

## **Rethinking Dialogue and History: The King's Promise and the 1906 Aboriginal Delegation to London**

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*Western academic and Aboriginal indigenous histories do not always tell the same story. Sometimes differences are over points of fact, other times interpretation, and on still other occasions the historical narratives appear to speak right past one another. This article examines conflicting historical understandings that Natives and newcomers from British Columbia brought to an encounter between a delegation of Salish leaders and England's King Edward in 1906. The author takes seriously the maxim that meaning precedes experience, and suggests that it is incumbent on western society to try to understand the Aboriginal techniques of constructing knowledge, and not just the other way around. He argues that history needs to be understood within particular historical contexts, and that historians should not shy away from considering and trying to interpret the role of metaphysics within the construction of Aboriginal historical consciousness.*

*Les récits des universitaires occidentaux et des Autochtones ne racontent pas toujours pas toujours la même histoire. Quelquefois les différences sont sur des questions de fait, quelquefois sur l'interprétation et même dans certains cas les récits historiques semblent se contredire. Cet article examine les perspectives que les Indiens et les nouveaux venus de Colombie-Britannique ont amené entre une dlégation de dirigeants salish et le roi douard d'Angleterre en 1906. L'auteur prend au sérieux la maxime qui dit que le sens prcede l'expérience, et suggère qu'il incombe à la société occidentale d'essayer de comprendre les techniques autochtones de construction des connaissances, et pas seulement le contraire. Il souligne que l'histoire doit être comprise dans des contextes historiques particuliers, et que les historiens ne devraient pas hésiter à envisager d'interpréter le rôle de la métaphysique et de l'essayer dans la construction de la conscience historique autochtone.*

White men go about with a veil over their eyes and do not think as we think.

- Chief Joe Capilano, 1910.

A hot sun beat upon Cowichan Chief Charlie Isipaymilt as he stepped forward to address the *Royal Commission on Indian Affairs in British Columbia* on 27 May 1915. Though elderly and standing less than five feet tall, Isipaymilt spoke with a conviction that impressed his audience, Native and newcomer alike. In addition to his hereditary prerogatives, Isipaymilt's authority derived in part from his intimate association with Britain's king—the man ostensibly chosen by God to rule the world's largest empire, and the man in whose name both the Indian reserves and Canada's provincial "Crown lands" were held. Physical proof of this relationship was manifest in the framed portrait cradled in the arms of the man in full traditional ceremonial regalia standing next to the Cowichan Chief. Isipaymilt had received the signed image of King Edward VII following a historic Royal audience at Buckingham Palace in 1906. Raising his arm in the air, with clarity and alacrity Isipaymilt informed the Commissioners that what he and the Cowichan people required and expected was the fulfillment of certain promises made to him by the British monarch nine years earlier:

I went to the King a few years ago to try to get some settlement from the King, and when I got there, the King gave me this photograph. His Majesty promised to do something for us, and said he would send somebody out to look into the matter. The King told me that I need not feel very sorry about these things, as if there was anything he could do[,] anything for me, he would do it. His Majesty promised to give each male Indian on the reserve, 160 acres of land, as this land belongs to us Indians. I hope you will take what I say into consideration and do what you can for us.<sup>1</sup>

Isipaymilt had not been alone when he visited the king. Indeed, he was a member of a delegation headed by the flamboyant and gregarious Squamish Chief Joe Capilano from North Vancouver. The other delegate was the quiet and reserved Chief Basil David, a Shushwap leader from the Bonaparte Reserve in the British Columbia interior. Simon Pierre, a young Stó:lō man and residential school graduate from the Katzie tribe

on the lower Fraser River, accompanied the three Aboriginal Elders as translator. Upon returning to Canada, Chief Capilano embarked on a tour of Aboriginal British Columbia. From the northern Nisga'a settlements on the Nass River to the Salish reserves of southern Vancouver Island, Capilano assured indigenous audiences throughout the province that the king supported them in their dispute with the non-Native usurpers of Aboriginal land and resources.<sup>2</sup> According to the western press, who hovered on the fringes of these gatherings seeking to make sense of the newly emerging sense of province-wide indigenous collective identity and political confidence, Capilano was "believed to have convinced his braves that the King of England is standing on his back, and that, if necessity arises, Ottawa's authority can be overridden."<sup>3</sup>

Another signed portrait of King Edward featured prominently in the funeral procession on the occasion of Capilano's death in 1910.<sup>4</sup> Equally telling is the carving on the marble slab within the stately granite mausoleum where Capilano's body was laid to rest. Visitors to the site today can still see, in bas-relief, the hands of Capilano and the King of England clasped in a firm handshake. Giant identical totem poles erected on the Squamish reserve and in London, Germany, and the United States tell the same story in cedar: two hands stretched across the Atlantic beneath a depiction of a spirit singer "petitioning that ... land, fish and hunting" will forever be preserved for Native people.<sup>5</sup>

Accounts of "Royal promises" feature prominently in the oral traditions of indigenous people living in what is now Canada's Pacific province. In addition to such matters as those referred to by Isipaymilt, among the most commonly cited promises are those describing Royal assurances of compensation for alienated lands. Certainly, along with concerns over government hunting and fishing regulations and a desire to see the ban on the potlatch lifted, this was the key issue raised in the formal written petition that Capilano, Isipaymilt, and David carried with them to London in 1906. Likewise, apparently associated oral traditions circulating among families within the two dozen contemporary lower Fraser River Stó:lō First Nations hold that at a great mid-nineteenth century gathering to celebrate Queen Victoria's birthday in New Westminster, the colonial governor agreed to a compensation formula that would see one-third of all revenues raised through the alienation of land outside of Indian reserves returned to the Stó:lō, the other two thirds to be divided equally between the federal and provincial governments.<sup>6</sup>

Despite their prominence in the oral canons and on-going significance to Aboriginal people, Canadian scholarly writing and political discourse alike has never seriously considered the possibility that a monarch of England, or the Crown's representative in Canada, may have actually made special promises. As such, it has never been a subject of vigorous discussion or debate within mainstream, non-Native, British Columbia society—something that indigenous people cite as evidence of the on-going dismissive nature of non-Native society toward Aboriginal concerns. On the other hand, and by way of comparison, there has been a similar reticence within contemporary Aboriginal society to consider the converse: that perhaps the Crown did not make promises; that perhaps their ancestors misunderstood government officials, or even intentionally misrepresented the Crown's true communications to subsequent generations.

Inevitably, history is regarded as the principal arbiter of contemporary Native-newcomer conflicts. In the case of the alleged 1906 Crown promise, the tension emerges in large part from the apparent contradiction between the oral history and the evidence contained in the documentary archival records. Unlike the case of the subsequently substantiated "outside" promises made to Aboriginal people in the negotiations of Treaties One and Two on the Canadian prairies as documented by Alexander Morris in 1880, an extensive search of Canadian and British government records has thus far revealed no corroborating account of political promises from King Edward VII to the 1906 Aboriginal delegates.<sup>7</sup> Nor do the government documents describing the large mid-nineteenth century gatherings in New Westminster make reference to a Royal promise of compensation for alienated lands along the lines described in the Salish oral traditions. But, of course, absence of evidence does not mean absence of a historical action or event.

It is becoming increasingly accepted that to develop a richer understanding of the history of Native-newcomer relations—one that is recognizable to indigenous people without compromising its intelligibility to non-Native society—requires more than simply contrasting and assessing the relative validity of oral sources against archival evidence.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, in the case of the alleged 1906 Royal promises, the documentary evidence and oral accounts interpenetrate in such interesting ways that a simple comparison fails to validate one over the other, let alone reveal the nuanced cultural factors at play in their communication. This article is an attempt to place both bodies of evidence within a richer context so that interpretive frameworks of understandings other than, or at least in

addition to, those encapsulated in terms such as fabrication, deception, fiction, or even simple misunderstanding can be used to launch meaningful cross-cultural dialogue, rather than stifle it. This analysis represents an effort, in other words, to effect an epistemological shift whereby not only are non-western bodies of evidence introduced alongside archival-based sources, but non-western means of using and assessing these non-western sources are respected and applied.

While a generation of increasingly sophisticated social history has done much to illuminate the past experiences of Aboriginal people, the recognition that indigenous people bring culturally specific meaning to their experiences has yet to make a solid impact on the writing of the history of Canadian Native-newcomer relations.<sup>9</sup> While it is commonplace to say that Aboriginal people conceive of the world differently than representatives of “western” society, the implications of this fact have yet to be fully appreciated. This is not to imply that Aboriginal people do not, and did not, understand the difference between fact and fiction, between deceptive and descriptive. Rather, perhaps the evidence indigenous people use, and used, to assess accuracy and validity, and their definitions of what constitute real and true, are not necessarily always identical to those of members of non-Native society, and as such are not necessarily recognizable. Certainly the pervasive belief among many contemporary Coast Salish people that the sasquatch is equally as real as the black bear speaks to the on-going distinctiveness of Native and newcomer cosmologies in the region where memories of the 1906 Royal promise circulate.<sup>10</sup> As scholars of gender history have been pointing out for more than a decade, meaning precedes experience.

In reconstructing the story of the 1906 visit to London, significant points of departure emerge between non-Native views of the Aboriginal delegates as practical rational beings, and Aboriginal views of Europeans as spiritual, metaphysically engaged people. Contrary to the impression of early-twentieth century non-Native observers, the assumptions of many twentieth century academics, and assertions of certain twenty-first century Aboriginal people alike, indigenous people acted rationally and practically to pursue material ends while still retaining and sustaining a world view that accorded active agency to unseen metaphysical spirit forces. Moreover, what constitutes practical and rational behavior is culturally and temporally situational.<sup>11</sup> When viewed through an indigenous hermeneutic, certain non-Native actions, people, and objects in London can be seen to have actually reinforced the incorrect view among the indigenous

delegates of 1906 that Europeans shared their epistemology. In short, the representatives of both cultures provided cues that were misinterpreted by their counterparts, which led to both the initial false assumption that each understood one another and subsequent assumptions that the other had purposely deceived. The dispute over the existence and reality of the 1906 Royal promise might, therefore, be a product of differing understandings of the functioning and nature of communication rather than evidence of lying, fabrication, or miscommunication.

In attempting to sort out such matters in a different context, historical philosopher R.G. Collingwood long ago argued that the historian's ultimate objective should be the recreation of the conscious thoughts of people living in a past time.<sup>12</sup> This does not involve pretending to be able to think as Aboriginal people do, and it certainly does not involve speaking for them. As anthropologist Clifford Geertz observed, only spies or romantics would find a point in either.<sup>13</sup> Trying to understand what someone thought or said is not the same as appropriating someone's thought or voice. What is presented here is a fresh interpretation of the communications between the Aboriginal chiefs from British Columbia and the British monarch in 1906. It is a speculative interpretation derived from an effort to see the world as these Aboriginal men may have seen it. It represents an attempt to appreciate and take seriously the meaning that they may have brought to certain experiences—meaning that their non-Native contemporaries may have failed to appreciate. Though the interpretation and conclusions were not provided by an Aboriginal person, they are derived from, and informed by, extensive ethnohistorical fieldwork and prolonged discussions with a host of Salish individuals, including descendants and relatives of three of the four Aboriginal men who traveled to Buckingham Palace in 1906.<sup>14</sup> In addition to being speculative, it is a conjectural interpretation that aspires to situate both the oral and documentary evidence in what is hopefully both a thick cultural and a rich historical context.

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The delegates who traveled to London in 1906 seeking promises from King Edward VII were not asking for new protections. Rather, they wanted confirmation that existing Royal promises would be honored. They believed that during the colonial period Governor James Douglas had both verbally and in writing entered a "covenant that all land taken from the Indians should be paid for."<sup>15</sup> Eleven years later, the Chief of the Scowlitz

tribe in the central Fraser Valley provided the *Royal Commission* with a detailed account of the nature of Douglas' promise:

Sir James Douglas ... made a verbally [sic] promise to us Indians in his first survey of the land. He said for which land I have surveyed it belongs to the Indians only, that no white men shall intrude [on] your land. And for all the outside lands Her Majesty Queen Victoria will take and sell to the white people and which is taken away from the Indians will be like a fruit tree and from this fruit Her Majesty Queen Victoria will give it to the Indians for their lasting support....

The second governor Seymour also made a verbally [sic] promise in his speech that that Her Majesty Queen Victoria will divide the revenue in three parts. One third to the Indians for their benefit. One third to the Crown. One third to the public for road work, etc.

Now for the last good many years standing we are expecting to receive those good promises by Her Majesty Queen Victoria. But we have not heard anything of it yet for the latest government of the province has concealed and buried it and worked all kinds of skeems [sic] to keep it hidden.<sup>16</sup>

Chief Joe Capilano's son, Mathias Capilano, recounted a similar history in his presentation to the *Royal Commission*. Additionally, Capilano also made explicit that Douglas had led his people to believe that the governor spoke with the full authority of the queen. According to Capilano, Douglas had given the chiefs "the understanding that ... anything that I do, it is the same as if the Queen were doing it herself. Also any thing I say it is the Queen herself that is talking .... And when he put the [survey] posts down, he said, now, no one shall take that out, for it is the work of Her Majesty the Queen and not my Self."<sup>17</sup>

In an analogous fashion, two generations earlier, in the summer of 1876, Dominion Governor General Lord Dufferin had met with huge crowds of British Columbia Natives and listened to grievances over inadequate reserve size, lack of compensation for lost lands, and other violations of Native rights, most of which were explained with reference to the earlier promises of Douglas and Seymour. In return, Dufferin is



discussed in the oral traditions preserving memories of these events as having provided assurances of the Crown's integrity, the impartiality and justness of British law, and the right of indigenous people, as special wards and "children" of the monarch, to special protection—assurances he repeated to the elite of non-Native society in an address delivered in Victoria on the eve of his return to Ottawa.<sup>18</sup>

Dufferin's visit was a major event in British Columbia indigenous history. He was met at New Westminster by more than 3,000 Aboriginal people representing five separate language groups. Molyneux St. John, the eastern journalist accompanying the Governor General, explained that Dufferin's response to the Native verbal petitions "while conveying the sentiments which Her Majesty and Her government feels towards our fellow subjects of the Indian race, laboured under the slight disadvantage of requiring five different translations, which were made sentence by sentence in order that different chiefs and their followers might understand."<sup>19</sup> One hundred and eighty kilometres upstream at Yale, Dufferin was "received by a guard of honour of the resident Indians," and then addressed by a chief "who was greatly assisted by the timely prompting and suggestions of his wife." Dufferin's reply, which St. John described as "simply an exposition of the goodness of the Indian tum-tum or heart in a few simple sentences," was allegedly transformed by the "gifted savage translator" into "an oration that Burke might have envied .... There was no prospective termination to it; sentence followed sentence, exhortation succeeded explanation, until it really became interesting to speculate upon what he might have been putting into the mouth of the Governor General."<sup>20</sup>

Considered in light of such historical understanding, the 1906 delegation was a desperate effort by British Columbia's indigenous people to secure confirmation of earlier promises and means to their fulfillment. Two years earlier, Chiefs Chilihitzta and Louie, from the Douglas Lake and Kamloops bands respectively, had traveled to Europe in the company of a sympathetic French Oblate missionary to attend a conference on Aboriginal languages and literacy.<sup>21</sup> While overseas the chiefs and their Oblate companion "succeed[ed] in [securing] an interview with his Holiness" Pope Pius X in Rome before returning to Canada.<sup>22</sup>

News of Chilihitzta's and Louie's success in meeting the pontiff spread quickly through Aboriginal British Columbia. According to the western media, within days of their return, "Hundreds of Indians [were] flocking to the Kamloops reserve to partake in the distribution of 2,000 medals,



blessed by His Holiness [the] Pope,” and to examine the 120 stereopticon images of the chiefs’ travels taken with Fr. Le Jeune’s stereo camera. Many other indigenous people throughout the province learned about the sojourn by reading Le Jeune’s travel log published in the Aramaic-like Duployan short hand of the Oblate’s Chinook Jargon newspaper, the Kamloops *Wawa*.<sup>23</sup>

Chief Chilihitzza’s and Louie’s meeting with Pope Pius proved to be a massively inspirational event in British Columbia Aboriginal history. For strategically minded Aboriginal leaders it demonstrated that it was possible to bypass local provincial and federal officials and speak directly with powerful European authorities who ostensibly commanded the respect, and even the obedience, of those prominent Canadian officials who consistently failed to listen to indigenous concerns and grievances. Anticipating the potential that a successful audience with the British monarchy would have for advancing Native claims and redressing past wrongs, following the 1904 sojourners’ return a series of large gatherings were organized in Nanaimo, Quamichan, Vancouver, Kamloops and other locales throughout British Columbia to discuss strategy. By the early spring of 1906, Joe Capilano had emerged as the leading figure in a wholly Aboriginal organized and directed movement to petition King Edward VII.<sup>24</sup> Veteran travelers Chief Chilihitzza and Chief Louie were scheduled to be part of the return expedition, but failing health ultimately prevented both from participating.<sup>25</sup> Instead, Chiefs Basil David of Bonaparte and Francois Silpachen of Shushwap joined the two coastal chiefs and their young translator to become the delegation’s third and fourth members. However, for reasons that are unclear nearly a century later, Silpachen dropped out after the delegation reached Ottawa.<sup>26</sup>

Joe Capilano and his companions were determined that their mission would succeed. If the 1904 emissaries, who officially represented only their own relatively impoverished and isolated reserves, had gained the ear of the pope, then surely delegates speaking on behalf of all the Indians of British Columbia could gain access to Buckingham Palace. Capilano’s designs were overtly political and extremely well conceived. There was nothing naïve about the 1906 delegates’ decision to bypass the British Columbia and Canadian governments in their effort to secure fulfillment of earlier promises and to ensure the repeal of restrictive hunting laws and the anti-potlatch provisions of the *Indian Act*. As the petition they ultimately carried to London explained, “the Dominion government is made up of men elected by white people who are living on our lands,

and, of course, we can get no redress from that quarter. We have no vote. If we had it might be different, but as it is we are at the mercy of those who have the vote, and alas! They have no mercy."<sup>27</sup> As such, it is easy to appreciate how Capilano and his associates would come to represent, for non-Native society, a new generation of westernized, practical, Indian leadership. Yet, such rational behavior did nothing to diminish the fact that in indigenous eyes, Capilano remained a symbol of continuity with the spiritually potent world of their ancestors. Like his own grandfather Paydsmook, who was remembered as the pragmatic Squamish leader who met George Vancouver in 1792 and who later helped establish and supply Hudson's Bay Company trading posts, Capilano saw no contradiction in adhering to Aboriginal spiritual beliefs while simultaneously engaging western politics and economics. As his son Mathias recounted years later in 1939, Chief Capilano was "fiercely proud of his lineage and of his tribal codes and customs."<sup>28</sup>

Among the delegates, Capilano, in particular, demonstrated deftness in his dealing with not only the Canadian and British press, but also a host of political figures, ranging from the Mayor of Vancouver to the Minister of the Interior in Ottawa and the Canadian High Commissioner in London. It seems clear that a central aim of the chiefs was to draw attention to the injustice of Canadian Indian policy in British Columbia, and in so doing embarrass the Dominion into applying the rule of law with consistency in all of its provinces. That the delegates might succeed greatly concerned many non-Native British Columbians who had profited by the alienation of Native lands and the restriction of Aboriginal economic activities. As his comments to the British press immediately before meeting King Edward reveal, Capilano was cognizant of this: "They told me, the white men told me, not to come to the great King ... because he did not like his dusky children. We would never go back to our people alive, they said."<sup>29</sup> Such opposition had convinced Capilano to play his cards close to his chest.

To build political momentum prior to embarking for London, Capilano teased the Canadian third and fourth estates. In British Columbia, after delivering speeches to sympathetic and enthusiastic indigenous audiences, Capilano routinely told newspaper reporters that he was presently unwilling to provide non-Native society with a translation that would reveal the details of his forthcoming mission. The media responded predictably, dogging the Squamish Chief as he traveled from gathering to gathering, pestering him for information. To their chagrin, Capilano remained steadfastly evasive, if ever cheerful.

Indicative of Capilano's and the press' mutually enriching relationship is the Native leader's response to questions posed by the media only days before his anticipated departure. Unbeknownst to officials at Vancouver City Hall, Capilano and a delegation of his supporters paid an unscheduled visit to the office of Mayor Bushcome. The arrival of disenfranchised Indians at the province's most important municipal building immediately caused a stir among journalists who recognized the potential for selling papers to a citizenry suspicious of Aboriginal political ambitions. Capilano emerged from the Mayor's office to announce that he had invited His Lordship to officiate in some capacity at the departure celebration that the chiefs were organizing for the Canadian Pacific train station three days hence. Reporters immediately descended upon the Aboriginal leader asking for details, only to find Capilano "extremely reticent as to the questions he will lay before King Edward, saying they would be heard in good time."<sup>30</sup>

Similarly, a correspondent for the *Victoria Daily Colonist* reporting on the final big intertribal gathering in Kamloops before the complete team of delegates boarded a train for the east coast observed that "even the most persistent interviewer would fail to gain any inkling of the object of the mission. The Chiefs will talk miles of eloquent Chinook, but when up against the main question it is 'Nothing now. By-an-by, when we come back.'"<sup>31</sup>

If Capilano had intended by his silence to draw attention to his mission he certainly succeeded. Curious members of the non-Native populace lined the streets of Vancouver on the day of the departure to watch as the Aboriginal delegates arrived by canoe from the Squamish reserve on the north shore of Burrard Inlet and then marched through the streets of Vancouver behind an Indian brass band. Chiefs Capilano and Isipaymilt were accompanied by roughly forty prominent "leaders and subchiefs" shown in photographs to have been dressed in either winter spirit dance regalia or the shawl-like woven blanket of a Coast Salish extended family leader. A crowd of several hundred other Aboriginal people dressed in European street clothes followed behind. At the C.P.R. station, Capilano delivered a circumspect speech professing Aboriginal people's loyalty to the Crown but still revealing nothing of his objectives beyond his intention to tell the king personally "what his Indian subjects want," and promising to convey the monarch's reply upon his return. A cautious Mayor Bushcome reneged on his promise to participate in the send-off celebration, and instead sent the City Comptroller to deliver a prepared statement in

Chinook jargon wishing the delegates well and expressing his hopes the "King would grant their wishes." It was only when the delegates boarded the train that Mayor Bushcombe and other British Columbia politicians actually learned the nature of the wishes that they were blindly supporting, for it was then that the media was finally provided the full text of the petition that the chiefs were carrying to the king. A complete transcript appeared in British Columbia newspapers the following week.<sup>32</sup>

The petition was a remarkable document written in a slightly stilted and awkward prose that reflected the Aboriginal delegate's desire to retain control over all aspects of their mission; that is to say, no sympathetic priest or lawyer penned the text. The pragmatic nature of the address doubtless contributed to the perception among non-Natives that the chiefs' were practical and rational individuals not unlike themselves. The petition's authors began by noting that they were aware of and recognized the inequity of Indian policy within the Dominion: "In other parts of Canada Indian title has been extinguished, reserving sufficient land for the use of the Indians, but in British Columbia the Indian title has never been extinguished, nor has sufficient land been allotted to our people." The relatively recent discovery of this geographical inequity, however, was not the precipitator of their grievance, though undoubtedly the chiefs hoped to appeal to the British sense of equity and fair play. Nor was the petition an effort to place before a new king a list of freshly identified grievances. Rather, it was explicitly an attempt to alert the monarch to breaches of the promises made in his mother Queen Victoria's name many years earlier. As such, it was both an appeal to the Crown's honour and an effort to reaffirm the intimate familial relationship that they had come to consider existed between themselves (as disenfranchised residents of the Canadian Dominion) and the Royal family. If, however, this proved inadequate to move the king to action, other rationales were also provided.

The petition raised the issue of political accountability. Without the franchise, Native people had no practical way to influence Canadian politicians or keep them accountable for promises made. The petition also outlined their frustration, as wards of the state, in being excluded from the process of selecting Indian agents who acted as liaisons between themselves and representatives of non-Native government. They pointed out the hypocrisy of a system that denied them political influence on the basis of their being "uncivilized" when they could, in fact, meet the criteria that the missionaries and government officials had established: They pointed out that they worshiped the same God, wore western clothing, ate western

food, and in other ways modeled western society. What further proof of their worthiness could there be, the petition asked, than the evidence that had confronted the chiefs when they visited the provincial penitentiary a few days earlier on a fact finding mission and “found only three Indians and upwards of one hundred who were not Indian.” Finally, the petition appealed to the western liberal notion of self-reliance, pointing out that under the current state of affairs in British Columbia, Native people were becoming unable to support themselves.

Ultimately, and significantly, the chiefs recognized that independent evidence would need to be garnered to confirm their oral histories and accusations before the king could or would act: “We are sure that a good man, or some good men, will be sent to our country who will see, and hear, and bring back a report to your majesty.” What they sought, in other words, was a promise from the king that the earlier Royal promises, which had established a mechanism for standardizing Native-newcomer relations, would be fulfilled. Put another way, what the delegation ultimately sought was an assurance that corroborating evidence, clearly so important to the validating of Native oral history and grievances in non-Native eyes, would be gathered and presented to the king. Beyond this, they seemed content to rely on the honour of the Crown and the impartiality and integrity of British/Canadian justice—about which they had heard so much—to ensure that amends were made and harmonious interracial relations restored.

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Though news of the Aboriginal mission and its objectives were now readily available to anyone reading British Columbia newspapers, politicians and senior bureaucrats in Ottawa claimed to be taken off guard by the delegations’ arrival in the Canadian capital. Moreover, while Capilano had now apparently shifted to a prudent policy of frank communication with the press, for Dominion officials he and his colleagues reserved an almost stereotypical stoicism. That is to say, Capilano engaged in a risky game of cat and mouse with Canadian politicians and newspaper reporters.

Upon arriving in Ottawa, the chiefs visited Parliament Hill hoping that Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier would provide them with letters to facilitate their desired audience with the king. The prime minister, however, was on vacation in California, and so the delegates were compelled to speak with Frank Oliver, Laurier’s Minister of Indian Affairs.

In his subsequent communication to London requesting that the chief's desire for an audience be granted, Oliver reported that the chiefs' official reason for wishing to meet the king was simply "to express personally their allegiance to His Most Gracious Majesty and their affection for the late lamented Queen whom they loved as a mother and for whom they continued to mourn." Confidentially, however, he suspected, that the Indians' true purpose was more political.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, the following day as the chiefs embarked a train for Montreal, the *Ottawa Citizen* reported that among the delegates' genuine objectives was a desire to inform the king of restrictions that infringed on their Aboriginal hunting and fishing rights. Such "intentions," the *Citizen* observed, had been "carefully concealed ... from officials of the Indian Department."<sup>34</sup>

The chiefs ultimately left Ottawa with little more to show for their efforts than a letter of introduction to High Commissioner Strathcona.<sup>35</sup> Coded telegrams, meanwhile, conveyed Ottawa's guarded request to London that attempts be made to expedite the chiefs' desire to meet the king. The High Commissioner's office lost no time in relaying this message, and Oliver's concerns, to the Earl of Elgin at the Colonial Office, who in turn quickly delegated the matter to Sir Montagu Ommanney, the Permanent Undersecretary of State for the Colonies. As the Salish delegation steamed across the Atlantic, British telegrams darted back across the same expanse asking for clarification from Laurier as to whether it was "expedient" to facilitate the meeting, noting that in addition to worries over the chiefs' political intentions, the summer months were particularly busy ones for the king. It was also via telegram that the Colonial Office informed Ottawa that regardless of any directions received from the Canadian prime minister, it was simply "not permissible" for the chiefs to lay grievances before the king.<sup>36</sup>

Two days later, on 4 August, Laurier's consent had been received and a time set for the chiefs to meet the king. The audience was set for 14 August, the day after Edward VII was scheduled to return from the Royal yachting regatta at Cowes. The High Commissioner's office, however, chose not to inform Capilano, Isipaymilt, and David of these arrangements until 13 August, the very eve of the Royal audience, and just two days prior to the chiefs' scheduled departure on the *S.S. Manitoba*.

The deception manifest in the High Commissioner's selective communications with the chiefs was part of a broader scheme to politically neutralize the delegation. The Colonial Office and the High Commissioner's office together were concerned over the attention Capilano and his

colleagues had attracted since departing Vancouver. Indeed, no sooner had they stepped off the steamer in Liverpool than the chiefs became the object of intense media interest, made all the more potent by the relatively recent introduction of technology that allowed newspapers to print photographs. The *Daily Graphic*, one of the most popular of the new image-centered British newspapers, ran a large portrait on 3 August showing all four of the British Columbia Natives standing at Euston Station—Capilano and Isipaymilt dressed in their traditional regalia. Beneath, in bold capital letters, ran the caption, “TO PETITION THE GREAT WHITE KING.” Elaborating on the title, a short article noted that among the delegates’ concerns was a fear that if their petition was not granted their game preserves would dwindle to such an extent that their “tribes [were] in danger of starving.”<sup>37</sup> A similar photo in the same day’s edition of the *Daily News* drew attention to the chiefs’ assertion that their sojourn was a desperate last effort to seek reparations from an authority higher than the local provincial and federal officials from whom “they could obtain no redress.”<sup>38</sup>

The attention bestowed by the British press, however, was a knife that cut two ways. While the journalists remained interested in the fate of the political mission, the delegation increasingly became, over the course of the two weeks, an entertainment item rather than news. A *Daily News* representative who toured London with Capilano and his team on their first full day in the city devoted slightly more than half of his roughly 700 word article to a quixotic discussion of how the “four cinnamon-coloured individuals” were awestruck by the greatness of the British metropolis. “Everything in London struck the chief of the Redskins as either too big or too small, too good or too bad,” the reporter noted. The engineering wonders of subways and overhead railway lines were matters that Capilano was quoted as finding “too wonderful!” and he wondered whether his wife, children, and friends back on the Squamish reserve would believe his description of such marvels.<sup>39</sup>

The *Daily News* reporter assumed that, as “Red Indians,” the delegates would be particularly interested in the wilderness areas of the capital city. Capilano, ever alert to an opportunity to use humour to play upon stereotypes, did not fail to please the British reading public when, upon reaching the centre of the park, halfway between the Marble Arch and Piccadilly, he “drew a deep breath and waving his hands about ... exclaimed ‘What a fine hunting ground!’” The article concluded not with an analysis of Aboriginal policy in Canada, but by a comment that could



only serve to diminish the delegates in the public eye: "Chief Joe and his friends are looking forward to a visit to the Hippodrome to see and criticize Dr. Rougumont's style of turtle riding."<sup>40</sup>

Thus, while nervous about the newspapers' ability to highlight Aboriginal discontent in Canada, Strathcona was also keenly alert to the power of the press to transform political delegates into political caricatures. Certainly the High Commissioner and others in London concerned with the political and economic development of the various British dominions and colonies were familiar with the phenomenon of indigenous people bypassing local authorities and bringing their grievances directly to the British government and public. Other indigenous people had earlier made a point of traveling to London in attempts to petition the monarch and Parliament in the late Victorian era. Among the most prominent were three African chiefs who, eleven years before the British Columbia sojourn arrived, had successfully persuaded Queen Victoria not to give specific tribal lands to Cecil Rhodes. These delegates' ability to absorb and reflect the fashion and political rhetoric of Victorian morality, historian Neil Parsons has recently explained, enabled them to convince the politically active queen and the conservative Colonial Office that they were civilized leaders of a civilized nation who deserved protection from the Crown against the most extreme expressions of economic and political imperialism.<sup>41</sup> Considered in this context, a key component of Strathcona's strategy for dealing with the British Columbia Aboriginal delegates apparently was to use his office's control of the gate to Buckingham Palace to leverage Capilano and the other delegates into modifying their immediate aims of presenting a formal petition—and then the Fleet Street tabloids take care of the rest.

Strathcona worked with some success to create an impression in the delegates' minds that the High Commissioner's office was their strongest ally in London.<sup>42</sup> In addition to facilitating the chiefs' room and board at the Chelsea soldier's barracks at Buckingham Gate, Strathcona's office also assumed charge of scheduling the chiefs' private time, and in so doing guided and shaped the delegates' views of London—and in turn London's views of the delegates. H.H. Aflingham, a Canadian expatriate and former Vancouver resident who apparently knew Capilano, was engaged by the High Commissioner's office to escort the Aboriginal leaders around London while they waited to hear the result of Strathcona's fictitious negotiations to secure their access to King Edward.<sup>43</sup>

It is from the accounts of the chiefs' supposed non-political (i.e. private) activities that we are provided with glimpses into their world view, and come to appreciate the extent to which their epistemology differed in significant ways from those of most non-Native Canadians. It was during this time, for example, that Sir Arthur Pearson, publisher of the *Daily Express* and Strathcona's friend, invited Pauline Johnson, the famous mixed-blood Mohawk-Canadian poet then touring London, to come to Canada House and interview the chiefs.<sup>44</sup> The Mohawk poet and the Squamish Chief immediately struck up a confidence that later developed into a close friendship after Johnson took up residence in Vancouver upon her return to Canada. Johnson presented herself to the chiefs just as she did to the readers of her commissioned articles in the *Daily Express*: as an Aboriginal person who walked comfortably in the non-Native world—as “a pagan in St. Paul's Cathedral” who sought similarities rather than differences between Christianity and indigenous spirituality.<sup>45</sup> During their meetings, Capilano shared with Johnson a number of Squamish accounts of creation and ancient transformations. He also related a tribal tradition concerning a previously unknown, but immensely significant, aspect of European history. In hushed tones Capilano explained to Johnson that the rise and fall of the famous Napoleon Bonaparte was a result of the Corsican's connection to the Squamish people. Napoleon had acquired the magical “joint of a sea serpent's vertebra,” which had previously belonged to a renowned Squamish warrior. According to Capilano, this powerful talisman had found its way to Napoleon after the Squamish had given it to French prisoners of the Russian American Fur Company who were secretly visiting the inland waters of Georgia Strait. The Frenchmen used the amulet to escape their Slavic captors and return to Europe where they transferred the object to the ambitious French Emperor. With the serpent's power Napoleon went from victory to victory until, as Chief Capilano recounted in a whisper, with “his face almost rigid with intentness,” the “Great French Fighter ... lost his Squamish charm—lost it just before one great fight with the English people.”<sup>46</sup>

Similarly revealing are the insights into the chiefs' epistemology found in newspaper discussions of such matters as their trip to the London Zoo, their reaction to the city's motor cars, and in particular, their visit to Westminster Abbey. Each, in turn, provides clues that potentially offer new ways of appreciating their later assertions of promises from the king.

Clearly the London Zoo was one of the highlights of the chiefs' London fieldtrips. Capilano and Isipaymilt, unlike Chief David Basil

and translator Simon Pierre, wore their ceremonial regalia everywhere they traveled in London, including to the Zoo. Capilano's clothes are of particular historical interest for, unlike Isipaymilt's, the Squamish Chief's wardrobe consisted not merely of the standard markings of rank and stature from his local Coast Salish tribe, but, rather, of tokens of distinction from throughout Aboriginal British Columbia. Like Isipaymilt, Capilano wore a classic Salish wool blanket with patterns depicting respect and power over a European suit and jacket. Additionally, however, photographs reveal that Capilano sported a buckskin coat with leather fringes and a fox fur hat typically associated with tribes from the northern British Columbia interior plateau, as well as a brightly patterned sash reminiscent of those worn by Red River Metis, but in this case most likely an example of craftsmanship from the upper reaches of the Fraser River above Lillooet. Capilano's regalia, in other words, was reflective of his extensive traveling done in preparation for the delegation prior to leaving. Almost certainly, each item was a gift from the different Aboriginal constituencies supporting the Squamish Chief's agenda. As he confidently explained to the press, he carried to the king the handshakes of all 200,000 Indians in British Columbia. He was the first Native leader from Canada's Pacific Province to claim such a mandate.

Capilano's regalia attracted attention wherever he went, and not only from curious Londoners. In the Zoo, the scent from the tanned buckskin coat captured the interest of a caged lion, which, as Capilano reportedly recounted with a "burst of laughter," led to a frightening, if humorous, situation: "Suddenly I see a lion look at me. Oh yes, a very fierce lion. And he sniff at my coat. And when I walked along he walked along too, and he got so angry, and he growl. And I laugh at him, and he walk along with me as far as he could go."<sup>47</sup> The wild lion's particular interest in the Indian chief's wardrobe emphasized for the English observers the Aboriginal leaders' closeness to nature and distance from the refinements of industrial life. Like the dangerous animals in the cages, the British Columbia chiefs were alien "others" whose every movement and utterance thrilled and entertained.

Like the animals, the delegates were considered objects of fascination worthy of study, if only because, like the rare species gathered from around the world and held behind the bars, they too were perceived as representatives of an exotic vanishing race. At the Zoo, a reporter with *The Express* noted "that a gentleman went up to the interpreter and told him to ask each of the chiefs for a little of tuft of hair. He said he collected

the hair of all the different nations but had none of Indian Chiefs.” This, however, was more than the British Columbia chiefs would tolerate. To this day many Salish people conceive of hair not as inert dead tissue, or “flattened fusiform fibers . . . [containing] pigment granules or air” as an Edwardian reader of Henry Gray’s *Anatomy* might suppose.<sup>48</sup> Rather, hair is regarded as an extension of the human form, carrying with it residual spirit power of the person from whom it grew. Shaman with evil intentions are believed to use carelessly discarded (or surreptitiously acquired) hair to “do bad work” upon people. Outside of the context of predominantly non-Native urban barbershops or hair salons, hair that falls out or is cut off is carefully disposed of to ensure that it does not fall into the hands of those who may use it for nefarious purposes. It is impossible to know whether these matters were on the minds of the chiefs in the London Zoo in the summer of 1906. It is also a possibility that the chiefs understood that the request reduced them from being perceived as human beings to, in effect, curious laboratory specimens. Suffice to say, they “looked at the petitioner sternly and refused. ‘He make too free and ask too much.’”<sup>49</sup>

Within Salish culture, dreams (especially vibrant or memorable ones) are regarded as meaningful messages from the spirit world. They advise, they warn, they guide and they foretell. Today, Salish people continue to use dreams to direct or redirect their lives. Specialists assist those with less spiritual experience and expertise by interpreting dreams and deriving messages on their behalf. While in London, the chiefs’ translator, Simon Pierre, explained to a *Daily Express* reporter that members of the delegation were being bothered by “horrible nightmares.” Chief David Basil suffered the most: “‘He springs out of bed,’ declared the Indian boy interpreter. . . and runs to my bed and catches me by the throat. ‘Horrible; horrible!’ he cries. And then a car hoots and I fear he will strangle me. So I tell him it is nothing, nothing, and he goes back to bed. A few minutes and then another car rattles by, and Chief Basil again springs at me. He is strong and hurts me, and I don’t like motor cars.”<sup>50</sup>

One can imagine that noisy internal combustion engines might have been disconcerting to the delegates, but, on the other hand, by 1906 automobiles were present in Vancouver and other British Columbia towns. Moreover, Aboriginal people like Chief Basil David, living along the Thompson and Fraser River corridor where the Canadian Pacific Railroad bisected a plethora of Indian reserves, were more than accustomed to nocturnal industrial noises. But to experience disturbing dreams while visiting a distant and unfamiliar locale most likely created parallels in

the indigenous mind with the experiences of a troubled person on a spirit quest. From the Salish perspective, a dream happens for a reason. To non-Natives, being disturbed by a motor car's horn might appear an unfortunate byproduct of having been installed in sleeping quarters too close to a garage, but to Salish people trained in the beliefs of their ancestors, the disrupted sleep associated with the hooting could easily have been interpreted as a frightening sign from the spirit world.

Beyond the zoo and motorcar incidents, perhaps the greatest insight into the chiefs' cosmology might be derived from a cultural contextualization of the media's description of their experiences at Westminster Abbey. Attired in their regalia, Capilano and Isipaymilt drew the attention of the resident clerics who, after the services, toured the chiefs and their interpreter through the imposing edifice and adjoining cloister and Chapel House. It was what the reporter for *The Observer* characterized as "the chief objects of interest," more than either the Episcopalian homily or the renaissance architecture that impressed the chiefs most. As baptized Catholics, the indigenous men were familiar with Churches as places of worship. What appears to have caught the delegates unaware was Westminster Abbey's role as a nexus of British history and power, for within its walls they encountered the burials of Britain's greatest chiefs and the 'transformer stone' that made them so.

According to the reporter, "the Coronation Chair was an object of especial veneration; so also were the tombs of the Royal dead and the shrine of Edward the Confessor," which the chiefs beheld in "reverent silence." Attempting to appreciate how the chiefs may have understood these objects involves a certain amount of conjecture. Metaphors, the chief tools used to communicate foreign concepts, prove most useful.

Insights into what metaphors the chiefs may have applied to try to understand the coronation chair of Edward I (Longshanks), the Stone of Scone, and the shrine of Edward III (the Confessor), might be acquired by reversing the process of cross-cultural communication used by certain contemporary Salish people when they explain their own transformer stones and ancestral spirits to contemporary non-Native outsiders. The staff Cultural Advisor at the Stó:lō Nation, Sonny McHalsie, currently spends many days each year speaking with non-Native students, teachers, scholars, and other guests about his Salish cultural heritage. Often McHalsie takes people on bus or boat tours throughout the Fraser Valley/Canyon to visit transformer stones and other sacred sites. In explaining these objects to outsiders he typically employs a series of carefully

chosen metaphors. Transformer stones are boulders, but they are also special rocks that hold within them a certain type of spiritual power, namely, the spirits or souls of Salish ancestors who were transformed at or near the beginning of time. “They are sort of like the sacred relics and shrines of old Europe,” McHalsie often explains. While McHalsie is not himself Catholic or Christian, he is familiar with much of the imagery used in the Christian discourse and ceremony. “Like the miraculous stories Catholics carry about people long ago being turned into pillars of salt, or of the voice of God appearing from a bush, our ancient stories tell of the spiritual potency of a past age, and of great transformations.” On other occasions, during longer and more intimate discussions, McHalsie has spoken of the analogy between his understanding of Salish residual spirit power and the spiritually potent sites of Lourdes or Fatima—places where spiritual messages and power are communicated.<sup>51</sup>

Salish people believe that transformer stones were created in a moment of profound metaphysical alteration and that, consequently, they contain within them latent transformative power. That is to say, they can, and do, provide contemporary Salish people with spiritual power/assistance/energy, which, once acquired, literally transforms the human recipient by causing their spiritual essence to be altered. As a result, “winter dancers” who have acquired their spirit helper and associated song are considered to be newly born; their age is henceforth counted from the date of their transformation rather than physical birth. Individually, they are regarded as “new people” (indeed, new initiates in the winter dance are referred to in English as “babies”).

The Salish Chiefs likely regarded the Stone of Scone within the context of Salish transformer stones. It was upon this stone, the “Stone of Destiny” as they were told, that every British monarch since Edward I, had been seated when transformed from a mere mortal into the king or queen. The fact that the Stone of Destiny was held within a sacred church, and not a museum or palace, and was described to them by clerics of the Church of England, and not tour guides or government officials, could only have reinforced the view of its spiritual significance. The association of the Stone of Scone with the *first* Edward, would almost certainly have been understood by the chiefs within the context of their own “first people”—prominent heroes (often referred to in the academic literature as “immortal ancestors”<sup>52</sup>) who were transformed into stone and whose spirits still influence the living human “carriers” of those hereditary names within contemporary society.

In Salish society, for example, Tixwelatsa is the name of a prominent ancestor of the Chilliwack tribe. During a contest with "The Transformer" (a being sometimes referred to as the "Little Christ" by contemporary Elders seeking metaphors to build cross-cultural understanding), Tixwelatsa was turned to stone. That stone, roughly the same size as the Stone of Scone, still exists and contains within it the spirit of the original Tixwelatsa. The contemporary "carrier" of the Tixwelatsa name regards the stone as a living entity. Its spirit communicates with him and others who are properly trained and gifted. That is to say, the stone is simultaneously a container and conduit of spiritual energy from the first Tixwelatsa to the contemporary world. The stone (the spirit within it) is consulted and it, in turn, responds to (speaks with) contemporary people.

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It is within these cultural contexts that we must consider whether King Edward made a promise or series of promises in 1906. Certainly the evidence is mixed, which makes ethnohistorical contextualization all the more crucial to understanding this event (or non-event). As mentioned, the government records in the Public Record Offices in London, the Royal Archives at Windsor Palace, and the National Archives in Ottawa, make no reference to promises on the part of King Edward VII. What the official records describe, as has been shown above, are government agents who were at pains to prevent the chiefs from discussing or presenting their grievances to the king. Prior to the Buckingham Palace visit, Simon Pierre and Chiefs Capilano, Isipaymilt, and David were required to meet with Lord Strathcona for two hours, during which time they were told that their audience would be short (the king's day calander for 14 August shows that he had scheduled fifteen minutes to meet with "Indian Chiefs from Canada"<sup>53</sup>), that no petitions could be laid before the king, and that "if they have grievances His Majesty has no control over British Columbia Lands."<sup>54</sup> To ensure compliance with London's and Ottawa's directives, Sir Montagu Ommanney, Permanent Undersecretary of State for the Colonies, was assigned to chaperone the delegates throughout the duration of their Royal audience.<sup>55</sup> Much of the non-official documentary evidence suggests that Capilano reluctantly accepted the government's conditions. In response to the direct question, "Has the King granted your petition?" posed by a correspondent from the London *Daily News* only minutes after returning from Buckingham Palace, Capilano allegedly "shook his head



gravely” and replied, “No the Great White Father has granted no petition because no petition was presented to him.”<sup>56</sup> Historical geographer Robert Galois concluded from this evidence that the chiefs ultimately failed to present their grievances, and were instead compelled to “present their petition through the appropriate channels in Canada.”<sup>57</sup>

But, of course, Capilano’s corroborating statement was made in Strathcona’s presence while sitting in the High Commissioner’s office at Canada House. Other newspaper reports suggest that a written petition was indeed presented, followed by a sympathetic and supportive discussion with the king concerning grievances (perhaps just outside Ommanney’s earshot). Later in the evening of the 14<sup>th</sup>, for example, when back in their private rooms and away from the government officials, the chiefs provided a reporter from the *Daily Express* with a detailed account of their audience. In his report, the *Express* correspondent recorded that, “The petition was then presented to the King who talked for over a quarter of an hour with the Chiefs. Chief Joseph would not, of course, divulge this part of the interview, but we understood that His Majesty gave his visitors advice as to the best way in which they could get their grievances redressed.”<sup>58</sup>

Likewise, the *Daily Mail* reported that, “His Majesty gave the Chiefs some valuable advice relating to their grievances, which they deeply appreciated. Joe said last night that he would be busy for six months after he got home speaking to great gatherings of the tribes, telling them wonderful stories about the great, good and kind King and Queen, who told them how deeply pleased he was to see representatives of his far Western children. ‘Yes,’ said Joe, smiling and nodding his head, ‘he called us his children and we are.’”<sup>59</sup> Isipaymilt, the Cowichan delegate, was also satisfied with the audience. *The Canadian Gazette* reported that “every muscle in [Isipaymilt’s] thickly lined face quivered as he strove to conceal his emotion. ‘I have prayed to be allowed to live long enough to see the Great White King,’ he said earnestly, ‘and tell him the wishes of my people. Now I have seen him and my heart beats with joy. Once let me bear the glad news back to the wigwams of my tribes, and I care not how soon death claims me.’”<sup>60</sup>

Four years after the epic journey to London, Capilano spoke at length with a reporter from *The Province*, outlining his frustration at non-Native denunciations of his accounts of his communications with the king. “They say here that I never saw the Great White Chief in London. They say I make too much of that affair and that I am full of untruth. The men who say such things are little men, the men who have no honour and think

all others have no honour also. The big men, the men who deal with real men, know that I speak the truth about all these things. They know that when one chief meets another great chief he not go about telling all the world what they speak .... Great men are silent and honourable." He continued, "the Crown is above all and when I go London I speak with the Crown, with the Great White Chief. ... We talk with the King and at the end he shake my right hand hard and with his left hand pat my left shoulder three times ... and say 'Chief we see this matter righted but it may take a long time, five years perhaps.'"<sup>61</sup>

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If this array of seemingly contradictory accounts are difficult to reconcile, perhaps alternative explanations for the Aboriginal delegates' view that the king made them promises may ultimately provide more satisfying explanations for both indigenous and non-Native audiences. What is presented here is a speculative hypothesis that involves recognizing that communications and promises need not assume the same form in Salish society as they did in Edwardian England to be considered legitimate and valid—that practical and rational understandings are culturally and temporally dependent. As Chief Capilano insightfully articulated to *The Province* correspondent in 1910 when discussing Missionary biases toward Aboriginal customs and spirituality, just because Europeans are able to observe Aboriginal behavior does not mean that they understand it: "They tell you things they have heard, but they do not understand them. If they have seen them they do not understand them, for white men go about with a veil over their eyes and do not think as we think."<sup>62</sup>

In contemplating this paper, and indeed throughout the writing process, I have agonized over presenting this thesis for fear it would be incorrectly regarded as evidence of the unreliable nature of Native oral tradition, and used to discredit or undermine legitimate Aboriginal claims. Nonetheless, I am inspired by the oft repeated words of Sonny McHalsie, who, as Cultural Advisor at the Stó:lō Nation, explains that his "job" is to "ensure that [Salish] culture and history are interpreted accurately and respectfully." I have witnessed too many Salish people engaged in meaningful and sincere communication with ancestral spirits to omit discussing the possibility that memories of Royal promises in London in 1906 may be references to communications with Edward III (the "Confessor," 1042-1066), or Edward I ("Longshanks," 1272-1307) rather than the then

reigning Edward VII. To the chiefs, who regularly communicated with ancestral spirits of their own, either Edward the Confessor or Edward I (who was, after all, the Confessor's namesake) would have been as real and sentient as the "living" king. Indeed, to the extent that Salish people appear to consider ancestor spirits to be incapable or unwilling to deceive, communications of this sort are typically regarded as more reliable than those between two living people. This is not to say that Salish people do not distinguish communication between two living humans from that between a living person and the spirit of a deceased person. Rather, that they do not consider one of these expressions of communication to be more real or legitimate than another. Certainly, the sacred context in which they encountered both Edward the Confessor's entombed body and the coronation chair of Edward I while visiting Westminster Abbey, coupled with their earlier experiences with Catholic priests in Canada whom they witnessed regularly supplicating ancestor spirits (saints), could only have reinforced the notion that western society operated in a way similar to their own, that distinguishing for English audiences whether they had received a promise from a living or a dead monarch would not have been considered necessary.

In Salish epistemology there would be no meaningful distinction between Edward I, Edward III, and the then current monarch, Edward VII. Both of the earlier Edwards were "great" men and kings, and although not genealogically related, they carried the same name (the former having been named by his father, Henry III, in honour of the latter). King Henry's decision to bridge the Saxon-Norman divide by naming his son after the Confessor would have metaphysically linked the two Edwards in the Salish mind. Indeed, today Salish nobles carrying high status hereditary names are not always direct blood relatives of their namesakes. What matters is peoples' understanding that the person given the name was considered worthy of that honour, and such worthiness is typically justified in terms such as, 'the ancestors saw that they are related/connected [even though we the living know of no blood ties]'. As such, communication between the Salish delegates and any of the Edwards would be possible, and indeed communication with the original Edward(s) would have been preferred. More to the point, communication with either of the ancient royal Edwards would have also been considered real and legitimate communication with the contemporary reigning king.

We know that when Capilano returned to Canada he made good on his promise to tell the province's Aboriginal people the message he had received from the king in London. Nine months after his return he was in Isipaymilt's community on Vancouver Island delivering what the Canadian press described as a "fiery oratory" designed to convey to Vancouver Island's Aboriginal people that not only were they entitled to larger reserves, but they still held title to the entire Island. The press observed that Capilano's "demeanor had altered somewhat" as a result of his discussion with the king. Local Indian agents were allegedly concerned that Capilano was undermining their policy, that he convinced his indigenous audience that he spoke with "greater intelligence and authority than any servant of the administration in Ottawa." Capilano conveyed the impression that he spoke for the King of England and that Ottawa's authority with regard to Indian people could be overridden. What is most significant for the development of what might be called "the spiritual communication thesis," however, is that Capilano was being accompanied and assisted in his venture by a shaman or expert in spiritual matters—someone the *Victoria Daily Colonist* derogatively referred to as "a hunchback who works on the superstitions of the tribe, and whose title, if translated into English, would read something like 'Legal Advisor Extraordinary'"—exactly the sort of person who could confirm or refute a conversation with Edward Longshanks.<sup>63</sup>

The presence of a shaman assisting Capilano helps situate the role of spiritual communication in the chiefs' communications with the English king(s). Likewise, contemporary oral histories still circulating in Aboriginal communities describing both the 1904 and 1906 European visits make clear that they were understood within the contexts of both politics and metaphysics—both history and legend. Among certain Douglas Lake Elders, for example, accounts of the 1904 Papal audience describe Pope Pius X performing a particularly miraculous feat.

Johnny Chilihitzza, the Nicola delegate who met the pope, is remembered as a shrewd politician and leader who "got his 'smarts' from the Oblates."<sup>64</sup> Like all political figures, the contemporary community remembers both his achievements as well as his more controversial acts. Interestingly, important aspects of Chilihitzza's leadership abilities continue to be assessed in terms of his spiritual qualities. Indeed, a crucial strength of his successor, Felix Gregoire, was that Gregoire's mother had been a prophet who had received messages from the dead describing the future.<sup>65</sup> When asked specifically about the visit to the Vatican, Elders

explained that the part of the story that they remember being told was not what the pope said, but rather his mysterious actions. According to a Lottie Lindley, whose aunt subsequently acted as Chilihitza's translator during discussions with non-Native officials, Chilihitza and the others were waiting in a special room when the pope appeared down a flight of stairs. He entered the room, spoke with Chilihitza and Chief Louie, and then "just vanished."<sup>66</sup> Some of the younger people in the Douglas Lake community today think that perhaps this story refers to the pope sneaking out a hidden doorway. For the Elders who remember Chilihitza, however, "that was the big story of Johnny Chilihitza." The story of the vanishing pope refers to a real act that demonstrated the pontiff's spiritual power and, by extension, his worthiness.

In a similar manner, among some of the descendants and relatives of Simon Pierre a story continues to circulate of a wondrous encounter between the chiefs and certain prominent members of the London elite. According to the oral history, representatives of the British government were seeking to impress the Aboriginal delegates by discussing the power and greatness of Britain during the course of a formal dinner. In response, to demonstrate that the Native delegates were not without their own power, young Simon conjured a small bird that flew in circles four times around his head before disappearing out a window.<sup>67</sup> Along similar lines, two decades ago Okanagan Elder Harry Robinson related for anthropologist Wendy Wickwire a marvelous account of a journey made by Coyote (the Interior Salish trickster figure who at the time was "half-man-half-animal") to London to negotiate with the king over Native land rights and Indian policy. According to Robinson, the king eventually consented to Coyote's demands that an agreement be written and signed that would forever define the relationship between Natives and newcomers. This "law," as Robinson explained, specifically articulated the king's commitment to protect Aboriginal lands. However, as the years passed and it became apparent that neither the king (nor his son after he assented to the throne) ever truly intended to fulfill the promise, a small artificial bird was released in Buckingham Palace and flew around in circles until it landed on the head of the king's granddaughter. As a result, she became queen and eventually fulfilled the Royal promise despite Canadian officials' subsequent attempts to thwart her.<sup>68</sup>

Spirit power, however, was not the only thing remarkable about the relationship between monarch and chiefs. In 1950, Simon Pierre shared memories of his London trip with anthropologist Wayne Suttles, explain-

ing that King Edward had expressed sincere regret over the fact that the delegates had not arrived a few years earlier while his mother, Queen Victoria, was still alive. The queen would have been most anxious to greet the chiefs herself, Edward allegedly explained, if for no other reason than that she "had a drop of Indian blood in her." How the queen came to claim Aboriginal ancestry is as mysterious to cultural outsiders as the role of the Squamish serpent's vertebra in Napoleon's conquest of Europe. Equally puzzling, as Suttles points out, is how Edward apparently failed to inherit his mother's indigenous bloodline.<sup>69</sup> To Pierre, and presumably his traveling companions, however, Victoria's Native pedigree appears to have made all the more meaningful the oft repeated rhetorical kin ties between the Great White Mother and her Indian children. The chiefs needed not rely on British justice alone to see their grievances addressed, for among Edward's own ancestors they had discovered indigenous people who had shared in their experiences of exploitation and marginalization. Theoretically, such links would have made communication with Royal ancestral spirits all the more possible and desirable.

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Clearly, a degree of uncertainty shrouds the 1904 and 1906 delegations, but to the extent that deception may have been involved, the evidence indicates that the insincerity was on the part of the Canadian and British officials, not the indigenous delegates. Even if King Edward VII did not explicitly make the promises attributed to him by the Aboriginal delegates, certainly High Commissioner Strathcona was deceitful in his dealing with the chiefs. He and his officials lied to the delegates by telling them that they might not be able to see the king, when in fact the audience had been scheduled on the day of their arrival in London.<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, they told this lie to use the time to discredit and undermine the chief's mission through the press and various other means. Indeed, the correspondence between Oliver in Ottawa and the British Colonial Office is not without a taint of misinformation. Without a doubt, the past thirty years of scholarship on the history of Native-newcomer relations in British Columbia substantiates the grievances presented in the petition intended for King Edward.<sup>71</sup>

The Canadian government in 1906 anticipated that the Aboriginal accounts of their discussion with King Edward would be faithfully preserved and that any promises would need to be honoured. In a coded telegram

composed three months after the chiefs had returned to Canada, the Governor General's office informed the British colonial Office that:

The tenacity of Indian memory is a well-known fact. These three chiefs will remember every detail of their visit to His Majesty as long as they live and will transmit even the minutest details to their children and the account of the visit may be handed down until it becomes traditional. From the earliest times in the dealing between the British and the Indians it has been considered a matter of policy to explicitly carry out promises made to the Aborigines and no small share of the success of the British and Canadian Governments in dealing with their wards may be attributed to this policy being carefully carried out.<sup>72</sup>

The specific Royal promise referred to in this telegram was but a commitment that each of the delegates would receive a signed portrait of Edward VII. But what that portrait signified for British Columbia's Aboriginal people was the honour of the British Crown and the justness of British law, as well as a new local authority for themselves derived directly from London. The chiefs were correct when they stated in their petition that certain promises had been made in the Crown's name guaranteeing Aboriginal people fair treatment at the hands of settler society in North America. Hamar Foster has been among the most articulate legal scholars arguing that British Common Law protected Aboriginal land rights throughout the British Empire, and that although the Royal Proclamation of 1763 was not specifically intended to apply to the area west of the Rocky Mountains, the principles and Common Law informing that document certainly did.<sup>73</sup> Promises that Aboriginal lands would be protected and Native people compensated for alienated territory had been made in the Crown's name by Governor James Douglas and his successor. Whether Edward VII personally confirmed these matters during his discussion with the 1906 delegates may never be known for certain. The British Press reported that Edward was sympathetic to Canadian Aboriginal issues, and that while touring Canada as Prince of Wales some years earlier he had befriended the Mohawk Chief Oronhyetekha and convinced him to travel to Britain and study at Oxford.<sup>74</sup> Whether Edward the Confessor would have offered, or did offer, advice and promises to the chiefs is obviously even more difficult to demonstrate—at least by the methods available to non-Salish studying the past. What is certain is that to this



day the Aboriginal people of British Columbia feel that they are entitled to just treatment and compensation for alienated lands, not only because their own traditions assert that the land is theirs, but because they have been repeatedly assured that Canadian law and tradition guarantee them the same.

History needs to be understood within particular contexts. Historical messages and narratives are conveyed in multiple manners. Both the Aboriginal people and newcomers had practical, rational goals and expectations concerning the ability to profit and prosper from the exploitation of British Columbia's land and resources. However, how each side sought to advance its claims and secure its objectives differed, and it is these differences that reveal the extent to which divergent epistemologies and worldviews account for the confused accounts of the discussion between chiefs and kings in 1906. Indeed, epistemology, as much as economics or politics, begins to explain the variance between western and indigenous understandings of the past—of history. They reveal (and in turn are revealed through) the separate, though interpenetrating historiographies, which account for the past through culturally prescribed lenses. Native people have been struggling for some time to try to appreciate the western historiography and the historical understandings that emerge from both the political and the academic western discourses. Historians should not wait for Aboriginal people to explain these matters, for in the past they have tried but not been heard. In the spirit of developing an intellectual forum where divergent historical consciousnesses can co-exist, and therefore better inform one another, the onus is now on westerners to try to better understand the basis of Native historical interpretation.

## Notes

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- <sup>1</sup> Charlie Isipaymilt, Testimony before the *Royal Commission on Indian Affairs in the Province of British Columbia*, 27 May 1913.
- <sup>2</sup> On 15 May 1908, the provincial Attorney General's office filed a report outlining concerns over Joe Capilano's continuing political activities in light of his trip to London, and British Columbia Indian Superintendent Vowell considered having the Squamish Chief arrested after "unrest" among the Nisga'a was traced to Capilano's oratory and assurances of the king's support for Native rights: "Joe Capilano Agitation at Hazelton," Attorney General (AG) Government Record (GR)-0429, Box 16, File 1, Foilo 4169/08; also "Indians at Hazelton," AG GR-0429, Box 16, File 1, Folio 4381/08.
- <sup>3</sup> "Cowichan Indians in Restless Mood: Alleged That Tribal Discontent is Aroused Through Oratory of Joe Capilano," *Victoria Daily Colonist*, 8 May 1907, p.3.
- <sup>4</sup> James W. Morton, *Capilano: The Story of a River*, (Toronto/Montreal, McClelland and Stewart Ltd, 1970), p.31.
- <sup>5</sup> Edward Green, "The Squamish Totems," *The Beaver: A Magazine of the North*, Outfit 270, No. 1, June 1939, p.37. Green quotes Joe Capilano's son, Chief Mathias Capilano, explaining the pole's symbols.
- <sup>6</sup> Promises of compensation attributed to both Governors James Douglas and his successor, Frederick Seymour, are cited by numerous Stó:lō Chiefs testifying before the *Royal Commission* between 1913 and 1915. It is also referenced in the 1908 and 1911 petition to Ottawa signed by Stó:lō Chiefs among others. These accounts also circulate in the Stó:lō communities today. Among certain Stó:lō family's, however, the promise is remembered as being for "one quarter" rather than one third of the funds raised.
- <sup>7</sup> In 1880, Lieut. Governor of Manitoba, Alexander Morris, investigated Aboriginal assertions that promises beyond those contained in the final treaty documents had been made to Canadian prairie natives during the negotiations of Treaty One and Treaty Two. The Privy Council ultimately decided to acknowledge and accept the oral history after it was corroborated in a memorandum written by the government's negotiators themselves. See Hon. Alexander Morris, P.C., *The Treaties of Canada and the Indians of Manitoba and the North-West Territories Including Negotiations on Which They Were Based, and Other Information Relating Thereto*, (Toronto: Belfords, Clark & Co. Publishers, 1880), pp126-127. I am grateful to my colleague J.R. Miller for drawing my attention to this source.
- <sup>8</sup> Much of this scholarly activity initially emerged in reaction to Justice Alan McEachern's rejection of oral evidence as anything more than hearsay in his "Reasons for Judgement: *Delgamuukw v. B.C.*" Supreme Court of British Columbia, 1991. For a scholarly critique of McEachern's decision see the special edition of *BC Studies, A Theme Issue, Anthropology and History in the Courts*, edited by Bruce G. Miller No. 95, Autumn 1992. Speaking more broadly within the Canadian context, the validity of oral sources as historical

evidence has been advanced principally in three ways. The first is characterized by the amassing of a critical mass of oral history on a particular topic to demonstrate overall internal consistency—see, for example, Treaty 7 Elders and Tribal Council with Walter Hildebrandt, Sarah Carter, and Dorothy First Rider, *The True Spirit and Original Intent of Treaty 7*, (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996). Another involves examining the political and economic context in which promises were made in order to better appreciate their possible meanings to those involved. Such an approach was applied by Arthur J. Ray, Jim Miller, and Frank Tough, *Bounty and Benevolence: A History of Saskatchewan Treaties*, (Montreal & Kingston, London, and Ithica: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000). A third approach proposes that even those oral traditions previously not considered genuine historical accounts because they ostensibly fell into the category of "myth" sometimes provide more accurate and detailed historical accounts than contemporaneous archival documents. Wendy Wickwire, "To See Ourselves as the Other's Other: Nlakapamux Contact Narratives," *Canadian Historical Review*, LXXV, No. 1, March 1994: 1-20.

<sup>9</sup> Elsewhere, for example, Robert Borofsky has demonstrated in his study of Pukapukan oral history in Oceania that concepts of historical truth as perceived from a European post-enlightenment perspective do not necessarily correspond with indigenous understandings of historical validity. See Robert Borofsky, *Making History: Pukapukan and Anthropological Constructions of Knowledge*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

<sup>10</sup> Wayne Suttles has written about the "reality" of the sasquatch (or "big foot") to Coast Salish people. See "On the Cultural Track of the Sasquatch," in Wayne Suttles, ed., *Coast Salish Essays*, (Vancouver: Talon Books, 1987), 73-99; and "Sasquatch: The Testimony of Tradition," in Marjorie M. Halpin and Michael Ames, eds., *Manlike Monsters on Trial: Early Records and Modern Evidence*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1980), 245-255. "Sasquatch" is actually an anglicized rendition of a Salishian Halkomelem language term that, like "sockeye" salmon has entered common Canadian and American parlance. The sasquatch is an integral figure in both Stó:lō culture as well as history.

<sup>11</sup> In this regard, my findings are more in line with Marshall Sahlins' as articulated in *How Natives Think: About Captain Cook for Example*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), than with Gannath Obeyeskere's in *The Apotheosis of Captain Cook: European Mythmaking in the Pacific*, (Princeton University Press: Princeton, 1992), or those expressed by Bruce Trigger in his influential article, "Early Responses to European Contact: Romantic Versus Rationalistic Interpretations," *Journal of American History* 77:4 (March 1991) 1195-1215.

<sup>12</sup> R.G. Collingwood, *The Idea Of History*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956). See in particular Part V, "Epilegomena," pp.205-334.

- <sup>13</sup> Clifford Geertz, "Thick Descriptions: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture," *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*. Edited by Clifford Geertz. New York, Basic Books, 1973, p.13.
- <sup>14</sup> I was employed as historian and research director at the Stó:lō Nation between 1992 and 2001, during which time I lived in Salish territory and made community-based research the focus of my scholarly activities. Descendants and relatives of Joseph Capilano, David Basil, Simon Pierre, Chief Chilihitza, and Chief Louie were interviewed for this project. As an aspect of a larger program of research, of which this paper is a part, I hope to extend my research to include relatives of Charlie Isipaymilt.
- <sup>15</sup> A reporter for the Vancouver *Province* relating a conversation with the 1906 delegates under the title "Indians Ask [for] More Compensation." Vancouver *Province*, July 14, 1906. As they explained in broken English to the *Canadian Gazette* reporter in Ottawa, "Victoria long time Queen. Indians give land to her." *Canadian Gazette*, 2 August 1906. "Stray Points," p.411.
- <sup>16</sup> "Statement of the Scowlitz Band to the Honourable Members of the Royal Commission," 1915, RG 10, Vol. 11021, File 520c.
- <sup>17</sup> Chief Mathias Joe and other Squamish men, to the Royal Commissioners, March 8th, 1915, RG 10, Vol. 11020, File 5208.
- <sup>18</sup> George Stewart, *Canada Under the Administration of the Earl of Dufferin*, (Toronto: Rose Belford, Co. 1878), 491-496.
- <sup>19</sup> Molyneux St. John, *The Sea of Mountains: An Account of Lord Dufferin's Tour Through British Columbia in 1876*, Vol II, (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1877), p.65.
- <sup>20</sup> St. John, *Sea of Mountains*, pp.90-91.
- <sup>21</sup> Personal communication with Brenda Jorgesens, Research Coordinator, Upper Nicola Band, 27 June 2003.
- <sup>22</sup> *Victoria Daily Colonist*, 15 November 1904. *The Colonist* reports that Chilihitza and Louie actually met Edward VII, but this is incorrect as Chief Morrison, who later accompanied Chilihitza and Louie to Ottawa on another delegation in 1908, explained in a letter to the *Ottawa Free Press* that was picked up by the *Daily News-Advertiser* in Vancouver: "They went to the Old Country; but did not see His Majesty, so they went over to Rome to Pope Leo XIII, and they succeeded in an interviewer with His Holiness. But not with His Majesty." Moreover, the daily travel log of the 1904 journey published by Fr. LeJeune in the Kamloops *Wawa*, as well as the extant oral histories that I was able to acquire from descendants of the two chiefs in the summer of 2003, make no reference to a Royal audience. There is still some degree of confusion concerning the details, however, for the newspaper account mentions Pope Leo XIII, who died in 1903.
- <sup>23</sup> See Kamloops *Wawa*, Vol. XIII. No. 2, September 1904; Kamloops *Wawa*, Vol. XIII, No. 3, December 1904. I am grateful to David Robertson, a graduate student in linguistics at the University of Victoria in British Columbia for

transliterating and transcribing excerpts of these editions of the *Wawa* from Duployan shorthand into English.

<sup>24</sup> In the weeks leading up to his trip to London, Chief Joe came to be known as Joe "Capilano" by non-Natives who identified him with the river of the same name where he resided. The name Capilano, however, was a hereditary name belonging to a family of the neighbouring Musqueam tribe—a community Joe had ties to through his mother. A controversy subsequently arose following Chief Joe's return over the legitimacy of his use of the Musqueam name. This tension apparently reached a climax thirty years later (more than two decades after Chief Joe had passed away) when the Musqueam community held a potlatch to strip the name away from Chief Joe's son. In the early 1950s, the controversy concerning who had the right to "carry" the Capilano Chief remained a topic of spirited conversation in Aboriginal society. This controversy was the principal aspect of the 1906 trip that the delegation's official translator, Simon Pierre, wanted to discuss when interviewed by anthropologist Wayne Suttles in 1951. (Personal communication with Wayne Suttles, July 2003). Moreover, it remains a controversial topic among certain members of the Squamish and Musqueam tribes to this day. (Personal communication with Crystal Johnston, June 2003).

<sup>25</sup> *Victoria Daily Colonist*, 6 and 13 July 1906.

<sup>26</sup> "Indian Chiefs Speak Good Words," *The World*, 14 July 1906. p7.

<sup>27</sup> *Vancouver Daily World*, 4 July 1906.

<sup>28</sup> *The Beaver*, Outfit 270, No. 1, June 1939. p36.

<sup>29</sup> "Redskins To See The King—Chiefs Go to Buckingham Palace Today," *Daily Express*, 13 August 1906,

<sup>30</sup> *Victoria Daily Colonist*, 2 July 1906.

<sup>31</sup> *Victoria Daily Colonist*, 13 July 1906.

<sup>32</sup> See *Victoria Daily Colonist*, 6 July 1906. All quotes from the petition in the following paragraphs are taken from this source.

<sup>33</sup> Public Record Offices (PRO), London, C.O. 42/908, attached correspondence in letter from Lord Strathcona, Canadian High Commissioner to London, to Sir Montagu Ommanney, Permanent Undersecretary of the Colonies, 1 August 1906

<sup>34</sup> *Ottawa Citizen*, 18 July 1906. Interestingly, the Vancouver-based *World* newspaper, whose front page proudly proclaimed itself to be "The Paper That Prints The facts," recounted a radically different story of the encounter between the British Columbia chiefs and the Minister of Indian Affairs than the one Oliver portrayed in his official correspondence. According to the *World*, which ran an in-depth article of more than 1,000 words, Capilano had actually presented Frank Oliver with a formal written petition, a copy of which they printed in its entirety, which outlined a series of grievances and their proposed remedies. This second petition was addressed to Laurier and differed in significant ways from the other petition they carried for King Edward. In the Laurier petition

the chiefs' outline made no mention of their opposition to onerous hunting and fishing restrictions or the anti-potlatching law. Their focused concern was focused on the breach of earlier promises for financial compensation made in the name of Queen Victoria for lands alienated outside of Indian reserves, and adequate lands within those boundaries. While the problems they identified with the system of Indian policy in British Columbia were systemic, the chiefs emphasized as one pragmatic remedial action the elimination of the position of Indian Agents within the federal bureaucracy. These individuals were regarded as being costly and inefficient advocates of the Indian people who "are spending a lot of our money [the funds that should be used as compensation for alienated lands] to no purpose, and we would be better off without them." The chiefs also objected to the role of federal agents because "these men are friends of the white men who put them in office." That is to say, the Indian Agents were ultimately responsible to the non-Native constituency who appointed them -- the very group who were responsible for breaching promises of compensation and reducing the size of reserves. Implicit in the petition was the notion that Aboriginal leaders were the correct and proper spokesmen for their communities, and the rightful administrators of the funds provided by the Department of Indian Affairs. Furthermore, surely the delegation's very presence in Ottawa was indicative of their ability and competence. According to *The World*, Oliver received this petition on behalf of the prime minister. Whether Oliver actually received the petition but concealed the fact from London is unclear. Perhaps the chiefs presented *The World* correspondent with a copy of the petition in anticipation of meeting Laurier, and then, upon finding that he was unavailable, determined not to present it to Oliver.

<sup>35</sup> "Indian Chiefs Speak Good Words," *The World*, 14 July 1906.

<sup>36</sup> PRO, C.O. 42/908, Earl of Elgin to Governor General Earl Gray, August 2, 1906.

<sup>37</sup> "TO PETITION THE GREAT WHITE KING: THE INDIANS WHO HAVE ARRIVED IN LONDON FROM CANADA TO ASK KING EDWARD TO PROTECT THEIR GAME RESERVES." *Daily Graphic*, 3 August 1906.

<sup>38</sup> "North American Indians to See The King," *Daily News*, 3 August 1906.

<sup>39</sup> *Daily News*, 3 August 1906.

<sup>40</sup> *Daily News*, 3 August 1906.

<sup>41</sup> Neil Parsons, *King Khama Emperor Joe and the Great White Queen: Victorian Britain through African Eyes*, (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

<sup>42</sup> The Vancouver *Daily Province* reported that Capilano had explained to representatives of the British Press that he and his traveling companions were pleased to discover that they had much in common with Lord High Commissioner Strathcona: he was a "mighty chief and hunter himself," and they "were sure of his sympathy." Vancouver *Daily Province*, 14 August 1906.

<sup>43</sup> "Redskins See the King," *Daily Express*, 14 August 1906.



- <sup>44</sup> Charlotte Gray, *Flint and Feather: The Life and Times of E. Pauline Johnson, Tekahionwake*, (Toronto: Harper Flamingo Canada, 2002), p.322-327.
- <sup>45</sup> Quoted in Gray, *Flint and Feather*, p.326.
- <sup>46</sup> E. Pauline Johnson, *Legends of Vancouver*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1986 [1911]), 141-149.
- <sup>47</sup> "Redskins see the King," *Daily Express*, 14 August 1906.
- <sup>48</sup> Henry Gray, *Anatomy of the Human Body* (Philadelphia: Lea & Febiger, 1966), originally published in London in 1858 under the title *Anatomy, Descriptive and Surgical*.
- <sup>49</sup> "Redskins see the King," *Daily Express*, 14 August 1906
- <sup>50</sup> "Redskins to See King," *Daily Express*, 13 August 1906.
- <sup>51</sup> McHalsie and I were colleagues at the Stó:lō Nation office from 1992 through 2001. I was privileged to witness and sometimes assist in his cross-cultural explanations.
- <sup>52</sup> See Jay Miller, *Lushootseed Culture and the Shamanic Odyssey: An Anchored Radiance*, (Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 1999).
- <sup>53</sup> Edward did not keep a personal diary, and there appears to have no official minutes or notes taken of his conversations with the Salish leaders. Personal communication with the chief archivist of Windson Palace Archives, February, 2001.
- <sup>54</sup> Coded telegram from Governor General Earl Gray to High Commissioner Lord Strathcona, PRO, C.O. 42/907. Also, "Great White King," *Daily Chronicle*, 14 August 1906.
- <sup>55</sup> Governor General Earl Gray to High Commissioner Lord Strathcona, 4 August 1906, PRO, C.O. 42/907.
- <sup>56</sup> "Great White Father – Red Indians at Buckingham Palace – 'Chief Joe' Exultant," *The Daily News*, Tuesday, 14 August 1906, p.7. The *Daily Chronicle* also reports that chiefs were not allowed to speak of the real reason for the visit ("Great white King," 14 August 1906). See also descriptions of the Royal Audience in: "The King and the Indian Chiefs," *The Morning Post*, 14 August 1906; "Kind Indian Chiefs," *Victoria Daily Colonist*, 31 August 1906; "A Present for the Queen," *Daily Gazette*, 15 August 1906.
- <sup>57</sup> Robert Galois, "The Indians Rights Association, Native Protest Activity and the 'land question' in British Columbia, 1903-1926," *Native Studies Review*, Vol. 8, No. 2, p.7.
- <sup>58</sup> "Ceremonial Dress," *Daily Express*, 14 August 1906. The Royal Archives at Windsor Castle contains no reference to a petition being presented to the king, but neither does it have any evidence that a petition was not given. The only record of the chiefs' visit is a notation of a fifteen minute audience in King Edward VII's day calendar. Other sources also describe Capilano as giving the queen three small cedar baskets woven by his twelve-year-old daughter, Emma, along with a note from Emma and a photograph of the chief and his daughter. Windsor Castle archivists report that they cannot find the baskets,



note, or photographs. They offer as an explanation that the Royal family has received so many gifts that numerous ones have simply vanished without record. They also point out that during air raids in World War II some records and artifacts were destroyed or lost during efforts to relocate them to safer locations. Personal communication, February 2001.

<sup>59</sup>“Good, Kind King,” *Daily Mail*, 14 August 1906.

<sup>60</sup>“The King and the Indian Chiefs,” *The Canadian Gazette*, 16 August 1906.

<sup>61</sup>*The Province*, Magazine Section, 26 March 1910, quoted in Morton, Capilano: *The Story of a River*, pp.32 & 34. In similar detail, four years earlier, while still in London, *Loyd's Weekly News*, quoted Capilano stating that the monarch had promised to look into the issue of fishing and hunting rights, although he cautioned that it might take as long as five years to sort out. *Loyd's Weekly News*, quoted in Gray, *Flint and Feather*, p.326. Loyds also reported that the delegates received gold medallions from the king and queen on which were the monarch's images. These medallions, worn like medals, are visible on Capilano's and Isipaymilt's chests in the photo taken of them in Vancouver on their return from London.

<sup>62</sup>Quoted in Morton, Capilano: *Story of a River*, p.36.

<sup>63</sup>“Cowichan Indians in Restless Mood: Alleged That Tribal Discontent is Aroused Through the Oratory of Joe Capilano,” *Victoria Daily Colonist*, 7 May 1906. See also “Indians unsettled,” *Victoria Daily Colonist*, 8 May 1906.

<sup>64</sup>Conversation with Lottie Lindley, 3 July 2003, Upper Nicola Band Research Office.

<sup>65</sup>Conversation with Isaac Lindley, 3 July 2003, Upper Nicola band Research Office.

<sup>66</sup>Conversation with Lottie Lindley, 3 July 2003, Upper Nicola Band Research Office.

<sup>67</sup>Conversation with Steven Point, 14 February 2001.

<sup>68</sup>I am indebted to Wendy Wickwire for making available to me this story from her vast collection of unpublished recording of Robinson, and to the late Harry Robinson himself for agreeing to share his knowledge with outsiders.

<sup>69</sup>Personal communication with Wayne Suttles, 19 June 2003.

<sup>70</sup>“Chiefs Go to Buckingham Palace Today,” *Daily Express*, 13 August 1906.

<sup>71</sup>See, in particular, Robin Fisher, *Contact and Conflict: Indian-European Relations in British Columbia, 1774-1890*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1977 [second edition 1992]); Paul Tenant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics: The Indian Land Question in British Columbia, 1849-1989*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1990); Keith Thor Carlson, ed., *You Are Asked To Witness: The Stó:lō In Canada's Pacific Coast History*, (Chilliwack B.C.: Stó:lō Heritage Trust, 1997); R.Cole Haris, *Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance, and Reserves in British Columbia*, (Vancouver and Toronto: UBC Press, 2002).

<sup>72</sup>Governor General Earl Gray to Colonial Office, 13 November 1906. PRO, C.O. 42/907 Original Correspondence for 1906.

<sup>73</sup> Hamar Foster, "The Saanichton Bay Marina Case: Imperial Law, Colonial History, and Competing Theories of Aboriginal Title," (1989), 23, *University of British Columbia Law Review*, pp.629-650.

<sup>74</sup> "Redskins to See the King," *Daily Express*, 13 August 1906.

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