*, 22-23), there were as many as 18-20 Tlingit kwaans, whereas Wallace Olson cites linguist Jeff Leer (*The Tlingit*, 18) as identifying 18 former kwaans.
[15] Traditionally, *kwaans* served no political function, but due to the effects of twentieth-century federal Indian policy, pan-Tlingit organizations, and native corporations, they have come to take on the political function of a tribe; see Thornton, "Place and Being," 72-74.
[16] De Laguna, "Tlingit," 212-213.
[17] *Ibid.*
[18] *Ibid.*, 11; Kan, *Symbolic Immortality*, 24.
[19] Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer, editors, *Haa Kusteeyí, Our Culture: Tlingit Life Stories* (Seattle, London, and Juneau: University of Washington Press and Sealaska Heritage Foundation, 1994), 9.
[20] Kan, *Symbolic Immortality*, 23.
[21] Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer, editors, *Haa Shuka, Our Ancestors: Tlingit Oral Narratives* (Seattle, London, and Juneau: University of Washington Press and Sealaska Heritage Foundation, 1987), 25.
[22] *Ibid.*, 26.
[23] *Ibid.*
[24] *Ibid.*, 22; Newton and Moss, *Subsistence*; Krause, *The Tlingit*, 65.
[25] Niblack, *The Coast Indians*, 298.
[26] De Laguna, "Tlingit," 213.
[27] Kan, *Symbolic Immortality*, 23.
[28] Thornton, "Place and Being," 194.
[29] Rosita Worl, *Principles of Tlingit Property Law and Case Studies of Cultural Objects* (Juneau, Alaska: Alaska Regional Office, National Park Service, 1994), 27.
[30] *Ibid.*
[31] De Laguna, *Under Mount St. Elias*, 453-54.
[32] Frederica De Laguna, *The Story of a Tlingit Community: A Problem in the Relationship between Archeological, Ethnological and Historical Methods* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1960), 17.
[33] Julie Cruikshank, *Life Lived Like a Story: Life Stories of Three Yukon Native Elders* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 347.
[34] De Laguna, *Under Mount Saint Elias* , 211.
[35] De Laguna, *The Story*, 17-18.
[36] See Thornton, "Place and Being," 69, for a chart of Tlingit clan names and their derivation.
[37] Anthropologist Renalto Rosaldo noted that Ilongot historical consciousness represents a spatialization of time in which the Ilongot map their pasts by places in the landscape where they have lived and gardened. Alfonso Oritz has discussed this element generally in Native American historical consciousness, stating that "Indian traditions usually exist more in space. . . than in time." He contends that these Indian "traditions exist in, and are primarily to be understood in relation to space; they belong to the place where people exist or originated"; see Renato Rosaldo, *Ilongot Headhunting 1883-1974: A Study in Society and History* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1980), and Alfonso Oritz, "Some Concerns Central to the Writing of 'Indian' History," *The Indian Historian*, Winter 1977: 18.
[38] De Laguna, *The Story*, 20.
[39] Cruikshank, *Life Lived*, 351.
[40] Elizabeth Nyman and Jeff Leer, *Gagiwdul.at: Brought Forth to Reconfirm—The Legacy of a Taku River Tlingit Clan* (Whitehorse, Yukon Territory: Yukon Native Language Centre and Fairbanks: Alaska Native Language Center, 1993), 23.
[41] Cruikshank, *Life Lived*, 3.
[42] De Laguna, *The Story*, 18.
[43] Peter Nielson, cited in Worl, *Principles of Tlingit*, 193.
[44] Worl, *Principles of Tlingit*, 193.
[45] *Ibid.*, 194.
[46] *Ibid.*
[47] Olson, *Social Structure*, 12.
[48] De Laguna, *Under Mount St. Elias*, 453-54.
[49] Herb Hope, interview with Tim Cochrane and Bonnie Houston, National Park Service, Anchorage, September 28, 1992.
[50] See Chapter 4 for a detailed discussion of the battle.
[51] La Perouse cited in Emmons, *The Tlingit Indians*, 70.
[52] Emmons, *The Tlingit Indians*, 69.
[53] Thornton, "Place and Being," 179.
[54] Goldschmidt and Haas, *Possessory Rights*, 102.
[55] Swanton, "Social Condition," 397; Olson, *Social Structure*, 3.
[56] Swanton, "Social Condition," 398.
[57] U. S. Census Office, *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census, June 1, 1880* (Washington D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1883).
[58] Swanton, "Social Condition," 409.
[59] *Ibid.*
[60] Goldschmidt and Haas, *Possessory Rights*, 107.
[61] Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 439.
[62] Swanton, "Social Condition," 400.
[63] *Ibid.*, 409.
[64] Herbert Hope interview with Tim Cochrane, Steve Peterson, Bonnie Houston, Katerina Solovjova Wessels, Arnold Alanen, and Holly Smith-Middleton, Alaska Systems Support Office, Anchorage, June 21, 1995; Hope named the six Kiks.adi house groups as belonging to the Point House, the Herring House, the Clay House, the Strong House, the Steel (Sun) House, and the Inside-the-Fort House.
[65] Mark Jacobs, Jr., "Early Encounters between the Tlingits and the Russians," in *Russia in North America, Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Russian America, Sitka, Alaska, August 19-22, 1987*, Richard A. Pierce, ed. (Kingston, Ontario and Fairbanks, Alaska: The Limestone Press, 1990), 4.
[66] Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 77.
[67] Dmytryshyn, et al., *Russian American Colonies*, 83.
[68] Sally Hopkins, "The Battle of Sitka," 5; John James, "Kiks.adi migration," 1.
[69] De Laguna, *Under Mount Saint Elias*, 294.
[70] Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 431.
[71] *Ibid.*, 433.
[72] U. S. Census Office, *Statistics of the Population of the United States at the Tenth Census, June 1, 1880* (Washington D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1883).
[73] U. S. Census Office, *Report of the Population of the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890* (Washington D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1895).
[74] Olson, *Social Structure*, 55-56.
[75] Goldschmidt and Haas, *Possessory Rights*, 108.
[76] *Ibid.*
[77] Thornton, "Place and Being," 237.
[78] Goldschmidt and Haas, *Possessory Rights*, 109.
[79] *Ibid.* 110-11.
[80] *Ibid.* 108; Olson, *Social Structure*, 12.
[81] "John James Account of Kiks.ádi Migration," unpublished manuscript given to Ellen Hayes in 1967/68 by Pete Nielson, on file in the Alaska Systems Support Office, National Park Service, Anchorage.
[82] Goldschmidt and Haas, *Possessory Rights*, 108.
[83] *Ibid*, 108.
[84] Herbert Hope, sketch attached to letter to Micki Hellickson, March 1, 1993, Alaska Systems Support Office Files, Anchorage.
[85] Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 105.

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[86]George Gmelch and Sharon Bohn Gmelch, with the assistance of Richard K. Nelson, *Resource Use in a Small Alaskan City—Sitka*, Technical Paper Number 90 (Juneau: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, 1985), 20.
[87]Hope interview with Cochrane and Houston.
[88]Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 105-07.
[89]*Ibid.*, 107.
[90]*Ibid.*, 109-10.
[91]Emmons reported this practice in the Chilkoot River; *Ibid.*, 105-06.
[92]Hope interview with Cochrane and Houston.
[93]*Ibid.*
[94]William Brady interview with Holly Smith-Middleton, Sitka, AK, July 6, 1995.
[95]Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 143.
[96]*Ibid.*, 145; Gmelch and Gmelch, *Resource*, 30.
[97]Many plant species utilized by the Tlingit were found in other low elevation habitats, in addition to the river course. A few important species frequently found in riparian habitats are discussed here. Other species that also may have been present will be described in the section on forest and beach habitats.
[98]Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 145; Gmelch and Gmelch, *Resource*, 30.
[99]Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 163; Nancy J. Turner, *Plants in British Columbia Indian Technology*, Handbook No. 38 (Victoria, Canada: British Columbia Provincial Museum, 1979) 194.
[100] Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 447; Turner, *Plants*, 192.
[101] Hope interview with Cochrane and Houston.
[102] Gill Truitt and Herbert Didrickson interview with Holly Smith-Middleton, Sitka, AK, July 5, 1995.
[103] Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 151.
[104] *Ibid.*, 150.
[105] *Ibid.*, 137-38.
[106] *Ibid.*, 449
[107] Truitt and Didrickson interview with Smith-Middleton.
[108] Emmons,*The Tlingit*, 60.
[109] *Ibid.*; especially see 89-92 for a detailed description of canoe manufacture.
[110] *Ibid.*, 152.
[111] Gregory P. Chaney, Robert C. Betts, and Dee Longenbaugh, *Physical and Cultural Landscapes of Sitka National Historical Park, Sitka, Alaska* (Douglas, AK: Vanguard Research, 1995), 138-39.
[112] In 1827, Kittlitz illustrated numerous specimens of this plant in his drawings of vegetation found near the Indian River; see Figure 23.
[113] Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 362-65, 391.
[114] Frederick Litke, *A Voyage Around the World 1826-1827: To Russian America and Siberia*, Vol. 1, Richard Pierce, ed. (Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press, 1987), 211-12.
[115] *Ibid.*, 211.
[116] *Ibid.*, 140.
[117] Goldschmidt and Haas, *Possessory Rights*, 108.
[118] Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 446; Brad Krieckhaus, Rick Foster and Susan Trull, *Ecological Inventory: Sitka National Historical Park* (Sitka, AK: U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, Chatham Area, February 1993), 40-46.
[119] See Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 151-52, for more detail on how they were prepared.
[120] Litke, *A Voyage*, 210.
[121] Krieckhaus, et al., *Ecological*, 42.
[122] Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 151-52.
[123]*Ibid.*, 446; Krieckhaus, et al., *Ecological*, 43; licorice fern is listed in Krieckhaus et al. as *Polypodium glycyrrhiza*.
[124] Emmons,*The Tlingit*, 149.
[125] Goldschmidt and Haas, *Possessory Rights*, 108.
[126] Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 446; Gmelch and Gmelch, *Resource*, 136.
[127] Gmelch and Gmelch, *Resource*, 132.
[128] Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 214-15, 449.
[129] Gmelch and Gmelch, *Resource*, 103-107.
[130] George Heinrich von Langsdorff, *Remarks and Observations on a Voyage Around the World from 1803 to 1807*, Volumes One and Two, translated and annotated by Victoria Joan Moessner, ed. Richard A. Pierce (Kingston, Ontario and Fairbanks, Alaska: The Limestone Press, 1993), 73.
[131] Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 152.
[132] Hope interview with Cochrane and Houston; Truitt and Didrickson interview with Smith-Middleton.
[133] Isabella Brady interview with Holly Smith-Middleton, Sitka, AK, July 6, 1995; Truitt and Didrickson interview with Smith-Middleton.
[134] Gmelch and Gmelch, *Resource*, 89.
[135] Emmons, *The Tlingit*, 147-48.

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CHAPTER 3

FOREIGN EXPLORATION AND TRADE IN TLINGIT TERRITORY

"We cannot allow the English or Americans to develop any trade with the savages, to whom they have been supplying firearms; we cannot allow them to settle these areas which have been explored by Russian navigators."

Alexander Baranof,
Governor of the Russian
American Company, 1800

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CHAPTER 3

FOREIGN EXPLORATION AND TRADE IN TLINGIT TERRITORY

The first documented arrival of European ships along the coast of southeastern Alaska occurred in the mid-eighteenth century. Their earliest contact with the Tlingit is thought to have occurred when one of the two ships sent out on the Bering-Chirikov Expedition explored the coast of North America opposite Kamchatka. Captain Alexei Chirikov on the *St. Paul* was separated from Vitus Bering on the *St. Peter* near the 49th parallel, but continued to explore independently.[1] In mid-July 1741, Chirikov sighted what he thought was the North American mainland at Latitude 55 degrees, 36 minutes, and intended to "make a careful survey" of part of the coast. On July 18th, at latitude 57 degrees, 50 minutes north,[2] at what is now called Lisianskii Strait, he sent a small boat with eleven men to shore where they were to search for fresh water.[3] After they failed to return, he dispatched another boat with four men on July 24th. While the Russians waited for their boats to return, a group of Tlingits who paddled in their direction "appeared hostile," but they could not be convinced to approach the ship. Chirikov waited another three days before a lack of water, the loss of fifteen men and both boats, and weakness from scurvy compelled him to depart for Siberia.[4] The fate of the Russian sailors remains uncertain. They may have been, killed, swept away in tidal currents, taken as slaves by the Tlingit, or they may have deliberately chosen not to return to the ship. According to Tlingit oral tradition in Sitka, the sailors welcomed the chance to be free of the hardship of the expedition and were accepted freely into the Tlingit community. The oral tradition, however, is not clear about the exact identity and time of arrival of the foreign sailors who joined the community.[5]

After this brief and mysterious encounter, the next documented European presence in southeastern Alaska was that of the Spanish. Spain had claimed possession of the northwestern coast, and in an effort to determine the extent of Russian encroachment into that territory, the Spainards sponsored several northern expeditions. In 1775, Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra sailed his schooner up the coast past Mt. Edgecombe, which he named "San Jacinto," and anchored at the northern end of Kruzov Island within the Sitka *Kwáan* territory.[6] The natives were initially hostile to Quadra and his men when they went on shore, but he later gave the following report:

> I hastened forward and gave them to understand that if they came nearer I would fire upon them without further parley, and therefore they must lay down their arms and I would do the same with my men, for I only asked good treatment and friendship. To this argument they agreed, and retiring to their shelter gave me clear opportunity of obtaining all I required.[7]

To proclaim Spanish possession of the region, Quadra's crew erected a cross just south of Kalalina Bay, which the Tlingits subsequently removed and erected near their homes. The Spanish traded with the Tlingits and continued their explorations as far north as 58 degrees before heading south again.[8]

For the next ten years, little contact is documented between the Tlingit and Europeans. Captain James Cook and his crew did sail up the coast in 1778, passing and naming both Mt. Edgecombe and Cross Sound, but they failed to stop. In 1785, La Perouse commanded a French expedition intended to rival Cook's; he and his crew sailed around Cape Horn, to Hawaii, and then on to Yakutat in southeastern Alaska in 1786. La Perouse then proceeded to head south to Lituya Bay where his ship may

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have been the first European vessel to ply those waters. In 1911, Emmons recorded a Tlingit account of this initial meeting of Europeans and the Tlingit of Lituya Bay:

> While the survivors were still mourning [four canoes of Tlingit from the south on a journey to obtain copper had just foundered at the entrance to the bay], two ships entered the bay. The Indians thought they were two great birds with white wings, perhaps Raven himself, and fled to the woods. After a time they came back to the shore and looked through tubes of rolled up skunk cabbage leaves, like telescopes, for if they looked directly at Raven they might turn to stone. When the sails were made fast, they thought the birds folded their wings and they imagined they saw a flock of crows fly up from the ships, so they ran back into the woods again.
>
> One family of warriors dressed in armor and helmets, and took their copper knives, bow and arrows, and launched a canoe. They were so frightened when thunder and smoke came from the ship that their canoe overturned and they scrambled ashore.
>
> Then a nearly blind old man said his life was behind him, and that he would see if Raven really turned men to stone. He dressed in sea otter furs, and induced two of his slaves to paddle him to the ship. When he got on board his eyesight was so poor that he mistook the sailors for crows, and threw away the rice that was offered him, thinking it was worms. He traded his fur coat for a tin pan and returned to shore laden with gifts of food. The people were surprised to see him alive, smelled him to make sure of his identity, and refused to eat the food he had brought. The old man finally decided that it must be ships and people, so the Indians visited the ships and traded their furs.[9]

Besides trading with the Tlingit in the fishing village at Lituya Bay, La Perouse claimed possession of the region in the name of France. He sent 21 men in two boats to explore the treacherous narrow entrance to the bay, but both vessels overturned in the currents. The bodies of the sailors were never recovered. In order to create a memorial to the lost men, the French negotiated with one of the Tlingit leaders for a place to erect it, in exchange for red cloth, hatchets, bar iron, and nails. They then erected a monument to the drowned men.[10]

THE FUR TRADE

Once James Cook's journals were published in England, his account of the abundance of sea otter along the northwestern coast of North America and the Chinese appetite for such pelts accelerated the growth of an active fur trade. Traders from England and America became increasingly numerous in southeastern Alaska in the 1780s. By June 1787, when British Captain George Dixon of the King George's Sound Company was trading in Sitka Sound (named Norfolk Sound by Dixon), he found that the Tlingit population of the Sitka territory, which he estimated to equal about 450 individuals, was well accustomed to trading and demanded high quality and valuable items.[11] William Beresford, an officer on the expedition, later recorded the following account of the trade they conducted:

> Toes [lengths of hoop iron used by the Tlingit to make adzes][12] are the article of trade held in the first estimation at this place; but they always refused small ones, wanting them in general from eight to fourteen inches long. Besides these, we traded with pewter basons, hatchets, howels, buckles, rings, etc. Of these the basons were best liked; for though the hatchets and howels were obviously the most useful tools these people could possibly have, yet they were only taken in exchange for furs of inferior value. Beads of every sort were constantly refused with contempt, when offered by way of barter, and would scarcely be accepted as presents.[13]

In addition to the steady trade that was conducted, Dixon's crew went on shore to obtain necessary provisions such as food, firewood, and fresh water. Although we cannot know for certain, given the ship's latitude at the time of these excursions (57 degrees, 3 minutes north), it is very possible that they may have drawn water from the Indian River. Beresford wrote that "water was procured from a small river round a point of land, at the distance of about a mile from the ship."[14] He went on to describe the landscape around the Sound and the various plants and animals they were able to obtain there:

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> The shore here, in common with the rest of the coast, abounds with pines [conifers]; there is also greater quantities of the witch hazle here, than we had hitherto met with. We found various kinds of flowering trees and shrubs, amongst which were wild gooseberries, currants, and raspberries; wild parsley is found here in great plenty; we picked great quantities of it, and its eats excellently, either as a sallad, or boiled amongst soup. The saranne, or wild lilly-root, grows here in great plenty and perfection.
>
> There are very few wild geese or ducks seen here, and those shy and difficult of approach. Captain Dixon, as I before observed, was frequently on shore with his fowling-piece; but he shot any thing that came in his way indiscriminately, his chief motive being rather to shew the Indians the effects of fire-arms, than to pursue game; and the event shewed that his intention was compleatly answered.
>
> The inhabitants frequently caught halibut, and we saw large quantities of salmon frequently hung up on shore to dry, but they were not very willing to sell it, which shews, that fish is a principal and favourite article of food here; we indeed purchased a few salmon, but they were of a very inferior kind to those we met within Cook's River. Fish, however, being the only fresh provision in our power to obtain, our whale-boat was frequently sent out with six hands to catch fish for the ship's company; they were always tolerably successful, catching great numbers of fine rock-fish, and some hake, but very few halibut.[15]

Beresford conveyed the abundance of the late spring and early summer landscape in the vicinity of Sitka, when many shrubs and herbs would have been flowering and setting berries. Those plants and the numerous fish they were able to catch supplied the sailors with the fresh sustenance of a diet not unlike that of the native inhabitants.

For the Tlingit, trading with the French, British, Spanish, and Americans was an extension of an already well established tradition of exchange among the native peoples of Alaska. Despite their suspicions of the traders, the Tlingit were eager to participate. The Europeans were dependent upon what they offered and were obliged to barter at the pace the Tlingit determined. When they had exhausted their trade goods, the ships and their European visitors moved on. Thus the Tlingit participated in such activities without great disruption to their culture.

COLONIZATION FROM THE EAST: THE RUSSIANS

The Russian[16] fur trade, which had been active since the 1740s along the Aleutian chain of islands and since the 1780s along the coast of the Gulf of Alaska, moved eastward into the Tlingit territory of southeastern Alaska. Geographer James R. Gibson has described the years from 1743 to 1799 as the boom phase of the Russian presence in Alaska.[17] During the early years of that period numerous private hunting companies explored and hunted on the Aleutian Islands, moving farther eastward into the Gulf of Alaska as they reduced the sea otter population. As the distance to those hunting grounds became greater, fewer companies had the necessary ships and crews to compete; by 1795, only three Russian companies predominated in these hunting and trading activities.[18] Two of those companies further consolidated in 1797 to form the United American Company, which two years later was renamed the Russian American Company.[19]

The Russian's hunting strategy differed from the British and Americans in two critical aspects. The Russians, finding the Aleuts, Koniags, and other natives they encountered to be greatly skilled in sea otter hunting, forced these natives into great hunting parties. Secondly, to improve the efficiency and productivity of their operations, the powerful Russian companies sought to establish permanent settlements of Russian and native hunters in Alaska. In 1792, Alexander Baranov, as the colonial manager of the North East Company, established a settlement at St. Paul's Harbor on Kodiak Island, which became the company headquarters in 1793. After several hunting expeditions to Yakutat at the northern end of Tlingit territory, Baranov ordered the establishment of a post at that location. Despite the earlier killing of a Russian by the Yakutat Tlingit and the latter's bitter resentment of the hunting parties in their waters, the two groups met on friendly terms.[20]

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By 1796, a fort consisting of seven buildings within a stockade housed approximately 80 people.[21] Other settlements followed, and by 1799, about 225 Russians were living in what is now Alaska.[22]

The Russian presence in North America was further solidified in 1799 when Tsar Paul I gave an exclusive twenty year charter to the Russian American Company in order to monopolize settlement, trade, and exploitation in the fur trade. The Tsar himself, as well as other Russian governmental officials, purchased shares to finance the company's operation, in the hope that a government-supported Russian presence would inhibit foreign expansion in Alaska. Baranov was appointed the company's governor.[23]

Undeterred by Tlingit dissatisfaction with Russian hunting practices, Baranov pressed for a settlement in Sitka Sound to discourage the busy British and American trade he and his agents had observed in that region. He wrote the following in a letter to Larionov: "We cannot allow the English or Americans to develop any trade with the savages, to whom they have been supplying firearms; we cannot allow them to settle these areas which have been explored by Russian navigators."[24] In the same year of the Russian American Company charter (1799), Baranov set out from Kodiak to alleviate the tensions and shortages occurring at the Yakutat settlement, and then went on to found a fort at Sitka.[25] On the way to Yakutat, he and his crew encountered a storm that forced all of the men in baidarkas, including Baranov, to take refuge on shore. There they were attacked by the Tlingit, who were able to kill or capture 26 native hunters.[26] De Laguna has reported that a native account attributes the instigation of this attack to a Tlingit from Yakutat and to a Chugach individual.[27]

Baranov and the survivors then sailed on to Yakutat. While there, Baranov noted the number of guns, "pistols, muskets, four-pound cannon and a few heavier caliber weapons"[28] that the Tlingit possessed as a result of their trade with the British and Americans; this further inflamed his compulsion to get to Sitka. With 1,000 Aleuts and 100 Russians, he set out for Sitka Sound where the Tlingit had a large winter village.[29]

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FORT ST. MICHAEL

There are disparate accounts of the initial negotiations that took place between the Russians and the Sitka Tlingits. Krause reported that Baranov negotiated with the Tlingits about where they could establish a Russian settlement, and that the Tlingits gave their consent to locate the Russian post on Starrigavan Bay six miles north of their winter village.[30] Other accounts assert that permission was given by some Tlingits, but that other individuals were opposed to letting the Russians stay. Swineford reported that the Tlingit were hostile to the Russians and tried to prevent them from establishing a settlement on Baranov Island, but that after the Russians took Tlingit hostages, K'alyáan, a leader of the Kiks.ádi clan, negotiated with the Russians to build their fort on Starrigavan Bay in Kiks.ádi territory.[31] One account asserts that the Russians paid a Tlingit leader for the land. Khlebnikov reported that Baranov gave the Tlingit presents and "asked their permission to build a fort there, offering them protection against their neighbors."[32] De Laguna describes the relationship between the Russians and the Sitka Tlingit as "initially friendly."[33] It is impossible to know just what transpired between the two parties in 1799; nevertheless, despite what they may have heard from their Yakutat neighbors, it is doubtful, because of their own cultural conceptions of territorial resource control and allocation, that the Tlingit fully understood the kind of permanent presence and intensive exploitation the Russians proceeded to display.

Despite whatever doubts or dissension that may have existed among the Tlingit, Baranov and his men built their fort—which they called Archangel St. Michael's Redoubt (Fort St. Michael). Baranov described his living conditions and the initial construction process:

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> We first built a *balagan* [storehouse] where we stored foodstuffs which we unloaded from the ship. Then we built a small ordinary bathhouse, which I moved into in October. Earlier, I had lived in a torn tent in rainy weather, and I suffered all winter long because of the smoke and the rain which came through the leaky roof until the end of February. Then we built a two-storied barracks with two watchtowers which were eight *sazhens* [fifty-six feet] long and four [twenty-eight feet] *sazhens* wide. Then we built a *kazhim* [communal dwelling] for the Aleuts.[34]

From that settlement the Russians continued to hunt sea otter. By 1800, the fur taken from the region accounted for three-fourths of all sea-otters bagged in Russian America.[35]

Nonetheless, the Tlingit were uneasy with the Russian presence and dissatisfied with Russian trade, in part because they refused to trade arms, as did the British and Americans, but also because the Russians paid lower prices in general. Fundamentally, though, the Tlingit resented the hunting of their sea otter by the large Russian hunting parties. And the Russians not only exploited the sea otters, but any other resources they desired and needed in Fort St. Michael, without giving any regard to Tlingit ownership of those resources. As a result of these fundamental conflicts, Tlingit resentment of the Russians grew. During the winter of 1799-1800, the initially friendly attitude shifted dramatically,[36] a fact that Russian American Company historian, P.A. Tikhmenev, reported in the following manner:

> While the Russians were building, the Kolosh did all they could to harm them. Only Baranov's firmness and his fearlessness saved the new settlement. When the Kolosh injured a female interpreter sent to ask her people to a celebration on the occasion of the dedication of the fort, Baranov appeared in the Kolosh settlement amid three hundred armed natives with only twenty-two men, demanding satisfaction. After that, the Kolosh evidently abandoned all attempts to drive the Russians from Sitkha Island. However, trade with them was not very satisfactory. The Kolosh constantly pointed out that the English and Americans gave them more goods and that they would wait for the arrival of their ships to barter their furs.[37]

TLINGIT REVOLT

Resentment finally became rebellion in June 1802, when approximately 600 Tlingit, led by Shk'awulyeil and K̲'alyáan,[38] with possible encouragement from the British and Americans, attacked the fort when most of the native hunters were on an expedition and half the Russians were working outside the stockade. The Tlingit surrounded the fort, shot through the windows, and set it on fire; altogether they burned the barracks, a new ship, a warehouse, and several sheds and seized about 3,000 sea otter pelts, which they loaded into the more than 60 canoes that had come to the beach. During the fighting, approximately 130 Aleuts and 20 Russians were killed, including Medvednikov, whom Baranov had left in charge of the post. A few Russians escaped into the woods and were later picked up by a British trader, Captain Barber, who took Tlingit hostages to secure the release of the Russian and Aleut prisoners they had taken. Barber delivered all of the survivors to Baranov on Kodiak Island, and requested a sizable ransom for doing so.[39]

The Tlingit attack at Fort St. Michael was the result of careful planning and strategizing among clan alliances that included most of the Tlingit tribes located throughout southeastern Alaska. Although Klebnikov probably exaggerated somewhat when he reported that over 50,000 Tlingit were privy to the plan to attack the Russians in Sitka and Yakutat simultaneously, certainly a large number of individuals from throughout the region joined forces to expell the Russians.[40] However, that some of the Tlingit clans did not participate in the battle is suggested by the fact that Medvednikov had been warned about the impending attack.[41] The hunting party from Fort St. Michael also was attacked on June 20 and 21; only Urbanov and 13 Aleuts escaped and eventually made their way back to Yakutat. An attack was narrowly diverted at the same time in Yakutat.

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Kuskov, Baranov's assistant at Yakutat, wrote to his superior on 1 July 1802, informing him of what he had heard from the Tlingit about the revolt—namely that some Yakutat chiefs traveled with others to many Tlingit villages and finally to Khutznoff[42] village (Angoon, Admiralty Island) where the leaders from many Tlingit tribes:

> held a council about annihilating our Novo-Arkhangel'sk fort and all of our main American party.
>
> After a great deal of discussion they finally agreed to meet for this purpose in the Khutsnov [Angoon] settlement the following spring, then move on up to our fort. Should the Sitkhin Koliuzh refuse to take part in the attack, they also were to be massacred.... [One of the leaders] provided a large quantity of gunpowder, lead and other ammunition together with several large cannon which he issued to each of the toions. The guns were left in the Khutsnov settlement. He received all the arms and ammunition for the English and Americans who have settled among them on Tykinna Island. They have a fort there and vessels which they use for trading along the coast. An American vessel which wintered in the Khutsnov settlement told the residents it would not call there again because they did not have enough beaver [sea otter] pelts for exchange and told them straight out that unless they liquidated our Novo-Arkhangel'sk fort [and Kuskov's large hunting party], they themselves, the Koliuzh, would be the losers.[43]

After plans were made for the attack near Sitka, the Akoi leaders were presented with a gift of ammunition and gunpowder, and told that "as soon as they heard of the destruction of our [the Russian] Novo-Arkhangel'sk fort they should deal in the same way with the Yakutat settlement."[44]

Kuskov and a hunting party had been attacked near Yakutat by the Tlingit in May, prior to the Sitka encounter, and after exchanging hostages, had managed to hold off their attackers and return to Yakutat. There they found a large gathering of Tlingits from all over the region; these individuals insisted that they were interested in trade only. Alarmed by rumors of an attack at Sitka, Kuskov sailed to Fort St. Michael and soon discovered that the fort had been destroyed. He returned speedily to Yakutat, fearing what he would find, and prevented the Tlingit attack that had been planned for the following night.[45]

For Baranov and the imperial mission of the Russian American Company, the destruction of Fort St. Michael was tragic; yet it was only a small and short-lived setback in their plan to dominate the sea otter trade in Sitkan waters. For the Tlingit peoples, the destruction of Fort St. Michael was a rejection of Russian control and exploitation, and an attempt to reclaim dominion over their own land and resources.

ENDNOTES

[1] Erna Gunther, *Indian Life on the Northwest Coast of North America* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1972), 4-5.
[2] The city of Sitka is situated at approximately Latitude 57 degrees, 3 minutes north.
[3] Glynn Barratt, "The Afterlife of Chirikov's Lost Men,"in *Bering and Chirikov: The American Voyages and Their Impact*, edited by O.W. Frost (Anchorage: Alaska Historical Society, 1992), 265-66.
[4] *Ibid.*, Gunther, *Indian Life*, 4-5.
[5] Richard Dauenhauer, personal communication to Holly Smith-Middleton, October 16, 1996.
[6] Derek Pethick, *First Approaches to the Northwest Coast* (Vancouver, British Columbia: Douglas and McIntyre, 1976), 48-49.
[7] *Ibid.*
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] George T. Emmons, "An Account of the Meeting between La Pérouse and the Tlingit," *American Anthropoligist*, New Series, Volume 13 (1911): 294-298.
[10] Gunther, *Indian Life*, 140-142.
[11] Captain George Dixon, *A Voyage Round the World; but more particularly to the Northwest Coast of America: Performed in 1785, 1786, 1787, and 1788, in The King George and Queen Charlotte, Captains Portlock and Dixon* (London: Geo. Goulding, 1789), 186.
[12] Robert De Armond, written comments to Arnold Alanen and Holly Smith-Middleton, December 8, 1997.
[13] Dixon, *Voyage Round the World*, 182.
[14] *Ibid.*, 183.
[15] *Ibid.*, 185-186.
[16] It is important to note that the personnel of the Russian fur trading companies were not exclusively ethnic Russians. Siberian natives, Finns, Swedes, Germans, and other Europeans were included among the diverse members of the Russian companies.
[17] James R. Gibson, *Imperial Russia in Frontier America: The Changing Geography of Supply of Russian America, 1784-1867* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 5. The survivors of Bering's expedition who were rescued from Commander Island, where Bering died, brought the first sea otter skins back to Russia.
[18] According to Russian historian V.N. Berkh, the remaining companies consisted of the Shelikhov and Golikov company, the Kiselev company and the Lebedev-Lastochkin company; translation by Katerina Solovjova Wessels of V.N. Berkh, *Izvestie O Mekhovoi Torgovle, Proizvodimoi Rossiianami Pri Ostrovakh Kuril'skikh, Aleutskikh I Severo-Zapadnom Beregu Amerikii* [*News*

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About the Fur Trade That is Conducted by the Russians in the Kkuril and Aleutian Islands, and on the Northwest Shore of America] (St. Petersburg, 1823), 143-44.
[19] *Ibid.*, 5; Katerina Solovjova Wessels, written comments to Holly Smith-Middleton and Arnold Alanen, December 1996.
[20] De Laguna, *Under Mount Saint. Elias,* 159. De Laguna reports that the Russian was killed when the Tlingit attacked a Russian camp, which they mistook for a Chugach party.
[21] *Ibid.*, 169.
[22] Gibson, *Imperial Russia*, 7.
[23] *Ibid.*
[24] Kiril Timofeevich Khlebnikov, *Notes on Russian America Part One: Novo-Arkhangel'sk*, compiled by Svetlana G. Fedorova, translated by Serge LeComte and Richard Pierce, edited by Richard Pierce (Kingston, Ontario, and Fairbanks, Alaska: The Limestone Press, 1994), 3.
[25] De Laguna, *Under Mount Saint Elias,* 169.
[26] *Ibid.*
[27] *Ibid.*
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] Gibson, *Imperial Russia*, 7.
[30] Aurel Krause, *The Tlingit Indians: Results of a Trip to the Northwest Coast of America and the Bering Straits*, translated by Erna Gunther (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1956), 30.
[31] The fort was located proximate to where the Kiks.adi village, Gajaa Héen, was situated; Goldschmidt and Haas, *The Territory*, 108.
[32] Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 3.
[33] De Laguna, *Under Mount Saint. Elias,* 170.
[34] Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 3.
[35] Gibson, *Imperial Russia*, 10.
[36] De Laguna, *Under Mount Saint. Elias,* 170.
[37] P. A. Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company,* translated and edited by Richard A. Pierce and Alton S. Donnelly (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1978), 62.
[38] De Laguna, *Under Mount Saint. Elias,* 170.
[39] For full Russian accounts of this battle see Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company*, Klebnikov, *Notes on Russian America Part One*, and H.H. Bancroft, *A History of Alaska, 1730-1885.* Unpublished Tlingit accounts are given by Sally Hopkins and Alex Andrews as part of their narrations on the Battle of 1804; see the draft manuscripts, translated by Richard and Nora Dauenhauer, Sitka National Historical Park archives.
[40] Klebnikov, citing De Laguna, *Under Mount Saint. Elias,* 170; Richard Dauenhauer, personal communication, October 16, 1996.
[41] De Laguna, *Under Mount Saint Elias*, 173.
[42] Also spelled Khutsnov by the Russians.
[43] I. Kuskov, "Report to A.A. Baranov on Kad'iak regarding an armed encounter with the local tribes and the devastation of Novo-Arkhangel'sk," *Documents on the History of the Russian American Company*, Marina Ramsay, translator, Richard A. Pierce, editor, (Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press, 1976), 144; although consistently referred to as Novo-Arkhangel'sk (New Archangel) in this translation, the correct name of the first Russian fort that was constructed in the Sitka area was Fort St. Michael; this report implies that no Sitka clan was involved in the initial plan. De Laguna has reported that this differed from local traditions in Sitka and Angoon, and that the Sitka Kiks.adi were responsible for undertaking the attack; De Laguna, *Under Mount Saint. Elias,* 171.
[44] Kuskov, "Report to A.A. Baranov," 145; the Russian settlement at Yakutat was attacked and destroyed in August 1805.
[45] *Ibid.*, 128-50.

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CHAPTER 4

RUSSIAN RETURN AND THE BATTLE OF 1804

The battle of 1804 was the pivotal event in the conflict between the Russians and the Tlingit population of the Sheet'ká Kwáan. The outcome resulted in the Russian establishment of a colonial outpost at Sitka, while at the same time, the Kiks.ádi tragedies that occurred during the conflict and subsequent evacuation have had an impact on the clan that continues to reverberate today.

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CHAPTER 4

RUSSIAN RETURN AND THE BATTLE OF 1804

For almost two years after the destruction of Fort St. Michael, the Tlingit of *Sheet'ká Kwáan* lived without a Russian presence in their territory; however, in anticipation of Russian retaliation for their destruction of Fort St. Michael, the Sitka Tlingit constructed a new, large fort during the fall of 1803 and spring of 1804 on Kiks.ádi clan land situated near the mouth of the Indian River. The battle between the Kiks.ádis and Russians that ultimately took place there in the fall of 1804 places the focus of this conflict within the landscape that now comprises Sitka National Historical Park. For the first time, specific references to that landscape appear in the Western historical record, in Russian accounts of the battle, and in subsequent activities that occurred there. Because the battle is fundamental both to the history of the relationship between the Tlingits and Russians and to the historical significance of the landscape at Sitka National Historical Park, this chapter begins with an account of that conflict and then examines the conditions of the park landscape at the time it occurred.

The Russian sources for the encounter are primarily based on one eye-witness account, the journal of Russian Naval officer, Urey Lisiansky, Captain of the *Neva*, the ship that played a definitive role in the battle. Lisiansky, knighted in 1801 after serving honorably on numerous international expeditions, was an educated and experienced, if not wholly unbiased, witness. His account of the battle was published in Russia in 1812 as part of his *Journey Around the World on the Ship "Neva,"* which subsequently was published in English in 1814 as, *Voyage Around the World in the Years 1803, 1804, 1805 and 1806*. Recent English translations of the 1812 Russian document. however, reveal significant differences between it and the 1814 English edition.[1] The Russian accounts that are discussed include Lisiansky's 1814 English edition, the translation of a portion of a 1947 Russian edition by Dmytryshyn, et al.,[2] and an as yet unpublished draft translations of both the 1812 and 1947 Russian editions by Lydia Black.[3] The Tlingit sources used in this chapter include two unpublished translations of oral accounts generously shared with us by Richard and Nora Dauenhauer of Juneau, Alaska. One of the oral traditions of the Battles of Sitka was related in 1958 by Alex Andrews, a member of the Kaagwaantaan clan and a child of the Kiks.ádi clan, in Sitka. The other was performed in 1960 by Sally Hopkins, a member of the Kiks.ádi clan, who was born only 63 years after the battle.[4] Also included are the accounts of some contemporary Tlingits: several interviews with and a manuscript prepared by Herb Hope, a Kiks.ádi who was told the Point House group tradition of the Battle of Sitka by his uncle, David Howard;[5] a conversation with Alfred Perkins, leader of the Kiks.ádi clan in Sitka who was taught the clan history by George Lewis; and an interview with Mark Jacobs, Jr. It also should be emphasized that this attempt to include the Tlingit account of their history in Sitka represents only the beginnings of an effort to tell the full Tlingit story. Because Tlingit history is comprised of individual clan and house group oral traditions, the complete story will only be known when and if each of those histories is told.[6] Finally, the cartographic depiction of the fort and the battle is based both on these sources and the excellent discussion of the battle provided by Chaney, Betts, and Longenbaugh in their 1995 report, *Physical and Cultural Landscapes of Sitka National Historical Park, Sitka Alaska.*[7]

THE BATTLE OF 1804

The question regarding which Tlingit clans participated in the 1804 battle remains controversial to this day. Herb Hope asserts that the Tlingit alliance formed in 1802 to encounter the Russians had fractured before the 1804 conflict and that only

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the six Kiks.ádi house groups of the Sitka winter village—the House on the Point or Point House, the Clay House, the Strong House, the Herring House, the Steel House, and House Inside the Fort— participated in the construction of the fort, *Shisk Kee Noow* ("Green Wood Fort" or "Sapling Fort").[8] Hope maintains that only the Kiks.ádi and males of the Eagle or Wolf moiety who were married to Kiks.ádi women fought in the battle.[9] Mark Jacobs, Jr., relates that only the Kiks.ádi clan was involved in the 1804 battle with the Russians at the Indian River.[10] The choice of the mouth of *Kaasda Héen*, a significant locale in Kiks.ádi ancestral territory, as a site for the fort further underscores the battle's importance to the Kiks.ádi clan.

Lisiansky sailed the *Neva* into Kodiak in the summer of 1804, nearing the end of what was to be the first Russian circumnavigation of the globe. There he received a request from Baranov, who had taken a hunting party south in hopes of punishing the Tlingits responsible for the destruction of Fort St. Michael, to meet him in Sitka. Lisiansky arrived in the Sitka region during August and soon was met by Russians from two Russian American Company vessels, who also were waiting for Baranov. They informed Lisiansky that "the inhabitants of Sitka had congregated in one place and had resolved to do everything in their power to prevent the Russians from reoccupying their settlement." During the month they waited for Baranov, the Russians observed Tlingit canoes in the sound and twice opened fire on them. Lisiansky also reports that the Tlingit attacked the captain of an American ship, the *O'Cain*, that had been in the area. Lisiansky sent out a boat in pursuit of the natives, but the Russians were unable to catch them.[11]

Baranov arrived in mid-September and reported to Lisiansky that part of his intention on the hunting expedition had been to punish the Tlingit who participated in the attack on Fort St. Michael, but that he was unable to do so because "the Kolosh, upon learning of his arrival, immediately ran off."[12] When the entire hunting party of 350 baidarkas, paddled by 800 "Kodiak natives, Alaskans, Kenaits and Chugach" hunters,[13] had finally straggled in, Lisiansky wrote that he and Baranov "prepared to attack the enemy and force them to bow to our demands, which were that they not hinder us in rebuilding our hunting settlement in their land."[14]

The next morning, on 28 September 1804, the flotilla of 800 hunters, three Russian American Company vessels, and the Neva sailed from Cross Sound and anchored near the Sitka winter village.[15] Lisiansky reports that their arrival caused an uproar in the Tlingit village. As they anchored nearby, he described the voices of the Tlingit they heard that night: "an extraordinary noise was heard from amongst them on shore."[16] The next morning the Russians found that the village had been abandoned.

Several native accounts describe the decision and the move from *Noow Tlein* to *Shisk Kee Noow*.[17] Herb Hope relates that the Tlingit had planned to "test the strength and intentions of the Russians at *Noow Tlein*, . . . then fall back on the new fort called "*Shisk Kee Nu*" [*Shisk Kee Noow*] located at the high water line near "*Kas daa Heen*" [*Kaasda Héen*]." Once they were settled in the new fort, they planned to wait for their northern allies to arrive before engaging in battle with the Russians.[18]

Upon discovery of the abandoned *Noow Tlein*, the Russians moved ashore. Lisiansky recalled their actions as follows:

> Baranov went ashore with a certain number of armed men and raised the flag of a high hill in the middle of the abandoned settlement. At the same time, the *partovshchiks* [Russian and Native hunters] covered the entire slope of the hill with their baidarkas and disposed themselves in the Sitkan dwellings. We set up six cannon in the fortress—four brass and two cast iron.[19]

Lisiansky also went to the abandoned Tlingit fort, and had several volleys fired from the guns.

Just after the Russians had established their claim to the Tlingit fort, one of the pivotal events of the war occurred. The Russians spotted a Tlingit canoe in the distance and sent a boat to attack it. As

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Lisiansky described it, "After a considerably prolonged skirmish, involving guns and falconets with which the barge was armed, one cannon ball" hit the Tlingit canoe. The canoe, which was full of Kiks.ádi warriors returning from Khutsnov [Angoon] with a supply of gun powder and ammunition, exploded. Many Kiks.ádi warriors were killed or injured, some of whom were picked up and taken prisoner by the Russians.[20] Tlingit accounts also relate this event as a tragic one for the Tlingit, both for the loss of young men and critical gunpowder needed for a prolonged battle. Herb Hope reports that "an elite crew," including "high caste young men from each house" led by a "respected elder," had been sent to pick up the gun powder. After the explosion, he relates: "The entire canoe was gone. The entire reserve gun powder supply was gone. The elite young men from every house were gone. The respected elder leader was gone." He concludes that it was a "tragic loss before the battle was truly underway."[21] In their accounts of the event, both Sally Hopkins and Alex Andrews attribute the explosion of the canoe to a spark caused by one of the Tlingits firing from the canoe.[22]

According to Lisiansky, after this incident the Tlingit sent an envoy to the Russians who informed them that the latter wished to settle the disagreement peacefully. Lisiansky reported the envoy was informed

> . . . that since the Sitkans had destroyed our fortress and killed many innocent people without any reason, we had come to punish them. If they repented their crime and sincerely wanted peace, they must immediately send the *toions* [leaders] to the fort and the conditions would be explained to them. When these had been accepted, in spite of our anger, we would be very fair and would be ready to accede to their request and conclude the affair without bloodshed.[23]

After the envoy returned to *Shisk Kee Noow* with this message the next day was spent in unsuccessful negotiations over the exchange of hostages and return of prisoners. The Russians decided that the Tlingit were just trying to stall for time, and declared that "without delay, armed ships would appear at their stronghold."[24] Herb Hope reported that the Kiks.ádi were stalling for time while waiting for help and powder to arrive from their neighbors.[25] In response to the Russian threat, the Tlingits returned to *Shisk Kee Noow.*

The next morning the Russians moved their ships out to the fort at the Indian River and "formed a line with the four of them before it."[26] (See Diagram 2 for the location of the ships and the activities of the subsequent battle.) Lisiansky reported that at this time both the Russians and Tlingit raised a white flag, although in the Dmytryshyn, et al. translation of the Russian edition, they describe the Tlingit as raising theirs first, to which the Russians responded by raising one in return.[27] In the 1814 English edition, Lisiansky describes the Russians as raising the first white flag, followed by the Tlingit.[28] Tlingit accounts concur with the latter scenario and contend that they did not understand the meaning of the white flag and were just responding to the Russians in kind.[29] If so, they would not have raised one first.

When the Tlingit made no move to begin negotiations, Lisiansky "decided to frighten the enemy with a little gunfire."[30] He sent some men to shore with a cannon to destroy a Tlingit "warehouse" and the Tlingit canoes. Lieutenant Arbuzov, in charge of the party, landed and led his men and the cannon towards the Tlingit fort. Lisiansky reported that when Baranov observed this advance, he "ordered some field pieces to be landed and with 150 men, went on shore to aid the Lieutenant."[31] Lisiansky described what followed:

> . . . by about 5:00 P.M. we already had a good supply of artillery on shore and about 150 guns. In spite of incessant gunfire from the enemy fort, our men approached boldly.
>
> By nightfall the assault was launched. Arbuzov employed his cannons against some of the gates, and Povalishin fired on the others. The artillery was carried over a small river. The attackers, losing no time and shouting

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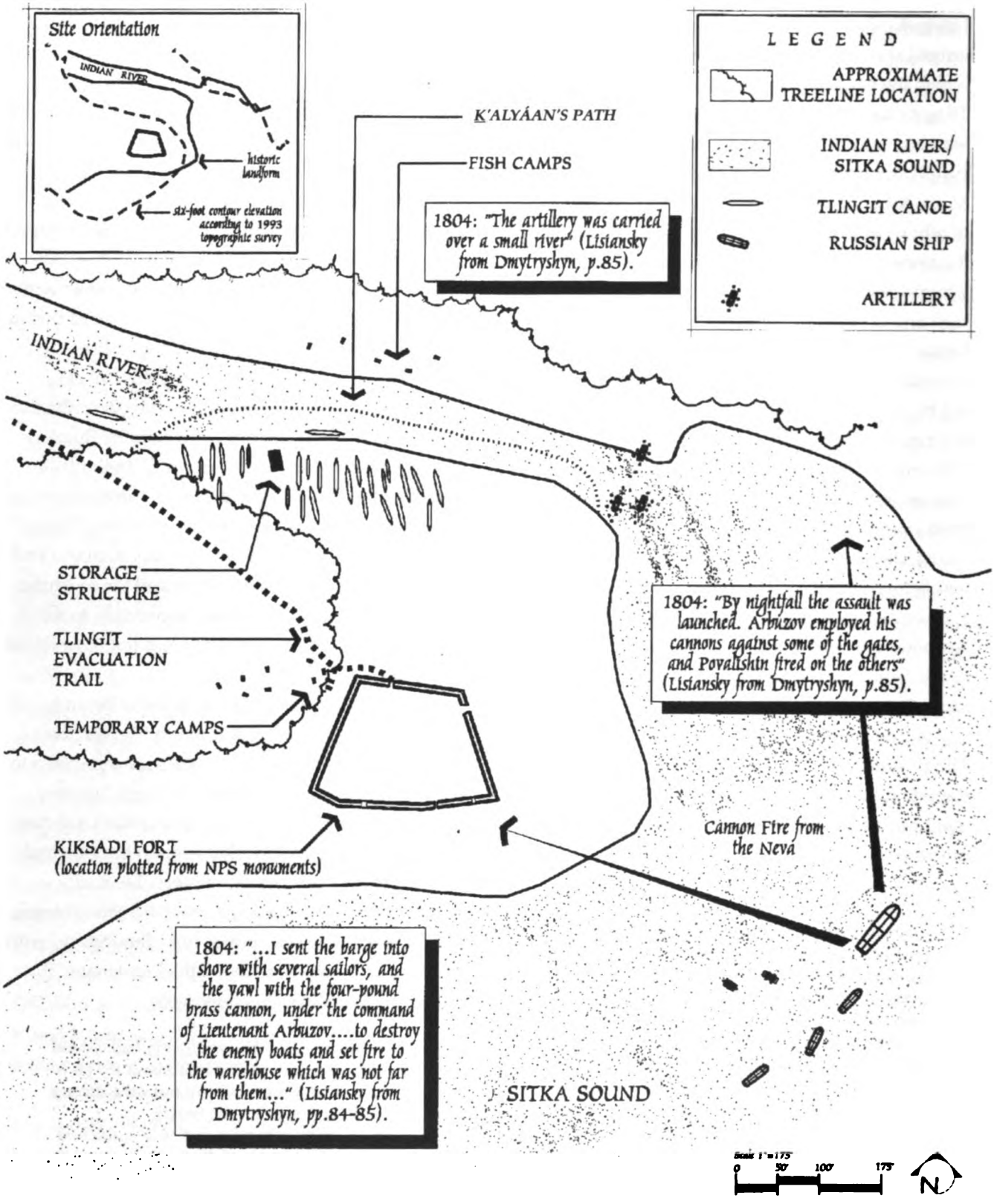

Diagram 2. Conceptual Diagram of the 1804 Battle between the Tlingits and Russians.

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> "Hurrah!" broke into the fortress. But the enemy, who had long since prepared a strong defense, opened fearful gunfire. Our cannons were totally successful and the fort would certainly have been taken if the Kodiaks and some of the Russian promyshlenniks had not run off under cover of the artillery fire.
>
> Taking advantage of this opportunity, the enemy intensified their fire against our sailors and in a short time wounded all of them and killed one. Arbuzov and Povalishin, seeing that their attack was unsuccessful, decided to retreat. At that time another sailor was killed and the Sitkans hoisted his body up on a spear.
>
> Realizing that the enemy was making a sortie with the intention of pursuing those in retreat, I ordered gunfire from the ships in order to hold back the Sitkan advance and give cover to those in retreat. Arbuzov put all of his men in the oared vessels and took the artillery with him. He returned to us in the evening. According to him, if everyone had comported himself with as much courage as the sailors had demonstrated, the fort could not have held out for long. The cannons were already right at the gates and a few shots would have given us victory. But the cowardice on the part of the Kodiaks ruined everything. Baranov, Povalishin and all the sailors who took part in this affair were wounded. One sailor died the next day.[32]

Other Russian sources add further detail to Lisiansky's account of the siege of the Tlingit fort. In his biography of Baranov, Kiril T. Khlebnikov described the attack:

> When the men [Lts. Arbuzov and Povalishin and their men] landed they began to converge on the fort from various directions. Baranov hurried to send a support party with two field-pieces to join forces with Arbuzov. With four cannon they approached the fort from the right, keeping up an incessant fire on it. Baranov remarks: "the very thickness of the wood of the fort made it hard to do it any significant damage, while we were exposed from all sides and, in addition dusk was falling." This decided them to take the fort by storm, but the Kolosh gathered all their forces together and opened a heavy fire from their fort. At that very moment when the fort should have been smashed and set on fire, Baranov was wounded in the right arm by a ricochet and Lieutenant Povalishin was also wounded. Some of the promyshlenniks and Aleuts who were not used to battle took flight. Then it was decided to retreat in good order and withdraw to the ships.[33]

Klebnikov's comment that the Russians approached the fort from the right echoes Lisiansky's remark that they carried the artillery over a small river on the approach. The Indian River would have indeed been on the right as they approached the fort. Further evidence for an attack from the river side of the fort is provided by the fact that the first Russian objective in the attack was to destroy the canoes (and warehouse), which Herb Hope contends, would have been beached away from marine wave action on the river side of the fort.

George von Langsdorff, who was in Sitka in 1806, provided additional information as to the location of the Russian ships and the direction of attack: "The Neva positioned herself at the mouth of the river and pointed part of her cannons toward shore opposite the headland or palisade" he wrote, "and fired with another part at the headland itself."[34] Herb Hope suggested that during the battle the Tlingit scouts would have been scattered throughout the woods.[35] He also indicated that there were fish camps on the eastern side of the river.[36] Perhaps the Russians fired on that side to protect their men from Kiks.ádi scouts during the landing in these areas.

A Tlingit perspective on the first day of the battle of 1804 is provided by Herb Hope's account of the Kiks.ádi Point House tradition. His account corresponds in many details to the events reported by Lisiansky, but Hope also provides additional details, and most importantly, illuminates a Kiks.ádi view of those events. He writes that:

> Baranof landed his force on the beach directly in front of the fort without consulting Captain Lisianski or making use of the Neva's cannon to bombard the fort.
>
> Baranof insisted on leading the attack.
>
> The Russians advanced up the beach behind the four hundred Aleut sea otter hunters who were used as light infantry.

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> The Kiks.ádi shaman had foreseen this frontal assault and had advised Katlian [K'alyáan] to have the Kiks.ádi warriors withhold their fire until the Aleut hunters were directly beneath the fort walls.
>
> The Kiks.ádi warriors displayed strong military discipline by withholding their fire, as instructed, until the Aleut hunters reached the fort walls.
>
> Then they opened fire with volley after volley over the heads of the Aleut hunters into the ranks of the Russians who were coming into range.
>
> The Aleuts broke rank and began a retreat west to the beaches where their bidarkas were waiting. They were pursued by the younger warriors who made a dash from behind the fort into the confusion on the beach.
>
> It was a calm day and the battlefield was soon covered by a heavy layer of gun smoke, making it difficult for either side to see what was going on.
>
> Amid the smoke of the battlefield Katlian [K'alyáan] and several warriors sprang up from Kaas da Heen [*Kaasda Héen*] and attacked the Russians from their rear.
>
> The battle flowed down the beach.
>
> The Kiks.ádi warriors charged out of Shisk Ke Nu [*Shisk Kee Noow*] and pursued the retreating Russians.
>
> The Kiks.ádi saw Baranof fall in battle. They saw his troops carry him from the battlefield.
>
> Just as the Russians reached the water's edge the Neva's cannon opened fire covering the last of the Russian retreat.
>
> The Russians were forced to leave their small cannon behind on the beach as they boarded their launches and left the battlefield.
>
> The battle was over.
>
> The Russians had launched their attack confident of victory, now they had barely escaped total defeat. Their losses were heavy.
>
> The Kiks.ádi warriors rejoiced.[37]

Other Tlingit accounts emphasize the role of the Kiks.ádi war leader, K'alyáan, in fighting the Russians, and highlight his surprise attack on the Russian forces. Like Hope, they relate that while the Russians were landing, K'alyáan hid himself in the Indian River with only his Raven Helmet visible and emerged from the water in the middle of the attacking Russians, swinging his blacksmith's hammer and smashing many Russian heads.[38] The Russians and their hunters ran screaming, and K'alyáan was able to get safely into the fort.[39] In these accounts, K'alyáan's actions are central to the Kiks.ádi victory.

The next stage in the conflict consisted of several days of negotiations between the two parties. Lisiansky relates that the next day, having been asked by the wounded Baranov to take over command of the battle, he "ordered the ships to harass the enemy with cannon fire at every possible opportunity, but not to put any of our men ashore."[40] This action caused the Tlingit to ask for peace, according to Lisiansky, and he accepted their proposal if they would send hostages and return the Kodiak prisoners they had taken. The envoy agreed that the conditions would be met the next day, and the following morning, Lisiansky stated, the Tlingit raised the white flag and slowly sent hostages.

Herb Hope provides a different version of the events. He relates that by late morning of the second day,

> Lisianski began a cannon bombardment that lasted all day long as he attempted to find the range of fort Shisk Ke Nu [*Shisk Kee Noow*].
>
> In the early afternoon the Russians stopped their cannon fire and sent a messenger ashore under a flag of truce.
>
> The Kiks.ádi were surprised to learn that the message was a demand for surrender. They reject it out of hand.
>
> They sent back a counter-demand that the Russians surrender. It is rejected by the Russians.
>
> The cannon fire resumed, but it stopped at nightfall.[41]

Despite their refusal to surrender, however, the Tlingit were aware of their declining chances for victory. They were short of gun powder and their allies had not arrived to assist them. "Holding the fort without gun powder looked more and more like a lost cause,"[42] and that, "the house chiefs all agreed on one thing—delaying tactics were in order. Every possible method of delaying a Russian attack had to be used to give the northern tribes time to arrive,"[43] Hope remarks.

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Frustrated with the slow pace of hostage exchange, and worried by reports of Tlingit ill intent, Baranov demanded the surrender of the fort. Upon learning the next day from a newly released Kodiak girl that the Kiks.ádi had sent for help from the Khutsnov (Angoon) Tlingit, Baranov sent a demand "that they immediately leave the fort if they wanted to avoid being totally annihilated."[44] According to Lisiansky, the Kiks.ádi leader, presumably K'alyáan himself, agreed that they would leave by the next dawn. When they had still not departed by noon the next day, Lisiansky reported that the Russians fired upon the fort, although he did not mention the effect of this bombardment. That evening the Russians were visited again by one of the Tlingit envoys, demanding the return of his canoe, which they had taken. Lisiansky reported that they refused and "advised him to urge his fellow tribesmen to get out of the fortress as quickly as possible."[45] The envoy agreed to this, according to Lisiansky, and "said that if his people agreed to our demand he would call out three times that night, 'Oooo.' And in fact at 8:00 P.M. we did hear a voice calling 'Ooraa!' three times."[46] The next morning the Russians found that the Tlingit had abandoned the fort, leaving behind only two old women and a young boy.[47]

In the Tlingit oral tradition related by Sally Hopkins and Alex Andrews, this negotiation period in the battle is remembered as a time of tragic miscommunication, when the Tlingit failed to understand the white flag flown by the Russians. Ms. Hopkins particularly mentions difficulties with interpreters. They both imply that it was misunderstanding that caused the Tlingit to abandon their fort secretly and escape through the woods.[48] Herb Hope, on the other hand, stresses that the Kiks.ádi were stalling for time as they waited for assistance from other clans and neighboring *Kwáans*. Once they realized that help would not arrive in time, he contends that they deliberately delayed a Russian offensive by offering "a truce, hostage exchanges, and promises of more talks, and held out the possibility of surrender," while they began evacuating the elderly, young children, mothers, and infants from the fort.[49]

When the Kiks.ádi ultimately agreed to depart the fort, it was to delay a Russian offensive. According to Hope, they "made this offer to prevent the Russians from attacking while the clan was involved in the last minute preparations to start the Survival March."[50] Hope's account of the preparations their departure conveys the tragic impact of the conflict on their lives. He writes:

> After dark the Kiks.ádi gathered for the last time in Shisk Ke Nu [*Shisk Kee Noow*]. The remaining elders thanked everyone for defending the homeland of the Kiks.ádi against a hated, but formidable enemy.
>
> The House Chiefs formally addressed the people to thank them for their bravery in battle and for agreeing to go on the Survival March to the north.
>
> The clan gathered together for one last song in Shisk Ke Nu [*Shisk Kee Noow*] to signal the Russians that they were ready to leave.
>
> It was an extremely sad song sung from the heart of everyone in the fort.
>
> It expressed their pain and anguish at the outcome of this great battle, it expressed their grief at the loss of Shisk Ke Nu [*Shisk Kee Noow*] and Noow Klein, their tribal houses, their many canoes, and their ceremonial regalia.
>
> It gave vent to all the grief they still felt for the loss of so many friends and relatives. They remembered the lost warriors who were their grandfathers, fathers, uncles, husbands, brothers and sons as well as the grandmothers, mothers, aunts, wives, sisters and daughters who died in the naval bombardment.
>
> They remembered the young house chiefs-to-be who died when the canoe carrying the gun powder blew up.
>
> The warriors mourned the loss of another chance to fight hand to hand combat with their hated enemies.
>
> The song ended with a loud drum roll and a wail of anguish.
>
> The Kiks.ádi made their final preparations and left Shisk Ke Nu [*Shisk Kee Noow*] for the last time.[51]

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Tlingit accounts describe the journey around Baranof Island and eventually to Peril Strait that today is known as the "Sitka Kiks.ádi Survival March of 1804." Sally Hopkins relates a number of places where they stopped along the way, and Alex Andrews describes their foot journey up along the Indian River and then later by boat where they built their new fort, *Chaatl'aa Noow*.[52] Herb Hope, who has extensively investigated the march and retraced the route himself, asserts that after the decision had been made to leave the fort, the movement was carefully planned, with the elderly and small children leaving first, followed by mothers with infants, and then the warriors, while a large rear guard was left behind to confuse the Russians.[53] He contends that they followed the Indian River up the valley, then cut over to Old Sitka, and continued on from there. In order to take advantage of the available resources, the house groups followed different trails.[54] Hope has mapped the Point House route and Herman Kitka has done the same for his group's route (Figure 4-1).

Hope estimates that the arduous journey to Peril Strait would have taken the Kiks.ádi roughly two or three weeks.[55] Food was gathered along the way. Deer would have been plentiful at that time of year and dog salmon would have been running in the bays and rivers. The people foraged along the coast, between the forest and the low tide line, where there were many edible plants.[56] Despite the abundance of available food, however, many people, especially the young and elderly, died on the march.[57]

The Russians, in the meantime, were busy at the abandoned fort, gathering up what they could use from whatever the Tlingit had left behind, including twenty canoes. Lisiansky related:

> In the fortress we found about a hundred of our cannon balls. . . . In addition to these we fell heir to two small cannon left by the enemy. We found a certain amount of dried fish in the barabors as well as salted roe and other foodstuffs, and also a quantity of empty boxes and some plates.[58]

The number and fate of the individuals killed in the battle vary in the different accounts. According to Klebnikov, "three sailors, three promyshlenniks [Russian fur trappers and traders] and four Aleuts were killed" in the Russian attack on the fort.[59] Although these primary sources make no mention of the burial of the men, a later tradition, expressed in Sitka, claims that they were buried "where they fell," and that the Russian Memorial in the public park commemorates the spot.[60]

Khlebnikov also reported that after the evacuation of the Tlingit, the Russians found 30 bodies near the fort and those of 5 children inside.[61] He does not say what was done with them. Although Tlingit accounts contain no specific number of casualties, Herb Hope states that the bodies of those killed in battle were buried in shallow graves east of the fort so they could be exhumed and cremated later. He asserts that the Russians exhumed the bodies and the Kiks.ádi were never able to retrieve them.[62] However, Alfred Perkins, leader of the Kiks.ádi clan in Sitka, contends that the Tlingits who were killed during the battle were buried in deep graves where they fell and that those burials remain in the park today.[63]

Baranov ordered the fortification destroyed, according to Lisiansky, and in his 1814 English edition he wrote: "to effect which, three hundred men went on shore. . . . After everything that was of use was removed out of it, it was burned to the ground."[64] Khlebnikov also describes the burning of the fort.[65] Interestingly, however, there is no mention of the fort burning in the Dmytryshyn, et al. translation of the 1812 Russian edition.[66] Hope also contends that the Russians undoubtedly would have used whatever timber they could salvage from the fort for the construction of their own settlement on the site of the Sitka winter village. He suggests that they probably burned only what they could not use.[67]

With the departure of the Sitka Tlingit and the destruction of their fort, the Russians turned their attention to the establishment of a new settlement, New Archangel. They had managed—with the

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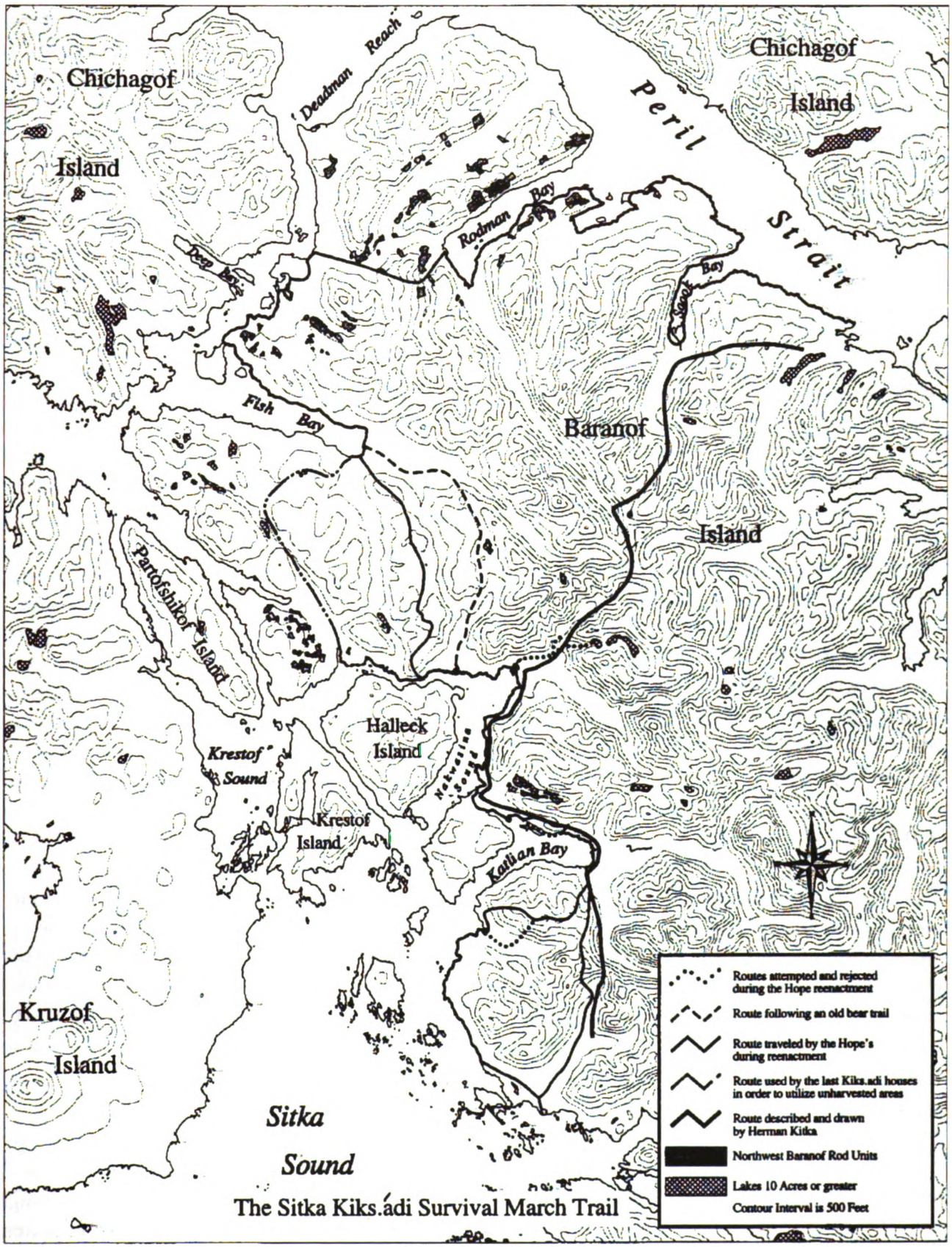

The Sitka Kiks.ádi Survival March Trail

Figure 4-1. Map of the Sitka Kiks.ádi Survival March Trail.

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impressive fire power of the *Neva*, the fateful coincidence of the exploded shipment of gunpowder, and the conflict between the Kiks.ádi and other clans—to gain control of the site where the Tlingit winter village existed. The next 60 years would include the difficult flowering of the "Paris" of Russian America, and a long, but not always peaceful relationship with the Tlingit of *Sheet'ká Kwáan*.

LANDSCAPE CONDITIONS

Throughout most of the area that currently comprises the park, the landscape conditions at the time of the battle were most likely not much different than they had been for many years prior to the meeting between the Sitka Tlingit and Russians. The construction of the fort and other related activities, however, transformed the end of the Indian River peninsula. The following section on landscape conditions describes briefly all of the areas within the park, which, except for the fort area, remained much the same as they were prior to that time. Changes that occurred in the fort area are also covered in greater detail. Diagrams 3 and 4 illustrate the landscape conditions and plant communities within the site during the years 1803-1804, just prior to the battle.

THE INDIAN RIVER AREA

To date at least, historic documentation of vegetation along the Indian River in 1804 has not been located. Nonetheless, it is possible to predict what communities reasonably would have been present in that area at the time (Diagram 4). The vegetation along the Indian River in 1804 would have been primarily forested with western hemlock/Sitka spruce forest in patches of various stages of development, shaped by the history of flooding and blowdown that has occurred along its banks. Red alder and salmonberry communities also would have occurred along the river, where disturbance had taken place more recently. Given the tradition that a Tlingit village had extended to the mouth of the river and that fishing and fish drying had been conducted in that area, it is probable that in these activity areas near the river's mouth forests did not extend to the edge of the water. Grassy openings with common herbaceous species also would have been located within the floodplain, thereby colonizing newly exposed river banks. At the river's mouth, estuary communities would have inhabited the shallow zones of tidal influence.

Oral accounts and historic documents provide some information about the structures situated along the river at this time. A Tlingit storage structure mentioned in Lisiansky's account of the battle was probably located along the river. Lisiansky described it, in his 1814 edition, as being "not far from the shore," and he ordered his men to destroy it along with the Tlingit canoes at the outset of the battle.[68] Dmytryshyn translates the same passage in the Russian edition in the following manner: "Their assignment was to destroy the enemy boats and set fire to the warehouse which was not far from them."[69] This may have been a similar structure to the ones that Emmons reported as later being found in some Tlingit villages. He described them as "small, rude, log or board structures with earth floors," in which all kinds of tools and goods were kept.[70] It also may have been a newly adapted part of a previous fish camp structure. Although the precise location of the structure is not specified in the sources, it is described as being near the canoes. According to Herb Hope, the canoes were landed on the river side of the fort to avoid the wave action in the sound.[71] This fact suggests that the "warehouse" was on the side of the peninsula along the river. An approximate location of this structure is illustrated in Diagram 2, the battle schematic, and Diagram 3, which depicts landscape conditions in 1803-1804.

THE FORT AREA

The end of the Indian River peninsula was a significant choice for the construction of the Tlingit fort. Certainly, the expansive views of the sea from the Indian River peninsula were an important feature in keeping track of the arrival and approach

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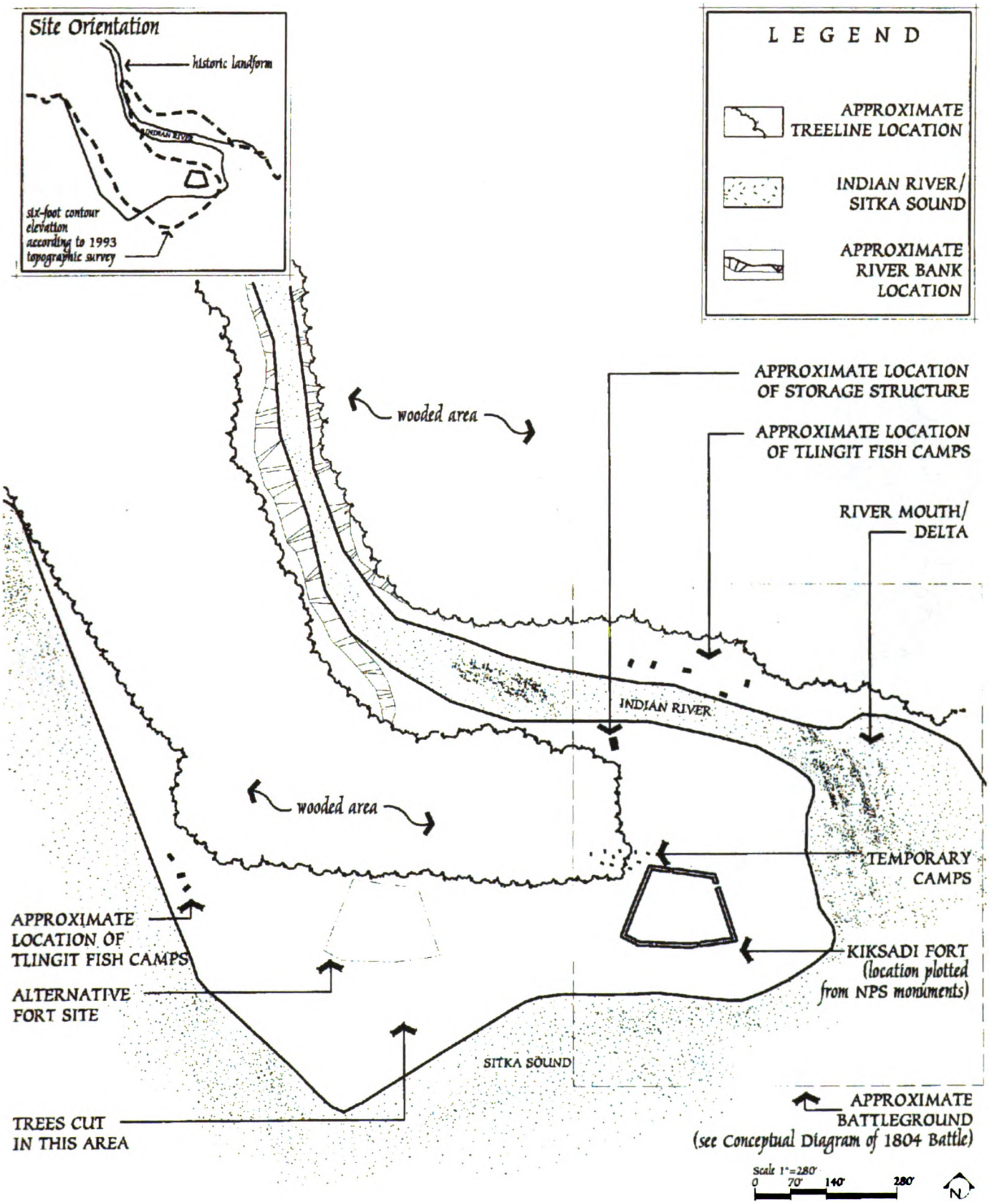

Diagram 3. Landscape conditions, 1803-1804 in what is now Sitka National Historic Park.

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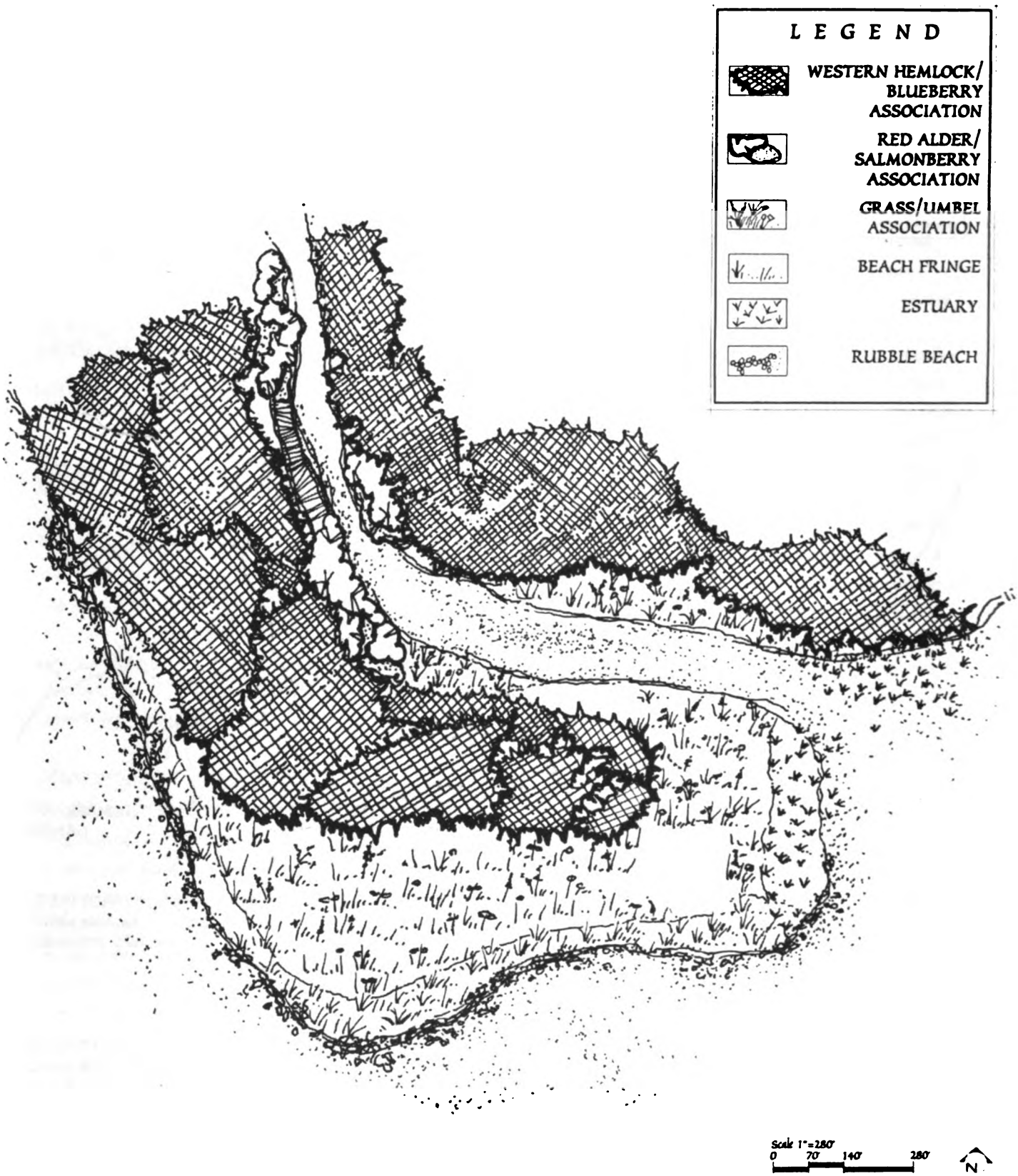

Diagram 4. Plant communities, 1803-1804, in what is now Sitka National Historic Park.

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of Russian ships.[72] The level site was a radical departure from the typical choice of a rocky headland or steeply sided island for a Tlingit fort.[73] It was, however, an excellent tactical decision for combat with the Russians, in that the broad tideflats and shoals that surround the peninsula prevented the Russian ships from sailing close to shore. That this location provided such protection is testified to by Baranov's remark that the fort was in "an inaccessible place," where, he wrote, "the water was so shallow that our ships could not approach closely, so our bombs and grape shot were almost harmless."[74] Undoubtedly, another important consideration in the selection of this site was access to important resources. Proximity to the Indian River and surrounding forests also would have ensured a ready supply of fresh water and subsistence resources during the conflict. These considerations, coupled with the symbolic importance of the area as Kiks.ádi territory, probably played a role in site selection.

The general location of the Tlingit fort near the end of the Indian River peninsula is specified by both Tlingit and Russian sources. Two early Russian charts of Sitka Sound depict what was almost certainly the fort near the river's mouth. The earliest Russan survey of the area, Lisiansky's 1805 chart, shows what is probably a river delta where the Indian River flows into the sound east of the Russian fort (Figure 4-2). Adjacent to the delta, a structure is labeled "Koloshenskaya," which is an adjectival form of "Kolosh," the Russian word for Tlingit, indicating that the structure was a native rather than a Russian building.[75] Although the structure and delta cannot be definitely identified as the Indian River and Tlingit fort, their location and label indicate strongly that they were.

The fort site is more specifically labeled on the other survey, a chart of the Sound drawn by Vasilii Golovin in 1818, which incorporated data from as early as 1809 (Figure 4-3). The Indian River, labeled "R. Kaloshenka" (Kolosh River) is clearly depicted, and at the point of the peninsula adjacent to the river's mouth a star symbol is labeled "Staraya Kaloshen Krepost," or "old Kolosh Fortress."[76] Golovin's survey provides solid cartographic evidence of the Tlingit fort's general location.

Several Tlingit sources also provide general information about the site. Sally Hopkins describes

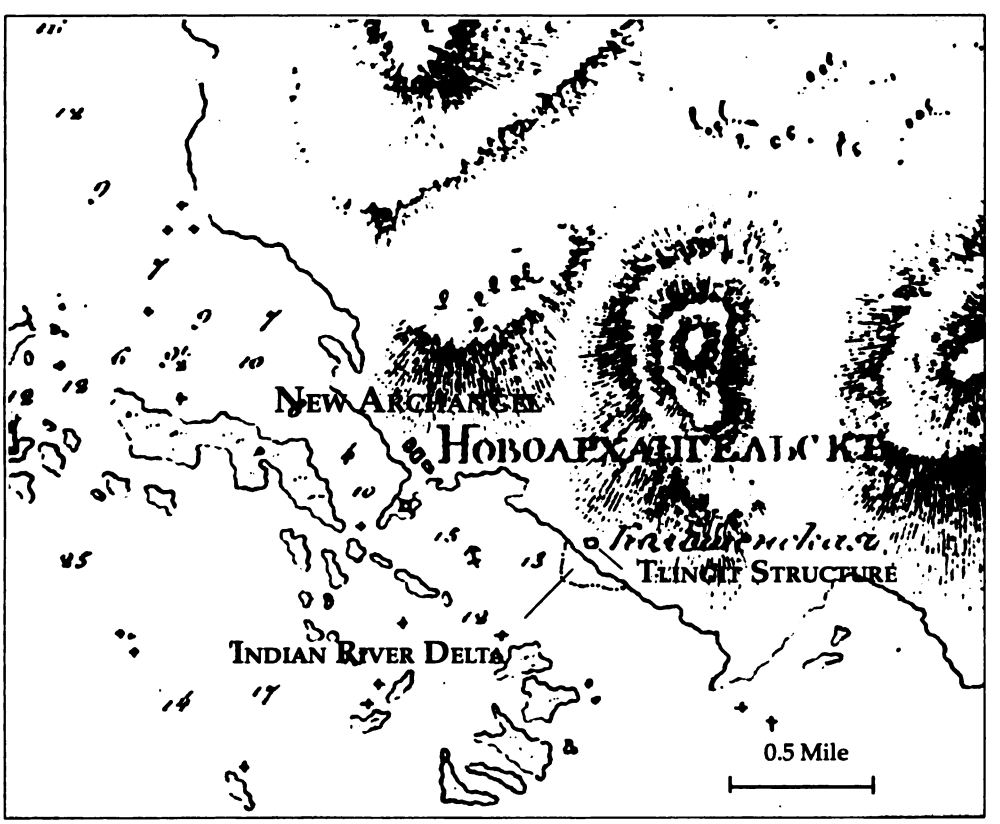

Figure 4-2. Section of Urey Lisiansky's 1805 survey of the Sitka area, showing New Archangel, and a Tlingit structure at the Indian River delta.

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Shisk Kee Noow as being at the "point of Indian River," and Alex Andrews refers to "the beach side" of the fort at the Indian River.[77]

Contemporary Tlingit accounts are more specific as to the fort's location. Herb Hope contends that the fort was right at the point of the peninsula near the mouth of the Indian River, or very proximate to where the National Park Service has identified it.[78] Other Tlingit consultants, however, suggest different locations. Alfred Perkins reports that the fort was farther inland than the currently designated site.[79] Mark Jacobs, Jr. asserts that the fort was not near the mouth of the river, but on the western end of the base of the peninsula (see Alternate Fort Site in Diagram 3).[80]

Figure 4-3. Section of V.M. Golovin's 1818 survey of the Sitka area, showing New Archangel, the Indian River, and the "Old Kolosh Fortress."

An analysis of the Lisiansky translations and other Russian accounts also provides several clues as to the precise fort site. In his account of the battle, Captain Lisiansky recorded his suggestion to Baranov that the Russians construct a raft so that at high tide they could float their cannons "in right under their walls" of the fort;[81] Lydia Black translates the same passage as that at high tide they could float their cannon "to the very wall of the fortress."[82] This observation certainly suggests that the fort was indeed located at or near the high tide line. Further evidence for the proximity of the fort to the high tide line is provided by Chaney et al.'s analysis of Lisiansky's account and the extent of the Indian River shoal at the time of the battle. Lisiansky reported that he was firing at the fort from a distance of a cable's length, which Chaney et al. calculate to be the equivalent of approximately 608 feet. Then by comparing the shoals shown in 1929 and 1989 aerial photographs of the park, they estimate that the shoals off the river's mouth in 1804 would have prevented the *Neva* from coming closer than about 600 feet to the shore, which agrees with Lisiansky's remark.[83] These two conditions indicate that in order to be within firing range of the Neva, the fort must have been very close to the high tide line.

Several other Russian documents indicate that the fort was fairly close to the river. Baranov described the fort as being "beside the creek" in a letter defining the battle.[84] Lisiansky's plan of the fort shows a section of the river flowing past a corner of the structure (Figure 4-4). Georg von Langsdorff, who spent the winter of 1805-06 in New Archangel, reported in his account of the battle that the *Neva*, which was posted near the river's mouth, fired at both sides.[85] Such a firing position would imply that the fort was relatively close to the river's southwestern side. Also, Lisiansky's report that the

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artillery was dragged across the river reveals that the weapons were landed on the opposite shore, and also implies that the fort was proximate enough to the river to prevent the Russians from landing their artillery on the southwestern bank.[86]

Thus, although the fort site cannot be precisely located at this time, current historical evidence indicates that it was situated very close to the high tide line and adjacent to the mouth of the Indian River (at or very near the presently designated fort site). However, because of differing Tlingit accounts pertaining to the fort's location, any archeological investigation of the site in the future ought to incorporate the entire Indian River peninsula.

Lisiansky described the Tlingit fort as a large fortified village that, according to his estimate, accommodated about 800 people.[87] Herb Hope and Mark Jacobs, Jr., on the other hand, both stress that the fort was constructed quickly, and was intended to serve as a defensive structure for the battle, but never as a place for permanent habitation.[88] Hope stated that the inside shelters would have been temporary in nature.[89] According to Emmons, however, it was "probably the most extensive fortification erected by the Tlingit," and the only one he knew of (except for the fort that the Sitka Tlingit built after the battle) where the whole "tribe united to live within one fort."[90] This point also was emphasized by Sally Hopkins when she said, "only at that time/people gathered as one/in the Green Wood Fort."[91] The number of people and the large scale of the fortification undoubtedly reflected a response to the Russian threat.

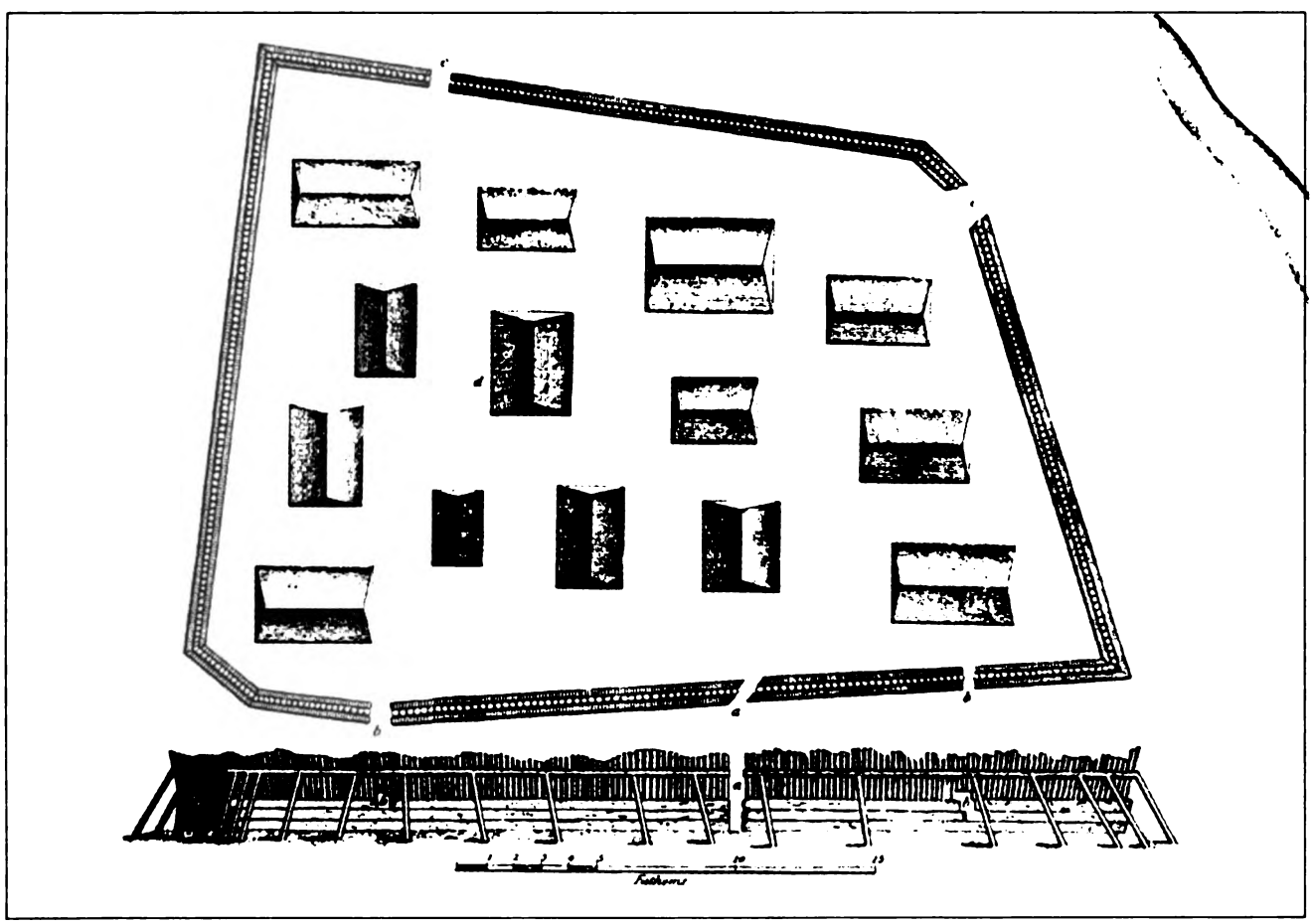

Figure 4-4. Urey Lisiansky's plan and elevation of the Tlingit fort near the mouth of the Indian River, from the English edition of his account, published in 1814.

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The fort's construction and layout are described in Russian and Tlingit sources. Lisiansky included a plan of the fort (see Figure 4-4), as well as a detailed description in his account. The several Lisiansky translations differ slightly in details concerning the shape of the fort, but agree for the most part on its general construction and layout.[92] In the 1814 English edition, Lisiansky described the fort as an "irregular square, its longest side looking towards the sea."[93] However, the translation of the 1947 Russian edition, by Dmytryshyn et al., Lisiansky is noted as describing the fort as an "irregular triangle, with the longest side extending about 35 *sazhens* [231 feet] toward the sea."[94] NPS historic architect Katerina Solovjova Wessels translates the same passage as stating that the fort was in the shape of an "irregular quadrangle," whereas Black's interpretation says that the fort was an "irregular rectangle shape, the large side extending toward the sea for about 35 *sazhen*."[95] Lisiansky's plan of the fort shows the shape as an irregular parallelogram with an outer wall of roughly 35 *sazhens* and three openings to the sea (a door and two cannon holes),[96] and two other openings, one on the side to the river and one to the back, which Lisiansky described as "two large gates in the sides towards the wood."[97]

Both European and native sources provide some insight into the methods employed in the construction of the fort. Again, there is some discrepancy between the several descriptions,[98] but general consensus on the massiveness of the fortification.[99] In a letter written the following spring, Baranov described the fort as being "protected by spruce logs so heavy that a man and in some cases two men could not encompass them, placed both in horizontal and vertical positions."[100] In his 1814 edition, Lisiansky remarked that the fort was "constructed of wood, so thick and strong, that the shot from [his] guns could not penetrate it at the short distance of a cable's length."[101] Hope also commented that the Russians cannons were not able to penetrate the stockade because of the massiveness of the logs.[102]

In the 1812 Russian edition of his account, Lisiansky provides further details as to how the walls were constructed:

> It was made of heavy logs in a form similar to a palisade. There were two inside rows of spars below, and three rows outside. Between these were heavy timbers about ten feet long which were braced against the exterior. At the top they were joined with similar heavy timbers and below they were held up by supports.[103]

According to Wessels' translation of Lisiansky, the fortress walls "slanted towards the outside," as they are shown in his plan.[104] Lydia Black's translation of the same passage is similar, except that she mentions that the ten-foot-long timbers were "inclined from the outside."[105] Lisiansky's plan of the fort illustrates the method described, with a palisade that inclined towards the outside, and which consisted of vertical logs supported at the base by three horizontal timbers. That wall was supported by a log framework which inclined towards the inside.

Certain elements of this construction method are corroborated by Tlingit accounts. In his oral tradition of the battle, Alex Andrews related that "logs were piled high" on the beach side of the fort.[106] Hope contends that one thousand logs, selected by the elders, were used to build the fort. They were cut in 10' to 12' sections, and carried to the site by several men, where they were lashed together with sea lion hide rope to create the fort.[107] He relates that the Tlingit used three heavy timbers on the outside at the base of the palisade to deflect the Russian cannonballs and only one on the inside for support.[108] He also contends, however, that contrary to Lisiansky's plan, the palisade walls inclined from the outside and were supported by a log framework on the inside of the palisade.[109] Hope has described that framework along the inside of the seaward facing wall of the fort as serving as a platform from which the Tlingit warriors could shoot over the top of the wall.[110] This type of platform, according to Emmons, was a frequent feature of Tlingit forts.[111]

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Within the walls of the palisade, according to Lisiansky, were fourteen Tlingit houses, but other than delineating their gabled roofs on his plan of the fort, he did not describe them.[112] However, George von Langsdorff, who visited the Sitka Tlingit in 1805 at their fortified village on Peril Strait, described houses within that fort that may have been similar:

> The houses within the fort are long rectangles of various sizes built in regular rows a few *klafters* (one *klafter* is equivalent to 6.18 feet) apart from each other. The roof, made of wide pieces of bark placed on top of each other, rests on about ten to twelve thick posts sunk deep into the earth. The side walls of the hut are formed by setting wide, thick boards into these posts. The entrance is at the gable end, which is occasionally painted bright earthen colors.[113]

Although Lisiansky's plan illustrates what look like fourteen permanent houses, such as those that Langsdorff described, Tlingit accounts diverge from this interpretation. According to Alex Andrews, there were only ten houses in the fort.[114] While Herb Hope didn't specify the number of structures, he emphasized that they were temporary shelters that could protect some, but not all of the Tlingit; he also related that the members of the population who were not warriors also stayed in temporary camps in the woods situated right behind the fort.[115]

Several sources, both Russian and Tlingit, describe pits within the fort that were used for protection from gunfire. Alex Andrews related that a "huge pit was dug inside," Sally Hopkins mentions a pit in her account, and Mark Jacobs, Jr. describes the Kiks.ádi as having "dug in" and built their fort.[116] Baranov, in a letter he wrote describing the battle, also mentioned that the "natives had dugouts where they could hide from artillery fire."[117]

Although no mention is made in either the Tlingit Russian historical accounts of the vegetation in the fort area, a contemporary Tlingit view reasonably suggests that the area was cleared before the fort was built. According to Hope, the Tlingit cleared some of the forest along the shore in order to establish a clear view from the fort to the west. He contends that they probably used some of the timbers in the construction of the fort.[118] As already has been mentioned, the land east and south of the fort adjacent to the river mouth was most likely cleared previously. Because the forest vegetation provided important cover to the Tlingit, probably no more forest would have been cut other than that which was necessary to clear a view. A grass-umbel plant community, which would have rapidly colonized the cleared area, is shown in the Fort Area on Diagram 4.

BEACHES AND TIDAL FLATS

The beaches and tidal flats surrounding the fort and peninsula were open expanses of beach cobble and gravel, where the waves washed in, the tides rose and fell, and the Tlingit carried out many of their activities. Canoes, fishing and gathering equipment, and perhaps other supplies related to the anticipation of battle with the Russians, probably were found there. However, other than fish camps that, according to Herb Hope, were located on the beach on the western edge of the Indian River peninsula (see Diagram 3), no other structures have been documented as existing on the beach or tidal flats at this time. Very little vegetation would have occurred there, other than the fringe of beach grasses and forbs at the higher elevations of the area, and the more salt tolerant forbs and lichens that occur closer to the tidal zones.

FORESTED AREAS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE INDIAN RIVER

The forest was Tlingit territory in this conflict. The dense cover provided by its tangled growth and the plant and animal species it harbored were important to Tlingit survival. Although no 1804 description of the forest near the Indian River has been located, one can reasonably assume that it was an old growth stand of western hemlock/Sitka spruce forest, with its characteristic structure created by very large trees, interspersed with openings created by numerous downed logs where young spruce and hemlock, as well as shrubs, forbs, and grasses, were able to get established. Tlingit trails

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certainly led through this forest, but their location has not yet been documented. Herb Hope, however, has endeavored to determine the path or the trail taken by the Tlingit when they evacuated the fort and marched to the other side of the island. He has mapped the route of what is now known as the Sitka Kiks.ádi Survival March of 1804 (Figure 4-1).

RUSSIAN MEMORIAL AREA

It is not known whether any of the Russians killed in the battle were buried, or if they were, where the graves were located. Neither Lisiansky nor Baranov mention the burial of the Russians in their accounts of the conflict and subsequent activities. In fact, the first known documentation of the Russian graves is the remark made by Baron von Kittlitz in 1827, stating that "a small monument still marked the graves of the Russians who fell in battle."[119] The area for the monument indicated by Kittlitz and later observers is in the general vicinity of the present memorial, on the northern side of the river near its mouth. Whether it was within the forest or on the grassy fringes along the edge of the river and estuary is not known. This side of the river was bombarded by the Neva's cannons; it also was the place where the artillery was landed before being dragged across the river. Combat may well have occurred in that area. That these activities occurred in this vicinity is made clear by the sources. Certainly the Russians killed in the battle could have been buried in that vicinity, but there is no evidence to verify this occurence in the primary documents.

CONCLUSION

The battle of 1804 was the pivotal event in the conflict between the Russians and the Tlingit population of the *Sheet'ká Kwáan*. Ending as it did with the Tlingit evacuation of the fort, the Russians were allowed to establish themselves there and to export the rich resources of the region.

Nonetheless, the outcome of the battle only briefly interrupted the Tlingit presence in the Indian River area. Throughout subsequent years they continued to utilize the territory for its abundance of seasonal resources. The Kiks.ádi tragedies that resulted from the conflict and the evacuation march—the loss of many young warriors, elderly, and children, as well as the disappearence of clan regalia not taken on the march—have had a impact on the clan that continues to reverberate today. Those losses also imparted powerful sacred meanings to the park's landscape as the Kiks.ádi clan's ancestral territory.

ENDNOTES

[1] For a discussion of other Russian sources, see Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer, "The Battles of Sitka, 1802 and 1804, from Tlingit, Russian and Other Points of View," In *Russia in North America, Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Russian America*, Sitka, Alaska, August 19-22, 1987, Richard A. Pierce, ed. (Kingston, Ontario and Fairbanks, Alaska: The Limestone Press, 1990); also refer to Gregory P. Chaney, Robert C. Betts, and Dee Longenbaugh, *Physical and Cultural Landscapes of Sitka National Historical Park, Sitka, Alaska* (Douglas, AK: Vanguard Research, 1995) for a discussion of the differences between the 1812 and 1814 Lisiansky editions.

[2] Basil Dmytryshyn, E.A.P. Crownhart-Vaughan, and Thomas Vaughan, eds. and trans., *The Russian American Colonies, 1798 - 1867: To Siberia and Russian America, Three Centuries of Russian Eastward Expansion, A Documentary Record*, Volume Three (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 1989).

[3] Our discussion is based on Black's translation, currently a working draft, as cited in Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer, "The Battles of Sitka," and Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*.

[4] Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer, trans., "The Battle of Sitka as told by Sally Hopkins," and "the Battle at Indian River told by Alex Andrews," draft manuscripts, National Park Service, Anchorage, and Sealaska Heritage Foundation, Juneau, AK, October 1994; for Sally Hopkins' life history, also see Nora Marks Dauenhauer and Richard Dauenhauer, eds., *Haa Kusteeyi, Our Culture: Tlingit Life Stories*. (Seattle, London, and Juneau: University of Washington Press and Sealaska Heritage Foundation, 1994).

[5] Herb Hope, interviews with Micki Hellickson, Sitka National Historical Park, Sitka, August 14, 1992; Bonnie Houston and Tim Cochrane, Alaska Systems Support Office, Anchorage, September 28, 1992; and Tim Cochrane, Steve Peterson, Bonnie Houston, Katerina Solovjova Wessels, Arnold Alanen, and Holly Smith-Middleton, Alaska Systems Support Office, Anchorage, June 21, 1995; Arnold Alanen, and Bonnie Houston, Anchorage, October 31, 1997.

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[6] For further discussion of Tlingit history, see Frederica de Laguna, *The Story of a Tlingit Community* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1960) and Frederica de Laguna, *Under Mount Saint Elias: The History and Culture of the Yakutat Tlingit*, Vol. 7 of Smithsonian Contributions to Anthropology (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1972).
[7] Chaney et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*.
[8] Herbert Hope, "The Kiks.ádi Survival March of 1804," in *Will the Time Ever Come: Proceedings of the First Conference of Tlingit Tribes and Clans*, Proofing Galley, December 1994, pp. 123-124; Hopkins, "The Battle of Sitka,"6.
[9] Hope interview, June 21, 1995; according to Hope, the Eagle or Wolf clans and some other Kiks.ádi houses left Sitka before the Russians arrived.
[10] Jacobs, "Early Encounters," 3.
[11] Dmytryshyn, et al., *Russian American Colonies*, 75.
[12] *Ibid.*, 79.
[13] *Ibid.*, 81.
[14] *Ibid.*, 82.
[15] Lisiansky, *Voyage*, 154.
[16] *Ibid.*, 155.
[17] Both Sally Hopkins and Alex Andrews describe the move in their accounts of the battle; refer to Hopkins, "The Battle of Sitka," 5-7; and Andrews, "The Battle at Indian River," 20.
[18] Hope, "The Kiks.ádi Survival March," 127-128.
[19] Dmytryshyn, et al., *Russian American Colonies*, 82-83.
[20] *Ibid.*, 83.
[21] Hope, "The Kiks.ádi Survival March," 128-129.
[22] Hopkins, "The Battle of Sitka," 7-8; Andrews, "The Battle at Indian River," 23-24.
[23] Dmytryshyn, et al., *Russian American Colonies*, 83-84.
[24] *Ibid.*, 84.
[25] Hope interview, June 21, 1995.
[26] Lisiansky, *Voyage*, 157.
[27] Dmytryshyn, et al., *Russian American Colonies*, 84.
[28] Lisiansky, *Voyage*, 157.
[29] Hopkins, "The Battle of Sitka," 11; Andrews, "The Battle at Indian River," 26.
[30] Dmytryshyn, et al., *Russian American Colonies*, 84.
[31] Lisiansky, *Voyage*, 157-58.
[32] Dmytryshyn, et al., *Russian American Colonies*, 85.
[33] K.T. Khlebnikov, *Baranov: Chief Manager of the Russian Colonies in America*, translated by Colin Bearne, edited by Richard A. Pierce (Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press, 1973), 48.
[34] Langsdorff, *Remarks and Observations*, 46.
[35] Hope interview, June 21, 1995.
[36] Herb Hope, sketch attached to letter to Micki Hellickson, March 1, 1993, Alaska Systems Support Office Files, Anchorage.
[37] Hope, "The Kiks.ádi Survival March," 129-30.
[38] K'alyáan originally obtained the cast iron Russian hammer during the 1802 attack on the fort at Old Sitka. After being sold to the NPS by Mary Williams in 1972, it is now among the regalia at Sitka National Historical Park. The hammer has been brought out ceremoniously and validated as Kiks.ádi clan property. According to Tlingit anthropologist Worl, it can be classified as a crest, symbolizing the fighting spirit and honor of Kiks.ádi warriors; see Rosita Worl, *Principles of Tlingit Property Law and Case Studies of Cultural Objects* (Juneau: National Park Service, 1994), 159-68.
[39] Hopkins, "The Battle of Sitka," 9-11; Andrews, "The Battle at Indian River," 24-26; Jacobs, *Early Encounters*, 5.
[40] Dmytryshyn, et al., *Russian American Colonies*, 86.
[41] Hope, "The Kiks.ádi Survival March," 130.
[42] *Ibid.*, 131.
[43] *Ibid.*
[44] Dmytryshyn, et al., 86-87.
[45] *Ibid.*, 87.
[46] *Ibid.*
[47] *Ibid.*, 87.
[48] Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer, "The Battle of Sitka," 9; Hopkins, "The Battle of Sitka," 9-11; Andrews, "The Battle at Indian River," 26.
[49] Hope, "The Kiks.ádi Survival March," 132.
[50] *Ibid.*, 133.
[51] *Ibid.*, 133-34.
[52] See Langsdorff, *A Voyage*, 72, for a description of that fort; he estimated the population to be between 1,300 and 1,400 people.
[53] Hope interview, October 31, 1997.
[54] *Ibid.*
[55] Hope interview, June 21, 1995.
[56] Hope interview, October 31, 1997.
[57] Dauenhauer and Dauenhauer, "The Battle of Sitka," 9.
[58] Dmytryshyn, et al., *Russian American Colonies*, 88.
[59] Khlebnikov, *Baranov*, 48.
[60] Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, 114.
[61] Khlebnikov, *Baranov*, 49.
[62] Hope interview, September 28, 1992.
[63] Alfred Perkins, personal communication to Holly Smith-Middleton, November 6, 1997.
[64] Lisiansky, *Voyage*, 162.
[65] Khlebnikov, *Baranov*, 49.
[66] This may very well be the result of an oversight; according to Wessels, who has examined and translated the original Russian text, the Dmytryshyn translation is flawed.
[67] Hope interview, June 21, 1995.
[68] Lisiansky, *Voyage*, 157.
[69] Dmytryshyn, et al., *Russian American Colonies*, 85.
[70] Emmons, *The Tlingit Indians*, 73.
[71] Hope interview, June 21, 1995.
[72] *Ibid.*
[73] Madonna Moss and Jon M. Erlandson, "Forts, Refuge Rocks, and Defensive Sites: The Antiquity of Warfare along the North Pacific Coast of North America," *Arctic Anthropology* (Fall 1992): 4.
[74] A. Baranov, letter to Demid Il'ich Kulikalov, April 29, 1805, in P.A. Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company, Volume 2: Documents*, Dmitri Krenov, translator, Richard A. Pierce and Alton S. Donnelly, editors (Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press, 1979), 142.
[75] Chaney et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, 111-12.
[76] *Ibid.*, 112; Chaney et al. point out that the star symbol used to illustrate the former fort site was a conventional fort symbol, and had been used by Lisiansky to depict both the Russian fort of New Archangel and Fort St. Michael at Old Sitka.
[77] Hopkins, "The Battle of Sitka," 6; Andrews, "The Battle at Indian River," 21.
[78] Hope, sketch attached to letter to Micki Hellickson; Hope interview, June 21, 1995.
[79] Perkins, personal communication to Holly Smith-Middleton.
[80] Mark Jacobs, Jr., interview with Holly Smith-Middleton, Sitka National Historical Park, July 7, 1995.
[81] Dmytryshyn, et al., *Russian American Colonies*, 87.
[82] Lydia Black cited in Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*,109.
[83] See Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, 102-110.
[84] A. Baranov, letter to Demid Il'ich Kulikalov, April 29, 1805, in P.A. Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company, Volume 2: Documents*, Dmitri Krenov, trans., Richard A. Pierce and Alton S. Donnelly, eds. (Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press, 1979), 142.
[85] Georg Heinrich von Langsdorff, *Remarks and Observations on a Voyage Around the World from 1803 to 1807*, Volumes One and Two, translated and annotated by Victoria Joan Moessner, edited by Richard A. Pierce (Kingston, Ontario and Fairbanks, Alaska: The Limestone Press, 1993), 72.
[86] Dmytryshyn, et al., *Russian American Colonies*, 85.
[87] Urey Lisiansky, *Voyage Around the World in the Years 1803, 1804, 1805 and 1806, Bibliotheca Australiana No. 42 91814*, (New York: Da Capo Press, 1968, reprint), 163.
[88] Hope interview, June 21, 1995; Jacobs, *Early Encounters*, 4.

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[89] Hope interview, June 21, 1995.
[90] Emmons, *The Tlingit Indians*, 76.
[91] Hopkins, "The Battle of Sitka," 6.
[92] For a detailed analysis of the different versions of the plan and different translations of the description, see Chaney et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, 103-09.
[93] See Lisiansky, *Voyage*, 163; and Dmytryshyn, et al., *Russian American Colonies*, 88.
[94] Dmytryshyn, et al., *Russian American Colonies*, 88.
[95] Katerina Solovjova Wessels, translation of *Journey Around the World in 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806 Ordered by His Imperial Majesty Aleksandr I on the Vessel Neva Under the Command of Yuriy Lisyanskiy, Navy Captain-Lieutenant, First Rank Captain and Order-Bearer, Part II* (St. Petersburg, 1812), excerpt in Moscow/St. Petersburg Archival Trip Report, Part 1, p. 29, Anchorage, Alaska Systems Office, NPS; Black cited in Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, 108.
[96] In the Dmytryshyn et al. (*Russian American Colonies*, 88) and Black (Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, 108) translations, Lisiansky is noted as identifying these as "a gate and two embrasures."
[97] Lisiansky, *Voyage*, 163.
[98] See Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, for a detailed comparison of these versions.
[99] Mark Jacobs, Jr. however, contends that the fort was a "makeshift fort [built] out of saplings;" See Jacobs, *Early Encounters*, 4.
[100] Alexander Baranov cited in Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, 109.
[101] Lisiansky, *Voyage*, 163.
[102] Hope interview, September 28, 1992.
[103] Dmytryshyn, et al., *Russian American Colonies*, 88.
[104] Wessels, "Moscow," 29.
[105] Lydia Black cited in Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, 108.
[106] Andrews, "The Battle at Indian River," 21.
[107] Hope interview, October 31, 1997.
[108] Hope interview and sketch, June 21, 1995.
[109] *Ibid.*; see Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, 103-10, for further discussion.
[110] Hope interview, June 21, 1995.
[111] Emmons, *The Tlingit Indians*, 77.
[112] Lisiansky, *Voyage*, 163
[113] von Langsdorff, *Remarks and Observations*, 72.
[114] Andrews, "The Battle at Indian River," 21.
[115] Hope, interview June 21, 1995.
[116] *Ibid.*; Hopkins, "The Battle of Sitka," 9; Jacobs, *Early Encounters*, 4.
[117] Baranov cited in Chaney, et al., *Physical and Cultural Landscapes*, 108.
[118] Hope interview, June 21, 1995.
[119] Frederic Litke, *A Voyage Around the World 1826-1829, Volume One: To Russian America and Siberia*, translated by Renee Marshall, supplemented with a parallel account by E.H. Baron von Kittlitz, translated by Dr. Joan Moessner, edited by Richard A.Pierce (Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press, 1987), 134.

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CHAPTER 5

NEW ARCHANGEL'S "PLACE OF AMUSEMENT," 1804 - 1867

As a local Finnish worker remarked in 1867, the Kolosh River was "the only place of amusement" in New Archangel. It was the place where local inhabitants could go to enjoy dramatic views of the mountains, or to drink tea on the banks of the river; it was a place nearby, but just far enough away from Sitka to become a special destination.

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CHAPTER 5

NEW ARCHANGEL'S "PLACE OF AMUSEMENT"

The establishment of the Russian American Company outpost on the site of the former Tlingit village at Sitka brought new forces of change that dramatically altered the landscape proximate to the fort, and eventually near the Indian River. The Russian outpost linked the region to the market economies of Europe and Asia, and the new colonists in turn, sought to convert its rich natural resources into profits for the company.

The shape of the company's settlement on the former Tlingit site and the changes they made in the surrounding landscape derived from Russian economic interests and the cultural traditions that were inherited from their Old World homeland. The Russians cut down trees, built homes, hospitals, churches and schools, and planted gardens. In the process, they dramatically altered the former Tlingit landscape at Sitka.

THE GROWTH OF AN OUTPOST

Both Baranov and Lisiansky judged that the New Archangel site would be a profitable one for the company. Baranov wrote, in a letter to the Main Office of the Russian American Company, that "the advantages of this location would insure millions in profit to the Empire"; he estimated that 10,000 to 12,000 pelts could be obtained annually, and calculated that a three million ruble profit would be derived from ten years of export to Canton.[1] Lisiansky also was optimistic about the new fort, both for the access it provided to sea otter and for the tremendous forests that grew there:

> In my opinion it [New Archangel] will soon become the chief establishment of the Russians. Besides other advantages, it is in the neighborhood of the best places for hunting the sea-otter, of which eight thousand might be procured annually, if the ships of the United States did not interfere with the trade: at present, the yearly amount does not exceed three thousand. The woods will also yield a handsome revenue, when the Russian commerce with China shall be established.[2]

Indeed, the colonists envisioned New Archangel as the center of the Russian American fur trade, where a population of Aleuts would be established to do the hunting, where the deep harbor and abundant forests would allow, the construction of a shipyard, and where the settlement would act as a trading point for foreign traders moving up and down the coast.[3]

Work towards the realization of his vision began immediately after the battle in the autumn of 1804. Khlebnikov described the initial activities that were undertaken:

> The first building put up near the site of the fort was one needed for storage. Almost a thousand trees were felled to make a stockade, and a small plank cabin was built for the Manager. A belltower and watchtower were built with surrounds of sharpened spikes; protecting the fort from hostile onslaughts by the Kolosh.[4]

When Lisiansky returned to New Archangel in June 1805, he reported that Baranov and the company had erected eight buildings which "could be considered beautiful even in Europe itself."[5] Five buildings, including a house for Baranov, a barracks, and two to three warehouses had been erected inside the fort on top of the promontory and several others were put up around it.[6]

John D'Wolf, an American visiting the fort during the winter of 1805, reported that two ships had been hauled up on the beach and were used as temporary barracks for a number of workers. During this period, D'Wolf wrote, "Watchmen were stationed along the shore, in both directions from the

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Figure 5-1. Russian outpost of New Archangel, as illustrated by Georg von Langsdorff, ca. 1805.

fort, and shouted 'All's well,' from one end to the other, at intervals, throughout the whole night." He remarked that "all were working cheerfully, and hard enough to kill anybody but Russians."[7]

Conditions in New Archangel were difficult for everyone during the first few years when almost 200 people, including Russians and hunters, were living in crowded and primitive quarters at the settlement.[8] Chamberlain Rezanov, who visited the outpost in the winter of 1805-06, described conditions in New Archangel as bleak, while Rezanov wrote: "He [Baranov] lives in a sort of plank yurt, which is so damp that the mildew has to be wiped off every day. The shack is full of holes and with the continuous rains it leads like a sieve."[9]

A detailed view of the settlement in 1805-06 (Figure 5-1) was drawn by Georg von Langsdorff, Rezanov's physician and a naturalist, who accompanied the Chamberlian to New Archangel in August 1805. Published in an account of his travels, the illustration clearly depicts the fort and its surrounding harbor. Langsdorff accompanied the image with the following explanation:

> In the foreground is the fortification hill. At its foot, to the right, is a bath house along with housing for craftsmen. On the left, somewhat hidden by the hill, is part of the large fortified casern [military barracks]. Next to it on a spit of land are the storehouses. In front of them is the small inlet used as the main landing spot for the outpost. Behind the hill along the shore are several buildings for the Aleuts, a kitchen, a smithy, the house of the locksmith as well as other men.[10]

When Peter Corney, a British sailor, visited the settlement in 1814, it had grown into a town of sixty log houses "enclosed by a high paling, and look-out houses built at a distance of twenty yards from each other, where there are people on the watch both day and night."[11] The census of 1815 reported that by

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Figure 5-2. View of New Archangel in 1827, by Aleksandr Postels.

this time the settlement had grown to a total population of 620 individuals, including 190 Russian males, 72 Creole males, 173 Aleut males, 110 Russian and Creole women, and 75 Aleut women.[12]

During these first few years, fur hunting expeditions departing from New Archangel suffered from mishaps and threats from the Tlingit, and were not as successful as Baranov had hoped. Some hunting was done in the waters off New Albion (present day California), and in 1812 Baranov sent Kuskov to found a post there. But the Spanish prevented successful hunting and the number of furs obtained in California declined as well.[13] Yet, despite these difficulties, overall the Russian American Company realized windfall profits from fur trade throughout the colonies at large during the period of Baranov's governorship.

In 1818, when the population of New Archangel had more than tripled since 1804, Baranov was replaced as Governor of the Russian American Company. The Company sent Ludwig von Hagemeister to serve as the next governor, but for reasons of illness, he returned to Russia in less than one year and left Lieutenant Semyon Ivanovich Yanovskii, Baranov's son-in-law, in charge.[14] During the two years he acted as Govenor, Yanovskii oversaw operations in the settlement. He also was responsible for the posting of a company physician in New Archangel.[15]

By the 1820s, the near eradication of the sea otter population in Russian America resulted in an economic slowdown for the Company. At the same time, Captain Matvei Ivanovich Murav'ev, who replaced Yanovskii as Chief Manager of the colonies in 1820, had to cope with severe supply shortages in New Archangel. An 1821 Imperial Russian decree that prohibited foreign vessels from trading in Russian America cut off a critical source of supplies to the colonies. Several annual Russian supply ships failed to sail to New Archangel, thereby worsening the situation. Murav'ev managed to avoid starvation by sending a ship to California and the Sandwich Islands to purchase provisions. Fortunately the decree was repealed in 1823, allowing the Russians to obtain some supplies from foreign traders in the region.

Murav'ev instituted a significant change in New Archangel in 1821 when he invited the Sitka Tlingit to settle outside the fort stockade. When they agreed to do so, he had a gate built near their village

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and created regulations to control trade and interaction between the Russian and Tlingit populations.

Several views of New Archangel, drawn in 1827, illustrate the character of the settlement and the landscape at that time. Aleksandr Filippovich Postels, a mineralogist and artist, and Baron von Kittlitz, a naturalist, accompanied Frederic Litke during his visit to Sitka in 1827.[16] Postels' distant view of the settlement, which was fronted by the sound and backed by steep mountains, conveys beautifully both the extent of the town and the character of the landscape (Figure 5-2). An extensive cleared area near the fort is also apparent.[17] Baron von Kittlitz's illustration (Figure 5-3), which depicts New Archangel from the shore to the east of the fort, presents a dramatic view of the *kekur*, with part of the church showing on the far right and figures positioned on the beach in the foreground. The drawing captures both the rugged quality of the rocky coast and the imposing fort site, as well as serene views of distant islands. During this period the incipient settlement housed the drapers and keepers of materials, the shipmasters, joiners and turners, the blacksmiths, metal smiths, locksmiths and coppersmiths, the coopers, spinners, tailors, roofers, glaziers, painters, charcoal burners, fishermen, ship carpenters, and carpenters, and the sawyers, caulkers, candle makers, watchmen, cooks, housekeepers, and interpreters who worked for the Company.[18]

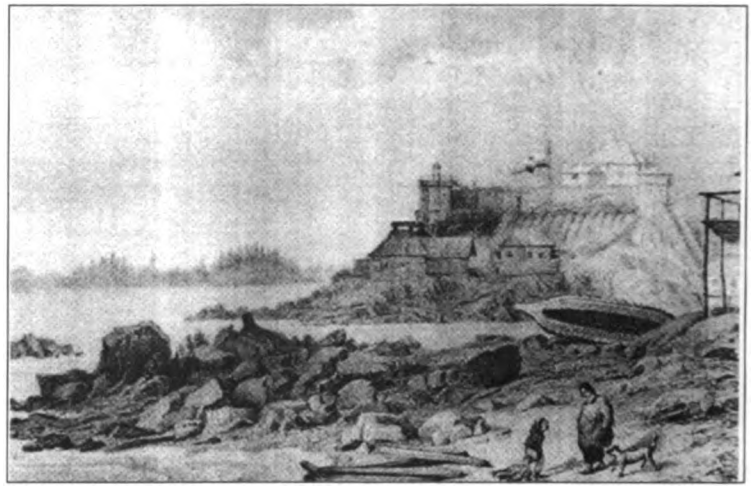

Figure 5-3. Russian fort overlooking the Sitka Sound and the rocky shore in 1827.

Supply problems continued to plague the colony in the 1820s and 1830s. In 1830, because of a shortage of corporate housing, the Russian America Company had purchased at least a couple of the twenty private houses that stretched along the shore east of the fortress.[19] The population had risen, by 1833, to 847 individuals—including 406 Europeans, 307 Creoles, and 134 Aleuts and Kolosh.[20] Baron F.P. Wrangell, who was Chief Manager from 1830 to 1835, encouraged the cultivation of gardens to offset the shortages. Wrangell, who instituted an efficient, economically minded administration, began to stop the over-hunting of sea-otter, improved relations with the Tlingits, and provided better conditions for the workers.

The rapid expansion of settlement can be discerned in a comparison of the 1820 and 1836 maps of New Archangel (Figures 5-4 and 5-5). Although the 1820 map is at a much larger scale, it clearly shows the palisade and buildings located both within and outside the enclosure.[21] In the 1836 map, the palisade extends farther to the northeast—just beyond the point of land that leads to the windmill—thereby enclosing a larger area that is much more densely built up with company buildings, private homes, and other structures, such as a church.[22] Also shown on the 1836 map are many Tlingit houses located outside the northwestern side of the stockade. By the 1830s, Wrangell reported that 1,000 Tlingit lived in the village.[23]

The decade of the 1840s is often referred to as the golden age of New Archangel, primarily due to Governor Adolph Etholén's activities and influence. Coming from Finland with Etholén were his wife, Margreth, and a Lutheran pastor, Uno Cygnaeus, who established a Lutheran congregation and built a church for the devout Mrs. Etholén; also accompanying them were several other prominent Finns, and a number of luxury items from St. Petersburg to furnish the Governor's residence.[24] Etholén was a

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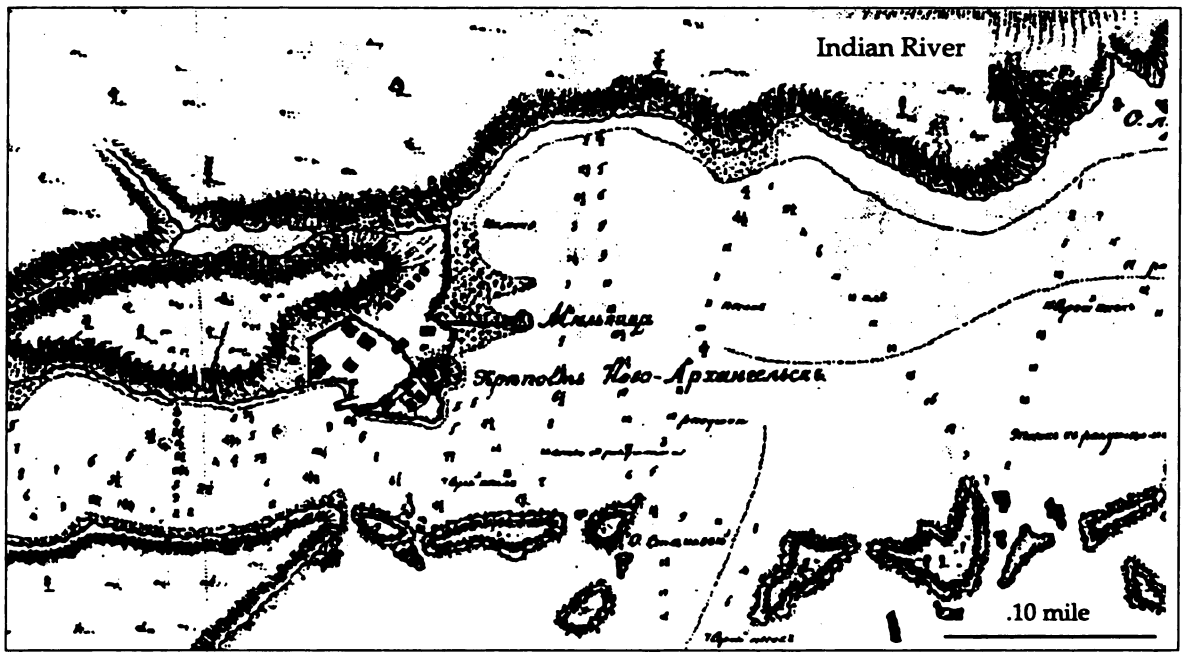
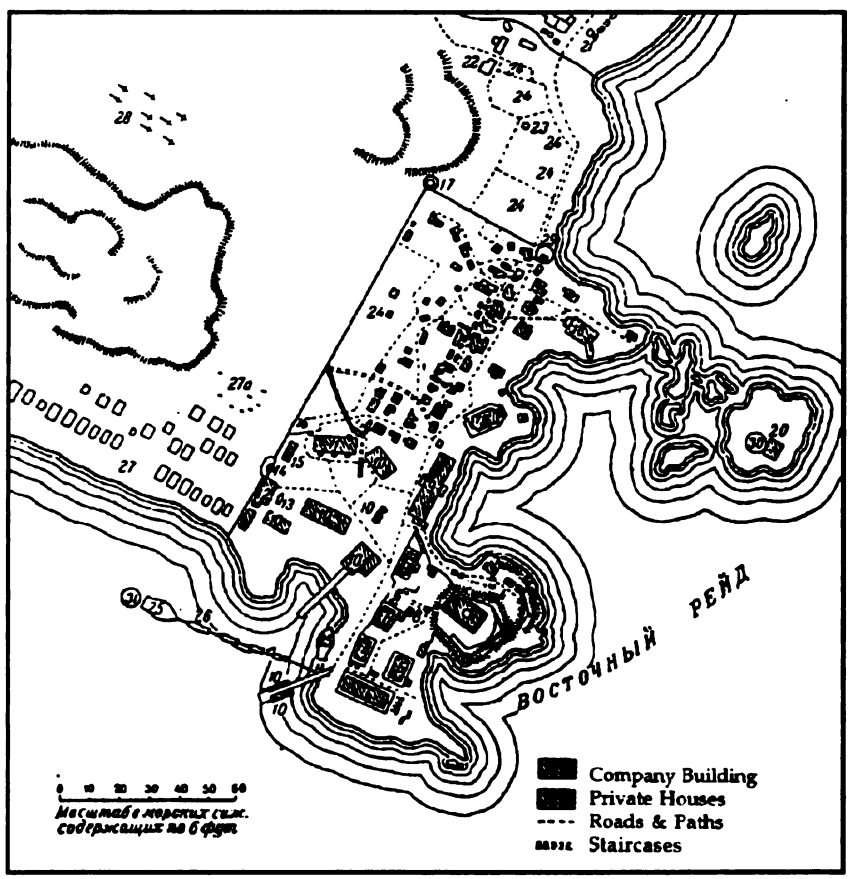


Figure 5-4. Russian plan of New Archangel and vicinity, ca. 1820, showing the Indian River at the upper right.

Figure 5-5. Russian plan of the New Archangel settlement in 1836, showing Russian American Company buildings, private residences, and the main roads and paths. On the left side of the plan, a large number of Tlingit residences are located along the shore outside of the settlement stockade.



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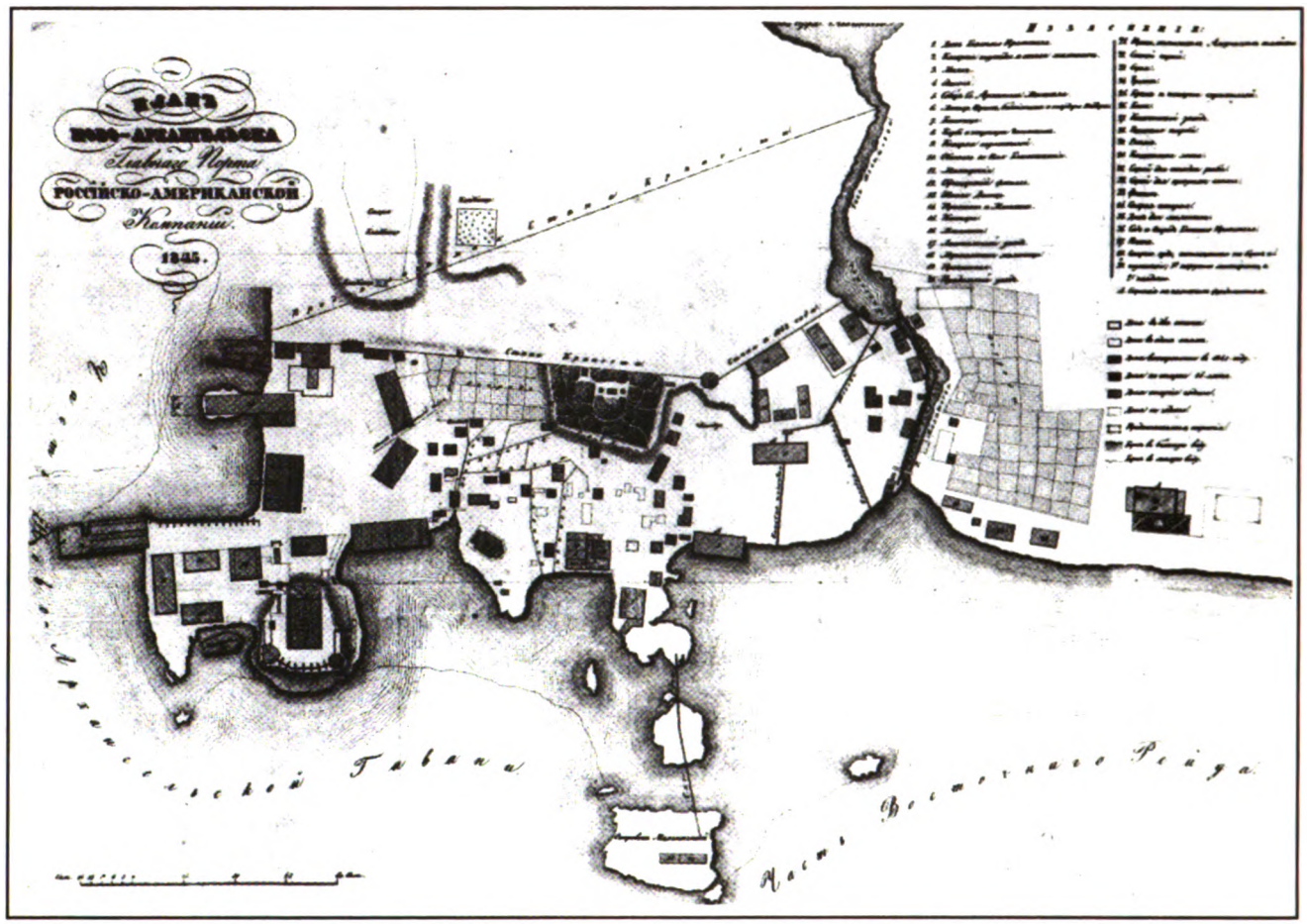

Figure 5-6. Russian plan of New Archangel in 1845 during the Adolph Etholén era.

man of Christian morality who sought to improve conditions for the European inhabitants of New Archangel, as well as for the native populations. He expanded the curriculum of the company's schools and made improvements to medical facilities. During his term as Chief Manager, several new buildings were constructed in the town: they included the Lutheran Church, built in 1843; the Russian Bishop's residence, finished in 1842, which served not only as the Bishop's residence, but also as a seminary and Bishop's Chapel; and a gentlemen's club, which Etholén envisioned as a place where upper-class men of character could mix with and influence working men.[25] Etholén had the library and navigational charts and instruments set up in their own individual buildings.[26] An 1845 plan depicts the settlement at the end of the Etholén era (Figure 5-6). It illustrates the layout of the central area in beautiful detail, delineating and identifying the buildings, the paths through the town, the kitchen gardens and public garden, the wharf, the cemeteries, and the stockade.

The Governor's house was the center of high society in New Archangel. Many visitors described the social gatherings they attended, most often dinners and balls at the Governor's residence during Etholén's tenure. Uno Cygnaeus wrote to his mother that "on Sunday afternoons, all officers gather at the Governor's house. These are quite tedious, since we need to sit there from 5 to 8 and only yawn. The others play cards, but this isn't for me. I have been to two balls, with the last one being especially boring."[27] Apparently Cygnaeus found these regular social occasions tedious. His feeling was shared by the Finnish physician and scientist Ferdinand Sahlberg, who commented in his diary

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that "much luxury prevails in this poor corner of the world," and continued that the "table at the Etholéns was such that I could never have believed that it would be found in Sitka. The silver was hard to touch with bare hands, but the dinner was as one would expect: boring and long."[28]

For the majority of inhabitants in the settlement, however, life was not so comfortable. Theirs was an existence of hard work and more primitive conditions. Sir George Simpson, again, provided a glimpse into this other dimension of New Archangel life:

> Of all the dirty and wretched places that I have ever seen, Sitka is pre-eminently the most wretched and most dirty. The common houses are nothing but wooden hovels, huddled together, without order or design, in nasty alleys, the hotbeds of such odours as are themselves sufficient, independently of any other cause, to breed all sorts of fevers.[29]

Simpson's exaggerated tone and ideas about the atmosphere notwithstanding, his accounts reflect the disparity between upper and lower class life in New Archangel, and suggests what physical conditions probably were like for many people.

The decade of the 1850s was a time of diversification for the Russian American Company. Despite efforts to rebuild the fur-bearing populations, the fur trade stagnated in the 1850s because of the limited otter population, coupled with the loss of the Chinese market.[30] Now the Company concentrated on developing other sources of revenue, including the sale of fish, lumber, ice and coal; hence, by the 1850s, these were equal to fur hunting as sources of revenue.[31] Tea importation from China to Russia also became an important revenue source for the Company.[32]

Although relations between the Tlingits and inhabitants of New Archangel were relatively stable throughout the 1840s and early 1850s, a serious conflict developed in the spring of 1855, when several Tlingits resisted the effort of a guard to stop them from taking firewood from a Company supply depot. Because one of the Tlingits wounded the guard, Chief Manager Voevodskii asked the Tlingit elders to punish them. Upon the elders' refusal, the conflict escalated into an outright battle. The Tlingits occupied the church that had been constructed as part of the palisade and launched an attack on the fort. The Russians fired back and eventually gained control, but not before many people on both sides were wounded or killed.[33]

A small number of significant changes occurred in the town during its last twenty years as a Russian outpost. The Orthodox Cathedral, a reconstructed version of which now occupies the original location, was begun in 1847 and consecrated in 1850. The old Orthodox church was torn down the same year. In 1848, a church for the Tlingits was consecrated, and a new covered market was built for trade with them.[34] British Captain Richard Collinson, who had first been in New Archangel under Captain Belcher in 1837, visited the settlement in 1850 and described it as follows:

> The buildings of the settlement, being composed entirely of wood, soon acquire a dinginess from the constant rain, so that it loses much of its picturesque appearance from the sea on a closer inspection. Besides the new Government House, which was in progress on my last visit [1837], a new cathedral and jetty have been built. The houses are spacious and comfortable, but with being fitted with double windows and warmed by stoves, there is a want of ventilation. . . . The incessant rain renders out-of-door exercise almost impracticable; in fact there are no walks except the public garden, which is tastefully laid out. . . .[35]

The town Collinson described displayed continuing dedication to commerce and trade, to the mission of the Russian Orthodox Church, and to civic comfort and pleasure (for those who could afford it) that was offered in spacious houses and public gardens.

An 1850 Russian plan of New Archangel and the surrounding region, originally published in an 1852 atlas by M.D. Tebenkov, depicts the town in the same year as Collinson's visit (Figure 5-7). It depicts a settlement composed of many buildings, within a stockade that extends to the mouth of Swan Lake, beyond which are shown more buildings, including

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Figure 5-7. Detail of a Russian survey, showing the settlement at New Archangel and the Indian River area, 1850.

a monastery and extensive garden plots along the shoreline to the east. The Tlingit village also extended farther up the northwestern shore than shown in early plans.[36]

During the tenure of the last two Governors, Johan Furuhjelm and Prince D.P. Maksutov, the Russian American Company developed serious financial troubles. By the early 1860s, it was on the brink of bankruptcy.[37] The third Company charter had expired in 1862 and had been extended only provisionally by the Russian government. These financial troubles, coupled with the Russian government's realization of the indefensibility of its American colonies during the Crimean War, led the Russians, in 1867, to sell the territory to the United States. The official transfer ceremony took place in New Archangel on October 18, 1867. On that day, Russia's far flung eastern colony became a territory of the United States that would be governed by American military forces.

As the historic plans reveal, throughout the almost fifty years of Russian occupation the company settlement expanded primarily to the east of the fortified *kekur*. In the earliest years, Russian activity was restricted by the Tlingit presence in the surrounding landscape. After the Tlingit established their village along the beach outside the Russian stockade, that sector of the landscape became primarily Tlingit territory. The Russians expanded their settlement and created gardens along the level coastline that stretched between the town and the Indian River. As they did so the Russians moved closer to the landscape that presently comprises the park. The Indian River area became both a convenient source of wood and water and a nearby scenic recreational area where the local population could enjoy freedom from the confines of the town.

VIEWS OF THE WILDERNESS

Several Russian American Company officials left accounts of the New Archangel landscape that convey the character of the area early during the first seven decades of nineteenth century. The rugged topography of the region and the immense forests surrounding the outpost impressed them. Their observations provide important information as to the contextual setting of the park at that time, and indicate, in some cases, the conditions and species that would have been present in the Indian River area.

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The steep mountains surrounding the outpost prevented easy movement from the New Archangel fortress into the interior of the island. In 1805, Langsdorff wrote that "there is almost no level ground of any size in the neighborhood of the outpost. On every side are steep and almost inaccessible hills covered with thick dark woods."[38] Khlebnikov provided more detail about the topography in his description of the area. He wrote: "There is probably no flat area one square mile in extent. There are mountain ridges everywhere; these consist for the most part of granite of various sorts, of gneiss and mica shale."[39] The mountains acted as a relatively impenetrable barrier around the fort and awed many of the newcomers.

Several Finns who inhabited New Archangel in the 1840s and 1850s described the landscape in their diaries and in letters to relatives back home. Although Gabriel Plathan, the second pastor of Sitka's Finnish Lutheran Church, described the steep landscape as "very unfortunate,"[40] several of his compatriots revealed an admiration for New Archangel's landforms, and sought to find similarities with their Finnish homeland. Ferdinand Sahlberg, a physician and naturalist who accompanied the Etholéns to New Archangel in 1840, wrote in his diary that except for the high mountains, "the archipelago is very similar to our Finnish islands."[41] Hjalmer Furuhjelm, a Finnish mining and metallurgical engineer who joined the Russian American Company in 1853, wrote in his diary when approaching New Archangel: "We have in front of us, magnificent nature, an archipelago full of cliffs and islands, with a huge, old forest. In the background were pyramid-like mountains covered by glimmering white snow."[42] His brother, Hampus Furuhjelm, a Naval officer in the service of the Russian American Company and future governor of the colony, wrote in a May 1852 letter to his father about New Archangel: "nature [here] is much like Finland, with mountains covered by spruce forest, as well as rapids and lakes, although they are incomparably larger."[43] Perhaps the most poignant expression of this reaction to the New Archangel landscape is the passage found in an anonymous Finnish letter of June 1840, which stated:

> The weather was beautiful and Sitka received her new settlers in a Sunday dress. The snow on the top of the mountains was glistening in the sunshine, which was shining in the most pleasant ways against the age-old coniferous forest on the slopes and the beautiful archipelago that surrounds the main island.
>
> Everything was so beautifully gloomy and magnificent that we found ourselves as if bewitched inside our own dear fatherland, although the mountains are larger. . . .[44]

To these Finns located far from their homeland, the southeastern Alaskan landscape stirred memories of the forests of home.

The immensity and lushness of the coniferous forests that extended throughout the landscape from the coast and upward to the mountains predominate in the historic accounts and illustrations. These depictions provide insight into the character of the rainforest and the species that were observed at the time. The impenetrable and wild nature of the forest is a common theme that runs through them. Captain Richard Collison, who was in New Archangel in 1850, remarked that hemlock "grows in a most luxurious manner, clothing the steep sides of the surrounding hills to their very summit, while every little rock or islet boasts of its clump of trees."[45] Baron von Kittlitz described how heavy rains and high winds freqently blew down trees, where they quickly became covered with moss. He continued:

> Then other trees fall in every direction, and whereas the spaces between them fill up with shrubs and bush plants, on the older ones, which have been reduced by degrees to a fertile dust, and from the remains grows a new generation of trees which are even more vigorous than their predecessors, and which when they fall will increase this inextricable congestion which, for many centuries, covers the primitive rocks with soil. . . .[46]

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The effect of these dynamics was to create a forest. Virtually impenetrable, Kittlitz remarked that "the superb forests of the Northwest Coast of America are probably more inaccessible than any others. Just to walk a thousand paces through such a forest is a perilous exploit, and one only gets to the other end with greatest efforts."[47]

These early observers also recorded the species that grew in the forests around New Archangel. Lisiansky described the trees and shrubs he observed in 1804:

> The Sitca [sic] Islands are all, indeed, plentifully supplied with wood, consisting of pine [shore pine], larch [Sitka spruce] and cedar [Alaska yellow cedar], called by the Russians, the smelling tree. There are also fir [hemlock], alder, and a few others to be found, but in no great quantity. The apple tree [Oregon crab apple] deserves notice. Its leaves resemble those of the European apple tree, but it bears a small fruit like the white cherry, and has the taste of a sourish apple. The islands abound in wild berries... there are blackberries, strawberries, black currants, and a particular kind of raspberry, and what is commonly called the red berry, which grows on large bushes and has a very pleasant taste.[48]

Khlebnikov also noted the berries and other shrubs that occurred in the forest understory:

> Low growing brushy vegetation with berries include the raspberry, which has a very watery taste, the mountain ash, currant, blackberry, which also has an inferior flavor, elderberry and some others. One plant [devil's club] belongs to the thorn family and is covered with countless sharp thorns. It grows between forested areas along the shore and adds to the impenetrability. Along the shore there is a shrub that produces good berries called "velvet berries." In the tundra grow cowberries, crowberries, cranberries and cloudberries.[49]

An illustration by Kittlitz conveys the character of such an environment, and depicts a Tlingit woman, with a baby and child, who is gathering some of the many berry species that grew there (Figure 5-8). In the drawing the human figures, positioned on a fallen tree, are surrounded by several species of standing trees of various sizes—one immense, showing only the base of its trunk in the sketch, the others either more slender and delicately branched or located in the distance—and the fallen trunks of others, as well as devil's club, ferns, and grasses. According to Kittlitz, "The picture shows the interior of the forest around Novo-Arkhangel'sk, where, in the most frequented places, the inhabitants make paths like the one seen here."[50]

Figure 5-8. Tlingit woman and children in the forest near New Archangel, ca. 1827.

The written and graphic records of these explorers are infused with a spirited enthusiam to describe, sample, and understand the natural world. Their writings and drawings comprise the earliest in-depth scientific and artistic accounts of the landscape around New Archangel.

THE CUTTING OF THE FOREST

The most dramatic changes the Russians made to the landscape around the outpost involved the cutting of the ancient forests. From the very beginning of Russian settlement at New Archangel, these rich forests were regarded as a valuable resource for the Company. The cutting of trees, which was a continual activity around the settlement, provided both building materials and fuel for local consumption and export. Although the sources do not reveal

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where specific logging activities took place each year, they do relate the general volume, extent, and method of tree removal.

The earliest known reference to the cutting of trees is in Khlebnikov's biography of Baranov, where he wrote that "almost a thousand trees were felled" to build the initial stockade at New Archangel after the battle of 1804.[51] Certainly the continuing construction of the fort required timber from many forest trees. That this work was going on is evidenced by Rezanov's 1806 report on New Archangel, in which he mentioned that the men sent to the forest to cut timber or burn charcoal were in danger from the Tlingit.[52] As the message from Chief Manager Hagemeister to Lieutenant Ianovskii and Khlebnikov in June 1818 indicates, the threat of a Tlingit attack continued to worry the administrators: "Dispatch people to fell timber, and for help in construction, but in felling and transporting trees be careful to the utmost so that the Koloshi do not attack."[53]

The extent of logging near the settlement in 1827 was described by Frederick Litke and illustrated by one of the artists on his expedition. Litke related that the dense forest previously extended up to the edge of the settlement. He wrote, "Formerly, at Sitkha [sic], there was so much wood no one knew what to do with it all; it seemed that all one had to do was cut down the best and most mature trees and they would fall, so to speak, directly on board ship.[54] Baranov actually had attempted to burn the nearby forest to prevent the possibility of a Tlingit ambush, but this action was not successful.[55] Eventually, however, the trees were gradually cut from around the settlement, so that by 1827, Litke wrote that what was left were "monuments to its existence, enormous stumps of tree trunks which covered the earth and formed a scene both strange and yet characteristic."[56] Elsewhere, he commented, "now it is necessary to go quite a long way to find" timber, although Litke also admitted that since the area was still so richly forested, there was no danger of running out for centuries.[57]

Figure 5-10. Landscape near the settlement of Sitka in 1827.

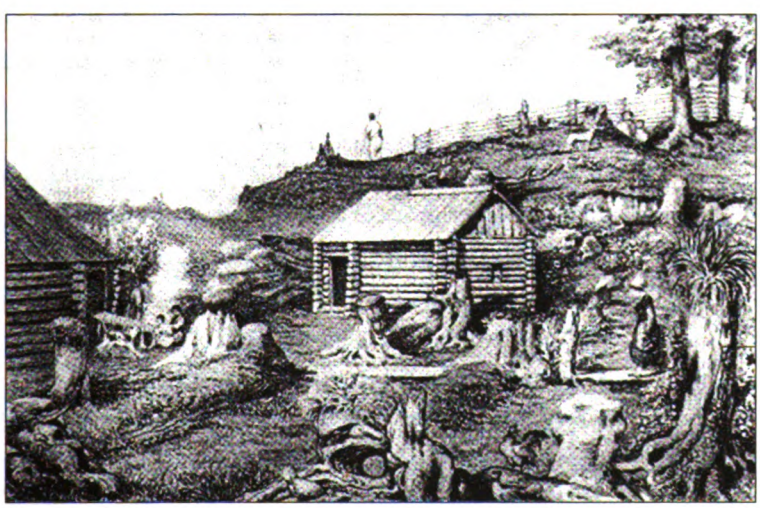

Figure 5-9. Settlement landscape near the New Archangel stockade, ca. 1827.

An illustration, drawn by one of the members of Litke's 1827 expedition, depicts the rough landscape at the edge of the settlement, where the inhabitants built their cabins and threaded pathways among and around the stumps of the ancient forest (Figure 5-9).[58] Kittlitz aptly described the scene when he wrote: "Right around the houses of the town you could see the stumps of trees that had not yet rotted away, although felled twenty-five years earlier when the colony was founded."[59] Figure 5-10 depicts another

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example of what probably was a very common kind of logged landscape around New Archangel, one where native vegetation was allowed to grow back naturally. Kittlitz, the artist, was interested in the shrub species coming up; in writing about the drawing, he noted that "here the axe has already cleared the forest enough so that one can distinguish the bushes forming the small growth."[60]

More precise data on the amount of logging the Company did at New Archangel was recorded by Khlebnikov in his records of the colony for the period from 1818 to 1832. He estimated the amount of timber cut around the village as follows:

> The trees near the fort have all been used for construction... Three hundred to five hundred trees are cut down every year for building materials; if we consider 400 trees to be an average, then since the settlement began in 1804, we have cut down around 8000 trees for company use; and if we take into account the use of firewood, the preparation of charcoal, lumber for shipbuilding and housing for individuals, then it would not be an exaggeration to say that in 20 years 20,000 trees were cut down. Although the shores are as thickly covered with trees as wild animals are covered with thick furs, the nearest trees have been cut down, and getting lumber now has grown more difficult a task. In spite of all this we can use these forests for another century without the supply becoming exhausted.[61]

Khlebnikov's calculations provide a clear depiction of the rate of forest clearing that occurred in the first twenty years of Russian occupation and expansion at New Archangel. In another section of his report he specified even further the extent of logging that had occurred: "All trees suitable for lumber have been felled in the vicinity; they must now be cut in areas from 50 to 200 *sazhens* [350 to 1400 feet] from shore."[62]

Tree cutting continued throughout the period of Russian control of New Archangel, as lumber was milled in local sawmills and either used locally or exported to supply other Russian American settlements, or for sale to foreign markets. By the late 1850s and early 1860s, however, Tikhmenev reported that "because of the difficulty of logging even enough for company settlement, only a little is exported to the nearest foreign ports. The best trees near the port and the seashore have already been cut down and at present the logging is done in places thirty or fifty *versts* [19.8 to 33 miles] away."[63] Tikhmenev further specified that between approximately 1850 and 1860, "about 9,500 logs were cut down around the port, not counting some of the lumber for shipbuilding."[64]

Timber was cut at such a rapid rate because it had many essential uses in New Archangel. Most fundamentally it was used to construct the buildings and fortifications for the town. Timber also was critical for the shipbuilding activities that occurred at New Archangel as early as 1806. Khlebnikov described how the different species that grew in the forests around New Archangel were used both for ship and building construction:

> Cypress [yellow cedar], known as *dushmiannoe derevo*, is used for the frame and planking of rowboats; it is somewhat yellowish, clean when finished and light-weight. Spruce [*el'*] is used for beams and decks; fine layered [*melkosloinoe*] trees which grow near rocks are used for making masts and spars. Those trees which grow in the wet tundra contain a lot of moisture and for that reason do not rot as quickly. Deciduous trees are used for planking and sometimes for decks, rudders and pumps, because they bend easily. The apple tree [Oregon crab apple] is used for making block and tackle because of its sturdiness. Spruce is used in house building. It is straight, even and up to 15 sahzens in length, without curves. The bark of the cypress trees is peeled and used as roofing in the spring.[65]

Khlebnikov explained further that thorn apple wood [Oregon crab apple][66] and spruce root were also used for shipbuilding. Of course, much timber was used in the construction of everyday items such as furniture, tools, barrels, and even water pipes.

Firewood was a constant necessity in New Archangel. Khlebnikov related that in winter two or three large launches brought "firewood into port every week for heating the barracks and houses; for baking and drying bread into rusks."[67] He also mentioned that firewood had to be prepared for

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each ship that sailed. Both thorn apple wood and spruce twigs were used for firewood, but spruce was preferred, according to Khlebnikov, because it gave off a warmer and more even heat.[68]

Charcoal production was another primary use of wood in New Archangel. Russian blacksmiths employed the charcoal to forge rust resistant iron.[69] Khlebnikov described the charcoal making process at New Archangel as follows:

> The wood is gathered into piles in an area of 10 to 16 *sahzens* [70 to 112 feet]. Then it is covered with dirt and burned. The burning lasts up to 15 days. Seventy to 150 baskets of charcoal are produced in this process, depending on the size of the pile. The charcoal is used by blacksmith, metal workers and coppersmiths at a rate of five to eight baskets a day.[70]

He added that large amounts of charcoal were also used to smoke rats out of the ships before they departed to sea. In order to furnish enough charcoal to supply all of these needs, the fuel was constantly being produced: "No sooner has a pile disappeared then more wood is cut for another pile," Khlebnikov remarked.[71]

Cutting timber in the steep mountainous terrain around New Archangel was both difficult and dangerous. Again Khlebnikov's reports provide a detailed account of the logging process in the settlement. Groups of 20 or so men were sent out to the forest in the fall to cut trees, for periods as long as several months. When they had cut 300 or 400 logs, large teams of 40 to 50 men would go out to haul the logs to shore, which often was an extremely difficult task to pursue over the rough and uneven terrain. In a normal day, according to Khlebnikov, 10 to 15 logs were hauled to shore. In May, the logs were towed into the harbor by rowboats or larger ships, where they would then be milled or cut.[72]

Evidently, not all of the logs had to dragged arduously across the ground. An account recorded by A. Ahllund, a Finnish blacksmith who lived in Sitka in 1867 and 1868, described a different technique for getting them to shore. Ahllund, upon seeing a huge log on the shore, asked a "timberman" how they moved something so large down to the water. The man replied as follows:

> They [the logs] came freely down the mountain slope—as long as it is possible to cut them so the tops point toward the sea. They then have to be pruned and peeled quite clean up to the new growth; only some branches will be left in place to hold the tree until it is quite ready. In the bay of the sea men in a boat receive the logs. This work is nothing but dangerous, since it has sometimes happened that a huge log comes down the mountain at great speed, skidding to the bottom and then into the water where it rips a hole in the bottom of the boat.[73]

Even in such conditions, where the logs "came freely down the mountain slope," logging around New Archangel was labor intensive and dangerous. But because the demand for timber in the settlement was constant, this work continued throughout the entire period of Russian presence in North America. Even today the signs of Russian logging are visible on the lower slopes of Mt. Verstovia just east of Sitka.[74]

LIVING OFF THE LAND

Although its extent was limited by terrain and climate, the Russian population also transformed land around New Archangel into agricultural areas. Supplying the population of New Archangel with fresh food was a continual concern for managers of the colony. Over the 63 years of Russian presence in New Archangel, various attempts to raise livestock, to cultivate grains, and to establish vegetable gardens occurred in and around the settlement; these activities only resulted in mixed degrees of success. Vegetable gardening was by far the most consistently productive effort of this type. In the very first year of Russian settlement Baranov initiated the planting of vegetable gardens. John D'Wolf, in May 1805, described the gardens as follows:

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> Governor Baranov was desirous of having a good kitchen garden, and so, to commence the business with a sort of flourish, we made up a pretty substantial picnic party. A little way back from the shore we found a considerable clearing without underbrush, and here we staked out about two acres of land. It was good soil, deep and rich, and we all tried our hand at the spade. The Governor setting the example, we went to work with a good will. . . This was the first ground ever broken for a garden at New Archangel.[75]

D'Wolf did not record what specifically was planted in those gardens, but Langsdorff, who was present in New Archangel at the time, also reported that potatoes grew well.[76] By June of the same year, Lisiansky reported that Baranov "had established fifteen vegetable gardens near the settlement."[77]

By the time Peter Corney, a British sailor, visited New Archangel in 1814, he saw 60 log houses in the community, each with adjoining kitchen gardens. He reported that every "Russian has cleared a piece of ground, where they sow potatoes, turnips, carrots, radishes, sallad [sic], etc."[78] Evidently this trend continued, as Chief Manager Hagemeister commented in an April 1818 memorandum to the Company office: "the Russians who live here, and by imitation some of the creoles as well, have applied themselves diligently to gardening"; Hagemeister also noted that he encouraged them to do so.[79] In addition, as he emphasized in another communication, the men could work only in large groups in the gardens and were never to be unarmed.[80]

Company policy toward gardening is evident in the advice Acting Chief Manager Ianovskii in New Archangel sent to the manager of the Kodiak office in December 1818: "Try to encourage more people to cultivate gardens," he stated, "and for this it is necessary to give them time off." He advised the manager to start company gardens, saying that in New Archangel they had three at that time. He recommended that if Company workers did not have enough time to cultivate their gardens during work hours, they should hire Russians or Aleuts to do so, and pay them in provisions. He remarked that this was very cheap in New Archangel, "as the Aleuts worked only for their food."[81] The crops, he advised, should be "used for the kaiurs [native workers]," giving them about one pud [36.11 pounds] of potatoes per month, as well as being "distributed for school children."[82]

The most successful of the garden crops at New Archangel was potatoes. Khlebnikov remarked that "of all the areas in the colonies, Sitkha [sic] is the best for growing potatoes."[83] He reported that "in better places the harvest is twelve to fourteen fold; in the worst it is six to eight fold," adding that "in the spring the Aleuts are paid one ruple a day by the Company to work in the gardens; more than 20 barrels of potatoes are planted and 150 barrels are harvested."[84] They fertilized the stony soil, according to Khlebnikov, with seaweed.[85] By the 1830s Chief Manager Wrangell reported that "vegetable gardens provide the inhabitants with excellent potatoes—yielding ten or twelve fold—and about 530 barrels (2,424 puds [87,530 pounds]) are produced annually."[86] Other crops raised in the vegetable gardens included turnips, cabbages, and salad greens. Cucumbers were grown under glass.[87] Wrangell mentioned that carrots and radishes were grown as well.[88]

The amount of land devoted to vegetable gardening in New Archangel expanded throughout the growth of the settlement. In the first year, according to D'Wolf, two acres were cleared to create kitchen gardens. An 1809 plan of the fort shows what appear to be gardens along the shore on both sides of the settlement (Figure 5-11). By the time of Khlebnikov's reports, which appeared between 1818 and 1832, he described the area in cultivation as follows: "no amount of soil remains unturned around the fort to make gardens."[89] Because of the uneven terrain around the settlement, however, the major area devoted to gardens, especially after the Tlingits settled outside the stockade to the north of the fort, was the fairly level land situated along the shore to the east of the town. Both written accounts and plans of the settlement corroborate this. In 1827, Litke described his view of the town in which he saw to the right of the church "alongside the

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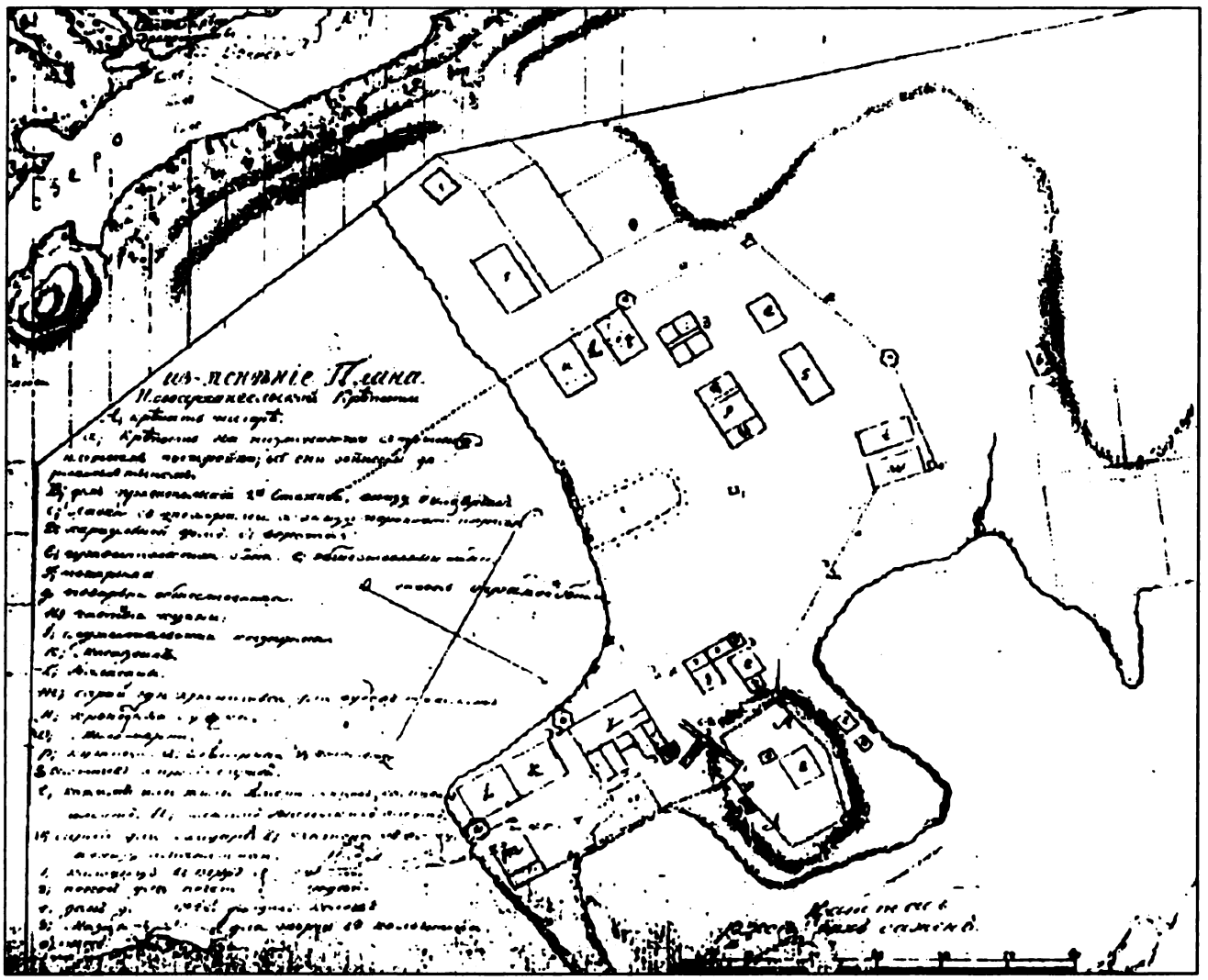

Figure 5-11. Russian plan of the fort in 1809, showing what probably are cultivated areas located both on the western and eastern sides of the stockade.

shore . . . a row of houses and gardens."[90] Wrangell described the same land "along the shore to the east," in the 1830s, as "a low-lying piece of land used by the company and private persons for growing potatoes."[91] A larger scale map of the settlement and its immediate surrounds, published in 1844 by Eugene Duflot de Mofras, who was in New Archangel in 1841, shows gardens along the shoreline north of the settlement, and inland behind the town as well as the largest area along the shoreline east of town (Figure 5-12).[92]

The amount of acreage under cultivation, however, shrank as the town expanded eastwards towards the Indian River. In his 1846 report to the Company, Chief Manager Tebenkov wrote: "The harvest of potatoes and vegetables [at Sitka in 1845] was negligible because the gardens, which formerly extended along the entire shore towards the rocks, have been reduced by more than one-half by the construction of a bishop's house, a seminary, and a barracks for the married men."[93] He bemoaned the lack of garden space, in an 1847 communication to Company headquarters:

> In spite of our Russian continued half century presence in Sitka, even the closest surroundings of Novo-Arhangel'sk and the settlement itself still have huge boulders, swamps, and stumps; I am not even talking about the surroundings of the settlement, but there is not a clear place in the settlement itself to establish kitchen gardens that are necessary for supply-

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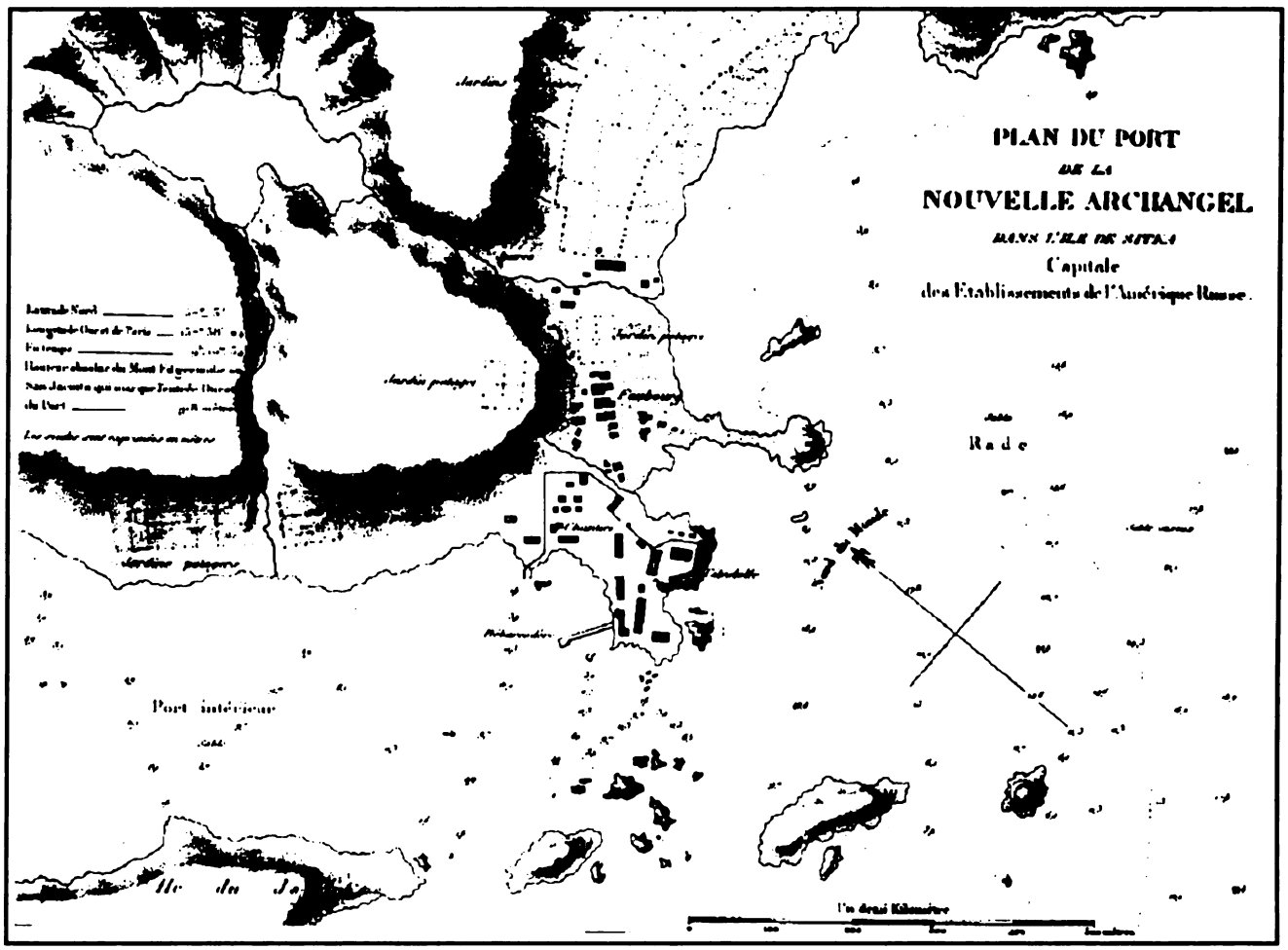

Figure 5-12. French plan of New Archangel, depicting vegetable gardens along the eastern and western coasts, as well as to the north, behind the town.

> ing food, except [a] puny strip of land along the sea shore (20 *sahzen* [140 feet] in width and 300 *sahzen* [2100 feet] in length), is the only thing we have in this respect.[94]

Tebenkov continued to blame the situation on the temporary status of most Russian inhabitants, which discouraged them from investing the amount of effort needed to clear more land properly. Whether or not this was the case, certainly both the rough terrain and expanding development limited the area available for cultivation.

Several plans show the effect of such development. The 1845 plan of the town clearly delineates a few gardens in town, including one that Mrs. Etholén described on the northern end of the Governor's residence, and a public garden with an adjoining vegetable garden situated inland behind the town (Figure 5-6). It also shows the beginning of what had been the continuous stretch of cultivated land from the outflow of Swan Lake, but which is interrupted by the Bishop's house. In Tebenkov's 1850 plan, gardens are depicted as continuing beyond the Bishop's house and several other buildings, almost to the beginning of the Indian River peninsula. That long stretch would seem to belie Tebenkov's remarks, but several other commentators reported a severe decline in vegetable cultivation.

Captain Richard Collinson remarked, in 1850, that "all attempts at clearing or cultivation have failed" at New Archangel, leaving the settlement as enclosed by the forest as if it were on an island.[95] Pavel Golovin remarked on the potential lack of fresh food in the settlement in 1860 and 1861 because the Russians "have very few gardens."[96] Some

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gardens certainly did continue to be cultivated, as evidenced by General Rousseau's 1867 report of vegetables, including cabbages, turnips, potatoes, and beets growing in raised beds.[97] Nevertheless, as early as the 1840s, the settlement gardens were clearly unable to supply enough fresh food to sustain the population of New Archangel.

Compensation for this deficit was realized by importing produce from other settlements and by trading with the Tlingit. After Russians introduced potato cultivation to the Tlingit around 1820, they subsequently became the most successful potato growers in the region.[98] In 1825, Otto von Kotzebue, the commander of a circumglobal expedition who stopped at New Archangel, commented that potatoes were "raised even by the Kalushes, who have learned from the Russians the manner of cultivating them, and consider them a great delicacy."[99] Two years later Litke commented that potato and other vegetable cultivation was widespread among "tribes who live further south" and was becoming popular in New Archangel as well.[100]

By 1841, according to Russian American Company records, the Tlingit were selling potatoes to the Russians at the annual trade fair initiated by Etholén to stimulate exchange with the natives. In 1842, they sold 550 barrels of potatoes to the Russians; in 1843, 1844, and 1845, the output of potatoes sold to the Russians by Tlingits from as far away as the Queen Charlotte Islands totaled 490, 130, and 1,060 barrels respectively.[101] This exchange, which continued up to 1851, appeared to cease during most of the 1850s when potatoes were imported from Kodiak, and then began again in 1861 with the sale of 260 barrels.[102] Tlingit potato gardens were probably scattered among the villages and fishing camps they occupied throughout the year. However, the 1844 plan of New Archangel, published by Duflot de Mofras (Figure 5-12), does depict gardens along the shore north of the settlement; these probably were Tlingit gardens.

Vegetable cultivation peaked among the Russian population in New Archangel during the 1830s. Because of regional climatic and soil conditions, which were particularly suitable to root crops, potatoes became a principle staple. Nevertheless, a combination of factors, including an increasing shortage of suitable land and a lack of motivated manpower, brought about a decline in potato production, so much so that the colony as a whole became dependent upon outside trade for obtaining fresh vegetables.

The raising of livestock also met with limited success in New Archangel. Baranov had brought a small number of domestic animals to New Archangel. Lisiansky reported, in 1805, that Baranov had "four cows, two calves, three bulls, an ewe and a ram, three goats and a fair number of pigs and hens."[103] John D'Wolf reported a similar tally and also mentioned the presence of dogs. The ewe and ram noted by Lisiansky had been given to Baranov by D'Wolf on his first visit to New Archangel.[104] Of this initial assortment, some fared better than others.

According to Khlebnikov, a small number of cattle were maintained "to provide milk for the officials and for the sick."[105] Their presence in 1809 is indicated by the depiction of a cattle yard on the settlement plan of that year (Figure 5-11). Litke likewise reported the presence of eight or ten head of cattle in New Archangel in 1827, and Wrangell noted them in 1833.[106] Overall, however, their numbers remained quite small in the settlement because of the inability to raise hay to feed them. By 1860, Golovin reported that there still were only "five or six cows and four horses on the whole island."[107]

Khlebnikov explained why only eight head of cattle were maintained during his time in the colony:

> The main reason for the lack of cattle is the preparation of hay; dark and damp weather prevents the grass from drying; the mowed grass often rots after incessant rains, but people and time were necessary to prepare it. The area itself does not allow for more than ten to twelve head of cattle because there are only three to four places in the various bays which have

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> valleys where you can cut [enough hay for] three or four stacks, but most of these valleys become covered with water during high tide; only during low tide can the grass be cut and raked to higher ground so that the tide does not carry it off.[108]

In another passage he noted that the hard work of drying hay for winter comsumption lasted from July and could continue through October. Khlebnikov explained that "it remains in place till autumn or winter and is transported dry on boats."[109] In addition, according to Khlebnikov, the shallow bays where the hay grew often froze, making it impossible to harvest the crop until the ice melted. The process was time consuming and labor intensive. Khlebnikov noted that the cost of labor to maintain one head of cattle equaled the same as the expense to maintain one person in the colony. And if the hay crop failed, which it often did, and the cattle had to be fed grain, the cost doubled.[110] Thus, a combination of factors—the scarcity of grass and the high labor costs involved in preparing hay, not to mention the tendency of the hay to rot in the frequent rain—limited the number of cattle kept at New Archangel.

Because they could be fed a variety of foods, pigs and chickens were raised somewhat more successfully. Litke noted, in 1827, that pigs were plentiful, but their flesh tasted fishy as a consequence of what was fed to them. He also noted that chickens were numerous but expensive to keep. Litke described a problem encountered in New Archangel by both chicken and pig owners—the activities of the ravens. He wrote that the ravens not only

> steal the chicks as soon as they appear, but also even the hens. People chase them off all the time by gunshot, but it does not seem to reduce either their number or their audacity. They also do harm to the pigs; they get behind them and pull out their tails. That is why, in new Archangel, all the pigs have no tails.[111]

Despite the predation of the audacious ravens, Chief Manager Wrangell noted, in 1833, that there were "significant numbers of hogs, goats, fowl and ducks," all of which the company raised to feed the officers.[112] Khlebnikov also noted that a large number of pigs and chickens were raised in New Archangel, including many that private idividuals raised on their own. He wrote that "chickens and pigs can be bought from the inhabitants any time of the year,"[113] but also noted that "the pigs, which are fed on fish and shellfish have a repulsive taste, while those fed on potatoes and grain are very tasty."[114] Not only the occupants of Russian New Archangel raised pigs, for they also were reported to have been numerous among the Tlingit by 1820.[115]

The raising of grain to feed both the human population of New Archangel and the livestock they kept was difficult and, most often, unsuccessful. As early as 1806, Langsdorff did report that the barley Baranov planted on a small island had ripened.[116] Nonetheless, the damp, cool climate usually prevented grains from drying. Tikhmenev succinctly described the situation when he wrote that "bread grains, as many experiments conducted around the port prove, do not ripen."[117] The grain that was ground in New Archangel, and which went into bread for the population, was imported from California and as far away as Chile.[118]

Due to the limitations imposed by the climate and topography of New Archangel, and the lack of time, skill, or effort among the Russians for farming and gardening, living off the land by utilizing European agricultural methods was not particularly successful. A shortage of fresh provisions was a constant threat and worry throughout the Russian presence in the colony. Supplies from Russia and foreign ports were often very long in coming and extremely costly as a result. Trade with the Tlingits supplied the mainstay of what fresh provisions the population regularly consumed.[119] As Pavel Golovin wrote in 1860, "it is thanks to the good will of the Kolosh that we have this food. If they suddenly decided to become angry . . . they would stop bringing meat and produce to the market and the whole colony would go hungry and would be forced to feed itself on Aian salted beef and salted fish."[120]

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Through the combination of hunting, fishing, gathering, and cultivation that the Tlingits practiced, the land and sea provided rich sustenance not only to the Native Americans, but to the colonists as well.

Near the Banks of the River

Within the context of the Tlingit and Russian activities that occurred in New Archangel from prior to the battle of 1804 up to the time of the sale of Russian America in 1867, the greater Indian River landscape—including the area that presently comprises Sitka National Historical Park—certainly would have been the site of numerous activities. Some of those activities already have been documented in the historical record, and the story they tell will be the subject of the ensuing discussion. The story, however, certainly represents only part of what really occurred there, and unfortunately many small human acts, such as the gathering of berries or wild celery shoots, fishing in the river, or simply walking in the woods are recounted only within the pages of lost memory or imagination. However that may be, the story uncovered in the historical record remains a rich account of the relationship between humans and the landscape—a relationship that includes both physical and symbolic dimensions.

Evidence of human activity in the Indian River landscape during the years immediately following the battle of 1804 is scarce. Situated approximately a mile from the nascent Russian fort, it is unlikely that during the first years of settlement, much Russian activity took place in that vicinity. Perhaps the Russian colonists fished or hunted there occasionally, but the threat of Tlingit hostility prevented much activity that far from the fort. In his June 1806 report from New Archangel, for example, Chamberlain Rezanov commented that the workers did not even dare to go as far as the wharf or into the forest without loaded guns; "in truth," he wrote, "our fort is more like an island."[121] Between the immediate and pressing needs of establishing the fort and the general hostility of the Tlingit population that moved through the landscape surrounding them, the Russians functioned primarily within their "island" fort.

However, after the Russians and the Tlingit population developed a guarded, but relatively peaceful co-existence in the community, the Russians moved more freely in the landscape situated outside the stockade. Their activities near the Indian River transformed the character of that landscape. Following a discussion of the Tlingit and Russian activities that occurred there, specific landscape conditions are detailed in this report.

Tlingit Activities Along the River

With the onset of spring 1805 and the beginning of the fishing season,Tlingit activity most certainly occurred near the Indian River. According to several Tlingit sources, the Kiks.ádi clan was certain to utilize its former hunting and fishing territory surrounding the early village site, so as to prevent other clans from encroaching on those lands.[122] Further evidence is provided in the report cited above, in which Rezanov related that over 1,000 Tlingit had returned to the area around the fort in early spring 1806 to fish during the herring run; the Tlingit remained around New Archangel until April 1, when they were pressured to depart by the captain of an American ship that recently had sailed into the sound. Since that time, Rezanov reported, "the Kolosh have been constantly sending groups of ten or fifteen men here to observe our fortifications."[123] Obviously the Tlingit population was moving relatively freely throughout their territory, and the Kiks.ádi would have continued to utilize needed seasonal resources available near the Indian River.

The landscape proximate to the Indian River was certainly the site of Tlingit fishing, hunting, and plant gathering activities, all of which perhaps became even more intensive after they had established their winter village in 1821 just outside the New Archangel stockade. In 1827, when Kittlitz witnessed some of their activities in the woods, he

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wrote: "We often saw Kalosch on the forest paths. The women. . . were often seen in little groups in the forest collecting all kinds of smaller foodstuffs, among others of importance the spicy fruit of the *Rubus spectabilis* that ripens in July."[124] Often the Tlingit women carried infants on their backs or hung them in a basket from a nearby tree while they worked. Kittlitz mentioned coming upon them "unexpectedly in the grass while the mother is busy nearby."[125]

Evidently, by the 1830s, certain Tlingit individuals were living along the Indian River, probably at fishing camps (or attempting to do so). In a communication dated 30 May 1831, Chief Manager Wrangell requested that the Kolosh not be allowed "to settle on the Kolosh River" because if they were, there would be a greater chance of them making "unallowed visits" to the kitchen gardens and spinner's shop situated at the eastern edge of town.[126] Wrangell thought such visits would increase the chance of "tense quarrels" erupting.[127] He also added that "if the Kolosh would not listen" to the order that they should not settle on the Kolosh River, then they needed to be forced "to forget forever these ideas."[128] What method of force was to be applied, Wrangell did not specify. Nonetheless, he did note that "this ban does not apply to Naushkekl', he is allowed to live on the river during fishing season."[129] In 1831 then, at least one Tlingit individual or house group occupied a fishing camp on the Indian River, and there may have been others.

That the Tlingit population was active throughout the landscape in the Sitka vicinity is further evidenced by a Russian account published in 1862. According to the author, during the summer season it was common to encounter Tlingit individuals in the "woodsy part of Novo-Arhangel'sk." Women could be seen gathering berries in groups of two or three individuals, whereas men were more often observed walking, or "as it seems meditating, and sometimes [sitting] crouched," wrapped in their long wool blankets.[130]

These observations suggest that Tlingit ties to the Indian River area were maintained throughout the period of Russian tenure. What they don't reveal is whether the Tlingit held ceremonial gatherings in the vicinity to commemorate the battle and the relatives they had lost. However, a dramatic statement of the symbolic importance of the Kiks.ádi clan's ancestral territory occurred during the Tlingits' 1855 uprising in New Archangel, when they burned a small Russian settlement along the river.[131] In effect, they reclaimed the territory.

RECREATION ALONG THE RIVER

Strolling through the forest near the river became a increasingly popular pastime with the Russians as relations with the Tlingit population stabilized and the town and gardens spread closer to the area. By the early 1830's Baroness Wrangell, wife of Chief Manager Wrangell, was known to walk out to the river with her female companions to pick berries.[132]

Shortly thereafter, during the "golden age" of New Archangel, the landscape along the Indian River emerged as a type of pleasure ground; in accounts of life in the settlement, this area became a place of refuge from the cares of daily life where people walked in their freetime hours and picnicked on their holidays. Since that time and up to the very present, the landscape has played a similar role in the lives of residents and visitors. Diaries, letters, and travel accounts testify to many visits made through the forest to reach the banks of the Kolosh River. Although most of these accounts were written by individuals who belonged to the more privileged class of New Archangel, their comments testify that the general population of the settlement sought refuge and refreshment there as well.

Walking to the Kolosh River seems to have been part of some people's daily routine. In 1842, Sir George Simpson mentioned taking his accustomed walk with the Governor, out to the "Little River," for the last time."[133] Uno Cygnaeus, the first Finnish Lutheran pastor, described his daily life in a July 1840 letter to his mother, in which he told her of the

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morning "hourly promenade to the Koliush (Kolosh) River" that he took between studying and writing sermons and reading.[134] In 1847, Gabriel Plathan, Cygnaeus' successor, frequently recorded in his diary that he "took a walk to the river."[135] Eduard Blashke, the Russian American Company physician in New Archangel from 1835 to 1840, wrote that the women of New Archangel rarely visited or took walks during winter, but "in summer, especially on feast days and in good weather, they walk on the banks of the Koloschenka and in the vicinity and drink tea there."[136] Blashke summarized the situation well, when he wrote that "summer walks along the Koloschenka and its environs" was one of the "few public amusements" enjoyed by the population of New Archangel.[137]

Naturalists also frequented the forest paths during this period, observing and collecting the vegetation and wildlife they found there. Ferdinand Sahlberg, the Finnish naturalist and physician who accompanied the Etholéns to New Archangel, took frequent walks to the Kolosh River. Sahlberg's diary entries for June 1840 contain frequent mentions of his excursions there, where he searched for birds. On 11 June 1840, Sahlberg recorded that he went "as usual. . . to the river," where he hunted and shot several birds, including one he had "looked for innumerable times along the river."[138] In the same entry Sahlberg noted that he stalked small fish specimens from a baidak and "often plunged down into the river to catch the small fish."[139] On another day, Sahlberg gathered *harpaler* on the river bank and "found a beautiful dark blue *Siberia*."[140] He followed in the scientific tradition of Kittlitz and Postels by exploring the landscape with an eye for specimens; however, he also was moved by the beauty he saw.

Another naturalist, I.G. Voznesenskii, a Russian scientist affiliated with the Zoological Museum of the Russian Academy of Sciences, arrived in New Archangel with the Etholéns in May 1840. Voznesenskii traveled to many areas of North America over the next ten years, exploring, observing, collecting, and drawing what he saw. He was in New Archangel from 1843 to 1845, and often visited the Kolosh River during that time. In his notes he wrote, "I walked with a gun. . . moving from the bay of the Koloshenka River to the bridge."[141] In another entry he wrote that, "today I went around the cape of the Koloshenka River and noted the following: white eagles, a multitude of seagulls, and near the shore, sea ducks; in the forest there were a number of titmice, kinglets and one woodpecker." Voznesenskii also just went to the river and "gazed into infinity."[142]

Landscape Conditions

The physical features of the Indian River landscape that presently comprises Sitka National Historical Park are summarized in this section. The following discussion describes the conditions within each of the cultural landscape areas that were present during this period of the park's history. Two sets of period plans, which show landscape conditions and plant communities within the park area in 1827 and in 1840-1855, illustrate this information graphically (Diagrams 5, 6, 7, and 8).

The Indian River Area

Russian activities along the Indian River had little effect on the landscape until sometime around the 1840s. However, in the earlier years of their settlement activities, the Russian inhabitants certainly took water from the river and fished and hunted along its banks. John D'Wolf, an American trader who spent a year in 1805 and 1806 in New Archangel, reported that in May of 1806:

> Another diversion was taking salmon, which at this season ran up into the creeks and inlets in great numbers. As many of the people as could be detached from their regular occupations were set to catching them, and curing them for winter provisions.[143]

The Indian River may very well have been one of the streams where they fished.

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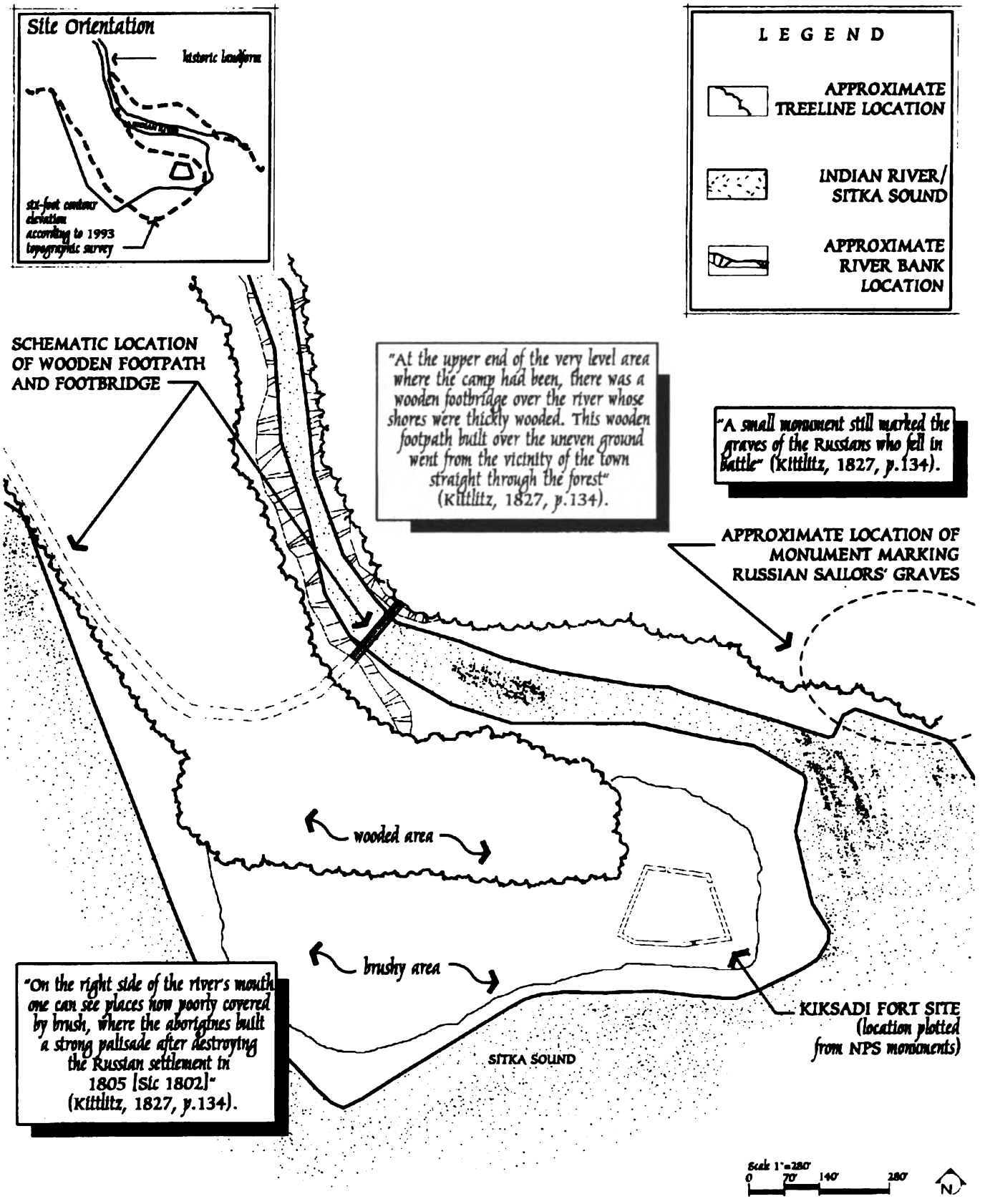

Diagram 5. Landscape Conditions, 1827, in what is now Sitka National Historical Park.

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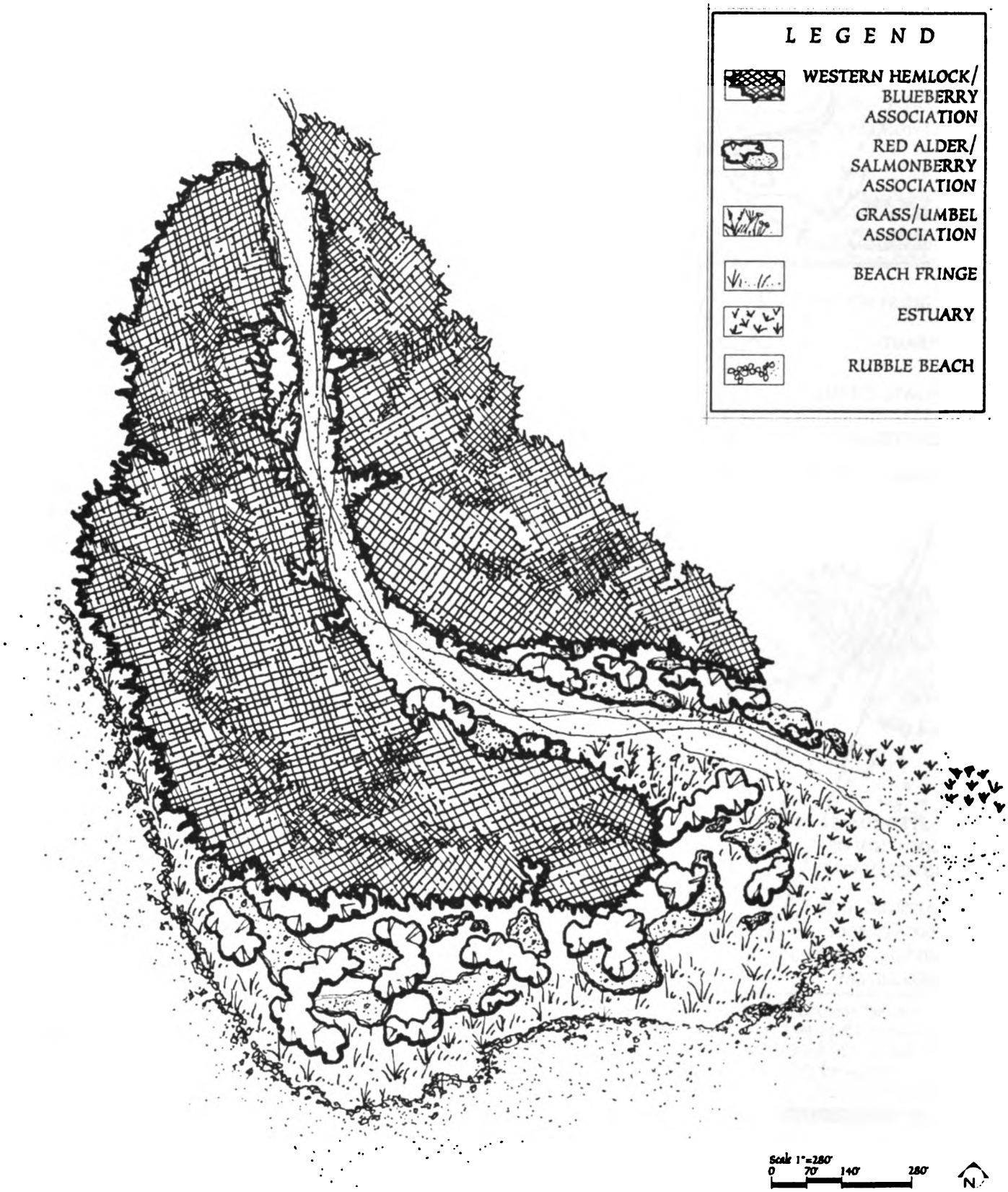

Diagram 6. Plant Communities, 1827, in what is now Sitka National Historical Park.

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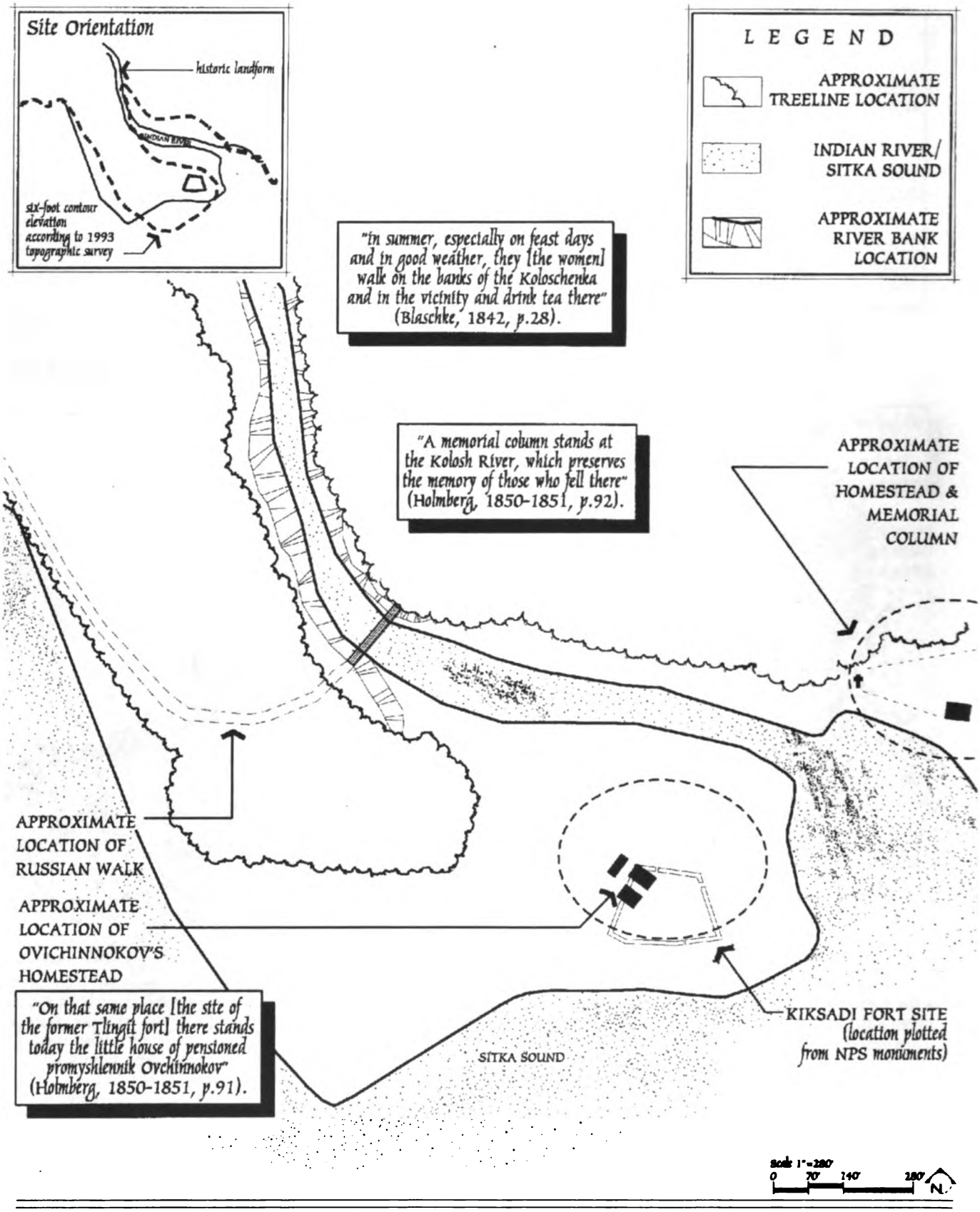

Diagram 7. Landscape Conditions, 1840-1855, in what is now Sitka National Historical Park.

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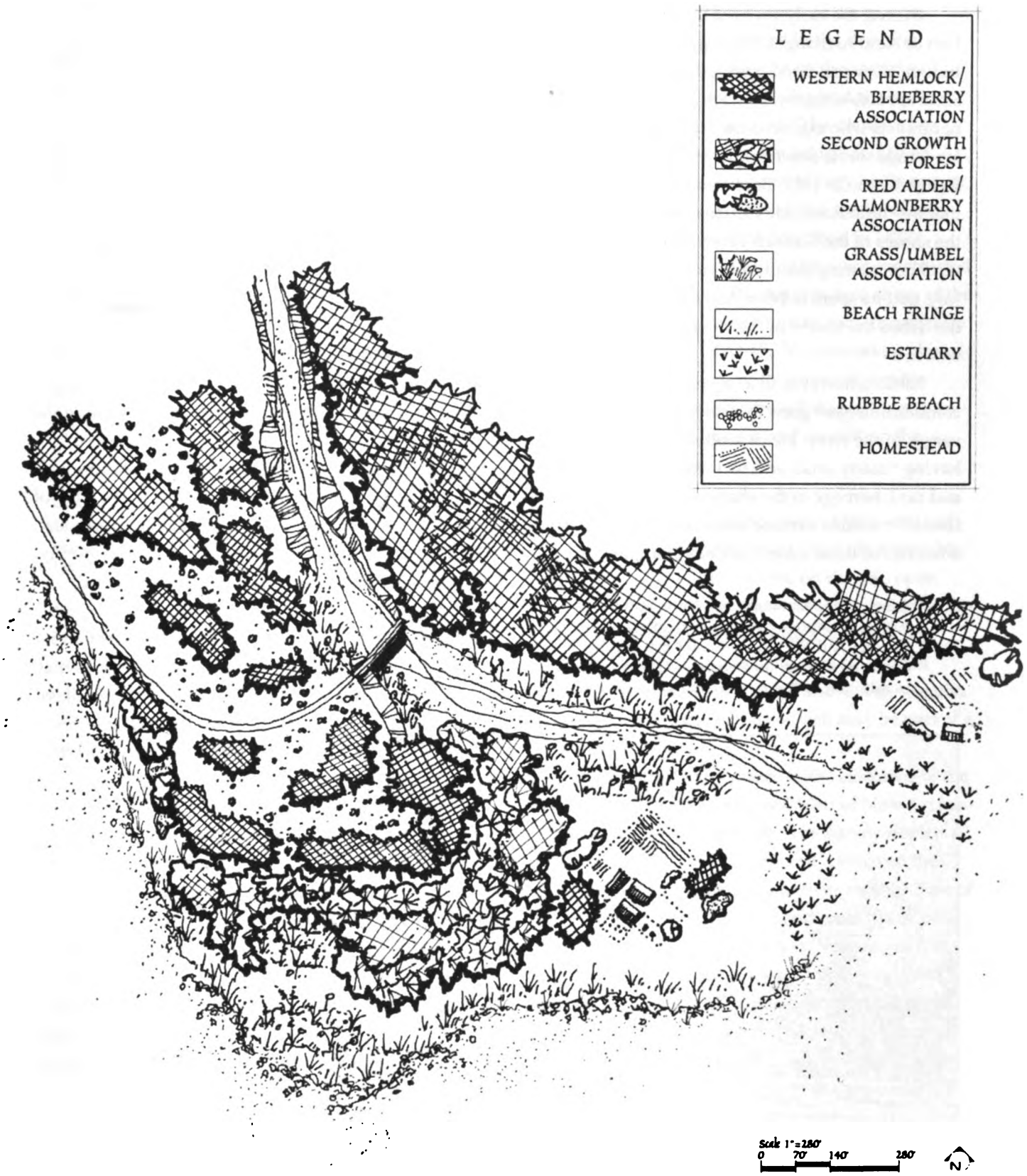

Diagram 8. Plant Communities, 1840-1855, in what is now Sitka National Historical Park.

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During the early years of the Russian occupation of New Archangel, the vegetation along the Indian River remained primarily an old-growth Sitka spruce/western hemlock forest. Several naturalists who explored the New Archangel landscape wrote descriptions of the area around the Indian River. In 1827, Baron von Kittlitz reported that he "undertook daily excursions, mainly along the shores of the Kalosch River and neighboring seashore" during the month, from mid-June to mid-July, that he spent in New Archangel.[144] Kittlitz described the shores of the river as being "thickly wooded."[145]

Kittlitz, however, also described the plant communities that grew in sunny spots along the verges of the river. He described the river banks as having "many small and picturesque grassy spots and rank herbage in the shadows at the edge of the forest."[146] Kittlitz defined some of the species he observed in those sunny patches along the banks:

> Among the various flowers the bright yellow, robust *Mimulus guttatus* [yellow monkey-flower] and the taller scarlet red *Aquilegia canadensis* [columbine] were especially striking, in addition to the now lighter or darker yellows of different *Syngenesia*, which superficially resemble our high growing *Hieracium* [hawkweed] species and the *Arnica montana*; [mountain arnica] and the stately groups of large white flowers of a broad leafed shrub, *Rubus nutchanus*, [probably thimbleberry, now known as *R. parviflorus*] contributed to the splendor of the flowers at the edge of the forest. *Epilobium latifolium* [river beauty] tightly bunched in open spots near the river were a pleasant sight. Their numerous strikingly large deep rose red flowers and charming bluish green leaves embellished the banks beautifully.[147]

Kittlitz's account of the lush riverbanks in June conveys the character of the sunny patches along the river channel and some of the species that occurred there. These patches occurred occasionally along the river and, as he wrote, "at the edge of the forest."

For most of its length, however, the spruce-hemlock forest would have come right to the edge of the river, where it was interspersed with deciduous alder clumps. The combination of these community types, the dense coniferous forest, the patches of alder and salmonberry, and the bright grassy spots, all of which occupy patches of shade and light and spread over the rocky banks and gravel beaches that fringed the rippling currents of the river, created its historic character; it was this character that had been essentially constant even before the Russians arrived in the area.

A drawing of the river done by Voznesenskii sometime between 1843-1845 illustrates the character of the plant communities that existed along the lower section of the Indian River some fifteen years later (Figure 5-13). The cleared land shown adjacent to a homestead at the river's mouth was probably not present when Kittlitz walked the shores. However, the character of the forest shown on the

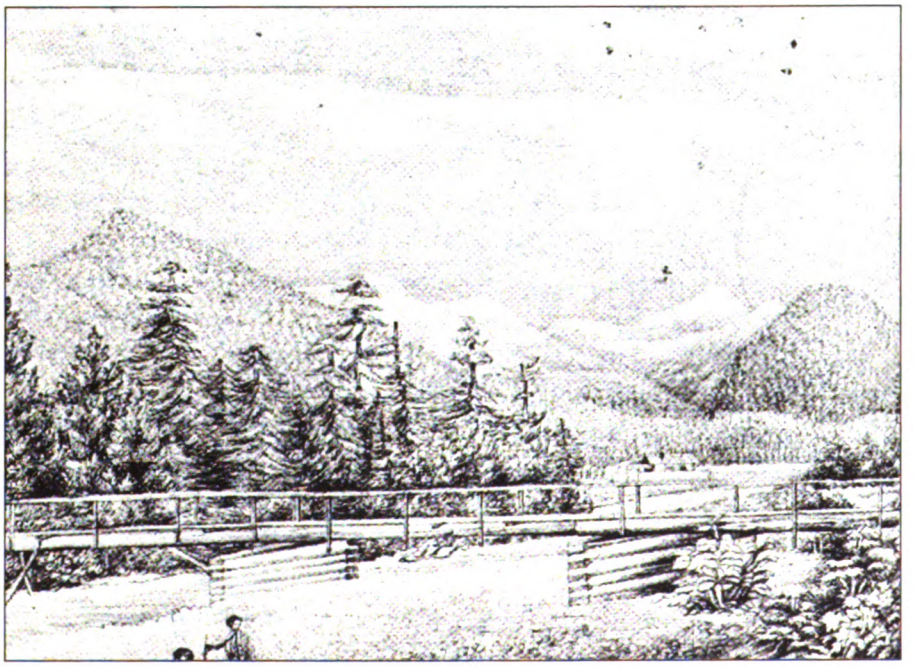

Figure 5-13. View of the lower Indian River, drawn by I.G. Voznesenskii, ca. 1843-1845.

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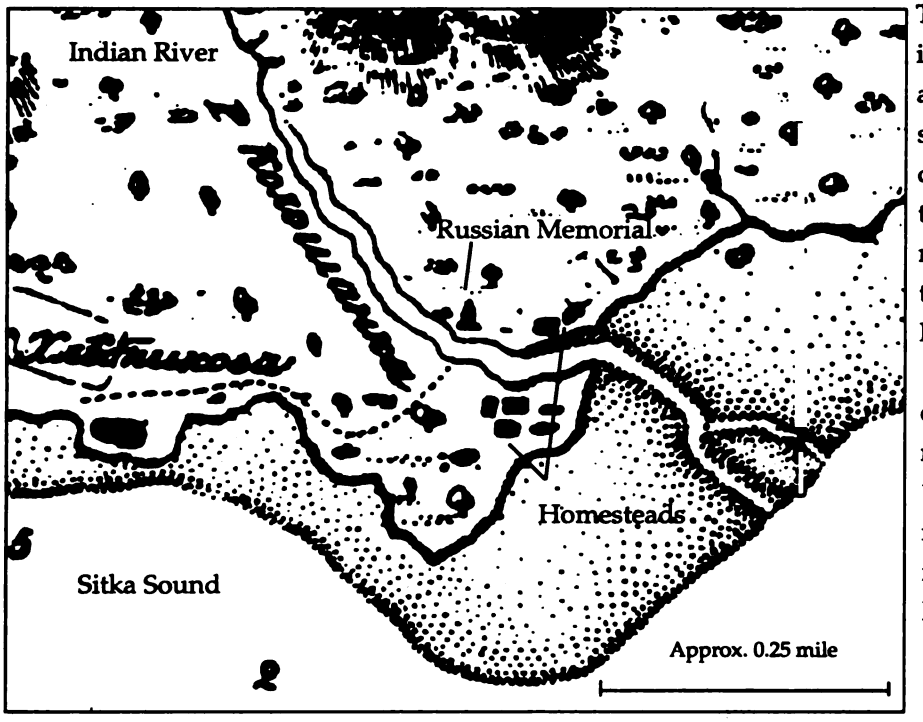

Figure 5-14. Detail of the 1850 Russian survey of New Archangel and vicinity, showing the Indian River area, including the road leading from the gardens (on the left) to the river bank and several buildings near the river's mouth.

northeastern side of the river and the shrubs and herbs along the sunnier areas on the southwestern river bank (the lower right-hand corner of the drawing) is probably very similar to what Kittlitz would have seen. The primary change that may have altered the scene during the intervening fifteen years was the thinning of the forests that resulted from Russian woodcutting activities. The forest along the river was probably sparser in some areas than the time when Kittlitz saw it.

Sometime before 1827, the Russians built the first documented bridge over the Indian River. Kittlitz described the wooden footbridge as crossing the river "at the upper end of the very level area where the camp [Tlingit fort] had been."[148] Without knowing how large an area Kittlitz was referring to, it is impossible to know the precise location of the structure.

A bridge is also shown crossing the river in Voznesenskii's 1843-1845 drawing (Figure 5-13). Whether the illustrated wooden bridge is the same bridge as the one Kittlitz observed is not known. The location of the bridge illustrated in the drawing appears to be the same or similar to the bridge site he described. The distance between the bridge and river mouth could very well amount to the extent of the level area Kittlitz described in 1827.

Buildings were constructed on the northeastern shore of the river's mouth sometime before 1843-45. Voznesenskii's drawing of the river and bridge includes what appears to be a homestead located on the eastern shore of the mouth of the Indian River. It is possible to discern, on the flat, open ground next to the mouth of the river, a gable-roofed house, with a chimney, surrounded by what appears to be a solid wooden fence. To the rear of that compound, a short section of more open fence is visible, which may be part of a livestock enclosure.

Cartographic evidence as to the existence of the homestead is found in the 1850 plan of New Archangel and vicinity (Figure 5-14). The survey depicts a compound of three structures and a fence on the northeastern side of the Indian River mouth. Two of the structures are rectangular and most likely represent the residence shown on Voznesenskii's drawing and perhaps an out-building. The third structure enclosed by the fence, designated with a triangular symbol set on a base, most likely represents the Russian Memorial Column mentioned by Kittlitz in 1827.[149] It is also possible, however, that the symbol represents a flour mill which may have existed along the river. An 1845 report to the Russian American Company headquarters mentioned a plan to build such a mill on the river, but it is not clear that it was ever constructed.[150]

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FORESTED AREAS

The drawings and writings of naturalists such as Postels and Kittlitz provide much information about the character of the forests near the Indian River in 1827. They described the typical characteristics of the old-growth spruce-hemlock forests of the region, confirming that at this time the Indian River forests were intact ancient stands. Postels reveals the awe he felt in his description of the trees near the Indian River that he and his companions passed through on their way to climb Mount Verstovaia:

> Hardly had we made a few steps into the forest than we found ouselves hemmed in by the dense vegetation. An indescribable sentiment touches the soul at the sight of this wild and ancient solitude, where, after may centuries, the trees have only fallen from old age, where their ancient trunks have seen generations of diverse plants born, grow and die, without having themselves mutilated by the axe.[151]

The scale and height of such forests towering over the inumerable and immense downed logs on the forest floor seemed incredible to these Europeans.

The irregular surface created by the downed wood in the old-growth stands was a source of amazement and frustration to the explorers. Kittlitz found walking through the woods behind the settlement to be a trial. He complained that it was necessary to climb "over more or less rotten logs, crawling between numerous entwined branches and twigs, incessantly feeling my way through the mostly lush plants and holes hidden by treacherous moss"; following this ordeal, he was careful "not to head straight through the forest, but rather to use paths."[152]

Postels also vividly described the difficulty of traversing the ancient forests:

> Often the road is blocked by a large pile of trees which time seems to have made fall at natural bridges across the abysses which are found below. The remains of rotten trunks and dead leaves which have accumulated over many years form on the original soil a layer so soft and deep that one runs the risk of sinking to the bottom of each step, the peril being all the more imminent because it is hidden by mosses and annual plants.[153]

A path in the forests near the Indian River made walking easier. Kittlitz described the terrain that the path carried them over:

> The unevenness [of the ground] was mainly caused by countless fallen tress, that had created the soil in this wilderness since time immemorial. The footpath, therefore, resembled a colossal, highly irregular grating. In the interspaces, sometimes shallow, sometimes deeper, grew a world of smaller plants in the shadows of the tall trees graced with colossal padding of moss and richly hung with *Usneae* (bearded moss). One can hardly imagine, without having seen the area, the incredible difficulties a person has walking through these woods.[154]

Alexander Postels' drawing of the forests near the river illustrates beautifully and in great detail the character of that landscape in 1827 (Figure 5-15). Large spruce and hemlock tower above an aged downed log that rests on the forest floor which is surrounded by an understory of shrubs and herbs. Beneath an opening in the forest canopy and behind the log is a sunny spot on the forest floor.[155] The artist described the main tree species of the forest that he had illustrated:

> Viewed from without, the great forest of Sitkha appears to be composed exclusively of conifers, among which the Russians distinguish particulary two specimens which they call the *Yel* (fir) [hemlock] (on the right) and *Listvennitsa* (larch) [spruce] (to the left). . . . Both reach a height of ninety to 200 feet and are very well suited for masts and the construction of ships, particularly the larch. As for the fir, it is less esteemed, being more subject to rot.[156]

Postels also noted other plant life in the forest, including "a very fine species of alder," "an elder with red fruit," "the mountain ash with red berries," and "the *Rubus Nutkanus* with pretty white flowers."[157]

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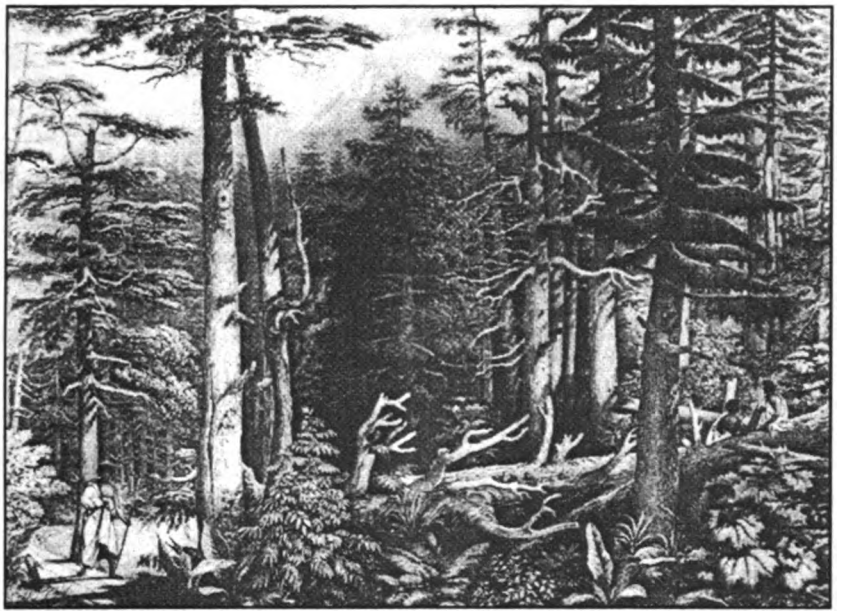

Figure 5-15. Path through the forest near the Indian River, ca. 1827.

The forest understory plants that inhabited the irregular terrain of the forest floor were recorded by Postels. He observed "two species of *Claytonia* [miner's lettuce], one with red flowers the other with white flowers, the *Mayanthemum bifolium* [false lily-of-the-valley], the *Cornus canadensis* [bunchberry] and the *Pyrola uniflora* [single delight wax-flower]."[158] He wrote as follows:

> Along the trunks of trees creep the *Comaropsis predata* [?] clinging to the clefts in the bark. In the most humid places one finds the *Dracontium Kamtschaticum* [?] . . . Among the two most common shrubs one must include the *Rubus spectabilis* [salmonberry], the *Alazea* [false azalea], and two species of *Ribes* [currant] (*Ribes bracteosum* and *R. affine* Dougl.); finally a very pretty species of *Carex* [sedge] and of *Streptopus roseus* [rosy twistedstalk]. As for *Trientalis* [starflower] and the *Linnea borealis* [twinflower], they are as common on this island as on the homeland. I saw also a new species of *Corallorhiza* (*Corallorhiza Mertensiana* Bgd.) [western coralroot], the *Listera* [twayblade] and the *Habenaria* [white bog-orchid], a fine *Orobanche parasite* (*Boschniakia*) [broomrape] and much *Vaccinium* (*Vaccinium ovalifolium* [oval-leaved blueberry], *parvifolium* [red huckleberry], *uliginosum* [bog blueberry] and even *myrtillus* [?]) the fruit of which is highly esteemed by the natives.[159]

In his description of the forests near the Indian River, Postels mentioned many of the most important species that occurred in the old growth forests around New Archangel. At the time of his visit in 1827, the stands in what now comprises the park exhibited the structure and composition of an ancient temperate rainforest. The woods were dense and lush. As Postels remarked, "clearings are rare."[160]

During the later years of the Russian presence in New Archangel, however, the character of the forest began to change. Although no currently known historical records document specific instances of company logging in the Indian River area, several types of evidence suggest very strongly that wood cutting took place there. Certainly in the vicinity of the homestead, the forest would have been cleared, as can be seen Voznesenskii's drawing. It is most likely that the young forest growth was removed for the construction of buildings on the other side of the river as well. It also is certainly reasonable to assume that residents near the Indian River would have cut and gathered wood from the area to supply their need for firewood, fencing, and other projects.

Further historical evidence for the likelihood of wood cutting in that area is supplied by the fact the Russians built a road out to the river for the express purpose of obtaining wood. In 1849, Chief Manager Tebenkov wrote a letter to the main company office, in which he mentioned the road. He reported that they "made a road to the gardens, pathways and summer houses in the gardens. The road cut through the forest to [the] Indian River in order to facilitate for the residents the removal of wood from the forest for their own usage." Tebenkov went on to explain that it had become fashionable in New Archangel to add porches and other structures to residential entrances and that the inhabitants had been harvesting wood to build them.[161]

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Beyond the localized clearing for the construction and maintenance of the homesteads and for individual use, it is reasonable to infer that wood was cut from the forests near the river on a more extensive scale. As Khlebnikov and Tikhmenev reported, timber in the vicinity of Sitka was rapidly harvested for construction materials, firewood, charcoal production, and export. The spruce/hemlock forest on the Indian River peninsula would have been readily accessible and the timber could have been floated easily to the settlement. However, given that the Indian River landscape continued to be an important scenic and recreational area for the inhabitants of New Archangel throughout the Russian period, it must be assumed that the Russians did not clear cut the Indian River peninsula. They most likely selected the trees best suited for their purposes, and left the others standing.[162]

Post-1867 historical documents and a recent scientific study of the park's forests provide further evidence that suggests the Russians selectively harvested the forest stands situated closest to the shoreline. Historic photographs taken of the park in the 1880s and 1890s depict areas of young vegetation as well as older trees. These photos are discussed in more detail below.

Strong evidence that the old growth forests were cut around the Indian River by the Russians, and probably continued to be harvested by the early American inhabitants of Sitka, is revealed by the second-growth character of the current park stands. In a recent vegetation inventory of the park's forests, the U.S. Forest Service analyzed the ages of the trees. They concluded that the forest in both the uplifted beach and western portion of the "moraine" ecological units had been logged sometime between 1843 and 1873 (see the Ecological Unit Map, Figure 1-6). However, they also report on the presence of a scattering of older trees throughout the stands, indicating that the Russians left some trees remaining.[163]

Other factors certainly played a role in the removal of the old-growth forests from the vicinity of the Indian River. Early U.S. Coastal Geodetic reports for the Sitka area testify that a very heavy storm, which caused three ships to lose moorage in the harbor, occurred there in 1867.[164] The winds accompanying such a storm certainly could have caused major blowdowns in the forests near the Indian River. It is quite obvious that natural events played an important role in shaping the park's habitats throughout its history.

The evidence is compelling that removal of the old-growth forests in what is now the park began with Russian wood-cutting activities. The exact sites and extent of the cutting they preformed is not known. It seems reasonable to assume that the most accessible timber nearest to the shore would have been harvested first. The age of the present forest stands would seem to corroborate this assumption. The character of the park landscape would have been transformed as a result. The forest adjacent to the beach most likely would have been removed, allowing the growth of sun-loving herbs and shrubs to occur in a wider band along the shore. Within the forest, cutting would have created more openings, where the increased light could have allowed the colonization of meadow and edge grass-umbel plant communities. These changes would have transformed the dense wilderness described by Kittlitz and Postels in 1827 into a forest with a more intricate patterning of sunny openings and dark groves.

THE RUSSIAN WALK

The Russian path to the Indian River is the first historically documented trail to traverse the park landscape. The historical accounts testify that it was used by the settlement's inhabitants and visitors on their way to draw water from the river, to gather wood in the forest, to hunt along the river, as well as simply to explore and enjoy the woods and river views. It is not known precisely when the wooden path was built or if it had been laid down on an already existing trail. The path originated in town, passed along the shoreline in front of the gardens,

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and then headed into the woods and to the river. The section of the trail that led from the settlement along the shore to a large boulder, popularly known as Baranov's Rock, located just across from the current location of Sheldon Jackson College, is reputed to have been a favorite walk of the first Chief Manager. Later it became a popular stroll among the inhabitats of Sitka.

The path must have been extended to the Indian River sometime before 1827, because it was described and illustrated by Postels and Kittlitz, who visited the colony that year. Kittlitz remarked that the path was "attributed to Baranov," but whether Baranov actually had it constructed, or if it was developed after his departure from the colony in 1818, is not clear.[165] Nevertheless, at time of his visit, Kittlitz reported that the "wooden footpath" led "from the vicinity of the town straight through the forest." He also specified that since it was constructed to pass over the uneven forest floor, its wooden surface "resembled a colossal, highly irregular grating."[166] It may very well have been constructed like the path shown in Figure 5-16, an illustration dated to 1818, of a Tlingit man on a forest path on Baranov Island, most likely near Sitka.[167]

A short section of the path is evident in Postels' illustration of the forest near the Indian River (Figure 5-15). Postels referred to it as "the road through the forest, part of it near the stream of the *Kaloschenka*" in his textual description of the illustration.[168] The surface depicted in the drawing is constructed of three side-by-side wooden planks placed over the surface of the ground. Other details are not apparent.

The road to the Indian River is referred to in Chief Manager Tebenkov's letter of 1849. He reported that the Company had made a road to the gardens and through the forest to the Indian River so that the residents could obtain wood.[169] It is probable that he re-surfaced and improved the path that already was there. A description of the road, published in 1862, reported that it was "paved with poles" which had been "placed on the many tree

Figure 5-16. Tlingit warrior walking on the wooden path built by the Russians, ca. 1818.

trunks that have fallen down." Tebenkov's crew may have extended the earlier road farther through the forest. In the 1862 account, the wooden road was described as leading to the bridge over the Indian River and then beyond to Mount Verstovaia.[170] Without knowing the exact extent of the earlier path, however, it is not possible to be certain.

The 1850 survey of New Archangel provides the first cartographic evidence as to the location of the road to Indian River (Figure 5-14). It is shown as following the shoreline adjacent to the gardens east of town. The road then extends from the end of the gardens around the point and into what is now the park and close to the current location of the visitor center. From there, it follows the park shoreline for a short distance, and then cuts across the peninsula to the river. Although it is not shown on the map, a Russian account written in 1862 states that the road led to the bridge over the Indian River and then continued to Mount Verstovaia.[171]

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The residents who walked along the road around that time would have left the busy settlement and first passed through the wide open space between the sandy beach and kichen gardens; from there they would have enjoyed expansive views of the mountains and sea. After passing around several rocky points, they would have walked through open meadows skirted by a cobble beach on one side and the forest on the other. Then they would plunge into the forest, where they suddenly would be surrounded by various forms of vegetation and intricate patterns of light and shade. Following the corridor through the towering trees and underbrush, they would have arrived at the sunny verge of the river. Moving away from the busy settlement and through spaces of such divergent character, first into an open expanse, then into the enclosed forest, and finally to the intimacy of the Indian River corridor, seemed to give pleasure to many residents of New Archangel. It was during the period of Russian tenure at New Archangel that the established use of this pathway is first documented—a use that continued through many subsequent years.

BEACHES AND TIDAL FLATS

Despite the paucity of historical documentation concerning the conditions of the beaches and tidal flats fringing the Indian River peninsula during this period, it is reasonable to assume that they changed little during the period from 1804 to 1867. Their open expanses probably would have been the scene of many Tlingit activities that continued from previous years, such as fishing, gathering shellfish, and gathering beach and sea plants. The Russian inhabitants probably fished and transported logs across the cobbles to the waters of the Sound. The beaches were probably also a common picnic site. But few of these activities would have had much effect on the habitats.

In 1827, on his way to climb Mt. Verstovaia, Aleksander Postels described the beach flora he observed on the upper beaches as "a carpet of flowers . . . which girds the island on all sides."[172] Postels listed a number of species that he observed, including seabeach sandwort, sea milkwort, Thyme-leaf speedwell, and silverweed in what may have been the park.[173] He noted the beach rye grass, calling it "the most beautiful of the coast." Postels described the progression of species from the hairy cinquefoil growing over the rocks and blue campanula blossoming in the crevices, to the edge of the forest where he observed an angelica species, cow parsnip, chocolate lilies, scurvy grass, and buttercups, among others.[174]

THE FORT AREA

During the period from 1804 to 1867, the fort area at the foot of the Indian River peninsula was the site of natural dynamics and Russian activities that transformed its character. The first known reference to the area after the destruction of the Tlingit fort in 1804 is provided by Kittlitz's description of the vicinity 22 years later. He wrote that "on the right side of the river's mouth one can see places now poorly covered by brush, where the aborigines built a strong palisade after destroying the Russian settlement in 1805 [sic-1802]."[175] Kittlitz's remark that the previous site of the Tlingit fort was "covered by brush" in 1827 suggests the plant communities in that area exhibited a process of natural dynamics in which the land that had been cleared in the fort vicinity had developed into what was most likely a red alder and salmonberry community. However, since Kittlitz specified that it was "poorly" covered suggests the possibility that either human activities or natural factors had affected the vegetation in the area during those 22 years. Without any more information, however, it is impossible to know for certain. From Kittlitz's remark we can only assume that most of the fort area had grown up in shrubs and alders by the time he was in the area.

The most dramatic change in the fort section of the park landscape during the period of Russian tenure in New Archangel was the establishment of small homesteads in the area. Retired Russian American Company worker Peter Ovchinnikov is known to have lived there for several years,

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probably from around 1845, when the company agreed to supply materials for the construction of his home, to the time of his death in 1853.[176] Ovchinnikov's homestead was noted by Heinrich Holmberg, a Finnish geologist, naturalist, and ethnographer who visited New Archangel in 1851. In a passage describing the Tlingit fort and the battle of 1804, Holmberg included a footnote as follows: "On that same place [the former site of the Tlingit fort] there stands today the little house of the pensioned promyshlelnnik Avchinnikov."[177]

The population of retired workers had posed a problem for the Russian American Company for a number of years. Company policy, expressed as early as 1818 by Chief Manager Hagemeister, was to settle those "who have been serving the company for many years on the rivers" or send them back home.[178] By 1845, the population of "unproductive" retired workers would have increased significantly; according to historian David Norlander, it was at this time that the Company allowed them to establish a retirement settlement along the Indian River in the vicinity of the former Tlingit fort.[179] According to Norlander, Ovchinnikov's house was the first one built there, and it was followed by three or four others.[180]

This settlement is depicted on Tebenkov's 1850 survey of the New Archangel vicinity (Figure 5-14). Three buildings are clustered together close to the southwestern bank of the Indian River at or very near the former site of the Tlingit fort. The precise nature of the buildings depicted is not clear, but it is probable that they consisted of a group of small residences. The inhabitants most likely had small kitchen gardens, where they could raise potatoes and other crops. They also may have kept chickens and pigs.

The buildings depicted on Tebenkov's map were probably destroyed in an 1855 Tlingit uprising that occurred in New Archangel. According to Pavel Golovin, there was a "small Russian settlement" on the river that "the Kolosh destroyed in 1855."[181] Later maps of the Indian River peninsula do not depict buildings in that location and no further mention of them is evident in historical accounts of the site.

Whether the site was utilized subsequently by the Russians is not known. Most likely some of the second growth alder and spruce timber that had developed after the battle and destruction of the fort were cut by the homesteaders and continued to be cut by the inhabitants of New Archangel. If the Tlingit had cleared the span of the peninsula's base, as suggested by Herb Hope, that entire area would have regenerated into a second growth spruce-hemlock forest. But the likelihood of wood cutting and other undocumented activities by the settlers, in addition to natural forces, most likely created a patchwork of trees, shrubs, and grassy openings in the area.

THE RUSSIAN MEMORIAL AREA

Little is known about the character of the Russian Memorial area during this period, although several historical documents testify to its presence on the northeastern side of the river. In 1827, Kittlitz noted that "a small monument on the other side of the river [from the fort site] still marked the graves of the Russians who fell in battle."[182] Holmberg also observed the monument along the river during his 1851 visit. He described it as "a memorial column . . . at the Kolosh River, which preserves the memory of those who fell there."[183]

The 1850 survey of the area depicts what is probably the memorial as part of the enclosure on the northeastern shore of the river's mouth (Figure 5-14). From this depiction it seems reasonable to assume that the memorial was sited in an open area adjacent to the homestead. It is shown quite close to the shore opposite from where the wooden road intersected the river. Although a precise comparison of this location with the present memorial location is difficult due to dramatic differences between the

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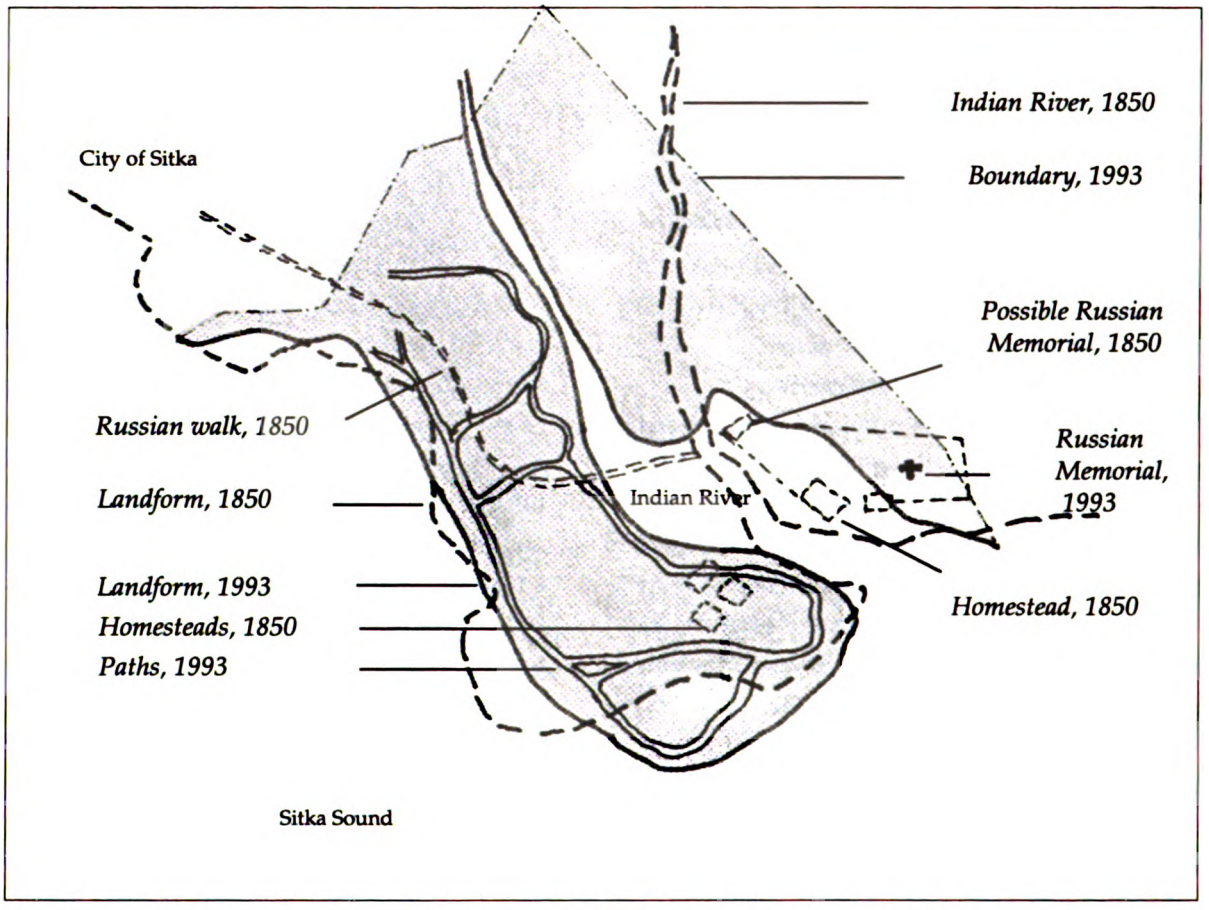

Figure 5-17. Overlay of 1850 Russian survey and 1993 survey of Sitka National Historical Park. The shaded area represents the 1993 landform. Scale: 1" = 600'.

landform and river course as depicted on the 1850 map and that of today (see Figure 5-17), it appears that the memorial was historically located farther upstream than where it is now.

CONCLUSION

Despite the presence and subsequent destruction of the buildings near the river, coupled with logging activities, the water course and forested landscape by the Indian River continued to be a favored destination for inhabitants of the settlement. Pavel Golovin, writing about New Archangel in 1860 and 1861, mentioned that "thanks to the good weather, we have resumed our daily walks to the Kolosh River."[184]

The paths through the forest and along the river continued to be a special place for the inhabitants of New Archangel. By 1867, at the end of the Russian era, the Indian River and its vicinity had become the site of numerous activities. As a result, the forest had been cleared along both sides of the river's mouth, and probably had been significantly thinned in the western and southern stands. Nevertheless, the landscape continued to play an important role in the community. For the Tlingit, it was traditional Kiks.ádi clan ancestral territory, a fishing and gathering area, and an important symbolic site. For the Russians, Finns, and other Europeans, it was primarily recreational. As a Finnish visitor testified in 1867, the Kolosh River was "the only place of amusement there."[185] It was the place where local inhabitants could go to "gaze into infinity," or to

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drink tea on the banks of the river; it was a place nearby, but just far enough away from Sitka to become a special destination; and it was a place to retreat from the constraints of town life where simple pleasures could be enjoyed.

ENDNOTES

[1] Kiril Timofeevich Khlebnikov, *Notes on Russian America Part One: Novo-Arkhangel'sk*, compiled by Svetlana G. Fedorova, translated by Serge LeComte and Richard Pierce, edited by Richard Pierce (Kingston, Ontario and Fairbanks, Alaska: The Limestone Press, 1994), 5.
[2] Urey Lisiansky, *Voyage Around the World in the Years 1803, 1804, 1805 and 1806, Bibliotheca Australiana No. 42, 1814* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1968, reprint), 236.
[3] Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 5-6.
[4] K.T. Khlebnikov, *Colonial Russian America: Kyrill T. Khlebnikov's Reports, 1817 - 1832*, translated by Basil Dmytryshyn and E.A.P. Crownhart-Vaughan (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1976), 49-50.
[5] Urey Lisianski cited by A.I. Alekseev, *The Destiny of Russian America, 1741-1867*, translated by Marina Ramsay, ed. by Richard A. Pierce (Kingston, Ontario and Fairbanks, Alaska: The Limestone Press, 1990), 132.
[6] Katerina G. Solovjova, "Fortified Structures of the Russian American Company," in *Bering and Chirikov: The American Voyages and Their Impact*, edited by O.W. Frost (Anchorage: Alaska Historical Society, 1992); see p. 345 for a 1807 plan of the settlement and pp. 345-47 for a discussion of the growth of the fort.
[7] John D'Wolf cited in De Armond, *Early Visitors*, 102.
[8] Langsdorff, *Remarks and Observations*, 48.
[9] Tikhmenev, *A History*, 154.
[10] *Ibid.*, 271.
[11] Peter Corney, *Voyages in the Northern Pacific: Narrative of Several Trading Voyages from 1813 to 1818, Between the Northwest Coast of America, the Hawaiian Islands and China, with a Description of the Russian Establishments on the Northwest Coast* (Honolulu: Thos. G. Thrum, 1896), 31.
[12] Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 27-28.
[13] See Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 6-25, for a detailed discussion of the hunting expeditions and economics of New Archangel under Baranov.
[14] Richard A. Pierce, *Builders of Alaska: The Russian Govenors, 1818-1867* (Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press, 1986), 4.
[15] *Ibid.*, 6.
[16] Frederic Litke, *A Voyage Around the World 1826-1829, Volume One: To Russian America and Siberia*, translated by Renee Marshall, supplemented with a parallel account by E.H. Baron von Kittlitz, translated by Dr. Joan Moessner, edited by Richard A. Pierce (Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press, 1987), see vii-xi, for a detailed discussion of the participants and purposes of the expedition.
[17] *Ibid.*, 291.
[18] Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 140-42.
[19] *Ibid.*, 140.
[20] Wrangell, *Russian*, 4.
[21] A Russian edition of Khlebnikov's notes on Russian America is the following: Kirila Xlebnikova, *Russkaya Amerika v "Zapiskax" Kirila Xlebnikova Novo-Arxangelsk*, sostavlenie, prediclovie, kommentarii i ukaxateli S.G. Fedorovoi, otvetstvennuii redaktor V.A. Aleksandrov (Moskva: Nauka, 1985), after p. 56.
[22] Pierce, *Builders of Alaska*, 19.
[23] Rear Admiral Ferdinand Petrovich Wrangell, *Russian America: Statistical and Ethnographic Information*, translated by Mary Sadouski, edited by Richard Pierce (Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press, 1980), 4.
[24] Pirjo Varjola, *The Etholén Collection: The Ethnographic Alaskan Collection of Adolf Etholén and His Contemporaries in the National Museum of Finland*, translated by Gillian Häkli (Helsinki: National Board of Antiquities, 1990), 19.
[25] *Ibid.*
[26] *Ibid.*
[27] Letter from Uno Cygnaus to his mother, 29 July 1840 (written in Swedish, translated by Hanelle Jönsson-Korhola and Arnold R. Alanen); the letter is in the Uno Cygnaeus Papers, Finnish National Archives, Helsinki.
[28] Ferdinand Sahlberg, *Dagbok från välden-runt-resan, 1839-1843* (diary, written in Swedish; translated by Hanelle Jönsson-Korhola amd Arnold R. Alanen); the diary is in the University of Helsinki Library Archives.
[29] Sir George Simpson quoted by De Armond, *Early Visitors*, 178.
[30] James R. Gibson, "The Sale of Russian America to the United States," in *Russia's American Colony*, edited by S. Frederick Starr (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1987), 276.
[31] *Ibid.*
[32] *Ibid.*
[33] Pierce, *Builders of Alaska*, 39.
[34] Pierce, *Ibid.*, 30.
[35] Richard Collinson quoted by De Armond, *Early Visitors*, 205.
[36] M.D. Tebenkov, *Atlas of the Northwest Coasts of America: From Bering Strait to Cape Corrienties and the Aleutian Islands with Several Sheets on the Northeast Coast of Asia*, translated and edited by Richard A. Pierce (Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press, 1981), Map No. 38.
[37] Gibson, "The Sale," 277; according to Gibson the financial difficulties arose more from political troubles in Russia than economic failures in the colonies.
[38] Georg Heinrich von Langsdorff, *Remarks and Observations on a Voyage Around the World from 1803 to 1807*, Volumes One and Two, translated and annotated by Victoria Joan Moessner, edited by Richard A. Pierce (Kingston, Ontario, and Fairbanks, Alaska: The Limestone Press, 1993), 57.
[39] Kyrill T. Khlebnikov, *Colonial Russian America: Kyrill T. Khlebnikov's Reports, 1817-1832*, translated by Basil Dmytryshyn and E.A.P. Crownhart-Vaughan (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1976), 23-24.
[40] Letter from Gabriel Plathan to his relatives, 1 May 1846, reprinted in *Suomi* (Helsinki), 9 October 1847, as "Sitka, ja maita muita siihen kuuluvia" ("Sitka, and Other Areas of the Country Connected with It"), translated by Arnold Alanen, 1995; a microfilm copy of the publication is located in the University of Helsinki Library.
[41] Sahlberg, *Dagbok*.
[42] Hjalmer Furuhjelm, *Dagbok* (diary, written in Swedish, translated by Hanelle Jönsson-Korhola and Arnold R. Alanen); the diary is in the Archives of the Finnish National Museum of Antiquities, Helsinki.
[43] Hampus Furuhjelm, letter to his father, Otto Furuhjelm, 25 May 1852, (translated by Hanelle Jönsson-Korhola and Arnold R. Alanen); the letters are in the Archives of the Finnish National Museum of Antiquities, Helsinki.
[44] Anonymous letter, *Borgå Tidning* (Porvoo, Finland) 6 June 1840 (in Swedish; translated by Hanelle Jönsson-Korhola and Arnold R. Alanen); a microfilm of the newspaper is in the University of Helsinki Library.
[45] Richard Collinson cited by R.N. De Armond, ed., *Early Visitors to Southeastern Alaska: Nine Accounts* (Anchorage: Alaska Northwest Publishing Company, 1978), 205.
[46] Litke, *A Voyage*, 201-02.
[47] *Ibid.*

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[48] Lisiansky, *Voyage*, 236-37.
[49] Khlebnikov, *Colonial Russian*, 38.
[50] Litke, *A Voyage*, 201.
[51] Khlebnikov, *Baranov*, 49.
[52] Rezanov cited in James R. Gibson, *Imperial Russia in Frontier America: The Changing Geography of Supply of Russian America, 1784-1867* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 109.
[53] Richard A. Pierce, translator, *The Russian American Company: Correspondence of the Governors Communications Sent 1818* (Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press, 1984), 111.
[54] Litke, *Voyage*, 65.
[55] *Ibid.*, 45. Langsdorff also mentioned Baranov's failed attempts to burn the forest; see Langsdorff, *Remarks and Observations*, 57.
[56] Litke, *Voyage*, 45.
[57] *Ibid.*, 65.
[58] *Ibid.*, 207.
[59] *Ibid.*, 131.
[60] *Ibid.*, 214. Kittlitz also wrote that the figure in the lithograph did not exist in the original drawing.
[61] Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 178.
[62] Khlebnikov, *Colonial Russian*, 77.
[63] Petr. A. Tikhmenev, *A History of the Russian American Company*, edited and translated by Richard A. Pierce and Alton S. Donnelly (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978), 421.
[64] *Ibid.*
[65] Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 67.
[66] The Oregon crab apple is "armed with sharp spur-shoots"; see Jim Pojar and Andy MacKinnon, eds., *Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast: Washington, Oregon, British Columbia and Alaska* (Vancouver, British Columbia: The B.C. Ministry of Forests and Lone Pine Publishing Company, 1994), 48.
[67] Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 143.
[68] *Ibid.*
[69] Pierce, *Builders of Alaska*, 8.
[70] Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 143.
[71] *Ibid.*
[72] *Ibid.*, 142.
[73] A. Ahllund, "Suomalaisen työmiehen muistelmista" ("Memories of a Finnish Laborer"), translated by A. Alanen, *Suomen Kuvalehti* (Helsinki, 1873), 178.
[74] Pierce, *Builders of Alaska*, 8.
[75] John D'Wolf quoted in De Armond, *Early Visitors*, 106.
[76] Langsdorff, *Remarks and Observations*, 57.
[77] Urey Lisianski quoted in A.I. Alekseev, *The Destiny*, 132.
[78] Corney, *Voyages in the Northern Pacific*, 31.
[79] Pierce, *Russian American Company*, 88.
[80] *Ibid.*, 111.
[81] *Ibid.*, 156.
[82] *Ibid.*
[83] Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 178.
[84] *Ibid.*, 144, 178.
[85] *Ibid.*, 178.
[86] Wrangell, *Russian*, 6.
[87] Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 144.
[88] Wrangell, *Russian*, 6.
[89] Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 178.
[90] Litke, *Voyage*, 45.
[91] Wrangell, *Russian*, 4.
[92] Eugene Duflot de Mofras, "Plan du Port de la Nouvell Archangel: dans l'ile de Sitka, Capitale des Establissents de l'Americque Russe," Plate 21 of *Exploration du Territoire de l'Oregon, des Californies et de la Mer Vermeille*, Vols. 1 & 2 and Atlas (Paris: Arthus Betrand, 1844).
[93] M.D. Tebenkov quoted by James R. Gibson, "Russian Dependence, upon the Natives of Alaska," in *Russia's American Colony*, edited by S. Frederick Starr (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1987), 94.
[94] M.D. Tebenkov to the Company's Main Headquarters, Russian American Company Records, Reel #553, No. 352, Folio 37, 12 May 1847; Microfilm, National Archives and Records Service Washington, D.C..
[95] Richard Collinson quoted in De Armond, *Early Visitors*, 205.
[96] Golovin, *Civil*, 85.
[97] Valerie K. Stubbs, "The U.S. Army in Alaska, 1867-1877: An Experiment in Military Government," unpublished Master's thesis (Washington, D.C.: American University, 1956).
[98] Gibson, "Russian Dependence," 90.
[99] Otto von Kotzebue, *A New Voyage Round the World in the Years 1823-1826*, Volume Two (N. Israel, Amsterdam, and New York: Da Capo Press, 1967, originally published in 1830), 43-44.
[100] Litke, *Voyage*, 91.
[101] Gibson, "Russian Dependence," 90-91. Trade was already well established with the Tlingit for the furs and fresh food they obtained from fishing, hunting, and gathering. This food was substantial and essential to the Russian population and continued up to the end of the Russian presence in the town. Khlebnikov's inventory of food purchased from the Tlingits in 1831 is lengthy and includes goats, fish, waterfowl, berries, greens, crabs, and eggs among other items. See his chart for a complete list and amounts, Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 130-131.
[102] *Ibid.*, 91.
[103] Urey Lisianski quoted in A.I. Alekseev, *The Destiny*, 133.
[104] John D'Wolf quoted in De Armond, *Early Visitors*, 105.
[105] Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 187.
[106] Litke, *Voyage*, 50; Wrangell, *Russian*, 9.
[107] Golovin, *Civil*, 85.
[108] Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 187.
[109] *Ibid.*, 144.
[110] *Ibid.*
[111] Litke, *Voyage*, 50.
[112] Wrangell, *Russian*, 6, 9.
[113] Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 179.
[114] *Ibid.*
[115] Gibson, *Imperial Russia*, 98.
[116] Langsdorff, *A Voyage*, 57.
[117] Tikhmenev, *A History*, 421.
[118] Khlebnikov, *Notes*, 108; Khlebnikov provides a complete inventory of the yearly shipments from California, including the amount of wheat, barley, peas, beans, and flour on each ship from 1817 to 1832.
[119] See Gibson, "Russian Dependence," for a thorough discussion of the extent of this trade.
[120] Golovin, *Civil*, 95.
[121] Basil Dmytryshyn, E.A.P. Crownhart-Vaughan and Thomas Vaughan, editors and translators, *The Russian American Colonies 1798 - 1867: To Siberia and Russian America Three Centuries of Eastward Expansion, Volume Three: A Documentary Record* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1989), 143.
[122] Herb Hope, interview with Tim Cochrane, Steve Peterson, Bonnie Houston, Arnold Alanen, and Holly Smith-Middleton, Alaska Systems Office, NPS, Anchorage, 16 June 1995; Isabelle Brady, interview with Holly Smith-Middleton, Sitka, 5 July 1995.
[123] Dmytryshyn, et al., *The Russian American Colonies*, 142-43.
[124] Litke, *A Voyage*, 140.
[125] *Ibid.*
[126] Some researchers have interpreted this passage as an indication that the gardens and spinner's shop were located near the Indian River. However, the evidence would seem to indicate that Wrangell was referring to the kitchen gardens and spinner's shop that were along the shoreline east of the town, and which the Tlingit would pass by on their way coming and going from the settlement. The remark reveals his reluctance to have the "Kolosh" living on both sides of New Archangel. See Pierce, *Builders of Alaska*, 19, for his translation of the Russian key for Blashke's 1836 map of the town (Figure 10), which identifies "shops for making rope" along the outlet stream from Swan Lake.
[127] Baron F.P. Wrangell, Record of Outgoing Files of Chief Governor of Russian Colonies in America, Captain of the First

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Rank and Bearer of the Order, Baron Wrangell 1st. From No. 1, January 1, 1831 to No. 499, December 31, 1831; microfilm, Russian American Company Records, Reel 33, Volume 8, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC.
[128] *Ibid.*
[129] *Ibid.*
[130] "Novo-Arhangel'sk and Koloshy," *Vokrug Sveta (Around the World)*, Volume II, pp. 30-36, St. Petersburg, 1862, translated by K.S. Wessels, 1995.
[131] Golovin, *Civil*, 118.
[132] Pierce, *Builders*, 13. The Baroness Wrangell apparently was an exceptional individual whose fine character and virtue impressed and influenced the entire town; she was highly esteemed among the Tlingit as well.
[133] Simpson, *Narrative*, 212.
[134] Cygnaeus letter to his mother.
[135] Gabriel Plathan, *Dagbok från Sitka*, 1845-48 (diary, written in Swedish; translatied by Hanelle Jönsson-Korhola and Arnold R. Alanen), Library of Åbo Akademi, Turku, Finland.
[136] Eduardus Blaschke, *Medical Topography of the Port of New Archangel*, 1842, Doctoral Dissertation, Imperial Medico-Surgical Academy of St. Petersburg, translated by Edward J. Muenk, 1971, Sitka National Historical Park Archives, 51. Blashke also noted that the water of the Kolosh River was very pure, but seldom used for drinking because of its distance from town, 28.
[137] *Ibid*, 60.
[138] Sahlberg, *Dagbok*, 11 June 1840.
[139] *Ibid.*
[140] *Ibid.*, 12 June 1840.
[141] E.E. Blomkvist, "A Russian Scientific Expedition to California and Alaska, 1839-1849: The Drawings of I.G. Voznesenskii," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 73 (No. 2): 148-49.
[142] *Ibid.*
[143] John D'Wolf quoted by R.N. De Armond, ed., *Early Visitors to Southeastern Alaska: Nine Accounts* (Anchorage: Alaska Northwest Publishing Company, 1978),
[144] Litke, *A Voyage*, 151.
[145] *Ibid.*, 134.
[146] *Ibid.*, 135.
[147] *Ibid.*
[148] *Ibid.*, 134.
[149] *Ibid.*
[150] "Report to Company Headquarters," Russian American Company Records, Microfilm Reel # 50, No. 116, Folio 292v, National Archives and Records Administration, microfilm, Reel #50, No.116, Folio 292v, Washington, D.C.
[151] Litke, *A Voyage*, 211.
[152] *Ibid.*
[153] *Ibid.*
[154] *Ibid.*
[155] The pastoral representations of Tlingit figures in the forest reveal the romantic perspective of the artist.
[156] Litke, *A Voyage*, 211.
[157] *Ibid.*
[158] *Ibid.*
[159] *Ibid*, 211-12.
[160] *Ibid*, 211.
[161] Mikhail Tebenkov, letter to the Main Office, 1849, Russian American Company Records, reported by David Norlander on his archival research in the Russian American Company Records and Russian Orthodox Church Archives, video presentation filmed at SITK, 22 September, 1995.
[162] However, it is likely that inhabitants of New Archangel's frontier environment quickly became accustomed to the sights of logging and clearing.
[163] Jim Russell and Bill Dougan, *Vegetation Inventory and Forest Health Assessment: Sitka National Historical Park* (Sitka: U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, Chatham Area, March 1994), 12, 18.
[164] Gene Griffin, comments on an initial review of the draft manuscript for this report, December 1996.
[165] Litke, *A Voyage*, 134.
[166] *Ibid.*
[167] Katerina Solovjova Wessels, Moscow/St. Petersburg Archival Trip Report, Part 1, p. 42, Anchorage, National Park Service.
[168] Litke, *A Voyage*, 210.
[169] M.D. Tebenkov, letter to the Main Office, 1849, Russian American Company Records, translated by David Norlander and included in his video presentation, 22 September 1995.
[170] Katarina Wessels, translator (author unknown), "Novo-Arhangel'sk and Koloshy," *Vokrug Sveta* (Around the World), St. Petersburg, Volume II, 1862, p. 32, from Moscow/St. Petersburg Archival Trip Report, Part 1, pp. 5-6.
[171] *Ibid.*
[172] Litke, *A Voyage*; for specific species see his list on pp. 211-12.
[173] *Ibid.*
[174] *Ibid.*; see Chapter 1 for the complete quote, including the Latin names of these beach species.
[175] *Ibid.*, 134.
[176] Norlander, video presentation, 22 September 1995.
[177] Heinrich Johan Holmberg, *Holmberg's Ethnographic Sketches*, edited by Marvin W. Falk, translated by Fritz Jaensch, the Rasmuson Library Historical Translation Series, Volume 1 (Fairbanks: University of Alaska Press, 1985), 91.
[178] Richard A. Pierce, translator, *The Russian American Company: Correspondence of the Governors Communications Sent 1818* (Kingston, Ontario: The Limestone Press, 1984), 15.
[179] Norlander, video presentation, 22 September 1995.
[180] *Ibid.*
[181] Golovin, *Civil*, 118.
[182] Litke, *A Voyage*, 134.
[183] Holmberg, *Holmberg's*, 92.
[184] *Ibid.*, 111.
[185] Ahllund, *Suomen*, 178.

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CHAPTER 6

THE MAKING OF A PARK, 1867 - 1900

"There are many magnificent parks on the continent, but none more beautiful than our natural Indian River Park."

The Alaskan, 1886

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CHAPTER 6

THE MAKING OF A PARK 1867 - 1900

The sale of Russian America to the United States in 1867 resulted in profound changes to the social fabric of Sitka. Following the purchase, Americans traveled to the new Alaskan frontier for a variety of reasons: as part of the U.S. military administration that was sent to govern the region, to follow dreams of deriving wealth from Alaska's resources, or simply to seek adventure. During the initial decades of the American presence, Sitka's population fluctuated as the town went through periods of economic growth and decline. Later, by the 1880s, numerous excursionists arrived to view the new territory's scenic landscape. A small number of these people, as well as a number of American missionaries who moved into the region during the 1870s, settled in Sitka among the indigenous population and remaining Russian inhabitants. These individuals, plus the people tied to the territorial government, of which Sitka became the capital in 1884, built the rough frontier settlement into a thriving American town.

The effects of this new population on the landscape of Sitka and the park were initially limited to utilitarian improvements made to the existing settlement, and to the construction of roads into outlying areas that allowed wood and water to be gathered from a greater distance. In the 1880s, however, the development of the Presbyterian mission on the eastern edge of the town transformed the character of the landscape adjacent to what would become the park, and influenced activities within the area. It was during the final years of this period that the land adjacent to the Indian River was first widely perceived as an official "park" to be maintained for the benefit of citizens and visitors alike.

AN AMERICAN FRONTIER TOWN

On the afternoon of Friday, October 18, 1867, the transfer ceremony was enacted at Sitka that formalized the American purchase of Russian territory in North America for the sum of $7,200,000.[1] In the presence of Russian Prince Maksoutoff, 100 Russian and 200 American troops in dress uniform, and a crowd of spectators, United States Commissioner General Lovell H. Rousseau and Russian Commissioner Captain Aleksei A. Pestchouroff formally enacted the transfer. The Russian flag was exchanged for the American in front of the Governor's house.[2]

In the days following the formal ceremony, the Commissioners made an inventory of property in the town, along with a plan, indicating all of the structures therein and the nature of their ownership. The Commissioners distributed the property as follows: all forts and public buildings were transferred to the United States government; all Russian Orthodox Church property remained in church control; and private property was registered to its owners, with certificates of ownership given to these individuals in fee simple. A list and inventory were made of privately occupied property without title.[3] Under the transfer treaty, Russian citizens were permitted to return to their homeland within three years or remain in Alaska and enjoy "all the rights, advantages and immunities of citizens of the United States."[4]

Congress had determined that the new territory would be a military district administered by the United States Army, commanded by Brevet-Major General Jefferson C. Davis. Sitka was designated as the headquarters of the district, with other posts to be established throughout the region. The Army's mission in the region was to maintain law and order, to prevent conflict and subdue native uprisings, and

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to prevent liquor trade with the native populations.[5] Much of their attention in Sitka was devoted to disputes created by the lack of American property rights in the new territory. With the departure of most Russians during the first few years following the transfer, squatting and property grabbing were flagrant. In the fall of 1867, eager American comercial opportunists rushed to Sitka in order to garnish ex-Russian property and secure business made available by the departing Russian American Company and its employees. In anticipation of the frontier boom, they reportedly "squatted all over Sitka," and established numerous saloons and stores in the town. Given the lack of legal parameters, General Davis tolerated all but the most blatant abuses.[6]

An account written by Emil Teichmann, who resided in Sitka in 1868, provides insight into the population of the new American town. He observed that "the most respectable class. . . [included] the officials of the Quartermaster's Department and of the Customs, the small number of municipal authorities, and a military chaplain . . . . The second class. . . comprised the traders, keeper of billiard saloons and dealers in spirits," and the third group included "adventurers" such as seamen and gold miners, and the "undesirable . . . Rowdies."[7] The total population (excluding the Tlingit) numbered about 800, including some 250 American soldiers, 50 American settlers, and approximately 500 Russians and Creoles.[8]

The days immediately following the acquisition of Alaska were times of optimism when the new American residents envisioned their settlement becoming a thriving trading center on the new frontier. A civic government was formed in 1867, and the first municipal election was held on November 25th, which established Sitka's city charter. William Sumner Dodge was elected mayor and a city council was established. Through the efforts of the military officers, their wives, and the more prominent residents of the town, a public school was established and Protestant religious services were reinstituted.[9]

The Army troops devoted a good deal of their attention to making improvements in the town. Following the purchase and throughout the winter of 1867-68, Davis' troops repaired and renovated a number of former Russian barracks and facilities for their own occupancy.[10] Davis and his troops took over eleven or twelve buildings, some only fit for use as storage. A number of the buildings required "purification" before they could be inhabited by the soldiers. By the end of October, the troops were housed in barracks.[11]

Work was also done on Sitka's sidewalks and streets. The city administration contracted the construction of four-feet wide wooden sidewalks and the troops improved the streets. The October 31, 1868, issue of the *Sitka Times* reported on the improvements made the troops and citizens:

> We have now a beautiful sidewalk through our principal street, cross walks and alley walks well adapted to meet and suit any people. General Davis caused a park to be made out of a little wilderness, which answers for a parade and drill ground for our Soldiers, and which is besides an ornament to our city.
>
> Many fine buildings have been erected, old ones repaired, and the only two main roads we have on our Island are substantially made, making it agreeable as well as pleasant to pass along and witness the improvements which are not only ornamental, but very useful to our whole community.[12]

In 1868, Davis also created some reserves of public land in Sitka to keep such sites from being encroached upon by private citizens and "to guide persons who desired to build on and improve the public lands."[13] Davis reported, in 1870, that the troops' quarters in Sitka were in good condition, and that "parade grounds, walks, and gardens already gave these heretofore dreary homes quite a civilized appearance."[14]

In 1873, the *Alaska Herald* (published in San Francisco) reported on the transformation of Sitka. According to the editor, " In one respect Sitka has improved more under American occupancy than any other place in the Territory, viz., cleanliness."[15] After an account of the lack of streets and sidewalks

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that resulted in knee-deep mud, the stagnant pools which gave forth "unwholesome vapors," and the "huts and houses of the poorer classes" unfit for human habitation that had previously characterized the town, the editor contended:

> After the stars and stripes floated from the Governor's residence, a change for the better commenced and sanitary measures were adopted. The American military authorities . . . made their headquarters bright and cheerful. The walks thereabouts were graveled, wooded sidewalks were laid, the principal street of the town was widened and cleaned, houses painted, dilapidated rookeries repaired, and things put in order generally.[16]

Despite these early efforts at civic improvement in Sitka, the rapid departure of the majority of Russians and the dearth of trade and commercial activity shortly thereafter brought about a period of decline. The 1867 population of approximately 700 people dwindled to about 300 by 1873. Mayor Dodge and other prominent citizens left, and the city council held its last meeting in 1873. From an annual collection of $21,000 accumulated between late 1867 and July 1869, the duties collected from maritime traffic in Sitka sank to $155 in 1874. For all practical purposes, Sitka was abandoned to the Tlingits and the military.[17]

In the meantime, the Army's military administration was troubled. The combination of low post-Civil War Army morale, the isolation and boredom of duty in such a remote post, the rough character of many of the town's Russian and native inhabitants, and the newly arrived American frontier "rowdies"—when combined with the extreme effects of liquor upon the Tlingit and other residents—resulted in a number of social problems.[18] While Teichman was appalled by the Russian workers he observed living "together with dogs and pigs," and who were prostituting their wives, he was more offended by the American soldiers. The officers spent their time drinking and gambling, which was bad enough, but as to the rank and file, he wrote: "Released convicts would not have been more dangerous to the public security than were these men whose task it was to enforce the law. Scarcely a day passed without a robbery, or a case of arson or a violent assault which must be ascribed to the soldiers."[19] Indeed, a total of 91 of the 270 American troops did time in the guardhouse in the period from 1868 to 1869.[20] Dr. E. J. Bailey, medical director of the Department of Alaska, testified in 1870 that the residents of Sitka "mutually debauch each other, and sink into that degree of degradation in which it is impossible to reach each other through moral or religious influences." He continued that it was a great mistake to place troops among the Indians. The War Department at first reduced the Sitka garrison in response to such reports from Alaska, and eventually, in 1877, withdrew the Army altogether.[21]

Responsibility for the territory, which had been a U.S. Customs District since 1868, was assigned to the Treasury Department, but following several potentially dangerous incidents with the Tlingits, the federal government permanently stationed a Navy ship at Sitka in 1879. The subsequent five years of Navy administration coincided with the blossoming of the Presbyterian missionary movement in Alaska. Both Navy officials and missionaries in Sitka attempted to reduce the violent and destructive elements of society and to instill civic pride among the residents. Commander Lester Beardslee created an Indian police force in 1879; and in 1881 Captain Henry Glass criminalized the consumption and trade in alcohol, and created measures that required the Tlingits to send their children to school. Missionary Carrie Willard reported that school attendance doubled in Sitka; by 1881, a total of 271 children attended the mission day school.[22]

The Sitka mission, founded by the Reverend John G. Brady and Fannie E. Kellog of the Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church in 1878, began in a classroom of an abandoned soldiers' barracks.[23] By 1882, however, largely through the efforts of Brady and Sheldon Jackson, the mission had developed into a vocational boarding facility, the Sitka Industrial School, where native children

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from throughout the region were trained in carpentry, mechanics, sewing, and other skills thought to lead to assimilation and civilization. The boarding school became the centerpiece of Jackson's Alaska mission.[24]

During the 1870s and 1880s, mining, fishing, and other commercial enterprises in southeastern Alaska brought more people and capital to Sitka. Gold seekers had comprised an important part of Sitka frontier society, but most had been disappointed in their efforts. Hopes, nevertheless, remained high, as reported by the *Portland Bulletin* in 1872: "Everybody in that region talks of nothing now but mines, and all are speculating in them." Gold was discovered and prospected at Silver Bay. A gold rush in nearby Fort Wrangell in 1873 stimulated further interest.[25]

Commercial salmon fishing also brought a great deal of capital into Alaska. The salmon canning industry began in 1878, when one of the two first salmon canneries opened in Sitka. Although the initial Sitka cannery only operated for two years, the fishing industry in the region increased so greatly that by 1889 the first legislation was introduced to regulate such fishing. As production increased, Tlingit cannery workers were gradually replaced by the Chinese. Much of the fishing was done by immigrants as well, including Swedes, Norwegians, Germans, and Sicilians. The salmon were so abundant that by the 1890s the supply was greater than the demand.[26]

During the 1880s, missionary and military influences reduced the degree of violent behavior in Sitka. In addition, the missionaries' advocacy of Alaska in Washington, D.C., and in the press, along with accounts of naturalists and adventurers, stimulated the development of tourism in the region. Sheldon Jackson promoted tourism in Alaska, sending letters to congressmen along with samples of native art. He amassed a collection of native artifacts from the entirety of Alaska and housed them in Sitka. The trading companies ran glamorous steamer excursions through the inside passage; these trips became fashionable pastimes for East and West Coast elites. In 1884, a total of 1,650 tourists traveled to southeastern Alaska; in 1886, the figure increased to 2,753 and then to 5,000 in 1890.[27]

Greater prosperity and stability developed in Sitka, not only as a consequence of the tourists and the money they brought, but also with the passage of the Alaska Organic Act in May 1884, which provided for a district government with Sitka serving as the capital. The government was to be comprised of a governor, a district court, a marshall, four deputies, a clerk, and four commissioners. John H. Kinkead was appointed as Alaska's first governor.

As the center of government in an increasingly economically viable region, Sitka grew into a relatively prosperous late nineteenth-century town. By the 1890s, it had churches, hospitals, schools, and barber shops. It had municipal streets, water works, and fire engines. Social life was highlighted by magic shows, auctions, and performances by the Literary and Dramatic Association. Formal balls and receptions were commonly given to mark the arrival or departure of a steamer or Navy ship. The Alaska Society of Natural History and Ethnology held regular meetings and published scholarly papers. The town's free reading room was well stocked.[28]

At the same time that growth was occurring on the outer edges of town, much of the historic fabric of Russian New Archangel was still relatively intact. Tourist and travel writer E. Ruhamah Skidmore described the scene in 1884. She wrote that the "rambling collection of weather-beaten and moss-covered buildings that have survived from Russian days, and the government buildings, in their coats of yellow-brown paint" gave an impression of "urban vastness and importance." She noted that the settlement had "the air and dignity of a town with a history."[29]

During these decades, the Tlingit community also underwent tremendous changes, the direct result of American military, missionary, trader, and commercial interests. In reference to the native populations residing throughout Alaska, the transfer

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treaty merely stated: "The Uncivilized tribes will be subject to such laws and regulations as the United States may, from time to time, adopt in regard to aboriginal tribes in that country."[30] The remark, reportedly made by one of the Tlingit elders at the time—"true we allowed the Russians to possess the Island, but we did not intend to give it to any and every fellow that came along"—conveys some of the sentiment with which they must have greeted the sale of their land.

The Tlingit, however, benefited economically from the high prices paid by Americans for fish and game.[31] Like the Russians, the Americans were dependent on trade with the Tlingit for much of their fresh food. General Davis allowed the trade to be carried out in the Indian market, but continued the Russian practice of closing the gates to the stockade at night. A report on the military post covering the years 1871 through 1874 related that "venison in abundance. . . grouse, ducks, halibut, salmon, clams &c., can usually be purchased by the Indians when in season. . . Native potatoes can occasionally be purchased in small quantities, and are quite good. . . . "[32]

The fur trade also was a source of revenue for the Tlingit. The same official reported that the "Indians are quite industrious, and are the only catchers of fur-bearing animals in the vicinity, deriving considerable revenue from the sale of marten, mink, otter, fox, wolverine, and bear skins. They also bring in deer-skins in large numbers, amounting to many thousands," annually.[33] In the business of food gathering, hunting, and fishing, the Tlingit were able to carry on in their traditional practices and to prosper from the wealth generated by American markets.

Other frontier elements, however, were profoundly disruptive to the Tlingit community. Most tragically, the vigorous trade of alcohol plied by the early American entrepreneurs had dramatically destructive effects on Tlingit society. The U.S.

Figure 6-1. The town of Sitka, as seen from Castle Hill sometime between 1886 and 1890.

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Figure 6-2. Tlingit village at Sitka, ca. 1883

military was charged to prevent such trade, but it was never successful in doing so. The military personnel also repeatedly sought out and destroyed Tlingit "hoochinoo" stills. However, alcohol continued to be accessible, and was frequntly a factor in violent conflicts between and among the Tlingits, the military, and elements of Sitka's Anglo population.

Inevitable conflicts also arose between the Tlingit and American groups during this period. U.S. military authorities sought to eradicate traditional Tlingit shamanistic practices, as well as the native practice of keeping slaves. Commander Henry Glass also fostered the signing of peace treaties among several Tlingit *kwaans*. In addition, the aims of American commercial activities in the region sometimes conflicted with Tlingit interests. Before controls were legislated, commercial operations took over traditional fishing grounds, which resulted in intensive over-harvesting of fish populations. Many Tlingits were forced to take cannery jobs. Through the efforts of missionaries and the military, the Tlingit village was "cleaned, whitewashed and drained" in 1881.[34] (Figure 6-2 is an 1883 view of the Tlingit houses along the beach.) In the same year, Glass established a rule that compelled the Tlingit children to go to the mission day school. Each Tlingit house in the village was numbered, as was each child who was given a tin number tag to be worn around his or her neck. If a child was caught out of school, the number was reported and the head of the house was fined. According to Sheldon Jackson, as soon as the Tlingits realized that Glass was "in earnest, the children were all in school"; the student enrollment numbered about 250.[35]

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Much of the new change resulted in the fracturing and transformation of the Tlingit community. The U.S. Military established a Tlingit police force in 1879 to keep peace in Sitka's Tlingit village. In the mission schools, the children were taught to reject their culture, something which many of them continued to do so as adults. Combined with economic pressures, these ideological shifts became the foundation for continuing cultural transformation among the Tlingit—a transformation that underlies much of the history of the landscape around the Indian River.

DEVELOPMENTS NEAR THE INDIAN RIVER

The eastern edge of Sitka was developed during the later decades of this period, resulting at first in more roads to the Indian River, then the development of businesses in the area, and eventually the construction of residences inside the boundary of what is now park property. These changes resulted in changes both to the physical fabric of the park landscape and to the activities that occurred there.

ROADS LEADING TO THE RIVER

The need for access to fresh water and firewood, as well as the necessity to keep soldiers and sailors stationed in the isolated settlement working productively, led to a series of changes in the paths, roads, and bridges in the vicinity of the Indian River. The military upgraded the former Russian paths and extended new roads into the forest to improve access to these resources.

During the years from 1867 to 1877, a new road was built into the forest near the Indian River on what would later become the property of the Presbyterian mission. Known as the Davis Road, it began at the former site of Barnaov's rock (near the foot of present day Jeff Davis Street) and cut up the hill through the site of present day Allen Hall on the Sheldon Jackson campus. According to Sophia Cracroft, who visited Sitka in 1870, the roadway continued to the upper Indian River, which was called "the Creek." Cracroft noted that past a dip and bend in the road was an opening where wagons crossed the river.[36] Because a branch of the road led to the naval and military cemetery behind the mission property, the route later became known as "Cemetery Road."[37]

Sheldon Jackson testified that the road was extended as much as one-half mile into mission property and in the process a great deal of timber was removed. Students in the Industrial School used spruce timbers from the upper Indian River in their cooperage class to construct casks for sale to the fish packing plants.[38]

This road is first shown on an 1879 survey of the Sitka harbor and its vicinity (Figure 6-3). It is shown heading north into the forest, traveling over a rise, crossing two streams that flow into the Indian River, and then heading down and meeting the river. The map does not show the road extending to the opposite shore. Whether the wagons stopped just across the river or whether the road continued is not clear, although it is likely that if the road proceeded, it followed the river valley.

Cracroft also recorded the methods used in the construction of the roadway. She wrote that "the heavy forest had been cleared away on each side for a considerable space, and the road had been made over the spongy ground by placing logs in the

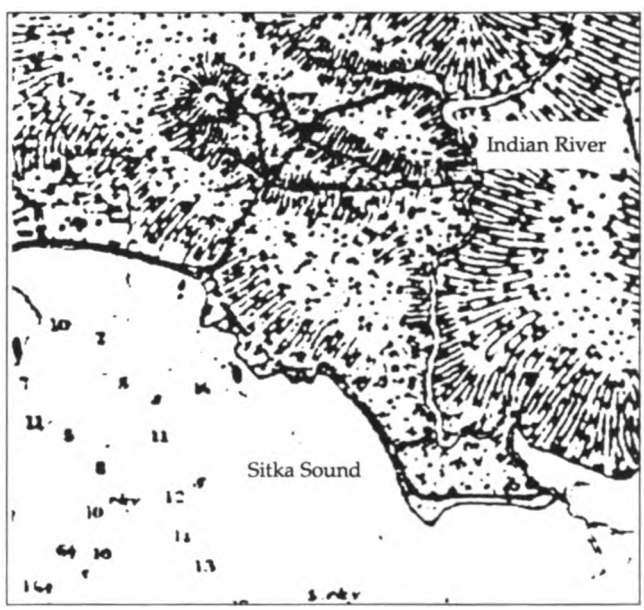

Figure 6-3. Section of the 1879 American survey of Sitka Harbor showing the Indian River area (the area shown equals approximately 1 sq. mile.)

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Figure 6-4. One of the "corduroy" roads leading through the forest near Sitka, ca. 1880s-1890s.

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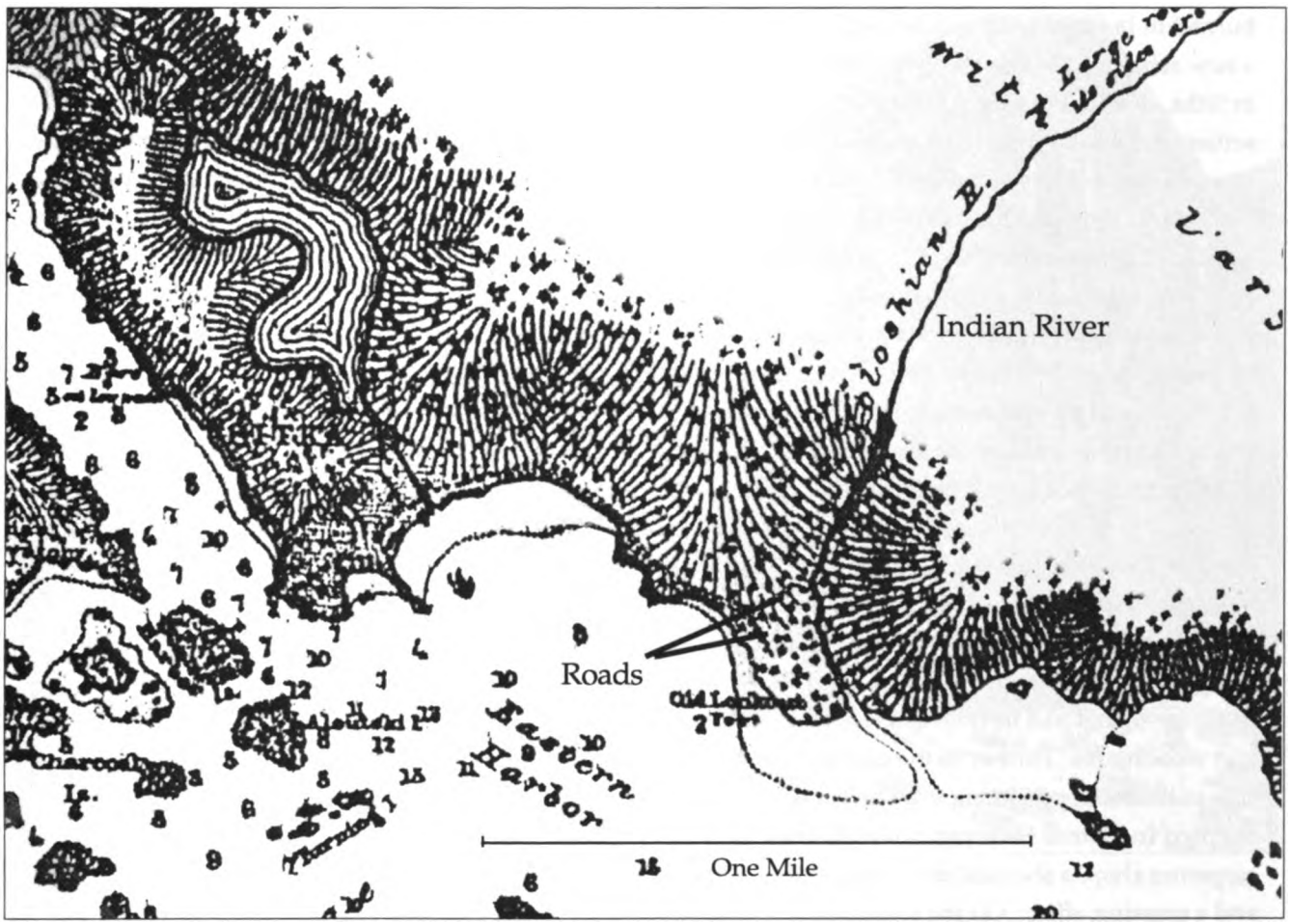

Figure 6-5. Section of an 1869 American survey showing Sitka, the Indian River area, and the "Old Lookout Fort" near the mouth of the river.

'Cordaroy' fashion, with a deep trench on each side for drainage, the earth from which had been thrown upon the road." The corduroy road she described, like those built by the Russians, was effective in creating a level, relatively dry surface over the uneven and frequently soggy ground around the town (Figure 6-4). On her walk upon that road, Cracroft observed two military wagons carrying prisoners back from their wood and water duty, in addition to several Tlingits who carried loads of wood.[39]

The access provided by the new roads allowed the development of several commercial operations during the late 1870s and 1880s along the upper stretches of the river. A mine was opened near the Indian River falls during the summer of 1879. Several mines, located far up the east fork of the river, operated in the mid 1880s, but none of these enterprises proved to be profitable.[40] In 1880, a brewery that supplied the barrooms and saloons of Sitka with fresh beer had been built on the Indian River.[41] There may have been an even earlier brewery on the river. Eliza Skidmore's 1884 description of the area mentions the site of an old Russian brewery, "abandoned for many years," in the vicinity of the river.[42] Skidmore also wrote that the "Davis Road connects the old brewery above the falls and the Governor's Walk, crossing a high swamp."[43]

THE PRESBYTERIAN MISSION COMMUNITY

Activities of the Presbyterian missionaries in the early 1880s changed the direction of development along the Indian River. When the old Russian hospital housing the Presbyterian boarding school

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burned in January 1882, mission leaders sought out a new school site. John Brady, a former missionary in Sitka, donated property for the school east of the settlement, just beyond the site of the previous Russian gardens. By October of the same year, Sheldon Jackson and his followers had a new building "almost under roof." It was a large structure, 50' x 100', set on a rise behind Baranov's Rock, where it faced the beach, and was designed to house 100 native boys. The missionaries envisioned it as just the core of an eventual group of buildings that would be constructed as the school grew.[44]

The mission school expanded rapidly over the next decade as more housing and training facilities for the native students were added. A second large building, constructed in 1884, housed a dormitory for the female students; in addition, dining rooms and classrooms were provided for both sexes. By 1888, the school had its own steam laundry, bakery, and woodhouse. Farther to the east on the opposite side of the road, projecting into the sound, was the Shepard Industrial Building, which housed a carpenter shop, a shoemaker's shop, a band room, and a printing office. On the lower level, it functioned as a boathouse. Farther east along the road was the girls' hospital. In 1888, a total of 115 students, representing a number of different native groups, attended the school.[45]

A central component of the Presbyterian strategy for converting and assimilating the Tlingit children was to separate them from their traditional families and homes by housing them at the school. When the children graduated, the missionaries wanted to provide them with the opportunity to continue to live away from the Tlingit village in housing suitable for a single-family residence. Jackson wrote that, "they [the missionaries] felt it incumbent on them to encourage the educated and trained young men that leave the industrial school to erect small and cheap but neat cottages for themselves. Being educated and out of and away from the barbarous customs of their fathers, they are naturally unwilling when they leave school to settle down in the old way in the native village."[46]

Funding for the cottage construction materials was donated by Presbyterian organizations and individuals through the National Indian Association. The students constructed the buildings and then paid off the cost in installments. In 1888, the cost for one cottage amounted to $350. Each home contained a first floor with two rooms—a pantry and a wood house—and a second half-story with two rooms and two closets.[47] The name of each cottage, named for its benefactor, was displayed in a brown and gold sign on the building.[48] Figure 6-6, taken around 1895, depicts the first row of cottages that had been built. The Miller cottage is closest, then the Bryn Mawr cottage, and finally the Cobb cottage.[49] An 1889 article in the school newspaper proudly reported that while heading east from the town, and passing the main school buildings,

> you come to two streets branching off at right angles from the beach towards Indian River. Three cottages have been built on each of these streets. The first three are already occupied by boys who have graduated from the school, selected "Home" girls for wives, and commenced housekeeping in "Boston" style. The other three cottages will soon be occupied by the same class of residents.[50]

The community of cottages, known as the Westminster Addition to the Village of Sitka, had a formal set of rules and regulations to be agreed upon and signed by the inhabitants. These included a willingness to revere the Sabbath, to live by the Bible, "to be truthful, honest, and industrious, to abstain totally from . . . intoxicants . . . and never attend heathen festivities or countenance heathen customs," among others.[51]

The "Model" cottages were built on the eastern end of the Mission property adjacent to and overlapping with the current park land. The first three were built in 1886 on what is now Kelly Street, and another three were put up in 1888 on the western side of Metakatla Street.[52] A section of the Mission property survey done shortly thereafter shows seven

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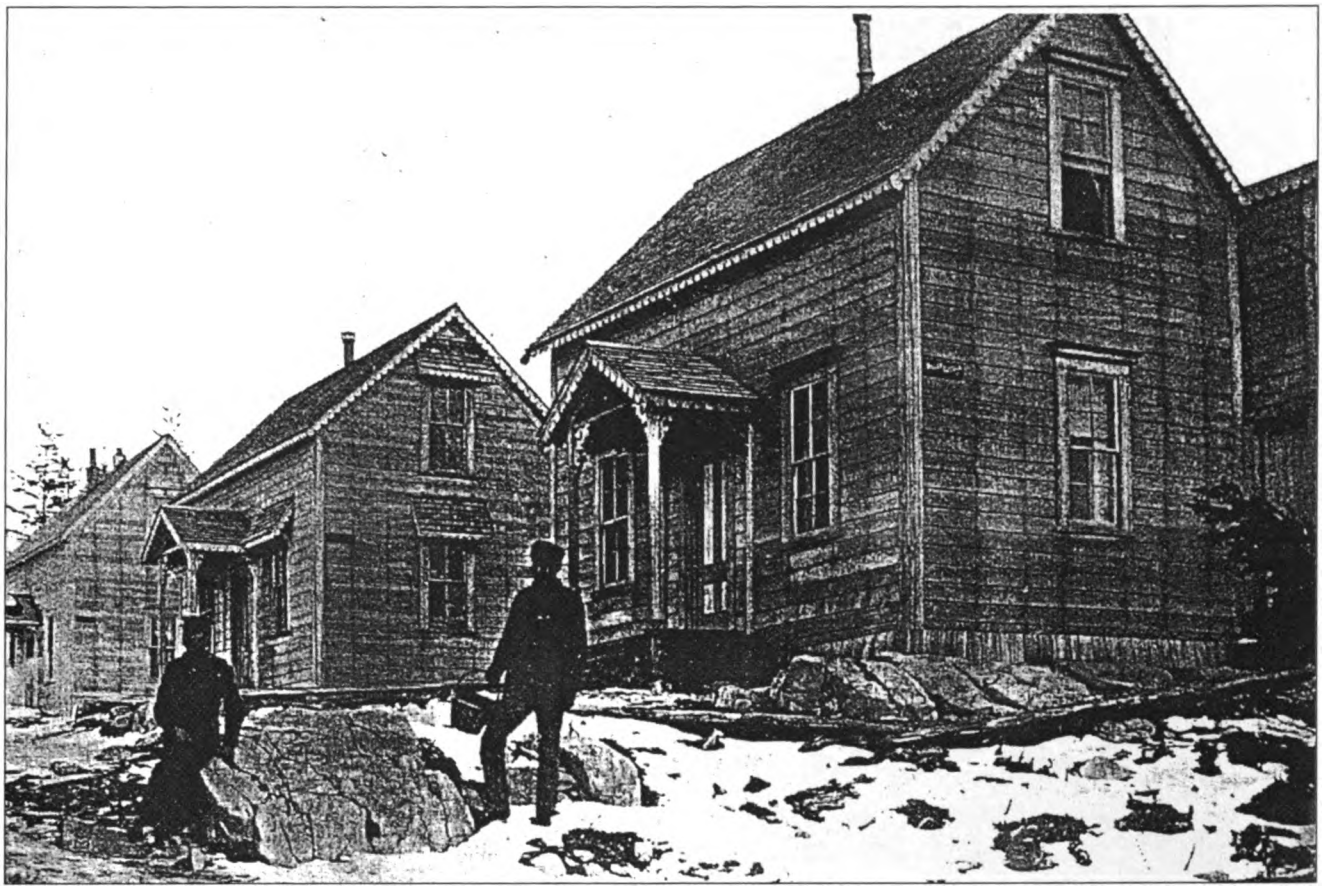

Figure 6-6. Model "Cottages" of the Presbyterian Mission, Sitka, Alaska, ca. 1895.

cottages and illustrates their relationship to the Indian River (Figure 6-7). The single cottage in the most easterly block of the village was located on what is now park property.

The community that had developed at the Mission school dramatically altered the character of the landscape along the eastern outskirts of Sitka (Figure 6-8). Stepan Ushin, a Russian resident of the town since at least 1867, noted in his diary of July 1884, that the character of the area near Baranov's Rock had completely changed from a meeting and viewing point for "promenaders" to a crossing of two roads to the Indian River. He noted that across from the boulder was the Presbyterian mission school.[53] The mission community also played an important role in influencing the future of the Indian River landscape. Not only did the school depend on the river for its water, and later, for its electricity, but the river and its surrounds were important recreational spaces for students and other members of the mission community. Several generations of native inhabitants of the cottages utilized the park in subsequent decades for recreation and the gathering of resources.

INDIAN RIVER PARK

For the first decade after the transfer of Russian America, historical documentation of the Indian River landscape is sparse. The few known accounts of the area that date to this period, however, reveal that the new residents of Sitka continued to consider areas around the Indian River as places for enjoyment. Their attitudes display a continuity that extended from the time that the Russians used the area. The historical evidence also indicates that the recreational use of the site increased in the 1880s—a trend that led to the gradual formalization of the

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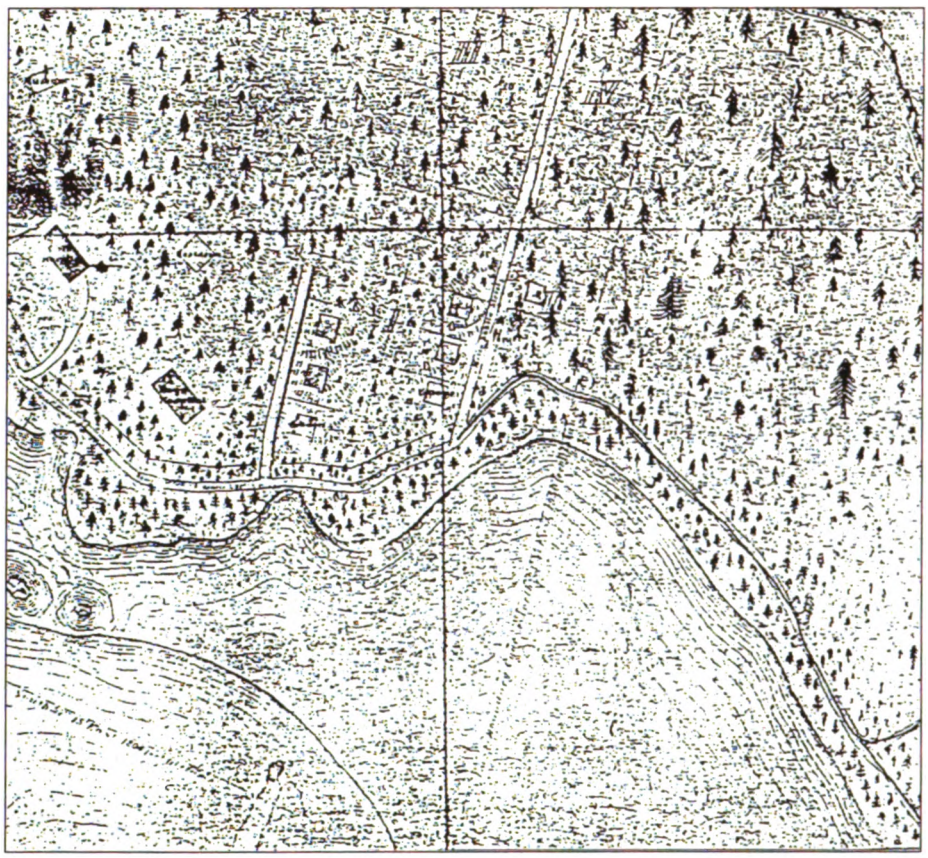

Figure 6-7. Section of the Mission Survey, dating to the late 1880s, showing several of the Mission school buildings and seven cottages.

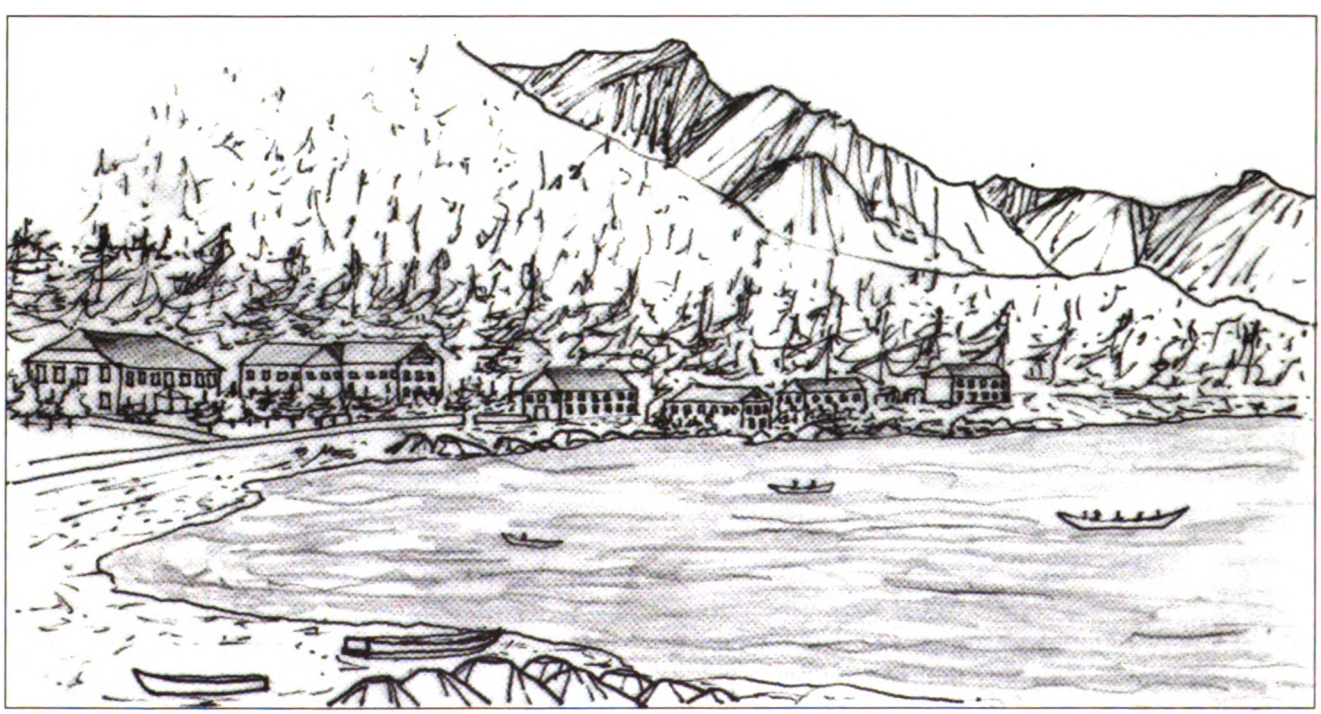

Figure 6-8. Presbyterian Industrial School, Sitka, Alaska, ca. 1895. From left to right the buildings shown are the boys' dormitory, the girls' dormitory, the church, Shepherd Hall, the parsonage, the cottages, and the hospital.

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area into Indian River Park, a recreational site that would be valued, supported, and maintained by Sitka residents. The formal park evolved out of the series of military improvements and an increasing focus on the area by both the growing numbers of tourists and residents who viewed it as a nearby scenic retreat. These uses led to the designation of the Indian River landscape as a federally owned public park, which included a scenic stretch of the river situated upstream of the current park property. The formal preservation of the area was clearly based upon a long-standing attitude among the residents of the town about the charms of the river and its surrounding forests and meadows.

TLINGIT ACTIVITIES ALONG THE RIVER

There is little specific documentation of Tlingit activities in the Indian River area during the period immediately following the transfer of the territory to the United States. It is likely, however, that many traditional Tlingit activities that had taken place there in the past continued during this period. Cracroft mentioned seeing Tlingit individuals carrying wood on one of the Indian River roads.[54] During the 1880s, a Tlingit presence in the park is evidenced by several historic photographs. Figure 6-9 shows two Tlingit adults along the river around 1880, while Figure 6-10 depicts a group of four Tlingits on the Indian River Road. It is probable that they were very often present in the Indian River landscape, but unfortunately their activities during this period were not recorded.

Although little documentation is available to describe their activities during this period, the Tlingit students of the mission school and the residents of the cottages certainly utilized the park as a recreational area as well. The "beautiful Indian River" was frequently referred to as a special destination in the school paper at this time.[55] For adults and children in the mission community the Indian River would have been a convenient place to fish, play, or just relax.

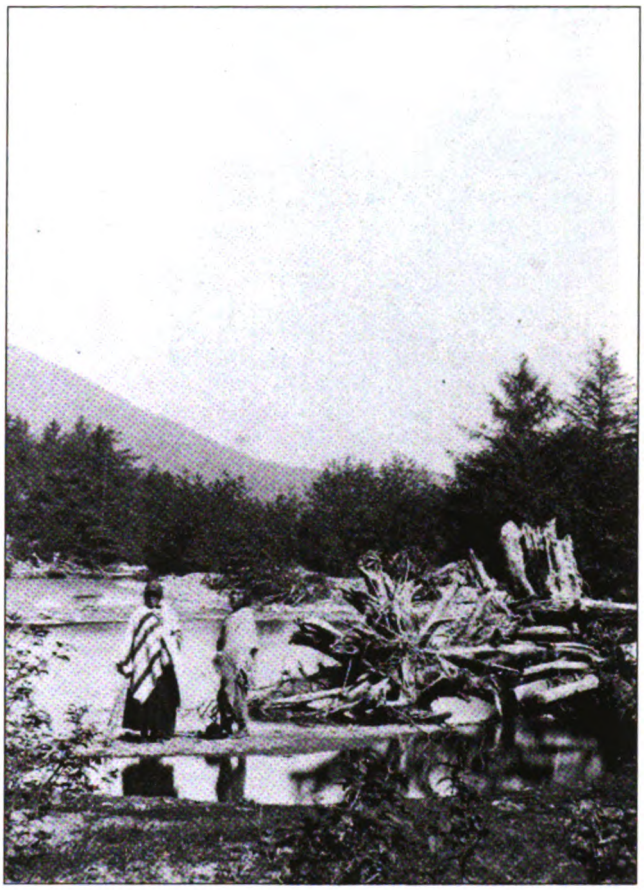

Figure 6-9. Tlingits along the Indian River, photographed sometime before 1882.

A PLACE FOR RECREATION AND CELEBRATION

The transfer of Alaska from Russian to American control did not disrupt the tradition practiced by the other inhabitants of Sitka—namely relaxing along the river. For those Russian inhabitants who remained in Sitka, they continued their accustomed activities along the Indian River. In 1868, Emil Teichmann noted that on practically every sunny afternoon, the Russians "went with their wives and children out into the open country. . . sometimes to the Indian River," where "a shady spot was chosen on the bank of the limpid, rushing mountain stream and everyone set to work to collect dry wood."[56]

Furthermore, the importance of this area to the entire community was evidenced when the first Fourth of July celebration in Sitka (1868) culminated at the mouth of the river. The day-long celebration

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Figure 6-10. Activities on the Indian River Road, ca. 1886-1890.

began in the morning when an Indian canoe race was conducted; many Tlingits participated, with the winners awarded clothing and other prizes.[57] At 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon, a procession marched to the mouth of the Indian River, where the crowds heard speeches and picnicked. William Sumner Dodge, the first mayor of Sitka and principal speaker at the ceremony, described the procession:

> Escorted by music, first came Battery "H", 2nd. U.S. Artillery, commanded by Capt. S.H. Kinney; next Co. "F", 9th U.S. Infantry, commanded by Lieut.. M.C. Foot; then the fire engine, elegantly decorated with flowers and flags, having in a bower a young Russian Miss, representing the Goddess of Liberty, who well sustained a part to her so novel. The engine was manned by soldiers from both companies, and was the most striking feature of the procession. Then followed the Major-General Commanding and Staff, the Orator and Reader, the Chaplain and the City Government and citizens generally, all under the supervision of Lt.-Major C.O. Wood, 9th Infantry, Marshall of the Day. Along the route of the procession many houses and stores were fancifully decorated, and flags waved from many a housetop—Russian as well as American—fraternization and good feeling being throughout the order of the day.[58]

A Finnish worker in the crowd recorded additional details about the procession. He mentioned that a colonel's seven-year-old son, riding on a horse, led the parade, followed by four drummers who drummed loudly. Behind them came many "important men and administrators." Soldiers pulled a fire engine, which included a hut made of conifer branches. A thirteen-year-old Finnish girl (Dodge had called her a Russian) sat in front of the cabin. She wore a small crown, upon which the word "Republic" was inscribed. Following the fire engine came the cannons and more soldiers.[59]

The procession marched out to the mouth of the Indian River, where, according to Dodge, a stand for the speakers and tables had been set up in a "beautiful grove."[60] As related by the Finnish participant, A. Ahllund, "a beautiful tent" had been set up "a little upward from the Kolossi [Indian] River" where enthusiastic speeches were given and performers sang. Nearby was a long table covered with food "where anyone could go; furthermore, a block of beer was distributed to each man."[61] Despite the rain that began to fall as Dodge was speaking, an "onslaught on the tables" commenced, followed by the roaring of the cannon salute that marked the end of the celebration.[62] The fact that the American committee chose the mouth of Indian River as the site for such an important, symbolic event in its short tenure, reveals the community's perception of that landscape as a special place.

Walking along the forest paths became a favorite pastime of Sitka residents and visitors. Military personnel frequented the walks to the Indian River as well. In 1873, the *Alaska Herald* reported that the "grand highway which leads from the wharf to the Indian River, back of Sitka, and probably over a mile long, was made a fashionable resort, where officers of the army and navy sauntered with Russian

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Figure 6-11. A dance at Indian River Point, ca. 1880s.

beauties. The soldiers and pretty Creole girls likewise whiled away the happy hours there. . . ."[63] Others hiked and hunted along the river. Fred Fickett, stationed in Sitka aboard a U.S. Navy ship in 1883 and 1884, frequently hiked up the river. In January 1883, Fickett noted in a diary account that he "went up the Indian River with care. Shot two ducks and an eagle." In February Fickett noted that he "went on a walk with Andrew, Lt. Thomas & wife and Miss Washews" to the Indian River and back.[64] Military personnel apparently also conducted practices along the river. The Marines held rifle practice at the Indian River point, where they would shoot across the river to "Target Island."[65]

By the 1880s, the area was becoming noted as a park and city attraction. As early as 1883, the land encompassing the mouth of the Indian River was both recognized as Sitka Park, and was referred to as "Indian River Park" in Sitka's newspaper, *The Alaskan*. The town's residents expressed concern for and pride in the area. An 1886 letter to the editor complained about the amount of wood cutting, decay, and vandalism apparent in the "park" area, and suggested that citizens hire a watchman "to take care of trails and report vandalism." The writer ended with the assertion that "there are many magnificent parks on the continent, but none more beautiful than our natural Indian River Park."[66] Community contributions to park improvements were noted in a May 1887, article that thanked "Mssrs. Barnett and McLean" for making both bridges passable. The author went on to suggest that prison labor could be utilized "in putting the trail on each side of the river in good condition for pedestrians."[67] Subscription funds paid for the construction of a bridge over the lower portion of the river in 1888. In June 1889, "District Attorney Grant and Deputy Clerk Meyer went out . . . and did some needed repairs to the Indian River bridge," with planking supplied by Collector Pracht.[68]

Charles Hallock's description of the Indian River vicinity clearly illustrates the affection residents and visitors had for that landscape. He wrote that the Indian River

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> is a favorite resort for visitors and townspeople, as well. Since the occupancy of the town by the government marines, they have devoted lots of labor to building bridges, rustic seats and walks along this sparkling stream, which is broken into falls and picturesque reaches here trout disport; and he who directed the work has done it admirably well, for every natural beauty has been left untouched, and as my friend. . . declares, "it is just like walking through a magnificently wooded park which has gone wild for centuries, with only the walks left civilized." Some of the firs and hemlocks are simply immense, and the undergrowth is frightful to penetrate.[69]

The rushing mountain stream and dense forest described by Hallock certainly included sections of the river upstream from the present park boundaries. The cascading stream and heavy woods of this upper area obviously appealed to the late nineteenth-century travelers' sense of romantic nature.

A PUBLIC PARK IS CREATED

Arising out of the widespread community interest in the park, on March 31, 1890, Alaska Commissioners Henry E. Haydon, O.W. Farenholt, and John G. Brady, appointed by then Governor Lyman Knapp, recommended that a public reserve be created at the mouth of the Indian River. Their recommendation to Governor Knapp was drafted in response to a suggestion by the Department of Interior that before Congress extended the public land laws into Alaska, any property needed by the government for public use ought to be formally declared through presidential proclamation. Along with other proposed reserves throughout the town of Sitka, including a military reserve on Japonski Island, and the reservation of the wharf site, Custom House, barracks, parade ground, public common, school site, governor's house, and the naval and military cemetery and watering site at Jamestown Bay for the Navy, the commissioners recommended:

> for reservation as a public park all that plat of ground, bounded on the West by the line as established by the survey made for the Presbyterian Mission . . . and along the shore line of the Bay at low tide to the mouth of the Indian River, and across the mouth of said River, along its right bank for an average width of 500 feet along said bank, to the point known as Indian River Falls; and also on the left bank of said river from said falls, an average width of 200 feet from said falls to the Eastern line or boundary as shown on the Mission plat (see Diagram 9).[70]

The governor forwarded the commissioners' recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior, who then proposed to President Benjamin Harrison that the majority of the land tracts be reserved. In a proclamation dated on June 21 of the same year, the President approved the Secretary's recommendations, stating that the "tracts of public land in the Territory of Alaska are hereby reserved for the uses and purposes indicated by the Secretary, until otherwise directed by Congress."[71]

With that proclamation, Indian River Park became an official public property. No provision was made, however, for responsibility or funds for its maintenance. It fell to the citizens of the town and to prison laborers to maintain the new park. Reports that appear in *The Alaskan*, for example, mention some of the maintenance being done at the time. In June 1895, the paper observed that prisoners had swept the streets all the way to the Indian River. But the efforts of prisoners and citizens were not always sufficient to maintain the park to everyone's satisfaction. In 1898, *The Alaskan* again emphasized the need for community pride in its plea to clean up the park:

> Indian River Park is one of Sitka's notable places. Everyone who comes here remarks about its location and goes away with pleasant memories of it. In two months, representative people from all over southeastern Alaska will be here attending the May term of the District court. About the same time commences the excursion season and persons from all over the country will be coming to Sitka. . . . The park ought to be cleaned up, new benches put in and new walks laid out.[72]

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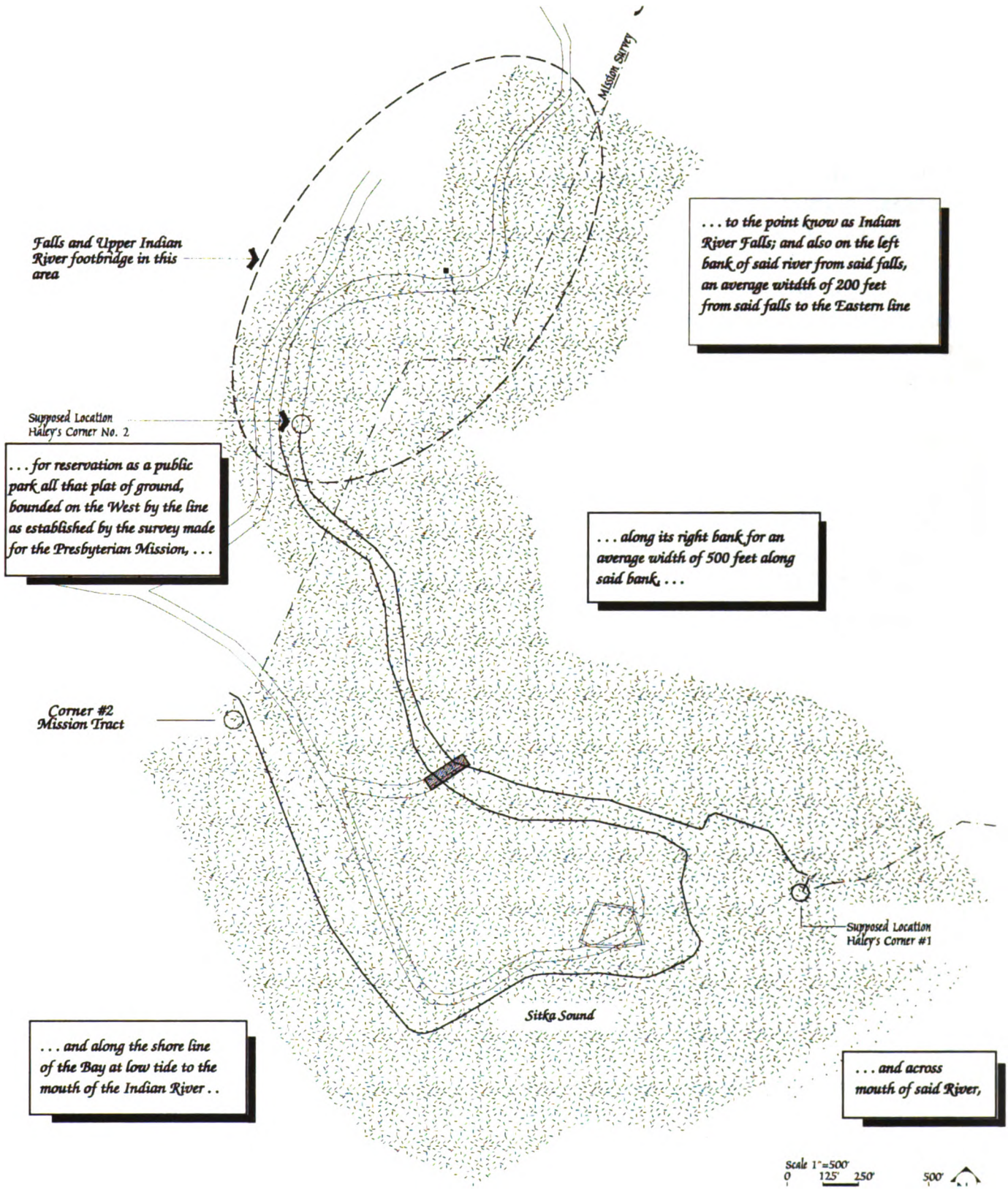

Diagram 9. The shading covers the approximate area of the public park created by Presidential Proclamation in 1890.

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The park had become central to Sitka's civic identity and was one of its main tourist attractions. As a consequence of this importance, the editors felt that the park ought to be spruced up. Indeed, if most of the benches and trails in the park at this time were the ones built by Gilman and his men in 1884, they certainly would have been in need of repair and renovation fourteen years later.

Tourists who visited the park during the 1890s commented on its romantic character. A.P. Prichard, who arrived in Sitka on the steamer, *The Queen*, on July 6, 1890, remembered taking "a stroll through the beautiful winding walk among the dense evergreens to the river and across the bridge to the falls."[73] Septima Collis also stopped at Sitka on her voyage through the Inland Passage. Collis reported that after hearing she should see the Indian River, she and some friends walked out to "a very quaint and romantic lane, leading to a clear and rapid stream over which is thrown a pretty rustic suspension bridge." Collis remarked that it was a "very charming spot."[74] The upper bridge, rushing stream, and Indian River Falls in the public park provided an accessible romantic "wilderness" that Victorian excursionists craved.

LANDSCAPE CONDITIONS

Landscape conditions at what is now Sitka National Historical Park during the period covered by this chapter are illustrated in Diagrams 10, 11, and 12. Diagram 10, featuring landscape conditions for the years from 1868-1870, depicts both the current park area and a section of the river upstream from present park boundaries that was historically a popular scenic stretch of the river. Diagram 11 depicts the landscape conditions of what is now the park during the years from 1870 to 1890, and includes the locations of the documented paths, the site of the lower footbridge, and the site of a homestead established in 1882-1883 near the mouth of the river. Diagram 12 depicts the distribution of plant communities in what is now the park for the same period. Like the other plant community diagrams, the illustration was generated using the existing historic documentation and making some inference and conjecture about probable conditions resulting from activities within the site.

THE INDIAN RIVER AREA

Evidence as to the character of the Indian River area is extremely limited during the first decade of American presence in Sitka. The few historical accounts left by visitors to the river fail to provide information about the vegetation on the river banks. They do suggest, however, that the river continued to be perceived as a scenic resource. At the same time, timber may very well have been cut by the American Army during that first decade, leaving those sections of the area less than scenic. Early photographs depict some of those sections. Nevertheless, Sitka's climate fosters rapid revegetation and the growth of new plant communities that would have quickly softened the views. In addition to these effects, the dynamics of the river channel would have continued to shape the plant communities along the river banks as well.

The earliest known photographic evidence of the river dates approximately to 1880. Figure 6-9 shows a stretch of the river at about that time, with Tlingit individuals standing on the shore, flanked by a pile of stumps. Another image taken by the same photographer around 1880 shows what are clearly stumps covering the far bank of the river (Figure 6-12). Although the images are identified as views of the Indian River near Sitka, it is not clear whether they were taken within what is now the park. What is clear is that the effect of logging adjacent to the river was very apparent for at least some of its length.

Historic accounts and photographs dating to the late 1880s and 1890s do provide specific information about the Indian River area at that time. The photographs of the lower stretches of the river within what is now the park depict an irregular margin of young conifers along the river, interspersed with shrubs, grassy openings, and exposed gravel. Figure

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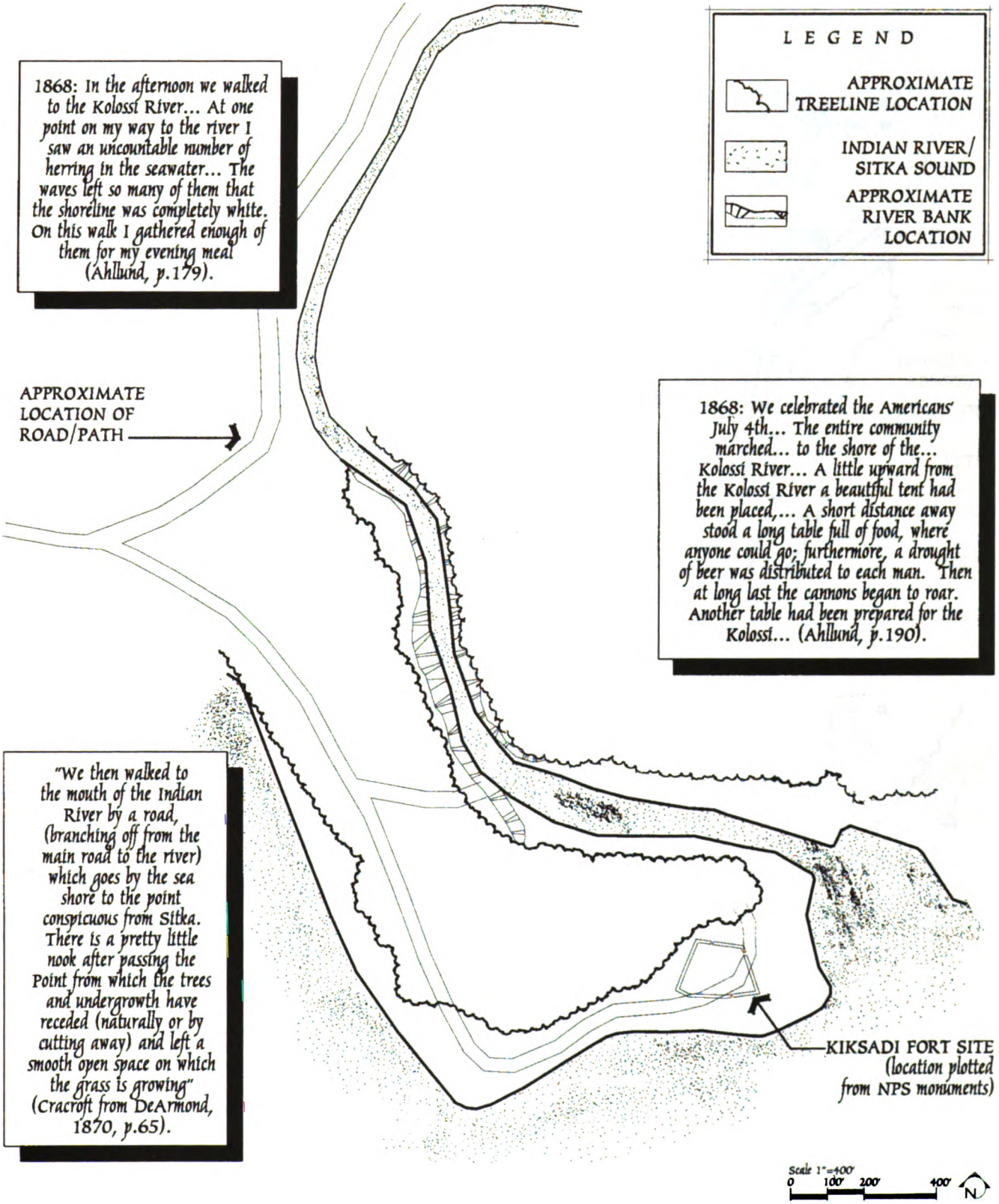

Diagram 10. Landscape conditions, 1867-1870, in what is now Sitka National Historical Park.

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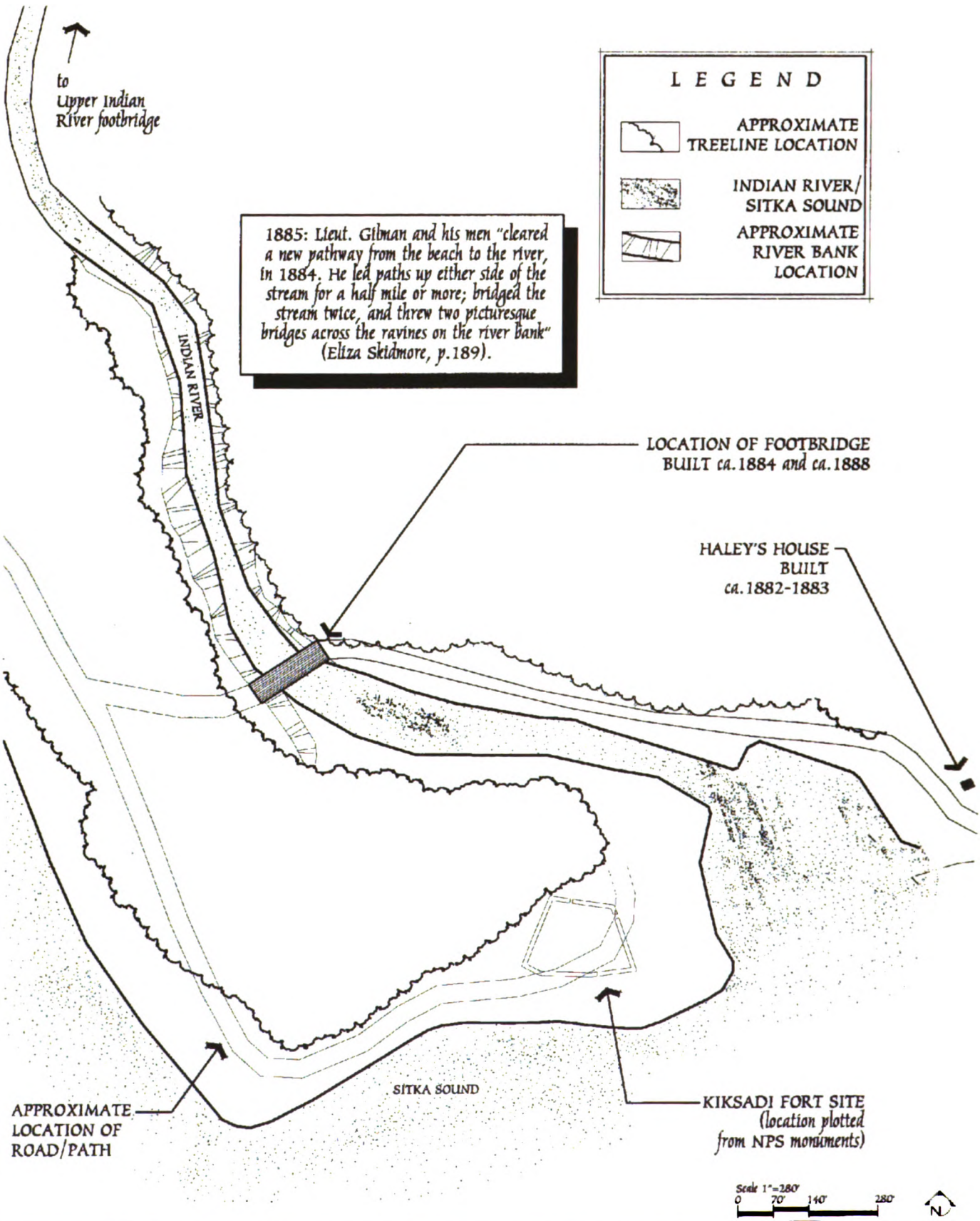

Diagram 11. Landscape conditions, 1870-1890, in what is now Sitka National Historical Park.

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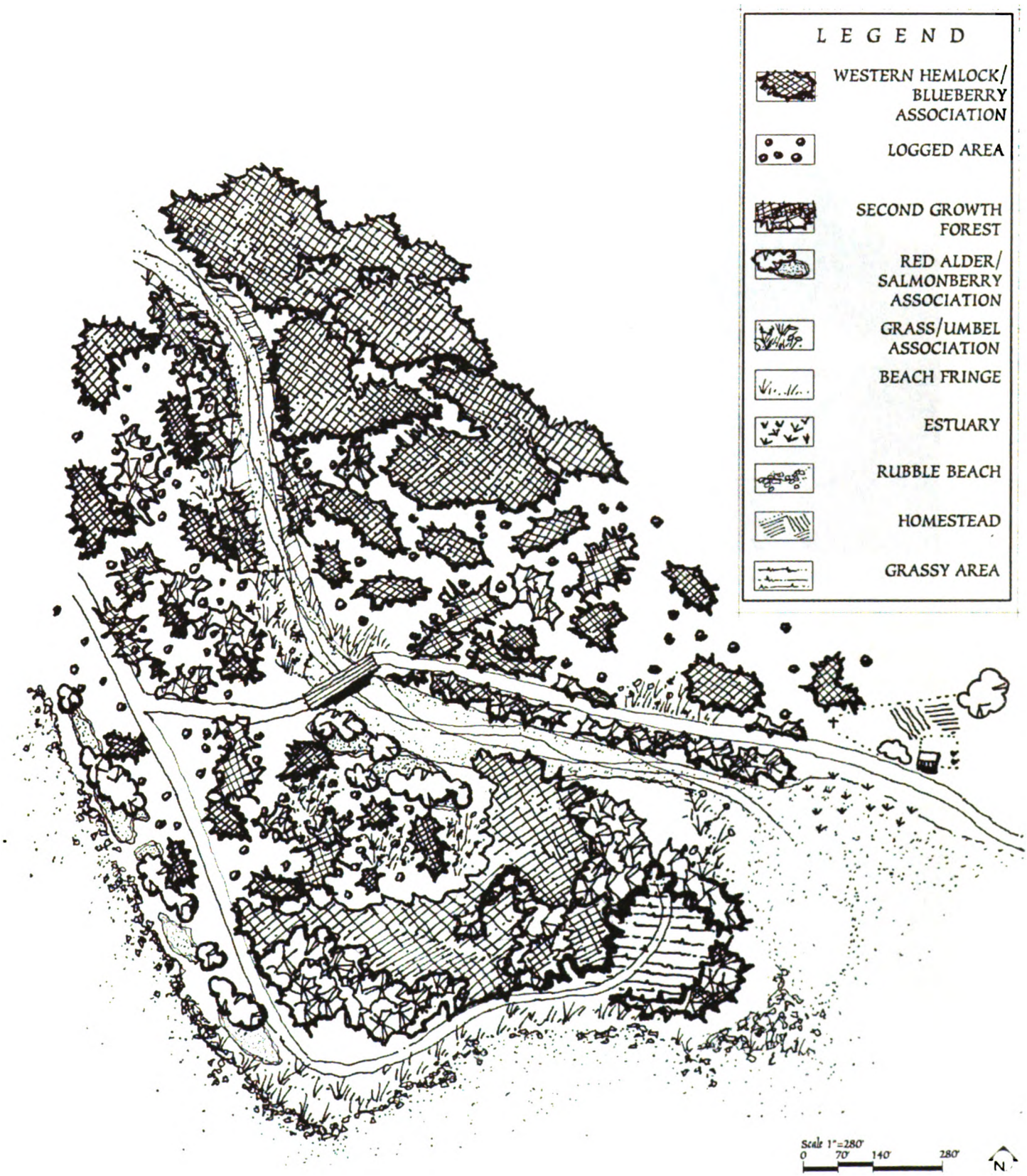

Diagram 12. Plant communities, 1870-1890, in what is now Sitka National Historical Park.

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Figure 6-12. Stereoscopic image of a heavily logged section of the Indian River, ca. 1880.

Figure 6-13. View of the lower Indian River, ca. 1886-1890.

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6-11, an up-river view taken from the bridge between 1886 and 1890, clearly illustrates that conifers of varying sizes comprised the dominant vegetation type on the river banks, but that between and among them, shrubs and grasses also occurred. A photograph of the bridge taken at about that time clearly conveys a similar character (Figure 6-14). Although the conifers predominate, shrubs are also evident on both sides. A number of stumps are evident in the river channel and along the banks. Figure 6-15, another view of the bridge, shows the variation in the age of the conifers.

Written descriptions about the growth that existed near the river focus on the upper stretches of the stream, near the upper bridge. Those accounts depict a lush undergrowth of ferns and grasses, large trees, and many fallen trunks. E. Ruhamah Skidmore described the area in 1884 as follows:

> All along the Indian River the ferns run riot, covering the ground in every clearing, and curling their great fronds up with the huge green leaves of the "devil's club" . . . . The moss covers everything under foot with a close, springy carpet, six inches deep, and moss and lichens, ferns and grasses envelop every fallen log and twig and convert them into things of beauty.[75]

Another visitor, who walked to the upper river in 1890, described the area in similar terms, writing that it was "a very charming spot, rich with ferns of the most delicate texture and brightest green and velvet mosses . . . a bower of wild foliage in fact, of exquisite color. . . ." [76] Photographs of the area taken at that time convey an irregular growth of conifers along the rocky shores.

These photographs also illustrate the dramatic change in the character of the river itself between the upper, rocky, fast-moving stretches and the wider, more level and placid section closer to the mouth. Figure 6-14, probably taken from a location quite close to the river's mouth, shows a rather wide channel at that point. Within this lower section, it is probable that the river normally flowed among and between stretches of exposed cobble. In 1870, Cracroft had remarked that the river flowed into the sound in at least two channels.[77]

As can be seen from the photographs, at that time two bridges crossed the river in what became Indian River Park. Both were built in 1884 by the U.S. Marines stationed in Sitka under the command of Lieutenant Gilman.[78] The upper bridge crossed the river near the end of a section of rapids known as Indian River Falls (Figures 6-16 and 6-17). This rustic bridge, with its fantastically arched spans crossing the rushing stream, was a favorite destination of tourists and residents alike. Skidmore also mentioned the spot in her account. She wrote that the bridge hung "its airy trestles over the Indian River at a point where the main branch comes tumbling down in cascades, and a side stream pours in its sparkling clear waters."[79] Figure 6-17 shows the wooden footpath and railing winding out of the forest and down several steps to the bridge. The photograph also shows the remains of what was probably an earlier bridge on the bank below the

Figure 6-14. Looking up the Indian River Channel towards the lower footbridge, ca. 1886-1888.

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Figure 6-15. Lower Indian River footbridge built by Lieutenant Gilman and his U.S. Marines, photographed ca. 1886-1888.

one built by the Marines. Gilman's bridge was destroyed sometime before 1893 when trees felled by wood cutters floated down the river and jammed above the bridge.[80]

Gilman and his crew also constructed the lower Indian River bridge in what is now the park (Figures 6-14 and 6-15).[81] It most likely was built at the point where the old Russian road came to the river and where the Russian bridges had been erected. After Gilman's lower bridge washed out in a flood, another structure was built at roughly the same location in 1888 to allow access to mining sites (Figure 6-18).[82] Funds to build the second bridge were raised by subscription, which was constructed by I.B. Hammon for a cost of $142.83.[83]

Beginning in about 1882-83, American homesteading activity is documented on the northeastern side of the river. Nicholas Haley, a soldier who was discharged at Sitka, claimed a homestead along the river, based on his legal rights as a Civil War veteran. His homestead claim, dated June 1, 1883, and which was recorded and received in February of that year, stated:

> I the undersigned, has [sic] taken up and claim one hundred and sixty acres of land as a homestead. . . northeast from the town of Sitka and house built on said homestead. . . . [there shall be] a notice written on a board and placed on said tree and it shall be known as the Sitka Park and Haley's Homestead.
>
> The starting point of this notice and house is on the north bank of Indian River point, the house stands about fifty feet from salt water in a bunch of small spruce trees and about one hundred feet from said house stands a post on the south corner marked N.H. and salt water strikes said post at high tide.[84]

Because the perimeter of Haley's claim was marked by blazed trees, it is no longer possible to delineate its exact location.

Several other documents, however, provide further clues as to the extent of the claim. A 1908 government document reveals that a conflict existed between the mission plat and Haley's homestead, in that the former property included a portion of his claim. Maps drawn of the proposed public park in 1908 show several, but not all of the corners of Haley's property. In Diagram 13, those points are

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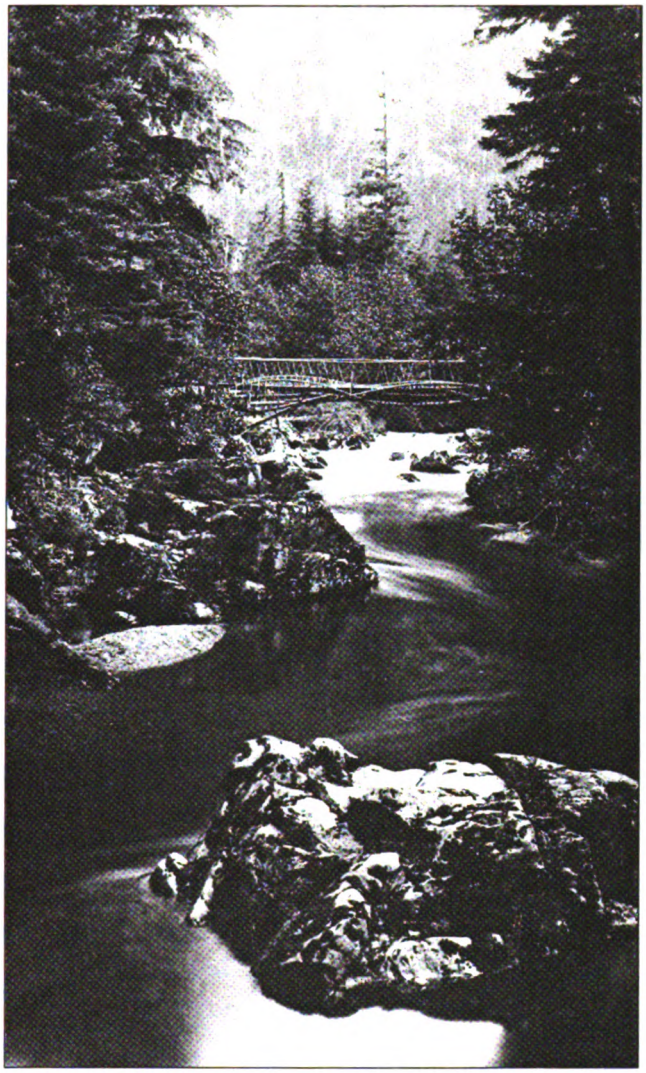

Figure 6-16. Upper Indian River footbridge, ca. 1886-1890.

depicted in the context of other nearby developments proximate to the river. The point of intersection of Haley's two boundaries indicated on the 1908 map was plotted and a dotted line drawn on an approximate boundary to his homestead. The claim, however, must have originally extended farther to the west, as Haley later stated that he gave some of his claim to Sheldon Jackson's Mission.[85] Whatever the exact extent of Haley's homestead, it is clear, certainly, that he made significant changes to the landscape on the eastern side of the Indian River. On or very near the site of the former Russian period homestead, Haley cleared land, probably of brush and young forest growth, for his cabin and gardens, and built a road and fence through the homestead along the eastern bank of the river.[86] In addition, he raised cattle, hogs, and other livestock on the land.

The public park created in 1890 conflicted with Haley's homestead claim. The conflict arose from the fact that the Presidential Proclamation of 1890 failed to specify if the point of measurement referred to as the bank of the Indian River was to be defined by the high tide or low water line. If the boundaries were measured from the high tide line, the public park would have included Haley's house and the point of land east of the river's mouth; however, if it were measured from the low water line, then the park boundary would have been west of Haley's wood road.[87]

Haley's right to the contested land was later denied by W.A. Langille of the U.S. Forest Service, who ruled, in a 1908 report, that the homesteader had failed to improve his claim. Langille reported that the Haley family had a home in Sitka, and had never lived on the claim. The only building on the property at the time was a small one-room house, built in 1883-84, which Langille found "worth nothing at present." Langille's recommendation was that Haley's right "to that part of the claim in conflict with the Proclamation of President Harrison dated June 21, 1890, be canceled."[88]

Figure 6-17. Posing on the Upper Indian River footbridge, late 1880s or early 1890s.

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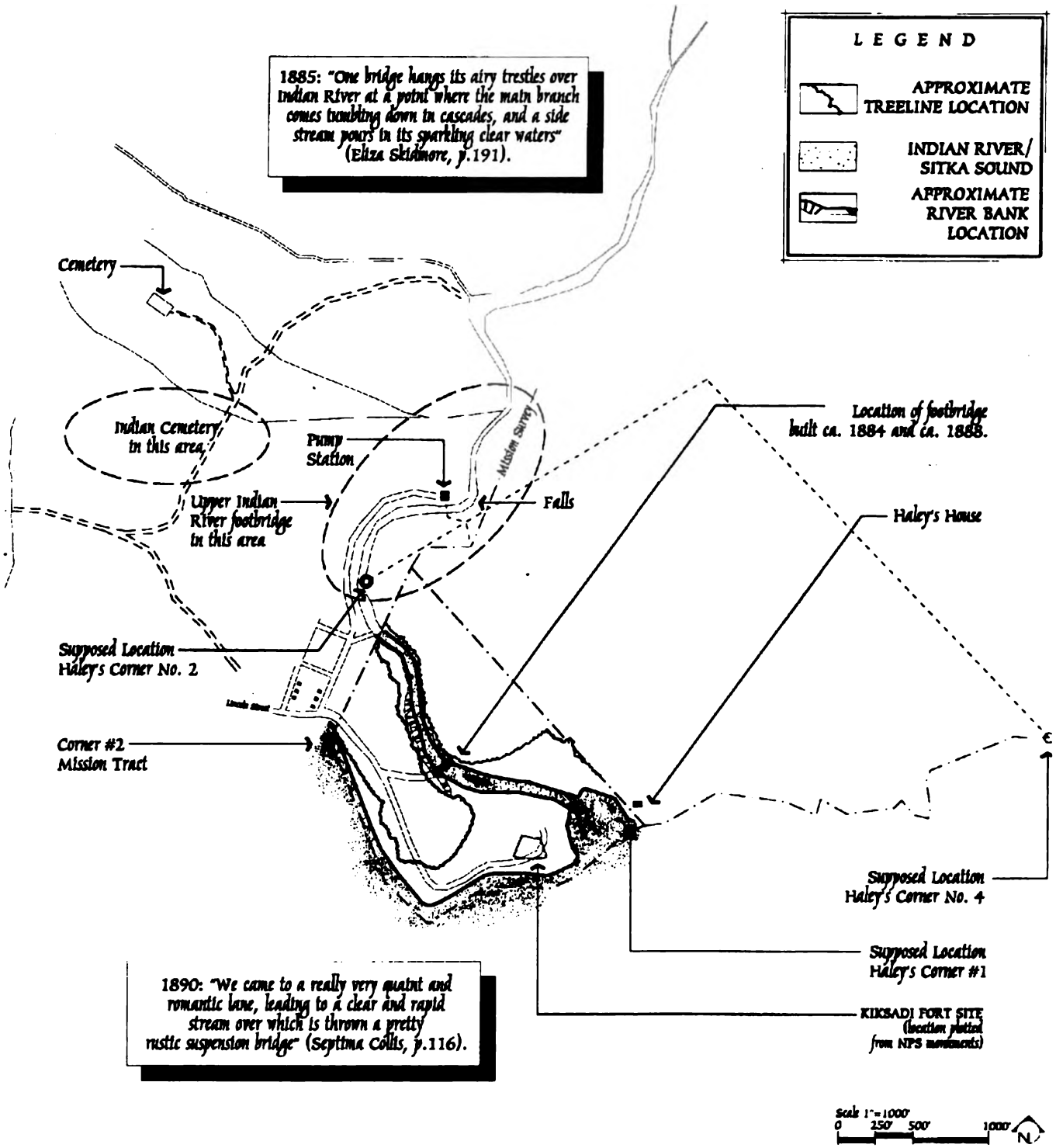

Diagram 13. Greater Indian River area, 1870-1890.

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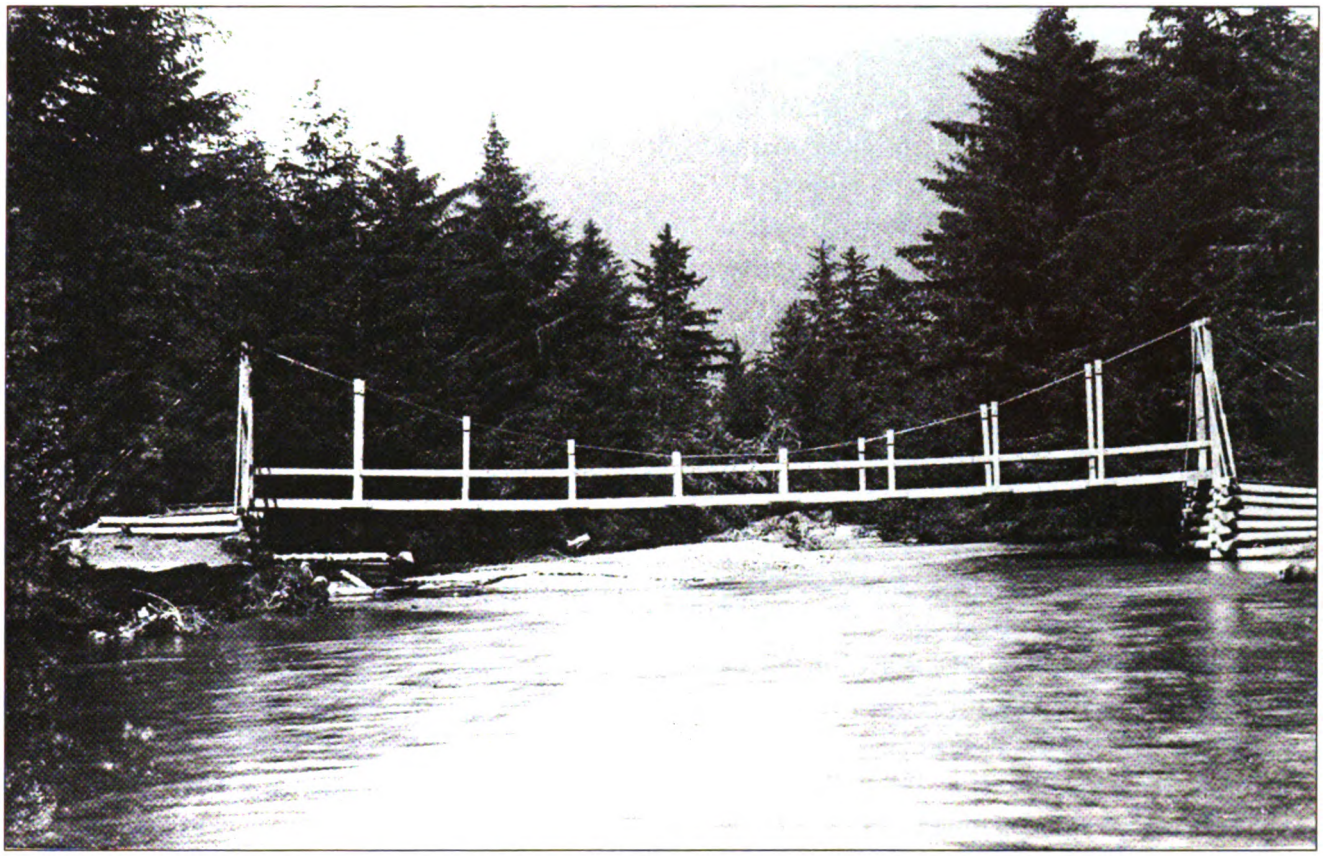

Figure 6-18. Lower Indian River bridge, built in 1888, after the Gilman bridge washed out in a flood.

Haley blamed his failure to improve the claim on the Tlingits from town and on "the older boys of the Mission" for committing a series of crimes against him, including killing eleven of his cattle, tearing down his fences, destroying his garden, and stealing his wood. Haley claimed to be so discouraged by these acts that he gave up trying to improve the property.[89] Haley further claimed that he was told the U.S. government would pay him for the land separated from his claim and incorporated into the public park; therefore he stated that he would only relinquish his rights upon payment. The federal government, however, both denied Haley's rights to the property and refused to pay him for the holding. A statement relinquishing his rights to the contested land, dated November 14, 1908, was never signed.[90]

Further evidence that Haley never officially gave up his rights to the land within the park is provided by the attempts of his children to obtain some kind of recompense for the property loss. In 1923, Haley's son, Charles, wrote a letter to the Hon. Charles A. Sulzer, Delegate from Alaska, in which he described all the improvements made to the land when he was a child and the present maintenance work they continued to do, "keeping the cabin in proper shape, and also improving the property outside these lines of the Park." In addition, Charles Haley asserted the following:

> There has [sic] been no improvements made by the Government on this park on the Haley side of Indian River, nor has the timber been protected. Although we have been stopped from cutting timber on these grounds many years ago, others cut timber there, and it is only by my watching, and entering a complaint to the workers at times that I prohibit them from cutting on or within our lines, although it is on or within the park lines. We have protected this timber for many years.[91]

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Dick Haley and Jimmy Cohen, two natives who worked for Nicholas Haley, swore in affidavits in 1923 as to the improvements they had made on the property during the 1880s. Cohen swore that he had cleared land, cut brush, made fence posts, and worked on the road along the bank of the Indian River "sometime during the year 1881 or thereabouts." He also swore that Haley lived on the homestead, and kept cattle, hogs, and other livestock as well. Dick Haley swore much the same.[92] The matter was finally settled by NPS Director Arthur Cammerer, who decided, on June 9, 1925, that Haley had no basis for his claim against the government because he had failed to perfect his title to land within the park at the time the Monument was set aside, "subject to any vested right," in 1910.[93]

Diagram 13 illustrates the relationship between the park and the developments that were occurring around it. Variation in the historic maps resulted from different road locations. The section of the dotted-line road running roughly from east to west is Lincoln Street. The six mission cottages that had been built by 1888 are shown adjacent to the park. The corners of Haley's homestead and the location of his house were taken from a 1908 survey of the park (Figure 7-17). The upper Indian River footbridge is located generally because its precise location at this time is not clear due to changes that occurred along the river after that time. It is very possible that the footbridge crossed the river about where Sawmill Creek Highway does today.

FORT AREA

There is very little mention of the fort area situated within the park during this period. According to Sophia Cracroft, in 1870 there was a"pretty little nook after passing the Point [on the trail along the beach] from which the trees and undergrowth have receded (naturally or by cutting away) and left a smooth open space on which the grass is growing."[94] Cracroft also remarked that the "river runs out swiftly, and has made itself at least 2 channels." Her remarks reveal that the smooth open space was near the river mouth just up from the point. It probably was proximate to if not at the same place where the Fourth of July festivities had been conducted in 1868. Its extent is not clear. Cracroft thought that it had been the site of Russian gardens.[95] Apparently evidence of the former Russian homesteads could be observed somewhere in this area. Skidmore reported, in 1893, that "traces of the ruins" could be found "in the park-like reach" at the mouth of the Indian River.[96]

Cracroft had written that from the grassy clearing, "the town is shut out from view, and you look only at the fine snowy range with a foreground of islets and hills on the mainland."[97] Her account reveals that trees and undergrowth surrounded the grassy spot. It seems likely that much of the western portion of the fort area would have grown up into a second-growth spruce-hemlock forest 66 years after it probably was cleared by the Tlingits. Wood, however, may have been cut by both the Russians and Americans in that area as well. The grassy nook Cracroft described in 1870 may have been proximate to or even the actual area where the retired Russian homesteaders were located, although in the intervening 15 years since their destruction, the area would have filled in with shrubs and alders. Nonetheless, other undocumented activities and natural forces may have taken place in the vicinity that could have altered the vegetation. Without more historic documentation it is impossible to know if this actually occurred.

RUSSIAN WALK

Certainly the Russian road to the Indian River continued to be utilized by the Americans during this period. It most likely was used by the Army troops and may have been improved by them as well. As Jackson testified, in 1885, all of the roads to the river were "in continual use for wood roads, a public walk, park, and places of public resort by the resident and the Unites States officers stationed at Sitka, Alaska, as well as the tourist and visitor to our town and territory."[98] In 1870, Cracroft described walking upon a road that was at least partially, if not entirely, the old Russian route. Cracroft wrote that

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Figure 6-19. "Walking over the lower Indian River bridge to the beach," ca. 1886-1888.

she followed the shore "by a well made road leading to the Indian River." She remarked that it was "the only road in any direction, so it is the universal walk for the whole community. The Military Carts too come this way for wood, and often for water also, as the river water is very fine. The half cleared margin gives a good deal of variety in vegetation, old stumps, fallen trees & bits of rock."[99]

Historic photographs taken in the 1880s illustrate the character of the trail at that time. Figure 6-19, a view taken between 1886 and 1888, shows the trail and the western end of the lower Indian River bridge. The path heads straight from the bridge through a small clearing and then into the woods. At that time, the trail appears to be relatively straight and level as it passes through the forest. Another historic photograph of a road to the Indian River taken at approximately the same time may also be the old Russian trail (Figure 6-10). However, it also may be one of the other roads to the river made by the U.S. Army.

Another road followed along the beach on the way to the mouth of the Indian River. Cracroft wrote that she and her acquaintances "walked to the mouth of the Indian River by a road (branching off from the main road to the river) which goes by the sea shore to the point conspicuous from Sitka."[100] Figure 6-20, taken sometime in the 1880s or 1890s, shows a section of this trail. The photograph illustrates that at the time the section shown was flanked by young spruces on the left, and was bordered with both openings and forested areas on the beach side.

Historic surveys of the Sitka vicinity depict both of these trails. An 1879 survey (Figure 6-3) shows a road traversing the Indian River peninsula, probably along the same path as the old Russian road. It also shows a road following the shore and ending at the point of land adjacent to the river's mouth.
A survey done in the 1890s shows the coastal route, but not the old Russian path (Figure 6-21). The omission probably reflects the large scale of the survey.

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Figure 6-20. Road out to Indian River Point, 1880s or 1890s.

FORESTED AREAS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE INDIAN RIVER

During this period, the forested areas on both sides of the river were most likely extremely varied from a structural standpoint. The history of the area prior to this time would have resulted in such conditions. Both historic accounts and photographs depict varied scenes along the river. Accounts of the forest near the upper bridge describe both lush understory, clearings, ancient trees, and young vegetation. Skidmore wrote the following description of the forested area:

> Giant firs and pines rise above the prostrate trunks of other large trees, whose wood is still sound at the heart, although the roots of a tree seventy feet high are arched and knotted over them. These overgrown trunks of prostrate trees are scattered all through the woods, and on one side of the river there is a fallen tree that would excite wonder even in the groves of California. Where the upturned roots are exposed, they are matted into a broad flat base on which the tapering trunk without tap-roots once stood like a candle on a candlestick. The fallen trunk is over ten feet in diameter, and a man six feet high is dwarfed when he stands beside the root. A second forest of ferns, bushes and young trees sprung up on top of this overturned tree, and its giant outlines will soon be lost in the tangle of vegetation.[101]

Her account depicts many characteristics of an old-growth stand. In the same vicinity, however, Skidmore also observed the old brewery clearing. Views of the upper bridge illustrate variations among the kinds of plants that were present and in the sizes of the conifers.

Sophia Cracroft's journal provides some clues as to the character of the lower Indian River vegetation not long after Americans arrived in Sitka. Her descriptions of various areas within the park—the grassy area near the mouth of the river and the "half cleared" margin of the path to the river containing a "good deal of variety in vegetation, old stumps, fallen trees & bits of rock"—suggest that the area was the site of a variety of plant communities in 1870.

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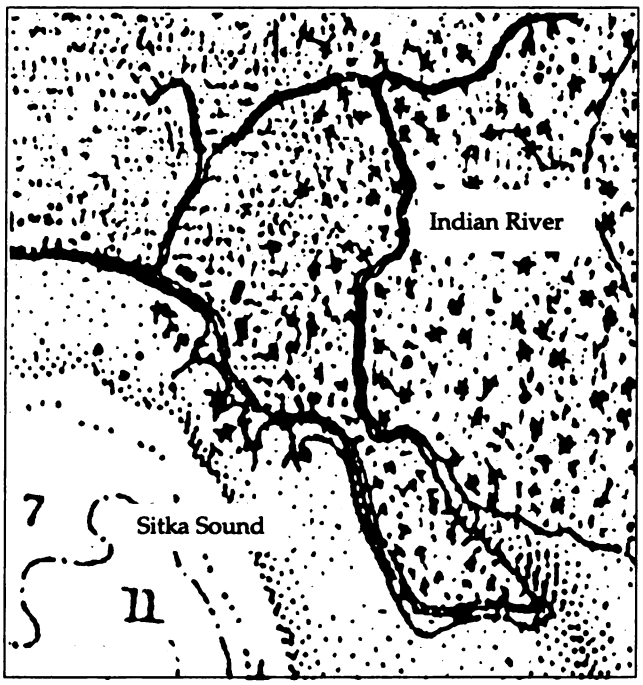

Figure 6-21. Section of an 1893-1897 survey of Sitka harbor, showing the Indian River area (the area shown equals approximately 1 sq. mile).

Historic photographs of the area dating to the 1880s also show a variety of vegetation. Figure 6-18 depicts a section of the Indian River that is fairly densely flanked by young conifers. However, Figure 6-19, looking across the lower Indian River bridge, illustrates quite clearly the varied nature of the forest in that area. The clearing at the foot of the bridge is fringed with juvenile spruce, behind which a number of stumps are apparent. The stumps continue along the entire trail. Several large trees stand behind the foreground of juvenile growth, but the light visible at the rear of the group on the left and on the trail suggests that this vegetation to the rear is more immature. On the right of the trail, the mature vegetation appears to be denser. The variation in the vegetation of what is now the park probably resulted primarily from the history of wood cutting activities that occurred during the Russian era, but that most likely continued through the first decade of American tenure, at the very least. In fact, wood cutting continued to be a problem along the river, even after the area had been set aside as a public park.

River and Forest Trails on Both Sides of the Indian River

Relatively little is known about other trails that traversed the landscape near the Indian River during this period. Nevertheless, it is clear that in 1884, when Gilman's Marines built the Indian River bridges, they also constructed new paths in the vicinity. According to Skidmore, they "cleared a new pathway from the beach to the river," and "led paths up either side of the stream for half a mile or more." They also built bridges over deep ravines on the river bank.[102] Skidmore remarked that Gilman had carefully laid out the river path "so as to bring in view all the best points of scenery."[103]

Then in 1890, another trail was constructed that led from the point of the Indian River to one of the Indian River bridges. In August of that year, Sitka's Marshall Williams and George Kastromentinoff "cut a trail from the point to the bridge along Indian River." According to a local newspaper account, the completed trail was "not only fine, but. . . picturesque."[104] At that time, on the eastern side of the river, the main trail traveled from Indian River Falls to the river's mouth and then led on to Jamestown Bay. According to Skidmore, "many side paths diverged from it."[105] Unfortunately, the precise routes of these paths are not known.

Russian Memorial Area

Little is known about the Russian Memorial site during this period. Skidmore, however, does mention that the Russian graves were located along the main trail on the eastern side of the Indian River in the vicinity of the "beach."[106] What is not clear is whether the graves actually were located in the open area along the beach, or in the woods in that vicinity. It also is not clear how the graves were marked at this time. None of the known historic maps of this period show the grave site.

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CONCLUSION

By 1885, the Indian River landscape was the scene of much activity. At that time, at least three, or possibly four, roads led to the Indian River: one cut through Mission property, one passed through the area near the present park boundary, one traversed the central area of the Indian River peninsula, and one led to the point. Trails led along the river and two rustic bridges spanned its width. As Sheldon Jackson testified in 1885, those roads and bridges were "in continual use for wood roads, a public walk, park, and places of public resort by the resident and the United States officers stationed at Sitka, Alaska, as well as the tourist and visitor to our town and territory."[107] These improvements were also made at a time when most of the areas, where timber previously had been removed, had re-vegetated. A letter written by Fred Fickett, one of the military personnel stationed in Sitka, to his fiancée about improvements that the Marines had made along the Indian River, provides insight into the overall effect of these changes: "Mr. Gilman has made almost a park out of the woods surrounding Sitka," Ficket wrote, "so that it is now almost a lovers paradise."[108]

The public park created along the Indian River in 1890 emerged from a long established pattern of use in the area. The trails and bridges built by the Marines dramatically enhanced the scenic qualities of the area both to residents and an increasing number of tourists. The development of the Presbyterian mission community at the edge of the park not only extended the town right up to the edge of the park, but it became a center for missionaries and students who valued the beauty of the area. The officials who recommended the preservation of the public reserve in 1890 most likely shared those values and percieved the economic benefits a park and tourist destination would offer Sitka.

Indian River Park served as a microcosm of the different kinds of natural beauty found in the area: a visitor could view wild, rushing stretches of water that cascaded through lush, tangled forests, or observe broader, more placid stretches that flowed through a variety of vegetation along the lower stretches of the river. Trails that skirted the beach provided expansive views of the sea and mountains, while trails that led through the woods offered opportunities to study the variety of vegetation. During these first decades of American tenure in Sitka, visitors displayed little interest in or awareness of the history that had occurred on the site; nonetheless, Indian River Park was highly valued both as a natural area and a community park.

ENDNOTES

[1] Ted C. Hinckley, *The Americanization of Alaska, 1867-1897* (Palo Alto, CA: Pacific Book Publishers, 1972), 20.
[2] Archie W. Shiels, *The Purchase of Alaska* (College, AK: University of Alaska Press, 1967), 151-52.
[3] *Ibid.*, 155; Robert De Armond, comments to Arnold Alanen and Holly Smith-Middleton, December 8, 1997.
[4] *Ibid.*, 130; for several months following the transfer, Chief Manager Maksoutoff sold the private buildings that belonged to the Russian American Company, and in some cases, he gave homes to Russians planning to remain in Sitka, and set up trusts for the people who occuppied the two tenements in town, Robert De Armond, comments, December 8, 1997.
[5] Jonathan M. Nielson, *Armed Forces on A Northern Frontier: The Military in Alaska's History, 1867-1987* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1988), 11.
[6] *Ibid.*, 14; Hinckley, *Americanization of Alaska*, 31.
[7] Emil Teichmann, *A Journey to Alaska in the Year 1868: Being a Diary of the Late Emil Teichmann*, edited by Oskar Teichmann (New York: Argosy-Antiquarian Ltd., 1963), 174, 189-90.
[8] *Ibid.*
[9] Hinckley, *Americanization of Alaska*, 40-46.
[10] Teichmann, *A Journey to Alaska in the Year 1868*, 14.
[11] Shiels, *The Purchase of Alaska*, 153.
[12] *Sitka Times*, October 31, 1868, p. 2; DeArmond, comments, December 8, 1997.
[13] Valerie K. Stubbs, *The U.S. Army in Alaska, 1867-1877: An Experiment in Military Government*, unpublished Master's Thesis (Washington, D.C.: American University, 1956), p. 61.
[14] *Ibid.*, 104.
[15] *Alaska Herald* (Sitka), May 24, 1873, p. 1, Stanford University, microfilm, Palo Alto, CA.
[16] *Ibid.*
[17] Hinckley, *Americanization of Alaska*, 47-53, 59-60.
[18] Many authors have commented on the character of Sitka's society at this time. See Hinckley, Teichmann, Nielson, and others.
[19] Teichmann, *A Journey to Alaska in the Year 1868*, 188.
[20] Nielson, *Armed Forces on A Northern Frontier*, 23; military prisoners were also shipped in to Sitka from "the lower forty-eight" to cut wood and haul water, De Armond, comments, December 8, 1997.
[21] *Ibid.*, 20-23.
[22] Carrie Willard, *Carrie Willard Among the Tlingits: The Letters of 1881-1883* (Sitka, AK: Mountain Meadow Press, 1995), 11.
[23] Ted C. Hinckley, *Alaskan John G. Brady: Missionary, Businessman, Judge and Governor, 1878-1918* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1982), 36.
[24] *Ibid.*, 59-60, Willard, *Carrie Willard Among the Tlingits*, 123, 144.
[25] Hinckley, *The Americanization of Alaska*, 69; Assistant Surgeon John Brooke, *A Report on the Hygiene of the United States Army with Descriptions of Military Posts*, War Department, Surgeon-General's

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Office, Washington, May 1, 1875, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1875), 482.
[26] Hinckley, *The Americanization of Alaska*, 128, 187, 190, 193; De Armond, comments, December 8, 1997.
[27] *Ibid.*,150.
[28] *Ibid.*, 229.
[29] E. Ruhamah Skidmore, *Alaska: Its Southern Coast and the Sitkan Archipelago* (Boston: D. Lothrop and Company, 1885), 162-73.
[30] Shiels, *The Purchase of Alaska*, 130.
[31] *Ibid.*, 171.
[32] Brooke, *A Report on the Hygiene of the United States Army*, 482.
[33] *Ibid.*, 482.
[34] Willard, *Carrie Willard Among the Tlingits*, 12.
[35] Sheldon Jackson, "The Annual Report of the Sitka Training School, 1884-85," *The Thlinget* 4 (No. 4, November 1911):1, Stratton Library, Sheldon Jackson College, Sitka.
[36] R.N. DeArmond, ed., *Lady Franklin Visits Sitka, Alaska, 1870: The Journal of Sophia Cracroft, Sir John Franklin's Niece* (Anchorage: Alaska Historical Society, 1981), 51.; De Armond, comments, December 8, 1997.
[37] Eliza Ruhamah Skidmore, *Appleton's Guide-Book to Alaska and the Northwest Coast* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1893), 119-20
[38] Sheldon Jackson, *A Statement of Facts Concerning the Difficulties at Sitka, Alaska in 1885* (Washington, D.C.: Thomas McGill & Co., 1886), 8; De Armond, comments, December 8, 1997.
[39] DeArmond, ed., *Lady Franklin*, 51.
[40] Stephan M. Ushin Diary, Sitka, Alaska, 1874-1894; excerpts translated by Tikhon Lavrischeff, 1935-36, Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley (microfilm) 19, 22; De Armond, comments, December 8, 1997.
[41] Ushin, Diary, 19, 22.
[42] Skidmore, *Alaska*, 191.
[43] Skidmore, *Appleton's Guide*, 120.
[44] Willard, *Carrie Willard Among the Tlingits*, 13-14, 95, 123, 140, 144.
[45] *The North Star*, 1(No. 2), January 1888); 2 (No. 5, April 1889), Stratton Library, Sheldon Jackson College, Sitka
[46] Jackson, *A Statement of Facts*, 9.
[47] *The North Star* 1 (No. 12, November 1888).
[48] *Ibid.*, 6 (No. 8), August 1895.
[49] *Ibid.*
[50] *Ibid.*, 2 (No. 5, April 1889).
[51] *Ibid.*, 11 (No. 5, August 1898).
[52] *Scenes from Sheldon Jackson School: A Documentary History, 1878-1967*, unpublished manuscript, in Stratton Library, Sheldon Jackson College, p. 2; *The North Star* 1 (No. 12, November 1888).
[53] Ushin Diary, 29-30.
[54] DeArmond, ed., *Lady Franklin Visits Sitka*, 51.
[55] *The North Star* 1 (No. 2, January 1888); 2 (No. 5, April 1889).
[56] Teichmann, *A Journey to Alaska in the Year 1868*, 218.
[57] A. Ahllund, "Suomalaisen työmiehen muistelmista" ("Memories of a Finnish Laborer"), translated by A. Alanen, *Suomen Kuvalehti* (Helsinki, 1873), 190.
[58] Honorable William Sumner Dodge, *Liberty, Her Struggles, Perils and Triumphs*, Oration delivered at Sitka, Alaska, Saturday, July 4, 1868 (San Francisco: Alta California Printing House, 1868), 6-7.
[59] Ahllund, "Suomalaisen työmiehen muistelmista," 190.
[60] Dodge, *Liberty, Her Struggles, Perils and Triumphs*, 6-7.
[61] Ahllund, "Suomalaisen työmiehen muistelmista," 190.
[62] *Ibid.*, 6-7.
[63] *Alaska Herald*, 6 (129, May 24, 1873): 1.
[64] Fred W. Fickett, Diary, January 3 and February 6, 1883, Fred Wildon Fickett Papers: 1877-1917, 1930, Archives and Manuscripts Dept., University of Alaska, Anchorage.
[65] *The Verstovian* (Sitka) 3 (No. 6, March 1917), Stratton Library, Sheldon Jackson College.
[66] *The Alaskan*, December 25, 1886, p. 4.
[67] *Ibid.*, May 14, 1887.
[68] *Ibid.*, June 15, 1889.
[69] "Sitka and its Sights: Charles Hallock's Pen Picture of Alaska's Capital," *The Alaskan*, May 9, 1891.
[70] Letter from Henry E. Haydon, O.W. Farenholt, and John Brady to Governor Lyman E. Knapp, March 31, 1890, pp. 3-4, Alaska State Archives, Files of the Alaskan Territorial Governors, L.E. Knapp, 1889-1893, copy from microfilm, Juneau, AK; De Armond, comments, December 8, 1997.
[71] Benjamin A. Harrison, Presidential Proclamation, June 21, 1890, copy included in Joan M. Antonson and William S. Hanable, *Administrative History of Sitka National Historical Park* (Anchorage: National Park Service, 1987), Appendix B.
[72] *The Alaskan*, March 26, 1898, p. 2.
[73] *Ibid.*, August 9, 1890, p. 4.
[74] Septima M. Collis, *A Woman's Trip to Alaska: Being an Account of a Voyage through the Inland Seas of the Sitkan Archipelago* (New York: Cassell Publishing Company, 1890), 116.
[75] Skidmore, *Alaska*, 189.
[76] Collis, *A Woman's Trip to Alaska*, 116.
[77] DeArmond, ed., *Lady Franklin Visits Sitka*, 65.
[78] Skidmore, *Alaska*, 189-91.
[79] *Ibid.*, 191-92.
[80] Skidmore, *Appleton's Guide*, 120.
[81] Skidmore, *Alaska*, 191-92.
[82] Skidmore, *Appleton's Guide*, 120.
[83] Antonson and Hanable, *Administrative History*, 38.
[84] Nicholas Haley Homestead Claim, transcribed in 1941 from SCDE, old transcribed records, Sitka Recording District, p. 40, National Archives microfilm, Cultural Resource Manager files, SITK.
[85] See the discussion in Chapter Seven.
[86] Jimmy Cohen, Deposition re. Haley Homestead, July 30, 1923, RG 79, Box No. 610, Entry 7, on file in the National Archives and Records Administration Annex, College Park, MD (hereinafter referred to as NA & RA).
[87] Report on a Proposed National Monument at Sitka, Alaska, 1908, pp. 4-5., RG 79, Records of the National Park Service. Central Classified Files, 1907-49, 1907-32. National Monuments: Shoshone Caverns (1909-32), Sitka (1910-1930), Timpanogas (1922-29). Box No. 610, Entry 7; (NA & RA).
[88] W.A. Langille, Report on Agricultural Settlement of Nicholas Haley on Baranof Island, Alaska, December 19, 1908, RG 79, Box No. 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).
[89] Statement made by Nicholas Haley, November 14, 1908, SITK Archives, Files of the Cultural Resources Manager.
[90] *Ibid.*
[91] Charles Haley, letter to Hon. Charles A. Sulzer, Delegate from Alaska, Washington, D.C., December 21, 1918, RG 79, Box No. 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).
[92] Dick Haley and Jimmy Cohen, depositions re. Haley claim and activities, July 30, 1923, RG 79, Box No. 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).
[93] A. Cammerer, letter to Frank L. Kuhn, Attny, June 9, 1925, RG 79, Box No. 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).
[94] DeArmond, ed., *Lady Franklin Visits Sitka*, 65.
[95] *Ibid.*
[96] Skidmore, *Appleton's Guide*, 119.
[97] DeArmond, ed., *Lady Franklin Visits Sitka*, 65.
[98] Jackson, *A Statement of Facts Concerning the Difficulties at Sitka*, 3.
[99] DeArmond, ed., *Lady Franklin Visits Sitka*, 3-4.
[100] *Ibid.*, 65.
[101] Skidmore, *Alaska*, 189-91.
[102] *Ibid.*
[103] *Ibid.*
[104] *The Alaskan*, June 8, 1895, p. 3; August 10, 1895, p. 3.
[105] Skidmore, *Appleton's Guide*, 120.
[106] *Ibid.*
[107] Jackson, *A Statement of Facts Concerning the Difficulties at Sitka*,3.
[108] Fred Fickett, letter to Nellie Lord, August 18, 1884, Fickett Papers.

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Figure 7-1. A group of artisans repairing the totem poles in Indian River Park, by Merrill, early 1900s.

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CHAPTER 7

TOTEM POLES COME TO THE PARK, 1890 - 1910

"Each totem is a record in wood of a different legend or a different family history. That is why it took me so many weeks to select the sites for them. I tried to preserve the spirit of the old order, which is passing. . . ."

E.W. Merrill, ca. 1925

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Chapter 7

Totem Poles Come To The Park 1900 - 1920

The first decades of the twentieth century were a period of transition in Sitka. The presence of the territorial government, headed by Governor John Brady, stimulated the continued development of the settlement. From 1890 to 1900, Sitka's population had increased by about 200 individuals.[1] Brady's activities, coupled with the influence of his supporter, Sheldon Jackson, furthered the expansion of the Presbyterian mission's efforts to assimilate and educate Alaska's native population—an effort that was centered in the mission community at Sitka. However, when the seat of Alaska's government was moved to Juneau in 1906, and Brady was replaced as Governor, the town lost a segment of its influential population.

The rudiments of government were created for Alaska, which provided the means for building communities in the territory. The Second Organic Act was passed by the U.S. Congress in 1912 and created a legislature for Alaska.[2] In 1913, the citizens of Sitka voted to incorporate the town as a second class city. The impetus to organize also resulted in the creation of the Alaska Native Brotherhood in 1912, a fraternal organization of Alaskan natives, which organized to fight for the rights of citizens and equal opportunity.

Economic development diversified in Sitka during this period. A cold storage plant opened in Sitka in 1913 and went on to become a major component of the town's economy. Several years later, fox farms were started on many of the small islands around the settlement. Tourism was becoming an increasingly important segment of the ecomony as well. By 1920, although the population remained somewhat below the level it had been in 1900, the community of Sitka grew on the strength of these resources. Sitka's Indian River Park continued to be an important locale, both for the town's residents and the increasing numbers of tourists. Continued development adjacent to the river provided the area with both the role and character of a town park. At the same time, the actions of influential citizens, including Governor Brady and the members of the Arctic Brotherhood, gave the park a new designation—that of Sitka National Monument.

Developments Outside the Park Expand

The Presbyterian Mission community adjacent to the park continued to expand during the first decades of this century. A survey of the Mission Tract, prepared in 1905 and 1906, and approved in 1907, illustrates the extent of this growth (Figure 7-2). In addition to the large dormitories, the church, the hospital, the industrial shop, and the museum that housed Jackson's collection of native artifacts, the survey shows that, by this time, the number of model cottages had increased to seventeen. The cottage social hall, where, according to the school paper, "the members of the church meet for special entertainment," is also depicted on the survey.[3] One of the cottages is shown on what would have been part of the future monument, and a fence is shown running adjacent to the road after it leaves the mission property. The increasing density of the mission community, in effect, brought an arm of the town of Sitka right to the edge of the park, increasing the feeling that Indian River Park was indeed a town park. The expanding mission also brought more visitors to the park's trails.

Another kind of mission development took place up river from the future monument. The 1907 survey shows a pump house on the Indian River where the college obtained its water supply (Figure 7-1). In 1909, the school began construction of a concrete dam in the same area and installed a water wheel that provided them with electricity within a

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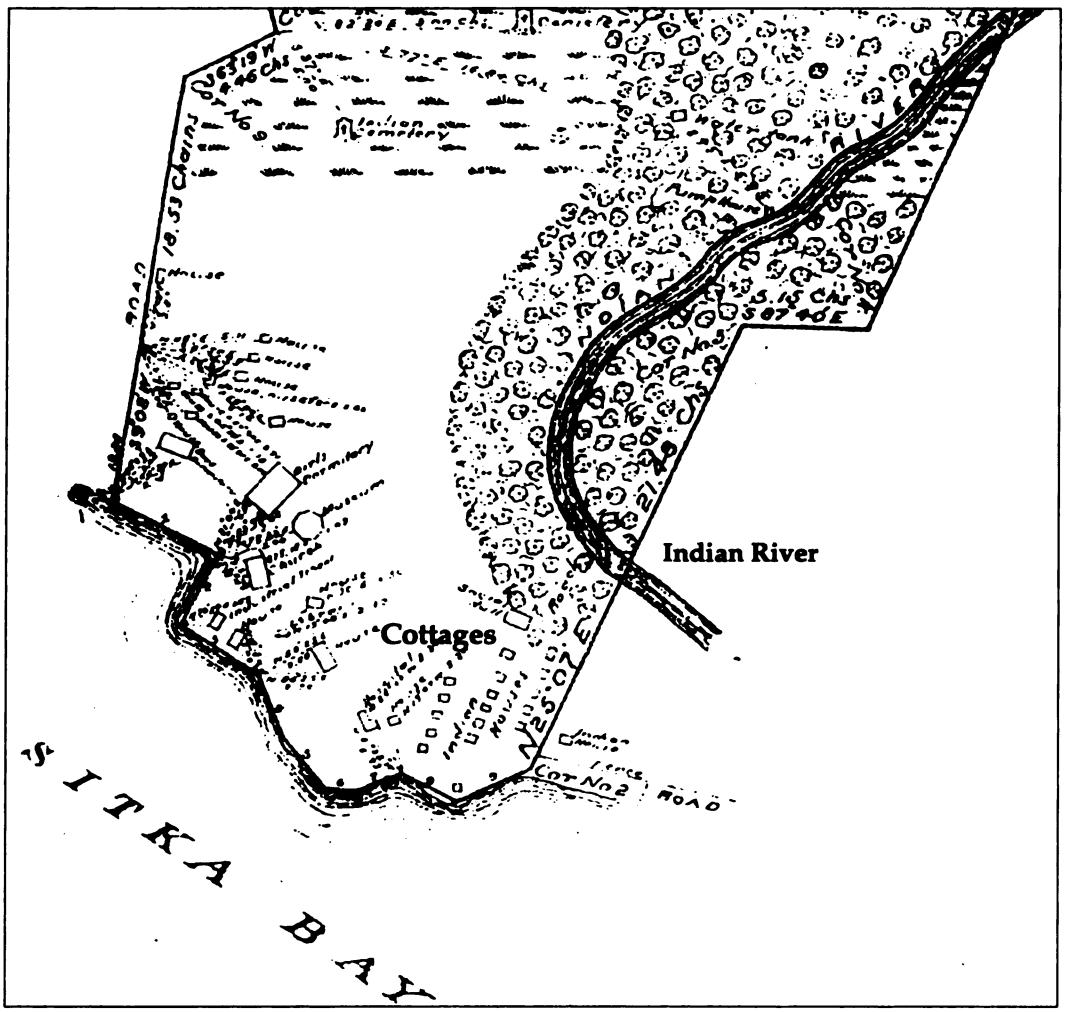

Figure 7-2. Plat of U.S. Survey No. 407 of the Presbyterian Mission Reserves, Sitka, AK, surveyed in 1905 and 1906. Indian River Park, as defined in 1890, bordered the Mission Reserve to the east and overlapped with the reserve along the river up to Indian River Falls.

couple of years.[4] Expanding and reinforcing the dam and water out-take was continued for a number of years.[5] What effect the withdrawal of water from the river had in the park at that time is not clear. The dam and pump stations, however, certainly would have impacted the woodland scenery that visitors to the upper Indian River had so admired in the past.

TOTEM POLES IN INDIAN RIVER PARK

In 1902, a change that occurred within Indian River Park initiated a trend which would transform the character and significance of the landscape. Through the actions of then Alaskan Governor John Brady, totem poles that had been carved by Haida and Tlingit natives in the mid-nineteeth century were brought to Sitka and erected along the park trails. The placement of the totems in the park and their initial maintenance were overseen by an important figure in Sitka, E.W. Merrill, an eccentric photographer who, along with Brady, was a central figure in the early evolution of the site. The need to protect the totems led to the designation of Indian River Park as Sitka National Monument. Government agencies, including the General Land Office, the Alaska Road Commission, and after 1916, the National Park Service, oversaw the maintenance of the park. The changes that occurred in those early years of the twentieth century resulted in the park becoming not only a scenic preserve, but a monument to southeastern Alaska's native cultures as well.

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Figure 7-3. Tlingit village of Howkan, Alaska, ca. 1884-1890.

The missionary pressures and economic changes brought about by the Americans to southeastern Alaska had led many of the native people to turn away from features of their traditional culture. At the same time, many Americans had become avid collectors of native objects and art, including missionary-turned-businessman and politician, Governor Brady, who was an avid collector, and Sheldon Jackson, who amassed a huge collection of native masterpieces from all over Alaska; Jackson housed the items in a specially constructed museum on the mission property in Sitka (the first concrete building in Alaska) for native and non-native alike to view. Brady maintained his own personal collection, in addition to sending material to Jackson.[7]

The native tradition of carving and raising totem poles was one of the practices affected by the cultural change that occurred in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries among the Northwest Coast natives. The proliferation of monumental wooden sculptures had peaked in the mid-nineteenth century with the increased wealth and influx of iron tools brought by European and American traders to the region. As the competetion for wealth and status accelerated, different types of poles were created for a number of social purposes. Memorial poles were raised as monuments to deceased ancestors, mortuary poles actually contained the ashes or remains of the desceased, crest poles illustrated the ancestry of a house group, history poles related the history of a clan, and legend poles illustrated a story or event that was important to members of a household. The art was most fully developed by the Haida of Queen Charlotte Island, and is thought to have spread from there to other groups, including the southern Tlingit. However, while the northern Tlingit, including the inhabitants of the Sitka region, did carve interior houseposts and mortuary columns, they did not traditionally shape the free-standing heraldic poles. During the apogee of the art, however, hundreds of poles were raised in many Haida and Tlingit villages south of Sitka. When these traditional villages, with their forest of

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totem poles facing the beach, were abandoned around the turn of the century, some of their owners began to sell or dispose of the old monuments (Figure 7-3).[8]

The initial placement of a Haida totem pole, four house posts, and a war canoe in the grassy clearing near the mouth of the Indian River seems to have been the idea of then Govenor John Brady. Whether other individuals in the community played a role in the decision to place them in the park is not clear. In 1901, Saanaheit, a Haida leader from the village of Old Kasaan on Prince of Wales Island, presented Brady and the District of Alaska with the large, seventy-year-old totem pole, four house posts, and a war canoe to be preserved as "historic relics." The large totem pole was about 60 feet tall and the canoe approximately 47 feet long, more than 6 feet wide, and over 3 feet deep. Saanaheit also donated, at the same time, a traditional Tlingit house.[9]

Brady had the poles and canoe brought on the U.S. Revenue Cutter, *Richard Rush*, to Sitka, where they were repaired and painted by native artists, "under the direction of Jim, the native jeweler, otherwise known as Klay-nay-hoo." Then the crew of the *Rush*, assisted by Col. George Kostrometinoff and "a gang of prisoners from the jail," set up the pole, house posts, and canoe on the grassy site near the mouth of the Indian River. They eventually planned to construct the donated house around the house posts and display the canoe inside the building.[10]

The 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis provided another opportunity for Governor Brady to champion Alaska and native Alaskan arts. The year before, Congress had appropriated $50,000 for Alaska to participate in the exposition. In order to gather more totem poles for the Alaskan display, Brady took the Revenue Cutter *Rush* and its crew south to Prince of Wales Island in November 1903. The records differ as to how many poles were collected and from where. Brady stated, in his Governor's report, that they were obtained from the Tlingit villages of Tuxekan and Klawock, and the Haida communities of Sukkwan, Klinkwan, Onhonklis, and Old Kasaan.[11] According to a current scholar who has investigated the history of the park's poles, Brady and the crew of the *Rush* collected fifteen totem poles, two carved planks, four house posts, one canoe, and two house frames.[12]

Most of the poles had to be dug up, ferried to the ship on launches, and then hoisted up and lashed to the Rush.[13] Several poles contained human remains. In a letter to his wife, Elizabeth, Brady wrote that they "took out the bones from some of the poles and buried them."[14] In one pole, where the human remains were interred into the base, they cut four feet off the bottom end and put that section back into the ground.[15] Brady commented on the changes that had occurred in native culture as evidenced by their willingness to dig up and donate the poles. He wrote, "surely a great change has come over them, when they will consent to do as I describe."[16] When the collecting trip was completed, the "totems and houses" were shipped to Ketchikan, where they were unloaded on November 20.[17]

After being patched and repainted the poles were shipped to St. Louis in 1904 and set up in the Alaska display. The Saanaheit totem from the park was also sent to the St. Louis exposition after being repaired in Brady's Sitka sawmill. During the course of the fair, numerous private collectors and museums expressed interest in purchasing the poles and other objects. At the end of the exposition, Brady sold one pole to the Milwaukee Public Museum and the carved planks to the Chicago Field Museum. One pole that had broken in pieces while it was being collected, and which had been patched together and exhibited in the Esquimaux Village section of the Alaskan Exhibit, was sold to an agent of the Banner Buggy Company.[18]

However, most of the poles, the houses, and the war canoe were shipped to Portland, Oregon, where they were erected in the District of Alaska exhibit at the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition of 1905.[19] At the close of that exposition, the totem poles and war canoe were returned to Alaska. In January 1906

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they were brought to Sitka on the *Al-ki*.[20] According to Sitka's local paper, *The Alaskan*, the fourteen poles and canoe were taken to "Government Park, Indian River" to be erected.[21]

On the day the *Al-ki* arrived in Sitka with the poles, Governor Brady and his sons, Hugh and John, walked through Indian River Park with the local photographer, E.W. Merrill, who was well known in the community for his artistic abilities. Since Merrill had been asked to select the pole locations in the park, he and Brady discussed their arrangement as they walked the site that day.[22] As the local paper reported, "the services of our local artist, [E.] W. Merrill, have been retained for the arrangement of the poles artistically."[23] Not much is known either as to why Merrill chose the sites he did, or what role Brady played in the selection. Apparently Merrill gave the matter careful thought. Writer Florence Willoughby quoted him as saying that "each totem is a record in wood of a different legend or a different family history. That is why it took me so many weeks to select the sites for them. I tried to preserve the spirit of the old order, which is passing. . . ."[24] Without any more information, it is difficult to know exactly how Merrill tried to "preserve the spirit of the old order." It is likely that he tried to site the poles in a manner that would reflect the way they were traditionally displayed in their native villages. In March 1906, the poles were in place and the paper exclaimed that Merrill had "arranged them in an artistic manner and they make a goodly show."[25]

Elbridge Warren Merrill was a very important character in the early decades of Indian River Park. He began his work, along with thirteen Tlingit craftsman, to repair and paint the poles before they were erected in 1906; after Merrill's subsequent design of the totem display in that landscape, his relationship with the park continued for the next several decades. During the first decades of the twentieth century, Merrill acted as unofficial caretaker of the park, where he tended to the repair and painting of the totems, kept vegetation cut back from them, and built benches in locations that allowed views of the sea and the surrounding landscape; he often did this without remuneration. In addition to his contributions, which shaped the character of the landscape, Merrill documented many scenes in the park with his own photographs.

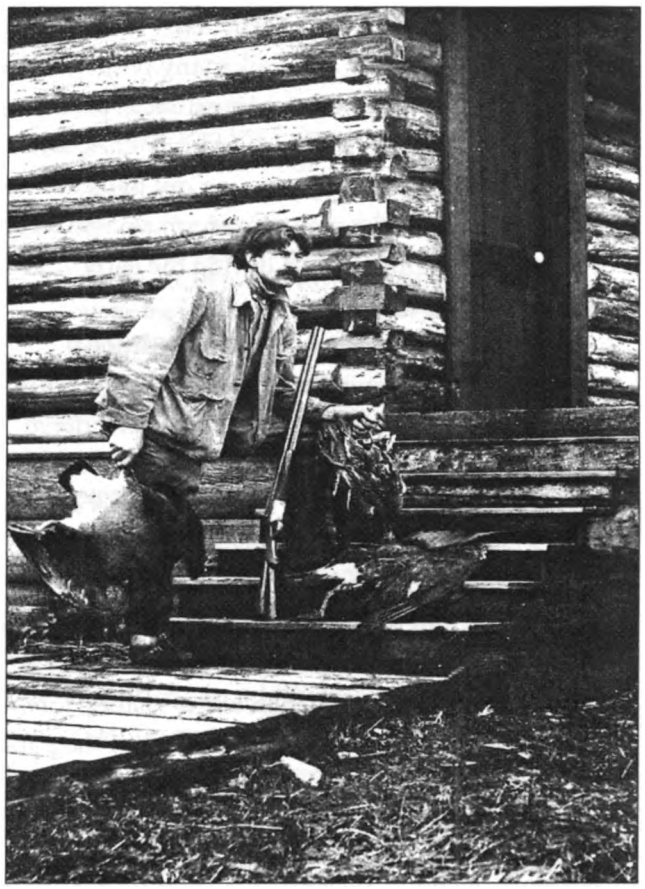

Figure 7-4. Elbridge Warren Merrill, the photographer who sited the original totems in Indian River Park.

Merrill, a native of Massachusetts, came to Sitka around 1898. Within a few years after his arrival, Merrill had established a photography shop in town, where he sold views of Sitka and the surrounding landscape. According to all accounts, Merrill was an attractive and eccentric character (Figure 7-4), and well known and respected by both the white and native communities for his knowledge, enthusiasm, and talents.[26]

It was for his talents as a photographer that Merrill was most famous. One Sitkan remembered how Merrill would sometimes "stay up two or three days just to get one picture. . . . Everything had to be just right—the sun, the clouds." Most of his photos were made either on commission, for sale to tourists,

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or for publication. He was particularly interested in the Tlingit community and took many photographs of them, including views of their artifacts, portraits, shots of traditional events such as potlatches, and illustrations of the natives carrying out daily activities. His photographs comprise an invaluable record of Sitka's Tlingit inhabitants during the early decades of this century.[27]

Because of the decline in many traditional native practices during those years when the poles were erected in the park, many people considered them to be ancient relics of a past culture. As Merrill said, "soon, I fear, these will be the only specimens left in Alaska."[28] Much as Governor Brady had planned, the Louisiana Purchase and Lewis and Clark expositions only increased the notoriety of the remarkable material culture of the Northwest coast Indians. With the introduction of the historic totems to the park landscape, the native history of the park itself became more central in its identity. It was during this time that the site of the historic battle between the Tlingits and Russians in 1804 became one of the principal features of the park's attractions.

THE CREATION OF A MONUMENT

The historic and cultural significance of the totem poles that had been erected in Indian River Park became an important consideration in the future definition of the area. In 1908, only two years after the poles had been brought to the park, the members of the Arctic Brotherhood in Sitka petitioned the President to designate the site as a National Monument. Since the members of the Brotherhood were concerned about damage being done in the area, they had written to U.S. Forest Supervisor W.A. Langille complaining that timber was being destroyed within the park. They claimed that because the park lacked "definite boundaries and responsible administrative supervision," it was "constantly being encroached upon."[29]

On the advice of Langille, they sought protection of the area through monument designation under the Federal Antiquities Act, which had been passed in 1906.[30] Originally intended as a measure to protect Native American sites in the American Southwest from looting and vandalism, the act allowed a President to create national monuments on federal lands by proclamation. The Arctic Brotherhood cited a number of reasons to the President that justified monument status for the park, including its scenic qualities. Their primary focus, however, was on the native artifacts and historic events that occurred there. In keeping with the intent of the Antiquities Act to preserve Native American features, the first reason the Brotherhood cited was the presence of "sixteen exceptionally fine Indian totem poles" in the park. These, they claimed, "are the only records of this feature of Indian mythology that are being preserved," but, they also complained, that the park lacked the provisions to carry out such preservation.[31]

The petitioners also emphasized the importance of the historic fort and battlefield site within the park. They wrote that there was "no more memorable event in the history of Alaska than the battle fought on this site in September 1804 between the Sitka Indians on one side, and the Russians and Aleuts under Baranoff and Lisiansky on the other." They stressed that Russian "supremacy" in the conflict had prevented the British from taking control of the territory, and led to American acquisition of the land.[32]

The role of the park in the community and as a tourist destination was also mentioned in the petition. The members emphasized the interest of the "hundreds of tourists" who visited Sitka and the park annually, claiming that, "among all of Sitka's attractions, the stranger finds nothing more interesting than this park."[33] They concluded that the park "is a place admired by all, and is, in fact, the pride of Sitka; therefore, we, your petitioners, lovers of

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nature primeval and citizens of this community interested in the perpetual preservation of a place so rich in historic lore earnestly implore your consideration of this request."[34]

Langille also played an important role in the park's designation as a monument. He prepared a map of the proposed monument, recommended its boundaries, and wrote a report detailing the features and the history of the park.[35] Langille's report concluded with a paragraph that reveals he was well aware of both the historical significance of the area and the popular sentiments and perceptions of many tourists and residents who visited the park and viewed the native totem poles. He wrote:

> Wrapt in the traditions that lie behind the veil of an historic past it breathes an air of romance, perhaps devoid of the finer qualities of sentiment, and redolent of rapine savagery, in the subjugation of a savage people in a savage land, but its mysticism, as well as its natural beauty appeals to citizen and stranger alike; while to Alaskans it is more than this, as the site of an event that led to permanent Russian occupancy, and, thru this, to the acquisition by the United States of a land that will some day be an empire unto itself, a unit of the greater American Republic to be, and it is only meet and just that this area be set aside as a playground for future generations, and as a Monument to commemorate one of the most important events in Alaska's history.[36]

Langille was well aware of the public craving for a romantic past, with its subjugated savages and mysticism, even if he himself was more historically savvy. He apparently was not above emphasizing the sensational if it meant the creation of a monument.

Langille recommended boundaries for the proposed monument that would eliminate the existing conflicts between the park set aside by the Presidential Proclamation of 1890, Nicholas Haley's homestead claim, and the Presbyterian mission property. He recommended the following boundaries for the proposed Sitka National Monument (Langille assumed the actual point of departure in the 1890 Proclamation was the low water line):

> Beginning at corner No. 2 on the easterly side of the Presbyterian Mission Site, at high tide line on Sitka Harbor; thence North 24° 54' East along the line of said Mission tract to a point 500 feet from the right bank of Indian River; thence South 42° East 2234.10 feet, approximately, to a point North 51° 30' East, distant 60 feet, from a post set at high tide line and designated as Haley's Initial Posts; thence across the mouth of Indian River to Indian Point and along the shore line of Sitka Harbor to the place of beginning.[37]

Instead of following a distance of 500 feet from the river, Langille's recommendations straightened out the eastern boundary of the park, and excluded the upper portion of the river that was part of the land formerly incorporated as part of the Mission property. Langille undoubtedly chose the location of the northwestern boundary to avoid conflict with the Mission survey. In addition, the mission had a pump station and was building a dam on the river below the falls, which probably detracted from the scenery. Since Langille's map shows trails, a road, and a bridge up river from the recommended boundary, people certainly would have continued their accustomed use of these features. The recommended boundary also reflects the emphasis given to the need to protect the totem poles and historic site in the lower areas of the park.

Langille's recommendations were endorsed by Governor Clark and the Secretary of the Interior.[38] On March 23, 1910, President Taft signed the proclamation that created Sitka National Monument. It read:

> Whereas, within the limits of the public park created by proclamation June 21, 1890, near Sitka, Alaska, is located the decisive battle ground of the Russian conquest of Alaska in 1804, and also the site of the former village of the Kik-Siti tribe, the most warlike of the Alaskan Indians; and that here also are the graves of a Russian midshipman and six sailors, killed in the conflict, and numerous totem poles constructed by the Indians, which record the genealogical history of their several clans and
>
> Whereas, under the general laws of Alaska it has been found difficult to prevent vandalism within the reserved area.

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> Now, therefore, I, William H. Taft, President of the United States of America, . . . do hereby set aside, subject to any vested right, as the Sitka National Monument, a tract of land near Sitka, Alaska, situated within, or chiefly within, the public park which embraces the mouth of Indian River and adjacent territory. . .[39]

The boundaries defined in the President's proclamation concurred with Langille's recommendations, except that the 60-foot distance from the southeastern corner to Haley's Initial Post is not mentioned, and the line across the mouth of the Indian River is drawn to a specific "pine tree on Indian Point." A map of the new Sitka National Monument was attached to the proclamation (Figure 7-5). The proclamation explicitly warned "all unauthorized persons not to appropriate, injure, or destroy any feature" of the monument and not "to locate or settle upon any of the lands reserved."[40]

Less than two years after the Sitka members of the Arctic Brotherhood sent their petition to Washington D.C., Sitka National Monument had become a reality. The historic and ethnological features of the park became its primary significance from that time forward. Certainly the river and "enchanted forest" as described in the 1880s were still appreciated by the many visitors to the park over the years, but the atmosphere created by the totem poles and battle site often dominated the tourist's experience. In addition to efforts to control the earlier problem of wood cutting and the dumping of debris in the park, these historic features required another kind of preservation and protection. Funding to do so remained a problem for park advocates over the span of many years. Local caretakers, including E.W. Merrill, tried to care for the poles, often without recompense. Thus the problems that plagued the early years of the monument were little different than they had been prior to its creation. What differed was the official status of the park and its direct link to the federal land management system.

EARLY EFFORTS TO OBTAIN MONUMENT FUNDING

The creation of Sitka National Monument by Presidential Proclamation was affected without any formal arrangement being made for the maintenance of the park or funding to support it. Local officials worked to get a Congressional appropriation to finance the monument's maintenance. They believed $5,000 was the amount needed for work in the park, including the repair of totem poles and roadways, other improvements, and help to erect a memorial to the Russian sailors killed in the 1804 battle.[41] Sitka attorney Arthur Shoup wrote to W. J. Lewis, Special Agent in the General Land Office, stressing the need for park maintenance. He reported that the "totem poles are now very badly in need of paint, and some of them which have been damaged by vandalism, should by all means be restored." Shoup noted that the dead underbrush which had accumulated around the totems not only was "unsightly," but also represented a "serious menace to the totem poles on account of fire." In addition, he reported that there were "a number of washouts in the paths and roads that should be repaired." He also felt that some money should be spent on interpretive signs for tourists.[42]

W.J. Lewis visited the monument several times in 1912 and sent a report of his observations, including photographs of the park donated by Merrill, to A. Christensen, Chief of the Field Division of the General Land Office, in which he lobbied for the $5,000 appropriation. Lewis wrote, "there exists locally, and especially among the more educated class and those of longer residence in the town, a strong sentimental attachment for every item of historic interest." He concluded that while "the little battle between a few Russians sailors and a handful of natives may be scoffed at as an opera bouffe performance," the event marked "the dawn of civilization in Alaska as surely as though ten thousand people had been slain."[43]

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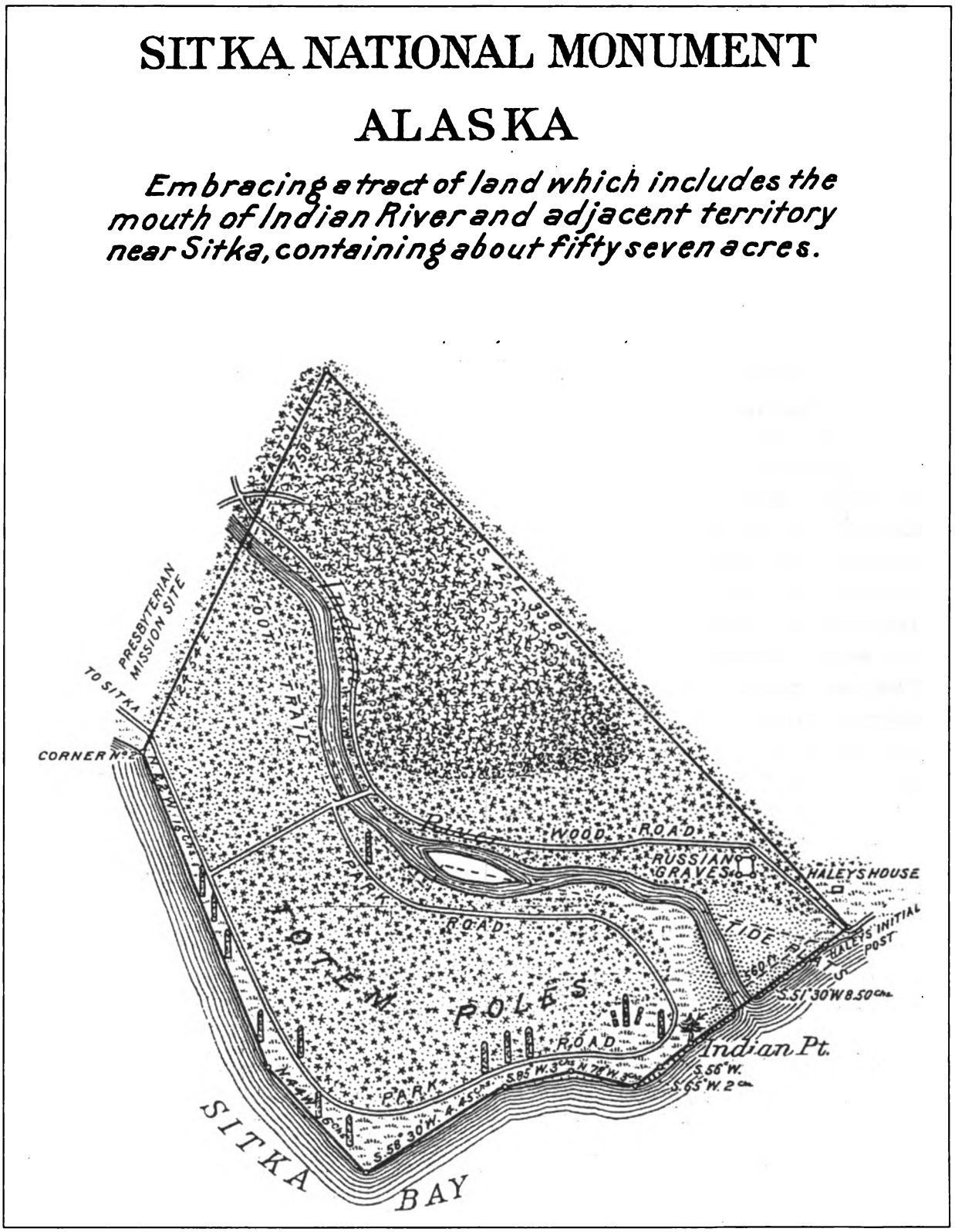

Figure 7-5. Map of Sitka National Monument that accompanied the 1910 Presidential proclamation which set aside Indian River Park as a National Monument.

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Although, according to Arthur Shoup's assessment in 1914 that "the present condition of this reservation is very much run down," the funding was not forthcoming.[44] Even the Legislature of Alaska had petitioned the Congress in 1913 for the $5,000 appropriation, "to be expended in the repair and restoration of the Sitka National Monument and the relics of aboriginal life contained therein. . . ."[45] When no funds were appropriated, the Interior Department requested $1,500 in 1914. Yet, still no funds were appropriated.[46]

Part of the money was needed to hire a caretaker for the monument. In May 1914, Christensen wrote a letter to the Commissioner of the Land Office in Washington, D.C., in which he explained the situation. He wrote that "there is practically no supervision over this monument except such as citizens of that locality may have exercised without any special authority. Because of the fact that we are not allowed to spend any money in supervising the monument, we have been unable to take any active steps in this respect." He recommended that Shoup, who had offered to "assume charge of the monument," be given "the necessary authority to protect and supervise the park."[47]

No action was taken, however, until the creation of the National Park Service in 1916. In that year, Robert Marshall, Superintendent of National Parks in Washington, wrote to Shoup, offering him the position of monument custodian, at a salary of $2 per month and about $300 dollars for its maintenance. Although Shoup accepted, he did not become caretaker of the park because, shortly following his acceptance, NPS officials found that his position as an attorney conflicted with the appointment. Therefore, both the naming of a custodian and the appropriation were delayed.[48]

In 1918, however, Alaska Governor Thomas Riggs, on the basis of Shoup's recommendation, suggested Merrill for the position of park custodian to the first director of the NPS, Stephen Mather. At the same time, Riggs independently authorized Merrill to begin repairs on some of the totems and to cut the brush away from them. Although the NPS accepted the governor's suggestion and sent Merrill the paperwork for the custodian's position, Merrill failed to return the completed documents.[49] In March 1919, after discovering that no work had been done on the totems in the monument, Shoup wrote to Riggs about Merrill as follows:

> I recommended Mr. Merrill for this work because he had charge of putting up the totems in the first place, has made a study of them and knows how they should be painted, and because he has always manifested a great interest in them and I believed it would be a labor of love for him to attend to it. I think that he has in all probability been putting it off until the winter is over. As to his not answering the letters, he has most likely procrastinated that. He means alright but he is largely "artistic temperament" and has very little regard for business matters. He is not lazy but he expends a lot of his energy in classifying bird life and preserving historical data and that is the reason you have never received you photographs.[50]

Shoup concluded that by the next mail, he would advise the Governor whether Merrill could be depended upon to do the work.

Although Merrill never returned the completed paperwork, and so was never hired officially by the Park Service, he began to work in the park during the late spring of 1918 and thereafter continued as unofficial caretaker for a number of years. Merrill and his crew had begun repairing the totems and cleaning up the park. He reported to Riggs in July on conditions in the park and the progress they had made. Merrill wrote that upon examining the totem poles, he found that all were "in want of repairs and badly requiring two coats of paint. Also bracing. The largest, [the Saanaheit pole]. . . required cable guys." He and his help cut down some of the leaning and dying trees along the paths within the park and used them to construct scaffolding around the poles. From these structures they repaired and painted the totems, beginning at the top level and gradually moving down. Merrill reported that after the second coat of paint was applied, they moved

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the scaffolding to the next totem. He asserted that "it was most satisfying to see the work moving in our favor," but that there had been a frequent rain recently, which had slowed their progress.[51]

During spells of wet weather Merrill and his crew attended to other needs in the monument. Merrill reported that the "work of improving the park was never taken up before. Throughout the park except [for] the roads children could not play and people could not walk. Everywhere there were dead limbs and fallen trees. Only a tangle wood." He and his crew "worked removing stumps, trees and dead limbs," and "cleaning up the accumulation of dead moss, spruce needles [and] cones." In addition, Merrill selected some pleasing sites in the park where they constructed seats. He reported to the Park Service that "after selecting sightly spots, with grandeur as Indian River, the harbor, the islands, the ocean, Mt. Edgecombe the extinct volcano, and a chain of other beauty spots, in the distance snow peaked mountains, I placed good, substantial and comfortable seats."[52]

Local visitors and tourists apparently appreciated Merrill's efforts. He remarked to Governor Riggs, "it would give you pleasure to listen to the remarks of tourists and residents of Sitka in regards to the improvements and beauty in the park."[53] He expanded on their favorable response in his report to the Park Service. Merrill wrote that, "it gives me great pleasure to notice the tourists quickly leave the roadway and walk into the clearings. All the work of clearing is in the vicinity of totems, which gives a pleasing effect."[54]

By June 1919, Shoup reported to Governor Riggs that Merrill had become very interested in the project, had been working hard without charging for most of his own time, and "now that he has once got started will continue to attend to it." After itemizing the $345 Merrill had spent so far, Shoup suggested that if a total of $1,000 were allocated to the efforts, the totems would be "in fairly good shape" and the park "considerably" improved.[55] Nonetheless, Merrill's continued role in the park was uncertain, as noted by his memorandum to Governor Riggs in July asking the latter to inform him "in regards to continuing the work and the appropriations for the financing [of] them."[56]

Yet, the work on painting the totems continued when the weather allowed. In May 1921, Merrill wrote to Riggs about the progress being made. He commented that "summer will soon bring the weather most suited for the work. The unpainted totems are damp and wet. All about there is a dense growth of Sitka spruce. This is my reason for selecting summer weather." He concluded that "the results of the work . . . [are] showing, for the past seasons. Reflects credit upon you and your fine effort to preserve Alaska's finest group of Totemic art."[57]

Merrill observed and reported on other work that needed to be done in the park. During the spring of 1920, he wrote to Riggs that the Indian River footbridge needed repair and was not safe. He explained, "the wooden hangers to which the bolts are attached are cracked and decayed at the ends; in fact, most of the woodwork is weakened and decayed." Merrill predicted that "soon there will be a heavy travel of tourists. With numbers of people upon the bridge at the same time, and the swaying, the bridge may not stand the weight." He felt that if the bridge were not repaired, it should be closed.[58] The bridge was repaired that summer.[59]

THE ALASKA ROAD COMMISSION

Beginning even before Indian River Park had become a national monument, another governmental agency, the Alaska Road Commission, had taken responsibility for some maintenance and construction within the park. The Commission's involvement in the park expanded over the years, but while Merrill acted as unofficial caretaker, the majority of the agency's effort was devoted to the maintenance of the roads that ran through the area and to the construction of bridges over the river. The Commission built both a footbridge over the Indian River in 1908, and in 1918, a wagon bridge at the northern

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Figure 7-6. "Miss Martindale of Topeka, Kansas," enjoying the "view from'the Point,' Government Park, Sitka," circa 1900-1902.

boundary of the monument.[60] Eventually, the agency's role grew from initially directing attention to roads and paths in the park, to undertaking the construction and maintenance of monument bridges and the clearing of new trails, and ultimately to taking responsiblity for overseeing all park maintenance during the 1920s and 1930s.

RECREATION AND TOURISM

The park continued to be an important scenic recreational area both for local inhabitants and visitors after becoming Sitka National Monument. The efforts of Sitka's citizens to care for the park testify to its importance in the community. As the Arctic Brotherhood members had written, the park was "the pride of Sitka."[61] At the same time, tourists were becoming a larger proportion of the park's visitors. In their petition for monument designation, the Arctic Brotherhood had emphasized the importance of the park as a tourist attraction. Much of the maintenance and many of the improvements accomplished during these early years had been intended to increase the park's comfort for and attractiveness to tourists. In correspondence relating to his work in the park, Merrill repeatly referred to the tourists, remarking on their reactions to the clearing and cleaning up he had done in 1919, the heavy visitors' traffic in 1920, and the benches he had built and placed at scenic spots so tourists could appreciate the fine views from the park (Figure 7-6).[62]

Even before the area had been designated a National Monument, the residents of Sitka had begun to provide the tourists with transportion to the park. Around 1905, the Sheldon Jackson School operated a horse-drawn wagon that carried visitors to Sheldon Jackson Museum and the park. According to Sitka resident and historian Robert De Armond, "a year or so after that Charles Haley [Nicholas Haley's son] who had a drayage business, fitted up a light wagon for the same purpose." According to De Armond, it was Charles Haley who began calling Barnov's Rock the Blarney Stone. He apparently liked to unload his passengers at the rock, march them around it three times, and then have them kiss it for good luck. Local resident Joe Ashby also testified that a man named Kirkland drove people through the park in his Model-A Ford, and that even earlier, Niel Anderson had done likewise.[63]

At the same time, Sitka residents, adults and children alike, used the park for many outdoor activities. Robert De Armond remembers that the sons of the Presbyterian Reverend Buchanan, who moved into the manse at the mission school in 1916, used the park as a playground. De Armond and the three Buchanan boys often used the rope swing that Reverend Buchanan had suspended from a pole lashed high up in the trees on the edge of the clearing near the mouth of the river. Games and races were held nearby, on the expanse at the foot of the peninsula, where the grass dropped down to an expansive sedge meadow. That area was a popular community picnic area. De Armond recalls that the

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American Legion held their annual Armistice Day turkey shoot on that meadow beginning around 1919. The shooter aimed at targets placed 50 yards away near the water's edge and the crowd stood behind them.[64]

Tlingit Relationships with the Park

During these decades the relationship between the Tlingit community and the landscape around the mouth of the Indian River was transformed as well. Undoubtedly a certain degree of unofficial use of park resources continued, just as had occurred before the formation of a public park. Several sources mention that Tlingit boys fished in the river during this period. DeArmond recalls that cottage resident Don Cameron ran a trapline through the park in winter.[65] It is also likely that Tlingit people continued to gather berries, other plant foods, and intertidal resources from the forest, openings, beaches, and tidal flats within the park. This may have been especially true of the children and families living at the Sheldon Jackson Mission or in the Mission cottages.

A new dimension of native culture was introduced to the park when the first totem poles were placed there in 1902. Those poles, and most of the totems brought to the site in 1906, were Haida in origin, with only a few coming from Tlingit villages on Prince of Wales Island. The Sitka Tlingit, however, eventually developed a relationship with the poles. Beginning with the repair work and painting done by the thirteen Tlingit carvers who worked with Merrill before the totems were first erected, the poles were shaped, to some degree, by Sitka's Tlingit residents.[66] The Tlingits' involvement in the restoration probably stemmed, at least in part, from their relationship with Merrill. Both the presence of the totems and the act of working on them, however, gave the Tlingit a certain investment and "ownership" in the park—artificial as it was; nevertheless, the monument was at least, to some degree, a memorial to the material culture of the Tlingit and Haida peoples. Although many members of the Tlingit community who had accepted the Christian mission teachings had also turned away from elements of their traditional cultures, including the totem poles, the investment they made in this monument to native culture would grow throughout later years.

By the time Sitka National Monument was created in 1910, the public park had become more than traditional Kiks.adi territory, and more than an area where Anglo citizens or tourists could hike and picnic: it had become a monument to the past—albeit an ambiguous past. It was a monument to the battle of 1804, and to the Russians and Tlingits who fought and died in the conflict. At the same time, the park commemorated the monumental art of the "vanishing" native cultures of the Northwest coast. To some individuals involved in its creation, like E.W. Merrill and Governor John Brady, it truly was a monument to the culture and skill of the Tlingit and Haida who had created the poles. To the Tlingit, it may have been a monument to their suffering and loss that followed the arrival of the Russians and then the Americans. The monument certainly meant many things to different segments of society. Yet, no matter what historical perspective they held, the various members of the community probably enjoyed the same activities along the river, forest paths, and shorelines that they always had.

Landscape Conditions

Evidence of park landscape conditions at this time is provided by a number of sources. Historical photographs by Merrill and other individuals, along with the 1908 and 1910 maps of the park, comprise the primary sources that can be used to document the character of the vegetation and the specific locations of the original totem poles, trails, roads, bridges, and other features in the park. This information is synthesized in Diagrams 14 and 15. The currently designated fort site has been included in Diagram 14 for comparison with the historic clearing where the Saanaheit pole and house posts were situated.

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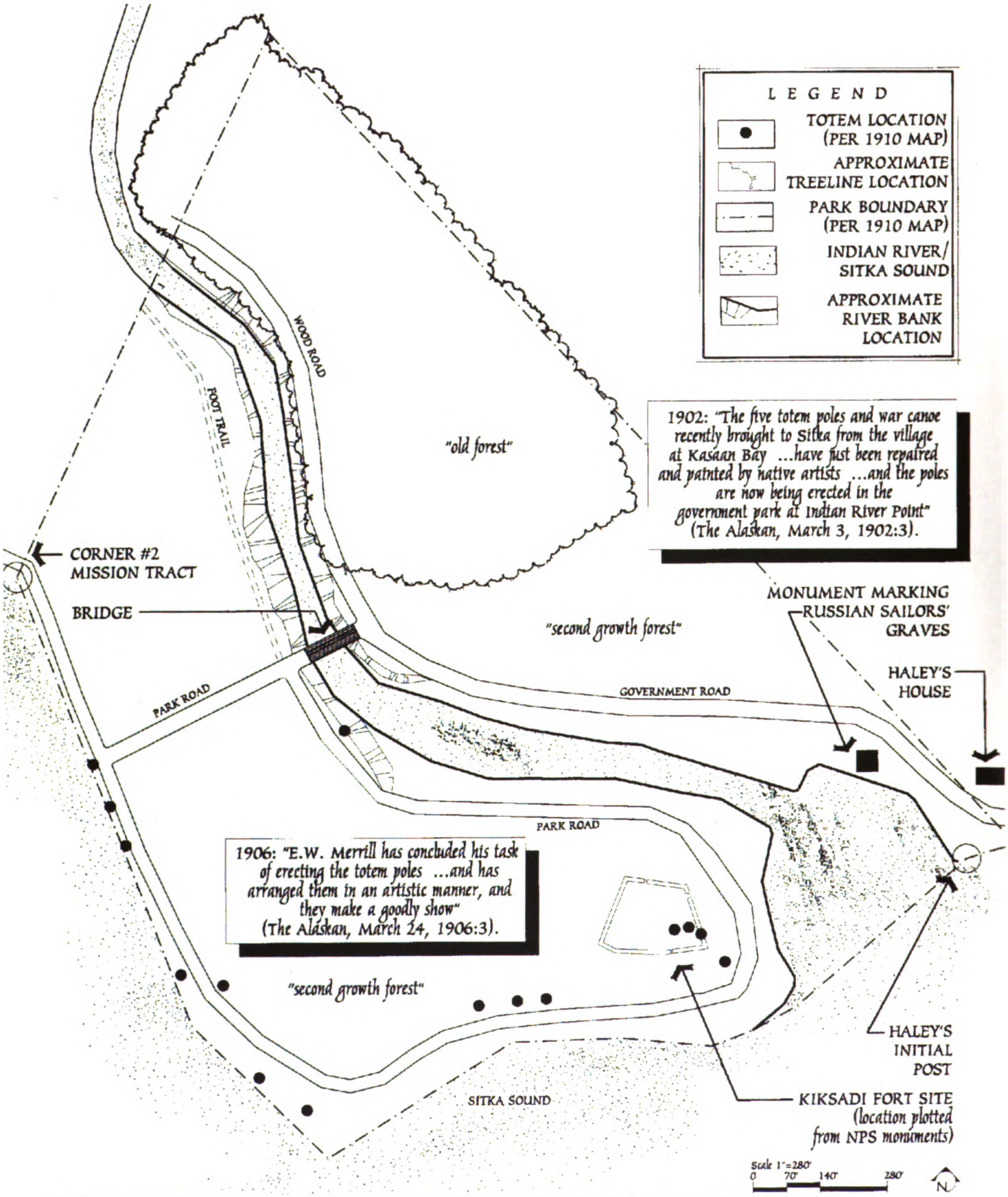

Diagram 14. Landscape conditions, 1900-1910, in what is now Sitka National Historical Park.

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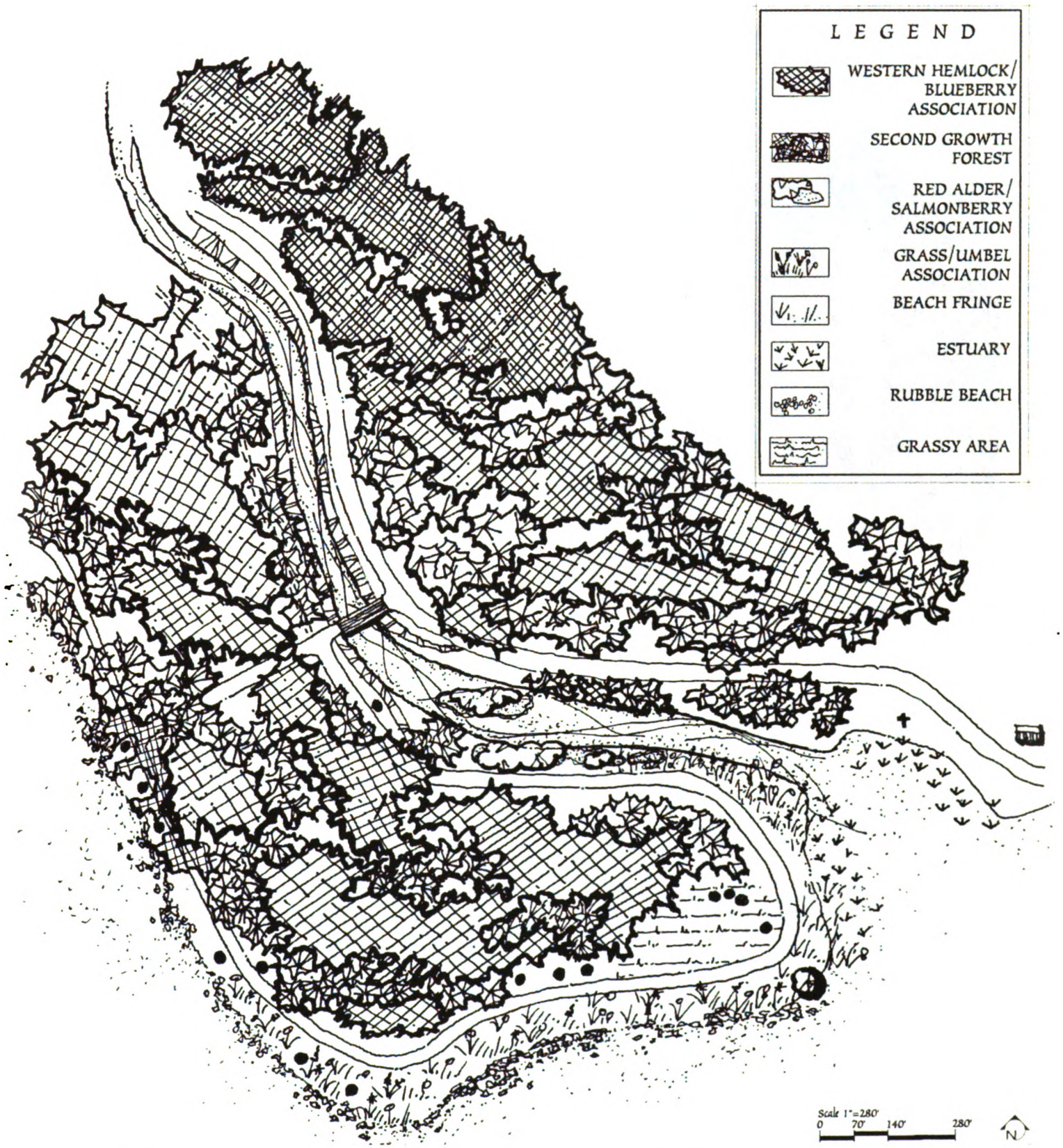

Diagram 15. Plant communities, 1900-1910, in what is now Sitka National Historical Park.

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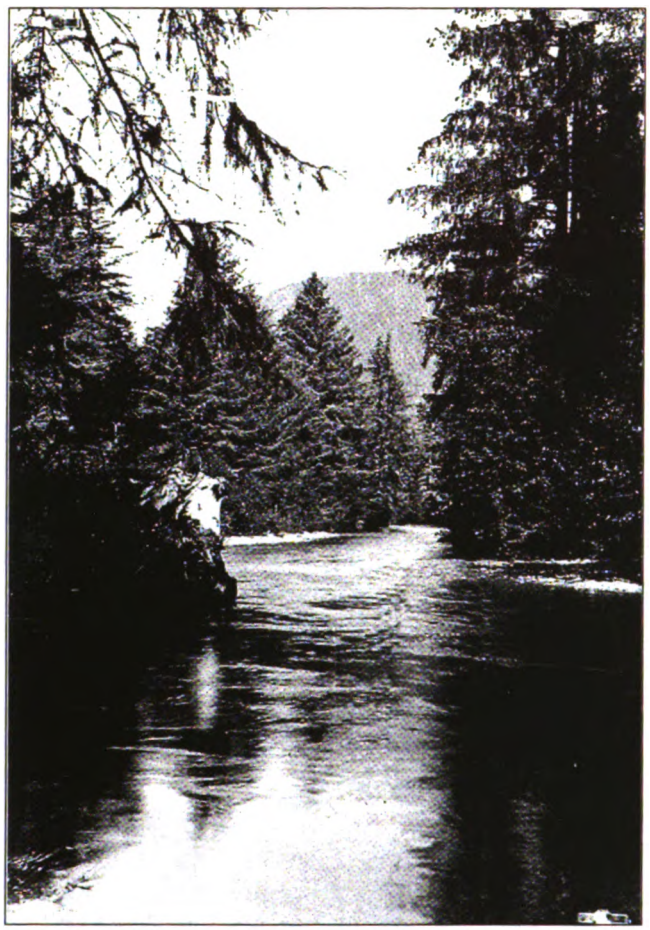

Figure 7-7. View of Indian River, 1913, by Merrill.

grassy areas. The most predominant vegetation in the park during this period, however, is a relatively dense second growth forest.

INDIAN RIVER AREA

The boundaries defined for Sitka National Monument in 1910 primarily incorporated the lower stretches of the Indian River, where the water flowed smoothly toward the sound. The character of this section of the river remained generally undisturbed during the period. Historic photographs of the stream testify that while a mosaic of plant communities continued to occupy the area, the spruce-hemlock forest was becoming more mature and dense at the edge of the river. Figure 7-7, a view taken by Merrill around 1913, shows a section of the river closely flanked by conifers, while Figure 7-8, taken around the same time, illustrates the variety of river bank conditions, and reveals a more open section of the river. A composite image of the river's mouth, taken in 1908, illustrates the expanse of gravel and grassy shore where the river met the sound, and the dense forest growth that flanked it (Figure 7-9).

Diagram 15 depicts the character and general distribution of the park vegetation at that time. The "old growth" area north of the river is shown as a section of western hemlock/blueberry association. The majority of the remaining park forest was comprised of second growth vegetation, dominated by immature spruce trees. Along the Indian River, the forest growth is interrupted occasionally by shrubby alder and salmonberry-dominated patches and

Figure 7-8. Indian River view, 1913, by Merrill.

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Figure 7-9. Looking towards the mouth of the Indian River, 1908.

Somewhere along the river, probably close to its mouth, grew a tree that had become legendary in the park. Known as the "witch tree," it was reported to have been where the natives conducted trials and practiced witchcraft. The members of the Arctic Brotherhood mentioned the tree in their petition for monument status.[67] Floods and windthrows that occurred during this period would have rearranged sections of the river banks and vegetation. Most of these events are not documented. Nevertheless, it is known that, in 1907, a flood washed out the footbridge in the park.[68] That event most likely resulted in other changes to the Indian River area as well.

Several bridges crossed the river during the period from 1900 to 1920. Within the monument two new bridges were built during this period. After the flood of 1907 washed out the lower footbridge, the Alaska Road Commission built a new suspension footbridge in the same location (Figure 7-10). The Commission hired J. C. Hayes to supervise the construction of the 108-foot-long structure, which was supported on each end by concrete piers and anchorages. The construction began on May 11, and was completed on June 10, 1908, at a cost of $2,167.[69] When the park was created in 1910, this was the sole bridge within the monument. It collapsed in 1911, when a cable fastening failed "due to the unusual vibrations induced by travelers swinging the bridge for amusement," but was subsequently re-erected by the Road Commission for a cost of $252."[70]

The first documented effort at stabilizing the banks of the Indian River was undertaken by the Alaska Road Commission during this period. These efforts were aimed at supporting the footbridge. The Commission crew stabilized the bank around the bridge in 1915, and in 1916, constructed approximately 100 feet of log and gravel bank protection to support the bridge's western pier.[71]

Figure 7-10. Indian River footbridge, built in 1908 by the Alaska Road Commission, 1910.

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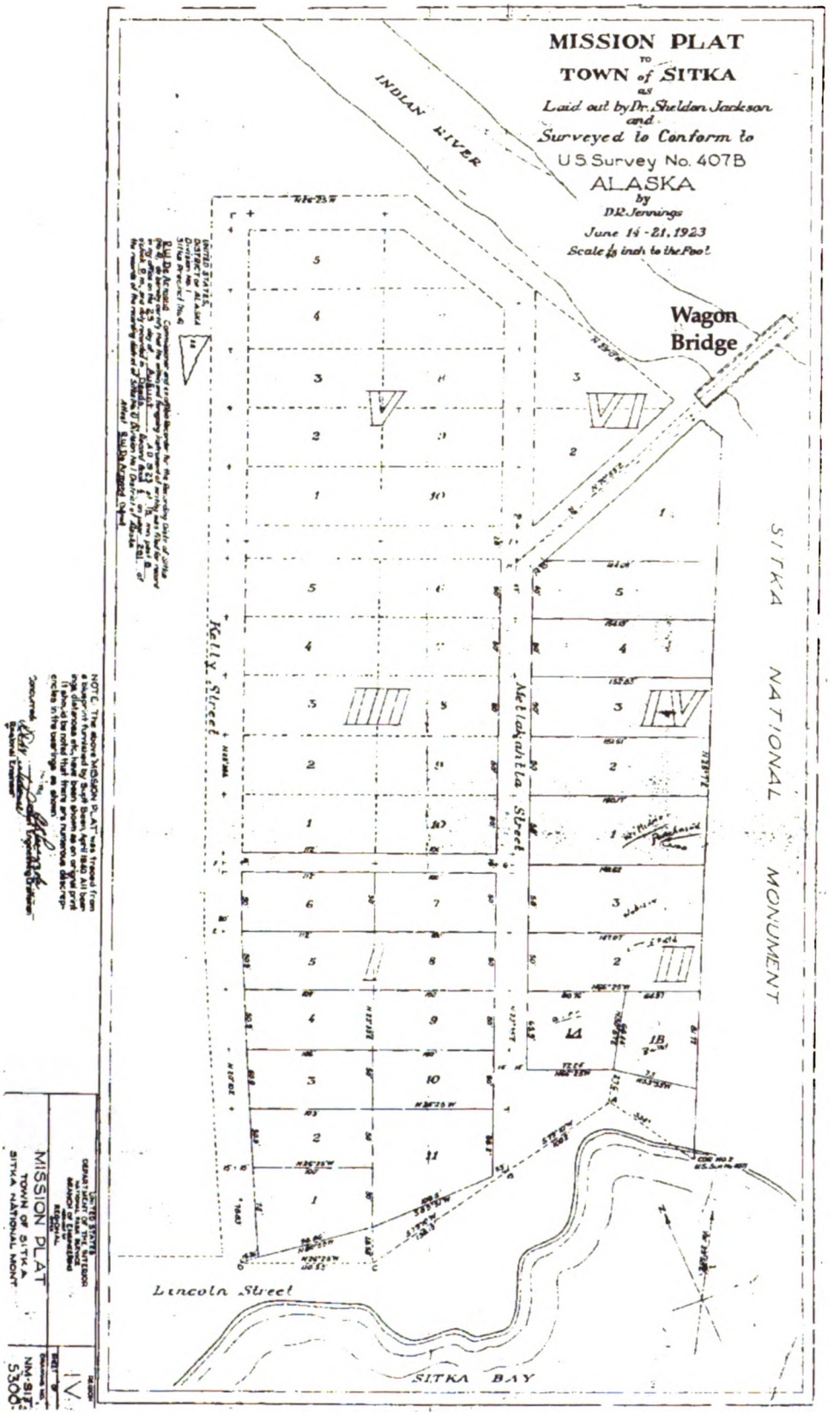

Figure 7-11. Plat of the Mission Cottage Settlement, 1923.

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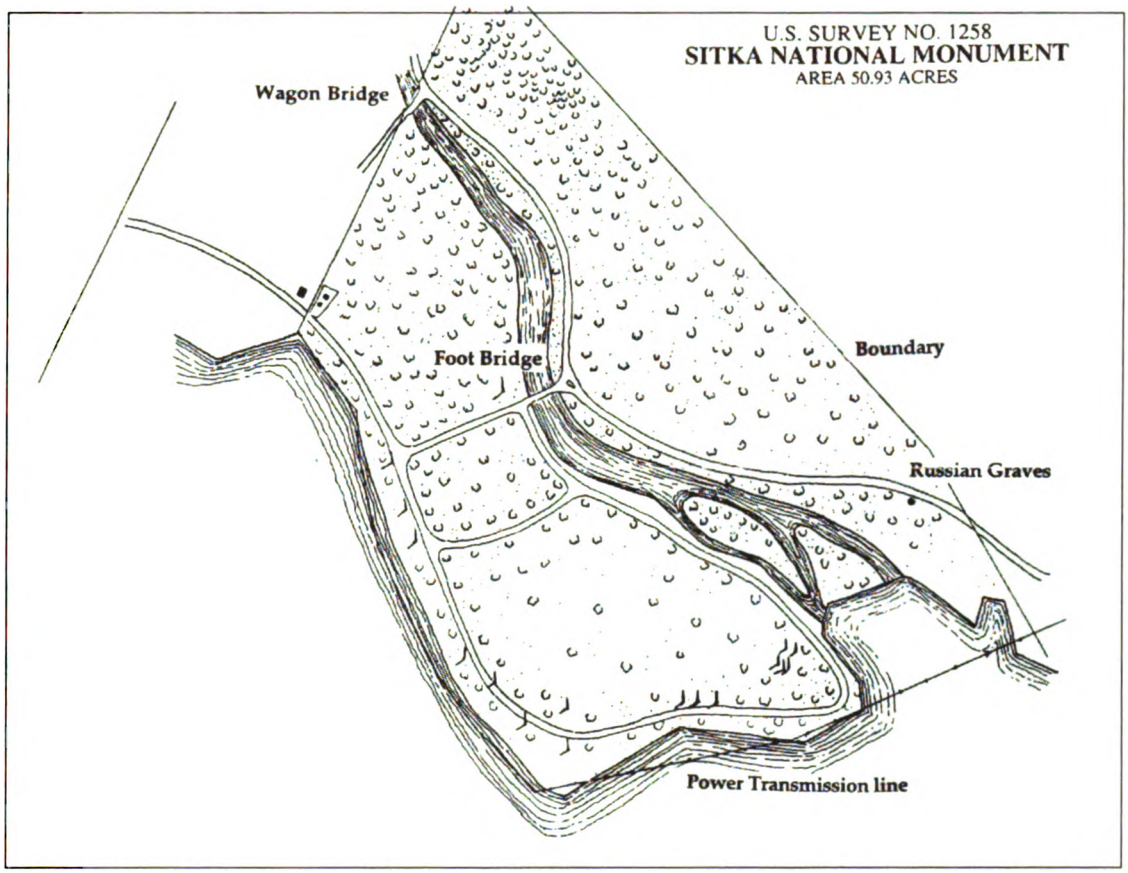

Figure 7-12. U.S. Survey No. 1258, Sitka National Monument, 1919-1920.

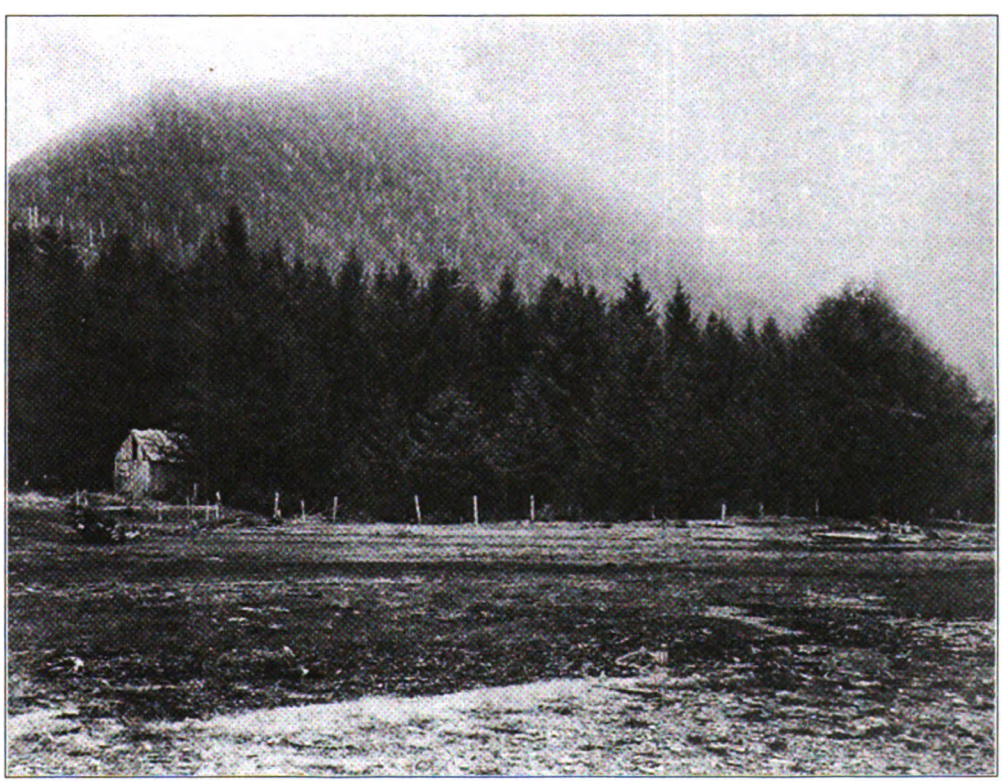

Figure 7-13. Former site of Nicholas Haley's homestead, ca. 1913.

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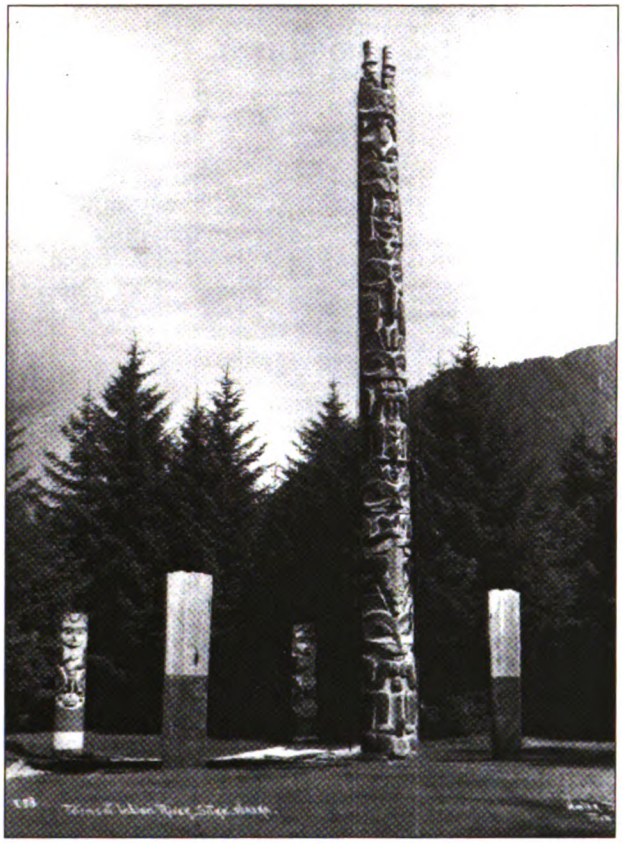

Figure 7-14. Saanaheit Totem Pole, House Posts, and canoe in the clearing near the river's mouth, ca. 1912.

Historically, wagons that needed to cross the river, but were unable to use the footbridges, had forded the stream. In 1918, however, the Road Commission extended Metlakahtla Street beyond the cottage settlement and north to the river, where it constructed a bridge for wheeled traffic (Figure 7-11). The "50-foot Howe truss" wagon bridge crossed the river just at the monument's northern border.[72] The location of the new bridge can be seen on the 1919 survey of the monument (Figure 7-12).

The character of the Indian River mouth was impacted during this time with the effects of Nicholas Haley's activities. Although not much remained on the property by 1908 except for his dilapidated cabin, the effects of Haley's past activities still would have been apparent (Figure 7-13). According to Langille's 1908 report, Haley had cut "a few cords" of wood in the vicinity of his cabin, had cultivated a small vegetable garden there as late as 1905 and, at the time of his inspection in 1908, had sown grass on a half-acre old field. According to Langille, Haley kept no livestock on the homestead, but he and two men who had worked for him in the 1880s claimed

Figure 7-15. Posing on the old war canoe, ca. 1904-1910.

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there at one time.[73] By the time Figure 7-13 was taken, which was no later than 1913, the area appears to have been practically abandoned. What is most apparent is the extent of the clearing that Haley had carved out of the area.

Haley and others apparently cut wood in additional areas along the river. Langille wrote, in 1908, that "several acres [had been] cut over by trespassers near the north side along the river by Haley and unknown trespassers from 1883 to 1908."[74] Just where the wood was cut on the northern side is not clear, but Figure 7-13 clearly shows the effect of such cutting on the bank of the river.

Figure 7-16. One of the Saanaheit house posts in the clearing near the mouth of the river, ca. 1913.

Fort Area

The fort area of the park, which for the purposes of this report includes the entire width of the base of the Indian River peninsula, overlaps with the Totem Trail area from 1906 onward when Merrill sited several poles along that section of the path. From this point on, the section of trail and the totem sites along it within the fort area will be discussed as part of the Totem Trail area, whereas the section off the trail will be considered as part of the fort area.

Conditions in the fort area during this time period are documented in a number of historic photographs and maps. These sources clearly illustrate that a small grassy clearing existed near the mouth of the river, while the rest of the area was covered with a second growth stand of spruce-hemlock forest. While it seems likely that the clearing is the same area described by Sophia Cracroft in 1870 as a "grassy nook" near the river's mouth, it is impossible to know for certain. During this period, however, the location and character of the clearing are well documented.

The 1910 monument map (Figure 7-5) indicates that the clearing occupied a section of the tip of the peninsula at the river's mouth. The cleared area is surrounded by forest on its northern and western sides, while to the south and east it is bordered by the trail and a grassy fringe above the beach. Although the 1910 map does not show it, Robert De Armond recalls that a narrow fringe of young trees existed between the clearing and the road and beach on the southern side. Just when these trees became established is not known and their extent is not documented. According to Lewis' 1913 report on the park, the clearing was about 150 feet in diameter.[75] Because the known historic photographs taken of the clearing were focused on the totems first placed there in 1902, that general view from within the clearing is the only image definitely documented during this period. Figure 7-14, taken about 1912, shows the Saanaheit Totem Pole, the four House Posts, and the remains of the war canoe in the level, grassy clearing. The totem grouping is situated towards the edge of the opening, with one house post literally in the shadow of the conifers that border the clearing. Figure 7-15, probably taken a few years earlier than 1912 (judging by the shape of the canoe), shows a couple posing on the side of the rotting dugout. Dense forest growth forms the background, looming quite close behind the houseposts and figures. Judging from the 1910

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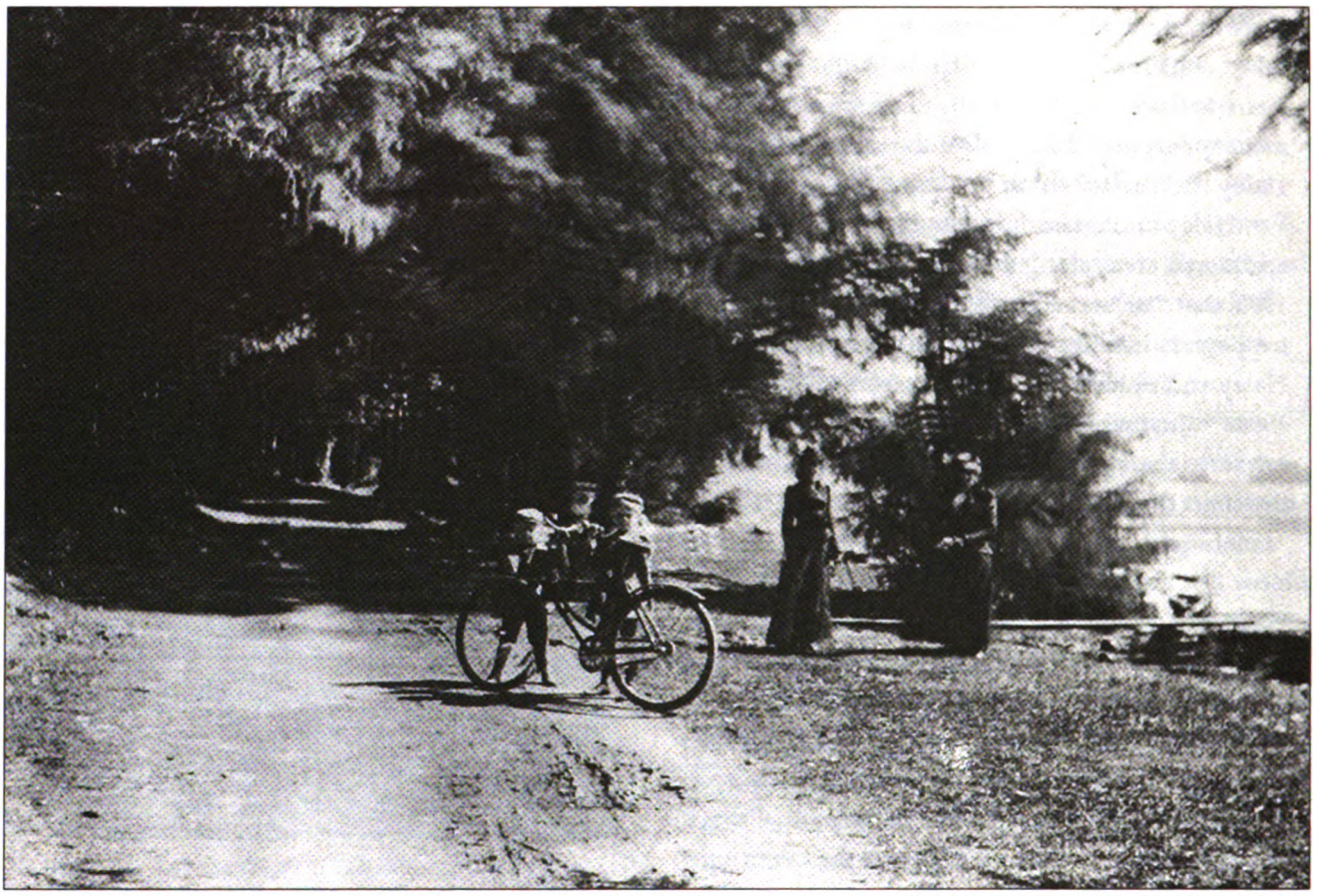

Figure 7-17. Road leading out to the Indian River point, ca. 1904.

monument map, the beach side of the clearing opposite the totems was relatively exposed to the sound and broken only by a narrow fringe of young trees.

The photographs also clearly illustate the condition of the totems. A close-up of one housepost, taken around 1912 or 1913, shows that the post was freshly painted and set in gravel near the edge of the clearing (Figure 7-16). In all of the photos from this period, the pole and house posts are in good condition and are freshly painted. By 1912, the canoe had completely collapsed, but the prow visible in Figure 7-15 appears to have been recently painted.

The clearing at the tip of the Indian River peninsula was one of the focal points of the park landscape. It must have been an attractive destination to visitors, offering a expansive space where the Saanaheit pole soared and where the sea and distant islands, the dense forest, and the river could be viewed.

RUSSIAN WALK/TOTEM TRAIL

The historic Russian walk to the Indian River, and the trail along the beach where Merrill arranged the totems in 1906, are also overlapping components of the park's cultural landscape. The Russian walk followed the beach partway out to the Indian River peninsula, and then cut east towards the river. Merrill placed totems along the beach section of that walk in the park, transforming it into part of what is now known as the Totem Trail. Because the Totem Trail was conceived of and laid out according to Merrill's aesthetic principles, and is still intact as a

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unit, it will be treated as one area. The section of the historic Russian walk that crosses the Indian River peninsula is considered with the other river and forest trails.

The documentation of conditions along the beach trail prior to the placement of the totems in the park is limited. The sources, however, do provide some information as to the character of the area and the activities that took place there. A 1904 photograph shows two children standing on the trail with a bicycle and two women looking on from nearby (Figure 7-17). It is not clear precisely where along the trail the photograph was taken, but it may have been relatively close to the present entrance area at the western edge of the park. The dirt road, with its muddy ruts, shows the kind of wear created by frequent wheeled traffic. The road, which passes from an open area in the foreground, is flanked by a stretch of grass between it and the beach before receding into the shadow of the forest. Patches of light are visible along its path, indicating that openings exist in the fringe of trees between the road and beach area. The overall feeling suggested by the image of this section of the road as it wound towards the mouth of Indian River is that of a series of enclosed and open spaces.

The trail was maintained, as early as 1905, by the Alaska Road Commission. Commission employees graveled the surface and kept the roadway clear of vegetation.[76] The entire length of the road, from the center of town to the end of the peninsula, referred to as the Sitka Street and Park Road in 1907, was described by a visitor:

> It leads from the government wharf to Indian River and is about a mile long. After leaving the business part of town the road is bordered on one side by the more pretentious residences, the mission and then a forest, and on the other side by the bay for the entire distance. It is a

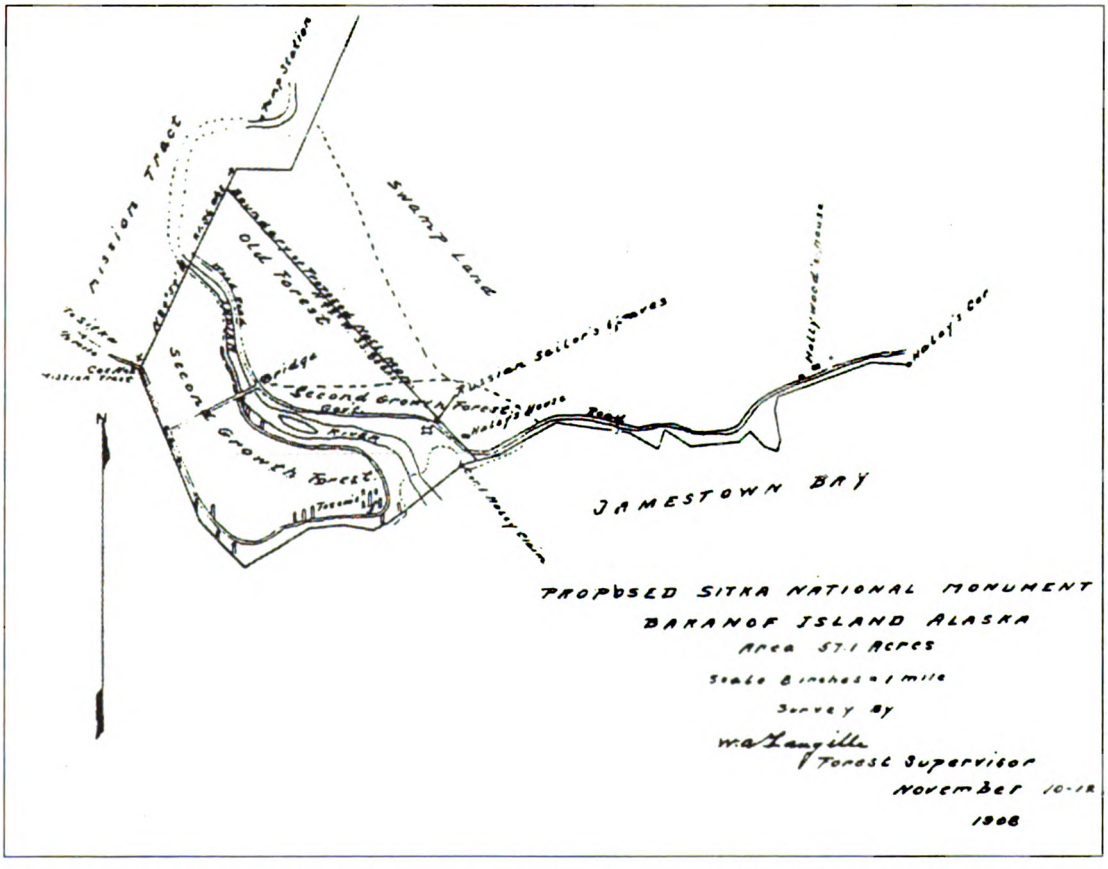

Figure 7-18. A 1908 Map of the "Proposed Sitka National Monument," surveyed by Forest Supervisor W. Langille.

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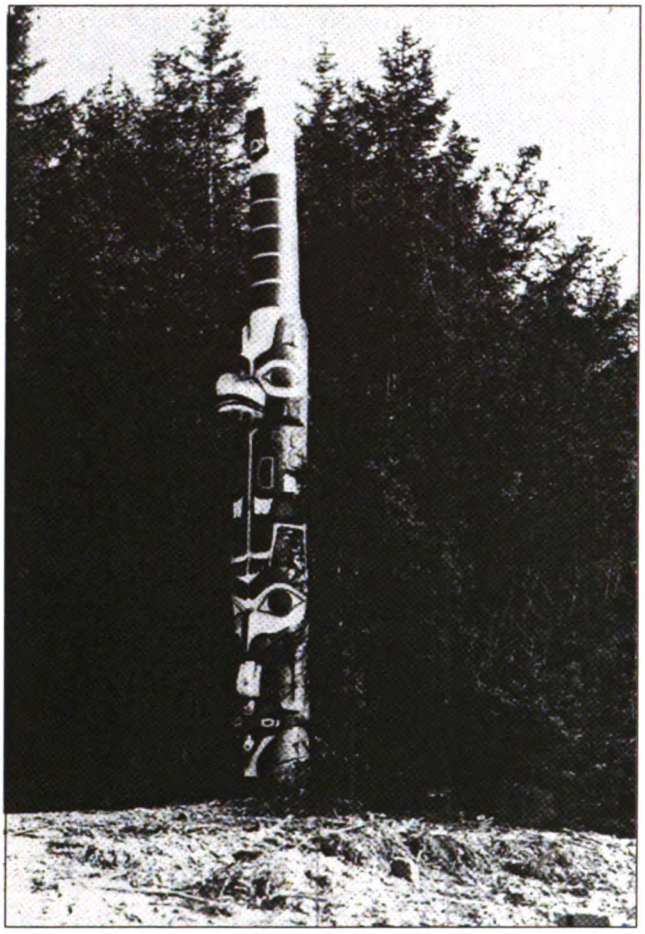

Figure 7-19. Frog/Raven Totem Pole, ca. 1913, by Merrill.

> fine highway, thoroughly macadamized, solid and firm. It follow the sinuosities of the shore and skirts it closely. The outlook from many places along its entire length is entrancing and the views presented are kaleidoscopic in variety.[77]

The "thoroughly macadamized" section of the road ended before it entered the park. The Park Road is shown on the 1910 monument map as forming a loop that closely follows the shoreline of the bay, continues out around the point at the mouth of the Indian River, proceeds up along the river bank to the bridge, and then heads west again across the peninsula toward the beach (Figure 7-5). This probably was the route followed by the wagon tours that brought visitors into the park.

The arrangement of totem poles along the trail in 1906 introduced a new cultural and spatial dimension to the Park Road corridor. Historic accounts and photographs provide some evidence as to how Merrill sited the poles and the character they imparted to the trail. The 1910 monument map and most historic photographs taken around that time suggest that when Merrill placed the totems, he sited most of them in open areas just above the beach, reflecting their use in traditional native villages (see Figure 7-3). The map indicates that the majority of poles were located on the western side of the peninsula in the narrow strip between the road and beach. Although the map depicts that strip as

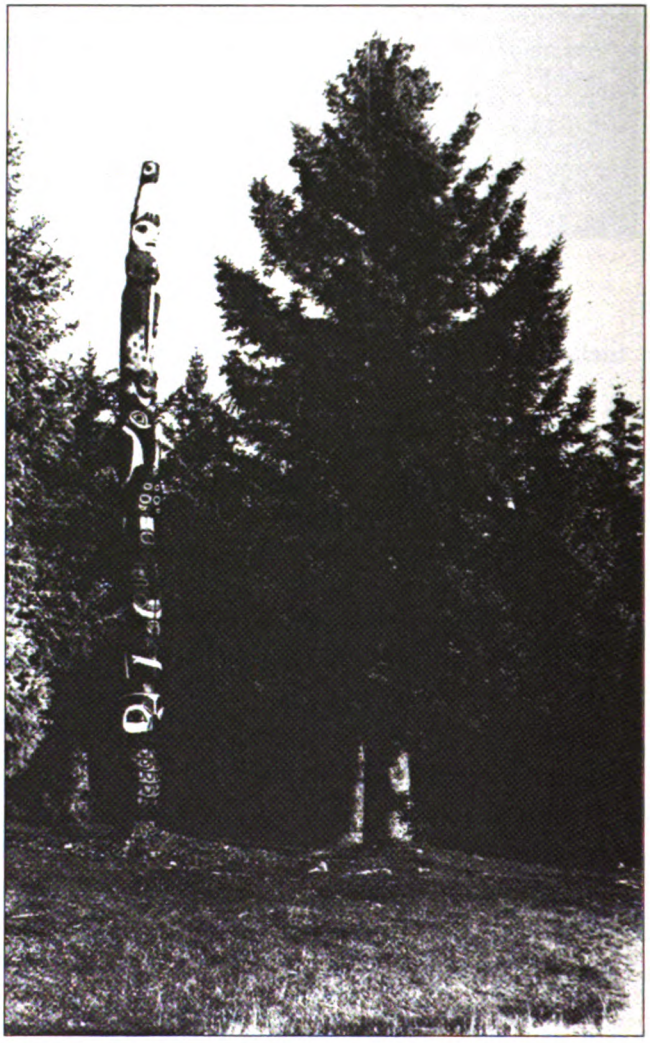

Figure 7-20. Gaanaxadi/Raven Crest Totem Pole, ca. 1913, by Merrill.

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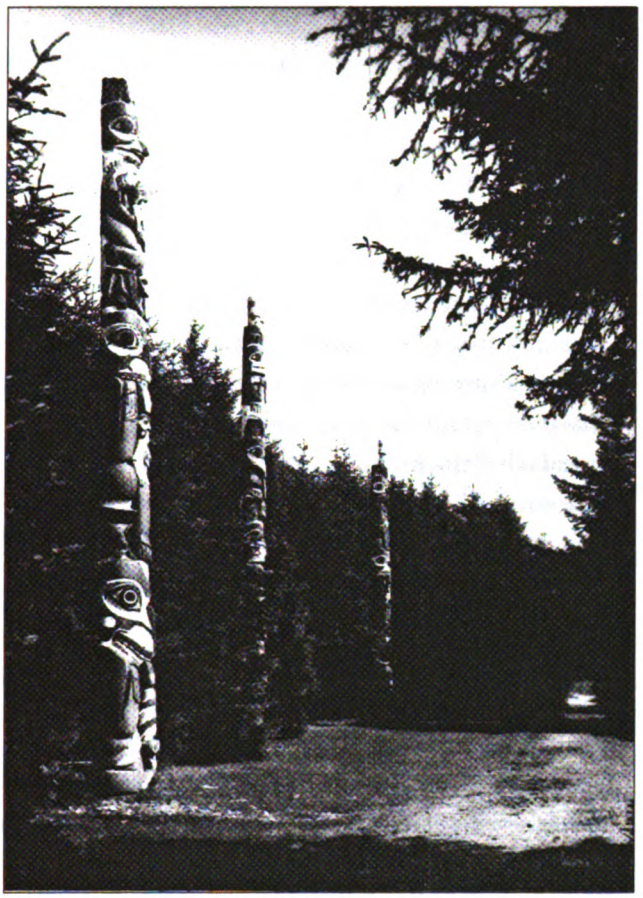

Figure 7-21. Lakich'inei Pole, Yaadaas Crest Pole, and Mosquito Legend Pole, ca. 1912, by Winter & Pond.

Figure 7-22. Posing at the base of the Waasgo Legend Totem Pole, ca. 1912, by Winter & Pond.

being vegetated with low grasses, there certainly were second-growth trees growing in much of the area between the beach and trail. Whether any trees were removed before the totems were erected is not documented, but photographs of the totems indicate that many were sited in clearings.

The 1910 monument map also shows totem poles in sites other than adjacent to the beach. Several poles are illustrated on the inside of the Park Road at the edge of the forest, and one is shown along the edge of the clearing at the river's mouth. The only pole not in the vicinity of the beach is sited along the park road close to the footbridge. Whether these were the original sites that Merrill had chosen for the poles is not clear. A map of the proposed monument, created in 1908, shows a number of poles in different locations (Figure 7-18). Whether the poles were moved in the interim, or whether either map illustrated the pole locations with precision is impossible to know. Merrill left very few records, and none indicate either the precise locations of the poles or whether they were moved following their initial placement.

Historic photographs provide some evidence as to the location and character of the totem sites. Figure 7-19, taken sometime before 1913, shows the original Frog/Raven Pole in a sunny location backed by dense young forest growth; it could have been placed in a number of locations shown on the map. The photograph does not reveal whether the pole faced the trail or the sea. The original Gaanaxadi/Raven Crest Pole, shown in Figure 7-20, sat among some young spruce in a open grassy area—most likely at the upper edge of the beach. The pole probably faced towards the beach. Figure 7-21, taken around 1912, depicts the original Lakich'inei, Yaadaas Crest, and Mosquito Legend poles, which made up the group of three totems shown on the

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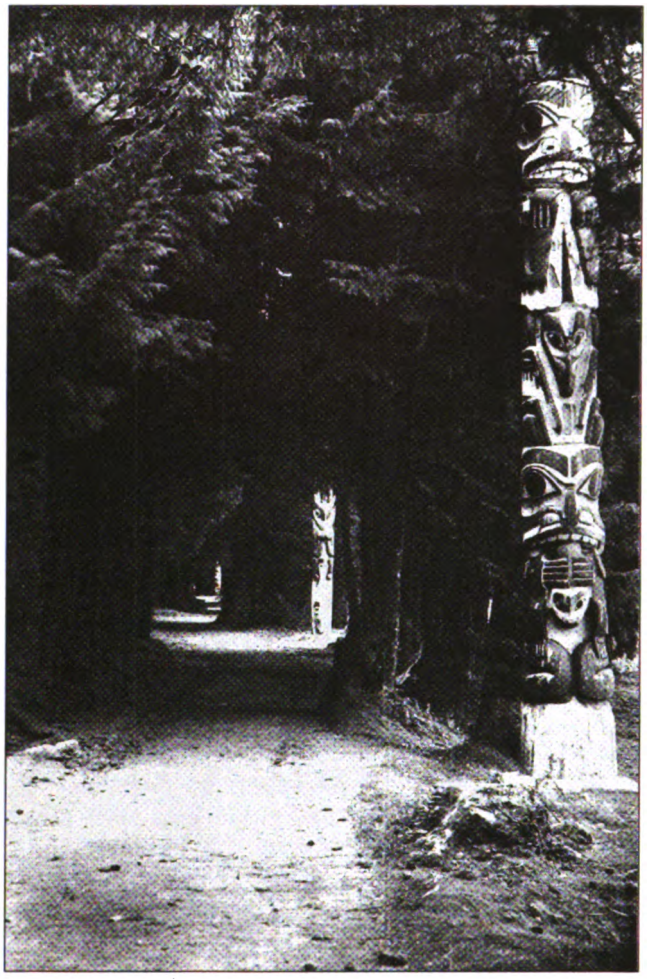

Figure 7-23. Undated photograph, "Looking down the Totem Trail or Lovers' Lane," by Merrill.

1910 monument map alongside the Park Road at the base of the peninsula (see Figure 7-5). The second growth forest comes very close to the back of the poles, and partially blocks the central totem from view in the photograph. The front of the poles face a clearing and the Park Road and gaze out to sea. It is also clear that some trees were present between the beach and trail on either side of the clearing. Another photograph, taken about the same time, depicts four men standing at the base of the original Waasgo Legend Pole (Figure 7-22). The image reveals that the pole stood in a grassy clearing, surrounded by trees on one side and the road on the other. Its exact location in the park is not clear.

Several undated Merrill photographs illustrate the setting of a number of other totem poles in the park.[78] A view of "Lover's Lane," as the Park Road came to be called, shows a series of poles, sited in small clearings on the beach side of the trail, which faced the visitor as he or she walked out towards the tip of the peninsula (Figure 7-23 and 7-24). The pole in the foreground was one of the original Yaadaas Crest Corner poles, followed by the Wolf Pole farther along the trail. Whether these were the original locations that Merrill chose is not known. The enclosed, wooded character of these totem sites contrasts with the expansive beach-side locations,

Figure 7-24. View along the Totem Trail, 1908-1911, showing the beach, sound, and distant islands.

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and may reflect Merrill's attempt to create a more intimate setting for studying the carvings. Set in the forest, the poles, which mimic the verticality of the trees around them, seem like animate versions of their neighbors.

Unfortunately, these historic photographs, which are the earliest documented images of the poles in the park, don't reveal Merrill's placement of all the totems. In combination with the 1910 monument map, however, the overall pattern of the totems' arrangement and the variety and character of their settings can be discerned. Merrill's attempt to "preserve the spirit of the old order" was most likely reflected in the sequential arrangement of the poles in open areas along the beach.[79] Whether he considered other elements of Tlingit and Haida culture when he sited them is not known. Given his artistic talent and the fact that he took weeks to select the sites, Merrill certainly considered the aesthetic dimensions of their organization. He created an arrangement that very well displayed the carved monuments themselves, but that also enhanced the scenic views of the park and surrounding landscape.

The arrangement of the poles in the park was not static for long. As a comparison of the 1908 and 1910 maps of the monument reveals, some poles may have been moved within a few years after their erection in the park. Additionally, a comparison of the 1910 monument map and a survey of the park done in 1919 (Figure 7-12), reveals some changes in the totem locations. The pole depicted in 1910 next to the clearing at the mouth of the Indian River is no longer present in that location by 1919. Furthermore, in the 1919 survey, a totem is shown on the northern side of the road at the southwestern corner of the peninsula. The totem near the river in 1919 is closer to the bridge than in 1910. Nevertheless, it is not certain that these differences reflect accurate changes to the pole arrangement. Given the amount of repair and maintenance they required, however, it is very likely that in the process their arrangement in the park shifted.

Figure 7-26. Vegetation along a monument trail, ca. 1913.

Figure 7-25. "Typical road scene" in the monument, ca. 1913.

The totems featured in the photographs appear to be in good condition and freshly painted. Lewis' 1913 report provides more detailed information on their condition. He wrote that while some of the poles had been vandalized, certain "figures . . . .

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Figure 7-27. Evidence of wood cutting in the monument, ca. 1910.

[had] been broken, as eyes or ears knocked off, eyes filled with birdshot, or some portions of the figures removed or missing," they were in a "generally good state of preservation." In his report Lewis recommended that a native craftsman be hired to repair and paint the totems.[80]

The fundamental consequence of the creation of the Totem Trail in 1906 was its domination of the experience that subsequent visitors to the park encountered. The powerful sculptures arranged dramatically along the main route through the park naturally attracted the attention of tourists. Outside of the Indian River area, many of the scenic qualities of the park were viewed as a backdrop for the poles. Pole preservation was a driving force behind the creation of Sitka National Monument and has been a central concern of park custodians and managers from that time and continuing to the present.

ENTRANCE AREA

The character of the monument's entrance area, where the visitor center and parking lots are currently located, was affected during this period by the Presbyterian mission community and the model cottage settlement that had grown up around it. The presence of seventeen cottages so close to the park likely would have resulted in disturbance to the

Figure 7-28. Fresh stumps in the national monument, ca. 1910.

forest in the vicinity. The settlement certainly diminished the visitors' sense of being in the kind of romantic natural setting that earlier sojourners to the park so often expressed.

FORESTED AREAS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE INDIAN RIVER

A second-growth spruce-hemlock forest occupied the majority of the monument landscape during this period. Within the overall stand, however, much local variety existed in the structure and species of the communities that were present. Additionally, according to Forest Supervisor Langille's 1908 report of the park, a portion of the forest on the eastern side of the river seemed to be "some of the original forest growth."[81] The "old growth" area as described by Langille is depicted on the 1910 monument map with a denser vegetation pattern (Figure 7-5).

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Some sense of the character of the park forest is provided by Langille's description. Langille wrote that the second-growth forest on the Indian River peninsula showed signs of the original forest growth in the form of "decayed stumps and portions of old logs still existent." Lewis' 1913 description of the forest provides more details. He wrote:

> Entering the Park the road plunges at once into the shadow of the timber. Except for a few little openings where the Totem Poles are planted, the roads and trails all wind about in the timber. The trees are mostly small spruce, not more than 18 inches in diameter, but in among these trees is a dense growth of smaller trees, brush, fallen timber, and debris in all stages of decay. It is so dense that one would make very slow progress in attempting to pass through it. . . .[82]

Lewis also specified that "in the immediate vicinity of the water front, that is, between the road and the water, the timber appears to be a reproduction. It is evident that the land here was cleared at one time from the fact that the ground is now free from debris and well grassed over among the trees."[83]

Historic photographs of the Indian River, the totems, and the roads and trials through the park illustrate the character and variety of the vegetation. The river and totem images already discussed well illustrate Lewis' characterization of the typical forest growth. Figure 7-25, which accompanied Lewis' report, also clearly illustrates the dense stand of immature spruce that flanked the road. Another photograph, taken about the same time, shows a trail passing through a more open area, where devil's club, ferns, and other herbaceous species are growing around old stumps (Figure 7-26).

Areas of the park's forest continued to be subject to cutting during this period. As Langille mentioned in his report on Haley's homesteading activity, several acres "near the north side along the river" had been cut between 1883 and 1908.[84] A number of photographs taken about 1910 illustrate evidence of local wood-cutting in the park (Figures 7-27and 7-28). It was just such activities that members of the Arctic Brotherhood complained of in their petition for the park to be designated a national monument.

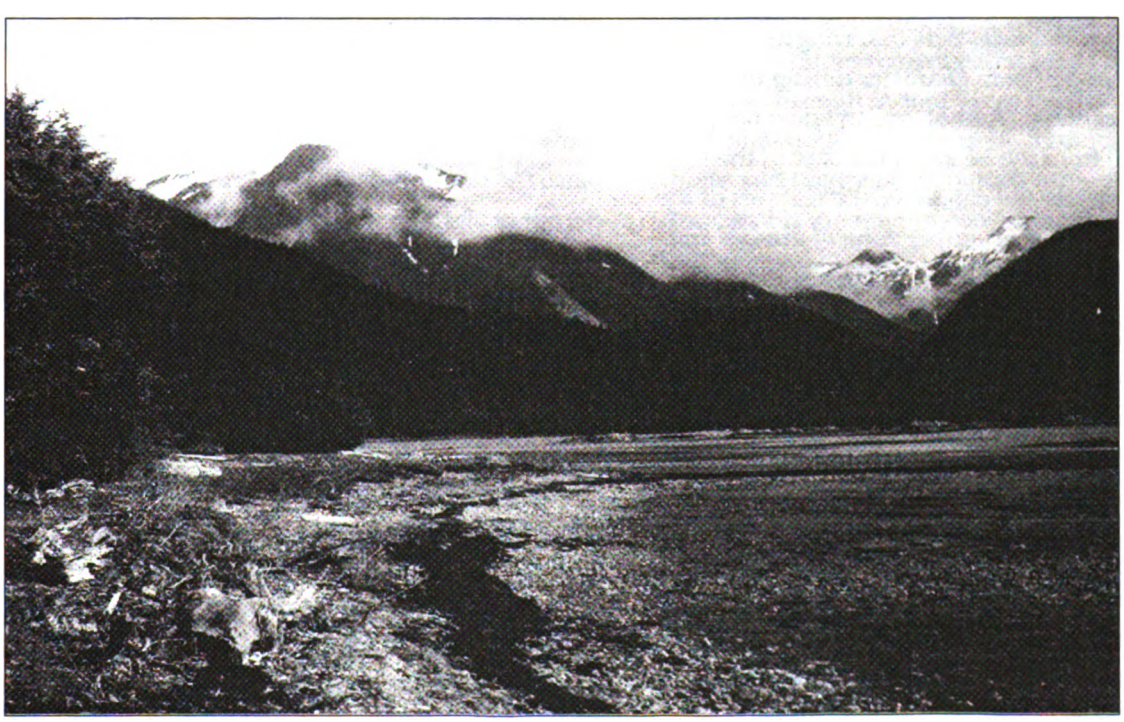

Figure 7-29. Looking towards the mouth of the Indian River and beyond, from the beach and sedge meadow at the base of the Indian River peninsula, 1900, by Merrill. This area served as the site of baseball games, picnics, and community gatherings.

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Figure 7-30. Snowy forest path in the park, ca. 1900, by Merrill.

BEACH/TIDAL FLATS

The beaches and tidal flats that fringed the park probably changed little in character during the first decade of the century. A photograph taken by Merrill in 1900 from the beach at the base of the peninsula illustrates the characteristic features of the beach zone, including an upper zone of grasses and other herbaceous vegetation growing around drift wood, a line of seaweed and other debris washed up by the waves, and a zone of relatively bare beach cobble (Figure 7-29). The photograph also clearly illustrates the sedge-dominated beach meadow that occurred in the tidal zone at the base of the peninsula. This meadow was a popular site for community gatherings and baseball games. The view towards the mouth of the Indian River and Jamestown Bay captured by the photograph conveys the dramatic coastal mountain scenery enjoyed from the park's beaches.

Sometime around 1913, an impediment to the enjoyment of views from the park beaches occurred when a power transmission line to Sitka was constructed along the monument beach.[85] Its location is shown on the 1919 survey of the park (Figure 7-12). Since the line apparently was put up without a permit or right-of-way clearance, its location became the subject of conflict among NPS officials and local and federal power authorities.[86] The Sitka Wharf and Power Company belatedly filed an application for a permit sometime around August 1923.[87] About the same time, Acting NPS Director Arno Cammerer wrote to the Federal Power Commission, stating that "a careful search of the records of the General Land Office does not indicate that a permit or right of way was ever granted for the construction of this line." Both NPS and Alaska Road Commission officials felt that the line should be moved to another location.[88] It was several years, however, before the line was moved.

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Figure 7-31. "Entering the park, the road plunges at once into the shadow of the timber," Lewis report, 1913.

RIVER AND FOREST TRAILS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE RIVER

The roads and trails within the monument were maintained for most of this period by the Alaska Road Commission. The agency's workers filled holes, regularly applied gravel to the road surfaces, and widened foot trails into wagon roads. A 1915 article in the mission school paper referred to the Commission's activities in the park as part of the "good roads movement in Alaska," which the author hoped would "influence the influx of population" to the great "Empire" of Alaska.[89] Indeed, the number and extent of roads passing through the park did increase during the first decade of the twentieth century.

The 1910 monument map illustrates the road system in the park at that time (Figure 7-5). On the western side of the river, the Park Road extended along the shore, around the point, and up the southwestern bank of the river to the bridge, where it turned west to the beach again. This loop, affording views of the totems, the forest, and the sound, was the most heavily traveled road in the park. On the eastern side of the river, a "Wood Road," closely paralleling the river, is shown on the 1910 map. This roadway is part of the road built by the Commission in 1909, Sitka Road #14, which followed the path of the earlier roadway that Haley had made to his homestead, and then continued a couple miles farther to Jamestown Bay. According to DeArmond, it was more like a wide path as it ran along Jamestown Bay.[90]

This same map also shows a fragment of another road that crossed the Indian River just above the boundary of the proposed monument, and which ended abruptly in the "old forest." This section of road is not shown on other maps, and when it was constructed is not known. It is very possible that this road ran through the Mission cottages neighborhood and across the river.

In 1913, Lewis' reported on the condition of the Monument trails and roads. He wrote that some of the trails were "in excellent condition." He noted that the soil was "gravelly and clean to the feet." Lewis also noted, however that "being gravelly, the trails are subject to washing out in places. Some repairs of this nature are needed now."[91] Shortly thereafter, the Road Commission resurfaced the entire length of the roadway, including the Park Road on both sides of the river.[92] A 1915 account of the Commission's activities remarked on "the extensive improvement being made on the roads leading through Indian River Park and along Jamestown Bay." The author continued that "mud holes and boggy places which formerly were almost impassable are now in good condition; and in many places mere footpaths have been changed to proper wagon roads."[93]

A number of historic photographs convey the range in character of the park roads during this period. The views of the Totem Trail already discussed present several perspectives of the main road in the park. Several other shots illlustrate some of the roadways and paths without totems. Figure 7-30, taken by Merrill around 1900, conveys the beauty of the park forest trails after winter snowfalls.

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Figure 7-32. Russian Memorial, 1913.

Figure 7-31, which accompanied Lewis' 1913 report, shows a section of park road passing through the patterns of light and shade created by the forest around it.

A comparison of the 1910 and 1919 monument maps reveals that the Road Commission had created a new road from the river to the beach in the park (Figures 7-5 and 7-12). It was cut from the beach to the river south of the original trail. Whether it followed an existing footpath or represented a totally new route is not clear. Additionally, by 1919, wheeled traffic could pass over the river on the wagon bridge at the northern park border and continue east, without having to pass along the Totem Trail. Since other new trails that the Commission developed were not mapped, it is not possible to locate them specifically.

RUSSIAN MEMORIAL AREA

Another important landscape feature of the park at this time was the Russian Memorial. It is indicated on both the 1908 and 1910 maps of the monument. Sitka members of the Arctic Brotherhood wrote, in their petition for National Monument protection on November 16, 1908, that after the battle Baranov had a wooden monument erected over the graves. They reported that since then, "public spirited citizens" kept it in "more or less repair." They also reported that "now the St. Nicholas Society of the Greco-Russian Church is heading a movement to erect a monument to permanently mark their place of death."[94] W. Lewis included a photograph of the Memorial in his 1913 report on the park (Figure 7-32). At that time, the simple picket fence and cross appear to be situated in a small clearing in the forest.

CONCLUSION

The additions of the Tlingit and Haida totem poles to the park's landscape during this period transformed its character and brought about designation of the area as a national monument. The placement of the totem poles in a park that was an important recreational site for the natives of the Presbyterian mission community underscores the processes of social complexity and change that occurred in Alaska during those years. Merrill's images of Sheldon Jackson School students posing for their class photos in front of the totems are poignant glimpses into the process and effects of cultural assimilation. Figure 7-33, taken by Merrill around 1917, shows the "girls from North Pacific Hall." According to the text published with the picture in the school paper, "in dress, in facial expression and in general attitude they [the girls] indicate the progress of their race quite as much as the grotesque figures in the background record the experiences of their fathers and grandfathers."[95]

Governmental organizations were shaping the physical as well as the social landscape of Alaska. The construction and maintenance activities of the

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Figure 7-33. Students of the Sheldon Jackson School in the monument, ca. 1917, by Merrill.

Alaska Road Commission imparted a functional character to features of the monument. Along with the extension and improvement of the road came more traffic, resulting in further decreases to the former romantic spirit of the park. Yet, it is obvious that romantic notions about the park continued to exist, as revealed by a poem, "Indian River," written in 1909. The author describes the river as "Winding thru the shady forest / Sparkling, clear, and icy cold/ The same today as in the dim / And distant days of old." After describing the ostensibly vanishing Tlingit the author concludes:

> There shall linger but a legend
> By the river's grassy brink,
> Which will reach the hearts of passers,
> Who may stop and stoop to drink.
>
> Bending to the running river,
> They shall catch its sad refrain:
> "Ye who drink once of its waters,
> Shall return to drink again."[96]

The river's continuing attraction and power had taken yet another form. While the poem conveys the sentimental views of the period, this legend, which is still occassionally repeated today, expresses the depth of local attachment to the stream and park.

ENDNOTES

[1] U. S. Census Office, *Report on the Population of the United States at the Twelfth Census, 1900* (Washington D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1901); after investigating other historic sources of the period, De Armond feels that the 1900 census data for Sitka may well be "skewed," and that the actual number of Sitka residents should be lower for that time, Robert De Armond, written comments to Arnold Alanen and Holly Smith-Middleton, December 8, 1997.

[2] Claus-M. Naske and Herman E. Slotnick, *Alaska: A History of the 49th State* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 94.

[3] A.M. Sheets, "A Historical Sketch," *The Thlinget*, March 1909, p. 1, Stratton Library, Sheldon Jackson College, Sitka.

[4] *The Thlinget*, November 1909, p. 1; January 1910, p. 1; August 1911, p. 1.

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[5] *The Verstovian*, November 1915, p. 1, Stratton Library, Sheldon Jackson College, Sitka.
[6] Joan M. Antonson and William S. Hanable, *Administrative History of Sitka National Historical Park* (Anchorage: National Park Service, 1987), 41.
[7] Ted C. Hinckley, *Alaskan John G. Brady: Missionary, Businessman, Judge, and Governor, 1878-1918* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1982), 44.
[8] Edward Malin, *Totem Poles of the Pacific Northwest Coast* (Portland, Oregon: Timber Press, 1986), 163.
[9] Richard D. Feldman and Judith E. Scherer, "Reaching Across a Continent: The Story of the Golden Hill Totem Pole," *Traces* 6, Fall 1994: 44.
[10] *The Alaskan* (Sitka), March 8, 1902, p. 3; despite *The Alaskan* report, there is some question as to whether Saanaheit's canoe was ever placed in the park. According to De Armond, the Saanaheit canoe was placed in front of the Marine Corps barracks in Sitka, where it eventually rotted away. He contends, and it is possible, that the canoe placed with the Saanaheit pole and housepost in the park was one that Brady originally collected for the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exposition. If so, it must have been in feeble condition to have reached the state of decay seen in a photograph of it taken in the park sometime between 1904 and 1910 (Figure 63).
[11] Report of the Governor of Alaska, 1904, pp. 157-58, Alaska State Archives, Juneau.
[12] Feldman and Scherer, "Reaching," p. 44.
[13] Log of the Rush, November 1903, SITK Archives, RG 51, Box 2, Folder 1.
[14] John Brady, letter to Elizabeth Brady, November 2, 1903, SITK Archives, RG 51, Box 2, Folder 1.
[15] *Ibid.*
[16] *Ibid.*
[17] Log of the Rush, November 1903.
[18] The agent, Mr. Cartwright, presented the pole as a gift to David M. Parry, a prominent industrialist. Parry erected the totem on his property in Indianapolis, where it became a local landmark; see Feldman and Scherer, "Reaching," p. 46.
[19] "The Exhibition of the District of Alaska at the Lewis and Clark Exposition," Portland, OR, 1905, Pamphlet, 57, SITK Archives, RG 51, Box 2, Folder 23, Sitka.
[20] *The Alaskan*, January 6, 1906, p. 3.
[21] *Ibid.*, January 13, 1906, p. 3.
[22] Sharon Bohn Gmelch, "Elbridge Warren Merrill: The Tlingit of Alaska, 1899-1929," *History of Photography* 19, Summer 1995: 164.
[23] *The Alaskan*, January 13, 1906, p. 3.
[24] Gmelch, "Elbridge Warren Merrill," 164.
[25] *The Alaskan*, March 24, 1906, p.3.
[26] Gmelch, "Elbridge Warren Merrill," 159-61.
[27] *Ibid.*, 162.
[28] *Ibid.*, 164.
[29] E. Otis Smith, Arctic Recorder of the Camp Sitka No. 6, Arctic Brotherhood, petition to President William H. Taft, November 16, 1908, National Archives, RG 79, Box No. 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).
[30] W.A. Langille, letter to Camp Sitka No. 6, Arctic Brotherhood, November 10, 1908, National Archives, RG 79, Box No. 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).
[31] Smith, petition to President Taft, 1908.
[32] *Ibid.*, 2.
[33] *Ibid.*, 1-2.
[34] *Ibid.*, 2-3.
[35] Langille letter to Camp Sitka No. 6, November 10, 1908.
[36] Report on a Proposed National Monument at Sitka, Alaska, p. 1, attached to letter from Alaskan Governor Clark to the Secretary of the Interior, April 7, 1910, National Archives, RG 79, Box No. 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).
[37] *Ibid.*, 5.
[38] Governor Clark, letter to the Secretary of the Interior, April 7, 1910, National Archives, RG 79, Box No. 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).
[39] William H. Taft, A Proclamation of the President of the United States, March 23, 1910, National Archives microfilm, SITK Archives, Files of the Cultural Resources Manager, Sitka.
[40] *Ibid.*
[41] Arthur Shoup, letter to Judge Wickersham, December 16, 1912, National Archives, RG 79, Box 610, Entry 7 (NA&RA).
[42] *Ibid.*
[43] W.J. Lewis, "Report on Sitka National Monument," May 22, 1913, pp. 1, 5, 8, National Archives RG 79 ?.
[44] Arthur G. Shoup, letter to A. Christensen, Chief of Field Division, April 30, 1914 , National Archives, RG 79, Box No. 610, Entry 7 (NA&RA).
[45] House Joint Memorial No. 5 to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, April 29, 1913, National Archives microfilm copy, SITK Archives, Files of the Cultural Resources Manager.
[46] Antonson and Hanable, *Sitka*, 49-50.
[47] A. Christensen, letter to Honorable Commissioner, General Land Office, May 20, 1914, National Archives microfilm copy, SITK Archives, Files of the Cultural Resources Manager.
[48] Antonson and Hanable, *Sitka*, 52-53.
[49] *Ibid.*, 53-54.
[50] A. Shoup, letter to Thomas Riggs, Jr., Governor of Alaska, March 22, 1919, SITK Archives, RG 51, Box 1 Folder 14.
[51] E.W. Merrill, letter to Thomas Riggs, Jr., July 7, 1919, SITK Archives, RG 51, Box 1 Folder 14.
[52] E.W. Merrill, letter to National Park Service, July 5, 1919, National Archives, RG 79, Box No. 610, Entry 7 (NA&RA).
[53] Merrill letter to Riggs, Jr., July 7, 1919.
[54] Merrill letter to National Park Service, July 5, 1919.
[55] A. Shoup, letter to Thomas Riggs, Jr., Governor of Alaska, June 13, 1919, SITK Archives, RG 51, Box 1, Folder 14.
[56] Merrill letter to Riggs, Jr., July 7, 1919.
[57] E.W. Merrill, letter to Thomas Riggs, Jr., May 14, 1921, SITK Archives, RG 51, Box 1, Folder 14.
[58] E.W. Merrill, letter to Thomas Riggs, Jr., May 29, 1920, National Archives microfilm copy, SITK Archives, Files of the Cultural Resources Manager.
[59] Antonson and Hanable, *Sitka*, 58.
[60] *Alaska Road Commission, 4th Annual Report, 1908, U.S. Serial Set No. 5420.* Extracted from: the Annual Report of the War Department for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1908, p. 103; *Report of the Board of Road Commissioners for Alaska* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1918), 11.
[61] Smith, petition to President Taft, 1908.
[62] Merrill letters to NPS, July 5, 1919, and Riggs, Jr., May 29, 1920.
[63] Interview with Robert DeArmond and Joe Ashby, Files of Timothey Cochrane, Alaska Systems Support Office, Anchorage; De Armond, comments, December 8, 1997.
[64] De Armond, comments, December 8, 1997.
[65] *The Alaskan*, May 9, 1891, p. 4; De Armond, comments, December 8, 1997.
[66] Sharon Gmelch lists the following individuals as the Tlingit who worked with Merrill: John Willard, Peter Jacobs, Thomas Cook, Don Cameron, Ray James, Cyrus Beck, Albert James, Garfield Bailey, George Bartlett, Thomas Willis, John Patton, Eaton Hunter, Howard Patton; see Gmelch, "Eldridge Warren Merrill," 164.
[67] Smith, petition to President Taft, 1908.
[68] Report on a Proposed National Monument at Sitka, Alaska, p. 1.
[69] *Alaska Road Commission, 4th Annual Report, 1908, U.S. Serial Set No. 5420.* Extracted from: Annual Report of the War Department for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 1908, p. 103.
[70] *Report of the Board of Road Commissioners for Alaska* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1912), 9.
[71] *Report of the Board of Road Commissioners for Alaska* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1916), 8.
[72] *Report of the Board of Road Commissioners for Alaska* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1918), 11.

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[73] W.A. Langille, Report on Agricultural Settlement of Nicholas Haley on Baranof Island, Alaska, December 19, 1908, National Archives, RG 79, Box No. 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA); Dick Haley and Jimmy Cohen, depositions re. Haley claim and activities, July 30, 1923, National Archives, RG 79, Box No. 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).
[74] *Ibid.*
[75] De Armond, comments, December 8, 1997; Lewis, "Report on Sitka National Monument, " 3-5, 8, 12-14.
[76] James G. Steese, *Annual Report to the Director, National Park Service, Sitka National Monument, Fiscal Year 1926, July 3, 1926*, 2, SITK Archives.
[77] George Stowell, "Sitka, Past and Present," *Alaska Monthly Magazine*, July 1907: 58.
[78] The images must have been taken sometime before October 27, 1929, the date of Merrill's death; see Gmelch, "Elbridge Warren Merrill," 169-70.
[79] *Ibid.*, 164.
[80] Lewis, "Report on Sitka National Monument," 3-5, 8, 12-14.
[81] Report on a Proposed National Monument at Sitka, Alaska, 1.
[82] Lewis, "Report on Sitka National Monument," 3-5, 8, 12-14.
[83] *Ibid.*
[84] Langille, Report on Agricultural Settlement of Nicholas Haley.
[85] Chief of Forestry Coffman, *Observations Relative to Sitka National Monument*, National Archives, RG 79; NPS Central Classified File, 1933-1949. National Monuments, Sitka 207.02.03-609.01, Sitka Master Plan File, Box 2386 (NA&RA).
[86] Arno Cammerer, letter, September 17, 1923, National Archives RG 79, Box No. 610, Entry 7 (NA&RA); Arno Cammerer, letters to Executive Secretary, Federal Power Commission, September 11, 1923 and September 17, 1923, SITK Archives.
[87] W.Kelly, Chief Engineer, Federal Power Commission, letter to Stephen Mather, August 31, 1923, SITK Archives.
[88] James Steese, telegram to Arno Cammerer, September 15, 1923, SITK Archives.
[89] *The Verstovian*, November 1915, p. 2.
[90] *Alaska Road Commission, 5th Annual Report*, 1909, 61st Congress, 1st Session, House Document No. 864. U.S. Serial Set No. 5834, p. 12; Charles Haley, letter to Hon. Charles A. Sulzer, Delegate from Alaska, Washington, D.C., December 21, 1918 (NA & RA); De Armond, comments, December 8, 1997.
[91] Lewis, "Report on Sitka National Monument," 3-5, 8, 12-14.
[92] *Report of the Board of Road Commissioners for Alaska* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1916), 8.
[93] *The Verstovian*, November 1915, p. 2.
[94] Smith, petition to President Taft, 1908.
[95] *The Verstovian*, March 1917 p. 1.
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CHAPTER 8

A CITY PARK AND NPS ORPHAN, 1920 - 1940

"The use of Sitka National Monument is much more that of a city park than the usual national monument. It is to a large degree an orphan child of the national park system."

NPS Chief of Forestry Coffman, 1938

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Chapter 8

A City Park And NPS Orphan, 1920-1940

The scarcity of documentation on Sitka during the 1920s and most of the 1930s probably reflects the fact that these were quiet years in the community. Little growth occurred during the first decade of the period. In fact, the population declined by ten percent from 1920 to 1930.[1] However, the quiet town of approximately 1,000 individuals, over 50 percent of whom were natives, sustained itself on fishing and the tourist trade. The Presbyterian Mission remained a constant presence as well.

All of this changed when the threat of World War II contributed to a boom in Sitka. In 1939, the U.S. Navy established an air station in the area. As a result, between 1930 and 1940, Sitka's population jumped by 88 percent to approach almost 2,000 people.[2] For the duration of the war years, many military personnel were stationed in Sitka.

The two decades were uneventful years in the park. The monument was regularly maintained by the Alaska Road Commission, and was utilized by local citizens and tourists alike. The National Park Service was not involved in the day-to-day affairs of the site, but provided some funding towards its upkeep. Nevertheless, when the NPS did turn its attention towards the Monument at the end of the 1930s, in the interest of totem preservation, the agency found that conditions there were not consistent with National Park Service standards. Through the efforts of the CCC and a NPS custodian assigned to the monument in 1940, the atmosphere of the site was transformed from that of a city park into a place where the character was deemed more fitting for a national monument.

Alaska Road Commission and NPS Cooperation

While Merrill continued in his unofficial role as caretaker, the Park Service endeavored , along with the Alaska Road Commission, to find an official monument custodian. Despite the fact that the position paid a salary of only $12 per year, the NPS felt the local prestige of a federal appointment was an additional incentive.[3] Acting NPS Director Arno Cammerer wrote from Washington, D.C., to Colonel James Steese, President of the Alaska Road Commission, reviewing the past offer that had been made to Merrill, noting his failure to fill out the necessary paperwork, and suggesting that a formal offer again be made to him.[4] Steese, however, replied that while Merrill had painted the totems several times, he had "the temperamental disabilities of an artist; inattention to regular and steady business being an outstanding characteristic. . . . Were he not so unreliable," Steese concluded, Merrill "would be an ideal custodian for the Monument."[5]

Instead, Steese suggested another resident of Sitka, Peter Trierschield, for the position. Trierschield, a master carpenter according to Steese, was a "careful and painstaking man" who had "built all the docks and other structures around Sitka and . . . [had] been in charge of road work, both for [the Commission] and the Territory, for many years." During the summer of 1922, Steese had authorized Trierschield to repair the footbridge in the monument and to erect NPS signs. Steese also testified that, when necessary, Trierschield had "performed considerable work" for the NPS and the city at his own expense. Ultimately, on November 10, 1922, Peter Trierschield, foreman for the Alaska Road Commission, was appointed the official custodian of Sitka National Monument.[6]

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By the time Trierschield was hired, the Road Commission had devoted time and labor in the park for years, without consistent NPS funding. Steese wrote to Cammerer, noting that "no regular alottment has ever been made [by the NPS] for the Sitka National Monument." He went on to suggest "the expenditure of a couple hundred dollars per year for the next two or three years" to preserve the monument, "dressing it up a bit." It was, he stated, "the most beautiful spot in all Alaska and visited by hundreds of tourists every year."[7]

Steese and Cammerer made an informal agreement on April 1, 1922, which assigned responsibility for maintenance and administration of the monument to the Road Commission, to be funded jointly by the NPS, the Territory of Alaska, and the Commission.[8] Under this agreement, the Road Commission supervised maintenance in the park during the 1920s and 1930s. Custodian Trierschield not only saw to the regular surfacing of the roads in the park, but also regularly reinforced, repaired, and applied sealant to the footbridge, and worked on the totems. In 1922, Trierschield also posted metal signs, furnished by the NPS, which he mounted on white-painted wooden posts that marked each entrance to the monument on the Sitka-Indian River Road (Route 14); these signs were in addition to one at the western end of the suspension bridge that identified the Indian River, and another that identified the Russian graves. He also posted wooden signs forbidding wheeled traffic from the section of the park situated west of the river, and from using the old ford across the river below the suspension bridge.[9]

Local interests in Sitka, however, protested the decision. They felt that the tourist trade would be impaired by such a prohibition. The Sitka Commercial Club wrote to NPS Director Steven Mather, suggesting that the footbridge within the monument be made into a structure suitable for vehicles and that a loop road be constructed through the park. Mather, however, remained opposed to traffic on the western side of the river. He corresponded with Steese about the matter, saying, "I do not think it, however, that it will be wise to open this Monument to vehicles." He felt that the small size of the park made vehicular access unnecessary. In addition to the lack of funds for the maintenance of vehicular roads, Mather also judged that "the Monument will be kept far more attractive to the traveling public, and the danger of vandalism kept to a minimum, if we keep vehicles out."[10]

Steese fully concurred with Mather and wrote to Eiler Hansen, Secretary of the Sitka Commercial Club, expressing the NPS opinion. He wrote that "it is only a couple hundred yards across the section of the Monument from which vehicles are excluded and tourists can readily leave their automobiles at the one side and rejoin them after a very short stroll at the east end of the foot bridge." Steese concluded that he was "deeply interested in the Sitka National Monument, as I consider it the most beautiful spot in all Alaska. We are all of course anxious to keep it so and I really do not believe that wheeled vehicles should be permitted in this western section."[11] Vehicles remained prohibited.

Steese, who had a personal affection for Sitka National Monument, visited the area himself and reported to Cammerer on what needed to be done; he continued his close involvement with the park throughout his years as President of the Alaska Road Commission. In 1928, Malcolm Elliot took over as President of the Commission and assumed supervision of monument maintenance. Although apparently lacking Steese's interest in the park, Elliot saw that the park was maintained. Trierschield and his crew removed driftwood from the river, worked on the totems, and "brushed out" the monument boundary to improve their ability to patrol the area. Elliot reported in 1928 that "practically all totem poles have been repaired, underbrush cleared, and gravel walks constructed."[12] At the end of 1936, Chief Engineer Ike P. Taylor reported that the monument was in good condition, but that continual work would be needed on the totem poles and river bank stabilization. Monument Custodian Peter Trierschield attended to park maintenance until his death in July 1937.[13] His son, John Trierschield, who

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was hired to replace him in August of that year, continued, until 1939, to make necessary minor repairs to the totems, paths, and Indian River bulkheads.

The NPS, however, began to devote greater attention to the monument during these years. Several NPS representatives who visited the park were critical of its condition and suitability as a NPS property. The prospect of participation in the U.S. Forest Service totem pole restoration program then occurring in other areas of southeastern Alaska prompted the National Park Service to send its Chief of Forestry, Mr. Coffman, to investigate the possibility of such a program in the park, and to evaluate the totems. During September 1938, Coffman looked at the monument with a critical eye. Although he found the character of the park generally pleasing, with a "very attractive stand of Sitka spruce and western hemlock," shaded paths, and grassy openings, Coffman believed that its character was more like a "city park than anything else."[14]

Coffman found that the park landscape was marred by the presence of certain elements. He complained that the name of the monument was not posted, and that the two metal enamel NPS signs marking the boundary and the agency's regulations had been damaged by gunshots. Other metals signs, one that identified the Indian River, another that pointed out the tree known as "Devil's Fork," and a third that identified the "Lyre Tree," also had been shot by vandals. Coffman wrote, "I consider signs of this character cheap and objectionable within a national park or monument even if they are unmarred." He therefore recommended that the metal signs be replaced by rustic wooden markers. The NPS official also suggested that rustic log benches would be more fitting than the frame benches then found in the park and stressed the need for toilet facilities.[15]

Coffman also commented on the need for improvements in the approach to the park entrance, as well as to the power line that crossed the monument along the beach. He observed quite a number of small pieces of trash in the park, and could not remember seeing any receptacles for waste. Coffman also noted the mess that cows made when trespassing in the park. Various people had carved their initials on the totem poles, on the blockhouse, and elsewhere. Finally, Coffman stressed the need for more supervision at the monument.[16]

Given these problems, coupled with the fact that the area was used more as "a city park than the usual National Monument," and that NPS officials visited the site infrequently, Coffman called the park an "orphan child of the national park system." He believed that if the monument were to be retained by the NPS, it "should receive the official attention, administration, and maintenance compatible with the prestige which attaches or should attach to an area within that system; otherwise it should be turned over to some other agency which will give it requisite care and supervision." Nonetheless, he also thought that if the city were to assume responsibility for the park, conditions probably would become even worse. Coffman suggested that if the cooperation of another agency were needed, that unit should be the federal Forest Service; Heinztleman's interest in totems and the presence of the CCC crew then working in Sitka made such an arrangement logical. Coffman's final recommendation was as follows:

> Sitka National Monument [should] be given the same recognition that is accorded historic, archeological, and biotic monuments of equal importance and be placed under the supervision of a full-time, properly qualified custodian. The prestige of the Service demands better supervision than the monument is now receiving.[17]

The report had some effect upon officials in Washington. In a memo to the NPS Director, acting Associate Director Hillory A. Tolson addressed Coffman's report and responded to some of the latter's remarks. Regarding the need for a full-time custodian, he suggested that an increase to the $700 annual monument appropriation be requested at upcoming budget hearings. Tolson also stated that a "properly designed sign bearing the name of the

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Monument" would be erected at the entrance. Furthermore, Tolson recommended that a "study of the Monument area should be made by a representative of the Branch of Plans and Design and a master plan developed for Sitka National Monument as soon as possible." He continued by reporting that the study would "include the installation of properly designed and wooden signs . . . and provide the basis for the submission of a proper construction program and appropriation estimates for the Monument."[18]

As to the issue of totem preservation at Sitka and Old Kasaan National Monuments, Tolson reported that the Commissioner of the Office of Indian Affairs had communicated his approval, as had the Secretary of the Interior and the Division of Territories and Island Possessions. All supported Heinzleman's proposal for a WPA project to rehabilitate and preserve the historic totem poles from "abandoned native villages, the Sitka National Monument and the Kasaan National Monument, construction of a traditional native community house and the restoration of a typical primitive native village." The WPA application, however, was not approved because funding for work relief projects "had been transferred or definitely committed."[19]

Further impetus was added to the movement to increase the amount of attention the NPS gave to the park when the report of NPS Superintendent Been was added to Heinzleman's proposal during fall 1939. Been echoed much of the sentiment expressed by Coffman. He described the character of the monument as follows: "the general effect is quite pleasing and has the aspect of a small city park." Been continued by reporting that visitors were "impressed by the tropic-like density of trees, undergrowth and mosses." Winding through the vegetation, he noted, was "a system of gravel paths wide enough for four people abreast. . . Along these the totems are set in small clearings—usually a lone pole on each site," except for the large totem and houseposts set in the larger clearing (the designated fort site). The main path, he wrote, "parallels the bay which is pleasingly visible through the trees." The blockhouse, he learned, was never completed.[20]

Been also made a number of criticisms of the monument. He stated that "judging from appearances, little has been done in the way of maintenance." He was very critical of the approach and entrance to the site, of the rough and narrow road, of the "unkempt houses amid high bushes and brambles" along the way, of the run-down house located right next to the entrance, and of the lack of posted information. He also wrote that "the entire one-quarter mile approach to the monument from the Sheldon Jackson School is about as unpleasant as one can imagine."[21] Apparently the concrete posts and chain had been removed before Been's visit, but he was not aware of why the Merrill plaque was placed at the entrance to the monument.

Been noted the deleterious impact of a gravel dredging operation at the mouth of the Indian River on the "very edge of the monument." The facility was owned by George Oja of Sitka. Been reported that the "operation is a jarring note to a monument area." He also predicted that if the Navy, which was going to build an air base at Sitka, removed the large amounts of gravel they claimed to need from the Indian River, "serious disfigurement will certainly result from the excavations." Been noted that at the time the Indian River was eroding soil in the monument, and that more revetment work was needed.[22]

The Superintendent also expressed some fundamental philosophical criticisms of the property: "Sitka National Monument may be considered antithetical to National Park Service purposes and ideals. The area is not unique nor has it an outstanding feature either scenically or scientifically," he wrote. In addition, Been felt that because totem pole carving was not traditionally done in Sitka, the totems did not belong in the park. He wrote that "unless the Service is committed to this distortion of Park Service functions, the poles should be moved to a place approximating their original location. Been

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admitted that "there will be local objections, but if the monument is misplaced, the issue should be faced squarely." He suggested taking the poles to the native villages near Ketchikan and Wrangell that the Forest Service was restoring, or to Old Kasaan National Monument.[23]

The historic value of Sitka, however, seemed worthy to Been as a justification for the monument. He wrote that despite Sitka's rich history, "Russian and Indian associations have been almost completely submerged today so that indications of their former importance are not apparent." He recommended the acquisition and restoration of historic sites, which would provide adequate justification for the monument. In that situation, Been felt that the totems could become a "museum adjunct to the primary purpose—preservation of historic Sitka." The need for such historic preservation was made even more appropriate in the face of the fast pace of development then occurring in town.[24]

Although Been's suggestion to move the totem poles was not taken up, many of his and Coffman's criticisms of the monument were addressed. In 1938 and 1939, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) crew in Sitka began constructing rustic benches and signs for the park, in addition to accomplishing significant work on the Indian River bulkheads.[25] The NPS ultimately assumed full responsibility for the park in 1940, after terminating its arrangement with the Alaska Road Commission in February of that year. At the same time, the Park Service placed the monument under the supervision of the Superintendent of Mt. McKinley National Park, and installed a ranger-custodian at Sitka. This affirmation of NPS commitment to the site marked the beginning of National Park Service efforts to supervise and control the park and shape it according to the agency's own standards.

U.S. Forest Service Involvement in Monument Activities

Despite the repeated efforts of E.W. Merrill and Peter Trierschield to maintain the totems, the effects of the wet weather continued to exert a heavy toll on the poles. In 1938, Coffman found that "a number of the poles are showing signs of advanced decay, some of them at the ground line, some at the top, and some have advanced dry rot at points in between the top and base."[26] Coffman described Trierschield's method of repair as follows: he dug out the decayed section, treated the newly exposed wood with creosote, and bolted in a carved piece of new red cedar, also treated with creosote on the back, to replace it. He then countersunk the bolts, filled the holes, and painted them according to the original design. Coffman had commented that "the replacement work in the making looked somewhat crude," but when the repairs were complete they "compared quite favorably with the original work and were not obvious to the casual observer."[27]

After his 1939 inspection of the park, Been criticized the results of previous repairs made to the poles. He wrote, "some results of these attempts have been almost hideous. For instance, tacking canvas over the decaying portion and painting it." He mentioned that all poles had inserts like the ones described by Coffman. In addition, Been concluded that at that time "nearly all the poles are so seriously decayed that restoration and sectional replacement is impractical or impossible."[28]

A major effort to improve the situation began when Alaskan Governor John W. Troy initiated a totem rehabilitation program within the monument. He wrote to NPS Acting Director Demaray in the spring of 1938, suggesting that a Civilian Conservation Corps crew be put to work in the monument rehabilitating the totems and taking care of any other landscaping needs. In response, Demaray wrote to Troy that "we are very much interested in your suggestion for the rehabilitation of totem poles and shall be glad to participate in the program."[29]

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As proposed, the U.S. Forest Service would act as overseer of the project. As Coffman had noted in 1938, the agency was taking the lead in the field of totem pole restoration. He explained their involvement as follows:

> Practically all of the totem pole region of Alaska lies within its two national forests, and Regional Forester Heintzleman is planning a very worth-while program for preservation and presentation of Indian lore and arts under CCC and WPA, including the repair of totem poles, their removal from abandoned areas where they are receiving no care or protection, and establishment of exhibition areas within easy reach of the tourist routes.[30]

Sitka National Monument was just such an area for Heintzleman's program. In January 1939, after examining the totems in the park, Heintzleman telegrammed the NPS Director that they were "in seriously deteriorated condition and unless rehabilitated [in the] near future will be beyond repair." He judged that several were already beyond saving. Heintzleman offered the WPA crew to the NPS, but wanted the National Park Service to assign a qualified foreman.[31] Director Cammerer replied that the NPS had no such qualified specialist to send, and suggested that Heinzleman hire an ethnologist or graduate student from the University of Alaska or University of Washington to give initial supervision at the very least. He specified, however, that if it were not possible to do so, the "park service approves going ahead provided [a] complete photographic and record card file be made before and after restoration of each totem for scientific reference."[32]

U.S. Forest Service personnel, including Acting Assistant Regional Forester Charles G. Burdick, Ranger Paul Judge, and Foreman John Maurstad, documented the condition of the totem poles on February 18, 1939. They found that because the needed repairs were so extensive, the poles would have to be taken down and moved to a repair shop for restoration. Consequently, construction of two or so repair sheds was planned and each pole was given a number (from 380 to 397) and tagged.[33] Photographs of the totems were taken during the winter of 1939, just prior to the beginning of the restoration process. During the inventory, the condition of each pole was assessed. A number of the poles were judged reparable, but several were so deteriorated that the team recommended their replacement. The U.S. Forest Service report containing the series of photographs represents the first complete catalog of the poles in the monument and provides excellent documentation as to their condition and location at that time.[34]

After completion of the inventory, work began on the poles. John Maurstad acted as foreman. According to Burdick, Maurstad was chosen for the job because he had "considerable experience in handling natives, and in both carpentry and cabinet making." Maurstad was sent briefly to Ketchikan to learn the preservation techniques the Forest Service was employing in its restoration efforts.[35] Working with Maurstad in Sitka was a crew of nine men, mostly Native American WPA employees.[36] George Benson was the chief carver.[37] Other carvers included Peter Jones, John Sam, and Frank Kitka.[38] Alaska Road Commission Chief Engineer Taylor instructed John Trierschield to assist the crew, if necessary, with advice and suggestions only. He also was instructed to allow the crew the use of a dump truck, for which the Forest Service would supply its own driver and fuel.[39] The crew constructed at least two repair sheds, one near the blockhouse and the other located just outside the entrance. By April 29, 1939, Burdick reported that the crew was working on three totems, "making inserts and large replacements."[40]

Maurstad reported to Burdick that a number of the poles had decayed too extensively for them simply to replace small sections. In April, Charles Burdick had contacted the Ketchikan office about acquiring red cedar logs for the Sitka poles. He requested seven large logs with limited taper for the new poles; the largest was to be 66 inches in diameter and 75 feet long, and the smallest was to be used for patching material.[41] The poles were towed to Sitka by the Forest Service boat.[42] Maurstad and

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Burdick also devised a temporary repair technique to prolong the lives of some totems by fifteen to twenty years. They proposed building scaffolding around the totems, removing the old paint, "gouging out the worst of the rot, a thorough soaking of all parts with preservative, small pieces of insertion work where necessary and possible to be fastened with marine glue, building up of parts with plastic wood where insertions are not possible, a good coating of paint and then pentraseal." According to Burdick, the other repairs were going slowly because of the limited number of carvers, but what was being accomplished was thorough.[43]

In May, Maurstad reported to Burdick on their progress. After erecting a scaffold around totem Number 391, it was discovered that the pole was badly decayed, particularly at the top and bottom. The existing patchwork was crude and cement had been used to fill the cavities. Also, the pole was saturated with moisture. Upon removing about half of the several layers of paint, they found that the colors had been changed in some places. It seemed that red and green had been interchanged, as well as red and white.[44] Because the pole was saturated, Maurstad devised a method to trim and dry it so that the team could then apply repairs and glue. He reported to Burdick on his technique:

> Burning and removing paint giving the wood a chance to dry out; then charring the wood slightly and trimming it with chisels and knives to obtain a good surface for applying glue and paint. This also helps the drying process. At the time Mr. Forrest was here he told me they had used plastic wood on another job and found that it came out, probably due to action of water and freezing. For this reason we are using shingles with waterproof casein glue in all the cracks wherever possible. Permatol D will also have to be applied before we can use marine glue.[45]

Maurstad stated that in order to determine which method and materials would be appropriate for the other totems, they restricted their experimentation only to one of the poles that had a great deal of decay. He wrote to Burdick, "there is considerable work on the poles even under this procedure and the question is if the result justifies the effort and expense."[46]

Guidance as to what wood preservative to use that would be both colorless and not interfere with the paint, was sought from the U.S. Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, Wisconsin. The Laboratory's investigators recommended "Permatox 'B' Concentrate," made by A.D. Chapman & Company, Inc., of Chicago. One part of the concentrate was mixed with ten parts of fuel oil solvent and applied to the totems by brush. Before being painted, three coats of the Permatox were applied. After painting, a final single coat of Pentral-Seal, another preservative, was applied in order to seal the paint pigments into the wood.[47]

Maurstad also mentioned that a Mrs. Carter was doing colored drawings of the totems, so that they could be painted with the correct colors. Two of the totems they had patched, he wrote, were being given a Permatol treatment and then were ready to be painted. With his letter, Maurstad included an order for canvas and marine glue, which he thought they would use at the rate of about ten quarts per pole.[48] On May 29, Ranger Judge telegrammed the Forest Service, reporting that five totems were ready for painting, and requesting that Forrest instruct them on mixing and painting.[49] After ensuring that the totems had been treated with Permatox (Maustad confirmed that they had had several treatments), it was assured that Forrest would come by plane at the "first opportunity."[50]

Apparently complaints were made about the appearance of the first finished totems. Both Burdick and Holbrook received reports that the poles were too shiny. Objecting to Forrest, Burdick wrote in July, saying "we discussed dull stains" and instructing him to investigate and correct the situation.[51] The shiny appearance could very well have been caused by too many coats of Pentra-Seal;

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Heintzleman reported to Dr. Carl Russell of the NPS that more than one coat had resulted in a glossy, "artificial appearance," and for that reason, by December 1939, they were only applying one coat.[52]

During his August 1939 visit to the park, Superintendent Been of Mount McKinley National Park observed the CCC crew at work. At that time, two native carvers "of advanced years" were working under foreman Richard M. Tate to restore or duplicate the old poles, while non-native crew members took on other improvements in the park. He noted that the natives were "doing good work and are doing it with hand made native tools so that the appearance of restored poles will be the same as the originals." He continued as follows:

> The natives who are employed on the project are oldsters who appreciate the importance of exactness. Calipers are used and careful measurements are made during the duplication work. Instead of native paints, modern oil paints are used because they are more enduring. However, careful attention is given to matching colors with native shades. The use of home made native tools gives the effect of authenticity, for the completed pole has the chipped appearance characteristic of original totems.[53]

Been felt that the duplicates and restored poles were being done well. Nevertheless, he also believed that even the best preservation attempt decreased the effect of the original. Given the rapid decomposition of the wood in that climate, Been concluded that "preservation is hopeless." He noted that a duplicate should be made of each pole, as the CCC crew already had done for several totems. The Forest Service had not done more, he wrote, because the NPS had not clarified its policy.[54]

By November 1939, Ranger Chipperfield reported to the U. S. Forest Service Regional office that the totem pole restoration work within the monument was "progressing satisfactorily". He also was concerned that some sort of shed be built to shelter the original totems then being replaced.[55] Heintzleman proceeded to write to Been for approval of the construction.[56] Been gave his approval for the building of a temporary shelter to protect the totems, suggesting that Ranger Chipperfield select an unobtrusive spot. At that time, the NPS was considering the eventual construction of a permanent building, which would most likely be an open-sided roofed structure "patterned from native architecture," for the protection and display of the totems. Been suggested that Linn Forrest, a Forest Service architect, submit a sketch.[57]

From the very beginning of their work on the totem restoration in the monument, other tasks for the CCC crew were discussed. In April 1938, Governor Troy had written to the NPS suggesting that the CCC crew perform other landscaping duties in the monument as well. At that time, Acting Director Demaray, in referring to the monument, replied that the NPS had no "general plan for development," and stressed that the agency had interests in the totem work only.[58] In February 1939, Heintzleman again raised the issue, writing to Governor Troy that "additional work in the monument could be undertaken by the CCC if proper technical advice were available, including landscaping, maintenance of the blockhouse, and Indian River bank revetments." He went on to suggest that the CCC crew could thin the timber within the monument's boundaries.[59] Troy recommended to NPS Director Cammerer that the Park Service take advantage of the Forest Service offer and CCC labor in thinning the timber and in pursuing other park improvements as outlined by the Alaska Road Commission.[60]

The NPS responded that they appreciated the Forest Service offer very much, and that CCC labor, including assistance with bank revetment along the river, blockhouse maintenance, and other improvements, would be very useful both to them and the Alaska Road Commission. Thinning of the forest, however, was not approved. Acting Director Demaray wrote as follows:

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> If the cleanup simply refers to the removal of papers and other debris left by visitors and trespassing cattle it certainly meets our consent, but we do not wish to have any vegetation removed unless the proposed work is first submitted in detail and meets with our approval.[61]

He continued to explain NPS policy towards vegetation management and the agency's specific approach to the monument:

> It is, as you know, the desire of the National Park Service to retain natural conditions so far as possible. We realize that Sitka National Monument functions very largely as a city park and in that respect differs from the usual national monument, and may therefore require slightly different treatment. However, even there we desire to maintain the forest growth and other vegetation in as natural a condition as compatible with the proper use of the area . . .this is essential in preserving the attractiveness of this area with its charming shaded paths. We are therefore unwilling to approve any thinning of the forest growth or other vegetation except as that may be necessary in connection with the removal of any trees or portions of trees which endanger life or property, or of any trees or vegetation which interfere with the maintenance of the road, paths, or other improvements.[62]

Demaray's response to Heinzleman's suggestion illustrates the divergent management policies of the NPS and the Forest Service. It is not clear why Heinzleman and Troy thought that the park's forest should be thinned, but the NPS remained firmly opposed to the alteration of the natural processes of forest growth—despite the fact that the agency recognized the monument's function as a city park for Sitka.

The CCC crew did work on the Indian River bank revetments that year. In Ike Taylor's 1939 annual report for the monument he reported that the crew had begun to extend and rebuild the timber bulkheads along the Indian River.[63] During the next several years, the CCC camp in Sitka continued work on the totem restoration and carried out other projects in the park. Although the CCC crews assumed an increasingly diverse number of tasks, their most important contribution to the monument's landscape was the restoration and recreation of the original totem poles.

Tourism in the Monument

Sitka National Monument served as an important tourist attraction in the town during these years. Clarence Andrews, who published *The Story of Sitka* in 1922, listed the park as among the important places to see in the area. He wrote:

> Beyond the Mission is the famous Indian River Road, a continuation of the Governor's Walk of the Russians, and often called Lover's Lane. It winds along the shore of the sea, through the Park, with here and there an opening in the forest where there are splendid examples of Hydah carvings in the tall totems placed in well chosen spots. . . .[64]

Andrews vividly described the romantic and mysterious attractions of the paths and vegetation along the river, as well as of the river itself: "from the rustic bridge on the Indian River there are enticing paths leading along the stream and toward Mt. Verstovia. . . ," he reported. Andrews also repeated the myth of the river's magical attraction as expressed by the author of the poem, "Indian River." In the introduction to the book he wrote: "there is a saying that whosoever comes to love the waters of the Indian River will ever after yearn for them, and it seems true, for always is that harking back to its banks with an unsatisfied longing."[65]

As more and more people took vacations along the Inside Passage, tourist visitation to the monument steadily increased throughout the 1920s. In his 1926 report on the monument, Steese stated that from 2,500 to 3,000 tourists had visited the park during the 1925 season, while a tally of over 3,000 tourists was recorded during the subsequent year.[66] In the next annual report, Elliott reported the same level of visitation during the 1927 season, whereas over 3,500 tourists visited the site during 1928. From 1929 through 1931, however, Elliott only remarked that "a large number of tourists" visited the monu-

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ment. Certainly the stock market crash of 1929 and the ensuing Depression drastically reduced tourist travel to Sitka. It was not until the late 1930s that the number of tourists in Sitka began to increase again.[67] In the annual reports from fiscal years 1933 to 1940 for Sitka National Monument, Chief Engineer Ike Taylor did not specify the number of people who visited the park.[68] By March 1940, however, a *New York Times* article that featured the CCC totem project remarked on the "hundreds of Alaskan tourists who walk through the lovely forested Sitka National Monument to see these displays of Native art and legendry [and who] will find their visit anticipated by appropriately placed rustic benches . . . ."[69] Subsequently, the onset of World War II again brought tourist travel to Sitka to a halt, and it would take several years before large numbers of tourists would once again visit the monument each season.

TLINGIT ACTIVITIES IN THE PARK

During this period the park also was utilized for a wide variety of activities by the Tlingit residents of Sitka, particularly those families that resided in the cottages near the park entrance. Quite a number of families lived there at this time.[70] The monument's landscape was immediately outside their doors, it provided space for their children, it was a source of resources that they could harvest, and it was an important historic locale where ceremonial events were held.

A number of Tlingit individuals remember playing in the park as children during this period. Bill Brady recalled riding his bike on the trails through the park, while his wife, Isabella Brady, who grew up in one of the cottages, reminisced that she and her brothers "used to play in the park all the time." The park was their playground. They played "cowboys and Indians" and built forts and jails. She recalled that to earn some money, they led tourists through the park and made up stories about the totems. Her brothers entertained the tourists by playing "Indians" with tomahawks and warhoops. Another common game was to chase the Burkhart cows out of the monument, for which Pete Trierschield paid them ten cents. Isabella Brady also sold sea urchin and abalone shells to the tourists at the entrance to the park; the shells were provided by her parents and the sales table was built by her grandfather, Peter Simpson. Physical exercise was another activity her family conducted in the park. She remembered that they had a long jump near the entrance and an obstacle course that included crossing the river. She recalls that they exercised out at Indian River Point wih their father. Isabella Brady also remembered that there was "a lot of togetherness" among the Tlingit children who grew up in the cottages, and that park was a good playground for them.[71]

Other Tlingits also remember playing in the park as children. Gill Truitt, who grew up in the cottages as well, remembered the park serving as a playground for the cottage kids. He recalled that they played in the blockhouse, and held baseball and other games both near the entrance and at the end of the peninsula.[72] Mark Jacobs, whose family moved to the eastern side of town in 1934, also played in the park as a child. He remembers Pete Trierschield encouraging him to chase the Burkhart cows.[73]

At the same time, they and their families gathered foods from within the park. (Diagram 16 illustrates where some of these traditional activities took place.) The Indian River was a source of water and a popular place to fish. Bill Brady recalled a deep pool beneath the wagon bridge where they gaffed salmon and caught fifteen to thirty fish at a time.[74] Truitt stated that the cottage people used the river for fish that were smoked and dried.[75] Mark Jacobs, on the other hand, reported that the pink salmon in the Indian River were only suitable for immediate consumption and that the better species of salmon for drying were not caught there.[76]

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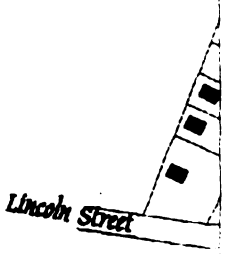
The park was a playground for the neighborhood children, where they used to play all sorts of games. Near the entrance, Isabella Brady remembers that they had broad jump and an obstacle course, which included having to cross the river.
Gill Truit remembers playing in the blockhouse and playing baseball at the end of the peninsula.



Herb Didrickson remembers collecting wild celery which grew in the sunny, sandy stretches of river bank.

In the late 1920's and early 1930's, usually around the time of year when the salmonberries are ripe, the Kiksadi would attend gatherings along the river to commemorate the battle, where they would sing songs and dance. (Bill Brady)

1941
KIKSADI PICNI

According to Isabella Brady, as a child she used to sell sea urchin and abalone shells at the entrance to the park. The kids also took tourists through the park and made up stories about the totems to make some money. (Isabella Brady)

Often at low tide, Mrs. Burkhardt's cows wandered across the mouth of the Indian River and grazed in the park. Peter Trierschield encouraged the local children to chase them back to the other side of the river. They were paid ten cents to do so. (Isabella Brady and Mark Jacobs, Jr.)

In the tidal flats, they gathered clams, cockles, and seaweed called goosetongue. They dug roots along the water line. (Isabella Brady and Gill Truit)

In 1934, Isabella Brady's grandmother's "forty day party" was at the end of the point. (Isabella Brady)

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Other foods and materials were gathered as well. Isabella Brady remembered going out with her grandmother to dig clams and cockles in the tide flats. She also reported that they picked many berries in the park, including salmonberries, blueberries, and huckleberries, and that in the spring they gathered the young salmonberry sprouts.[77] Truitt reported gathering clams, cockles, and seaweed. They also dug roots along the water line that were brittle and tasted like coconut when eaten raw, and the beach was kept clean of driftwood by gathering and stacking it for firewood. Herb Didrickson recalled collecting wild celery in an open sandy area on the river bank above the footbridge.[78]

The Tlingit community also held important ceremonial events in the monument. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, usually about the time the salmonberries were ripe, the Kiks.ádi gathered on the eastern bank of the Indian River, proximate to the location of the current footbridge, to commemorate the 1804 battle (Diagram 16). Regalia were brought out and singing and dancing occurred.[79] Isabella Brady recalled that her grandmother's forty-day party was held at the end of the Indian River peninsula in 1934. After its conclusion, she remembered hauling things back to their home in a wheelbarrow.[80]

Certainly many other Tlingit activities took place in the park, both during these early years and the preceding era. Other than the efforts of the Trierschields to keep the park tidy, there was little governmental supervision of the monument. The Tlingit were able to interact with the landscape during these years on a number of levels. The range of their activities reflected the diversity within the Tlingit community as its members experienced the cultural changes brought about by the presence of Anglos and particularly the missionaries. Further research is needed to document more completely the Tlingit relationship with the park's landscape throughout its history. Nevertheless, historical accounts by Bill and Isabella Brady, Gill Truitt, Herbert Didrickson, and Mark Jacobs suggest that the Indian River and its surrounding landscape continued to play an important role in the lives of the Tlingit after the area became a government park.

Landscape Conditions

During these decades of limited NPS attention to Sitka National Monument, the park landscape was maintained by Alaska Road Commission officials, the park custodian, and other local citizens of Sitka. For the most part, little dramatic change occurred during these years. The forest continued to grow, the river channel continued to be shaped by the waters of Indian River, and the gravel applied to the trails continued to be washed away and trampled into the wet ground. With no regular supervision of the park, local citizens used the area as their city park, as a playground, and apparently as a place to target shoot at metal signs. However, by the end of the 1930s, with the help of the CCC, the park began to take on a new character.

The landscape conditions and plant communities within the monument during these decades are illustrated in Diagrams 17 and 18. Diagram 18 illustrates the location of the bridges, roads, major trails, Russian graves, the blockhouse, and the totems. For reference, the currently designated fort site was plotted from a later park map. Diagram 17 depicts the general distribution of plant communities within the monument during this period, and was derived from both written descriptions of the park vegetation and a 1929 aerial photograph of the park (Figure 8-1).

Indian River Area

The Indian River bridges and banks were the subject of repeated maintenance and construction activities during the 1920s and 1930s, which altered the natural character of the stream in those locations. On practically an annual basis the log cribbing that supported the river banks was reinforced and extended. Following his assignment as custodian in

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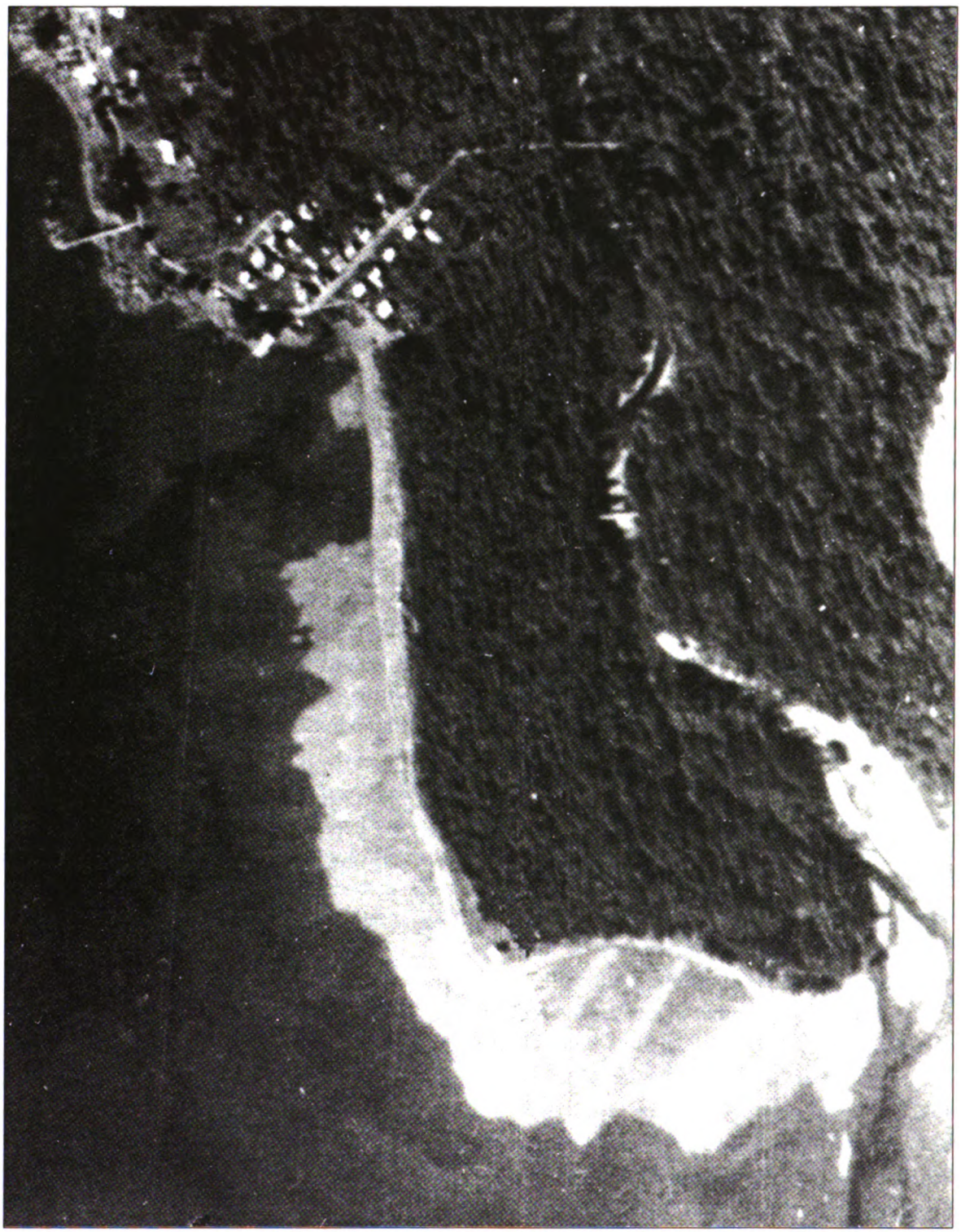

Figure 8-1. Aerial photograph of Sitka National Monument, 1929.

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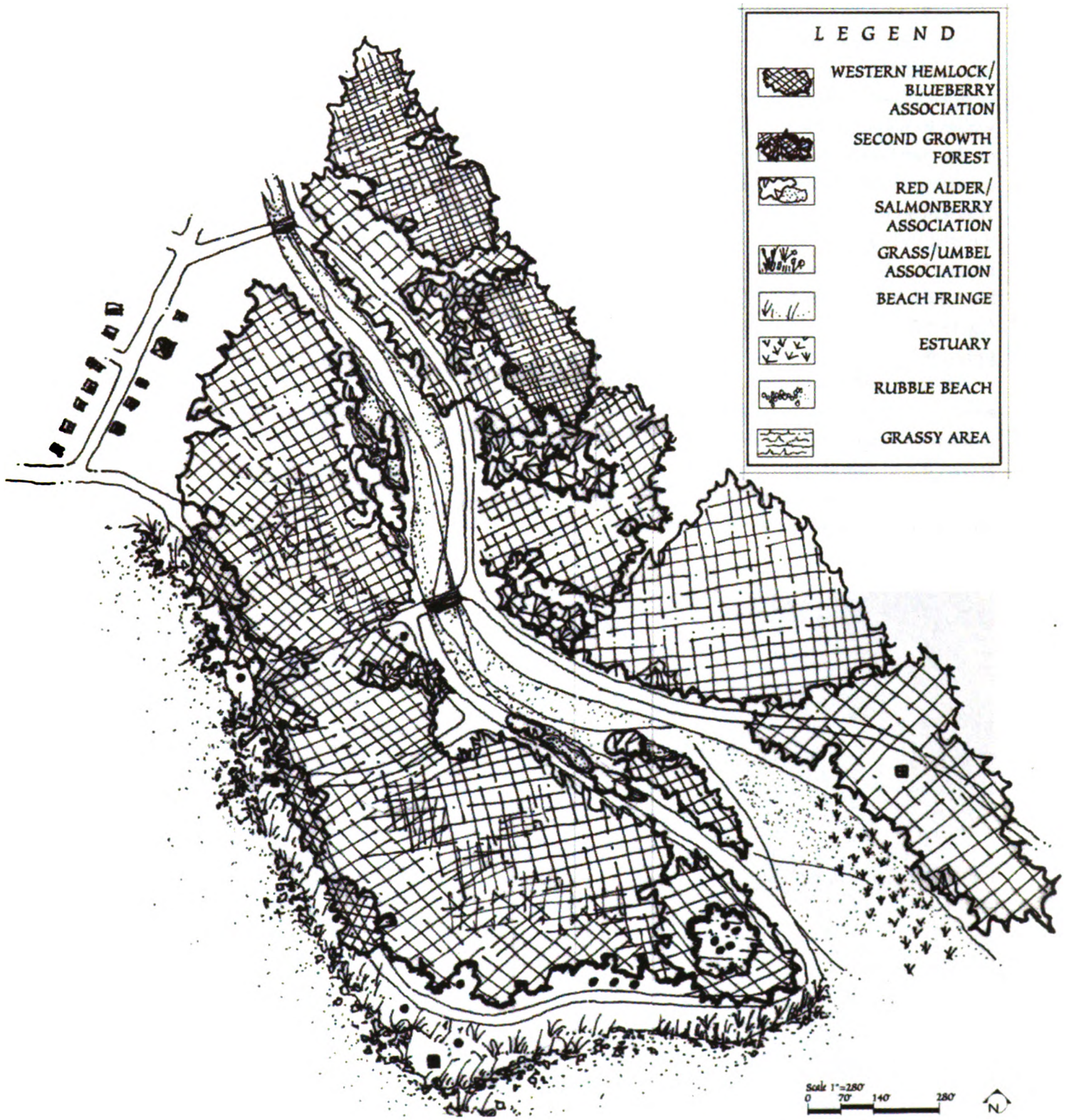

Diagram 17. Plant communities, 1929, in what is now Sitka National Historical Park.

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1922, Peter Trierschield found that erosion was occurring close to Lover's Lane. Trierschield reported to Steese that the bulkhead needed to be raised in order to protect the road from washing out in the next flood, emphasizing that the work had to be done in early spring, "if the river is to be kept within its bounds." He also noted that the foot path on the "left [northeastern] side of the river is in bad condition," and could not be used in wet weather. Trierschield recommended grading and graveling the trail and constructing several culverts to carry runoff. The following year the bulkhead along the Indian River was extended 70 feet and backfilled.[81] Figure 8-2, taken in 1923, illustrates the work in progress.

A flood that occurred in 1927 resulted in heavy erosion and threatened to wash out a large old tree in the park, known as the Witch Tree. According to Steese, it was "the greatest flood they [Sitka residents] ever remember witnessing in Indian River." The heavy waters had carried down great amounts of debris that had lodged in the channel upstream from the tree. The flood had badly undercut the bank opposite the Witch Tree, and a part of the road had been loste.[82] During the following two years, the Commission made repairs to the footbridge bulkheads and constructed another bulkhead, which was backfilled with stone on the western bank of the river to protect the tree. A 60-foot-long section of bulkhead that protected the western footbridge abutment was rebuilt in 1930.[83] Emergency repairs were made to the Indian River bulkheads in 1931.[84] In addition to routine maintenance activities in 1932, the construction of a 60-foot-long, 9-foot-high section of bulkhead to protect the suspension bridge was completed.[85] In 1935, riprap was constructed along the bank of the Indian River to protect the Witch Tree from further erosion damage.[86] The CCC also rebuilt and extended the bulkheads along the river in 1938 and 1939.[87] These repeated efforts to contain the Indian River were the beginning of an

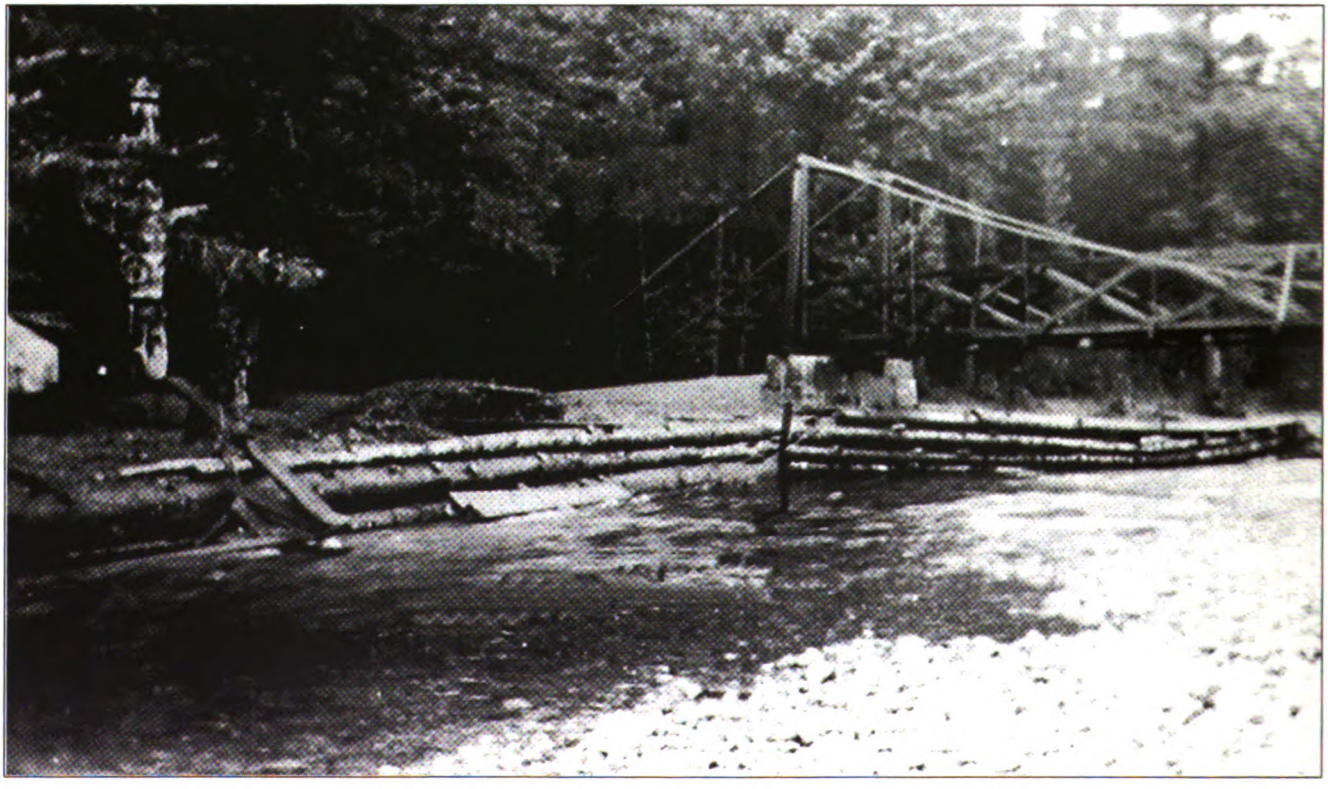

Figure 8-2. Extending and repairing the log cribbing near the Indian River footbridge, 1923.

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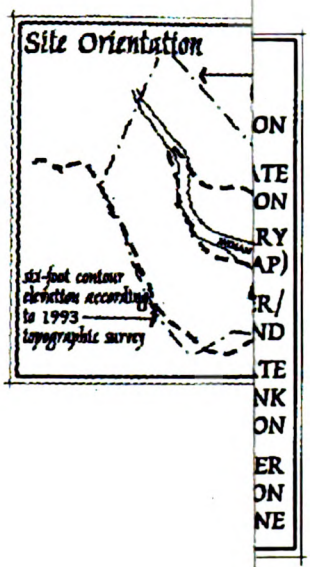

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Figure 8-3. Indian River footbridge, 1939.

Figure 8-3 illustrates the character of the spruce-hemlock forest along the stream, including numerous tall alders at the water's edge. In the vicinity of the wagon bridge, however, the majority of the forest growth on the western bank was more immature, and the area adjacent to the road was clear (Figure 8-4). The clearing may have been a result of the "brushing out" that was done periodically along the monument's boundaries.

The acclaimed Witch Tree had been protected with more and more cribbing, but was ultimately reported to have been washed out by March 1940.[91] Just exactly where the tree stood is not clear. According to one account, the "huge hemlock with gnarled branches" was along Lover's Lane (on the western side of the river), where it reached "down one long, fern-draped arm to stroke the glass clear ripples of the river . . . . in the line of the Neva's bombardment." Robert DeArmond, on the other hand, recalls that "the tree was on the east side of the river, somewhere about 200 yards from the wagon bridge." He notes

on-going effort on the part of park managers that continues up to the present. Evidence of the historic cribbing was still located in the woods along the bank of the river during the summer of 1995.

The bridges that crossed the river during these years consisted of the footbridge, originally built in 1908, and the wagon bridge constructed in 1918—both by the Road Commission (Figures 8-3 and 8-4). Both were rebuilt in 1921.[88] The footbridge underwent major repairs to the floor beams, stringers, and decking in 1934, as well as regular maintenance and clean up.[89] Its approaches were also periodically built up. In 1925, they were raised with gravel, and in 1936, a stone retaining wall was installed to support the eastern approach to the footbridge.[90]

The forest flanking the river within the monument was becoming more mature and dense during this period.

Figure 8-4. Indian River wagon bridge, ca. 1940.

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Figure 8-5. Saanaheit Pole and House Posts, 1939.

that when the road along that side of the river was built, it originally ran between the tree and the river, but when the road began to erode, it was moved to the other side of the tree.[92] The Road Commission's documentation of its efforts to protect the tree, cited earlier, would seem to corroborate DeArmond's recollection.

The character of the river mouth area was adversely impacted at least by 1939 because of a gravel dredging operation located just outside the monument boundary. Whether enough gravel had been excavated at the time to increase erosion within the site is not known. Superintendent Been noted, however, that the operation had a "jarring" impact upon the monument.[93]

Despite this operation, and the regular bridgework and bank stabilization that the Road Commission and then the CCC undertook in the monument during these decades, the Indian River retained much of its natural, scenic character and appeal. The water coursed through the dense spruce/hemlock forest, overhung by alders, and around a wooded island before flowing into Sitka Sound.

FORT AREA

The character of the majority of the fort area was not significantly impacted during this period. The Saanaheit Pole and House Posts, subject to periodic maintenance throughout this period, continued to dominate the clearing (Figures 8-5 and 8-6). The clearing itself became more enclosed as the surrounding trees grew taller and denser (Figure 8-1 and Diagram 18). Nonetheless, there is no documentation of large-scale change either in the clearing or along the trail that traversed the base of the peninsula. At the southwestern tip of the peninsula, however, in a grassy clearing where the beach and Totem Trail turned towards the mouth of the Indian River, a new feature was added to the landscape: a Russian blockhouse.

In 1926, members of the community lobbied to have a replica Russian blockhouse built in the park. The Sitka Commercial Club, the Alaska Historical Association, and other organizations raised the funds to reconstruct a replica of Blockhouse Number Two that formerly had been part of the old stockade between the Russian and Tlingit sections of Sitka.

Figure 8-6. One of the Saanaheit house posts, 1939.

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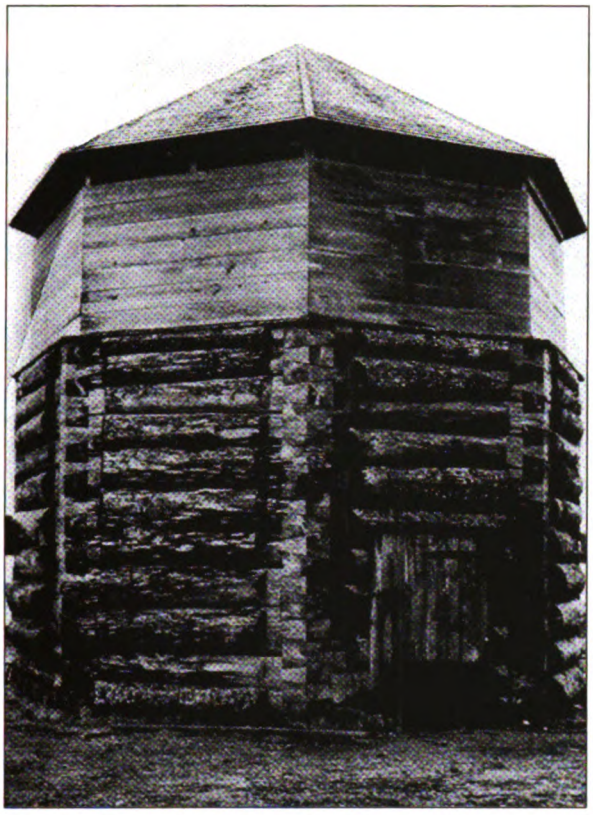

Figure 8-7. Replica Russian blockhouse at Sitka National Monument, between 1926 and 1959.

Col. Steese supported the project. He felt that "the finished structure will become an integral part of the Monument and will add to its significance as a repositor of objects of historic or archeological interest."[94]

After NPS Director Stephen Mather gave his approval, construction of the blockhouse began in June of 1926. Steese described the completed structure as follows:

> It is octagonal in shape, constructed out of heavy cedar logs with all joints mortised in the old Russian style. Hinges, mooring bolts and other hardware were the original wrought iron pieces salvaged from the old structure. Of the three original cannon, two were on the site and the third was rescued in Juneau and restored to its position .[95]

The blockhouse was situated out in the open area south of the trail at the edge of the clearing, just above the upper limit of the beach (Diagram 17, Figures 8-7 and 8-8). Being at the verge of the beach, it attracted visitors to wander away from the trail. The sight of the blockhouse in the clearing must have been intriguing from the water as well.

The blockhouse became a tourist attraction in the park and a favorite play area for local children. Because of maintenance and vandalism problems, however, it had to be kept locked most of the time, and was only opened on special occasions or when steamers and tourists were in town. Coffman noted in 1938 that it had been used for "privy purposes" in the past.[96]

Beaches and Tideflats

Several community elements adversely impacted the character of the monument's beaches during this period. Up until 1930, a local powerline was strung along the beaches as it extended from town towards Jamestown Bay. Although NPS officials were not happy with the situation, Director Mather had decided, in 1924, that for the time being the line should remain. Mather apparently met with Merrill and discussed the matter. He felt the proposed alternative sites would be no better, and commented that the line "could be taken off the

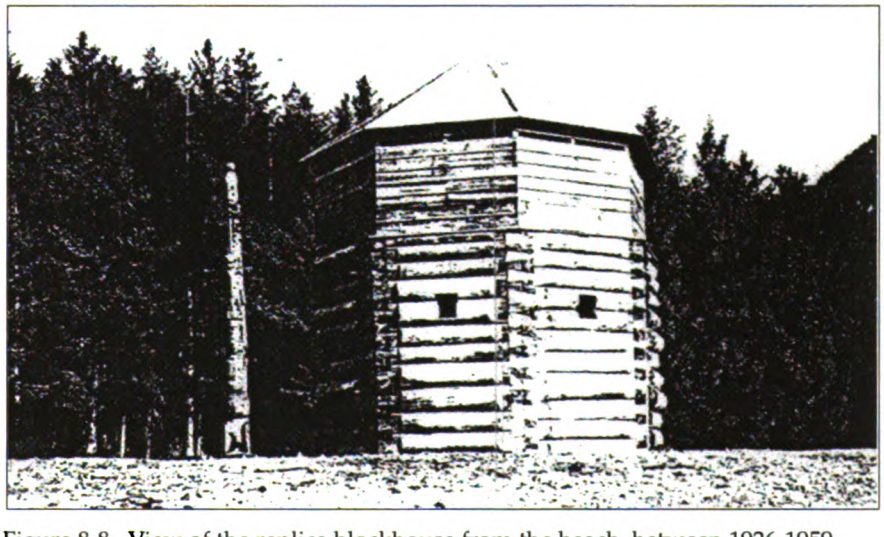

Figure 8-8. View of the replica blockhouse from the beach, between 1926-1959.

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Figure 8-9. Trespassers on the edge of the beach near the mouth of the Indian River, n.d.

monument proper and carried entirely through the shallow water of the bay, but I think this would be practically the same as the present location." The alternative possibility of running the line through the wooded area at the back of the monument, he thought, might create more of an "eyesore." Mather allowed the line to remain, but "with the understanding that if from a personal inspection later on by the Park Service it should be decided some changes should be made in it the company will agree to make them."[97]

Finally, in 1930, the Sitka Wharf and Power Company applied to move the line, and then only farther to the sea outside the monument's boundary but still running along the shoreline.[98] NPS Director Horace Albright felt that because the proposed location was outside the monument's boundaries, the NPS could have no objection to the new location; therefore the line was moved.[99] In its new location, however, the power line continued to interfere with the scenic views of the bay enjoyed by visitors to the monument.

The character of the monument's beaches and the grassy areas that bordered them was often "enhanced" during this period by the presence of grazing cattle (Figure 8-9). A small dairy owner, Mrs. Burkhardt, who had purchased part of Haley's homestead and lived near the northeastern monument boundary, allowed her livestock to wander into the federal property. The cows crossed the river at low tide, and grazed around the totems and blockhouse.[100] They damaged the vegetation and created a mess for the custodian to clean up. Been remarked on the "unpleasant mess" caused by the stray cows and occasional wandering bull during his inspection of the park in 1939. Apparently the land was not fenced, and repeated requests to keep the

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cows out of the park failed to have any effect. The custodian frequently hired local children to chase the bovines back over the river whenever they were observed.[101]

Nevertheless, and despite these intrusions, the beaches continued to be important recreational areas. Residents of the cottages held picnics there, collected plants, and dug for shellfish. The beach meadow at the end of the Indian River peninsula also was a favorite spot for baseball games during these years.[102]

Entrance Area

Alaska Road Commission and CCC activities dramatically altered the character of the northwestern corner of the park landscape that was adjacent to the mission cottages. Beginning with the posting of signs on the border, the area was gradually developed into a formal entrance with space for parking and a gateway that marked the beginning of the Totem Trail.

After the construction of the wagon bridge over the Indian River in 1918, it no longer was necessary to drive through the western portion of the park to travel to the other side of the river and beyond to Jamestown Bay. Local citizens, however, continued to drive on the Totem Trail. Despite their objections, the NPS and Road Commission decided, in 1922, to prohibit wheeled traffic from entering the monument on the western side of the Indian River; during the same year, Trierschield posted signs that prohibited such traffic in the park.[103] However, some traffic in the park continued. Finally, in 1925, the Road Commission moved two of the park totems, the Waasgo Legend and Raven/Shark poles, to the beginning of Lover's Lane. The poles created an ornamental gateway, with the trail passing through them. Two concrete posts connected by a heavy a chain were installed in the middle of the trail to prevent traffic from slipping between the totems.[104] Figure 8-10 shows the gateway shortly after it was constructed. Also apparent in the photograph is a corner of the fence around the nearest cottage property, which at that time was very close to the gateway. In 1927, the residents of that cottage were convinced to move the fence back twenty feet so the park entrance area could be expanded and cleared.[105] The plan shown in Figure 8-11 depicts the approximate location of the totem gateway, and reveals the extent of the cottage community that existed at that time adjacent to the monument entrance. Drawn by Gill Truitt, the plan of the settlement also identifies the residents of each home.

The citizens of Sitka added another element to the ornamental gateway in 1933. After E.W. Merrill's death in 1929, the Sitka Post of the American Legion had raised funds to commission a bronze plaque of the photographer with an inscription that read: "Elbridge W. Merrill who dedicated his life and artistic attainments towards picturing the scenic beauties surrounding Sitka, Alaska, 1932."[106] They wanted to erect the plaque on a stone monolith

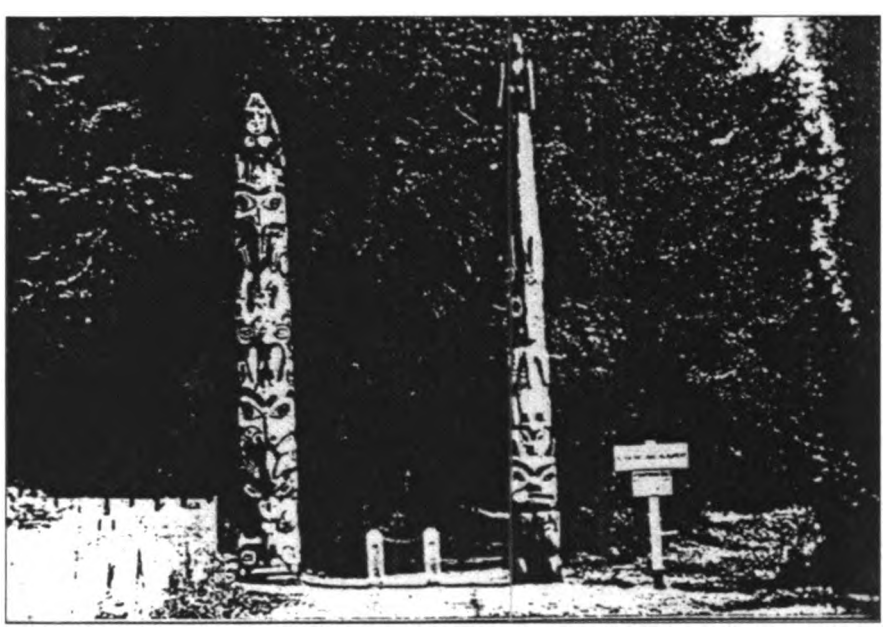

Figure 8-10. Ornamental gateway at the monument entrance, 1925.

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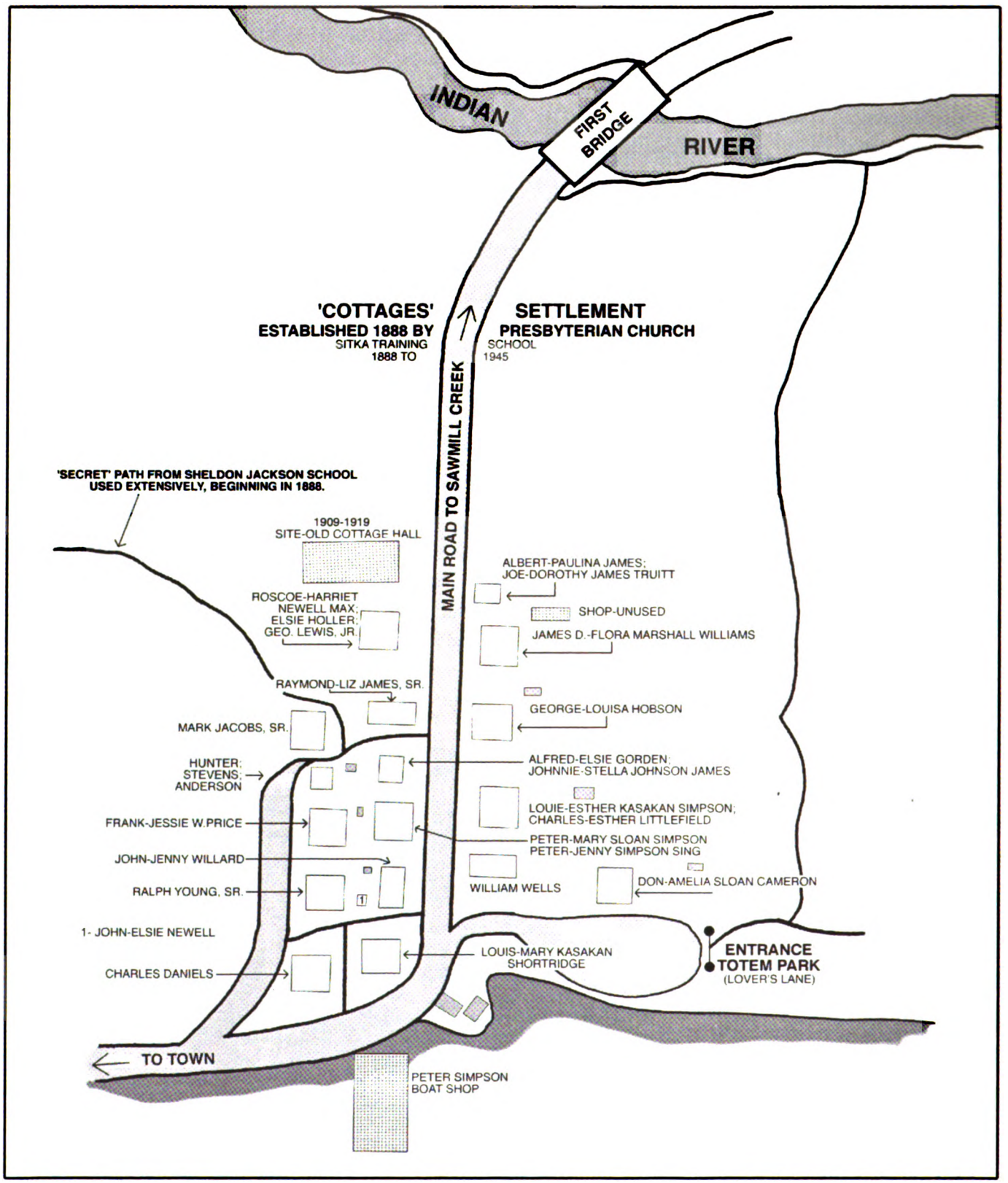

Figure 8-11. Plan of the Cottage settlement, identifying residents during the 1930s and 1940s, as drawn by Gill Truitt in 1991. Not to scale.

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Figure 8-12. Totem gateway and the Merrill plaque, after 1933.

Figure 8-13. Cottages adjacent to the monument entrance, 1940.

within the park and wrote to the NPS to obtain permission, explaining that "Mr. Merrill was the first official representative of the Government in the care of this Park. We believe it would not only be a fitting place for this memorial but that it would add to the beauty and scenic interest of the park itself."[107]

Acting NPS Director Cammerer turned down their request, however, stating that even if Merrill had been an official government representative, which he had not been, only such monuments as those commemorating important historical events in the park's history would be permitted on the site.[108] Cammerer suggested that the plaque be erected along the road that approached the main entrance to the monument, but outside of its boundaries. The citizens of Sitka responded by erecting the plaque between the two totems that formed the ornamental gateway at the entrance to the park (Figure 8-12).

Additional improvements to the entrance were accomplished in 1940 by the CCC and newly arrived NPS custodian Ben Miller. The parking area was expanded and the metal signs replaced with rustic markers carved by the CCC. In May 1940, Miller reported that the improvement around the parking area at the entrance had been finished and landscaped with trees, shrubs, and flowers from the "surrounding country."[109] Figure 8-13, taken at that time, shows the mission cottages adjacent to the entrance parking lot and the newly landscaped area next to the road. Figure 8-14 shows the parking area, bordered by the residential fence on one side, and the stone that was installed as part of the recent landscaping.

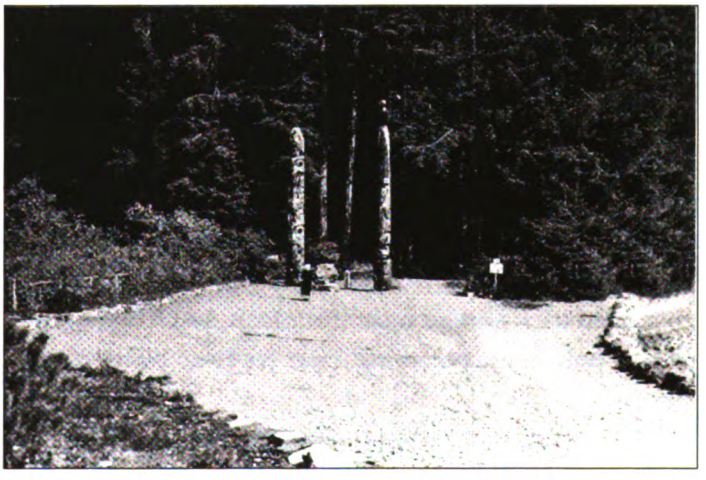

Figure 8-14. Monument parking lot and entrance, 1940.

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Figure 8-15. Waasgo Legend and Raven/ Shark Totem Pole gateway, 1939.

TOTEM TRAIL

Totem Trail, commonly known as Lover's Lane during this period, was a favorite stroll for residents and tourists alike. Been described the trail, in 1939, as a gravel path "wide enough for four people abreast" along which the totems were set in "small clearings." Been also noted that the sound was "pleasingly visible through the trees."[110] Although the trail was the scene of continual periodic maintenance—to the poles, to the road, and to the vegetation—the overall character of the corridor was dominated primarily by the increased maturity of the forest through which it passed. The forest trees that shot up passed the tops of the totems in many areas along the trail, reducing the dramatic effect of the poles themselves. Certainly, the trees were kept trimmed back around most the totems, but a number of poles were becoming more enclosed by the forest.

Totem maintence clearly impacted the trail on a temporary basis as the poles were worked on in place, or taken down to be repaired. The Road Commission, which reported regularly during the years the agency supervised totem maintenance, noted that the poles were being painted and repaired. A number of poles were moved as well. When the ornamental gate was constructed, the Waasgo Legend and Raven/Shark poles were moved from their previous locations along the trail to the entrance area. The Commission's report for 1932 also reveals that two unnamed totems were "completely rebuilt" and "one was moved from a heavy timbered area to an open space."[111] In other areas, clearings were enlarged around the poles. The Road Commission reported in 1933 that "several trees near totem poles were removed."[112]

Photographs taken of the totems prior to the CCC restoration project undertaken in 1939 provide documentation of conditions along the trail at that time. After 1925, the totem gateway marked the beginning of the trail (Figure 8-15). Between that point and the blockhouse area, most of the poles that sat along the stretch of trail were situated in small clearings, open to the beach on one side and flanked by tall spruce and hemlock (Figures 8-16 and 8-17). However, the original Memorial/Mortuary Column, at that time, was more visible than the others,

Figure 8-16. One of the Yaadaas Crest Corner poles, 1939.

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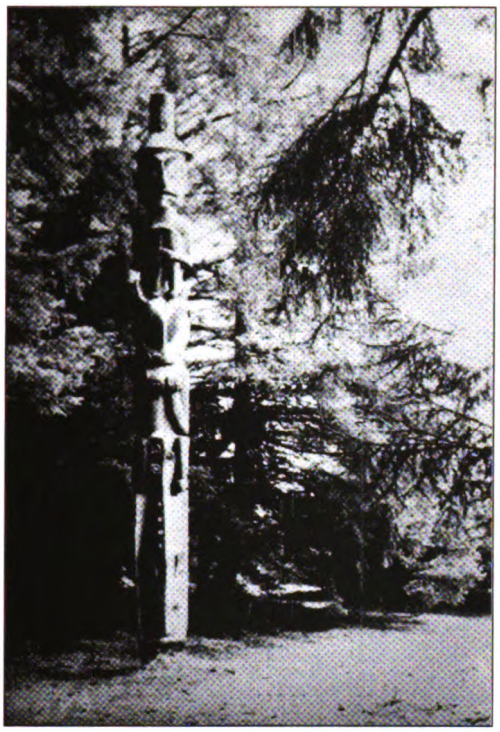

Figure 8-17. Wolf Pole, 1939.

Figure 8-18. Memorial/Mortuary Pole, 1939.

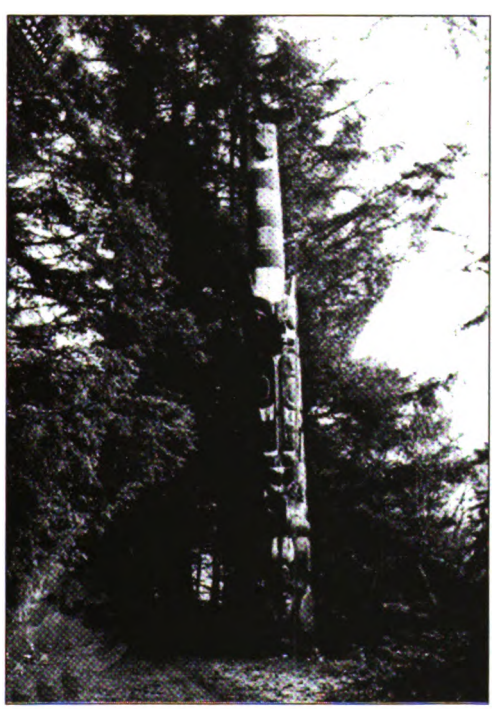

Figure 8-19. Frog/Raven Pole, 1939.

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Figure 8-20. The other Yaadaas Crest Corner Pole, 1939.

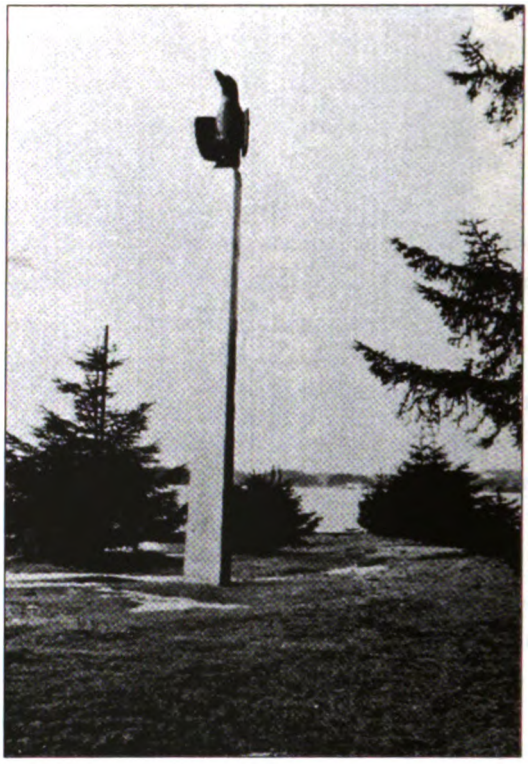

Figure 8-21. Raven Memorial Pole, 1939.

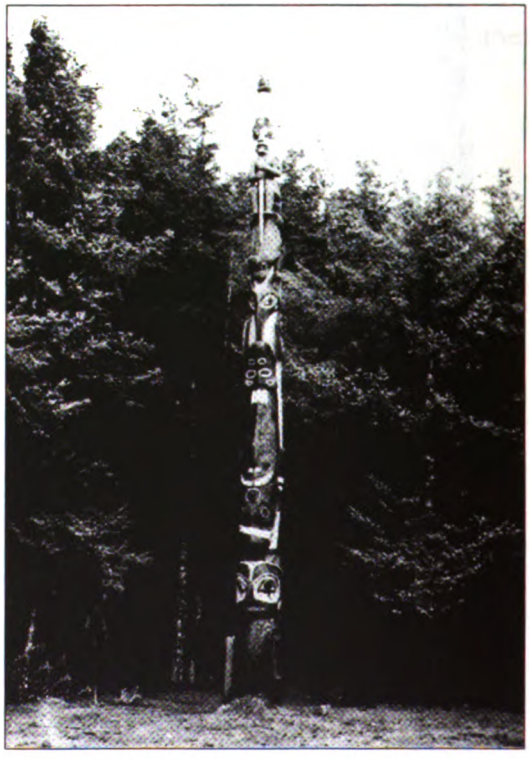

Figure 8-22. Gaanaxadi/Raven Crest Pole, 1939.

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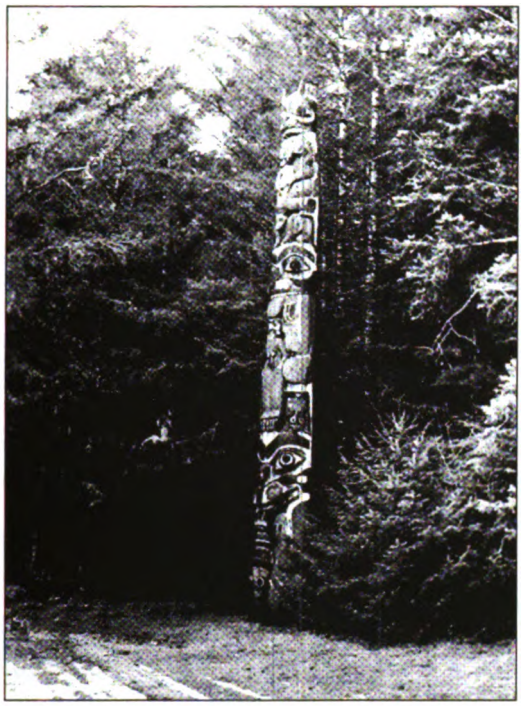

Figure 8-23. Lakich'nei Pole, 1939.

Figure 8-24. Yaadaas Crest Pole, 1939.

Figure 8-25. Mosquito Legend Pole, 1939.

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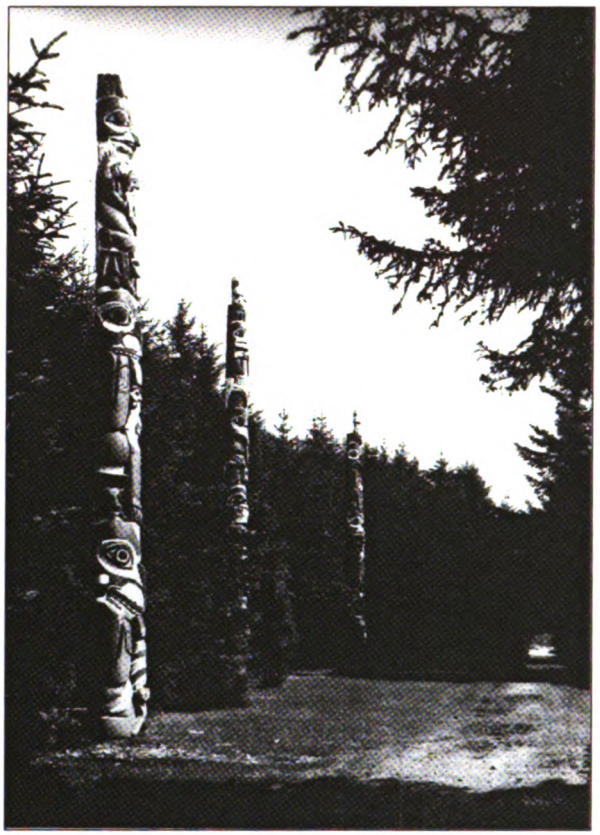

Figure 8-26. Lakich'nei, Yaadaas Crest, and Mosquito Legend poles, ca. 1913.

Figure 8-27. Lakich'nei, Yaadaas Crest, and Mosquito Legend poles, 1939.

standing above and apart from the trees (Figure 8-18). The Raven Memorial Pole sat in an open area, north of the blockhouse, partly skirted by young spruce, and overlooked the sound (Figure 8-21). The other pole in that area, the Gaanaxadi/Raven Crest Pole, sat east of the trail at the edge of the woods facing the water (Figure 8-22). The blockhouse also was a predominant focal point at that section of the trail.

Beyond the blockhouse, the totems remained in the same arrangement that they had displayed in 1913. Along the trail at the base of the peninsula, the three poles stood on the edge of the forest facing the sound, just as they had been arranged by Merrill. In Figures 8-23, 8-24, and 8-25 the three poles are shown individually. A comparison of Figure 8-26, a photograph of the group taken around 1913, and Figure 8-27, the same group filmed in 1939, illustrates the amount of growth that had occurred in the forest during the intervening years, and its impact on the view of the three poles.

The only pole that Merrill sited along the river remained in that location during this period. The Trader Legend Pole stood along the trail not far from the foot bridge. Figure 8-28 conveys the character of its setting in 1923, and the presence of a tent next to the pole. Perhaps the tent was related to the totem repair work or cribbing construction being done at the time. The 1939 photographic inventory depicts the pole as sitting right at the edge of the trail, closely surrounded by spruce and hemlock branches (Figure 8-29).

Unfortunately, since the Forest Service did not make a complete photographic record of the poles at the completion of their project, it is not possible to indicate whether any of the poles they worked on were rearranged. Other than the poles that were moved in 1925 to create the totem gateway, most of the totems appear, in 1939, to be very near their original locations.

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The other minor element of the Totem Trail that began to change during this period was the type of bench used along the pathway. Figure 8-30 illustrates the typical frame bench that the Alaska Road Commission provided for the park. Coffman had criticized the frame benches in 1938 and recommended that rustic ones be installed in their place.[113] When the CCC began to take on jobs in the park for the NPS in 1938 and 1939, they constructed fourteen rustic benches hewn from cedar logs, and placed them along the trail (Figures 8-31and 8-32).[114]

Figure 8-28. Trader Legend Pole, 1923.

River and Forest Trails on Both Sides of the Indian River

The other roads and trails that passed through the park during this period are not well documented. The major pathways are shown on Diagram 17. In 1925, the Road Commission did report that they cleared a new trail, but its location is not documented.[115] All of the major trails probably conformed to Been's description of the Totem Trail's width—about wide enough for four people to walk abreast. That they were regularly surfaced with gravel is confirmed by the annual Road Commission reports. During this period, the main path on the eastern side of the river was the only road to the Jamestown Bay area and undoubtedly was subject to greater wear than the footpaths.

The overall character of most monument paths was defined by the dense vegetation and forest that enclosed them. According to several descriptions of the park written in the 1920s, the "paths wander among the ferns in graceful curves," through forest so dense and tall that upon entering "one has the impression of entering a vast cathedral."[116] Andrews noted, in 1922, that the paths along the Indian River were "bordered with huge Sitka spruces and giant cedars, with the space thickly filled with a dense growth of shrubbery, among which is prominent the Devil's Club (*Panax horridus*), with its beautifully palmated leaves and its cruel spines concealed underneath."[117] The "tropic-like density of trees, undergrowth and mosses"also impressed Been

Figure 8-29. Trader Legend Pole, 1939.

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Figure 8-30. Typical frame bench built for the monument by the Alaska Road Commission, ca. 1940.

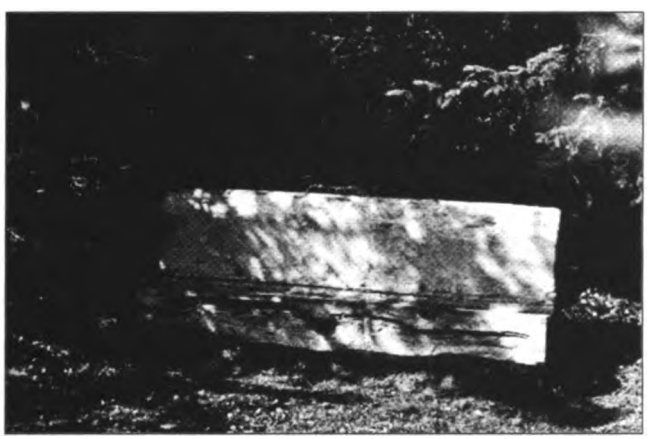

Figure 8-31. One of the rustic benches constructed for the monument by the CCC, 1940.

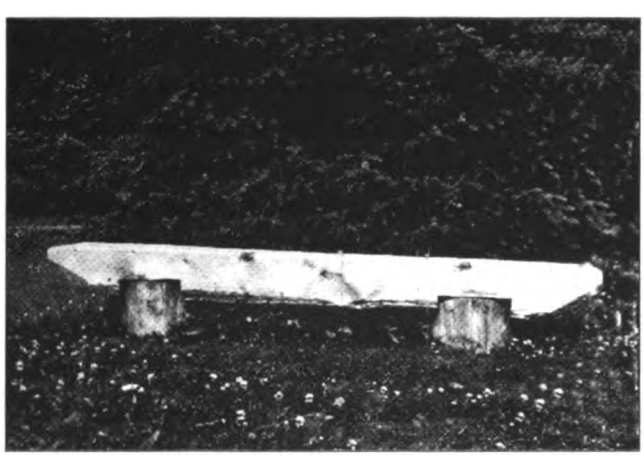

Figure 8-32. Rustic bench constructed for the monument by the CCC, 1940.

during his 1939 inspection. The paths, however, also passed through small clearings along the beach and river, which provided a pleasant contrast to the dark forest passages.

Several unusual individual trees were apparent along the park paths. In addition to the Witch Tree, two other noteworthy specimens were identified in the park. The "Lyre Tree," so named due to the similarity of its shape to that of a lyre, was located near the trail on the eastern side of the river (Figure 8-33). The tree known as the "Devil's Fork" also was identified by signs and must have been adjacent to a path, but its specific location is not documented. Coffman remarked critically on the metal signs that indentified the trees in 1938, and the CCC supplied the "Lyre Tree" with a rustic marker shortly thereafter.

FORESTED AREAS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE INDIAN RIVER

By this time, the forests that covered the monument's landscape consisted of very dense second growth spruce-hemlock stands. A number of historic accounts testify to the character of the dense growth, both in the height and density of the trees and the variety of shrubs found in the understory. A description of the park, written in 1925, claimed that "aside from the totems, the most interesting feature of the park is the forest growth." According to the author, there was "a cathedral-like dignity and grandeur in the architecture of nature here exemplified."[118] A photograph of an area in the park that accompanies the article shows the trail passing through tightly packed ranks of straight trunks and interlacing branches.

Clarence Andrews described the monument's growth as follows: "In the depths of the forest the earth is covered with a carpet of ferns and mosses, and the trunks of fallen trees of former years may be seen with other trees of from two to three feet in diameter growing on their prostrate bodies."[119] Coffman referred to the park forest as a "very attractive stand of Sitka spruce and western hemlock."[120] Been also reported favorably on the park's

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forests, commenting on their density—so dense, in fact, that the Forest Service thought the trees should be thinned.[121] A number of the trail, totem, and river photographs illustrate this characteristic feature of the forest. The aerial photograph taken of the monument in 1929 also illustrates the dense and regular character of the park forest at this time (Figure 8-1).

Russian Memorial Area

Detailed information as to the condition or character of the Russian Memorial area during this period have not been found. The Russian graves, however, are mentioned in several descriptions dating to this period. The grave site is also shown on the 1919 monument survey as being situated very close to the road that traveled from the eastern side of the monument past Haley's old homestead site . It must have been clearly visible from the road. The Road Commission reports reveal that in 1922, Peter Trierschield posted a sign that identified the graves, but it is not clear what other kind of marker was present at this time.[122]

Figure 8-33. Lyre Tree, ca. 1928.

Conclusion

During the years between 1920 and 1940, Sitka National Monument played an important role as a community park. Local interest and investment in the monument led to the construction of the replica blockhouse on park property, and the placement of the Merrill plaque at its entrance. Usage regulations created by the Alaska Road Commission and National Park Service were unpopular among some members of the community, who saw the monument as an important tourist attraction, and who wanted to be able to provide automobile tours of the site. For many local residents, both Tlingit and Anglo, the park was an important recreational site. Additionally, Tlingit neighbors gathered foods and fished in the Indian River.

When the NPS evaluated the site in 1938 and 1939, they found that the activities of the Alaska Road Commission and local residents had created a landscape that was not in keeping with National Park Service standards. The agency instituted changes at the time that shaped the future direction of the site as a national park. Nevertheless, during these years, the natural beauty of the river and forests was admired by locals and visitors to the area. This sentiment was expressed by a local author in 1925: "no lover of nature can be long in Sitka without falling in love with the Indian River."[123]

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[122] *Annual Report of the Chief of Engineers, 1922. Extract.* "Report Upon the Construction and Maintenance of Military and Post Roads, Bridges, and Trails, Alaska." Board of Road Commissioners for Alaska. Part II (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1922), 23.
[123] *The Verstovian*, January 1925, p. 1.

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CHAPTER 9

THE EFFECTS OF WAR, 1940 - 1955

"Should the excavation be allowed to continue until the Naval Air Station and supporting Army camps are completed the area now known as Sitka National Monument will be of little value to the National Park Service, because a hole full of water has very little attraction, especially in a country where there is water everywhere."

Ben Miller, Monument Custodian, 1942

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CHAPTER 9

THE EFFECTS OF WAR 1940-1955

The exigencies of World War II temporarily interrupted NPS initiatives at Sitka National Monument, as well as the role the park played in the community. After 1942, visitation to the park dropped dramatically, and the monument's custodian turned his attention to U.S. military needs. The Indian River channel comprised a convenient source of gravel that supplied military contractors with the material for constructing the base at Sitka. Their massive excavation of the lower sections of the river proved to have long-lasting and destructive effects on the park. At the same time, a portion of Sitka National Monument was taken over by the Army and completely closed to the public. These events interrupted the social and recreational functions the park provided for the community, some of which were never resumed. These years of turmoil contributed to the degraded integrity of the Indian River, the heart of the park's scenic landscape. As a result, the Park Service re-evaluated the future of the monument during the quiet years that followed the conflict.

The CCC project in the park continued into the first few years of the 1940s. The crew not only rehabilitated the totem poles, but created rustic benches and signs, rebuilt the cribbing along the Indian River, landscaped the monument entrance area, and constructed pit toilets. In the winter of 1941, they also worked on the carving of a rustic entrance sign.[1] The following winter, the crew removed an old pump house located on the riverbank located just downstream from the vehicle bridge, and a logjam that was increasing riverbank erosion near the same bridge; work also continued on the totems.[2] In 1942, however, CCC activities in the park were terminated.

During these years, shortly after Coffman and Been had criticized conditions in the monument, the NPS began considering the development of a Master Plan for the park. In preparation, Custodian Ben Miller was asked to outline a research program so an interpretive plan and historic base map of the monument eventually could be prepared. Four historic elements within the monument were suggested as objects of study: the 1804 battlefield site, the Kiks.ádi village, the Russian graves, and the totem poles. The wood road was also suggested as being worthy of further research.[3]

ESCALATING MILITARY ACTIVITY WITHIN THE MONUMENT

By 1941, however, U.S. military needs inside Sitka National Monument became paramount to other NPS plans for the facility. Superintendent Been's 1939 prediction that the Navy would need to excavate gravel from the river within the monument's boundaries for the construction of its air station turned out to be correct.[4] The construction of Sitka Naval Air Station on a causeway from Japonski Island to Makhnati Island required large amounts of fill. Gravel was needed for the construction of buildings, bunkers, roads, and runways.[5] The mouth of the Indian River and the beaches that bordered the monument provided the most convenient and accessible source of this material anywhere in the vicinity of Sitka.

In 1940, the private gravel removal operation situated just outside the monument's boundary at the mouth of the Indian River was taken over by the U.S. Navy. Their gravel bunkers, constructed near the former location of Haley's house, turned out to be partially on monument property. The precise location of the boundary in that area was difficult to determine because it had been defined in the 1910 proclamation by the mean high tide line; therefore, Miller was uncertain of the actual location in 1940

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since natural alterations to the river delta had changed the line following the time the 1919 survey had been conducted. He was unable to ensure that construction would remain outside the park's boundaries. The gravel pit, at that time, was situated in the river delta outside the monument's boundaries.

Within a very short time, however, the Navy had exhausted the gravel supply in that area, and in February 1940, Navy officials requested permission to expand the excavation to the river delta within the park boundaries.[6] At that time, Miller gave permission for the Navy to remove the gravel and straighten out the channel since it was believed that dredging in the delta would decrease erosion occurring on the western bank of the river and thereby benefit the monument.[7] By April 1941 yet more gravel was needed and the Navy applied for another expansion of its excavation. Permission was requested to remove the small wooded island near the mouth of the river.[8]

Miller was concerned that the island afforded vital protection from the direct force of the river to the western bank and historic features of the park. The CCC crew had built a dam between the upper end of the island and the western river bank to control the erosion that occurred from the water flowing on both sides of the island; because of the dam, the western channel now only flooded during high tide. Removing it would allow the river to flow directly against the western bank. Miller also opposed a dredging location that would be plainly visible from the Indian River path. On the basis of these concerns, he recommended that the island be taken "only as a last resort," if necessary for "vital defense work."[9]

Instead, he and M.D. Williams, an engineer for the Public Roads Division, came up with an alternative expansion that would allow gravel to be removed from the eastern bank of the Indian River. The two men proposed building a new road farther away from the river to replace the old wood road that would be endangered by the expanded dredging (Figure 9-1). Miller felt that the new road "would be a great improvement over the present one as several small kinks will be eliminated and the drive will be more scenic than the present one along the river."[10] Been approved the plan and recommended to NPS officials that the Navy be authorized to remove gravel from the eastern river bank and that the island be "sacrificed only if [the] approved source is exhausted."[11]

By autumn, however, the Navy had just begun to build the new road and had again exhausted the aggregate deposits in the approved area. When Naval officials informed Miller that they would need an additional 100,000 yards, Miller became alarmed. He expressed his concern to Been, stating that "I am firmly convinced something will have to be done to stop the Navy from eventually destroying the most historic part of Sitka National Monument. It appears that there is no let up to their demands. . . . If this amount of gravel is taken from the present pit, which will have to be enlarged, all or nearly all of the historic features of the Monument will be destroyed. . . ."[12] A flood, which had just occurred on October 21-22, 1941, destroyed both a 600-foot-long section of log cribbing that extended downstream from the footbridge, and the rock rip-rap located farther downstream. With the loss of the revetments, a 600-foot-long strip of the bank that ranged from 6 to 30 feet wide, washed away. The upper end of the wooded island was also swept away. Miller blamed the damage on the channel alteration brought about by the Navy's dredging operation. He reported the following to Been:

> It is my unbiased opinion the damage was caused by the removal of a large quantity of gravel which formed a pit approximately eight hundred feet long, varying in width from about twenty feet at the upper end to approximately two hundred feet at the lower end and ranging in depth from four feet at the upper end to an estimated thirty feet at the lower end. During the flood the material in the stream bed washed into the hole which lowered the stream. . . . After the stream had been lowered the bank slid into the water, carrying the bank protection with it, as there was no support left.[13]

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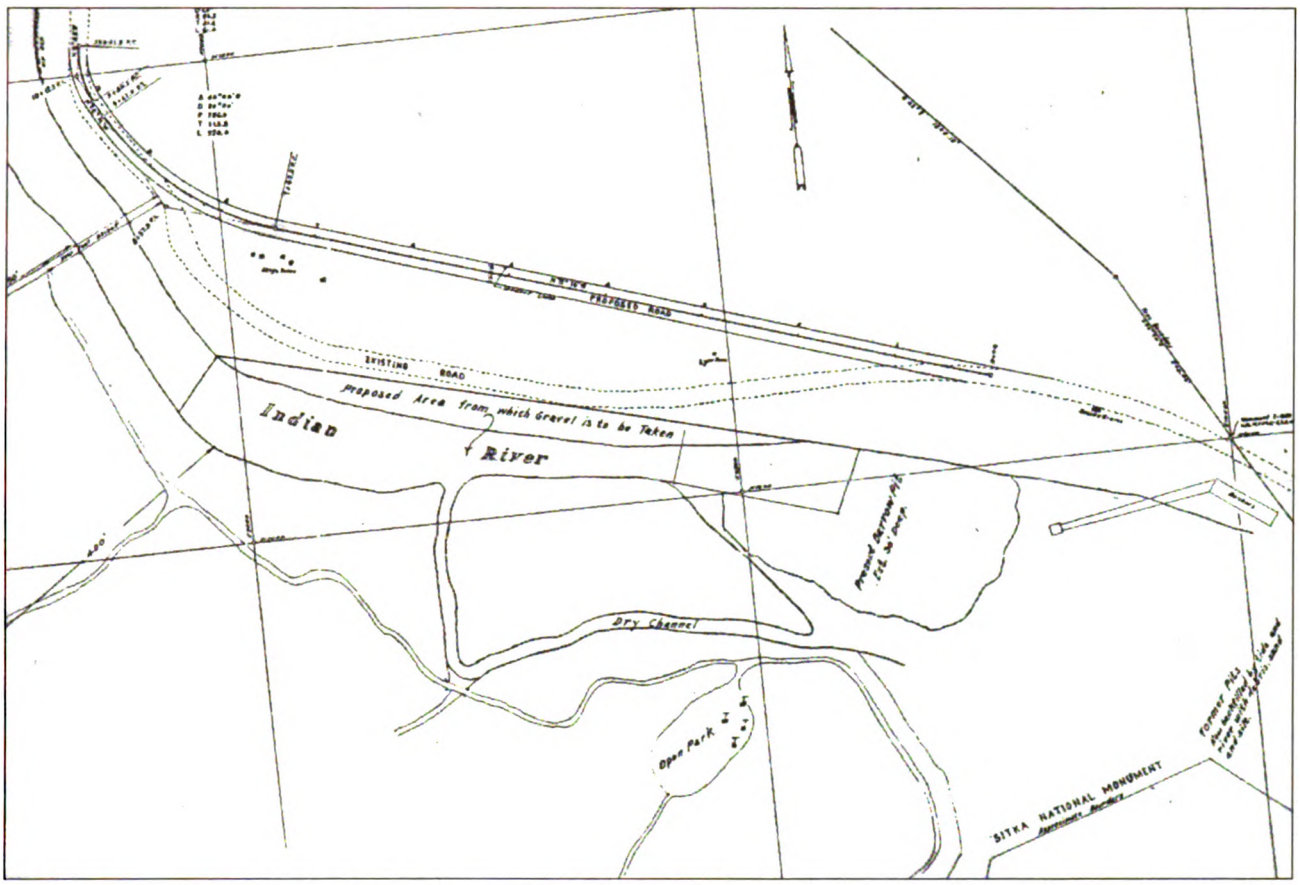

Figure 9-1. Expansion of the Navy's gravel dredging operation in the Indian River within Sitka National Monument, May 3, 1941.

Been wrote to Lt. Stribling, the Engineering Officer in Charge at the Sitka Naval Base, that excavations within the monument had to stop when the aggregate between the river and new road had been exhausted; since Been realized that amount would be insufficient, he felt he was providing sufficient notification so that Navy officials might locate another gravel source.[14] Been subsequently was assured that the Navy would repair any damage caused by its gravel operations. Stribling noted in November, for example, that the Navy was using trees selected by Miller, along with those cleared from the almost completed roadway, to construct cribbing along the river.[15] Both the road and repairs were completed in December.[16]

Increased urgency in military needs resulted in NPS approval to excavate the wooded island during spring 1942. Miller specified the precise extent and procedure with which the Navy was to remove the trees and gravel in stages, beginning on the outer edge of the island; he also listed the Navy's responsibilities for repairs and clean-up operations.[17] Clearing began on the island in March, with excavation commencing in April.[18] The supply was estimated to last for three months, and indeed, by August, the Secretary of the Navy wrote to the Secretary of the Interior that additional gravel was needed for the war effort. He suggested relocating the new road farther back on the eastern side of the river, and dredging the area between the road and river (Figure 9-2).[19] In the meantime, Miller was opposed to the expansion. He wrote the following in his June report:

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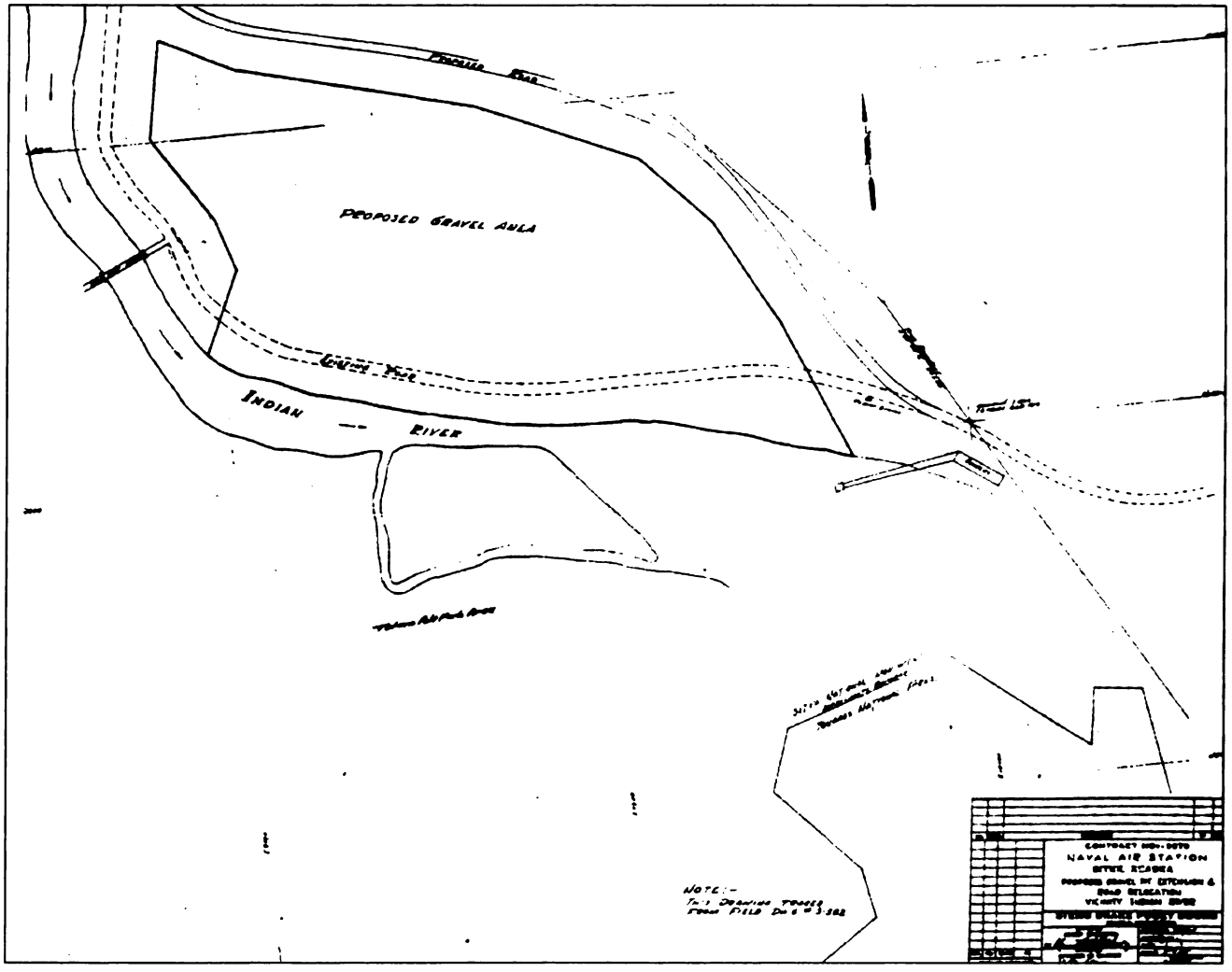

Figure 9-2. Expansion of the Navy's gravel dreding operations in the Indian River within Sitka National Monument, ca. 1942.

> Should the excavation be allowed to continue until the Naval Air Station and supporting Army camps are completed the area now known as Sitka National Monument will be of little value to the National Park Service, because a hole full of water has very little attraction, especially in a country where there is water everywhere.[20]

Nevertheless, the Navy's appeal for the additional 28,000 cubic yards of gravel was granted, but with a number of conditions specified by the NPS. They included the following: the Navy would construct a new road around the excavation and obliterate the old one; a trail would be constructed from the footbridge to the new road; the sides of the excavation pit were to be at least 150 feet from the Russian graves and footbridge; the sides of the pit would be gently sloped so that eventually it could be used as a recreational beach and lagoon; and the existing cribbing would be further supported with large rocks. Miller was to determine whatever cutting and removal of trees and other vegetation were necessary.[21]

Significant rains fell on the area in mid-September, resulting, on the 18th and 19th of that month, in the heaviest documented flood in the history of the monument. The flood waters washed away the footbridge and undermined the highway bridge.[22] Miller reported that approximately 200 feet of road,

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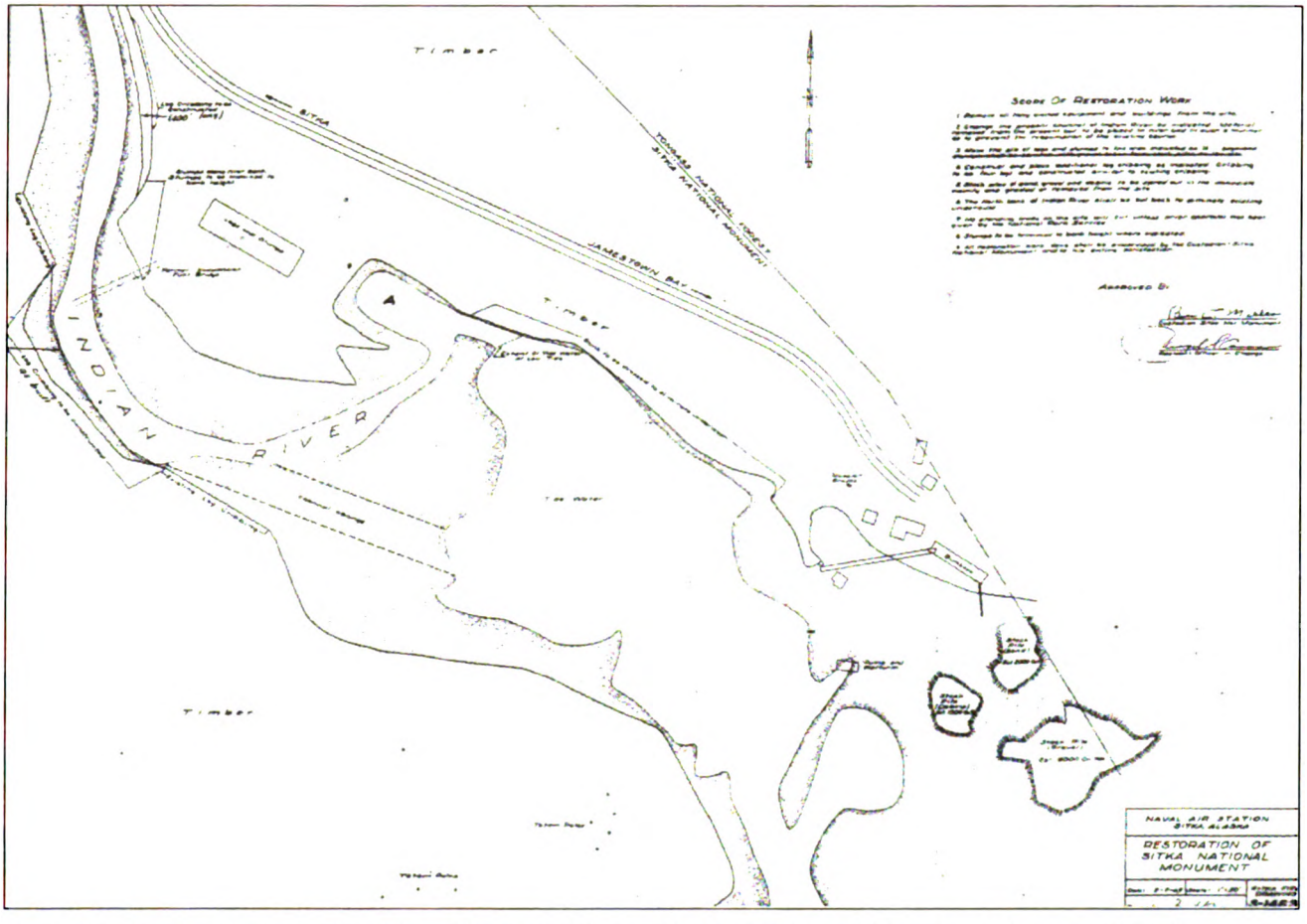

Figure 9-3. The Navy's Restoration Plan of the Indian River within Sitka National Monument, February 7, 1945.

250 feet of trail, and both river banks—the latter ranging in width from 10 to 50 feet—washed away. All the rip-rap and 300 feet of log cribbing were destroyed. In addition, many trees were swept into the river and the Trader Legend totem pole was washed away. Miller estimated that it would cost $40,000 to repair the damage within the monument.[23] He also was certain that Navy operations in the river had been responsible for the extensive damage. He wrote to Lt. Gottwals, stating "it is quite evident that the damage caused by the September 1942 flood was due to gravel being washed into the [excavation] pit . . . . The lowering of the river bed caused the piers of the foot bridge and the highway bridge to become undermined, thereby resulting in their destruction. . . ."[24] The NPS required that the Navy repair the damage caused by the flood.

Before most of the restoration work was undertaken, however, the Navy began to move its personnel out of Sitka. The gravel operation had ceased and the Navy wanted to turn it over to the City of Sitka and allow the local government to resume responsibility for the restoration of the river within the monument.[25] NPS officials objected that the Navy ought to "fulfill its obligation to restore the site and repair as much of the damage as possible," and reminded Navy authorities of their original agreement to repair any damage caused by the dredging.[26] In compliance, the Navy submitted a restoration proposal and plan in 1945 (Figure 9-3). The restoration was accomplished by civil service personnel who were supervised by Lt. Carrier.[27] By

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March, Miller reported that the gravel bunkers had been torn down and removed and a large pile of logs and stumps also had been cleaned up. In addition, construction of the cribbing had begun.

Under the revised restoration agreement, signed on July 19, 1945, the Navy extended the log cribbing on the eastern bank about 400 feet, backfilling it with gravel from the operation stockpiles. Stumps were trimmed along the river to "bank height"; stockpiles of logs and stumps were buried with gravel; all military buildings were removed, including the Army structures (but not the three private structures outside the monument boundaries); and the remaining gravel stockpiles were eliminated.[28] Replacement of the footbridge was not part of the restoration plan.

Miller was satisfied with the Navy work. He reported to the NPS Regional Director that "we were fortunate to get as much work done as we did. Of course, there will be more work to do after the war, but the major portion, and the most expensive has been accomplished."[29] However, the Indian River flooded again in September 1945, washing out much of the restoration work. A 645-foot-long section of log cribbing had to be rebuilt before the project was finally completed in October 1945.[30]

The Navy's dredging activities also occurred on the monument tideflats. The NPS allowed the Navy to remove gravel from the tideflats along the western shore of the park in exchange for filling in and expanding the parking area at the monument entrance. Been felt that the monument would need more space for parking and turning around automobiles when tourism resumed after the war.[31]

While the Navy was excavating gravel and hauling it out of the park twenty-four hours a day, the Army was also engaged in the monument. Because of the growing potential of war-time battles in the North Pacific, the military build-up increased throughout Alaska, including Sitka, where Army posts were established in the park. In October 1941, the Army established a guard post near the gravel operation.[32] In January 1942, Miller reported that a temporary observation post had been set up near the blockhouse "for the purpose of detecting anti-aircraft fire."[33]

The fullest extent of Army occupation in the monument commenced on May 30, 1942, only a few days before the Japanese attack on Dutch Harbor in the Aleutian Islands. At that time, the Army took over the monument on the western side of the Indian River, "from the second cross footpath to the mouth of the river."[34] Miller reported that "this drastic action was evidently necessary because. . . reports of an attack on Dutch Harbor early this morning [June 3, 1942] are coming in." The Army troops removed the aircraft observation post near the blockhouse and set up two pyramid tents and a temporary building to function as a mess hall and barracks. They also installed search lights, a fire control station, and several 50-caliber machine guns and ammunition positions.[35]

Just what was done within the Army reserve is not exactly clear. Bonnie Houston reports that armed military police patrolled the entrance and paths in the monument, while military vehicles were driven on the gravel paths. A local resident related to Ms. Houston his memory of anti-aircraft guns lighting up the night sky during military practice sessions. By August 1943, however, the Army moved out and the monument was re-opened. During the following winter, the temporary building was removed and by May 1944, full restoration of the occupied section of the monument had been completed.[36]

POST-WAR RE-EVALUATION

After the war ended and probably in consideration of the disturbance that had occurred in the monument during the war, NPS officials revisited the idea of terminating the monument's NPS status. In 1948, however, a regional committee recommended that the park be retained until the historical resources of Sitka could be evaluated, given the possibility that it might become one unit in a group of historical sites in Sitka.[37] Miller returned to Sitka

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National Monument as superintendent at the end of January 1949, following an illness that had led to his absence since 1946. An agreement formed that same year, between the Army and NPS, stipulated that the monument superintendent also would act as caretaker of the National Military Cemetery in Sitka—a role that Miller subsequently assumed.[38]

The monument's historic value was re-affirmed in 1949 by a federal task force. The Alaska Field Committee, assigned to evaluate and plan Interior Department territories in Alaska, recommended the development of major facilities in the park. The committee proposed the construction of a museum/headquarters building that would include the superintendent's office, public restrooms, storage rooms, and a museum area where items from the Sheldon Jackson Museum and other artifacts could be displayed. They also recommended the construction of a residence for the superintendent, a utility structure, and further erosion control structures along the Indian River.[39]

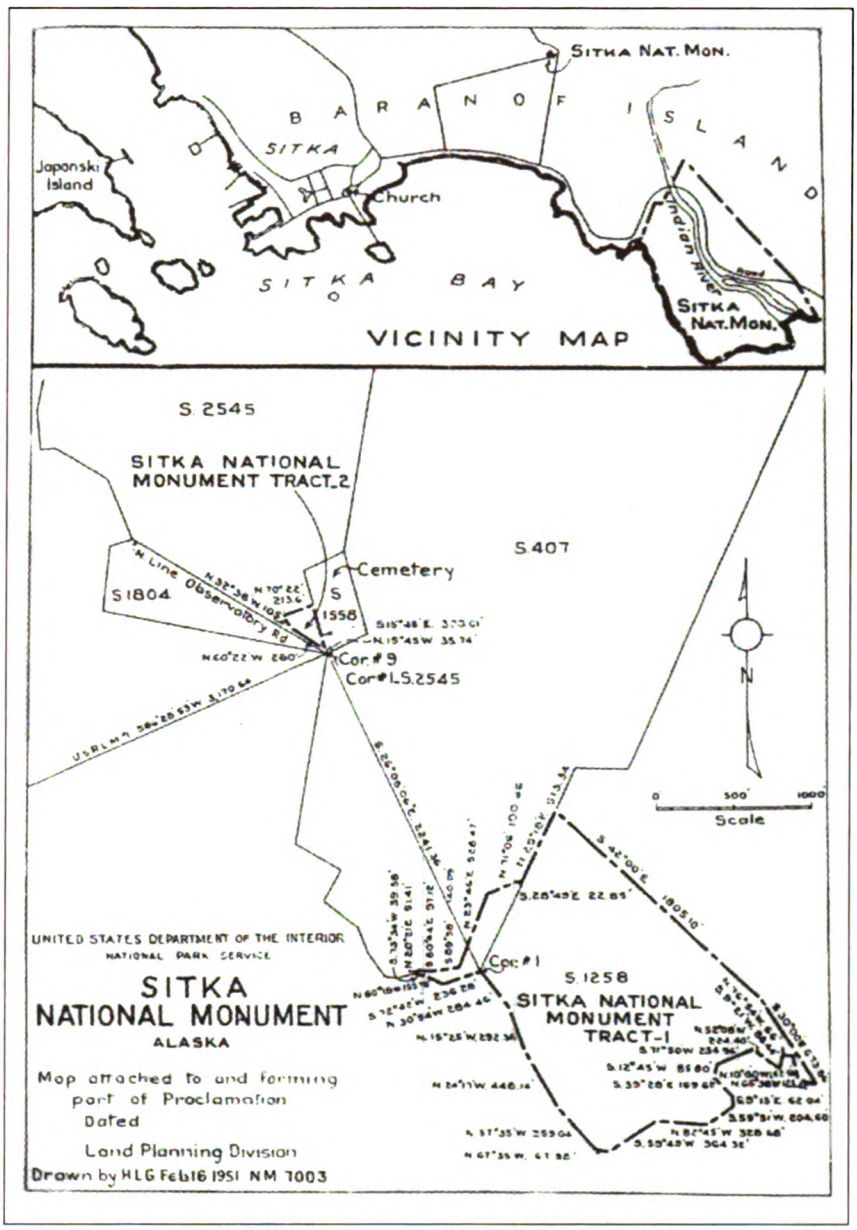

Figure 9-4. Sitka National Monument, as defined by a 19 February 1952 proclamation.

Many of these recommendations were adopted in a review of the monument's future, undertaken in 1953, the year that Miller departed and was replaced by Henry B. Schmidt. National Park Service planners proposed the development of interpretive facilities and programs at the site, including construction of a museum at the park that would transform Sitka National Monument into the NPS center for southeastern Alaska that would feature the interpretation of native Alaskan and Russian history and archeology.[40]

BOUNDARY CHANGES

At the same time that the park's future was being defined, its physical boundaries were redefined as well. Discrepancies had been discovered between the boundary defined in the 1910 Presidential Proclamation that established the monument, and the one delineated in the 1919 survey of the park. The former boundary cut into and excluded the existing shoreline, the blockhouse, and the World War II gun emplacements from the monument. In

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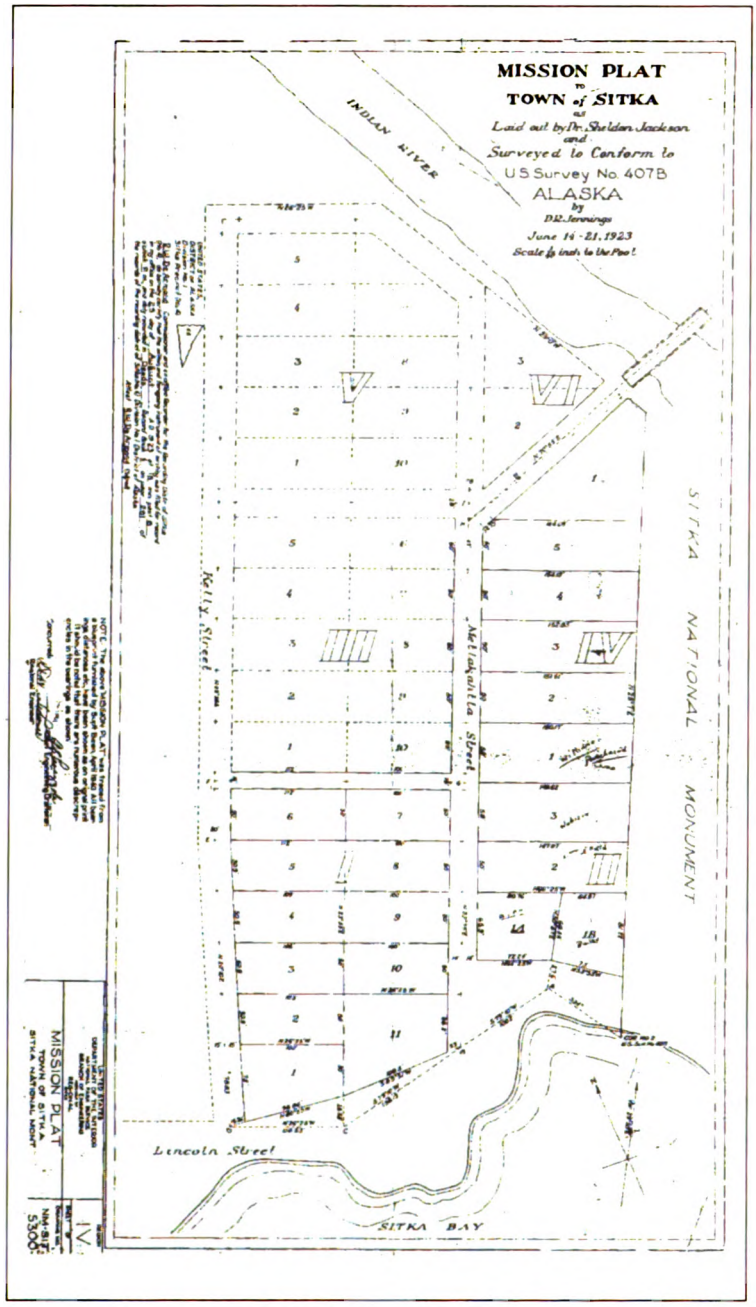

Figure 9-5. Plat of the Presbyterian Mission Cottage settlement, 1923.

addition, NPS officials desired to acquire the Presbyterian Mission property at the western boundary and entrance to the park for the construction of a proposed visitor center and parking area.

Presbyterian officials were also interested in transferring the land to the NPS. Leslie Yaw, the Superintendent of the Sheldon Jackson Mission School, met with Been and Miller and suggested that if they wrote a report explaining NPS use of the land, he would recommend its transfer to the government. According to Been, Yaw felt that the "unsightly" properties (the cottages) near the entrance were "a discredit to the church and to the mission," and that several of the old buildings should be razed. Also discussed at that time was the possibility of the NPS acquiring the cottage next to the entrance (the former Cameron residence) so it could be removed to allow space for an administrative building.[41] Yaw notified Miller that the Presbyterian Board of Missions approved the transfer of the entrance site to the NPS. Houston reports that the land was deeded to the Park Service on March 26, 1943.[42]

The National Park Service acquired the small strip of land between Sitka Sound and Lots 1A and 1B of Block II at the monument entrance in August 1950 through the donation of the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church.[43] The Board also indicated to the NPS, in early 1951, that it had no objection if the agency wanted to include six more Mission cottage lots within its boundaries, "pending their acquisition."[44] Subsequently, a Presidential Proclamation, dated 19 February 1952, re-defined the boundaries for Sitka National Monument (Figure 9-4). The new boundary primarily corresponded to the one drawn in the 1919 survey of the park, but also included the additional properties at the entrance and a small plot of land next to the national cemetery formerly owned by the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey (Figure 9-4, Tract 2).[45]

At the time of the proclamation, several lots included within the new boundary were owned either by the Presbyterian Mission or the native families that had purchased them from the church. Over the next decade, these lots were acquired by the NPS. In June 1953, the National Park Service purchased, from the Board of National Missions of the Presbyterian Church, Lots 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the

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original Mission plat's Block IV, Lot 1 of Block VI, and a beach lot that had been the former site of the mission industrial shop and boat house (see Figure 9-5).[46] In 1954 and 1955, Lots 1B and 3 of Block II and Lot 1 of Block 4 were acquired from the Board and the native residents.[47] The individuals who owned Lot 2 of Block II within the monument boundaries, however, did not sell their property to the NPS until almost a decade later. The aquisition of the cottage lots allowed the NPS to plan the expansion of its facilities at the monument's entrance. However, the removal of cottages on the eastern side of Metakatla Street also effectively obliterated a portion of an important component of park history.

RECREATION AND TOURISM

After an initial increase in the number of visitors to the park in 1940 and 1941, the level of visitation began to decline significantly in 1942, reached its lowest level in 1946, and then started to increase with the resumption of travel after the war. When Ben Miller originally arrived in Sitka in January 1940, he found that military construction had transformed Sitka into a boom town.[48] He spent a good proportion of his time answering tourists' questions when the boats were in port.[49] Miller reported hearing "numerous" complaints against the steamship companies for not stopping in Sitka for more than a few hours. The end of September closed the monument tourist season for that year. Miller reported that the last of the Alaska Steamship Company boats stopped in Sitka on the 24th of that month.[50]

Generally during the winter months, visitation was limited to locals and military personnel. In December 1940, Miller noted that the only visitors were local residents, and even they were few in number.[51] Five "out of state" visitors came to the monument in January 1941.[52] By spring, when the length of daylight hours increased, Miller stepped up the amount of time he spent patrolling so as to prevent vandalism; his actions were precipitated by the increasing number of soldiers and sailors stationed in Sitka.[53] April brought no increase in tourists, although local residents frequented the park.[54] The number of tourists increased in May, and their visits continued during the summer season. The total number of visitors grew from approximately 5,000 in 1940 to 9,600 in 1941.[55]

Nevertheless, by the following year, the war reduced travel to the region. Although fewer tourists visited the monument during this period, local residents and military personnel continued to frequent the park. In March 1942, Miller contacted 23 monument visitors, mostly military personnel.[56] In April, the 950 people who visited the park were either servicemen or locals. The total number of visitors recorded by the NPS for 1942 was 8,800.[57] Miller remarked "it is quite evident that members of the armed forces will constitute the majority of the visitors for the remainder of the war.[58] This proved to be the case. In July 1945, Miller reported that travel was significantly lower than during the same month the previous year. He made 178 contacts, but reported that only 84 servicemen and a few tourists had visited the monument.[59]

In addition to the comings and goings of servicemen and tourists, local residents utilized the park during this period, but to a reduced degree as the war effort intensified. In the spring of 1940, school picnics were held in the park.[60] Likewise, in the spring of 1941, a large picnic was given in the park by the primary grade school children of the local public school. That same season, the Kiks.ádi Tlingits held a picnic on the beach in honor of their descendants killed in battle with the Russians (Figure 9-6).[61] Houston reports that this was the last Kiks.adi memorial held in the park. (However, very recently, in 1997, a memorial was again held in the park.) One resident of the Mission cottages—who had played in the park as a child, had carried water from the river, and had gathered food within the monument in the decades before the war—remembered how dramatically World War II changed the park. For twenty-four hours a day, heavy, loud trucks hauled gravel from the Indian River to the site of airbase construction. For a while a good

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Figure 9-6. A Kiks.ádi picnic in Sitka National Monument, ca. 1941.

portion of the park was closed to the public and practice anti-aircraft fire could be heard and seen lighting up the night sky. These disruptions interrupted many of the traditional and recreational activities previously conducted in the park.[62]

LANDSCAPE CONDITIONS

The NPS made a number of improvements to the monument, both before and after the war, that added to the rustic character of the park and, at the same time, provided visitor facilities. The war effort in Sitka not only interrupted the park's development trend, but also resulted in a dramatic degradation of the Indian River area in the monument.

Diagrams 19 and 20 illustrate the landscape conditions and plant communities within the monument during this period. Diagram 19, showing the landscape conditions, utilizes the landform and river channel as they were depicted on the 1953 Master Plan map of the monument. The landscape features, including the totems, latrines, gun emplacements, trails, roads, and Russian Memorial, are also derived from the 1953 plan. The location of the comfort station at the park entrance was derived from the construction drawing and a 1956 plan of the monument. Diagram 20 depicts the distribution of plant communities within the monument as described in historical accounts and as shown in a 1948 aerial photograph of the monument (Figure 9-17).

INDIAN RIVER AREA

Obviously, the scenic character of the Indian River area within the park was dramatically degraded by the massive gravel excavation that occurred there during World War II. Not only was vegetation removed along the lower sections of the Indian River and the size and shape of the channel drastically altered, but a large section of the park's eastern forested area was also excavated, taking with it the old wood road that ran toward the southeast parallel to the river. The increased channel gradient created by the gravel dredging operations exacerbated flooding and erosional forces on the remaining riverbanks and resulted in the loss of the footbridge, large sections of the river banks, and damage to the wagon bridge. The Trader Legend Pole that had been standing near the footbridge was even swept away, although it was later recovered and returned to the park.

The excavation of the river occurred in stages as the supply of gravel in each area was exhausted. But even before significant damage was done to the park's physical landscape, the presence of the gravel plant on the shore of the river mouth, in proximity to the site of the former Russian homestead and Haley's place, must have created incongruous sights and sounds in a scenic park and national monument (Figure 9-7). The machinery, the large barrow pits carved into the river delta, and the stockpiles of gravel would indeed have been "jarring," as Been remarked in 1939.

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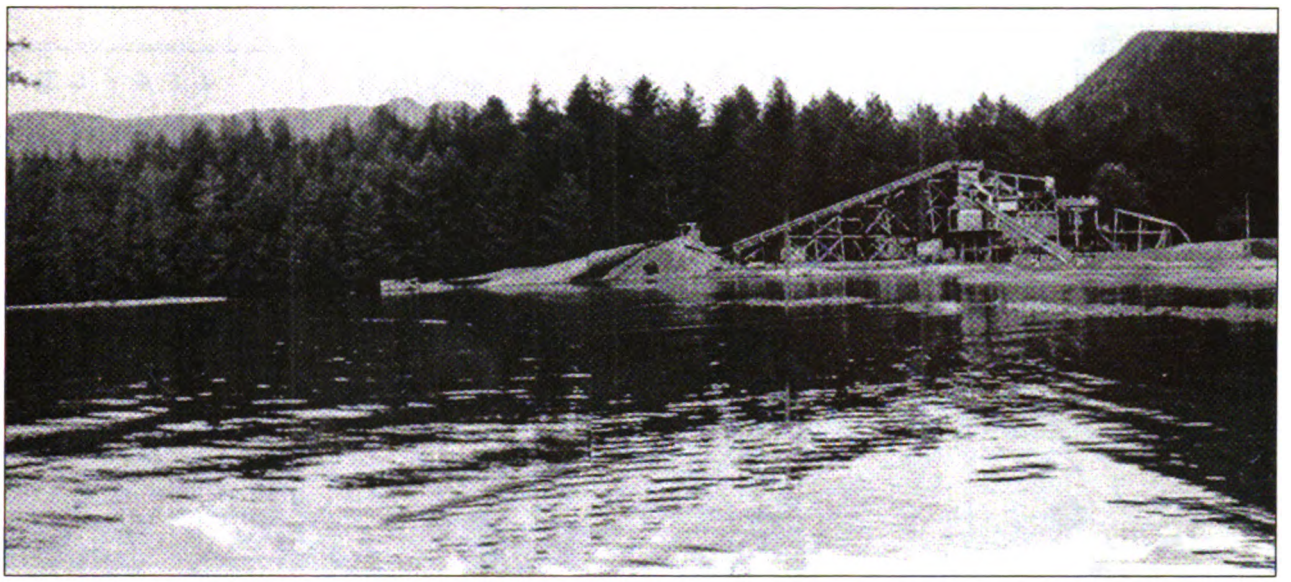

Figure 9-7. U.S. Navy gravel dredging operation at the mouth of the Indian River, 1941.

As the excavation extended up the river into the monument, both sides of the river were impacted. When the NPS granted permission for the Navy to excavate the eastern bank, trees were removed to expose the gravel for most of the distance from the mouth of the river to the footbridge (Figure 9-1). The excavation process turned the eastern shore of the river into a raw and uneven expanse of bare gravel and debris (Figure 9-8). After the NPS sanctioned the excavation of the wooded island along the western bank of the river, that side of the stream became the scene for clearing and dredging activities as well (Figure 9-9). The final expansion of Naval gravel dredging in the park resulted in further clearing and excavation along the eastern side of the river (Figure 9-2).

The September 1942 flood resulted in an even more dramatic reshaping of the river channel. According to Miller's report, approximately 200 feet of road on the eastern side of the river were washed out (Figure 9-10). The flood waters swept away 10 to 50 foot wide sections of both river banks, all of the rip-rap, and 300 feet of log cribbing, as well as 250 feet of trail; this action created significant disorder along the lower section of the Indian River (Figure 9-11).[63]

Figure 9-8. Gravel operation and eastern bank of the Indian River, 1941.

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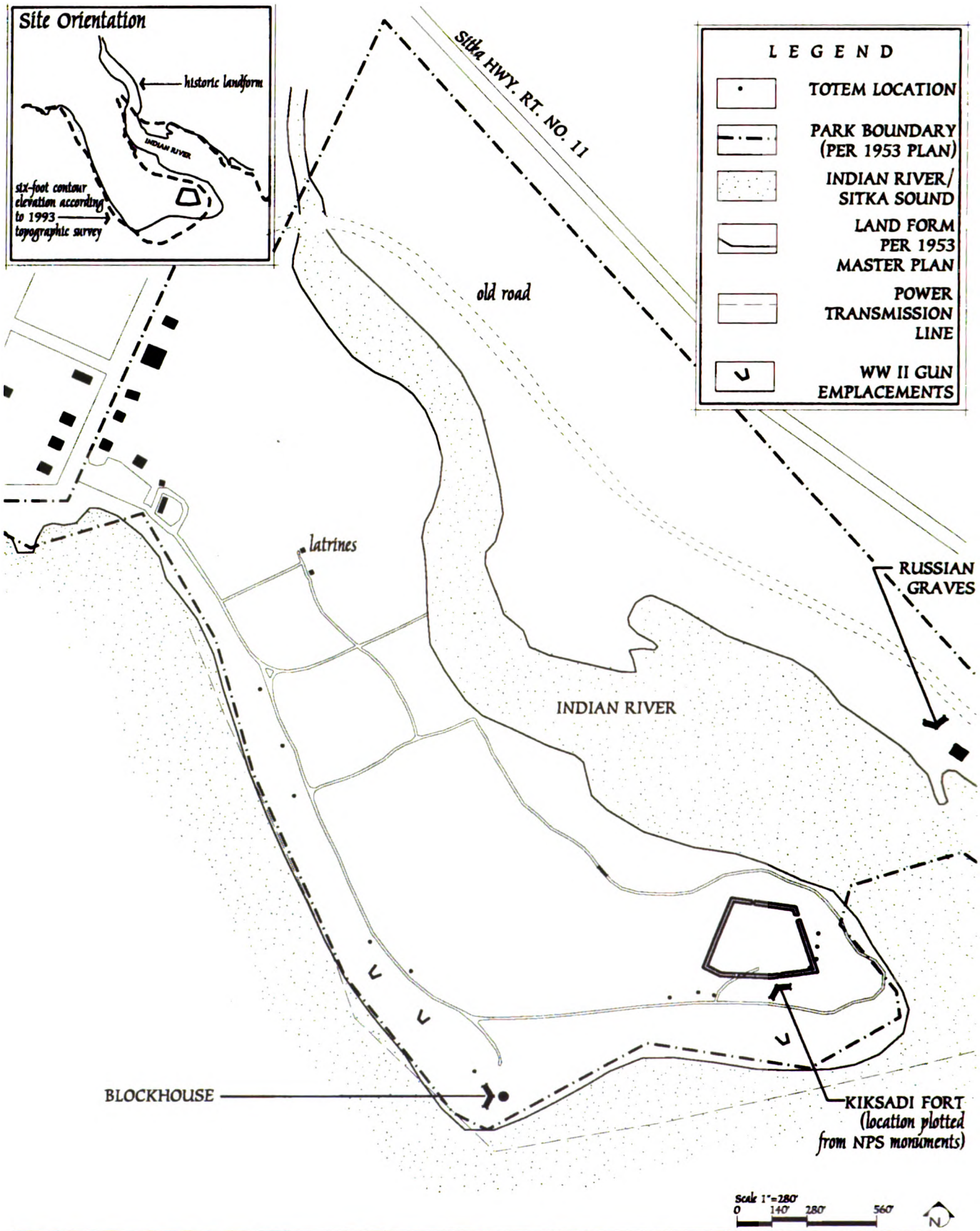

Diagram 19. Landscape conditions, 1945-1955, in what is now Sitka National Historical Park.

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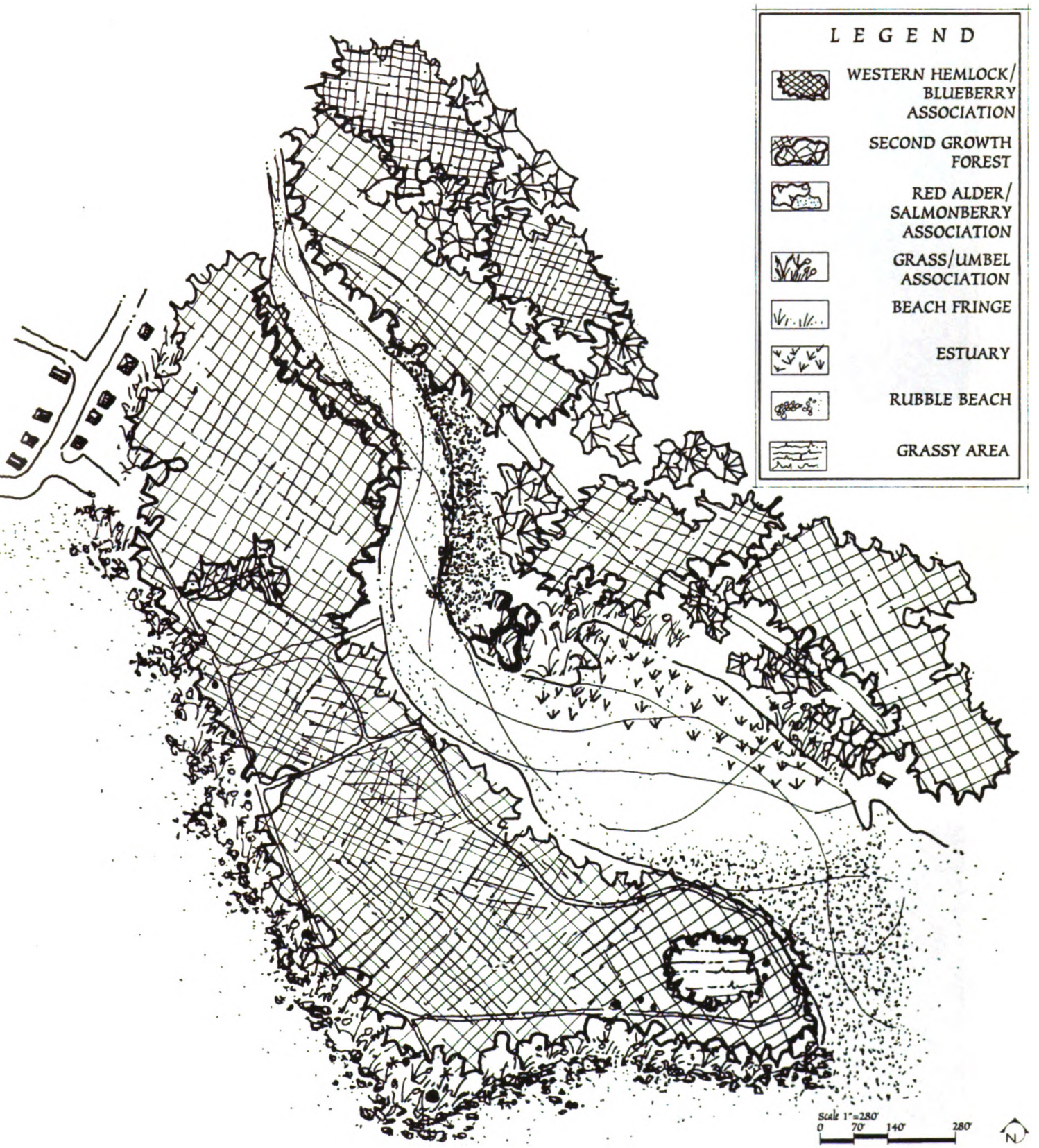

Diagram 20. Plant communities, 1948, in what is now Sitka National Historical Park.

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Figure 9-9. View of the island near the mouth of the Indian River after the timber had been cleared, 1942.

Figure 9-10. Section of the road that washed out on the eastern side of the Indian River during the September 1942 flood.

Figure 9-11. Gravel pit in the Indian River channel following the September 1942 flood in Sitka National Monument.

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Figure 9-12. Repairing the western river bank near the mouth of the Indian River in Sitka National Monument, 1942.

Figure 9-13. Former location of the Naval gravel bunkers and stock piles after restoration, 1945.

Figure 9-14. New Indian River channel after restoration, 1945.

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Figure 9-15. Installation of log cribbing during restoration work, 1945.

Very soon after the flood occurred, however, the Navy began to clean up the river and to construct supporting elements along the river banks. The western bank was smoothed out and log cribbing was installed in 1942 (Figure 9-12). As part of the 1945 restoration, the Navy straightened out the main Indian River channel, constructed log cribbing on both sides of the river (both above and below the former footbridge location), removed its buildings and equipment, graded the stockpiles and debris, buried piles of logs and stumps, and smoothed the northeastern bank around the large excavated lagoon (Figures 9-13, 9-14, 9-15 and 9-16). Figure 9-17, taken in 1948, clearly illustrates the scarred condition of the Indian River area following the Navy's excavation and restoration efforts.

Both bridges that had crossed the river were also taken out by the 1942 flood. The suspension footbridge was completely swept away, along with the bank that supported it. One end of the wagon bridge collapsed when its support was washed out (Figures 9-18 and 9-19).[64] Within a month, the Navy had constructed a temporary vehicular bridge nearby (Figure 9-20).[65] No documentation has been found indicating that bridges were constructed within the monument again until the 1960s.

Much vegetation along the river was also lost during this period, both as a result of flooding and Navy clearing. The northeastern bank, in particular, was cleared by the Navy, but so were sections on both sides of the river. In addition, many trees were undermined and swept into the river during the 1942 flood.[66] A comparison of 1929 and 1948 aerial photographs (Figures 8-1 and 9-17) of the park clearly shows the amount of forest cover that was lost along the river as a result of these events.

The gravel dredging also impacted the fish and wildlife that occupied the Indian River habitat. Salmon spawning habitat was destroyed, resulting in a temporary interruption of the previously abundant runs in the river. Additionally, the other species that would have inhabited or utilized the river's mouth and banks were disturbed by the dredging. Although the immediate ecological effects

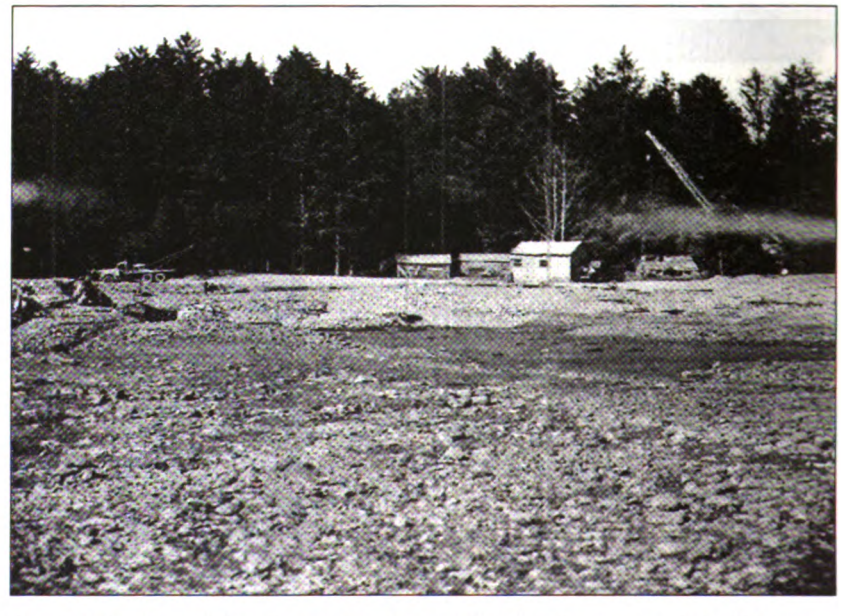

Figure 9-16. Remaining Army structures following the removal of all Navy buildings at the mouth of the Indian River, 1945.

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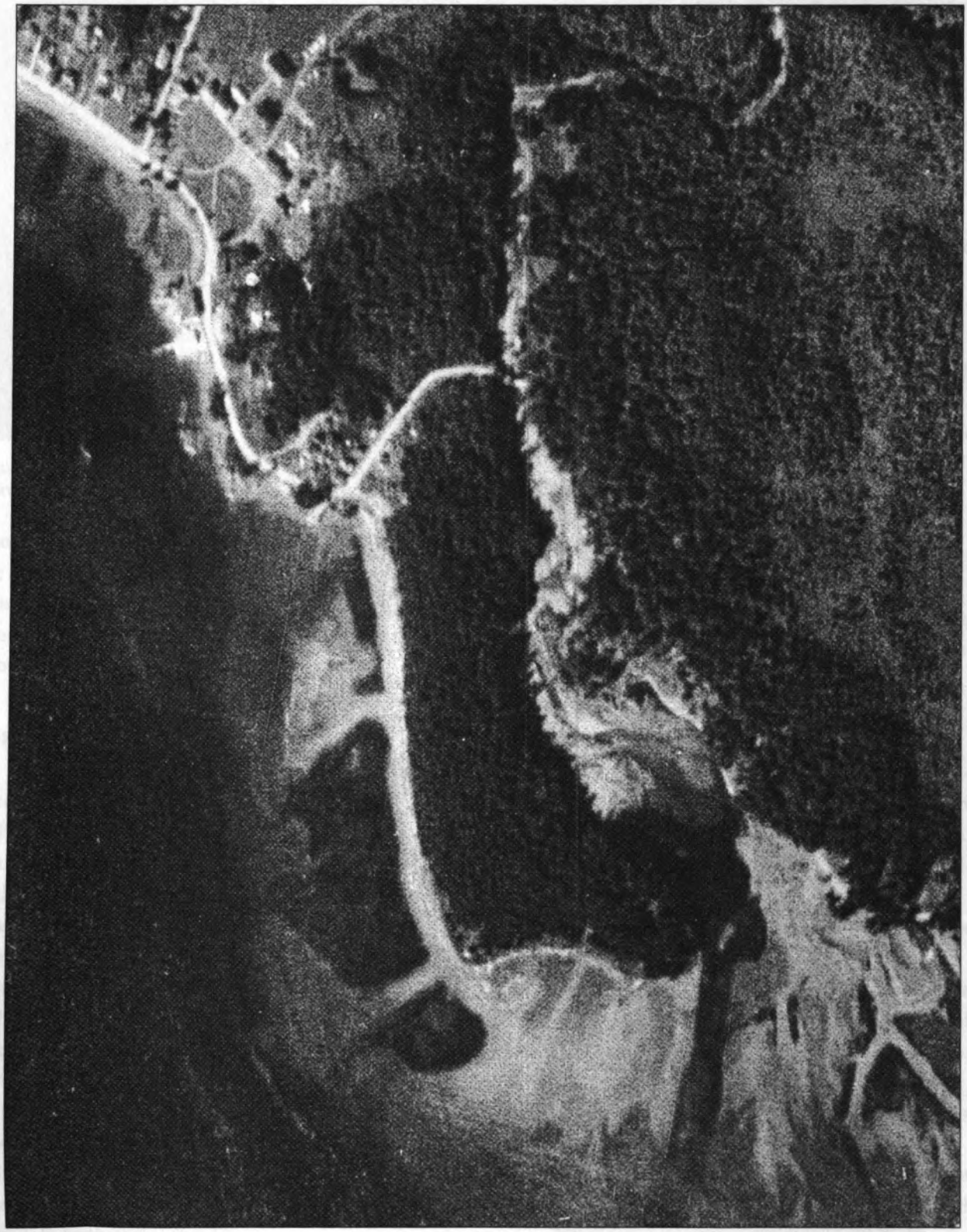

Figure 9-17. Aerial photograph of Sitka National Monument and vicinity, 1948.

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Figure 9-18. Wagon bridge in the monument during the flood of September 1942.

Figure 9-19. Collapsed wagon bridge in Sitka National Monument after the flood of September 1942.

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Figure 9-20. Temporary vehicular bridge built by Navy contractors following the September 1942 flood.

upon the Indian River habitat were not documented, the short-term effects on many species were profound. In time, however, the restored riverbed eventually developed into an extensive estuarine habitat at the mouth of the river.

FORT AREA

The fort area of the park landscape was influenced by several factors during the years from 1940 to 1955. Miller's intial description of the clearing near the Indian River refers to what he interpreted as the remains of the Tlingit fort: "There is one spot where five totem poles now stand that was the site of an Indian community house which the Russians destroyed by shell fire from their war ships. There is still an indentation in the ground where the Indians dug in to keep from being annihilated by the Russians."[67] It is not clear, however, that the indentation Miller observed was an historic feature dating to the time the Tlingit fort was in existence. Although the accounts of the battle do testify that the Tlingits had created dugouts within the fort, many subsequent activities in the area could have been responsible for the depression he observed.

Early in the period, the clearing near the Indian River was the site of CCC totem repairs. For a period of several years, while a replica was being carved, the Saanaheit Totem Pole was not present in the clearing. Because the new pole had been carved from a log created by bolting two smaller logs together, questions were raised about its suitability for the monument; therefore, the raising of the pole was delayed. The Forest Service was making plans to locate a large enough log to carve another replica of the Saanaheit Pole, when all CCC work for the season stopped on the last day of June 1940.[68] An additional copy, however, was never created. The replica was finally erected in April 1942, with the help of the military. U.S. Army Engineers loaned their power hoist for the project, and the Navy sent an "experienced rigger" and crew to help raise the pole. Miller reported that he assisted by hauling needed materials in the truck and by running the power hoist during the operation.[69] Whether the new pole was erected in the same spot as the original is not documented, but it seems likely, given that the CCC apparently did not do much, if any, work on the houseposts, and most likely left them standing where they were. It is possible, however, that the entire group was set up in a new location in the clearing.

Only a couple of months after the new pole had been erected, the entire area was closed to the public when the Army occupied the monument. The extent of the landscape changes that resulted from the military occupation is not currently known. Nevertheless, the evidence at this point suggests that disturbance to the area was minimal. At the outset of the occupation, the commanding officer assured Miller that "no trees would be cut down and such other vegetation removed as would absolutely be

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necessary for their purpose."[70] When Miller and Been were given a tour of the Army post, Major Pomeroy expressed pride that they had caused so little disturbance to the park's landscape.[71]

The specific locations of the Army tents and temporary barracks are not clear. Perhaps they were located in the clearing near the Indian River or along the beaches. They also may have been put up in the cover of the forest. The locations of at least some of the 50-caliber machine gun emplacements constructed by the Army are known. Their positions above the beach, south of the clearing near the river and north of the blockhouse, are shown on Figure 160. The 1948 aerial photograph of the park shows what appears to be a cleared fringe above the beach at the base of the peninsula, which may have been part of the area cleared by the Army, either for its structures, gun emplacements, or other equipment (Figure 9-17).

BEACHES AND TIDAL FLATS

Sections of the beaches and tideflats extending along the western border of the monument were also impacted by military activities during this period. Whether the Army affected any changes to the beach within the area they occupied is not known. Several images of the beach at the end of the peninsula, taken around 1940 and 1942, show no signs of disturbance. Figure 9-21, apparently taken in 1942, shows the curve of the beach and grassy fringe at the base of the peninsula that stretched towards the mouth of the river. The vegetation in the beach meadow, the grassy strip, and the edge of the forest appear to be quite dense and lush. The only visible signs of disturbance consist of the electric transmission line and gravel plant in the far distance.

The tideflats along the western edge of the monument also were subject to gravel dredging by the Navy. The 1948 aerial photograph of the park clearly illustrates the extent of the excavation that occurred there (Figure 9-17). Some of the gravel was taken to the entrance area, where it was used as fill along the upper edge of the beach to broaden the parking area.[72] It is likely that the dredging, transportation, and dumping of gravel would have been very apparent on the monument beach during this time.

ENTRANCE AREA

During this period the NPS began to transform the entrance area of the monument into a larger developed area, where the agency eventually planned to construct a museum facility. The initial improvements to the area consisted of relatively small-scale changes enacted by Miller and the CCC. During that first spring of Miller's tenure at the park, he had supervised the improvement of the entrance area. By March 1940, the totem repair shelters at the entrance to the monument had been removed and a larger shelter was constructed for the replication of the Saanaheit pole.[73] In April 1940, Miller reported spending "the greater portion of

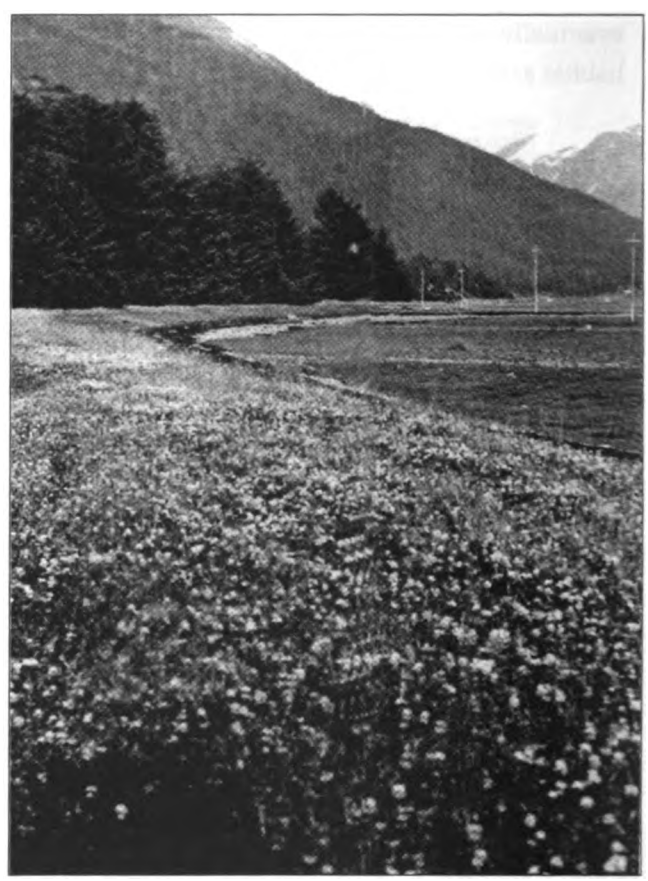

Figure 9-21. Beach and meadow at the end of the Indian River peninsula, looking toward the river's mouth, 1942.

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Figure 9-22. Entrance to the Monument featuring the new sign carved by the CCC, ca. 1941.

seven days . . . in the surrounding country gathering trees, shrubs, and flowers to be planted at the entrance." He was assisted by Garrison Turner, the landscape architect for the Pioneer's Home, who helped him to select and haul plants in the pickup truck owned by the retirement facility.[74] The native plants were installed in an area bordered by stone. At the same time, a rustic monument sign was being carved in the U.S. Forest Service shop in Juneau. The sign was erected and painted in April 1941 (Figure 9-22).[75]

The process of acquiring the cottage properties adjacent to the park boundary had begun in 1941 when Been and Miller met with Leslie Yaw, and the majority of lots within the new monument boundary had been acquired by 1955. Only Lots 1A and 2 of Block II of the Mission Plat remained in private ownership at that time. It is likely that the cottages were razed or dismantled shortly after the NPS acquired title to the land. If that were the case, most of them would have been gone by 1955. However, an April 1955 plan for the construction of a comfort station at the monument entrance shows an existing residence immediately adjacent to the parking area.

The comfort station was the first NPS facility to be constructed within the boundaries of the monument. The small, one story redwood building was located just behind the parking lot and totem gateway (see Figures 9-23 and 9-24). Open only during the summer season, the station contained a storeroom and two restrooms. Later, monument staff members set up small exhibits in the storeroom, which were reported to be quite popular with park visitors.[76] The building occupied part of the same site as the future park visitor center, and was removed in the summer of 1964, prior to the construction of the new facility.[77] The exact method and time of its removal were not documented.

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Figure 9-23. Totem gateway and comfort station located at the monument entrance, ca. 1960.

TOTEM TRAIL

The character of the Totem Trail during the 1940s and early 1950s was impacted relatively little by the activities occuring in other areas of the park. However, conditions along the trail during the time that the CCC totem rehabilitation project was being completed would have been affected when the poles were taken down for repair or replication and then re-erected after completion. The project was almost complete by early 1940. Only four poles remained that needed further work, and two of them just required painting.[78] By the end of the year, all that remained to be done was the "re-adzing, patching and painting" of the first pole that was encountured on the right when entering the park (one of the original Yaadaas Crest Corner poles), and a "few minor corrections" on the other poles.[79]

With the installation of the Saanaheit Pole in 1942, the CCC totem rehabilitation project was completed. During the entire project, four of the eighteen totems—the Waasgo Legend, Frog/Raven, Trader Legend, and Saanaheit poles—had been completely recarved. (Figure 9-25 depicts the new Frog/Raven pole.) The new and restored poles were re-erected on stone bases, while the copied originals were stored on skids in the park until a shelter could be provided. Eventually, they were loaned to the Navy. Restored sections were displayed in the administration and recreation buildings at the Naval Air Station.[80]

The totem poles that were repaired received differing degrees of restoration attention. On both of the Yaadaas Crest Corner poles, known as the First and Second Twins, the two top figures were replaced. (Figures 9-26 and 9-27 show the completed poles erected in their former locations.) Both the Wolf and Mosquito Legend poles were repaired, but the Yaadaas Crest Pole was only painted. The Raven/Shark Pole had been patched before the CCC project commenced and no work was done on either the Memorial/Mortuary Raven Memorial, Lakich'inei poles, or the Gaanaxadi/Raven Crest Pole.[81] (Figure 9-22 shows the entrance poles in 1940, and the newly carved Waasgo Legend and Raven/Shark poles, whereas Figure 9-28 shows the group of three—the Lakich'inei, Yaadaas Crest, and Mosquito Legend poles—after restoration.) As both Heinzleman's report and the photographs reveal, after the work was completed the rehabilitated poles were returned to, or located very proximate to their former sites.[82]

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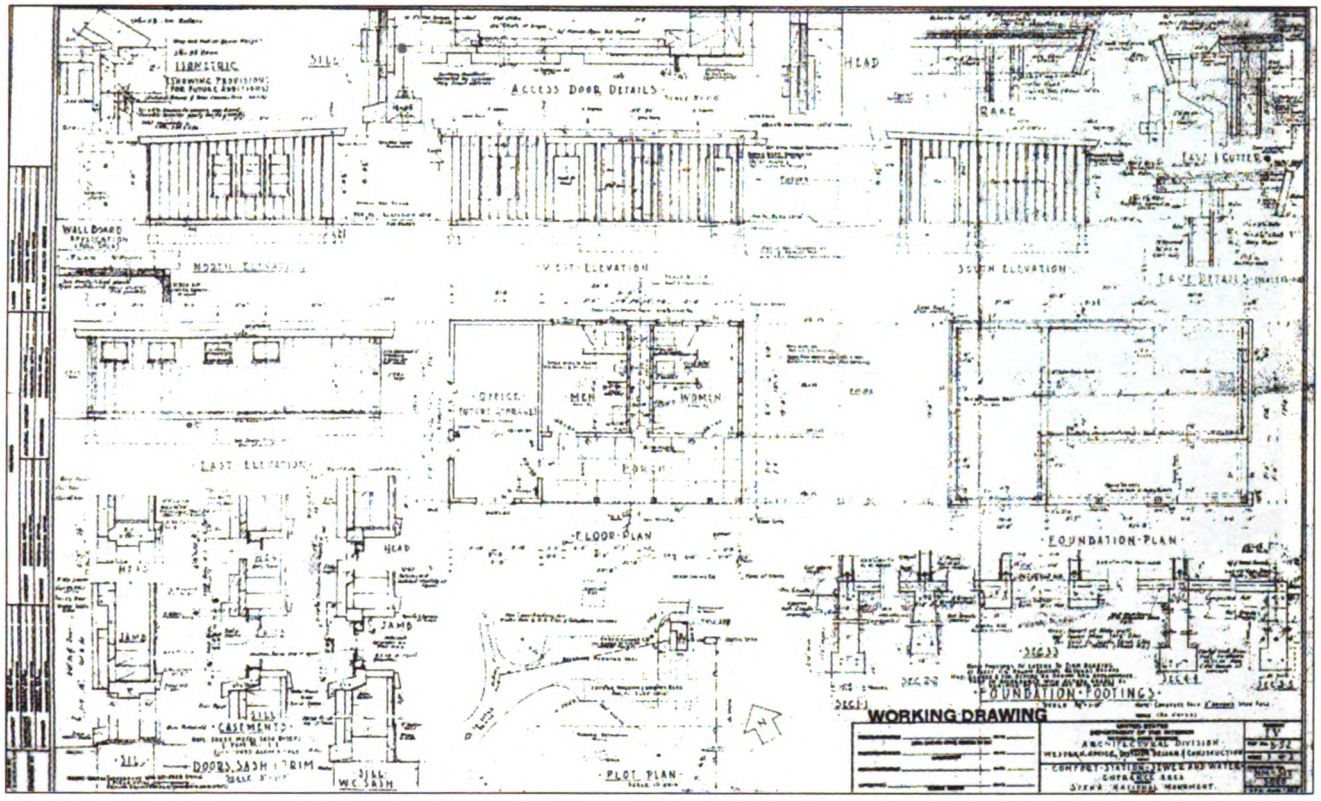

Figure 9-24. Comfort station plan, April 1955.

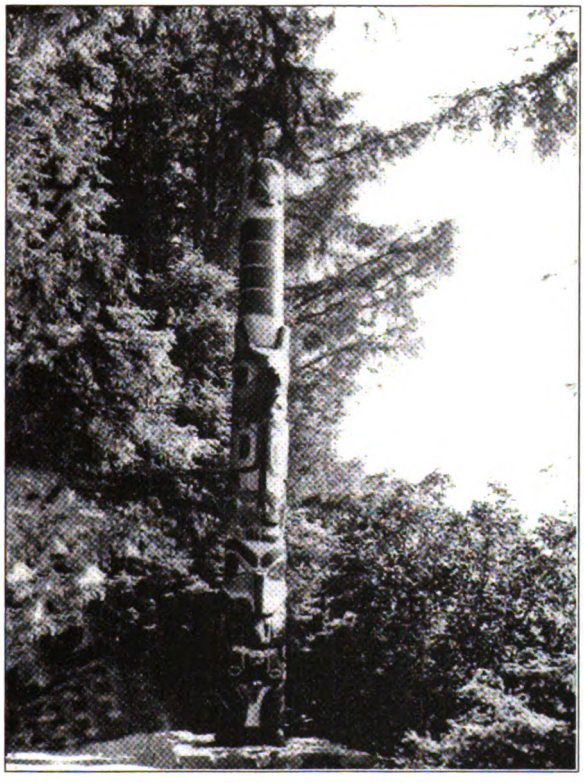

Figure 9-25. New Frog/Raven Totem Pole, 1940.

Figure 9-26. Restored Yaadaas Crest Corner Pole along the Totem Trail, 1940.

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Figure 9-27. Other restored Yaadaas Crest Corner Pole, 1940.

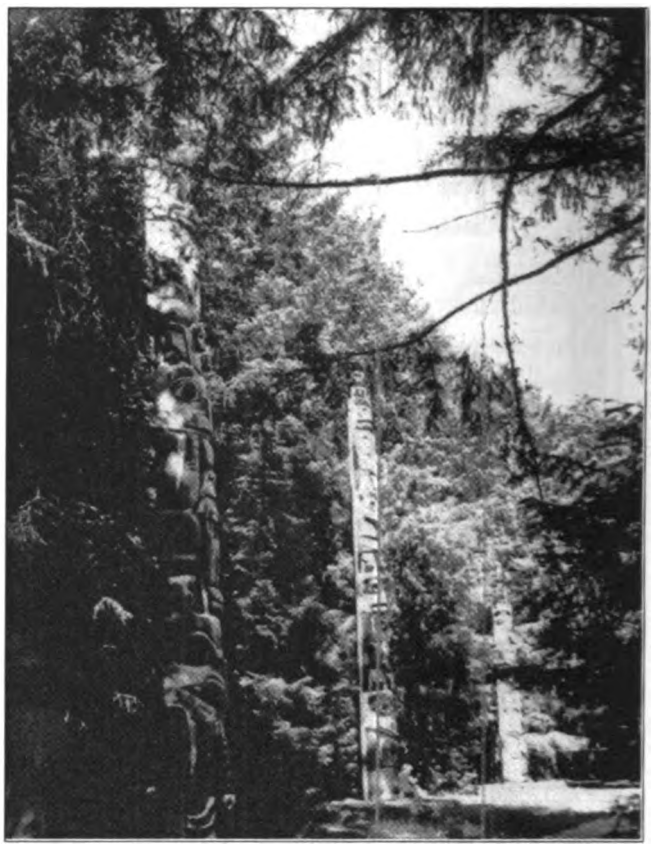

Figure 9-28. Lakich'inei, Yaadaas Crest, and Mosquito Legend poles along the Totem Trail, 1940.

With the poles re-installed along the trail the character of the corridor was very similar to its historic conditions at the turn of the century. Of course, in the 1940s the trees were much taller than they had been when Merrill first sited the poles. But Miller's 1940 photographs of the totems, taken after the project was completed, reveal that the clearings around several of them had been somewhat enlarged, thereby allowing the poles to stand out more noticably among the trees.[83]

The military traffic and construction of gun emplacements just off the trail during 1942 and 1943 probably resulted in some disturbance to the road and vegetation in the vicinty of those activities. Other, as yet undocumented Army activities also may have impacted the trail. However, the overall spatial organization and character of the trail remained intact throughout this period.

FOREST AND RIVER TRAILS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE INDIAN RIVER

Sections of the historic trails in the monument were lost because of the gravel dredging and the Indian River flood of 1942. The section of Lover's Lane that had skirted the western bank of the river was largely washed out when the footbridge and Trader Legend Pole were swept away in the 1942 flood. Dredging of the island along the western side of the river may also have led to the erosion of the trail in that vicinity. After the loss of such an extensive section of the bank, a new trail was built that followed an irregular path along the river, and which cut further inland in several places (see Diagram 19 for its location). Two short trails also were cut to the latrines installed in 1940.

The character of the views from the river trails was certainly degraded by the dredging and for a number of years following the restoration; eventually vegetation covered the dredging and flooding

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Figure 9-29. New road on the eastern side of the Indian River after expansion of the gravel pit in 1942.

scars. There is no specific documention of the other forest trails, but it is reasonable to assume that they maintained their historic character as woodland paths.

The historic "wood road" that skirted the eastern bank of the Indian River was also lost due to Navy dredging activities and the flooding of the river. The Navy cut into the river bank and forest to excavate the gravel, thereby creating a broad estuary where the road had once passed. In 1942, a new road was cleared that traveled through the dense forest from the wagon bridge to the gravel excavation area along a path farther away from the the river (Figure 9-29).

FORESTED AREAS ON THE BOTH SIDES OF THE INDIAN RIVER

Apart from the forest that had flanked the wooded island and river banks, the forested areas west of the Indian River remained relatively undisturbed during this period. The forest continued to grow denser and taller under the NPS policy of hands-off vegetation management. The 1948 aerial photograph of the park illustrates the density of the forest stand within the western section of the monument (Figure 9-17).

A wide expanse of forest, including the "lyre tree," was cleared on the eastern side of the Indian River when the Navy expanded its excavation. Figure 9-17 illustrates the degree to which the forest was disturbed on that side of the monument.

RUSSIAN MEMORIAL AREA

As the Navy expanded its gravel operation, the activities moved closer and closer to the Russian Memorial site. While the NPS had stipulated, in 1942, that 100 feet of forest should be reserved between the gravel pit and Russian graves, most of the vegetation between the grave site and river was lost because of the dredging and subsequent flooding.[84] Figure 9-30, a view of the Russian Memorial taken in April 1949, shows the very thin fringe of trees between the grave marker and the bare gravel shore of the river.

At that time the graves were marked by a wooden cross, surrounded by a picket fence, and identified with a metal NPS sign. The broken pickets and rusty, pock-marked sign shown in the 1949 photograph provide insight into some of the activities that went on in the area, and the lack of

Figure 9-30. Russian Memorial, April 1949.

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maintenance the marker was receiving at the time. The main route to the site had been obliterated by the gravel operation, but the new road, which passed quite close to the marker, would have provided access.

CONCLUSION

Many activities within the monument were interrupted by the military actions that occured during World War II. For the most part, however, these activities continued after the war was over. The dredging operation in the Indian River was especially responsible for the serious scarring of the park's scenic heart. For a good proportion of its length in the park, the river's banks were eroded and stripped of vegetation. Both bridges were also destroyed. The direction, width, and gradient of the lower river channel section was radically altered. All of these physical consequences of Navy dredging operations brought an end to many traditional activities that had occurred in the park throughout its history. Many years would pass until another bridge was built over the river in the park, and before "lovers of nature" would again enjoy views of the forest stream. Also, the pollution of the river, at least from a traditional Tlingit perspective, is suggested by the fact that their last memorial was held in the park in 1941. For national defense reasons, both the monument and people of Sitka had made a huge sacrifice that would have long-lasting consequences.

ENDNOTES

[1] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for January 1941," February 3, 1941, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).

[2] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for February 1942," March 3, 1942, copy from National Archives microfilm, SITK Archives, Files of the Cultural Resources Manager; Gill Truitt and Herbert Didrickson interview with Holly Smith-Middleton, Sitka, AK, July 5, 1995.

[3] Memo for the Regional Director, May 13, 1940, copy from National Archives microfilm, SITK Archives, Files of the Cultural Resources Manager.

[4] Frank Been, "Report on Inspection of Sitka National Monument, Alaska, October 14, 1939," National Archives, RG 79, National Park Service Central Classified File, 1933-1949. National Monuments, Sitka 101-207.02.3, Box 2385, Sitka Reports File (NA & RA).

[5] Bonnie S. Houston, "Sitka National Historic Monument Land Use History: 1939-1945" (draft manuscript), May 31, 1995, Alaska Systems Support Office, National Park Service, Anchorage, 14.

[6] Ben Miller, memo to Frank Been, March 22, 1940, copy from National Archives microfilm, SITK Archives, Files of the Cultural Resources Manager. See Houston, "Sitka Land Use History," 15-17, for a technical description of the dredging, sorting, crushing, and washing process; she reports that the average production of an eight-hour day equaled 320 cubic yards and that the aggregate was hauled by truck twenty-four hours a day over the highway bridge to town, where it was barged to the construction site.

[7] Ben Miller, memo to NPS Director, March 5, 1940, National Archives RG 79, Box 2384 (NA & RA).

[8] Ben Miller, memo to NPS Director, April 15, 1941, National Archives RG 79, Box 2386 (NA & RA).

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] Ben Miller, memo to Frank Been, May 6, 1941, National Archives RG 79, Box 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).

[11] Frank Been, memo to NPS Director, June 4, 1941, National Archives RG 79, Box 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).

[12] Ben Miller, memo to Frank Been, October 22, 1941, National Archives RG 79, Box 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).

[13] Ben Miller,memo to Frank Been, November 5, 1941, National Archives RG 79, Box 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).

[14] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for November 1941," December 13, 1941 National Archives RG 79, Box 2385; Frank Been, letter to Lt. Stribling, November 5, 1941, National Archives RG 79, Box No. 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).

[15] Lt. Stribling, letter to Frank Been, November 26, 1941, National Archives RG 79, Box No. 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).

[16] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for December 1941," January 4, 1942, copy from National Archives microfilm, SITK Archives, Files of the Cultural Resources Manager.

[17] Ben Miller, letter to Lt. Stribling, March 5, 1942, National Archives RG 79, National Park Service Central Classified File, 1933-1949. National Monuments, Scotts Bluff-Sitka, Box 2384, Sitka National Monument File (NA & RA).

[18] Ben Miller, "Narrative Reports for March and April 1942," National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).

[19] Frank Knox, Sec. of Navy, letter to Sec. of Interior, August 11, 1942, National Archives RG 79, Box 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).

[20] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for June 1942," July 4, 1942, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).

[21] Frank Been, memo to Ben Miller, September 22, 1942, National Archives RG 79, Box 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).

[22] Houston reports that the flood also caused two deaths: two of three sailors who were on the bridge when it went out drowned, while the other managed to hang on to a tree; see Houston, "Sitka Land Use History." 22.

[23] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for September 1942," October 5, 1942, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).

[24] Ben Miller, letter to Lt. Gottwals, January 8, 1943, National Archives RG 79, Box 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).

[25] Ben Miller, memo to Regional Director, August 8, 1944, National Archives RG 79, Box 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).

[26] Regional Director, memo to NPS Director, August 14, 1944; Acting Sec. of Interior, memo to Sec. of Navy, August 24, 1944, National Archives RG 79, Box 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).

[27] Houston, "Sitka Land Use History," 22-23.

[28] "Agreement of Sitka Naval Air Station for Restoration of Sitka National Monument," July 19, 1945, National Archives RG 79, Box 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).

[29] Ben Miller, memo to Regional Director, July 26, 1945, National Archives RG 79, Box 610, Entry 7 (NA & RA).

[30] Houston, "Sitka Land Use History," 23; Sitka Navy Department Project #1 File, October 5, 1945, National Archives RG 79, Box 2386 (NA & RA)..

[31] Frank Been, "Field Notes and Interviews, Inspection of Glacier Bay National Monument and Sitka National Monument, August 12 to September 4, 1942," National Archives RG 79, Box 2385, Inspections and Investigations, Sitka File (NA & RA).

[32] Houston, "Sitka Land Use History," 24.

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[33] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for December 1941," National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[34] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for May 1942," June 3, 1942, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[35] Houston, "Sitka Land Use History," 25-26.
[36] *Ibid.*, 26.
[37] Joan M. Antonson and William S. Hanable, *Sitka National Historical Park: An Administrative History* (Anchorage: National Park Service, 1987), 93-94.
[38] *Ibid.*
[39] *Ibid.*, 94.
[40] *Ibid.*
[41] Frank Been, Field Notes from Inspection, July 19 - August 29, 1941, of Sitka National Monument, copy from National Archives microfilm, SITK Archives, Files of the Cultural Resources Manager.
[42] Houston, "Sitka Land Use History," 12.
[43] J. Howard McGrath, Attorney General, letter to Oscar L. Chapman, Secretary of the Interior, August 3, 1950, SITK Archives, RG 10, Box 4, Folder 10.
[44] R.D. Searles, acting Sec. of the Interior, letter to the President, August 9, 1951, SITK Archives, RG 10, Box 6.
[45] Harry S. Truman, President of the United States, "Proclamation 2695: Redefining the Boundaries of Sitka National Monument, Alaska," Federal Register, February 29, 1952, Volume 17, No. 42, 1787-1790.
[46] Herbert Brownell, Jr., Attorney General, letter to Douglas McKay, Secretary of the Interior, June 2, 1953, SITK Archives, RG 10, Box 4, Folder 10.
[47] Herbert Brownell, Jr., Attorney General, letters to Douglas McKay, Secretary of the Interior, May 20, 1954, February 9, 1955, and August 3, 1955, SITK Archives, RG 10, Box 4, Folder 10.
[48] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for January 1940," February 8 1940, copy from National Archives microfilm, SITK Archives, Files of the Cultural Resource Manager.
[49] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for June 1940," July 3 1940, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[50] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for September 1940," October 3, 1940, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[51] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for December 1940," January 3, 1941, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[52] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for January 1941," February 3, 1941, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[53] Ben Miller, "Narrative Reports for March 1941 and May 1941," National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[54] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for April 1941," May 5, 1941, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[55] Antonson and Hanable, *Sitka*, Appendix F.
[56] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for March 1942," April 2, 1942, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[57] Antonson and Hanable, *Sitka*, Appendix F.
[58] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for April 1942," May 5, 1942, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[59] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for July 1945," August 2, 1945, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[60] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for April 1940," May 2, 1940, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[61] Ben Miller, "Nativative Report for May 1941," June 4, 1941, SITK Archives, copy from National Archives microfilm, Files of the Cultural Resources Manager.
[62] Isabella Brady, interview with Holly Smith-Middleton, July 6, 1995, Sitka.
[63] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for September 1942," October 5, 1942, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[64] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for September 1942," October 5, 1942, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[65] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for October 1942," November 3, 1942, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[66] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for September 1942," October 5, 1942, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[67] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for January 24 - January 31, 1940 for Sitka National Monument," February 8, 1940, copy from National Archives microfilm, Files of the Cultural Resources Manager.
[68] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for April and May 1940," June 6, 1940, copy from National Archives microfilm, SITK Archives, Files of the Cultural Resources Manager.
[69] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for April 1942," May 5, 1942, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[70] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for May 1942," June 3, 1942, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[71] Been, Field Notes and Interviews, August 12 to September 4, 1942.
[72] *Ibid.*
[73] Houston, "Land Use History," 9.
[74] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for April 1940," May 2, 1940, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[75] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for March 1941," April 2, 1941, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA).
[76] Ben Miller, "Monthly Narrative Report for June 1960," June 28, 1960, SITK Archives, Administrative Records (SITK 14591 a-b RG 10).
[77] Early plans for the visitor center proposed joining the new building to the comfort station. Although no written account of its dismantling has been found, the final visitor center design overlapped with the comfort station's location. The last mention of the building is in the monthly report for February 1964, in which Museum Aid Hardcastle reported to the Superintendent that during a break-in minor damage had been done to the building. Construction of the visitor center began during the following summer.
[78] Ben Miller, "Narrative Report for February 1940," February 8, 1940, copy from National Archives microfilm, SITK Archives, Files of the Cultural Resources Manager.
[79] Linn A. Forrest, memo to Chipperfield, December 2, 1940, National Archives RG 95 (NA & RA-Anchorage).
[80] Miller, after receiving several complaints about the poor condition of the original poles lying around the monument, reported this to Been, in "Narrative Report for May 1942," June 3, 1942, National Archives RG 79, Box 2385 (NA & RA); Been, Field Notes and Interviews, August 12 to September 4, 1942.
[81] George Benson described the latter two as being "just like new in 1939"; interview with George Benson, September 7, 1967, SITK Archives, FR51, Box 1, Folder 9; Duane Pasco, "Totem Pole Appraisal," manuscript, SITK Archives, RG 51, Box 1, Folder 11.
[82] Heinzleman, letter to Demaray, February 17, 1940, National Archives RG 79 Box 2384 (NA & RA).
[83] Among the tasks to be carried out was the following: "Trim foliage from trees in such a manner that cutting is not apparent. To be done so that totems can be viewed and photographed without obstruction. Care should be used to avoid unnecessary trimming"; see "Jobs Requested to be Done by Forest Service CCC at Sitka National Monument," National Archives, Alaska Region, RG 95, Records of the U.S. Forest Service, Civilian Conservation Corps Work, Correspondence of Regional Office, Number 10, 1937-1942. File: U (CCC) Improvement, Totem and House Restoration, Tongass (A) Region 10, 1 of 2.
[84] Frank T. Been, "Field notes and interviews and inspection of Glacier Bay and Sitka National Monuments, August 27, 1942," National Archives RG 79, National Park Service Central Classified File, 1933-1949. National Monuments, Sitka 101-207.02.3, Box 2385, Inspections and Investigations, Sitka file.

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CHAPTER 10

THE MONUMENT'S MISSION TAKES SHAPE, 1955 - 1972

"In the setting of a typical Alaskan tidewater forest, Sitka National Monument commemorates the bravery and culture of Alaska's Indians."

Mission 66 Report, 1957

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CHAPTER 10

THE MONUMENT'S MISSION TAKES SHAPE 1956-1971

The community of Sitka experienced tremendous growth in the decades following the war. Transportation developments that built upon the existing military infrastructure, coupled with improved connections to the surrounding region and the rest of the nation, helped to catalyze the expansion of local industry. Additionally, after Alaska achieved statehood in 1959, Americans throughout the nation became increasingly aware of the 49th state. By 1960, the population of Sitka had grown to over 3,200 people, with much of the increase contributed by the opening, in 1959, of the Alaska Lumber and Pulp Company, a Japanese-owned pulp mill located south of town on Sawmill Creek Road. Then, in the early 1960s, the Alaska State Ferry established a bi-weekly stop north of town near the site of Old Sitka. Furthermore, the construction of a jetway on Japonski Island in 1965 provided regular jet transportation for residents and outside visitors.[1] By 1970, the population of the town had risen to 6,425 individuals.[2] This local growth was paralleled by increasing numbers of tourists who visited the area as well.

Important developments also occurred at Sitka National Monument during these decades. The nation-wide NPS park development program, Mission 66, implemented in the 1950s, provided the organizational impetus for the monument to meet the service-wide goals of protecting the park's natural and cultural resources while, at the same time, providing visitor facilities. This initiative led to the construction of a visitor center and other public-use facilities in the park, an increase in staff support, and the implementation of interpretive programs on Tlingit culture and history. Community involvement was an integral component in the growth of the park's mission during these years. In this period of national and local growth and prosperity, the monument's mission was formulated and carried out both in the physical development of interpretive and recreational facilities in the park, and the programs conducted within them.

MONUMENT ADMINISTRATION AND PLANNING INITIATIVES

The Mission 66 program of the NPS was a long-range, service-wide initiative—scheduled for completion by the time of the agency's fiftieth anniversary in 1966—to develop the nation's national parks in the face of increasing visitation then occurring throughout the country. The two-pronged program sought to provide visitors with facilities that would offer them "maximum enjoyment" of the parks, and at the same time, protect park resources. Construction was a central element of the Mission 66 program.

The Mission 66 plan developed for Sitka National Monument mandated changes that had been recommended in previous planning initiatives for the park. The central element of the plan, prepared for the monument in 1959, featured the construction of a "Visitor Use Center." Other visitor facilities were mandated, including campfire circles, trailside exhibits, and interpretive signs. The construction of a seawall and erosion control structures along the Indian River was part of the plan.[3]

The interpretive theme for the park went through several revisions in various planning initiatives prepared during the 1950s and 1960s. The theme of the Mission 66 report especially focused on the Tlingit history of the site. The monument was defined as follows: "In the setting of a typical Alaskan tidewater forest, Sitka National Monument commemorates the bravery and culture of Alaska's Indians."[4] The plan emphasized the Tlingit story in its summation of the monument's dramatic history:

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"Here on this spot, a Tlingit village stood in the days before white men knew Alaska existed. It was here that a battle of only a few hours duration changed the course of Indian civilization in Alaska."[5]

In a separate 1959 Master Plan for the site, the interpretive emphasis was shifted back to Sitka's Russian-American history, while native culture and the totems were treated as incidental. The Regional Director objected to this shift in a letter to the Superintendent, in which he wrote that "upon direction from the Washington office, we re-wrote the Sitka folder and prepared the Mission 66 prospectus to minimize the Russian story." He stressed the importance of the totems and native culture in the park's original purpose.[6]

Both the Russian and native histories were ultimately addressed in the 1965 Master Plan for the park. Monument Historian Ingersoll described the purpose of the park as providing "for public use and enjoyment of the decisive battle ground of the Russian conquest of Alaska in 1804." He continued by noting that "the park develops among its visitors an appreciation of the native Indians and their culture, the conquest and settlement of Alaska by Russia, and other important aspects of the history of Alaska and our nation."[7] Ingersoll laid out a number of specific objectives for the park, including the provision of public facilities that would allow for the "full use" of park resources, weekly educational programs on "conservation, local history, and native culture," and the "protection and preservation" of the totem poles. Ingersoll also noted the importance of interpreting the natural history of the park.[8]

Coupled with the construction of visitor facilities and erosion control structures that occurred during this period, the development of the park's interpretive themes and programs represented the maturation of the monument: protection was provided against resource loss and the "full use" of those resources was made possible both in the new facilities and the programs carried out in them. The park had a rich history and diverse cultural and natural resources. The National Park Service's Mission 66 program and subsequent planning initiatives provided the means for the visitors to learn about that history.

RECREATION AND TOURISM

Local residents continued to be frequent and regular visitors to the monument. In 1958, monument historian George Hall reported a "noticeable trend on the part of Sitka residents to visit the monument for family recreational purposes."[9] Both school and scout groups regularly held events in the monument. Most school children in Sitka attended an "Annual Day at the Park" during the late 1950s and early 1960s.[10] In April 1959, Hall reported giving a tour of the park to about 600 children from the Sitka school during their class picnics.[11] The next month the Boy Scouts held an overnight "Camporee" on the eastern side of the Indian River. Hall reported that "on the final afternoon, games and contests were conducted while many parents visited with the scouts."[12] Another regular community event held in the park was the annual Easter egg hunt, sponsored by the Sitka Moose Club, which normally attracted several hundred participants.[13] Historian Hall also reported, in 1959, on increasing visitation, especially during the evening hours, by individuals employed in new industies in the area.[14] Crews from Japanese ships anchored at the pulp mill, for example, began visiting the monument in 1960.[15]

The general trend in park tourism over the period showed a gradual increase in the number of visitors, with an attendance of approximately 45,000 people in 1971.[16] Rates of outside visitation fluctuated, however, depending on the time of year and the transportation routes available to Sitka, although the publicity associated with Alaskan statehood contributed to an increase in 1959.[17] The greater number of air flights, including daily excursions from Juneau, and the establishment of an Alaska State Ferry stop at Old Sitka, also contributed to an increase in visitation.[18] The park staff regularly

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opened the visitor center for groups of passengers arriving in Sitka at odd hours. The completion of the Japonski Island jetway boosted visitation to the park even further, from approximately 25,000 people in 1965 to 38,000 in 1966.[19] Better connections to the state and nation brought more and more tourists to Sitka during these decades; the tourists, of course, utilized the new NPS facilities in the monument.

A CENTERPIECE OF THE MONUMENT'S INTERPRETIVE PROGRAM

During this period, the visitor center became the focus of the monument's interpretive program. Almost every busload of tourists was able to hear interpretive talks in the center. Personnel representing the Indian Arts and Crafts Board took part in the facility's craft shops.[20] Because of the space it offered for conducting administrative functions at the park, and because it provided for the comfort and interpretive needs of the tourist, the visitor center was the most important addition to Sitka National Monument during this period. In addition, the presence of Indian Arts and Crafts Board personnel established an important precedent for Native American involvement in NPS interpretive activities.

The dedication ceremony for the visitor center demonstrated the important role it was to play in the local community. John W. O'Connell, the mayor of Sitka, was present to welcome the guests, who were assembled in the lobby of the new building while the overflow of guests spilled outside the doors. The dedicatory address, given by the NPS Western Regional Director Edward A. Hummel, featured the role that the agency wanted the visitor center to play as a "community house." Hummel emphasized that the center's role extended beyond the NPS:

> In another sense, this new building is a "community house" not just because it is the product of the thinking and planning of men in the National Park Service, or the needs and demands of millions of people who visit parks all over the country, but also because it is the expression of the local community in which it is situated. Without the support of your community and your congressional delegation, no such building as this would be possible or desirable. . . . It is not only for the community, but it is in the community. It is a part of the community. . . . It must harmonize with the purposes of the community of which it forms a part.[21]

Hummel encouraged the individuals gathered there to "make maximum use" of the building; he noted that while most tourists would use it during the summer, local residents should use it year-round. Hummel stated, "since the building and its staff are part of your community the year around, we welcome your use of this 'community house' in off-hours and off-season for interpretive and conservation programs."[22] He said that its dedication as a community house was fitting because the building was to be just that "for the people of Sitka, of Alaska and indeed of the whole nation." Without touching on the specific features of the new facility, Hummel's remarks nevertheless reflected the sentiments of the many individuals who had worked so hard to see that the building was constructed. And he stressed what so many earlier monument staff members knew and had tried to work towards—the need for both the park and the people of Sitka to cooperate in preserving their heritage.

TLINGIT PARTICIPATION IN THE PARK

The Tlingit residents of Sitka always had been a major component of the local population that utilized the park's landscape. The children of several native families living in the mission cottages practically "grew up in the park." World War II, however, interrupted much local recreation in the monument. Additionally, the property of several native families living in the cottages had been acquired by the NPS for the expansion of the park entrance and construction of the visitor center. While that segment of Tlingit visitors may have decreased, certainly members of Sitka's native community continued to visit the facility, along with the rest of the town's population.

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Native Alaskans also took an active part in the park's interpretation programs after the opening of the visitor center in 1965. At first the artisans were sponsored by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board, and native art from throughout Alaska was displayed. Later though, through the involvement of local Tlingits, native arts and crafts demonstrations in the visitor center were limited to the Indian cultures of southeastern Alaska.

The participation of the Tlingit community in the dedication ceremony formally marked the beginning of their involvement with the National Park Service in the new facility. On August 14, 1965, an estimated 300 individuals from throughout the state attended the official dedication. Tlingits from Sitka and the entire region, including members of the Kiks.ádi, the Kaagwaantaan, the Dashetan (from Angoon), the T'akdeintaan (from Hoonah), the Ducknahadi (from Alsak River), the Dckluwadi (from Angoon), the Chookaneidí (from Hoonah), the Chilkat Gonaktadi (from Yakutat), the Onkaketon (from Angoon), and the Woshketon (from Hoonah) clans were present. In addition to speeches by NPS personnel, the ceremony featured several Tlingit dances and culminated in the Tlingit dedication of the building as a community house, the Tlingit-Ahna-Hit (House of the People of the World). Additionally, the Frog Hat and Herring Blanket—both Kiks.ádi *at.oow*—were displayed and their stories related, along with stories of the Kaagwaantaan Wolf and Eagle houseposts that had been mounted in the new building.[23] This NPS-sponsored dedication program constituted the agency's recognition of contemporary Tlingit ties to the facility and marked the beginning of a nascent partnership between the native community and the NSP in the interpretion of Sitka National Monument.

Within a few years after the dedication ceremony, that relationship took the form of a cooperative agreement between the National Park Service and the Alaska Native Brotherhood (ANB), Camp #1, which stipulated the following: that the NPS would provide visitor center space for the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center, and that the ANB would provide "interpretive demonstrations of authentic Indian arts and crafts for the park visitor."[24] When their input was first solicited in February 1968, local Tlingit leaders objected to the Indian Arts and Crafts Board program that had been initially installed in the center because it included demonstrations from native groups located in other areas of the state. Instead, they believed that the center ought to interpret Tlingit culture.[25] The Tlingit leaders submitted a proposal to the NPS and Indian Arts and Crafts Board to manage "an instructional and cultural learning center for Indians of Southeastern Alaska" in the visitor center's Indian Arts and Crafts Shop.[26] Shortly thereafter, the cooperative agreement was signed and the Southeast Alaskan Indian arts and crafts demonstration program began, thereby helping the Tlingit to perpetuate their own traditions and, at the same time, educate park visitors about Tlingit culture.

One of the individuals responsible for the creation of the program was a Tlingit woman, Ellen Lang (Ellen Hope Hays), who was employed at the park and active in the native community. Ellen Lang was the first female member of the ANB and served as chairperson of the ANB Arts and Crafts Committee at the time the proposal was drafted.[27] She was employed at the park for almost ten years, including four years as superintendent (1974 to 1978). Lang went on to become a native liaison for the NPS, and after her retirement, she continued to be a leader in the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center.[28] During this period when the NPS was defining and developing monument programs, Lang played a critical role in fostering and developing the relationship between the NPS and the Tlingit community. Their relationship was beneficial to both parties in meeting the NPS desire to interpret the Tlingit history that the park commemorated and the Tlingit's wish to perpetuate their culture and interpret it themselves.

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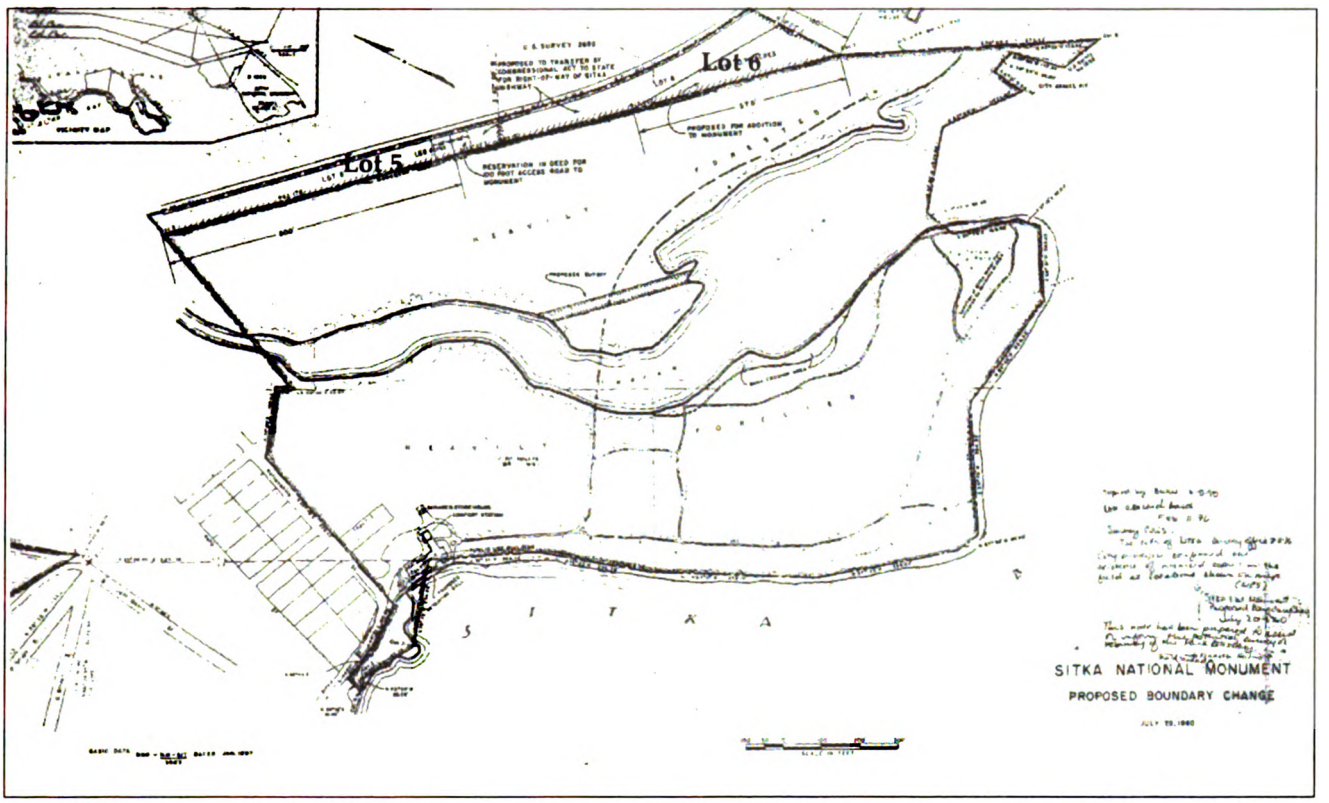

Figure 10-1. Proposed monument boundary change, incorporating Lots 5 and 6 along the northwestern boundary, 20 20 July, 1960.

PROPERTY ACQUISITION

The final piece of privately owned property near the monument entrance was acquired during this period and the residence was removed shortly after construction of the visitor center. The Littlefield family owned the lot, Number 2 of Block II of the Presbyterian cottage settlement. They negotiated its sale to the National Park Service on February 1959, but since funds were not available at that time, the matter remained unresolved until August 1963, when the agency finally was able to acquire the lot. The contractor who was constructing the visitor center removed an outbuilding and a smokehouse from the Littlefield property and used the main house as a headquarters in 1964; when no bids were received on the house, the NPS allowed the Sitka Fire Department to burn it in March, 1965.[29]

NPS officials also attempted to expand the monument along its eastern boundary. Between Sawmill Creek Highway and the monument was a narrow strip of land owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Officially designated as Lots 5 and 6 of U.S. Survey No. 3695, the properties equaled about 3.54 acres of land (Figure 10-1). The NPS sought ownership of the strip in order to prevent roadside development and to maintain a forested buffer between the monument and highway.[30] However, when Superintendent Mitchell requested authorization for filing a withdrawal with the BLM in June 1960, the Acting Regional Director recommended (with Mitchell's concurrence) an alternative solution: that "the Monument boundary bordering Lot 5 and the northern half of Lot 6 should be established as the enlarged right-of-way" of the highway. The remaining .79 acres of Lot 6, they proposed, should be added to the monument by proclamation or by an Act of Congress.[31] No action, however, was taken after the NPS Assistant

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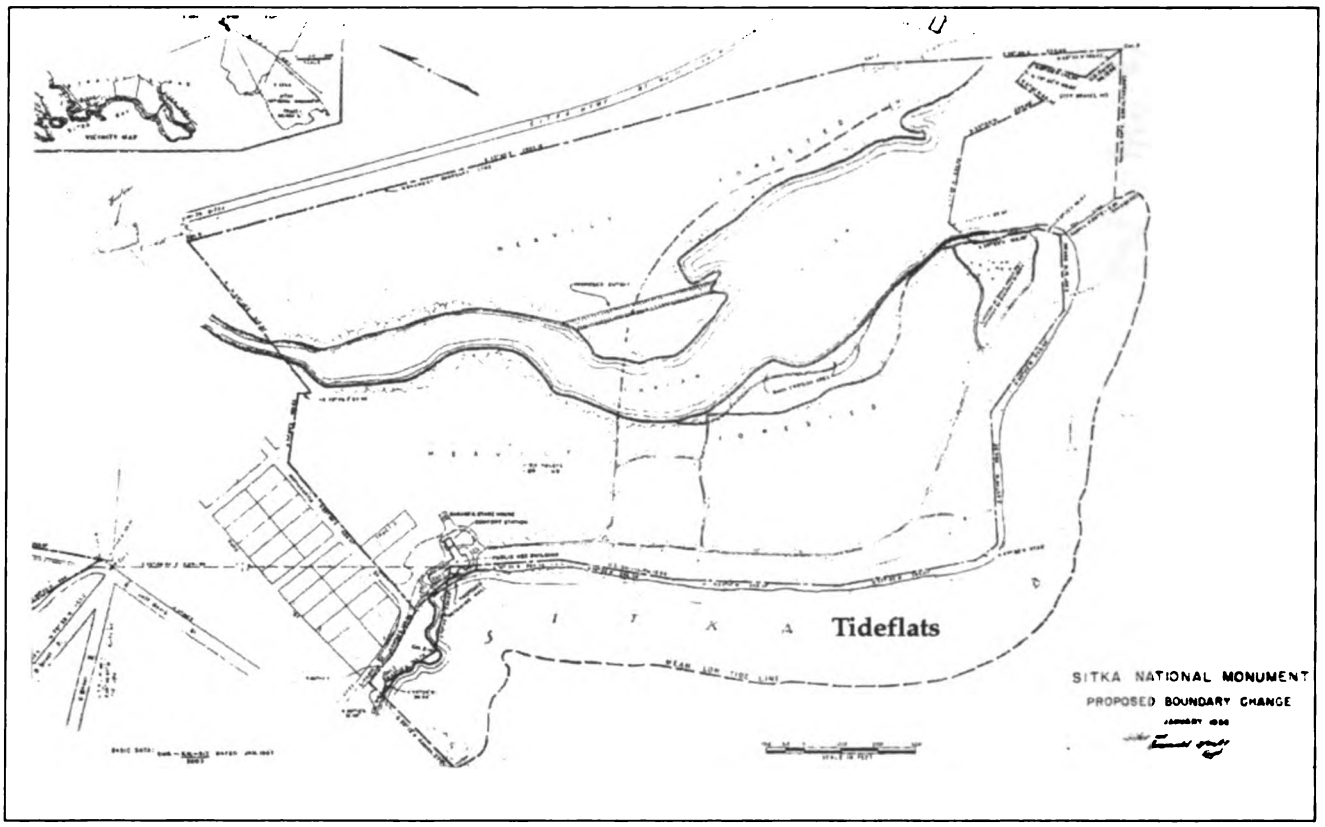

Figure 10-2. Proposed monument boundary change to incorporate the tideflats, January 1959.

Regional Director advised waiting until the status of the monument's tidelands was resolved, and both areas could be added to the park in one proclamation.[32]

In May 1963, Alfred P. Steger of the BLM again inquired if the NPS was interested in the withdrawal of the lots, and if not, the State of Alaska would acquire them. The two lots were subsequently included in the application for the state selection of lands dated to May 13, 1963.[33] In November of the same year, NPS officials requested that the lands not be transferred in order to allow for the authorization of a Presidential Proclamation to add them to the monument.[34] Romaine Hardcastle reported that the lots were still under state application as of January 1966.[35] They were ultimately transferred to the State of Alaska and their status remains unchanged, despite legislation in 1972 (to be discussed in the next chapter) that added them to the monument.

At the same time, NPS officials sought control of the tidelands adjacent to the monument's beaches, which were owned by the State of Alaska, except for a small area near the visitor center that was under the jurisdiction of the City of Sitka. The tidelands always had constituted an integral component of the park landscape—not only were they the scene of the 1804 battle, and thus central to the park's historic significance, but they also were important recreational and gathering areas where visitors, throughout the history of the park, had enjoyed views of the islands in Sitka Sound while they gathered beach plants or dug cockles. Additionally, the presence of the tidelands at the mouth of the Indian River helped to control the rate of flow and erosion and protected the river habitats.

Recognizing the importance of the tidelands, NPS officials now endeavored to preserve them. In 1959, Park Historian Hall and Regional Office personnel prepared a map of the tidelands as a proposed addition to the park that they planned to

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utilize in their petition to the State of Alaska for the lands (Figure 10-2).[36] A year later, Superintendent Mitchell wrote to Roscoe Bell, Alaska State Division of Lands Director, emphasizing the important role that the tidal flats played in the battle of 1804. He wrote that they were "essential to the preservation and proper use of the Monument."[37] In February 1963, Mitchell again wrote to Bell, requesting an application for a 50-year, no-fee lease of the tidal flats within the monument.[38] State approval of the lease was delayed for several years, in part due to the need for the NPS to fund a survey of the area.[39] The survey was conducted in 1967 and the state ultimately granted the NPS a 55-year lease to 47.915 acres of tideland adjacent to the park in December 1971.[40]

A lease was also sought from the City of Sitka for the area of tideland adjacent to the park within the city's jurisdiction. The granting of such a lease required an amendment to the Sitka City Ordinances, which was drafted and passed a year later.[41] On July 29, 1964, the city granted a 55-year lease to the park for the 1.61 acres of tideland near the monument entrance .[42]

LANDSCAPE CONDITIONS

The major changes made to the monument's landscape during this period represent the implementation of the Mission 66 plan for the park. The property was expanded, and the visitor center and other public use facilities were constructed. At the same time, however, gravel dredging operations at the mouth of the Indian River continued to exert a negative impact on that area of the park. Additionally, erosion of the western river bank became an increased threat to the fort area of the park, leading to an erosion control project in 1961, which again altered the channel of the Indian River. With the increase in staff and funding that began in the 1950s, impacts upon the resources of the park received more attention from the NPS during this period than in the past.

The Landscape Conditions Diagram (Diagram 21) prepared for this period depicts the landscape features of Sitka National Monument in 1968, just after completion of the visitor center and new footbridge. The landform utilized in this map is derived from the 1965 Monument Master Plan. The locations of the visitor center, the picnic area, the trails, and the footbridge are illustrated. Documented totem locations at that time also are depicted.

Diagram 22, derived from the 1965 aerial photograph and various documentary sources, depicts the distribution of plant communities within the monument for the period. At this time, the majority of the park's vegetation was relatively undisturbed second-growth Sitka spruce/western hemlock forest. However, some changes were then occurring in the plant communities, such as the establishment of brush on the beach ridges at the end of the Indian River peninsula, the development of the alder floodplain community along the upper section of the river, and the enlargement of the fort site clearing.

INDIAN RIVER AREA

The scarred landscape at the mouth of the Indian River continued to be dredged during the 1950s and 1960s, as local contractors removed gravel from the vicinity. In November 1957, the Bureau of Land Management contracted with John C. Miller for the sale of 20,000 cubic yards of gravel that were to be dredged just outside the monument's boundaries in Jamestown Bay.[43] At the same time, gravel was sold to the Sitka Pulp Mill from a location beyond the Miller sale, in an area where both the city of Sitka and the BPR had permits. In April 1959, the Superintendent concluded that "although these operations are an undesirable part of the scene, they have not to date done any physical damage to Sitka National Monument."[44]

By September 1959, however, Hall became concerned that the operations were cutting into monument property and endangering the fort and battle site; therefore, he met with Alaskan State

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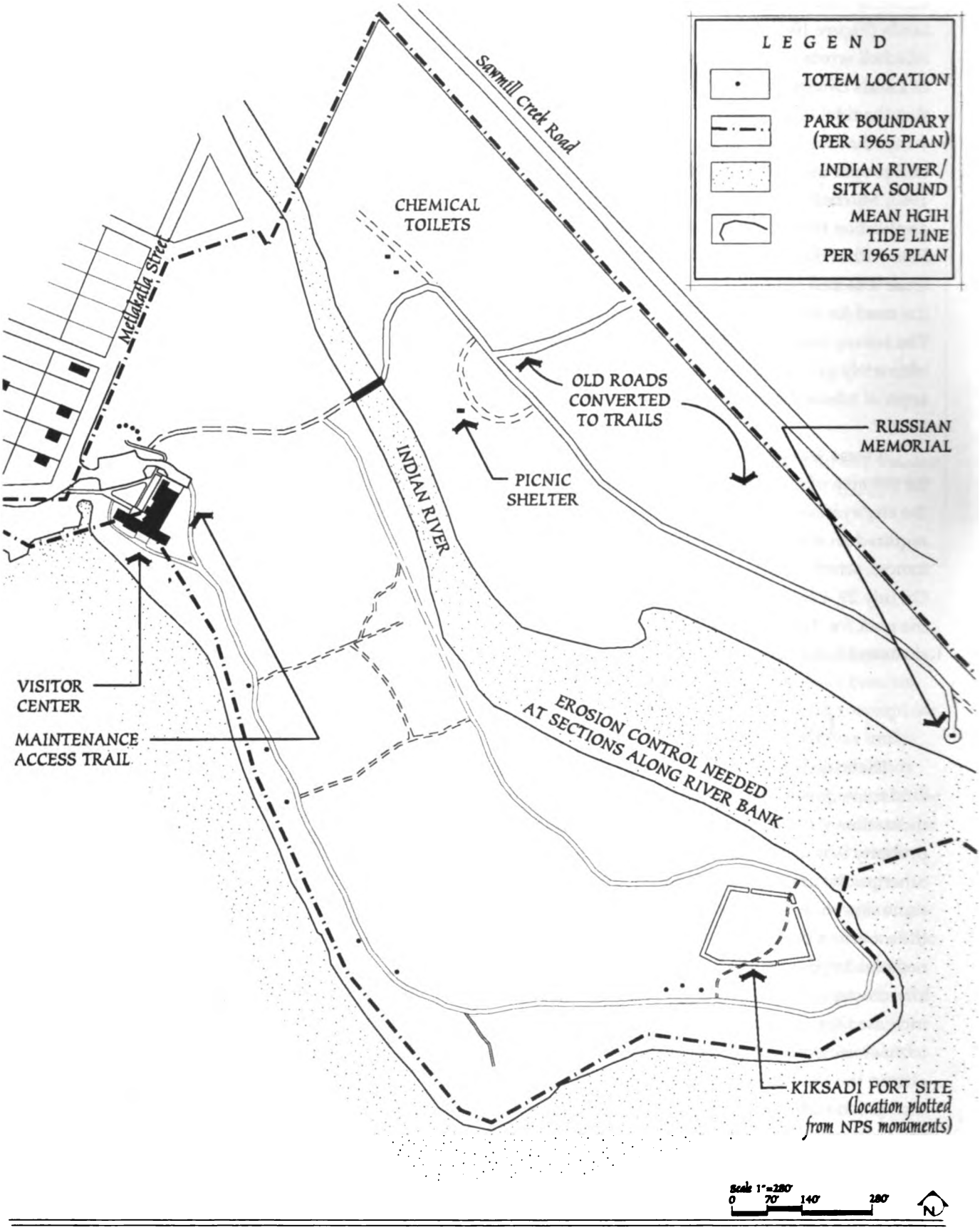

Diagram 21. Landscape conditions, 1965, in what is now Sitka National Historical Park.

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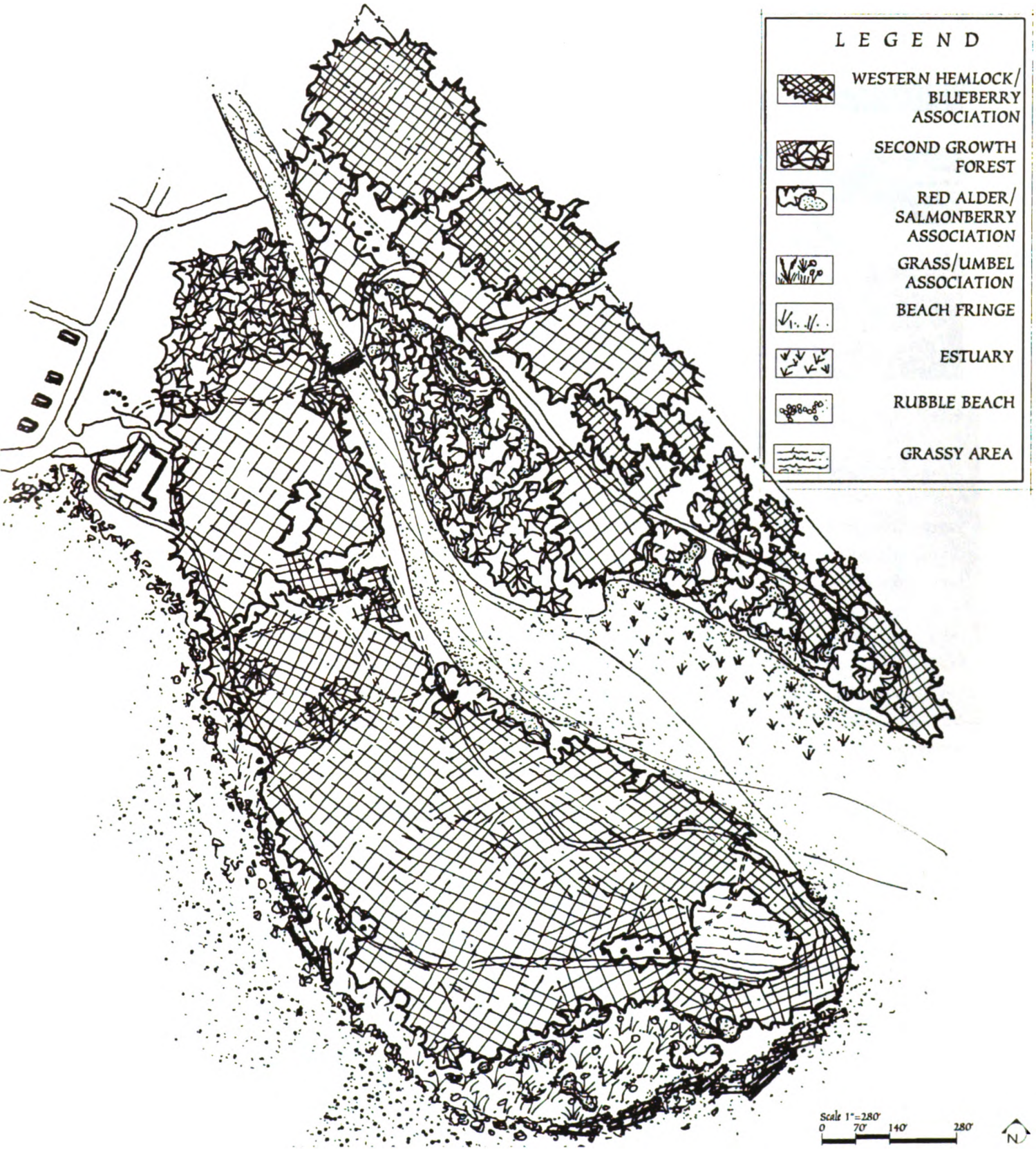

Diagram 22. Plant communities, 1965, in what is now Sitka National Historical Park.

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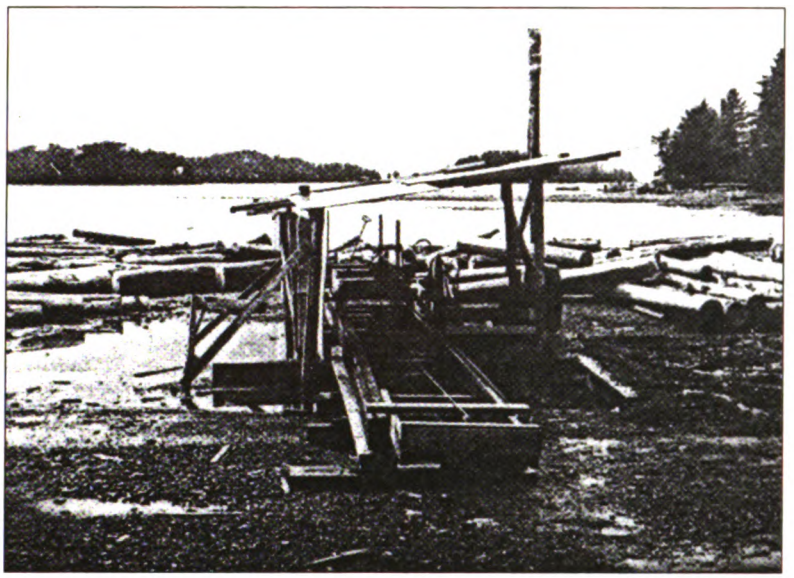

Figure 10-3. Gravel dredging at the mouth of the Indian River, March 1958.

officials to discuss yet another proposed gravel operation involving the removal of 10,000 cubic yards of material near the Indian River, which also would entail accessing park property.[45] The dredging continued through 1960 and 1961 at several points in the area, including John Miller's site, the operation run by Fred Pinson, the Department of Public Works excavation, and the U.S. Public Health Service enterprise. Monument Superintendent Mitchell objected to the continued dredging. He wrote that "the overall and cumulative effects of the removal of this gravel is that the gradient of the river is increased and, therefore, tends to erode away Monument lands." Nevertheless, he deemed it impossible to convince officials that the operations had a detrimental effect on the park.[46]

However, the continued detrimental effect on the character of the Indian River landscape was also undeniable. The view of the river's mouth and opposite shore from the area proximate to the fort site was not a scenic one. Photographs taken at the time depict the tidal flats on the eastern side of the river's mouth as a barren area of irregular excavation pits and gravel piles, scattered with machinery (see Figures 10-3 and 10-4). Regardless of whether the gravel operations were outside the park boundary, their sights and sounds were totally incongruous with the intentions of the monument. In addition, the excavation increased the river gradient and concomitant erosional processes in the park.

The inevitable happened in fall 1960, when heavy rainfall resulted in an extreme flood comparable to the one that had occurred in 1942. The Indian River became a "wild torrent," taking out trees and undercutting the river bank in creating a new channel. After the flood, the river flowed closer to and into the former Navy gravel permit area.[47] Despite this damaging event, as well as NPS and private objections throughout the 1960s, the gravel operators continued to haul aggregate out of the bay just beyond the borders of the monument.

To prevent further and more extensive erosion of the river banks situated within the monument, an erosion control project was undertaken in 1961. George Hall expressed the urgency of the project in a memo to the Superintendent, explaining that

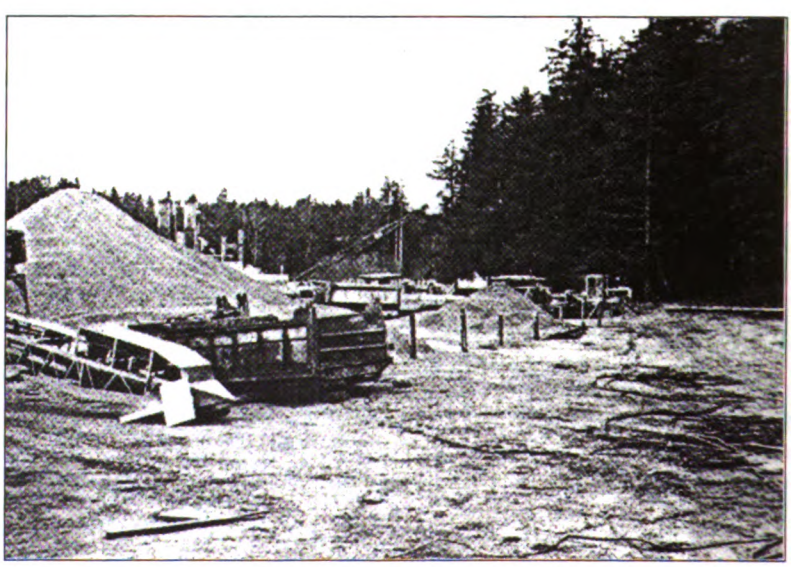

Figure 10-4. Gravel dredging operation at the mouth of the Indian River, December 1961.

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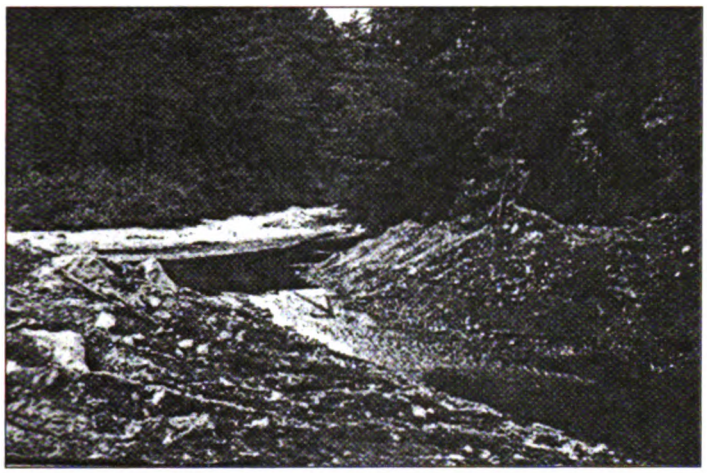

Figure 10-5. New channel created during implementation of the erosion control project near the mouth of the Indian River, 1961.

because serious undercutting had created a bank wall on the western shore that was about ten feet high, additional high water would "be extremely damaging to the section of bank paralleling the trail by the river." He concluded by stating, "we can't afford to wait longer."[48]

The project took place between 1 June and 31 July 1961, and consisted of three tasks: a channel, approximately 800-feet-long from the river mouth to a point intersecting the riverbed in the center of the Monument, was dug; the river flow was diverted by the construction of a bank of rock rip-rap, and the eroded banks were rebuilt with gravel from the new channel (Figures 10-5 and 10-6). Flood waters on August 11 damaged the lower section of rip-rap, which was reinforced shortly afterwards (Figure 10-7). By September 1, Hall reported that "in summary, it can be said that the diversion was successful." At the same time, he recommended that the rip-rap be backfilled with gravel in order to stabilize it, and that erosion control evaluation should continue.[49]

The past practice of allowing incongruous activities to be conducted within park boundaries was continued when the NPS issued a special use permit to the Morrison-Knudsen Company that allowed the firm to install a "hot-plant" asphalt operation on the eastern bank of the Indian River. At the closing of the operation, in June 1958, the permit was extended 30 days to allow time to remove the firm's equipment from park property.[50] After the Morrison-Knudsen Co. cleanup and departure in July, however, Hall found several items that had not been taken care of properly, including a bulldozer track left in the river and various "cans, cables, and plastics" incompletely buried in monument soil—items that he had explicitly requested be removed.[51] Apparently, at least some of these items were

Figure 10-6. Lower section of the new river channel, August 1961.

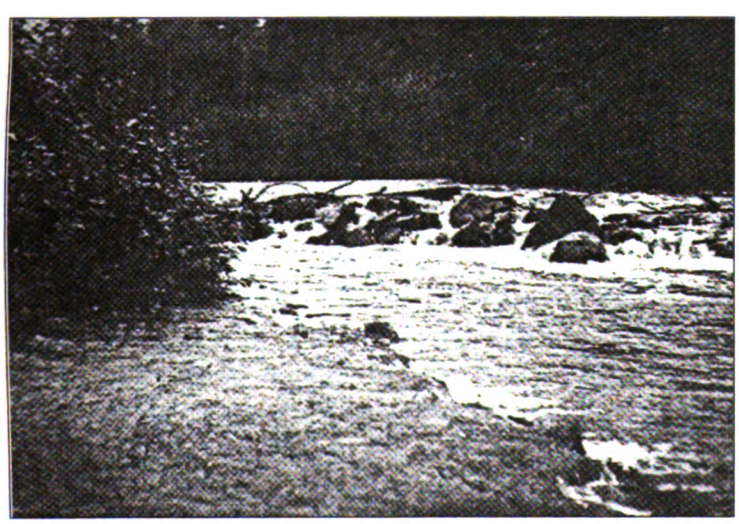

Figure 10-7. Floodwaters breaching the newly installed rip-rap along the Indian River, August 1961.

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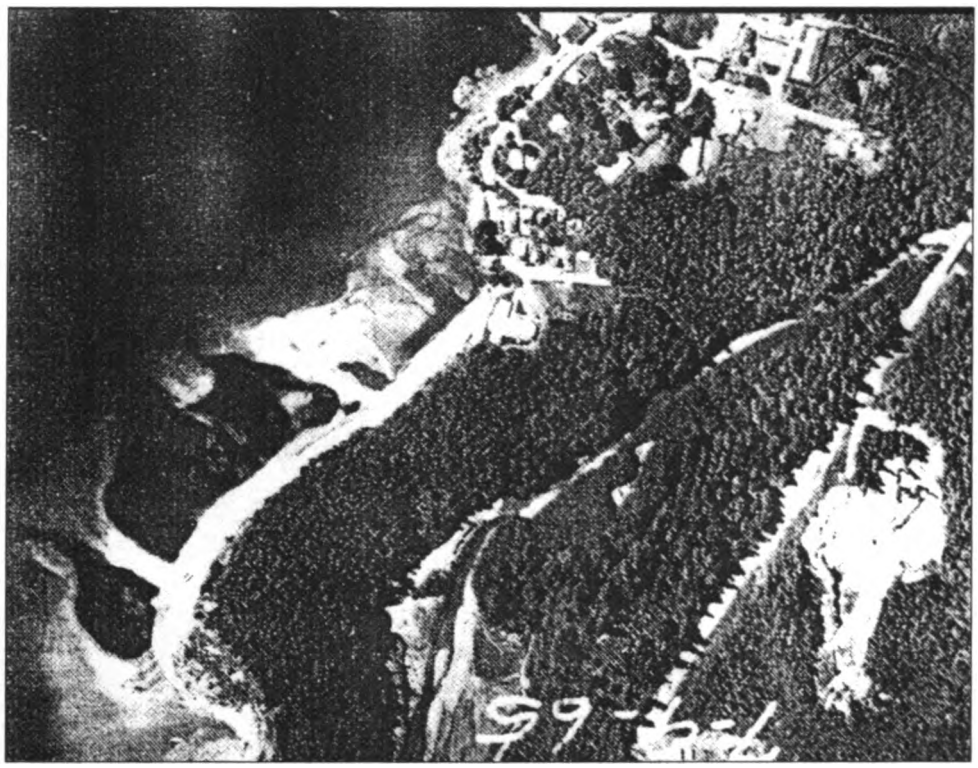

Figure 10-8. Aerial photograph of Sitka National Monument and vicinity, 1965.

never removed. During low tide in summer 1995, for example, a partially submerged bulldozer track still could be observed near the mouth of the Indian River, and planks and a cable were seen emerging from the adjacent river bank.[52]

Much of the vegetation flanking the Indian River, particulary on the eastern shore, consisted of newly established communities on the areas disturbed in the 1940s. A 1965 aerial photograph of the area (Figure 10-8) reveals a long section of young vegetation, most likely alders, growing along the bank on the upper stretch of the river adjacent to the picnic area; this was an area that had been subject to significant erosion during the 1942 flood. Along the lower section of the eastern bank, where the Navy had dredged a large lagoon, a vegetated estuary was developing. Along the shore near the point adjacent to the area where current dredging activity was occurring, little vegetation was evident. The NPS, however, had planted some young trees in the area in 1959. In May of that year, historian Hall reported that "a number of seedling trees were planted on the flat, open area at the mouth of Indian River." He explained that it was hoped the trees would "improve the background of the scene from the battle site" and establish a screen and boundary in the area.[53]

Eroded areas along the western river bank were also the site of revegetation, but less loss of the forest had occurred along that side. The majority of the western shore was closely covered with second-growth spruce and hemlock (Figure 10-8).

To provide easier access to the eastern side of the river, a footbridge was finally built over the Indian River in the summer of 1966. Designed by the monument's museum technician, Romaine Hardcastle, and erected by a group from the local Neighborhood Youth Corps, the bridge joined the two sides of the monument for the first time in over twenty years (Figure 10-9).[54] Hardcastle had designed the bridge to be dismantled and placed in storage in winter. Unfortunately, a flood that occurred the month after the bridge was completed washed out the new structure. At that time, the piers, iron piping, and decking were salvaged for reconstruction.[55] Due to cost and safety concerns, however, park managers decided not to rebuild the bridge immediately.[56]

Nevertheless, shortly thereafter, a new bridge and trail project was approved that included the construction of another footbridge across the river (Figure 10-10).[57] The location chosen for the bridge was farther up-stream than most of the previous bridges in the park, and linked a trail from behind the visitor center to the new picnic area on the opposite side (Figure 10-11). The channel, which was narrower in this upper section of the river,

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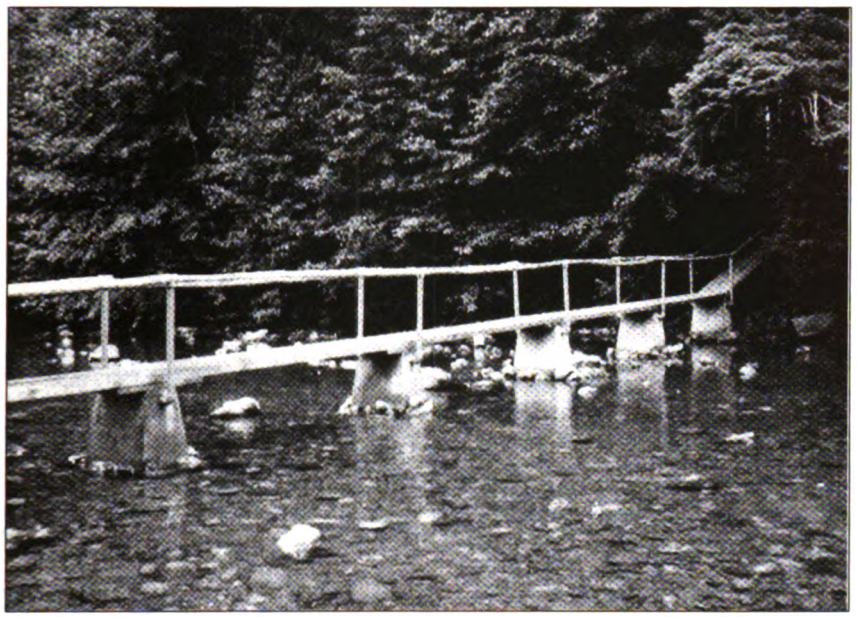

Figure 10-9. Indian River footbridge, ca. 1966.

meant that the bridge had a shorter distance to span. The arched bridge's simple and graceful design also was a departure from the series of more rustic bridges that had crossed the river in the past. Yet the wooden spans over the steel and concrete structure linked the bridge aesthetically to its woodland setting. The bridge was constructed in 1967-68 and remains in place today.

Construction of the new footbridge and the features it led to reflect the fact that the upper stretches of the Indian River within the monument were becoming increasingly attractive. A dense growth of alders had softened the eroded sections of the eastern bank, thereby recreating some of the river's earlier scenic appeal. Up through the 1950s, the lower stretches of the river within the park were subject to disturbance from the asphalt plant. Outside the areas of on-going dredging activity at the river's mouth, the lower Indian River also began to recover after the removal of the asphalt plant.

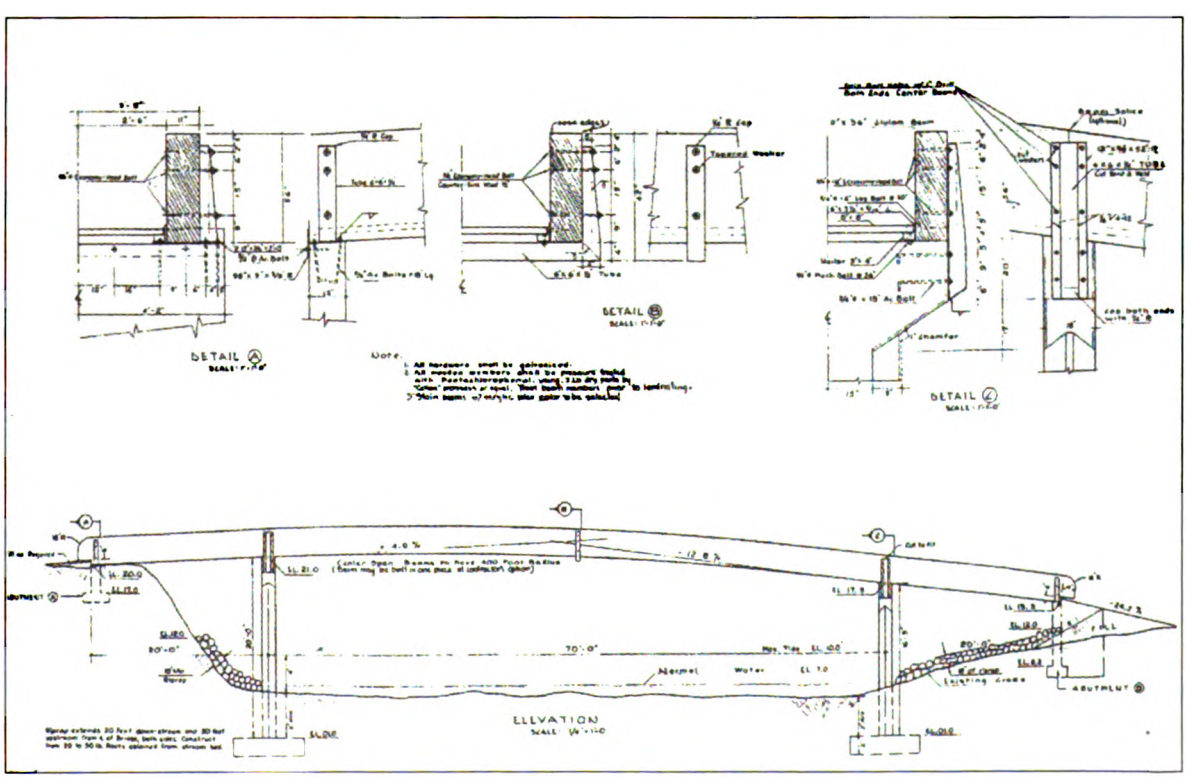

Figure 10-10. Plans for the Indian River footbridge, constructed in 1968.

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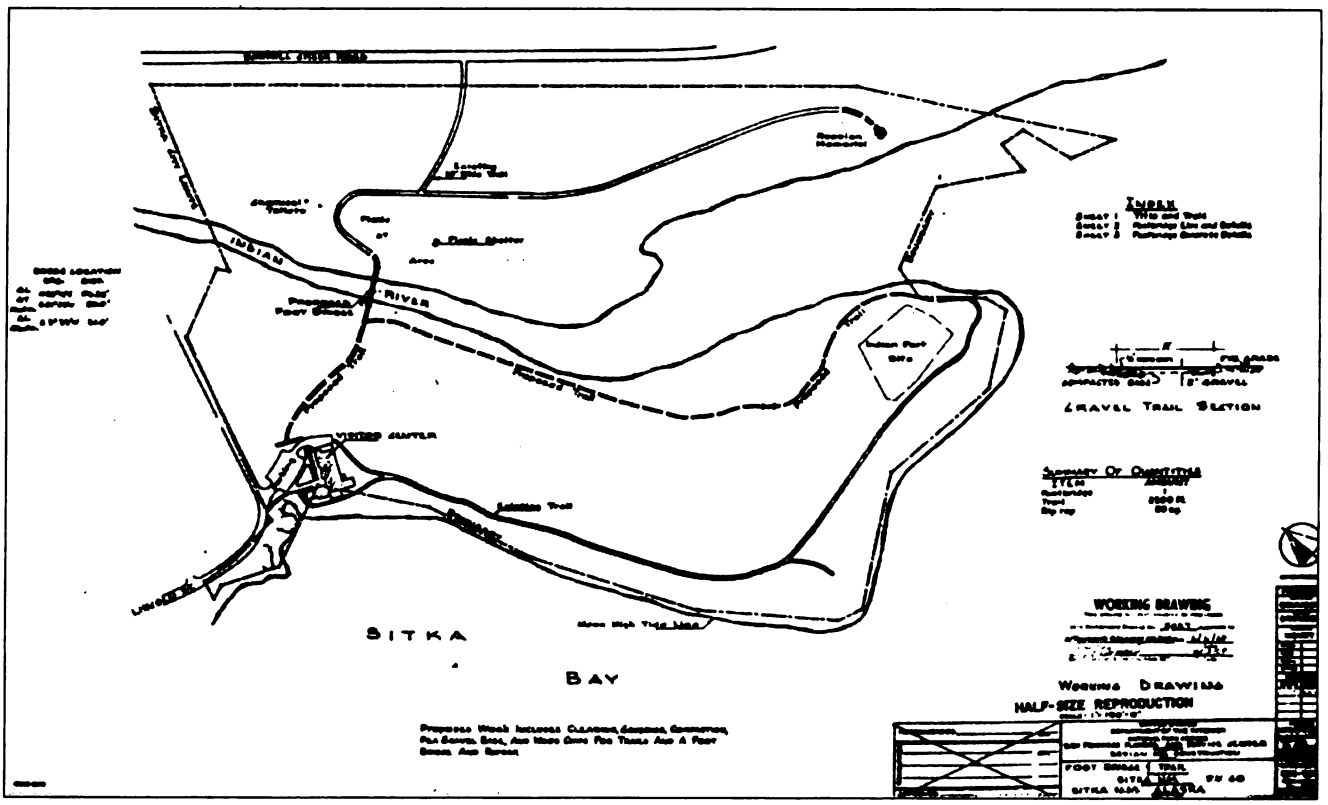

Figure 10-11. Footbridge and trail plan for Sitka National Monument, 1967-1968.

FORT AREA

During this period, the fort area of the park was the site of several activities, including excavation and tree removal, that altered the landscape in a number of ways. Additionally, changes were made to the placement of interpretive devices in the fort area and in the location of the totem poles. While the overall character of the larger area remained unchanged, by the end of the period the fort site clearing itself was significantly altered.

Archeological excavations in 1958 conducted in the clearing and adjacent forest near the Indian River led to the official interpretation of the area as the site of the Tlingit fort. Frederick Hadleigh-West, then a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Alaska, was hired to locate and verify the Tlingit fort site within the monument.[58] Hadleigh-West and his crew of four Sheldon Jackson students and one Mount Edgecombe High School student spent approximately one month in the summer of 1958 excavating within the monument. The fort site excavation initially began in a depression observed in the clearing during a 1957 survey.[59]

After a week of excavating without recovering any remains of the fort site, Hadleigh-West followed the suggestion of Tlingit elder Alex Andrews, who pointed out a low ridge that his father had told him was part of the Tlingit fort. The crew excavated the ridge, and Hadleigh-West eventually concluded that it was the remains of the fort's south wall (see Figure 10-12). The uncovered logs were in an extremely advanced state of decay and showed evidence of being burned in numerous locations. Hadleigh-West also discovered what he considered other important features along the ridge: two mounds of fist-sized rocks on the interior side of the wall; burned timbers buried two feet below the surface; a timber with a circular hole in it; a cannon ball; and a portion of an iron kettle.[60]

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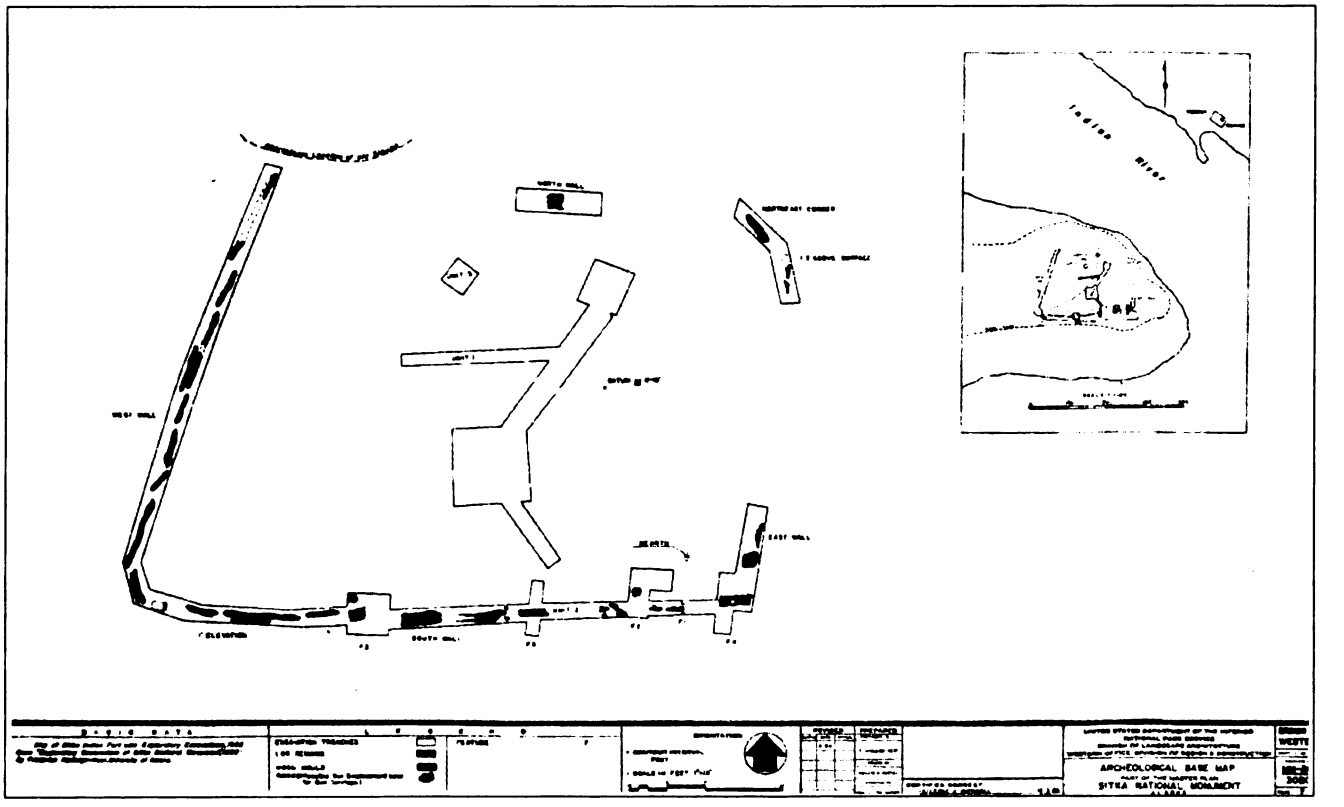

Figure 10-12. Frederick Hadleigh-West's map of the Tlingit fort site based on his 1958 excavations in Sitka National Monument.

Remains of the other fort walls were uncovered as well, although in differing degrees. The team found what they thought to be good evidence of the west wall (Figure 10-12). Although few artifacts were uncovered from the area adjacent to it, Hadleigh-West felt certain that they had found the wall itself. He reported several "very clear cases of one log abutting against another." Those logs also showed evidence of burning. The location of the other two walls was less certain, however. Very little evidence of the east wall was found, with the remains consisting primarily of buried wood mold or stain in the soil. Hadleigh-West reported that the east wall area was "unclear" due to past bulldozing at the site, and that although he thought the mold and stains were the remains of the fort wall, "it could not be verified satisfactorily." Likewise, very little evidence of the north wall was uncovered, although the archeologist was more certain that the short section of logs they had located were indeed wall remains.[61]

Hadleigh-West interpreted his team's findings as the remains of the Tlingit fort. He reported the following:

> There can be little doubt that the south and west walls represent very tangible remains of the Sitka fort. The small portion uncovered of what is taken to be the north wall could, perhaps, be questioned. The northeast corner section must in like manner be open to question since it is, in a sense, "floating"—i.e., not directly tied in with other wall sections. Nevertheless, these too, are here considered parts of the fort structure, even though that cannot definitely be proved. Much more conjectural is the section "East Wall."[62]

However, when potential sites adjacent to the "East Wall" were investigated and no evidence of remains was found, the archeologist was inclined to believe they may have found all that remained of that wall.[63]

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Hadleigh-West compared his findings with Lisiansky's plan of the fort and concluded that the two revealed "a gratifying degree of correspondence," noting in particular the similarity of the southwestern corner, among other features. Although the excavation revealed little about the fort's method of construction, the horizontal log remains did correspond to the heavy horizontal logs reported to have formed the base of the walls. Additionally, no evidence was found of houses within the fort. The archeologist attributed this to past disturbance on the site, as well as to the fort's short period of occupation, which allowed little time for cultural material to be deposited. He did note the possibility, however, that further excavation would uncover remains of the houses.

In addition to following the outline of the fort walls, the team excavated several other units. Unit One, the largest, was located within the fort walls, and yielded most of the artifacts. Hadleigh-West reported that the cultural material recovered was shallow, mostly found within the first six inches of soil, and that its distribution was scattered due to the bulldozing that had occurred on the site in the past. The artifacts that the team uncovered were almost entirely of European manufacture. The archeologist reported that "only a small portion of the material . . . is to be ascribed to the occupation of this site by the Tlingits in 1804." The artifacts recovered by Hadleigh-West were returned to the park in 1961 and sent to the NPS Western Regional Office for curation and analysis. After the completion of that process in 1969, they were returned to the park.[64]

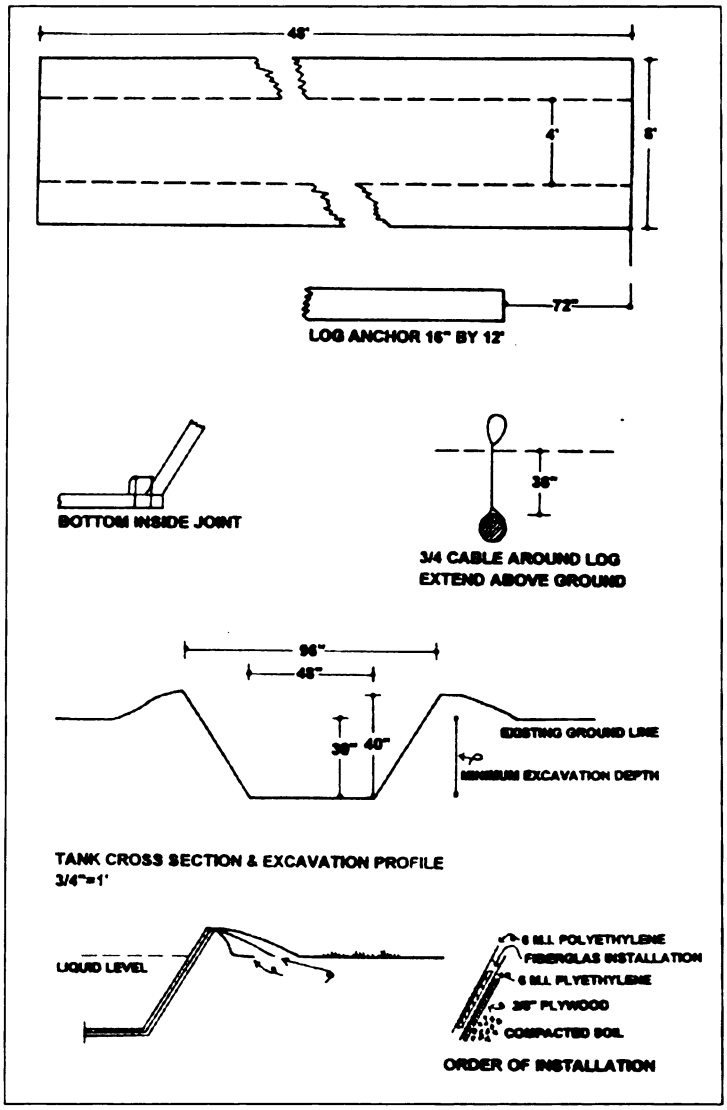

Figure 10-13. Totem pole preservation tanks excavated in the fort area of Sitka National Monument, 1971.

Hadleigh-West's findings led to changes in the clearing. Following his excavation of the Tlingit fort site and based upon his interpretation, markers were placed to indicate the location, extent, and shape of the fort. Hall noted, in his report for June 1961, that "a fort device has been installed. . . to assist the use of self-guiding interpretation. The device includes rows of buried stakes with painted ends defining the direction and length of the walls."[65] Additionally, resulting from the increased emphasis on the clearing at the Tlingit fort site, the totem poles were removed in 1965. In the summer of that year, the Saanaheit Pole and four house posts were erected on a rise overlooking the new visitor center and parking lot (on the former Littlefield property).[66]

During the early 1970s, actions were taken in the clearing that seem to belie the earlier importance the NPS placed on the site and which may have destroyed additional archeological information remaining in the clearing. A comprehensive totem pole preservation project was undertaken at the

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location in May 1971, when trees cut from inside the fort perimeter were used as cribbing to support the totems as they were treated. The totems were laid on the cribbing in the clearing prior to the application of paint remover. The following year, after their paint had been stripped, the poles were then soaked in vats excavated at the fort site (Figure 10-13). The vats were about 30 inches deep, ranged from 4 feet wide at the base to 8 feet at the surface, and were long enough to contain the poles. They were lined with plywood and fiberglass insulation sandwiched between two layers of six millimeter thick polyethylene (Figure 10-14). Following their repair, two preservative soakings, and painting, the poles were set back into position and the vats removed from the clearing in the spring of 1973.[67] The combination of clearing, excavation, fencing-off the area, and the general movement of machinery caused a great deal of disturbance to the site, including both the historic land surface and the existing vegetation. Although the area is reported to have been landscaped following the project, it is not clear what specific actions were taken at the time. It is likely that the trenches were filled and seeded with grass.[68]

At this time, most land within the fort site area, except for the clearing where the Saanaheit Pole and houseposts stood, was in second growth Sitka spruce/western hemlock forest. It is probable, however, that the size of the fort site clearing increased to some extent after Hadleigh-West's excavation. The archeologist reported that a large proportion of the remains uncovered by the team were found in the woods. Although he reported that the presence of large trees prevented further investigation in a number of spots, it is likely that smaller vegetation was cleared. Later the interpretive device was constructed along sections of the walls.

In addition to the grass at the fort site clearing, there was brush in the vicinity as well. Park Historian Ingersoll reported that work crews "brushed out" the fort site in August 1965, although it is not clear if they cut the shrubs growing along the margins of the fort clearing, if the brush was actually located within the clearing, or if it was on the beach ridges forming seaward from the clearing.[69]

BEACHES AND TIDAL FLATS

Areas of the monument's beaches and tidal flats were subject to significant changes during this period. Despite Park Service attempts to preserve the integrity of these areas, gravel dredging continued in the tidal flats along the shore of the monument. In 1964, Superintendent Mitchell proposed a series of conditions that should be met if dredging were to take place. They included the following: that a topographic map be prepared of the tidal zone

Figure 10-14. Totem pole preservation project underway in the fort area of Sitka National Monument, 1971.

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inland from the proposed gravel pit so its condition could be monitored; that dredging be kept sufficiently below the low-water line to retain support for the tidal flats; that the dredging be subject to constant supervision; and finally, that an alternate source of gravel be explored. Under these conditions, more gravel was removed. Figure 10-8 dramatically depicts the deep and broad pits excavated just offshore from the monument's beaches.

Figure 10-15. Pulp mill drift logs on the beach in Sitka National Historical Park, 1995.

A major transformation in the beach and tidal flat zone of the park began during this period and resulted in significant alterations to the historic battlefield site. With the opening of the pulp mill east of the park in 1959, numerous large logs cut for the mill were washed up on the monument's beaches (Figure 10-15). These logs formed beach ridges when gravel, beach cobbles, and organic material accumulated behind the logs in the former flat beach meadow situated at the end of the Indian River peninsula. The gradual process of accumulation has led to the lifting of these ridges above the tidal zone and allowed the colonization of terrestrial vegetation to occur. Thus, the landform and vegetation of the former beach and tidal flat at the end of the Indian River peninsula have been altered dramatically. Figure 10-8 illustrates the uplift that occurred only six years after the opening of the pulp mill.[70]

This process profoundly altered the character of the historic battlefield site. What had historically been a broad expanse of gently sloping beach meadow and tidal flat, where the Tlingits and Russians fought in 1804, and which later became the site of Tlingit commemorative picnics and community baseball games, now became a series of ridges with low-lying pockets where salt and fresh water wetland plants could be found, and where higher ridges with alders and herbs were established. These changes in topography and vegetation transformed the character of what had been an open expanse with broad views of the sea, to a rough and irregular and shrubby space where the view was blocked by young trees and shrubs.

In July 1959, the replica Russian blockhouse was removed from its location on the edge of the beach at the southwestern tip of the Indian River peninsula. Its removal turned out to be controversial in the community. By this time, the replica, originally constructed in 1927, was in poor condition. Monument Historian Hall made a sudden decision to have it razed. On July 21, it was knocked down and burned on the beach. The sudden action caused an uproar in the community since the replica had been constructed with private funds raised within the town of Sitka. Community residents blamed the NPS for allowing the structure to deteriorate, claiming that the neglect and destruction of the blockhouse represented a break of faith with the people who originally financed its construction. The Russian Orthodox Church in Sitka protested as well.[71] In addition, the Sitka Chamber of Commerce sent a letter to Secretary of the Interior Fred Seaton, protesting both the demolition of the blockhouse and removal of the Russian Memorial.[72] The NPS, however, eventually met community demands to rebuild the replica—outside the park in a new location proximate to the Russian cemetery in town. It was constructed there in 1961-62.[73]

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The removal of the blockhouse was a sign of the philosophical change that occurred within the NPS since the time the replica originally had been constructed. Within the context of a growing awareness of historic preservation and the overall development of the monument's legitimate resources and interpretive themes, the deteriorating replica was a misplaced entity. Its removal had little effect on the physical character of the park, outside of an increase in the open character of the beach-side site where it had been constructed.

TOTEM TRAIL

Very little change occurred in the character of the totem trail during the period from 1956 to 1971. The regular repetition of small-scale changes, such as the fresh application of gravel to its surface, the movements associated with the park's totem preservation program, and the trimming of dead and overhanging vegetation occurred numerous times. But, in general, these activities generally maintained the character of the historic corridor that passed through the forest.

During this time, totem pole preservation and maintenance continued as a central concern of monument managers. In late spring 1959, Hall reported that "the staff" coated five of the totems with linseed oil and then painted them. He remarked that "it was formerly considered a matter of protocol to utilize native painters to do this work, however, labor conditions and the lack of interest by the native people ruled this out as a labor source."[74]

Following an assessment of the poles' condition in 1959, several received attention.[75] In spring 1960, the first Yaadaas Crest Corner Pole was "completely treated and painted," and both the Raven/Shark and Trader Legend poles were "treated and completed" by a local contractor.[76] By the next month, a total of seven poles had been "repaired, sealed, and painted."[77]

As mentioned above, a comprehensive totem preservation project was conducted at the park from 1971 through 1973. At that time the poles were lowered and either placed on cribbing at the fort site or behind the visitor center where they were stripped of paint. They were then soaked twice in the vats described, first in sodium fluoride for approximately two weeks and then in copper sulfate for another ten days or so. The poles were re-erected during the following spring and summer.[78] Throughout this project, no totems stood along the historic trail. However, when the project was completed in 1973 and the poles were re-erected, the character of the Totem Trail remained largely unaltered.

Because of the damp climate, most of the totem work consisted of regular treatment and maintenance to preserve the wooden poles. Nevertheless, occasional unusual events necessitated extra maintenance and repairs. During a period of extremely dry weather in the spring of 1958, an accidental fire started along the trail at the base of the Raven Memorial Pole. Hall wrote that "before the fire could be controlled, the figure of Raven was burned beyond repair."[79] George Federoff carved a new Raven in January 1961, and the pole was erected again in June of that year.[80] At one point, unusual vandals were observed drilling into the Raven/Shark Pole at the entrance to the trail. Hall reported that in May 1961, a pair of woodpeckers had "taken a liking to the shark figure" and had drilled a deep hole into it that was two inches in diameter. According to Hall, a coat of wood preservative was sufficient to discourage the birds.[81]

In addition to on-going totem maintenance and repair, several poles were moved from their locations along the trail during this period. NPS officials loaned three totem poles from the monument for display in another Alaska Exhibit, this time at the New York World's Fair of 1964-65. The two poles that formed the entrance gate to the Totem Trail—the Waasgo Legend and Raven/Shark poles—in addition to the Yaadaas Crest pole, which had stood as part of the group of three totems near the end of the trail, were taken down and bundled in wrapping and lumber donated by the Alaska Lumber and Pulp Company; from Sitka they were shipped to Seattle on the Alaska Steamship vessel *Tatalina*, where they

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continued to New York City by train and truck.[82] In the park a sign was erected at the location of the Waasgo Legend Pole to explain its absence.[83] When the two poles were returned to Sitka in 1966, it was determined that their base sections needed replacement. After their repair, preservative treatment, and painting, the three totems were re-erected in new locations in the "immediate vicinity of the visitor center."[84] These changes brought to an end two long-established totem displays in the park. And no longer did two totems flank the entrance gateway, as they had since 1925, nor did the grouping of three totems stand along the trail as they had since the formation of the park in 1910.

For the most part the topographic features through which the trail passed remained stable during these years. In December 1963, however, a heavy storm with 60 mph winds created waves that seriously eroded the bank adjacent to the trail around Totem Number 5, the Memorial/Mortuary Column, which according to a 1964 park pamphlet, was the third pole situated along the trail.[85] In January, ocean tides flooded the trail several times, intensifying the erosion.[86] The bank continued to erode, resulting in the loss of three trees and the tilting of a number of others. In March, the Service Transfer Company stabilized the area with the installation of 150 yards of rock rip-rap along the beach next to the totem.[87]

The Sitka spruce/western hemlock forest community on either side of the trail continued to grow naturally during these years, receiving very little interference from park managers. The only documented changes in vegetation along the trail consisted of small-scale weeding and trimming. Larger changes were occasionally wrought by natural forces such as heavy winds and storm tides. The December 1963 storm also took out several trees along the trail near Totem Number 5. But, despite these incidents, the forest was relatively undisturbed and the enclosed character of the trail only increased as the trees continued to grow.

FOREST AND RIVER TRAILS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE INDIAN RIVER

During this period, little change in the other park trails west of the Indian River is documented, other than brief mentions of graveling, weeding, and trimming along the pathways. Monument Historian Charles Warner did report, nonetheless, that a heavy wind in September 1963 took down "about seven trees near the cross trail to [the] Indian River." He remarked that the area now had "a very bare appearance."[88]

One new section of trail, however, was constructed sometime near the time when the present footbridge over the Indian River was built in 1967-68. Although the 1968 Bridge and Trail Plan (Figure 10-11) shows that section as a proposed trail, it also was depicted on the 1964 plan for the park, but not on the 1953 plan. The 1968 plan proposed to create a five-foot-wide trail, with a compacted pea gravel base that was to be covered with wood chips. It is likely that if the trail had existed for some time prior to the 1968 project, it was not until then that the path became a major corridor.

The same bridge and trail plan also depicts a proposed trail that extended from just east of the fort site, and up to the western bank of the Indian River where it intersected with the proposed cross trail. Trails have run in the vicinity of this proposed pathway in the past. At least from the time the National Monument was created in 1910 and probably earlier, a path/road has traversed the lower section of the property from below the second cross trail to the Indian River at its mouth; in plans pre-dating 1953, however, the path was located closer to the river bank. The section that runs from the cross trail to the bridge trail is depicted on a 1964 sketch of the park. Whether it actually existed and in what condition, is not clear. Again, the 1968 project probably represented what was primarily a trail improvement project, with clearing and grubbing necessary in some sections to create a level pathway of uniform width.

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ENTRANCE AREA

The landscape area that was most radically altered during the 1956-1971 interim was the monument entrance area. Once the remaining inholdings were acquired, the cottages removed, and the visitor center constructed and landscaped, the entrance space was totally transformed. Instead of a pair of totems flanking the entrance to a path heading into the park, the visitor, before entering the woods, now encountered and was drawn into a visitor center surrounded by a number of totems that sat at the edge of the forest.

The most important element associated with Mission 66 developments at the monument was the construction of the visitor center. As mentioned earlier, the center was to include park offices, public restrooms, storage facilities, and a museum. In addition, the Indian Arts and Crafts Board of the Department of the Interior had submitted a proposal, in 1962, to include a native arts and crafts center as part of the facility.[89] The final design consisted of a one-story building, with a gradually sloping roof reminiscent of the native architecture of the region. The T-shaped plan included a wing for NPS offices, a large entrance lobby and adjacent museum space, an auditorium for audio-visual programs, and a wing for the demonstration and display of Indian arts and crafts. The building was staked out in July 1964, and by the next month, most of the footings were poured. By June 1965, the center was effectively completed and NPS personnel moved from their old offices in the post office building to the facility on June 22.[90]

The area around the building was graded, a parking area was paved, a concrete walk to the front entrance was installed, and the remaining area was landscaped (Figure 10-16). The plan called for the planting of 48 Sitka spruces, mostly around the northern and eastern edges of the cleared area in front of the existing forest, although 8 were to be planted near Lincoln Street and the entrance sign. It also included one vine maple (*Acer circinatum*) at a corner of the southeastern wing, four bigleaf maples (*Acer macrophyllum*) at the northern edge of the cleared area in front of the spruce, and three white birches (*Betula pendula*) near the building. The groundcovers included Checkerberry Wintergreen (*Gaultheria procumbens*), salal (*G. shallon*), and common periwinkle (*Vinca minor*). Unfortunately, the first winter killed most of the new landscape plants. In spring 1966, a total of 10 trees were replaced, the surviving ground cover (*Gaultheria* spp.) was planted on the hillside above the building, and grass was seeded in its place.[91] In addition, soil brought into the area around the Saanaheit Pole was leveled and seeded with grass.[92]

Beach erosion in front of the building became a concern of park managers shortly after its construction. In fall 1966, a total of 126 cubic yards of shot-rock were deposited on the beach side of the building in order to stabilize the area.[93] The following spring, soil was brought in and workers "raked and leveled the area previously damaged . . . when [the] shot rock was hauled in."[94] In June 1967 the area was seeded with grass.[95]

As mentioned above, the two totems that had flanked the monument entrance since 1925, the Waasgo Legend and Raven/Shark poles, were removed in the spring of 1964 and sent, along with the Yaadaas Crest Pole, to the New York World's Fair. The first totems erected at the entrance area after the visitor center was completed were the Saanaheit Pole and the house posts. They were moved to a rise overlooking the center in 1965 (Figure 10-17 and 10-18). When the three poles arrived back from New York in 1966, they were erected near the building, increasing the entry area totem display.

Although obvious differences exist, the totems sited around the visitor center are to some degree more reminiscent of traditional poles situated in front of Tlingit and Haida houses that faced the beach. In such a setting they acted as focal points, echoing the vertical rhythms of the surrounding forest and providing a dramatic counterpoint to the horizontal planes of the building, beach, and sound.

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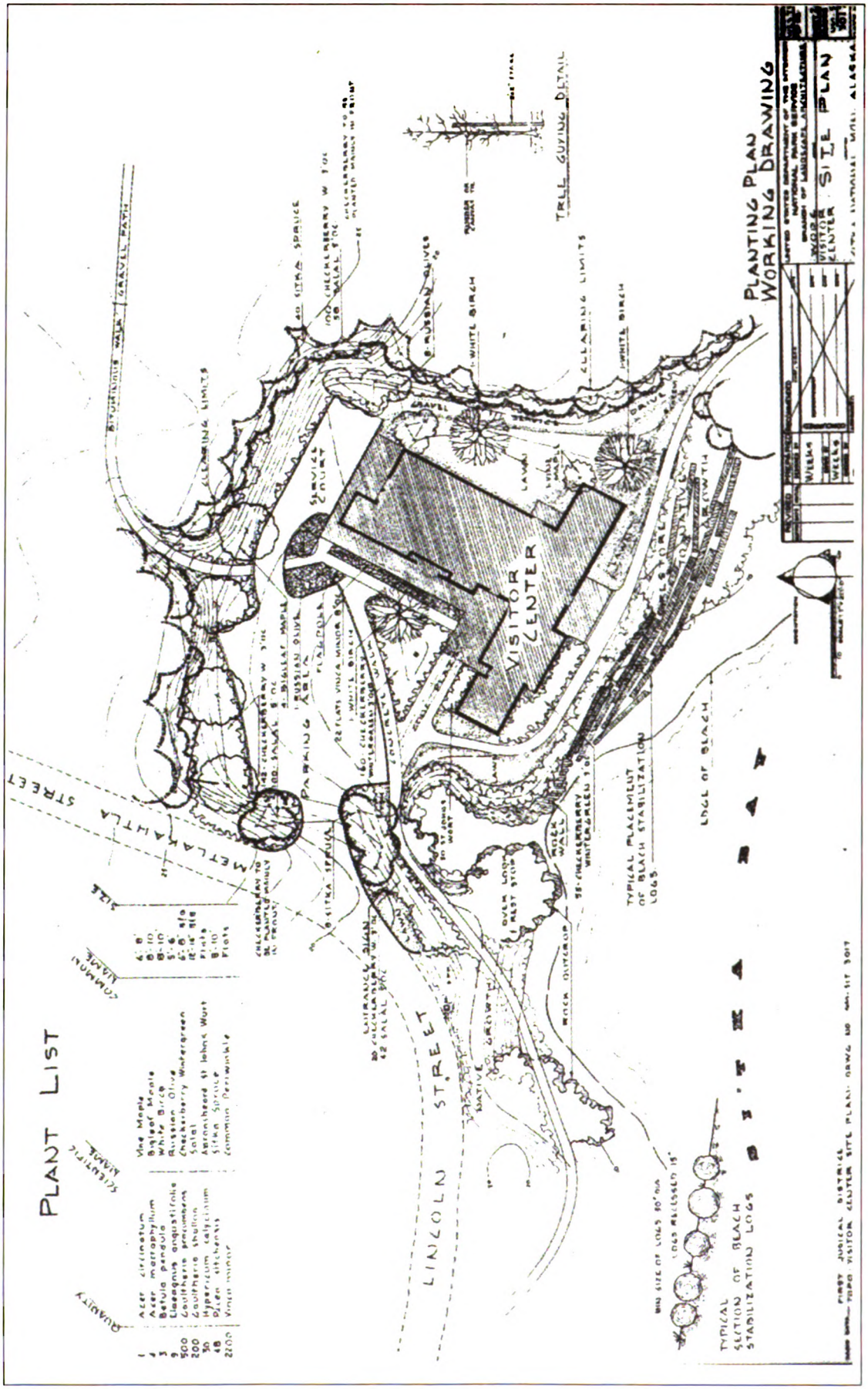

Figure 10-16. Visitor center site and planting plan for Sitka National Monument, 1964.

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Figure 10-17. View of the visitor center from the beach, December 1965.

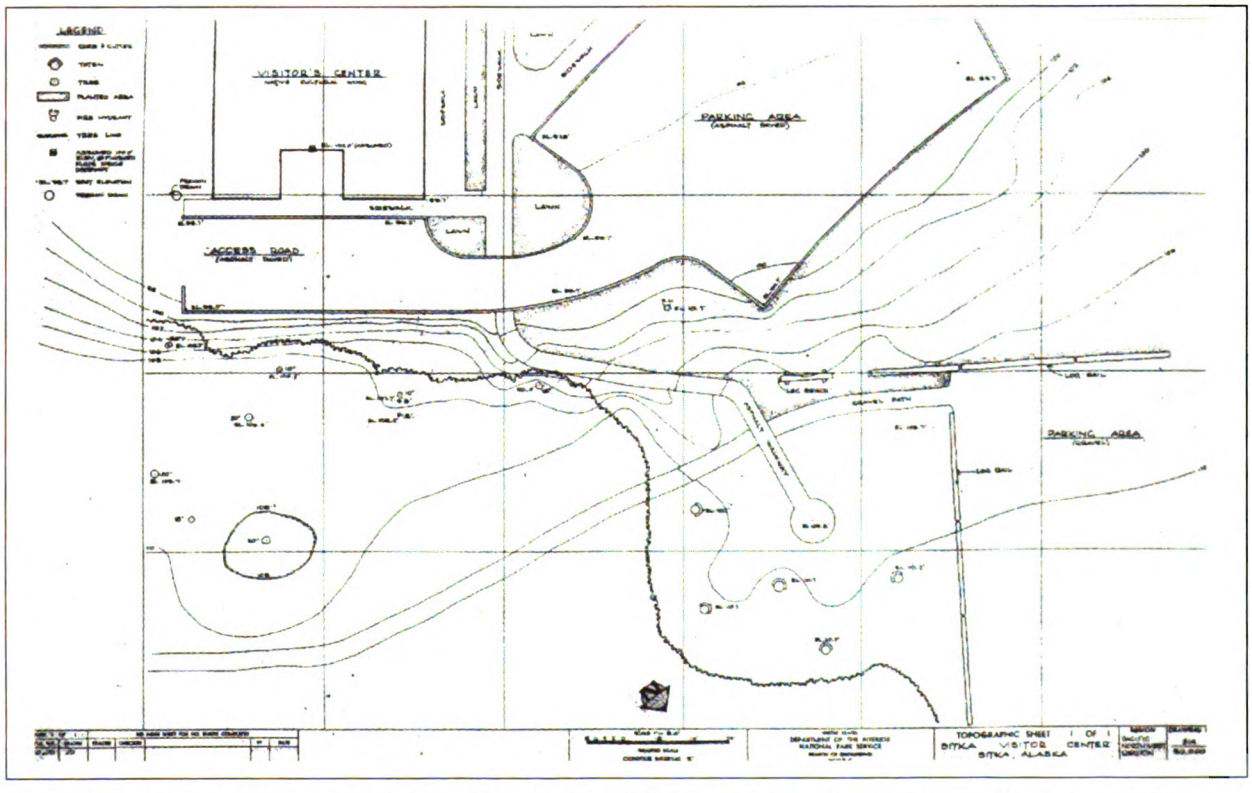

Figure 10-18. Topographic survey of the north end of the visitor center area, showing the parking area and the Saanaheit Totem Pole and House Posts.

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RUSSIAN MEMORIAL AREA

There is little documentation of change in the character of the Russian Memorial area during this period. The grave marker was situated in a small enclosed clearing beside the trail. Gravel dredging continued proximate to the site and was clearly visible through the thin buffer of trees, but the memorial area itself remained relatively intact.

Frederick Hadleigh-West was also assigned to verify the location of Russian graves during his 1959 archeological project in the Monument. His team, however, failed to uncover any human remains at the site of the Russian Memorial, although they did uncover a greatly decayed horizontal timber feature at a depth of about six inches in the location of the fence and Russian Cross (Figure 10-19). Within the first six inches of soil, on top of or adjacent to the timbers, the team also found a few artifacts, including a few shards of mid-19th century china, three iron spikes (possibly hand-forged in the 19th century), and one brass finger ring. Believing the timber feature to be the top of a "crude timbered crypt," Hadleigh-West expected to find the burials beneath it. However, such was not the case. The excavation was discontinued after the pit had been dug about 9 feet deep and 10 feet square, with several exploratory trenches leading from it, and nothing but sterile soil being found. Hadleigh-West concluded: "There were no Russians buried at this point. Neither was there any other sort of excavatory activity which would have disturbed the soil. The site was, in brief, completely sterile."[96] As a result of his findings, park managers had the Russian Memorial removed.[97]

It also is interesting to note that the crew encountered a layer of compacted gravel over the northern third of the timber structure, which turned out to be the edge of the historic wagon road bed. While the historic documents locate the memorial adjacent to that road, it is surprising that gravel would have been allowed to cover a section of the grave site, if not compacted into it. Additionally, the purpose of the timber structure remains unexplained. Hadleigh-West also stated that in his opinion, the timbers "could have dated from the year 1804," or no later than the mid-19th century. He suggested that the Russians killed in the 1804 battle may not have been buried there at all, and that it was possible the timbers had been part of a commemorative marker to the sailors. Alternatively, the timbers could have been the remains of a more recent commemorative marker situated in the wrong place.[98] It also is possible that the timbers were the remains of some unrelated structure. Hadleigh-West suggested that archival research might reveal more

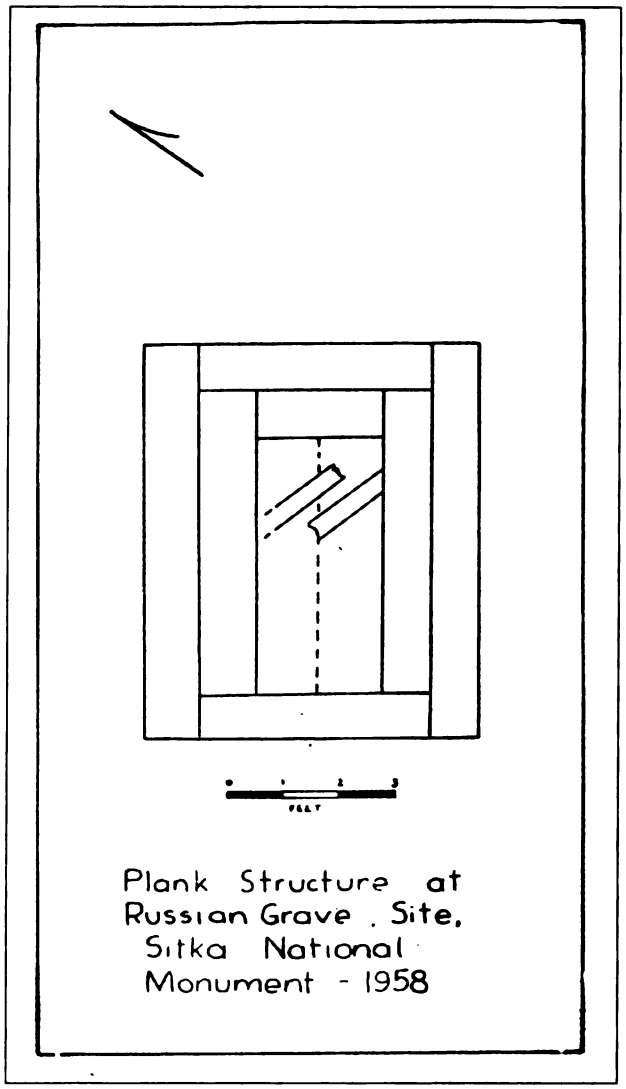

Figure 10-19. Sketch of the timber structure excavated by Frederick Hadleigh-West at the Russian Memorial, 1958.

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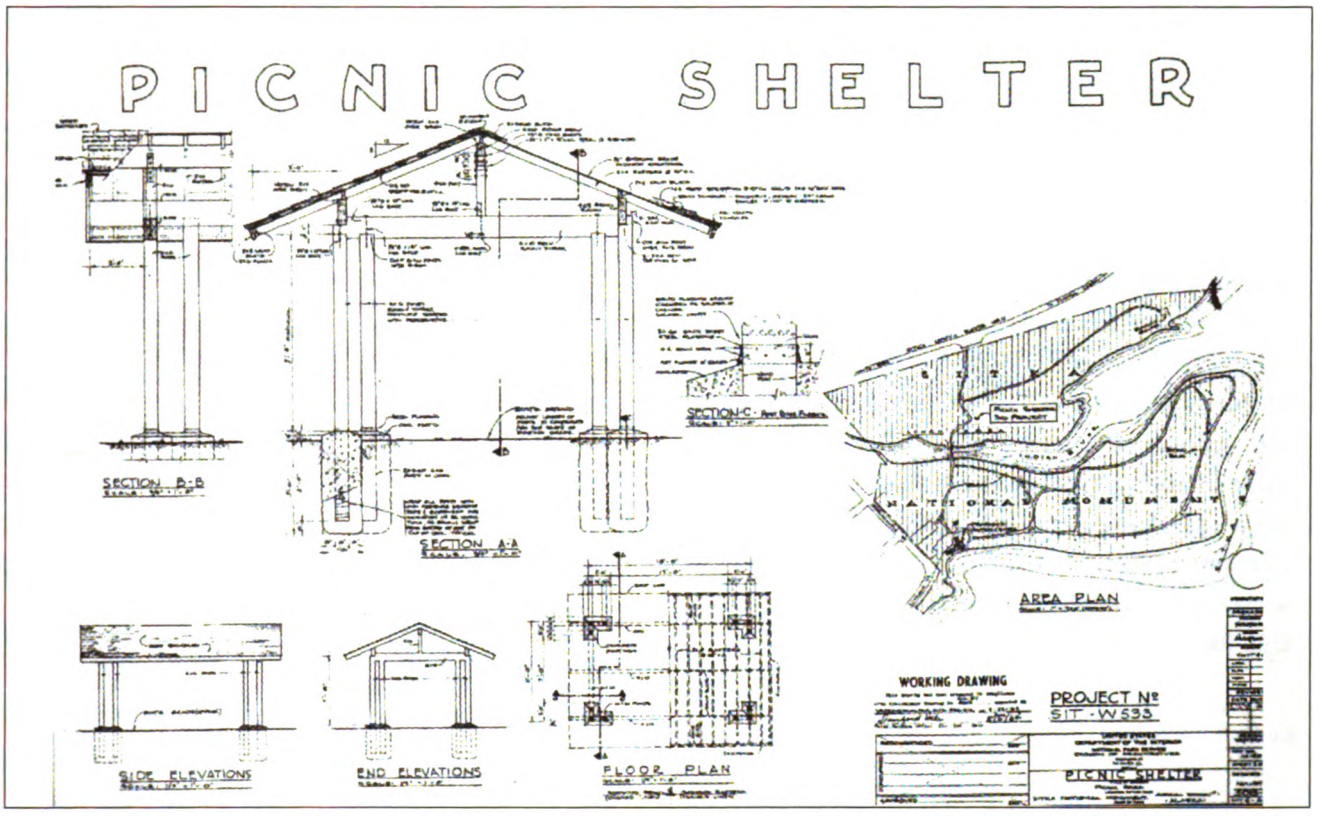

Figure 10-20. Picnic shelter plan for Sitka National Monument, 1964.

information about the possible graves and memorial. Such investigation, however, has yet to provide any more details as to the existence and whereabouts of the Russian graves.

In 1960, the NPS received a request to erect another memorial at the previous Russian grave site. A new marker was erected and dedicated on March 23, 1960. The site was blessed in a ceremony by the local Bishop of Sitka's Russian Orthodox Church. Several days later, an open house and tea were hosted by the Sitka Historical Society to commemorate the memorial. According to Hall, "the affair was well attended and considered the most successful affair conducted by the society."[99]

THE PICNIC AREA

Another important component of Mission 66 development at Sitka National Monument was the construction, on the eastern side of the Indian River, of a recreational area consisting of picnic and toilet facilities. A site was chosen where the spruce/hemlock forest had washed out in the 1940s and which was in an early developmental stage of an alder stand. Plans included the construction of a wooden picnic shelter, and the installation of picnic tables, fire places, and chemical toilets. In 1964 and 1965, the picnic shelter was erected, picnic tables and fireplaces were constructed, and two chemical toilets were installed (Figure 10-20).[100] By mid-summer 1966, the picnic area was completed.[101] The toilet and shelter locations are depicted in Figure 172, but the precise locations of the other picnic tables and fireplaces are not documented.

CONCLUSION

Significant changes took place in the landscape of Sitka National Monument during the 1956-1971 interim. By far the most dramatic transitions were the product of Mission 66 developments—the visitor center, the new footbridge, the picnic area, and the

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improved trails. These developments arose from the commitment of the NPS to improve and maintain the monument's landscape, despite the damage done to the lands by the gravel dredging and flooding during the 1940s. The actions also reflect federal commitment to the provision of recreational and educational facilities in NSP facilities throughout the nation for use by the American public. The significance of the visitor center at Sitka National Monument, however, has another dimension since it also serves as the site for the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center. As such, it reflects the growing interest, among both the NPS and Native Alaskans, in the perpetuation of Indian culture. As a social and symbolic "community house," it became a true focal point for the monument.

ENDNOTES

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[6] Regional Director, Memo to Superintendent of Sitka and Glacier Bay, December 11, 1959, SITK Archives, (SITK 14591 a-b RG 10), Folder 4.
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[8] *Ibid.*, Chapter 2, Section 1, pp. 3, 4, 8.
[9] "Monthly Narrative Report for May 1958," June 3, 1958, SITK Archives, RG 10, Box 5, Folder 9, Administrative Records (SITK 14591 a-b RG 10).
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[32] Herbert Maier, Assitant Regional Director, Memorandum to Director, October 25, 1960, SITK Archives, RG 10, Box 4, Folder 3.
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CHAPTER 11

SITKA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK, 1972 - 1996

The mission of Sitka National Historical Park is "to preserve the site of the decisive battle of the Russian conquest of Alaska in 1804... and to develop among its visitors an understanding and appreciation of the Tlingit Indians and their culture, the conquest and settlement of Alaska by Russia, and other aspects of the history of Alaska and our nation."

Statement for Management, Sitka National Historical Park, 1976

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

SITKA NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK 1972-1996

The past twenty-five years have seen the continued expansion of Sitka. The population increased from 6,425 people in 1970 to 7,800 by 1980.[1] A decade later, in 1990, just under 8,600 Sitka residents were reported in the national census, and it is estimated that the figure had increased to approximately 9,000 individuals by 1995.[2] This slow growth has continued, despite the closing of the Alaska Pulp Corporation Mill in 1993, which led to the subsequent loss of approximately 400 jobs and 20-33 percent of the town's tax base.[3] In addition to the governmental, educational, and health services that currently support the town, fishing continues as a critical element in the local economy. Sitka is one of the main trolling ports in the region and the site of two commercial fish processing operations.

Tourism also continues to function as an important local economic activity. Air transportation to the area now includes daily jet service to and from Seattle and Juneau. In addition, the Alaska Marine Highway continues to stop regularly at Old Sitka, located approximately seven miles north of town. The most dramatic influx of tourists arrives on the increasing number of cruise ships that visit the town during the summer season. In summer 1981, a total of 83 cruise ships stopped in Sitka, bringing approximately 80,000 visitors to town.[4] By 1995, it was projected that this figure had more than doubled.[5] The cruise ship industry has become a critical element in the local economy. At the same time, the repeated arrival of numerous cruise passengers *en masse* has created the need for current city and NPS planning initiatives to improve tourist facilities.

Visitation to the park has also increased during the past twenty-five years, particularly with the increase in cruise ship traffic. In 1972, approximately 38,000 visitors were reported by park staff. Ten years later, that number had jumped to approximately 90,000.[6] By 1995, the park staff reported almost 248,000 visitor contacts and estimated that over 110,000 non-contacted visitors had entered the park as well.[7] That same year, in addition to local residents and other tourists, 100,000 cruise ship passengers were expected in the park.[8] These visitors are generally limited to a very short time period in the park, which allows them to make no more than a short tour of the visitor center (often to use the bathrooms), or to take a brief walk along the Totem Trail. A 1993 study of visitor use revealed that park visitation by local residents is even greater than that demonstrated by cruise passengers. Local residents are most likely to use the park trails and other facilities year round.[9]

CREATION OF A NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

The growth of tourism in Sitka was paralleled by the evolution of Sitka National Monument into a National Historical Park. Created by a congressional act passed on October 18, 1972, the NPS holdings in Sitka were expanded and re-designated Sitka National Monument, along with the Russian Bishop's House, as Sitka National Historical Park. The act authorized the NPS to acquire "by donation, purchase, or exchange" the historic property in order to "preserve in public ownership for the benefit and inspiration of present and future generations of Americans," the area which commemorated "czarist Russia's exploration and colonization in Alaska."[10] The passage of this act represented the fruition of goals expressed as early as 1939 by Superintendent Been, and of more recent planning efforts undertaken by NPS staff during the 1960s. Already in 1967, expansion of Sitka National Monument had been discussed by NPS officials. A 1968 NPS "Alternatives Study for Sitka" had recommended that the National Park Service acquire the

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Russian Mission (as the Russian Bishop's House was then known) and the re-constructed Russian blockhouse. The report also recommended that a complex of Russian period structures be built around the blockhouse. The City of Sitka subsequently approved the NPS Alternatives Study.[11]

Only part of the alternative recommended by the 1968 study was enacted when the Historical Park Act passed in 1972. It authorized an appropriation of up to $140,000 to be used for purchase of the Russian Mission and $691,000 for development of the site.[12] It did not mention the blockhouse. The act also enlarged the Indian River unit of the park to include city and state tidelands and Lots 5 and 6 along Sawmill Creek Road. Most importantly, the passage of the legislation reflected Congressional recognition of Sitka's Russian history.

The fascinating story of the restoration and on-site archeological excavations of the Russian Bishop's does not figure directly into the landscape history of the Indian River segment of the park. Its acquisition, however, led to greater emphasis on the Russian history of the park in general. A 1976 Statement of Management defined the purpose of the park as follows:

> . . . to preserve the site of the decisive battle of the Russian conquest of Alaska in 1804 for public use and enjoyment and to develop among its visitors an understanding and appreciation of the Tlingit Indians and their culture, the conquest and settlement of Alaska by Russian, and other aspects of the history of Alaska and our nation.[13]

The same document lists the significant resources of the park as consisting of the fort and battle site, the eighteen totem poles, the Russian Bishop's House, "Lover's Lane," which is referred to as "a continuation of the [Russian] Governor's Walk," and the Indian River. The statement reflects the attempt of the NPS to balance Tlingit and Russian interpretations of the newly created National Historical Park.[14]

Although the inclusion of the Russian Bishop's House property as a historic site certainly comprised a very important addition to NPS resources in Sitka and to the agency's preservation and interpretation program, that property is not the subject of this study. The primary efforts in the Indian River segment of the park during the last two decades have been directed towards protection of park resources, both natural and cultural, the development of visitor center interpretive programs, and the support of Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center initiatives, including continued totem pole replication and creation. These continue to be critical endeavors today and have resulted in the further evolution of the park's landscape.

TLINGIT PARTICIPATION IN THE PARK

The Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center in the park's visitor center comprises an important center for the practice and demonstration of traditional Tlingit arts that allows the artist themselves, through demonstrations, to interpret their culture to visitors. Originally operated under a contract with the Alaska Native Brotherhood, the center is now a native-operated non-profit corporation.[15] Woodcarving, silver carving, and other arts are demonstrated in the center's workshops. Artwork from the center is sold in an Alaska Natural History Association outlet located in the visitor center.[16]

The Cultural Center has played an important role in the preservation of Tlingit traditions in Sitka during the twenty-five years it has operated, and it is currently sponsoring programs that will help to perpetuate and develop Tlingit culture in the future. The carving and raising of the Indian River History Totem Pole in 1996 symbolized a coming together of the Tlingit clans in Sitka, and expressed a reaffirmation of their connections to the park landscape. It also was the first totem pole designed and carved by Sitka artists to commemorate the Tlingit community of the Sitka area. In 1996, the Cultural Center sponsored an important protocol workshop, during which time Tlingit elders met to establish rules and customs for the interpretation of their history.

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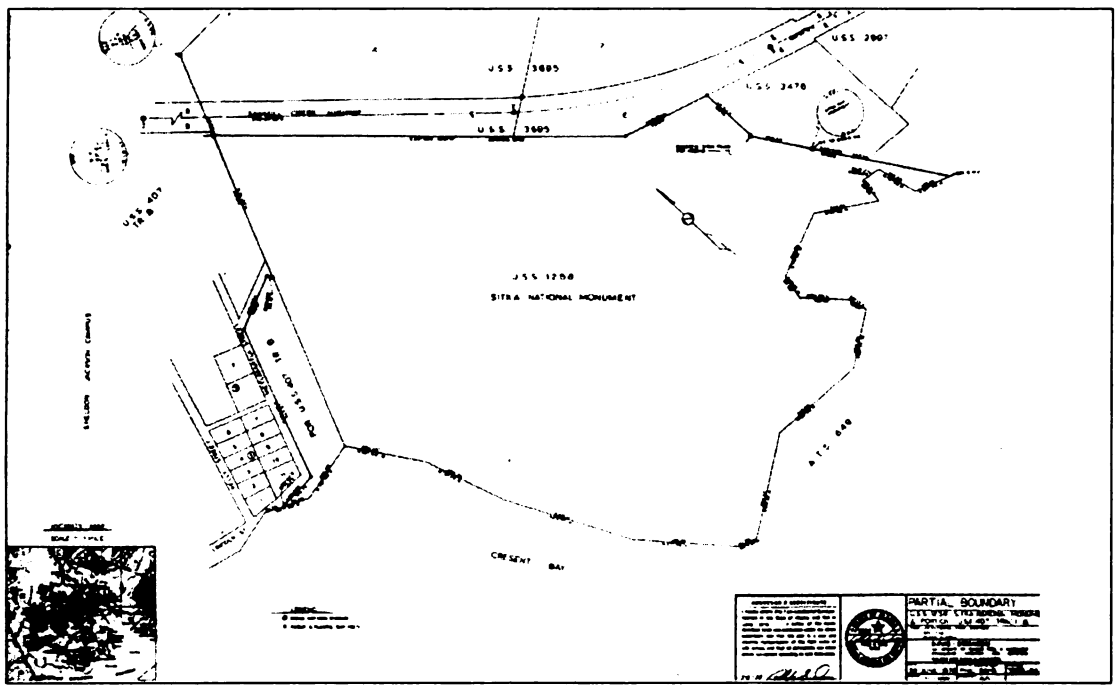

Figure 11-1. Boundary of Sitka National Historical Park, June 1978.

The NPS is also working with the Tlingit to review the park's museum collection. Since the human remains and cultural objects in the collection may be eligible for repatriation under the Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), the NPS has begun taking necessary steps to comply with the law. The National Park Service also has responsibility for a number of ethnographic items on loan from the Sitka Tlingit. These clan-owned items were brought to the park for care and protection in its museum. The NPS has also conducted research to help resolve questions of conflicting clan ownership.[17]

The National Park Service is working with the Sitka Tribe of Alaska to implement the Tribal Self-Governance Act of 1994, which allows eligible tribes to enter into funding agreements that permit them to assume responsibility for certain functions within the park. Consulation over possible park programs, services, or functions that have special significance for the Sitka Tlingit are expected to follow what have as yet been preliminary discussions over these issues.[18]

BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENTS

Passage of the 1972 Act incorporated peripheral lands into the park, including lots along Sawmill Creek Road on the park's northeastern boundary and tidelands that surround the Indian River peninsula. However, although defined as part of the park at that time, Lots 5 and 6 remain under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management. The 47.92 acres of tideland were held under 50-year leases, acquired from the state by the NPS in 1971, and which expire in 2028. In 1972, the City of Sitka's lease of 1.61 acres of tidelands near the visitor center was renewed so as to conform to the new boundary, which was slightly larger than the original agreement. The 1980 Land Acquisition Plan also recommended that the NPS eventually acquire the tidelands. Nevertheless, they remain under lease at present. Figure 11-1 illustrates the boundaries as defined by the 1972 act.[19]

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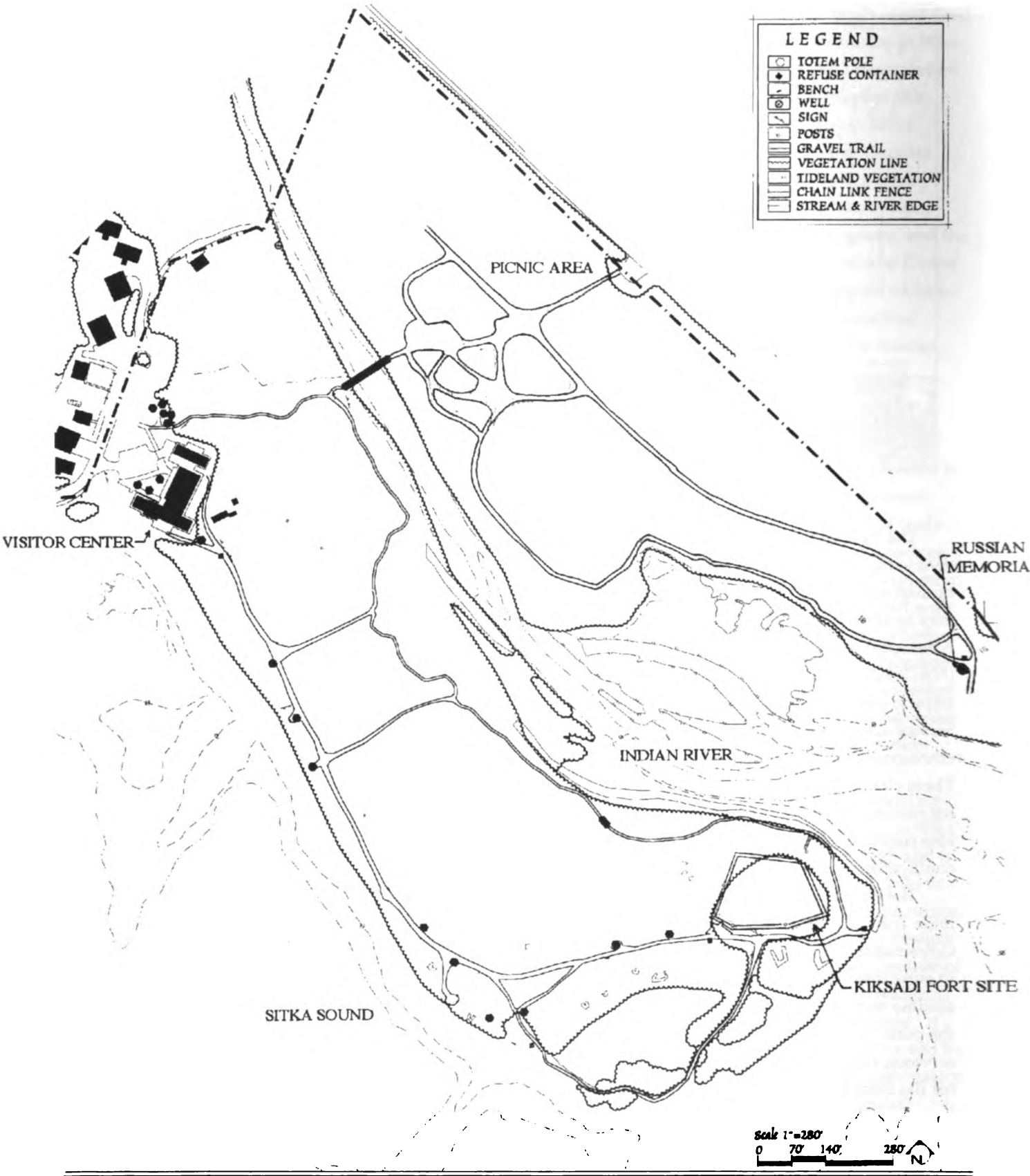

Diagram 23. Landscape conditions, 1995, in Sitka National Historical Park.

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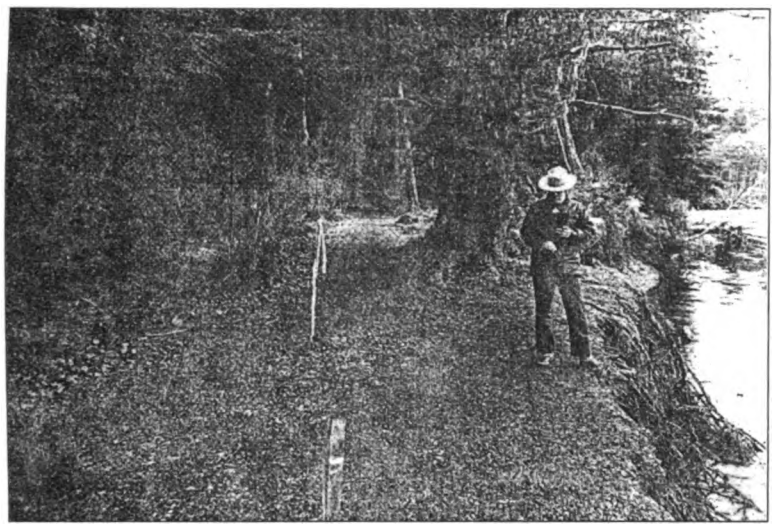

Figure 11-2. River bank erosion near the fort site clearing, 1979-80.

Landscape Conditions

During the past twenty-five years, the rhythms of landscape change have continued at the park. For the most part, however, the transitions have been relatively small in scale and have not resulted in significant alterations to the park's character.

Indian River Area

The character of the Indian River area has become more scenic in the past twenty five years. For the most part, the vegetation has re-established itself on areas disturbed in the past. However, erosion problems, largely resulting from past dredging operations, have continued to be a problem near the river's mouth. In addition, concern over the maintenance of an adequate streamflow for both the ecological and aesthetic health of the river has become a concern as other local uses propose to increase their out-take upstream from the park. Water pollution has also become a concern with the increase in development upstream from the park. Protecting the river's biological and aesthetic integrity has been a primary concern of the National Park Service in recent decades.

The diversion of water upstream from the park boundaries presents a potential threat to this integrity. Historically, the City of Sitka had utilized the Indian River for its municipal water supply, but after the State of Alaska denied the municipality's request for an additional withdrawl of 3.5 million gallons per day, city officials constructed a pipeline to Blue Lake, and in 1985 the Indian River was relegated to backup status as a water source.[20]

Sheldon Jackson College, however, also diverts water from the river for its fish hatchery operation. Additionally, about one-half mile upstream and beyond the extent of tidal actions, the institution maintains a dam for the generation of emergency hydroelectric power. When the College applied for additional Indian River water rights for the hatchery in 1982, the application was set aside by the Alaska Department of Natural Resources, which decided, at that time, to consider a "basin-wide" adjudication of the rights.[21]

In order to prepare a Federal Reserved Water Rights Claim for Indian River water, the NPS contracted with the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife to conduct a fishery instream flow study to determine the requirements needed to maintain a healthy salmon spawning habitat in the park.[22] The NPS Pacific Northwest Regional Office also conducted a recreational and interpretation instream flow study to document the minimum flow required to maintain these standards. Nonetheless, although the studies were completed in 1987 and the interested parties agreed to negotiate a settlement, Indian River water rights remained unresolved as of 1996.[23]

Active erosion of the Indian Rivers banks has continued during this period as well. The alarmingly rapid loss of the river bank adjacent to the fort site increased the urgency for further erosion control measures (see Figure 11-2). According to Bruce Molina, a U.S.G.S. marine geologist who inspected the river in 1977, the riprap that had been installed

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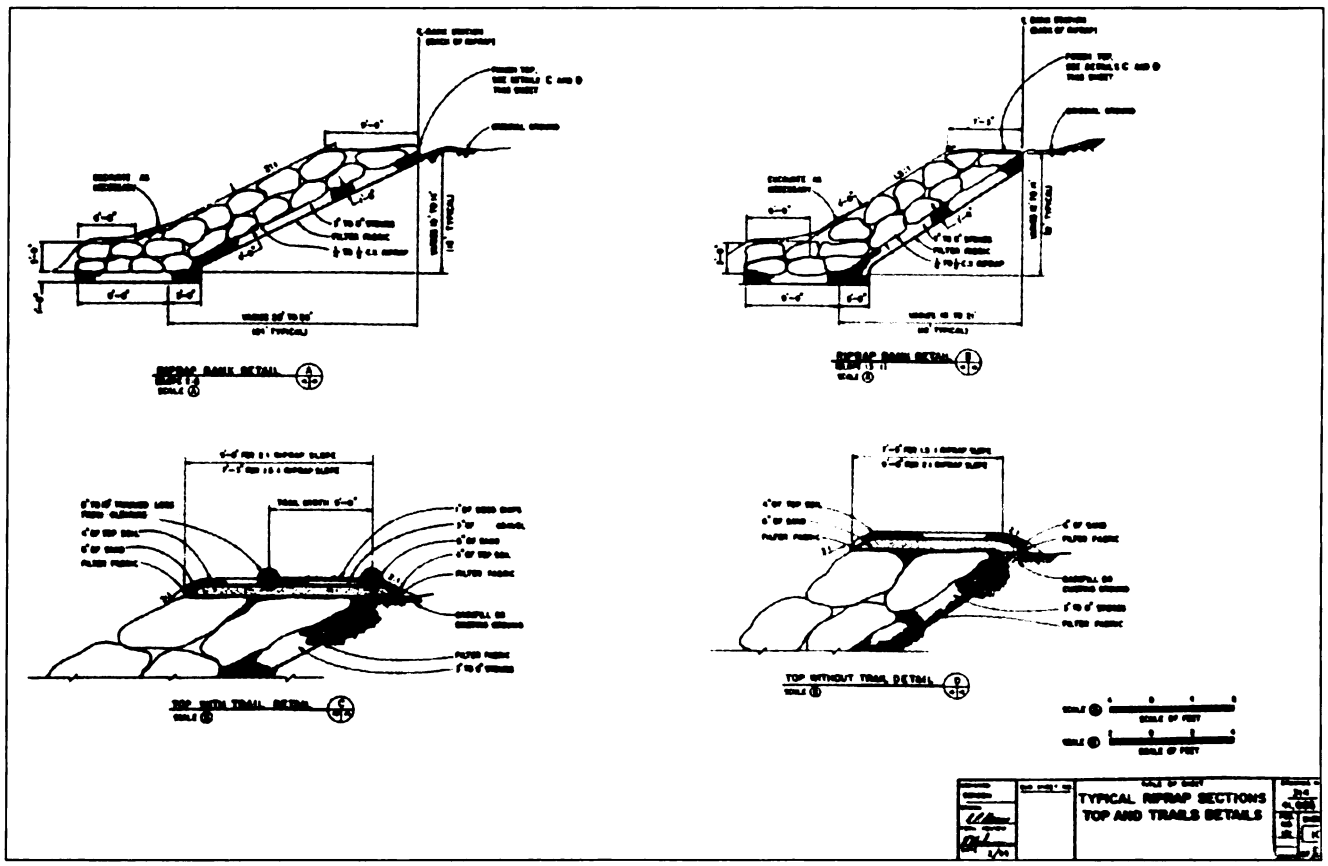

Figure 11-3. Stone riprap installed along the southwestern bank of the Indian River, 1985.

in the 1960s exacerbated the erosion near the fort site. He wrote that the riprap had "locked the river into a course where the laterally cutting edge of a meander falls against the part of the peninsula where the historic fort is located." Molina concluded that the change in flow, combined with the effects of the long term dredging that occurred at the mouth of the river, had resulted in "a very complex and rapid erosion as an end product." He recommended the installation of additional riprap to protect the fort site, stating that "it is much, much too late to alter the course of the river, rather I think you can only wage a holding action to protect the fort."[24]

Upon another inspection of the situation two years later, Molina found that in some places along the river, three to six meters of land had eroded or slumped into the water. At that time, he calculated that in at least three different places, only six to eight meters of land remained between the designated fort site and river. He repeated his earlier recommendation that a "protective barrier" be constructed.[25] A 1980 National Park Service report noted that in the previous one and one-half years, over 12 feet of "shoreline depth" had been lost. At that time, approximately 30 feet of land remained between the river and fort site.[26]

Finally, in the early 1980s, a major erosion control effort was undertaken in the park. In June 1983, both an Indian River Erosion Control Environmental Assessment and an erosion control engineering report were released by the NPS. The environmental assessment described the Indian River as "one of the most manipulated systems in Alaska." The report documented the causes of erosion in the river and stated that "at the current rate of erosion, portions of the fort site could begin to erode away within five years." It also warned, however, that a heavy storm and flood event could damage the fort site at any time. Consequently, the recommendation

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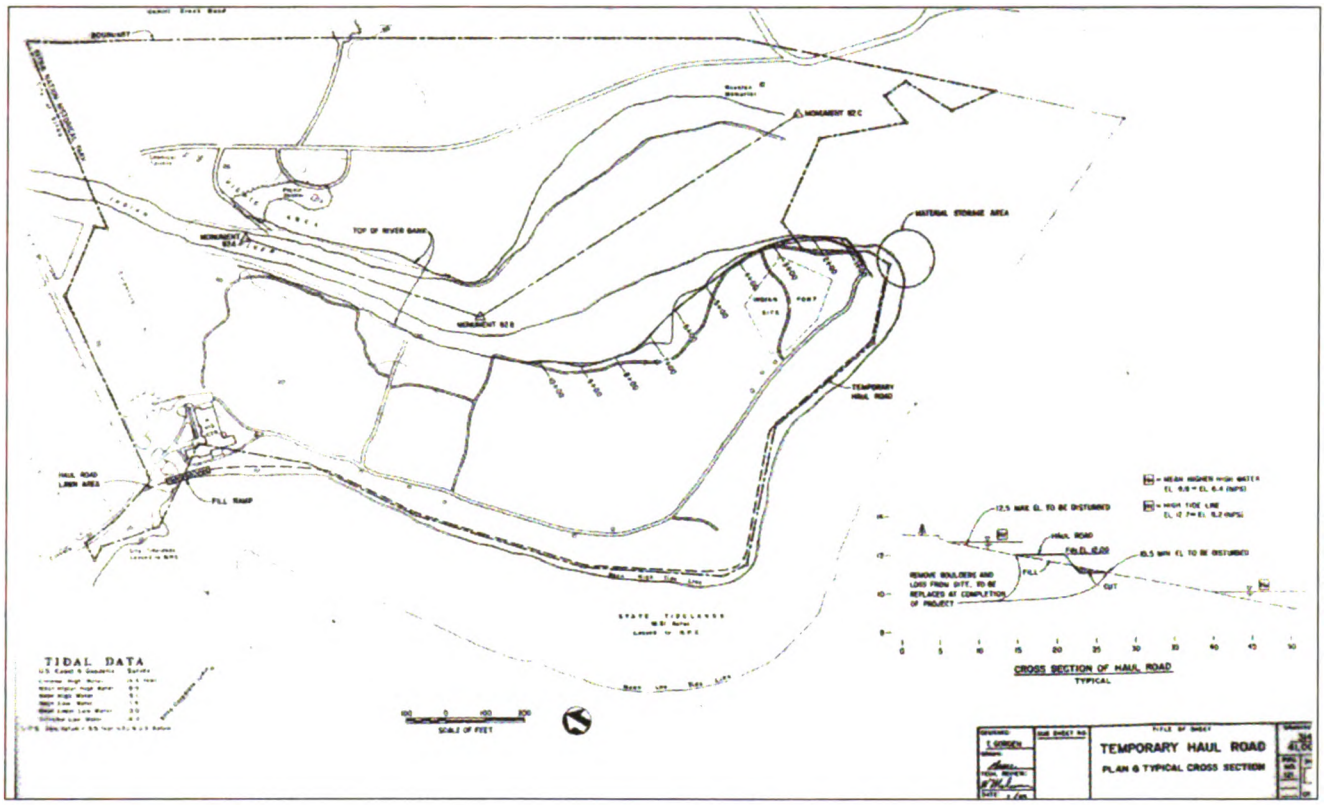

Figure 11-4. Riprap installation project plan, showing the temporary haul road, the extent of the riprap, and the material storage area, 1985.

made in the environmental assessment was that a sloped wall type of rip-rap, which would be placed 50 percent in the river and 50 percent on the river bank, be installed for protective services (Figure 11-3).[27]

The required permits, however, were not issued for the project when the State of Alaska determined that the riprap construction would bring about "unacceptable habitat encroachment without demonstrating that there was not feasible and prudent alternative." Subsequently, the NPS submitted a compromise proposal in which the riprap would encroach into the stream to a lesser degree.[28] The State Department of Fish and Game, however, advocated a vertical type of bank support, which would not interfere with the river bottom and fish habitat. The NPS objected to this method on aesthetic and ecological grounds. The Coastal Zone Management section of the Office of the Governor ultimately ruled in favor of the NPS proposal.

The project was undertaken in June 1985. In order to reach the site, a temporary haul road was constructed on the beach that extended from the front of the visitor center out to the mouth of the river. The sloped, wall rock riprap was finally installed in the summer and completed by October.[30] It extended along the western bank of the Indian River from just below the second cross trail to a short distance around the point at the mouth of the river (see Figures 11-3 and 11-4).[31] The riprap installed at that time is still in place and effectively controls erosion along the western bank of the river.

Changes were also taking place on the eastern shore of the river's mouth—changes that exacerbated erosion problems adjacent to the fort site. A trailer court had been established on the northeastern side of the river's mouth, at the former location of Haley's homestead and subsequent gravel operations. In 1973, the owner of the court illegally dumped 10,000 cubic yards of fill into the intertidal zone of Jamestown Bay in order to expand his

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Figure 11-5. Concrete remains of a previous Indian River footbridge, 1995.

property. Two years later, he constructed a 250-foot-long log and riprap bulkhead to contain and protect the fill, which extended 200 feet into Jamestown Bay at the mouth of the Indian River.[32] The owner belatedly applied for a U. S. Army Corps of Engineers permit for the installation of the fill and bulkhead, but it was denied.[33] The Corps requested that he remove the fill and bulkhead and restore the site to its previous condition by June 1, 1981.[34] The project however, was not removed. Following the damaging floods of the mid-1980s, large rock rip-rap was installed in 1987 to stabilize the trailer court fill even further.[35]

Presently, in several areas, remains of historic features and activities can be discerned in the river. The concrete abutments of an earlier bridge have become lodged in the center of the channel south of the present bridge (Figure 11-5). On the northeastern side of the river, near its mouth, on-going erosion has exposed a mass of buried cable on the bank, most likely left from either the gravel dredging or asphalt operations conducted in that vicinity in the 1940s and 1950s (Figure 11-6). A large piece of a bulldozer track, undoubtedly left from those same activities, was also left in the river channel and is clearly visible during periods of low water (Figure 11-7).

Figure 11-6. Buried cable eroding from the Indian River bank, 1995.

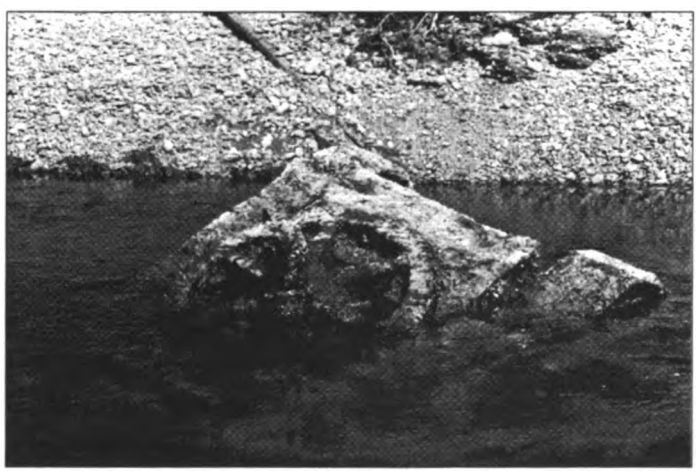

Figure 11-7. Submerged equipment in the Indian River channel, 1995.

Despite these intrusions, the overall character of the river corridor within the park is natural and scenic, especially in the upper stretches. Dense spruce-hemlock forest growth extends along the banks and leans out over the water. The trees that comprise the deciduous alder-salmonberry community along the eastern side of the stream have grown tall over lush shrubbery along the bank (Figure 11-8). The central section of the river, between the bridge and estuary, is heavily forested on both shores, with large expanses of exposed cobblestones creating islands in the channel during periods of low water (Figure 11-9). For the most part, the

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estuary created by the Naval gravel dredging operations of the 1940s has become densely vegetated with salt tolerant grasses and sedges (Figure 11-10). The width of the channel in this section of the river creates a pleasant contrast to the enclosed woodland corridor up-river and affords expansive views of the surrounding forest and mountains. However, it also affords a clear view of the trailer court situated across the fort area and the river's mouth (Figure 11-11).

Figure 11-8. Looking over the Indian River bridge towards the picnic area, 1995.

Figure 11-9. Gazing upstream in the Indian River channel at low tide, 1995.

with grasses, mosses, and other vegetation in some places. Nevertheless, its exposed surface imparts an unnatural facade and straight bank that only add to the manipulated character of the lowest stretches of the river. Considering the degree of past disturbance to the area and the extreme erosion that has occurred along the southwestern bank, this section of the river is in relatively good shape. Its character has certainly improved since cessation of

That the lowest section of the river in the park has been subject to greater disturbance and development is evident in its present appearance. The trailer court, with its massive stone riprap, dominates the scene on the northeastern shore. Adjacent to the court, an alder stand grows along the channel, above a steep cobblestone bank that is eroding actively (and exposing buried planks and the cable shown in Figure 11-6). The riprap on the opposite shore has been effective in controlling erosion in that area and has been colonized

Figure 11-10. Indian River estuary, 1995.

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Figure 11-11. Down-river view of the Indian River estuary, 1995.

industrial operations within the park; it can be hoped that the character of the river and streambank will continue to improve during subsequent years.

BEACHES AND TIDAL FLATS

The overall character of the park's beaches and tidal flats, for the most part, has remained undisturbed. Nonetheless, the process of beach build-up at the foot of the Indian River peninsula has continued over the past 25 years. The logs from the nearby pulp mill continued to wash onto the point and raise the level of the beach. In 1981, Superintendent Ernest Suazo attempted to address the problem by having some of the logs cut and burned on the beach.[36] He reported that although they worked to remove "a tremendous number" of logs from that area, the effort only constituted a "minor stab" at removing the total accumulation.[37] Until the pulp mill closed in 1993, the logs continued to pile up on the beach, thereby enlarging the stabilized area. Although the increase has stopped, today these massive logs still remain on the upper edge of the beach (Figure 11-12).

The vegetation on the higher elevations of this uplifted beach meadow is now comprised of red alders and salmonberry, with young spruce beginning to come up beneath them. In the lower elevations, where salt water occasionally pools after storm tides wash over the ridges, salt tolerant grasses and herbs predominate.[38] The lowest elevation of the beach at the foot of the peninsula consists of an expansive beach meadow which retains its historic character. However, the uplifted ridges and the trees and shrubs that have become established on them effectively obliterate the open character of the historic battlefield site.

A narrow footpath that ran through the uplifted area was improved in 1980. Workers cleared away large beach logs and surfaced the trail with wood chips.[39] Leading off the Totem Trail, the battlefield trail skirts the western edge of the meadow and then

Figure 11-12. Pulp mill logs on the uplifted beach at the end of the Indian River peninsula, 1995.

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cuts north to the fort site. When the trail was created, the uplifted beach through which it passed was predominantly covered with low grasses and herbs. As of 1996, red alders, salmonberry, and other shrubs and small trees enclosed the trail and blocked the view to the sea. Large mill logs are apparent under the lush vegetation in some areas.

Figure 11-13. Old gravel dredging pits in the park tidelands, 1995.

The natural character of the stretch of park beach west of the peninsula is relatively intact. In some areas, particularly in front of the visitor center where they help to support the fill deposited at the back of the beach, groups of immense mill logs occur (see Figure 10-15). Also, the old gravel dredging pits that were excavated along the beach form lagoons in the gravel tideflats during periods of low tide (Figure 11-13).

FORT AREA

Other than the river bank erosion discussed above, the fort site area has not been the locus of large-scale change during the past twenty-five years. Most of the area is densely forested. However, certain Park Service activities have impacted the fort site clearing.

In 1980, the clearing was landscaped in conjunction with the creation of the new battlefield trail project. Suazo reported that low areas remaining from previous archeological excavations were filled in and seeded with grass. Unfortunately, the fill dirt used to level the clearing came from the Russian Bishop's house and contained cultural material. Therefore, any future archeological excavation conducted at the fort site clearing will be impacted by this deposition.[40] The cleared area was enlarged between 1980 and 1990. NPS staff members also removed a very large hazard tree from the fort site. Suazo reported that since its removal opened up the site, he felt that more trees were lost from windfalls thereafter.[41]

Figure 11-14. Designated fort site clearing, 1995.

The present character of the clearing is that of an enclosed, quiet retreat composed of an expanse of lawn surrounded on all sides by tall spruce and hemlock trees. The nearby river, beach, and sound are

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Figure 11-15. Remains of a World War II gun emplacement near the fort site clearing, 1995.

totally blocked from view. The woodland clearing is a pleasant space to enter from the forest trail (Figure 11-14). As the designated site of the beach-side Tlingit fort, however, it is quite confusing. Additionally, aside from the increased size of the trees and the full enclosure on the beach side, the present situation is probably similar to the area's historic character since not long after the totems were placed in the park in 1902.

Archeological Investigations

Although no additional excavations have been conducted in the area since 1958, historical research and archeological analyses have raised questions about the remains Frederick Hadleigh-West uncovered in that year. When historic documents revealed that a Russian homestead had existed in the vicinity of the fort site, the age of most artifacts from the site suggested the possibility that Hadleigh-West had found the remains of this enclave instead of the fort. Hence, Ty Dilliplane, an historical archeologist, was hired by the NPS to evaluate the data in 1993. He conducted a review of the relevant historical documents, assessed the oral accounts, and completed an analysis of Hadleigh-West's artifact assemblage.[42] Dilliplane concluded that many of the artifacts from Hadleigh-West's excavation could definitely be dated to a time after 1804 and that many others, such as certain ceramics, represented types in use long after that date. This assessment, coupled with the presence of what may have been Russian period bricks in Hadleigh-West's Unit One, seemed to indicate that the remains located in 1958 may have been the site of the former Russian homestead. Dilliplane recommended further archeological testing to locate the structural features of the fort and houses it contained.[43]

In 1995, statistical spatial analysis of the assemblage was conducted by Thule Research. The investigators, however, reported that the "gross nature of the excavation units severely limited both

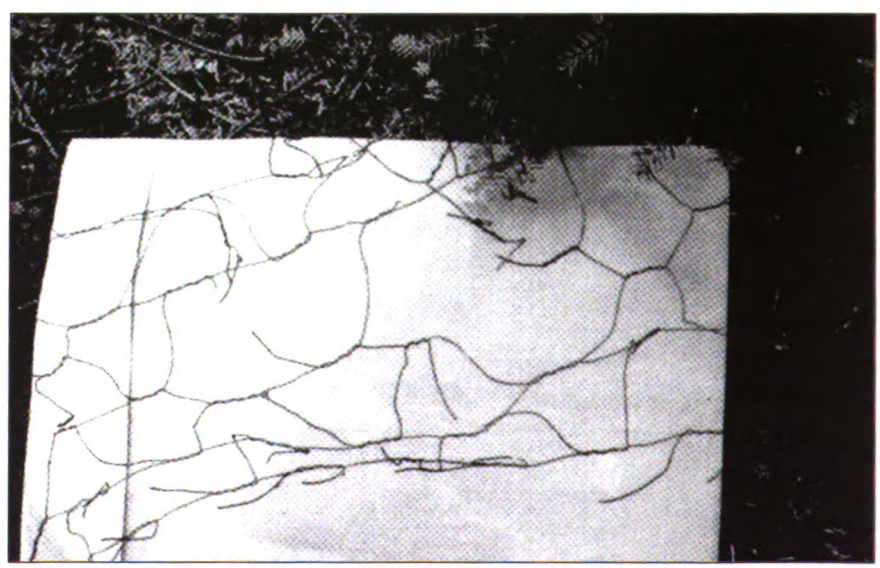

Figure 11-16. Close-up of the wire that formerly encased a gun emplacement, 1995.

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the analyses which could be conducted and their resulting interpretation." Nevertheless, the firm's staff members determined that the total artifact distribution was not random since certain units predominated with certain artifact types. Their analysis revealed, for example, that Hadleigh-West's Unit One contained the greatest number of ceramics, while glass predominated in the south wall unit. Furthermore, Thule Research concluded that "the Interior unit does possess some qualities of domestic function in the presence of ceramics and nails. The dominance of glass artifacts adjacent to the walls also deserves further investigation." The consultants noted, however, that "of equal importance to the poor spatial control at the site assemblage is the extreme temporal breadth exhibited by the assemblage."[44]

In addition to the analysis of the entire sample, the items that could be potentially contemporary with the battle of 1804 were analyzed; they totaled 353 items (approximately 33 percent of the entire sample). Altogether, 94 percent of these artifacts were ceramics, most of which were used over a very long period of time. Consequently, based upon their upper limiting date, only 18 artifacts—1 ceramic and 17 nails (1.7 percent of the total)—could be dated to the period of the battle. A spatial analysis of the 353 items showed some additional patterning, but it was insufficient to define activity areas within the site. The researchers concluded that additional analysis of the assemblage was needed, including comparison with items from Old Sitka. They also concluded that a new excavation should be conducted, using a systematic strategy in which detailed provenience would be recorded.[45] Until that happens, questions will remain about Hadleigh-West's findings.

TOTEM TRAIL

During the past twenty-five years little lasting change has been documented along the Totem Trail. What has occurred consisted mainly of totem preservation activities and the removal of hazardous vegetation from along the corridor. Yet, the basic character of the trail remains intact. The level, bark-covered path enters into the forest just beyond the first totem pole that stands behind the visitor center. Passing through the forest of tall spruce-hemlock trees, it is enclosed on both sides, with only glimpses of the sound apparent through the fringe of trees between the path and beach. The forest understory along much of the trail is a well developed growth of rusty menzisia, red huckleberry, and blueberry shrubs. The delicacy of their texture next to the trail softens the character of the spruce and hemlock forest on either side. Occasionally a larger opening in the trees allows a clear view of the water.

The totems stand along the trail in small clearings, for the most part surrounded and overtopped by the tall forest trees. The specific location of each totem throughout this period has not been documented. In the process of totem preservation, the poles were constantly being taken down, treated, and re-erected. Their locations are shown on park maps from the period, but their specific identities are not labeled. However, a list prepared in 1974 indicates that their order along the trail at the time was very similar to the organization demonstrated in 1996.[46]

In 1978, during the tenure of Superintendent Ellen Lang, a program was initiated for Tlingit carvers to create replicas of the remaining Brady period poles and one CCC-era pole. Like the other Cultural Center demonstrations, visitors could observe the carvers and converse with them. That year, Tlingit carver Tommy Jimmie created two replicas for the park—the Raven/Shark Pole and one of the Yaadaas Crest Corner poles. Maggie, his wife, painted their highlights.[47] Replication of the Memorial/Mortuary Column was undertaken in 1979, and the new pole, carved by Nathan Jackson, was dedicated on August 16, 1980.[48] Jackson carved a reproduction of the other Yaadaas Crest Corner pole in 1982. In 1984 and 1986, four more poles were replicated.[49] Additionally, the original Saanaheit houseposts were replicated by carver Reggie Peterson in 1981.[50] The original totems were put in storage after their copies were erected.

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Figure 11-17. Remains of log cribbing found in the forest along the Indian River, 1995.

Another totem preservation project was undertaken during the early 1990s. In 1993, four totems were treated and re-erected, and by the completion of the project in the next year a total of fifteen had been taken down, cleaned, treated, and re-erected on new support posts.[51]

In recent decades, periodic storms have caused damage to the surface of the trail and the vegetation along it. Ernest Suazo reported that while he was Superintendent, the trail was restored numerous times after storm tides had damaged it. The worst damage was done on Thanksgiving Day in 1984, when, Suazo reported, "the Sitka area was subject to unusually extreme high tides, winds, and rain." The combination of these forces resulted in the loss of 100 to 150 feet of trail and other minor damage scattered throughout the park.[52]

Strong winds also damaged vegetation along the trail. A 1987 windstorm with winds of 60 miles per hour blew a number of trees down in the park, including one along the trail next to the Frog/Raven Pole. The storm also created a number of hazard trees.[53] Suazo reported that a huge number of dead and hazard trees were removed from the park during the time he was at Sitka.[54]

FOREST AND RIVER TRAILS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE INDIAN RIVER

Passing through the park's dense stand of spruce and hemlock, the other forest trails west of the Indian River are, for the most part, enclosed by lush growth on both sides. The river trail, however, allows glimpses and occasional clear views of the stream along its path. One section of the river trail north of the first cross trail passes through an area of blowdown, where young trees are getting established on some of the downed trunks, and where very little vegetation has colonized the understory.

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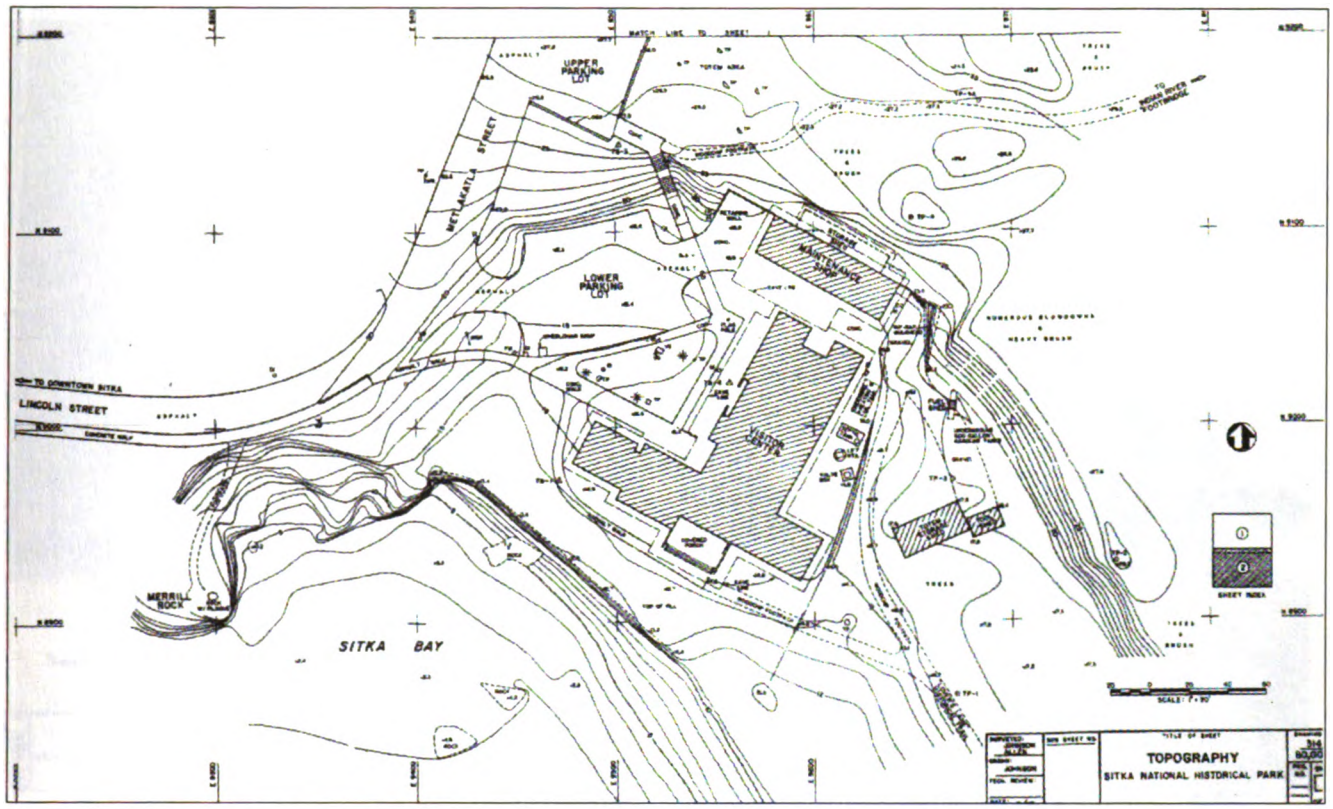

Figure 11-18. Topographic survey of the visitor center site at the park entrance, 1987.

In the low area between the river trail and river, proximate to the historic footbridges, the remains of old log cribbing were discovered under the vegetation (Figure 11-17).

Probably many of the hazard trees were removed along these trails. The 1987 storm felled trees across all three cross trails to the Indian River, and left a group dangling over a ledge at the point of the peninsula. Superintendent Suazo reported that "the trails are impassable due to twelve trees blocking passage." The trees ranged in diameter from eight inches to three and one-half feet. Additionally, the Superintendent noted, "another tree, whose root ball measures about 12 feet in diameter, fell, uprooting three fourths of the walking surface of the trail.[55]

The main trail that traverses the eastern side of the park follows the old road bed built in the 1940s and which leads to the Russian Memorial. The path is wide and level, enclosed by spruce-hemlock forest. Other than routine maintenance of the trail surface and the cutting of overgrown and hazard vegetation, the only documented change that occurred along the path during this period was the installation, in 1980, of a physical fitness "parcourse."[56] The exercise stations were built along trails on the eastern side of the river, but all of these facililties were removed in 1995.[57]

The trail that follows the riverbank is, for the most part, a narrow path. On the southern end, adjacent to the estuary, it is tightly enclosed with young spruce. Several old blown down trees with large rootwads are apparent from the trail. Much of the terrain is uneven and the path in this area winds around the edge of the estuary, passing a small deep slough at one point where rotting logs have fallen into the water and from where an old cable extends and wraps around a tree at the top of the bank and the edge of the trail. Beyond this area, the character changes as the path leads northward into the alder stand towards the footbridge.

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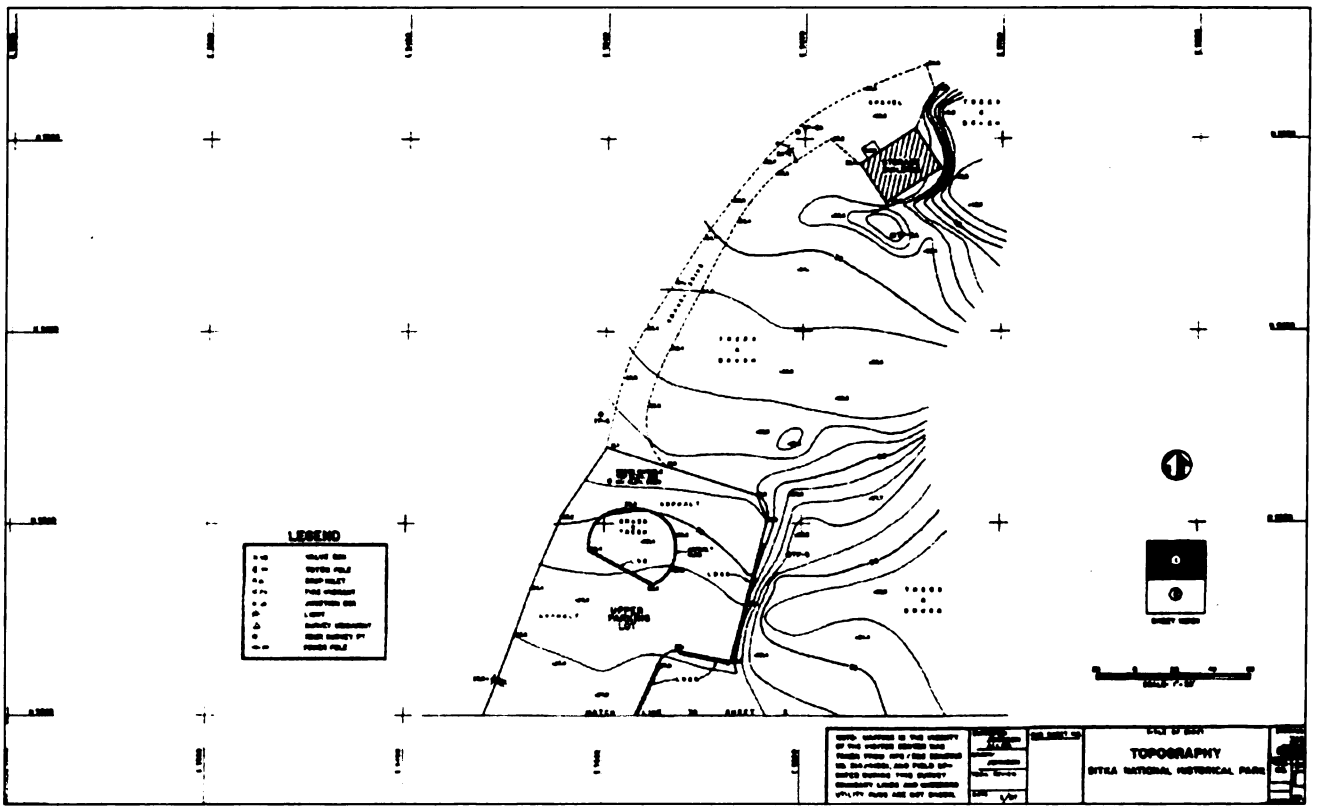

Figure 11-19. Topographic survey of the northern end of the entrance area, including the upper parking lot and storage building, 1987.

ENTRANCE AREA

During recent decades, numerous changes have occurred at the entrance area to the park. These transitions, however, primarily consist of minor alterations that have not significantly affected the character of the area.

Erosion of the beach in front of the visitor center has occurred during these years. Although it was normally a much slower, gradual process than which was occurring in the Indian River channel, park managers felt that a receding beach front eventually could threaten the visitor facilities.[58] Indeed, the tides of the 1984 Thanksgiving Day storm reached the front door of the center and carried logs that banged on the walls of the building.[59] Shortly thereafter, a riprap wall was installed at the back of the beach in front of the center in order to stabilize the area.[60]

Very little change has occurred in the vegetation near the visitor center. Minor changes were undertaken between 1980 and 1990 when the trees around the entrance driveway were thinned and the entrance sign was moved. According to then Superintendent Suazo, these changes were not popular with some local residents.[61]

During the last few decades the paved area around the visitor center has been expanded. Before 1979, an asphalt path was constructed from the center up the slope to the site of the Saanaheit Pole and house posts. At that time the upper path and parking area were surfaced with gravel. In the 1980s, a concrete sidewalk and stairway replaced the path leading to that upper terrace. In addition, a concrete sidewalk stretching from the then asphalt upper parking lot to the Indian Bridge footpath was installed on the terrace (see Figure 11-18).

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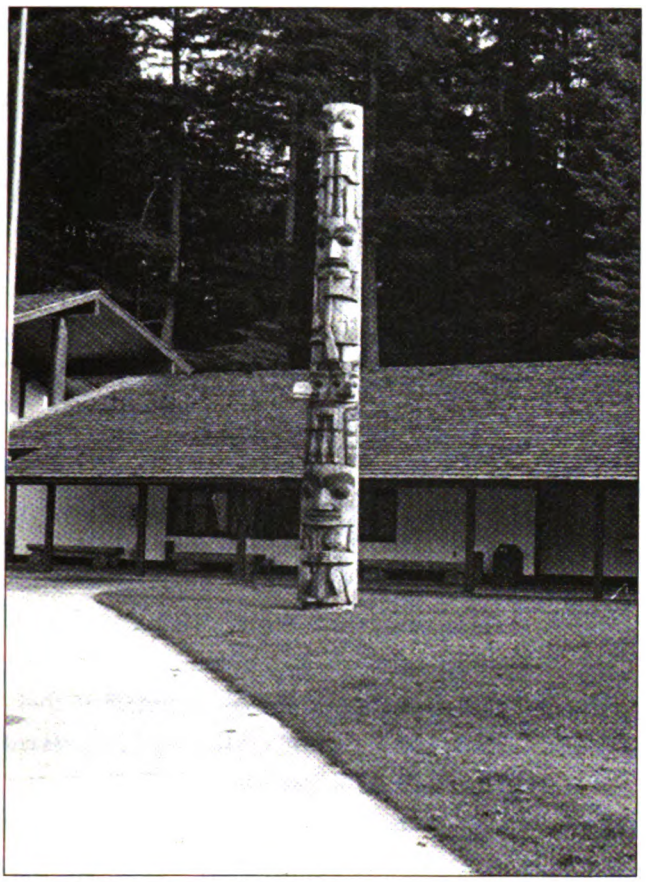

Figure 11-20. Bicentennial Totem Pole in front of the Visitor Center, 1995.

Figure 11-21. Re-erecting a totem pole at the visitor center after it had been repaired, 1993.

A maintenance and storage facility was completed in 1979 adjacent to the Cultural Center wing of the visitor center and at the end of what had been an access road. A garage and shop were located on the lower level, while the second story consisted of a storage area and museum office (see Figure 11-18).[62]

Several small sheds were also constructed in the wooded area behind the visitor center to house tools and totems during the 1980s. The 1987 survey of the visitor center vicinity depicts the totem shed and tool shed in that area. Another storage shed was built in the forest along the gravel road that had been Metakatla Street, and where materials from the Russian Bishop's House restoration were stored (Figure 11-19).[63]

Two new totems were carved for the park and erected around the visitor center. Largely due to the efforts of then Superintendent Ellen Lang, a new totem pole was commissioned for the park in October 1976, in accordance with the celebration of the American Bicentennial. Carved by Duane Pasco, the Bicentennial pole depicts the previous 200-year-history of the Native Alaskans of the Northwest Coast, and includes figures representing the native people, the arrival of white colonizers and their cultural influences, and the raven, eagle, and salmon crests (Figure 11-20). The pole, purposely left unfinished to symbolize the unknown future, was erected in front of the Cultural Center wing of the visitor center.[64] After repairs were made to one of the other totems in front of the center, the pole was re-erected in the summer of 1993 (Figure 11-21).

On April 27, 1996, twenty years after the Bicentennial Pole was dedicated, another new totem was erected in the park. Officially titled the "Indian River Tlingit History Pole," it commemorates the history of the Tlingit clans that used the river (Figure 11-22). The creation of the pole was conceived of

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Figure 11-22. Indian River Tlingit History Pole, October 1996.

and commissioned by the Cultural Center, and was intended to symbolize the coming together of the Sitka Tlingit clans that have conflicting views of the history of the battle. Tlingit elder Herman Kitka researched Tlingit history to determine which clans first arrived in Sitka.[65]

The pole was designed and carved by Will Burkhardt, a grandson of George Benson, who had carved poles for the CCC in the 1930s, and who later taught carving in the Cultural Center. He was assisted by Wayne Price and Tommy Joseph. Its design is unprecedented in that the pole displays crests of both Raven and Eagle moieties. Raven is the uppermost figure on the pole. Beneath him is a human figure, representing the first people to settle in Sitka. He wears the hat of the Kiks.ádi clan and holds two salmon, symbolizing the Coho clan. Beneath the human figure is a large frog, then the Kiks.ádi crest, and beneath that the eagle, representing the clans of the Eagle moiety. The Eagle clans, the Kaagwaantaan and the Chookaneidi, are represented in the Brown Bear crest (Figure 11-22). That the pole displays all these crests is a very important

Figure 11-23. The entrance to the visitor center, October 1996.

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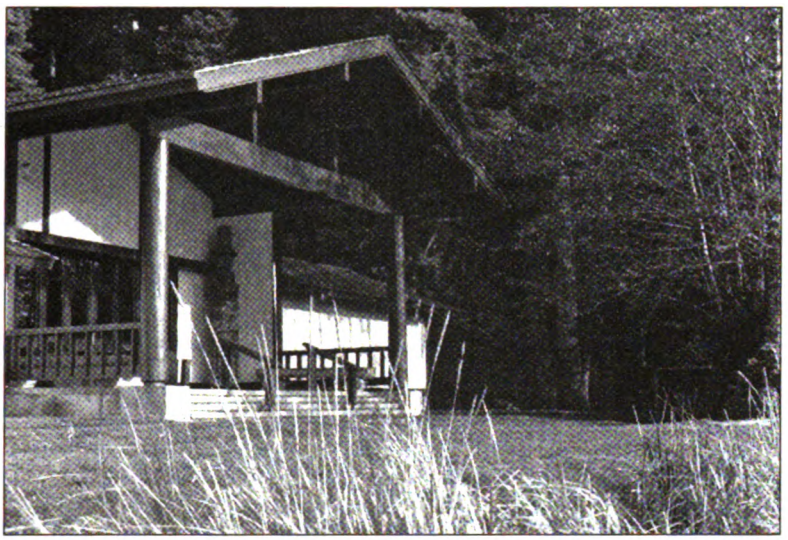

Figure 11-24. Visitor center entrance and portico that faces the beach, 1996.

symbol representing the coming together of the first clans in Sitka and serves as a proud symbol of their common history in the Indian River area.[66]

The totem was erected on the slope behind the visitor center, facing the sea. Hundreds of people attended the ceremonial raising. Two hundred people pulled the ropes that raised the pole slowly into place. The pole now serves as a potent symbol of the past and future for many of the people who were present. According to Dave Galanin, President of the Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center, it represents "the beginning" of a strong Native movement among a new Tlingit generation.[67] Thus the Indian River People's History Pole is a very significant addition to the park landscape since it powerfully conveys the Tlingit history of that environment.

A number of changes that occurred in the park entrance area within the past few decades, such as the construction of storage and worksheds and the expansion of paved areas, were made to improve NPS operations in that area. On the whole, these changes have been done with appreciable sensitivity. The worksheds are sheltered in the woods behind the visitor center, and the paved terrace adjacent to the Saanaheit Pole is flanked by benches where visitors can sit and look out at the visitor center and beyond it to Sitka Sound. The Indian River Peoples History Pole, the newest addition, is dramatically sited near the top of that slope, so that Raven also can look out to the sea.

Picnic Area

The picnic area on the northeastern side of the Indian River has been the site of little change over the past twenty five years. Its woodland setting contrasts with other areas of the park in that the deciduous alders and shrubs that dominate the vegetation have a lighter, more lush character than the spruce-hemlock forest. After leaf-fall, when a thick layer of alder leaves carpets the ground beneath the trees' bare branches, the contrast becomes even greater.

Very little change has been documented in the picnic area since its construction. The growth of alder trees in the area probably represents the most dramatic change over thirty years. The toilet facilities were the subject of some attention, however, since the 1987 windstorm damaged the chemical facilities in the area.[68] In 1995, new non-chemical toilets were built to replace the previous facilities.[69]

Russian Memorial Area

The Russian Memorial area became increasingly enclosed over the past twenty five years as the forest around it became more mature. Additionally, the expanse of bare gravel that was apparent very proximate to the site in 1949 (Figure 9-30) has become a dense alder stand. The memorial itself was destroyed on Alaska Day, October 18, 1995, and the commemorative plaque was stolen. The memorial has subsequently been rebuilt, but it remains without the plaque (Figure 11-25).

Incongruous land uses adjacent to the memorial continue to impact the site. Although gravel removal and the making of asphalt have ceased in the vicinity, the Russian Memorial now has a trailer park

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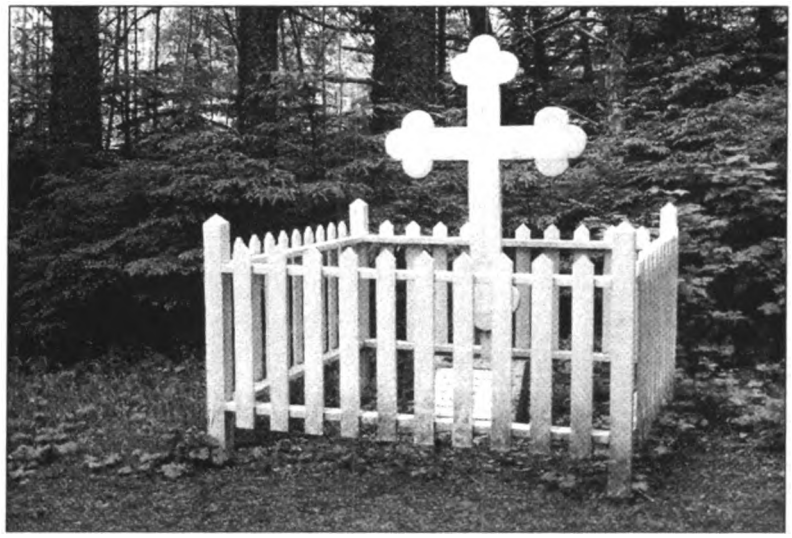

Figure 11-25. Russian Memorial, 1996.

as a neighbor. When approaching the area, the trailers are visible through the trees, significantly reducing the secluded character of the space.

CONCLUSION

The twenty-five years since the creation of Sitka National Historical Park have included a period of stability and maturation of the park's landscape. The period following the cessation of industrial activities within and adjacent to the Indian River area of the park has seen the repair of the river banks and recovery of the vegetation. It has been a time of concerted National Park Service efforts to identify the needs for protecting the site's natural and cultural resources; this has led to research on the habitats of the Indian River and the park's critical cultural resources, including archeological data on the fort area and preservation of the totem pole collection. Research also has been conducted on Tlingit resources in the park, often in compliance with recent legislation that protects and affords Native American rights to those resources; this continues to be an important focus of National Park Service activities at Sitka.

The Southeast Alaska Indian Cultural Center plays an increasingly important role in the park and community. The Center's sponsorship of a protocol workshop in 1996 marks an important movement towards the unification and self-determination of Sitka's Tlingit community. The Indian River People's History Pole, the latest addition to the park landscape, was conceived of and commissioned by the Cultural Center. Its traditional raising signifies the re-affirmation of Tlingit history in the park and comprises an important act in the Tlingit telling of the story. These endeavors, as they have arisen from the exciting partnership between the National Park Service and the Cultural Center, mark the development of an increasingly synergistic partnership between the NPS and Tlingit community as preservation and interpretation of the Sitka National Historical Park landscape continues.

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Chapter 12

Summary

The cultural landscape of Sitka National Historical Park has been shaped and enriched by the dynamic interaction of the several cultural groups that came together in Sitka. The story of the park's landscape exemplifies and gives form to the complex and intricate dialectic relationships that develop when divergent cultures interact with one another.

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CHAPTER 12

SUMMARY

The landscape that presently comprises Sitka National Historical Park is the product of successive human and "natural" changes that have occurred at the site over the span of many years. The purpose of this study has been to identify those transitions and analyze their effects within the park, beginning prior to the battle of 1804 and continuing up to 1995. Both historic documentation and a process of synthetic inference based upon documented regional cultural and natural processes have provided insight into the evolving landscape that encompasses the mouth of the Indian River. To carry out the study, the present park was divided into a number of landscape areas that were traced through time. This report has followed, in considerable detail, the changes that have taken place; a summary of these transitions, as they have been manifested in each area, constitutes the remainder of the chapter.

INDIAN RIVER AREA

The Indian River comprises the heart of the park. It has created and shaped the park's landforms and offers habitat for a number of important species, all of which have provided sustenance to the various cultures that inhabited Sitka throughout its history. Its scenic qualities have been valued by Sitka's residents for almost two centuries, were central to the creation of the public park in 1890, and have continued to be a major attraction in the park.

The Indian River is a dynamic riparian corridor that is constantly being shaped by "natural" environmental forces. These forces have affected conditions along the river throughout its history and continue to do so today. They have resulted in a shifting channel and mosaic of plant communities along its banks. They also have been responsible for driving the continual changes that have characterized the cultural features of the area. The historical record reveals that a series of wooden bridges built over the river, the first one constructed sometime before 1827, were washed out by floods during seasons of high rainfall. The utilitarian and recreational value provided by having a span over the river prompted repeated bridge construction and bank support within the park. The use of these bridges, in addition to the trails along the river banks, has been a continuous activity in the park. The majority of the park's historic bridges were located downstream from the current bridge and proximate to the first trail that crosses the peninsula from the beach to the river. While it is located at a new site along the river, the present bridge, built in 1968, carries on the tradition established by the historic structures.

River conditions within the park were drastically disturbed during the World War II period when an immense amount of gravel was dredged near its mouth. The dredging operation cut into the forested banks and created a large lagoon on the northeastern side of the river. Extensive gravel excavations were also conducted just outside the park boundaries in Jamestown Bay; these activities not only affected the visual character of the park, but increased the Indian River channel gradient as well. The combined effects of the dredging operation, coupled with the erosional forces that were exacerbated because of these activities, led to a series of erosion control projects in the lower section of the river. The magnitude of the stabilization grew from extensive log cribbing, initially built by the U.S. Navy following its operation, to a channel change and stone riprap addition in the 1960s; these activities were followed by the latest installation of heavy stone riprap constructed along the southwestern bank of the river in 1985 to control the massive erosion then occurring at the fort site and along the shoreline. Erosion continues to be a problem along the northeastern bank of the river's mouth.

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This history has resulted in a manipulated and unnatural scene within the lower sections of the river. While the large lagoon area has developed into an productive and aesthetically pleasing estuary habitat, the surrounding scene is marred by the presence of a trailer court located on the northeastern side of the river, just outside the park boundaries. Much of the river bank in this lower section is either covered with stone riprap or demonstrates signs of past and present erosion. While the park's lush vegetation softens these features, the overall character of the area has been degraded.

Although major disturbance also occurred in some areas along the upper sections of the river, most recently in the section adjacent to the picnic area when flooding in the 1940s washed out the banks and vegetation, the area has regained much of its scenic character. A lush red alder-salmonberry community has grown up on the disturbed area that merges with the surrounding spruce-hemlock forest to create a densely forested and attractive river corridor. The footbridge, which crosses over the river in this section, affords views of the water as it flows swiftly over the cobble river bottom beneath the overhanging vegetation. In salmon spawning season, masses of fish can be observed in the stream, while flocks of gulls and ravens feed on the spawn and fish. These features combine to create a scenic woodland stream that is probably very similar in character to the historic Indian River.

FORT AREA

Located on the tip of the peninsula at the mouth of the Indian River, the fort area is also a central component of the present park landscape. The topographic features of the site, along with the forest, river, and ocean resources that come together in this area led to its choice as the site for the Tlingit fort in 1803. The same qualities drew Russians to use the area as a pleasure ground, and retired Russian workers to settle in there in the 1840s and 1850s. Ultimately, the preservation of the Tlingit fort site within that area was one of the primary factors that led to the creation of the National Monument in 1910, and it constitutes one of the principal charges of the National Park Service today.

The series of activities that occurred within the area brought about a number of landscape changes. Oral tradition has suggested that, prior to the arrival of the Russians, a Tlingit village extended from Jamestown Bay to the Indian River. It is not clear, however, whether the village extended across the river into the fort area. If it did, the forest likely was cleared a short distance back from the tip of the peninsula. Tlingit accounts also relate that, at the time of fort construction, the forest was cut to the western edge of the park peninsula so as to allow for a clear view of approaching Russian ships. Following the Tlingit evacuation and Russian destruction of the fort, the cleared area most likely grew up as a shrubby community dominated by red alder and salmonberry, and eventually evolved into a second growth spruce-hemlock forest.

The Russian settlement near the mouth of the Indian River certainly would have resulted in localized clearing of the alders stands and second growth proximate to the homesteads, as well as the creation of a road and numerous paths through the area. Although these changes are not historically documented, that they occurred is a reasonable assumption. It is also likely that the Russians cut trees in the adjacent forest to supply their domestic timber and firewood needs.

The cessation of these homesteading activities in 1855 allowed for the continued growth of a second-growth spruce-hemlock forest that most likely was harvested, to some degree, first by the Russians and then by the early American settlers who came to the area after 1867. The few historic accounts from this period suggest that trees were present in the area during the 1870s. Following the destruction of the Russian homesteads, however, a clearing near the river's mouth apparently was a fairly constant feature of the area and was recognized as the site of the Tlingit fort.

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A Haida totem pole, four house posts, and a war canoe were erected in the clearing in 1902, where they remained as the focal point for the clearing until the 1960s, at which time the ensemble was moved to the rise overlooking the park's visitor center. During most of that period, the clearing was not completely enclosed with trees but in recent decades dense forest growth has developed between it and the uplifted beach adjacent to the area. The remaining fort area outside the clearing has subsequently become densely forested with mature spruce and hemlock trees. Presently, the forest completely encloses the clearing and creates a dramatically different scene than the historical setting of the beach-front fort, which was open to the river and sea and backed by the forest in 1804.

BEACHES AND TIDAL FLATS

Throughout time, the park's beaches and tidal flats have been subject to the constant forces of tide and wave action that have shaped them. Such forces, for the most part, have maintained the historic character of these landscape areas as broad expanses of cobble that extend from the fringe of vegetation at the edge of the forest to the permanently submerged subtidal zone in the sound. These areas historically have been the scene for Tlingit food gathering and other subsistence activities, and for memorials held in the park. They also have been important recreational areas for beach combing, picnicking, and taking in the views of the surrounding sea and mountains.

Several twentieth-century activities have impacted the park's beaches and tidal flats. During the 1930s and 1940s, gravel pits were excavated in the tideflats, leaving large irregularly shaped pools that become apparent during low tide in the otherwise evenly sloping surface of the sector. Additionally, since the operation of the pulp mill, large square cut logs washed up and scattered on the beach. Although drift logs always would have been a feature of the beach habitat in this region, the shape and number of these timbers create an artificial effect. Nevertheless, for the most part the logs have not significantly impacted the overall natural character of the park beaches.

The one section of beach that has been noticeably impacted is the former beach meadow at the base of the Indian River peninsula. Through the process of isostatic rebound and the effect of numerous mill logs lodged on the point, the beach area has been raised above the wave zone and colonized with terrestrial vegetation. During the 1980s the NPS created a trail through the area, the majority of which presently passes along areas enclosed by shrubs and small trees; the beach is apparent only at two or three spots along its length. The former gradually sloping beach and beach meadow is now a series of ridges and low areas. The variation in plant comunities found within the area ranges from an area dominated by salt tolerant wetland grasses to stands of alder and salmonberry.

The result of these developments has been a dramatic change in the character of the space. Prior to the time when the battle was fought at the site in 1804, and up through the 1940s, the area included open grass, beach, and beach meadow that stretched from across the peninsula to the mouth of the river. The base of the peninsula is now comprised of an area of irregular topography that has been colonized by several plant communities and is increasingly being enclosed by alders and other small trees and shrubs.

RUSSIAN WALK/TOTEM TRAIL

The two major historic paths through the park—the old Russian path to the Indian River and the Totem Trail (the latter as laid out by Merrill in 1906)—probably overlapped as they entered what is now the park and headed out to the Indian River peninsula. The precise location of the Russian path is difficult to ascertain with certainty due to cartographic discrepancies in the historic maps. Nevertheless, the historic documents suggest that the trail probably followed the same path, or at least very closely, the path of the totem trail as it now enters

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the park; it then cut over to the river in the vicinity of the first cross trail that currently exists in the park—a route that has been in continuous use throughout all subsequent historic periods in the park.

Over time, several aspects of the trail have changed significantly. Certainly the surface of the ground and trail have been modified since it first served as a Russian and then as an American "cordoroy road." The vegetation also has been altered by historic activities, ranging from the old growth that first enclosed the corridor, to a community of irregular structure consisting of clearings and stumps, shrubs, immature trees, and scattered old specimens resulting from wood cutting conducted in the park during the Russian and early American periods. Presently the path travels through a dense and tall second-growth spruce-hemlock stand that has developed since the majority of cutting ceased in the late 19th century.

The path no longer leads to the edge of the river and the footbridge that led to the other bank. Flood damage during the 1940s, which washed out the bridge, also eliminated a large section of the bank and trail in that area, leaving an eroded slope now covered by trees and shrubs. The historic trail presently abuts the river trail that skirts the bank in this area.

The Totem Trail was originally a vernacular road that led along the edge of the forest to the mouth of the Indian River. Although it is a route that probably was used by the Tlingits and Russians much earlier, it was not documented cartographically until 1879. As a consequence of Russian and American wood-cutting activities, at that time the western side of the trail probably was open to the beach throughout much of its length. Since then a strip of forest has grown up in the area between the beach and trail.

Although second-growth forest was present on both sides of the trail in 1906—when Merrill sited the totem poles along its length—a greater proportion of the corridor probably was open to the beach. In addition, clearings may have been enlarged before the totems were erected. Documentation on how Merrill laid out the totem trail has not been found, and given the kind of man he was, such information probably does not exist. Historic photographs and maps provide the only evidence as to the original totem locations in the park. These sources make it possible to locate some of them specifically, but not all of the poles that Governor Brady brought to the park. They do, however, provide insight into what factors probably guided Merrill's design of the totem arrangement and they convey a sense of the trail's early character.

Merrill arranged the poles along the trail in such a way that many were visible from both the trail and beach. The poles on the beach side generally faced the trail, while those on the forested side faced the path and beyond to the sea. Along the lengthy stretch of trail that runs from the park entrance to the base of the peninsula, the poles were erected in openings among the trees on the beach side of the path. Towards the end of that stretch one pole was situated in front of the forest on the other side of the trail. Several poles at the southwestern corner of the peninsula and one pole at the mouth of the river were set in open grassy areas above the beach, which was reminiscent of settings in front of traditional native village houses that faced the shore. The grouping of three totems that looked out over the sound at the base of the peninsula also recalled the traditional native village arrangement where numerous houses and poles stood in close proximity to one another. Merrill also sited one pole along the river trail, where it could be viewed from that path, as well as from the bridge and the other side of the river. The overall effect of his design was to highlight both totems and the natural setting of the park. He arranged the poles in a manner that created a series of successive views of the totems set against a background of forest, beach, and sound.

Despite the fact that since the time Merrill arranged the poles along the trail, the totems have been moved from their original locations for repair, maintanance, and replacement reasons, their current spacing is similar to Merrill's. However, durung

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ensuing years, as the forest has grown up and over the top of the poles, the historical design has been altered. Instead of standing in clearings and extending above the tree tops, most poles are now overtopped and enclosed by the forest. Since vegetation also has grown between many of the poles and the beach, they no longer recall the beach-side setting of a traditional village. Not only has this change eliminated the attempt Merrill made to echo native traditions in his arrangement, but the enclosure has altered the aesthetic effect one experiences when viewing the poles. For the most part, it is now difficult, if not impossible, to achieve a clear and simultaneous view of the surrounding sea, the mountainous landscape, and the totems—except at the southwestern end of the peninsula; at this point the trail skirts a grassy area where several totems are situated, much as they would have been after Merrill arranged them. The tall forest growth around the majority of the poles certainly reduces the impact of their dramatic vertical form. Instead, they seem to mimic the trees thrusting up around them. Nevertheless, their current condition demonstrates another kind of charm, namely because visitors are now able to view the carved poles in a more intimate setting. But yet, the experience of the display is dramatically different than the one that Merrill designed.

The maturity of the forest has increased the enclosed character of the entire trail. For the most part, the corridor is enclosed by the tall forest growth, which recedes periodically to create broader openings where the totems are situated. For much of its length, scenes of the beach and sound are blocked by trees, although several openings do allow some views. Historically, the totem trail (or "Lover's Lane" as it was popularly known) had extended around the point and to the bridge where Merrill sited the Trader Legend Pole, but now the display ends with two totems situated along the trail at the base of the peninsula not far from the fort site clearing.

River and Forest Trails on both sides of the Indian River

Throughout the park's history, a series of other vernacular or social trails have traversed the western section of the park. Historical documents refer repeatedly to the clearing of new trails in the area, but their locations, for the most part, have not been documented. Twentieth-century maps, however, do provide information about the major trails that have been constructed since designation of the National Monument occurred. Sometime between 1910 and 1919, the existing second cross trail was cleared from the beach to the river. Following the flooding and erosion that took place during the 1940s, which washed out the historical section of Lover's Lane along with the foot bridge, the existing new trail was constructed along the river. Erosion at the river's mouth that occurred prior to the 1985 installation of riprap along that section of the bank brought the edge of the river much closer to this area of the path than it had been in the past.

As in the case of the historic Russian path and Totem Trail, the character of the other trail corridors in the park has been altered by the historic thinning of the forest stands and the subsequent maturation of the present second-growth stand. For the most part, the trails are now enclosed by lush forest vegetation. The several areas of blowdown that the western river trail passes through result from a post-World War II event, but historically, other such areas may well have been scattered throughout the park.

Most of the historic trails on the eastern side of the river no longer exist. The historic wood road that skirted the eastern bank of the river was destroyed by the gravel dredging and flooding that occurred in the 1940s. The main trail that now travels through the area follows the path of the road that the Navy built in the early 1940s to replace the historic route; however, the upper stretch of the trail above the present maintenance area, which historically led to the old wagon bridge, has grown over and is no longer evident. The existing path that leads to the eastern edge of the park follows the route of an old road that was built to to the main

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highway when it was moved farther to the east and outside the park's boundaries after World War II. The narrow river trail on this side of the park that follows the edge of the estuary, and then leads to the picnic area and present bridge, was developed following the gravel dredging and asphalt producing activities that occurred during the 1940s and 1950s.

PICNIC AREA

The picnic area on the eastern side of the Indian River is a relatively new addition to the park landscape. Little is known about the character of the area prior to the development of this facility in 1964. It is clear, however, that flooding and erosion in the 1940s washed out the coniferous forest and a section of the historic road that passed through the area, and reshaped the landform in the process. The present deciduous alder and salmonberry community in the picnic area became established after that event, and in subsequent years it has grown into a lush stand of alders and shrubs, with the picnic tables arranged in clearings.

RUSSIAN MEMORIAL AREA

During the early periods of the park's history, very little is known about the character of the Russian Memorial marker or site. Although a few historical Russian accounts mention the presence of a memorial on the northeastern side of the Indian River, they do not provide much information either about the specific location or attributes of the site. Because of discrepancies between the 1850 map of the area, which shows what is probably the memorial, and twentieth-century maps of the park, it is difficult to place the historic site accurately within the present park landscape. It was not until the 1908 map of the proposed Sitka National Monument that the graves were specifically marked and identified. The location of graves on both the 1908 and 1910 maps, as well as subsequent maps of the park, is consistent with the present memorial.

Since the formation of Sitka National Monument in 1910, the character of the grave marker itself has changed very little. A plain wooden Orthodox cross placed inside a small picket enclosure has typically marked the graves, although in 1908 the site was marked by a large white cross. The present cross is more ornamented than the historic ones.

Although activities proximate to the site have brought about large-scale landscape change in the vicinity, the immediate site remained fairly undisturbed. However, until the main road was moved out of the park following World War II, for many years the marker was situated at the side of the gravel road that ran through the park; therefore, it undoubtedly was impacted somewhat by road maintenance activities. Indeed, the 1958 archeological excavation of the site uncovered the edge of an old roadbed that crossed the corner of the memorial.

The character of the vegetation surrounding the present site has changed throughout its history. A 1908 photograph depicts the marker situated at the edge of the second-growth forest and at the river 's mouth. Just when the trees were cut in the area is not possible to determine exactly, but its proximity to the historic Tlingit village and subsequent Russian and American homesteads suggest that such activities occurred as early as the mid-nineteenth century. The area may have been subject to natural disturbance as well. The 1850 Russian map of the area shows a symbol for what probably was the memorial; it is part of a fenced complex of buildings near the river's mouth in an area which, all evidence indicates, was clear of timber. Subsequently, the memorial site has become enclosed in second-growth spruce-hemlock, although during gravel dredging operations pursued by the Navy in the 1940s, the enclosure was reduced to a narrow strip of trees on the river side of the marker. Presently the site is probably more secluded and densely surrounded by vegetation than it has been since the early Russian period.

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FORESTED AREAS ON BOTH SIDES OF THE INDIAN RIVER

The park's forests, on both sides of the Indian River, now consist of second-growth stands of Sitka spruce and Western hemlock. Prior to Russian settlement in the area and for the first several decades of New Archangel's existence, the vegetation near the river was a typical old growth spruce-hemlock temperate rainforest. Primary historic documents have not been found that provide direct testimony of large-scale wood cutting activities that occurred specifically within the park's boundaries; nevertheless, the huge amount of wood used by the Russians for fuel, construction, charcoal production, and export, and later by the Americans for fuel and construction, indicate strongly that timber was cut there throughout much of Sitka's history. The accessibility of trees in the area, and the subsequent character of the forests adjacent to the Indian River, all point to this occurrence. Historic photographs of the park taken as early as the 1880s show evidence of wood cutting, both in the structure and age of the vegetation as well as the presence of stumps. In addition, natural disturbance undoubtedly played a part in taking out much of the old growth forest near the river.

One area of forest in the northeastern corner of the park was not disturbed to the degree that other sections were. Today, this area exhibits more of an old growth character than the remainder of the park. That same section is shown on the 1910 map of the park as an old growth area. However, that some cutting has occurred there is testified to by present and historically documented stumps in the area.

The park's second-growth forest exhibits a different structure and character than that which the old growth forest would have demonstrated. The current stand is taller, denser, and more uniform than is typical of an old growth stand. This is especially the case in western sections of the forest on the Indian River peninsula, where a serene and park-like character is created by the pattern of tall straight trunks that rise above a well developed understory of blueberry species, huckleberry, and rusty menziesia. Other areas of the park forest exhibit a more varied structure and show greater signs of disturbance. Several localized areas on both sides of the river that have been subject to recent blowdown display numerous large downed trees with massive upturned rootwads and exposed soil; they impart a wild and chaotic character to those areas.

PARK ENTRANCE AREA

Over the past hundred years, both inside and just outside the present park boundaries, the entrance area has been the site of much change . Little is known about the area during the pre-Russian, Russian, or early American periods in Sitka, other than the fact that the route to the Indian River passed through it. In the 1880s and 1890s, however, the Presbyterian Mission built a settlement of model cottages for their native graduates that was located adjacent to and within the present park boundaries. Two cottages were located in the vicinity of the visitor center and lower parking lot, and four others were situated along the eastern side of Metlakatla Street, where the Saanaheit totem grouping and upper parking lots are found today.

During the early decades following the designation of Sitka National Monument, the street known as Park Road ran along the beach in front of the cottages. When the Alaska Road Commission and NPS decided to prohibit vehicular traffic in the western portion of the park, an ornamental gateway was built where the road entered the forest, and a small parking area developed just outside the gateway. Traffic was directed up Metlakatla Street and across the river. The parking area was subsequently expanded somewhat after residents of the adjacent cottage were persuaded to move their fence back twenty feet. In the early 1940s, under supervision of the first NPS custodian at the site, the CCC landscaped the areas around the parking lot with native plants and erected the original wooden monument entrance sign. The totem gateway that had been the focal point of the entrance area since

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1925 was dismantled prior to construction of the present visitor center—the same time that the totems were sent for display in the Alaska Exhibit at the 1964-1966 New York World's Fair.

The first NPS structure was constructed at the entrance area in 1955. The small one-story comfort station, located adjacent to the totem gateway in the vicinity of the Cultural Center wing of the present visitor center, contained restroom facilities and a storeroom. It was removed before construction of the present visitor's facility.

During the 1940s and 1950s, the NPS acquired the beach front property where the parking lot was located, along with the cottage properties on the eastern side of Metlakatla Street. The Mission cottages were removed from those lots, so that by the time the visitor center was constructed in 1964, only one cottage, located in the present vicinity of the Saanaheit totem group, remained. It was removed in that same year.

The present visitor center, constructed in 1964, was dedicated in 1965. The construction of the building and the creation of a paved entrance drive and parking area have totally transformed the historically rustic and informal entrance space into a highly developed zone that forms the initial park experience for most visitors. However, the design of the center and its placement at the edge of the forest and beach create an attractive and appropriate centerpiece for the park entry. Subsequent developments in the area, such as the construction of work and storage sheds and the expansion of the upper parking lot, have been accomplished sensitively and unobtrusively so they do not disturb the effect of the original design.

Other than the spruce that were planted at the edge of the forest, the original planting undertaken when the building was constructed is no longer evident. Lawns and low native hedges presently comprise the vegetation immediately around the building, and spruce trees soften the appearance of the area from the road. While the present planting is not very interesting, its simplicity and overall horizontality harmonize with the building and contrast well with the dark mass of forest trees that rise behind the visitor center.

The totem display that has been created at the entrance area since the visitor center was constructed serve as dramatic focal points for the space. Several totems were first placed on the lower lawn following their return from the New York World's Fair in 1966. Their placement adjacent to the building recalls the historical placement of poles in front of traditional native village houses. The Saanaheit Pole and House Posts were erected on the rise overlooking the center in 1965. The newest pole, placed on the slope above the lower parking lot, was erected in 1996 . The entrance area totem arrangement allows many visitors who do not have time to walk along the park trails to view the totems closely. Their arrangement on the lawns, in contrast with the forest setting provided for most of the other poles in the park, is a more culturally traditional display and enhances the aesthetic power of their form and expression.

The landscape adjacent to the park entrance area has changed very little in character since the center was developed. The area is bordered by an expanse of beaches and tidal flats on the southwestern side. Views from the top of the retaining wall at the back of the beach take in the length of the Indian River peninsula, the beach, the sound, the distant islands, and the mountains. The view from the area across Metlakatla Street encompasses a residential neighborhood on the site of the former Mission cottages. The character of the development has changed with the years and is now that of a typical modern residential area.

THE MAKING OF A CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

All of these areas and the dynamics within them have contributed to the present landscape of Sitka National Historical Park. It is a dynamic landscape that has been shaped by numerous cultural and natural forces over the past two centuries. The activities of the Tlingits, the Russians, and the

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Americans along the Indian River have resulted in a complex landscape that has elements of all four NPS cultural landscape categories. The 1804 fort and battlefield site near the mouth of the Indian River comprise a very significant *historic site*. Merrill's arrangement of totem poles within the park landscape according to his specific, if undocumented design principles, constitutes an *historic designed landscape*. Since the park was shaped by the recreational and utilitarian activities of Sitka's residents, it has a long history as a rich and dynamic *historic vernacular landscape*; the creation of trails and roads, the building of bridges, homesteads, and Mission cottages, and the cutting of wood all contributed to the shaping of the vernacular landscape at Sitka National Historical Park. And most definitely, the park comprises a rich *ethnographic landscape* as Kiks.ádi clan territory. The Indian River is an important locale in the social geography of the clan. Historically, the entire park landscape was the site of numerous subsistence activities. As the location of the 1804 battle, the park is a site of tremendous historical significance to the Tlingit of Sitka. The new totem pole that was carved and erected in the park commemorates their relationship to that landscape and carries it into the future.

The cultural landscape of Sitka National Historical Park has been shaped and enriched by the dynamic interaction of the several culture groups that came together in Sitka. The story of the park's landscape exemplifies and gives shape to the complex and intricate dialectic relationships that develop when divergent cultures interact with one another. The social, spiritual, and material dimensions of that story enrich the community at large.

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Figure Sources & Bibliography

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Diagram and Figure Sources

Diagrams

Diagram 1.	Based upon the authors' analysis and the 1993 topographic survey of Sitka National Historical Park, 1993.
Diagram 2.	Derived from Herbert Hope's 1992 and 1995 accounts of the 1804 battle and Tlingit evacuation; Richard and Nora Dauenhauers' translation of Alex Andrew's oral account of the battle; Urey Lisiansky's account of the battle included in the English edition of his *Voyage Around the World;* Basil Dmytryshyn et al.'s translation of Lisiansky's battle account in *The Russian American Colonies;* and Gregory P. Chaney, et al.'s, *Physical and Cultural Landscapes of Sitka National Historical Park.*
Diagrams 3 & 4.	Derived from 1992 and 1995 interviews with Herbert Hope and his 1993 sketch of the site; an interview with Mark Jacobs, Jr. (1995); and Urey Lisiansky's account of the battle. The landform is derived from the 1910 "Sitka National Monument Map."
Diagrams 5 & 6.	Derived from Baron von Kittlitz's description of the area, included in Frederick Litke's *Voyage Around the World, 1826-1827;* landform based upon the 1910 Sitka National Monument Map. Additionally, vegetation types in Diagram 6 are based upon Frederick Litke's and Baron von Kittlitz's drawings and descriptions of the Indian River area; the U.S. Forest Service's 1994 *Ecological Inventory* and *Vegetation Inventory* of the site; and the authors' inferences.
Diagrams 7& 8.	Derived from M.D. Tebenkov's 1850 survey of Sitka and vicinity; Heinrich Holmberg's description of the site published in his *Ethnographic Sketche;* and I.G. Voznesenskii's 1843-45 drawing of the Indian River. The landform is derived from the 1910 Sitka National Monument Map. Vegetation types in Diagram 8 are based upon the authors' analysis and inference using the historic accounts of Russian woodcutting in the Sitka area and the 1994 U.S. Forest Service's *Ecological Inventory* and *Vegetation Inventory* of the site.
Diagram 9.	Landform derived from the 1910 " Sitka National Monument Map"; location of the paths as shown on the 1879 American survey of the Sitka area; location of the falls and Haley's property corners from the 1908 map of "Proposed Sitka National Monument," drawn by U.S. Forest Supervisor W. Langille; the extent of the shaded area is based upon the Alaska Commissioners' description of the area to be set aside as a public park, which was approved by President Benjamin Harrison on 21 June, 1890.
Diagram 10.	Derived from Sophia Cracroft's description of the area written in 1870, and A. Ahllund's 1868 description. The landform is based upon the 1910 "Sitka National Monument Map," and the routes of the paths are taken from the 1879 American survey of the Sitka area.
Diagrams 11 & 12.	Based upon Cracroft's 1870 account; Eliza Skidmore's description of the site in 1885; historic photographs; and the 1879 American survey. Vegetation types are derived from the authors' analysis of these accounts and historic photographs, and the U.S. Forest Service's 1994 *Ecological Inventory* and *Vegetation Inventory* of the site. The landform and location of Haley's house are derived from the 1910 "Sitka National Monument Map".
Diagram 13.	Location of roads/paths based upon the 1879 American survey of the Sitka area; the location and extent of Haley's property, as well as the falls, pump station, and mission property line are taken from the 1908 "Proposed Sitka National Monument" map drawn by Langille. The locations of the cottages are from the 1880s Presbyterian Mission survey, while the Indian cemetery is shown as it is on the Plat of U.S. Survey No. 407 of the Presbyterian Misson Reserves.
Diagrams 14 & 15.	Derived from the 1910 "Sitka National Monument Map"; vegetation types also based upon historic photographs, W. Langille's and W.J. Lewis' descriptions of the site, and the U.S. Forest Service's 1994 *Ecological Inventory* and *Vegetation Inventory* of the site.

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Diagram 16.	Based upon interviews with Isabella and Bill Brady, Gill Truitt, Herbert Didrickson, Mark Jacobs, Jr., and Herbert Hope; landform derived from the 1919 survey of Sitka National Monument.
Diagrams 17 & 18.	Landform and the location of roads, bridges, and totems derived from the 1919 survey of Sitka National Monument and the 1923 plat of the cottage settlement; cottages plotted as shown on the plat of U.S. Survey No. 407 of the Presbyterian Mission Reserves; vegetation types based upon the 1929 aerial photograph of the site, and the U.S. Forest Service's 1994 *Ecological Inventory* and *Vegetation Inventory* of the site.
Diagrams 19 & 20.	Landform and the location of paths, totems, gun emplacements, and structures derived from the 1953 Master Plan of Sitka National Monument. Vegetation types based upon the 1948 aerial photograph of the site, historic photographs of the monument, and the U.S. Forest Service's 1994 *Ecological Inventory* and *Vegetation Inventory* of the site.
Diagrams 21 & 22.	Landform and the location of paths, parking area, totems, and structures derived from a 1965 plan of Sitka National Monument; vegetation types based upon the 1965 aerial photograph of the site, historic photographs of the monument, and the U.S. Forest Service's 1994 *Ecological Inventory* and *Vegetation Inventory* of the site.
Diagram 23.	Landform and the location of paths, totems, gun emplacements, structures, buildings, and extent of vegetation are derived from the 1993 survey of Sitka National Historical Park.

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