

North Pacific Cannery

Archaeological Resource Inventory

March 2000

NORTH PACIFIC CANNERY VILLAGE MUSEUM

Archaeological Resource Inventory

Prepared for

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ABSTRACT

An archaeological survey of North Pacific Cannery was carried out between November 1999 and February 2000. The project was designed with two aims in mind. Firstly, I was asked to identify and record the remains of any buildings that once existed on cannery property but have since been demolished. The expectation was that these remains would include structural elements, such as pilings, as well as associated artifact scatters. Secondly, I was asked to search for traces of a possible prehistoric occupation of the area by First Nations groups. The information was to provide the basis for future planning and development by the staff of North Pacific Cannery Village Museum.

In the time available, I examined four areas and found historical remains in all four. From west to east the four areas were: (A) the Native housing area near the western edge of the property; (B) the Japanese quarters on the west side of the creek, near the eastern edge of the property; (C) an industrial area on the east side of the same creek; and (D) an area of housing associated with the point of land at the eastern periphery of the cannery grounds. No evidence of a prehistoric occupation came to light during the course of the survey.

There are plans to replicate some of the Native housing in or near Area A, and I recommend that a small scale archaeological excavation be conducted in this area prior to any development that would impact the existing remains. Areas B and C are not under any imminent threat at present. As such, they should be monitored on a regular basis by museum staff and otherwise left alone. There is a possibility that Area D might be developed as a camp ground for visiting tourists, and if this occurs, the remains of two smoke houses in this area should be recorded in detail. The surface artifacts in that area should also be collected at the same time. My final recommendation is to expand the archaeological survey coverage to include a few areas of the cannery property that have not yet been systematically examined.

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INTRODUCTION

North Pacific Cannery is situated on a narrow parcel of land overlooking Inverness Passage at the mouth of the Skeena River. It was established as a salmon cannery in 1889, and over the years, the facilities grew to include a cold storage unit, can-making factory, boiler house, reduction plant, blacksmith shop, machine shop, net loft, office, store, mess hall, Chinese and Japanese bunkhouses, First Nations houses and fishermen's quarters. There were also docks and wharfs large enough to accommodate a fleet of fishing vessels (Blyth 1991:121-123). The plant operated continuously until its final closure in 1981, and in recognition of its importance in the history of the region, the cannery was then acquired and recommissioned as an historic maritime museum. Visitors to the site are able to examine a total of 25 structures, and in so doing, develop a better appreciation for a way of life that was shared by so many in early coastal British Columbia.

In addition to the intact structures, the grounds of North Pacific Cannery contain archaeological remains of various kinds. There are traces of demolished buildings, as well as accumulations of refuse from assorted activities associated with the operation of the cannery. In the fall of 1999, I was asked to conduct a survey of the cannery property with the aim of identifying and recording these important resources. I was also asked to conduct a systematic search for evidence relating to a possible occupation of the area by First Nations groups prior to the establishment of the cannery. The archaeological survey was carried out between November 1999 and February 2000, and the results are presented in this report. Four areas were examined, and archaeological remains of the cannery operations were encountered in each area. No prehistoric evidence was found. My report begins with an account of the field work, focusing on the methods employed in carrying out the survey. This is followed by a description of the remains in each area. The report ends with a series of recommendations aimed at the long-term management of these resources.

FIELD INVESTIGATIONS

The field investigations at North Pacific Cannery Village Museum began on November 20, 1999 with a general assessment of the cannery property. On that day,

Don Sankey and I spent a total of eight hours at the site. We started by examining the intertidal zone immediately west of the main cannery buildings, where the First Nations cannery workers and their families were originally housed. The Native huts were on pilings in the upper intertidal zone, and access was provided by a 10 foot wide boardwalk that ran parallel to the shoreline. The houses were on either side of the boardwalk. Maps of the cannery suggest that there may have been more than one phase in the construction of these units. Some plans show a single length of boardwalk and associated houses; others show two or more connecting lengths. The buildings and boardwalks are no longer present, but some of the stub ends of the pilings that supported these structures have survived and are readily visible in the intertidal zone.

Don and I spent about an hour walking over this area and found that there were some definite alignments of posts, which seem to represent some of the supporting pilings for the boardwalk and huts, although the visible posts do not constitute a complete set. It may be that some of the posts were removed or have rotted away over time. We also observed a dense scatter of historical artifacts extending just beyond the alignments of posts. Presumably, these items were either lost over the edge of the boardwalk or deliberately discarded by the cannery workers. The artifacts include broken glass bottles, broken dishes, cutlery and other metal objects. For the purposes of this report, the posts and associated artifact scatter at this end of the cannery property are designated Area A (Figure 1).

After completing our assessment of the Native housing area, we proceeded a few hundred metres eastward along the CN railway line to a point where the tracks cross a large creek. According to a map of the cannery prepared in 1923, this area contained a few small huts occupied by Japanese cannery workers. The huts were apparently located on the west side of the creek, and Don and I spent the next three hours examining the area in an effort to find some evidence of the structures. The search was hampered by a dense thicket of shrubs that reaches to a height of about 2 metres. At times, it was a challenge just to get a clear view of the ground surface through the tangle of branches. As we proceeded around the area, we began to observe a scatter of historical artifacts, including rusted buckets, gas cans, bottles and pieces of corrugated metal. We cleared the underbrush from the area that seemed to hold the greatest concentration, and this led to the discovery of a distinct cluster

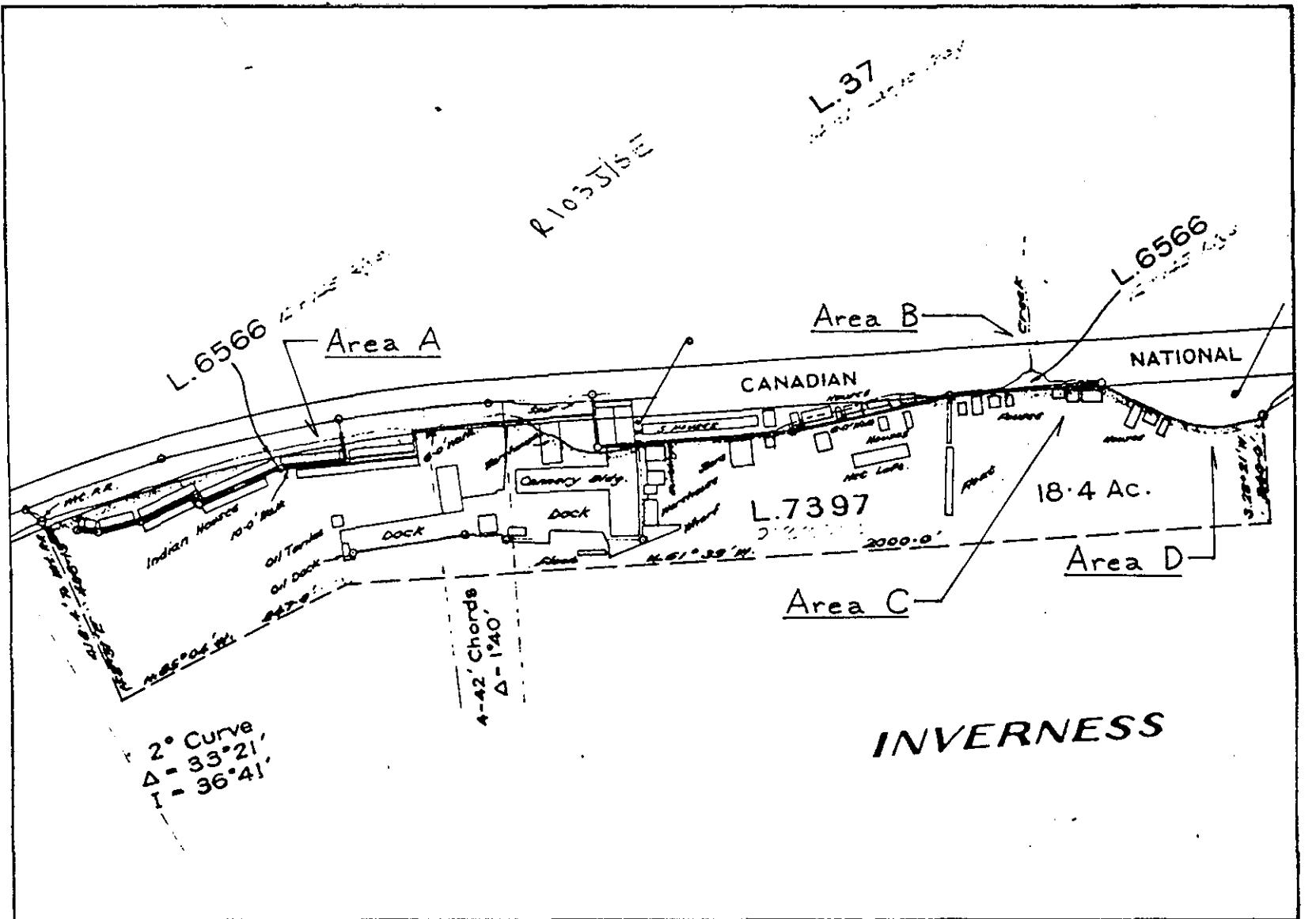


Figure 1. Map of North Pacific Cannery, from Coell & Associates (1985:15).

of objects, including more corrugated metal, length of decomposing lumber, part of a wire-wrapped wooden waterline and a pile of bottles, old pots and other domestic refuse. Our assumption is that these items mark the location of one or more of the Japanese huts. The huts themselves must have been removed at some point in the past, as we found no trace of any standing structures on the west side of the creek.

The area containing the artifacts was designated Area B (Figure 1).

Don and I then made our way down to the shoreline at the mouth of the creek and spent the next hour checking out the remains in that area. About 50 m east of the creek mouth are the remains of a small industrial structure--a shed with a cover of corrugated metal. The shed stands on a low flat area at the edge of the beach, just above the high tide line. The roof of the structure is partially collapsed, and the wood around the doorway is charred as though an attempt had been made to burn the shed down. We made no systematic search of the surrounding land, as it was thickly overgrown with shrubs, but did observe several objects lying on the ground near the shed. Some of these are modern, for example the plastic tops of spray cans. These were likely deposited by wave action, as they are only a few metres from the beach. We also noted the stub ends of numerous pilings in the intertidal zone in front of the shed and in the area closer to the mouth of the creek. Those in front of the shed are aligned at right angles to the shoreline and may be the remains of a wharf or a dry dock facility for hauling up fish boats in need of repair. The beach in this area is also littered with historical debris. Most of the items are industrial in nature, including numerous fragments of metal machinery. For the purposes of the report, we named this Area C (Figure 1).

We then proceeded down the beach to a forested point of land at the eastern edge of the cannery property and spent the remainder of the day, about 3 hours in total, examining that area. A careful search of the ground surface revealed a thin scatter of historical debris, including what appears to be part of a stove and two metal bed frames. A denser cluster of items was then found just above the beach near the western end of the point. These included a TV antenna, a bed frame, and some metal cans. Two smoke houses are located just above this area. The smaller of the two has been overturned. The larger one is more intact, although the roof is partly collapsed. An early map of the cannery shows several houses on pilings adjacent to the area where the smoke houses are. It may be that the two smoke

houses and various artifacts scattered over the area are all associated with that occupation. We cored the point in several places using Oakfield soil samplers to determine the depth of the soil deposits and to assess the potential for buried archaeological remains. Over most of the point, bedrock was reached within a few centimetres of the surface. Only one area seemed to contain a deeper series of deposits, and we decided to shovel test that area on a return trip to the site. For the purposes of the report, we named the point Area D (Figure 1).

On November 26, 1999 the mapping began. The members of the mapping team on that day included Don Sankey, Teresa Weismiller and myself. We spent a total of seven hours in the field and in that time completed the field map of Area D. The methods used were consistent with those employed on other archaeological surveys in the region (eg. Archer 1991). A non-stretching nylon base line was laid out running from one side of the point to the other, roughly parallel to the railway tracks, and measurements to significant topographic features, such as the high tide line, the railway tracks and important breaks in the slope were then recorded at 5 m intervals along the length of the base line, using a standard compass and chain technique (Figure 2). At the same time, the locations of all surface finds, structures and other points of interest were also plotted in relation to the base line. The final step was to record spot elevations at selected locations across the area. Elevation points were chosen to reflect the general site topography, and the measurements were taken in relation to the barnacle line on the adjacent beach using a hand level. Photographs and detailed notes were also taken, documenting the two smoke house structures and surface artifacts, all of which were left in place. To complete the recording of the area, we put in a shovel test where the sand and silt deposits were at their deepest. The test unit was about 30 x 30 cm in surface area and reached a depth of 60 cm. After finishing the shovel test, we plotted the location of the test unit and refilled it, returning the ground to its natural condition.

Poor weather and other commitments prevented our return to the cannery until almost a month later. On December 21, 1999, Don Sankey, Teresa Weismiller and I began to record the surface evidence relating to the Japanese huts in Area B. We spent a total of seven hours at the site and were able to complete a map of the area in the time allotted. The recording procedures were much the same as those used in Area D, although no shovel testing was done in this area. The ground near



Figure 2. Teresa Weismiller at the base line during the mapping of Area C.

the cluster of historical debris is uneven, wet, and rocky and holds no significant potential for archaeological remains dating to a time before the construction of North Pacific Cannery. We did, however, do some coring in the area using the Oakfield soil samplers and found nothing of interest. The surface remains are concentrated in a small area about 25 m west of the creek. Among the items present on the surface are several lengths of milled lumber and some sheets of corrugated metal, all of which were probably used in the construction of the huts. Part of a narrow wooden water pipe is also present, and there are many items of domestic refuse, including bottles, pots and part of a stove. To assess the possibility that other metal objects might have sunk into the ground, we ran a metal detector over the area. Positive signals were obtained at numerous points across the area, which supports the inference that this was the location of the Japanese huts. No attempt was made to determine the nature of subsurface metal objects, as this would have damaged the integrity of the site. However, they probably include nails, pieces of corrugated metal, cans, pots and other similar debris.

On January 30, 2000, the weather conditions were ideal for photography, and Teresa Weismiller and I spent two and a half hours at the cannery, compiling a photographic record of the four main areas of interest. Up to this point, only a few photographs had been taken due to the rain, hail and dark clouds that accompanied the earlier days of investigation and mapping.

The mapping of Area A began on February 6, 2000 and was completed a week later on February 13. The survey team on the first day consisted of David Konsmo, Teresa Weismiller and myself, and on that occasion, we spent only three hours in the field, as our access to the area was limited by a rising tide. The tidal conditions were better the following week, and in three hours Teresa and I were able to finish recording the pilings and associated scatter of historical artifacts. The methods used in mapping Area A were essentially the same as those already described for Areas B and D. The assessment of Area A included shovel testing at three spots along the beach close to the pilings. The purpose was to determine whether the historical artifacts were confined to the surface layer or had a deeper distribution within the beach deposits. The shovel tests were 30 x 30 cm in area and reached a maximum depth of about 40 cm. In each case, broken glass and other items of interest were found only within the uppermost 10 cm.

On February 27, 2000, Teresa Weismiller and I returned to the cannery to map the remains in Area C. These included the partly collapsed industrial shed, the base of an outhouse found about 15 m east of the shed, the stub ends of the pilings and the scatter of historical artifacts observed both above and below the high tide line. In Area C, the artifacts were found to be mainly industrial in nature rather than domestic. The methods used in mapping Area C were the same as those employed in Areas A, B and D. As well as preparing a detailed map of the area, we took notes on the features identified and a series of photographs. Seven and a half hours were spent at the cannery that day, and that completed our field investigations.

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

The following pages summarize the information gathered in the four areas that were examined. The record for each area includes descriptive observations, a map drawn to scale, and a series of photographs showing features of interest.

Area A

On the beach, directly west of the Machine Shop at North Pacific Cannery are the remains of the living quarters used by First Nations cannery workers and their families (Figures 3 and 4). A map of the cannery drawn in 1923 shows two rows of small, rectangular houses facing each other, with a boardwalk in between (Figure 5). There were 17 huts on the north side of the boardwalk and 15 on the south side, for a total of 32. The entire complex was built over the intertidal zone and supported on pilings. The map shows that a long, straight section of boardwalk linked the First Nations housing area to the shore, just west of the can-making building, with a shorter section branching off to give access to the main wharf. By 1934, the housing for the First Nations workers had apparently been expanded. A map dating to that year shows 42 huts in the section where previously there had been only 32. There were 22 huts on the north side of the boardwalk and 20 on the south side (Figure 6). Moreover, the 1934 map shows a westward extension to the boardwalk, built at a slight angle to the main walkway. The new section had eight additional huts in a single row, thereby increasing the total to 50. Yet another



Figure 3. General view of Area A, looking west from the CN Railway tracks.



Figure 4. Area A, showing the rows of piling stubs in the intertidal zone.

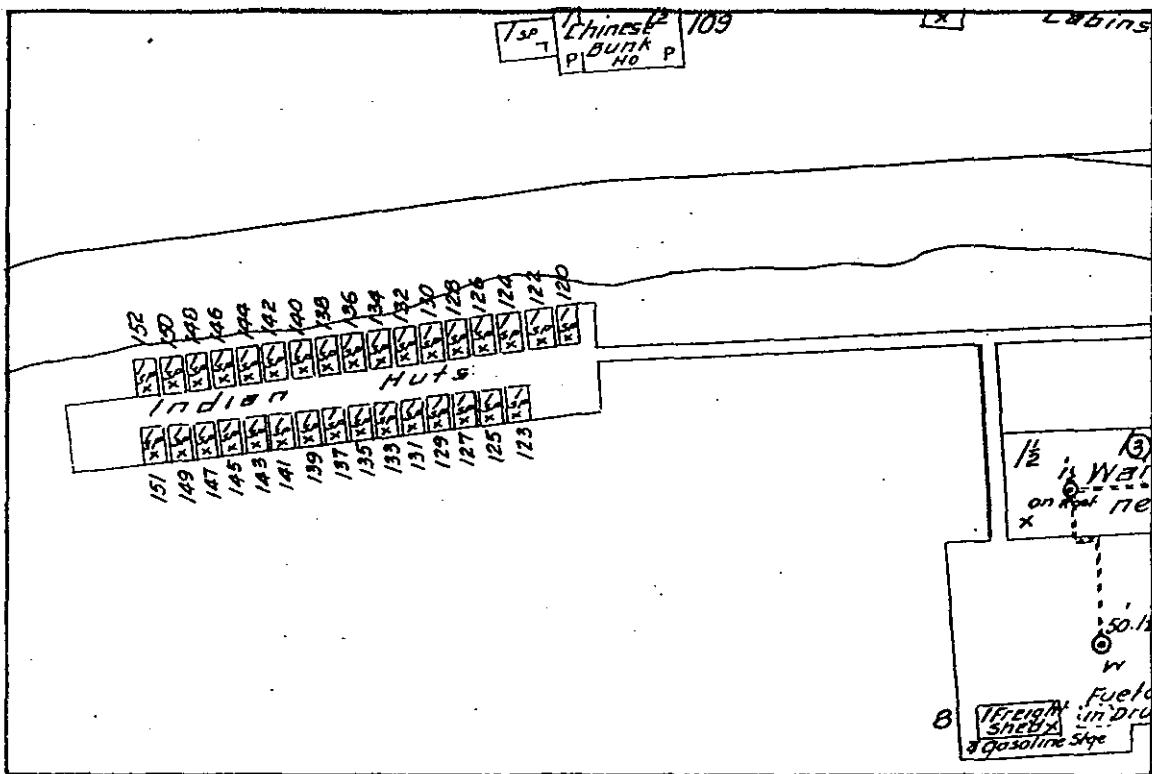


Figure 5. Detail of 1923 map of North Pacific Cannery, showing Area A.

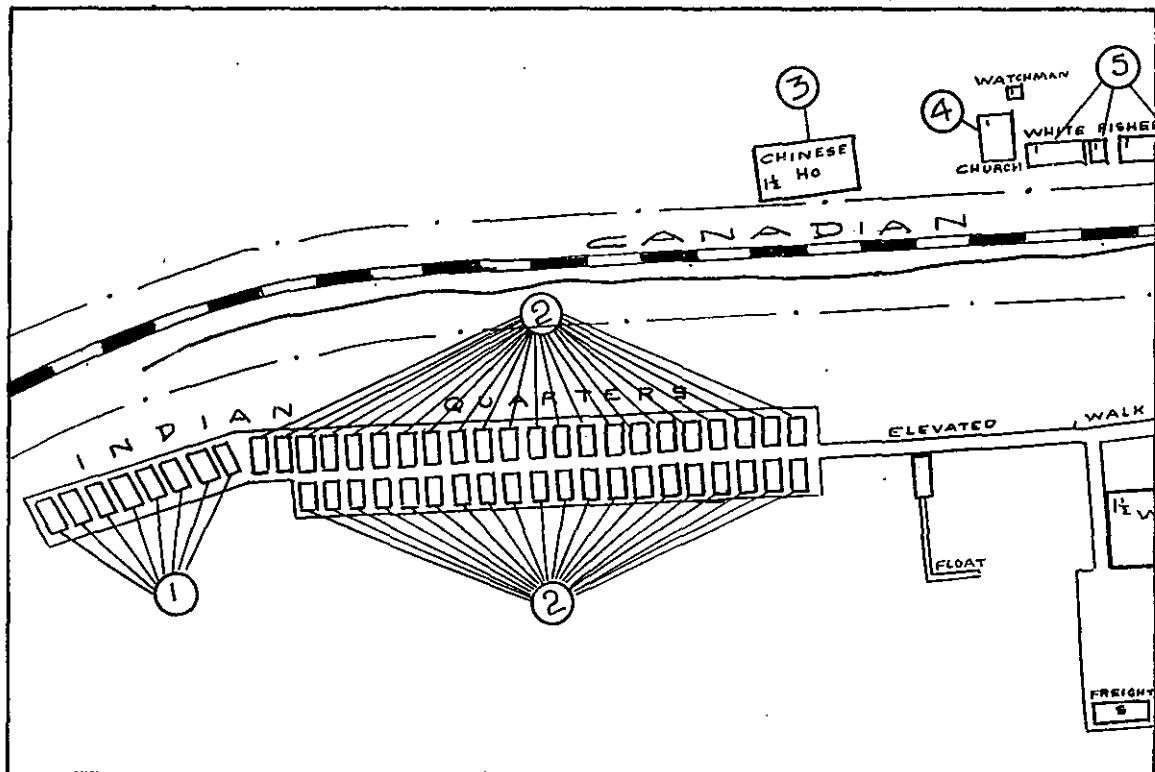


Figure 6. Detail of 1934 map of North Pacific Cannery, showing Area A.

phase in the history of the First Nations quarters is indicated on an undated map included in a report on the cannery prepared by real estate appraisers D.R. Coell & Associates in 1985. Their map shows five interconnected segments of boardwalk in this area, each with huts on one or both sides (Figure 1). The total number of housing units is not indicated, but it must have been substantially over the 50 huts shown in 1934. Although the exact sequence of construction in this area remains to be determined, it is clear that the facilities underwent significant change over time.

The remains of the First Nations housing that have survived to the present include a scatter of historical artifacts, as well as the stub ends of the pilings that once supported the huts and boardwalks. There are no intact structures left in the area; the last were demolished some time ago, although photographs of the Native housing were taken as recently as 1974 (eg. Blyth 1991:58). On our survey of the intertidal zone, we located the stubs of 143 pilings (Figure 7). Some are aligned, and almost certainly represent the supports for the main boardwalk through the area, and there are also stubs that may have supported the huts themselves. However, it appears that some (perhaps many) of the pilings that once stood in the area are not included among the surviving remains. What became of the missing stubs is uncertain. Some may have been removed when the houses were taken down; others may have simply rotted away over time. In any case, there does not appear to be sufficient material remaining to allow for a detailed reconstruction of the facilities within this area.

The artifact scatter in Area A is linear in form, which corresponds with the arrangement of huts along the boardwalk. Most items occur within a few metres of pilings, which suggests that the refuse was discarded either from the houses or the boardwalk. Almost all of the artifacts in the area may be classified as domestic refuse. Items include whole and broken pop bottles, liquor bottles, cold cream jars, medicine bottles, broken dishes (including oriental soup bowls), cutlery, and personal items, such as tooth brushes (Figures 8 and 9). A few industrial artifacts were also seen within the intertidal zone, including fragments of metal equipment. The artifacts seem to be of widely varying age. Some may be as much as a century old, while others are close to the modern era. No prehistoric stone artifacts were observed, although the beach was carefully searched with this in mind. Shovel tests dug at intervals across the area indicate that the artifacts are mainly confined

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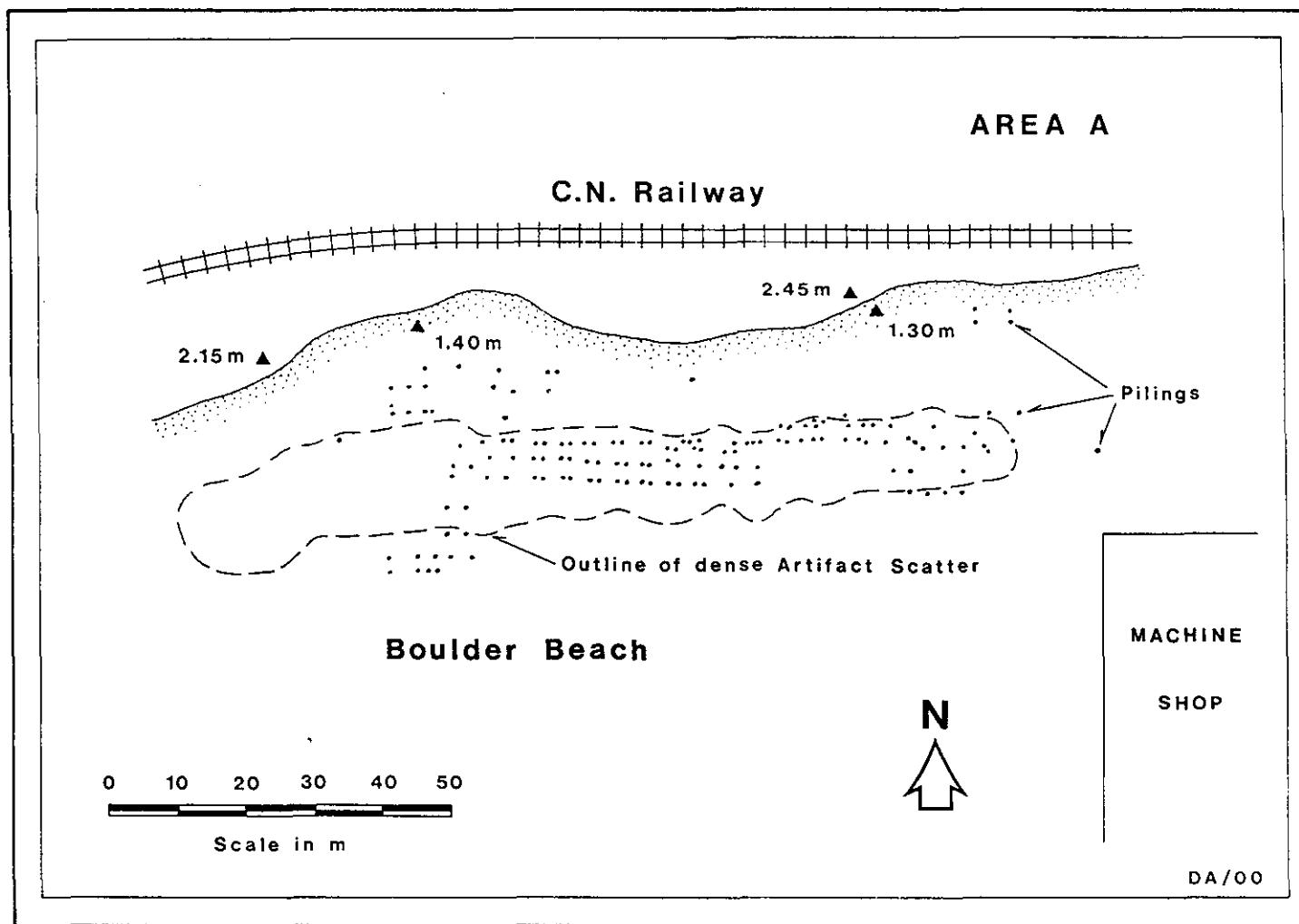


Figure 7. Site map of Area A.



Figure 8. Domestic refuse in Area A, including a whole medicine bottle.



Figure 9. Domestic refuse in Area A, including a fragment of an oriental bowl.

to the surface layer and do not extend more than about 10 cm into the beach deposits.

Area B

A small creek flows into Inverness Passage about 80 m east of the main group of buildings at North Pacific Cannery, and Area B is on the west bank of the creek (Figure 10). It measures 35 m N-S by 60 m E-W and contains a scatter of historical artifacts, which seem to relate to an occupation by Japanese cannery workers of the early to mid twentieth century. Area B is bounded on the south side by the C.N. railway tracks, on the north side by the secondary road that runs between Port Edward and Cassiar Cannery, and on the east side by the edge of the creek. The western margin is defined only by the distribution of artifacts and other remains across the area.

The most prominent physical feature of Area B is the creek itself (Figure 11). Although quite shallow, it has an average width of about 6 m. There is also a small tributary, about 1 m wide, that flows through Area B and joins the main creek at the edge of the C.N. railway bed. The course of the tributary may well have been altered by the construction of the railway, as it now flows along the edge of the railway bed for some considerable distance. Originally, it likely flowed directly into the waters of Inverness Passage about 30 m west of the creek. The local terrain is uneven, due in large part to the irregularities of the underlying bedrock. A few small patches of flat ground occur, but these are generally wet and boggy. The vegetation in Area B is variable, perhaps reflecting the patterns of human activity in the area. Near the creek is a small stand of mature second growth forest, consisting of Sitka spruce, western hemlock and red alder, with an understory of red huckleberry, sword fern and moss. Several large stumps are also present within a few metres of the creek. The size of the living trees suggests that Area B was originally logged off during or soon after the construction of the cannery. About 20 m west of the creek, the forest gives way to a dense thicket of shrubs, consisting mainly of salmonberry bushes. In this area, the second growth trees were probably cleared out when the huts were built for the Japanese workers. The present shrub cover is typical of areas that have been cleared for some purpose and then abandoned.

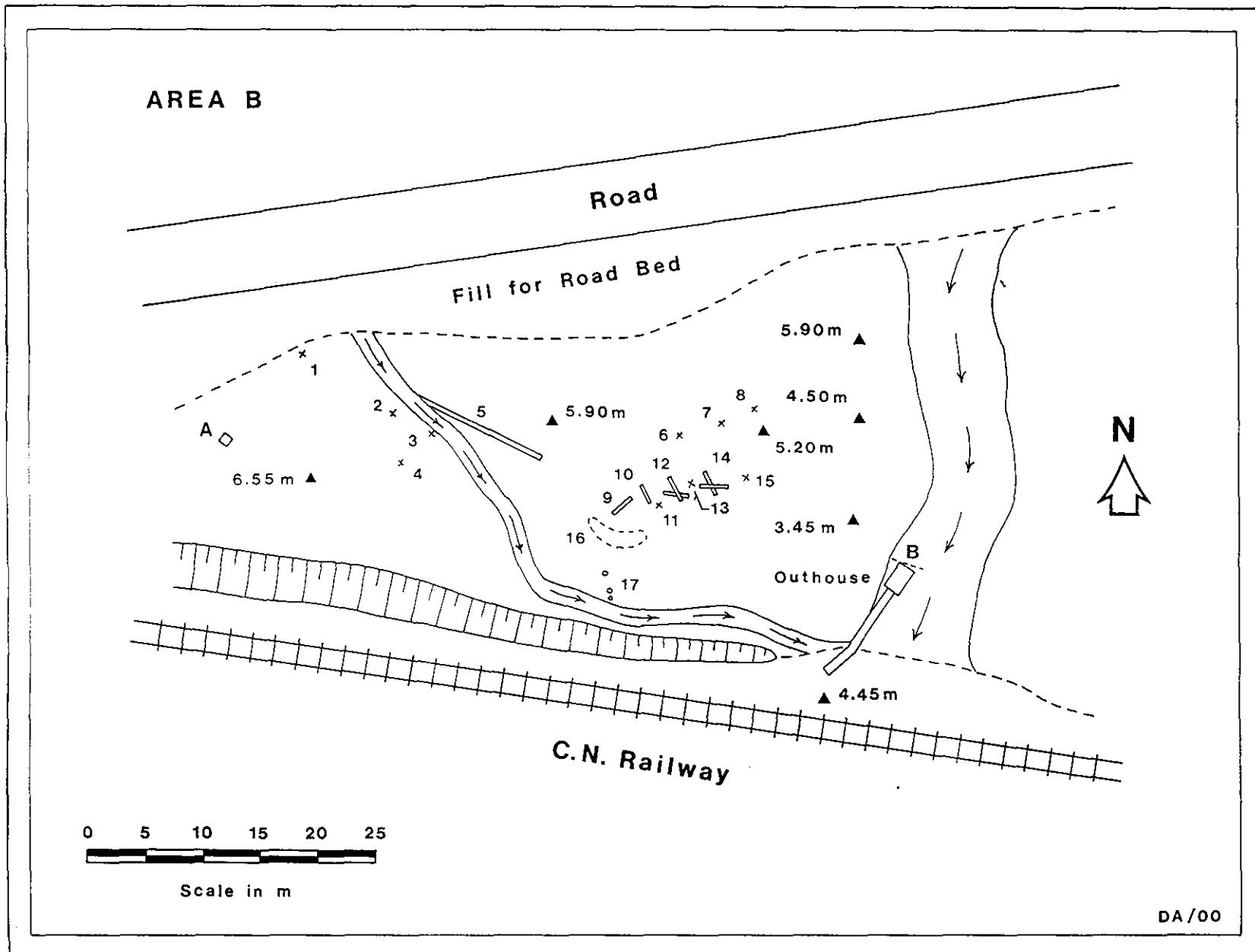


Figure 10. Site map of Area B.



Figure 11. The creek at the eastern edge of Area B.



Figure 12. Several sheets of corrugated metal in Area B.



Figure 13. Accumulation of domestic refuse in Area B.



Figure 14. A 5 gallon metal bucket in Area B.

Historical artifacts and other remains in Area B are in a cluster, centred about 20 m west of the creek (Figures 12, 13 and 14). They include:

1. A galvanized bucket.
2. A 2.5 gallon gas can.
3. A stove oil container.
4. A 5 gallon metal bucket (Figure 14).
5. A wooden waterline, 8 inches in diameter, wrapped with wire (Figure .
6. A piece of corrugated metal, about 1 m square.
7. Several sheets of corrugated metal, roughly 1 x 2 m (Figure 12).
8. A rusted bucket.
9. A 6 x 6 inch post with a nail in it, at least 2 m long.
10. A 6 x 6 inch beam, 2.5 m long.
11. The metal framework of a naptha stove, with fuel tank attached.
12. A 6 x 6 inch beam, at least 2 m long, extending into the ground; and below this, a 3 x 8 inch plank, at least 1.5 m long, extending into the ground.
13. A folded sheet of corrugated metal, roughly 1 x 2 m.
14. A 2 x 6 inch plank, at least 2 m long; and below it, and a 4 x 4 inch beam.
15. A cluster of 6 liquor bottles, all complete.
16. An accumulation of domestic refuse, including liquor bottles, medicine bottles, food bottles and jars, and metal pots (Figure 13).
17. A group of three posts: an 8 inch post with a nail in it, 75 cm high; to the south of this, a 6 inch post, cut off just above the ground; and to the south of this, an other 8 inch post, again cut off just above the ground.

The nature and distribution of the items suggests that a domestic structure of some kind stood about 20 m west of the creek. The structure was evidently demolished some time ago and most of the construction materials removed. All that remains of the building itself are a few beams and planks, which may have been part of the foundation or superstructure, and some sheets of corrugated metal, which may have been used on the walls or roof. A metal detector, used to check for subsurface metal objects, indicated a scatter of items over the entire area. No attempt was made to determine the nature of the metal objects, but they likely include nails discarded during the building's demolition, as well as assorted domestic refuse.

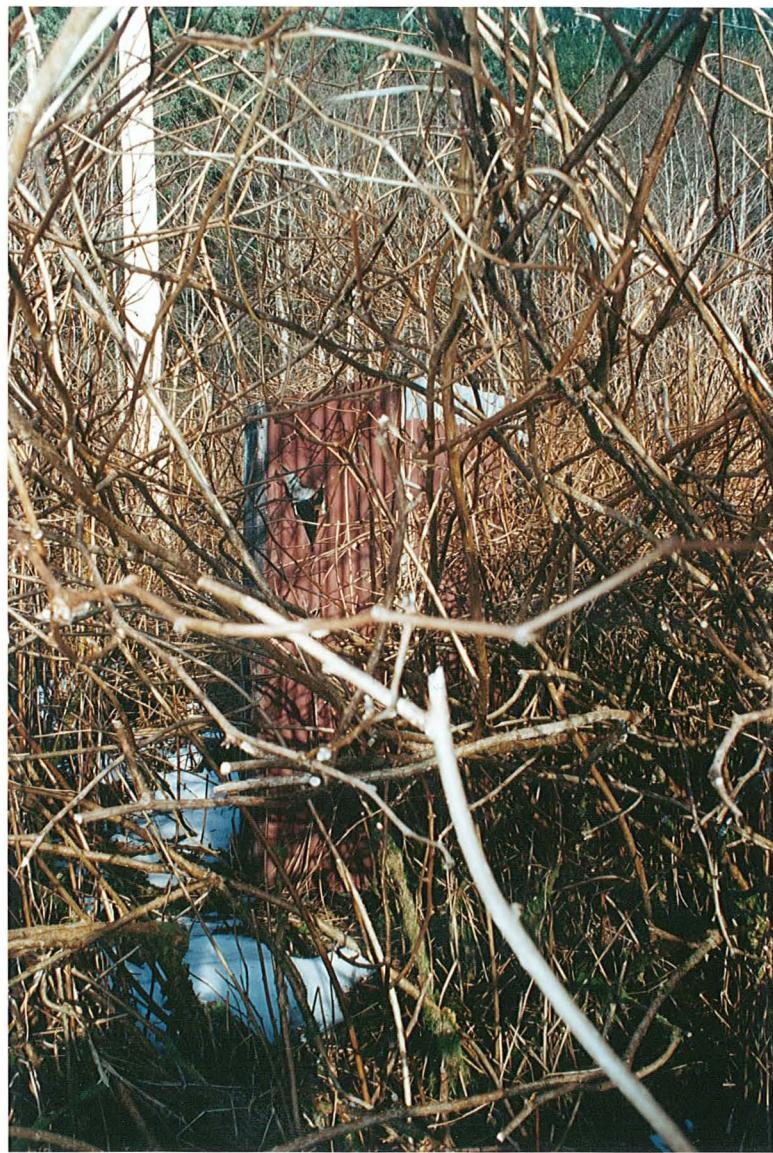


Figure 15. Remains of a small smoke house (Structure A) in Area B.

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A small, abandoned building (Structure A) standing at the western edge of Area B measures 1 x 1 m around the base and 2 m in height (Figure 15). Although in poor condition, it appears to be the remains of a smoke house, used for processing salmon and other fish. The walls are made from sheets of corrugated metal, and on the water side a triangular hole has been cut through the metal, probably to allow the smoke to escape. The doorway is on the north side of the building, facing away from the water. On the walls inside the smoke house are two nails that may have been used for hanging the fish over the fire. The structure has a dirt floor and the roof is missing.

Other facilities observed in or adjacent to Area B include part of a dam on the main creek (Structure B). The remains are about 8 m north of the point where the creek enters a culvert under the railway tracks. The dam was made of vertical planks, a few of which are still intact next to the west bank of the creek (Figure 16). The dam would have created a pool of water, about 1 m deep, providing the inhabitants of Area B with a convenient source of fresh water for drinking, cooking or bathing. At some point, an 8 inch wooden water pipe also was also installed, carrying water from the tributary streamlet to the area where the Japanese hut(s) stood (Figure 17). The significance of the two sources of fresh water is uncertain, but they may have been used at different times or for slightly different purposes.

In summary, our investigations in Area B produced no evidence of any prehistoric occupation on the west bank of the creek. The remains are all consistent with a relatively recent occupation of the area by cannery workers. A map of the complex dating to 1923 shows several structures in the area (Figure 18). There is a medium-sized building, located about 20 m west of the creek, and a groups of three small huts, located about 30-40 m west of the first structure. All of these are labeled as housing units used by Japanese cannery workers. In addition, there is another single structure of unknown purpose located about 30-40 m to the northwest of the latter group of three. The medium-sized structure, closest to the creek is also shown on a later map of the area, dating to 1934, but the other buildings are not represented (Figure 19). Perhaps they were no longer standing by this time. Our survey of the area produced evidence of only one structure, and the location corresponds exactly with the medium-sized building that appears on both maps. The remains of the other buildings were not found during the survey, and it



Figure 16. Remains of wooden dam at the edge of the creek in Area B.



Figure 17. Remains of the wooden water line in Area B.

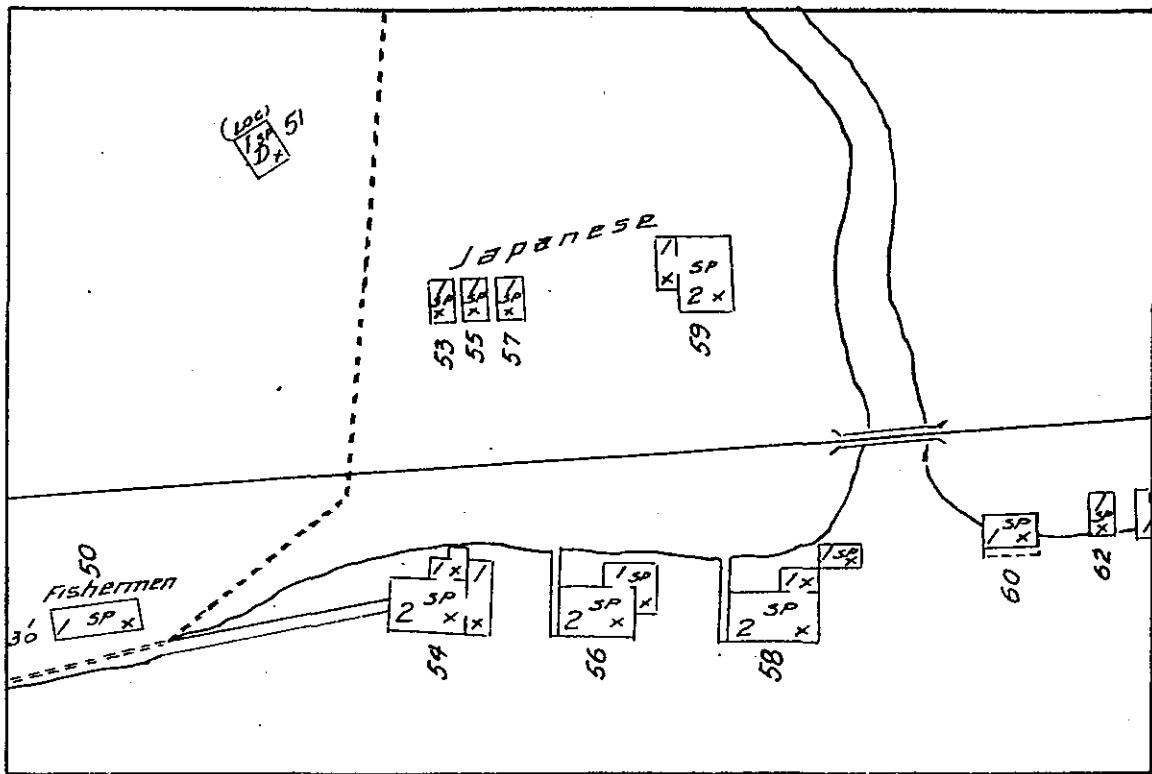


Figure 18. Detail of 1923 map of North Pacific Cannery, showing Area B.

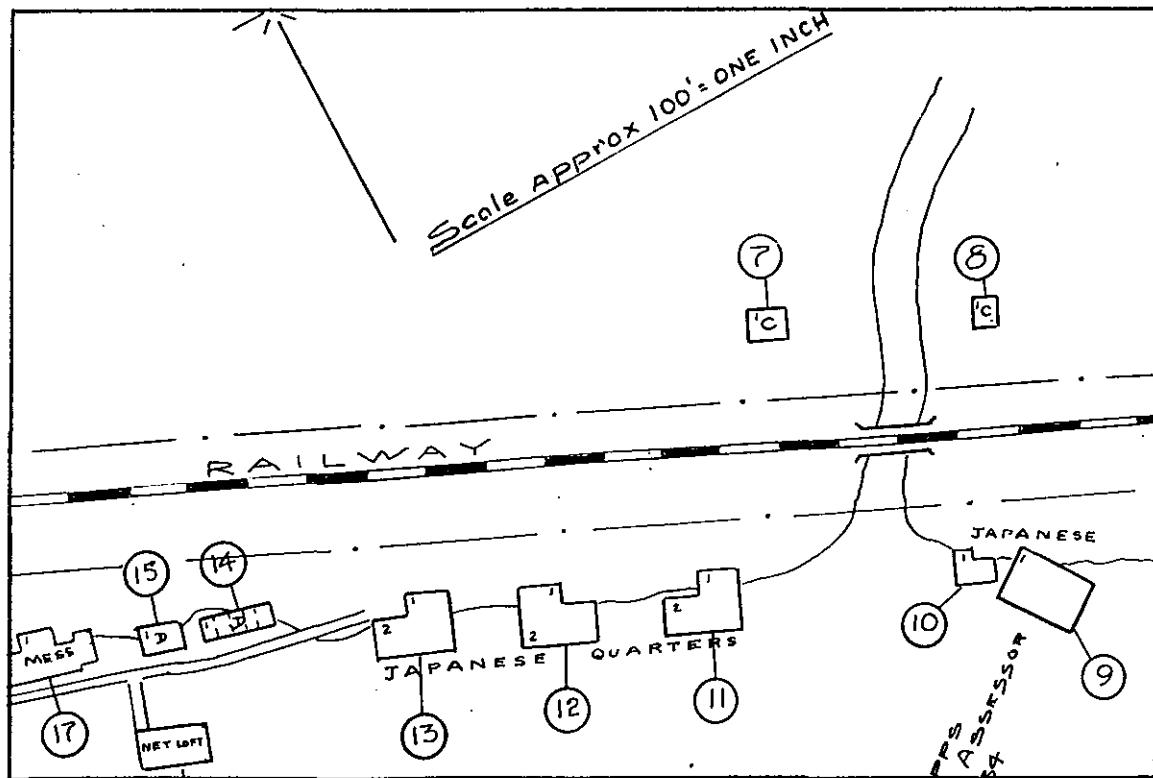


Figure 19. Detail of 1934 map of North Pacific Cannery, showing Area B.

may be that they are now buried under the fill for the Port Edward-Cassiar Cannery road. The poor condition of the smoke house at the western edge of Area B suggests that some time has elapsed since it was last used, but even so, it may date to a time after the occupation by the Japanese cannery workers.

Area C

Area C is located just to the east of Area B on the south side of the C.N. railway tracks (Figure 20). It includes a wedge of land measuring about 25 m N-S by 40 m E-W, as well as the adjacent intertidal zone. The wedge of land is bounded on the north side by the railway tracks and on the south side by the rocky shores of Inverness Passage. To the east, it extends to the base of a steep rise, which forms the western limit of Area D. The land is low and flat along the shoreline, but rises gradually towards the railway tracks. The vegetation in Area C is a dense growth of shrubs, with a few scattered red alder trees. The shrubs appear to be salmonberry bushes, although a positive identification is difficult during the winter season when the leaves are down. Below the high tide line is a gently sloping beach of cobbles and boulders, which gives way in the lower intertidal zone to a broad expanse of sand and silt (Figure 21).

Just above the high tide line in Area C is a small, dilapidated building that was probably used for some industrial or commercial purpose (Figure 22). Structure A is squarish in plan, measuring 3.0 m along the front (facing the beach) and 3.1 m along the side. It has a single-pitched roof which slopes downward slightly towards the west. From the ground up, the roof is 1.7 m high at the southwest corner and 2.4 m high at the southeast corner. Inside the structure, the main corner uprights are 4 x 4 inch posts, while the secondary uprights, cross-pieces and roof supports are 2 x 4 inch studs. Both the sides and roof are covered with sheets of corrugated metal. The entrance to the building is in the southeast corner facing the beach and measures 1.85 m high and 0.70 m wide. Overall, the building is in poor condition. Some of the siding is missing; there is evidence of charring along the upright by the door; and the roof is partly collapsed. Inside the shed is an old motor, mounted on a wooden block, and a pile of discarded fish netting. The building may have been used as a storage facility when no longer serviceable for other purposes. Directly in front of the building, the shoreline has been extended

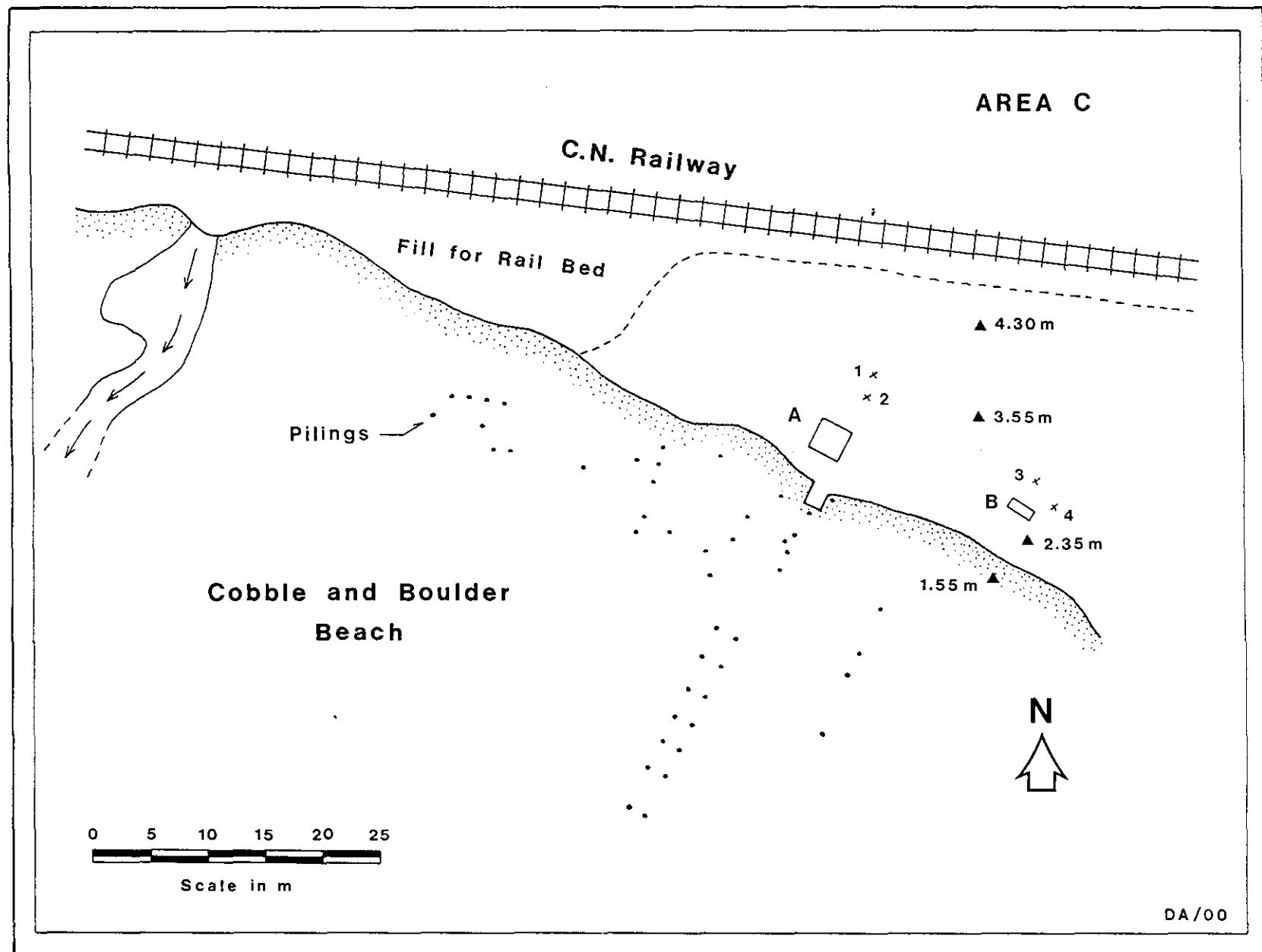


Figure 20. Site map of Area C.



Figure 21. Teresa Weismiller mapping the intertidal zone in Area C.



Figure 22. Remains of a shed (Structure A) in Area C.

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outward slightly through the construction of a small rectangular pad (Figure 23). The sides of the pad are made of thick, rough planks, held in place by posts driven into the beach gravels. The space inside the pad has then been filled with boulders from the beach. The purpose of the extension is unknown.

About 15 m east of the shed is the foundation of an outhouse (Structure B). It was evidently rectangular in plan, measuring 2.2 x 1.1 m and was oriented with the long axis parallel to the shoreline. The pit for the outhouse has been refilled with a variety of material, including several sheets of corrugated metal, parts of a wooden framework and part of a broken toilet.

On the ground near Structures A and B we observed four historical artifacts. They are as follows:

1. A sheet of corrugated metal, 1.5 x 1.0 m.
2. A sheet of corrugated metal, 1.5 x 1.0 m.
3. An anchor, 70 x 55 cm.
4. A sheet of corrugated metal, 1.5 x 1.0 m.

A few other items were observed amongst the bushes, just above the high tide line; however, these appear to be contemporary objects. They include pieces of plastic, which are commonly carried by the tide and deposited on local beaches through the combined action of the wind and waves.

In the intertidal portion of Area C are the remains of 48 pilings, all cut off at a height of about 30 cm above the beach. The pilings probably supported a variety of structures, including workshops, boardwalks, and dock facilities. Some of the stub ends are aligned and were likely parts of the same structure. For example, directly in front of Structure A, there are two parallel rows of pilings, extending southward into the intertidal zone, at right angles to the shoreline, about 2 m apart. The arrangement suggests a small wharf or perhaps a dry dock facility used to haul up fish boats in need of servicing. The beach in Area C, is littered with historical items, most of which are industrial in nature. They include bricks, metal frames and brackets, metal pipes, lengths of wire cable, and a large flywheel, as well as the ubiquitous fragments of broken glass (Figures 24, 25 and 26).

A plan of North Pacific Cannery prepared in 1923 shows four buildings in the area to the east east of the creek. At least three extend into the intertidal zone



Figure 23. Extension at the edge of the shoreline in front of Structure A in Area C.



Figure 24. Bricks and metal frame on the beach in Area C.



Figure 25. Metal brackets and other debris on the beach in Area C.



Figure 26. Large metal flywheel on the beach in Area C.

and must have been supported at least partially on pilings (Figure 27). The largest structure is identified as a net oiling shed; the others are of unknown function. A later map, dating to 1934, also shows four buildings in this area, but they do not appear to be the same set of structures (Figure 28). At this time, all four extended into the intertidal zone and would have required pilings for support. The nature of the buildings is not indicated, although it is stated that they were used by Japanese workers. Given the changes that evidently occurred in the use of Area C, it may be difficult to associate the existing pilings with particular historical structures.

Area D

The forested point of land at the eastern edge of the cannery property is Area D (Figure 29). It measures 42 m N-S by 88 m E-W and has an irregular topography underlain with bedrock. Along the south side of the point, facing Inverness Passage, is a rocky beach of boulders, cobbles and bedrock outcrops. The northern boundary is defined by the C.N. Railway tracks. The railway here runs through an artificial cut with the original bedrock surface standing 1-2 m above it on either side. Some blasting was evidently needed to level the rail bed in this area. From south to north across the point, elevations increase gradually. Measurements taken show an overall rise of about 5 m across the area, which seems to reflect a general rise in the underlying bedrock. In most places that we cored, bedrock was no more than 10-20 cm below the surface. The vegetation on the point is dominated by a second growth forest of western hemlock, Sitka spruce and western red cedar, with an understory of red huckleberry bushes, sword ferns and moss (Figure 30). Several large stumps are present, and judging from the size of the living trees, the area was probably logged off about a century ago, during or soon after the construction of North Pacific Cannery.

On the west side of the point overlooking the beach are two partially intact structures. They both appear to have been used as smoke houses, for processing salmon and other fish. Structure A, the smaller of the two, has been overturned and is lying on its side (Figure 31). Its basal dimensions are 1.30 x 1.25 m. The height for the building could not be determined with any precision due to its poor condition, although it was probably a little over 1.80 m high. The uprights used in

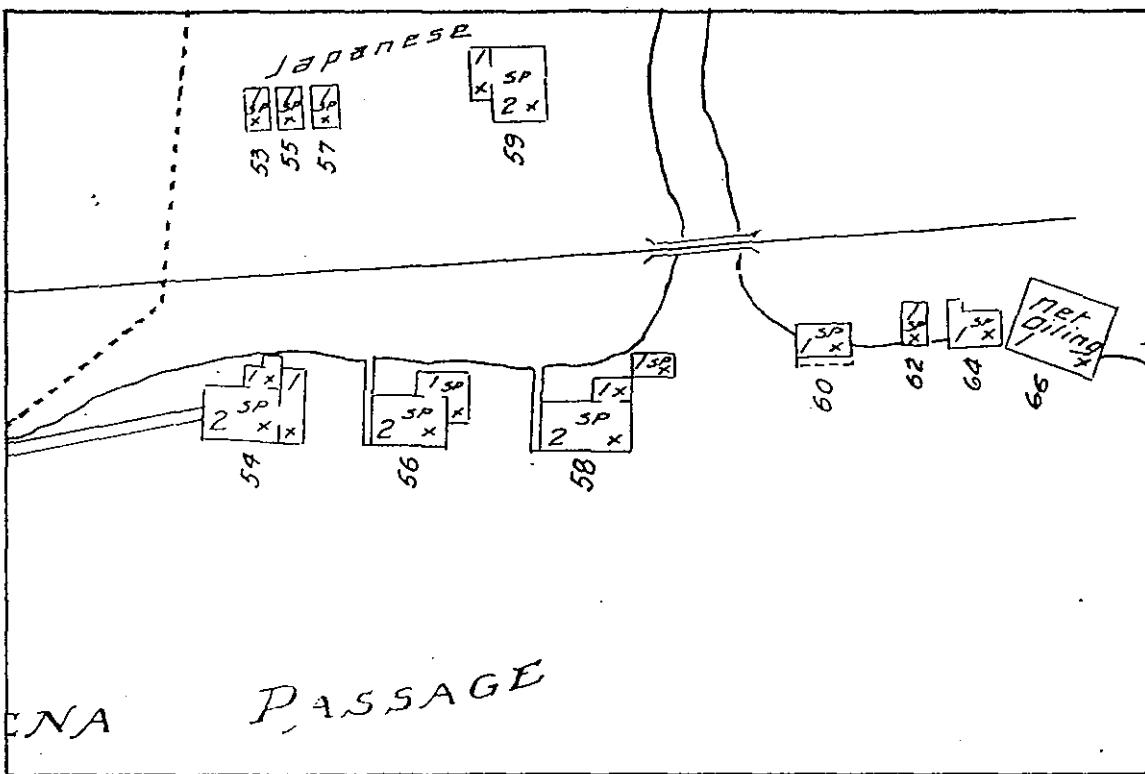


Figure 27. Detail of 1923 map of North Pacific Cannery, showing Area C.

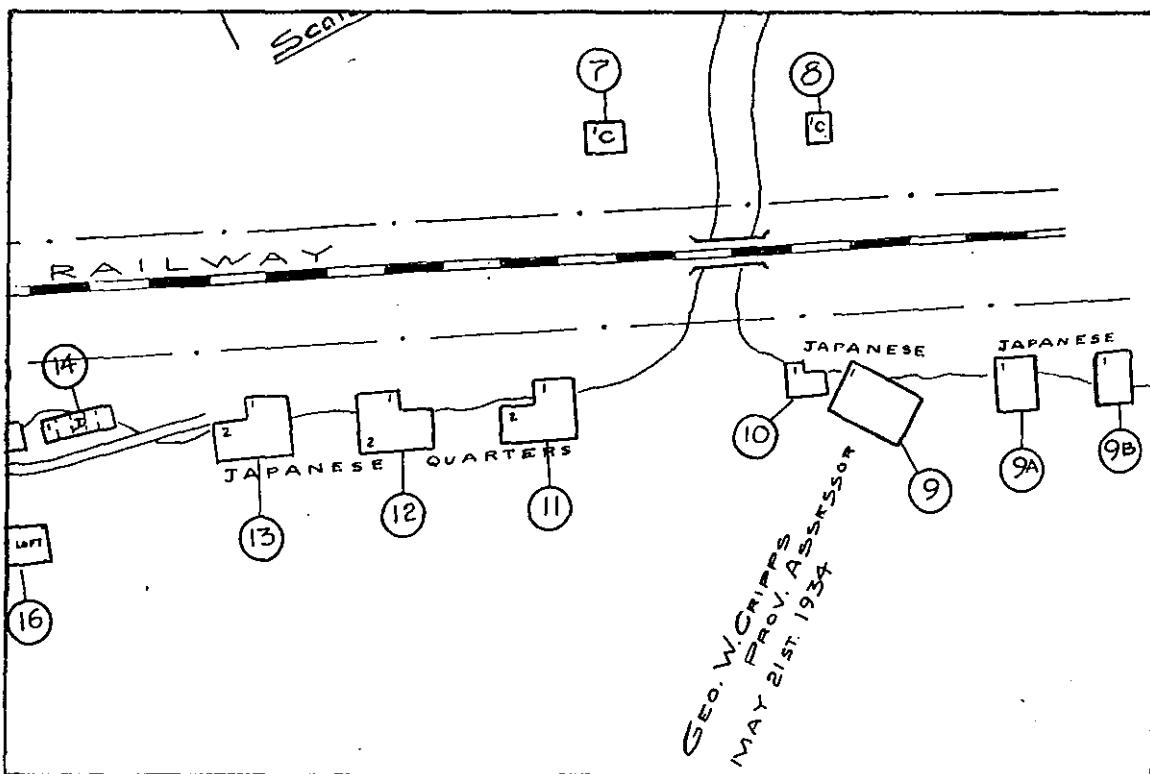


Figure 28. Detail of 1934 map of North Pacific Cannery, showing Area C.

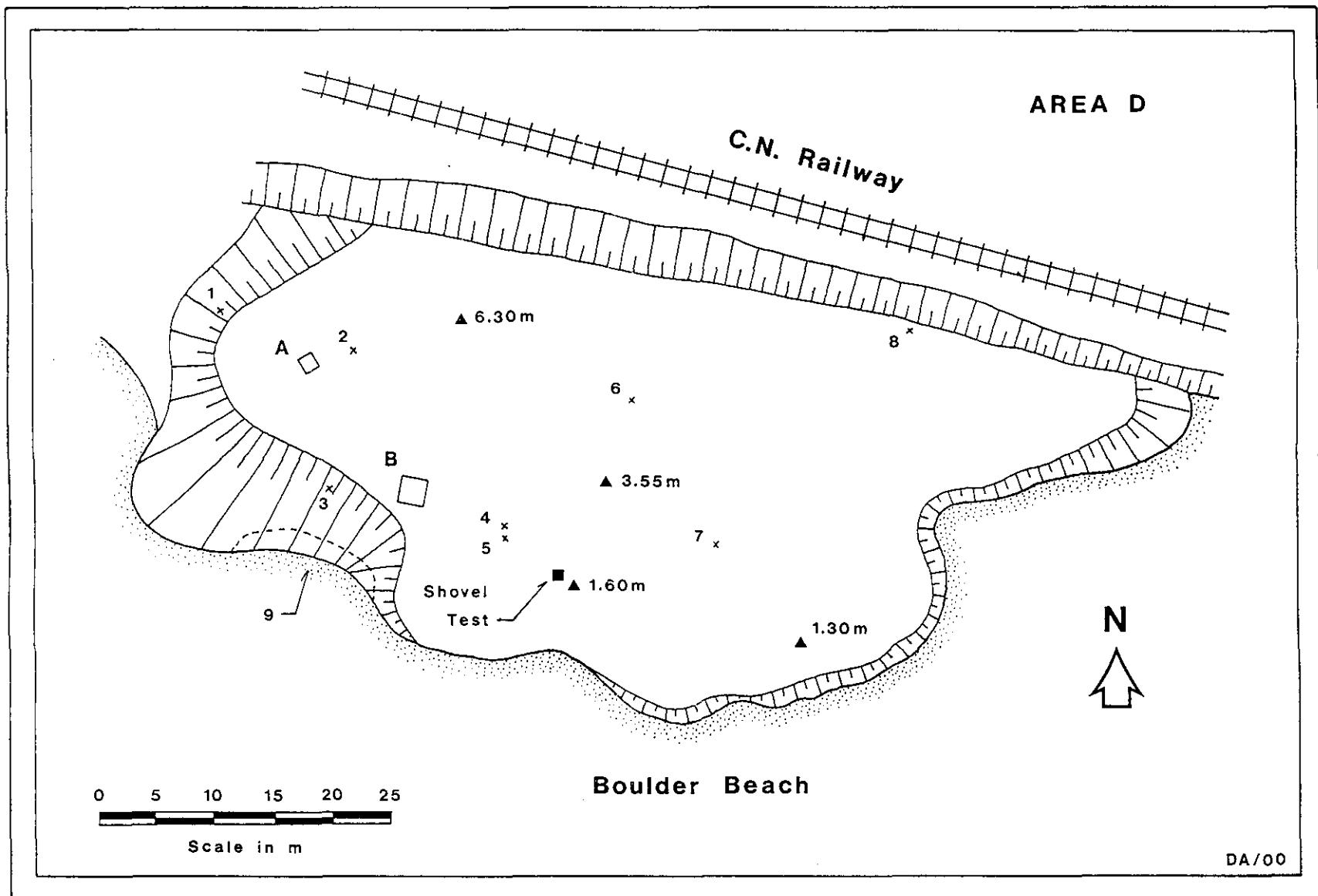


Figure 29. Site map of Area D.



Figure 30. General view of Area D looking east.



Figure 31. Smoke house (Structure A) lying on its side in Area D.

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its construction are 4 x 4 inch milled lumber, and the cross pieces in the side walls are 2 x 4 inch studs and 1 x 6 inch planks. The walls were enclosed with sheets of corrugated metal. The roof was flat, made of plywood, and it too was covered with corrugated metal. The dimensions of the roof are 1.75 x 1.5 m, which makes it slightly larger than the base of the building, leaving a projection out to the front and a smaller overhang on the other three sides. The door of the structure is missing, and nothing can be said about its construction. Inside, horizontal slats have been nailed onto the side walls--at least three on each side. Presumably, the fish to be smoked were hung from rods, and the ends of the rods were supported on the horizontal slats. The structure does not appear to have had a floor. The present alignment of the building suggests that it faced in a southwest direction, towards the beach.

The second smoke house, Structure B, is larger than the first, measuring 2.5 x 2.3 m (Figure 32). It has a single pitched roof, with a gentle slope running east to west. On the east side, the roof is 2.1 m high; on the west side, it measures 1.7 m high. In framing the walls, the builders used an assortment of lumber: 2 x 4 inch studs, as well as 2 x 6 inch and 2 x 8 inch planks. On two sides (south and west), the walls are enclosed with sheets of plywood; on the other two, sheets of corrugated metal have been used for the same purpose. The roof is of plywood and has no overhang. Originally, it may have been covered with sheets of corrugated metal, as in Structure A, but if so, none remains in place. The building has a dirt floor and a doorway on the south side (east corner), facing the shoreline. The opening is 1.8 m high by 0.8 m wide. Structure B is in fairly poor condition. Some of the corrugated metal sheets on the walls have been torn off; the door is missing; and the plywood roof is sagging. There appear to be no brackets on the inside of the shed to support the rods from which the fish were hung. However, they have been removed when the structure was abandoned.

A systematic search of the point led to the discovery of 13 historical artifacts, all lying on the surface of the ground (Figure 29):

1. A sheet of corrugated metal, 1.5 x 1.0 m.
2. A sheet of corrugated metal, 1.5 x 1.0 m.
3. A sheet of corrugated metal, 1.5 x 1.0 m.



Figure 32. Smoke house (Structure B) in Area C.



Figure 33. Rusted metal tank, possibly part of a stove, in Area D.

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4. A sheet of corrugated metal, 2.0 x 0.5 m.
5. A rusted metal bed frame.
6. Part of a rusted metal bucket.
7. A rusted metal tank, 0.9 x 0.5 x 0.5 m, possibly part of a stove (Figure 33).
8. A rusted metal bed frame.
9. A cluster of items, including a TV antenna, a metal bed frame, a bucket, a wooden box and a rusted metal container.

The sheets of corrugated metal (items 1-4) lie within metres of the smoke houses and were almost certainly torn from their walls or roofs. The rest of the artifacts are domestic refuse. Items 5-8 were found scattered across the point with no apparent pattern in their distribution. However, on the slope below the two smoke houses (location 9) we observed a cluster of items, which suggests a refuse disposal area. A TV antenna was among the items found. This would indicate a relatively recent date--certainly no earlier than the 1950s or 1960s. In the interests of preserving the historical integrity of the site, all artifacts were left in place.

One small area on the south side of the point, near the shoreline, was found to contain a deeper series of subsurface deposits, and during our initial assessment, we noted the possibility that this area might have been occupied by a First Nations group prior to the construction of the cannery. A shovel test was therefore done near the centre of this area to determine its archaeological potential. The test hole was 30 x 30 cm in surface area and reached a depth of 60 cm. Littermat, roots and humus extended from the surface to a depth of 25 cm, and one pieces of broken glass was found within this uppermost layer. Below the humus, from 25 to 60 cm below the surface, was a layer of dark brown silty loam. These deposits became slightly coarser as the depth increased. The unit ended in a layer of large irregular stones similar to those on the adjacent beach. No artifacts, shells, bones, fire-cracked rocks or pieces of charcoal were observed in the silty loam deposit, which suggests that the area was not inhabited in the distant past.

In summary, the investigations in Area D provide no support for the idea that the point was inhabited prior to the establishment of North Pacific Cannery. All of the material remains encountered in the area suggest an occupation or use during the time that the cannery was in operation. Moreover, the indications are

that the occupation was late in the history of the cannery, probably extending into the 1950s or 1960s, perhaps even later. The likely source of these remains is revealed in a report prepared by D.R. Coell & Associates in 1985. They present an undated plan of the cannery property, which shows a group of three rectangular structures on the southwest side of the point (Figure 34). The buildings extended outward from the shoreline into the intertidal zone and must have been supported at least partly on pilings. The presence of these structures helps to explain the cluster of artifacts just above the high tide line in that area. These items evidently accumulated just below or behind the buildings, which is a logical place for a refuse dump. The smoke houses would have stood at the top of the bank a few metres above and behind the buildings--again, a logical place for this kind of facility. The other artifacts strewn across Area D may also be associated with the shoreline structures, although for those items, the connection is not as clear.

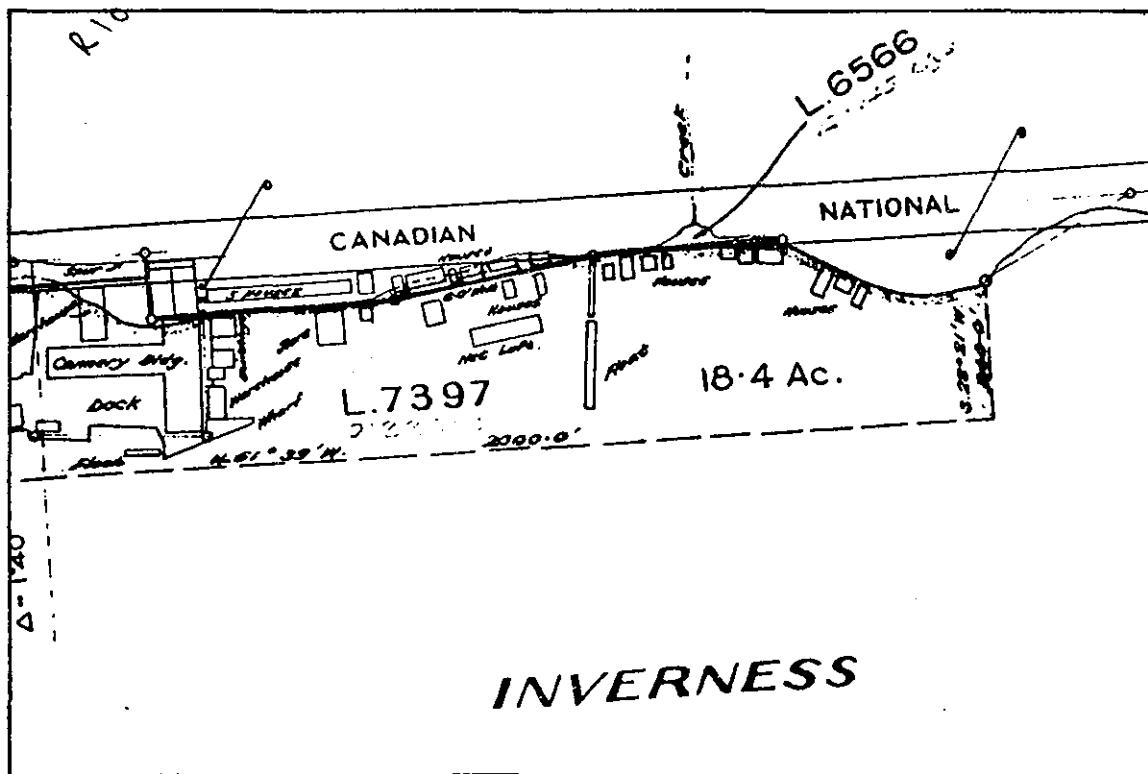


Figure 34. Detail of map from Coell & Associates (1985:15), showing Area D.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the investigations carried out to date at North Pacific Cannery, I would like to offer the following recommendations:

1. Area A. It is my understanding that the archaeological remains in Area A are under threat from two sources: (a) the possible construction of a First Nations housing exhibit in that area; and (b) the looting of historical artifacts from the area by local beachcombers. In view of these dangers, I recommend a small scale archaeological salvage operation in Area A. The objectives would be to compile a more precise record of the pilings in the area using a transit or some other major surveying instrument and to make a systematic collection of the historical items that lie either on or in the beach deposits. The project could be designed with a public aspect. Tourists and local residents could be given an opportunity to help with the salvage excavations and in the process increase their knowledge of the local history and of historical archaeology in general. The project might also lead to the recovery of items that could be used in cannery displays.
2. Area B. This area does not seem to be under threat of any kind at present. There are no imminent plans to develop the area and no indication of any looting of the historical artifacts that lie on the surface. I therefore suggest that the area be monitored on a regular basis by museum staff and otherwise left alone. In future, there may be sufficient interest in the Japanese quarters to warrant a systematic excavation of the area, and with that in mind, the surface artifacts and other remains should be left untouched and in place.
3. Area C. At present, there appear to be no urgent threats to this area. I therefore recommend regular monitoring by museum staff to assess the condition of Structure A, the pilings and associated artifact scatter. If any changes are perceived, it may be necessary to plan a detailed recording of the building and pilings, and a systematic recovery of the portable artifacts.

4. Area D. The museum is considering a low-impact development of this area to provide a small camp ground for visitors to the cannery. If this plan is put into effect, Structures A and B should be recorded in more detail prior to any development. The few surface artifacts in the area should also be collected prior to any development. In the meantime, the area should be monitored on a regular basis by museum staff.
5. There is also need for some additional archaeological assessment within the cannery property. The stub ends of some pilings were noted in the intertidal zone south of Area B, on the west side of the creek mouth. However, time constraints made it impossible to investigate further. Other areas yet to be examined include the east side of the creek north of the railway tracks, and the area north of the road. These areas should be surveyed and assessed as soon as possible.

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