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San Juan Island National Historical Park

An Environmental History

Christy Avery

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Cover photo: Sheep graze under the orchard trees at the Crook Farm ca. 1900, on the former parade ground of English Camp. (San Juan Island National Historical Park files.)

Frontispiece: American Camp prairie, looking south to Mt. Finlayson. (Courtesy of San Juan Island National Historical Park.)

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As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has responsibility for most of our nationally owned public lands and natural and cultural resources. This includes fostering sound use of our land and water resources; protecting our fish, wildlife, and biological diversity; preserving the environmental and cultural values of our national parks and historical places; and providing for the enjoyment of life through outdoor recreation. The Department assesses our energy and mineral resources and works to ensure that their development is in the best interests of all our people by encouraging stewardship and citizen participation in their care. The Department also has a major responsibility for American Indian reservation communities and for people who live in island territories under U.S. administration.

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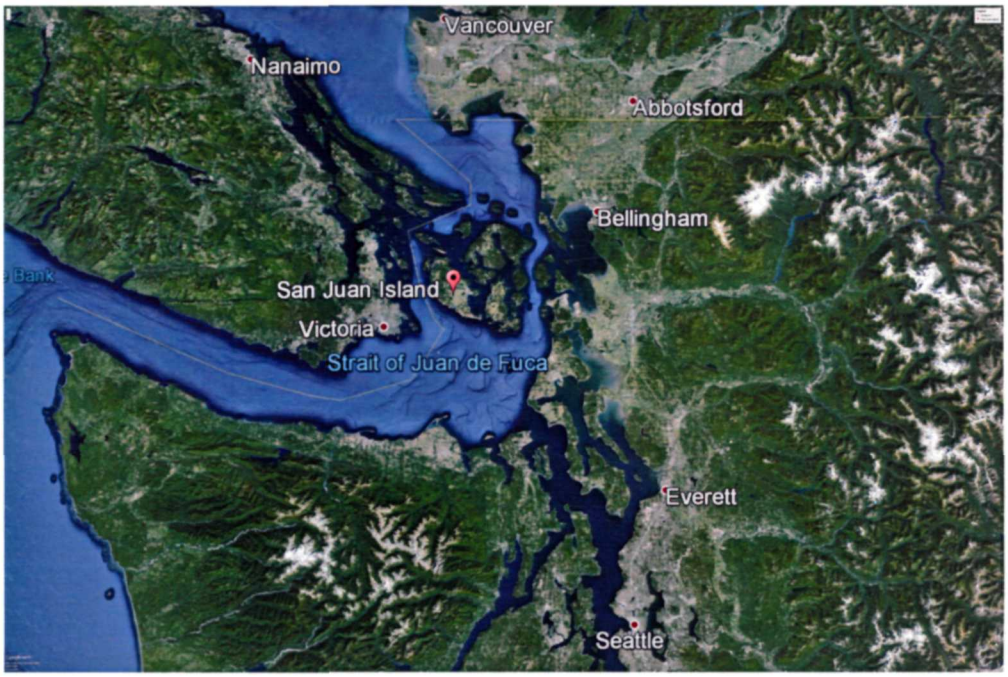
Preface

This study is one in a series written for the Pacific West Regional Office (PWRO) of the National Park Service that attempts to explore the changing relationship between humans and nature in our national parks. I began this project in 2001 as an intern when I was a first-year graduate student at the University of Washington. I would like to thank PWRO Seattle historian David Louter, who conceived of the project and provided constant guidance along the way. Linda Nash, a history professor at the University of Washington, set up the internship, and I would also like to thank her for reviewing a draft of this manuscript. Mike Vouri, chief of interpretation at San Juan Island National Historical Park, proved invaluable to this study. His knowledge of the island's history is unsurpassed, and he generously answered my questions and assisted my search for documents. My colleagues at the PWRO in Seattle proved helpful as I navigated my first project for the National Park Service; I would like to thank Fred York and Mike Hankinson in particular for their help. I would also like to thank the staff at the San Juan Historical Museum, Friday Harbor, Washington; the Washington State Archives, Northwest Regional Branch, Bellingham, Washington; University of Washington Libraries Special Collections, Seattle, Washington; and the Bureau of Land Management Public Information Center, Portland, Oregon.

Christy Avery



Map 1. San Juan Island lies in the Salish Sea in northwestern Washington State.

Map 2. San Juan Island and the two sections of the National Historical Park.

Introduction

In 1966, the federal government established San Juan Island National Historical Park to commemorate the events that occurred on San Juan Island between 1853 and 1871. During that time, the island was at the center of a boundary dispute between the United States and Great Britain. This resulted in the joint occupation of the island, a conflict that came to be known as the Pig War.[1] Due to vaguely worded language in the Oregon Treaty, the 1846 agreement between the United States and Great Britain that fixed the British-American boundary in North America at the forty-ninth parallel, ownership of San Juan Island remained contested until 1872. The treaty specified that the water boundary would be located in "the middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island."[2] However, both Haro Strait, to the west of San Juan Island, and Rosario Strait, to the east of Orcas and Lopez Islands, fit this description. The Hudson's Bay Company staked a British claim on San Juan Island when they established Belle Vue Sheep Farm on the island in 1853. In April 1854, American customs collector Isaac Ebey presented Charles Griffin, the farm's manager, with a duties bill. The next year, Whatcom County sheriff Ellis Barnes seized 34 rams and 410 ewes from the farm for taxes. Company officials expressed outrage at these actions on what they considered British soil.

The lack of a formal border did not prevent citizens from either nation from establishing land claims on San Juan Island. As American settlers trickled to the island in the late 1850s, they encroached on what the Hudson's Bay Company considered British property. In June 1859, American Lyman Cutler shot a Company pig that was eating potatoes in his garden. Tensions rose on both sides, and on July 4, American settlers raised their flag over the island. Twenty-two settlers then petitioned General William Harney, commanding general of the Department of Oregon, for military protection.[3]

In July 1859, Captain George Pickett, commanding officer at Fort Bellingham, on the Washington Territory mainland, was ordered to move to San Juan Island. The next month, Lieutenant Colonel Silas Casey, commanding officer of Fort Steilacoom, received similar orders. Casey and Pickett were instructed to protect American settlers from Northern Indians and to "protect their rights and resist any interference by British authorities in any conflicts of interest between American citizens and the Hudson's Bay Company."[4] In March 1860, British troops landed at Garrison Bay, on the northwest side of the island, to counter the American presence. The troops occupied their respective camps for twelve years. The standoff on San

1. For more thorough studies of the Pig War, see Erwin Thompson, *Historic Resource Study: San Juan Island National Historical Park* (Denver: National Park Service, 1972); Michael Vouri, *The Pig War: Standoff at Griffin Bay* (Friday Harbor, WA: Griffin Bay Bookstore, 1999); and David Hunter Miller, *San Juan Archipelago: Study of the Joint Occupation of San Juan Island* (Bellows Falls, VT: Windham Press, 1943).

2. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 1.

3. The petitioners specifically requested military protection from Indians, but the army's decision to send troops to San Juan Island was undoubtedly spurred by the British presence on the island.

4. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 25.

Figure 1. The parade ground at American Camp. (Gary Tarleton photo.)

Juan Island is noteworthy for the fact that the troops coexisted peacefully; not a single shot was fired during the Pig War. In 1871, Great Britain and the United States agreed to allow Kaiser Wilhelm I of Germany to arbitrate the dispute. Both nations' troops occupied the island until 1872, when the Kaiser sided with the Americans. The water boundary was established at Haro Strait, and San Juan Island became an American possession.

The purpose of this study is to rethink the history of San Juan Island in a way that takes into account interactions between humans and the island's natural environment. Most of the books and studies written about San Juan Island focus on the nineteenth-century boundary dispute between the United States and Great Britain. No one has fully investigated the history of the interactions between the natural environment and the peoples—Northern Straits Indians, the Hudson's Bay Company, British and American armies, early homesteaders and twentieth-century island residents—that have inhabited the island. An environmental history can further our understanding of how humans have affected their natural environment and how the natural environment has shaped human history. This type of study includes information about the functions of ecosystems, the interactions between nature and social and economic systems as well as ideas and sentiments about the natural environment. To different people at different times, San Juan Island has been a valuable military instillation, a farmer's dream, and a tourist's paradise. Though twenty-first-century visitors may view the island as a peaceful, rural hideaway, a refuge from urban life situated among spectacular scenery, the island's history shows us that this view, like all of those cultural perceptions of the island that have come before it, is a cultural invention. Each group of island inhabitants has imagined San Juan Island in different ways, creating different sets of expectations that have affected the natural world.

The San Juan Islands are located in the Salish Sea, near the Canadian border in northwestern Washington State. The archipelago contains 175 named islands, though hundreds more appear at low tide. The rocky islands are remnants of an ancient mountain range overcut by glaciers. San Juan Island, on which the historical park is located, is the second largest island in the chain and home to the largest town in the archipelago, Friday Harbor, which serves as the county seat. The island, which is located at the west end of the chain, lies in the rain shadow of the Olympic Mountains, resulting in an unusually dry climate for a Western Washington location. The two sections of San Juan Island National Historical Park, American Camp (1,223 acres) and English Camp (529 acres) are located in different microclimates. The southern tip of the island, on which American Camp is located, receives only nineteen inches of rain per year, while

Figure 2. English Camp. (Author photo.)

English Camp, located on the northwestern side, receives about twenty-five inches annually.[5] The American Camp scene includes windswept prairies, sandy beaches, and sweeping views across the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Haro Strait. In contrast, English Camp, with its meadow and formal garden, is situated on a relatively small, sheltered bay and surrounded by forest.

An environmental history can help us understand why people came to San Juan Island, what values they placed on the land, and how they changed the island's landscape. Humans have interacted with San Juan Island's natural environment since the beginning of settlement by native peoples. Environmental changes reflect cultural changes, and each successive group of islanders brought their own hopes to the island. Northern Straits Indians, who kept permanent villages on San Juan, valued the island for its fisheries, wildlife and wild plants, and they managed and modified their surroundings in order to take advantage of these island resources. Early Europeans viewed the landscape as a storehouse of extractable commodities, and the onset of British and American settlement brought San Juan Island into the worldwide economy. American settlers and commercial enterprises further developed the island's natural resources by engaging in agriculture, mineral extraction, and fishing, resulting in widespread environmental change. Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century island boosters, imagining a prosperous agricultural and commercial landscape, promoted their island's natural resources in an attempt to lure settlers to the area. These idealized perceptions of the landscape shaped its use. However, Americans had depleted many of these natural resources by the 1920s, causing many islanders to look to tourism to sustain the island's economy. As land preservation and scenic values gained importance among Americans during the mid-twentieth century, legislators, islanders, and environmental groups worked together to support the creation of San Juan Island National Historical Park. By exploring the overlooked aspects of the interactions between nature and the cultures that have inhabited the island, we can better understand the history of the park.

5. Roy Davidson McClellan, *The Geology of the San Juan Islands* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1927), 1–4.

Chapter One

Changes in the Land: Northern Straits Indians and San Juan Island

People have utilized San Juan Island's natural resources for at least 5,000 years. Although many have a tendency to see American Indians as timeless people, living in an unchanged landscape, the relationship between Indians and their environment has been much more dynamic. Rather than passively adapting to the island's environment, Northern Straits Indians actively shaped their natural surroundings before European contact. A semisedentary people, they traveled seasonally to fishing, shellfish harvesting, and plant gathering locations. As a result of San Juan's different microclimates, geography, and vegetation patterns, Northern Straits Indians used the two sections of the historical park for different purposes. They depended on the island's wild plants, trees, fish, waterfowl, and wildlife, and through cultivation and the use of fire, they modified and managed their surroundings to best enable resource use.

Early Islanders

Archaeologists believe that people have inhabited the Pacific Northwest for at least 11,500 years. The glaciers of the Pleistocene Era had receded to expose the San Juan archipelago, though there is no data that suggests people colonized the islands at this time. Humans inhabited or visited San Juan Island beginning at least 5,000 years ago, but not much is known about these people, who may have only seasonally occupied the island. The island these early visitors encountered looked somewhat different than it does today. It had a slightly different shape and size due to the lower sea level. Cedars and Douglas firs had yet to colonize the island. However, the prairies of southern San Juan Island have been grasslands for thousands of years.[1]

Although the fisheries resources of San Juan Island have long been important to native peoples, evidence suggests that the earliest residents of the islands relied on terrestrial resources for subsistence. This may have been due to the difficulty of salmon fishing off the island; the endeavor may have required technology that these people did not possess. Instead, they utilized the resources of the island itself, such as plants and game. They most likely hunted deer and elk with spears or knives tipped with leaf shaped points made of dacite, a black volcanic rock found in coastal British Columbia.[2]

Between 4,500 and 2,500 years ago, islanders' technology and art advanced as a result of changes in the island's natural landscape. Western red cedars and Douglas firs began to colonize the island around 4,000 years ago. Correspondingly, woodworking tools such as large stone mauls, adzes, and wedges appeared at this time. Native peoples used these implements to build cedar structures and to fabricate clothing from cedar bark. They continued to hunt birds and game, which provided not only meat but also bones that could be fashioned into tools and ornaments. New tools may have enabled native peoples to fish, since these early islanders

1. Julie Stein, *Exploring Coast Salish Prehistory: The Archaeology of San Juan Island* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), 17, 104–105.

2. Stein, *Exploring Coast Salish Prehistory*, 104.

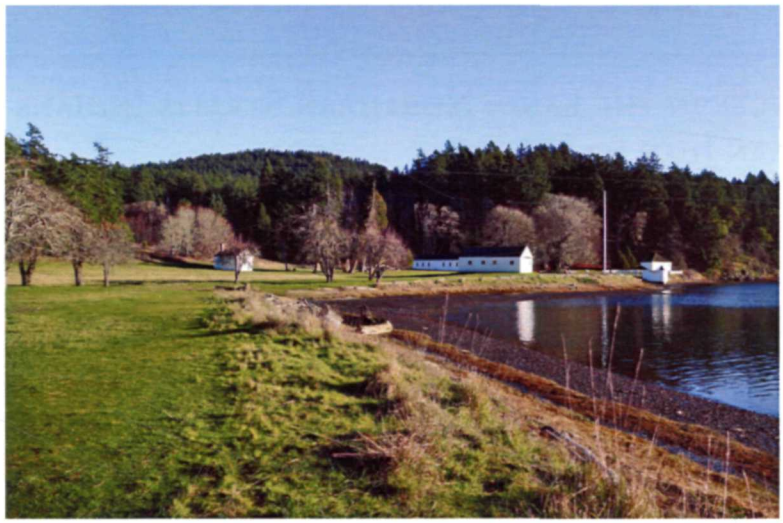


Figure 3. The island's native peoples deposited shell and bone waste at the water's edge on Garrison Bay between 500 and 1800 C.E. Over time, they created an area that proved ideal for food processing and habitation. The site also offered a low bank for hauling canoes ashore. (Author photo.)

began utilizing the fisheries of the surrounding waters during this era. This group primarily ate mussels, which were easily harvested, though they also consumed clams and fish.[3]

As fisheries resources expanded between about 2,500 and 1,500 years ago, increased numbers of native peoples began to migrate from the mainland to the island for year-round habitation. The expansion of shellfish beds, caused by changes in area beaches as the sea level rose and eroding bluffs subsequently deposited additional sand on the beach, led to an increase in shellfish consumption. The island's population grew during this phase, as evidenced by the number of shell deposits that date from this time. As archaeologist Julie Stein explains, the newcomers came to fish during the spring and to collect berries and dig camas and clams in the summer and fall. These peoples also began to stay on the island all winter with these stored foodstuffs. Characteristic Northwest coast Indian culture began during this time. These people crafted stone tools, fine carvings, and woven textiles, typical of the type that archaeologists consider traditional Northwest coast art.[4]

Native peoples began to use Garrison Bay and the site that would become known as English Camp as a dwelling place and center of food processing between 1,500 and 1,200 years ago. When the first occupants of English Camp came to the site, they found a small peninsula, jutting out into Garrison Bay, where the parade ground is now. The area to the northeast of the grounds was a wetland. These first residents lived in a cedar structure in the wooded area in the northern part of the site. The inhabitants of the building piled shells along three of the outside walls of the structure, a technique used briefly during this period, leaving a horseshoe shaped midden to the north of the parade ground. The evidence suggests that this structure measured about 30 by 45 feet. Archaeologists do not know if the structure was occupied year round or seasonally, or why the occupants piled shells around the building. Shellfish remained important to native peoples' diet, and salmon fishing began during this period. These people

3. Stein, *Exploring Coast Salish Prehistory*, 20.

4. Stein, *Exploring Coast Salish Prehistory*, 22.

may have relied more on wood and less on stone than their predecessors did, given the number of woodworking tools found from this phase.[5]

The people who lived at Garrison Bay exploited the rich fisheries of the area, leaving behind middens that altered the island landscape.[6] They changed the dimensions of the Garrison Bay shoreline between 500 and 1800 CE by depositing their shell and bone waste at the water's edge, extending the shoreline into the intertidal zone and creating the meadow at English Camp now known as the parade ground. The waves in this sheltered bay are too weak to move accumulated debris from the shoreline, so the waste generated by the site's residents filled in several hundred yards of the bay. As the site filled in, this created an open space that would prove perfect for food processing and habitation.[7]

The Northern Straits Indians

The Indians who occupied the San Juan Islands at the time of European contact were the Northern Straits. One of five language based groups within the larger Central Coast Salish group, the Northern Straits are further subdivided into six groups: the Sooke, who lived in the area of Sooke Inlet on Vancouver Island; the Songhees, residents of the present-day Victoria area and nearby islands; the Saanich, who inhabited the Gulf Islands and the Saanich Peninsula of southern Vancouver Island; the Lummi, who lived among the San Juan Islands and the mainland to the east of the archipelago; the Semiahmoo, who occupied the mainland coast near Birch Bay, Boundary Bay and Drayton Harbor; and the Samish, who inhabited the southern San Juan Islands and Fidalgo Island. Before disease decimated Indian populations in the late eighteenth century, the Northern Straits numbered about 4,100.[8]

The category of Northern Straits is based on a shared language and culture rather than on American conceptions of Indian tribalism, a concept that does not fit the small, kinship-based groups of the Indians who inhabited the San Juan Islands or Puget Sound area.[9] These groups associated and intermarried, and an individual often had relatives in multiple groups.[10] Some people lived in more than one village during their lifetime, and many villages incorporated members from different Indian language or cultural groups. As historian Alexandra Harmon points out, individual Indians often had "multiple associations, multiple loyalties, and multiple ways to identify themselves to others."[11] This makes identifying the specific Indian groups on San Juan Island difficult, and there is conflicting data regarding which groups utilized certain parts of the island. It also creates problems when trying to understand Northern Straits land use practices. According to Harmon, "exchanges between communities not

5. Stein, *Exploring Coast Salish Prehistory*, 23–24. A midden consists of deposits of archeological artifacts such as food waste and tools.

6. Archaeologists are unsure about how the previous occupants of the Garrison Bay area are related to the group that lived there between 1200 CE and the mid-nineteenth century.

7. Stein, *Exploring Coast Salish Prehistory*, 75.

8. Wayne Suttles, "Central Coast Salish," in *Handbook of North American Indians*, Vol. 7, ed. Wayne Suttles (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1990), 473.

9. Suttles, "Central Coast Salish," 453.

10. Daniel Boxberger, *San Juan Island National Historical Park: Cultural Affiliation Study* (Seattle: National Park Service, 1994), 14.

11. Alexandra Harmon, *Indians in the Making: Ethnic Relations and Indian Identities around Puget Sound* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 8.

Figure 4. The Northern Straits Indians used American Camp beaches for gathering shellfish and processing fish. (Author photo.)

only inspired imitation but also introduced variations and encouraged innovations."[12] Some ethnographical information comes from tribal elders who recall past practices of their groups, though recollections may vary from individual to individual due to the different practices of family groups lumped together as a tribe in the twentieth century.

Despite these difficulties, evidence suggests the Northern Straits were active participants in managing San Juan Island's ecosystem. The journals of the U.S. Boundary Commission, the recollections of Indians elders and the work of anthropologists and archaeologists show us that native peoples on the island depended on the marine and terrestrial resources to sustain themselves. The island provided such an abundance of edible natural resources that the Northern Straits did not grow crops, though they adapted land use techniques that facilitated the growth of desirable plants.

The Northern Straits were successful on San Juan Island due to the diverse landscape that allowed them to utilize various parts of the island in distinct ways. Evidence suggests that the Northern Straits only seasonally used the American Camp area, whose dry, exposed, and windy slopes would not have made a good location for a winter village. Although much of the island's shoreline is too steep and rocky to provide a good winter village site, the Northern Straits had permanent winter villages on protected bays on the northwest portion of San Juan Island.[13]

They used sites on Mitchell and Garrison Bays as winter villages for about 500 years, until the mid nineteenth century. Some archaeologists attribute these sites to the Lummi. However, other researchers note the confusing nature of assigning tribal identifications, and they contend that the winter village sites may have belonged to the Lummi, the Songhees, or another group of Northern Straits.[14]

12. Harmon, *Indians in the Making*, 8.

13. Wayne Suttles, *The Economic Life of the Coast Salish of Haro and Rosario Strait* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1974), 69.

14. Boxberger, *San Juan Island National Historical Park: Cultural Affiliation Study*, 20.

The Northern Straits favored the Garrison Bay site due to its sheltered location, the low bank that allowed canoes to be easily hauled ashore, and the open meadow. The village, at the present site of the English Camp section of the historical park, was characteristic of a Northern Straits village and consisted of a large cedar plank house and many smaller houses. Often, several immediate families would share a dwelling based on kinship ties. Multiple dwellings, within a village, "were independent of each other, though they might cooperate for various purposes, such as defense," according to anthropologist Daniel Boxberger. William Warren, secretary of the U.S. Boundary Commission, reported in 1859 that the plank house on Garrison Bay was "about 500 or 600 feet in length, by about 50 to 60 feet in width, and must have accommodated over a thousand Indians." When the British came to the island in 1860, they dismantled the longhouse, which was empty at the time, in order to clear an area for their own structures. There is no record of any encounter between the inhabitants of the longhouse and the British soldiers.[15]

One Lummi elder described the winter village at Mitchell Bay, just to the south of Garrison Bay. He recalled, "They had a nice, big campground. Good camping place for Lummi people. Canadian people and everybody were all mixed in there. They had a nice big smokehouse there; we call it a longhouse. There were about three of them . . . then they had small camping houses that they stayed in. Made out of shakes and one thing or another, but they were nice. The houses were known by the people that owned them."[16]

Empirical evidence combined with Lummi elders' recollections substantiate that the idea that the Northern Straits used fire to manage their natural surroundings on San Juan Island.[17] Burning was a common way for many North American Indian groups (including those in western Washington) to manage their landscapes. The Northern Straits likely burned the island's forests to facilitate travel through otherwise dense wooded areas. They probably also burned wooded areas in order to increase game habitat. The renewed undergrowth that followed a forest fire provided increased forage for deer and elk, which thrived in recently burned and young forests.[18]

American visitors in the nineteenth century noticed the effects of intentional burning on the island's forests. The boundary commissioners attributed the burning to Indians "in search of deer," indicating that burnt, open forests facilitated hunting.[19] In 1858, George Gibbs, geologist of the U.S. Boundary Commission, noted that the timber on the island was of little value, "having suffered from frequent conflagrations."[20] William Warren, the commission's secretary, reported that the vegetation resembled that of the eastern Cascades, "the ground being free of underbrush."[21] Henry Crosbie, the Whatcom County assessor, observed in 1859

15. Stein, *Exploring Coast Salish Prehistory*, 56; Boxberger, *San Juan Island National Historical Park: Cultural Affiliation Study*, 18; and William J. Warren, 1860, Geographical Memoir, Appendix F, Records of the Boundary Claims Commission and Arbitration, Northwest Boundary Survey, Record Group (RG) 76, National Archives at College Park, Maryland (NACP).

16. Stein, *Exploring Coast Salish Prehistory*, 58.

17. Lightning causes almost all naturally occurring fires, but is rare in the archipelago.

18. Richard White, *Land Use, Environment, and Social Change: The Shaping of Island County, Washington* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1980), 21–25.

19. Archibald Campbell, in U.S. Department of State, *The Northwest Boundary: Discussion of the Water Boundary Question* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1868), 140.

20. George Gibbs, March 18, 1859, Records of the Boundary Claims Commission and Arbitration, Northwest Boundary Survey, RG 76, National Archives Building, Washington, DC (NAB).

21. William J. Warren, Geographical Memoir, 1860, NACP.

Figure 5. Garry oaks thrived on the southern part of Young Hill due in part to the periodic fires that kept Douglas firs from overtaking the area. (Gary Tarleton photo.)

that the undergrowth of the island is "spare, unlike other parts of the country," since fire kept the forest floor relatively open. The Northern Straits probably utilized burning techniques on other islands as well. Henry Custer, a boundary commission assistant, reported that Orcas Island hillsides and forests had been similarly burned.[22]

These intentionally set fires affected the composition and health of the forest. Frequent fires enabled Garry oaks and conifers to become the most common trees in the English Camp landscape during the prehistoric period. Garry oaks are rarely found in western Washington, and archaeologists believe that Indians may have traded for their seeds. The oak woodlands were kept free of competing trees and brush by fires, since the Garry oak found on the island are resistant to fires of low and moderate intensity.[23] The oaks thrived on the southern part of Young Hill (in the historical park) due to the shallow soil and moderate rainfall of the location, and periodic fires most likely kept Douglas firs from overtaking the area.[24] While the boundary commissioners may have viewed fires as damaging, frequent fires could be beneficial to the island's ecosystem. Fire encouraged healthy forests, since burning "released mineral nutrients accumulated in the litter, humus, wood, and foliage of the old forest, while it simultaneously prepared seedbeds and triggered the release of some seed supplies," according to Forest Ecology Professor James K. Agee. Agee also points out that fires in older forests "kept a significant proportion of each region in young trees and thus reduced the susceptibility of the forest to insects and disease."[25]

22. Henry Custer, April 11, 1859, RG 76. Records of the Boundary Claims Commission and Arbitration, Northwest Boundary Survey, RG 76, NAB. He reported that "the timber is sparse, having been thinned out by fires."

23. James K. Agee, *The Forests of San Juan Island National Historical Park* (Seattle: National Park Service, 1987), 47. Agee also presents an alternative theory about the presence of Garry Oaks on San Juan Island; he states that the trees may have migrated up the Willamette Valley in Oregon to Washington.

24. Agee, *Forests of San Juan Island National Historical Park*, 66.

25. White, *Land Use, Environment, and Social Change*, 25.

Fire shaped the forests near the parade ground. Regular burning sustained a Douglas fir community, since this species was quick to colonize burned areas. Between 1715 and 1725, a large fire devastated the forests of what is now English Camp. These trees regenerated, though there may have been another large fire in the northeast of the parade ground around 1775. Grand firs may have dominated the area at one time, but only a few remain among the Douglas firs. Alders, maples and western red cedars thrived in the lower, wetter areas of the English Camp site. Indians likely burned the area that would become the parade ground to maintain the meadows, thereby attracting game and keeping trees and brush from encroaching on their winter village. In this way, the Northern Straits cultural practices created the landscape that would become English Camp.[26]

Logging, cultivation, and livestock grazing on the southeastern end of the island over the past 150 years have made it difficult to piece together the prehistoric landscape of the American Camp area. The most likely scenario, as suggested by James K. Agee, is that the American Camp prairies have most likely always been grasslands due to their soil composition and windswept location. Perennial grasses such as Idaho fescue, California oatgrass and junegrass likely dominated the prairies before Hudson's Bay Company livestock introduced exotic species to the island. A ridge runs from east to west across American Camp, dividing the area into a southern side, which took the full brunt of winds and storms off the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and a sheltered northern side along Griffin Bay. North of the ridge grew a Douglas fir forest with some western hemlock This area was ideal hemlock habitat, but periodic burning favored Douglas firs, which regenerate quickly after a fire. Douglas fir dominated the area where the American military would build the redoubt and the parade ground, while the forest to the north was composed of Douglas fir, grand fir and lodgepole pine. Other tree species grew in the area as well. A few Garry oaks and junipers were probably scattered in protected areas of the grasslands, and some Sitka spruce grew at Griffin Bay.[27]

The Northern Straits relied on the island's natural resources for sustenance. Camas, an onion-like bulb in the lily family, was the most important plant in their diet. The bulb grew at both sections of the historical park and was a staple as well as a sweet ingredient added to other foods. Camas, which was also a mainstay of Indians in eastern Washington and British Columbia, thrives on prairies in dry climates, and it. Due to San Juan's location in the rain shadow of the Olympic Mountains, camas flourished on the island, especially on the prairies of the American Camp site and on rocky hillsides with a southern exposure, such as on Young Hill.

The Lummi, Songhees, and Saanich harvested camas on San Juan Island. Women dug the bulbs in May, after the plant bloomed but while the stalk remained. These women utilized wooden digging sticks with a wood or bone handle as levers. They steamed the bulbs at the harvesting site, if it was far from a village; otherwise, the bulbs were taken back to the village for processing. Inhabitants of the Garrison Bay village steamed camas in a pit on the parade ground. Steaming, which could take a day and a half, transformed camas from a "white, glutinous or somewhat slimy and virtually tasteless bulb into a drier, brown to black, figlike morsel that was of a sweet agreeable flavor with the consistency of a roasted onion."[28] The Northern Straits dug pits, about two by four feet in which they layered rocks and wood. They started a fire in the pit, and after the rocks became red hot, kelp, salal branches, sword ferns,

26. These fires were probably deliberately set, though they may have become unintentionally large. James K. Agee, *Historic Landscapes of San Juan Island National Historical Park* (Seattle: National Park Service, 1984), 4–5.

27. Agee, *Historic Landscapes of San Juan Island National Historical Park*, 18–23.

28. Alston Vern Thoms, "The Northern Roots of Hunter-Gatherer Intensification: Camas and the Pacific Northwest" (PhD Diss., Washington State University, 1988), 158.

Figure 6. The prairie at American Camp was an ideal location for cultivating camas, and the Northern Straits planted and harvested the bulb and then burned the meadows to increase soil fertility and decrease competition from other plants. (Author photo.)

and madrona bark were laid on top, followed by the camas. A bucket full of water was poured into the pit to create steam. The hole was then covered with grass and about four inches of dirt, and another fire was built on the top. The concoction was left until the next day, when the camas were collected, dried, and stored in cattail bags. Camas harvest lasted about three weeks.[29]

Although camas bulbs were native to the San Juan Islands, evidence suggests that the Northern Straits' actively promoted camas growth while discouraging competing plants. Indians throughout the Northwest used fire to cultivate camas, and the Northern Straits likely burned the American Camp prairies and the slopes of Young Hill were annually for this purpose. After the ripe bulbs were removed from the soil, women may have scattered their seeds into the disturbed ground from which they were harvested, as mainland Indian groups did. The Northern Straits may have also transplanted bulbs from one area to another, thereby increasing the amount of camas as the plants spread. The entire growing area was then burned to increase soil fertility for next year's crop. The burning added potassium, in the form of potash from the plant's ashes. Potash encourages growth, increases storage ability, and intensifies flavor in cultivated onions, and it probably has a similar effect on camas. Burning also reduced competition by other species. While the fire had little effect on the buried bulbs, it killed off competing plant species. Fire may have also controlled pests and disease.[30]

Other plants were vital to Northern Straits Indians for food, clothing, building materials, and tools. Cedar was particularly important. The Northern Straits cut cedar to build structures, make canoes, and create implements. They fashioned clothing from cedar bark. These native islanders picked berries such as serviceberry, thimbleberry, elderberry, and huckleberry during the summer months, and the berries were sometimes sun-dried and stored. They harvested

29. Suttles, *Economic Life of the Coast Salish of Haro and Rosario Strait*, 62.

30. Thoms, *Northern Roots of Hunter-Gatherer intensification*, 202; and White, *Land Use, Environment, and Social Change*, 22.

Figure 7. Camas bulbs were a staple of the Northern Straits diet. Steaming transformed the bulb of this flower from a tasteless, slimy plant into a food that could be eaten alone or used as a sweetener. (San Juan Island National Historical Park photo.)

crabapples and stored them in cattail bags to ripen for winter consumption. In the spring, they gathered edible greens such horsetail, thimbleberry and salmonberry shoots. When peeled, these shoots resembled celery in texture and appearance. The groups utilized some plants for medicinal purposes. Alder sap, for example, was used as a tonic for an upset stomach.[31] Whether for shelter, food, or medicine, San Juan Island's plants were essential to the Northern Straits.

The Northern Straits fashioned tools from plants for hunting game. Hunters attracted deer by blowing on a grass blade, which made a "fawn-like" squeal. They hunted deer and elk using bows made from cedar, vine maple, or yew. To make bows, the Northern Straits cut tree limbs, wrapped them in kelp blades, and then steamed them in pits until they were limber enough to flex into a bow shape. They fashioned arrow shafts from serviceberry wood or cedar, which they then smoothed with stone knives and dogfish skin. The arrow blade was stone or mussel shell. Game was also caught in nets made from elk or deer sinews or willow grass. In pursuit of game, hunters were able to use the topography of the islands to their advantage. The islands, with their many narrow game trails that passed through the high or rocky parts of the islands, were especially suited for "deer drives," a community hunting effort in which men drove deer into a net strung across a narrow trail. The Northern Straits also hunted elk on San Juan Island, but there is no information about these hunting practices.[32]

The Northern Straits utilized game for meat, clothing, and tools. They steamed and dried deer meat and saved the deer hides, though it is unclear how the hides were utilized. Deer

31. Suttles, *Economic Life of the Coast Salish of Haro and Rosario Strait*, 58.

32. Suttles, *Economic Life of the Coast Salish of Haro and Rosario Strait*, 83–84.

Figure 8. Lummi Indians practice reef netting for salmon, probably around 1940. (University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, NA1937.)

bones, sharpened to a point on one end, were used as weaving tools. Native peoples utilized woodworking tools made from bone and antlers, though tools made from wood and stone (such as slate knives or arrow points) were employed as well. Bones were probably also fashioned into jewelry and ornamentation.[33]

The Northern Straits depended on the marine resources off San Juan Island, and no resource was more important than salmon. Reef net salmon fishing, a "technologically sophisticated technique . . . that involved a great deal of labor and skill," was the Northern Straits' most important food gathering activity. In the beginning of the summer, the Northern Straits moved from their winter villages to temporary summer fishing camps, which were usually located in an area with a southern exposure to help dry the fish. Reef nets, which had to be made every year, were constructed of willow bark twine with young, flexible cedar branches twisted together as line. These nets were used exclusively by the Northern Straits to capture the Sockeye salmon that migrated through the San Juan Islands to the Fraser River each summer. As anthropologist Daniel Boxberger describes, "A long net was anchored to the sea bottom at the forward end and tied between the bows of two canoes at the back end. A smaller net was strung between the two canoes. The fish, swimming along the sea bottom, followed the lead net up, as if swimming over an underwater reef, and into the smaller net, where they were hauled aboard the canoes." The labor-intensive method, performed by crews of six to ten men, was so effective that their harvest was probably limited only by the amount of processing they could do. During the height of the season, one reef net crew could catch several thousand salmon.[34]

There were at least ten reef net fishing sites off the west coast of San Juan Island. The Songhees operated nets in many of these locations, and the Lummi, Saanich, and Samish probably also used these sites. Each site had an owner who had inherited that particular location. The owner

33. Stein, *Exploring Coast Salish Prehistory*, 101.

34. Boxberger, *San Juan Island National Historical Park: Cultural Affiliation Study*, 19–20; and Suttles, *Economic Life of the Coast Salish of Haro and Rosario Strait*, 161–62.

could choose to hire a captain and a crew to fish for him in exchange for a share of the catch. As one Lummi elder recalled, "Each family had their own reef netting location. Each location had a name. It dates way back. They just didn't go and step on somebody's toes."[35]

The Northern Straits likely reef netted off American Camp's shore, and they utilized the beaches of the historical park for fish processing. An underwater ridge that extends for about a mile off of South Beach at American Camp called the Salmon Bank would have been an ideal location for reef netting. The site provided the right type of moderate currents, since stronger currents would have torn the nets from their anchors. The shallow depth of the Salmon Bank forced the fish closer to the surface and allowed fishermen to anchor their nets on the shoal. The Salmon Bank also provided clear water in which the watchman, in the stern of one canoe, would have been able to spot the fish and order the crew to pull in the nets. American Camp beaches such as South Beach make an ideal location for fish processing, since the exposure to sun and wind facilitated fish drying. The large beach provided plenty of room for fishermen to build temporary dwellings and for processing activities such as cleaning and drying on racks. As in other fish processing sites, the owner of the site and a crew built shelters on the beach out of mats or wood. The Northern Straits dried the fish on racks in between the dwellings and the shore, and they sometimes built fires in trenches to facilitate the drying or smoking of the fish. The mats, which were made from leak-proof cattails or tules, could be rolled up and transported to other sites.[36] Fishermen used these structures as workshops to make tools and implements, such as nets. In this way, the plants of the island were utilized to facilitate the salmon harvest.

Since salmon were only available for part of the year, the Northern Straits sought other fish as well, and these fish were processed at both English and American Camps. Smelt (also called herring by the Northern Straits) were the most commonly consumed fish after salmon. They were so plentiful that the group could easily catch them using only a pole studded with bone shards (and later, nails). The Northern Straits also consumed halibut, flounder, rockfish, dogfish, and ratfish at the winter village site at English Camp.[37]

Marine invertebrates, particularly bivalves and crabs, were vital to the Northern Straits diet, and American Camp beaches were important shellfish gathering locations. Native peoples gathered cockles, mussels, oysters, and sea cucumbers from island shores at low tide, though they sometimes needed a digging stick to pry them loose. They also utilized digging sticks to harvest clams from gravel or mud flats. The Northern Straits harvested chitons, snails, barnacles, and sea urchins from rocks, then collected these items into loosely woven baskets from which the water could drain out. They gathered crabs either by wading or by spearing the crustaceans from canoes. Although some of these foods, such as the sea urchins, were eaten raw, most were steamed. To steam shellfish such as clams, they would first heat rocks over a fire, and then cover the shellfish with kelp or white fir boughs for fifteen minutes until they opened. Native islanders often roasted and dried clams and cockles for winter consumption. To roast, the shellfish were steamed (with the exception of rock clams and cockles, which did not require this first step) and removed from their shells, then threaded on a stick and set over a fire fueled by Douglas fir bark. The roasted meat was strung on a cedar bark line and dried in a smokehouse or a shed. Shellfish was available during the entire year, but the Northern Straits

35. Boxberger, *San Juan Island National Historical Park: Cultural Affiliation Study*, 21–34; and Suttles, *Economic Life of the Coast Salish of Haro and Rosario Strait*, 161.

36. Boxberger, *San Juan Island National Historical Park: Cultural Affiliation Study*, 33–34.

37. Boxberger, *San Juan Island National Historical Park: Cultural Affiliation Study*, 97; and Suttles, *Economic Life of the Coast Salish of Haro and Rosario Strait*, 64.

mainly harvested large quantities of the staple during the summer, and consumed the dried meat during the winter. Dried clams were a valuable export for the Northern Straits, and they were often traded to mainland Indians for waterproof baskets or smoked salmon.[38]

Waterfowl were also an important source of food, especially in the winter, when they were one of the few fresh foods available. The Northern Straits caught ducks by using fire on dark, cloudy nights. They lit a fire in a box of sand or clay on the stern of a canoe just behind the paddler. When the ducks saw the bright fire, the frightened birds flew into the shadow near the bow of the canoe, where a man with a multiple pronged spear (often made with a cedar shaft and deer bone point) easily killed them. Near English Camp, the Saanich, Songish, and possibly the Lummi hunted duck using raised duck nets at Mosquito Pass (between San Juan and Henry Island). This method involved catching the ducks with a net made of nettle fiber or willow bark twine strung between two poles. The Lummi and the Saanich also hunted ducks with bow and arrow while on a canoe disguised with conifer boughs. The Northern Straits valued duck for clothing as well as meat, and duck feathers were woven with nettle fibers to make clothing.[39]

The Northern Straits obeyed a "complex interaction of free-access resources and locations held in trust for a larger kinship group," according to Boxberger.[40] Many natural resources were shared and open to everyone, but some were considered private property. Privately owned resources were often open to anyone within a large kinship group, which could include almost all of the Northern Straits. A family or single person who would receive payment for use of the resources and supervise the collections owned other areas. Resource owners passed down both the knowledge of and the use of resources. Women usually owned shellfish beds, and they used rocks to delineate the boundaries of their beds. Kinship groups utilized the same reef-netting locations each year, and these sites were regarded as privately owned. While most camas beds were open to all, women usually utilized the same locations each year, and they considered some areas private property. American Boundary Commission secretary William Warren reported that on the side of Young Hill "we saw in different places cobble stones placed in lines about 100 feet long, arranged in this position probably by the Indians . . . though for what purpose we could not conjecture."[41] These were likely the boundaries of privately owned camas beds.

European Contact

The Spanish were the first Europeans to explore the San Juan Islands, but they made few references to the Northern Straits in their records. In 1791, a Spanish schooner was driven off by what they called "Indian war canoes" while exploring Haro Strait. Another encounter on the same channel spurred the Spanish to fire their cannons in an attempt to frighten the Indians.[42] The Spanish had traded extensively with Vancouver Island's native residents, but they did not explore the interior of the San Juan Islands, nor did they record any observations

38. Suttles, *Economic Life of the Coast Salish of Haro and Rosario Strait*, 64–67.

39. Suttles, *Economic Life of the Coast Salish of Haro and Rosario Strait*, 70–80; Boxberger, *San Juan Island National Historical Park: Cultural Affiliation Study*, 6; and Stein, *Exploring Coast Salish Prehistory*, 60.

40. Boxberger, *San Juan Island National Historical Park: Cultural Affiliation Study*, 6; and Suttles, *Economic Life of the Coast Salish of Haro and Rosario Strait*, 60–67.

41. Warren, 1860, NACP.

42. Warren L. Cook, *Flood Tide of Empire: Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543–1819* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1973), 304.

of the islands' inhabitants. The British explored the islands' waters, but they too noted few interactions with the Northern Straits. William Broughton, an officer with George Vancouver's expedition to the Pacific Northwest, observed an Indian village on Orcas Island. Broughton's men traded for venison off Lopez Island, after six Northern Straits from an onshore village rowed out to meet the Englishmen.[43] Charles Wilkes of the U.S. Exploring Expedition, who explored the islands' waters in the early 1840s, did not mention the Northern Straits in his reports. Although these early explorers did not find the islands' native inhabitants worthy of investigation, the first European company to settle the island considered the Northern Straits an essential part of their operation.

The arrival of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) in the mid-nineteenth century significantly altered the Northern Straits traditional lifestyle as the remote island, its resources and its inhabitants became incorporated into a new economic system. The HBC had long included native North Americans in their business, through labor and trade. As the Company moved into the West Coast of North America after 1821, they disrupted the Indians' traditional economies that included the use of haiqua (a type of shell, found only on the west coast of Vancouver Island) and slaves as currency and trade goods. Instead, the HBC traded commodities such as blankets, muskets, gunpowder, and shot, hunting and fishing tools, tobacco, clothing, and ornaments for natural resources such as salmon and animal hides from native peoples.[44] Fort Victoria became a center of trade for Indians throughout the entire regions after its founding in 1843, just as other Hudson's Bay Company establishments had become in other areas. According to historian Richard Mackie, "Mutual interest and trading opportunities drove the exchanges, as did the utility, quality, or novelty of British manufactures."[45]

On San Juan Island, the Northern Straits provided canoe transportation, labor for construction projects and salmon for the Company's export business. They also worked as sheepherders, caring for the Company's flocks. After contact with the Company, the archipelago's Indians began to utilize guns, rather than weapons fashioned from the native plants of the islands, to hunt game. This use of guns, a more effective hunting tool, likely contributed to the decline of game on the island in the 1850s. The Northern Straits had long traded among themselves and with other native groups, but contact with Europeans irreversibly altered their economy and way of life.[46]

The Hudson's Bay Company generally enjoyed good relations with the region's native peoples, but the Americans did not. There had been raids on American settlers as well as on other Indian groups in the 1850s throughout the Puget Sound and San Juan Island areas. The American army established forts at Port Townsend and Bellingham in response to these attacks.[47] Especially feared were the Kwakiutl, who lived north of Washington Territory along the British Columbia coast. In his correspondence with Vancouver Island governor James Douglas about the Indian threat in 1854, Washington Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens complained that Hudson Bay Company employee Charles Griffin, who resided on San Juan Island, had frightened Puget Sound settlers with "certain incautious statements." The statements, along

43. J. Nielson Barry, "Broughton's Reconnaissance of the San Juan Islands in 1792," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 21, no. 1 (1930): 55–60, esp. 58.

44. Richard Somerset Mackie, *Trading beyond the Mountains: The British Fur Trade on the Pacific, 1793–1843* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997), 283.

45. Mackie, *Trading beyond the Mountains*, 287.

46. Suttles, *Economic Life of the Coast Salish of Haro and Rosario Strait*, 89.

47. Michael Vouri, *The Pig War: Standoff at Griffin Bay* (Friday Harbor, WA: Griffin Bay Bookstore, 1999), 34.

with Griffin's assertion that he could not provide protection to Americans on San Juan Island, drove American customs collector Oscar Olney off the island in 1857 to seek safety elsewhere. Stevens suggested that these statements were intended to keep Americans off San Juan, but Douglas replied that "motives of humanity" drove Griffin to sound the warning. Nevertheless, Douglas assured Stevens that the Indians were not as unfriendly as rumored, and that he would pass on any reports if hostilities arose.[48]

The rumors, it seemed, were not without merit. Paul K. Hubbs, Jr., Olney's successor, believed that fear of Indian attacks kept American settlers from colonizing the island. Hubbs took refuge with Griffin after Clallam Indians attacked his house. In 1858, 130 Kwakiutl attacked a party of miners on Orcas Island; the Royal Marines rescued the group. In July of 1859, the twenty-two Americans on the island requested American military protection from "bands of marauding Indians, who infest these waters in large numbers." Even the Hudson's Bay Company had occasional problems with Indians. For example, in 1857, Charles Griffin paid the steamer *Otter* thirty-six British pounds to chase Indian sheep thieves. By 1859, when American settlers had established themselves on San Juan, tensions between Indians and Americans on the island ran high, and Indians were blamed for the murder of two Americans whose bodies were found washed up on the island's shore. Despite the lack of evidence, the Americans assumed Indians were guilty of the crime since they had been hunting on the island at the time.[49]

These Indians from the north inspired fear and awe in American settlers and surveyors. American boundary commissioner Archibald Campbell reported, "The insecurity and danger arising from the depredations of the Indians who came down from the Russian and British possessions at the north, in their immense war canoes, forced our citizens to abandon their attempts at settlement." Campbell continued, "When these northern Indians start out upon their trading and marauding expeditions with a fleet of canoes, they present a truly formidable array. Their canoes, made from the single trunk of a giant cedar of their country, are of the most beautiful model and workmanship; they are from seventy five to one hundred feet in length and will carry from fifty to sixty persons, and are driven through the water at great speed . . . They have been known to capture huge vessels." According to Campbell, the Northern Straits were "inferior in all ways" to these northern Indians, who were their "hated enemies."[50] The boundary commissioners, who hired Indians as assistants, chose to travel around the archipelago only during the winter, when "the expedition could be safely made by a small party . . . when it would be secure from annoyances from Northern Indians."[51]

The American military viewed the Indians not only as an annoyance but also as a threat. Drunken Indians proved to be a nuisance to both the British and American military stationed on San Juan, even though it was British and American citizens who sold liquor to the Indians. One American lieutenant recorded, "The islands are often visited by smugglers, whiskey sellers, cattle thieves, and roving bands of Indians, who have to be looked after and punished for the depredations and violations of law and order-by this command."[52] Sgt. Henry Cooper

48. James Douglas to the Right Honorable Henry Labouchere, May 5, 1854, Record Office Transcripts of the Hudson's Bay Company, Vol. 3, 63, Provincial Archives, Victoria, British Columbia.

49. Thompson, *San Juan Island Historic Resource Study* (Denver: National Park Service, 1972), 190–91; Vouri, *Pig War*, 42; and Boxberger, *San Juan Island National Historical Park: Cultural Affiliation Study*, 32.

50. Campbell, *Northwest Boundary*, 132.

51. Gibbs, May 24, 1858, NAB.

52. Capt. Thomas Grey to the Assistant Adjutant General, April 11, 1866, Records of the U.S. Army Continental Commands, San Juan Island, Letters Sent, Volume 1, Pt. 5, RG 393, NAB.

reported, "We have been disturbed at night lately with discordant noises and reports of firearms" from the Indians.[53] Indian women were brought to the island as prostitutes. Captain George Pickett quickly became exasperated with the situation, and he wished that government authorities would handle what he felt was a civil matter. "Two-thirds of the Indians on this end of the island are drunk day and night . . . it is perfect bedlam," he complained.[54] Both armies agreed that the presence of alcohol on the island presented a problem, but there were simply too many liquor suppliers to control.

During this tense time, even traditional Indian activities came under suspicion. Lieutenant Colonel Silas Casey drove the Northern Straits from their seasonal fishing grounds off San Juan in 1858. Pickett was distrustful of one particular group of Indians, and he accused them of only "pretending" to be on a hunting expedition during a visit to the island. In April of 1860, he noted worriedly that there were more than 4,000 Indians "from the north" gathering for salmon fishing off the island.[55] One of his gunboats, the *Forward*, had battled a "marauding party, killing a great many Indians," and he requested the company of the warship *Massachusetts* to help prevent other conflicts.[56]

Although many of these Indians may have been engaging in customary activities, their mere presence worried the Americans. Pickett endeavored to prevent further violence on the island. Under orders to remove Indians from San Juan, he postponed action until he could formulate a plan to do so without endangering the island's settlers. He realized that all of the Indians, even Belle Vue Sheep Farm employees, would have to be expelled if this plan were enacted. When a Haida Indian was murdered, Pickett attempted to stave off revenge attacks by investigating the murder. When he was unable to find the killer, he offered restitution to the victim's widow. His tactic worked, and no retaliatory violence occurred. By mid-July in 1860, Indian violence had calmed considerably due to James Douglas' new policy of disarming all Indians who ventured into Victoria's harbor.[57]

The Northern Straits Displaced

American attempts to concentrate Northern Straits on reservations in the late nineteenth century further disrupted the Indians' practices and economies. Some Americans were sympathetic to Northern Straits' claims to the islands. American Archibald Campbell, in his boundary commission report, stated that the islands belonged to various Indian tribes.[58] Fellow commissioner George Gibbs suggested that the islands be made into reservations for the Northern Straits, since the archipelago provided "valuable hunting and fishing grounds."[59] Both men's conclusions were ignored by the federal government, who sought to contain the archipelago's Indians on mainland reservations. In 1859, the Treaties of Point No Point and Point Elliot were enacted to consolidate Indians in Washington State onto reservation lands.

53. Sgt. Henry Cooper to the Royal Marines Camp, August 14, 1861, San Juan Island, Letters Sent, Vol. 1, RG 393, NAB.

54. Vouri, *Pig War*, 195.

55. Captain George Pickett, letter, April 26, 1860, Records of the U.S. Army Regular Mobile Units, Post Letters, Fort Bellingham and Camp San Juan Island, Vol. 1, RG 393, NAB.

56. Captain George Pickett to the Assistant Adjutant General, n.d., San Juan Island, Letters Sent, Vol. 1, RG 393, NAB.

57. Vouri, *Pig War*, 196.

58. Campbell, *Northwest Boundary*, 132.

59. Gibbs, May 24, 1858, NAB.

The Lummi received a reservation on Lummi Island. The Samish initially settled on non-reservation lands on Guemes Island, but in 1912, the group was split and sent to both the Lummi and the Swinomish reservations. Most Indians continued to occupy their traditional sites in the nineteenth century, and since the islands were disputed territory until 1872, the Bureau of Indian Affairs did not attempt to force the Northern Straits out of the archipelago.[60]

As British and American settlers colonized the island, the Northern Straits found themselves dispossessed of traditional hunting, fishing, gathering and winter village locations. By 1870, seventeen years after the Hudson's Bay Company established Belle Vue Sheep Farm on San Juan Island, only 36 percent of residents in the entire archipelago were Indian or part Indian. No adult male Indians remained on the island. Just twenty-one Indian women did, and all were married to white, Hawaiian, or African-American men.[61] In 1887, Congress passed the Dawes Act, which assigned individual allotments on the mainland reservations in an attempt to reduce the size of the reservations as well as force American conceptions of private property and land use on the Indians. The Bureau of Indian Affairs used the act to discourage Indians from traveling off reservation, thus limiting their access to San Juan Island.[62]

Some Indians continued to work as manual laborers as they had for the Hudson's Bay Company. Many picked crops for Puget Sound area farmers. Others sold fish, shellfish, and berries to white settlers. Some Lummis became farmers on their reservation. The establishment of canneries in Northern Puget Sound in the 1890s encouraged commercial fisherman to set up fish traps on the Salmon Bank and other locations off the west side of San Juan Island, denying the Northern Straits access to their traditional fishing grounds. In 1895, the Lummi unsuccessfully sued a salmon cannery at Point Roberts after they established fish traps at a traditional reef netting site and thus reduced the Lummi catch to almost nothing. By 1912, only twelve Indians worked as fishermen in San Juan County.[63] More than sixty years later, the Boldt decision of 1974 would reinstate fishing rights guaranteed to Washington's Indians under nineteenth century treaties, and the Lummis were able to revive their fishing industry. In the late twentieth century, the Northern Straits once again began reef netting in the San Juan and Canadian Gulf Islands.

Contemporary Northern Straits occupy only a small portion of the lands on which their ancestors lived. The Sooke, Songhees, and Saanich have reserves on Vancouver Island. The Semiahmoo occupy a small reserve just north of the border between the United States and Canada. The Lummis inhabit a reservation on Lummi Island in Washington State. Since American conceptions of Indian tribalism did not fit the lifestyle of the Northern Straits, some native peoples never gained federal recognition. The Samish are still seeking recognition from the U.S. government; this recognition would allow the group certain fishing rights. Although fragmented geographically, the Northern Straits continue to socialize with each other through summer festivals, games, dances, and religious ceremonies.[64]

Tribal members of the Lummi, the Songhee, the Saanich, and the Samish still come to the San Juan Islands to fish, but private property owners have made access to most traditional resources

60. Boxberger, *San Juan Island National Historical Park: Cultural Affiliation Study*, 29.

61. U.S. Bureau of the Census, Whatcom County, San Juan Island, 1870, San Juan Island Historical Society Archives. Of the 448 residents in the archipelago, 163 were Indian.

62. Boxberger, *San Juan Island National Historical Park: Cultural Affiliation Study*, 40.

63. John N. Cobb, *The Salmon Fisheries of the Pacific Coast* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1910), 51. There was a total of 205 county residents working in the fishing industry.

64. Suttles, *Economic Life of the Coast Salish of Haro and Rosario Strait*, 473.

off limits. Moreover, many of these resources, such as shellfish, game, and wild plants, have been depleted. One Lummi elder explained, "The Lummi Indians can't go ashore on San Juan Island to dig a bucket of clams. They get drove away. . . . They won't even let you land a boat anymore in lots of the old places."[65] While the Northern Straits had observed communal access to many natural resource locations, the creation of the boundary between the United States and Canada and the formation of reservations led to restrictions on natural resources such as salmon. No longer do the six Northern Straits groups share shellfish beds or fishing locations; each "tribe" is legally allowed certain quantities and access to specific sites.[66]

San Juan Island's native peoples spent thousands of years utilizing the natural resources of the island. They relied on the native plants and animals of the island for food, clothing, shelter, and tools, and they were able to modify the natural landscape without destroying their environment's capacity to sustain them. While Northern Straits Indians collected and sold some of these resources in the marketplace after European contact, subsequent groups of islanders exploited these resources to the point of depletion. Valuable market crops that could be profitably sold thousands of miles away replaced the commercially worthless native plants that had sustained the Indians. After the Northern Straits were dispossessed of the island, British and American settlers sought to shape the island into their own image of an ideal landscape.

65. Stein, *Exploring Coast Salish Prehistory*, 6.

66. Boxberger, *San Juan Island National Historical Park: Cultural Affiliation Study*, 6.

Chapter Two

Rock of Empire: European and American Exploration of the San Juan Islands

The geographic isolation of the San Juan Islands and the Pacific Northwest kept Europeans from exploring the region until the late eighteenth century, when they were spurred, as historian Carlos Schwantes explains, by "curiosity, commerce, and conquest" to investigate the region.[1] European nations emphasized commercial interests over colonialism and settlement during this time, and both Great Britain and Spain sought to discover a Northwest Passage and to exploit the natural resources of the Pacific Northwest. In the mid-nineteenth century, American explorers and surveyors evaluated the island for resource extraction, agriculture and settlement, as well as its strategic location. European and American expectations of San Juan Island's natural environment differed from those of the archipelago's previous inhabitants. Northern Straits Indians had primarily utilized the island's resources for subsistence purposes before European contact, but Europeans and Americans held different values and assumptions about the natural world. As these explorers surveyed the remote archipelago, they imposed their values on the natural environment and searched for the natural resources that would make the San Juan Islands a valuable addition to their empire.

European Exploration and Surveying

Both Spain and Great Britain explored and claimed ownership of the San Juan Islands in the late eighteenth century, and these explorers were the first to see the natural landscape in terms of extractable commodities. European explorers were drawn to the region for timber (for ship masts) and for otter pelts, which brought top dollar in the newly opened Chinese markets.[2] They also sought to discover the Northwest Passage, a mythical waterway through North America that would connect the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Although early European visitors to the San Juan Islands believed they were discovering untouched land, they were actually encountering an environment managed and shaped by Northern Straits Indians. While the island's indigenous residents had viewed San Juan Island and its surrounding waters as an abundant landscape, European explorers saw little to entice them in the rocky archipelago.

The Spanish were the first Europeans to explore the islands. Spain, which occupied California in the eighteenth century, saw the Northwest as a logical extension of its North American possessions. The Spanish sent expeditions to map and explore the area, to defend against British claims and to search for a Northwest Passage. They also hoped to acquire sea otter pelts from the Indians. Competition among Spain, Great Britain, Portugal, Russia, France, and the United States in the sea otter trade was fierce, and the Spanish were determined to stake their claim to the lucrative business.[3]

1. Carlos Schwantes, *The Pacific Northwest: An Interpretive History* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 42.

2. Warren L. Cook, *Flood Tide of Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1973), 281.

3. Cook, *Flood Tide of Empire*, 340.

In May 1790, Spanish explorer Manuel Quimper skirted the western edge of the archipelago. Quimper sailed from Nootka Sound on Vancouver Island, where the Spanish had established a fort the year before, intending to explore the waterways inside the Strait of Juan de Fuca. He carried beaten copper sheets to trade with Indians for otter pelts, as they had successfully done on Vancouver Island. He also planned to assess the area for "strategic harbors . . . fresh water, firewood, fertility, climate, prevailing winds, and Indian behavior." Although Quimper sighted and named Haro Strait, he did not have time or adequate provisions to explore the area inside and through the channel. Strong winds and unfavorable tides hampered his attempt to return to Nootka Sound, sending his ship, the *Princesa Real*, back and forth across the Strait of Juan de Fuca. From his vantage point, the islands looked like a solid coastline, and he mistook the archipelago for part of the mainland. Quimper did explore the strait, and he marveled at the "delicious fish, among which were salmon of 100 lbs more in weight," which he purchased from Olympic Peninsula Indians. However, the Spanish were uninterested in exploiting the fisheries resources of the region, since they preferred to concentrate on the lucrative fur trade.[4] Quimper successfully acquired sea otter pelts from Indians on the Olympic Peninsula and Vancouver Island coasts, which encouraged the Spanish to pursue further explorations in the area.

The next year, Francisco de Eliza mapped the waters surrounding the area he called "Isla y Archipelago de San Juan." With two ships, the *San Carlos* and the smaller schooner *Santa Saturnina*, Eliza sought to locate the passage in the uncharted waters to the east of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, since the rest of the west coast of North America had largely been mapped. He sent José Verdiá to explore the area around the San Juan Island in a longboat, but Indian war canoes (which probably belonged to Indians that resided north of the islands) overwhelmed the boat in Haro Strait, forcing them to turn back. Verdiá soon returned to Haro Strait and spent ten days exploring the area, and he discovered that the strait led to another, larger channel, which George Vancouver later named the Strait of Georgia. Verdiá spotted whales in the Strait of Georgia, prompting Eliza to determine that there was an undiscovered ocean entrance to the area, possibly the Northwest Passage, since the Spanish had not seen whales in the Strait of Juan de Fuca.[5]

Still hoping to discover the mythical passage to the Atlantic, Eliza sent the *Santa Saturnina*, commanded by José María Nárvaez, to explore the waters north of the archipelago. Passing by the San Juan Islands, the ship's pilot, Juan Pantoja y Arriga, described the chain as "an indescribable archipelago of islands, keys, rocks, and big and little inlets." Poor visibility, windy conditions, and persistent rain hindered the Spanish explorations; the area's strong tides and submerged reefs also made the endeavor difficult.[6] For three weeks, Nárvaez explored north through Haro Strait and the Strait of Georgia to 50 degrees latitude, an area that Europeans had not previously explored. After running short of supplies and failing to discover the Northwest Passage, he turned back. Since they did not explore the archipelago's interior, only its perimeter, the Spanish map from these expeditions depicts the chain as one land mass. However, their limited explorations of the Strait of Georgia encouraged the Spanish to continue searching for a route to the Atlantic.[7]

4. Cook, *Flood Tide of Empire*, 280–81.

5. Derek Hayes, *Historical Atlas of the Pacific Northwest: Maps of Exploration and Discovery* (Seattle: Sasquatch Books, 1999), 72.

6. David Richardson, *Pig War Islands* (Eastsound, WA: Orcas Publishing Co., 1972), 21.

7. Hayes, *Historical Atlas of the Pacific Northwest*, 72.

Figure 9. A detail of a Spanish map drawn in 1792 after the voyages of the *Sutil* and the *Mexicana*. This is the first map to depict the San Juan Islands, though it shows the unexplored archipelago as a solid land mass called "Isla de San Juan." This map was later used to help settle the British-American boundary dispute. (San Juan Island National Historical Park files.)

The Spanish made one final effort to find a trade route or valuable commodities in the archipelago. In 1792, a crew commanded by Alejandro Malaspina joined forces with Vancouver's expedition to explore and map the area. However, the Spanish concluded that "one does not find there terrestrial or marine products whose examination or acquisition is worth exposing oneself to the consequences of a protracted voyage." Sea otters did not inhabit the waters beyond the Strait of Juan de Fuca, dashing the Spaniards' hopes of finding exportable commodities in the region. By the end of 1792, the Spanish realized that no passage to the Atlantic existed and that the damp, densely forested region was unsuitable for Spanish settlement or further commercial endeavors.[8]

However, the Spanish left their mark on the archipelago by naming many of the islands after patrons, crewmembers, and natural features. Eliza probably named the archipelago for Juan Vicente de Guemes Pacheco Padilla Horcasitas y Aguayo, a potential patron of future explorations and the viceroy of Mexico. They originally named Rosario Strait "Canal de Nuestra Señora del Rosario," for a patroness of their expedition. Haro Strait (Canal de López de Haro) and Lopez Island were both named for Quimper's pilot, Gonzalo López de Haro.[9] Orcas Island was likely named for the viceroy of Mexico. Although many of these

8. Cook, *Flood Tide of Empire*, 355.

9. Hayes, *Historical Atlas of the Pacific Northwest*, 70–72. The name also referred to the waterway now known as the Strait of Georgia.

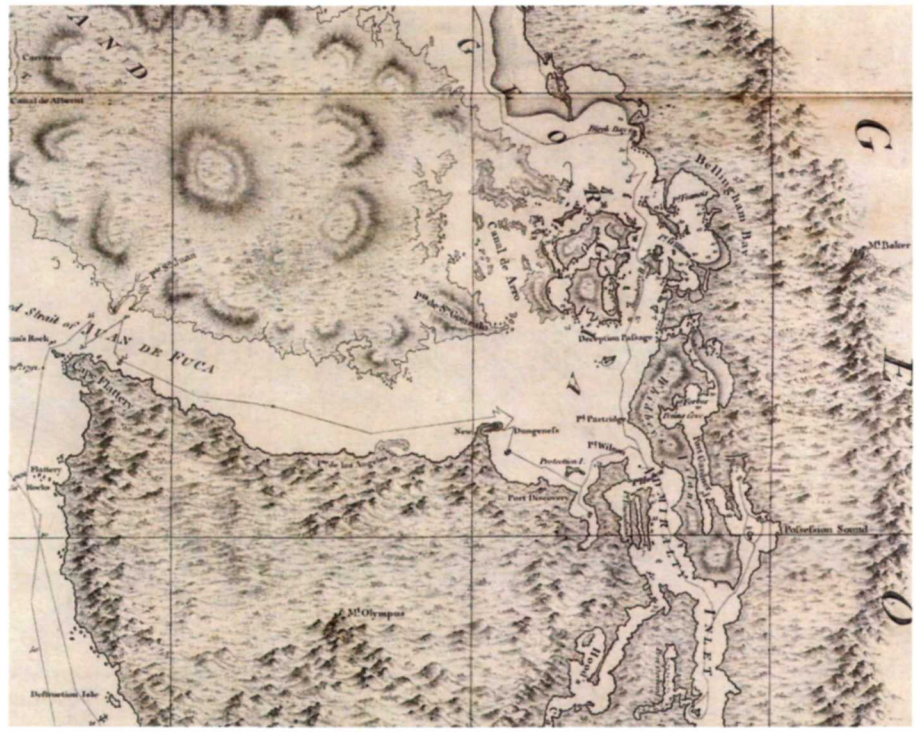


Figure 10. A detail of Captain George Vancouver's "A Chart Showing Part of the NW Coast of America," published in 1798, accurately depicts the islands as an archipelago. (San Juan Island National Historical Park files.)

names survive, subsequent explorers renamed some of the features originally designated by the Spanish.

British explorers were similarly unimpressed with the San Juan Islands within the context of their New World experiences. In his voyage to the Pacific Northwest in 1792, the British government charged George Vancouver with discovering a Northwest Passage and securing the region for Great Britain. A timber shortage in Great Britain had motivated the British to search for large trees from which they could fashion ship masts. They also sought otter pelts for the lucrative market in China. However, the small size of the islands' trees compared to those on the mainland along with the absence of sea otters made the archipelago undesirable for commercial endeavors. While Vancouver and his crew recorded favorable impressions of the land bordering Puget Sound, the body of water to the south, the British explorers held a different opinion about the San Juan archipelago, which they viewed as unsuitable for agriculture, settlement, or resource extraction.[10]

The explorers were initially optimistic about the resources they might find on the islands. Noting "an archipelago of islands of various sizes," Vancouver sent Lieutenant William Broughton to explore the islands. Broughton became the first European to investigate the interior waterways of the archipelago, since the Spanish had explored only the perimeter. From the west, Broughton stated that the chain looked "most capacious, and presented an unbounded horizon." The individual islands were "rocky . . . (and) well cloath'd with wood." Broughton's report focuses on nautical observations, and he recorded few of his impressions of

10. Edmund S. Meany, *Vancouver's Discovery of Puget Sound* (New York: MacMillan and Co., 1907), 196.

the islands. He did find the archipelago an important location for collecting essential supplies. On Cypress Island, Broughton's men gathered fresh spring water and wild strawberries. They brewed spruce beer from the needles of spruce trees to help prevent scurvy. The crew also fished the waters of the archipelago, and on Orcas Island, they bought fresh venison as well as a live fawn from the Indians.[11]

The English had gathered much needed resources from the San Juan Islands, but the expedition members were unimpressed with the islands' potential for resource extraction or settlement, especially compared to the Puget Sound area, which they had just explored. Archibald Menzies, a Scottish botanist on Vancouver's ship *Discovery*, was highly enthusiastic about that area, which he felt had tremendous agricultural and settlement possibilities. Sailing through Admiralty Inlet into Puget Sound, he wrote of the "beautiful canals and wandering navigable branches" and of the "rich country" with easy ocean access and fertile banks that should be settled by any "civilized nation." Menzies described the area's climate as "exceedingly favorable." The soil was "light and gravelly" and would "yield most of the European fruits and grains in perfection." In sum, he described the Puget Sound area as "fine country . . . a desirable situation for a new settlement."[12]

However, Menzies held a less favorable opinion of the San Juan Islands, which he viewed as bleak and worthless. His comments on their steep, rocky shores and stunted trees contrasted with his description of Puget Sound. "We could not help notice the difference between these islands and that fine country we had so lately examined. Here the land rose rugged and hilly . . . and was composed of many solid rocks covered with a thin layer of blackish mold which afforded the nourishment to a straddling forest of small stunted pines. The shores were almost everywhere steep, rugged and cliffy which made landing difficult, and the wood were in many places equally difficult of access from the rocky cliff and chasms." Menzies expressed excitement only about the archipelago's unique plant species, which "added considerably" to his collection.[13] In the eyes of the British explorers, the small size of the islands' trees along with the absence of sea otters made the archipelago undesirable for commercial endeavors. Like the Spanish, the British had been looking for marketable commodities in the San Juan Islands, and when they did not find any, they too deemed the archipelago worthless. Between 1792 and 1841, due to the lack of extractable resources and the realization that a Northwest Passage did not exist in the area, no European (or American) vessel visited the San Juan Islands.

Signed in 1795, the second Nootka Treaty resolved the territorial dispute between Great Britain and Spain in favor of Great Britain, paving the way for British expansion into the region. In the mid 1850s, the British showed renewed interest in the region's timber resources. The question over the boundary between Oregon Territory and British North America brought many British warships to the region, and this once again spurred Royal Navy interest in timber, for ship masts, from the Pacific Northwest. The British ship *America* procured Douglas fir spars from Port Discovery on the Olympic Peninsula in 1845, and these trees proved better suited to ship masts than the softer wood from California the navy had previously used. The spars so impressed British Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Sir George Seymour that he sent a number of Douglas firs from Vancouver Island to England to be tested for quality. The

11. J. Nielson Barry, "Broughton's Reconnaissance of the San Juan Islands in 1792," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 21, no. 1 (1930): esp. 55–60, 59. Spruce beer was a fermented alcoholic drink made from spruce twigs, yeast, and molasses.

12. C. F. Newcombe, ed., *Menzies' Journal of Vancouver's Voyage, April to October 1792* (Victoria, BC: W. H. Cullin, 1923), 47.

13. Newcombe, ed., *Menzies' Journal*, 48–51.

trees were deemed superior to even those from Riga, in Latvia, which the navy considered the highest quality trees in the world. However, the problem of how to profitably transport the timber 18,000 miles, from the Pacific Northwest to England, proved challenging. In 1855, the Crimean War increased the British need for timber for ship construction, and British warships were able to transport enough Northwest timber to solve that nation's immediate needs.[14]

Due to the timber crisis, San Juan Island's trees aroused some British interest during this time. Maps drawn by British surveyors noted the presence of "ship trees" on the west side of the island south of Deadman Bay, indicating that the British at least considered exploiting the timber resources of the island.[15] Due to the high quality timber on Vancouver Island and the mainland, the islands' trees likely remained uncut, as there is no evidence to suggest that the British navy ever did utilize the archipelago's trees for ship masts.

British surveyors found themselves frustrated by the archipelago's weather, currents, and native residents, just as Spanish explorers had been, while charting the archipelago in the 1850s. James Alden conducted the first marine survey of the islands in 1852, and these British explorations continued for about ten years, probably for defense purposes in anticipation of permanent occupation. Smoke from forest fires, which the Northern Straits Indians probably intentionally set, obscured the islands' shorelines. Base marks, used by surveyors to map the islands, were destroyed by storms and by Indians. The surveyors complained of heavy rains and the distorted appearance of the islands due to refraction during clear days. Treacherous currents and submerged reefs made navigation dangerous. George Davidson, a survey supervisor, concluded that "the experience of three seasons in this locality has not increased our relish for navigating these channels in sailing vessels."[16] The surveyors were undoubtedly happy to complete their task and leave the archipelago.

Although the British had explored and surveyed the archipelago beginning in 1792, ownership of the islands was uncertain. A treaty signed in 1846 fixed the U.S.-Canada boundary in "the middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island." Due to the negotiators' ignorance of the region's geography, this could have meant either Rosario Strait or Haro Strait, along the eastern or western edges of the chain. To settle the disagreement, the United States and Great Britain agreed to send surveyors to the region in order to devise a water boundary between American and British North America.[17] Earlier explorers had deemed the islands worthless, yet both the British and American governments sought to claim the San Juan Islands for their own.

British and American boundary commissions worked separately for over four years, between 1857 and 1862, determining their recommendation for the international water border and surveying the border between the Rocky Mountains and the coast. The British wanted only to determine the water boundary, though Archibald Campbell, head of the American team, persuaded them that the entire 409-mile border west of the Rocky Mountains needed definition. The British Admiralty chose James C. Prevost as British Boundary Commissioner. Prevost appointed Captain George Henry Richards as chief surveyor, while Charles Wilson

14. Barry M. Gough, *The Royal Navy and the Northwest Coast of North America, 1810–1914: A Study of British Maritime Ascendancy* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1971), 96–98.

15. Capt. G. H. Richards, "Haro and Rosario Straits, 1858–9," map, Victoria Provincial Archives, Victoria, British Columbia.

16. Lucille McDonald, *Making History: The People Who Shaped the San Juan Islands* (Friday Harbor, WA: Harbor Press, 1990), 106.

17. Erwin Thompson, *San Juan Island Historic Resource Study* (Denver: National Park Service, 1972), 1.

Figure 11. The British maintained that Rosario Strait should be the international boundary, while the Americans favored Haro Strait.

served as the British commission's secretary. Unsurprisingly, each group chose a water boundary that favored their own nation.[18] While Prevost maintained that Rosario Strait, to the east of Lopez and Orcas Islands, should be the boundary, Campbell favored Haro Strait, between San Juan and Vancouver Islands.[19]

The British commissioners encountered many of the same difficult conditions in the archipelago that frustrated previous surveyors and explorers. Charles Wilson, an educated twenty-two year old Englishman from a wealthy family, recorded the frustration of trying to navigate through "awful tides which run down narrow channels" as quickly as a rushing stream. Twice during their initial thirty-hour journey through the archipelago, their ship, the HMS *Satellite*, was forced to take shelter in protected coves to wait out powerful tidal currents. The commissioners sometimes traveled at night to avoid these treacherous flows, though navigating in the dark presented its own problems.[20]

Despite these difficulties, the archipelago's scenic beauty and agricultural possibilities charmed the Englishman. Wilson wrote, "I cannot describe to you the scenery of the islands, as it baffles all description." When strong tides forced the ship to take shelter in the harbor of an unknown island, the springtime flower display enchanted Wilson. He exclaimed, "It was like walking through a flower bed in an English garden, the flowers were nearly all new to me and some of them very beautiful and would be prized in any English garden. I collected a great many."[21] British surveyor Richard Mayne agreed, and he declared, "I have never seen

18. Herman Deutsch, *Surveying the 49th Parallel 1858–1861: The United States-Canada Boundary in the Pacific Northwest* (Tacoma: Washington State Historical Society, 1962), 2.

19. Gough, *The Royal Navy and the Coast of North America*, 154.

20. George F. G. Stanley, ed., *Mapping the Frontier: Charles Wilson's Diary of the Survey of the 49th Parallel, 1858–1862* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1970), 47

21. Stanley, ed., *Mapping the Frontier*, 47.

wild flowers grow with the beauty and luxuriance they possess here."[22] The tide slackened and the commissioners set off in the direction of San Juan Island, which Wilson called the "loveliest" island in the archipelago. "[San Juan Island] has rich soil and everything seems to grow luxuriantly . . . [there are] beautifully sloping glades running down to the sea, bordered by arbutus, maple, and dogwood." He likened the scenery to England's Mount Edgecumbe, a country estate famous for its gardens and views of Plymouth Sound, "the only difference being that [San Juan Island] is all natural and [Mount Edgecumbe] artificial." Wilson did not realize that the Northern Straits Indians had actively shaped the landscape through their resource management strategies.[23]

The surveyors may have agreed that San Juan Island possessed unique beauty, but they held differing opinions on the island's potential importance to the British Empire. Mayne concluded that it was "manifestly absurd" to think that the island had any "real value." James Prevost, the head of the water boundary commission, felt differently.[24] Prevost admitted that "San Juan Island is a beautiful and fertile island" with a significant proportion of cleared, potentially productive agricultural land, but he argued that the island's strategic location would prove to be its most valuable asset to the British government. Even if the island was "intrinsically worthless," Prevost believed that it was "of the utmost value to Great Britain, commanding as it does the channel of communications between Vancouver Island and British Columbia." Prevost saw little worth in the islands to the east, but he contended, "San Juan is invaluable to our possession."[25] Prevost's view would prevail among British government officials. Hudson's Bay Company representatives came to value San Juan Island for its natural resources, and the British boundary commissioners thought the island offered a beautiful, agriculturally productive landscape. Ultimately, however, it was the island's strategic locale that led the British to contest American claims to San Juan Island.

American Exploration and Surveying

The first Americans to explore the waters around San Juan Island mapped the archipelago in 1841 as part of a four-year journey around the world. The U.S. Exploring Expedition, led by Captain Charles Wilkes, emphasized scientific discoveries, and the government-sponsored mission helped establish the nation's reputation as a scientific authority.[26] Expedition members explored, mapped, and named geographical features throughout the San Juan Islands and Puget Sound region. Charles Wilkes renamed the San Juan Islands the "Navy Archipelago" in his written reports, though he retained the designation "Archipelago de Arro," an English corruption of the Spanish name for the chain, on his maps. Wilkes renamed many of the individual islands as well, though some of his designations were never incorporated into official maps. San Juan became Rodgers Island and Orcas became Hull Island on his maps. He had more permanent success labeling Shaw, Blakely, and Decatur islands, all named for heroes of the War of 1812. Although Wilkes named these features, he largely ignored the San Juan Islands in his reports, suggesting that he did not find the archipelago noteworthy.

22. Richard Mayne, *Four Years in British Columbia and Vancouver Island: An Account of Their Rivers, Coasts, Gold Fields, and Resources for Colonization* (London: John Murray, 1862), 40.

23. Stanley, ed., *Mapping the Frontier*, 47.

24. Stanley, ed., *Mapping the Frontier*, 40.

25. Michael Vouri, *The Pig War: Standoff at Griffin Bay* (Friday Harbor, WA: Griffin Bay Bookstore, 1999), 24.

26. Hayes, *Historical Atlas of the Pacific Northwest*, 120.

Figure 12. Haro Strait, with Vancouver Island in the distance. The United States sought to make this the international boundary. (Author photo.)

San Juan Island remained unimportant to the Americans until the boundary dispute with Great Britain in the mid-nineteenth century. The fur trade had declined by this time, and the two nations were looking to the natural environment to provide agricultural and extractive resource opportunities for settlers and corporations. As Washington Territory's population rose, the island became increasingly valuable to the United States for its strategic location, good harbors, and arable farmland. Between 1851 and 1874, the island and its resources would be at the center of a dispute that brought the two nations close to war.

During the 1840s, the idea of manifest destiny—a phrase used by politicians to justify and encourage continental expansion—captured the American imagination. Settlers seeking land began streaming into the Pacific Northwest. The U.S. Congress created the Washington Territory in 1853, and immigrants and corporations journeyed to the region hoping to find success through agriculture, logging, and other natural resource uses. To facilitate settlement and commerce, railroad companies and government agencies chartered expeditions to map boundaries, survey land, and record scientific discoveries. The Pacific Northwest had been surveyed for American settlement since the late 1830s, when the U.S. Exploring Expedition mapped the region.[27] However, the expedition had largely ignored the San Juan Islands, which may have seemed too remote for settlement in 1840. As settlers claimed prime agricultural land on the mainland, however, the island's prairies became increasingly attractive to homesteaders. By the late 1850s, American settlers had arrived on San Juan Island, and the resolution of the boundary dispute became urgent.

Archibald Campbell, chief clerk of the war department, headed the American team of boundary surveyors that was established in 1857. The U.S. Boundary Commission was charged with not only determining the water boundary between Washington Territory and British Columbia but also analyzing the "Haro" (San Juan) and "Northern" (Canadian Gulf) islands for settlement and resource extraction. With an influx of miners to the region and the rapid settlement of Puget Sound area valleys, Americans eyed prospective agricultural areas in the islands. As Archibald Campbell stated in 1858, "recent emigration to this region has attracted considerable

27. The U.S. Exploring Expedition was an expedition conducted by the U.S. Navy that explored the Pacific Ocean, including the West Coast of the United States and the Puget Sound region, between 1838 and 1942.

attention to this beautiful and picturesque group of islands, and much greater interest that heretofore is now manifested in the settlement of the boundary question. The uncertainty in regard to their sovereignty prevents them from being occupied by American settlers."[28] In Campbell's eyes, the archipelago's natural landscape offered enticements to American settlers seeking agricultural or resource extraction opportunities.

Boundary commissioners' records offer the best description of any historical records of San Juan Island's landscape during the nineteenth century. In language typical of the time, they portrayed the island as an agricultural Eden, lacking only industrious Americans who would turn the land into a profitable landscape. As the commission explored the island, they examined and were impressed by the island's prospects for agriculture, fishing, and mineral extraction. In this way, they exemplified the typical nineteenth-century American view of nature as a resource waiting to be exploited.

When the commission members described the island, they, like other explorers, commented on a landscape shaped by the Northern Straits Indians. The prevalence of open timber and prairie on the island were probably the result of intentionally set fires; the practice that had encouraged desirable native plant growth for the Northern Straits also made the island exceptionally attractive to settlers. It is unclear exactly how much prairie existed on San Juan Island at the time. According to George Gibbs, the commission's geologist and interpreter and an Eastern intellectual and author who had worked for the federal government on Indian commissions, "the amount of actual prairie land on the island can hardly be stated with exactness, much of what is called so being rather open timber." He estimated that Home Prairie, which by that time was the site of the Hudson's Bay Company's Belle Vue Sheep Farm, was about two miles long by one-half mile wide. Oak Prairie, now called San Juan Valley, comprised about three and one-half square miles, or about a thousand acres. Gibbs noted that there were other, smaller prairies on the island as well. Henry Custer, a Swiss-born topographer who served as the boundary commission's assistant, was told of one sizable prairie in the northern part of the island, though he was not able to see it. Some of these prairies had undoubtedly served as camas growing locations for the Northern Straits.[29]

The commissioners enthusiastically promoted the island's agricultural possibilities. Gibbs estimated that between one-third and one-half of the island's land was arable. He declared the soil "excellent, but on the Belle Vue prairie somewhat gravelly."[30] Custer estimated that between fifty and sixty claims of 160 acres each "of good and valuable land" could be established, while Gibbs predicted that about 130 claims could be settled.[31] Gibbs believed that when "subjected to cultivation, [the island] will doubtless reward the husbandman with abundant crops. The soil . . . is almost inexhaustible."[32] The geologist concluded that from "an agricultural point of view San Juan assumes a decidedly prominent place among the rest of the islands of the Sound. The soil is almost thoroughly good and productive and in low situated places even rich. . . . I have no hesitation in saying that these islands are in every respect as valuable,

28. Archibald Campbell to Lewis Cass, Secretary of State, September 25, 1858, reprinted in U.S. Department of State, *The Northwest Boundary: Discussion of the Water Boundary Question* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1868), 51.

29. George Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859, Appendix C, Record Group (RG) 76, Records of the Boundary Claims Commissions and Arbitrations, Northwest Boundary Survey, National Archives at College Park, Maryland (NACP).

30. Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859.

31. Henry Custer, Geographical Memoir, Appendix D, April 11, 1859, RG 76, NACP; and Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859.

32. Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859.

Figure 13. Nineteenth century surveyors were impressed by the amount of grasslands on the island, and were optimistic about the island's agricultural potential. (Author photo.)

agriculturally, as the settled part of Vancouver's Island."[33] Custer tempered Gibbs's enthusiasm somewhat as he noted that parts of the southwestern end of the island (probably the southern slopes of Mt. Finlayson) were "so exposed to the sweep of southern gales that no grain or fruit could be grown there."[34]

Much of the island's terrain was rocky or hilly and therefore not suitable to field crops, but the commissioners believed that these areas were perfect for raising sheep. Gibbs believed that "much of what is not available for the plough affords good pasturage." Custer declared, "all land not fit for cultivation is nevertheless perfectly adapted to grazing purposes." He believed that even the island's hillsides, where the soil was "thin and rocky," possessed good grass for sheep.[35] Gibbs reported that "some of the hills are grassy to their summits," while other hills were "covered with a luxuriant growth of grass," perfect for sheep grazing. He observed that Belle Vue Farm's sheep fared well on the grass and the camas. According to Campbell, mutton raised both on San Juan and Vancouver Island "is remarkable for its delicacy of flavor, which may be accounted for by the peculiar properties of the grazing." He also noted that the absence of predators, along with the "sweet, nutritious grass" and the island's mild climate made San Juan perfect for raising sheep.[36] The commission did not suggest that other livestock could be successfully raised on the island. Although the mutton was eaten locally, wool, not meat, was the primary export product obtained from sheep. Wool could easily be shipped around the world, an important factor for farmers in such a remote location as San Juan Island.

Farmers and livestock ranchers needed a reliable supply of fresh water, and the commissioners' report assured potential settlers that an adequate number of streams and lakes watered the

33. George Gibbs to Lieut. John G. Parke, February 24, 1858, RG 76, NACP.

34. Custer, Geographical Memoir, April 11, 1859.

35. Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859; and Custer, Geographical Memoir, April 11, 1859.

36. Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859; and Campbell, "Northwest Boundary," 133.

island. Henry Custer reported that the one permanent creek on the island, which ran through Oak Prairie and emptied on the southwest side of the island, was of "considerable size." He observed several other seasonal streams, as well as two permanent lakes that drained to the west. "Altogether, there seems to be no want of water on the island," Custer determined. Gibbs was more effusive in his praise of San Juan's water resources. He thought some of the island's creeks were "of sufficient size and force to produce excellent mill power," perhaps for grain since the island lacked good timber resources. The island's saltwater harbors provided safe anchorage for settlers' boats and merchant vessels. Griffin Bay impressed Campbell as a harbor location, "one of the best and safest on the whole sound, with good anchorage almost everywhere." Custer also noted that the sheltered bays on the island's northwest side, near English Camp, would make excellent harbors.[37]

San Juan's trees paled compared to the giant cedars and firs that grew on the mainland, and the men believed that the forested land on the island would be most valuable when it was cleared for agriculture. Gibbs reported that the forests of San Juan endured frequent fires. Burning by the Northern Straits created valuable prairie land for American settlers, but it reduced the value of the island's timber. Gibbs noted that "the timber is small and easily cleared," and he believed that when the land was "divested of [timber] by the hardy pioneer, [it] can be brought into profitable cultivation." Fir was the dominant tree, according to Custer, though he noted a "species of stunted oak" (Garry Oak) that grew on Oak Prairie. Custer also noted that the forests were less dense than on the mainland, with many open areas. Once settlers cleared timber from valley bottoms, he believed, "grain of every variety could be cultivated with rich returns." Gibbs did note a potentially valuable stand of large cedars at the north end of the island that he suggested could be logged profitably.[38]

As the commission's geologist, Gibbs was charged with examining the mineral resources of the island. Vancouver Island contained valuable coal deposits, and though the commissioners hoped to find coal also in the San Juan Archipelago, only Orcas Island contained a small deposit. San Juan Island did contain high quality limestone, however, "a circumstance of great importance" to Campbell. The limestone was valuable both as lime and as a building material. The discovery was especially important since no limestone deposits had been found in the Puget Sound area, and the rock had to be imported from either California or Vancouver Island.[39]

The fisheries resources of the island, which could "easily be made very productive and profitable," impressed the commissioners. Campbell believed the islands might contain the most productive fishery in the Puget Sound region, and the men were impressed by the numbers of salmon Hudson's Bay Company employees were able to catch off of San Juan Island."[40] Custer noted that "halibut and codfish are also taken in large numbers, and are said to be unsurpassed in quality." Gibbs noted, "Persons supplied with the proper appliances for carrying on a fishery might find it a profitable occupation."[41]

Impressed as they were with San Juan Island's natural resources, the commissioners probably did not look to the island's fisheries or native plants for their own sustenance. Despite the

37. Custer, Geographical Memoir, April 11, 1859; and Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859.

38. Custer, Geographical Memoir, April 11, 1859; and Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859. Ship's knees were used to frame ships.

39. Campbell to Cass, September 25, 1858, in *Northwest Boundary*, 7.

40. Campbell to Cass, September 25, 1858, 7.

41. Custer, Geographical Memoir, April 11, 1859; and Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859.

abundance of fish and shellfish, the Americans did not mention eating seafood from the island's waters. Nor did they record eating berries or any other plants native to the island. Instead, the men appear to have survived on rations and some game, such as venison, though it is not known whether they hunted themselves or purchased the deer from the Indians. On one occasion when provisions were low, Charles Griffin of the Hudson's Bay Company's Belle Vue Sheep Farm presented William Warren, the commission secretary, and Caleb Kennerly, the expedition's naturalist and surgeon, with "a fat lamb, which he had selected from his flock. . . . This present was fully appreciated . . . as our venison had given out and we were reduced to . . . rations."[42] The commissioners were grateful to accept food fitting to European and American tastes. Gibbs had worked as an ethnologist among Indian groups in the Pacific Northwest and served as a translator for the boundary commission, so it is likely he was familiar with native foods of the region. However, there is no evidence that Gibbs used his knowledge or communication skills to procure local foods other than venison.

The commission evaluated other islands in the archipelago in the same manner. They were especially impressed with Orcas Island, which also had a considerable amount of arable land as well as at least one coal bed, but the men believed that many of the islands could be successfully settled, due to their water resources and mild climate. To the commission, all of the islands were perfect for raising sheep due to the absence of predators and the abundance of forage.[43] However, in their view, San Juan Island was the best location for potential settlers due to its abundance of prairie land.

The archipelago's beauty charmed the American commission members, just as it had impressed their British counterparts. Campbell believed that the islands contained some of the loveliest harbors in the world, and he thought that the interspersed patches of prairie and forest and the "mountain sides covered with luxuriant grass to their summits," gave the islands a "pleasingly rural aspect." The south facing, untimbered slopes of the islands, such as the one on Mt. Finlayson, particularly struck Campbell. "This peculiarity is so striking as to attract the attention of all who traverse these waters, and in spring time and early summer, when the grass is green and the flowers in bloom, the prospect is enchanting."[44]

The commissioners had complained of the confusing nature of the island's names after consulting Spanish, British, and American maps of the archipelago. For unknown reasons, the maps of the U.S. Coast Survey, published in the mid 1850s, ignored some of Wilkes's designations while retaining others. To add to the confusion, the British had their own set of names for many of the islands and waterways. The commissioners favored Wilkes's names, except where the Spanish names were "well established." Therefore, San Juan Island retained its Spanish name rather than the British designation "Belle Vue" or Wilkes's name, "Rodgers." The commission's designations became the permanent names for the islands.

Military Surveying in the Late Nineteenth Century

After the resolution of the boundary dispute in 1872, the island remained a strategically valuable site, and the American army surveyed and evaluated the former military camps on San Juan Island for potential military reservations. The island had been occupied by American and British troops beginning in 1859 and 1860, respectively, and they remained at their camps

42. William Warren, Geographical Memoir, Appendix F, 1860, RG 76, NACP.

43. Campbell to Cass, September 25, 1858, in *Northwest Boundary*, 133.

44. Campbell to Cass, September 25, 1858, 4.

until the international boundary was determined in favor of the Americans. In 1873, the army's board of engineers proposed that the southeastern end of San Juan Island, along with six other parcels in the archipelago, be reserved for defensive purposes. The army asked the General Land Office, the federal agency charged with selling lands to homesteaders, to refrain from surveying and selling the island's lands until the army could choose military reservation sites. In March 1874, Major Nathaniel Michler was directed to survey the seven areas chosen by the army as potential reservations, and by September, he had completed his assignment.[45] Michler selected sites based on their defensive capabilities, including their potential for defensive works development. Each reservation had to be less than 640 acres, according to an act of Congress passed in 1853.[46] The army gave squatters, islanders who resided within the boundaries of the newly established reservations, until January 1, 1878, to vacate the newly established reservations.

The geography of the southeastern part of San Juan Island made the area well suited to defensive purposes, and 640 acres were reserved for the military in this area. The reservation encompassed Mount Finlayson, Cattle Point, Rocky Point, Neck Point, and Goose Island, though it did not include the American Camp (which American troops had occupied between 1859 and 1872) and Belle Vue Sheep Farm sites. Michler included Mt. Finlayson in the reservation due to its "most comprehensive and commanding view." Michler also noted that Griffin Bay was "well sheltered," and he considered the harbor "most important as an anchorage."[47] Point Caution, on the northeastern part of the island (what would later become the University of Washington's Friday Harbor laboratories), was also designated for military use. In December 1875, seven military reservations were officially set aside in the islands.

Army surveyors working under Michler were charged with evaluating lands for military reservations, but they, like boundary commissioners George Gibbs and Henry Custer before them, also expressed their belief that island, particularly the American Camp site, could be successfully settled and farmed. "The larger part of this township is prairie, of which the soil is sandy and of very good quality. Scattered over the prairie are small groves of alder, willow and pine," they noted, which was wood that settlers could use for building materials and firewood. The large spring southwest of the military camp provided "fine fresh water . . . a full supply during all seasons of the year."[48] Their notes describe a landscape altered since the arrival of Euro-Americans. The north side of Mount Finlayson was thickly wooded with fir, cedar, maple, and alder, and the surveyors reported dense undergrowth, perhaps as a result from the cessation of burning by the displaced Northern Straits. The southern slopes of Mount Finlayson were covered in bunchgrass, a species introduced after the arrival of Hudson's Bay Company sheep.[49]

45. Unknown author to Captain Sears, May 5, 1888, Office of the Chief of Engineers, Land Papers, San Juan Island, National Archives Building, Washington DC (NAB).

46. H. Clay Wood, Assistant Adjutant General, Headquarters, Department of the Pacific, to unknown, January 8, 1876, RG 77, NACP.

47. Nathaniel Michler, "A Hydrographic Report of United States Military Reservations on San Juan and Adjacent Islands," September 8, 1874, RG 77, NACP.

48. T. M. Reed and John Whitworth, "Transcript of the Field Notes of the Survey of Townships 34, 35, 36, 37, of the Willamette Meridian," General Land Office Survey, 1874, Bureau of Land Management Records Center, Portland, Oregon.

49. G. F. Cramer, "Report of Survey of U.S. Military Reservations on San Juan and Adjacent Islands," July and August 1874, RG 77, NACP.

The surveyors observed that settlers had claimed the entire area, though no farms had been established yet on the former military camp. To the northwest of American Camp, on Robert Frazer and Christopher Rosler's claims, the investigators classified the soil in the fields and alder bottoms as good, but they considered most of the soil second rate. The timber consisted of fir, small pines, alder, willow, and gooseberry, with undergrowth of wild rose and fern. Isaac Sandwith's claim, just west of American Camp, consisted of rocky prairie, with thickets of wild rose, willow, and gooseberry. At English Camp, which British troops had occupied, they described the soil near Garrison Bay as "first rate," though they rest of the area they classified as "rough, inferior, and second rate."[50]

On the whole, however, Michler did not believe that the island would become a prosperous agricultural landscape. While previous surveyors, such as the American boundary commissioners, optimistically predicted that the island could become an agricultural Eden, Michler's report foreshadows some of the difficulties island farmers would face in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He classified much of the land as "inferior," "second and third rate," and "rocky." The army engineer stated that the island contained "very little arable ground," and he revealed that though about 150 people had settled the island, hardly any land was actually being farmed. He noted that most settlers raised sheep, an activity suitable to the island's rocky terrain. Furthermore, Michler was aware that the island's location, far from mainland markets, posed problems for farmers and merchants. Unlike other nineteenth-century island visitors who placed primary importance on the potential for natural resource use, Michler envisioned a different type of value in the island's natural landscape. He called the island's scenery "beautiful and extensive" and the climate "salubrious," and he thought that given more developed transportations and communications, the island could become a tourist destination and "a delightful summer home retreat" for residents in Victoria.[51]

Despite Michler's pragmatic observations, island settlers pursued agricultural endeavors and resource extraction in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. He had envisioned the island as a strategic location for national defense, but the sites he selected for military reservations were never developed for this purpose. San Juan Island also did not quickly become a tourist destination, since the remote location and lack of regular transportation to the islands kept large numbers of mainland visitors from vacationing in the archipelago until the 1920s. Instead, most residents tried to shape the island's natural environment into a profitable agricultural landscape.

50. Reed and Whitworth, "Transcript of the Field Notes of the Survey of Townships 34, 35, 36, 37, of the Willamette Meridian."

51. Nathaniel Michler to Brigadier General A.A. Humphreys, April 20, 1875, RG 77, NACP.

Chapter Three

Island of Plenty: The Hudson's Bay Company and San Juan Island

While European explorers considered San Juan Island's environment mostly incompatible with their economic goals, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) thought differently. To company officials, the Pacific Northwest was an unexploited region ripe for commercial development, and San Juan Island was one of the region's untapped resources. The HBC imagined the island as a potentially profitable landscape, a place that not only met the needs of its residents but also the demands of a market economy. The organization expanded to the island during the mid-nineteenth century in an attempt to control the area's natural resources and prevent American settlement. Company employees extracted and sold raw materials, raised livestock, planted crops, and exported salmon, and in less than twenty years their operations transformed San Juan Island's natural landscape into a productive agricultural environment.

The Hudson's Bay Company absorbed the North West Company (which held a royal charter to operate on the Northwest coast of North America) in 1821, thereby bringing Hudson's Bay operations to the region. In 1842, George Simpson, the chief factor of the HBC, ordered the establishment of Fort Victoria on Vancouver Island to assert British authority in the region and to provide the company with both a trading outpost accessible by sea and a base of operations from which to explore the area's natural resources. This move laid the groundwork for British settlement of San Juan Island in the early 1850s.[1]

The Hudson's Bay Company exploited new and remote markets, but when they turned their attention to San Juan, they did so within a different framework. The fur trade in the Pacific Northwest had declined by the mid-nineteenth century due to dwindling beaver numbers and changes in English fashion (silk hats had become more popular than beaver hats by this time), so the Company sought to remain profitable through "the extraction, trade, and export of various natural resources."[2] The provisions trade had become a viable export industry, and ships and employees, formerly employed in transporting furs, now mobilized to transport other commodities. By the early 1850s, when the HBC expanded to San Juan Island, the organization was no longer a fur trading company, but, according to historian Joseph E. Taylor, "a general resource company that had recognized an abundant new environment and a broad commercial opportunity" in the Pacific Northwest. The HBC sought commodities such as fish, lumber, and agricultural products to sell to markets in Asia, California, and Alaska.[3]

The company's salmon exporting business was especially lucrative, and it maintained a Honolulu office to facilitate the sale of its North American products to distant markets in Asia and California. In 1845, salted salmon from the Pacific Northwest sold for ten to eleven dollars

1. Although the Hudson's Bay Company claimed to have taken formal possession of the island by placing a wooden tablet on Mt. Finlayson in 1845, no evidence for any such an action has been found.

2. Richard Somerset Mackie, *Trading beyond the Mountains: The British Fur Trade on the Pacific, 1793–1843* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1997), 151, 282.

3. Joseph E. Taylor, III, *Making Salmon: An Environmental History of the Northwest Fisheries Crisis* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), 60.

per barrel in Hawaii, and since each barrel cost the company only four dollars to produce, the HBC made a good profit. In 1850, 4,000 barrels of salmon from the company's Fort Langley (located southwest of present-day Vancouver, British Columbia, on the Fraser River) were sold in Hawaii for $41,000, "a very pretty sum" concluded Vancouver Island governor James Douglas.[4] Fort Langley, which took advantage of the vast Fraser River salmon runs, produced more salmon for export than any other HBC post. California became an especially important market in 1848, when the gold rush spurred demand for commodities such as salmon.[5]

With these profits in mind, Douglas logically sought to expand the company's Northwest fishing operations onto San Juan Island.[6] He undoubtedly knew of the abundant catches off the island's west side, where Fraser River salmon migrated to and from the ocean. Company officials had observed Northern Straits Indians reef-netting locations in the area, and the island's proximity to Fort Victoria made San Juan a convenient location for catching and processing salmon. In 1850, Douglas took steps to exploit the salmon runs off San Juan Island. The governor sent a Mr. Simpson, a company clerk, to San Juan Island to establish a salmon fishing operation on the island, possibly at Eagle Cove. Simpson remained on the island for only a few weeks, and there is no record of any salmon packing or exporting in that year.[7] His short visit may have been an exploratory mission that laid the foundation for the company's foray onto the island the next year, or it may have been designed to indicate formal British possession of the island.

On June 1, 1851, the HBC sent William Macdonald to establish a seasonal salmon fishery on the island's south end. MacDonald traveled by canoe from Fort Victoria to San Juan Island with an Indian crew, a pilot, and four French-Canadian workers.[8] Macdonald and the pilot chose a "small sheltered bay" on the southern part of the island, and though he did not pinpoint the location, it was likely within present-day boundaries of the historical park. An 1860 U.S. military map shows an HBC fishing station on the southern part of Griffin Bay, east of Jakle's Lagoon, but this location may not have been the site of the original operation.[9] Macdonald recorded that the workers erected "a rough shed for the salting, packing, and canning of salmon." He lived in a "primitive shelter" of four posts covered by a cedar bark roof for the first month of his stay. Macdonald purchased salmon from the Northern Straits, who seasonally fished in the area of the salmon banks, at the rate of one blanket (worth four dollars) for every sixty fish.[10] Rather than subsist on the wild foods and fish of the island, he and his men lived off supplies the schooner *Cadboro* brought from Fort Victoria. Macdonald must not have found his shelter too comfortable. After a month on the island, he elected to live on board the *Cadboro* for the duration of his two-month stay. He then returned to Victoria to do office work.[11] There is no record of who succeeded Macdonald, though Charles Griffin, the

4. Taylor, *Making Salmon*, 32.

5. John Work to Edward Ermatinger, August 8, 1856, John Work Papers, Victoria Provincial Archives, Victoria, British Columbia.

6. Hartwell Bowsfield, ed., *Fort Victoria Letters* (Winnipeg: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1979), 30.

7. David Richardson, *Pig War Islands* (Eastsound, WA: Orcas Publishing Co., 1971), 32.

8. William John Macdonald, *A Pioneer 1851* (Victoria, BC, 1914), 30.

9. James W. Forsyth, "Southeast Portion of San Juan Island," Map, 1860, Record Group (RG) 49, Records of the Bureau of Land Management, National Archives Building, Washington, DC (NAB). While this shows us the location of the station in 1860, no maps or records have been found that specify the station's location in 1851.

10. Richardson, *Pig War Islands*, 33.

11. MacDonald, *A Pioneer 1851*, 31.

Belle Vue Sheep Farm manager, may have overseen the operation throughout the rest of the decade.

Although the first year's output was small, yielding only sixty barrels of salmon (each containing forty to forty-five salmon), in subsequent years the endeavor proved successful, producing from 1,500–3,000 barrels of salmon per year.[12] Packed in barrels, the salmon were cured then shipped to Hawaii, ultimately destined for markets in California and Asia. Douglas was pleased with the operation's success and made plans to expand it. However, the fishery did not sustain this level of harvest for long, and it began to decline noticeably in the late 1850s. Douglas blamed what he called the "cyclical nature of salmon runs," in which some years produced exceptionally few fish.[13] In 1858, no fish were packed, and neither Charles Griffin nor Robert Firth (Griffin's successor as farm manager) mentioned a salmon fishing operation in their records after this time.

Wary of American expansion into the Pacific Northwest, the HBC increased its operations on San Juan Island. In November 1853, probably in response to the archipelago's incorporation into Whatcom County in the newly created Washington Territory, the company sent Charles Griffin to set up a sheep farm (sheep were one of the company's most important commodities). San Juan's strategic location on Haro Strait, a trade route between the Queen Charlotte Islands (now known as Haida Gwaii), mainland British Columbia, and the Pacific Ocean, also spurred the company's expansion onto the island.[14] Gold had been discovered in the Queen Charlotte Islands, off the northwest coast of British Columbia, in 1851, and Douglas wanted to protect these resources from American encroachment.[15]

HBC officials argued that the island was an essential part of their organization's agricultural production network. They claimed, for example, that Vancouver Island lacked the necessary natural resources to raise sheep. John Work, an HBC employee, wrote that Fort Victoria had "limited pasturage . . . . We have not a great extent of clear land." He went on to complain about the difficulty of clearing forested land and the poor quality of the grass, which he called "artificial."[16] A wheat shortage on Vancouver Island in 1854, coupled with the high cost of importing grain from Oregon, also spurred the company to seek additional cropland on San Juan Island. Many Americans, such as Whatcom County assessor Henry Crosbie, were skeptical. He believed that the company occupied the island primarily for strategic reasons. In 1859 Crosbie stated that "the alleged cause of the sheep being placed there was the insufficiency of the pasturage in the part of Vancouver Island where they had previously been herded—the true cause was undoubtedly to give to a shadowy claim the substance of an occupation." Archibald Campbell, secretary of the U.S. Boundary Commission that visited San Juan Island in the late 1850s, held a similar view. He stated that Hudson's Bay expansion onto the island "was doubtless accelerated by the territorial legislature . . . embracing the Haro Archipelago in one of its counties."[17]

12. George Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859, Appendix C, RG 76, Records of the Boundary Claims Commissions and Arbitrations, Northwest Boundary Survey, National Archives at College Park, Maryland (NACP).

13. Bowsfield, *Fort Victoria Letters*, 32.

14. The Queen Charlotte Islands were officially renamed Haida Gwaii in 2010.

15. Barry M. Gough, *The Royal Navy and the Northwest Coast of North America, 1810–1914: A Study of British Maritime Ascendancy* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1971), 132.

16. John Work to William Tolmie, March 29, 1852, John Work Papers, Victoria Provincial Archives.

17. Henry Crosbie, "Assessment of HBC Co. Property on San Juan Island Made by Assessors of Whatcom County, Washington Territory, May 20, 1859," RG 76, NACP; and Archibald Campbell to Lewis Cass, Secretary of State,

Figure 14. The Belle Vue Sheep Farm site, with Haro Strait in the background. These grasslands provided land easily cleared for crops, and a nearby spring offered fresh water for company employees and animals. (Author photo.)

As American settlers began to find their way to the island in the latter half of the decade, the company wanted to retain the island to prevent "a settlement of lawless American citizens, so near to Vancouver's Island."[18] American boundary commission geologist George Gibbs's assessment of the HBC's colonization of the archipelago seems the most logical. He believed that the company settled the island with the intention of "securing all eligible sites for themselves and strengthening the quasi claim of the British government." To solidify their claim to the islands, the company urged Douglas to find evidence at Fort Victoria of an action reputedly taken in 1845, when an HBC employee claimed to have taken possession of San Juan Island by placing a wooden tablet on Mt. Finlayson. The British had learned an important lesson from the dispute over the border of the Oregon Territory, and it looked to formal possession of the San Juan Islands to keep American settlement at bay. However, Douglas was unable to prove the 1845 claim.[19]

The Hudson's Bay Company also tried to assert its presence on Lopez Island, just east of San Juan. Douglas granted a license in 1852 to a company employee, William Pattle, to cut timber on the southwestern part of the island for the San Francisco market. After building two primitive log cabins and cutting spars, Pattle abandoned the enterprise to mine coal in Bellingham.[20] In September 1853, the HBC secretary advised the governor that "the proceedings of the Americans with regard to the islands should be narrowly watched, and that the most easterly of them should be occupied and turned to some use by the Company's

September 25, 1858, reprinted in U.S. Department of State, *The Northwest Boundary: Discussion of the Water Boundary Question* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1868), 51.

18. John Shepherd to Henry Labouchere, February 29, 1856, Record Office Transcripts of the HBC, Victoria Provincial Archives.

19. Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859; and Secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company to James Douglas, September 1, 1853, Record Office Transcripts of the HBC, Victoria Provincial Archives.

20. Richardson, *Pig War Islands*, 34.

servants." In February 1854, company leaders approved Douglas's plan to secure possession of Lopez Island, and the secretary instructed Douglas to offer land grants of no more than 500 acres each (he believed that fifty acres of good land would be adequate) to British subjects, "with the view of securing occupation" not just on Lopez, but any of the islands. Company officials believed that the claims of British citizens would "be more likely to be respected" by the American government than would the claims of the Hudson's Bay Company.[21] However, the HBC had never encouraged settlers, and, according to historian Michael Vouri, Douglas "had been so successful at discouraging colonists, no one was around to take him up on [the offer]."[22] Douglas blamed the lack of British settlers on the unavailability of free land. The company never succeeded in establishing their operations on any island but San Juan.

British and Spanish explorers had viewed the island as almost worthless, but the island's natural resources and location proved well suited for HBC endeavors. In December 1853, a month after Griffin arrived on San Juan, the steamer *Beaver* brought the first sheep to the island from Fort Nisqually, an outpost of Puget's Sound Agricultural Company (a subsidiary of the HBC).[23] The company located the farm, named Belle Vue Sheep Farm, on the southern prairie in what is now the American Camp section of the historical park. Griffin named the grasslands Home Prairie. He estimated Home Prairie, which supplied grass for the sheep and other livestock landed by the company, to be about two miles long and one-half mile wide.[24] These grasslands provided land easily cleared for crops, and a nearby spring offered fresh water for company employees and animals. The farm, located near San Juan's southern shores, had easy access to the steamers that would transport goods between the island and Victoria. Griffin located a pier on the large bay to the north of the farm, then called Ontario Roads or San Juan Harbor (now called Griffin Bay), due to its sheltered location, which offered vessels safe harbor from sudden winter storms.[25] A cove on the southern shore of the island off Haro Strait provided safe landing for the canoes that brought passengers and mail from Victoria.[26]

San Juan proved perfect for raising sheep, and Belle Vue Sheep Farm continually expanded its enterprise throughout the island during the 1850s. Sheep, which prefer grazing on slopes, thrived on the island's steep, rocky terrain. Griffin reported that the animals found "excellent food on the hill side prairies." Although HBC employees raised livestock, crops, and garden vegetables on the island, wool was the primary product of the farm. Griffin's journal entries emphasize the importance of sheep to the company's farm; though his notes are brief, he always recorded the condition of the flocks. The company utilized the entire island to graze the animals, and while they were corralled at night, they roamed freely during the day. Griffin established at least four additional sheep stations on the island during the course of the decade. One of these, dubbed the "John Bull" station, included five or six acres of cleared land, though its exact location and purpose is unknown. The four other stations each consisted of a corral with a small sheepherder's cabin and were situated on prairies, connected to Belle Vue Sheep

21. Shepherd to Labouchere, February 29, 1856; and Secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company to James Douglas, September 16, 1853, Record Office Transcripts of the Hudson's Bay Company, Victoria Provincial Archives.

22. Michael Vouri, *The Pig War: Standoff at Griffin Bay* (Friday Harbor, Wash.: Griffin Bay Bookstore, 1999), 28.

23. Gough, *Royal Navy*, 84; and Erwin Thompson, *Historic Resource Study, San Juan Island National Historical Park, Washington* (Denver: National Park Service, 1972), 167.

24. Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859.

25. Henry Custer, "Report of Henry Custer, Assistant of a Reconnaissance of San Juan Island and the Saturna Group," April 11, 1859, RG 76, NACP.

26. Captain G. H. Richards, "Griffin Bay and Adjacent Anchorages," Map, Victoria Provincial Archives.

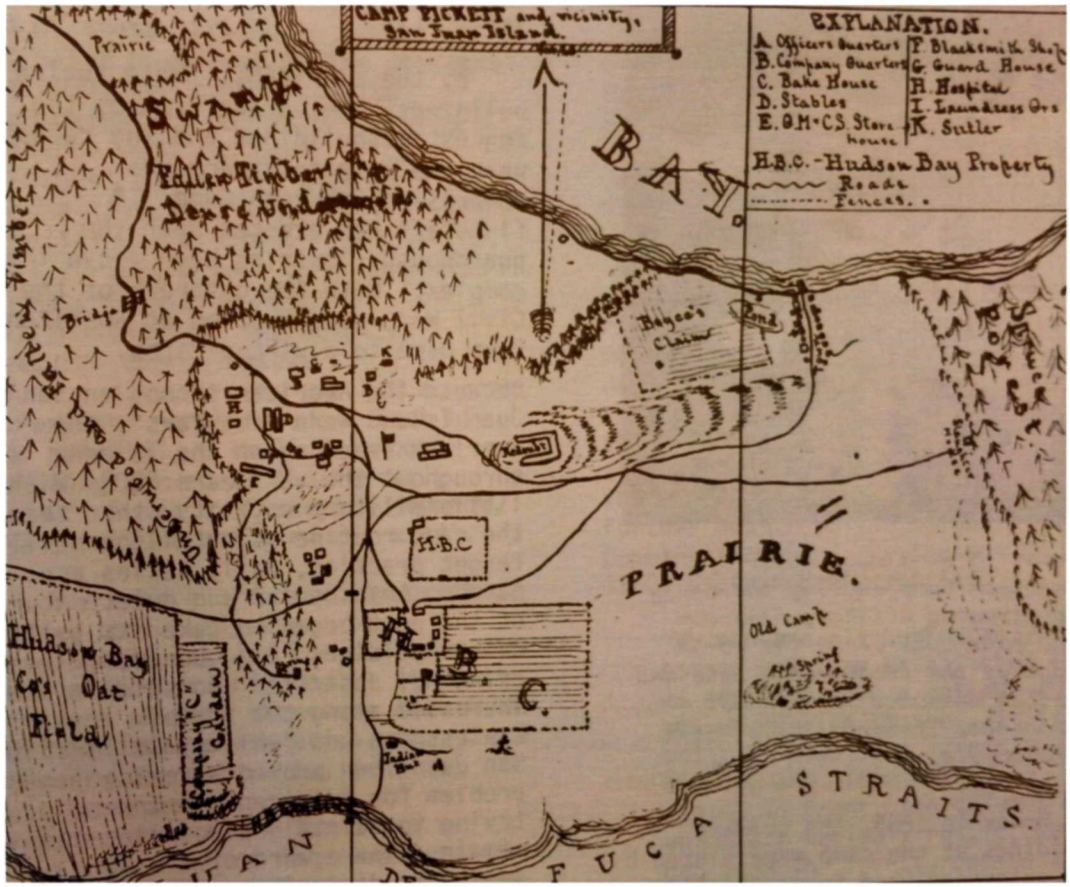


Figure 15. Belle Vue Sheep Farm and American Camp in the early 1860s. The Hudson's Bay Company found the large prairie perfect for agricultural activities like growing crops and raising livestock. (San Juan Island National Historical Park files).

Farm by road.[27] One was thought to be located near Friday Harbor, another south of Mitchell Bay, and one beneath Little Mountain near Kanaka Bay. An additional station may have been sited on Oak Prairie (now called San Juan Valley).[28]

San Juan Island proved an ideal environment in which to raise sheep, and the flocks prospered. On an 1855 visit, Douglas admired the healthy condition of the sheep on San Juan. They were free from "scab," a disease common in the Northwest. Even animals that arrived on the island with the disease during their stay had completely healed, according to Douglas.[29] Their numbers grew over the decade through natural increase, though Griffin lost a small number of the animals to wolves and to an unknown poisonous plant.[30] In 1853, the HBC imported 1,369 sheep to the island. In May 1856, their numbers had increased to 2,110, and by the next year, Griffin counted 2,890. In 1859, about 4,500 sheep roamed the island. Although the flocks prospered, they required workers to tend them and an infrastructure of buildings and

27. Custer, "Report of Henry Custer," April 11, 1859; and Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859.

28. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, Historic Base Map 1; and Vouri, *Pig War*, 29.

29. James Douglas to Secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company, February 24, 1855, Record Office Transcripts of the Hudson's Bay Company, Victoria Provincial Archives.

30. Charles Griffin, Belle Vue Sheep Farm Post Journal, November 15, 1858, Hudson's Bay Company Archives, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

transportation networks. The company employed sheepherders to wean, clean, and shear the sheep; sheepherders also protected the animals from both predators and, according to Griffin, "Indian sheepstealers."[31]

As the farm grew, the number of men employed by the farm rose. When Griffin landed on the island in 1853, he brought six HBC employees with him. By 1859, seventeen to nineteen men worked for Belle Vue Sheep Farm. Gibbs reported that the farm's employees included one Englishman, one Scotchman, one Hawaiian and two men of mixed ancestry, while five Hawaiians, one Scotchman, and six to eight Chinese and Indian men worked exclusively herding sheep or as farmhands.[32]

Farm employees raised and tended other livestock for export, employee rations, and farm work. Horses and oxen were indispensable to farm endeavors. Griffin utilized both animals to clear and plow fields, and horses also provided transportation. In 1853, the HBC brought three horses, two cows with calves, one heifer, one boar, and one sow with young to the island.[33] By 1859, the farm had thirty-five horses and forty head of cattle as well as oxen and pigs. Like the sheep, these animals required human labor for protection, and more structures such as barns, corrals, and troughs. Farm employees raised field crops to sustain the livestock throughout the winter.[34] They slaughtered and salted cattle and hogs for their rations, and they shipped surplus animals to Victoria for sale or export.

The farm met Douglas's expectations of a successful agricultural enterprise. During an 1855 visit, the governor said the land was of "very fine quality," and he predicted that Belle Vue would become "a very pretty tillage farm." Douglas proposed bringing new land under cultivation and sent additional oxen to the farm for this purpose.[35]

Daily life on the farm was a ceaseless cycle of tending the livestock and crops. In San Juan's mild climate, poor weather conditions rarely affected the men's ability to work. Company employees planted, weeded, and harvested the garden that grew at Home Prairie, then cleaned and stored the produce in root cellars. Farm workers used horses and oxen to clear about 100 acres around Belle Vue for field crops. Planting, harvesting, threshing, cleaning, and storing crops were year-round tasks. Company employees purchased seeds in Victoria and grew field crops such as oats, wheat, and peas, as well as garden vegetables including carrots, cabbages, turnips, and potatoes. They sowed and harvested grain for employee meals, for export, and for winter livestock feed. Typical Griffin journal entries include such comments as "all hands planting potatoes" or "all hands digging up and hauling turnips." A week's potato harvest could yield more than 600 pounds. Griffin called the returns on the plots "satisfactory."[36]

By producing and exporting resource-based commodities from San Juan Island, the Hudson's Bay Company brought the island into the global economy. Farm products such as wool, salmon, and grain were sold in Victoria and points around the globe. The company's Hawaiian office brokered many of the overseas exchanges, and the company traded lumber, fish, and flour from their Pacific Northwest operations for sugar, tobacco, molasses, coffee, rice, and salt from Hawaii and Asia. The salmon exported to Hawaii even became incorporated into the Hawaiian

31. San Juan Sheep Farm Account Book, May 31, 1857, Hudson's Bay Company Archives.

32. San Juan Sheep Farm Account Book, December 14, 1853; and Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859.

33. San Juan Sheep Farm Account Book, December 14, 1853.

34. Henry Crosbie, "Assessment of HBC Co. Property on San Juan Island."

35. Douglas to Secretary of the HBC, February 24, 1855.

36. Custer, "Report of Henry Custer," April 11, 1859.

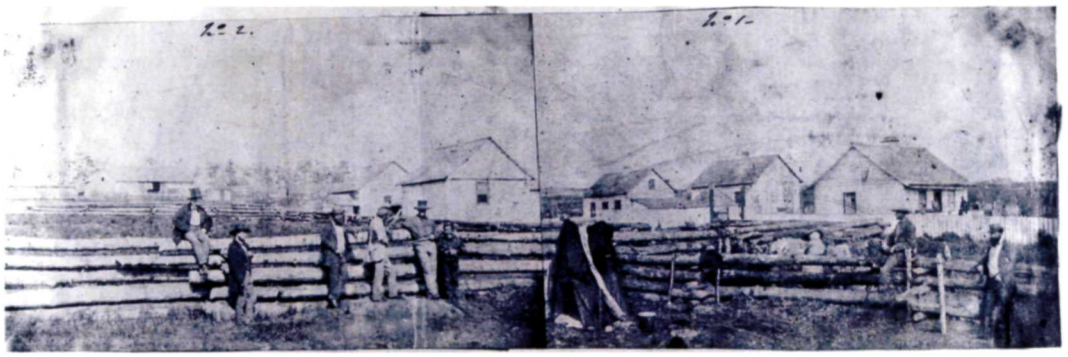


Figure 16. A rare photo of Belle Vue Sheep Farm (1859). (Courtesy of Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library).

diet.[37] The company recruited Hawaiian employees to work, primarily as sheepherders, in the Pacific Northwest. Locally, the island's mutton fed Belle Vue Sheep Farm and Fort Victoria employees, while hogs and cattle were sold in Victoria and given out as rations to farm employees. The company shipped San Juan Island wool to England, and though this endeavor proved unprofitable, it helped justify their presence on San Juan Island.[38]

Belle Vue Sheep Farm products also supplied miners in Victoria and mainland British Columbia and the British military during the occupation of San Juan Island. In 1858, about 35,000 prospective miners passed through Victoria on their way to the Fraser River gold fields on the mainland of British Columbia. Until the gold rush, the town of Victoria comprised little more than Fort Victoria. There was no food, shelter, or adequate water supply to accommodate the hoards of miners. A tent city quickly arose, and William Macdonald observed that the area began to take on the appearance of a town. To feed the influx of immigrants, the company shipped farm sheep and crops to Victoria and to the mainland of British Columbia. In a June 1859 letter, Roderick Finlayson at Fort Victoria asked Charles Griffin to send "all the sheep you may have on hand disposable for sale."[39] The gold rush appears to have drastically reduced the number of sheep on San Juan Island. After his request for sheep, Finlayson asked for the farm's "full supply of potatoes."[40] In the early 1860s, the HBC began to provide some supplies to the British military stationed at English Camp. In February 1861, Griffin reported sending sixty-two sheep to the camp. He sold additional sheep to the British military on San Juan Island in April and August that year.[41]

By the end of the decade, Belle Vue Sheep Farm consisted of seven small dwellings as well as barns and other outbuildings (there were seventeen structures total). Griffin's house was surrounded by "a fine collection of flowers," suggesting that he found it necessary to supplement the natural landscape to properly make his home on the island. Richard Mayne, a British boundary surveyor, described the farm as situated on "a beautiful prairie." The farm's cultivated areas included two large fenced areas for field crops and a garden, though the actual size of

37. Mackie, *Trading beyond the Mountains*, 155.

38. Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859.

39. Theodore Morgan, *Hawaii: A Century of Economic Change* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1941), 223; Macdonald, *A Pioneer 1851*, 31; and Roderick Finlayson to Charles Griffin, June 6, 1859, Belle Vue Sheep Farm Post Records, Hudson's Bay Company Archives.

40. Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859; and Finlayson to Griffin, June 6, 1859.

41. Charles Griffin, Belle Vue Sheep Farm Journal, 1861, Hudson's Bay Company Archives.

the area is unclear.[42] While the editor of the *British Colonist* (a Victoria newspaper) estimated that the HBC cultivated 100 acres, Gibbs speculated that six acres near the houses and an additional forty acres to the west were farmed. Henry Crosbie, the Whatcom County assessor, put the figure of plowed land slightly lower when he reported that 80 acres were "fenced and under cultivation."[43] As the editor of *British Colonist* described in 1859,

> The station faces the Straits of San Juan de Fuca, and comprises about six small one-story dwellings, of hewn logs, built around a small open square. Behind to the north are several barns. The dwellings are situated within a hundred yards of the shore, on the side of a gentle slope, running back about a half a mile to the summit of the peninsula. About one hundred acres around the station were enclosed and under cultivation. We were informed they claim the whole southern end of the island . . . nearly the whole of which is prairie and used as a sheep ranch. A herd of 4,000 and odd sheep, with some 1,000 lambs, were quietly grazing a short distance below."[44]

The construction of transportation routes for the Hudson's Bay Company's agricultural operations left an imprint on the island. In 1854, farm employees cut trees to build the first road on the island to facilitate the movement of their sheep. During a visit in January 1855, Douglas felt the grasslands were "rather scanty" for the number of sheep the Company grazed on the island. As a result, he ordered the company's Indian laborers to cut a road to fresh pasture on the island's west side, about sixteen miles from the farm. By that summer, roads linking sheep pastures to Belle Vue Sheep Farm crisscrossed the island and steamer docks dotted the shore. As the agricultural operations expanded, so did roads through the forests of San Juan Island. In March 1858, Griffin employed Indian labor to cut a road from one prairie to another to facilitate sheep grazing.[45] In September that year, roads were cut from "Park Hill" to a spring and from an unnamed prairie to the farm. Two months later, Griffin "sent all hands . . . out to cut a road thru from Lereux's Prairie, off Prairie du Chive, to Channel Prairie."[46]

The Hudson's Bay Company's operations modified the natural environment in ways that were perhaps unexpected, yet revealing of their economic rather than ecological perspective. For example, raising sheep for a global market led to increased herds and decreased rangeland. Farm sheep, whose grazing habits and sharp hooves prevented grass regeneration, roamed increasing distances throughout the island. By 1858, Griffin reported difficulty in finding fresh pasture for the expanding flocks. [47] The animals devastated native grasslands at American Camp. Unlike rhizomatous grasses, the caespitose (bunch) grasses that predominated on the island's southern prairies were unable to withstand heavy grazing.[48] Cryptogams, such as moss,

42. Lieutenant Thomas Casey, "Map of Southeast End of San Juan Island," December 1860, RG 77, Records of the Office of the Chief of Engineers, NAB; Thompson, *Historic Resource Study,* 170; Richard Mayne, *Four Years in British Columbia and Vancouver Island: An Account of their Forests, Rivers, Coasts, Gold Fields, and Resources for Colonization* (London: John Murray, 1862), 40.

43. Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859; and Crosbie, "Assessment of HBC Co. Property on San Juan Island."

44. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study,* 170.

45. Griffin, Belle Vue Sheep Farm Journal, March 15, 1858, Hudson's Bay Company Archives.

46. Griffin, Belle Vue Sheep Farm Journal, Charles, November 8, 1858, Hudson's Bay Company Archives. The names of these prairies are Griffin's; their locations are unclear.

47. Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859.

48. James K. Agee and David Rolph, *A Vegetation Management Plan for San Juan Island National Historical Park* (Seattle: National Park Service, 1993), 40.

ferns and fungi, were also not capable of surviving trampling by farm stock, paving the way for exotic plant species such as silver and early hairgrass, cheatgrass, Canada thistle, and tansy ragwort, which better tolerated sheep grazing.[49] The seeds of these exotic species journeyed to the island on company ships and mixed with field crop seed. Sheep even ate the species of cactus that grew on the island, "for moisture, during the summer," according to Gibbs.[50]

The company's use of San Juan Island not only altered native vegetation but also affected native animal populations on San Juan Island. Before the HBC's arrival, black bear, elk, deer, and wolves roamed the island. Company priorities lay in protecting their investment, however, and the arrival of the British spelled the demise of some animal species on the island, especially predators. William Macdonald reminisced about his stay in 1851 that "wolves used to prowl round us all night."[51] Wolves preyed on company sheep and were therefore a threat to the farm's principal product, and sheepherders laced sheep carcasses with strychnine to poison the predators. This killed a number of wolves, and according to the island's Indians, taught the remainder not to molest the sheep. Griffin was especially aggressive about exterminating wolves; in November 1858, his horse died after falling while being ridden in pursuit of a wolf.[52] Company employees also shot wolves, and as a result, the animals were probably extinct on the island by the 1860s. Hunting by HBC employees (as well as early American settlers) devastated black bear and elk populations on the island, and though some deer remained, their numbers had drastically dwindled by 1860. Henry Custer reported in 1859 that game was "almost extinct" on the island. Robert Firth, farm overseer in 1865 and 1866, never reported any encounters with predators.[53] In less than a decade, British and American residents of San Juan had wiped out the island's predator and large wildlife populations.

The HBC's quest for profits also altered the island's forests. European explorers had derided the timber quality of the San Juan Islands, but the forests suited the needs of the company and its agricultural operations. Cutting and hauling wood frequently occupied farm employees as they converted trees into fuel and building materials. The farm initially imported bricks and planks from Fort Victoria in 1854, but in later years, farm employees utilized the island's forests for building materials. Workers cut pine and cedar to construct houses, fences, outbuildings, and roofing shingles as well as barns and enclosures for livestock. They also built a slip for boats and at least one bridge. Livestock required fenced enclosures and barns, and company employees cut timber to construct these structures. Company employees also cut oak from the slopes of Mt. Young, near English Camp, to make carts, wheels, and harrows (a type of plow that pulverizes and smoothes the soil). Wood was also fuel for the HBC steamers *Otter* and *Beaver*, which carried supplies, mail, and passengers to Belle Vue Sheep Farm and farm products to Fort Victoria. Company employees did much of the woodcutting, but Northern Straits Indians also cut and sold wood to the company to power their steamers.[54]

49. Jim Romo, "Considerations for Management of Grassland Vegetation at San Juan Island National Historical Park," in Cathy Gilbert, *Historic Landscape Report: San Juan Island National Historical Park* (Seattle: National Park Service, 1985).

50. Gibbs, Geographical Memoir, March 18, 1859.

51. Macdonald, *A Pioneer 1851*, 30.

52. Griffin, Belle Vue Sheep Farm Journal, November 15, 1858, Hudson's Bay Company Archives.

53. Gordon Keith, ed., *The James Francis Tulloch diary, 1875–1910* (Portland: Bingford and Mort, 1978), 21; Custer, "Report of Henry Custer," April 11, 1859; and Robert Firth, 1865–1866, Diary, Victoria Provincial Archives.

54. Griffin, Belle Vue Sheep Farm Post Journal; and Journal of the Steamer *Beaver*, Hudson's Bay Company Archives.

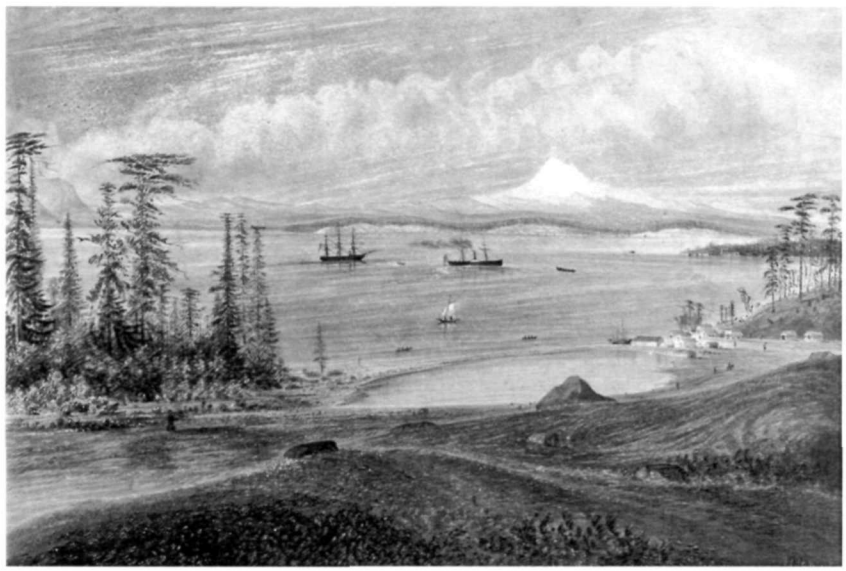


Figure 17. Griffin Bay and San Juan Town with Mt. Baker in the background in 1859, by landscape painter James Madison Alden. (San Juan Island National Historical Park files).

The HBC created, as best it could, a familiar agricultural landscape that reflected both market needs and cultural beliefs. While the Northern Straits Indians relied on the fisheries, wild plants, and game of San Juan Island, HBC employees preferred to raise garden vegetables and livestock and to import supplementary rations from Victoria. Mutton was a staple of farm employees, and sheep were slaughtered for rations routinely. Pork from Belle Vue pigs supplemented their diet, and on at least one occasion Griffin ordered a cow butchered for workers' rations. Cows also provided milk to farm employees. The farm imported salted beef, tea, "grease" (probably lard or other cooking fat), and flour from Fort Victoria. No evidence suggests that company employees ate locally available fish or plants.[55]

The British presence on the island could not deter American settlers from establishing residency, and squatters continually encroached on HBC operations. As settlers and, after 1859, the American military established themselves on lands used by the farm, company employees complained of disruption to their operation. A.G. Dallas complained to Douglas in 1859 of "the great damage sustained by the Hudson's Bay Company." He declared, "Our sheep, cattle and horses are now disturbed at their pasturage, and driven from their drinking springs, in the vicinity of which the troops are encamped. Much of the pasture is also destroyed."[56] The next year, Dallas reported that "the whole island is overrun by squatters and whiskey sellers—Our sheep and other animals are consequently much disturbed, and excluded from several of the former runs altogether, and the Indians and our own people are much demoralized." Upon arriving on the island in September 1860, he reported that "every man we had was in a state of drunkenness, and Mr. Griffin driven to his wits end." Dallas blamed the drunkenness and subsequent loss of labor on Americans, who sold whiskey to soldiers, Indians, and HBC employees alike from the newly established village called San Juan Town.[57]

55. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 180.

56. A. G. Dallas to James Douglas, August 5, 1859, San Juan Island Correspondence, Victoria Provincial Archives.

57. A. G. Dallas to Thomas Fraser, September 12, 1860, Record Office Transcripts of the Hudson's Bay Company, Victoria Provincial Archives.

Figure 18. Griffin Bay and the San Juan Town site in 2015. (Author photo.)

Although Belle Vue Sheep Farm had been a lucrative enterprise for the Hudson's Bay Company, by 1860, the business was struggling to remain profitable. Increased security costs associated with protecting farm property from American settlers cut into the farm's profits, as did increased transportation, communication, and labor costs. Even if Great Britain prevailed in the boundary dispute and gained official possession of the island, Dallas believed that few buyers would be willing purchase tracts of island land. He stated that only if the farm sold all of its livestock could it make a profit.[58]

To regain some losses, Hudson's Bay official H. H. Berens attempted to persuade the British government that the company had settled the island only with the idea of securing territory for Great Britain in mind. Berens went so far as to state that the island was a "source of outlay and expense to the Company," and he sought reimbursement for "past and future" expenses. San Juan was settled by the HBC "not as lucrative speculation or one which could be of any value to the Company's trade," Berens argued, "but, simply, as a defensive measure, and the only means of securing the islands from the encroachments of the Americans." Furthermore, he stated, the company could no longer afford to maintain a British presence on the island without government reimbursement.[59] However, the scathing response from T. Frederick Elliot, a British government official, indicated that the crown was not prepared to accept this argument. Elliot found no evidence for such an assertion, citing a previous letter in which the company admitted that they had settled San Juan Island for their own benefit. "The claim is one which is quite inadmissible," reprimanded Elliot.[60] The HBC received no compensation from the British government.

By 1863, encroachment by the American military and settlers had reduced Belle Vue Sheep Farm from about one hundred acres to sixty acres. Robert Firth's journal of his tenure on the farm from 1865 to 1866 reflects a much smaller operation than Charles Griffin had overseen. Firth did not describe any construction projects and he mentioned only one employee.[61]

58. Dallas to Fraser, September 12, 1860.

59. H. H. Berens to Lord John Russell, December 20, 1860, Record Office Transcripts of the Hudson's Bay Company, Victoria Provincial Archives.

60. T. Frederick Elliot to H. H. Berens, April 30, 1862, Record Office Transcripts of the Hudson's Bay Company.

61. Robert Firth, Diary, 1865–1866.

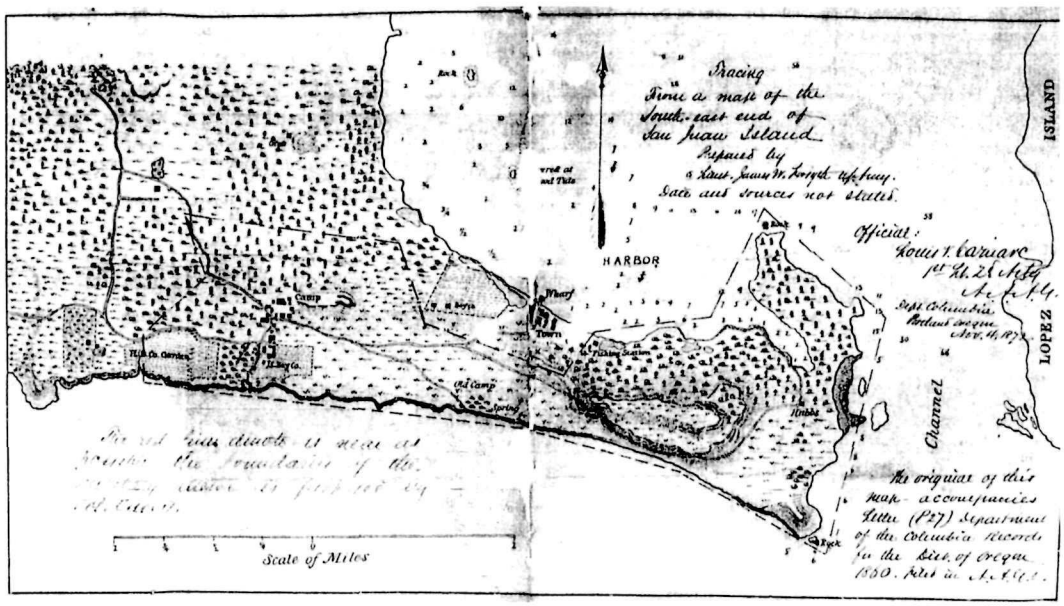


Figure 19. An 1872 map depicting the location of Hudson's Bay Company agricultural operations, American Camp, and San Juan town. (San Juan Island National Historical Park files).

Numbers of livestock at the farm had been drastically reduced. The company abandoned the farm and the island in the late 1860s or early 1870s. By 1874, when Nathaniel Michler mapped the area for the American army, only nine of the original seventeen buildings remained.[62]

By the 1870s, the HBC abandoned San Juan Island. Like the Northern Straits Indians before them, the company managed the island's environment to facilitate resource use, but the landscape left by the British showed greater signs of modification. Imprinted on San Juan's terrain were overgrazed hillsides, plowed prairies, and logged forests as well as infrastructure and a built environment in the form of roads and buildings. These changes demonstrated a dramatic shift from subsistence to a market economy, and the company's occupation of San Juan Island initiated a new phase in the utilization of the island's natural resources. In coming decades, the island would continue to occupy a place in British and American visions of pastoralism and natural resource use as settlers and companies sought to exploit the natural resources of the island.

62. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study,* 171–73.

Chapter Four

The Military Landscapes of San Juan Island

By the late 1850s, the United States and Great Britain both considered San Juan Island a strategically important location, and each nation claimed the island as their own. The British government thought that the island was key to defending Haro Strait and mainland British Columbia, while the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) coveted the fisheries, agricultural, and timber resources of the islands. The United States similarly believed the island to be strategically important; furthermore, a number of Americans had settled on the island. In July 1859, increasing tensions between the HBC and American settlers (or squatters, from the British viewpoint) on the disputed island compelled the American army set up a fort on the south end of the island near Belle Vue Sheep Farm.[1] In response to this perceived American encroachment, the British established a military camp at Garrison Bay on the northwestern part of the island in March 1860. The armies occupied their respective camps until the boundary dispute was settled in 1872.

The ways that the British and the American armies manipulated the natural landscape reflected not only their different geographic locations on the island, but also their different cultural views of their place in the natural world. The British established camp on a serene, sheltered bay; in contrast, the Americans chose a site at the edge of a large, dry, windswept prairie. While the British enjoyed their formal gardens, vine-covered terraces, and croquet grounds, the Americans put little effort into landscape design, instead focusing on the utilitarian aspects of constructing a military camp. Both groups cut trees, built structures, established roads, and planted gardens, but relatively little resource use and ecological change occurred during this time. The military occupation of the area that is now San Juan Island National Historical Park is well known, but for all of the military occupation's historical impact, the two armies caused relatively little environmental change.

American Camp

By the mid-1850s, some American military personnel considered the island vital to the defense of the Puget Sound area. General Persifer F. Smith reported to President James Buchanan in 1857 that San Juan, Lopez, and Orcas islands were integral to commanding and defending the inland waters of Puget and Queen Charlotte sounds as well as the Strait of Juan de Fuca. He believed that the islands contained the best harbors on the Pacific Coast, and that the archipelago could prove valuable for timber and coal.[2] Two American topographical engineers, sent by the army to assess the military importance of the archipelago, confirmed his views. They concluded that the islands "are so situated that they form an admirable land locked

1. For a thorough account of the military occupation of San Juan Island, see Erwin Thompson, *Historic Resource Study: San Juan Island National Historical Park* (Denver: National Park Service, 1972); and Michael Vouri, *The Pig War: Standoff at Griffin Bay* (Friday Harbor, WA: Griffin Bay Bookstore, 1999).

2. U.S. Department of State, *The Northwest Boundary: Discussion of the Water Boundary Question, Island of San Juan* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1868), 52.

harbor of ample size accessible by narrow entrances in any wind and weather and capable of being defended almost by small arms. As a naval station secured by batteries, this position commands all the interior waters and the approach to the [U.S.] territories." The engineers feared that Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca could be used as the setting for a Pacific Coast blockade or as a base for an attack on San Francisco. They thought that the island could also provide valuable refuge for American ships during storms, or as a natural resources storehouse for military needs such as "wood, water, coal, provisions, timber, and spars."[3] They saw the possession of San Juan Island as integral to protecting the West Coast.

In 1860, the Chief Engineer of the U.S. Army agreed that the archipelago was essential for defense purposes. General Joseph G. Totten, renowned for his expertise designing coastal fortifications, believed that if Great Britain possessed San Juan Island, the British would control the waterways east of the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Totten asserted that "the possession of the San Juan group of islands is, strategically, of high importance to us." The U.S. Board of Engineers agreed that if the British possessed the island, the American command of waterways to the east would be of little value. The board recommended that a U.S. naval station be established at Griffin Bay, due to its large size and sweeping marine views, in order to "counterbalance" the British naval presence on Vancouver Island.[4]

General William S. Harney, commander of the Department of Oregon of the U.S. army, believed that San Juan Island contained valuable natural resources, such as timber, fresh water, and grass, but he was convinced that the island's strategic location remained its primary value. San Juan, according to Harney, "is the most commanding position we possess on the Sound; overlooking the Straits of Haro, the Straits of Fuca, and the Rosario Strait, [the island] is the most suitable point from which to observe and prevent the northern Indians from visiting our settlements to the south of it. At the southeastern extremity one of the finest harbors on the coast is to be found, completely sheltered, offering the best location for a naval station on the Pacific Coast." The army steamer *Massachusetts* utilized wood and fresh water from the island as it delivered supplies to Puget Sound area military installations and patrolled the waters for Indian movements. Boundary commissioner Archibald Campbell agreed with General Harney's assessment. He declared that while the island offered agricultural opportunities to American settlers, "it is in a military and naval point of view . . . that their importance is to be mainly regarded." Army surveyor William Walsh agreed, likening San Juan to Gibraltar, "since it is situated so as to command the avenues of commerce to all the interior waters."[5]

On July 18, 1859, Captain Alfred Pleasanton, General Harney's acting adjutant general, commanded Captain George Pickett to establish camp on the southeastern end of San Juan Island. Pickett and his company were stationed at Fort Bellingham, which they abandoned in order to move to the island. Pickett chose a location near the HBC wharf on Griffin Bay, about two hundred yards above the water. The camp was situated on a small prairie, flanked by forest to the east and west. Pickett felt uneasy about the exposed location and the proximity of the H.M.S. *Tribune*, a thirty-one gun British steam frigate anchored in Griffin Bay. Within the

3. Captain George Stoneman and Lieutenant W. H. C. Whiting, July 5, 1855, in *Northwest Boundary*, 52.

4. Joseph Totten, in U.S. Department of State, *Northwest Boundary*, 134; and James O. McCabe, *The San Juan Water Boundary Question* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), 32.

5. General Harney to General Scott, July 19, 1859, [printed in] *Washington Pioneer-Democrat*, June 15, 1860; Captain A. Pleasanton to Lieutenant Colonel Silas Casey, July 7, 1859, in U.S. Department of State, *Northwest Boundary*, 146; Archibald Campbell to Secretary of State Lewis Cass, September 25, 1858, in U.S. Department of State, *Northwest Boundary*, 52; and William Daniel Walsh to his father, April 1860, San Juan Island National Historical Park Archives, San Juan Island, Washington.

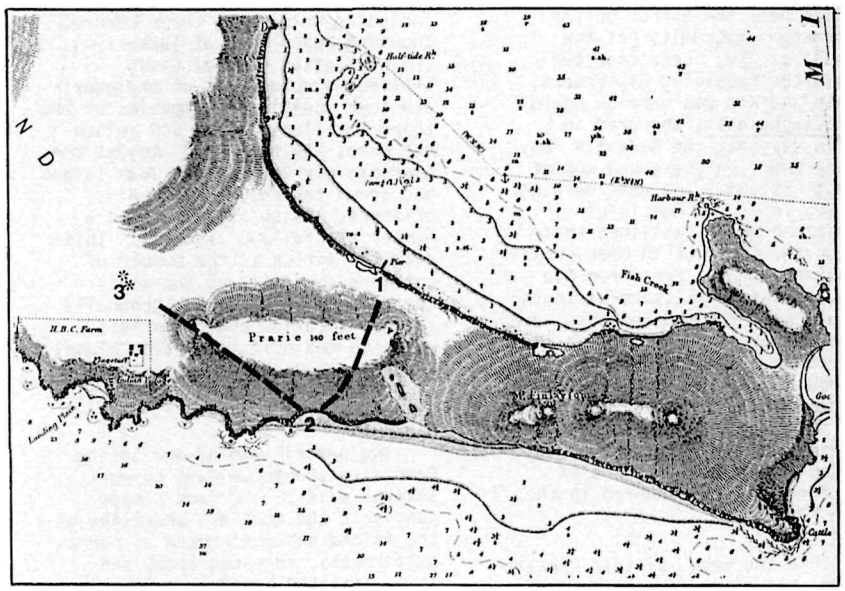


Figure 20. The three American Camp sites. Pickett first located his camp on Griffin Bay (#1), but moved his troops over the ridge to Spring Camp (#2) within a week. The next month, Colonel Silas Casey ordered the garrison to move to a more sheltered, defensible position on the edge of the prairie (#3), which became the camp's permanent location. (San Juan Island National Historical Park files.)

week, he moved the camp south, over the ridge, to a spring on the large prairie that the HBC used as sheep pasture. A *Victoria Colonist* reporter described the scene. "The whole of this side is prairie, extending to the end of the Island. In the middle of it, near the springs, were three tents, erected by Captain Pickett's company . . . commanding a very excellent view, and with water convenient."[6] The new location also proved temporary.

In early August, General Harney sent Lieutenant Colonel Silas Casey and three companies of men to San Juan Island. Upon arrival, Casey assumed command, and he disliked the camp's location. He reported, "We are encamped in rather an exposed position with regard to the wind, being at the entrance to the Straits of Fuca. The weather at times, is already quite inclement."[7] Like the first site, the new location was also exposed to fire from British ships. By the third week in August, Casey decided to move camp to a third and final location.

Casey chose the new camp location for its sheltered position, expanse of prairie, and commanding view of both Griffin Bay and Haro Strait. Situated at the edge of the prairie, north of Belle Vue Sheep Farm, the camp was backed by forest and sheltered from the strong winds that swept off the strait. British boundary commissioner James C. Prevost observed that the establishment was "very strongly placed in the most commanding position at this end of the island, well sheltered in the rear and on one side by the Forest and on the other side by a commanding eminence." A *Victoria Gazette* reporter described the site as "in a little valley . . . selected with a view to protection against the cold and disagreeable winds." The

6. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 126–28.

7. Casey to Pleasonton, August 14, 1859, Records of the Bureau of Land Management, Abandoned Military Reservation File, San Juan Island, Record Group (RG) 49, National Archives Building, Washington D.C. (NAB).

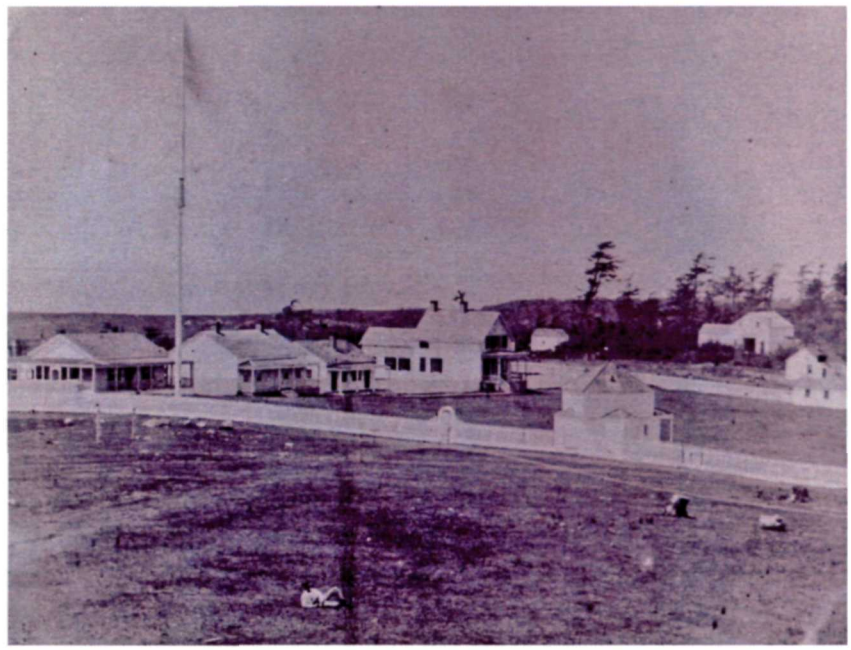


Figure 21. The American Camp parade ground ca. 1868. While the British worked to create an aesthetically pleasing landscape, the Americans focused on reshaping their natural environment into utilitarian military instillation. (San Juan Island National Historical Park files.)

reporter concluded, "It's hard to conceive of a more romantic spot; the white tents peeping up and out from among the green foliage."[8]

The task of establishing a camp was less than romantic, however. Army engineer William Peck wrote, "After landing, we were compelled to make room for ourselves and received a detail to assist in moving the logs and rubbish, which of course caused considerable grumbling." The distance of the nearest fresh water also posed an inconvenience for the troops. The nearest spring was almost a mile away, so the soldiers caught "an Indian pony," one of several who roamed the island, to cart the water to camp.[9] By the end of August, 461 American soldiers and officers occupied the site.

When the American military arrived on the southeastern end of the island to establish camp, they encountered a vast expanse of prairie. Previous island occupants manipulated this landscape for food production (whether for subsistence or export to market), but instead of harvesting camas, growing crops or raising sheep, the Americans set out to exploit the landscape for military purposes.

Americans at Camp Pickett worked to reshape their natural environment into a secure, productive military instillation. Many camp structures were constructed using wood from Fort Bellingham's abandoned buildings, but soldiers harvested some trees to provide wood for building materials. For example, wood from Fort Bellingham was utilized to build the quartermaster's house and the attending surgeon's house, while the soldiers cut logs to build

8. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 133–34.

9. C. Coulter Brewster, ed., *The Pig War and Other Experiences of William Peck, Soldier, 1858–1862* (Medford, Ore.: Webb Research Group, 1993), 98; and Captain George Pickett to Major Babbitt, Fort Vancouver, September 9, 1860, Records of the U.S. Regular Army Mobile Units, San Juan Island, RG 391, NAB.

Figure 22. The redoubt in 2014. The fortification provided American troops views of both Griffin Bay and Haro Strait, and represented the most significant environmental modification of the military era. (Author photo.)

junior officer's quarters and a barn for fifteen animals.[10] Soldiers cut fir, alder, and pine for building materials and firewood.[11] Pickett assured his superiors that there was "no expense to government for fuel at this post—it is cut by the men." The Americans may have purchased some lumber for building in Victoria, since Pickett remarked that it was inexpensive to purchase and ship wood to the camp from the colonial town.[12]

One of the most significant modifications to the island's natural environment by the American army was the construction of a 700-foot long earthen fortification called Robert's Redoubt.[13] Soldiers built the redoubt on the eastern edge of the campsite in a location that afforded views of both the bay and the strait. Army engineers designed the fortification to support six thirty-two-pound guns, so that the redoubt would allow even a small force to defend the site against attack. Constructing the enormous redoubt was difficult work, as the men worked only with picks and shovels. Before the Americans completed the structure, Lieutenant General Winfield Scott ordered the artillery removed and the structure abandoned as part of a deal with the British that reduced the American force and removed artillery from the camp. The order to cease work caused "great rejoicings" among the men, according to Peck, but he expressed disappointment that his work engineering the fortification had been pointless.[14] Boundary

10. J. Haskell, February 11, 1869, Records of the U.S. Army Continental Commands, Land and Produce Records, RG 393, NAB.

11. Charles Bird, "Post Description," Post Orders, RG 391, NAB.

12. Captain George Pickett to Headquarters, December 8, 1861, Letters Sent, Post Letters, Vol. 1, Part 5, RG 393, NAB.

13. The redoubt was named for its designer, Second Lieutenant Henry Martyn Robert.

14. Vouri, *Pig War*, 122 and 177.

commissioner William Warren lamented, "The Earthworks thrown up last summer have been dismantled, and only serve to disfigure a beautiful mound just south of camp."[15]

By the mid-1860s, the camp included twelve main structures, fences, roads, outbuildings, and the abandoned redoubt. The Americans did not know how long their island stay would last, and as a result, many of the structures were of shoddy construction. In 1865, the troops procured lime, wood, and other building materials to improve some of the camp's hastily built structures. In 1867 and 1868, as it became apparent that the troops would continue to occupy the island, a building boom occured and resulted in the harvesting of additional timber. Eventually, at least thirty-four structures stood at American Camp. Even with these improvements, the buildings did not shield the men from the damp, often chilly island climate. J. G. Haskell grumbled that the camp buildings were no protection against inclement weather. "It has rained, snowed, hailed, or blew almost every day this month," he complained one September, "and in our exposed position we have been obliged to stand the full effect of each storm."[16]

Although the Americans focused on the utilitarian aspects of building a military fort, at least one camp resident sought to create a home-like environment through ornamental gardening. The wife of Major H. Allen grew a small flower and vegetable garden outside her home. Ornamental gardens were frequently found near officers' quarters at military bases, but her garden was unique to the camp.[17] In contrast to their British counterparts, the Americans did not incorporate gardens into camp design.

In the view of the American military, the island was a strategic location for a camp but not an environment that would meet their every need. Most military camps relied on rations, and the San Juan Island camp imported staples such as flour and pork from an army distribution center in San Francisco. While Charles Bird noted that the island's waters abound with "salmon, halibut, flounder, rock cod, and herring . . . and smelt," Bird did not indicate that the troops ate these fish. William Peck also mentioned the "delicious salmon" available on the island, indicating that some soldiers may have sampled local fish. There is no evidence that soldiers hunted deer, duck, or any other wildlife for food. Civilians in San Juan Town supplied the military with goods and labor, and the army also contracted with civilians to transport supplies between Victoria and the island.[18]

The military utilized some locally raised foods to supplement their rations, though these consisted of nonnative, domesticated plants and animals. A vegetable garden at Fort Bellingham initially provided fresh produce. Pickett moved from the mainland location to the island in the middle of the summer, and he considered the garden (which was "in fine and flourishing condition" at the time of the move) at the fort valuable enough to leave a few men behind to guard, tend, harvest, and transport the vegetables to the island.[19] Once on San Juan, soldiers

15. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 134.

16. Ibid, 140; For a detailed inventory of the camps buildings, see ibid., 147–64; and J. G. Haskell, September 30, 1871, RG 49, NAB.

17. Cathy Gilbert, *Historic Landscape Report: San Juan Island National Historical Park* (Seattle: National Park Service, 1986), 36.

18. Charles Bird, n.d., Post Orders, Records of U.S. Regular Army Mobile Units, 1921–1942, RG 391; Coulter, ed., *Pig War*, 101; and "Notice of Bid Appearance," Records of the Office of the Quartermaster General, RG 92, both at NAB.

19. Captain George Pickett, April 26, 1860, Post Letters, Fort Bellingham and Camp San Juan, Vol. 1, RG 391, NAB.

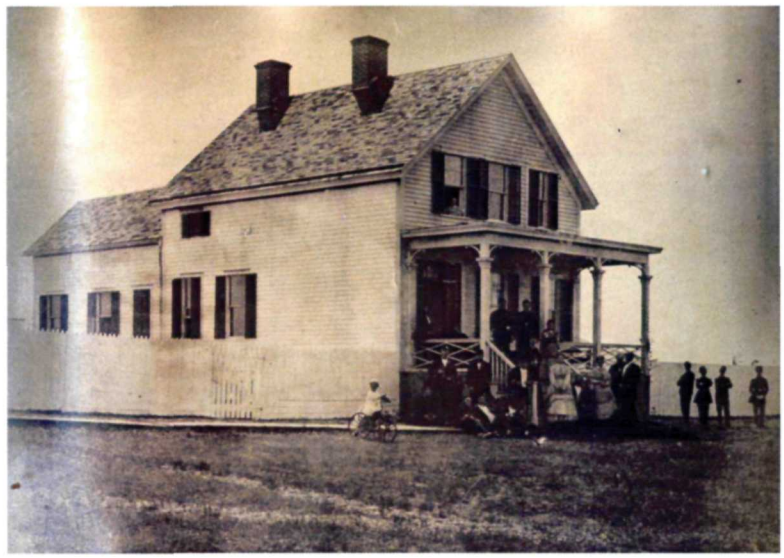


Figure 23. The Commanding Officer's house at American Camp. British and American troops and officers socialized during their peaceful tenure on the island, and three British officers (pictured second, third and fourth from left) are among the visitors in this photo. Note the contrast between the stark landscape surrounding this home, and the lush scene at the Captain's residence at English Camp. (San Juan Island National Historical Park files.)

planted a vegetable garden at Camp Pickett.[20] Other supplies, such as fresh beef and potatoes, were purchased from island farmers or Victoria merchants. While Pickett purchased a winter's supply of potatoes in 1861, he noted that the company's own garden would produce enough to feed the camp in subsequent years.[21]

Rather than grow their own feed or rely on island grasslands, the military procured livestock feed from local farmers and civilians on the mainland. In the early 1860s, Pickett believed that sufficient quantities of hay and oats could be purchased from island farmers.[22] Charles Bird confirmed that the island was "particularly adapted" to growing hay and grain, and he believed that islanders produced more than enough to satisfy the military's needs. For unknown reasons, local sources eventually proved insufficient, and the army solicited suppliers from mainland Western Washington to deliver supplies such as hay, oats, and straw.[23]

Although the American military regarded the island only as a strategic location for a military installation, William Daniel Walsh, an army surveyor at American Camp, considered the island an abundant landscape. In the mid- to late nineteenth century, American settlers were rapidly moving westward looking for agricultural opportunities. In contrast to other parts of densely timbered western Washington, the island boasted a sizable proportion of prairie. Walsh, who had traveled extensively around the western United States, believed that settlers could capitalize on San Juan's valuable natural resources. He admired the timber, the fresh

20. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 160; and James K. Agee, *Historic Landscapes of San Juan Island National Historical Park* (Seattle: National Park Service, 1984), 26. The garden may have been situated either near Belle Vue Farm fields, near the barracks, or possibly at both locations at different times.

21. Captain Pickett to Headquarters, Letters Sent, Vol. 1, Part 5, Post Letters, Camp Pickett, RG 393, NAB.

22. Pickett to Headquarters.

23. Charles Bird, Post Orders, RG 391; and "Government Proposals," *Washington Standard*, March 7, 1868.

water sources, and "the richest soil" he had ever seen. According to Walsh, vegetables thrived and grew to extreme proportions in the island's soil. He effusively praised the island's "healthy climate," scenic beauty, and safe harbors, as well as plentiful game and fish.[24] Writing to his sister after a second visit to the island in 1861, Walsh penned, "you can scarcely imagine how delighted I was at beholding once more the most beautiful gem of the Pacific."[25]

William Peck, an army engineer who spent three months on San Juan Island, similarly fell in love with the island. He wrote that "the prospect is delightful and we feel we can enjoy ourselves here. . . . The beautiful Straits of Juan de Fuca on the one side of the island and the Bay of San Juan on the other, dotted here or there with a sail of an Indian canoe, with the surrounding islands covered with their heavy pine timber, all add to the enchantment of the scene, and make this one of the most beautiful islands imaginable. . . . Mounts Baker and Rainier loom magnificently far above the clouds, their snow covered summits shining like monuments of burnished gold in the bright sunlight." Peck spent his free time exploring the island ("running over some fine country") and duck hunting. Like Walsh, he also evaluated the island in terms of its potential for agriculture and resource extraction. He admired the island farms, characterized the soil as productive, and noted that land was being colonized quickly. Peck optimistically described the timber resources and he envisioned a thriving fishing industry harvesting the vast quantities of "delicious fish" in the islands' waters.[26] Peck and Walsh provide an interesting contrast to their military peers, who valued the island only for its strategic importance, not for its natural resources or scenic beauty. The Americans cut trees, plowed the prairie, and built a fortification, but more significant logging, farming, and other landscape modifications occurred after the army abandoned the island.

English Camp

Like the Americans, the British valued San Juan Island's strategic location, situated across Haro Strait from Vancouver Island. San Juan lay directly in the path of communications between Vancouver Island and the mainland, and the British believed that their ability to navigate the waters of the area freely depended on their possession of the island.[27] To the alarm of the British, Americans were rapidly settling the Pacific Northwest. The British sought to possess San Juan Island as a buffer between Vancouver Island, with its valuable coal and timber resources, and the United States. Captain James Prevost of the British Boundary Commission viewed possession of the island as vital to the continued British naval presence at Esquimalt on Vancouver Island. Prevost believed that if the British did not possess the island, it "might someday prove fatal to Her Majesty's Possessions in the quarter of the globe." He also alleged that the island would provide "a wall of defense to [Vancouver Island's] peaceful occupation."[28] The Colonial Office, a British governmental agency responsible for managing affairs in British North America, agreed, noting that the island was "of the utmost importance in a military, maritime, and commercial point of view and on account of its close proximity to Vancouver

24. William Daniel Walsh to his father, April 1860, San Juan Island National Historical Park Files.

25. William Daniel Walsh to his sister, February 11, 1861, San Juan Island National Historical Park Files.

26. Brewster, ed., *Pig War*, 101–20.

27. Barry M. Gough, The *Royal Navy and the Northwest Coast of North America, 1810–1914* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1971), 156.

28. Gough, *Royal Navy*, 154.

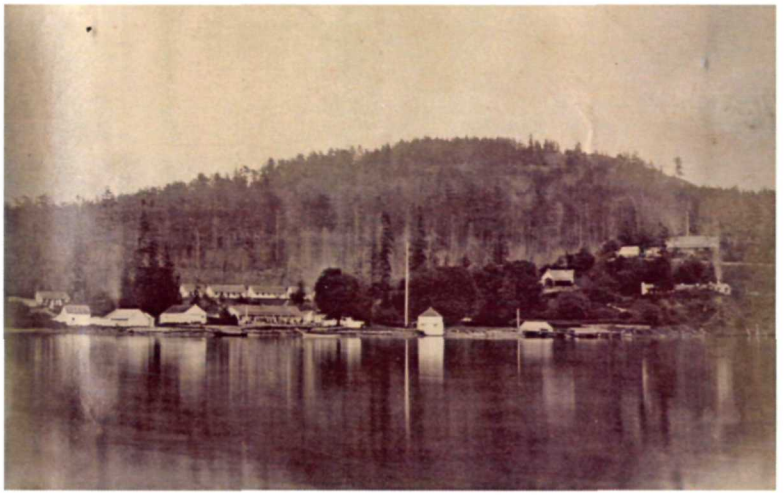


Figure 24. English Camp, ca. 1867. Officers' quarters were set on the hillside, while other camp structures occupied the meadow or shoreline. (Courtesy of the Royal BC Archives.)

Island." Marking the boundary at Rosario Strait would allow the British unimpaired movement and communications on Haro Strait.[29]

In 1860, in response to the establishment of the American camp, Prevost journeyed to the island and investigated a number of sites for a British military camp. He narrowed his search down to seven locations by February of that year, but most of the suitable sites had some disadvantage. One location at the southern tip of the island had good boat access but no fresh water and little cleared ground. A nearby spot offered cleared prairie, fresh water, and "every convenience for a camp," but the land had already been settled by American Paul K. Hubbs, Jr. Prevost considered the abandoned American Camp near the spring, but the area was too exposed. He favored a site near Friday Harbor, which had untimbered, almost level land, fresh water, a safe harbor for ships, and no settlers nearby; why this location was not eventually chosen is unknown.[30]

Prevost found Garrison Bay ideal for a military camp, but an initial examination did not reveal a source of fresh water. Further investigations revealed a "large patch of water, half lake, half swamp" about three-quarters of a mile from the bay. Prevost also discovered two streams in the area. The area also boasted a sheltered harbor that provided anchorage for large vessels, gentle slopes, timber (including "very fine oak"), and a meadow, which afforded troops room to practice maneuvers. The site was large enough to accommodate a large number of soldiers and structures.[31] British Lieutenant Richard Roche, after an exploratory mission, called the Garrison Bay site, "admirably adapted for an encampment."[32] Furthermore, there were no European or American settlers nearby and established transportation routes were available. The bay lay just off the route of the steamer that regularly traveled from Victoria to the

29. McCabe, *San Juan Water Boundary Question*, 33.

30. David Hunter Miller, *The San Juan Archipelago: Study of the Joint Occupation of San Juan Island* (Bellow Falls, Vt.: Windham Press, 1943), 131–32.

31. Letter from Captain Prevost, March 13, 1860, "San Juan Island Correspondence, etc," Vol. 1, Victoria Provincial Archives, Victoria, British Columbia.

32. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 200–201.

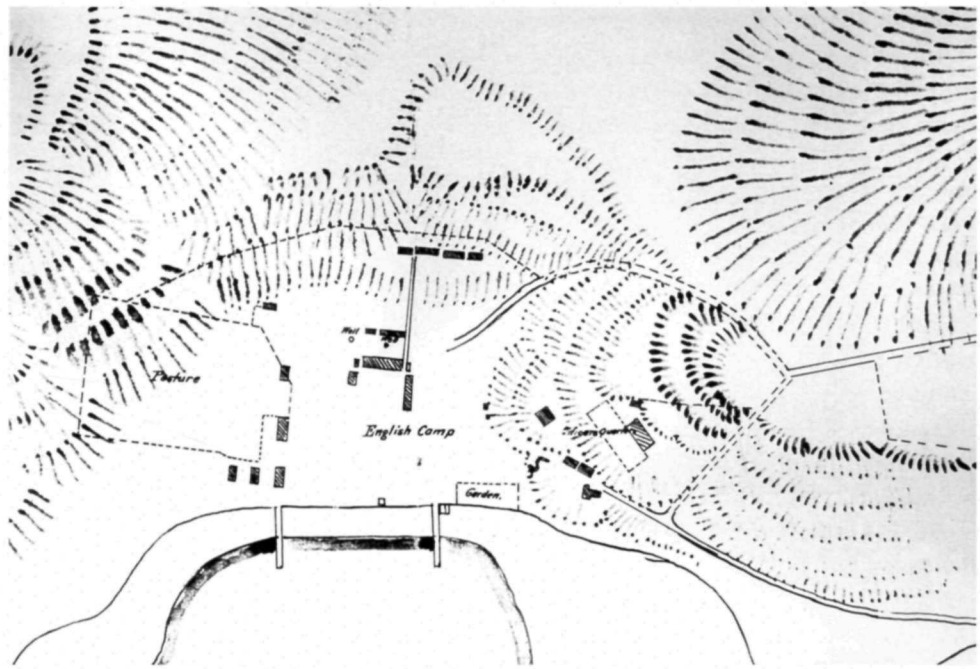


Figure 25. A map of English Camp in 1875, shortly after the end of the boundary dispute. (San Juan Island National Historical Park.)

Fraser River, and a path led to Belle Vue Sheep Farm, about eleven miles distant. British Rear Admiral Robert L. Baynes and James Douglas agreed upon the location, and eighty-seven Royal Marines established camp on March 21, 1860.

The British found the site perfect for a military camp. The Northern Straits Indians appreciated the sheltered, waterfront location and the open, grassy meadow, and they used the spot as a seasonal dwelling. Indians had created the meadow area by depositing shell and bone remains that were covered by grass and trees over the centuries. The British recognized that their parade ground was actually a human creation. One sergeant reported that their camp was set "on a shell bank-the accumulation of 'Years,' evidently, as it averaged ten feet high, from thirty five to forty feet through, by 120 yards long, it was the work of Indians, as they live very much on a shellfish called 'Clams,' and of course deposit the shells just outside their huts." The British were either unaware or unconcerned that the Northern Straits still seasonally inhabited the site. Upon arrival, they began dismantling the longhouse that stood there.[33] Like their American counterparts, the troops labored to transform their surroundings into a military camp. The British did import at least some building supplies (such as shingles, boards, and other lumber) from Victoria, but the troops worked so hard cutting timber and clearing trails that Admiral Baynes suggested they be paid extra for their labor. The forest east and south of the shoreline was cleared for fuel and housing. The army expanded the natural terraces of the hillside with stone walls, cleared additional forest from the slope, and built officer's quarters. Eventually, the British erected an estimated thirty-seven structures.[34]

33. Vouri, *Pig War*, 190.

34. "San Juan Island Correspondence, etc," Government of Vancouver Island, 1858–1859, Victoria Provincial Archives; and Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 202.

Figure 26. Garrison Bay and English Camp in 1867. Captain William Delacombe's establishment of a formal garden at the encampment reflects the British view of their place in the natural world. This is the only known photo of the garden. (Courtesy of the Royal BC Archives.)

The British capitalized on the limestone resources of the island. They operated two kilns near Roche Harbor and used the processed lime for both mortar and disinfectant. They also exported some lime from the island, though details about the trade are unknown. Lime extraction on the contested island created problems between American settlers and the British military. In 1860, Captain George Bazalgette sparred with William Brannock, John Hofenmeyer, and Paul K. Hubbs, Jr., who had been hired by S. Meyerback to build a kiln about three miles from English Camp, near Roche Harbor. The British commander was unable to keep the Americans from utilizing the resource.[35]

The British received supplies from Victoria, from Belle Vue Sheep Farm, and from island settlers such as Gus Hoffmeister. Hoffmeister had a contract to provide the British with beef, and he kept one hundred head of cattle and five hundred sheep on Speiden Island (plus an additional thirty sheep on Henry Island) for this purpose.[36] The sheep farm supplied the post with mutton and cattle.[37] The soldiers at least occasionally ate fresh fish, and they enjoyed some fresh produce as well. Soldiers planted fruit trees and a vegetable garden, fenced by saplings. The more utilitarian garden existed until 1867, when a formal garden displaced it. The vegetable garden may have been moved rather than eliminated, but its final location is not known.[38]

35. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 226.

36. U.S. Works Progress Administration, *Told by the Pioneers* (Olympia, WA: Works Progress Administration, 1938), 50–51.

37. Brewster, ed., *Pig War*, 102.

38. Carol Meadowcroft, "Reconstruction of the Formal Garden at English Camp," in Gilbert, *Historic Landscape Report,* 243–44; and Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 225.

Nature clearly held a value beyond strategic importance for the men stationed at English Camp. Garrison Bay offered the British a sheltered, green, park-like spot for their encampment. Unlike the Americans, the British attempted to reflect a pastoral vision of nature in their camp design, one that included gardens and recreational grounds. Officers played tennis and croquet on camp lawns. One American visitor to the camp in 1868 described a "summer house," probably a gazebo, on Young Hill. This structure had no apparent military purpose, and probably served only for the enjoyment of the officers and their families.[39]

When Captain William Addis Delacombe arrived to command English Camp in 1867, he brought his wife and family. Perhaps to provide his wife with a reminder of her English home or to bring order to the natural landscape, he ordered construction of a formal garden on the south edge of the parade ground. The garden, designed in the Gardenesque style of the mid-nineteenth century, was composed of colorful, low border plants (probably annuals and bulbs) and arranged in a geometric pattern. The specific varieties of flowers remain unknown, but nurseries in Victoria undoubtedly supplied the plants. Paths led through the garden, which separated the main camp from the officer's quarters on the hill above the parade ground.[40]

Captain Delacombe's residence, built the same year as the garden, also reflected the attention paid to landscape design at English Camp. Delacombe helped design the structure, which became the most ornate and elaborate home in the camp. The large house contained two wings and two verandas as well as several outbuildings. A wide grassy lawn was planted in front of the home, while a series of rock terraces adorned the hillside below. An attractive display of climbing vines and roses grew in front of the house, and the lawn contained two additional rose beds. A fifteen-foot-wide road lined with fir trees created a dramatic entrance to the home and grounds.[41]

The British were so successful in creating a pleasant, pastoral scene that tourists from Victoria journeyed to the site to picnic. Excursions were advertised in the *Daily British Colonist* newspaper and visitors were charmed by the scene at Garrison Bay. One Victoria reporter praised the "delightful" combination of "natural" beauty and manmade gardens that surrounded the officers' quarters.[42] He described, "nature and art have combined to produce a scene calculated to delight and entrance the enthusiast, the snug little camp, fronted by a verdant lawn, while trellis-like walks ascend in mazelike meshes the hill in the background, forming a fit study for the lover of the picturesque."[43] Enthralled by "the singular beauty of the scenery," an American visitor wrote, that "in the fore-ground is the level green sward with a noble tree rising from its center, and fringed with spreading maples. Up through these are winding walks to the officers' quarters, and beyond, a lofty hill, on which a summer house has been erected, where the surrounding shores are seen to advantage."[44] Another writer depicted the camp as "a beautiful and sequestered little spot where stands the neat and picturesque camp of the British garrison. . . . We may remark here that the neatness, cleanliness, and good order

39. David Richardson, *Pig War Islands* (Eastsound, Wash.: Orcas Publishing Co, 1971), 111; and Thompson, *Historic Resource Study,* 224.

40. Meadowcroft, "Reconstruction of the Formal Garden at English Camp," 244. The term *Gardenesque* was coined by John Claudius Louden. Louden believed that gardens should be easily recognizable as works of man, not nature, and his Gardenesque style gardens emphasized geometric patterns and exotic species of plants.

41. Gilbert, *Historic Landscape Report,* 101.

42. *British Daily Colonist*, May 27, 1867.

43. *Daily British Colonist*, May 27, 1867.

44. Edmund Thomas Coleman, "Mountaineering on the Pacific," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (1869): 794.

Figure 27. Captain William Delacombe's residence reflects the attention paid to aesthetics and landscape design at English Camp. The ornate home fronted a large lawn that contained two rose beds, while a series of rock terraces adorned the hillside below. (Courtesy of the Royal BC Archives.)

observable through out the entire camp were the subject of general observation."[45] The British viewed their alterations as improvements of the natural landscape, and the overall scene was one of pastoral beauty.

The two armies occupied their respective locations until Kaiser Wilhelm I resolved the boundary dispute in 1872, paving the way for American settlement. Major Nathaniel Michler noted that the English left their pretty location "with regret . . . this locality is a beautiful one, and the buildings for both officers and men were pleasant and comfortable." The British left twenty-seven structures, two wharves, two wells, a pasture, a garden, roads, and fences.[46] However, visually and ecologically, their effect on the natural environment appears to have been limited. Most of the forest north and northeast of the camp remained intact. British troops had built structures, cut trails, and logged timber, but they caused relatively little ecological change on the island.[47]

After the Boundary Dispute

The American military considered San Juan Island valuable even after the boundary dispute ended. They expressed interest in locating fortifications at Griffin Bay in 1874, but these plans were never realized. The military continued to consider the southeastern end of the island strategically important and designated 640 acres at the tip of the island as a military

45. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 204.

46. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 209.

47. Agee, *Historic Landscapes*, 12–26.

reservation, but the site was never developed.[48] San Juan Island's military significance and strategic importance had declined, and an increasing number of settlers were drawn to the island for its natural resources and agricultural opportunities. The departure of the military signaled the beginning of a new era for San Juan Island, as settlers began buying homesteads, constructing houses, and establishing farms. Once again, cultural change would bring environmental change to the island.

48. In 1923, the War Department declared the majority of the reservation "useless" and allowed the land to be sold to the public. The government retained one lot in section 7, as well as all of section 8, which encompassed the southeastern tip of the island, for a naval radio compass station.

Chapter Five

A Productive Island: Settlement in the Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries

European and American settlement of San Juan Island began in the 1850s, while the area was still disputed territory. Many settlers came to the island, and to the former military camps in particular, to raise marketable commodities such as sheep, field crops, and orchard fruit. They believed that San Juan offered extraordinary agricultural opportunities, and by replacing commercially worthless native plants with nonnative crops and animals, they altered the landscape of the island and what would become the historical park. Settlers and corporations who ventured to San Juan beginning in the late nineteenth century sought to profit from the area's natural resources, and they modified the island's environment and surrounding waters by extracting limestone, cutting forests, and harvesting salmon. These islanders had not inherited a pristine landscape, but settlers had a far greater impact on the natural environment than groups that preceded them. They brought larger numbers of livestock, cleared more land for crops, and caught more fish than previous inhabitants had done. As they worked to create a productive landscape based on natural resource use, residents in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries brought lasting environmental change to San Juan Island.

Nineteenth Century Settlement

With one exception, the first Euro-American residents on San Juan Island (excluding Hudson's Bay Company employees) were American customs inspectors, and they left few marks of their occupation on the island. Information about the first American on the island is scarce. In 1852, American William Webster claimed to have built a house and a store on the island, much to the alarm of Vancouver Island Governor James Douglas. Webster's account is probably true, as evidenced by the details he recounted about the Hudson's Bay Company salmon packing operation on the island, but no additional information about his tenure remains.[1] Henry Webber, an American customs inspector who came to the island in 1854, became the next American to reside on the island. Webber camped near Belle Vue Sheep Farm, but there is no indication that he built any structures. He must have viewed the grasslands on this part of the island as potentially valuable property, because sometime before 1860, he claimed land that included part of the farm and American Camp. He did not settle this tract once the General Land Office offered the land for homesteading in 1876, but he did apply for a nearby parcel, to the north of Eagle Cove. In 1857, another inspector, Paul K. Hubbs, Jr., also expressed an attraction to the area when he built a cabin about 100 yards from Belle Vue Sheep Farm headquarters. Hubbs believed that no European or American settlers had established claims on the island due to fears of Indian attacks.[2]

As news spread of the discovery of gold in British Columbia's Fraser River in 1857, the island soon became a hub of activity. Most early settlers were prospectors who either failed to find

1. Erwin Thompson, *Historic Resource Study, San Juan Island National Historical Park* (Denver: National Park Service, 1972), 189.

2. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 190.

gold or become stranded on San Juan along their way. By June 1858, about 10,000 hopeful miners had traveled to Victoria on their way to the Fraser River, much to the consternation of the Hudson's Bay Company and the British Admiralty.[3] Most of the miners were Americans, and their preferred route was by ship from San Francisco to Victoria, then by small boat up Haro Strait past the west side of San Juan Island to the mainland of British Columbia. Others began the two-day water journey in Port Townsend, either spending the night in Victoria or camping on San Juan Island halfway through their trip. British Admiralty officer Richard Mayne reported that gold seekers "used every sort of boat" to reach their destination. Many of these craft undoubtedly had a difficult time negotiating the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Haro Strait, leaving men stranded on San Juan Island.[4]

American settlers also trickled to the island in 1858 and 1859 hoping to pursue agricultural endeavors. By this time, the island's prairies had gained regional fame. Miners either had seen the grasslands during their water journey to the Fraser River or had heard about the untimbered land from their fellow goldseekers. Whatcom County assessor Henry Crosbie listed nine Americans on the island in May 1859, each of whom filed a preemption claim with the American military stationed on the island. The military kept records of all such claims in the archipelago, and the record allowed the claimant to have priority if the land became incorporated into the United States.[5] These men may have been lured by glowing descriptions of the island, such as the one that appeared in 1859 in the *Victoria Gazette*, a pro-American newspaper. The paper's editor opined that "the island has so much superior and eligible soil, where white oak, cedar, fir, and pine abound, and where broad acres of unobstructed grass governed plain invitingly promise abundant and almost spontaneous crops." The editor complained that the Hudson's Bay Company had turned this "comparative Eden" into a "sheep pasture," and he felt that American agricultural endeavors would be preferable to British sheep ranching.[6] Crosbie also described the island as perfect for agriculture due to its grasslands, noting that "the isle is extremely fertile, as the island contains many prairies."[7] About twenty-five settlers resided on San Juan Island by the end of 1859.[8]

As was common in the history of American westward expansion, speculators planned to capitalize on the seemingly untouched terrain. In February 1859, Captain C. L. Denman and Edward Gillette surveyed and planned improvements on twenty-six claims of 160 acres each at the urging of American prospectors in Victoria. Denman and Gillette believed that if the island became part of the United States, settlers would be awarded the land under preemption laws.[9] George Gibbs of the American Boundary Commission dismissed the endeavor as "a matter of bare speculation," since he believed that none of the claimants would occupy the

3. Barry M. Gough, *The Royal Navy and the Northwest Coast of North America, 1810–1914: A Study of British Maritime Ascendancy* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1971), 136.

4. Richard Mayne, *Four Years in British Columbia and Vancouver Island: An Account of Their Forests, Rivers, Coasts, Gold Fields, and Resources for Colonization* (London: John Murray, 1862), 41.

5. Thompson, 182; Henry Crosbie, "Assessment of HB Co. Property on San Juan Island," May 20, 1859, Records of the Boundary Claims Commissions and Arbitrations, Northwest Boundary Survey, Record Group [RG] 76, E191, National Archives at College Park, Maryland (NACP). Crosbie identified these settlers as Paul K. Hubbs, Jr., Charles H. Hubbs, Lyman Cutlar, Edward Gillette, John Whittey, a Mr. Powell, John Madison, and John Hunter McKay.

6. "U.S. Correspondence relating to the Occupation of San Juan by U.S. Troops," *Victoria Gazette*, August–October 1859, 96, Victoria Provincial Archives, Victoria, British Columbia.

7. Crosbie, "Assessment of HB Co. Property on San Juan Island," May 20, 1859.

8. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 182.

9. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 190–91.

land.[10] Gibbs' prediction proved correct, but there were many other settlers willing to settle unsurveyed, unimproved land on the island.

After the American military arrived on San Juan Island in July 1859, civilians colonized the area, "out of a desire to be where the excitement was; some looking for work; and still others looking to supply their brethren with bread and booze," according to historian Erwin Thompson.[11] Entrepreneurs had a ready market, as approximately 500 soldiers, as well as additional numbers of settlers and Indians, occupied the island. A village called San Juan Town sprang up at the site of the Hudson's Bay Company wharf on Griffin Bay (then called Ontario Roads or San Juan Harbor). American boundary commissioner William Warren reported that in 1860 the town comprised twenty structures and thirty to forty residents.[12] Ownership of the town site was contested. The HBC considered the tract their property, while two settlers each claimed the parcel.[13]

Conflicting estimates exist of the island's population during this period, probably due to the transient nature of the early settlers. The 1860 census records fifty-seven adults (besides those in the American and British military) on the island. Twenty-eight identified themselves as farmers, while one hunter and one fisherman also resided on the island. The rest of the islanders were engaged in various trades and occupations. In 1861, the *Olympia Pioneer and Democrat* reported that sixty settlers were "opening farms and engaging in agricultural pursuits."[14] By January 1860, Dr. Caleb Kennerly, an American boundary commissioner, estimated that between forty and fifty Americans farmed on the island, in addition to the thirty or forty people living at San Juan Town. These early settlers viewed the island as a potentially profitable agricultural landscape, and many established themselves on the island's prairies, which offered easily cleared land. Nine settlers had claimed tracts on the island's southeastern end near American Camp by 1860. Kennerly noted that "about a dozen claims taken up by American settlers . . . who had built small cabins" on the road from Belle Vue Sheep Farm to Oak Prairie (now San Juan Valley).[15] Near English Camp, two settlers, probably Americans, built log huts on either Garrison or Westcott Bay, where they reportedly intended to grow potatoes. By 1860, about eight Americans were living on the island's north end. Over the next decade, additional settlers established farms and sheep ranches. The 1870 census shows that, excluding the British and American military, 278 men, women, and children, in ninety-four households, occupied San Juan Island. Of these ninety-four households, sixty identified themselves as farmers, while three additional islanders were occupied as stock ranchers.[16]

Many early residents may have been lured to San Juan Island with positive reports like the one that appeared in the *Washington Standard*, which encouraged settlers to take advantage of the island's "luxuriant" grass and fertile prairies. In 1876, the same newspaper depicted the island's farmers as busy, constantly "improving" the island's natural landscape by planting crops, building structures, and raising livestock. Many of these early settlers were immigrants

10. George Gibbs, February 24, 1858, Geographical Memoir, Appendix G, RG 76, NACP.

11. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 182.

12. William Warren, 1860, Appendix F, RG 76, NACP.

13. S. V. Boyce and J. E. Higgins both claimed ownership of the town site.

14. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 194.

15. Dr. Caleb Kennerly, Report, February 20, 1859, RG 76, NACP; and "Map of South East End of San Juan Island, W.T., Showing Government Reservations," Map 6, in Thompson, *Historic Resources Study*, n.p.

16. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 226; and 1870 U.S. Census, Whatcom County, San Juan Island, San Juan Island Historical Museum Archives, Friday Harbor, Washington.

to the United States, and they settled on the disputed island in the hopes of eventually claiming their own parcel of land.[17]

On San Juan Island, as in the rest of the western United States, settlers found mining opportunities particularly attractive. The *Washington Standard* encouraged potential settlers to take advantage of the island's limestone deposits, and a few islanders established quarries at various points around the island in the 1860s and 1870s. The 1860 census lists six men occupied in the lime manufacturing. In spring 1860, three Americans, Lyman Cutlar, D. F. Newsom, and Edward Gillette began an operation on the island's west side.[18] By 1877, the San Juan limekiln produced seventy barrels of lime per day and employed fifteen to twenty men. Also in 1860, S. Meyerback, a German immigrant, hired William Brannock, John Hofenmeyer, and Paul K. Hubbs, Jr., to build a kiln about three miles from English Camp, near Roche Harbor for small-scale lime processing. Lime extraction and processing proved difficult for individuals and small companies, and by the late nineteenth century, two large companies had come to dominate the industry on the island.[19]

Charles McKay and Thomas Fleming typified the early island settler. McKay, who had tried and failed to find gold in British Columbia, was one of the first settlers on San Juan Island; he was attracted by hunters' reports as he journeyed home to California. He recalled, "They told us what a fine island it was, full of game. So we went to see it. There appeared to be a lodestone on the island, for we got stuck at once." The Nova Scotia native claimed 160 acres as his own and began farming, though what crops he raised are unknown. Soon after he arrived, he recalled, a number of Americans also established farms.[20] Fleming, a Scottish immigrant, moved to San Juan Island in 1863 after searching Port Angeles and Vancouver Island in vain for a place "like home" where he could establish a farm. After hearing enthusiastic descriptions of San Juan, he moved himself and his family to the island, which may have reminded him of his native Scotland. Fleming raised sheep, cattle, and horses as well as field crops and vegetables. He sold some of his products, such as hay, potatoes, and pigs, to the American military.[21]

As these settlers tried to capitalize on the island's prairies, limestone deposits, and timber, they began to reshape the island into their vision of a productive landscape. In the process, islanders expanded on changes to the natural environment initiated by the Hudson's Bay Company. Island farmers replaced native grasses with marketable crops, and they erected fences to delineate private property boundaries. Settlers felled trees for firewood, fences, and structures, though after 1874 they also utilized wood from the abandoned military camps' buildings (and in some cases, they may have moved entire buildings). The HBC had built a few roads, and settlers cut additional rough roads and trails. They even built a racetrack near San Juan Town.[22] Sheep had already grazed much of the island, but settlers expanded the areas on the island affected by livestock grazing.

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17. "San Juan Island," *Washington Standard*, December 12, 1868; and *Washington Standard*, July 8, 1876.

18. *Washington Standard*, July 8, 1876; and Lucile S. McDonald, *Making History: The People Who Shaped the San Juan Islands* (Friday Harbor, WA: Friday Harbor Press, 1990), 88. Newsom and Gillete were bought out in 1864 by August Hibbard; after Hibbard's murder in 1869, the operation continued under new ownership.

19. *Orcas Island Historical Society Newsletter* 16, no. 3 (November 1997), 2; and Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 226.

20. Charles McKay, "History of San Juan Island," *Washington Historical Quarterly* 2 (July 1908), 290–93, quotation on 290.

21. Lucile McDonald, "Pioneer Kept Diary in Pig War Period," *Seattle Times*, March 19, 1961, 9.

22. McDonald, "Pioneer Kept Diary in Pig War Period," 9.

Hunting by Americans and Europeans in the late 1850s and early 1860s caused profound changes to the native animal populations on the island. While black bear and wolves had been common on the island during the Hudson's Bay occupation, the new residents helped exterminate predators, which were all extinct by the 1870s. Hunters traveled to the islands to find deer, which they sold in Victoria and mainland British Columbia to Fraser River gold miners. Archibald Fleming recalled that wolves, elk, deer, and beaver were prevalent on the island until the early 1860s, and he blamed American and European hunters for their demise.[23] American boundary commissioners held American settlers and hunters who sold the meat at market liable for the loss of game animals; within a few short years, they charged, Americans and Europeans had caused the extermination of elk and the decline of deer in the archipelago. Deer remained abundant in some places, but many settlers considered them a pest and hunted the animals, since they ate crops intended for market. After wolves were exterminated, islanders reported that deer became increasingly prone to disease, since the predators had preyed upon weak and sick animals.[24]

Like the Hudson's Bay Company and many of the European and American explorers, most settlers, it seems, did not look to the local ecosystem for sustenance. According to the few accounts of early island life, settlers largely relied on nonnative crops and livestock. Whereas Indians had taken advantage of the large duck populations of the islands settlers preferred to import quail and turkeys to raise and sell at market. Some early islanders traded for fresh fish from Northern Straits Indians, but they did not attempt to rely on these fisheries resources. Merchants sold settlers many items that they could not raise themselves. One store's inventory in 1865 included everything from canned meats, fish, fruits, and vegetables to staples such as flour, sugar, spices, coffee, and tea. Canned oysters and sardines were sold in a location that abounded with fresh fish. Settlers also traded at the American garrison for supplies.[25]

The James Hannah family provides an example of islanders' reliance on nonnative foods and animals. Even though they eked out an existence on the island, they still seemed to rely on food and products derived from nonnative plants and animals. James Hannah and his family lived eight miles from San Juan Town, and they worried about running short of supplies (such as flour) in the winter, when roads and bridges often washed out. The family relied on the products they made from their goats, sheep, and poultry. They knitted clothes from sheep's wool, rendered tallow from goat and sheep fat to make candles, and raised turkeys both for their own consumption and for the local market. While Lila Hannah recalled that the family sometimes purchased fish from Northern Straits Indians, there is no evidence that they collected berries, shellfish, edible plants, or any other foods native to the island and its surrounding waters.[26]

The island's remote, undeveloped character posed challenges to early settlers. In the 1860s, settlers used mail boats, trading schooners, rowboats, and canoes (often paddled by hired Indians) to sell their merchandise in Victoria. Settlers sold or traded sheep, wool, venison, potatoes, and other garden produce for staples, such as sugar, tea, and tobacco, and hard goods,

23. Gordon Keith, ed., *The James Francis Tulloch Diary, 1875–1910* (Portland, OR: Bingford and Mort, 1978), 22; and McDonald, "Pioneer Kept Diary in Pig War Period," 9.

24. U.S. Department of State, *The Northwest Boundary* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1868), 140; and Keith, ed., *Tulloch Diary*, 98; and Ernest A. Davidson, Richard M. Bond, and J. Volney Lewis, "Report on San Juan Island Investigation," National Park Service, August 5, 1937, 3, San Juan Island National Historical Park Archives.

25. Thompson, *Historic Resource Study*, 186.

26. Lila Hannah Firth, "Early Life on San Juan Island," 1945, Manuscripts, University Archives, and Special Collections (MUASC), University of Washington, Seattle.

such as tools. In the 1860s, the only regular boat service to the islands was the mail boat, which picked up island-bound mail in Victoria. Some supplies could be purchased in town, but settlers could only travel the island's poor roads in good weather. Since bridges often washed out after heavy winter rains, many settlers remained stranded until the community could get together to make the necessary repairs. The Crook family, who settled on English Camp, lived thirteen miles from San Juan Town, but it was more convenient for them to spend two hours rowing a forty-foot cedar canoe to Vancouver Island for supplies than to spend an entire day traveling overland to the tiny island village. Early resident Archibald Fleming recalled that nearly everyone who lived near shore owned a boat; islanders often found it easier to row from one part of the island to another than to travel cross-country. During the 1870s, mail-boat service made it slightly easier for farmers to get their products to mainland markets. In 1873, regular mail service began on a twice-monthly basis. Within a few years, three boats carried the mail to San Juan Island, and the island was served at least once per week.[27]

The General Land Office (GLO) opened land on the island to homesteaders in 1874, after the resolution of the boundary dispute. Due to the expanses of cleared land in the vicinity of Belle Vue Sheep Farm and American Camp, this area was quickly settled, but not without some restrictions. President Ulysses S. Grant ordered that British land claims be settled before the agency offered island parcels to Americans. The army also requested that the GLO postpone land sales until potential military reservations in the archipelago could be surveyed and reserved. The military reserved 640 acres on the island's southeastern end, leaving the area east of the former American Camp site undeveloped but off-limits to homesteaders.[28]

Between 1879 and 1886, the GLO issued patents on all of the parcels in the area west of the newly drawn military reservation boundary. Henry Webber, the former customs collector, applied for 160 acres just to the north of American Camp. Robert Firth, who had been the manager of the HBC's Belle Vue Sheep Farm, homesteaded about 226 acres encompassing farm headquarters. Thomas Weekes received 80 acres to the northwest of American Camp. Carl Ostergaard homesteaded 163.1 acres to the east of the Hudson's Bay Company's farm, while William Taylor claimed 164.75 acres to the east of American Camp. George Jakle received 78.85 acres just west of the military reservation boundary. Joseph Sandwith, Robert Sandwith, Robert Frazer, and Christopher Rosler all established farms just north and west of the present boundaries of the American Camp section of today's historical park.

William Crook settled on a large portion of the former British military camp, probably in 1875. The level, grassy parade ground, sheltered harbor, spring, and remaining buildings undoubtedly attracted him to the site. Crook applied for 161.85 acres, though his holdings eventually totaled 320 acres. Upon arriving at their homestead, the Crook family utilized an abandoned military structure for their residence. Isaac Sandwith claimed 160 acres now contained in the southeastern portion of the historical park. John McKay and Silas McCrary each homesteaded 160 acres just east of the camp. In 1896, James Holden settled on about 20 acres of land at Bell Point, northwest of the parade ground.[29]

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27. McDonald, *Making History,* 59; Neva Durhack, "Birthday Greetings to Jim Crook," *Friday Harbor Journal*, September 24, 1964; and U.S. Work Projects Administration, "Interview with Archibald Fleming, San Juan Island," *Told by the Pioneers* (Olympia, Washington, 1937–1938), 51.

28. The military similarly reserved six other parcels in the islands, including one on San Juan Island at Point Caution.

29. Bureau of Land Management Online, General Land Office Records, Official Federal Land Patent Records Site, http://www.glorecords.blm.gov.

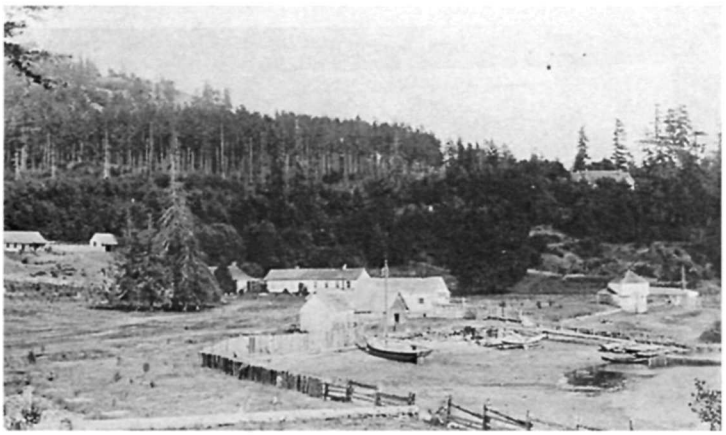

Figure 28. The Crook Farm, on the former site of English Camp, ca. 1890. The level, grassy parade ground, sheltered harbor, spring and remaining buildings attracted James Crook to the site after the General Land Office offered the parcel for sale in 1874. Captain Delacombe's former residence, on the hillside, burned down in 1895. (San Juan Island National Historical Park files.)

These homesteaders sought to transform the former military camps into profitable agricultural landscapes. Robert Firth's and George Jakle's endeavors typified the type of agricultural activity settlers pursued on San Juan Island. By 1879, Firth, former Belle Vue Farm manager, owned 300 acres on the farm site. He raised 500 sheep, 50 pigs, and 22 cows as well as horses and chickens. He grew 50 acres of hay to feed his animals in the winter, while 160 acres of his land remained meadow for livestock grazing. In addition, he cultivated 20 acres of oats, 60 acres of wheat, 20 acres of potatoes, and 18 apple trees. Jakle owned land just south of Griffin Bay, partly on the site of the former military camp, where he raised 345 sheep as well as small numbers of pigs, horses, and cows on his 78 acres. Jakle also raised 25 acres of oats, 20 acres of wheat, and 2 acres of potatoes.[30]

Firth and Jakle's neighbors, who resided outside of the boundaries of the current historical park, all similarly raised sheep, field crops, and orchard fruit. Joseph Sandwith, who owned land along the shore west of the American Camp site, raised 262 sheep; he also cultivated hay, barley, oats, wheat, and peas. Robert Frazer and Christopher Rosler, both of whom homesteaded just north of the American Camp boundary, each grew 100 apple trees. Just southeast of the former English Camp site, Isaac Sandwith raised 490 sheep, 29 pigs, 68 chickens, a few horses and cows, as well as 20 acres of hay and 3 acres of potatoes on his land.[31] Unfortunately, agricultural census records do not include the Crook's farm. Farming and raising livestock were central to the island's early settlement, and thus to the transformation of its natural environment. Islanders saw these changes as welcome progress as they interpreted the landscape in terms of commodities for a marketplace.

30. U.S. Census Office, *Tenth Census, Agriculture, 1880, Washington Territory* (Seattle: University of Washington Library, 1942).The 1880 agricultural census recorded the specific types of crops and livestock raised by islanders in the vicinity of the present-day historical park, though that year was the last for this type of detailed agricultural recording.

31. It is unclear how much land Sandwith owned at this time. While his 1879 land patent shows he was granted 160 acres, the 1880 agricultural census states his holdings totaled 670 acres.

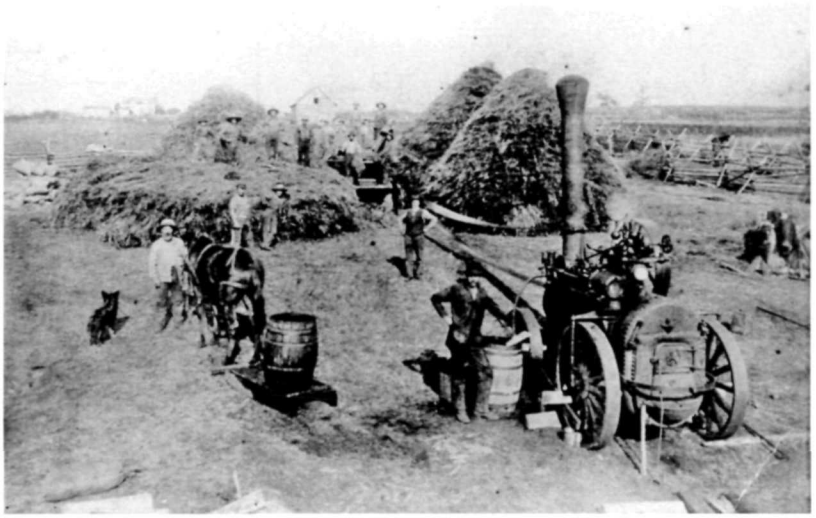

Figure 29. Robert Firth's farm (Firth is the left) on the former site of American Camp. Nineteenth century settlers did not inherit a pristine landscape, but as they imported greater numbers of livestock and cleared more land for crops, they had a far greater impact on the island's natural environment than groups that preceded them. (San Juan Island National Historical Park files.)

Boosterism and the Reshaping of the Island Landscape

Due to San Juan's mild climate, expanses of prairie, and seemingly fertile soil, settlers held high expectations for the island's agricultural potential. Island boosters embraced the Jeffersonian vision of an island of owner-occupied small farms and ranches, rather than a few large industries or large landholders and tenant farmers. These democratic expectations of the island's yeoman potential shaped the ways in which island residents utilized the landscape, and San Juan became an island of small farmers and ranchers.

Many western American communities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries vied for new residents by publishing promotional literature aimed at luring migrants to their area. An array of books, pamphlets, and newspaper supplements from San Juan Island portrayed the natural resources of the archipelago as potentially profitable investments. These illustrated materials show an array of photos depicting the islands' resource-based industries. Booster publications emphasized the islands' agricultural prospects, such as growing orchard fruit and raising sheep and dairy cows. Many organizations made efforts to lure settlers to San Juan Island in particular by promising abundant yields, easily cleared land, a favorable climate, and reliable transportation options to get farm products to mainland markets. San Juan's lime deposits, fisheries resources, and mild climate were promoted as additional inducements to settlers.[32] The island's large size, as well as the presence of Friday Harbor, the archipelago's largest town and the San Juan County seat, also drew settlers to San Juan Island, which attracted more new residents than any other island in the archipelago.

Like other western states and territories that sought to attract migrants, Washington Territory published promotional literature to attract and aid potential homesteaders, and this promotional material described San Juan and neighboring islands in glowing terms. One booklet, published in 1875, promised that San Juan County "offers many excellent

32. "Islands of San Juan County, Washington," Supplement to the *Everett Herald*, 1908, MUASC.

Figure 30. A farm on the American Camp site, where a former officer's quarters served as a farmhouse. Settlers, surveyors and speculators began coveting the camp's prairie while the military still occupied the site, and farmers quickly settled the area after the General Land Office sold parcels of the camp in 1874. (San Juan Island National Historical Park files.)

opportunities for immigrants and much of its best land lies unoccupied—land that is easily cleared and will produce heavy crops of either grain or vegetables."

Although the booklet described the island as "thickly settled," it claimed that good land still awaited the prospective farmer.[33] The state continued promoting the county into the twentieth century. A 1914 publication promised potential migrants that a prosperous future awaited those who established sheep or dairy farms, orchards, or truck farms.[34]

In newspaper articles and promotional supplements aimed at mainland residents, San Juan Island's boosters promoted the island as a potential Eden. They called it "the most delightful, charming and productive" on earth, and they believed that San Juan possessed natural advantages that ensured agricultural success.[35] One account read, "Here, fanned by cool sea breezes in summer and experiencing none of winter's intensities, [island farmers] live an ideal life amid an ideal environment."[36] Promoters described the island's climate as "salubrious" and they promised: "Here, there are no high water rates as in irrigated sections, no sand storms, cyclones, or cloudbursts as in the Middle West." Boosters claimed that the island contained some of the "finest farms in western Washington" due to the exceptional soil fertility. The valleys produced "immense crops of grain and hay, while the upland is unexcelled for dairying and grazing purposes." According to boosters, grains, hay, fruit, and potatoes grew "in perfection."[37] Promoters assured settlers that choice land for orcharding, raising stock and poultry, dairying, or other farming could be bought for a reasonable price, enabling families of modest means to purchase their own farms.

33. Mrs. A. H. H. Stuart, *Washington Territory: Its Soil, Climate, Productions, and General Resources* (Olympia: Washington State Legislature, 1875).

34. Harry F. Giles, *Homeseeker's Guide to the State of Washington* (Olympia: F. M. Lamborn, 1914), 15.

35. "The San Juan Islands," *San Juan Islander* (Friday Harbor, Washington), 1901, 3.

36. "Islands of San Juan County, Washington," *Everett Herald*, July 18, 1908.

37. "Islands of San Juan County," 4.

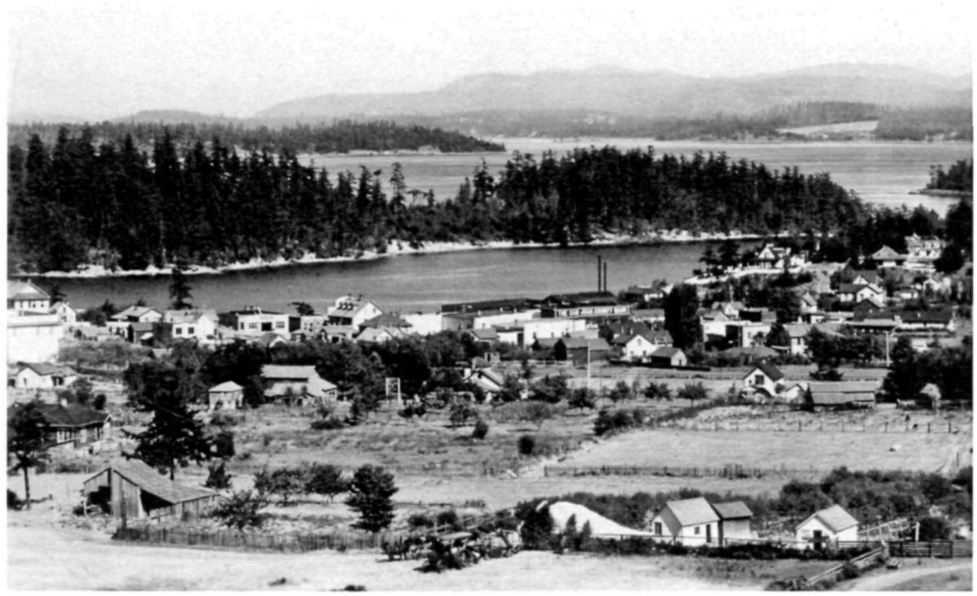

Figure 31. Friday Harbor in 1928. Boosters used pictures such as this one to promote San Juan Island as "the most delightful, charming, and productive (island) on earth." (University of Washington, Special Collections, UW36575.)

The publications proudly displayed photographs of the island's orchards, ranches, limekilns, and fish traps. Pictures of prosperous looking farms with tidy white fences assured potential migrants that the island was a thriving agricultural community. Photographs of churches, schools, businesses, steamships, and families posed in front of attractive homes filled the pages of brochures. These photographs were meant to assure potential residents that San Juan Island was not an untamed wilderness, but rather a domesticated, prosperous environment with a multitude of opportunities for migrants.

According to boosters, islanders would develop certain beneficial qualities from their tenure on the islands. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, many Americans believed in the connection between a healthy environment and a moral, productive citizenry, and the archipelago's promoters capitalized on this idea in their promotional literature.[38] One pamphlet stated, "Here the simple life may be led among quiet, peaceful and healthful surroundings and the highest type of American citizenry developed."[39] The article continued, "It will be seen by perusal of the foregoing review of the resources of the San Juan Islands that nature has been peculiarly partial to them. It is not therefore surprising that the people of the archipelago are enthusiastic in their loyalty and prosperous, healthy and generally happy."[40] These types of arguments proved persuasive to migrants, and the population of San Juan County grew by 41 percent between 1890 and 1900.[41]

As transportation improvements made the mainland more accessible, islanders held high hopes for the future of their agricultural community. After the resolution of the boundary dispute,

38. Theodore Steinberg, *Down To Earth: Nature's Role in American History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 157.

39. "The San Juan Islands," 3–5.

40. "The San Juan Islands," 3–5.

41. "The San Juan Islands," 5.

Whatcom (now called Bellingham) and Port Townsend became the principal markets for San Juan Island farm products. During the 1880s, twice-weekly steamer service began from Port Townsend, and in the 1890s, three steamers per week called on the island. In 1901, daily (except Sunday) steamer service began.[42] As early as 1900, island boosters assured potential residents that the island's isolation was a thing of the past due to frequent boat service. The advent of gasoline- and diesel-powered boats in the early twentieth century also gave island residents newfound freedom. Boosters envisioned that these new transportation connections would enable San Juan Island farmers in particular to distribute their goods to the mainland quickly and easily. One report predicted that "in the future, this county will enjoy a large fresh fruit and sweet cream trade with the important and rapidly growing cities of Seattle, Tacoma, Everett, and Bellingham, to which strawberries and cream will be shipped on swift motor boats."[43]

County boosters painted a rosy picture of farming in the islands, but settlers' lives in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were not easy. James Tulloch, a farmer on Orcas Island in the late nineteenth century, recalled the particular hardships of farming in the archipelago. The island's "wind shaped, badly twisted" trees proved exceptionally difficult to cut for both structures and firewood. Although boosters promoted the island's mild climate, he complained that the summers were "very dry and hot," and plagued by yellow jackets.[44] Plowing fields and transporting goods over land was tedious work, done with oxen and crudely built carts. Even the island's birds and animals were pests. Brown mink "infested" the forests, and deer proved a constant menace to crops such as cabbage and potatoes. "Pestiferous" crows devoured orchard fruit, and jays (which Tulloch called "the torment of our lives") carried off potatoes and consumed newly planted seeds. Even gulls' cries became annoying to the vexed farmer. Some years, his crops did not produce high enough yields to earn a profit, and he was forced into the backbreaking labor of cutting wood for the limekiln near Cascade Lake.[45]

Like other settlers, Tulloch labored to remake the natural landscape into what he considered a productive, profitable environment. Tulloch replaced the island's native plants with orchard trees, and he sought to rid his land of the deer and birds that damaged his crops. He found the island's dry summers an obstacle to growing orchard fruit, so he and a neighbor built and shared an irrigation system using pipes salvaged from the ruins of Seattle's 1889 fire. The water proved insufficient for both his farm and his family, so Tulloch constructed another half-mile of pipe from his home to a spring on Mt. Constitution. Fruit growing initially proved profitable, but it involved "ceaseless and increasing toil" due to pests, fungus and building and maintaining irrigation systems.[46]

Besides tapping into his island's agricultural potential, Tulloch embarked on a beautification campaign in order to reshape the island into his vision of a picturesque natural landscape. Although surrounded by waters teeming with salmon and other fish, Tulloch dug two ponds and stocked them with imported Colorado trout. He lined the road on his property with crushed white shells collected from the island's beaches and built an ornamental fountain with a thirty-foot spray near his garden. Tulloch's actions proved unusual; while a few of his fellow islanders followed his lead, Tulloch was disappointed at the majority of his neighbors' refusal

42. Norman Hayner, "Ecological Succession in the San Juan Islands," *American Sociological Society* 23 (1929), 81–92.

43. "Islands of San Juan County," 9.

44. Keith, ed., *Tulloch Diary,* 12–13.

45. Keith, ed., *Tulloch Diary,* 17–83.

46. Keith, ed., *Tulloch Diary,* 82.

similarly to "beautify" their property.[47] Most instead concentrated on developing successful agricultural enterprises.

Booster literature did not discuss problems such as Tulloch encountered, and the glowing descriptions of the islands successfully attracted new residents. Between 1880 and 1910, a time in which boosters heavily promoted the archipelago, the population of San Juan Island grew 51 percent. Many of these immigrants took up farming, and the amount of farmland in the county grew by 38 percent between 1900 and 1910.[48]

Farming the Island, 1880s–1960

Despite booster promises of fertile farmland and abundant yields, the pervasiveness of the sheep industry on San Juan Island suggests that other types of agriculture never lived up to islanders' expectations. The hilly, rocky, and dry terrain that characterized much of the island was not ideal for raising crops, but sheep thrived in this environment. Raising sheep had become popular in the Pacific Northwest in the 1860s, and islanders eagerly took up the endeavor. Some turned to sheep ranching after their land failed to support other types of agriculture. For example, Alfred Douglas attempted to grow crops on his farm north of the American Camp site, but the lack of rainfall led him to abandon the effort in favor of sheep ranching.[49]

Boosters attributed the success of the sheep industry to the island's natural environment. The island's mild climate and "the plentitude and nutritious qualities of the natural grasses which grow here," also allegedly contributed to the high quality of the sheep. In 1889, 6,377 sheep roamed San Juan County. Ten years later, county records reported almost 13,000 sheep. According to boosters, "The finest grazing ranges in Western Washington are found in this country." Sheep ranchers in San Juan County raised more sheep than any other western Washington county throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[50] Boosters even claimed that San Juan Island sheep remained free from the diseases that plagued mainland sheep. Islanders raised the Shropshire, Southdown, and Oxforddown breeds, which produced good quality meat and abundant wool. "The quality of the mutton is said by epicures to equal that of Wales and the Scottish Highlands," claimed one promotional pamphlet.[51] Although their numbers declined after 1900, sheep remained important to the island's economy throughout the first few decades of the twentieth century.[52]

Island boosters expressed similar enthusiasm about the dairy industry on the island. "This is a great dairy region," claimed the San Juan County Board of Commissioners.[53] While the depression of the 1890s raged, promoters alleged that dairy farmers there, who raised Jersey

47. Keith, ed., *Tulloch Diary,* 91.

48. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *13th Census of the United States, 1910, Volume 3* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1913). There are no agricultural statistics specific to San Juan Island during this time.

49. Jacilee Wray, "The Salmon Bank: An Ethnohistorical Compilation," 2003, 14, San Juan Island National Historical Park Archives.

50. "The San Juan Islands," 5.

51. "Islands of San Juan County," 8.

52. Hayner, "Ecological Succession in the San Juan Islands," 85. There were about 8,000 sheep remaining in the county in 1920.

53. San Juan County Board of Commissioners, "San Juan County: Its History, Resources, Attractions, and Advantages," n.d., San Juan Islands Pamphlet File, MUASC.

and Guernsey cows due to their heavy milk production "lived in serene disregard of outside conditions and enjoyed uninterrupted prosperity."[54] They shipped the milk by steamer to Whatcom until a creamery was established on San Juan Island in the early twentieth century. Although there were only 443 dairy cows in San Juan County in 1889, by 1909, that number had grown to 1,969, and by 1919, islanders owned 3,175 dairy cows.[55] Photos in booster literature showed seemingly contented herds of dairy cows grazing on the island's grasslands, while prosperous-looking farmers posed beside barns and fences.

The livestock of the Hudson's Bay Company and early settlers affected the island's natural environment, but with the increase in sheep and cattle grazing by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, San Juan residents expanded these changes. Islanders cut trees to build fences and barns for their animals. Many island residents began raising hay and grain to feed their cattle, and this required the clearing of trees and native grasslands. Farmers grew larger quantities of hay and grain as their herds expanded, and between 1899 and 1924, the number of acres of hay grown on the islands increased by 300 percent.[56]

Settlers grew grain for human consumption as well, though the enterprise must have proved unprofitable. In 1886, Clarence Tucker built a three-story gristmill in Argyle, on the island's eastern shore, to process grain. Islanders hoped the mill would spur other manufacturing operations to open in the area, but it remained Argyle's only business. While the mill enjoyed some success for the next two decades, by 1909, the operation had closed due to insufficient business.[57]

Another type of agricultural endeavor on the island resulted in unanticipated environmental consequences. Rabbit farmers released unwanted animals into the wild on the island in the 1880s, and the animals spread quickly. The expanding rabbit population dug warrens into island soils and prevented the regeneration of trees. The animals found Douglas fir seedlings particularly palatable, and their consumption of these plants hindered forest growth. Farmers considered the animals pests. Warrens posed hazards to horses and cattle, who could fall and become injured in the holes, and rabbits may have eaten grasses and grain meant for livestock.[58] However, some island residents benefited from the rabbits. A few families supplemented their income by selling butchered rabbits, while many others hunted the animals for personal consumption. Many landowners allowed rabbit hunting by permission on their property, suggesting that they were eager to be rid of the animals. Jim Crook often had so much butchered rabbit on hand he offered the meat to horrified visitors who had come to see the remains of English Camp.[59] Rabbits continued to be abundant on the island into the late twentieth century.

54. "Islands of San Juan County," 9.

55. Washington State Bureau of Statistics and Immigration, *Dairying, Poultry, and Stock Raising in Washington* (Olympia: F. M. Lamborn, 1916), 92–94.

56. Hayner, "Ecological Succession in the San Juan Islands," 85–86.

57. Anita Garrett, "Grist Mill Symbolized Argyle's Ambitions," *Seattle Times*, December 3, 1961.

58. Richard D. Taber, *Implications of the Rabbit Decline on San Juan Island* (Seattle: National Park Service, 1982), 2; and Davidson, Bond, and Lewis, "Report on San Juan Island Investigation," 3. Rabbits had no apparent effect on local wildlife. In the 1930s, Davidson reported that the only noticeable effect that rabbits have had on native wildlife was on Smith and Flattop islands, where rabbits pushed the Rhinoceros Auklet and perhaps Puffins out of their native habitat by taking over their burrows.

59. David Richardson, *Magic Islands* (Eastsound, WA: Orcas Publishing Co., 1973), 91; and Promotional Brochure, San Juan Island Pamphlet File, n.d., MUASC.

In addition to livestock and field crops, islanders believed that the San Juan Islands' climate and soil were perfect for growing orchard fruit. There was much optimism in the early years of fruit growing, and in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the orchard fruit industry in the archipelago grew tremendously. The orchard industry prospered across the Pacific Northwest during this time, and according to island promoters, "no county of any state of the union . . . has greater possibilities for fruit culture."[60] Boosters claimed that due to the islands' adequate rainfall, San Juan orchardists had an advantage over eastern Washington growers who relied on costly irrigation. Most fruit raisers grew apples; in 1898, 150,000 boxes of apples were shipped from the islands to points around the globe. Islanders also grew pears, and these were shipped and sold in markets such as Chicago, Boston, and New York. "The fruit ranches of San Juan County may be relied upon every year to yield products of unsurpassable quality, in enviable quantity," one promotional pamphlet asserted. Boosters assured potential farmers that "fruits of all kinds thrive here. Apples, pears, cherries, plums, prunes, strawberries and blackberries grow in perfection and in profusion." San Juan's farm bureau even promised an absence of pests, inexpensive land, and the low cost of water freight. In 1899, there were almost 72,500 apple trees and over 28,000 plum, prune, and pear trees in San Juan County. By 1909, the county boasted almost 77,000 apple trees and over 14,000 plum, prune, and pear trees. Boosters claimed that even small-scale orchardists could profit. "Many orchards of five to ten acres are bringing rich rewards to their owners," according to the county's promotional literature.[61] In many cases, land values on San Juan Island were higher between 1880 and 1910, reflecting the success of the industry at its peak, than in the 1920s, after orcharding declined.[62]

Like other agricultural communities, San Juan Island was at the mercy of external market forces, but the island's remote setting posed additional challenges to farmers, and it contributed to the decline of the orchard industry. Fruit often spoiled before it reached mainland markets, and high transportation costs from the remote island made many endeavors unprofitable.[63] Improvements in railroad transportation (land transportation had become cheaper than water transportation by 1920) and irrigation helped fruit growers from eastern Washington capture an increasingly larger share of the market during the 1910s.[64] Island growers protested that the price of shipping to Seattle and the low prices merchants offered there drove them out of business. San Juan and Lopez islands' grain growers faced similar difficulties in the face of competition from mainland farmers.[65] Pests and fungus also made agricultural endeavors increasingly difficult around the turn of the twentieth century. Coddling moths and tent caterpillars infestations forced farmers to destroy many of their orchard trees. James Tulloch complained that the rich, volcanic soils of eastern Washington gave that region's apples and pears a more attractive appearance than fruit from the San Juan Islands, thus making it more appealing to consumers.[66] By 1919, there were about 25,000 fewer apple trees in the county than ten years previous. By 1924, about 50,000 orchard trees remained in the county, less than

60. "Islands of San Juan County," 10.

61. Ibid.; "The San Juan Islands," 5; "San Juan Island" File, San Juan County Farm Bureau brochure, 1923, Northwest Collection, Victoria Provincial Archives; and "San Juan County: Its History, Resources, Attractions, and Advantages."

62. Hayner, "Ecological Succession in the San Juan Islands," 84.

63. Keith, ed., *Tulloch Diary*, 90–91.

64. Elmon A. Geneste Oral History, San Juan Island Historical Museum Archives, Friday Harbor, Washington.

65. Hayner, "Ecological Succession in the San Juan Islands," 85.

66. Keith, ed., *Tulloch Diary*, 95.

half as many as there had been in 1899.[67] By the mid-1930s, visitors noted that many of the islands' orchards appeared dilapidated or abandoned.

As the orchard fruit industry declined, island farmers turned to other crops to fulfill their hopes of a creating a prosperous agricultural landscape. The island proved well suited to raising peas, and the pea industry proved to be one of the bright spots in the island's economy during the Great Depression. The first pea vines were planted in 1922 by John Henry, after soil samples and climactic conditions led him to believe that the island was the best spot on the West Coast for pea growing. By 1925, Henry grew peas on nearly 1,200 acres in San Juan Valley. His San Juan Islands' Canning Company, which produced "Saltair" brand peas, employed about 150 people and produced about 50,000 cases of peas per year. Henry transformed a former salmon cannery into a processing plant for peas, since the decline in salmon had left one of the island's two canneries vacant. The pea canning industry provided employment from the 1920s through the 1930s.[68] In 1939, a pea weevil infestation devastated the crop, and Henry moved his operation to the mainland, where weevils did not thrive. The island's economy suffered due to the plant's closure, and the Roche Harbor Lime Company became the island's only major employer thereafter.

Boosters continued to promote the archipelago as a farmer's paradise. Although peas briefly thrived, the number of farmers in San Juan County decreased from 436 in 1920 to 363 in 1930.[69] The San Juan County Farm Bureau attempted to draw farmers to the area with the same arguments that boosters had utilized for decades. One brochure promised that, "pure, fresh water is everywhere, and all over is a temperate sun, kindly, beneficent, and never oppressive." The bureau promoted the low prices of island land and the low cost of water transportation to mainland markets. Furthermore, boosters disingenuously claimed that pests never bothered the many crops grown by island farmers.

Some of the fruit and vegetable crops islanders planted enjoyed brief commercial successes, but pests, transportation costs, and market factors continually dashed the hopes of island farmers.[70] After the pea weevil devastated the pea industry in 1939, Warren Russell and George Jefferies bought John Henry's land in San Juan Valley and planted strawberries, which they grew with some success until 1960. A variety of other crops, such as filbert nuts, walnuts, peaches, grapes, ginseng, potatoes, wheat, and oats, were grown commercially on the island during this time, but none of these crops enjoyed the earlier successes of the orchard fruit and pea industries.[71]

By the 1950s, islanders no longer saw agriculture as their future, though the island remained rural in character. One author and islander stated that by the 1960s only a few "gentlemen farmers" remained on what had been an agricultural island.[72] The amount of land used for crops and pasture had continued to decline, and the archipelago only contained 203 farms (124 less than a decade earlier) in 1960. At the former English Camp site, the Crooks no longer commercially raised orchard fruit, though orchard trees remained on the parade ground. The rest of the site was forested or woodland pasture for livestock. Much of the American Camp

67. Loomis J. Shadboldt, *History of the Tree Fruit Industry in the State of Washington*, 1954, 7, MUASC.

68. "Pea Canning," Pea Canning Clipping File, San Juan Island Historical Museum Archives.

69. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States*, Washington State, 1930. No Agricultural Censuses were taken between 1880 and 1925, so early twentieth-century statistics are not available.

70. Keith, ed., *Tulloch Diary*, 98–101.

71. "Strawberries," Strawberry Clipping File, San Juan Island Historical Museum Archives; and San Juan County Farm Bureau brochure, 1923.

72. Richardson, *Magic Islands*, 97.

Figure 32. Farms occupied the former American Camp site at the turn of the twentieth century. This photo was taken from the redoubt, ca. 1900. (University of Washington, Special Collections, WAS3455.)

area consisted of livestock pasture, although some islanders grew hay, wheat, oat, and barley in scattered plots around the area. Other areas near American Camp lay idle; tracts of both forest and grassland went uncultivated and ungrazed.[73] Although some islanders had enjoyed limited success raising sheep, orchard fruit, and crops, boosters' visions of a prosperous agricultural landscape failed to achieve permanence.

Farming the Former Military Camps

At the turn of the twentieth century, farmers continued to utilize the land at the former American Camp site for orchards, sheep pasture, and field crops.[74] Robert Firth, the former Belle Vue Sheep Farm manager who homesteaded on the site of the Hudson's Bay Company operation, grew wheat, oats, and potatoes as well as orchard fruit at the site in 1899. Firth raised fruit in two separate orchards—one just above the shore of Grandma's Cove and the other next to his house. Grasslands surrounded his fields, and he raised ninety sheep on the former site of the sheep farm.[75] Cultivated fields of unknown ownership lay east and northeast of Firth's property. John George Jakle, Jr., possessed an orchard and a small, cultivated field just west of the military reservation boundary. Sheep undoubtedly grazed much of the area as well. Most of the area north of the Belle Vue Sheep Farm and American Camp sites was classified by surveyors as sparse or slashed timber, interspersed with grasslands.[76] Remains of rock piles in the forests on Mt. Finlayson testify that someone unsuccessfully tried to farm the logged of areas of American Camp in the early twentieth century.[77]

The military reservation, which encompassed the island's entire southeastern portion (including the eastern part of the current historical park), remained largely undeveloped. The army leased

73. "San Juan Island Land Use," Map, 1952, Historic Map Collection, Suzzallo Library, University of Washington.

74. James Agee, *Historic Landscapes of San Juan Island National Historical Park* (Denver: National Park Service, 1984), 26.

75. "The San Juan Islands," 22.

76. U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, "Washington Sound, Part of San Juan Island, Pear Point to Eagle Point, 1897," Map, Columbia Cascade Support Office, Seattle, Washington.

77. Agee, *Historical Landscapes*, 26.

Figure 33. Sheep graze under the orchard trees at the Crook Farm ca. 1900, on the former parade ground of English Camp. (San Juan Island National Historical Park files.)

this reservation, along with San Juan Island's other reservation at Point Caution, to islanders beginning in 1892 with certain conditions. Tenants were not allowed to cut timber, and they were responsible for removing any structures they had built when their lease expired.[78] An 1897 map shows two cultivated fields on the military reservation, one near Cattle Point and another on the shore east of

South Beach. The field above South Beach belonged to James Bryant, who successfully grew potatoes in the parcel's sandy soil.[79] Eliza Jakle leased land on the reservation for one dollar per year beginning in 1898, and her sheep probably grazed the adjacent unfenced, unsettled land that would later become the historical park. She also may have grown crops in a cultivated field near Cattle Point. The venture could not have been very profitable. In 1911, Jakle's lawyer, who communicated with the army regarding her activities on the leased land, stated that she "ekes out a living raising sheep," and he portrayed her as caretaker for the reservation. He asserted that she kept campers (probably fishermen) from squatting on the lands and that she prevented fires from damaging the reserve.[80]

Islanders similarly raised orchard fruit, crops, and sheep on the site of the former British military camp at the end of the nineteenth century. The Crook family raised apples, cherries and sheep on the English Camp site. Sheep grazed grasslands growing northeast and northwest of the orchard, while the area to the south, on Garrison Bay, was forested. The Bell Point

78. Harvey Brown, Raymond Vessey, and David Brown, Appraisers of Abandoned Military Reservations, State of Washington, to the Commissioner, General Land Office, Washington, D.C., September 20, 1924, Records of the Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office Division, Abandoned Military Reservation File, Washington, San Juan Island, RG 49, National Archives Building, Washington D.C. (NAB).

79. James F. Bryant Land Patent, Bureau of Land Management Online Land Patent Details; and Wray, "Salmon Bank," 17.

80. F. F. Randolph to Robert Shaw Oliver, Assistant Secretary of War, February 19, 1911, Abandoned Military Reservation File, Washington, San Juan Island, RG 49, NAB.

Figure 34. The Crooks built their home, the two-story building in the center-left, in 1903. (San Juan Island National Historical Park files.)

peninsula was also timbered, and the slopes of Mt. Young contained forest, some of which had been logged.[81] Isaac Sandwith owned 200 acres of the site; half of these were cultivated with field, orchard, and garden crops, while the other half supported 300 sheep. Much of his land, from the boundary with the Crook property on the west to the road or track that ran through his property, was classified by surveyors as sparse or partially logged forest. Sandwith owned another 640 acres on the island, on which he kept about 700 additional sheep.[82]

In 1923, the U.S. Navy made additional farmland available when they declared most of Section 7 of the military reservation (the area encompassing Mt. Finlayson, in the present historical park) "useless" and offered nine parcels in the tract for auction. The navy similarly dispersed parts of Section 8 (the island's southeastern end) in the late 1920s.[83] Eliza's son George Jakle, Jr., bought 248.60 acres in Section 7 in 1925, while Eliza claimed 153.5 acres of Section 8 in 1927 under the Homestead Act.[84] The Jakles likely utilized their land, most of which now lies inside the boundaries of the historical park, for grazing sheep.

81. U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, "Topography of Washington Sound, Wash, San Juan and Henry Islands, 1894," map at Pacific West Regional Office, National Park Service, Seattle, Washington.

82. "The San Juan Islands," 18.

83. Brown, Vessey, and Brown to the Commissioner, September 20, 1924. Mrs. Jakle believed that she had an agreement with the war department that would allow her first right to claim the land near Cattle Point under the Homestead Act of 1862. She had briefly resided on the claim in the nineteenth century, which her first husband Frank Bryant had purchased from Paul Hubbs before the resolution of the boundary dispute. Frustrated investigators from the war department tried to make sense of conflicting stories from her son and other island residents regarding her tenure on the military reservation. They concluded that she had probably "kept up some manner of cultivation and had grazed the land continuously." Despite this, they decided that she had no right to the claim, since her second husband, George Jakle, had illegally filed two homestead claims. However, for unknown reasons, she was able to claim the land under the Homestead Act.

84. Serial Patents, George Jakle and Eliza Jakle, Bureau of Land Management Online, General Land Office Records, Official Federal Land Patent Records Site, http://www.glorecords.blm.gov/.

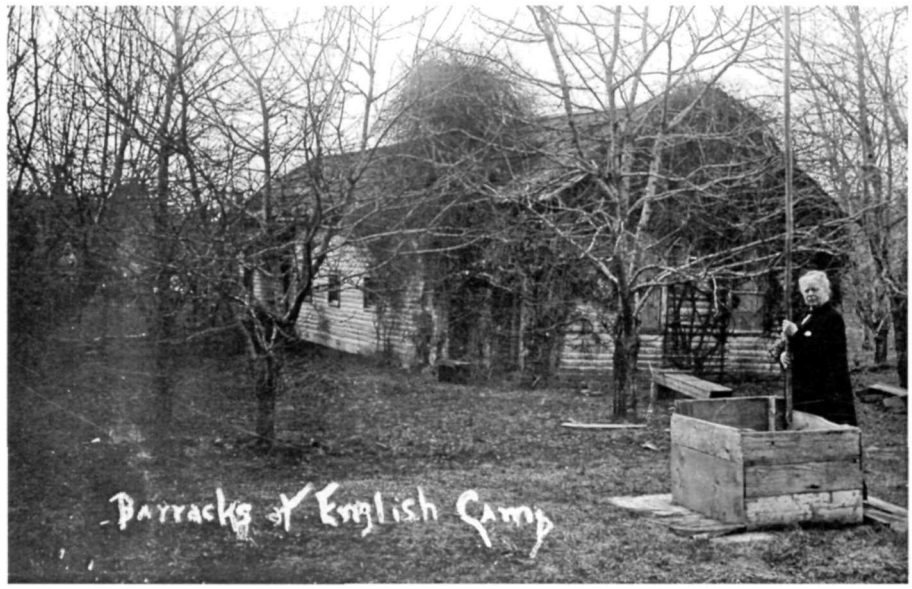

Figure 35. Mary Crook at the farm cistern. The British used the building in the background as barracks during the military occupation of the island. (San Juan Island National Historical Park files.)

The Lime Industry

On San Juan Island, as in the rest of the western United States, mineral extraction opportunities lured settlers and corporations. San Juan Island (along with Orcas Island, which had smaller deposits) held the only high calcium lime deposits on the West Coast, making the island the principal supplier for the entire western United States until the 1940s. Furthermore, the island's limestone deposits were easily accessible and close to water transportation routes. The deposits are found in rock outcrops that date from the Paleozoic Era, and these formations are the remains of an ancient mountain range that stretched from Vancouver Island to central Washington. Lime is used to make cement and steel; one ton of lime is needed to make one ton of steel. It is also used agriculturally as a soil amendment.[85] Limestone extraction and processing was one of the largest industries on the island throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Boosters initially viewed the limestone as inexhaustible, but by the mid-twentieth century, the resource had become depleted.

Some settlers attempted to operate small-scale lime processing operations, but as with most mining operations, the expense of building and operating quarries and lime works favored large companies. Robert and Richard Scurr had processed lime near Roche Harbor beginning in 1881, but six years later, they sold their lime deposits to John McMillin in order to concentrate on their orchard and sheep-raising operations. In 1888, McMillin's Tacoma and Roche Harbor Lime Company began extracting and processing lime on San Juan Island. Although some smaller companies also extracted and processed lime, McMillin's company dominated the industry in the archipelago. By 1900, the company had become the largest lime processing plant on the West Coast.[86]

85. Lynette Evans and George Burley, *Roche Harbor: A Saga in the San Juans* (Everett, WA: B and E Enterprises, 1972), 35.

86. William R. Danner, *Limestone Resources of Western Washington* (Olympia: Washington State Printing Office, 1966), 88; Evans and Burley, *Roche Harbor*, 35.

Contemporary observers marveled at both the limestone deposits and the lime processing operation at Roche Harbor. The Tacoma and Roche Harbor Lime Company owned 3,000 acres, on which they built the company town of Roche Harbor, complete with a hotel, a wharf, a large general store, a warehouse, a school, and a church. The land also included two ranches on which the company raised cattle and hogs (to feed its workers) and grew hay, oats, and root vegetables. Early twentieth century descriptions of the company's limestone deposits, which were one-quarter mile thick and ran three-quarters of a mile from Roche Harbor to Westcott Bay, depicted the resource as "inexhaustible" and "the purest in the world."[87] The lime quarries were 250 feet high and a quarter-mile wide. Observers described the thirteen kilns and the warehouses, which loomed above Roche Harbor, as "imposing." The warehouses held 20,000 barrels of lime, and one reporter noted, "it is a grand sight to see long rows of barrels piled high in these warerooms."[88] The company constructed nine inclined tracks (these were the island's only railroads) so that ore cars could use gravity to roll from the quarries to the processing plant. An engine powered the cars' return to the quarries.

The Tacoma and Roche Harbor Lime Company transported and sold their product around the world. The company's ship, which had a capacity of 550 tons, made monthly deliveries to San Francisco. The company also transported the product on its five barges. In 1890, Tacoma and Roche Harbor produced 146,203 barrels of lime; after 1901, that figure usually exceeded 200,000 barrels per year. San Franciscans used San Juan Island lime to rebuild after the 1906 earthquake. It was also shipped as far away as South America and Hawaii. The famous Bethlehem Steel Company of Pennsylvania was one of the company's biggest customers.[89]

Lime processing was the primary cause of the island's deforestation. The thirteen wood-fired kilns at Roche Harbor required three and one-half cords of wood each day, and the kilns ran seven days per week, twenty-four hours per day, eleven months per year. Each kiln burned 1,050 cords of wood per year. San Juan's timber was generally too small for other types of commercial harvesting, but many private landowners cut and sold wood to the lime company. The company also ran logging operations on its own land; one 1901 photo shows the previously timbered area above Roche Harbor, behind the warehouses and the kilns, completely devoid of forest. The finished lime was shipped in wood barrels, and the associated barrel making further contributed to logging on the island. Employees at John McMillin's Staveless Barrel Company constructed barrels for the lime from the island's fir and cedar.[90]

Islanders depended on the lime industry in a number of ways. By 1908, the Tacoma and Roche Harbor Lime Company employed eighty-five men, while the Staveless Barrel Company occupied an additional fifty. Selling cut wood to the company to fuel the limekilns supplemented many islanders' incomes. Local farmers also sold products such as apples, potatoes, or butter to company employees. The operation continued through the Great Depression, with the company extracting almost 240,000 tons of limestone from the island between 1930 and 1940.[91]

87. "Islands of San Juan County," 17.

88. "The San Juan Islands," 7.

89. "The San Juan Islands," 8; William R. Danner, *Limestone Resources of Western Washington* (Olympia: Washington State Printing Office, 1966), 88; and Evans and Burley, *Roche Harbor*, 8.

90. San Juan Islands," 8; William R. Danner, *Limestone Resources of Western Washington* (Olympia: Washington State Printing Office, 1966), 88; and Evans and Burley, *Roche Harbor*, 8.

91. *Orcas Island Historical Society Newsletter* 16, no. 3 (November 1997), 2; McDonald, *Making History*, 92; and Danner, *Limestone Resources of Western Washington*, 89. It is unknown how many tons were mined before 1919.

Figure 36. Roche Harbor ca. 1930. The company town at Roche Harbor. The Tacoma and Roche Harbor Lime Company was the largest lime processing operation on the West Coast, and the company's operations were largely responsible for the island's deforestation. (University of Washington, Special Collections, UW18973.)

Smaller lime companies operated on the island as well. Harry Cowell, a rival of John McMillin, purchased and expanded Hibbard's claim on the island's west shore, and his holdings stretched along the coastline from Smallpox Bay to Deadman Bay. Cowell also purchased and developed a number of smaller claims, on both San Juan and Orcas islands. The Harry Cowell Lime and Cement Company operated two processing plants in the county. One consisted of two kilns on the west shore of San Juan Island, which produced about 230 barrels of lime per day in the early twentieth century. The other processing plant, which consisted of a single kiln, was located on Orcas Island. The company shipped lime to markets in Portland and around Puget Sound.[92] At least eight other individuals or companies dug limestone quarries at various points around the island. Jim Crook had a thirty by nine-foot quarry about one-half mile northwest of the English Camp blockhouse, and he operated a lime kiln on his property sometime in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. Due to the poor quality of Crook's limestone, the venture never developed into a large operation. Another limestone outcrop, located on the west side of Mt. Young on Crook's property, was never quarried due to its small size.[93]

In the 1930s, the Roche Harbor Lime Company had optimistically predicted that enough limestone remained to supply the kilns for an additional fifty years, but they drastically overestimated the resource, and by the 1950s, the company had difficulty finding enough high-quality limestone to sustain their operations. Federal government contracts during World War II kept the Roche Harbor operation afloat during the 1940s, but by 1951, only six kilns operated. The company continued to employ forty workers until 1956, when Paul McMillin, son of founder John McMillin, sold the Roche Harbor property to investors who converted the complex into a resort. As farming declined in the 1950s some islanders attempted to

92. "Islands of San Juan County," 19.

93. Danner, *Limestone Resources of Western Washington,* 92.

restart the lime industry by commissioning geological studies, but these reports proved that the remaining lime deposits were too small to be commercially viable.[94]

After the industry collapsed, evidence of limestone extraction remained in the form of abandoned quarries and second growth forest. Islanders and company employees had cut most of the island's old-growth forests to fuel the wood-fired limekilns and to make barrels. Investigators from the National Park Service in the 1937 observed that these activities had left "scars that are visible across distances of miles." The Roche Harbor Lime Company (previously called the Tacoma and Roche Harbor Lime Company) abandoned fifteen quarries when it ceased operations in 1956, two of which were converted into water reservoirs. Smaller operations left an unknown number of individual quarries scattered around the island.[95] The lime industry had provided jobs from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries, but islanders exhausted the finite resource.

Logging

San Juan Island's timber industry paled compared to that of mainland Washington State, but island timber was utilized to fuel limekilns, power wood-fired steamers, build structures and fish-trap pilings, and heat homes. Local timber companies exported a small amount lumber from the island. Boosters, again promoting a myth of abundance, promised that the island contained an "inexhaustible supply of timber," but by 1910, almost all of San Juan Island's old-growth forest had been cut.[96]

Logging operations on San Juan Island in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries utilized techniques that ensured maximum harvests and severe environmental damage. Island loggers used the steam donkey, a small steam engine invented in 1882, which powered winches and chokes that pulled cut fir and cedar from the island's forests to either a gathering spot or the shoreline. The device allowed loggers to extract more timber than they had using horses or oxen. As a stream donkey dragged logs through the forest, it created marks that scarred the landscape and made it more difficult for most new trees to germinate. Evidence suggests that loggers sometimes utilized spar trees along with steam donkeys. Using this technique, loggers used pulleys to move the timber through the air by running the winch on top of a tree, thus limiting some of the environmental damage caused by dragging the logs.[97] Logging was prevalent throughout San Juan County; by 1893, the county's three sawmills processed four million board feet of lumber per year. At least one logging company, the Western Mills and Lumber Company, operated on San Juan Island in the early twentieth century; founded in 1902, the company employed eighteen men by 1908.[98]

Deforestation occurred at both former military campsites. Jim Crook, owner of the majority of the former English Camp site, built a small sawmill on his property. Crook logged some of the timber on his property to make barrels for both the lime industry and the Great Northern

94. Davidson, Bond, and Lewis, "Report on San Juan Island Investigation," 10; and Danner, *Limestone Resources of Western Washington,* 88.

95. Davidson, Bond, and Lewis, "Report on San Juan Island Investigation," 7; and Danner, *Limestone Resources of Western Washington,* 85.

96. "The San Juan Islands," 8.

97. Logging file, Photo Collection, San Juan County Historical Museum Archives; and Richard White, *Land Use, Environment, and Social Change: The Shaping of Island County, Washington* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1980), 96.

98. Nellie V. Miller, *Resources of the State of Washington* (Seattle, 1933), 50; and "The San Juan Islands," 8.

Fishing Company. Between 1905 and 1920, almost all of the remaining old-growth forest at English Camp was logged, and the area was then burned to clear the stumps. As logging and agricultural operations ceased in the late 1950s, Douglas firs, along with some grand firs and lodgepole pine, recolonized the meadows of English Camp.[99]

Most of the American Camp area also was logged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The forests on the northern side of Mt. Finlayson were cut during the 1880s, probably by settlers clearing land for agriculture, although some trees remain in the area that date to the early eighteenth century. The majority of the remaining old-growth forest, most of which lay to the northeast and northwest of the redoubt, was cleared between 1895 and 1910. These forests regenerated, and most of the area's trees date from the late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries.[100] Some commercial-grade fir, spruce, and hemlock grew on the north side of Mt. Finlayson by the mid-twentieth century, and in the 1950s, the biggest trees in this area were harvested.[101] Despite the removal of the largest specimens, Douglas fir remains the dominant tree on the island.[102]

Fishing

Salmon sustained the Northern Straits Indians and attracted the Hudson's Bay Company to San Juan Island, and with the invention of canning in the late nineteenth century, the fishing industry provided economic opportunities for islanders. Salmon from the Fraser River migrate past San Juan Island, but Americans only lightly fished the island's waters until the 1890s, when the first canneries opened along the waters north of Puget Sound.[103] The process of canning had been invented in 1864, and high market demand for canned salmon spurred the industry's expansion throughout the Puget Sound region in the late nineteenth century. Although some other species of fish, such as halibut, were commercially fished off San Juan Island, salmon was the primary catch. Boosters promised that salmon fishing in the archipelago offered tremendous financial opportunities, and by 1900, the industry had become the most important in the archipelago. The boom was short lived, however; by 1920, it had declined due to market forces, overfishing, and environmental degradation.

Fishing quickly became the largest industry in the islands after canneries opened in Anacortes, Blaine, and Friday Harbor in the early 1890s. Boosters promised that "the fishing industry has reached immense proportions and gives employment to hundreds of men during the summer months."[104] The canning industry expanded rapidly, and by 1900, there were fifteen canneries in the waters north of Puget Sound, in the vicinity of the archipelago.[105] In 1894, the Island

99. Durhack, "Birthday Greetings to Jim Crook"; and Agee, *Historic Landscapes*, 11.

100. Agee, *Historic Landscapes*, 26–27.

101. Field Notes of the Dependent Resurvey of the Section Boundaries and Partial Subdivision of Fractional Section Eight, Township 34 North, Range 2 West, 9 August 1955, Bureau of Land Management Archives, Oregon State Office; and Agee, *Historical Landscapes*, 27.

102. Tom Shroeder, "Historic Forest Conditions," *Forest Info for the San Juan Islands*, http://www.rockisland.com/tom/presettle.html.

103. John F. Roos, *Restoring Fraser River Salmon* (Vancouver: Pacific Salmon Commission, 1991), 54.

104. "San Juan County," n.d., MUASC.

105. Committee on Protection and Management of the Pacific Northwest Anadromous Salmonids. *Upstream: Salmon and Society in the Pacific Northwest* (Washington DC: National Academy Press, 1996), 82; San Juan County Board of Commissioners, "San Juan County," n.d., MUASC; and Roos, *Restoring Fraser River Salmon*, 56.

Figure 37. The Friday Harbor Packing Company's salmon cannery in 1915. The first canneries opened in the waters north of Puget Sound in the 1890s. This cannery, established in 1894, produced more than 50,000 cases of salmon per year in the early twentieth century. (University of Washington, Special Collections, COBB3855.)

Packing Company established a salmon cannery in Friday Harbor, and five years later, Pacific-American Fisheries purchased the cannery and renamed the operation the Friday Harbor Packing Company. In its first year, the cannery produced 25,000 cases of salmon, and by 1908, the business exported more than 50,000 cases per year.[106] At least one other cannery operated on the island in the early twentieth century as well. Canning companies exported much of the fish to the East Coast, Great Britain, and Europe.[107] Around the turn of the twentieth century, over one thousand men worked in the fishing industry in San Juan County.[108]

Fish traps, called "a superior technology" by island boosters, enabled companies to harvest enormous quantities of salmon.[109] Culture and technology had limited Northern Straits salmon fishing; the reef net technique procured modest catches compared to fish traps. The Hudson's Bay Company had engaged in trade on a global scale, but they were constrained by their limited ability to process and trade salted fish before the advent of mechanized canning and the expansion of railroad transportation networks. With the invention of canning and fish traps, however, corporations became involved in large scale, profit driven salmon fishing operations in which large quantities of fish were caught, processed, and shipped to points around the globe.

Certain types of traps were first used in the Pacific Northwest in the 1850s to catch fish, but it was not until 1879 that northwestern fishermen began using the eastern style poundnet, commonly known as a fish trap. These traps worked by funneling migrating salmon through a stationary structure, consisting of nets strung along pilings, into an enclosure called a spiller pot. The trapped salmon were then lifted aboard a scow and shipped to the cannery. By 1897,

106. Wray, "Salmon Bank," 5; and "The San Juan Islands," 6.

107. E. G. Ziegler owned this cannery was owned, but there is no other information available about the operation. Joseph E. Taylor, III, *Making Salmon: An Environmental History of the Northwest Fisheries Crisis* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999), 64.

108. "The San Juan Islands," 5.

109. "The San Juan Islands," 5.

Figure 38. A fish trap on the Salmon Bank. Fish traps funneled migrating salmon through nets strung along pilings into an enclosure called a spiller pot. The trapped salmon were then lifted aboard a scow and shipped to a cannery. (University of Washington, Special Collections, UW5703.)

nine fish traps operated offshore what is presently the American Camp section of the historical park. Around the turn of the century, additional traps were constructed off the west side of San Juan Island at Kanaka Bay, Deadman Bay, and Eagle Cove. In 1900, forty fish traps operated in the county, employing about 300 men. These devices were owned by corporations such as the Pacific-American Fisheries and Alaska Packers, since the expense of building traps made it difficult for individuals to construct and own the devices. While the Hudson's Bay Company had exported about 120,000 salmon in its best year on San Juan Island in the 1850s, a single trap operated by Shultz and Gross near Roche Harbor caught over 400,000 salmon in one season. In some cases, more fish were caught than could be processed. Those fish were simply thrown away.[110]

The shores along southern and western San Juan Island became a hub of activity due to their proximity to the Salmon Bank, the submerged ridge that runs for about two miles to the south of Cattle Point. Due to the shallow depth of the bank, fishing companies were able to drive pilings into the shoal for fish traps. From the turn of the century and into the early 1930s, Pacific-American Fisheries operated a camp at South

Beach near their fish traps consisting of bunkhouses and at least one cookhouse. The water from the nearby springs, which the company leased from Eliza Jakle, proved insufficient for the company's camp in the early twentieth century, and they were forced to bring water by scow to the locale.[111]

110. Taylor, *Making Salmon*, 144; U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, "Washington Sound, Part of San Juan Island, Pear Point to Eagle Point, 1897"; Wray, "Salmon Bank," Appendix A, Trap Inventory at Salmon Bank; and "The San Juan Islands," 5.

111. Wray, "Salmon Bank," 5–6.

Figure 39. Purse seiners in 1907. The shores along southern and western San Juan Island became a hub of activity due to their proximity to the Salmon Bank. From the turn of the century and into the early 1930s, Pacific-American Fisheries operated a camp at South Beach, near their fish traps, consisting of bunkhouses and at least one cookhouse. (San Juan Island National Historical Park files.)

Commercial fishermen from all over the Puget Sound region came to fish at the Salmon Bank using gill nets, purse seines, and reef nets. Some rowed from as far away as Hood Canal and Gig Harbor in small skiffs. With the advent of gasoline-powered motorboats in the early twentieth century and diesel-powered boats in 1914, even greater numbers of men ventured to the island to fish. Fishermen established three large camps, two on western San Juan Island and one on southern Lopez Island, near the Salmon Bank.[112] Fishermen moored boats in small coves and camped on the island's western and southern shores in order to station themselves near the salmon runs.[113]

The fishing industry was economically important to islanders from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries. Many islanders worked for wages for the fishing and canning companies. Individual fisherman utilized gill nets, purse seines, and reef nets to catch fish for sale to canneries in Friday Harbor and on the mainland. Fish caught in the spring were sold fresh to markets in the Puget Sound area; canners preferred the summer sockeye run due to its bright red flesh. Islanders depended on the fishing industry in other ways as well. Farmers sold butter, milk, and vegetables to the fishing camps. Men and women worked in camp cookhouses preparing meals, waiting tables, and washing dishes. Washington State law required that companies remove fish traps for part of each year, since they could be an obstacle to navigation. This meant that new traps had to be constructed annually. Companies employed island laborers to cut trees for trap pilings, and they hired islanders to build and dismantle the traps.[114]

112. Daniel J. Chasen, *The Water Link: The History of Puget Sound as a Resource* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981), 45–47. Two of the camps were associated with particular ethnic groups. While the Scandinavians set up camp on southern Lopez Island, the Slavs and a group unassociated with any particular ethnic group established camps on San Juan Island

113. Wray, "Salmon Bank"; and Randolph to Oliver, February 19, 1911.

114. Jakle, interview, 22.

Although the rhetoric of the time suggested otherwise, there were signs that the region's salmon fisheries were exhaustible as early as the 1880s. There were a few attempts in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to enact salmon harvest regulations, but they failed due to pressure from the fishing industry, which sought to maximize short-term profits at the expense of long-term sustainability. In 1908, a joint American-Canadian commission was established to study the condition of the Fraser River salmon runs. The commission recommended the regulation of salmon traps and commercial fishermen, but opposition from American canneries led Washington state congressmen to defeat the proposal. Competing factions of the fishing industry sought to limit the harvest levels of their rivals; purse seiners in particular fought the trap industry. In 1924 and 1928, initiatives were proposed that would have either restricted or abolished certain types of commercial or trap fishing in Washington State. Both initiatives failed.[115]

Market forces, overfishing, and environmental degradation caused the decline of the salmon fishing industry in the San Juan Islands as in the rest of the Pacific Northwest. The industry in the islands thrived until 1913, a record year for the Fraser River run, but subsequent years never matched this harvest level. While island boosters had seen fish traps as an efficient, economical technology, the traps' success helped speed the decline of the salmon populations. Moreover, a large landslide on the Fraser River in 1913, caused by railroad construction, blocked salmon migration on the river. Due to the blockage, the catch from this run declined by half in 1917 and one-sixth in 1921 (based on the 1913 numbers). Siltation and pollution from gold mining, logging, and agriculture on the Fraser River also led to a decline in salmon numbers near San Juan Island. One of the island's two canneries closed sometime in the late 1910s or early 1920s. After World War I, a surplus of Alaskan salmon led to a depression in the industry, making the endeavor less profitable for islanders. Partly in response to urging from commercial and sport fisherman who resented the large catches enabled by fish traps, Washington State voters banned the devices in 1934. The industry never returned to its nineteenth-century harvest levels.[116]

Islanders continued to fish commercially using purse seines, gill nets and reef nets, the method of fishing used by Northern Straits Indians since before European contact. Many islanders dried and smoked salmon and herring for sale; they also continued to fish for personal consumption.[117] The number of islanders working in the fishing industry dropped, and though the Friday Harbor Packing Company continued to operate until 1959, it was no longer a major employer.

A Transitioning Economy

As natural-resource-based industries in the islands declined, so did San Juan County's population. The county had fewer residents in 1960 than it had in 1910.[118] However, transportation improvements meant that the San Juan Islands became more integrated into the region as a whole with, for example, Friday Harbor becoming the principal market not only for San Juan Island residents but also for nearby smaller islands. During the 1920s, car

115. Chasen, *Water Link*, 47.

116. Chasen, *Water Link*, 45; Hayner, "Ecological Succession in the San Juan Islands," 84–85; and Committee on Protection and Management of the Pacific Northwest Anadromous Salmonids, *Upstream*, 82.

117. "The San Juan islands," 5; and Wray, "Salmon Bank," 41.

118. In 1960, San Juan County had 2872 residents; in 1910, 3603. There are no statistics available for San Juan Island.

ferries and special Saturday ferries between Lopez Island and Friday Harbor for shoppers were introduced. Goods and services became concentrated in Friday Harbor, rather than remaining scattered in island villages, making the town the commercial center of the San Juan Islands. In 1928, Friday Harbor had the only bank, creamery, weekly newspaper, car dealership, movie theater, and drugstore in the archipelago.[119] Better ferry service made travel from and around the islands convenient for island residents; they also enabled large-scale tourism to the islands. Boosters' visions of an island of small, profitable farms and industries had failed to materialize, and many islanders began to see tourism as their island's future.

119. Hayner, "Ecological Succession in the San Juan Islands," 88–92.

Chapter Six

A New Land Ethic: Preservation and Tourism in the San Juan Islands

Islanders had relied on natural resource-based industries since the mid-nineteenth century, but by 1920, market forces and resource depletion caused the decline of the island's agricultural, fishing, and lime industries. At the same time, better transportation connections between the islands and the mainland and increased promotional efforts by island boosters helped make the San Juan Islands a desirable tourist destination. Rather than viewing nature only for its extractable commodities, islanders began to see the value in scenic preservation and recreation. As residents and visitors embraced this new vision of the island's natural landscape, the archipelago was reinvented as an unspoiled venue for relaxation and recreation.

The First Tourists

The San Juan Islands had few facilities to accommodate tourists in the nineteenth century, but a small number of vacationers did venture to the archipelago during this time. The daughter and niece of Vancouver Island Governor James Douglas both reportedly honeymooned on San Juan Island in the 1850s, though there is no additional information about their visits to the undeveloped island.[1] Camping was a popular activity throughout the Puget Sound region in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and some of the first tourists to the area were families who camped on the islands' shores. In 1885, Washington Territorial Governor Watson Squire noted, "the scenery [of San Juan County] is beautiful and the various islands are attaining prominence as summer resorts." A tourist hotel was established in Friday Harbor in 1891.[2]

In the early twentieth century, small resorts began to appear on Orcas Island, the first of the San Juans to develop tourist facilities. Orcas' rugged, hilly topography made farming difficult, but it provided scenic landscapes that drew visitors. East Sound House, which advertised itself as a scenic destination for city dwellers seeking relaxation or recreation, became the first resort in the archipelago when it opened on the site of a former Orcas Island orchard in 1891. In 1901, a second Orcas resort opened on West Sound. Prominent Seattle families and developers began to build summer homes in the archipelago, and the area near Eastsound became especially popular.[3]

While natural resource-based industries still dominated the archipelago's economy, few people were interested in land preservation in the San Juan Islands. Robert Moran, a former Seattle mayor, tried unsuccessfully to donate his 2,600 acre Orcas Island estate to Washington State in the early twentieth century. Moran emphasized the scientific value of his land, since there was little interest in the scenic or recreational value of the property. He proposed that scientists

1. Richard Mayne, *Four Years in British Columbia and Vancouver Island* (London: John Murray, 1862), 40.

2. Norman S. Hayner, "Ecological Succession in the San Juan Islands," *Publication of the American Sociological Society* 23 (1929): 81–92, quotation on 90.

3. "The San Juan Islands," Illustrated Supplement to the *San Juan Islander* (Friday Harbor, Washington), 1901, 24; and Hayner, "Ecological Succession in the San Juan Islands," 91.

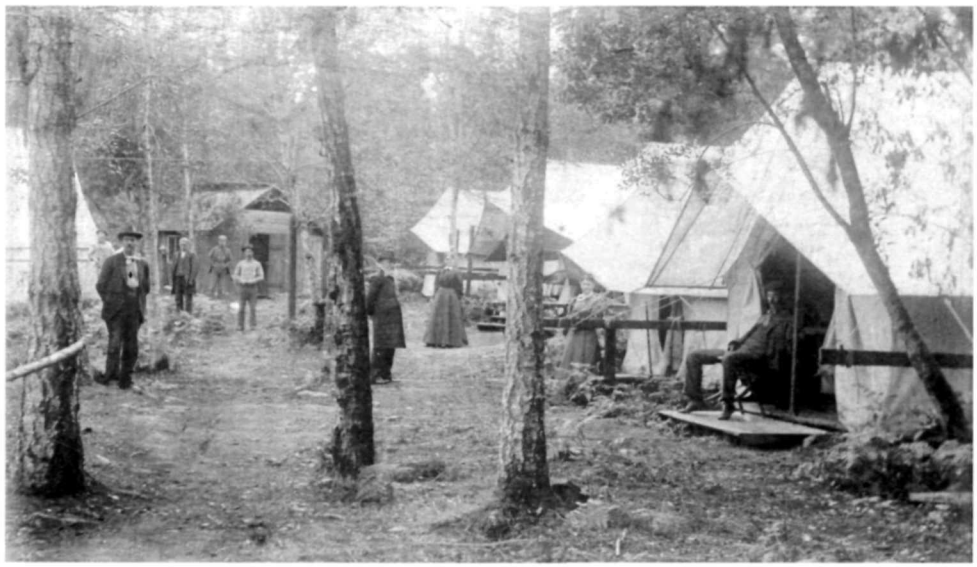

Figure 40. A tourist camp in the San Juan Islands, ca. 1900. Camping became a popular pastime throughout the Puget Sound region in the early twentieth century, and increasing numbers of visitors journeyed to San Juan and Orcas Islands after entrepreneurs established campgrounds on those islands. (University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, UW5183.)

and students utilize the wooded estate to study forestry, zoology, botany, and geology. He suggested that the summit of Mt. Constitution, the estate's (and the archipelago's) highest point, would make a fine site for a University of Washington astronomical observatory. However, Washington State did not have any agency to administer park lands, and state legislators considered the archipelago too remote to be an attractive tourist destination.[4]

In the mid-1910s, a number of factors converged to spur the state to create park lands in scenic areas such as the San Juan Islands. National interest in scenic preservation arose as the automobile made previously remote natural areas more accessible to tourists. Stephen Mather, the first head of the newly formed National Park Service (NPS), traveled the nation urging the creation of national and state parks to protect scenic areas. In Washington, the city of Seattle began a "City Beautiful" campaign to attract visitors and residents. Many residents in the urbanizing Puget Sound region began to see a need for parks that offered recreational opportunities such as hiking, swimming, and camping. In 1913, the legislature created the Washington State Board of Park Commissioners, but it failed to provide the commissioners with funding or guidelines. In 1921, the board became the Washington State Parks Committee, and though the legislature still did not allocate money for the agency, they did establish guidelines and directives, and allowed the parks to operate concessions. The state finally accepted Moran's 2,600-acre donation in 1920, ten years after he initially proposed the idea to state legislators.[5]

Many islanders resisted the transition from a rural to a tourist economy, but some saw economic opportunity in the change. By 1908, developers were building summer homes on former orchards. One early twentieth-century promotional paper reminded potential visitors

4. Thomas Cox, *The Park Builders: A History of State Parks in the Pacific Northwest* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), 23.

5. Cox, *Park Builders*, 25. By the second half of the twentieth century, Moran State Park had become one of the most popular parks in the Washington State park system.

Figure 41. The auto ferry *Rosario* in 1935. The inauguration of car ferry service to the islands in 1923 enabled tourists to travel to the islands relatively quickly and conveniently. (University of Washington, Special Collections, UW36576.)

that the island was "first and foremost the home of the stockraiser, the dairyman and the fruit grower," but islanders were beginning to see the economic value of attracting tourists. Sociologist Norman S. Hayner reported, "Farmers who own beaches on Orcas Island dream about the resorts they are going to establish, and storekeepers talk about a golf course and an automobile road up Mt. Constitution." Other island farmers and merchants eagerly viewed tourists as consumers for local products. As fitting an agricultural community, promoters boasted that the island's fresh foods, such as meat, cream, eggs, and vegetables, "will build up [the tourist's] constitution that he may return to work with renewed strength." These islanders hoped tourists would invigorate the archipelago's economy. However, just as the islands' remote location posed difficulties for local farmers attempting to sell their products in urban markets, their isolation also presented problems for vacationers seeking a convenient getaway from their urban homes.[6]

The inauguration of car ferry service to the islands in 1923 enabled tourists to travel to the islands relatively quickly and conveniently, and as a result, the archipelago's tourist industry grew dramatically. The San Juan County Commercial Club even boasted that "the archipelago is on a main automobile highway" after ferry service began between Anacortes, 80 miles north of Seattle, and Friday Harbor.[7] The expanded use of gasoline- and diesel-powered motorboats also contributed to increased visitation to the islands. Travel articles in Northwest newspapers and magazines marketed the islands as a desirable, convenient vacation destination for Seattle and Everett residents. By the late 1920s, increased ferry service had generated, according to one sociologist, "a flood of visitors during the summer months—tourists, boy and girl campers,

6. Hayner, "Ecological Succession in the San Juan Islands," 7–13, 92.

7. San Juan County Commercial Club, "San Juan Island in Puget Sound," ca. 1920s, San Juan County Pamphlet File, Manuscripts, University Archives and Special Collections (MUASC), University of Washington, Seattle.

Figure 42. The road up Mt. Constitution on Orcas Island in 1930. Promoters touted the islands' scenic wonders, recreational possibilities and easy auto access in an attempt to lure tourists. This drive, in Moran State Park, was one of the archipelago's main attractions. (University of Washington, Special Collections, UW36579.)

biological students, excursionists, yachtsmen, relatives of native islanders."[8] By the late 1940s, visitors could arrive by plane, ferry, or private boat; two Black Ball ferries per day (three on Sundays and holidays) ran between Anacortes and the islands.

An Island Reinvented

Boosters retooled their rhetoric as they attempted to lure a new type of resident and visitor to the islands. While early promotional materials had proudly showcased the island's natural resource-based industries, a different kind of publicity campaign developed in the first half of the twentieth century. Instead of limekilns and reef nets, pamphlets publicizing the San Juan Islands displayed pictures of isolated beaches and tranquil coves. Newspaper photographs showed sport anglers as they reeled in huge salmon, while hikers stood triumphantly atop Mt. Constitution (the archipelago's highest point) on Orcas Island in tourist brochures. Travel articles that featured the islands appeared in national and regional magazines and newspapers with increasing frequency throughout the mid-twentieth century, and the islands became a popular vacation destination.

Generations of islanders had mined limestone, plowed prairies, grazed livestock, and cut trees, but by the mid-twentieth century, boosters promoted the archipelago as a pristine retreat in a spectacular natural setting. They promised to visitors the idea that the islands' scenic beauty, peacefulness, and remote location would relieve the stress of city life. One pamphlet read, "Here are mountains to climb and valleys to ramble through. Here are long expanses of water upon which the wearied worker may sail, row or be propelled. Here are numerous bays whose gentle slope and firm sands smilingly call for the patter of bathers' feet."[9] While booster publications designed to attract residents had emphasized the island's development

8. Hayner, "Ecological Succession in the San Juan Islands," 91. In the 1920s, about 5,000 tourists visited the islands each summer.

9. San Juan County Commercial Club, "San Juan Island in Puget Sound."

while downplaying the remote location, some tourist brochures highlighted the archipelago's remote location and the undeveloped natural environment in order to emphasize the quiet and relaxing setting. One typical booster publication called the islands, "an enchanted paradise for the nature loving pleasure seeker." Promoters promised that the tourist's body *and* mind would be rested after a vacation in the islands.[10] One entrepreneur lured solitude-seeking homebuyers by promising that the development was "your island dream come true . . . a perfect setting where isolation, a mild climactic environment, and scenic beauty contribute to repose and freedom from the strain of contemporary life."[11] Travel writers agreed, and they often described the islands as "a paradise" or "a hideaway."[12] One typical description noted, "for pure eye-catching, breathtaking beauty, it is hard to imagine anything, anywhere, to compete with a meandering excursion among these quiet islands."[13]

While these descriptions enticed tourists who sought a peaceful vacation in a beautiful natural environment, magazines, other literature promoted the islands as a place for sports and recreation. Writers described the archipelago as "the nation's summer playground," promising that "sports and fun galore" awaited the island visitor.[14] They portrayed the islands as perfect for swimming, horseback riding, sport fishing, hiking, sailing, golf, canoeing, and hunting. Promoters boasted that the islands were "dotted with beaches and coves for the delight of yachtsmen, sportsmen, and pleasure seekers."[15] Whether a tourist desired an active or relaxing vacation, promoters assured potential visitors that the archipelago was a perfect destination.

Just as boosters had promised farmers that the archipelago's mild climate ensured successful harvests, tourist brochures promised visitors happy vacations under sunny skies, with mild temperatures and healthy surroundings. One promised that the islands have "the finest climate in America, as well as long hours of daylight in the summer." The pamphlet continued, "thunderstorms are virtually unknown and winds of hurricane violence are nonexistent. There are no extremes of hot and cold." Early promoters had pledged to farmers that abundant rainfall would water their crops, but tourists were assured, "summer rainfall is extremely light." They were also promised that the rural islands contained no "mosquitoes . . . nor any poisonous snakes."[16] Islanders knew that while tourists wanted to enjoy the islands' natural environment, they did not want to be inconvenienced by bad weather or insects.

Hunters from around the Puget Sound area flocked to San Juan Island to hunt the rabbits that island residents considered a pest. Since Washington State did not consider rabbits a game animal, hunters could pursue rabbits without a obtaining a license or obeying limits. Night hunting became a popular sport on the island for locals and tourists. Hunters drove cars equipped with spotlights and running board seats through island fields, while a passenger used long handled nets to scoop up rabbits. Pairs of hunters reportedly could catch up to 100 rabbits in one night.[17]

10. San Juan Island Chamber of Commerce, "Visit San Juan Island: Resort Guide," 1957, MUASC.

11. "Welcome to Rosario," n.d., San Juan County Pamphlet File, MUASC.

12. Margaret Bean, "Dream Islands of Puget Sound," *Travel* (August 1933): 20.

13. David Richardson, "San Juan Water Trip Filled with Beauty," *Tacoma Sunday Ledger/News Tribune*, August 25, 1961.

14. San Juan County Commercial Club, "San Juan Island in Puget Sound."

15. San Juan Island Chamber of Commerce, "Visit San Juan Island: Resort Guide."

16. "Welcome to Rosario."

17. Francis E. Shafer, "Tourist Flow to the San Juan Islands" (M.A. Thesis, University of Washington, 1953), 23.

Figure 43. The University of Washington's Puget Sound Biological Station, date unknown. The marine laboratory, along with the creation of the San Juan Marine Biological Preserve in 1923, demonstrated an increasing emphasis on research and study rather than resource extraction in the surrounding waters. (University of Washington, Special Collections, UW36577.)

By the mid-twentieth century, tourism had become increasingly important to the area's economy. The commercial fishing industry in the archipelago had declined, but some islanders began to earn their living guiding sport-fishing excursions and operating fishing supply stores and fishing resorts. New hotels and restaurants sprang up to serve the tourist trade. Other islanders earned a living constructing vacation homes and supplying summer residents and tourists.

Scenery and Science

The waters around the archipelago had been famous for their salmon, but by the 1920s, these waters also became valuable for scientific research. The University of Washington established a marine laboratory on San Juan Island in 1904, and the first classes were held in a defunct fish cannery in Friday Harbor. In 1921, the university received 484 acres of the unused military reservation at Point Caution, just northeast of the town of Friday Harbor.[18] Two years later, the Washington State legislature, at the urging of the university laboratory, created the San Juan Marine Biological Preserve, which encompassed the waters of the entire archipelago. The purpose of the organization was to "preserve marine biological materials useful for scientific purposes, excepting materials gathered for food and kelp." Persons who collected non-edible marine organisms in the preserve could be charged with a misdemeanor.[19] Creation of the preserve did nothing to regulate the harvesting of fish or shellfish in the area, but it demonstrated an increasing awareness that the islands' waters were valuable for more than just their extractable, marketable commodities.

18. Lucille McDonald, *Making History: The People Who Shaped the San Juan Islands* (Friday Harbor, WA: Friday Harbor Press, 1990), 110.

19. Michael R. Murray, "The Status of Marine Protected Areas in Puget Sound," Vol. 2, MPA Site Profiles and Appendices, http://www.psat.wa.gov/shared/volume2/research.pdf.

Further evidence of this growing interest in the area's scenery and scientific value came in the 1930s.[20] During the New Deal, the federal government placed increased emphasis upon developing recreational opportunities for Americans. National park visitation dropped during the Great Depression, but as historian Larry Dilsaver explained, the New Deal "spawned the greatest booms in construction of visitor facilities, road and trail development, park planning, identification of new areas, and new initiatives for expansion of the system to ever occur."[21] The NPS twice considered preserving the entire archipelago during this decade.

Emerson Knight, a NPS landscape architect, was captivated by the islands' scenery during his visit in 1935. The NPS sent Knight to evaluate the chain for federal protection, and he recommended that the islands be preserved as a national recreation area due to their "intrinsic natural, educational, inspirational, and scientific values." He suggested that the federal government buy out private property owners while allowing life tenure for island residents. Knight predicted that farmers would willingly sell their property due to the decline of agriculture in the islands, but he anticipated difficulty purchasing homes and land from summer homeowners who valued the scenic locations of their vacation residences. Knight summarized, "The dream of creating the San Juan Islands, priceless in their natural endowments and excellence, into some form of National Recreation Reserve, is a vivid one recommended for fulfillment."[22] His report was published in 1937, but the federal government did not take any action based on his recommendations.

Other NPS investigators were not as charmed. The Park, Parkway, and Recreational Study Act of 1936 authorized the NPS to study potential new park, recreation, and seashore sites, and the agency again evaluated the archipelago for inclusion in the park system. Seeking exceptional natural wonders, prime wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities for the public, three NPS employees teamed up in 1937 to assess the feasibility of preserving the islands as a national park. Landscape architect Ernest A. Davidson, wildlife technician Richard M. Bond, and geologist J. Volney Lewis determined after two months of investigation that while "scenically the islands are excellent," they were not "of character sufficiently outstanding . . . to merit National Park status." To Davidson and his colleagues, there was no singular feature that deserved protection, since it was the islands' "distant views and panoramas outside the islands themselves" that made the area scenic. "There is almost no possibility of damaging such a type of scenery," they concluded. The investigators did not see the landscape as pristine and natural, as boosters hoped that visitors would, since they noted the lack of old-growth forest and the evidence of repeated fires. Even the few old-growth trees on the islands were considered "poor" compared to forests on the mainland.[23] "Considered as a whole," the investigators wrote, "scenic values of forest, lake, and mountain are inferior to numerous portions of the Northwest." The team concluded that the scenery and geology of the entire archipelago were not of exceptional character or in danger of development, and that federal ownership was not necessary to preserve recreational opportunities in the islands.[24]

20. Kelley June Cannon, *Administrative History: San Juan Island National Historical Park* (Seattle: National Park Service), November 20, 1997, 32–33.

21. Larry M. Dilsaver, ed., *America's National Park System: The Critical Documents* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1994), 67.

22. Cannon, *Administrative History*, 33.

23. Ernest A. Davidson, Richard M. Bond, and J. Volney Lewis, "Report on San Juan Islands Investigation," National Park Service, August 5, 1937, 2.

24. Davidson, Bond, and Lewis, "Report on San Juan Islands Investigation," 1.

They did, however, recommend that Orcas Island was worthy of some type of federal protection, due to the quality of its scenery and the opportunity for the NPS to restore wildlife habitat. In the late 1920s and 1930s, the NPS had begun to espouse an ecological approach to natural resource management, symbolized by the creation of a wildlife division. One major study published in 1933 entitled "Fauna of the National Parks of the United States: A Preliminary Survey of Faunal Relations in National Parks," recommended that wildlife species be reintroduced into areas where human activities had reduced their numbers or eliminated them altogether.[25] Davidson and his colleagues demonstrated their commitment to these ideas when they recommended that large mammals be reintroduced onto Orcas Island. The team enthusiastically suggested that the island could provide habitat for wolves, a rapidly vanishing predator. Since wolves roam large areas, they often traveled out of other protected areas in the United States and were consequently trapped or poisoned. In an island environment, the team reasoned, the wolves would be protected from these human actions. The investigators believed that reintroducing elk, bear, and wolves provided the opportunity to have "a really balanced wildlife population," since the animals would not swim away from the island. They also recommended that certain areas in the archipelago be set aside as refuges for nesting sea birds, and that the state work toward preservation and acquisition of shoreline.[26] However, the NPS commitment to ecological management lessened during the 1930s as the recommendations of wildlife biologists and other scientists conflicted with the emphasis that New Deal programs placed recreation and development. The suggestions of the team, who admitted that their idea was not feasible due to the number of property owners on the island, were never implemented.

Neither of these NPS efforts resulted in land preservation, but the attempts show the changing conception of the value of the San Juan Islands. By the mid-twentieth century, the islands were known better for their scenic beauty and recreational opportunities than for their agricultural, fishing, or lime industries. One writer called San Juan Island a "photographer's paradise of old rail fences, sheep, cattle, and fields." Tourists snapped pictures of the "gnarled old trees," remnants of the once thriving orchard industry, especially during the springtime bloom.[27] What had once been the islands' main industry now represented only a quaint photo opportunity for tourists.

The Contested Landscape

Islanders in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries worried about ways to get their products to market, but by the mid-twentieth century, politicians and island promoters instead focused on delivering tourists to the islands. By the 1950s, America's love affair with the automobile had reemerged stronger than ever after World War II rationing of oil and rubber ended. The Interstate Highway Act, increased suburbanization and the popularity of recreational auto touring spurred the growth of the American highway system. In 1959, Governor Albert Rossellini and the Whatcom county commissioners proposed a series of bridges linking San Juan, Shaw, Orcas, Lummi, Lopez, and Decatur Islands, and they planned to inaugurate short ferry routes that would connect Decatur Island to Anacortes and Lummi Island to the mainland. According to this plan, tourists would be able to drive an "island hopping" loop that would provide "one of the most breathtakingly beautiful trips in the

25. Richard West Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks: A History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 93.

26. Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, 2.

27. Ann Sullivan, "San Juans—Fabulous Islands," *Oregonian*, May 8, 1949.

world." However, many islanders argued that making the chain so accessible would destroy the isolation and tranquility that drew tourists to the area. The bridges were never built due to this opposition and to the tremendous expense involved in building the proposed route.[28]

This may have been the first instance of widespread public opposition to a development plan in the archipelago, but it was not the last. Increasing numbers of islanders began to oppose development that might jeopardize the peaceful nature and scenic beauty of the islands. By the 1960s, most islanders accepted that the shift to a tourist-based economy would happen, but the reshaping of the island's landscape remained a contentious process, as many locals feared that overdevelopment, in the form of summer homes and tourist facilities, would ruin the character of their islands. During that decade, the San Juan County Planning Commission sought to create a landscape that balanced economic development with the islands' "natural charm."[29] The commissioners wanted to, in their words, save the islands from overdevelopment, and their mission became "to preserve, protect, and enhance those amenity qualities of the islands which are a reflection of their unspoiled natural beauty." The group completed a comprehensive plan in 1966 that suggested that the islands remain largely rural. It also expressed the urgent need for more public recreational areas to attract tourists, especially on the shoreline, though it stressed that these areas should remain undeveloped.

The fear of development was not universal, however, and some residents opposed plans that favored tourism at the expense of commercial development. Fifty Lopez Island residents signed a petition encouraging the county to forego zoning efforts that would restrict "payroll producing industries."[30] San Juan Island residents divided over their support for the plan, and due to the amount of opposition, the planning commission's recommendations were ultimately scrapped. This alarmed many Northwesterners who opposed industrial development of one of the region's prime vacation spots. Concern about the islands' future was so great in the region that the state legislature considered several bills that would have usurped the power of local planners to make planning decisions.[31]

Despite the failure of the planning commission's recommendations, many still agreed with its assessment that "the chief resource of the San Juans is obviously the scenery and relaxed environment." Generations of islanders had sought to promote and utilize the island's extractable natural resources such as lime, salmon, and agricultural products, but by the 1960s, many islanders worked to keep development and industry out of their archipelago. A proposed aluminum plant on Guemes Island was never built after residents from around the region expressed outrage about this type of facility in the area.[32] Oil companies sought to begin exploratory drilling near the archipelago, but to the relief of most islanders, the government of British Columbia defeated the proposal. Many similarly opposed large-scale development plans (such as a 1,150-acre condominium development on Kanaka Bay, northwest of the American Camp site) that they feared would ruin their island's rural character.[33]

28. Editorial, "Bridges Linking San Juan Islands Urged," *Seattle Times*, February 23, 1959.

29. Walt Woodward, "San Juan Plan Due in 3 Weeks," *Seattle Times*, December 11, 1966.

30. Woodward, "San Juan County Now Has Its Plans," January 16, 1967.

31. Walt Woodward, "Islands Given Two Year Breathing Spell," *Seattle Times*, April 23, 1967.

32. David Richardson, *Magic Islands* (Eastsound, WA: Orcas Publishing Co, 1973), 96.

33. Alice Staples, "Big Project for San Juan Island Is Told," *Seattle Daily Times*, October 1, 1965. The project also included a golf course, an observatory, and a mile-long jet landing strip; the developers intended to market the project to Californians. The development was never built.

Figure 44. The Washington State Historical Society erected this monument in 1904 on the redoubt at American Camp to commemorate the Pig War. They placed a similar marker at English Camp. These were the first attempts to memorialize the conflict. (University of Washington, Special Collections, A. Curtis 12923.)

San Juan Island National Historical Park

By the second half of the twentieth century, people increasingly valued the scenery, recreational opportunities, and historical significance of the English and American Camp sites, and this led to National Historical Park status for the former military camps. Attempts to memorialize the American Camp historic site began in the early twentieth century. In 1904, the Washington State Historical Society placed monuments on the site of the redoubt at American Camp and on the hillside overlooking Garrison Bay at English Camp to commemorate the events of the Pig War. Throughout the early to mid-twentieth century, Jim Crook guided visitors around the site of the former English Camp. By the 1950s, he was guiding as many as 100 curious visitors per day around his property.[34] Crook also maintained the small British cemetery per an agreement with the British government. To commemorate the events of the Pig War, Washington State purchased the site of the redoubt at American Camp in 1951. The state continued to acquire lands on both historic sites until 1963.

The federal government again became interested in preserving land in the archipelago in the late 1950s. Due to the explosive growth in outdoor recreation and national park visitation that occurred after World War II, NPS director Conrad Wirth convinced Congress and President Dwight D. Eisenhower that the nation's national parks were in crisis. Between 1945 and 1954, national park visitation had jumped from 11.7 million to 47.8 million per year. Traffic jams, overflowing parking lots, and deteriorating or inadequate visitors' facilities became the norm. Along with new roads, visitors' centers, and other infrastructure in existing parks, Wirth sought to add new national parks and recreation areas to the system in order to meet the needs of the 80 million visitors expected to visit the parks in 1966, the fiftieth anniversary of the NPS. By

34. San Juan County Pamphlet File, MUASC.

1966, Congress had allotted over $1 billion to the program, named Mission 66. This funding allowed the NPS to add seventy new units to the park system between 1955 and 1966.[35]

Just as there were too few national park units and facilities relative to the numbers of visitors, the San Juan Islands lacked enough public recreation areas to meet tourists' demands. Tourist traffic to the San Juan Islands increased tenfold between 1932 and 1952, and the majority of these visitors came from urban areas in the Puget Sound region. They sought recreational opportunities on the islands' scenic shores, but there were few parks or beaches available for public use.[36]

Ironically, however, the NPS initially ignored the recreational potential of American and English Camps when it began to investigate the feasibility of preserving the sites. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, senators Warren G. Magnuson and Henry M. Jackson promoted the creation of a national historical monument on the site of the former military camps on San Juan Island, and the federal government designated the two camps as national historic landmarks in 1961. Washington State owned the former camps, but state legislators recognized that the federal government could better fund a park on the sites and supported the transfer of their acquisitions to the federal government in 1964.[37] In 1965, a NPS team finalized a study of the proposed park site, in which they concluded that the establishment of San Juan Island National Historical Park was both "feasible and desirable."[38] The report's authors believed the sites were primarily valuable for their historic significance, and the scenic and recreational values of the areas played almost no role in the team's recommendations.

By the 1960s, vacation home development on San Juan had boomed. The authors of the national historical park proposal urged the speedy acquisition of potential park lands due to the rising property values associated with the transition from a rural to a tourist economy. Landowners at American Camp no longer engaged in agriculture, logging, or other natural resource use, and the land was slated for vacation home development. Above South Beach at American Camp, developers had platted sixty-six vacation home lots.[39]

Most islanders believed that park status for the English and American Camp sites presented an excellent opportunity for land preservation in an area quickly becoming developed. Senator Henry Jackson, a sponsor of the senate bill to establish the historical park, received far more letters of support from islanders than of opposition to the proposed park. Most writers expressed interest not only in historic site preservation and interpretation but also in the recreational opportunities and scenic beauty a large, waterfront park on the island would offer.[40] Although San Juan Island had remained the commercial center for the archipelago, it lagged behind Orcas and Lopez as a tourist destination. Some saw park establishment as

35. Ethan Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007), 3–7.

36. Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, 173, 182; Shafer, *Tourist Flow to the San Juan Islands*, 23, 26. In the 1950s, there were only three parks in the archipelago: Moran State Park on Orcas Island, Odlin County Park on Lopez Island, and San Juan County Park on San Juan Island.

37. Cannon, *Administrative History*, 41.

38. Charles B. Browne et al., *San Juan Island National Historical Park: A Proposal* (Washington, DC: National Park Service, March 1965), 1.

39. Cannon, *Administrative History*, 52. At English Camp, the Crook family was still raising hay and fruit on a portion of their 185 acres.

40. Cannon, *Administrative History*, 39–40; and "Legislation-S1441-Pig War National Monument, 1958–64," Henry M. Jackson Papers, MUASC.

Figure 45. By 1960, the American Camp prairie was more valuable for its scenic views than for agriculture, and the area was platted for development. Congress designated San Juan Island National Historical Park in 1966 in order to preserve the sites of the former military camps. (Author photo.)

an opportunity for the island to draw a larger share of visitors.[41] Most islanders supported the creation of the park, but some worried about the increased traffic, pollution, and crime that the additional 50,000 tourists per year might bring after park creation. Some landowners on the proposed park site were concerned that the government would not compensate them for the full value of their property, and they expressed resentment that they would not be able to develop their property either for profit or for their own home sites.[42] However, park proponents outnumbered opposing voices.

While the state and federal agencies that supported the park's creation emphasized the historic value of the former military camps, environmental and outdoor advocacy groups endorsed the park proposal because of the site's scenic qualities, recreational opportunities, and wildlife habitat. Emily Haig, speaking at a public hearing on behalf of the Seattle Audubon Society and the Washington State chapter of the Nature Conservancy, acknowledged the historical significance of the proposed park. However, the organizations she represented clearly valued the sites for their wildlife habitat. She urged the federal government to preserve "undisturbed areas" at the former camps, and she urged the government to include bird nesting rocks and some small, nearby islands with significant bird populations into the park boundaries.[43] The Sierra Club supported park creation as a way to protect the island's natural beauty, and the club encouraged the inclusion of adjacent waterfront parcels for their scenic value.[44] A variety of other regional groups, such as the Washington State Historical Society and the San Juan

41. David Richardson, "San Juan Water Trip Filled with Beauty," *Tacoma Sunday Ledger/News Tribune*, August 25, 1961, 9.

42. Cannon, *Administrative History*, 40. The National Park Service estimated that the park would draw 50,000 visitors in its first year.

43. "Pig War National Historic Park Hearing Statement," Friday Harbor, Washington, April 17, 1965, Emily Haig Papers, MUASC.

44. "Minutes of the Executive Committee, May 29, 1965," Sierra Club, Pacific Northwest Chapter, Emily Haig Papers. The club's proposal was defeated by real estate interests.

County Democratic Party, were also vocal in their support of the proposed park. In September 1966, Congress approved the creation of San Juan Island National Historic Park, one of ten new national parks designated that year.[45]

Environmental groups valued the San Juan Islands as a pristine and scenic vacation destination, and they continued to work toward land preservation in the San Juan Islands even after the federal government created the park. Seattle Audubon Society spokeswoman Hazel Wolf believed, "the islands are relatively unspoiled by encroaching civilization and might well be regarded as sort of a last frontier."[46] The Audubon Society urged the federal government to include the archipelago in the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation's inventory of coastal and inland waters, and the group hoped that additional areas in the island would be preserved for their "outstanding recreational opportunities" and wildlife habitat.[47] The Sierra Club continued to lobby for land preservation and against large-scale developments in the archipelago. Brock Evens, speaking on behalf of the Sierra Club and the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs, summed up the attitude of many northwestern environmental groups when he stated, "We feel we have a stake in [the future of the San Juan Islands]."[48]

Local grassroots groups emerged to safeguard the island's scenery, ecology, and rural character. Islanders founded Friends of the San Juan Islands in 1978 in order to lobby for growth management plans that would protect the islands' wildlife, natural environment, scenic vistas, and rural landscapes.[49] The San Juan Preservation Trust, the first land preservation trust in Washington State, similarly sought to protect the "extraordinary beauty and abundant nature" of the archipelago. Founded in 1979, the trust solicited donations to buy conservation easements from property owners willing sell the development rights to their land. The group also purchased land threatened by development and helped private property owners preserve scenic landscapes.[50] In 1990, county voters approved a real-estate tax to fund the San Juan County Land Bank, an organization dedicated to "preserving the natural heritage" of the islands through the acquisition of farmland, wildlife habitat, and other ecologically or scenically valuable parcels of land.

Managing the Landscape

The national historical park designation presented challenges to NPS administrators, scientists, and staff. The National Park Service's initial management objectives included interpretation of historical events, environmental education, and developing visitor services and recreational opportunities, as long as these actions did not interrupt the historic scene. The agency worked toward the goal of historic landscape and building restoration, and structures and fences built after the historic period were removed. Park staff also cut down some orchard trees, once a staple of the island's economy, that were planted outside of the designated historic period.

45. Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, 206.

46. Hazel Wolf on behalf of the Seattle Audubon Society to the San Juan County Commissioners, November 19, 1966, Legislation, San Juan Islands, 1966–1967, Seattle Audubon Society Papers, MUASC.

47. Hazel Wolf on behalf of the Seattle Audubon Society to President Lynden Johnson, Governor Dan Evans, Senator Warren Magnuson, Senator Henry Jackson, and Representative Thomas Pelly, December 15, 1966, Legislation, San Juan Islands, 1966–1967, Seattle Audubon Society Papers.

48. Brock Evans to San Juan County Commissioners, November 24, 1970, Brock Evans Papers, MUASC.

49. "Friends of the San Juans," http://www.sanjuans.org.

50. "San Juan Land Preservation Trust," http://www.sjpt.org. The trust has preserved 9,500 acres of land and 21 miles of shoreline in the islands as of 2004.

Figure 46. The American Camp parade ground, viewed from the redoubt. Haro Strait is in the distance. (Author photo.)

Other elements of the landscape were restored. For example, park staff recreated the formal garden at English Camp in 1976. The 1979 General Management Plan reinforced the values laid out in the 1967 master plan. Historic preservation and interpretation remained the park's priority, but the plan placed increased emphasis on protecting natural resources, such as identifying and protecting endangered species and their habitat.[51]

The 1979 General Management Plan stated that one objective of the park was to "manage natural resources in order to recreate and perpetuate the historic scene."[52] Park management chose to recreate the historic scene as it appeared in the early 1860s, rather than a later period in which additional development occurred.[53] However, as biologist James Agee pointed out, a faithful recreation of the historic scene would include cutover forest. The park accepted the "historical inconsistency" of a more aesthetically pleasing interpretation of the scene.[54]

The landscape at English Camp in the late twentieth century was similar to that found during the time of military occupation, but resource managers proposed additional reforestation in order to better recreate the historic scene and conceal evidence of the site's agricultural past. Due to the Crook's woodcutting and livestock grazing, more meadow existed at the camp in the twentieth century than during the historic period. Regeneration of much of the cut forest had occurred by the mid-1960s. After park creation, trees encroached upon the meadow, and by the early 1980s, trees had colonized almost 50 percent of the meadow at English Camp.[55]

While trees were overtaking much of the English Camp meadow, rabbits hindered the reforestation of American Camp. Agriculture and logging had ceased at the site, but the rabbit population kept the forest from spreading to previously forested areas at American Camp. Biologist James Agee called the introduction of this nonnative species "the single biggest

51. Cannon, *Administrative History*, 55.

52. National Park Service, *General Management Plan: San Juan Island National Historical Park* (Denver: National Park Service, 1979), 3.

53. Cannon, *Administrative History*, 107.

54. James K. Agee, *Historic Landscapes of San Juan Island National Historical Park* (Seattle: National Park Service, 1984), 13.

55. Agee, *Historic Landscapes of San Juan Island National Historical Park*, 15.

Figure 47. English Camp and the reconstructed formal garden. National Park Service staff recreated the garden as well as the park-like setting of English Camp. (Author photo.)

ecological event to occur in the island's post-historic era."[56] By the mid 1970s, between 250,000 and 500,000 rabbits lived on the island, and about 40,000 of the animals inhabited American Camp. During this time, the rabbits consumed as much as three-quarters of new spring growth at the camp. As a result, little tree regeneration occurred around the site, since rabbits ate or damaged young trees, and graze-resistant grasses began to dominate meadows. Due to their intensive grazing habits, rabbits reduced available forage for other animals, thereby affecting other mammal populations. Rabbits favored grasses, herbs, and woody plants, which allowed weeds such as thistles and bracken to flourish. The island's raptors fed on the rabbits, but without any discernable affect on their population.[57] The American Camp area changed little between park creation and the early 1980s, since the park did not attempt to recreate the forested landscape, and rabbits kept trees from colonizing previously wooded areas.

In the early 1980s, a decline in rabbit populations, possibly from reproductive failure, allowed some grass regeneration and forest encroachment on grasslands at American Camp. Park managers and staff considered the rabbits a pest, but the sudden reduction in rabbit population caused unwanted changes. For example, the decline contributed to an increase in rodent populations. Rodents such as voles either damaged or consumed young trees and thus prevented some forest regeneration. In 1986, the park experimented with tree replanting in an effort to ascertain the best methods for restoring native plant species to the prairie, but they determined that protecting seedlings with screens to prevent damage from voles was necessary.[58]

Trees had reclaimed much of the English Camp meadow, but at American Camp, resource managers believed they would have to take a much more active role in forest creation by planting

56. Agee, *Historic Landscapes of San Juan Island National Historical Park*, 27.

57. NPS, *General Management Plan: San Juan Island National Historical Park*, 14.

58. Agee, *Historic Landscapes of San Juan Island National Historical Park*, 36; and Cannon, *Administrative History*, 116–29.

Figure 48. The National Park Service maintains the graves of the five Royal Marines who died during the British occupation of San Juan Island. (Author photo.)

and protecting seedlings, and by using herbicides to discourage competition from grasses. Some factors were beyond the control of resource managers, however. The greatest damage done to experimental stands was from water—either too much, during heavy winter storms, or not enough, during dry summers. The decline of the rabbit populations also increased fire fuel accumulations, making the park more vulnerable to wildfire. By the late twentieth century, rabbits' presence in the park still affected the potential success of reintroduction of native plant species to the prairie. Rabbit warrens, some of which were decades old, continued to create hazards for park hikers and horseback riders.[59]

Although fire helped create San Juan Island's natural environment, fire suppression policies prevailed on the island during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. At the turn of the twenty-first century, park managers faced controversial decisions about prescribed burning to lessen forest fuel loads and to restore native plant species. At this time, the island's forests contained about as much wood as they did in the latter half of the nineteenth century, before extensive logging took place. Douglas firs remained dominant on the island, as they had been since before Euro-American settlement. However, island trees were about half as large as they were in the nineteenth century, and they grew more closely spaced together at this time. These dense forests of undersized trees reflected the history of high-grade logging (in which the biggest and best trees are harvested) on the island and the cessation of low-intensity fires, which previously culled smaller trees while leaving larger specimens standing. This type of forest is prone to catastrophic fires, since small, slender trees are not as fire resistant as larger varieties.[60] In 2000, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources named San Juan Island as the community most threatened by wildfire in northwestern Washington.[61]

59. Agee, *Historic Landscapes of San Juan Island National Historical Park*, 36; and Cannon, *Administrative History*, 116–29.

60. Tom Shroeder, "Historic Forest Conditions," *Forest Info for the San Juan Islands*, http://www.rockisland.com/~tom/presettle.html.

61. Bill McGlaughlin, "Are We at Risk?" *San Juan Islander*, February 12, 2001.

Figure 49. Fire helped to create the island's natural environment, and the NPS undertakes prescribed burns in order to reduce exotic species, encourage native grasses, and to reduce fuel loads. (San Juan Island National Historical Park photo.)

Figure 50. Interpretive signs at the former Belle Vue Sheep Farm site. (Gary Tarleton photo.)

Other resource management issues continued to pose challenges to the park. As many as 130 different exotic species had invaded the park as a result of livestock grazing and cultivation, but park staff hoped to restore native grass species to the prairies, in part through the use of fire. Park plans also called for the preservation of Young Hill's Garry oak habitat through prescribed burning, which would eradicate unwanted plant species that compete with the historic oaks. Conflicts over appropriate park usage, increasing visitation, and natural resource management all continue to present challenges to park administrators.

Conclusion

San Juan Island National Historical Park now draws over a quarter million people per year. These visitors come to enjoy the windswept beaches and the expansive views of American Camp, where troops once prepared to defend the island from the British. They might hope to spot one of the three resident pods of orca whales from South Beach, where Northern Straits Indians and American fishermen processed their salmon catch. Visitors may look forward to seeing bald eagles hunt rabbits on the prairie, where Hudson's Bay Company and American farmers grazed sheep and raised crops. They enjoy walking and picnicking on the serene waterfront meadow at English Camp, where British soldiers practiced maneuvers. Perhaps they visit the park to attend one of the living history programs, in order to learn more about a unique event in American history.

Most visitors have no idea that islanders throughout nineteenth and early twentieth centuries envisioned a much different future for the archipelago, and that assumptions about the island's value as a peaceful, relaxing vacation spot are relatively recent cultural creations. Islanders once pinned their hopes for a prosperous future on natural resource-based industries such as agriculture, fishing, and mining, but there is little evidence left of these industries today. A few orchard trees act as reminders of the island's once thriving fruit industry. Once bustling Roche Harbor, center of the island's lime industry, now serves as a popular resort. The docks that once harbored oceangoing transport vessels attract hundreds of yachts on a summer day. Hiking trails lead past the old lime quarries, which regenerating forests now mostly obscure. Tourists can hire guides and charter boats for salmon fishing expeditions, but the commercial fishing industry is drastically smaller than it was a century ago. By 2014, less than 1 percent of county residents made their living in forestry, fisheries, and farming combined.[1] Some agriculture does persist, though island farms now produce specialty products such as organic vegetables, heirloom variety apples, and goat cheese. Sheep farming survives on a small scale; a few farms rear naturally raised lamb. These businesses cater to upscale restaurants, local residents, and tourists rather than the global marketplace.

New residents, attracted by the islands' unhurried lifestyle and scenic beauty, have flocked to the islands in the past few decades. While the county's population remained stable throughout the twentieth century, it exploded after 1970. That year, 3,856 people resided in the archipelago; by 2014, the number had increased to 16,180. San Juan became the fastest growing county in Washington between 1970 and 2000. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century booster efforts focused on attracting residents and businesses to the archipelago. In contrast, twenty-first century islanders express concern about overdevelopment and population growth and the resulting loss of rural landscapes, scenic vistas, and wildlife habitat.

Contemporary values about the archipelago's natural environment have impacted the islands' economy and social structure. The influx of new residents, greater competition for available

1. Washington State Office of Financial Management, "San Juan County," http://www.ofm.wa.gov/databook/pdf/53055.pdf.

Figure 51. Rangers interpret the natural and cultural history of the historical park. (San Juan Island National Historical Park photo.)

Figure 52. A hiking and interpretive trail crosses the American Camp redoubt. (Author photo.)

Figure 53. The annual Encampment event commemorates the peaceful military occupation of San Juan Island with reenactments, presentations and a candlelight ball. (San Juan Island National Historical Park photo.)

homes and building sites (due in part to recent trends of land conservation and preservation), and the high costs of transporting workers and materials to remote island locations has resulted in escalating home costs. Large numbers of tourists have created an increase in low-wage service-sector employment, and the largest sector of employment is accommodations and food services.[2] There is a greater gap between household income and housing prices in San Juan County than any other county in Washington, and many native-born islanders can no longer afford to live in the archipelago.[3] Land conservation and preservation safeguard the scenic beauty and recreational opportunities that attract tourists and seasonal residents, but these measures come at a high cost for some island residents.

Our culture's expectations of San Juan Island have changed since Europeans settled the island in the mid-nineteenth century. Visitors to the island expect stunning scenery and abundant wildlife rather than logging and mining operations. Tourism has replaced agriculture as the dominant industry, and the island's natural landscape reflects this change. As it has in the past, the dominant cultural view will continue to influence the natural environment to shape the society, economy, and ecosystems of San Juan Island.

2. Washington State Office of Financial Management, "San Juan County."

3. San Juan County, Department of Community Development, "Affordable Housing," http://www.co.san-juan.wa.us/planning/affordablehousing.aspx.

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San Juan Island National Historical Park, located in the Salish Sea in northwestern Washington State, commemorates the events that occurred on San Juan Island between 1853 and 1871, when the island was at the center of a boundary dispute between the United States and Great Britain. The island is renowned for its natural beauty, and visitors flock to the park for its hiking trails, beaches, and wildlife viewing, as well as the opportunity to learn about a unique event in American history. However, previous generations of visitors and residents held very different expectations of the island. This study investigates the interactions between the natural environment and the peoples—Northern Straits Indians, the Hudson's Bay Company, British and American armies, nineteenth-century settlers and twentieth-century island residents—that visited or inhabited San Juan Island in order to understand why people came to the island, what values they placed on the land, and how they changed the natural landscape. Northern Straits Indians valued the island for its fisheries, wildlife and wild plants, and they managed and modified their surroundings in order to take advantage of these island resources. Europeans explorers viewed the landscape as a storehouse of extractable commodities, and the onset of British and American settlement brought San Juan Island's resources into the worldwide economy. The British and American governments believed that the island was important for its strategic location, and settlers pinned their hopes on agriculture, mineral extraction, and fishing. In the mid-twentieth century, cultural and economic changes led to the creation of the national historical park. This study deepens our understanding of how humans have affected the natural environment of San Juan Island, and how the natural environment has shaped human history.