

Schwin

Agent

Peace R. expedition

1879

G. M. Dawson

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY }  
OFFICE OF THE ENGINEER-IN-CHIEF. }

Massett.

Queen Charlottes Isles.

March 26th.

1879

Dear Sir,

I received your letter dated from Victoria on the 12<sup>th</sup>. Dec. last and as we expect the steamer again shortly I hasten to answer it

You state that you left a note with Mr. Duncan for me which as I intend (s.v.) crossing to Metchikilla by first opportunity I will probably be enabled to answer afterwards.

With regard to your first enquiry I beg to inform you that the name of the Chief is not as a rule hereditary but in many instances the successor takes the name of his predecessor in order to strengthen his influence.

neither is the name of the Chief  
the same as that of his Village  
but <sup>as</sup> in the case of Skidegate  
the Whites having learned the  
Chief's name applied it to  
the Village. In the native lan-  
-guage Skidegate is not the name  
but "Hahoe", and of this place  
the name is not "Massett" but  
"Aht-i-wass" though Massett is  
the Indian name of the Island  
opposite and as the ships  
of the early traders anchored  
off the Island, the name came  
to be applied to the Village also  
by the Whites.

And so on in like manner with the  
other villages the names by which  
they are known to the Whites are  
not their true names.

With regard to the Colachans or  
small fish they are entirely unknown

on the Islands, that is they have  
never been known to frequent  
any of the Hydah Waters. I have  
made strict enquiry about this  
as I am thinking of bringing  
some of the Spawm from the  
Nees to this Islet if possible.  
The dog has been introduced  
on the Islands by the Natives  
themselves as also the cat.

For the former they paid  
high prices to the Indians  
of the Mainland ~~many~~ years  
ago insomuch that the fact  
is almost a proverb amongst  
the Bimshews of the present.  
As to the value of the dog  
to a Hydah.

Respecting proper Names of Persons  
it is true that all <sup>adults</sup> have more  
names than one, as when a man  
or woman attains to maturity

The name borne hitherto  
is dispensed with and a new  
name is given which is the  
adult name. Also in the  
case of Chiefs and their children  
additional names are also given  
which in many cases indicate  
their rank.

In former times when at  
war with the surrounding  
tribes the Haidahs united  
in common cause and more  
sately in their encampments  
& quarrels at Victoria and  
hence their name was feared  
by all the tribes on the  
Mainland but no one chief  
ever assumed the supremacy  
over all the others, each chief  
leading & directing his own tribe.

Trusting you are in good health  
& that you have arrived home  
again safe & with our united kind regards  
to you & your brother, I remain  
Dear Sir  
very faithfully yours  
Wm. Collison