Although little known today, the 1928 Canadian movie, *Saving the Sagas*, is an early example of a film recording the presence of the ethnographic fieldworker, in this case, the National Museum of Canada ethnologist Marius Barbeau (1883-1969) at work in the Nisga'a communities along the Nass River in northern British Columbia. This consideration of the film discusses the ways in which it represented those communities, first on its own and then, together with its contemporary *Fish and Medicine Men*, as part of *Nass River Indians*, the otherwise lost 1928 film from which the two shorter films were subsequently made. Focusing on the latter film's relationship to government action concerning Aboriginal peoples, it concludes with discussion of the implications of this representation, which was produced originally for the National Museum to be shown first in conjunction with the National Gallery of Canada's 1927 "Exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art, Native and Modern."

Many years ago now, and more than half a century after Bronislaw Malinowski's visit to the Trobriand Islands, George Stocking [1983: 101] published a photograph of the ethnographer at work in the field [Figure 1]. Part of Stocking's study of this "culture-hero of the fieldwork myth," the photograph illustrates his discussion of Malinowski as both a champion of such intensive study and, as a writer of rare capacity, the man who firmly established the authoritative place of "the Ethnographer" in the myth-history of anthropology [Stocking 1983: 93-120]. Carefully staged from the darkened interior of the ethnographer's tent, the photograph pictures the scene just beyond the tent's opened flaps: a gathering of Trobrianders looking on as Malinowski, sitting in profile inside, works at his typewriter. Like other early pictures of ethnographers actually writing, it is an

---

Lynda Jessup received her doctorate in art history from the University of Toronto and is now teaching the history of Canadian Art at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. Her recent research focuses on the politics of representation and the construction of a Canadian national art in exhibitions and exhibition programming in Canada during the 1920’s. She has published several articles on this subject in journals and edited books, and is now working on a series of articles dealing with early ethnographic films, exhibitions and cultural festivals.
unusual image, its belated publication in Stocking's study supporting the subsequent suggestion that the production of such records of ethnographic text-making ran counter to "an ideology claiming transparency of representation and immediacy of experience" [Clifford 1986a: 2]. Now, viewed in the light of recent critical anthropology, they are seen as explicit illustrations of a colonial encounter, of an ethnographic authority rooted in Western frames of reference and, as feminist anthropologists have also argued, of an ethnography firmly grounded in masculine subjectivity [Gordon 1988: 7-24].

This alone suggests reason for inquiry into the now little-known 1928 film *Saving the Sagas*, a work ostensibly devoted to portraying the process of ethnographic record-making.1 Produced by Associated Screen News Limited, a commercial film producer in Montreal, the movie documents the ethnographic activities of Marius Barbeau and Ernest MacMillan among the Nisga'a of the Nass
River region of British Columbia. Barbeau, an ethnologist at the National Museum of Canada in Ottawa (now the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa-Hull), and MacMillan, then principal of the Toronto Conservatory of Music, are depicted in their efforts to record "with camera and phonograph" what the movie's first intertitle describes as "the vanishing culture, the rites and songs and dances of the Indians along the Canadian Pacific Coast, north of Vancouver" [Appendix 1, SS 1-5].2 Described in that first intertitle as an ethnographic text itself—"a screen recording" of this "vanishing culture"—the film is also an early example of ethnographic filmmaking, both within Canada and internationally.

In fact, the earliest surviving movies to claim a place in the history of ethnographic film were shot little more than two decades before.3 Prominent among them is Edward S. Curtis's In the Land of the Head Hunters [1914], a dramatic tale of passion and intrigue set among the Kwakwαgə’wakw (Kwakiutl) of Vancouver Island. Even the little-known films of Baptist minister and amateur photographer Joseph Kossuth Dixon, while made earlier than Curtis's film, were shot only in 1908. Unconcerned by what would now be seen as a contradiction in aims, Dixon sought, as he described it, "to eliminate any hint of the white man's foot"4 in his efforts to recreate accurately an earlier phase of Aboriginal life on the Crow reservation in southern Montana where he shot a now-lost dramatization of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's version of the Ojibwa legend, Hiawatha, and a reenactment of Custer's battle with the Sioux at Little Bighorn. As Susan Krouse [1990: 213-33] points out in her study of the films, moreover, he seemingly had no qualms about portraying Ojibwa and Sioux respectively using Crow Indians in their own native dress.

His work also underscores the fact that such an effort to recreate an earlier, seemingly pre-contact, period in Aboriginal life was characteristic of early ethnographic filmmaking in general. Curtis, who was also interested in recording what he saw as a vanishing race, reconstructed earlier Aboriginal costumes and settings for his film as well. As Bill Holm and George Quimby [1980: 29-30] point out in their study of In the Land of the Head Hunters, this approach is not only evidenced in Curtis's work, it also marks Robert Flaherty's 1922 film, that keystone of ethnographic film history, Nanook of the North [see also Rony 1996: 90-104; Russell 1996: 55-77]. In these films, as in other early examples, ethnographic authenticity was located in what was imagined as the purer, pre-modern society that existed in contrast to the felt inauthenticity of the contemporary Aboriginal culture with which the filmmaker was working. Ethnographic authority—the power to designate this authenticity and, by contrast, inauthenticity—rested with the filmmaker and, by extension, with the West. In other words, where members
of Aboriginal societies were pressed into service to represent themselves as essentialized, universalized, "traditional" and rapidly vanishing, the ethnographic filmmaker was not a participant at all but, like the camera, an invisible observer. "[Excluding] himself from the world of his subjects... [and] his subjects from the world of the film," as David MacDougall [1981: 282, 278] points out, the filmmaker was seemingly omnipotent and omniscient, at once arbiter and guardian of anthropological knowledge.

From that position, both anthropologists and film scholars have argued, the ethnographer defined the nature of the West's relationship to other cultures with surprising consistency. In a discussion of ethnographic writing that applies as well to these early films, for instance, James Clifford notes the pervasiveness in ethnography of the theme of the vanishing primitive and of the end of traditional society. "Ethnography's disappearing object is..., in significant degree," he argues,

a rhetorical construct legitimating a representational practice: "salvage" ethnography in its widest sense. The other is lost, in disintegrating time and space, but saved in the text. The rationale for focusing one's attention on vanishing lore, for rescuing... the knowledge of old people, may be strong.... I do not wish to deny specific cases of disappearing customs and languages, or to challenge the value of recording such phenomena. I do, however, question the assumption that with rapid change something essential ("culture"), a coherent differential identity, vanishes. And I question, too, the mode of scientific and moral authority associated with salvage, or redemptive, ethnography. It is assumed that the other society is weak and "needs" to be represented by an outsider (and that what matters in its life is its past, not present or future). The recorder and interpreter of fragile custom is custodian of an essence, unimpeachable witness to an authenticity [Clifford 1986b: 112-13].

Using Clifford's words as a point of departure, it is clear that what distinguishes *Saving the Sagas* from its contemporaries is not the fact that it escapes what he has subsequently called "the salvage paradigm" [Clifford, Domingues, and Trinh 1987: 121-50]. On the contrary, *Saving the Sagas* is an anomaly in the early history of ethnographic film and a rarity in the field of ethnography in general precisely because it depicts salvage ethnography. Portraying the fieldworker in action "saving the sagas," it makes explicit what is implicit in other films of its generation, replacing an Aboriginal past seemingly reconstructed from surviving material culture and local memories by shots of that material culture as it survives in a contemporary context [Figure 2] and of the process by which the esoteric knowledge contained in memories is procured in the form of ethnographic records [Figure 3].
It also predates by 40 years what are generally thought to be the earliest ethno- 
graphic films to record the presence of the fieldworker, among them most 
notingably Margaret Mead's New Guinea Journal [1968], a film shot on a return trip to 
Manus 40 years after her first fieldwork there in the late 1920s. Mead's early field 
research is now regarded as a major contribution to the development of modern 
ethnography, which emerged as a professional activity in the decade or so fol-
lowing World War I. During these years the authority of amateur and armchair 
ethnographers was increasingly superceded by that of the academically trained 
fieldworker, a situation George Stocking attributes in part to the apparent ability 
of professional fieldworkers to harness modern technology and Western science 
in the development of what seemed in contrast to amateur ethnography a more reliable, 
more efficient, and thus more "scientific" way of working [Stocking 1989: 208-79].
In this respect, it is significant that *Saving the Sagas* was filmed at the very moment that marked the emergence of modern fieldwork; it not only presents the academically trained fieldworker as ethnographic authority, but also does so by defining "modern" ethnography in terms of what was then recent technology—a technology that seemed to make this ethnography both possible and necessary. Note, for example, that with the establishment of Barbeau and MacMillan's presence on the Nass, recent technology in hand, the ethnographic imperative generated by technology was presented to contemporary audiences in the third intertitle of the film: "The ways of the white man—and radio jazz—are sweeping away the old color [sic] of Indian life in British Columbia" [SS 6]. The shot following the intertitle, which illustrates the statement, shows three young Nisga'a men gathered around a radio [SS 7]. This was apparently sufficient to characterize the modern world of Native youth and to establish the idea that the march of
Figure 3a Frame enlargements from Saving the Sagas; Albert Allen (Gadim Gaidoo’o of Gitmanmaax) with Robert Pearl (Wii Xha’a of Gitanyou) and Frank Bolton (Txaa Lاخhatkw of Gwinwok).
Western civilization was inexorable and inescapable; from this point on the audience accompanies the ethnographic team (now identified as "our explorers" [SS 8]) inland and, significantly, back in time, to survey what are described in contrast as the "ancient town" of Angeda [SS 8] and "old Geetiks," where, intertitles state, "the craft of the totem carver survives," and what consistently appears to be an older generation of Nisga'a hold to what are called "the old rites" [SS 15-23]. As if to underscore the theme of vanishing culture, one of its members is even shown chanting on his grave—"the way to be sure about one's funeral sermon," an intertitle states [SS 24-26].

Once the urgent need to salvage the remnants of this seemingly pre-modern culture was established, it can be assumed the audience was meant to appreciate the efforts of the two protagonists to do so; prefacing a sequence of shots of ethnographic record-making, an intertitle informs viewers: "Mr. Barbeau and Dr. MacMillan record the songs and chants fading away with the advance of the white man" [SS 33]. And they were doing so, the audience was shown, not only in writing and musical notation, but also on wax cylinders and, as an introductory shot to the film implies, with the movie camera they brought along on the deck of their boat [SS 34-38, SS 4-5, Figure 4]. In a reflexive turn, the implication continues, the camera was now being used to shoot these scenes of ethnographic record-making, the audience's momentary awareness of its presence again stressing the role of the film itself as an ethnographic text. Western technology, harbinger of assimilation, was the tool of the "modern" ethnographer, that custodian (in this case, along with the National Museum of Canada) of an otherwise fading cultural essence.

In other words, the film is celluloid celebration of "salvage" ethnography, which makes it difficult at this point to argue that it was counter-hegemonic. Even though it depicts ethnographic text-making, it was not criticizing dominant ideology and the ways in which it was formulated; it was devoted to naturalizing and reproducing racial, gender and class preconceptions and hierarchies. On one level, it was performing this function in the interests of the Canadian nation-state. At a time when the federal government was pursuing a policy of aggressive assimilation, the film presented the ethnographer, the National Museum and, through them, ultimately the state itself not only as guardian of a fragile cultural essence fading in its natural environment, but also as custodian of what appeared in the light of its involvement as the nation's cultural heritage. This was the message as well when the footage and intertitles used in Saving the Sagas existed in their original form as part of a longer, now-lost film entitled Nass River Indians.
Produced by Associated Screen News specifically for use by the National Museum, the latter film was shot in the summer of 1927 and then edited in the fall and early winter with intertitles written by Barbeau.\textsuperscript{5} Existing as a single, 35mm print, it then became part of the museum's collection of anthropological films where it circulated to educational institutions, clubs and societies for many years after its production, its subsequent disappearance being marked by its omission from a 1974 publication dealing with the museum's ethnographic films.\textsuperscript{6} Fortunately, the footage and intertitles survive in the form of two shorter films Associated Screen News later recut from \textit{Nass River Indians} for commercial release, \textit{Saving the Sagas} being one of them. The other film is \textit{Fish and Medicine Men}, which survives as prints of a badly damaged negative suffering most severely from the extensive excision and fading of the intertitles.\textsuperscript{7} Badly deteriorated, its introductory intertitle would have been added at this time. Like the introductory intertitles in \textit{Saving the Sagas}, it serves to locate the film's action on "the Canadian Pacific Coast... north of Vancouver," in this case where "a race of
red fishermen lives" [Appendix 2, FM 1]. This film also begins with the original opening sequence of *Nass River Indians* and perhaps the most emphatic representation of "the Indian" as having been absorbed into the fabric of so-called modern life. Presented with a series of shots of young Nisga'a women packing cans of salmon for a conveyer belt at an Arrandale cannery, the film's audience was told that at Fishery Bay, where "the Indians come to catch salmon for the white man's canneries," "... machinery now speeds the Indian's fish on the way to civilization's dinner table" [FM 5-15].

This representation is significant, given the Canadian government's active efforts into the 1920s to criminalize corresponding Aboriginal resource activity by denying, through fisheries legislation, Aboriginal claims to this resource; by restricting, through heavy regulation, Aboriginal access to salmon and the technology used to exploit it; and by curtailing, through an increasingly narrow definition of what constituted "subsistence" fishing, the Aboriginal food fishery the Canadian government itself had invented as a concept in 1888 in its initial attempts to restrict Aboriginal fishing rights. As Diane Newell [1993: 66-97, 98-109] has pointed out in her study of Canada's Pacific coast fisheries, in so doing, the government effectively became the resource management arm of the fishing industry, guaranteeing a pool of Native labor—mostly female and consistently cheap—for the white-owned canning industry in a period when labor was scarce. In fact, cannery operators placed such high value on Aboriginal village and family labor that they applied and paid for the required fishing licenses under Native fishers' names and then hired the men to fish in their gillnet fleets in order to ensure Native women and children would arrive at the bay each season to work in their processing plants [Newell 1993: 75-76, 85-86,109].

In light of this, it becomes apparent that the film's representation of contemporary Nisga'a culture as being of an evolutionary past attests to the vitality in the 1920s of the political dimension of such temporal dislocation, what Johannes Fabian [1983: 144] succinctly describes as the chronopolitics of colonial expansion. In the film these were expressed in a variety of ways, among them the conveyer-belt sequence representing cannery technology as contemporary, efficient, developed and White—that which "now speeds the Indian's fish on the way to civilization's dinner table" [FM 5-34]. The culminating intertitle of this sequence, "Tin cans and machinery—both symbols of the white man's culture" [FM 27], is key in this respect. In contrast to such mechanization, Aboriginal labor was manual, "the Indian boss [calling] the workers 'by hand'" [FM 19], and the women cleaning the fish and filling the cans in what was to remain a manual operation until after 1945. Utilizing the still-familiar notion of progress as something mani-
fest in the relationship of capitalist and technological advancement also meant that contemporary Nisga'a practices of the non-conveyor-belt type—its so-called "traditional" fishing technology—were understood to be an earlier, premodern stage in the development of capitalism—part of "the old color of Indian life in British Columbia" [SS 6]. As such, it was also that of a culture whose disappearance marked the advancement of the Canadian nation-state.

Whether this was received by contemporary audiences as bad, good or inevitable, the film effectively rationalized and naturalized a process of assimilation that was then being implemented by the Department of Indian Affairs and by Euro-Canadian institutions through policies and programs of coercive tutelage [Titley 1986]. Operating in the areas of culture, education, religion and land use, Brian Titley observes [1986: 75-93], the latter were designed to "save" the Aboriginal population of Canada by "cleansing" it of Aboriginality. So, where Saving the Sagas presented the idea that "purification through cleaning" [Sibley 1995: 64], and thus the attainment of whiteness, were inevitable because "the ways of the white man... [were] sweeping away the old color of Indian life," Deputy Superintendent-General of Indian Affairs Duncan Campbell Scott stated flatly, "I want to get rid of the Indian problem." A well-known Canadian poet, and in that capacity in 1928 co-editor with Barbeau and MacMillan of a book of three of the Nisga'a songs that the latter had collected on their trip the year before, Scott saw assimilation as a means of advancing the aims of the Department, which by the second decade of the century was facing increasingly organized efforts on the part of Aboriginal peoples in Canada to secure rights, lands, and resources. "Our objective," he maintained at the time, "is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic, and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department...."

Not surprisingly, this policy met with active opposition on the part of Aboriginal peoples in Canada, among them most notably the Nisga'a. Of the Aboriginal population in British Columbia, they were (and remain today) the most politically engaged with the state, having organized themselves earlier in the century in response to the refusal of both federal and provincial governments to deal with the gradual pre-emption of their land and resources by Euro-Canadian settlement. Their first political organization, the Nisga'a Land Committee, marked the beginning both of the intertribal political organization that flourished in British Columbia in the first two decades of the century, and of formalized political activity among the province's Aboriginal population today. According to Paul Tennant [1990: 86], whose study of Aboriginal peoples and politics rests squarely on his identification of Native land as the source of what is still an ongoing dis-
pute in the province, the formation of the Committee among the Nisga'a consti-
tutes what he describes as the first "planned political restructuring" among
British Columbian Aboriginal peoples to make them more effective in dealing
with the Euro-Canadian political system. It was followed, perhaps most signifi-
cantly in 1916, by the organization of the Allied Tribes of British Columbia.
The latter's subsequent efforts in the 1920s to advance Aboriginal claims to land,
fishing, hunting and water rights, to compensation, and to medical and educa-

tion rights, however, culminated in defeat. In 1927, the year \textit{Nass River Indians}
was shot, the federal government passed Scott's recommended amendment to
the Indian Act effectively prohibiting claim-related activity among the Aboriginal
population of Canada \cite{Titley1986:135-61;Tennant1990:84-113}.

None of this is apparent in the film, however; the "modern" factory is pre-
sented as the Aboriginal woman's new domestic setting. There, she is defined
through her work, first in relation to the activities of the mostly unseen Native
fishermen who both deliver the catch to her and end the filmic sequence related
to her work on the conveyer belt; its conclusion is marked when the fleet puts out
to the fishing grounds again, an intertitle and distant shot of what was clearly a
company-owned oar- and sailboat-powered gillnet fleet establishing that fact for
the viewer \cite{FM33-34}. However, the fishermen do not disappear from thought;
the Indian woman is also situated, along with those who catch the fish, in relation
to distant "civilization." Working as unskilled labor, she prepares what is
identified as traditional Indian food for its dinner table. If we take into account
what Gail Bederman \cite{1995:1-44} has most recently argued, that civilization was
understood by Euro-Americans at the time not only as Western, but as specifi-
cally White, male, and middle-class, then the Indian woman acts here not only as
a domestic in civilization's household, but also as the one who defines the film's
ideal viewer as a White, middle-class, Euro-Canadian male. Now a domesticated
Indian—and unskilled labor—the Aboriginal woman takes the place assigned
her in the capitalist structure of the modern nation-state.

It is tempting to suggest that this sequence in the film originally found a coun-
terpart in the shots (now in \textit{Saving the Sagas}) of women demonstrating what are
described in an intertitle as "old potlatch dances" \cite{SS27}. Positioned later in the
original \textit{Nass River Indians} as an event recorded further upstream and therefore, it
seems, back in time, the three potlatch-dance scenes on the beach at Geetiks may
have been used in contrast to the opening sequence of the film to represent the
Aboriginal woman in a state closer to nature, a state in which passion and desire
ruled reason. One of the intertitles suggests as much when it links what would
have been seen by Euro-Canadian audiences as base, if not degenerate, behavior
with her essential "Indianness," introducing a shot of one of the women dancing with the provocative words: "if we understand Indian—and we do—this little beauty is signalling for a kiss—or maybe a drink" [SS 27-32].

The possibility that the shot actually functioned this way, of course, is linked to the suggestion that the footage and intertitles of Saving the Sagas and Fish and Medicine Men can still be seen in relation to one another as indicative of the structure of the earlier Nass River Indians. This suggestion in turn is supported by the fact that the original sequence of shots and intertitles constituting Nass River Indians can be reconstructed based on a description of the film in the National Museum's 1933 Catalogue of Motion Picture Films [Appendix 3]. In the catalogue, the film is listed as consisting of three reels, which are then described briefly as follows:

The fishing industry provides the chief occupation of the Indians of the Nass River region of British Columbia. In the first reel we are taken to a native village, which is one of the centres of the salmon industry, and operations from the "catch" through the stages of canning are shown. There are also views of the cannery bungalows for the native families and life at the cannery during the summer. An Indian chief is shown dancing in his old-time regalia. Reel 2 opens with a peace dance. Several totem pole villages of former days are shown, and there are excellent views of totem poles of the wolf, eagle, and other clans. An Indian is seen carving a mask, and one of the old potlatch dances is depicted. On this expedition Mr. Marius Barbeau, of the National Museum, and Dr. Ernest MacMillan, of the Toronto Conservatory of Music, collected native songs, and a series of views show them in the act of recording the songs and music. Reel 3 shows pictures of the games and many other favourite pastimes of these Indians, and a medicine-man performing a cure. [Canada, Department of Mines, National Museum of Canada, 1933: 6, no. 15]

Immediately striking is the fact that the sequence of shots described above confirms what the organization of Saving the Sagas still suggests: the film's narrative was structured around movement upstream. It begins with footage shot at Arrandale, including scenes of life in the cannery bungalows: the foreman calling the women to work "by hand" [FM 20-22], the young Nisga'a men at the radio [SS 7], children playing [FM 36, 38-39], a young woman playing a keyboard upon which rests the sheet music for "Thank you for the Buggy Ride" [FM 41, 43]. In all of them the cannery bungalow setting is evident. The scene then shifts from Arrandale to Kincolith, which is located on the other side of the Nass River, slightly further inland. The village can be identified in the footage that corresponds to the scene described next in the catalogue: "an Indian chief ... dancing
in his old-time regalia." Now part of *Fish and Medicine Men*, it is a shot of the man Barbeau identified in his photographs of that summer as Frank Bolton (Txaa Laxhatkw of Gwinwoł), chief of the Eagle clan of Gwinwok, performing his *amhalayt* dance with Robert Pearl (Wii Xha’a of Gitanyow) assisting on a frying-pan drum, the accompanying intertitle reading, "But the old chief remembers some pagan dances" [FM 51-55]. In *Fish and Medicine Men*, it still precedes the shots of the peace dance the catalogue describes as beginning reel two of *Nass River Indians* [FM 56-59]. The latter shots show Pearl throwing eagle-down into the air as he and Bolton dance, "a sign of peace and goodwill to all except maybe the eagle" [FM 58]. In all these shots, the men stand on what is clearly the boardwalk that distinguished contemporary Kincolith; as an intertitle now in *Fish and Medicine Men* put it, "Kincolith sports more boardwalk than Atlantic City" [FM 49].

There is also an intertitle in *Fish and Medicine Men* indicating the original order of the shots in *Nass River Indians* by citing the town's location in relation to Arrandale, the first sequence of shots in the film: "Nearby is Kincolith," it states, as though indicating the second stop in a filmic journey, "it means 'the place-of-scalps'—but it is a church town now" [FM 46]. Having played on the old fishing station's former association with piles of fish heads (or "scalps") to suggest the past existence of what would have been seen by Euro-Canadian audiences as a barbaric Indian practice, the intertitle gave way to shots illustrating missionary activity in the village, the same scenes that now accompany the intertitle in *Fish and Medicine Men* [FM 47-48]. These would have preceded the shots of Bolton and Pearl performing the *amhalayt* and peace dances; not only because the reference to Kincolith as "a church town now" is included in the introductory intertitle to this sequence, but also because the scene of Frank Bolton dancing in what the catalogue describes as "old-time regalia" is introduced in the film with the intertitle, "But the old chief remembers some pagan dances" [FM 51], as though to suggest that he does so in the face of this missionary work.

The suggestion was probably confirmed for viewers by another set of shots of missionary activity at Kincolith—specifically, the shots of a Christian band now included in *Saving the Sagas* with the intertitle, "But the Church Army now spreads Christian salvation along the Coast" [SS 48]. Clearly made at the same time as the shots of missionary work in *Fish and Medicine Men*, they seem designed to follow this "pagan" dancing, bracketing it with yet another reminder of its anachronistic place in contemporary life.

At this point in the film the idea that the culture was vanishing would have been well-established, and thus the next sequence of shots described in the catalog follow logically both in terms of theme and geographical movement. The cat-
alogue's reference to scenes of totem pole villages corresponds both to existing shots "up a river, back from the sea" to Angede, "ancient town of the Wolf tribe" where "our explorers" uncover a totem monument "deep in the tangled growth," and to the equally "old" village of Geetiks, which is "still the home of the Eagle people" [SS 8-16]. By this time, it is becoming increasingly clear that the protagonists—and with them, the audience—are not only moving upstream and backward in time, but in doing so are also moving from civilization back to nature. Drawing on the deeply imperialist and still familiar metaphor-concept of exploration, this regression is charted in the gradual movement upstream from occupied coastal villages where "civilization is overtaking the redman" [FM 35] to what are presented as increasingly overgrown inland villages where nature is in the process of reclaiming what still survives from a seemingly earlier time.

It is in this natural world that the film situates the Indian as both racial and cultural group. For one thing, the sequence of shots relating to the Eagle people now in Saving the Sagas would have appeared at this point in the original film and established the idea that Native culture was fading, if only by virtue of what remnants were left. In the village of the Eagle people, the accompanying intertitles state, "the craft of the totem carver survives" [SS 17], "the Eagle squaws still know the measures of the old potlatch dances" [SS 27], and "the Eagle chief holds to the old rites" [SS 21]. Appearing here as well is the shot of the latter, prophetically "chanting his glories on the site of his grave" [SS 24-26]. Thus there is resonance to the earlier suggestion that the shots of women performing potlatch dances were intended as a counterpoint to the cannery scenes of Native women performing in "the white man's culture" [FM 27]. Primitivized in terms of the passion that is conventionally used to distinguish women from their more rational male counterparts, the Aboriginal woman was represented here in her natural state as the essentialized bearer of a culture facing extinction.13

The catalogue description makes it clear that this sequence of shots of the villages of Angede and Geetiks was followed in turn by that of Barbeau and MacMillan "saving" their songs and music [SS 33-41], and by reel three of the movie, which contained both the demonstration of lahal playing now in Saving the Sagas [SS 42-47] and the reenactment of a medicine-man performing a cure that appears at the conclusion of Fish and Medicine Men [FM 60-67].14 Reel three may have also included the story, now in Saving the Sagas, of the chief whose conversion to Christianity forced him to choose one wife from among his three [SS 50-58]. The only series of shots in either Saving the Sagas or Fish and Medicine Men unaccounted for at this point, the story fits, albeit awkwardly, into the vague category described in the catalogue as "many other favourite pastimes of these
Indians." In this connection, it is noteworthy as well that Barbeau's captioned photographs from the trip reveal that, like the shots of MacMillan and Barbeau recording songs, of lahál playing, and of the medicine-man cure, this footage was actually shot in front of the cottage he stayed in that summer at Arrandale [Figure 5].\textsuperscript{15} Perhaps he thought it reasonable at this point in the filming to focus on his efforts to record songs and music and to film specific activities, the ethnographic imperative of his work situated elsewhere in the film's narrative. Certainly, the story of the chief's quandary is in keeping with this idea: it is a dramatization of the events that gave rise to one of the most favored songs Barbeau and MacMillan recorded that year, the chief's response to the angry gossip that followed his choice of wife, aptly titled "What Are You Talking About? (Haguhlaen)."\textsuperscript{16}

On the other hand, the dramatized events themselves suggest another, perhaps more appropriate spot for the sequence, one that places the dramatization firmly into the narrative of the film. That spot lies in the larger sequence devoted to Kincolith, immediately following the second reference to missionary activity in the village and the intertitle, "But the Church Army now spreads Christian salvation along the Coast" [SS 48]. According to Barbeau [1933: 109], Frank Bolton, the Eagle chief in the film, was the last of Nisga'a chiefs to convert to Christianity, the decision prompting his move downstream to the missionary village of Kincolith from Geetiks, where he had remained with his three wives after "a craze" of conversions moved everyone else to the mission town in the 1880s. The reenactment of one of the consequences of his conversion—his adoption of monogamy—thus follows logically on the scene devoted to Kincolith as the site of "Christian salvation"; it could even be argued that the inclusion of the story necessitated this second reference to missionary activity in the village—that the scenes are, in fact, part of one sequence in the narrative. Significantly, this is how they appear in Saving the Sagas, the cause and effect relationship between them introducing the note of patriarchal humor that comes with his attempt at redemption—his rejection of all three wives in favor of a "young Hutsini beauty" [SS 48-58].\textsuperscript{17}
Figure 5 “Dr. Watson and Mr. Guin taking moving pictures of Indian life in front of my cottage at Arrandale.” Caption by Marius Barbeau, ethnologist at the National Museum of Canada, 1927. (Canadian Museum of Civilization, no. 1-9 (1927), Marius Barbeau Collection.)
Although unidentified as such, the sequence is also one of what appear to be a number of dramatizations related to the songs and chants recorded that summer. The introductory intertitle to *Nass River Indians* underscores this, by identifying "the vanishing culture, the rites and songs and dances" as the things Barbeau and MacMillan set out to record. In other words, considering *Nass River Indians* as a whole, the rites and songs and dances emerge as the three major components of the movie, all of them depicted as rapidly disappearing. Thus the scenes filmed at Kincolith depicting Natives converted to Christianity become the foil for later scenes of what are represented in contrast as "ancient," "traditional" or "old" religious practices. And the dances and chants, most of which were performed by Frank Bolton and Robert Pearl—both in the field, so to speak, and in front of Barbeau's cottage at Arrandale—are clearly intended to be understood in relation not only to the Christian Army band, but also to the earlier scenes of "modern" life in the cannery bungalows. The latter also contain references to music: young men listening to "radio jazz," the young woman playing a popular tune on the keyboard. The shot of Frank Bolton singing to a cradled baby [FM 35-39, 44-45], which clearly belongs with the others of children in the bungalow camps, should also be mentioned here. Loitering in front of a bungalow with a group of men, Bolton even performs a little jig viewers would probably not associate with dance at all were it not for the introductory intertitle to the shot, which reads, "And the popular song has won the flappers of the Nass" [FM 40, 42].

In this way the body of the film acts as a protracted dramatization of the idea that an authentic Nisga'a culture was disappearing, the sequence of shots of Barbeau and MacMillan recording songs and chants acting as its culmination. The latter sequence, which comes at the end of reel two, also gains significance in light of the fact that contemporary documents connected with the first showings of the movie refer only to two reels of film. Reel three, it seems, was not originally regarded as part of the film, despite evidence that it was produced at the same time, deposited in the museum along with the other reels, and later listed in the collection as part of *Nass River Indians*. The shortest of the reels, described in the museum's 1933 catalogue as showing "pictures of the games and many other favourite pastimes of these Indians, and a medicine-man performing a cure," it may simply contain extra scenes that were intended for the film at one point, but were not included. The sequence of shots devoted to lahal, "the gambling guessing game" [SS 42-47], for example, can be thematically related to the reel-two intertitle, "Kincolith sports more boardwalk than Atlantic City" [FM 49], the last
intertitle in the sequence, "It's just the Indian version of the white man's old 'shell game'" [SS 46], thus sustaining it as a joke based on Atlantic City's association with gaming, amusements and recreation. Perhaps the awkwardness of the transition to the next sequence in reel two ultimately prevented its inclusion, or perhaps there was not enough time to include any of the scenes that ended up in reel three; certainly, there is ample evidence that the production of the film was rushed, Barbeau adding some scenes, among them the carving sequence, very late in the editing process.

Coincidental with this is the fact that the scenes in reel three mark a break in what is otherwise a complex and coherent narrative culminating in the shots of MacMillan and Barbeau making phonograph recordings. This climax is firmly established as such when the latter sequence, which begins with an intertitle and shots of the two men working on a song with Bolton and Tsimshian interpreter William Beynon [Gwisge’en; Figure. 6], concludes with footage of Albert Allen (Gadim Gaidoo’o of Gitanmaax) and of Bolton and his daughter singing into a phonograph, the intertitle reading, "The cannery cans the salmon. The camera cans the dances and now the phonograph cans the songs. Everything canned but the Indians!" [SS 39, Figure 7]. In doing so, it represents the film for viewers in relation to this moment, the inclusion of the word "now" in the intertitle serving to align the film's narrative chronologically to this point and thus to establish the sequence as the culmination of the story. It also recollects the narrative thematically for viewers by tying the thirteen-intertitle section devoted to the cannery at the beginning of the film to the subsequent scenes of dancing—now redescribed as records of a movie camera's use—and of wax-cylinder recording. "Tin cans and machinery—both symbols of the white man's culture" [FM 27], is recalled as well, the emphatic repetition of the imagery it established in the cannery sequence underscoring the thematic continuity.

Of course, the intertitle also suggests that the development of such technology has made the science of the modern ethnographer possible, his use of the recent technology "now" at his disposal allowing him to preserve "everything... but the Indians." This is striking in the degree to which it calls up Clifford's sobering description of salvage ethnography as a project in which "the other is lost in dis-integrating time and space, but saved in the text." The fact that it does so by way of a pun on the verb "to can," however, effectively indicates that sobriety was not the aim here. In contrast, the intertitle is in keeping with the overall jocular tone of the film: the visual pun signalled when a shot of the cannery foreman clapping his hands is prefaced by the intertitle, "The cannery boss has no whistle so the Indian boss calls the workers 'by hand'" [FM 19-21]; the play on words effected when the
shot of Bolton singing to an infant snugly framed by the sides of its cradle begins with the intertitle, "This baby is 'the very picture' of his dad—so they have 'framed' him" [FM 44-45]; the corny jokes made when footage of Pearl throwing feathers into the air as part of the peace dance opens with the words, "The white stuff is down feathers, an eagle's pyjamas" [FM 56-57], followed by the quip, "This is a sign of peace and goodwill to all, except maybe the eagle" [FM 58]; the now familiar drollery evident in the intertitle, "He is chanting his glories on the site for his grave—the way to be sure about one's funeral sermon" [SS 24]; the ironic understatement made with the comment, "Kincolith sports more boardwalk than Atlantic City" [FM 49]; the sexist and racist humor at play in the tale of the chief's "Christian decision" to take one wife [SS 50-58] and in the potlatch dance sequence prefaced by the insinuating "And if we understand
Indian—and we do—this little beauty is signalling for a kiss—or maybe a drink" [SS 31]; the vernacular flavor established when the footage of women involved in the final stages of the canning process is prefaced by the words, "The feminine touch—which finishes the poor fish" [FM 23-26]; the shot of piles of fish on the cannery floor prefaced by the suggestion that Roman Catholic practice meant "Friday is not a lucky day for the salmon" [FM 17]; or the sequence devoted to lahal playing by the observation, "It's just the Indian version of the white man's old 'shell game'" [SS 46].

Overall, the tone is similar to that of Grass [1925] and Nanook of the North [1922], and as such is more suggestive of a production made for entertainment than of the type of educational film Barbeau's colleague, Harlan Smith, was producing during these years to accompany the museum's Saturday morning lecture series [Zimmerly 1974: 4-5, 18-21]. Nanook of the North also includes puns, irony, exclam-
atory statements—even an encounter with the phonograph by which "the white man 'cans'" the Native's voice. Smith's films, amounting to almost two dozen treatments of various western Canadian Aboriginal cultures, privilege descriptive intertitles and illustrative shots dealing with such objects of anthropological interest as food, clothing, housing, and transportation, which although designed to enliven his talks and at least implicitly to popularize the museum's activities, did so primarily by virtue of their popular appeal as moving pictures. Barbeau's film, in contrast, sought to popularize the activities of Barbeau, MacMillan, and thus the National Museum, through the content of the film as well, like Nanook of the North, although more emphatically, using dramatization, playful language and irony to intensify the entertainment value of the viewing experience.

This approach is similar as well to one Barbeau takes in "The Thunder Bird of the Mountains," an article he published in 1932 based on his trip to the Nass River region five years earlier. Cast as a voyage of discovery, it eschews academic language in a popularizing tale of anthropological revelation ostensibly recalled by Barbeau using dialogue, evocative description, and humor. In it, Barbeau, together with a musician, a painter, and an "artist photographer"—identified respectively as Ernest MacMillan, Langdon Kihn, and Dr. Watson—are in the midst of making records of Native songs, dances and wood carvings along the Nass River. They have found what Barbeau describes as "something of Paradise Lost after the downfall"—"real" songs, baffling to outsiders but "natural to the Indians themselves," living only in memory; totem poles—even a masterpiece "endowed with something very personal, quite Indian"—abandoned to decay in the forest; customs diminished, creativity lost [Barbeau 1932: 94-96].

The story itself centers on the filming of what can be identified as the scene now in Saving the Sagas showing Bolton "chanting his glories on the site for his grave" [SS 24]. As in the film, it is used here to suggest the tension between two states of being, and between Primitive past and Modern present, Barbeau writing at the outset that what they "witnessed in front of the lens [was] the awakening of a people from its accustomed lethargy. The old chief, instead of a fisherman's soiled overalls, now donned kingly regalia that made of him a grandee of the earth..." [Barbeau 1932: 97]. With this, he introduces another story, based on the lyrics of the chief's song. Remembered seemingly word for word by Barbeau, it conjures up the mythic Thunderbird's triumphant return to the heights of the mountain, its presence, suddenly felt in the figure of the chief, inspiring the performers and enthralling the audience, until "[t]ransfigured, the Indians rose in their dance from the depths to spectacular heights. Dispirited and slovenly in ordinary life," he writes, "they were now lifted to a higher plane, like spirits
swaying their exalted selves over the shrubbery or living gods in a bespangled pantheon" [Barbeau 1932: 98]. Only then was "[t]he spell of the mystic past" broken by a real thunderstorm [Barbeau 1932:100]. The song, which concluded with reference to the Otter and its subsequent seduction of the chief, is left unexplained to Barbeau until that night in camp, when groping in the darkness for understanding of it all, he is inspired:

I know! Those Indians had been lured away from their own path in life, and they had gone astray into the bogs. And who was to blame if not the Otter, the charmer? But the Otter, who was she if not a symbol? What did the native syren stand for? Civilization, no doubt, our own gift to them, the Indians. Civilization, our Christianity, our trade goods, our tools, our worship of the machine—in a word, the White Man, parcel and all! Fifty years after the native had adopted our devices wholesale, they had become a wasted lot with nothing truly their own either new or ancient. This night they were drifting with their cannery nets to the whirlpools. They were dragged down by the feet one by one. Indeed they were almost extinct now, extinct in many ways. Civilization, the great Killer, was engulfing them. [Barbeau 1932:107]

Coming as the climax of the story, his revelation also confirms the increasingly apparent fact that his tale of life on the Nass is as much a parable loosely fashioned on experience as it is an account of his fieldwork. In a note to Beynon, which he included with an offprint of the article, he says as much, telling his interpreter, "The story of the Thunder Bird of the Mountains is not meant to be strictly accurate as to the facts but merely to drive home a point which is the definition of Civilization and Culture." To that end, he included in the party one of his former fieldwork companions, the American artist Langdon Kihn, who although discouraged by Barbeau from making a trip to the Nass that summer, appears in the story as arbiter of Indian artistic merit. Championing the sculptural quality of the last Aboriginal wood carvings in the same way MacMillan asserts the Natives' former musical worth, he also completes the story's ensemble of artist, musician and filmmaker, all of whom are ultimately so inspired by the vanishing culture they witness on the Nass that they are raised to heights of creativity in turn. Fired that night in the camp by talk of Native art, music, and life to create canvas, composition and film respectively, they illustrate Barbeau's central contention that culture "comes unheralded to the pure-hearted whose path lies on the heights, whoever they are, primitive or civilized" [Barbeau 1932:110].

Kihn and the others also set the stage for Barbeau's new reading of the lyrics to the chief's song, itself an elaborate embellishment of what was in reality a relatively modest song of potlach hospitality. Seemingly inspired by the chief's story in the same way MacMillan is inspired by Native music and Kihn by
Native art, Barbeau suggests that he saw his role as the ethnologist in the party as one devoted, at least in part, to this popular formulation of a contemporary, Western lore stimulated by its Native counterpart. What is more, his interpretation of the song, which presents his view of the Nisga'a people and their culture, is striking in the degree to which it echoes the portrayal of Nisga'a life in the film. Both express what Nicholas Thomas [1994: 15] describes as a competing colonialist agenda—in this instance, one that counters what was generally accepted by Euro-Canadians as the civilizing mission of the church and the progressive impulse of technology with a romantic narrative full of regretful nostalgia for the idealized precolonial society they have destroyed. In Barbeau's narrative, civilization corrupts, resulting in what he sees as the degenerate state of the present-day Indian. Already "hushed" by civilization (and, in this case, confined to the lowest level of the capitalist class structure), Indians cease to exist in his present as anything but a people "almost extinct," the lesson of the story for Westerners lying in his warning of the dangers of civilization to other primitive cultures [Barbeau 1932: 107-110]. Politically an act of opposition to contemporary views, on another level it simply reproduced supremacist thinking based on the idea that the Indian was not only unable to function successfully in the modern world, but also that this inability was the result of predisposition rather than colonial encounter.

Of course, his position, and his efforts to popularize it, were also tied to his belief in the mission of the Museum and the value of the material it collected and housed. So it is not surprising perhaps that Barbeau's efforts to define and record the "vanishing culture" of the Canadian West Coast were also part of a campaign by Associated Screen News's major stock-holder, the Canadian Pacific Railway, to market the area to tourists. In fact, by the time the film was made, both the CPR and Canadian National Railways had been working with Barbeau and the National Museum for a number of years, hoping to increase tourist traffic to their western regions by promoting the idea that their lines offered access to a national landscape steeped in cultural heritage [Jessup 1992: 64-73]. The National Museum's activities in this respect were bathed in an aura of legitimacy that advanced the interests of the railways in what might otherwise have been dismissed by the public as crass commercial promotion. With this in mind, the general tourist agents of both railways routinely gave free passes over their lines to Barbeau and his parties [Jessup 1992: 31-35, 64-73]. In the summer of 1927, it was CPR agent John Murray Gibbon who provided passage, arranging rail trips to Vancouver where Barbeau and his group, bearing cameras and phonograph, caught a boat north along the coast to the Nass River.
For Gibbon and the CPR, this was also part of the company's ongoing support of Barbeau's more recent involvement in an exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada that promised to benefit its western traffic. The show, eventually entitled "The Exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art, Native and Modern," would combine west-coast Aboriginal material drawn from the collections of the National Museum, the Royal Ontario Museum, and McGill University with paintings and sculptures of west-coast subject matter by prominent Euro-Canadian artists, many of whom had visited the region at Barbeau's request, and on passes from either the CPR or CNR [Ottawa 1927]. Prominent among them were Group of Seven member A.Y. Jackson and his friend, Montreal artist and future Group member Edwin Holgate, both of whom visited Tsimshian and Gitskan communities on the Skeena River in the summer of 1926; Montreal painter Anne Savage and Toronto sculptor Florence Wyle, who made the same trip west from central Canada the next summer; and Vancouver artist Emily Carr, who had visited Native communities to paint many years before, with Barbeau's support of the travel involved in her work first coming into play on her trip to the Nass River in 1928. Touted by National Gallery director Eric Brown as the first exhibition of North American Aboriginal work to be, as he put it, "artistic first and ethnological after," the show was intended to establish the place of this material in the world of art, and to claim it both as a treasured national possession and, by suggesting its origins in an indeterminate national past, as the touchstone of what was presented in contrast as the nation's new "modern" art [Jessup 1992: 62-98].

What is perhaps more important in this context is the fact that the film was actually made to be shown in conjunction with the exhibition, which finally opened on 20 November 1927 [Figure 8]. This is one reason Barbeau's caption to a photograph of the project's filmmaker James Sibley Watson and his assistant reads, "Dr. Watson and Mr. Gunn taking moving pictures of Indian life ancient and modern" [Figure 9]. Not only did it describe a photograph of the two portraying the conversion of the Nisga'a to Christianity from their so-called "pagan" existence but, describing the subject of the moving pictures as "Indian life ancient and modern," it identified what was in effect the movie's working title. The film also reiterates the exhibition's theme on another level by portraying Barbeau at work on the nation's musical past with one of Canada's musical talents of the day, composer and professor Ernest MacMillan. By the time the exhibition opened, this reiteration had been reiterated in turn by the CPR, which had also completed its own film for the show, the Associated Screen News production Totem Land. Portraying the Kwakwaka'wakw people of Vancouver Island in the process of becoming the past, this film featured what it described as "the famous
Canadian soprano," Juliette Gaultier de la Verendrye learning Kwakwaka'wakw songs as "a modern student of the ancient art." It was this art she demonstrated in a recital held in connection with the first showing of *Nass River Indians*, her performance and the film becoming part of a special evening of entertainment held in January 1928 in conjunction with the exhibition's run at the then Art Gallery of Toronto. Clad in Aboriginal dress lent by the National Museum, she sang arrangements of Native songs, some of them prepared for performance by MacMillan from the Nisga'a pieces collected by Barbeau and him the previous summer.34

Like *Saving the Sagas* and *Nass River Indians*, the special evening echoed the theme of the exhibition that inspired it. It represented Aboriginal cultures of the Canadian West Coast as being the touchstone of contemporary cultural life in Canada—part of the nation's past, rather than its present or future. In fact, the developmental aspect of the project was so strongly valued by the exhibition's architects that Barbeau secretly criticized Gaultier to MacMillan because she
Figure 9 “Dr. Watson and Mr. Gunn taking moving pictures of Indian life ancient and modern”. Caption by Marius Barbeau, ethnologist, National Museum of Canada, 1927. (Canadian Museum of Civilization, image no. 69611.)
refused "to do very much" with the songs they gave her, insisting instead on presenting them in "a semi-primitive form." In contrast, the exhibition and its programming, ostensibly designed to celebrate West Coast Native culture, operated smoothly in a now familiar way to represent Aboriginal peoples as Indians firmly of the Primitive past and thus lost in the Modern present. The problem with this, of course, lay not only in the way this affected audience understanding of the objects on display, but also in the way this representation worked to normalize Euro-Canadian views of contemporary Aboriginal peoples that facilitated government legislation aimed at aggressive assimilation and paternalistic control. Simply put, art history in its public forum—that is, in the museum—was ultimately as complicit in internal practices of colonialism in Canada as we now know anthropology was in imperialist expansion. In this case, the convergence of the two also worked effectively to create a complex "cultural event" as rare in its time as a film of the ethnographer at work "saving the sagas."
NOTES

Grants from the Queen's University Advisory Research Committee, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada supported research for this article and two others forthcoming. I am grateful to Greg Eamon, Dale Gervais and Bill O'Farrell of the National Archives of Canada, and Benoit Thériault of the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

1. The only treatment of the film to date is provided in Morris [1994: 41-42, 45-55]. Her discussion, which attempts a close textual reading of the movie, includes some interesting observations, but is rife with inaccuracies. These extend even to her description of the film.

2. Aside from its use in a reference to Canada's Indian Act, the word "Indian" is used historically in this paper to refer to the concept Barbeau and others applied to the Aboriginal populations of North America. The words "Aboriginal" and "Native" are used throughout this paper to refer to the different peoples of indigenous ancestry in North America. These general terms, used to refer to a wide range of people of indigenous ancestry, are paired with the plural "peoples" to recognize both commonalities and differences among them.

3. Jay Ruby [1979: 71] points out that, in fact, many of these films are incorrectly labelled, the term "ethnographic" having been applied it seems to "any documentary film of exotic peoples ... regardless of the maker's competencies and intentions" and without due consideration of the film's actual relationship to ethnographic study. Keeping this in mind, he also stresses however that such films cannot then be automatically disregarded in discussion of ethnographic film.


6. Zimmerly [1974]. By this time, *Saving the Sagas* is listed [p. 29, no. 8] as part of the Museum's collection. Prior to this, the most recent publication to list the film as part of the collection is Canada, Department of Mines and Resources, National Museum of Canada [1937: 6, no. 15]. The entry also refers to the existence of a one-reel, 16mm copy of the film, which has since disappeared as well. Both copies were in the Museum's collection until at least 1949. (See CMC, Information Management Services, Barbeau's correspondence, box B225, "Norrish, B.E. (1928-49)," Barbeau to Norrish, 13 May 1949.) The first Museum publication to include the film [Canada, Department of Mines, National Museum of Canada, 1933: 6, no. 15], lists it as a three-reel movie.
7. Prints of the film are in the National Archives of Canada (hereafter NAC). Appendix 2 was produced from NAC prints IDCISN 195744, VLTSLF-CFI 5213-A, which the Archives acquired from Associated Screen News. (The intertitles of the NAC print IDCISN 195743 VLTSLF 7710-0251, which was acquired from the National Film Board of Canada, are clearer, but not as complete.) In their present state, the film's intertitles are short and badly damaged. The first intertitle survives in a single frame with badly faded lettering, and after the first five intertitles, which have suffered deterioration, only one intertitle (beginning "Nearby is Kincolith...") can be read without freezing the frame. Copies of the film in other collections all appear to have been made from the same source.


11. The Nisga'a Land Committee was reestablished in 1955 as the Nisga'a Tribal Council.

12. See CMC, Reference Library, Photo Archives Vertical File, "Photographs Taken by C.M. Barbeau, 1927," nos. 69607-9, 69623-7; Riley, 1988: nos. 69607-9, 69623-7. Other participants in the film mentioned in this article are similarly identified in the captions of Barbeau's 1927 photographs, which are published in Riley. My thanks to Verna Williams of Wilp Wilx'oskwil Nisga'a for the proper Nisga'a spelling of the individuals' names. It should be noted in this context that not all the people who appear in the film were Nisga'a, some having moved to communities on the Nass River from neighboring areas. Frank Pearl, for example, was Gitksan.

13. The historical basis of the complexity with which notions of nature, culture and gender were endowed—in this case manifest in the Aboriginal woman as bearer of both nature and culture—is discussed by Jordanova [1980: 42-69].

14. The reenactment consists of eight shots, in comparison to three shots or less for all but four sequences in the film. Thus it probably included intertitles, at least one of which would have identified the reenactment as a medicine-man cure. The intertitles probably disappeared with the deterioration of the print from which the NAC copies were made.

15. See CMC, Reference Library, Photo Archives Vertical File, "Photographs Taken by C.M. Barbeau, 1927," no. 1-9, "Dr. Watson and Mr. Gunn taking moving pictures of Indian life in front of my cottage at Arrandale." The corresponding photograph, showing a break in the filming of the chief's story, is
indicated on Barbeau's list as having been rejected from inclusion in what is now the museum's Vertical File. A print can be found in the CMC, Information Management Services, Barbeau Collection, Northwest Coast Files, box B33, "Discard (Photos) Nass and Skeena, 1927 (B-F-534)." The footage of Frank Bolton carving a mask (SS 17-20) was also shot at Arrandale; Barbeau's photographs of him clearly show him sitting on the wooden plank-walk in front of the cottage. See Riley [1988: nos. 69632-34].

16. Transcribed by MacMillan and published together with the lyrics and story of its composition and subsequent "collection" in Barbeau [1933: 109-111]. Also published together with the story of its composition in Barbeau [1951: 125-26, no. 29], where the title is given as "Aguhlen (What are you talking about?)."

17. In Barbeau [1932: 102] he identifies the humor in the situation (for both the community and those just hearing the story) as arising from an interpretation of the chief's actions as part of his efforts toward redemption. In this sequence of the film, Robert Pearl plays Frank Bolton, the man who actually wrote the song after his conversion to Christianity. Bolton appears in the sequence as the man who introduces the "young Hutsini beauty" to Pearl, the chief.


20. The lack of intertitles in the footage of the medicine-man cure makes it difficult to discuss it in relation to either the larger part of this film, or to Fish and Medicine Men. For perceptions of Atlantic City in this period see Paulsson [1994: 14-56].


22. The little girl in the shot with Bolton is identified as his daughter in Calder [1993: 8].

23. Smith's films, which were shot between 1923 and 1930, include The Tsimshian Indians of British Columbia (1925-27, NAC), Lower Skeena Valley (The Tsimshian People) (1925-27), Totem Pole Villages of the Skeena (1925-27), The Bella Coola Indians of British Columbia (1923-24, NAC), The Carrier Indians of British Columbia (1923-27, NAC), The Kwakiutl Indians of British Columbia (1923-30), The Lilooet Indians of British Columbia (1923-30), The Nootka Indians of British Columbia (1928-29, NAC), The Coast Salish Indians of British Columbia (1928, NAC), The Shuswap Indians of British Columbia

24. In the story Bolton is identified by Barbeau as "Old Geetiks," the nickname he was given before his conversion to Christianity when he and his three wives lived alone at Geetiks. See Barbeau [1933: 109-11; 1951: 100-105, 125-26].


27. See "Song No. 30: Tem'asemis," in Barbeau [1951: 126-27].

28. In this instance, the interpretation he offers in the story is encapsulated by the story itself which, couched in popular terms and published, becomes his real contribution to cultural life in the same way that MacMillan's subsequent arrangements of Nisga'a songs and Kihn's existing paintings of the west actually became theirs. For a contemporary discussion of the paintings Kihn produced as a result of his earlier trips to western Canada with Barbeau, see Comstock [1925: 50-55]. The relationship of the "artist-photographer" to the environment in which he finds himself in the story is less developed, Barbeau writing only that, at the climax of discussion in camp that night, MacMillan became absorbed in music, Kihn began painting, and "Watson headed for his bromide trays and his film rolls" [p. 106].

29. Rony [1996: 131-32] has found a similar situation in other ethnographic films of the 1920s and 1930s, although, in contrast to *Nass River Indians*, the works she discusses do not portray the contemporary life of the Primitive. Rather, reconstructing a paradisiacal past, and later even conceding contact with the West, they implicitly set the Primitive in opposition to both Civilization and the Modern.


31. National Gallery of Canada Archives, Exhibition Files, 5.5 West Coast Art Native and Modern Exhibition 1927-28, Eric Brown to John Murray Gibbon, 10 October 1927.

32. CMC, Information Management Services, Barbeau Collection, Northwest Coast Files, box B30, "Photo Inventory, 1927 (B-F-465), "Photographs Taken by C.M. Barbeau, 1927," 3, no. 69611.
33. CMC, Information Management Services, Barbeau's correspondence, box B197, "Gibbon, J. Murray (Jan-Mar 1928)," Barbeau to Gibbon, 11 January 1928; box B196, "Gaultier, Juliette (1925-30)." 1 January 1928.

34. See CMC, Information Management Services, Barbeau's correspondence, box B196, "Gaultier, Juliette (1925-30)," Indian Songs of British Columbia and Eskimo Songs, Recital by Juliette Gaultier de la Verendrye, Art Gallery of Toronto, 25 January 1927. Barbeau originally planned to show the film during a special evening Brown was planning in connection with the show's run in Ottawa, but it was not in his hands in time. See box B214, "Lismer, Arthur," Barbeau to Lismer, 15 January 1927; box B201, "Gunn, Alex (1927-28)," Gunn to Barbeau, 4 January 1928.

REFERENCES

Barbeau, Marius

Barbeau, Marius, Duncan Campbell Scott, and Ernest MacMillan
1928  *Three Songs of the West Coast Recorded from Singers of Nass River Tribes, Canada*. English versions by Duncan Campbell Scott, transcribed and arranged by Ernest MacMillan. London: Frederick Harris Co.

Bederman, Gail

Calder, Frank, intro.
1993  *Nisga'a: People of the Nass River*. Vancouver and Gitlakdamiks: Douglas & McIntyre, and Nisga'a Tribal Council.

Canada, Department of Mines, National Museum of Canada
1933  *Catalogue of Motion Picture Films*. Ottawa.

Canada, Department of Mines and Resources, National Museum of Canada
1937  *Catalogue of Motion Picture Films*. Ottawa.

Clifford, James


Clifford, James, Virginia Domingues, and Trinh T. Minh-Ha

Comstock, Helen
Fabian, Johannes

Gordon, Deborah

Holm, Bill, and George Quimby

Jessup, Lynda
   1992  Canadian Artists, Railways, the State and 'the Business of Becoming a Nation.' Toronto: Ph.D. thesis, University of Toronto.

Jordanova, L.J.

Krouse, Susan Applegate

MacDougall, David

Morris, Rosalind

Newell, Diane
   1993  *Tangled Webs of History: Indians and the Law in Canada's Pacific Coast Fisheries*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Ottawa
   1927  *Exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art, Native and Modern*. Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada.
L. Jessup

Paulsson, Martin

Riley, Linda

Rony, Fatimah Tobing

Ruby, Jay

Russell, Catherine

Sibley, David

Stocking, George


Tennant, Paul

Thomas, Nicholas
Titley, Brian  
1986  *A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Toronto  

Zimmerly, David  

APPENDIX 1

Shot-List of *Saving the Sagas*

**Head Title:**
B.E. Norrish Presents  
'Saving the Sagas'  
Produced by Associated Screen News Limited  
Montreal Que

**SS 1 Intertitle:** A screen recording of the vanishing culture, the rites and songs and dances of the Indians along the Canadian Pacific Coast, north of Vancouver. Associated Screen News [at lower left].

**SS 2:** Extreme long shot across a still body of water showing both foreground and far shore. Three figures in profile paddle a canoe from right to left across the frame.

**SS 3 Intertitle:** C. Marius Barbeau of the National Museum and Dr. Ernest MacMillan of the Toronto Conservatory of Music set out with camera and phonograph. Associated Screen News [at lower left].

**SS 4-5:** Extreme long shot of a boat on which two men can be seen: one at the helm and one on the deck, where a movie camera on a tripod stands among some cases. A long shot lingers on the camera and cases on the deck.
SS 6 Intertitle: The ways of the white man—and radio jazz—are sweeping away the old color [sic] of Indian life of British Columbia.

SS 7: Long shot of a young Nisga'a man in headphones adjusting a radio that sits on a table outside a cannery bungalow as two other young men look on.

SS 8 Intertitle: Up a river, back from the sea. Our explorers come upon the site of Angeda—an ancient town of the Wolf tribe.

SS 9: Extreme long shot across a river showing a totem pole standing on the shore and, in a rowboat on the water, four men in suits rowing upstream. [The pole is the Third Pole of Kwahsuh (Matthew Nass), called Thl'ameen, which means Wide-Base. It is now in the Canadian Museum of Civilization.]

SS 10 Intertitle: Here, deep in the tangled growth, is the totem monument of a Wolf chief.

SS 11-14: Long shot of the lower half of the pole up to its grave box, then a long shot showing the Wolf on the box and the carving immediately below it. Another long shot shows the Grizzly Bear carving on the grave box at the top of the pole before moving down the pole slowly to the base where a medium shot shows the base carving, as one of the suited men pulls dense brush away from it.

SS 15 Intertitle: Here is old Geeticks—still the home of the Eagle people.

SS 16: Tracking shot of the shoreline and deserted village taken from the water.

SS 17 Intertitle: The craft of the totem carver survives here.

SS 18-20: Closeup of a man's hands [those of Frank Bolton (T̓x̱aa Laxhatkw of Gwinwok)] sharpening a knife on a small stone, followed by another showing a mouth being carved into an unfinished wooden mask. A third closeup shows the inside of the mask being hollowed out with an adze.

SS 21 Intertitle: The Eagle chief holds to the old rites.

SS 22-23: Long shot of a man [Bolton] in fringed dance apron, blanket cape decorated with ermine, cedar shoulder sash and eagle headdress dancing and chanting beside a totem pole. A closeup shows a hand with a mallet beating a drum.

SS 24 Intertitle: He is chanting his glories on the site for his grave the way to be sure about one's funeral sermon.
SS 25-26: Another long shot of the chief dancing, this time holding a raven rattle in each hand, followed by a closeup of his eagle headdress.

SS 27 Intertitle: The Eagle squaws still know the measures of the old potlach dances.

SS 28: Long shot of three women dancing, one of them beating a drum.

SS 29 Intertitle: This pantomimic dance suggests singing the baby to sleep.

SS 30: Medium shot of one of the three women dancing with her arms positioned as though cradling a child, while a man beats a drum in the background.

SS 31 Intertitle: And if we understand Indian—and we do—this little beauty is signalling for a kiss—or maybe a drink.

SS 32: Medium shot of the same woman dancing and gesticulating.
**SS 33 Intertitle:** Mr. Barbeau and Dr. MacMillan record the songs and chants fading away with the advance of the white man.

**SS 34-38:** Long shot of Barbeau and MacMillan [to his right] seated at a table covered with wax cylinders. They are transcribing the song being sung by the man [Bolton] at the left. A medium shot of the left end of the table clearly shows Barbeau consulting the young man [Tsimshian interpreter William Beynon] crouching behind him. This is followed by a closeup of a hand [MacMillan's] making musical notations on a piece of paper; a medium shot of the singer, young man and Barbeau working; and a closeup of a sheet of paper with lyrics written [in Barbeau's hand] both in Nisga'a and English translation.

**SS 39 Intertitle:** The cannery cans the salmon. The camera cans the dances and now the phonograph cans the songs—everything canned but the Indians!

**SS 40-41:** Medium shot of a man [Albert Allen (Gyedimgald'o of Gitanaax)] beating a drum and singing into a wax cylinder recorder accompanied by two other men [Robert Pearl (Wii Xha’a of Gitanyow) and Bolton]. Another medium shot shows a man [Bolton] beating a drum and singing into the phonograph accompanied by a little girl.

**SS 42 Intertitle:** Lahal—the gambling guessing game.

**SS 43:** Long shot of two men [Bolton at left, Pearl at right] seated on ground playing *lahal* while others look on.

**SS 44 Intertitle:** "Where is the winning stick?" "The hand is quicker than the eye?"

**SS 45:** Closeup of man's [Pearl's] hands on blanket as he handles the sticks.

**SS 46 Intertitle:** It's just the Indian version of the white man's old "shell game."

**SS 47:** Medium shot of one of the men [Pearl] shaking the sticks in their case and then throwing them down.

**SS 48 Intertitle:** But the Church Army now spreads Christian salvation along the Coast.

**SS 49:** Long shot of a small missionary group, consisting of singers and a man beating a base drum, being led in song by a uniformed Native man.

**SS 50 Intertitle:** When converted, the last pagan chief had three wives—at least two too many for one Christian—at one time.
SS 51-52: Long shot of a man [Pearl] speaking and gesturing to three women seated in front of him. A second shot shows the women standing up and walking out of the frame.

SS 53 Intertitle: He devoutly puzzled over the problem—and the wives.

SS 54: Medium shot of the man speaking and gesturing [as though to each of the three women] before walking off to the left.

SS 55 Intertitle: Between these three squaws he had to make a Christian decision.

SS 56: Long shot of the man standing in front of the three seated women, while at the right another man [Bolton] walks along a path toward him holding hands with two young women.

SS 57 Intertitle: And he did—he quit them all and took this young Hutsini beauty.

SS 58: Medium shot of the two men talking and gesturing with one of the young woman between them, the man with the wives then patting her on the shoulder and taking her arm.

End Title: Saving the Sagas The End.
APPENDIX 2

Shot-List of *Fish and Medicine Men*

**Head Title:**
B.E. Norrish Presents
'Fish and Medicine Men'
Produced by Associated Screen News Limited
Montreal Que

*FM 1 Intertitle:* Far up the Canadian Pacific Coast off the Nass, north of Vancouver, near the Alaskan border, a race of red fishermen lives. Associated Screen News [at lower left].

*FM 2:* Tracking shot of a shoreline and deserted village taken from the water.

*FM 3 Intertitle:* In the salmon season the villages are left deserted.

*FM 4:* Tracking shot of shoreline and deserted village continues.

*FM 5 Intertitle:* Fishery Bay—Here the Indians come to catch salmon for the white man's canneries.

*FM 6-9:* Extreme long shot across the water of an oar and sailboat powered gillnet fleet, followed by a long shot from above of a man lowering a sail as he lands one of these boats, an extreme long shot of the boat as it glides among others into dock, and a long shot from above of men with picks working in bins of fish on the dock.

*FM 10 Intertitle:* Tons of shimmering silver in the harvest of the Pacific.

*FM 11-14:* Medium shot from above of men working in bins of fish. Cut to medium shots of piles of fish, of a man in a slicker pitching fish with a pike, and of two men pitching fish with pikes.

*FM 15 Intertitle:* Machinery now speeds the Indian's fish on the way to civilization's dinner table.

*FM 16:* Long shot of a conveyer belt moving salmon on the docks.

*FM 17 Intertitle:* Friday is not a lucky day for the salmon.

*FM 18:* Medium shot of piles of fish on the [Arrandale] cannery floor.
**FM 19** Intertitle: The cannery boss has no whistle so the Indian boss calls the workers "by hand".

**FM 20-22:** Shot of a man's back (Albert Allen [Gadim Gaidoo’o of Gitanmaax]) as he walks away from the camera down a cannery bungalow boardwalk clapping his hands. A second, extreme long shot from the other end of the crowded boardwalk shows him from the front clapping his hands. Next is a long shot from the other end of the boardwalk showing women walking towards the camera.

**FM 23** Intertitle: The feminine touch—which finishes the poor fish.

**FM 24-26:** Medium shot of a woman working in a cannery filling cans with salmon, followed by a closeup of another woman's face as she works, then of [her] gloved hands filling a can.

**FM 27** Intertitle: Tin cans and machines—both symbols of the white man's culture.

**FM 28-32:** Cans are processed on a conveyor belt in two consecutive long shots, followed by extreme long shots of a fisherman outside on the docks cleaning nets with a hose, women mending nets as two children play in the foreground, and a long shot of a woman and children tending nets.

**FM 33** Intertitle: And again the fleet puts out to the fishing grounds.

**FM 34:** Extreme long shot of an oar and sail powered gillnet fleet.

**FM 35** Intertitle: On "Indian Bow" civilization is overtaking the redman.

**FM 36:** Long shot of a child drinking from a tap outside one of the cannery bungalows.

**FM 37** Intertitle: Even the papoose rides in a perambulator.

**FM 38-39:** Medium shot of children dragging a perambulator down a set of bungalow steps, followed by another of the children pushing the baby in the perambulator.

**FM 40** Intertitle: And the popular song has won the flappers of the Nass.

**FM 41 43:** Long shot of a young woman playing a keyboard is followed by an extreme long shot of a man [Frank Bolton (Txaa Laxhatkw of Gwinwok)] "dancing" in front of a group of men sitting on the steps of the cannery bungalows. The next shot is a closeup over the shoulder of the young woman showing the sheet music for "Thank you for the Buggy Ride" and a full page advertisement for footwear.
**FM 44 Intertitle**: This baby is "the very picture" of his dad—so they have "framed" him.

**FM 45**: Medium shot of a man [Bolton] singing to an infant suspended in a cradle.

**FM 46 Intertitle**: Nearby is Kincolith—it means "the place-of-scalps"—but it is a church town now.

**FM 47 48**: Extreme long shot of minister in vestments standing at the top of a set of steps [in front of the mission building at Kincolith], women and three young girls standing on the steps below. This is followed by another of a uniformed man leading the three little girls down the steps.

**FM 49 Intertitle**: Kincolith sports more board walk than Atlantic City.

**FM 50**: Extreme long shot down a boardwalk showing houses and telegraph poles on either side of it.

**FM 51 Intertitle**: But the old chief remembers some pagan dances.

**FM 52-55**: Long shot of a chief [Bolton] wearing a fringed dance apron, blanket cape decorated with ermine, cedar shoulder sash and *amhalayt* frontlet, shaking two raven rattles and dancing. He is assisted on
a frying-pan drum by a man [Robert Pearl (Wii Xha’a of Gitanyow)] wearing a dance apron, bear-skin cape, and woolen toque. This is followed by medium shots of the second man beating the frying pan and of the chief dancing with him, and by another long shot of the two dancing.

*FM 56 Intertitle:* The white stuff is down feathers, an eagle's pyjamas.

*FM 57:* Medium shot of the two men dancing, the chief now wearing an eagle headdress and dancing as the other man throws eagle down into the air.

*FM 58 Intertitle:* This is a sign of peace and goodwill to all, except, maybe the eagle.

*FM 59:* Medium shot of the two continuing to dance as the one throws eagle down into the air.

*There are no intertitles extant for the rest of the film*

FM 60-67: Long shots of a man [Bolton] dressing for re-enactment of a medicine-man cure: of him drawing a cedar shoulder sash from a wooden box, and then a dance apron which he puts on; of him taking a breastplate from the box; of him sitting, with the breastplate on, taking a rattle from the box; and of him tying on an eagle-claws headdress. An extreme long shot shows him re-enacting a medicine man cure over a "sick man" [Pearl], who lies on the ground under a blanket. Three men in the background accompany the medicine man with drumming and song [Henry Smart (Tok of Kincolith [now Gingolx]), Albert Allen beating a drum, and William Foster (Guiixmawx of Gitwinksihlxw)]. Three long shots of the cure reenactment follow: the medicine man shaking the rattle and chanting over the sick man before he sets them down to hold the "sick man's" face in his hands; the medicine man shaking the rattle and chanting over the "sick man"; the medicine man lifting the "sick man" from the bed by the cedar sash, which he has looped around the back of the "sick man's" neck.

End Title: Fish and Medicine Men The End.
APPENDIX 3

Reconstruction of *Nass River Indians*

[REEL 1]

**SS 1 Intertitle:** A screen recording of the vanishing culture, the rites and songs and dances of the Indians along the Canadian Pacific Coast, north of Vancouver. Associated Screen News [at lower left].

**SS 2:** Extreme long shot across a still body of water showing both foreground and far shore. Three figures in profile paddle a canoe from right to left across the frame.

**SS 3 Intertitle:** C. Marius Barbeau of the National Museum and Dr. Ernest MacMillan of the Toronto Conservatory of Music set out with camera and phonograph. Associated Screen News [at lower left].

**SS 4-5:** Extreme long shot of a boat on which two men can be seen: one at the helm and one on the deck, where a movie camera on a tripod stands among some cases. A long shot lingers on the camera and cases on the deck.

***

**FM 3 Intertitle:** In the salmon season the villages are left deserted.

**FM 2 + 4:** Tracking shot of a shoreline and deserted village taken from the water.

**FM 5 Intertitle:** Fishery Bay—Here the Indians come to catch salmon for the white man's canneries.

**FM 6-9:** Extreme long shot across the water of an oar and sailboat powered gillnet fleet, followed by a long shot from above of a man lowering a sail as he lands one of these boats, an extreme long shot of the boat as it glides among others into dock, and a long shot from above of men with picks working in bins of fish on the dock.

**FM 10 Intertitle:** Tons of shimmering silver in the harvest of the Pacific.

**FM 11-14:** Medium from above of men working in bins of fish. Cut to medium shots of piles of fish, of a man in a slicker pitching fish with a pike, and of two men pitching fish with pikes.

**FM 15 Intertitle:** Machinery now speeds the Indian's fish on the way to civilization's dinner table.
FM 16: Long shot of a conveyer belt moving salmon on the docks.

FM 17 Intertitle: Friday is not a lucky day for the salmon.

FM 18: Medium shot of piles of fish on the [Arrandale] cannery floor.

FM 19 Intertitle: The cannery boss has no whistle so the Indian boss calls the workers "by hand".

FM 20-22: Shot of a man's back (Albert Allen [Gadim Gaidoo'o of Gitanmaax]) as he walks away from the camera down a cannery bungalow boardwalk clapping his hands. A second, extreme long shot from the other end of the crowded boardwalk shows him from the front clapping his hands. Next is a long shot from the other end of the boardwalk showing women walking towards the camera.

FM 23 Intertitle: The feminine touch—which finishes the poor fish.

FM 24-26: Medium shot of a woman working in a cannery filling cans with salmon, followed by a closeup of another woman's face as she works, then of [her] gloved hands filling a can.

FM 27 Intertitle: Tin cans and machines—both symbols of the white man's culture.

FM 28-32: Cans are processed on a conveyer belt in two consecutive long shots, followed by extreme long shots of a fisherman outside on the docks cleaning nets with a hose, women mending nets as two children play in the foreground, and a long shot of a woman and children tending nets.

FM 33 Intertitle: And again the fleet puts out to the fishing grounds.

FM 34: Extreme long shot of an oar and sail powered gillnet fleet.

***

FM 35 Intertitle: On "Indian Bow" civilization is overtaking the redman.

FM 36: Long shot of a child drinking from a tap outside one of the cannery bungalows.

FM 37 Intertitle: Even the papoose rides in a perambulator.

FM 38-39: Medium shot of children dragging a perambulator down a set of bungalow steps, followed by another of the children pushing the baby in the perambulator.

FM 44 Intertitle: This baby is "The very picture" of his dad—so they have "framed" him.
**FM 45**: Medium shot of a man [Frank Bolton (Txaa Laghatkw of Gwinwoḵ)] singing to an infant suspended in a cradle.

**SS 6 Intertitle**: The ways of the white man—and radio jazz—are sweeping away the old color [sic] of Indian life of British Columbia.

**SS 7**: Long shot of a young Nisga'a man in headphones adjusting a radio that sits on a table outside a cannery bungalow as two other young men look on.

**FM 40 Intertitle**: And the popular song has won the flappers of the Nass.

**FM 41 43**: Long shot of a young woman playing a keyboard is followed by an extreme long shot of a man [Bolton] "dancing" in front of a group of men sitting on the steps of the cannery bungalows. The next shot is a closeup over the shoulder of the young woman showing the sheet music for "Thank you for the Buggy Ride" and a full page advertisement for footwear.

***

**FM 46 Intertitle**: Nearby is Kincolith—it means "the place-of-scalps"—but it is a church town now.

**FM 47 48**: Extreme long shot of minister in vestments standing at the top of a set of steps [in front of the church at Kincolith], women and three young girls standing on the steps below. This is followed by another of a uniformed man leading the three little girls down the steps.

**FM 49 Intertitle**: Kincolith sports more board walk than Atlantic City.

**FM 50**: Extreme long shot down a boardwalk showing houses and telegraph poles on either side of it.

[REEL 2]

**FM 51 Intertitle**: But the old chief remembers some pagan dances.

**FM 52-55**: Long shot of a chief [Bolton] wearing a fringed dance apron, blanket cape decorated with ermine, cedar shoulder sash and *amhalayt* frontlet, shaking two raven rattles and dancing. He is assisted on a frying-pan drum by a man [Robert Pearl (Wii X̱ha’a of Gitanyow)] wearing a dance apron, bear-skin cape, and woolen toque. This is followed by medium shots of the second man beating the frying pan and of the chief dancing with him, and by another long shot of the two dancing.

**FM 56 Intertitle**: The white stuff is down feathers, an eagle's pyjamas.
**FM 57:** Medium shot of the two men dancing, the chief [Bolton] now wearing an eagle headdress and dancing as the other man throws eagle down into the air.

**FM 58 Intertitle:** This is a sign of peace and goodwill to all, except, maybe the eagle.

**FM 59:** Medium shot of the two continuing to dance as the one [Pearl] throws eagle down into the air.

**SS 48 Intertitle:** But the Church Army now speaks Christian salvation along the Coast.

**SS 49:** A long shot of a small missionary group, consisting of singers and a man beating a base drum, being led in song by a uniformed Native man.

**SS 50 Intertitle:** When converted, the last pagan chief had three wives—at least two too many for one Christian—at one time.

**SS 51-52:** Long shot of a man [Pearl] speaking and gesturing to three women seated in front of him. A second shot shows the women standing up and walking out of the frame.

**SS 53 Intertitle:** He devoutly puzzled over the problem—and the wives.

**SS 54:** Medium shot of the man speaking and gesturing [as though to each of the three women] before walking off to the left.

**SS 55 Intertitle:** Between these three squaws he had to make a Christian decision.

**SS 56:** Long shot of the man standing in front of the three seated women, while at the right another man [Bolton] walks along a path toward him holding hands with two young women.

**SS 57 Intertitle:** And he did—he quit them all and took this young Hutsini beauty.

**SS 58:** Medium shot of the two men talking and gesturing with one of the young women between them, the man with the wives then patting her on the shoulder and taking her arm.

***

**SS 8 Intertitle:** Up a river, back from the sea our explorers come upon the site of Angeda—an ancient town of the Wolf tribe.

**SS 9:** Extreme long shot across a river showing a totem pole standing on the shore and, in a rowboat on the water, four men in suits rowing upstream. [The pole is the Third Pole of Kwarhsuh (Wolf clan) called Wide-Base. It is now in the Canadian Museum of Civilization.]
SS 10 Intertitle: Here, deep in the tangled growth, is the totem monument of a Wolf chief.

SS 11-14: Long shot of the lower half of the pole up to its grave box, then a shot showing the Wolf on the box and the carving immediately below it. Another long shot shows the Grizzly Bear carving on the grave box at the top of the pole, before moving down the pole slowly to the base where a medium shot shows the base carving, as one of the suited men pulls dense brush away from it.

SS 15 Intertitle: Here is old Geeticks—still the home of the Eagle people.

SS 16: Tracking shot of the shoreline and deserted village taken from the water.

SS 17 Intertitle: The craft of the totem carver survives here.

SS 18-20: Closeup of a man's hands [those of Bolton] sharpening a knife on a small stone, followed by another showing a mouth being carved into an unfinished wooden mask. A third closeup shows the inside of the mask being hollowed out with an adze.

SS 27 Intertitle: The Eagle squaws still know the measures of the old potlach dances.

SS 28: Long shot of three women dancing, one of them beating a drum.

SS 29 Intertitle: This pantomimic dance suggests singing the baby to sleep.

SS 30: Medium shot of one of the three women dancing with her arms positioned as though cradling a child, while a man beats a drum in the background.

SS 31 Intertitle: And if we understand Indian—and we do—this little beauty is signalling for a kiss—or maybe a drink.

SS 32: Medium shot of the same woman dancing and gesticulating.

SS 21 Intertitle: The Eagle chief holds to the old rites.

SS 22-23: Long shot of a man [Bolton] in fringed dance apron, blanket cape decorated with ermine, cedar shoulder sash and eagle headdress dancing and chanting beside a totem pole. A closeup shows a hand with a mallet beating a drum.

SS 24 Intertitle: He is chanting his glories on the site for his grave the way to be sure about one's funeral sermon.

SS 25-26: Another long shot of the chief dancing, this time holding a raven rattle in each hand, followed by
a closeup of his eagle headdress.

_SS 33 Intertitle:_ Mr. Barbeau and Dr. MacMillan record the songs and chants fading away with the advance of the white man.

_SS 34-38:_ Long shot of Barbeau and MacMillan [to his right] seated at a table covered with wax cylinders. They are transcribing the song being sung by the man [Bolton] at the left. A medium shot of the left end of the table clearly shows Barbeau consulting the young man [Tsimshian interpreter William Beynon] crouching behind him. This is followed by a medium shot of the singer, the young man, and Barbeau working, a closeup of a hand [MacMillan's] making musical notations on a piece of paper; a medium shot of the singer, young man and Barbeau working; and a closeup of a sheet of paper with lyrics written [in Barbeau's hand] both in Nisga'a and English translation.

_SS 39 Intertitle:_ The cannery cans the salmon. The camera cans the dances and now the phonograph cans the songs—everything canned but the Indians!

_SS 40 41:_ Medium shot of a Nisga'a man [Allen] beating a drum and singing into a wax cylinder recorder accompanied by two other men [Pearl and Bolton]. Another medium shot shows a man [Bolton] beating a drum and singing into the phonograph accompanied by a little girl.

***

[REEL 3]

_SS 42 Intertitle:_ Lahal—the gambling guessing game.

_SS 43:_ Long shot of two men [Bolton at left, Pearl at right] seated on ground playing lahah while others look on.

_SS 44 Intertitle:_ "Where is the winning stick?" "The hand is quicker than the eye?"

_SS 45:_ Closeup of man's [Pearl's] hands on blanket as he handles the sticks.

_SS 46 Intertitle:_ It's just the Indian version of the white man's old "shell game".

_SS 47:_ Medium shot of one of the men [Pearl] shaking the sticks in their case and then throwing them down.

[There are no intertitles extant for the rest of the film]
Long shots of a man [Bolton] dressing for re-enactment of a medicine-man cure: of him drawing a cedar shoulder sash from a wooden box, and then a dance apron which he puts on; of him taking a breastplate from the box; of him sitting, with the breastplate on, taking a rattle from the box; and of him tying on an eagle-claws headdress. An extreme long shot shows him re-enacting a medicine man cure over a "sick man" [Pearl], who lies on the ground under a blanket. Three men in the background accompany the medicine man with drumming and song [Henry Smart (Tok of Kincolith [now Gingolx]), Albert Allen beating a drum, and William Foster (Guiixmawx of Gitwinksihlkw). Three long shots of the cure reenactment follow: the medicine man shaking the rattle and chanting over the sick man before he sets them down to hold the "sick man's" face in his hands; the medicine man shaking the rattle and chanting over the "sick man"; the medicine man lifting the "sick man" from the bed by the cedar sash, which he has looped around the back of the "sick man's" neck.
This ‘digital’ version of this article started using scans of a paper copy using a Umax flatbed scanner set at 300 dpi and converted to text using OCR (Optical Character Recognition) software Omni Page Limited Edition. The text was then layed out in WordPerfect 3.5e (for Macintosh). The images were added afterwards (scanned from the motion picture films) and then output to PDF format using James W. Walker’s Print-To-PDF shareware version 2.1.6; (http://www.jwwalker.com)

To view this PDF requires Adobe Acrobat Reader version 3.0 or greater and can be downloaded free at; http://www.adobe.com

Comments or queries about the content of this article should be addressed to;
llj1@post.queensu.ca

Comments or queries about the scans or the creation of this document should be addressed to;
webmaster@canadianfilm.com

Additional copies of this PDF file can be downloaded at; http://www.canadianfilm.com

Reprinted here, with revisions, from; Visual Anthropology, Vol. 12, pp. 49-86
Reprints available directly from the publisher
Photocopying permitted by license only

©1999 OPA (Overseas Publishers Association)N.V. Printed in Malaysia.
Published by license under the Harwood Academic Publishers imprint, part of The Gordon and Breach Publishing Group.