

REMAINS TO BE SEEN

The future diversity of Canada was apparent from the start—Indians, Inuit, Vikings, French, British and Americans came, stayed and blended and their relics still abound: the faded paint of an advertisement on an old brick wall, foundation walls under the city streets and chimney stones on a prairie farm. Scientists and historians have found many chips of the original Canadian mosaic still in place.

In this issue of CANADA TODAY/D'AUJOURD'HUI we consider the way it used to be.

Long, Long Ago

Anthony Island

The old Indian village of Ninstints is in a sheltered cove on rocky, mist-shrouded Anthony Island, the most remote of the Queen Charlotte group.

Ninstints now has no residents but it does have the last cluster of totem poles still standing in their original locations. UNESCO lists it as a treasure of world culture, along with the Pyramids, the Parthenon and the Viking village of L'Anse aux Meadows on the upper tip of Newfoundland.

Haida Indians lived on the island off the coast of British Columbia for thousands of years, first in caves, then in long houses.

They were fishermen (Skungwai, the native name of the island, means Red Cod Island) and raiders. They swept down the coast in the summer, raiding villages, taking slaves and plundering. Then they came home to the island, a natural refuge protected from pursuers by winds that whipped the sea to a froth and mist that hid the offshore rocks.

Ninstints was flourishing when the Spaniards came briefly in 1774 and when the British and American fur traders came in the 1780s.

Captain John Kendrick of Boston arrived on the *Columbia* in the summer of 1789. The Indians stole his personal laundry drying on deck. Kendrick seized their Chief, Koyah, and his second in command and chained them to cannon mounts until his laundry was returned. When it was, he demanded that the Indians also sell him all their furs, at a price of his choosing.

Kendrick returned in two years on the *Lady Washington*. Koyah captured him but Kendrick leaped from the companion way and escaped

below decks. He rallied his crew and they stormed the deck firing pistols. The Indians, who had no guns, leaped overboard and sixty were killed, including Koyah's wife, his brother and his two sons.

In the following years Koyah captured two ships, one American and one British, and killed the crews. He attacked a third, the *Union*, under Captain Burt, and was killed along with a hundred of his people. From then on the people of Skungwai avoided all contact with white traders.

The line of chiefs named Koyah, which means Raven, died out and was succeeded by chiefs of the Eagle clan named Ninstints, which means One-Who-Is-Two.

In the 1860s smallpox swept the island and by 1884 there were only thirty people left. They moved to Graham Island, the largest of the Queen Charlotte group, a few years later. The first known photograph of Ninstints, taken in 1911, shows the village's deserted long houses intact but covered with shrubbery.

In recent years Anthony Island has been surveyed and the remains of the village given official protection.

Visitors are invited but it is difficult to get to, even by helicopter, and they must get written permission from both the Indian Band Council at Skidegate and from the British Columbia government's historic site branch.

For enthusiasts the trip is worthwhile. Several caves, one reaching back 100 feet, show clear signs of ancient use, and in the north bay shallow depressions mark the remains of much older cave dwellings.

Depressions and fallen mossy beams mark the sites of nineteen long houses that bore such names

Cover photo: William Lyon Mackenzie King, Canada's most enduring Prime Minister, collected bits and pieces of old and significant buildings and built a ruin at his estate outside Ottawa. This is one view of the odd but haunting results. Another is on Page 11.