

Life History of a Collection: The Tahltan Materials Collected by James A. Teit

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This article is concerned with one particular collection made under the auspices of the Geological Survey of Canada and tells a life history of that collection. In 1912 and 1915, James A. Teit collected material objects, songs, narratives, and historical photographs from members of several Tahltan communities in northwestern British Columbia. This study situates the collector's work in the social and institutional contexts that influenced him, documents his fieldwork carried out in the Telegraph Creek and Cassiar districts, and attempts to give recognition to the Tahltan people who contributed to the collection's construction. The essay focuses on the relationship between field collecting and museum collections as archival records exemplified by this collection. Taken as a case study, the essay concludes by addressing the issues arising from the report of the Task Force on Museums and First Peoples (1992) which calls for improved access to museum collections by aboriginal peoples and the dissemination of information about those collections.

An academic background in literature and anthropology with specific interests in aboriginal oral and written narratives led me to the "Tahltan Tales" collected by Teit and published by Franz Boas in the *Journal of American Folklore* (Teit 1919, 1921). The published narratives suggest an editor's heavy hand because of the formal arrangement of the stories, Latinized passages, and standardized English. Originally, the focus for this essay was to be a comparison between the published narratives and the collector's field notes. In February 1992, I travelled

to the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC) in Hull, Québec which houses this collection to conduct archival research. I could not locate Teit's manuscript of the narratives. The following summer, I returned to the CMC and with the help of archivist Benoît Thériault discovered that the original manuscript of the narratives no longer exists. Edward Sapir had turned it over to Franz Boas in October 1917, and it has since disappeared.¹

During the search for that elusive manuscript I was struck by the disarticulated nature of the "artifact" assembled by Teit. Interrelated components of this "artifact" — field notes and unpublished manuscripts, material objects, songs, narratives, and photographs — had been separated out and dispersed throughout the museum's archival systems. Given this disassembled "artifact," my questions for this study then became: What constitutes this collection today? What is its life history? Ruth Phillips notes that in "larger, more academically orthodox museums, the fragile webs of interconnectedness [between components of the "artifact"] have more often been destroyed by conventional practices of naming and classification, and they can be reconstructed only with painstaking research" (1992: 8). In telling the life history of the Tahltan materials assembled by James Teit, this essay attempts, through great convolutions, to reconstruct these fragile webs. The vantage point is provided by the collector's field notes, unpublished manuscripts, and correspondence, as read and interpreted today.

While the Tahltan and Kaska narratives Teit collected appeared in the *Journal of American Folk-*

lore (Teit 1917, 1919, 1921) and some of Teit's Tahltan work was published (Teit 1906, 1909, 1914, 1956), little has been published about Teit's northern collecting activities.² Some of the sub-Arctic materials Teit collected have been exhibited and documented (Clark 1974; Glenbow Museum 1987; Duncan 1989; Thompson 1990); however, no work takes the Tahltan materials as its sole focus. This study seeks to begin to fill this void by providing information about Teit and the collection he made in northwestern British Columbia.

While primarily archival in nature, this investigation was influenced by discussions with Tahltan people I met in the Yukon. A meeting with an elder originally from the Telegraph Creek area, and with a representative from the Tahltan Tribal Council in Dease Lake, British Columbia, provided an initial opportunity to discuss my research involving the Tahltan materials. As a result of this discussion, a project description was submitted to the Tahltan Tribal Council in Dease Lake, British Columbia. Further discussions took place with several other individuals of Tahltan descent who have interests in the Tahltan collection and Teit's work. We shared information about Teit and the communities in which he worked, including information found in Teit's papers. Most importantly, the people I met provided a human component to this study that pure archival research could not.

THE COLLECTOR: JAMES A. TEIT

Nancy Parezo points out (after Kroeber, Fenton, Sturtevant, and others) that a large percentage of museum collections remain unstudied (1987). Reasons suggested for this are many.³ Parezo contends that original fieldwork is generally emphasized or more highly valued in anthropology than archival or library research. A museum collection is the result of someone else's fieldwork and research efforts; collections research, then, neither original nor fieldwork in the strict sense, is generally equated with archival research. Parezo identifies yet another explanation for the lack of interest in museum collections research which bears directly on this investigation: "most researchers have understood neither the procedures employed in making the collections nor the assumptions and decisions that surrounded and informed their construction" (1987: 2).

Museum collections are not random samplings of a culture's material production. Systematic collections like those made for the Smithsonian Insti-

tution, the Bureau of American Ethnology, and the Geological Survey of Canada result from preconceived agendas (Kaepler 1989; Sturtevant 1991; Thomas 1989, 1991). Further, individual researchers and fieldworkers are influenced by their own aesthetic and research interests. The collections they constructed reflect these interests more often than they do the people with whom the materials originate (Hail and Duncan 1989; Hail 1991; Krech 1991; Lee 1991; Thomas 1989, 1991). I consider some of the assumptions that underlie James Teit's collecting activities in northwestern British Columbia and discuss the institutional mandate and research interests of the Geological Survey of Canada which further influenced Teit's activities.

Teit in British Columbia⁴

In 1883, John Murray (Teit's maternal uncle) who lived in Spence's Bridge, British Columbia, extended an invitation to the Tait's in the Shetland Islands asking whether one of their children would be interested in taking over his general store. James accepted the offer, signed over his legal birthright to his brother, and emigrated to Canada. At nineteen, in March of 1884, James Tait arrived in Spence's Bridge (Banks 1970: 43; Wickwire 1988: 185).

By 1887, Tait was involved in hunting expeditions throughout southern interior British Columbia. The Yale Register of Marriages notes that James Alexander Teit (Teit reverted to the Norwegian spelling of Tait) married Susannah Lucy Antko on September 1, 1892. Antko was a member of the Spence's Bridge Band, a division of the *Nlaka'pamux* (Thompson). Wickwire notes that "through his marriage to Lucy Antko, [Teit] gained even deeper access to the culture of the *Nlaka'pamux* people" (1988: 187). After Antko's death from pneumonia in 1899, Teit remained in Spence's Bridge and married Leonie Josephine Morens in 1904. Of their six children, five survived: Erik, Inga, Magnus, Sigurd, and Thor (Howes and Lean 1979). Teit and his family lived in Spence's Bridge until 1919 when they moved to Merritt, British Columbia.

Teit's hunting and guiding expeditions in British Columbia also took him north in search of moose and big-horn sheep as well as ethnographic materials. He travelled to the Stikine River to hunt northeast of Telegraph Creek from August to November, 1903. The ethnographic artifacts Teit collected on this trip were sent to the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) in New York (Teit 1906:

337). Two years later, from August to October, he hunted in the Cassiar district (Teit 1906; Banks 1970: 46-7). During this time, Teit again collected for the AMNH, and for the Field Columbian Museum in Chicago (now Field Museum), under the direction of Franz Boas and Charles F. Newcombe, respectively. The information in Teit's paper, "Notes on the Tahltan Indians of British Columbia" was gathered during these trips (Teit 1906; Banks 1970: 91-2).

Teit travelled and hunted with the *Nlaka'pamux*, spoke their language fluently, and over the years worked closely with The Indian Rights Association of British Columbia (1909-1916) and The Interior Tribes of British Columbia (1910s). The latter organization, assemblies of which took place in Spence's Bridge, represented the Thompson, Okanagan, Shuswap, and Lillooet peoples. Teit took active roles in these organizations (Tennant 1991). In 1910, a statement about land claims prepared by Teit on behalf of Shuswap, Okanagan, and Couteau chiefs was presented to Sir Wilfrid Laurier on August 25, 1910, in Kamloops, British Columbia (Teit 1910; Howes and Lean 1979; Wickwire 1988).

The Tahltan people in northwestern British Columbia drafted the *1910 Declaration of the Tahltan Tribe* while Teit was in the area. This document declares the rights, desires, and claims of the Tahltan peoples and is signed October 18, 1910. Chief *Nanok*, *Nastulta* (Little Jackson), George Assadza, *Kenetl* (Big Jackson), and eighty other members of the Tahltan tribe signed the Declaration asserting that they "have heard of the Indian Rights movement among the Indian tribes of the Coast, and of the southern interior of B.C. . . . we have read the Declaration made by the chiefs of the southern interior tribes at Spences Bridge . . ." (*1910 Declaration of the Tahltan Tribe*, copy obtained from the Tahltan Tribal Council in Dease Lake, British Columbia). Teit was in Telegraph Creek from August through October 1910. While he is not mentioned by name in the Declaration, Teit may well have provided information about the interests of the Interior Tribes and lent his advice to the Tahltan representatives who signed the Declaration.⁵ During his 1910 visit to Telegraph Creek, Teit acted as guide to Homer Sargent, a California millionaire (Rosenberg 1928; Banks 1970: 48-50). He also collected interior Salish baskets and woven materials for Sargent who in 1912 began to donate his collection to the Field Museum (Cole 1985: 210).

In January of 1912, Teit accompanied a delegation of nine chiefs representing The Indian Rights Association of British Columbia to Ottawa. This delegation presented their interests regarding land claims to the Honorable R. Borden, Premier of the Dominion of Canada, and his Cabinet. Teit acted as interpreter (Wickwire 1988: 190-91). While in Ottawa, Teit met with Marius Barbeau and Edward Sapir in the Geological Survey's Anthropological Division. At this time, the delegation of chiefs agreed to record a collection of sixty songs with Barbeau. These songs are now part of the CMC collections (Wickwire 1988). Also, Teit and Sapir finalized the details of Teit's appointment to the Geological Survey's Outside Service (Sapir to Boas, January 13, 1912, CMC Library I-A-236M).⁶ In 1915, Teit again travelled to Ottawa with a delegation of eight chiefs representing The Interior Tribes of British Columbia (Tennant 1991).

At a conference in 1916, which established The Allied Tribes of British Columbia,⁷ a steering committee was struck to deal with the question of outstanding land claims. Teit was appointed committee secretary. In this capacity, Teit helped draft the "Statement of The Allied Indian Tribes of British Columbia for the Government of British Columbia" (Canada 1927). This Statement was presented to British Columbia Premier Oliver in December 1919 and became the authoritative statement of British Columbia aboriginal claims (Tennant 1991).

Teit and Franz Boas

In September 1894, Franz Boas, while employed at the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), travelled to British Columbia. Boas was carrying out a general survey of aboriginal peoples in that province for the Northwestern Tribes Committee of the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS). En route to Bella Coala country, Boas stopped in Spence's Bridge and was directed to Teit. When they met, Boas immediately engaged Teit as an assistant. Teit accompanied Boas while the latter took anthropometric measurements of the *Nlaka'pamux* living in the Spence's Bridge area. This meeting marks the beginning of what would prove to be a long and fruitful collaboration. Boas returned to Spence's Bridge in December 1894 at which time Teit agreed to write a report for Boas about the *Nlaka'pamux* (Boas Family Letters in Rohner 1969: 139-40, 162). This work resulted in the publication of "A Rock Painting of the

Thompson River Indians of British Columbia" (Teit 1896), and a collection of *Nlaka'pamux* stories, *Memoirs of the American Folk-Lore Society* (Teit 1898).

Teit's collaboration with Boas continued with the Jesup North Pacific Expedition (1897-1907). Financed by Morris K. Jesup, President of the AMNH, the North Pacific Expedition was a systematic research project engaged in investigating ethnological relationships between America and Asia (Cole 1985). Teit produced several reports on the Thompson, Lillooet, and Shuswap peoples which appeared in the *Publications of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition* (see Sprague 1991). From 1900 to 1910, Teit carried out an investigation of the Salishan under Boas's direction, financed by Homer Sargent (Banks 1970: 90). The collaboration between Teit and Boas would continue throughout Teit's tenure at the Geological Survey.

Teit brought to the Outside Service of the Geological Survey his experience as a long-time resident of British Columbia, as a political activist who worked on behalf of various aboriginal organizations in that province, as a fieldworker and collector for major museums in North America, and as a private collector in his own right. These overlapping experiences determined, in part, the nature of the collection he made for the Survey's Museum.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT FOR COLLECTING: THE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Douglas Cole and Edward Said have referred to "the scramble" for artifacts which began as early as the eighteenth century (Cole 1985; Said 1988; see also Thomas 1989, 1991). The systematic collecting activities which took place in North America formed the basis of extensive museum ethnographic collections (Cole 1985; Stocking 1985; Nason 1987; Hail 1991). In the United States, the Smithsonian Institution and the Bureau of American Ethnology (BAE) began their collecting in the late 1800s. While the Geological Survey of Canada began collecting ethnographic materials around 1879, the more systematic collecting began in the 1890s and continued into the early part of this century. These extensive institutional collections were made to serve as material bases for scientific research and public education (Fenton 1960; Cole 1973, 1985; Jacknis 1985, 1992; Stocking 1985; Parezo 1987). The Geological Survey provided the institutional context that directed Teit's northern collecting activities.

The formation of the anthropological division

Established in 1842 as an independent body, the Geological Survey's primary responsibility was to survey and map the country's geological resources, and in 1856 the first *Survey Act* empowered the Survey to establish a Geological Museum. The Geological and Natural History Museum was located in Montreal with geologist Sir William Dawson (Principal of McGill University) as curator. Secondary to these geological activities, the Survey would collect linguistic, and archaeological information from aboriginal peoples throughout the country whose populations and cultures were thought to be in rapid decline and in danger of disappearing altogether (Brock 1911; Waiser 1989). In 1877, a new *Survey Act* brought the Survey under the auspices of the Department of the Interior and called for the removal of both the Survey and its Museum to Ottawa. In 1881, the Museum was relocated to the former Clarendon Hotel building at Sussex and George Streets in Ottawa (Waiser 1989).

Geologist George M. Dawson, son of Sir William Dawson, worked for the Geological Survey from 1875 until 1901. In 1895, George Dawson became Director of the Survey. Dawson was active in the field and "the main force in directing the Survey's museum toward anthropology" (Cole 1985: 79; Cole and Lockner 1989). The results of Dawson's fieldwork in the Yukon and northwestern British Columbia were published by the Survey (Dawson 1888, 1898). Teit's northern work would build on these reports. In 1897, Dawson was appointed Chairman of "A Committee on an Ethnological Survey of Canada" established by the BAAS (Cole 1973). His death in 1901, however, brought a hiatus to the Committee's activities. In 1909, a new Ethnological Survey Committee was struck, and in 1910 this Committee, chaired by Rev. Dr. George Bryce, recommended to the Canadian government that it establish an ethnology division at Ottawa (Cole 1973).⁸

In 1910, an Anthropological Division in the Geological Survey Branch was established with funds appropriated by Parliament (Cole 1973: 42). R. W. Brock, Director of the Survey from 1910-1914, outlines the Anthropological Division's mandate:

The plans of the Anthropological Division include field work among the native tribes of Canada for the purpose of collecting extensive and reliable information on their ethnology and lin-

guistics, archaeological field work, the publication of results obtained in these investigations, and the exhibition in the Museum of specimens illustrative of Indian and Eskimo life, habit, and thought. (Brock 1911: 7)

The *Mines Act* of 1907 had established a new Department of Mines which oversaw both the Geological Survey Branch and the Mines Branch. This act "called for the Survey to 'collect, classify and arrange for exhibition in the Victoria Memorial Museum such specimens as are necessary to afford a complete and exact knowledge of the geology, mineralogy, palaeontology, ethnology and fauna and flora of Canada'" (quoted in Waiser 1989: 173). Begun in 1904 to replace the inadequate facilities of the Sussex Street building, the Victoria Memorial Museum Building on McLeod Street became the home of the Geological Survey Branch and its Museum. Brock moved his staff into the uncompleted building in 1910 (Russell 1961).⁹

Boas/Teit/Sapir connection

Cole suggests that through his work under the BAAS, Boas "set the standards and shaped the direction of anthropology in Canada" (Cole 1973: 41). Boas played a key role in the establishment of the Anthropological Division in the Geological Survey. The task of choosing a director for the new Division fell to Brock who sought and acted on advice from Boas, then head of the Anthropology Department at Columbia University. Boas's reply to Brock suggests there is but one candidate qualified for the position. He recommends his former student:

Dr. Sapir is without any doubt the most brilliant among the younger anthropologists; and if you were to ask me for a recommendation, I should without hesitation pick him out as the man whom I should most confidently expect to develop the particular work you have in mind. . . . The record of his work, wherever he has been, is excellent, and he has turned out a most incredible amount of material within a very short time. At the same time he has a most excellent critical mind, clear insight into ethnological problems, and ability to organize extended scientific investigation. (Boas to Brock, May 14, 1910, quoted in Maud 1982: 110)

Sapir accepted Brock's offer to head the Anthropological Division. The appointment, effective September 1, 1910, marked what Darnell suggests is

the beginning of professional anthropology in Canada (Darnell 1975: 404). Sapir credits the newly created Division as the outcome of "many years work on the part of Dr. G. W. Dawson, formerly the director of the Geological Survey, and Dr. Franz Boas" (Sapir 1911: 789). Sapir's remarks in *Science* assert the urgency for carrying out ethnological projects in Canada:

Now or never is the time in which to collect from the natives what is still available for study. . . . With the increasing material prosperity and industrial development of Canada the demoralization or civilization of the Indians will be going on at an ever increasing rate. No shortsighted policy of economy should be allowed to interfere with the thorough and rapid prosecution of the anthropological problems of the dominion. What is lost now will never be recovered again. (Sapir 1911: 793)¹⁰

Notably, the same institution established in 1842 to survey, name, and map the country, activities that support and even encourage expansion, is now responsible for carrying out salvage ethnography among aboriginal communities.

By January 1911, C. M. Barbeau and Harlan I. Smith joined the scientific staff of the Anthropological Division. While Sapir hoped to model his Division on the BAE, his style of administering research was unique (Sapir 1911: 789).¹¹ The BAE preferred cooperative projects that necessarily involved more than one scholar. Sapir, on the other hand, encouraged his research staff to retain "individuality in working style and career progression" (Darnell 1990: 65). The Division itself was organized according to culture area, and the four sub-disciplines within anthropology were covered by specialists: Harlan I. Smith (archaeology), Francis Knowles (physical anthropology), Marius Barbeau (ethnology), and Sapir (linguistics). This staff was augmented by a varying number of researchers and fieldworkers employed on a part-time or short-term basis.

Sapir noted that generally information about aboriginal peoples in Canada was lacking. The area that required the most urgent attention was "the Athabaskan tribes of the Mackenzie Valley. A thorough investigation of these tribes (Chippewyan, Slaves, Yellow Knives, Dog Ribs, Hare and Loucheux) is probably the greatest single need of ethnological research in Canada" (Sapir 1911: 792).

Of the four classic sub-disciplines, Sapir's own focus was on Athapaskan linguistics.¹² Assisted by an introduction from Boas, this is where Sapir's interests and Teit's northern work would intersect in 1911 (Sapir/Boas Correspondence, 1911, *passim*).

The Geological Survey Museum's classification system

At the American Museum of Natural History, Boas had arranged tribal collections according to geographic or regional areas. This culture area scheme challenged Otis T. Mason's typological evolutionary system of arranging material culture (Boas 1887a, 1887b, 1907; Mason 1887, 1890; Jacknis 1985; Fenton 1986). Mason soon adapted arrangements at the National Museum (Washington, D.C.) according to region, although he remained interested in typological problems (Mason 1887; Wissler 1915: 78; Jacknis 1985). When Sapir became Head of the Anthropological Division, he found that a large percentage of the ethnographic materials already collected had remained unnumbered. Further, the part already numbered had proceeded according to "no definite principle of classification" (Sapir 1912: 379). Therefore, in 1911, he renumbered the whole collection "according to a definitely established scheme."

The collection was divided into five main groups corresponding to as many culture areas of Canada, with each area assigned a number: Eastern Woodlands III, Arctic or Eskimo IV, Plains V, Plateau and Mackenzie Valley VI, and West Coast VII (see Wissler 1915). Physical Anthropology and Archaeology were assigned numbers I and II, and VIII-XII, respectively. Within each culture area, objects were assigned numbers from one to infinity. The photographic collection was numbered in the same way. Sapir stated that with this system in place it would be possible "to assign any numbered specimen to its proper culture area and tribe without the irksome necessity of looking up a catalogue" (Sapir 1912: 379). Based on a Boasian precedent reflecting then current museum practices, Sapir's scheme established a logical, convenient way to accession collections received by the Anthropological Division.

CREATING THE COLLECTION

Teit was unique among Geological Survey fieldworkers. His fieldwork was not the result of short, sporadic visits made to the field by a stranger. Rather, it was based on continuing personal and po-

litical relationships with the aboriginal peoples in British Columbia where he lived and worked. At the same time, Teit was connected to mainstream anthropology through his continuing collaboration with Franz Boas, as a collector for major North American museums, and as a fieldworker for the Geological Survey. Further, his correspondence with Sapir and Boas indicates that he was aware of and reading current scientific publications and often requested that copies of certain articles and books be sent to him (Teit to Sapir January 20, 1916, November 3, 1921, *passim*). Teit subscribed to *Science* and *American Anthropologist* (Teit to Sapir, February 2, 1921). His daughter Inga Perkin indicated that her father had an extensive library which included foreign language dictionaries, and volumes on botany, history, poetry, natural history, and anthropology (Banks 1970: 62-63). Teit was familiar with the work carried out among the Tahltan peoples by George M. Dawson (1888, 1898), Father A. G. Morice (1890), and Lt. G. T. Emmons (1911) and regularly cited their publications. On occasion, Teit even suggested readings in the linguistic field which might interest Sapir (Teit to Sapir, February 17, 1913). Among the many scientists who sought him out on their way through British Columbia were H. K. Haeberlin with whom Teit collaborated on "Coiled Basketry in British Columbia and Surrounding Region" (Haeberlin, Teit and Roberts 1928), Franz Boas, and Harlan I. Smith and Edward Sapir of the Geological Survey.

Moreover, Teit was at the center of ethnographic collecting in British Columbia. He had a long association in this regard with Charles F. Newcombe. They were in contact regarding collections for the Field Museum, Chicago and the Provincial Museum, Victoria. And frequently, Teit alerted Sapir to the availability of particularly "good pieces" from private collectors in Victoria, Vancouver, and elsewhere (Teit to Sapir, April 6, 1914; September 21, 1914; February 27, 1917; January 28, 1920; March 24, 1921, *passim*).

Teit and the outside service

The extensive and rich correspondence between Teit and Sapir began in late 1911 and continued on a regular basis until July 31, 1922, three months before Teit's death.¹³ Sapir's interest in having Teit collect Tahltan materials is indicated in an early letter to Teit:

It is my desire first of all to have a systematic mapping instituted of the Athabaskan tribes of Canada, and I believe that you would be the very best person that could be chosen to work out the exact tribal boundaries in British Columbia and the Yukon. Hand in hand with this preliminary work should go the gathering of representative collections for our museum. At least certain tribes, Tahltan for instance, should be chosen for complete ethnological study on the scale you have adopted for your Thompson River or Shuswap Indian monographs. (Sapir to Teit, December 2, 1911)

Sapir does not outline what a "representative collection" might consist of and in 1913 he gave Teit free rein with regard to what should be collected.

Because of Department of Mines policy, Teit could not be appointed to the Inside Service of the Anthropological Division. This would require that he take up residence in Ottawa; Teit chose to remain in British Columbia. His employment to the Outside Service became "practically permanent," nevertheless (Sapir to Boas, January 13, 1912). The following excerpts from Teit's contractual agreements with the Survey reflect the nature of Teit's appointment:

1913/14 agree to undertake ethnological field work and the purchase of specimens among the Athabaskan tribes of British Columbia, and if necessary adjoining regions . . ."

1914/15 agree to undertake . . . an ethnological field trip or ethnological field trips among various Salish or Athabaskan tribes of British Columbia...and to obtain representative museum collections illustrating the life of the various tribes visited. . . . A scientific paper, or a series of scientific papers . . . is to be submitted for publication . . ."

1915/16 agree to undertake an investigation of the Athabaskan tribes of northern British Columbia, Yukon, and Northwest Territories for the purpose of obtaining further ethnological data on these tribes . . . and forward . . . a complete and final memoir on at least one important phase, such as mythology, religion, social organization, or material culture, of the ethnology of the Tahltan Indians . . ." (CMC, Sapir Correspondence, Contracts: 1913-1920)

The 1916/17, 1917/1918, and 1920/21 contracts refer exclusively to the preparation of "final memoirs on the ethnology of the Tahltan Indians" (contracts for the years 1918/19 and 1919/20 are not in the

CMC Library [Documents Collection]). All of the contracts outline financial details and request the submission of all notes, notebooks, photographs, negatives, plans, maps, and specimens¹⁴ that result from fieldwork. In the 1916 contract, Teit lists his profession as "ethnologist."

Teit did not always comply with Survey accounting procedures and his reports were invariably late; and, in the case of the "final memoirs" on the Tahltan, never submitted in completed form. Teit's tardiness became problematic for Sapir who had to account for the activities of his field service staff. Within a few years of Teit's appointment, Sapir encountered administrative problems (Sapir to Boas, October 19, 1916). The arrangements made with Teit under R. W. Brock were not acceptable to Brock's successor, R. G. McConnell, Deputy Minister and Director of the Survey from 1914-1920 (Russell 1961: 5-6). In an attempt to provide Teit with continued financial support Sapir offered to purchase completed manuscripts from him (Sapir to Boas, August 11, 1919). Teit agreed to this arrangement, as reflected in the 1916/17, 1917/18, and 1920/21 contracts. In fact, Teit's work for the Survey was interrupted because of financial restraints during the First World War and because of illness, family duties, his advocacy work on behalf of aboriginal peoples, outstanding work for Boas, and finally, his untimely death. Throughout his employment with the Geological Survey, Teit continued to divide his time among commitments to Boas, to the Survey, and to various aboriginal organizations in British Columbia.

Teit's northern fieldwork

While Teit's first contract on record covers the fiscal year 1913/14, the *Geological Survey Summary Report for 1912* indicates that his initial work for the Survey was carried out among the Tahltan peoples in the Cassiar district from August 15 to November 1, 1912 (Sapir 1914a: 448-83; Teit 1914, 1956). Teit reported collecting about thirty Tahltan artifacts (mostly bags and tools) and sixty-one songs, among these Bear Lake Sekani songs, all from the Upper Stikine River area (Teit to Sapir, November 2, 1912). The results of this trip are documented in "On Tahltan (Athabaskan) Work, 1912" (Teit 1914: 484-87). Further, Teit wrote 450 pages of information about general ethnography, mythology, traditions, and language. Among this material are the field notes Teit wrote on the Tahltan and Kaska

stories that Boas would publish in the *Journal of American Folklore* (Teit 1917, 1919, 1921).

Teit arrived in Telegraph Creek on September 1, 1912 and wasted no time in getting to work. He met with some Tahltan people the next day who had already selected a man to work with him.¹⁵ Within six days of his arrival, Teit had found out all he could about tribal boundaries and naming and then tackled social organization. He wrote:

... on points where Dawson, Morice or Emmons disagree with information obtained by me, I am taking great pains to get hold of the true way, and have asked a number of informants. So far they all agree so I feel confident I am correct. They say these other men were only a short time here and picked up their information casually and without taking any pains, so they say there is no wonder they have made a few mistakes (they had no paid men to give them information). (Teit to Sapir, September 6, 1912)

Teit was shown a few "old things" which he priced, but no one was willing to sell these to him and he did not persist (Teit to Sapir, December 4, 1912).

Sapir's directions to Teit included various pointers on non-material culture. Specifically, Sapir requested documentation on chieftainships, inheritance of property, fishing, hunting and other economic rights, marriage regulations, naming of individuals, religion, and shamanism. Further, Sapir instructed Teit to document linguistic data he hoped would provide a basis for his classification of Athapaskan tribes. The data should include fairly extensive vocabularies and test grammatical questions following guidelines set out by Pliny Goddard. It was Sapir's hope that Teit would produce an elaborate study of one particular Athabaskan tribe along the lines of Teit's treatment of the *Nlaka'pamux* (Thompson) (Sapir to Teit, December 2, 1911; January 16, 1913). Sapir especially wanted to see data on the exact nature of the Tahltan clans. He suggested to Teit a series of questions to ask which ran to one page and a half in length. Sapir was especially interested to find out which aspects of the social organization were primary and which were secondary because he believed the Tahltan represented the case of an interior tribe which had become "profoundly influenced in its social form by the [coastal] Tlingit" (Sapir to Teit, December 21, 1912 and January 16, 1913; see MacLachlan 1981). In contrast, Sapir left the matter of collecting museum material

entirely up to Teit: "just collect whatever seems of real interest to you" (Sapir to Teit, January 16, 1913).

When packing up the Tahltan specimens in February 1913 back in Spence's Bridge, Teit noted to Sapir that in general he continued to collect when funds from his various museum sources had run out: "I hated to see good rare things and good replicates [sic] go by, so I bought them with my own money altho [sic] sometimes not very convenient for me." Teit had made collections over the preceding five years and offered to sell them to the Survey's Museum (Teit to Sapir, February 17, 1913). On March 5, 1913, Teit sent off the list of Tahltan artifacts; the artifacts themselves and the wax cylinder recordings of the songs followed three days later. These arrived in Ottawa before March 22, 1913 when Sapir acknowledged their receipt.

A return trip to the Telegraph Creek area was planned for the summer of 1913. This was suspended, however, until Teit completed all outstanding work for Boas (Sapir to Teit, June 10, 1913). That year, Teit collected just four Tahltan pieces; these were purchased by the Geological Survey (Sapir 1914b; Sapir does not provide details about how Teit acquired these). The thirty-one Tahltan photographs reported for 1913 were taken by Teit during the previous year's fieldwork.

In 1914, Teit was barred by his doctor from taking any northern trips because of ill health. Teit wrote to Sapir of his disappointment in not being fit to go north "as all the people were expecting me and I had in a way made a good part of my arrangements already" (Teit to Sapir, April 6, 1914). Instead, he planned to write out the Tahltan tales and material he had on hand and to continue with two papers in progress for Boas. He also suggested to Sapir that with some practice and the proper equipment he could undertake to make anthropometric measurements: "It seems to me too bad to miss all the fine opportunities I have in this line. It looks like wilful neglect" (Teit to Sapir, April 6, 1914).¹⁶

Teit's plans for the 1915 summer field season included visits to the Athapaskan and Tlingit people of the Atlin and Teslin districts. He left for the Cassiar district for the period July 7 to November 6, where he worked with Kaska people between Dease Lake and the Liard River. In Telegraph Creek during the latter part of this trip Teit completed work on Tahltan social organization, naming, and marriage systems. Of the seventy-four songs he col-

lected (many composed since his visit in 1912), some are identified by Teit as Tahltan, Kaska, Liard, Mackenzie (Fort Simpson), Sekani (Nelson River and Bear Lake), Cree, Naas, Kitikhsian, Taku, and Tagish (Teit to Sapir, November 16, 1915 [with appendix]). He also collected a considerable number of botanical specimens along with many Tahltan names and uses for them. In all, he collected about 150 ethnographic objects; these included some "old pieces." The lot consisted of tools, bags, utensils, clothing and ornaments. He wrote:

[I] bought a good many specimens — most of them old pieces. There are some duplicates but you said that would not matter. I think you will find the collection quite interesting. As I suppose you want a pretty full collection from this area, I left a list with Dandy Jim my chief informant of the kinds of things I will buy next year. The Indians here have many valuable old things but the only way to get them is to be here in the early part of the fishing season when they are congregated chiefly at Tahltan where they have all their stuff stored away in their houses. The early summer and Christmas time are the proper periods to catch the Tahltan altogether. (Teit to Sapir, October 13, 1915)

Teit never returned to Telegraph Creek.

In January 1916, Teit sent the Tahltan and Kaska tales in manuscript form to Sapir. Included were an index of the contents and a preface. He annotated the tales by making comparisons chiefly with Thompson River stories he had collected earlier (Teit 1898). Teit completed the catalogue of the Tahltan specimens collected in 1915 and sent this under separate cover in February. He noted that he had taken photographs of some mythological places including "the place near Tahltan where the Raven urinated"; another photograph showed the wind break to the Raven's house, and another showed the Raven's house in a large cave in a cliff. References to these places are made in the Raven Cycle of stories, "Raven in the Country of the Tahltan" (see Teit 1919: 211-12). Teit mentioned to Sapir that he had these photographs and would send them to Sapir (Teit to Sapir, February 20, 1916), but later in the same letter he tells Sapir that the prints in his possession had been produced in Ottawa on April 21, 1913 and copies then sent to him in Spence's Bridge. Taken during the 1912 trip, only the first of these three photographs in the CMC's collections has sur-

vived. The card catalogue in the CMC Library (Photographic Archives) describes the photograph of the place where Raven urinated as a "group of summer houses or fishing lodges of Tahltans made of poles, some roofed with bark, Telegraph Creek, B.C." — the mythological significance of this place is not mentioned. The other two photographs are listed as discarded.

Following Sapir's suggestion, Teit planned to compare the Tahltan tales he had collected with Tlingit tales in Swanton's *Tlingit Myths and Texts* (1909). Sapir hoped to edit and publish the Tahltan and Kaska tales under the auspices of the Geological Survey, but continued financial restraints made this impossible (Teit to Sapir, March 20, 1917). Also in this letter, Teit requested prints of some twenty photographs that he had taken in the Telegraph Creek and Cassiar districts. A Tahltan "subchief" unnamed by Teit wanted to show these photographs to people "up north."¹⁷

Sapir had begun to edit Teit's manuscript, but in the fall of 1917 he offered the manuscript to Boas who was looking for "good Indian material" for the *Journal of American Folklore*. Sapir asked Teit if he objected to his turning the stories over to Boas. Teit did not object; along with Sapir, he wanted to see them published. In October 1917, Sapir transferred the manuscript to Boas at Columbia University who completed the editing, including the annotations, and published them. Teit's four-page preface was removed, as were his designations "T1" which indicated Tlingit origin for some of the stories.¹⁸ Boas Latinized some of the more sensitive passages and highlighted moralizing aspects of each tale with the use of italics.

In May 1918, Teit received by mail two dozen copies of the published "Kaska Tales" (Teit 1917) — the "Tahltan Tales" were not published until 1919 and 1921. He sent "5 or 6 of [the copies] to persons up in the Tahltan and Kaska countries—3 of them Indians." He also distributed a copy to Charles F. Newcombe and a copy to the Provincial Government Librarian in Victoria. Others he gave to friends in British Columbia interested in folklore (Teit to Sapir, May 12, 1918). During 1919 and 1920, Teit continued to prepare his notes for the comprehensive Tahltan study he planned to write up. More and more of his time, however, was taken up by his work for The Allied Tribes of British Columbia and his paper for Boas on *Nlaka'pamux* (Thompson) uses of plants.

In 1920, Sapir informed Teit that the newly formed Anthropological Club of Ottawa with Sapir as President and Harlan Smith as Secretary had elected Teit as a member, an honor that carried with it no responsibilities and a few privileges (Sapir to Teit, February 16, 1920). Later that year, Teit put aside the manuscript on Tahltan ethnography to devote his energy to the recently initiated Ditchburn-Clark inquiry into the *Report of the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of British Columbia* (Canada 1916). Teit was appointed to the inquiry to represent aboriginal interests. In a letter to Sapir, Teit reported:

[I had to] . . . occupy *all* my time during the rest of this month and the greater part of next with work for Mr. Scott [Duncan Campbell Scott, Deputy Superintendent of Department of Indian Affairs] and the Indians in connection with placing the Indian case before the Board which has been appointed by the two governments to investigate the actual needs of the Indians as regards lands, fishing, hunting, etc. This Board of two officials [W. E. Ditchburn for the Department of Indian Affairs and Major J. W. Clark for British Columbia] will later make recommendations to the Governments and then an attempt will be made to settle with the Indians and if possible end this troublesome controversy. Work in connection with this important matter will take up most of my time for some months to come. (Teit to Sapir, November 10, 1920)

The inquiry was completed March 19, 1923 (Tittley 1986: 149), five months after Teit's death. In the same letter, Teit refers to the Tahltan, Kaska, and Tlingit vocabularies that remained unfinished due to his unfamiliarity with the sounds and their rendering. In February 1921, Teit forwarded the Tahltan manuscript unfinished to Sapir.

In March 1921, Teit was diagnosed with cancer and his doctors gave him only a few months to live. Prompted by this news, Teit sent to Sapir sixty pages of linguistic material on his Tlingit, Tahltan, and Kaska vocabularies and all the Tahltan notes he had in Spence's Bridge. Later that month, Teit left British Columbia for the Mayo Brothers clinic in Minnesota to seek treatment. During May and June of that year, Teit took a series of x-ray treatments in Vancouver. On July 18, 1921, Teit suggested to Sapir that they call off the outstanding financial settlement for the Tahltan manuscript (Teit to Sapir, July 18, 1921).

Teit made only one further reference to this work, but he never took it up again (Teit to Sapir, March 18, 1922). Teit died on October 30, 1922.

To the end, Teit was concerned about the fate of ethnographic materials he watched leaving the province:

I think the Museum is making a mistake (I don't mean yourself *of course*) in not having some funds on hand yearly for the purchase of specimens — especially for archaeological and old stuff which cannot be duplicated. This stuff is constantly going to the museums in the States, and here and there to private collectors and speculators instead of to the National Museum of Canada as it should. (Teit to Sapir, March 18, 1922)

Field relationships: The Tahltan people who contributed to the collection

Museum classification systems in general dehumanize collections. If they exist at all, references to individuals involved in the collecting process remain buried in field notes, diaries, and accounts books. Teit refers to individuals with whom he worked in the north throughout his field notes and correspondence. We cannot know what constitutes this collection without considering the Tahltan people involved in its formation.

Teit notes in 1912 that Dandy Jim "is said to be one of the best informed men in the tribe selected by Indians at meeting 2nd September as first man to give information" (Teit Field Notes 1912-1915a; Teit to Sapir, September 6, 1912; Teit 1956:40). Throughout his field notes and published papers, Teit repeatedly refers to Dandy Jim as his chief informant. After his return home from Telegraph Creek, Teit mentions that Dandy Jim "sat with [him] nearly every day" (Teit to Sapir, December 4, 1912). He notes that Dandy Jim was born about forty miles up the Iskut River around forty-six years earlier, and gives his Tahltan name as *Tuū' ts* ("strong rocks"), a member of the *Nā'lotēn'* (Nahlin) clan of the Crow phratry.¹⁹ Teit notes there was no real chief of the *Nā'lotēn'* clan, but that "Dandy Jim is a close relative [perhaps of the late Chief *Katune*] and able man who speaks for the clan at councils" (Teit Field Notes 1912-1915a). Teit's 1912 census of Tahltan village indicates that Dandy Jim was married to Susie Ward (*Nakistitā'*, also called "Old Susie"). As well as providing Teit with information, Dandy Jim sang

songs and sold Teit a few ethnographic objects. Teit paid Dandy Jim for the information he provided; purchasing individual songs and objects separately. In a letter dated January 3, 1919, Teit informs Sapir that Dandy Jim died on a trapping trip.

While Dandy Jim was Teit's primary source of information, many other people also assisted Teit. Teit's published papers refer to several individuals by name:

Most of the information from the Kaska I obtained at the foot of Dease Lake, my chief informants being Albert Dease and his wife. The Tahltan information was collected for the most part at Telegraph Creek from Dandy Jim. I obtained some information from several other individuals of both sexes of the Tahltan and neighboring tribes, particularly from Big Jackson, Slim Jim, Dennis Hyland, Bear Lake Billy, Ned Teit, etc. (Teit 1956: 40).

Teit acknowledged that he obtained information from "individuals of both sexes," but he mentioned only the men by name in "Field Notes on the Tahltan and Kaska Indians: 1912-1915" (Teit 1956). Many people agreed to let Teit record them singing, almost half of them women.²⁰ The following people contributed many songs, some of which they composed themselves: Slim Jim, Big Jackson, Dandy Jim, Nellie Campbell, Aggie Quak, Aggie Adset, Beal, Little Charley, Ada Quok, Susie Ward, Joe Coburn, Little Emma, Minnie Coburn, Nelson, Thommy Cigar, John Thibet, Harry Bear Lake, Jeanie Campbell, Samuel, Davie, Bear Lake Billy, Daisy Campbell, and Lucy Campbell.²¹ Ada Dease and Matilda Reid sang most of the Bear Lake songs. More complete information about each of these individuals is recorded in Teit's 1912 census (Teit Field Notes 1912-1915a).

The notebook "J. Teit's Accounts" covers the Cassiar trip of July 7 to November 6, 1915. Teit used it to account for supplies, to itemize the objects purchased, and as a diary. The names he mentions regularly include Packer Johnny, Packer Tommy, George Adsit, Hunter Frank, and Bombay Johnny, people with whom he camped and obtained information. Late in August, Teit notes that he worked with Nettie and Albert Dease, recording Kaska language and stories (Teit Field Notes 1912-1915a; Teit 1956: 40-41). On several occasions between August and late October, dances took place in the evenings.

Teit kept particularly detailed notes in 1915. Unlike his earlier records, Teit notes not only what was purchased, but also from whom. While songs and information were obtained from both men and women, Teit purchased ethnographic objects almost solely from women. He identifies individuals by name and provides details about the purchases he made from them.²² The people Teit collected from in 1915 include: Albert and Nettie Dease, Jeanie Smith, May, Lucy and Louisa Dease, Nellie Nehass and her mother, Mrs. Thibet, Lucy Martin, Dandy Jim, Minnie Coburn, Lucy Campbell, Jennie Martin, Mrs. Packer Johnny, Ida and Bear Lake Billy, *Sto'ngdju's*, Jenny Martin, "Old" Mrs. Charley, Emma Simpson and Benny, Aggie, Frank, Dennis, Mary's mother, Ida Quok, and Lucy Albert.

THE COLLECTION AS MUSEUM ARCHIVE

Artifacts, songs, and photographs

The total number of Tahltan artifacts collected by Teit and accessioned into the museum's collections is 168. The fate of four from this total (one double set of gambling sticks with bag, one pipe, an arrow point, and spear head) and two snares is unknown.²³ The accessioned collection includes a wide range of objects under the following general categories: bags and pouches, spoons, clothing, necklaces, tools, blankets, ornaments, baby carriers, hunting and fishing equipment, pipes, women's work bags, snowshoes, and one toboggan (Teit Collector's Files 1912-1920, CMC Ethnology Division). There are eighty-six songs originally recorded on wax cylinders and transferred to audio tape by Eugene Arima in 1961. Teit's notes categorize the songs as belonging to the following types: mourning, *Kuwegan* or peace, love, dance and potlatch, gambling, cremation, paying off songs for the dead, children's, shaman's doctoring songs, and numerous songs for animals, sung by twenty-four individuals. Teit notes the type of song and the person or persons singing. He identifies the situation in which the songs would be sung, includes English words for most of the songs, and in many cases he notes the composer's name.²⁴ Teit's notes identify some of the songs as Bear Lake Sekani, learned from them through association and intermarriage; all songs are sung by Tahltan people (Teit Phonograph Records 1912, CMC Library (Documents Collection)). The photograph collection numbers over one hundred. The collection consists of photographs taken by Teit of the

singers, of the people from whom he obtained information and purchased objects, and of various others with whom he came into contact (Teit 1912-1915c, CMC Library [Photographic Archives]).

Field notes and unpublished manuscripts

The field notes recorded and manuscripts written during Teit's 1912 and 1915 northern field trips are held in the CMC Library (Documents Collection) and include "Field Notes: Tahltan, Kaska and Bear Lake Indians" (Teit 1912-1915a, nine notebooks), "Tahltan and Kaska Myths" (Teit 1912-1915e, seventy-five page incomplete typed manuscript),²⁵ "Report on Tahltan Field Work among the Tahltan, Kaska, and Bear Lake Indians" (Teit 1912-1915d, original holograph, typed manuscript, notes, maps),²⁶ "Observations on Physical Characteristics of the Tahltan and Kaska Indians" (Teit 1912-1915b), "Tlingit Vocabulary from a Tahltan Informant, Dandy Jim" (Teit 1912-1915g), "Tahltan Songs" (Teit 1912-1915f, typed notes and audio tapes), and "Notes on songs of the Indians of British Columbia, and lists of phonograph records" (Teit 1912-1921). Among the nine notebooks, one from 1912 provides a census of Tahltan village (with English and Tahltan names of individuals and their clans), one catalogues objects purchased and provides ethnographic notes, another includes notes on songs and myths, and an account book also documents objects purchased. Also, Teit drew or annotated several maps. These maps indicated the approximate extent of the territory used by the Tahltan around 1912 and 1915 and are based on information he heard (see Teit 1956: 50-52).

Structures of classification and control: Cultural materials in museum archives

Removed from their field settings in northern British Columbia to Teit's home at Spence's Bridge in southern British Columbia, the materials (by then decontextualized from social settings of community and utilitarian function) were documented by Teit, tagged, packed, and shipped to Ottawa. From the moment the objects were selected they became and were treated as scientific specimens. Once received by the Geological Survey in Ottawa these specimens were further decontextualized and fully embedded in scientific "structures of classification" (Phillips 1992). Cultural symbols, now specimens and artifacts, were accessioned, categorized, and placed into storage, a synchronic deep-freeze,

for safe-keeping. Even before their removal from the geographic location in which the collector obtains them, the materials are embedded in a hierarchical structure of knowledge that is outside northern Athapaskan epistemology. To this day, most of the objects in the collection carry Teit's original classification tag.

The Tahltan artifacts, photographs, and songs collected by Teit were accessioned into a classification system established by Sapir which was based on then current museological theory. This system was a convenient way to pigeon-hole aboriginal cultural materials and make access to collections relatively unproblematic for scientists and scholars at the Museum who were familiar with its classification systems (Sapir 1914a). In 1971, the entire northern Athapaskan collection was reorganized and assigned new numbers. The Plateau and Mackenzie Valley area ("Section VI") was divided. The Plateau area became Section II; the Mackenzie Valley materials remained under Section VI, and re-labelled Northern Athapaskan.²⁷ The Tahltan artifacts collected by Teit were assigned individual new numbers under section VI. With minor adjustments made over the years to account for misattribution, Sapir's system remains in tact. In their current situation in the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the artifacts are maintained by the Collections Management division under the Director, Collections. As with all collections, these materials require specialized storage facilities. Supported by an independent records system, they are stored separately from the photographs and songs. At the time of writing, some of the artifacts were not yet installed in permanent storage (Collections Management was one of the last divisions to move into the new building in 1990). Further, twenty-eight items had not yet been assigned permanent locations. The song collection, managed within the Library division (also under Director, Collections), is organized and maintained separately. The photograph collection is held in the Photographic Archives section of the Library and is organized by a numbering system cross-referenced only to its own catalogue record, not to the rest of the collection. The negatives are in specialized cold storage facilities in the basement. Again, as with the songs and photographs, the collector's field notes and unpublished manuscripts are under the auspices of the Library; these are housed and maintained on a different floor from the photographs, and are managed by archi-

vists. The Documents Collection is stored and managed according to separate categories: archaeology, ethnology, folk culture, and history. Teit's papers and manuscripts are dispersed among the archaeology, ethnology, and folk culture sections.

Travelling history

Since their acquisition in 1912 and 1915, forty-three of the artifacts from this collection have been exhibited. Fourteen artifacts were on loan to *Strangers of the North*, a travelling exhibition of northern Athapaskan materials from Alaska and western Canada. The exhibition, a collaboration between the Royal Scottish Museum and the then National Museum of Man, Canada, was formed from their respective collections and travelled from 1974-1977 (see Clark 1974). The itinerary included the Provincial Museum of Alberta (Edmonton), the Royal British Columbia Museum (Victoria), the Anchorage Historical and Fine Arts Museum (Anchorage), the Glenbow Museum (Calgary), and the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature (Winnipeg). A selection of the Tahltan artifacts in "Strangers of the North" (nine of the fourteen) was included in "Kwaday Kwadan" at the MacBride Museum, Whitehorse, from September to December 1981. Although the CMC Collections records refer to this selection as "Miniathabaskan," this exhibition and concurrent conference were important collaborations between The Council for Yukon Indians, the Yukon Historical and Museums Association, and the MacBride Museum involving many people from across the Yukon and northern British Columbia.

Other loans of the Tahltan materials collected by Teit were made to the Oblate Order in 1930; to the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto in 1933; to Australia in 1935; to the RCMP in Ottawa, 1938; to exhibits in Montreal and Winnipeg in 1938 and 1939; and to the Pembroke, Ontario Tercentenary (Pembroke celebrated its centennial in 1958). Crawley Films in Ottawa borrowed a man's shirt in 1948 to be used in *The Loon's Necklace*.²⁸ The *Sacred Circles* exhibition (1976-77), organized by the Nelson-Aitkens Museum in Kansas City, Missouri, included a pair of Tahltan snowshoes from this collection. The exhibition showed in Kansas City and London, England. Still other loans of the Tahltan materials went to UNESCO, Paris in 1983 and to the Glenbow Museum's *The Spirit Sings* exhibition in 1988. One piece has been on loan to the Prince of Wales Heritage Centre in Yellowknife

since 1978. Several pieces were on display in the National Museum of Canada, Ottawa from 1963-67 and at the Victoria Memorial Museum Building. During the National Museum's "Indian Days" in 1964, two Tahltan powder horns were used. Several of the Tahltan pieces were included in exhibits in the museumobile series of Caravans organized by the National Museums of Canada in the 1970s and 1980s.²⁹

As part of the permanent collections held by the Museum of Civilization, the Tahltan materials have seen homes in storage facilities in the Victoria Memorial Museum Building on McLeod Street (Ottawa), warehouses in Bells Corners (1968-69) and on Merivale Road (Ottawa), and at the Asticou complex in Hull, Québec where all collections were centralized to prepare for the final move into the present location in Hull.

Except for the loans made to the MacBride Museum in Whitehorse, the Museum of the North in Yellowknife (as it was called at time of loan), and the current loan to the Prince of Wales Heritage Centre in Yellowknife, the balance of loans has been made to institutions outside northern Canada, or abroad. No part of this collection has travelled to the originating locations in the Telegraph Creek and Cassiar districts of British Columbia.

Accessibility: Retrieving the collection and related information

The "artifact" (field notes and manuscripts, correspondence, material objects, songs, and photographs) collected by Teit is physically dispersed throughout the museum's classification system and, indeed, throughout the museum building. Management by different branches and divisions with separate records management and staff, and in one instance the relinquishment of original documents to another institution, creates problems for a researcher who attempts to discover all the components of a particular collection. Because of these spatial, administrative, and preservation divisions, it is physically impossible to see all the components of this collection at once. During the course of the study, the situation of the Northern Athapaskan collection generally, but specifically the Tahltan materials Teit collected, was such that I was unable to see many of the parts of this collection. During the period from June 1992 (the time of my first inquiry) through April 1993, the Tahltan artifacts, which remained packed from the move to the present loca-

tion in 1990, were unavailable for viewing. (Eventually, I was to gain access to the entire collection and in late 1993 I photographed the 158 objects then available.)

Connections between Teit's field documentation and his correspondence are severed by archival practices which dictate that these be categorized and stored separately. Objects are not only separated from documentation, but also from other components of the "artifact" as products of museum preservation and safe-keeping enterprises. The result is the further disarticulation of interrelated cultural materials. Any interconnection between the collected materials and the people from whom these materials were collected is severed. The names of the Tahltan people who contributed to the construction of this collection had remained buried in field notes. Once the fragile webs which had formerly existed between components of the collection are reconstructed, only partial histories are revealed.

CONCLUSION

Ethnographic objects are first "defined, segmented, detached, and carried away" from communities (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1991); they are further dispersed in the museum context over the course of accession, classification, and storage. Naming and classifying activities, macro-systems of museum classification, contribute to, and indeed create, the dispersed nature of large museum collections (Phillips 1992). Removed from communities and social settings, assembled "artifacts" are shipped to central holding agencies far afield from ethnographic sites and the originating peoples. Here, the "artifact" is disarticulated and stored. Objects might be further separated or disarticulated from each other through the selection and elimination processes of creating an exhibit. Exhibits might temporarily release objects from classification structures when they are united with archives and other objects from the "artifact" for exhibition purposes. While curators and researchers consult fieldworkers' notes and documentation to prepare labels, exhibit notes, and publications, the unity or re-unification of the "artifact" is limited and temporary; once the exhibit closes objects are re-absorbed into the classification system (Halpin 1991). Only rarely are entire collections exhibited.

Historically, systematic survey collecting was carried out in order to preserve so-called representative collections of material culture from abo-

original peoples. Assemblages of objects were used by museums (and continue to be) as ways to represent whole cultures. Based on early museum convention, naming and classifying practices were designed to create, order, and control discrete components for the purposes of academic study and preservation of cultural heritage. These categories now continue to privilege domains of inclusion and exclusion (Phillips 1992). Certain kinds of information are suppressed and others are privileged. Information about the collector and the collected is compartmentalized by the way collections are dispersed and then controlled by categories imposed and enforced by museum hierarchies. Such categories do not foster relationships between objects and people, between songs and people, or between narratives and people. Further, relationships which existed in the originating communities between the collector and the collected (people and things), are severed when the "artifact" (the collection as a whole) moves from the field setting to a museum context. From the perspective of the "artifact" and the originating communities, these practices act as forces fragmenting the unity of the collection. The very *process* of collecting is buried.

The Tahltan collection considered here had its beginnings in northwestern British Columbia when James Teit began his fieldwork for the Geological Survey in 1912. Teit sent the "artifact" from the Telegraph Creek and Cassiar districts in northwestern British Columbia to Spence's Bridge in south central British Columbia via Vancouver. From Spence's Bridge, Teit shipped the collection to the Geological Survey in Ottawa where it was accessioned, classified, separated into discrete components, and then placed in storage. Each component of this "artifact" carries with it its own story, and each component is connected to the others. But the stories are concealed and the connections severed in the museum context. Over the course of attempting to reconstruct the "fragile webs" of this "artifact," I was confronted by museum practices that stood in the way of rapid, unproblematic retrieval of the collection as well as information about the collector, and the people and their cultural materials, the collected. These difficulties bear directly on emerging museum practice related to issues about accessibility to collections and the reconstitution of collections in contemporary aboriginal communities.

The report of the Task Force on Museums and First Peoples, "Turning the Page: Forging New Part-

nerships Between Museums and First Peoples" (1992), calls for improved access to museum collections by aboriginal peoples, and recommends that:

In concert with First Peoples museums should develop a workable process to provide full disclosure of existing information relating to aboriginal collections. Such information will include the scope of the collection, the kinds of objects included, and the geographical location, cultural affiliation, means and period of acquisition. (1992: 8)

Aboriginal peoples in Canada and the United States are increasingly approaching museums with requests for information about collections, and requests to reconstitute collections in their communities. Many people wish to carry out research on the collections themselves. The CMC and other like institutions are being forced to respond to different sets of needs and purposes than those of institutions created to collect, preserve, and store cultural heritage. Originally created to accommodate and even facilitate academic research, museum categories are impediments to the kind of research called for by the recommendations of the Task Force. If museums are to provide full disclosure of information about their collections and make their collections truly accessible, they will have to find ways to overcome the impediments of their own practices.

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge Mrs. Grace Edzerza, Vera McGinty, and Allen Edzerza of Whitehorse, Yukon and Marilyn Norby of Dease Lake, British Columbia for their time and interest in this project. The staff at the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC) in Hull provided access to the Teit documents and collections records. Special thanks to Margo Reid and Benoît Thériault at the CMC for their assistance. Unpublished manuscripts, field notes, and correspondence are quoted by permission of the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

Financial support for fieldwork in the Yukon was provided by a Northern Studies Endowment Fellowship from the Northern Research Institute (Yukon College), and The Northern Scientific Training Program (University of British Columbia).

Notes

1. The original manuscript was not returned to the Geological Survey of Canada nor was it retained among Boas's papers. It is not listed in the American Philological Society manuscript collections under the Teit or Boas entries (Freeman *et al.* 1966). Bernard R. Crystal, Assistant Librarian for Manuscripts, Butler Library, Columbia University confirms that the Tahltan/Kaska narratives manuscript was not retained among Boas's Columbia University papers (personal communication October 7, 1992).
2. Jacknis (1992) confines his study to Teit's *Nlaka'pamux* collections (Thompson River Salish, south central British Columbia), while Wickwire has studied Teit's life and work with the *Nlaka'pamux* (1979, 1985, 1988, 1993). Others have documented Teit's life and provided commentary on his publications (Boas 1922; Banks 1970; Howes and Lean 1979; Bunyan 1981; Maud 1982).
3. As anthropology shifted from a museum-based to a university-based discipline the number of museum anthropologists remained approximately stable while the number of non-museum anthropologists increased dramatically (Jacknis 1985; Nason 1987; Parezo 1987: 2). Sturtevant has shown that the actual percentage of publications concerned with material culture decreased between 1920 and 1960 (Sturtevant 1969: 626). More recently, Pearce points to a rise in museum research endeavors, especially in England where she is based. Along with Ames, Pearce sees much potential for the development of museum-based theory (Pearce 1989; Ames 1992).
4. Born James Alexander Tait April 15, 1864 in Lerwick, on Mainland, in the Shetland Islands, Scotland. The eldest of John and Elizabeth Murray Tait's twelve children, Tait attended high school in Lerwick until age sixteen. He then worked in his father's general store and as a fisherman on the North Sea (Banks 1970: 41; Wickwire 1988: 185).
5. The Teit papers in the CMC Library (Documents Collection) neither confirm nor deny that Teit worked with the Tahltan on the *1910 Declaration of the Tahltan Tribe*.
6. Unless otherwise stated, all quotations from correspondence are taken from Edward Sapir's Correspondence, CMC Library (Documents Collections) I-A-236M.
7. The Indian Rights Association of British Columbia dissolved in 1916 when The Allied Indian Tribes of British Columbia was formed at a conference on the Squamish reserve in North Vancouver. The Allied Tribes represented virtually all tribal groups across British Columbia, including the Tahltan (Tennant 1991: 87-95).
8. The Committee's recommendations were supported by the Archaeological Institute of America and the Royal Society of Canada (Sapir 1911: 789).
9. The Victoria Memorial Museum was formally disconnected from the Geological Survey in 1920, but remained under the Department of Mines for a number of years (Russell 1961; Zaslow 1975; Waiser 1989).

10. Sapir's 1912 statement became the *de facto* mandate of the Geological Survey and its Museum (and the subsequent National Museum in its various guises) until 1990 (Laforet 1993). Sapir's summaries for this and subsequent years' work undertaken by the Anthropological Division are found in *Summary Reports of the Geological Survey* (Department of Mines) for the respective calendar year.
11. See Darnell (1975, 1976, 1990) and Cole (1973, 1985) for details about Sapir's contributions to Canadian anthropology and his tenure at the Victoria Memorial Museum.
12. This spelling reflects that used by Sapir and is the common spelling used in Canada. For detailed synonyms see *The Handbook of North American Indians, Volume 6: Subarctic*. June Helm, editor. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1981.
13. The Sapir/Teit correspondence (350 letters) contains information related to Sapir's directions to Teit, to contractual arrangements, and reveals details about Teit's work in south central British Columbia and the Teit/Sapir relationship, generally. My focus here is primarily on those letters referring to Teit's collecting activities in the north.
14. The word "specimen" reflects Geological Survey language and is typical of natural science terminology in use during the period covered here.
15. In his letter to Sapir (September 6, 1912), Teit does not mention names of the people he met. This information is found in his unpublished field notes (Teit 1912-1915a and 1912-1915f) and is reported in the section "Field Relationships," following.
16. Teit had undertaken anthropometric measurements among the peoples throughout southern interior British Columbia from as early as 1895. These reports are in the Teit archaeology papers, CMC Library (Documents Collection).
17. Among those prints requested are ones of Aggie Quok, Ida Quok, Hunter Frank, *Tsāstle'ma*, Samuel, Minnie Adzedza, Charlie, Packer Johnny, Davy, Tommy Hawkins, Albert Dease, Nellie Campbell, Mrs. Quok, and *Sauttlēn*.
18. The typescript manuscript in the CMC Library (Documents Collection) includes Teit's four-page preface. His designation "Tl" (Tlingit) he explains as follows: "The stories marked "Tl" represent those to be which my Tahltan informants thought likely to be of Tlingit origin, wholly or in part, either because similar versions are related by the Tlingit or because the tales are set in the Tlingit country and reflect conditions of life existing there" (Teit 1912-1915e). By 1916, Boas had concluded that the folk-tales and myths that had been collected from aboriginal peoples across North America indicated that stories had wide distributions; some stories were so assimilated that any internal evidence indicating origin was rarely discovered. Boas's conclusion might explain why he removed Teit's "Tl" designations from the Tahltan tales (Boas 1916; Teit 1919, 1921).
19. Teit's 1912 census conducted at Tahltan village shows Dandy Jim as a member of the *Nā'loten'* clan of the Crow phratry. However, Teit's "Field Notes on the Tahltan and Kaska Indians: 1912-15" indicates that Dandy Jim "is a member of the *Nalakoten* or Nahlin clan of the Raven Phratry" (Teit 1956: 40-41).
20. See Wickwire (1993) for detail's about Teit's work with *Nlaka'pamux* women.
21. This name list follows the order and spelling found in the CMC card catalogue for the songs (Teit 1912-1915f). Some of the renderings of the names are inconsistent with Teit's manuscript. More detailed information about each song is given in Teit's notes (Teit 1912-1915a).
22. Teit paid for objects, songs, and information separately (Teit 1912-1915a).
23. Teit's catalogue for the 1912 field trip lists the double set of gambling sticks with beaded double-pouched bag. His 1915 catalogue shows the missing pipe of gunstock wood and cartridge shells carved to represent a canoe. This pipe was made by Bear Lake Sekani, obtained from a Tahltan source, and said by Teit to be old. The spear head and the arrow point both appear in the 1915 catalogue. All four objects were accessioned and assigned permanent location numbers. However, between their accession date and 1971 when a complete cataloguing and reassignment of numbers occurred, all four artifacts went missing. Teit lists two snares in 1912 that he will forward at a later time. His correspondence with Sapir does not mention them again and the records do not show them to be received or accessioned. Refer to Teit's handwritten catalogue and the typescript prepared from it by the Geological Survey (Teit 1912-1920).
24. The singers' names are listed in the section "Field Relationships," above. The notes for the songs are among Teit's Field Notes 1912-1915a and 1912-1915f.
25. Presumably this typed manuscript was prepared from Teit's original manuscript which was sent to Boas. The partial typescript in the Library (Documents Collection) includes: Teit's four-page preface, "the Raven Cycle" and sixteen additional stories. This manuscript forms part of the collection which appears in the *Journal of American Folklore* 32(118): 198-239, 1919. The other thirteen stories published in this volume, 32(118): 239-50, are not in the CMC Library (Documents Collection).
26. In the fall of 1923, Diamond Jenness embarked on fieldwork in British Columbia. He had these field notes with him. In January 1924, Jenness met with a Tahltan woman living near Hazelton to obtain information on what he refers to as "Tahltan sociology." His aim: to work over "Teit's materials as much as possible, with a view to its publication later." Jenness wrote that the Division owed at least this much to Teit in recognition of the good work he had done (Jenness to Sapir, November 25, 1923; January 6, 1924; February 4, 1924).
27. Personal communication April 15, 1993 with Judy Thompson, Curator of Western Sub-Arctic Ethnology (Canadian Ethnology Service, CMC). Ms. Thompson completed the 1971 cataloguing of the northern Athapaskan collection.
28. This Tahltan shirt was on loan to Crawley Films Limited (now defunct) of Ottawa from March-May

1948. The shirt is worn by a character in *The Loon's Necklace* (1950), produced by Crawley. The story depicted by the film is based on a myth from the Interior Salish people of British Columbia and is set on the banks of the Nicola River in south central British Columbia (filmed in a studio). Douglas Leechman, archaeologist at what was then the National Museum, is credited with the story told in the film. At the time of its first release, the film was made available to the Canadian Education Association, courtesy of Imperial Oil. Imperial Oil continues to distribute the film worldwide. This twelve-minute film was the "Canadian Film of the Year" in 1950 (personal communication April 15, 1993 with Bill O'Farrell, former Vice-President of Crawley Films Limited). CMC records indicate that Marius Barbeau was hired out to Crawley Films during the making of this film although Barbeau's name does not appear in the credits. The CMC's copy of this film is in permanent storage and is not available for viewing (personal communication April 15, 1993 with Dennis Fletcher, CMC Library). The National Archives of Canada in Ottawa has a copy of this film on video which was made available to me for viewing. While the continuing story of *The Loon's Necklace* is of interest in its own right, I wish to draw attention to the misappropriation of the Tahltan shirt. Collected in northwestern British Columbia, it was used in a film that tells a story important to Salish people in south central British Columbia. In 1993, when I photographed the collection, this shirt could not be located.

29. These Caravans travelled throughout the country and were an attempt to decentralize the National collections.

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