

We Shall Remain: Indigenous Influence in Sixteenth-Century “La Florida” and the  
Early Twentieth-Century Eastern Arctic

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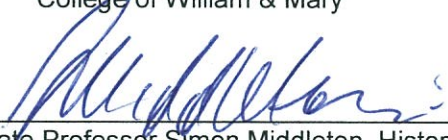
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## ABSTRACT

Spanish Imperial Missionary Activity and Indian Politics in “La Florida,” 1565-1597

In this paper, I argue that Catholic missionization of Calusa, Tequesta, and Guale people in sixteenth-century “La Florida” must be understood not simply as a Spanish colonial endeavor but as a collaboration with native leaders, who encouraged it as a means of increasing their own social and political power. I show that missionization was only successful as long as the presence of friars and a Spanish garrison benefited native leaders. Missionaries were expelled when their upkeep became a burden—that is, when they were no longer a source of socially valuable status items or military assistance against neighboring groups.

Euro-Inuit at Wolstenholme Post, 1909-1946: Arctic Foxes and Neighborly Bonds

This paper is a case study of white-Inuit relations at the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) Wolstenholme trading post. I show how Inuit influence over the twentieth-century white fox trade contributed to the development of neighborly bonds between Inuit trappers and HBC traders. In the early twentieth century, the eastern Arctic was Inuit territory, far from white Canadian society, and there were multiple entities clamoring for a trading partnership with Inuit. The pressing need to retain Inuit patronage, the communal nature of surviving arctic winters, and the unique backgrounds of the HBC men meant that the latter learned Inuktitut, donned Inuit clothing, hunted and traveled with Inuit, and established friendships with them that went far beyond fur trade business.

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This thesis is dedicated to my husband, Daniel, who, like my native protagonists, has remained through thick and thin.

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## CHAPTER I: INTELLECTUAL BIOGRAPHY

I entered the William & Mary PhD program interested in early Euro-Indian relations in what is now the American South. In my research, I sought to highlight indigenous influence over European actions, as well as conflicting interests and power disparities within native polities. My goal was to make indigenous peoples' agency and common humanity impossible to ignore, such that their pasts would cease to be presented as a Eurocentric narrative of total victimization under settler colonialism. I wanted to show native peoples' roles in the making of history and to underscore their resilience in the face of rapidly changing circumstances. Since I had not yet settled on a dissertation topic, I used my research seminars to explore unfamiliar territories, though I brought the same principles to my work.

In the fall, I decided to look at Spanish missionary influence in sixteenth-century "La Florida," as the Spanish christened what is now the coastal Southeast. Apart from compiling a short annotated bibliography of Florida Indian histories, broadly defined, I had never written on the topic. Most La Florida mission histories focus on the seventeenth century, when the latter were most stable. I thought that my work on the sixteenth century would fill a gap in the scholarship. I was also interested in the period because explorers and missionaries ultimately failed to establish a lasting presence anywhere except St. Augustine until the next century due to indigenous resistance.

I began the project under the impression that there would be copious documentation for a case study of the Santa Elena (present-day Parris Island, SC)

or Nombre de Dios (present-day St. Augustine, FL) missions. Naturally, this was not the case: the missionary records mostly consisted of the friars' correspondence with their superiors and dramatic secondhand accounts of their activities. I also found the sources inaccessible; they were either in Spain or on microfilm at the University of Florida. Though I requested the latter through ILL, my request took several weeks to process. By the time the reels arrived, it was too late to do anything significant with them. Worse, their contents were unlabeled and my paleography skills weak, which made quick searches impossible. I ended up relying on published missionary correspondence, secondhand accounts, and secular colonial correspondence, which dashed my hopes for a truly publishable piece, forced as I was to rely on others' choices about which documents mattered. Still, I forged ahead.

Using the sources at my disposal, I concentrated on failed missionary efforts among the Calusa, Tequesta, and Tocobaga of present-day South Florida and the Guale of what is now coastal Georgia. I found that indigenous leaders' social and geopolitical interests determined whether missionaries could proselytize among their people and how long they succeeded. I read these findings against the scholarship on the seventeenth-century missions, which has also found that cacical interests were crucial to the missions' establishment and continued operation in the region. I concluded that the history of the Florida mission system could not be understood as a monolithic clash between native and colonizer. In the sixteenth- as in the seventeenth-century, the social stratification of the La Florida

chiefdoms had contributed to an institution that yielded benefits for indigenous elites as it exploited native commoners.

To make this paper publishable, I would need to expand my primary source base to include all missionary correspondence from the period, as well as contemporaneous documents describing secular Hispano-Indian relations. With stronger research backing them, I would revise my thesis statements to give them a less-speculative, confident tone where appropriate. I would also need to rewrite the section on the Guale Revolt, in which I used the scholarly debate on the Revolt's origins as point of departure from which to present my own interpretation. In a subsequent draft, I would like to focus exclusively on my analysis of the Revolt's significance, moving the debate to the footnotes. Finally, I would develop the conclusion to better convey the historiographical import of my research.

I switched gears entirely for my spring research. I decided to leave the program to conduct research independently and become an acquisitions editor. With no dissertation to plan for, it no longer made sense to limit my chronological focus. My original plan had been to revisit Dutch-indigenous land transfers in New Netherland, my previous thesis topic, but I changed my project to Euro-Inuit relations in the early twentieth-century eastern Arctic. Once again, I set out to fill a gap in the scholarship by doing a case-study of Euro-Inuit relations at the Hudson's Bay Company's Wolstenholme post (1909-1946), located on the Hudson Strait. Much of the scholarship on the twentieth-century fur trade looks at the central and western Arctic, which saw a much greater degree of white encroachment than the

eastern Arctic did, and the story is one of diminishing native control over trade. In a previous class, I had looked at a few years of the Wolstenholme post journals and glimpsed what seemed like contact-period white-native relations occurring in the modern era. I was intrigued by what I saw, but since the class was structured in preparation for a week-long trip to the Waswanipi Cree reserve, I did not have the opportunity to conduct any real research. My goal, then, was to look at all the Wolstenholme records and make a case for continued native leverage over trade in this remote eastern Arctic post.

In this project, I had the problem of having relatively few secondary sources but many primary ones. Historian Toby E. Morantz kindly sent me all the Wolstenholme post journals and post reports, and archaeologist Susan Lofthouse shared a report on the history of the Cape Wolstenholme area that contained many Inuit oral histories. From there, I continued to amass sources, including many issues of two Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) employee magazines, biographical information for the Wolstenholme post staff, and memoirs written by HBC men working in the Arctic. That Hudson Strait Inuit had power over the twentieth-century trade at Wolstenholme did not surprise me, but the high incidence of non-business-related comments in the post journals did. I ended up making a case for the coalescence of a Euro-Inuit community at Wolstenholme that was characterized by food sharing, intimacy, and white acculturation to Inuit ways. I argued that the competitive market, the post's isolated arctic location, and the Wolstenholme

men's mostly Labrador origins laid the foundation for community since they resulted in substantial Inuit leverage over trade and white openness to Inuit ways.

To make this paper publishable, I would like to strengthen a sub-point that I made about Hudson Strait Inuit being less technologically dependent than indigenous peoples to the south by putting it in conversation with other scholars' contentions. I would also like to revisit the biographical data on independent traders Solomon Ford and Herbert Hall since I have seen different death dates across secondary sources. Ford's death is mentioned in the Wolstenholme journals, so I will just match the primary source. I would also like to iron out the details of what happened to Ford and Hall's business following their deaths, since there is also disagreement about when the Baffin Trading Company took it over. Finally, I would like to incorporate the 1928 smallpox epidemic into my findings on community to strengthen my argument. I intend to expand this project into a book-length regional study, incorporating the HBC's neighboring Sugluk East and West, Wakeham Bay, Arctic Bay, and Cape Smith posts.

These studies, separated by centuries but sharing a theme of Indian power, have only hardened my resolve to write against narratives of indigenous decline and passivity. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to conduct a modern project in my Colonial America seminar. Together these topically disparate projects have shown me that there is no hard temporal cut-off for indigenous power and consequence.

## CHAPTER II: SPANISH IMPERIAL MISSIONARY ACTIVITY AND INDIAN POLITICS IN “LA FLORIDA,” 1565-1597

Studies of Spanish missionary activity in La Florida<sup>1</sup> typically focus on the formal missions of the seventeenth century, which historian Michael V. Gannon once called their “golden age” of operation.<sup>2</sup> Earlier scholarship on the subject, such as Gannon’s, emphasized Spanish prowess in the founding of St. Augustine (1565) and lauded the missions as a triumph over Indian “idolatry and ignorance.”<sup>3</sup> Later works decried the missions, identifying them as instruments of Spanish colonialism and Indian subjugation, but they continued the eerie tradition of locating agency and influence mostly in the Spanish. The work of anthropologist Jerald T. Milanich is proof of this view’s continuing currency; in 2006, he wrote that “missions *were* colonialism” and that “the Spaniards made the Indians of La Florida

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<sup>1</sup> In the sixteenth century, “La Florida” was indigenous land. Spaniards existed at the very periphery of various southeastern chiefdoms’ territories and knew little about the lay of the land beyond the coasts. Their claims to possessing the land and to having conquered its people were little more than delusion; their presence was contingent on indigenous leaders’ approval and tolerance of their presence. I use the term “La Florida” because my study seeks to identify a trend among multiple polities in the large area that the Spanish Crown wished to possess. This term allows me to discuss the common political motives and strategies of the Calusa, Tequesta, Tocobaga, Guale, Orista, Saturwiba, Utina, and other “La Florida” chiefs more easily. It is also more familiar to historians and lay readers than the indigenous names for that large portion of the Southeast would be if we knew what they called it. “Spanish Florida” does not appear in this paper because the region was not Spanish territory despite what imperial officials and mapmakers may have believed. Note: In this paper, I do not include the Chesapeake region in the analytical realm of La Florida. The Spanish did not have a burning desire to settle there or repeated contact (if intermittent) with the Powhatan chiefdom in the way that they did with the Indians of present-day South Florida.

<sup>2</sup> Michael V. Gannon specifically refers to the 1606-1675 period in this way. See Michael V. Gannon, *The Cross in the Sand: The Early Catholic Church in Florida, 1513-1870* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1965), chap. 4, which is called “The Golden Age of the Florida Missions, 1606-1675.”

<sup>3</sup> Gannon, 18.

believe that loyalty to the colonial system was in their best interest. That is why they did not flee...or rebel, or refuse.”<sup>4</sup>

More recently, there has been increasing acknowledgement of the role of indigenous people—particularly indigenous leaders—in the establishment, survival, and function of the seventeenth-century missions. Many scholars now agree the establishment of missions was heavily contingent on native approval, and indigenous leaders are understood to have been instrumental in allowing them to take root successfully. Historian John E. Worth, for example, writes that “the request for or acceptance of resident missionaries were strictly voluntary acts...conversion and establishment of missions were not prerequisites for formal political subordination.”<sup>5</sup> John H. Hann agrees and has made the important point that “except for the earliest approaches to coastal natives in the 1560s, missionaries began their work unaccompanied by soldiers...at the invitation of...native leaders rather than by thrusting themselves uninvited upon...indigenous societies.”<sup>6</sup>

Scholars have also identified the political motives that drove chiefs’<sup>7</sup> conversion and encouragement of missionaries in the late-sixteenth and

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<sup>4</sup> Jerald T. Milanich, *Laboring in the Fields of the Lord: Spanish Missions and Southeastern Indians* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999), xiii and 3.

<sup>5</sup> John E. Worth, *The Timucuan Chiefdoms of Spanish Florida*, vol. 1, *Assimilation* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998), 40. Robert C. Galgano concurs, stating that native leaders “voluntarily accepted the missionaries in their towns” and actually requested more friars than the Franciscan order could readily provide between the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries. See Robert C. Galgano, *Feast of Souls: Indians and Spaniards in the Seventeenth-century Missions of Florida and New Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005), 41.

<sup>6</sup> John H. Hann, “The Missions of Spanish Florida,” in *The New History of Florida*, ed. Michael Gannon (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996), 80.

<sup>7</sup> I use the words “chief,” “chieftain,” “cacique,” “mico,” and “leader” interchangeably to refer to indigenous leaders in this paper. Though the peoples of La Florida all had different names for their

seventeenth centuries. Caciques' need to maintain their internal authority was their primary reason for seeking alliances with the Spanish Crown.<sup>8</sup> In La Florida, chiefs maintained power through displays of exclusive opulence in their possessions and attire, such as painted deer skins, shells, feathers, and precious stones.<sup>9</sup> The Spanish custom of sealing agreements with gifts of European goods—goods that were rare, exotic, and therefore valuable in the native world—drew caciques to them as a source of material power. European goods like iron axes, hoes, knives, hats, doublets, colorful cloth (such as linen and even silk), glass beads, and other goods became new symbols of the chieftaincy.<sup>10</sup> As Joseph M. Hall, Jr., explains, “both Natives and newcomers were familiar with the political and economic calculations behind exchange, whether giving generously, buying cheaply, or

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leaders, I opt to use more general terms, both for clarity and because I am writing across chiefdoms and cultures. Note: “cacique” is an Arawak word adopted by the Spanish to refer to indigenous leaders throughout the Caribbean; it is not tribally specific in this context. “Mico” is a Guale word, but Spanish officials seem to have used it loosely, if the documentary record is any indication.

<sup>8</sup> John E. Worth, “Spanish Missions and the Persistence of Chiefly Power,” in *The Transformation of the Southeastern Indians, 1540-1760*, ed. Robbie Ethridge and Charles Hudson (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2002), 57-58; David Hurst Thomas, “Foreword,” in J. Michael Francis and Kathleen M. Kole, *Murder and Martyrdom in Spanish Florida: Don Juan and the Guale Uprising of 1597* (New York: American Museum of Natural History, 2011), 11; Francis and Kole, 29-30.

<sup>9</sup> John E. Worth, “Inventing Florida: Constructing a Colonial Society in an Indigenous Landscape,” in *Native and Spanish New Worlds: Sixteenth-Century Entradas in the American Southwest and Southeast*, ed. Clay Mathers, Jeffrey M. Mitchem, and Charles M. Haecker (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2013), 198; Worth, “Chiefly Power,” 57; Thomas, “Foreword,” 11; and Francis and Kole, 29-30. According to Kathleen A. Deagan, archeological sites exhibit “a pattern of differential access” to these goods, evidence of the particular chiefly right to them. See Kathleen A. Deagan, “Spanish-Indian Interaction in Sixteenth-Century Florida and Hispaniola,” in *Cultures in Contact: The Impact of European Contacts on Native American Cultural Institutions, A.D. 1000-1800*, ed. William W. Fitzhugh (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1985), 300.

<sup>10</sup> Worth, “Inventing Florida,” 197-198; Milanich, 107-108; Francis and Kole, 29; and Hann, “Missions,” 83 and 86. Note: in the mission system, chiefs received more than just “trade goods.” John E. Worth observes that “chiefs were also regaled with a range of specialized gifts, including ornate cloth...and were additionally provided luxury foods such as wheat, wine, and cheese during visits.” See Worth, “Chiefly Power,” 58. Francis and Kole also note that some chiefs received jewelry and even horses as gifts. See Francis and Kole, 29.

selling dearly.”<sup>11</sup> Southeastern chiefdoms were also territorial, making Spanish military assistance against their enemies desirable, though historians maintain that this motive was ultimately secondary to the need to enhance internal power.<sup>12</sup>

In the seventeenth century, allowing a mission to be established in one’s town provided all the accoutrements that caciques looked for in entering political and military alliances with the newcomers. Missions provided steady access to exotic goods, created a market for surplus corn, and the military garrisons that were sometimes near them were a source of protection from enemies. Missionaries themselves were also useful as “resident cultural broker[s] and advocate[s]” who acted “on...[chiefdoms]’ behalf with respect to the Spanish military government.”<sup>13</sup> Missions’ wooden buildings were a symbol to other polities of their communities’ favored position with the new power in the area. “By pledging allegiance and obedience to Spanish officials,” David Hurst Thomas explains,

Timucua, Mocama, and Guale chiefs annexed a powerful military ally...In the process, the paramount chiefs...not only created a new market for their agricultural surplus, but they also gained access to new tools and technologies to improve their yield. [They] also readily converted their

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<sup>11</sup> Joseph M. Hall, Jr., *Zamumo's Gifts: Indian-European Exchange in the Colonial Southeast* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 5.

<sup>12</sup> Charlotte M. Gradie discusses the importance of Powhatan and Calusa military concerns in “The Powhatans in the Context of the Spanish Empire,” in *Powhatan Foreign Relations, 1500-1722*, ed. Helen C. Rountree (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1993), 1-20. Writing about the Utina in the early-seventeenth century, John H. Hann believes that “Spanish successes against French intruders enhanced...[their] image as allies worth cultivating.” See Hann, “Missions,” 83. David Hurst Thomas, J. Michael Francis, and Kathleen M. Cole, however, posit that military alliance was not the central concern for Timucuan, Guale, or Mocama peoples even if it was a reason for forging alliances. They believe that access to luxury goods was the primary goal. See Thomas, “Foreword,” 11; and Francis and Kole, 29-30. John E. Worth agrees with them, stating that “The primary personal motivation on the part of aboriginal chiefs for establishing relations with the Spaniards...seems to have been related to maintaining or enhancing internal political power within their own chiefdoms or communities.” See Worth, “Chiefly Power,” 57.

<sup>13</sup> Worth, “Inventing Florida,” 196; Worth, “Chiefly Power,” 57 (quotes);

surpluses into Spanish goods...and...received tribute from the Spanish and their own people.<sup>14</sup>

Best of all, chieftains retained their privileged status and continued to rule their people with considerable secular autonomy within the mission system, effectively becoming part of what can be considered a Spanish paramount chiefdom. Caciques “managed both the selection of *repartimiento* laborers and the distribution of their wage goods, as well as the production and sale of surplus corn and other foodstuffs to Spanish officials,” limiting friars’ authority to religious matters.<sup>15</sup> Worth describes this unique scenario as assimilation, which he defines as “the incorporation of preexisting chiefdoms as subordinated elements within the political and economic infrastructure of the expanding [Spanish] colonial system.”<sup>16</sup> Unable to compel a friendship, Spaniards bought it, assimilating caciques into their colonial ruling structure and working through them to harness Indian labor and convert the people.<sup>17</sup> In “rendering obedience” to the Crown, aboriginal leaders became power brokers, “initiating and effectively regulating the flow of power between Spaniards and Indians.”<sup>18</sup>

This paper argues that the Calusa, Tequesta, Tocobaga, and Guale chiefs of present-day Florida and Georgia (fig. 1) desired alliances with the Spanish Crown in the sixteenth century for the same reasons that Apalachee and other La

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<sup>14</sup> Thomas, “Foreword,” 10-11.

<sup>15</sup> Worth, “Chiefly Power,” 57 (quote); Worth, “Inventing Florida,” 196-197; Thomas, “Foreword,” 10 and 11; and Hann, “Missions,” 86.

<sup>16</sup> Worth, “Chiefly Power,” 52.

<sup>17</sup> Amy Turner Bushnell, “Republic of Spaniards, Republic of Indians,” in *The New History of Florida*, ed. Michael Gannon (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1996), 63; Hall, 53; Thomas, “Foreword,” 9-10; Galgano, 55; and Deagan, 299, 302-303, and 303-304.

<sup>18</sup> Worth, *Timucuan Chiefdoms*, 37 (quote) and 43. See also Galgano, 54.

Florida caciques would in the seventeenth: to procure gifts that reinforced their internal status and military support against rival polities. The Spaniards' unique terms for alliance—conversion—made missionaries an extension of the political bond. A missionary presence also signaled to rival leaders the alliance that a cacique had brokered with the newcomers. Caciques welcomed missionary activity in order to secure the politico-military alliance. Missionaries were a source of valuable items that heightened chiefly prestige and power. They also provided the military might that leaders sought, either directly, as soldier-missionaries, or indirectly, through formal missionaries' connection to Spanish secular officials. Sixteenth-century "Calusa," "Tequesta," "Tocobaga," and "Guale" acceptance of missionaries was contingent on the Spanish's usefulness as allies to the *cacique* rather than the entire chiefdom. Spaniards' ability to function in favor of chiefs' geopolitical aims and in support of traditional status quos were the determining factors of their utility. In this vein, missionaries were only welcome as long as they did not threaten the chieftancy (by questioning polygamy, for example) or otherwise upset the social order (by demanding food forcefully and giving nothing in return, interfering with succession, or creating an insubordinate populace). Missionaries, therefore, had a very limited impact on Indian politics. In the sixteenth century, they were killed or expelled as soon as their influence became threatening. This policy continued in the seventeenth century, as the high incidence of revolts show; the difference is that by mid-century the colony had become too powerful to expel entirely.

Despite their characterization of the seventeenth century as a period of indigenous influence and autonomy in La Florida, mission scholars still fall victim to the teleological trap of Spanish conquest. They consistently detect a change in indigenous chieftains' policy toward welcoming missionaries in the late-sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and they demarcate the period as the beginning of the La Florida mission system's steady expansion.<sup>19</sup> They often tacitly read this so-called change in political strategy as proof of rising Spanish ascendancy and the beginning of the end of Indian power in La Florida. Worth, for example, states that "as soon as one or more aboriginal chiefdoms had aligned themselves with the Spaniards, neighboring provinces were effectively obligated to follow suit" or risk "political and military isolation."<sup>20</sup> Explaining why missionary efforts among the Powhatan failed, Charlotte M. Gradie maintains that "without being faced with strong Spanish military coercion, the Powhatans were able to reject both Christianity and Spanish colonization."<sup>21</sup> In doing this, scholars revert to a less nuanced understanding of Hispano-Indian interaction, seeing "superior" Spanish military force and intimidation (and sometimes disease<sup>22</sup>) as the sole factors in caciques' decision-making. Such readings ultimately fail to acknowledge

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<sup>19</sup> Hann, "Missions," 80; Hall, 53; Worth, *Timucuan Chiefdoms*, 40 and 50; and Milanich, 107-108 and 111. See also John H. Hann and Bonnie E. McEwan, *Apalachee Indians and Mission San Luis* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1998).

<sup>20</sup> Worth, *Timucuan Chiefdoms*, 37. To his credit, Worth does say that chiefs who failed to do this also faced "out-migration from their own territory, reducing both tribute and desirable labor." See page 37.

<sup>21</sup> Gradie, 171.

<sup>22</sup> Joseph M. Hall, Jr., believes that disease may have had a hand in the Spaniards' "sudden" success, saying that Spanish gifts may have been needed more urgently to stabilize chiefs' power as local artisans' reduced numbers and output interfered with the ritualistic display of power through special goods. Hall, 52-53.

indigenous agency and power, turning it into an inconsequential blip in light of future events. Worse, they unwittingly perpetuate the idea that indigenous peoples were weak, passive, gullible, and even inferior (in their political and military organization) when pitted against European force, even though the documentary and archeological records decidedly speak to the contrary.

Examining leaders' motives for forging (and dissolving) alliances with Spaniards in the sixteenth century reveals significant continuity in Indian policy toward missionaries when considered alongside the seventeenth-century trends that scholars have identified. Understanding caciques as the locus of policy is instructive. Taking the experiences of indigenous commoners as proof of the missions' control of La Florida Indians is an incomplete and reductive assessment of the Hispano-Indian political situation. La Florida's chiefdoms were rigidly stratified societies with two classes, noble and commoner. Though caciques ruled by consensus rather than coercion, there was little incidence of social mobility; chiefs inherited their status matrilineally and had many special privileges.<sup>23</sup> La Florida chiefs were traditionally entitled to the labor of their people, who "worked to construct communal buildings, and...tended agricultural fields whose produce was controlled by their chiefs."<sup>24</sup> They were exempt from some labors (which continued under the mission system<sup>25</sup>) and had the right to collect tribute from their

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<sup>23</sup> Jonathan DeCoster, "Entangled Borderlands: Europeans and Timucuan in Sixteenth-Century Florida," *Florida Historical Quarterly (FHQ)* 91, no. 3, 500 Years of Florida History—The Sixteenth Century (Winter 2013): 378; Milanich, 40-41 and 45-46; Bushnell, 63; and Francis and Kole, 27 and 28.

<sup>24</sup> Milanich, 3-4 (quote) and 44; Francis and Kole, 28; Bushnell, 68; and Worth, "Chiefly Power," 45-46. Bushnell refers to this practice as the Sabana System.

<sup>25</sup> Worth, "Chiefly Power," 41-42.

people.<sup>26</sup> Caciques also controlled the distribution of goods and were entitled to the most valuable goods and the best foods to the exclusion of commoners.<sup>27</sup> A basic understanding of chiefly privilege makes it evident that there were major points of divergence between cacical and common interests. This intra-societal division must be acknowledged more fully in the study of La Florida's indigenous societies. Until this is done, Indian agency will remain ambiguous in the history of La Florida. In the sixteenth century (and through much of the seventeenth, as scholars have shown), chiefs achieved much of what they wanted through the placement of missionaries in their communities. Indeed, John E. Worth notes that "only in cases where their [chiefs'] own internal authority was directly challenged did rebellion flare...abuses in the labor system were largely tolerated as long as the chiefs maintained power."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Francis and Kole, 28; and DeCoster, 378.

<sup>27</sup> Milanich, 44; and Francis and Kole, 28-29. This also included the right to multiple wives, which commoners did not have. See Wade, 55-58, for elite polygamy among the Calusa; Francis and Kole confirm its existence among Guale and Timucua chiefs in Francis and Kole, 27.

<sup>28</sup> Worth, "Chiefly Power," 58.

This paper makes a concerted effort to widen the scope of Indian agency so that the events of the seventeenth century will be reinterpreted as a continuation of previous chiefly policies rather than a turning point signaling native decline. My analysis relies on published versions of Luis Jerónimo de Oré’s 1619 account of missionary activities in La Florida (which is biased but considered to be fairly accurate) and Gonzalo Solís de Merás’s eyewitness account of Pedro Menéndez de Avilés’s voyages to La Florida. These accounts shed light on late-sixteenth-century formal missionary activity and the impromptu soldier-missionization implemented by Menéndez de Avilés in 1565. These documents also detail the establishment of diplomatic relations between Spanish officials and various La Florida caciques. I also incorporate published Jesuit correspondence written during their brief envoys among the Calusa, Tequesta, and Powhatans (the late-1560s and 1570s); published secular correspondence from the 1570s and 1580s; and published documents related to Franciscan proselytization among the Guale and to the latter’s 1597 revolt. Occasionally, I also refer to published documents



Figure 1: La Florida Peoples of the Sixteenth Century. “Indian Tribes of the Sixteenth Century” [map]. Scale not given. In Edwin L. Green, *School History of Florida* (Baltimore, MA: Williams & Wilkins Company, 1902). Courtesy of the Florida Center for Instructional Technology. <http://fcit.usf.edu/florida/m>. Note that the Guale are not shown here. They lived on the present-day Georgia coast, beyond the Saturwiba shown in this map.

related to the early Spanish expeditions to the region, though the pre-1565 failed missionization—and, I might add, colonization—attempts are beyond the scope of this study. My hope is this study will counter narratives of inevitable Indian subjugation and powerlessness in La Florida and beyond.

### **Spanish Plans for La Florida: Gold, Pirates, and French and Indian Interlopers**

Initially, the Spanish Crown was drawn to La Florida as a possible source of natural resources, particularly precious metals.<sup>29</sup> Early explorers soon discovered that nothing comparable to the treasures of Mexico and Peru existed in La Florida.<sup>30</sup> Coastal Indians like the Calusa had some gold and silver in their possession, but their supply was obtained from shipwrecked Spanish vessels rather than from the land itself.<sup>31</sup> Throughout the exploratory era, La Florida was described as poor and sterile land and its people as living a difficult life.<sup>32</sup> This

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<sup>29</sup> Milanich, 56; Worth, “Inventing Florida,” 192-193.

<sup>30</sup> Worth, “Inventing Florida,” 192-193.

<sup>31</sup> Gonzalo Solís de Merás, for example, mentions that the people on the Menéndez de Avilés expedition traded cheap goods—including a single playing card—for the Calusa’s shipwreck wealth. See Gonzalo Solís de Merás, *Pedro Menéndez de Avilés and the Conquest of Florida: A New Manuscript*, ed. David Arbesú (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2017), 91. Hernando de Escalante Fontaneda also makes note of the Ais’ “rich[ness] from the sea, [rather than]...the land.” in his 1587 captivity Memorial. See “The Captivity of Hernando de Escalante Fontaneda, 1549-1566,” in *Discovering Florida: First-Contact Narrative from Spanish Expeditions along the Lower Gulf Coast*, ed. John E. Worth (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014), 207.

<sup>32</sup> Paul E. Hoffman, “‘Until the Land Was Understood’: Spaniards Confront La Florida, 1500-1600,” in *La Florida: Five Hundred Years of Hispanic Presence*, ed. Viviana Díaz Balsera and Rachel A. May (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014), 69-82. See also “The Captivity of Hernando de Escalante Fontaneda, 1549-1566,” in *Discovering Florida: First-Contact Narrative from Spanish Expeditions along the Lower Gulf Coast*, ed. John E. Worth (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014), 201. Fontaneda wrote that the Indians “live in a very difficult and swampy land. They have nothing from the mines or anything else...in this world.”

knowledge “effectively relegated [La Florida] to a marginal role within the broader Spanish empire.” It became an area of strategic interest alone.<sup>33</sup>

The Spanish Crown wanted permanent bases in Florida to control the Bahama Channel, through which the treasure fleet sailed on its return voyages to Spain. Ships were often wrecked off the Atlantic coast of the Florida peninsula, and the Crown wanted an opportunity to salvage the valuable treasure, as well as to shelter shipwreck victims.<sup>34</sup> “In the absence of Spanish garrisons on the peninsula,” J. Michael Francis and Kathleen M. Kole write, “shipwreck survivors were often taken captive with little hope of rescue or ransom.”<sup>35</sup> Indeed, the documentary record is rife with mentions of the threat of shipwrecks. Recounting the ongoing hostilities with Indians in a 1573 testimony, Juan Ripalta could not remember the names of the chiefs involved and described them as being from “the region where the ships are wrecked, and where it is fitting, for the security and the trade of the Indies, that the country be made safe...[which] cannot well be accomplished for the said Indians are such traitors.”<sup>36</sup> A permanent presence in La Florida was also desirable because it would deprive French and English privateers of a base from which to attack the treasure fleet.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Worth, “Inventing Florida,” 193 (quote); and Worth “Chiefly Power,” 54.

<sup>34</sup> Francis and Kole, 18.

<sup>35</sup> Francis and Kole, 18. See also Deagan, 286.

<sup>36</sup> Juan Ripalta testimony for Pedro Menéndez de Avilés’s 1573 report to the king, January 18, 1573, in *Colonial Records of Spanish Florida: Letters and Reports of Governors and Secular Persons*, vol. I, 1570-1577, ed. and trans. Jeannette Thurber Connor (Deland, FL: Florida State Historical Society, 1925), 63 and 65.

<sup>37</sup> Francis and Kole, 18; and Bushnell, 62-63.

Franco-Spanish competition was another major factor fueling Spain's lingering interest in La Florida.<sup>38</sup> The French establishment of Fort Caroline in 1564 reignited fading Spanish interest in La Florida and led to the successful establishment of St. Augustine in 1565 and Santa Elena in 1566.<sup>39</sup> Historian Juan Carlos Mercado believes that the French were the Crown's primary enemy by the time Menéndez de Avilés made his way to La Florida.<sup>40</sup> Jonathan DeCoster seems to agree, writing that the threat of a Franco-Timucuan alliance was tenable enough that Menéndez de Avilés "immediately negotiate[ed] with Timucuan leaders to have...French captives turned over to him, and...fretted constantly about the supposedly friendly relations between the French and the natives."<sup>41</sup>

Individual Spaniards' motives were also influential in the continuing effort to settle La Florida, which was unsuccessful from 1513 to 1565. Explorers of La Florida were driven by the prospect of "power, land, and noble titles" that could result from "discovering" a territory that contained natural resource wealth.<sup>42</sup> As they frequented reminded their monarch, these men often invested their personal funds in their voyages, giving the search for wealth more urgency. These incentives were made even stronger by royal contracts that the Crown granted to

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<sup>38</sup> Francis and Kole, 18; Worth, "Inventing Florida," 193-194; and Juan Carlos Mercado, "Introducción," in Pedro Menéndez de Avilés, *Cartas sobre la Florida (1555-1574)*, ed. Juan Carlos Mercado (Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2002), 29.

<sup>39</sup> Eugene Lyon, "Santa Elena: A Brief History of the Colony, 1566-1587" (Columbia: Institute of Archeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, 1984), 1; and Kevin Starr, *Continental Ambitions: Roman Catholics in North America: The Colonial Experience* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2016), 68.

<sup>40</sup> Mercado, "Introducción," 22.

<sup>41</sup> DeCoster, 390.

<sup>42</sup> Galgano, 39.

explorers, which legally guaranteed the discoverers of a territory extensive power within them and over their output. “Contracts such as these,” John E. Worth reminds us, “were standard practice for early Spanish voyages of discovery and conquest...privately financed but royally incentivized endeavors.”<sup>43</sup> Ponce de León’s 1512 and 1514 contracts are a case in point. The 1512 one granted him possession of any lands he discovered, civil and criminal jurisdiction over it, twelve years of tithe rights, rights to the products of the land for ten years (though he was not tax-exempt), and the right to Indian labor with Crown oversight.<sup>44</sup> The 1514 contract also gave him permission to make war on and enslave Indians who resisted conquest and exploitation.<sup>45</sup> The persistence of Spanish individuals with something to gain from the conquest of La Florida must be considered alongside greater Spanish imperial concerns; after all, it is they who carried out colonization under the Crown’s banner.

### **Spanish Intentions for La Florida Indians: Vassalage and Missionization**

From the beginning, the Crown intended to conquer the people of La Florida and to make them royal vassals. The Hispanic vision for the New World was unique: unlike the English, they were “not seeking unoccupied land for immigrants.” Instead, they wanted to create “new multiethnic communities” by

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<sup>43</sup> John E. Worth, ed. and trans., *Discovering Florida: First-Contact Narrative from Spanish Expeditions along the Lower Gulf Coast* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014), 69.

<sup>44</sup> “1512 Royal Contract with Juan Ponce de León” in *Discovering Florida: First-Contact Narrative from Spanish Expeditions along the Lower Gulf Coast*, ed. John E. Worth (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014), 71.

<sup>45</sup> “1514 Royal Contract with Juan Ponce de León,” in *Discovering Florida: First-Contact Narrative from Spanish Expeditions along the Lower Gulf Coast*, ed. John E. Worth (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014), 78.

restricting the societies they encountered.<sup>46</sup> When Spaniards made contact with La Florida's indigenous peoples, they read them the requerimiento, which promised "good treatment if the people in question converted and became subjects of the Crown."<sup>47</sup> Becoming a Spanish subject necessitated conversion to Catholicism, as Spanish monarchs "had sworn...to support the Catholic church."<sup>48</sup> Indeed, explorer Lucas Vázquez de Ayllón's royal charter required him to bring Catholicism to native peoples, a stipulation that was common in such contracts.<sup>49</sup>

Though the Spanish Empire considered conversion, and thus missionization, essential to colonization, explorers were the initial agents of empire. Changes in the Crown's New World policies over the course of the sixteenth century increased missionaries' influence and restricted Spanish officials' use of force in La Florida. The 1542 New Laws of the Indies outlawed Indian slavery and "overtly abusive treatment of Native groups." This change in imperial policy was significant for the Indians of La Florida, John E. Worth contends, because "the failure of all previous expeditions to settle Florida prior to 1542 meant that when Florida was finally colonized...events would unfold under far different circumstances."<sup>50</sup>

The other important change came in 1573 with the Ordinances of Pacification. "Pacification" of indigenous peoples through "gifts and conversions"

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<sup>46</sup> Thomas, "Foreword," 10 (both quotes).

<sup>47</sup> Starr, 69.

<sup>48</sup> Milanich, 56.

<sup>49</sup> Milanich, 60.

<sup>50</sup> Worth, "Inventing Florida," 193 (both quotes).

became the new mode of conquest. Under the new policy, Amy Turner Bushnell observes, the military's role became "to defend the advancing missionary" rather than to advance the frontier through force.<sup>51</sup> From that point on, missionaries became agents of empire in their own right, sent "to evangelize and hold the frontier as servants of the Crown protected by the military."<sup>52</sup> These sixteenth-century changes in imperial policy continually shielded La Florida Indians from the full force of Spanish abuse and contributed to the unique missionization processes of the latter-sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For example, Menéndez de Avilés's second petition to the king for permission to "[give] up as slaves the Indians of La Florida" was summarily rejected in 1574. In La Florida, the conquest of indigenous peoples would be a very gradual, extended, and difficult process for the Spanish empire. Missionization of La Florida Indians would likewise be difficult, meeting with copious hindrances.

It is important to note that the interests of secular officials differed from those of missionaries and often clashed. The *Omnimoda* of 1522 granted religious orders "worldwide autonomy" and independence from imperial structures. In Spain, however, this provision was revoked in 1568, "place[ing] religious-order priests under the jurisdiction of local bishops" and thereby giving secular officials more control over them.<sup>53</sup> Missionaries often desired to bring Catholicism to native

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<sup>51</sup> Bushnell, 62 (all quotes). Raquel Chang-Rodríguez and Nancy Vogeley agree with this assessment. See Raquel Chang-Rodríguez and Nancy Vogeley, "Introduction," in Luis Jerónimo de Oré, *Account of the Martyrs in the Provinces of La Florida*, ed. and trans. Raquel Chang-Rodríguez and Nancy Vogeley (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2017), 34.

<sup>52</sup> Starr, 96 (quote); and Chang-Rodríguez and Vogeley, "Introduction," 34.

<sup>53</sup> Starr, 70 (both quotes).

peoples and to effect social changes (in dress, marital practices, and, of course, religion) within their societies through conversion. Though they wanted to see major changes in indigenous lifeways, they were often opposed to the use of force.

An excerpt from Fray Luís Cáncer's eyewitness account, which covers the events of his 1549 expedition before his death at the hands of Indians, provides a good example of missionaries' divergent hopes for Indians. After Indians killed a fellow friar and his companion who'd gone ashore, Cáncer determined that he could not "turn back with such news" since others would conclude (and badly conclude) that all these pagans were worthy of death and deserved to have war made upon them and their lands taken." After that, he recounts a conversation he had with the viceroy of New Spain, who had said that "if [he] did not succeed [with missionization], [he] would be doing the worse thing that had been done in the Indies," since the Indians would have to be killed.<sup>54</sup> Cáncer's alleged response was that "if they should kill us all immediately...they did so by their rights" and that "His Grace could not make war on them as a Catholic Christian."<sup>55</sup>

According to historian Robert Allen Matter, such differences of opinion between secular officials and missionaries kept La Florida in a state of perpetual vulnerability. Sixteenth-century Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries consistently rejected military defense in La Florida, considering it unchristian, a policy that left

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<sup>54</sup> Diary of the Luís Cáncer Expedition, 1549, in *Discovering Florida: First-Contact Narrative from Spanish Expeditions along the Lower Gulf Coast*, ed. John E. Worth (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014), 179 (both quotes).

<sup>55</sup> Diary of the Luís Cáncer Expedition, 1549, in *Discovering Florida: First-Contact Narrative from Spanish Expeditions along the Lower Gulf Coast*, ed. John E. Worth (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014), 179-180.

them vulnerable to attack.<sup>56</sup> Indeed, though the very first Jesuits missionaries were left among the Calusa, Tequesta, and Orista with soldiers in 1566, their subsequent effort among the Powhatans in 1570 lacked a military escort.<sup>57</sup> As historian Charlotte M. Gradie explains, the Jesuits felt that Menéndez de Avilés had misrepresented the condition of the natives as pacified and easy to convert; his subsequent efforts to restrict their freedom of movement and to force them to remain near Spanish forts were unsuccessful.<sup>58</sup> The Jesuits considered the abuses of soldiers to have been the cause of their failure among the Orista, Tequesta, and Calusa.<sup>59</sup> Their mission to Ajacán ended in murder and resulted in the Jesuit order's withdrawal from La Florida. Gradie believes that the lack of military coercion, combined with the Spaniards' failure to cultivate alliances with regional leaders, left the Jesuits entirely dependent on the young cacique Don Luis. His betrayal spelled their doom.<sup>60</sup> Indian political strategy, however, was predicated on far more than fear of military force.

### **Soldier-Missionaries and Jesuits among the Calusa, Tequesta, and Tocobaga, 1565-1567**

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<sup>56</sup> Robert Allen Matter, "Missions in the Defense of Spanish Florida, 1566-1710." *FHQ* 54, no. 1 (Jul. 1975): 19-20 and 37; Milanich, 96; and Hann, 80. Charlotte M. Gradie also believes that the conflict between Spanish officials and Jesuits over bringing soldiers with them contributed to the Spanish empire's failure in the Chesapeake, since she thinks that it was force that achieved conversion. See Gradie, 155.

<sup>57</sup> Hann, 81; and Gradie, 164-165.

<sup>58</sup> Gradie, 163.

<sup>59</sup> Francisco Sacchini, excerpts from *Borgia, the Third Part of the History of The Society of Jesus*, 1622, in Clifford M. Lewis and Albert J. Loomie, *The Spanish Jesuit Missions in Virginia, 1570-1572* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1953) 220-221. See also Deagan, 298.

<sup>60</sup> Gradie, 160-161 and 171.

Early missionization attempts in La Florida, such as those of the two priests who accompanied Juan Ponce de León on his 1521 expedition and that of the 1549 Fray Luís Cáncer expedition ended in failure (and murder in the latter case, as we have seen). Few alliances were forged between Spaniards and La Florida chieftains between 1513 and 1565. Hispano-Indian encounters were brief, a mix of trade, kidnapping, captivity, and battle.<sup>61</sup> Chiefs may have been uninterested in alliances due to negative early experiences with Spanish explorers, to a lack of familiarity with the newcomers and their potential use to them, and other unknown reasons. La Florida chieftains' isolationism thus successfully posed an impediment to missionization in the first half of the sixteenth century. It is unclear what changed in the 1560s. It may have been, as John H. Hann posits, the impressive Spanish victory over the French, or the fact that disease had weakened chiefdoms in the wake of expeditions.<sup>62</sup> Whatever the case may be, La Florida's caciques showed ample interest in establishing alliances when Pedro Menéndez de Avilés paid them diplomatic visits in 1565 and 1566.

On his expedition, Menéndez de Avilés forged alliances with the Calusa, Tequesta, and Tocobaga in the southern part of the Florida peninsula. These chiefs were all competing for control of the area, while Menéndez de Avilés was trying to broker peace between them for the Crown's benefit.

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<sup>61</sup> John E. Worth, ed., *Discovering Florida: First-Contact Narrative from Spanish Expeditions along the Lower Gulf Coast* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014), 154; Deagan, 286; and Worth, "Inventing Florida," 197-201.

<sup>62</sup> I mentioned this earlier in footnote 14. See Hann, "Missions," 83. Many scholars assert that disease attacked La Florida polities between contacts with Spanish explorers. See, for example, Worth, "Chiefly Power," 47; and Deagan, 290-291.

Menéndez de Avilés came to Calusa territory “in search of some men and women who...had been captured twenty years ago and were being held captive” by Chief Carlos of the Calusa. Carlos reportedly killed some of these people every year, “sacrificing them to the devil.”<sup>63</sup> Menéndez de Avilés and Carlos had a tense first encounter. Carlos received “a shirt and breeches of taffeta, a doublet, and hat,” as well as gifts for his wives and gave the adelantado a silver bar in return. Carlos was allegedly “driven by greed”—clearly a desire for exotic goods—onto the Spaniards’ ship, where Menéndez de Avilés strong-armed him into releasing the Christians.<sup>64</sup> Soon after this incident, Carlos visited the adelantado desiring to form an alliance; he offered Menéndez de Avilés his elder sister in marriage, whom the latter was compelled to accept.<sup>65</sup>

Having held Christian captives and made contact with Spaniards in the past, the chief seems to have been aware of the Spanish requirement of conversion for alliance. Before he could be advised about it, he told the adelantado that he would go to Christian lands and “become a Christian with all his men” after his sister had gone and reported back to him.<sup>66</sup> Later, when the adelantado hesitated to consummate his marriage to Carlos’s sister on the grounds that she was not a Christian, Carlos allegedly replied that since they had become allies, “he and his sister and his people were already Christians.”<sup>67</sup> Though Menéndez de Avilés had

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<sup>63</sup> Solís de Merás, 87 (both quotes).

<sup>64</sup> Solís de Merás, 89.

<sup>65</sup> Solís de Merás, 91-99.

<sup>66</sup> Solís de Merás, 91.

<sup>67</sup> Solís de Merás, 95.

a retort to this, he could not refuse Carlos's sister in the end, which would have broken the peace since "his Indians would [have been]...outraged."<sup>68</sup>

Carlos, for his part, allowed a cross to be set up in his village, promising to worship it daily, though he reiterated that he could not give up his idols so soon.<sup>69</sup> Soon after, he also accepted what I call soldier-missionaries. Soldier-missionaries were lay Christians that Menéndez de Avilés sent to the Calusa and other allies in the sixteenth century, when there were few friars to go around.<sup>70</sup> In Gonzalo Solís de Merás's account, these men are described as journeying to the Calusa unaccompanied. The adelantado allegedly ordered them to "worship the cross with great devotion morning and evening, reciting the catechism...and to instruct them [the Calusa] as best they could."<sup>71</sup> In the order to establish Fort San Antón in Carlos's land, which Menéndez de Avilés penned himself, he ordered for Captain Francisco de Reinoso to be given "Father [Juan] Rogel, Jesuit of the Company of Jesus."<sup>72</sup> Rogel himself does not tell us when he arrived in his report on the missions, saying only that he was placed among the Calusa.<sup>73</sup>

Subsequently, the adelantado sent Juan Pardo and some more soldiers to missionize among the Tequesta, who'd also requested to "take him [Menéndez de

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<sup>68</sup> Solís de Merás, 95.

<sup>69</sup> Solís de Merás, 99.

<sup>70</sup> Gradie, 158.

<sup>71</sup>, Solís de Merás 170-171.

<sup>72</sup> Order by Menéndez establishing Fort San Antón de Carlos, October 15, 1566, in *Discovering Florida: First-Contact Narrative from Spanish Expeditions along the Lower Gulf Coast*, ed. John E. Worth (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014), 268.

<sup>73</sup> Report on the Florida Missions by Father Juan Rogel, Written Between the Years 1607 and 1611, in *Missions to the Calusa*, ed. and trans. John H. Hann (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1991), 287.

Avilés] for their elder brother.”<sup>74</sup> Jesuit friar Francisco Villareal was sent to them at the same time that Rogel was sent to the Calusa, posing the same conflict of uncertain timing.<sup>75</sup> The Tequesta claimed to be relatives of Carlos and were interested in allying with the Spanish because the adelantado had married Carlos’s sister.<sup>76</sup> War soon broke out between the two groups, however. Apparently, the Tequesta were Carlos’s former subjects. Their mutual alliance with the Spanish seems to have angered Carlos, who allegedly tried to force the Tequesta to hand over their Christians so that he could execute them.<sup>77</sup>

This brief historical moment shows that a region’s most powerful chief, in this case Carlos, desired an exclusive alliance that would give them a marked military advantage over other polities. Whereas the Tequesta stood to benefit from the triple alliance, it compromised the Calusa’s expansionist plans. The Spaniards’ political promiscuity had driven Carlos to sever the alliance. When Menéndez de Avilés entered the harbor with reinforcements to quell the unrest, Carlos, as if to test the Spaniards’ commitment, asked “the Adenlantado and [Captain] Francisco de Reinoso to go with him and his people to Tocobaga and wage war on them.” When the adelantado responded with the usual refrain about making peace with the Tocobaga, he agreed to accompany them to Tocobaga to negotiate.<sup>78</sup> This

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<sup>74</sup> Solís de Merás, chap. 20 and 159 (quote).

<sup>75</sup> Letter of Francisco Villareal to Francisco Borgia, March 5, 1570, in *Discovering Florida: First-Contact Narrative from Spanish Expeditions along the Lower Gulf Coast*, ed. John E. Worth (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014), 273.

<sup>76</sup> Solís de Merás, 158.

<sup>77</sup> Solís de Merás, 173.

<sup>78</sup> Solís de Merás, 174 (text and quote).

was likely done to keep an eye on the situation, though the chief was probably not happy with the situation.

The Tocobaga, in turn, requested Christians and an alliance, but the twenty-nine chieftains who gathered said that they would happily “take him for their elder brother and become Christians, and...make peace with Carlos...[provided] that...the Adelantado would help [them]” should Carlos wage war on them.<sup>79</sup> It seems, then, that for the Tequesta and Tocobaga the Spanish could be beneficial allies as protectors from the more powerful Calusa chiefdom. Becoming Christian seemed like a small price to pay, especially given that the soldier-missionaries were a source of immediate protection.

Unfortunately for Menéndez de Avilés, the soldier-missionaries and their formal Jesuit partners soon became more trouble than they were worth. Among the Calusa, it seems that competition for women threatened native men, since “the Indian women were very fond of them [the soldiers].”<sup>80</sup> Though the records that I have consulted do not explicitly mention it, the soldiers’ demands for food were probably another knock against them, especially in the case of the Calusa, for whom the alliance—likely forged to disperse the Tocobaga and Tequesta—had proven useless. Among the Tequesta, Father Francisco Villareal states that “on account of an affront that they said an old Indian...who had been chief, made to a soldier, the Christians had killed him.” War broke out, of course, and the Christians were driven from the land. Villareal also mentions the Indians at Tocobaga also

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<sup>79</sup> Solís de Merás, 178.

<sup>80</sup> Solís de Merás, 173.

killed the soldiers there.<sup>81</sup> Soldier-missionaries' aggression seems to have outweighed their protective qualities for the Tequesta and Tocobaga; when that occurred, fear did little to keep them from expelling the soldier-missionaries and the Jesuit fathers.

The situation was more complex with the Calusa chiefdom in spite of their clashes with soldier-missionaries. Father Rogel states that he preached against Calusa religion after witnessing the “wretches” worship their “temple of idols...which were some very ugly masks.” “For this reason,” he says, “its authors conceived a great hate against him because he had revealed their secrets and profaned their religion.”<sup>82</sup> These “authors” may have been Calusa clerics, who saw their positions threatened by the advent of a new religion. Indeed, Jerald T. Milanich asserts that many Calusa priests were “openly hostile toward the Jesuits, viewing them as threats to the power of the native elites.”<sup>83</sup> The religious conflict soon escalated, with people trying to forcibly enter the fort with the masks on. A soldier allegedly hit one of the marchers, almost initiating a Hispano-Calusa battle.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Letter of Francisco Villareal to Francisco Borgia, March 5, 1570, in *Discovering Florida: First-Contact Narrative from Spanish Expeditions along the Lower Gulf Coast*, ed. John E. Worth (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014), 273.

<sup>82</sup> Report on the Florida Missions by Father Juan Rogel, Written Between the Years 1607 and 1611, in *Missions to the Calusa*, ed. and trans. John H. Hann (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1991), 287 (all quotes).

<sup>83</sup> Milanich, 95.

<sup>84</sup> Report on the Florida Missions by Father Juan Rogel, Written Between the Years 1607 and 1611, in *Missions to the Calusa*, ed. and trans. John H. Hann (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1991), 287-288.

But more important than the threat to native clerics' power seems to have been an internal conflict between Cacique Carlos and his nephew, Don Felipe. Rogel writes that there was bad blood between Carlos and his nephew for the former's having married his sister to the *adelantado*. To spite him, Don Felipe allegedly "gave his word that on his return from Spain he would become a Christian." Later, the Spanish soldiers at the fort killed Carlos "at the urging of this don Phelipe."<sup>85</sup> Though some scholars have rephrased this scenario, saying that the Spanish had had Carlos killed, it seems much more likely that a preexisting conflict drove his murder. Mariah F. Wade agrees, writing that, though Carlos "steered a neutral course...minimiz[ing] change while profiting from the elements of the Spanish-Calusa alliance that enhanced his prestige," he did not see Don Felipe's complicity with the Spanish for what it was—a threat.<sup>86</sup>

On becoming cacique, Don Felipe steered a similar course. When Rogel tried to prevent him from marrying his sister, he resisted, saying that "it was a custom of the caciques to marry their sisters; that when he became a Christian, he would leave her."<sup>87</sup> By putting Catholicism off rather than rejecting it entirely, Felipe was able to benefit from the goods and protection that his alliance with the Spanish provided while retaining the practices of polygamy and sororal marriage that were the mark of the Calusa chieftaincy. The Calusa chief well understood that "to

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<sup>85</sup> Report on the Florida Missions by Father Juan Rogel, Written Between the Years 1607 and 1611, in *Missions to the Calusa*, ed. and trans. John H. Hann (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1991), 289.

<sup>86</sup> Wade, 55.

<sup>87</sup> Report on the Florida Missions by Father Juan Rogel, Written Between the Years 1607 and 1611, in *Missions to the Calusa*, ed. and trans. John H. Hann (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1991), 290.

accept Europeans without Christianity was feasible, [but] to accept both was cultural suicide.”<sup>88</sup> Don Felipe was soon killed, having allegedly “tried to kill the Spaniards who were in the fort.” His decision to expel the Spanish may have been due to continuing religious pressure; Villareal explained that he had been intimidated into burning his idols and that “soon after, saying that this chief was plotting to betray us [the Spaniards], the Christians killed him.”<sup>89</sup> But even having lost two of their chiefs to the Spanish (technically), the Jesuits and soldiers were forced to withdraw since the Calusa removed from their village, leaving the missionizers without students.<sup>90</sup> Jesuits and soldier-missionaries had overplayed their hand: missionaries would not return to South Florida for more than 200 years.<sup>91</sup>

### **Franciscan Missionaries: Two Readings of the 1597 Guale Revolt**

Franciscan missionaries replaced the Jesuits once they abandoned their plans for La Florida in 1572. The latter had briefly worked with soldier-missionaries among the mutually hostile Guale and Orista chiefdoms, after both chiefs had requested Christians.<sup>92</sup> Despite some violent encounters in 1574 and 1576, J.

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<sup>88</sup> Wade, 55 and 58.

<sup>89</sup> Letter of Francisco Villareal to Francisco Borgia, March 5, 1570, in *Discovering Florida: First-Contact Narrative from Spanish Expeditions along the Lower Gulf Coast*, ed. John E. Worth (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014), 273-274.

<sup>90</sup> Letter of Francisco Villareal to Francisco Borgia, March 5, 1570, in *Discovering Florida: First-Contact Narrative from Spanish Expeditions along the Lower Gulf Coast*, ed. John E. Worth (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2014), 274.

<sup>91</sup> Francis and Kole, 21.

<sup>92</sup> Solís de Merás, 115, 122, 124, 160; and Report on the Florida Missions by Father Juan Rogel, Written Between the Years 1607 and 1611, in *Missions to the Calusa*, ed. and trans. John H. Hann (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1991), 290. Rogel was sent to minister to the Orista after spending some time in Havana following his withdrawal from Calusa territory. As with the Calusa-Tequesta-Tocobaga complex, the Guale-Orista rivalry was characterized by competition for an alliance with the newcomers. The seemingly more powerful Guale chief was

Michael France and Kathleen M. Kole assert, sixteenth-century Spanish relations with the chiefdoms had been “remarkably amicable.”<sup>93</sup> In 1595, Governor Domingo Martínez approved the establishment of five Franciscan missions in Guale territory and things remained peaceful.<sup>94</sup> Such was not the case in the fall of 1597. Francis and Kole provide a brief summary of what transpired:

In the late fall of 1597, Guale Indians murdered five Franciscan friars...and razed their missions to the ground...According to most version of the story, Tolomato’s resident friar publicly reprimanded Juanillo for practicing polygamy. In his anger, Juanillo...launched a series of violent assaults on all five of Guale territory’s Franciscan missions.<sup>95</sup>

In their book, *Murder and Martyrdom*, Francis and Kole disproved this narrative. Their research yielded additional documents on the 1597 uprising that had never been seen before, and that showed that the revolt “largely reflected the tensions between indigenous chiefdoms,” especially given the many benefits of the Hispano-Guale alliance.<sup>96</sup> “To maintain hegemony,” David Hurst Thomas reminds us, “the paramount Guale chief depended on alliances and tribute relationships with both lesser Guale chiefdoms and the Spanish government.”<sup>97</sup> Indeed, when the Franciscan missions were founded, neither the government “nor any of the friars expressed any concern for the safety of the missionaries assigned there.”<sup>98</sup> In fact, they lived peacefully among the Guale for two years without a

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allegedly “troubled by the Adenlantado’s friendship with those [Orista] of Santa Elena and by the fact that those chieftains had taken him for their elder brother...he [Menéndez de Avilés] should leave him people to live in his land, since he had done that for Orista.” See Solís de Merás, 126.

<sup>93</sup> Francis and Kole, 22.

<sup>94</sup> Francis and Kole, 26.

<sup>95</sup> Thomas “Introduction,” 5.

<sup>96</sup> Thomas, “Introduction,” 11.

<sup>97</sup> Thomas, “Introduction,” 11.

<sup>98</sup> Francis and Kole, 26.

garrison.<sup>99</sup> The friars, according to Francis and Kole, were just a casualty of Guale micos' struggle for power over Guale territory: two of them lived to tell the tale and, in some of the mission towns, intruders had burned the cacical house in addition to mission buildings.<sup>100</sup> The revolt had been orchestrated by rival Cacique Don Domingo to obtain the paramount chieftancy.<sup>101</sup>

I think that considering both versions of what occurred is a valuable exercise in discerning the considerable power that caciques had over their relationship with the Spanish and their missionaries. In the first version, Don Juan had enjoyed the fruits of being a missionized ally to the Spanish, receiving goods and military strength through his ties to missionaries. Once the friars' presence began to interfere with traditional sources of chiefly power, namely polygamy, Don Juan murdered several of them, reasserting his authority. The fact that he did not kill them all suggests that he did not want to expel the missionaries entirely; the relationship was too valuable for such an extreme act. In the second reading, the friars had nothing to do with the uprising. They died almost at random, as a way to incite the Spanish. Their deaths and the testimonies of the friars' interference with polygamy sealed the fates of Cacique Don Domingo and his heir, Don Juan. Their subsequent executions allowed the chief of Asao to become mico mayor of Guale territory, breaking the line of succession.<sup>102</sup> In his new position, Don Domingo "made regular trips to St. Augustine, taking Indian laborers with him to perform

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<sup>99</sup> Francis and Kole, 26.

<sup>100</sup> Francis and Kole, 68.

<sup>101</sup> Francis and Kole, 145.

<sup>102</sup> Francis and Kole, 145.

public works in the Spanish garrison. In exchange...[he] received Spanish luxury goods and continued favor.”<sup>103</sup> In both cases, the friars had limited influence over cacical affairs and were tools wielded to gain political power. In the first reading, they were used for internal gain and killed upon threatening the chieftancy; in the second, they were used to gain an advantage over external rivals, albeit within the same chiefdom.

### **Conclusion**

With these case studies of the sixteenth-century Tequesta, Tocobaga, Calusa, and Guale missionization attempts, it is evident that it took far more than Spanish force to conquer the people of La Florida. Sixteenth-century chiefs only allowed the missionization of their populaces as long as an alliance with the Spanish was beneficial to them; gifts to reinforce internal authority, military protection and aid against enemy polities, and the proviso that missionaries remain subordinate to them were the price of missionization. The costs of Spanish missionization of La Florida would remain similar well into the seventeenth century, and missionaries’ influence would remain limited. The agency of indigenous caciques and their elitist actions played a major role in the seventeenth-century Spanish colonization and subjugation of La Florida’s indigenous commoners. This is a perverse reality that must be acknowledged.

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<sup>103</sup> Francis and Kole, 145.

### CHAPTER III: EURO-INUIT RELATIONS AT WOLSTENHOLME POST, 1909-1946: ARCTIC FOXES AND NEIGHBORLY BONDS

In 1909, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) established a trading post on Cape Wolstenholme, the northernmost point of the Quebec-Labrador Peninsula, where the frigid waters of the Hudson Strait meet those of Hudson Bay. The Company sought to trade for arctic foxes and to beat rivals like Revillon Frères, which competed for indigenous trade throughout Canada, to the eastern Arctic. Inuit trappers sought the most generous and accommodating trade partner. What developed was more than a business relationship: this paper argues that the HBC post staff and local Inuit families formed a close community around the everyday activities of the arctic fur trade at Wolstenholme post (near present-day Ivujivik). This community was characterized by food sharing between locals and the post, non-business-related visits and the exchange of personal news, and the staff's



Figure 2: Nunavik and present-day Inuit communities. Makivik Corporation. "Nunavik Villages" [map]. Nunavik Maps. <http://www.makivik.org/nunavik-maps/#prettyPhoto>.

acculturation to Inuit ways. Above all, Wolstenholme was a site of cross-cultural intimacy and sympathy, both of which were bred by interdependence in an extreme climate.

While there have been many studies on societal formation and change in the context of trade—and more specifically the early French fur trade<sup>104</sup>—the emergent community at Wolstenholme does not fit those models. For one thing, the post workers did not come to the eastern Arctic in the hopes of permanent settlement. They were employees who came to work for a finite period and were often assigned to multiple Arctic posts over the course of their careers, after which they returned to their places of origin or to southern Canada (“the South”).<sup>105</sup> Though he spent ten years in the Canadian Arctic, Cecil E. Bradbury (b. 1901) recalled that “the Hudson’s Bay Company endeavoured to keep their staff in the north no longer than three years.”<sup>106</sup> Beyond the transient HBC population, there

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<sup>104</sup> For example, Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Culture Encounter in the Great Lakes* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001); Sophie White, *Wild Frenchmen and Frenchified Indians: Material Culture and Race in Colonial Louisiana* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012); and Susan Sleeper-Smith’s forthcoming book, *Indigenous Prosperity and American Conquest: Indian Women of the Ohio River Valley, 1690-1792* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018).

<sup>105</sup> For example, Bruce D. Campbell spent five years in the Arctic, working at Wolstenholme (1934), Cape Smith (1935), and Port Harrison (1936-1938) posts. He later served in World War II and was a German prisoner of war for two years. He does not seem to have retired in the Arctic. See Bruce D. Campbell, *Where the High Winds Blow: Adventures in the Arctic with the Hudson’s Bay Company*, 2nd ed. (Canada: The Book Society of Canada Limited, 1951).

<sup>106</sup> Cecil E. Bradbury didn’t work at Wolstenholme, but he did work at the Lake Harbour (1919-1920), Frobisher Bay (near present-day Iqaluit, NU, 1920-1923), Amadjuak (1924-1925), and Arctic Bay (1926-1927) posts. He also spent two more years on a polar expedition after that. After his adventure, he returned to Newfoundland, where he was from. See Cecil E. Bradbury HBCA Biographical Sheet, Hudson’s Bay Company Archives (HBCA), Provincial Archives of Manitoba, <http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/hbca/biographical/> (this website allows you to look up workers’ names and download their biographical sheets, which HBCA archivists have compiled based on the documents available); and Cecil E. Bradbury, *Ten Years in the High Canadian Arctic, Being a personal account of his early life, more particularly his voyages as an employee of the Hudson’s*

was no white settlement in the eastern Arctic. Missionaries of various denomination began to visit Kuujuaq, 384 miles from Wolstenholme,<sup>107</sup> beginning in the 1870s, but a permanent mission was not established until 1899.<sup>108</sup> Near Wolstenholme, Roman Catholics only established the first mission in 1938.<sup>109</sup> While the Canadian government had been concerned with establishing sovereignty over the Arctic since the late-nineteenth century, it strove to do so through surveying expeditions and the establishment of police forces and patrols rather than through settler colonization. Canada established the Eastern Arctic Patrol in 1922, but it only made an appearance during the summer, making the state's influence little more than nominal through Wolstenholme's existence.<sup>110</sup>

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*Bay Company, between the years 1920 and 1930* (St. John's, NL: Robinson-Blackmore Books, 1994), 26 (quote) and 54-55 ("Afterword").

<sup>107</sup> These distances are based on flights. There are no roads between these settlements as yet. Doubtless, the distance between these trading posts was far greater in the early-twentieth century, when people traveled by komatik (dogsled), on foot, or by umiaq or qajaq/kayak (and eventually motorboat).

<sup>108</sup> Ann Vick-Westgate, *Nunavik: Inuit-Controlled Education in Arctic Quebec* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2002), 29; and Toby Morantz, *Relations on Ungava Bay: An Illustrated History of Inuit, Naskapi, and Eurocanadian Interaction, 1800-1970* (Westmount: Avataq Cultural Institute, 2016), 43, 46-47, 55-56, and 83-86. Kuujuaq, on Ungava Bay, is also where the HBC opened Fort Chimo, its first arctic post, in 1830. Christianity did not begin to take root among eastern Arctic Inuit peoples until the early-twentieth century. The only exception is the Labrador coast, where Moravian missionaries had been present since 1771. See Morantz, *Ungava Bay*, 26; Tim Borlase, *The Labrador Settlers, Métis and Kablunângajuit* (Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Newfoundland: Labrador East Integrated School Board, 1994), 171; and Susan A. Kaplan, "European Goods and Socio-Economic Change in Early Labrador Inuit Society," in *Cultures in Contact: The Impact of European Contacts on Native American Cultural Institutions, A.D. 1000-1800*, ed. William W. Fitzhugh (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1985), 60.

<sup>109</sup> Susan Lofthouse, "Parc National Iluiliq Project: Historical overview of post-contact occupation in the Parc National Iluiliq Project study area" (unpublished report submitted to the Kativik Regional Government, Nunavik Parks Division, Nunavik, Quebec, 2017), 70.

<sup>110</sup> Vick-Westgate, 31-33; Sarah Bonesteel, *Canada's Relationship with Inuit: A History of Policy and Program Development* (Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada, 2008), 18; François Cartier and Guislaine Lemay, "Exploration in the Canadian Arctic," McCord Museum, accessed 26 Mar 2018, [http://collections.musee-mccord.gc.ca/scripts/printtour.php?tourID=GE\\_P3\\_5\\_EN&Lang=2](http://collections.musee-mccord.gc.ca/scripts/printtour.php?tourID=GE_P3_5_EN&Lang=2); and C.S. Mackinnon, "Canada's Eastern Arctic Patrol 1922-68," *Polar Record* 27, no. 161 (1991): 93 (abstract).

Second, while some of the Wolstenholme men may have had sexual encounters with local women, these did not culminate in intermarriage or produce ethnogenesis in the form of a “Kablunângajuit” (“part-white,” or Inuit-Métis) population, as occurred in other Euro-Inuit contact regions.<sup>111</sup> The only permanent families were those of local Inuit, and even these were willing to relocate when food was scarce. In fact, many of the families who traded at Wolstenholme were near present-day Salluit, about seventy-five miles away, when they finally got wind of the post’s presence in 1912.<sup>112</sup> Neither did cross-cultural interaction at

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<sup>111</sup> Bob Marden May seems to have married an Inuit or Inuit-Métis woman. Her name was “Mary or Nancy Askew” and she was the daughter of Jeannie Annatok, very likely an Inuit or Inuit-Métis woman judging from her last name. May probably didn’t meet his wife at Wolstenholme since their first child was born in 1945, long after his 1941 stint at the post. He retired from the HBC in 1952 to work with Fraser Brace Construction Company, which was based in the South. See Bob Marden May HBCA Biographical Sheet, HBCA, Provincial Archives of Manitoba, <http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/hbca/biographical/>. Another exception may have been William R. Ford (1877-1913), who worked at Wolstenholme from 1912 to 1913, when he drowned while hunting. His wife, Elizabeth Ford (née Ford but not related), seems to have been a Labradorian of mixed ancestry. Her father, George Ford (1857-1918) was born in Cartwright and worked at the HBC post in Nachvak, Labrador, for most of his career. Though her mother was a Newfoundlander, her brother’s birth in Nachvak and her father’s career leads me to believe that she, too, was a Labradorian. After her husband’s death, Elizabeth reportedly gave lectures calling herself “Anauta,” an “Eskimo.” Two stories published in *Them Days*, a magazine about early Labrador history, seem to corroborate her claim to Inuit identity. In one, she is described as the close “Eskimo” friend of Sarah Jane Perry, a Labradorian who died at the post a few weeks before her husband, Christopher G. T. Shepperd, who drowned along with Ford. In the other, she is described as “Eskimo” and is said to have told the story of her husband’s death. Her father “old George” was also known to be fluent in Inuktitut, suggesting a mixed background. Her brother, Solomon, who eventually became an independent trader in Salluit was apparently considered Inuit by the locals he served and seems to have spoken Inuktitut as well. In a story in *The Beaver*, Elizabeth’s own husband was also described as an interpreter, though his biographical sheet does not indicate that he held that position. Given her Labrador origins, it is quite possible that she may have been Inuit-Métis. See Christopher C.T. Shepherd HBCA Biographical Sheet; William R. Ford HBCA Biographical Sheet; Solomon Richard Ford Biographical Sheet; George Ford Biographical Sheet; Margaret Davis, “Anauta: Friendship and Sorrow,” *Them Days: Stories of Early Labrador*, vol. 7, no. 1, 1981, 46-48; and Ella Manuel, “I saw and talked to Anauta,” *Them Days: Stories of Early Labrador*, vol. 7, no. 1, 1981, 48; Maud Watt, “Nascopie Honeymoon,” *The Beaver*, March 1938, 21-22, Canada’s History Archive Featuring *The Beaver*, Campbell, 84-87 (on Solomon being considered Inuit); and John T. Rowland, “Mystery at Erik Cove,” *The Beaver*, December 1950, 6, Canada’s History Archive Featuring *The Beaver* (on George being fluent in Inuktitut).

<sup>112</sup> Lofthouse, 30; and Ajia Naulittuk, oral account, quoted in Ajia Naulittuk, “Our Best Memories,” *Tumivut*, 1996, 21-22.

Wolstenholme give rise to a newfound racial or cultural progressivism among the post workers. White notions of civilization, morality, and preferable ways of living did not disappear in the course of living among Inuit, nor did post workers come to identify with Inuit culture.<sup>113</sup> Rather, the experience of lengthy (if ultimately temporary) cohabitation, trading, dependence on Inuit, and near-total severance from “the Outside,” created a social climate in which whites were open to Inuit subsistence tactics and became intimately acquainted with local people. Frequent interaction and shared concerns—trade-related and not—created ties that went beyond business to resemble neighborly bonds.

To uncover the nature of the Euro-Inuit community at Wolstenholme post, I have relied on the Wolstenholme post journals, which span the lifetime of the post with relatively few gaps (the years 1929-30, 1930-32, 1932-33, 1935-36, 1936-38, 1939-40, and 1942-45 are missing). In these journals, post managers recorded trade, tasks completed by other employees, the arrival and departure of visitors,

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<sup>113</sup> The related ideas of civilization and proper living come up often in HBC men's writings and in the HBC magazines *The Beaver* (1920-present) and the *Moccasin Telegraph* (1941-1990). For example, on October 3, 1934, a post manager hoped to get in touch with Nottingham Island, where there was a radio station, writing that “communication by this means with civilisation would be a very good thing to have.” In 1939, another one was pleased to have fresh fruit at the post, which had been “kindly brought from civilization.” See Wolstenholme Post Journal, 3 Oct 1934 and 23 Jul 1939, HBCA, Provincial Archives of Manitoba, 30 and 42. After having “a piece of frozen seal meat and snow water” as his New Year's dinner, J.W. Nichols wondered about “civilization and the sumptuous dinners that most everybody is enjoying today.” See J.W. Nichols, “My Most Exciting Experience in the Company's Service,” *The Beaver*, December 1941, 12, Canada's History Archive Featuring *The Beaver*. Other mentions are not so critical but express a clear preference for European lifeways. After returning from a thirty-one-day caribou hunt in which he traveled by dogsled and slept in snow houses (igloos), Bob Marden May proclaimed that he “could revel in the luxury of the post—good food eaten at a table, a comfortable chair, a good warm fire, a bed to sleep in, and—neither last nor least—a bath!” To May, coming from a different culture, Inuit accommodations represented privation and were a temporary sacrifice in the name of procuring food. See B.M. May, “Caribou Hunt,” *The Beaver*, March 1942, 33.

and other activities. My research draws on the personal reflections and non-business anecdotes that often slipped into these routine, semi-formal reports to reconstruct the Wolstenholme world. Additionally, the Wolstenholme post reports, which are only available for the earliest years, 1909-1913, offer a sense of the Company's strategy—and thus Wolstenholme's—for maintaining a good relationship with Inuit trappers that would encourage trade over the long term. I also make use of a small number of published memoirs and short (non-fiction) stories penned by HBC workers from Wolstenholme and other eastern Arctic posts. Due to their personal nature, these writings sometimes reveal more about ordinary workers' lived experiences and relationships with Inuit than the post journals can since the latter were official records. I was also able to locate a published excerpt of an Inuit oral history in *Tumivut*, an Inuit magazine, and some other excerpts in Avataq Cultural Institute archaeologist Susan Lofthouse's history report on the Wolstenholme area. These I have employed where possible, but, for the most part, I have identified the sinews of this community through a careful reading of white-authored documents.

Previous studies of the HBC's arctic posts and its relations with Inuit mention Wolstenholme post only in passing.<sup>114</sup> The most notable study of the twentieth-century arctic fur trade is based on the central Arctic and does not mention the post at all. Similarly, two excellent studies on Euro-indigenous

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<sup>114</sup> For example, Bonesteel, 2; and Peter J. Usher, *Fur Trade Posts of the Northwest Territories, 1870-1970* (Ottawa: Northern Science Research Group, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1971), 27.

relations at eastern Arctic and subarctic HBC focus on other parts of the vast region.<sup>115</sup> Caroline Hervé used the Wolstenholme journals to study power and leadership in Inuit communities and how HBC post managers and missionaries were implicated in these structures, but she did not concentrate on the post, instead using aspects of its operation to illustrate broader trends (which was appropriate since it was not a case study).<sup>116</sup> Finally, Susan Lofthouse's report, the only detailed history of the post and its vicinity, is informative but does not make any historiographic claims.<sup>117</sup> This paper is the first in-depth study of Euro-Inuit relations that focuses exclusively on Wolstenholme post. In so doing, it paves the way for the study of Euro-Inuit relations on the Hudson Strait and in the Canadian Arctic Archipelago, areas that did not see an HBC (or white) presence until the early twentieth century.

Though the circumstances that attended the modern Northern fur trade were vastly different from those of earlier periods, white-native interaction at the arctic post bears a striking resemblance to the relations of much earlier periods in native history. At Wolstenholme, the presence of rival interests, HBC policy, and

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<sup>115</sup> Respectively, Arthur J. Ray, *The Canadian Fur Trade in the Industrial Age*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990); Toby Morantz, *Relations on Southeastern Hudson Bay: An Illustrated History of Inuit, Cree and Eurocanadian Interaction, 1740-1970* (Westmount: Avataq Cultural Institute, 2010); and See Toby Morantz, *Relations on Ungava Bay: An Illustrated History of Inuit, Naskapi, and Eurocanadian Interaction, 1800-1970* (Westmount: Avataq Cultural Institute, 2016).

<sup>116</sup> The dissertation is available online. Caroline Hervé, "'On ne fait que s'entraider.' Dynamiques des relations de pouvoir et construction de la figure du leader chez les Inuit du Nunavik (XXe siècle-2011)," (PhD diss., Université Laval, 2013).

<sup>117</sup> Susan Lofthouse, "Parc National Iluiliq Project: Historical overview of post-contact occupation in the Parc National Iluiliq Project study area" (unpublished report submitted to the Kativik Regional Government, Nunavik Parks Division, Nunavik, Quebec, 2017).

the post's continuing isolation from the South despite technological innovations combined with Inuit mastery of the land, resulting in substantial native leverage over trade. These factors, as well as the mostly Labradorian origins of the post staff, strongly influenced the formation of community at the post. Considering Euro-Inuit interaction at Wolstenholme, which was not established until the twentieth century, is important because the facts of daily life there produce enormous dissonance against the narratives of native declension and colonial victimization that have conquered indigenous history. It is my hope that the case of Wolstenholme will shatter these reductionist narratives of exploitation, in which native peoples lack agency, influence, and basic human motives in our shared past, rather than being the latest in a long line of exceptions to the rule.

## Economic Foundations for Community at Wolstenholme Post: Competition for Inuit Patronage and Inuit Power

Europeans made contact with the Tarramiut<sup>118</sup> of the south shore of the Hudson Strait as early as 1611, when Henry Hudson's mutineers stopped at the Digges Islands<sup>119</sup> on their way back to England, "seeking fresh water and meat."<sup>120</sup> They met 50-60 people and traded "glass buttons and a knife for skins and walrus tusks" on friendly terms.<sup>121</sup> When they tried to trade for caribou meat the next day, the encounter turned violent and four sailors were killed.<sup>122</sup> By the end of the seventeenth century, however, archaeologist Susan Lofthouse states that HBC "supply ships were making annual or biannual voyages through Hudson Strait to the trading posts in James Bay and southwestern Hudson Bay" and engaging in sporadic trade. Though they traded with Inuit on both shores of the Strait, the tides

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<sup>118</sup> The Tarramiut (also spelled "Taqramiut") are one of the four subgroups among the Inuit of Nunavik, which are differentiated by "certain cultural traits and linguistic particularities." According to Bernard Saladin d'Anglure, they "occupied the south coast of Hudson Strait from Cape Wolstenholme in the west to Hopes Advance Bay in the east." They numbered approximately 250 people at the end of the nineteenth century, "spread along close to 400 miles...of coastline." He considers their territory to have been one of the least acculturated places in the Quebec-Labrador Peninsula in 1961. See Bernard Saladin d'Anglure, *Traditional Social Organization among the Inuit of Kangiqsujaq, Nunavik*, trans. Robyn Bryant (Inukjuak: Publications Nunavik/Avataq Cultural Institute, 2013), 60 (both quotes) and 1 (last sentence). Also Vick-Westgate, 26; and Morantz, *Southeastern Hudson Bay*, 3. The Inuit of Cape Wolstenholme in particular were called Nuvunnguq according to two Ungava Inuit that Moravian missionary Jens Haven met in 1773. See Vick-Westgate, 25.

<sup>119</sup> The Digges Islands, East Digges and West Digges, are two islands off the coast of the Ungava Peninsula, almost directly across from Cape Wolstenholme, where the eponymous post was established by the HBC. In the Wolstenholme post journals, they are referred to in the singular, as "Digges Island."

<sup>120</sup> Lofthouse, 11.

<sup>121</sup> Lofthouse, 11 and 12 (quote).

<sup>122</sup> Lofthouse, 12; and Morantz, *Southeastern Hudson Bay*, 2.

and the movement of ice floes kept the ships near the north shore for longer, creating more possibilities for a meeting there.<sup>123</sup>

Trade became more regular in the early eighteenth century, and “HBC ships were ordered to barter with ‘Eskimos.’”<sup>124</sup> Inuit, mostly from southern Baffin Island but also from the south shore of the Strait, traded baleen, “skins, ivory, and sea mammal oil” in return for needles, knives, fish hooks, scissors, beads, and other European goods.<sup>125</sup> In the 1860s, American and Scottish whalers joined the regular traffic passing through the Strait. Historian Dorothy Harley Eber observes that “there are records of about 150 voyages...between 1860 and 1915.”<sup>126</sup> Baleen, not blubber, was the primary object of these expeditions, since whale oil was already being supplanted by coal and other fuel sources. All along the Strait, Inuit began whaling for these ships in return for firearms, ammunition, and other goods. Elder Peter Pitseolak recalls that people also traded skins.<sup>127</sup>

In the twentieth century, “ladies took a fancy to white fox fur,” as HBC man Cecil E. Bradbury put it, “using it for stoles, collars, hats and muffs.”<sup>128</sup> Arctic foxes became prized commodities and the fur trade gravitated north. In 1909, the HBC

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<sup>123</sup> Lofthouse, 13. Lofthouse does note that Inuit were not confined to their side of the Strait and that they crossed “relatively often, as seen in oral histories and historical documents” (20-21). Also, William Barr, “The Eighteenth Century Trade between the Ships of the Hudson’s Bay Company and the Hudson Strait Inuit,” *Arctic* 47, no. 3 (Sep. 1994): 236.

<sup>124</sup> Lofthouse, 20; Morantz, *Southeastern Hudson Bay*, 2 (quote); and Barr, 236.

<sup>125</sup> Lofthouse, 20 (quote); Morantz, *Southeastern Hudson Bay*, 2; and Barr, 239. Barr notes that in the eighteenth century, “the HBC was still *not* trading guns to Inuit,” possibly due to earlier encounters that had resulted in deaths. Barr, 241.

<sup>126</sup> Dorothy Harley Eber, *When the Whalers Were Up North: Inuit Memories from the Eastern Arctic* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989), 22-23 and 23 (quote). Also Lofthouse, 23.

<sup>127</sup> Eber, 25 and 29; and Peter Pitseolak, oral account, quoted in Eber, 23.

<sup>128</sup> Bradbury, 11. Also Lofthouse, 27. Morantz refers to the period from 1900 to 1930 as the “Great Fox Era.” See Morantz, *Ungava*, 71.

established Wolstenholme post (near present-day Ivujivik), the first post dedicated to the arctic fox trade and to trading with Inuit. The post was an effort to protect the Company's monopoly in the region from rival company Revillon Frères (RF), which had established a post at Fort Chimo (present-day Kuujuaq), on Ungava Bay, in 1903.<sup>129</sup> The effort was not in vain: in 1910, RF erected a post at Wakeham Bay (present-day Kangiqsujaq), 203 miles away, and "the two companies competed for Inuit trade around the coastline of Nunavik."<sup>130</sup> Though it had long been acquainted with the Tarramiut, Wolstenholme was new ground for the HBC and competition from RF set the tone for trade at the post: the Company would have to make a good effort to attract and retain Inuit patronage. The Company's presence would not be a favor to Inuit; it would be quite the opposite.

The first two years of Wolstenholme's existence reinforced this sensation. Not a single Inuk came to trade at the post, and the staff lived in total isolation until the annual late-summer arrival of the cargo ship, *Pelican*, to replenish stock and drop employees off. The post workers made numerous attempts to locate the "Esquimaux," all ending in failure. Though many signs of former camp sites, such as "decayed seals bones in great quantities [at Moodys Inlet]," were observed in "thirty different harbours," post manager Parsons reported them "not less than 6 or

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<sup>129</sup> Bonesteel, 4; Lofthouse, 27-28; and Morantz, *Ungava Bay*, 73; and "Hudson's Bay Company. Wolstenholme," Keystone Archives Descriptive Database, Archives of Manitoba, accessed 8 Mar 2018, [http://pam.minisisinc.com/SCRIPTS/MWIMAIN.DLL/125274834/1/1/915?RECORD&DATABASE=AUTHORITY\\_WEB\\_INT](http://pam.minisisinc.com/SCRIPTS/MWIMAIN.DLL/125274834/1/1/915?RECORD&DATABASE=AUTHORITY_WEB_INT).

<sup>130</sup> Lofthouse, 28 (quote), 30, and 34.

7 years old.”<sup>131</sup> As early as October of 1909, Parsons predicted that it was “going to be a very lonely and monotonous winter.”<sup>132</sup>

He was right. The Wolstenholme staff did not make contact with Inuit until July of 1910, when the *Active*, a whaling vessel carrying “about 40 Esquimaux...for the whale fishing,” put in for water at the post. These Inuit seem to have been employed by the captain year-round: “During the winter these Esquimaux hunt white foxes for him...he had about 400 foxes from them [this year] which he considered but a few.”<sup>133</sup> Though they had camped near the post in the fall of 1907, the ship had “removed [the Inuit] to the other side of Straits as they said there was nothing to hunt around in this locality.”<sup>134</sup> After the *S.S. Active* departed, the Wolstenholme staff did not see Inuit again until a year later, when they finally encountered some families at Sugluk Bay (present-day Salluit). These families were not local; they had begun to journey there from Ungava Bay due to the scarcity of foxes and reports of their plentitude to the northwest. At the time of the meeting, Parsons reported that “they have never spent a winter so far north as this...but they mean to give it a trial.”<sup>135</sup>

Parsons was also careful to note the families’ report of a trader at Stupart Bay (a.k.a. Wakeham Bay), “presumably Revillon Freres,” showing the real threat that the competitor posed for the distant trading post.<sup>136</sup> But Ajia Naulittuk (1906-

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<sup>131</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 8-31 Jul 1910, single entry. Also, “General Remarks and Suggestions,” in Wolstenholme Post Report, 1909, HBCA, Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

<sup>132</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 17 Oct 1909, entry.

<sup>133</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 8-31 Jul 1910, single entry.

<sup>134</sup> *Loc. cit.*

<sup>135</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 27 Jun-18 Jul 1911, single entry.

<sup>136</sup> *Loc. cit.*

1993), a little girl at the time, remembered something more about the meeting at

Sugluk:

That morning, my father had gone to relieve his bowels. As he was heading back, he saw a small boat approaching. Apparently the pilot of the boat had already seen the tupiq,<sup>137</sup> as they were looking for Inuit...My father was given all kinds of things which the traders had brought with them. The things he received were free, the traders were so grateful to find Inuit...They gave us all their supplies, keeping only enough for their return trip...These people came back the following year with all kinds of trading supplies like guns and bullets...<sup>138</sup>

Though the post manager did not put it in so many words, the Company's active search for Inuit and its many gifts were a clear sign to Naulittuk that it was dependent on Inuit goodwill for business. It was for the trappers to decide where they would trade, and all the Company could do was make itself as attractive an option as possible in a competitive market. One way to do this was by being nearby so that trappers would not have to make long journeys in harsh weather. In the same 1911 entry, Parsons suggested moving the post to Sugluk "to prosecute the trout fishery and have a small camp here for the Fall fox hunt."<sup>139</sup> Moving the post there would have made it significantly more accessible to Inuit who journeyed to RF's Wakeham Bay post from the east, making it easier to divert trade from the latter.

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<sup>137</sup> A tupiq is a tent made of sealskin or caribou hide. Inuit used it as summer dwelling, once the snow became too soft or scarce to make igloos. Today, they are more commonly made of canvas and called tupikhaq.

<sup>138</sup> Ajia Naulittuk, oral account, quoted in Ajia Naulittuk, "Our Best Memories," *Tumivut*, 1996, 21-22. Lofthouse also quotes this account in her report, on page 30.

<sup>139</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 27 Jun-18 Jul 1911, single entry.

The importance of location in attracting Inuit is visible in the post reports. After the first unsuccessful year at Wolstenholme, Ralph Parsons was relentless in trying to convince the Company that business would be better if they relocated the post. He noted that RF “established a Post at Cape Dufferin...and...no natives can be expected here from that direction.”<sup>140</sup> Based on his reconnaissance missions, he concluded that there were no Inuit within a 200-miles radius of the post and opined that it was

out of the question to expect natives to visit us here from the South or East even supposing they knew that we had a trading Post here as they are cut off by Revillon Freres of Cape Dufferin to south and it would be as near for them to go to Fort Chimo from Stuparts Bay to the East as to here.<sup>141</sup>

A good post could not be out of the way, because people would simply trade at more proximate locations. Parsons was not offended by the notion that Inuit might prefer to trade with nearby RF. Indeed, he noted that the Company’s Fort Chimo location would itself make travel to Wolstenholme senseless. Indeed, the reason Inuit had left the area in the first place was “not that seals &c were too scarce, but that the place was too far away from any trading station for them to get ammunition &c.”<sup>142</sup>

Another consideration was the post’s proximity to good hunting grounds. After the 1911 encounter at Sugluk Bay, Parsons was more hopeful about the post’s prospects. The Inuit had reportedly told him that “they would hunt for us and

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<sup>140</sup> “Competition,” in Wolstenholme Post Report, 1909, HBCA, Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

<sup>141</sup> “General Remarks and Suggestions,” in Wolstenholme Post Report, 1909.

<sup>142</sup> “Competition and General,” in Wolstenholme Post Report, 1910.

trade with us, as long as we remained here.”<sup>143</sup> According to Parsons, they praised the post as a good idea, and the availability of food was a big reason. They observed that Wolstenholme was “situated very conveniently...[for] trade as there are good hunting grounds on both sides of...Cape [Wolstenholme]” and that “seals are as plentiful, walrus, porpoise, bears, and foxes...much more plentiful here than further south.”<sup>144</sup> Seal is a staple food for Inuit,<sup>145</sup> and walrus was an important source of dog food. It was the Company’s responsibility to make itself available to trade by situating itself conveniently. Through the life of the post, competition would remain a palpable threat. As early as 1912, RF was threatening to open a post at Sugluk Bay, and Parsons worried that this “would probably greatly damage our trade here as it would cut off a good many of our dealers.”<sup>146</sup> Before this could happen, a company run by former HBC men, Lansom and Hubbard (LH), came on the scene in 1920, establishing a post right near Wolstenholme.<sup>147</sup> Though LH folded just a year later,<sup>148</sup> their presence shook trade up more than the distant RF posts could ever have hoped to do. LH posed a serious economic challenge since it offered Inuit trappers better prices and higher-quality goods for their furs. On the day of its official opening, the Wolstenholme post manager reported that

they told our Natives that they would give them anything they wish to ask for and would pay a bigger price for furs than we would, they are feeding the Natives on the best of grub, jars of Milk, Sugar, Cheese, and the best of

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<sup>143</sup> “Competition and General,” in Wolstenholme Post Report, 1910.

<sup>144</sup> “Competition and General,” in Wolstenholme Post Report, 1910.

<sup>145</sup> According to A. Kalingo, “The seal has always been the main animal of interest. It is why most...Inuit settlements are...on the seacoast.” See A. Kalingo, “Seal hunting in winter,” *Makivik Magazine*, Spring 2009, 4-7.

<sup>146</sup> “Competition,” in Wolstenholme Post Report, 1911-1912.

<sup>147</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 1-16 Sept 1920 and 31 Dec 1921, entries; and Lofthouse, 44.

<sup>148</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 25 Sept 1921; and Lofthouse, 45.

butter, and if we are to keep up with them it will increase our Gratuities 500%, and I am afraid that we will have to follow their lead as the best means of holding an Eskimo is through his stomach.<sup>149</sup>

The LH seemed to have no reservations about spending lavishly to curry favor with Wolstenholme's Inuit. The Inuit, in turn, were no fools. They held out for more food and more generous trade deals, and they threatened the HBC post with defection to force its hand. Just a month later, the post manager reported that "The Eskimo have been arriving almost every day and the expense in feeding them will be increased fully 500% in other years more especially as the Opposition are feeding them on the very best of grub, and we have to do the same."<sup>150</sup> Inuit trappers were undeniably allowing themselves to be courted by two eager suitors, in this instance by arriving at Wolstenholme simply to see how much food the traders were willing to share. These requests for food countered any assumption that Inuit business could be taken for granted, and they helped put the Wolstenholme traders and Inuit on more equal terms.

The trappers' strategy was successful. The LH post raised the price for foxes a month later, indicating Wolstenholme's compliance with previous Inuit demands. The HBC seems to have followed suit a second time: the LH post had to raise its prices again the following month, presumably to retain its trading partners.<sup>151</sup> After this second increase, Inuit trappers made a more conspicuous effort to incite the Wolstenholme traders to beat their competitors' terms. The post

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<sup>149</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 17-30 Sept 1920, single entry.

<sup>150</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 12-31 Oct 1920, single entry.

<sup>151</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 13 Dec 1920 and 15 Jan 1921, entries.

manager reported that one of their men had actually been paid the new price and recorded an itemized list of the goods he'd received for his fox: a pair of "black mole. Trousers," ten pounds of lard, an axe handle, a "checker Board," two pounds of chewing tobacco, a white blanket, five pounds of sugar, and a shirt. This information, whether passed on directly by the trapper or not, clearly had the aim of manipulating the HBC into increasing its prices. The post manager also learned that the LH post let people pick out the items that they wanted when they traded rather than giving them tokens, another "hint" about HBC policies that were unpopular with Inuit.<sup>152</sup>

The Company could not rest easy after LH's failure. Just before its rival went under, trappers living at Sugluk Bay had demanded that the HBC open a post there for their convenience. The post manager promised to open a "small post there next spring," understanding (probably from the trappers) that "the Opposition" was planning to do the same. To him, it was abundantly clear that "the first on the ground w[ould] hold the Natives."<sup>153</sup> In the end, the Company dragged its feet on opening the post until 1924, when "former HBC traders Herbert Hall...and Solomon Ford (Salamonie)...set up an independent post along the eastern shore of Salluit," reviving its resolve. According to Susan Lofthouse, these free traders "posed a challenge to HBC, who were accustomed to many of the hunters from that area travelling to Kangirsukallak [Wolstenholme]."<sup>154</sup> Their fox prices were also very

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<sup>152</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 15 Jan 1921, entry.

<sup>153</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 6 Feb 1921, entry.

<sup>154</sup> Lofthouse, 52 (both quotes). Also, A. Stevenson, "Arctic Fur Trade Rivalry," *The Beaver*, Autumn 1975, 49, Canada's History Archive Featuring *The Beaver*.

good. When locals brought news of their presence, the post manager called the traders “as liberal as can be...by the prices I have heard about.”<sup>155</sup> That the HBC opened Sugluk East post the next year is a testament to Hall and Ford’s potential to win Salluit people’s patronage. In fact, their potential was so great that the company opened a second post, Sugluk West, even closer to their trading post, in 1930. In his memoir, Bruce D. Campbell recalls meeting Ford in 1935: “Natives came and went...freely” through his quarters, and they “regarded Solomon as one of themselves.” He also seems to have spoken Inuktitut well.<sup>156</sup> Ford’s deeper ties to local Inuit may have made him a more formidable competitor. Indeed, he and Hall took the largest share of foxes at Sugluk from 1924 to 1939, when Ford died.<sup>157</sup>

Working under the Baffin Trading Company (est. 1939), Ford’s brother, Henry, took the business over in 1940. Though the Baffin Trading Company was sold to the HBC in 1949, when the fox fur market collapsed, the Sugluk post remained open until 1952.<sup>158</sup> The post’s prolonged existence may have been a testament to its owners’ good relations with local people. Henry, a former HBC interpreter at Fort Chimo, was also fluent in Inuktitut. Though Campbell identified his brother as a fellow white man, the Henry and Solomon may have been of mixed Euro-Inuit ancestry, judging from their Inuktitut fluency, Solomon’s Labrador birth

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<sup>155</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 16 November 1924.

<sup>156</sup> Campbell, 85 and 86 (quotes).

<sup>157</sup> Morantz, *Ungava Bay*, 93. Hall had died a year earlier, in 1938. See Morantz, *Ungava Bay*, 92; and Herbert Hanley Hall HBCA Biographical Sheet.

<sup>158</sup> Lofthouse, 52-53; and Morantz, *Ungava Bay*, 93.

place, and the latter's verifiable good relations with Inuit locals.<sup>159</sup> Henry, too, may have had good relations with Sugluk locals due to his fluency and possible Inuit heritage, though I have found no record of his interactions with them. Through its entire existence, Wolstenholme had to contend with this strong rival presence, equipped with higher prices and social advantages. Though the HBC and RF had come to "an agreement on fur prices and merchandise" in 1926, the latter also remained a going concern until 1936, when the HBC bought them out.<sup>160</sup>

Intense competition from multiple rivals through most of Wolstenholme's existence cannot be overstated as a foundation for community at the post. The rivalry forced Qallunaat—whites—to respect trappers and their families and to cater to them. Hudson Strait Inuit had many places to take their furs and buying power, and as competitors neared Wolstenholme, Inuit expectations of generosity and good treatment increased. These expectations attest to the fact that the HBC did not hold a monopoly over the fur trade in the twentieth century. Indeed, historian Arthur J. Ray writes that "By the end of the Second World War the Hudson's Bay Company posts barely secured one-quarter of the total returns [of the fur trade], and the organization was under attack by opponents on all fronts."<sup>161</sup>

At Wolstenholme, the fact of a decreasing market share must have felt very real

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<sup>159</sup> Campbell, 85-87; Solomon Richard Ford HBCA Biographical Sheet; and Morantz, *Ungava Bay*, 93; and Stevenson, 49.

<sup>160</sup> "Revillion Frères," in François Cartier and Guislaine Lemay, "Exploration in the Canadian Arctic," McCord Museum, accessed 26 Mar 2018, [http://collections.musee-mccord.qc.ca/scripts/printtour.php?tourID=GE\\_P3\\_5\\_EN&Lang=2](http://collections.musee-mccord.qc.ca/scripts/printtour.php?tourID=GE_P3_5_EN&Lang=2); and Morantz, *Ungava Bay*, 93 (quote).

<sup>161</sup> Ray, xv.

until at least 1940, prompting anything but the staff's disdain for their trading partners.

In addition to encouraging respectful interaction between Inuit and Qallunaat, competition at Wolstenholme encouraged the post managers to accommodate trappers in "lean years," another foundation for the community that developed there. In his study of the twentieth-century central subarctic fur trade, Ray discerned a striking contrast from the pre-Confederation era, which he described as "an equal partnership with natives." Before, the two parties had been interdependent, with the Company "depend[ing] on the native people for furs, a portion of the food its men consumed at trading posts, and seasonal labour." The Company had also been willing to provide relief in poor trapping years (and even pensions) since it served their long-term interests. "Besides guaranteeing the physical survival of the native labour force," Ray writes, "such company largess also bought loyalty to the company," which was very important given the trading partners' parity.<sup>162</sup> After Confederation, Ray found the relationship altered. The HBC's need to be competitive in a crowded, rapidly changing marketplace and the realization that it "no longer could count on retaining their Indian trading partners by looking after their well-being in times of need" led executives to try to curtail old relief systems.<sup>163</sup> Dependency and debt also weakened native peoples' trade leverage in the subarctic over time.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Ray, 226.

<sup>163</sup> *Loc cit.*

<sup>164</sup> Ray, 199-200.

Circumstances in the eastern Arctic were different. First, HBC executives' efforts to stop issuing credit generally failed, even in the subarctic.<sup>165</sup> Ray himself observed "a widening division of opinion...between the commissioner's office and the men in the field, about whether it was a good idea to continue to look after the economic needs of its trading partners." Post staff typically favored helping the people they had come to know well in lean years.<sup>166</sup> Moreover, credit remained crucial to maintaining native loyalty and ensuring their survival and continued trapping, which brought the Company profit.<sup>167</sup> Generosity, both in trade and the granting of "debt," never ceased to be important at competition-ridden Wolstenholme. In 1934, just two years before RF folded, one manager noted that "The natives here have not yet forgotten the stories they heard of the free rations and other gratuities which have been issued at Wakeham Bay for so long, and they are rather difficult to handle in consequence."<sup>168</sup>

Inuit trading at Wolstenholme were in a much stronger position vis-à-vis the Company. Beyond the empowering effects of competition, they exhibited less technological dependence than peoples further south for longer due to the sporadic nature of prior contact and trade. Hudson Strait Inuit retained traditional, subsistence-driven lifestyles until the mid-twentieth century,<sup>169</sup> which gave them effective alternatives to Western technology (and thus credit) during poor trapping

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<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 227.

<sup>166</sup> Ray, 211.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, 211 (quote) and 212.

<sup>168</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 12 October 1934.

<sup>169</sup> Bonesteel, 10; and Vicks-Westgate, 44.

seasons or market slumps. Elder Salomonie Alayco (b. 1906), for instance, remembers that people living at Pujjunaq “visited the trading post by dogteam” and dressed entirely in polar bear skins. He noted that the people “didn’t even have any stoves. They only used soapstone lamps.<sup>170</sup> They...managed to cross parts of ice where sea currents are...Sometimes they had to use their ice chisels to move their sleds...They were still living in a traditional way of Inuit.”<sup>171</sup> Dependence on motorboats, snowmobiles, firearms, and other goods was largely a post-World War II phenomenon for Inuit and likely contributed to their prolonged power.<sup>172</sup> At Wolstenholme, motorboats came into increasing use in the 1930s, but sharing was common. They were not an individual- or family-level requisite. The post never saw the use of snowmobiles, and dogsleds remained the primary means of winter transport through the post’s existence. Neither did store food or clothing displace traditional equivalents in the pursuit of foxes. Meat, animal fat, and fur were essential for people and dogs to stay alive and warm.

Furthermore, Wolstenholme post opened at the time of the arctic fox boom and in prime arctic fox country. More southerly peoples, whose relationship with the HBC had begun with the beaver trade,<sup>173</sup> may have struggled to adapt to the

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<sup>170</sup> To keep igloos warm and lit through long winter nights, Inuit traditionally burned seal oil in soapstone lamps. Whale oil reportedly did not burn well, leading nineteenth-century people to wonder why whalers wanted their blubber so keenly! See Eber, 29. Also François Cartier and Guislaine Lemay, “Exploration in the Canadian Arctic,” McCord Museum, accessed 26 Mar 2018, [http://collections.musee-mccord.qc.ca/scripts/printtour.php?tourID=GE\\_P3\\_5\\_EN&Lang=2](http://collections.musee-mccord.qc.ca/scripts/printtour.php?tourID=GE_P3_5_EN&Lang=2).

<sup>171</sup> Salomonie Alayco, oral account, quoted in Lofthouse, 68.

<sup>172</sup> Morantz, *Ungava Bay*, 201.

<sup>173</sup> The eastern James Bay Cree are a good example. Daniel Francis and Toby E. Morantz discuss their beaver trade in *Partners in Furs: A History of the Fur Trade in Eastern James Bay, 1600-1870* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1983). In her subsequent book, *The White Man’s Gonna Getcha: The Colonial Challenge to the Cree in Quebec* (Montreal: McGill-

changing market in ways that Strait Inuit never had to. Fox fur prices were high through the 1920s, which in combination with multiple buyers greatly enhanced Inuit influence over trade.<sup>174</sup> Though prices infamously collapsed in the early 1930s,<sup>175</sup> the high volume of trade documented in the post journals of subsequent years suggests a decent, if ultimately short-lived, recovery. Despite the regular “outfitting” of Inuit with merchandise for the trapping season and many instances of people trying to solicit more credit, Wolstenholme Inuit carried remarkably little debt. In 1934, after the nadir of the trade, post manager J.G. Allen reported that “there is every reason to suppose that all the debts will be cleared off as usual.”<sup>176</sup> Over ten years later, in the post’s final year of operation, J.G. Cormack wrote that the trappers were “all able to pay debts in full and most of them have a bit over for tobacco money.”<sup>177</sup> A largely traditional lifestyle and the abundance of marine mammals around Cape Wolstenholme may have been factors in fending off debt as well as starvation even in hard times.<sup>178</sup>

Despite signs of decline elsewhere, the arctic fox market, Company policies and rivalries, and the particularities of the Hudson Strait Inuit resulted in striking

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Queen’s University Press, 2002), Toby Morantz discusses the problems that changing tastes in furs created for Cree trappers. See Morantz, *Crees in Quebec*, 32, 109, and 123-124.

<sup>174</sup> Lofthouse, 70; and Morantz, *Ungava Bay*, chap. 3.

<sup>175</sup> Bonesteel, 4 and 10; and Morantz, *Ungava Bay*, chap. 5.

<sup>176</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 12 October 1934.

<sup>177</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 25 July 1946.

<sup>178</sup> For example, caribou shortages began to affect eastern Crees and more southerly Inuit, who lived near the tree line, in the mid-nineteenth century. Both food and fur animal populations were also low in the 1920s and 1930s in these places. See Morantz, *Crees in Quebec*, 33 and 109; and Ray, 10. Also, Vicks-Westgate, 35. This was not the case for coastal Hudson Strait Inuit, who depended more on marine mammals, though there were periods of hunger and starvation. See Lofthouse, 70.

native power at Wolstenholme post—power that laid the foundation for community by prompting respect.

### **Cultural Foundations for Community: Labradorians in a Frigid Land**

Wolstenholme's location was another critical factor in the coalescence of Euro-Inuit community there. Its location on the eponymous cape at the very top of Nunavik (arctic Quebec), encircled by steep cliffs, made it an exceptionally cold and windy place.<sup>179</sup> Former employee Bruce D. Campbell referred to it as "Windy Wolstenholme"<sup>180</sup> and the reputation preceded it. Beyond its coldness, the post's arctic location made it an isolated place. Ice floes prevented the passage of ships until August—"ship time"—when the annual supply ship usually arrived. The rest of the year there was no contact with "the Outside," though the beginning of a Company mail service in 1934 and two-way radio in 1938 allowed for contact between eastern Arctic posts in later years.<sup>181</sup> The radio also allowed for some news from the South to reach staff members beginning in the late-1920s; Campbell recalls that "every man in the polar regions turned on his radio at 11 P.M. for the words of news and welcome from Nottingham Island," where there was a radio station.<sup>182</sup> Unfortunately, there was often no signal, and if the battery died (which

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<sup>179</sup> One post worker's wife endured a trip from Sugluk to Wolstenholme after the latter was no longer a year-round post. She describes the cliffs as a major barrier that made an inland route necessary to reach the post. See Mrs. W. Buhr, "Komatik Trip," *Moccasin Telegraph*, January 1949, 1-3.

<sup>180</sup> Campbell uses this moniker in his memoir. See Campbell, part one. "Brutus" also noted the post's windiness in Brutus, "Diary of an H.B.C. Apprentice Clerk on a Voyage to Hudson Bay," *The Beaver*, January 1922, 9, Canada's History Archive Featuring *The Beaver*.

<sup>181</sup> See Campbell, 68-69 (mail service); and S.G.L. Horner, "Posts of the Far North Will Have Two-Way Short Wave Communication," *The Beaver*, June 1938, 10-13, Canada's History Archive Featuring *The Beaver*.

<sup>182</sup> Campbell, 31.

it eventually did since coldness shortened its life) there would be no radio at all until the supply ship's return.<sup>183</sup> "Ship time" prompted a lot of excitement among both the post staff and Inuit, and locals arrived days in advance to prepare, which gives an idea of the post's remoteness. Remembering her honeymoon voyage to Fort Chimo, where her husband was to be the post manager for three years, Maud Watt noted that "One has to spend at least a year in the north to realize what 'ship time' means." On her first year the ship was so late that they'd "given her up." When it finally appeared on the horizon "everyone just went mad."<sup>184</sup>

Wolstenholme's distance also meant that the post staff was provisioned exclusively with canned and dry goods for their diet; potatoes were the exception.<sup>185</sup> As far as building materials were concerned, only the barest necessities were provided. Limited quantities of wood were provided to build (and later repair) the post and outbuildings. Wolstenholme was far north of the tree line, and, as Parsons discovered in 1909, "there isn't a piece of wood as big as a match on the whole coast."<sup>186</sup> Coal was burned for warmth. Cecil E. Bradbury remembers digging coal from outcrops at Arctic Bay post, which the HBC sent him to establish in 1926.<sup>187</sup> At Wolstenholme, the Company provided a supply of coal, and

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<sup>183</sup> For example, the 1946 post journals are full of complains about no spotty radio signal. See Wolstenholme Post Journals, 1946. When Campbell arrived at Wolstenholme, his manager asked him if he had any news from the Outside. He had broken the radio's power valve seven months ago and had not heard a thing since. Campbell also noted that the radio's battery was kept behind the kitchen stove, the warmest place in the building, to preserve its life. See Campbell, 7-8 and 21.

<sup>184</sup> Maud Watt, "Nascopie Honeymoon," *The Beaver*, March 1938, 21 (all quotes).

<sup>185</sup> Campbell, 21.

<sup>186</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 24 Aug-5 Sept 1909, single entry.

<sup>187</sup> Bradbury, 33.

Campbell noted that its cost was “enormous” in the North.<sup>188</sup> This heat source was only so effective in subzero temperatures; Campbell vividly described how the cold slowly claimed the post:

The weather grew colder and colder and, at Jim’s suggestion, I moved from my room upstairs down to the kitchen, where I slept on top of the table. Then came the day when even Jim was forced to leave his bedroom to sleep with me in the kitchen. Then the living-room, and finally the office, became uninhabitable...eventually the time came when the cold forced us to leave our large house and move to a small house near the store...Its smallness and compactness made it easy to heat. It had originally been built as a resting-place for the natives, when they came in to trade, but...they preferred to build their igloos.<sup>189</sup>

Wolstenholme’s extreme weather, its remoteness, and the limited effectiveness of twentieth-century white lifeways in the Arctic helped make its men more open to Inuit culture and survival tactics.

But even before trade was established at Wolstenholme, Inuit ways were already in evidence at the post. From the beginning, the staff used snow to insulate the post, making it look like a snow house from the outside.<sup>190</sup> They also made and used Inuit implements like ulus<sup>191</sup> and komatiks.<sup>192</sup> For example, John Ford spent about a week working on a “cometik” and a day making a snow knife “for making snow house” in 1910.<sup>193</sup> The men also seem to have been accustomed to wearing

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<sup>188</sup> Campbell, 20-21.

<sup>189</sup> Campbell, 41.

<sup>190</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journals, 1909. Campbell also remembers doing this. See Campbell, 41. At other posts caribou moss was also used for internal insulation. Bradbury did this at Frobisher post in 1920. See Bradbury, 19-20.

<sup>191</sup> An ulu is a rounded knife designed to cut and shape hard snow into blocks for igloos.

<sup>192</sup> A komatik is an Inuit sled. They were made of many pieces of driftwood and sometimes whalebone and held together by sealskin lines. Mud was shaped into runners and coated with ice to cut through the snow. Bradbury describes this on page 23.

<sup>193</sup> See Wolstenholme Post Journals, 28 Feb 1910, 1 Mar 1910, 3 Mar 1910, and 4 Mar 1910 entries for komatik and 11 Mar 1910 for the ulu.

sealskin boots. As early as the fall of 1909, Parsons despaired at not finding Inuit because none of the staff knew how to make boots and they had worn their existing ones out.<sup>194</sup> One April morning also saw the men “employed practising to build snow houses.”<sup>195</sup> Igloos seem to have been used primarily for meat storage around the post, but the men likely slept in them on hunting trips as well.<sup>196</sup> In later years, Bob M. May, John W. Nichols, Bruce D. Campbell, Ralph E. Knight and his wife, and Wally Buhr and his wife all traveled by komatik and slept in igloos along the way, as did most arctic workers. Mrs. Buhr found them “lovely and warm.”<sup>197</sup>

Beyond using Inuit tools, the post men lived according to the seasons of the Arctic: in the fall, as they waited for the arctic foxes to become “prime,”<sup>198</sup> they traveled inland to hunt caribou, which they called “deer;” shot seals, walrus, and lingering snowbirds; and caught whales, trout, and char. During the long winter, they set traps for and shot marauding arctic foxes and polar bears. They also hunted a variety of seals on the ice. The staff continued to fish during the winter, placing nets beneath the Strait’s sea ice. The brief springs and summers brought snowbirds such as ptarmigan, geese, and tern to the area, which they pursued, and boats became the chief mode of transportation on the thawed waterways.

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<sup>194</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 15 Oct 1909. Sealskin boots, or kamik, were made by women, as was other apparel.

<sup>195</sup> See Wolstenholme Post Journal, 7 Apr 1910.

<sup>196</sup> For example, Wolstenholme Post Journal, 2 Jun 1911.

<sup>197</sup> May, “Caribou Hunt;” Nichols, “My Most Exciting Experience;” Campbell, 74-76; Buhr, “Komatik Trip,” 2 (quote); and Mrs. R.E. Knight, “Komatik Journey,” *Moccasin Telegraph*, July 1952, 6-7.

<sup>198</sup> An animal is “prime” in the winter, when its coat is thickest. For the arctic fox, this was also the time when its coat was the most sought-after colors, white, silver, or “blue,” another type of silver.

Goose egging was another spring pursuit. Such “country food”<sup>199</sup> was the post’s only source of fresh meat, and low yields or bad weather, which impeded outside activity for days at a time, would force them to rely on dry goods and salty cured meats. When a servant came back from hunting with “a few ducks terns and pigeons” in May, 1910, the post manager was very pleased, writing that they were “a great treat, for we are near starved for fresh meat.”<sup>200</sup> Meat was also required to sustain the dogs, on whom they depended for transportation. Whale, walrus, and sometimes seal meat were the chief sources of dog feed, with seal oil being added to mush as a substitute when stores ran low.

In the early years without Inuit visits, the Wolstenholme men were strikingly self-sufficient for newcomers to the region. In the post journals, they often appeared to be deploying well-known skills rather than learning new ones. This was no coincidence given their background. Through the mid-twentieth century, many of the workers at Wolstenholme and other arctic posts were from Labrador, which became a dependency of Newfoundland (an autonomous British colony until 1949) in 1809 after a long period of governmental ambiguity.<sup>201</sup> People in Labrador

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<sup>199</sup> “Country food” refers to wild game and was used in relation to “store food,” which was already prepared, to an extent, and was bought at HBC posts.

<sup>200</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 24-28 May 1910, single entry.

<sup>201</sup> See Lofthouse, 28; and communication from Toby Morantz, 24 May 2017. Newfoundland joined the Canadian Confederation in 1949. Prior to the vote for Confederation in 1948, Labradorians had never voted or had any representation in the Newfoundland government. See John C. Kennedy, *Encounters: An Anthropological History of Southeastern Labrador* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2015), 186; *A Short History of Newfoundland and Labrador* (Portugal Coast-St. Philips, Newfoundland: Boulder Publications/Newfoundland Historical Society, 2008), 76, 122-126, and 139; and Borlase, 272. Note: Scotland was another source of HBC men. Christopher G.T. Shepperd (1887-1913) was from Aberdeen and worked at Wolstenholme from 1912 to 1913. He and his friend, William R. Ford, drowned on a duck hunt. Shepperd’s Labradorian wife, Sarah Jane Perry, had died a few weeks before. Christopher C.T. Shepherd HBCA Biographical Sheet; William R. Ford HBCA Biographical Sheet; Margaret Davis,

lived in a semi-Inuit way shaped by centuries of contact and intermarriage and characterized by transhumance.<sup>202</sup> Their unique background primed these Wolstenholme men for their dealings with Tarramiut and paved the way for community.

Cecil E. Bradbury's son-in-law remarked that Bradbury was one of many Newfoundlanders who heard "the call of the Arctic and the call of Ralph Parsons" and went north.<sup>203</sup> Many Labradorians heard it as well. In its first year, Wolstenholme's team consisted of Ralph Parsons himself, "John Ford & boy, Mrs. J. Ford," Mark Mucks, and Fred Groves. The following year, the Fords were replaced by George and Mary Bird, James Palliser, and John Edmunds. The team remained the same for the 1911 outfit, and most of them were Labradorians.<sup>204</sup> Ralph Parsons (1881-1956) was a Newfoundlander,<sup>205</sup> but George (1867-1939) and Mary Bird were from Labrador. Their son, Roland (b. 1905), remembers being photographed atop a dead polar bear when he was a boy at the post.<sup>206</sup> James Tusaajjapik Palliser (d. 1924), an Inuk, was from Hebron, Labrador,<sup>207</sup> and John Edmunds (b. 1894) was from Davis Inlet. Edmunds served as an interpreter at

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"Anauta: Friendship and Sorrow," *Them Days: Stories of Early Labrador*, vol. 7, no. 1, 1981, 46-48; and Ella Manuel, "I saw and talked to Anauta," *Them Days: Stories of Early Labrador*, vol. 7, no. 1, 1981, 48.

<sup>202</sup> Communication from Toby Morantz, 24 May 2017; and communication from Aimee Chaulk, 14 Mar 2018.

<sup>203</sup> Bill Rompkey, "Introduction," in Bradbury, ix.

<sup>204</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 13 Aug 1909 and 17-20 Aug 1909; and "Staff," in Wolstenholme Post Report, 1909.

<sup>205</sup> William Ralph Parsons HBCA Biographical Sheet; and "Ralph Parsons: The King of Baffin Land," Hudson's Bay Company History Foundation, accessed 15 Apr 2018, <http://www.hbcheritage.ca/people/other-people/ralph-parsons>.

<sup>206</sup> I discussed the Bird family lineage with *Them Days* editor and archivist Aimee Chaulk. Email from Aimee Chaulk, 14 Mar 2018.

<sup>207</sup> L.A. Ewing, "Wolstenholme Post," *The Beaver*, September 1925, 212; and Lofthouse, 48.

Lake Harbour post, where he served following his tenure at Wolstenholme. He is never described as Inuit, so his fluency in Inuktitut suggests that he may have been Inuit-Métis, though he was not described this way, either.<sup>208</sup> It should be noted that mixed-heritage Labradorians often denied their Inuit ancestry. In her thesis on early Sandwich Bay Inuit-Métis's<sup>209</sup> distinct identity, Laura Elena Kelvin writes that

During the first three quarters of the twentieth century, the InuitMetis referred to themselves as Settlers, presenting their European heritage to others. This would have been advantageous at the time considering migratory Newfoundland fishermen and other outsiders stigmatized Aboriginal people and people of mixed ancestry in Labrador.<sup>210</sup>

It is possible that more than a few “white” Wolstenholme men were of mixed ancestry, providing a degree of culture-affinal impetus for community.

Many subsequent Wolstenholme men also had a Labrador background. For example, Albert T. Swaffield (born in 1903) was a Labradorian who worked at Wolstenholme from 1935 to 1940. His father, William T. Swaffield (1867-1952), was an HBC man from West Holme (Dorset), England, who was employed at a string of Labrador posts from 1890s to 1918. He settled his family in Cartwright, Labrador, where Bert was raised.<sup>211</sup> Leonard G. Budgell (d. 2000) was another

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<sup>208</sup> John Edmunds, HBCA Biographical Sheet. Bradbury also describes Edmunds as an interpreter. See Bradbury, 36.

<sup>209</sup> Today, Labrador's Inuit-Métis (sometimes also called the Labrador Métis) refer to themselves as NunatuKavummiut. They call their homeland NunatuKavut (“Our Ancient Land”). See <http://www.nunatukavut.ca/home/>.

<sup>210</sup> Laura Elena Kelvin, “The Inuit-Metis of Sandwich Bay: Oral Histories and Archaeology” (MA thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2011), 136. John C. Kennedy also comments on this in Kennedy, 140.

<sup>211</sup> William T. Swaffield HBCA Biographical Sheet; J.S.C. Watt, “Labrador Year,” *The Beaver*, June 1937, 22, Canada's History Archive Featuring *The Beaver*; and Kennedy, 219. Note: Bert Swaffield was identified as a Newfoundlander in the *Moccasin Telegraph's* spring 1944 issue. See “Personals,” in *Moccasin Telegraph*, spring 1944, 4. I believe that this is an error given the information on his father. The Watt article even mentioned all of William's children, including Bert, and described them as living in Cartwright.

Labradorian who worked at the post in 1942. His stories appeared often in *Them Days*, a magazine devoted to preserving Labrador history and elders' stories. Budgetell's father and brother were also Labrador HBC men: "Love of fur trading seems to be a family characteristic with some people. In Labrador we have GEORGE BUDGEELL, Sr. at Rigolet, sons LEONARD at Hebron and GEORGE, Jr. starting at Hopedale."<sup>212</sup> A third Labradorian, Samuel George Ford (1880-1950), worked at the post as a clerk and interpreter from 1917 to 1919. This man may also have been of mixed Euro-Inuit extraction.<sup>213</sup>

The Labrador origins of the Wolstenholme men meant that they came to the post and trading table with Inuit cultural knowledge and skills. Extensive intermarriage and region's ecology produced a society that was profoundly influenced by Inuit lifeways. European immigrants to Sandwich Bay, Labrador, many of whom arrived in the first half of the nineteenth century, were "almost exclusively" single males who largely married Inuit women.<sup>214</sup> Their dwellings show that there was more than sexual mingling occurring. Looking at nineteenth-century archaeological sites in the area, Laura Elena Kelvin notes that

the Inuit-Metis, Inuit and migratory fishermen...constructed and lived in similar sod dwellings. On the surface, the archaeological remains of these dwellings are almost identical, making it difficult to determine the ethnicity of the occupants.<sup>215</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> Leonard Budgetell, "Letter from Leonard" and "I was a Hudson's Bay Company man all my life," *Them Days: Stories of Early Labrador*, vol 27, no. 1, Fall 2001, 3-8 and 61-64; "Personals," in *Moccasin Telegraph*, December 1941, 5 (quote).

<sup>213</sup> Samuel George Ford HBCA Biographical Sheet. In his obituary, Sam Ford was also described as a "a fluent Eskimo linguist, and an expert on Arctic and Eskimo affairs." He died in a helicopter accident after retiring in Newfoundland. See "Sam Ford," under "Bereavements," in the *Moccasin Telegraph*, Winter 1951, 8.

<sup>214</sup> Kelvin, 49. Also Borlase, 75.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*, ii.

The characteristics of Sandwich Bay apply to the rest of Labrador as well. Anthropologist John C. Kennedy describes the people of Labrador as “residents of mixed Inuit and European ancestry, and their non-Aboriginal neighbors.”<sup>216</sup> Moreover, he contends that previous historians have been misguided in separating southern Labrador from the rest of the coast. Kennedy argues that southern Labrador “resembles...central and northern Labrador, with the proviso that a gradation of ‘Inuitness’ past and present exists from north to south,” with the north being more Inuit.<sup>217</sup>

In Labrador, “both Inuit-Metis and their neighbors lacking Aboriginal ancestry” exhibited a blend of Innu, Inuit, English, Scottish, and Irish “cultural practices and beliefs in varying combinations and degrees.”<sup>218</sup> Lydia Campbell (1818-1905) is a representative case. She was an Inuit-Métis woman “raised speaking both English and Inuktitut, and both European and Inuit skills were part of daily life.”<sup>219</sup> Both types of “settler”<sup>220</sup> families also lived self-sufficiently, migrating seasonally for their subsistence in much the same way that Inuit families did. This is unsurprising given that newcomers “learned how to survive in Labrador from local Natives, often their Inuit or part-Inuit wives and affines.”<sup>221</sup> Most families

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<sup>216</sup> Kennedy, 6.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, 148.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*, 150.

<sup>219</sup> Kennedy, 143. See also, Lydia Campbell, “Sketches of Labrador Life,” c. 1894-1895, Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Digitized Books, Memorial University of Newfoundland, <http://collections.mun.ca/cdm/ref/collection/cns/id/61407>.

<sup>220</sup> “Settler” is a term used to describe settlers who intermarried with Inuit, as well as their descendants and distinctive culture. It also applies to non-Métis people from Labrador, who also shared the culture. See Borlase, 46.

<sup>221</sup> Kennedy, 150 (quote). Also, Borlase, 75-76 and 96.

had two dwellings, a coastal summer one and an inland winter one. The summer dwellings' proximity to the ocean allowed for the easy harvesting of cod, salmon, seals, and migratory waterfowl. Kelvin notes that Sandwich Bay families often had an additional summer house; one was for salmon fishing and the other for cod harvesting. Whaleboats were used for travel and fishing; they were often homemade.<sup>222</sup> During the winter, families moved inland, where the forests would shield them from the harsh coastal winds and provide firewood for warmth. Here, their time was occupied by big- and small-game hunting, fur trapping, and ice fishing on the rivers. Families also kept dog teams for hunting and travel, and Kennedy notes that "the entire dog-team complex, including dog-team commands, uuk for right and utter for left, along with whalebone komatik shoes, was rooted in Inuit culture." Women's work was also seasonal. Summers saw them helping their husbands process fish for trade with merchants and gardening, while the onset of winter signaled a switch to cleaning furs, which was done with ulus. During the winter, women also made clothing and sealskin boots for their families; domestic duties never ceased.<sup>223</sup>

Much like Inuit families at Wolstenholme, Labrador families used their traditional skills to produce goods to trade with local and itinerant merchants,

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<sup>222</sup> Kennedy, 8, and chap. 6, esp. 151-153 and 165-175; Kelvin, 50; Cleophas Belvin, *The Forgotten Labrador: Kegashka to Blanc-Sablon* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006), 71-73, 76; and Borlase, 57, 62-63, 93-94, 115-124.

<sup>223</sup> Kennedy, 8 and chap. 6, esp. 151-153, 175-179, and 176 (quote); Kelvin, 52; Belvin, 71-73, 75-76; and Borlase, 80. 92-93, 95-100, 112-115.

including the HBC. Salt cod, salmon, and furs were their primary products.<sup>224</sup>

According to historian Cleophas Belvin, in the twentieth century,

local fishermen received their fishing gear on credit at the beginning of the season, on the understanding that they would pay for it in fish once the season was over. The rest of the catch would be used to obtain winter provisions, but more often than not, a portion of these supplies were also obtained on credit. Money rarely, if ever, was exchanged between buyer and seller.<sup>225</sup>

Though Kelvin notes that the cash economy began to intrude on the “credit/debit system” in the early twentieth century, families trading with St. Lawrence Seaway Products Limited or the HBC, “the principal salt cod buyers” remained on the credit system, as did Inuit trappers in the eastern Arctic.<sup>226</sup> The early twentieth-century fur trade in Labrador also resembled that of the Arctic: competition between RF and the HBC and price fluctuations affected the trade, and the demand was primarily for foxes. White and Inuit-Métis trappers in Labrador did have the option of targeting different animals depending on world demand, which Wolstenholme trappers could not do.<sup>227</sup> Labrador’s Inuit-inflected way of life, characterized by seasonal transhumance, the production of goods for a global market, and dependence on merchants for provisions and hunting gear, persisted until the mid-twentieth century. In fact, some people migrated seasonally as late as the 1990s, though much had changed by then.<sup>228</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> Kelvin, 52; and Kennedy, 160.

<sup>225</sup> Belvin, 132. Also, Kennedy, 160.

<sup>226</sup> Kelvin, 57; and Belvin, 131-132.

<sup>227</sup> Kennedy, 218-224.

<sup>228</sup> Kennedy, 7-8; and Kelvin, 57. Archaeologists Elmer Harp and M.A.P. Renouf experienced this lifestyle firsthand while conducting excavations in 1949 and 1950. See Harp, Jr., Elmer et al. *Lives and Landscapes: A Photographic Memoir of Outport Newfoundland and Labrador, 1949-*

The unique Euro-Inuit culture of Labrador and the seasonality of life there undoubtedly conditioned staff members who possessed that background for life in the eastern Arctic. Few were unacquainted with Inuit and their lifeways. Fewer still were unused to transhumance or to the idea of a migratory, subsistence-oriented life. Though the Tarramiut differed significantly from the Labrador Inuit, who had access to trees and made sod houses, the Wolstenholme staff possessed enough Inuit cultural literacy to be open to building a community with local trappers on the Hudson Strait.

### **The Wolstenholme Community, 1911-1946**

Life at Wolstenholme changed once the post was connected to the social and economic networks of local Inuit. Almost immediately, the symbiotic relationship that had been anticipated from the beginning developed. Food sharing was the cornerstone of community at Wolstenholme. Over the life of the post, the staff hunted (and trapped) less, depending more on their trading partners to supply country food. The Inuit served by the post, in turn, came to rely on it for dry goods (“store food”), which provided a stable food source when game was scarce, as well as ammunition, an indirect source of food.

Soon after contact was made at Sugluk Bay, a “very hungry” family arrived at the post, having “shot nothing on the road,” and with news of five other families on their way.<sup>229</sup> These families were in need of supplemental food due to low game

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1963 (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2003), introduction, part one: 1949, and part two: 1950.

<sup>229</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 16 August 1911.

stocks and had not come to trade. They needed some provisions to be pulled back from a state of starvation so that they could try to hunt again. Opapyah, the first family's provider, for example, left to go caribou hunting the very next day, though his family would be staying at the post until the supply ship arrived.<sup>230</sup> A month later, the new post manager wrote that "yesterday Kaunnaluk came back from inland as he with his family ran short of grub in very bad weather[.] [H]e will try again as soon as the weather clears."<sup>231</sup> From the beginning, the post was a place where a family could regroup, get some provisions, and return to the land for real food and their fur income. This practice continued over the years. In 1923, for instance, "Charlie, Sheaveaksuk, Kuturalook, Allookoo-Mark & a couple of boys" received provisions after reporting that they were "hungry for meat and fat."<sup>232</sup> In 1939, another tough year in terms of game, two men came in when they ran out of cartridges on a seal hunt. In this case, the post's replenishment of their ammunition supply was a better source of relief than "grub" would have been since they had finally found a spot with a good number of seals.<sup>233</sup>

By hosting Inuit in hard times, the post staff earned trappers' goodwill and thus their trade. The extreme environment of the Arctic, so powerful in Inuit lives, had created a society in which food sharing was a prominent value. According to anthropologist Bernard Saladin d'Anglure, a good Inuit host offered his visitors

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<sup>230</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 17 August 1911 and 18 August 1911.

<sup>231</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 28 September 1911.

<sup>232</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 28 November 1923.

<sup>233</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 3 February 1939.

food, and “a person who requested food was never refused.”<sup>234</sup> It makes sense that Inuit trading at the post expected a helping hand in difficult winters, given their principles. Beyond anticipating that the Company would extend credit when they needed it, locals expected their business partners to feed them at no charge while they were at the post. Markossie, who guided Bruce Campbell to Sugluk in 1934, asked for tea when he arrived at the post, for example.<sup>235</sup> Wolstenholme maintained a gratuity budget for this reason, though the post men often found it insufficient to satisfy visitors. When the annual ship was late in 1934, the post manager made locals promise to feed themselves since Wolstenholme’s “present allowance” was not enough to feed them all and they did not want to return home. After Inuit made unfavorable comparisons between the gratuities offered at Wakeham Bay (run by RF) and the post, he concluded that it would benefit Wolstenholme “to feed them on a more generous scale.”<sup>236</sup>

Besides granting gratuities and emergency credit, Wolstenholme shared food directly and indirectly by annually provisioning Inuit on credit. Dry goods, ammunition, and, later, gasoline for motorboats allowed families to cache food (and dogfood) for the winter so that they could trap more. It also ensured their survival and continued trapping in the long term. In 1934, the post manager reported that he had had to provision local Inuit for walrus hunting three times, “instead of the usual twice,” because bad weather had interfered with the previous

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<sup>234</sup> Saladin d’Anglure, 124 and 115.

<sup>235</sup> Campbell, 74.

<sup>236</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 22 and 27 August 1934.

hunting trips. This had resulted in high debt among the trappers, but the post manager anticipated a good fox season and was not as concerned as he might have been. He still thought that “Lack of dogfood will undoubtedly minimise our fur hunt this coming winter,” however, since the men had not secured enough walrus to last through the winter.<sup>237</sup> This statement shows how important it was for the Company to support locals in securing their food supply. About a decade later, in contrast, a post manager happily wrote that “All natives have done well with Whales this year,” which would “make a difference to the Fur hunt!”<sup>238</sup>

When Inuit went hunting with Wolstenholme provisions, they were not just feeding themselves, however. Locals often provided the Wolstenholme men with much-needed fresh meat, supplementing the latter’s hunting efforts and their diet of dry and canned goods. For example, in 1924, the men were grateful for “a trout & a little sealmeat” that a man brought in, as they had not “had a bit of fresh meat for two weeks.”<sup>239</sup> On another occasion, in 1933, some people, having “made a good killing of young white whales and some seals...brought some of the meat in for dog feed for us.”<sup>240</sup> Six years later, the journals report seal meat, geese, livers, partridges, and more whale meat being traded at the post.<sup>241</sup> Locals also collected goose eggs for the men.<sup>242</sup> Often, Inuit and whites went hunting together explicitly

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<sup>237</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 29 September 1923 and 12 October 1923 entries. Quotes from the latter.

<sup>238</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 14 July 1945.

<sup>239</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 19 January 1924.

<sup>240</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 27 June 1933.

<sup>241</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 21 March 1939, 22 May 1939, 4 June 1939, and 6 June 1939 entries.

<sup>242</sup> See, for example, Wolstenholme Post Journal, 27 June 1945.

to feed the post, the former taking a leading role in such trips.<sup>243</sup> The post staff needed country food for optimal nourishment and to feed their dogs, which made travel possible. Inuit locals' prominent role in white survival established interdependence at the post and was a premise for community.

When Wolstenholme men traded for meat rather than foxes, they behaved according to Inuit community values in addition to acquiring dietary necessities. Allowing Inuit families to trade food animals in hard times allowed them to survive since they could replenish their provisions and hunting equipment. The nadirs of arctic fox cycles<sup>244</sup> and poor game years were the most critical moments for food sharing. The exchange of meat for “grub” mitigated the risk of starvation for Inuit by serving as a nutritional bottom line. It also kept the post men less hungry and improved their diet, both nutritionally and in terms of variety. Though the Wolstenholme men were given a year's supply of dry goods to survive until ship time, this was not an abundance of food. Worse, the frigid climate and strenuous activities that employees engaged in—hunting, trading for hours in unheated buildings, maintaining buildings, etc.—created strong appetites and high caloric needs. Fresh meat was a major part of the men's diet. The secondary trade in food, which was not as profit-driven as the fox trade, created a relationship of

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<sup>243</sup> See Campbell, chap. 6-8 (walrus hunting), B. M. May, “Walrus Hunt,” *The Beaver*, September 1942, 31-32, Canada's History Archive featuring *The Beaver*; May, “Caribou Hunt;” and Nichols, “My Most Exciting Experience” (seal hunting).

<sup>244</sup> Arctic fox populations fluctuate in three- or four-year cycles. Saladin d'Anglure, 53 and 32; Morantz, *Southeastern Hudson Bay*, 20; Ray, 206; and Lofthouse, 37.

interdependence among whites and Inuit—the first sign of community at Wolstenholme.

The frequent trading in food and furs, combined with the small size of the white and Inuit populations fostered intimacy at Wolstenholme, a deeper layer of community building. This process began with familiarity, in the form of knowing individuals' names. According to Bruce Campbell, HBC posts kept files on each trapper, which included their “date of birth, number of children, and...wives; ability as an engineer, as a dog-driver, as a hunter, as a trapper, and as a boatman; general character; and...the amount of fur caught in the past year.” Wolstenholme was no exception.<sup>245</sup> These files could have been a crutch for the post staff, but it seems more likely that they served as records and an aid to new employees. Trading was a long process, and it ensured that people would become readily acquainted with one another. Campbell remarked that it could take “three days to deal with...twenty natives” since they could not be rushed.<sup>246</sup> This may have been an exaggeration, but the post journals do indicate that trading took many hours to complete.<sup>247</sup>

In the post journals, Inuit are usually mentioned by name, rather than in agglomerations. On February 3, 1939, for example, “Solomonie and Henry” arrived at the post. Ten days later, “Natives Ungaeyook, Oudlalook, Ooshoakjuke, Lucas, Henry and Knakjuak’s family” came by.<sup>248</sup> The prevalence of individual names in

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<sup>245</sup> Campbell, 17 (quote) and 18.

<sup>246</sup> Campbell, 64.

<sup>247</sup> For example, see Wolstenholme Post Journal, 18 December 1934 and 22 May 1939 entries.

<sup>248</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 3 and 13 February 1939 entries.

the journals, especially indigenous ones, indicates a significant degree of familiarity between the Wolstenholme men and trappers. Though post managers had to keep track of who came in and what was traded, such information was likely recorded in individuals' files or in the post's accounts since the journals rarely give detailed trading information. Moreover, the fact that some writers did resort to mass mentions of Inuit like "natives," shows that enumeration of individuals was not required. J.G. Cormack and Frank Melton, who kept the Wolstenholme journal from 1945-1946, for instance, frequently used this appellation.<sup>249</sup> The widespread and voluntary use of individual trappers' names in the journals is evidence of budding familiarity at Wolstenholme. The Inuit, for their part, "devise[d] nicknames for all white people who visit[ed] the Arctic," according to Campbell.<sup>250</sup>

Euro-Inuit relations at Wolstenholme took on an increasingly intimate character as time passed. Beyond knowing individual trappers' names, the post men came to know their personalities well. For example, on July 6, 1940, two Inuit arrived with whale meat to trade. The post staff got into

quite a disagreement with Ugnaitok concerning who should provide the natives with cartridges during the summer months. As it is he is the most awkward of the natives, and naturally the disagreement would take place with him. He is of the decided opinion that the Company should provide the Cartridges when the natives are "hard up" and the natives permitted to spend their small earnings...on tea, tobacco and such like. I do not know who is responsible for entertaining this line of thought; but they both got cartridges for the meat traded to day.<sup>251</sup>

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<sup>249</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 1945-1946.

<sup>250</sup> Campbell, 53.

<sup>251</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 6 Jul 1940.

This late entry shows far more than a buyer-seller acquaintance between Ugnaitok and the traders. His personality is specifically described, something that a person does not come to know from impersonal dealings, even if frequent. Trading was a prolonged activity that was more personal than a regular business transaction. It created a deeper relationship between the traders and trappers, no matter how “akward.” Even though the post manager won the day, refusing to give Ugnaitok anything but cartridges for his meat, the disagreement was intense, a sign that it was not one between strangers.

Beyond knowing individuals, the Wolstenholme men seemed to know all the people in the area. Though he often referred to Inuit visitors en masse, J.G. Cormack knew the locals well enough to identify a group of people as “outsiders” on November 30, 1945. This comment was part of a long entry in which he expressed concern for young women’s marriage prospects. Since all the locals were related, Cormack worried that they would have to search far afield for husbands.<sup>252</sup> This level of familiarity with the local community does not seem to have been uncommon for HBC whites in the Arctic: Mrs. R.E. Knight recalled a journey that she made with her husband from Cape Smith to Povungnetuk. They stopped at two native camps on the way. Describing the second one, she noted that “As at the first camp, we knew everyone here, and had a fine gossip before going on.”<sup>253</sup> The small size of arctic communities like Wolstenholme and the

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<sup>252</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 30 November 1945.

<sup>253</sup> Knight, 7.

communal nature of subsistence and travel encouraged not just individual- but community-level familiarity.

The reasons for Inuit visits to Wolstenholme and the news exchanged at the post transcend familiarity, however. The Wolstenholme post journals are rife with non-business news and activities. These passages show that Euro-Inuit interaction at the post entailed much more than fur trading, taking on a decidedly intimate cast. Inuit families visited the post in the manner of neighbors in dispersed communities, for leisure and in emergencies. Recreational visits often involved simple chatting. For example, in 1941, “Josephie and Selmoonie arrived...and after a short visit left for the camp.”<sup>254</sup> There is no mention of trading in the entry; the men seem to have been looking for good conversation. On another occasion, a post manager “Did some trading and talked a bit with natives.” The separate mention of each activity implies that they were unrelated.<sup>255</sup> Other visits were more exciting, as on Christmas Day in 1923. To celebrate the holiday, the Wolstenholme men “held a shooting competition for the natives...after that we had football & a scramble winding up at night with a dance, I think everybody had an enjoyable time, for dinner we had sealmeat.”<sup>256</sup> In making leisure visits, Inuit made the conscious and time-consuming decision to travel to the post, sometimes with no expectation of trade or food. This suggests that a Euro-Inuit community was cohering.

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<sup>254</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 11 July 1941.

<sup>255</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 1 September 1945.

<sup>256</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 25 December 1923.

Crisis compelled other visits. In one instance, a boy came in with a “frost-bitten Penis” in need of treatment. Apparently, it was only the latest in a series of “‘queer’ Doctoring jobs” they’d had that year.<sup>257</sup> On another occasion, some people arrived with the corpse of a little boy who had drowned. A post servant began work on a coffin the next day, and it is very likely that everyone mourned and buried the boy together.<sup>258</sup> Only intimacy and friendship could have compelled Inuit to bring their injured and dead to people who had begun as a foreign presence in their region.

Sometimes the Wolstenholme men paid visits of their own. On May 18, 1941, the post staff paid a visit to Ivujivik, where a Catholic mission had been founded in 1938 and had attracted Inuit settlement. They looked in on “the fathers,” finding them “to be in very good health,” but “All natives where [sic] also visited and found to be well.”<sup>259</sup> Evidently, Euro-Inuit relations at Wolstenholme had developed an element of mutual concern. There is more direct evidence of this in an entry dated May 31, 1941:

A very fine winter’s trade has been experienced by the Post: With all natives being in good health. Anguyuets[?] wife died of T.B., but this was to be expected as she had been ailing for a long time...The fur cycle exceeded earlier expectations, and consequently the natives have lived very well and have been able to equipp themselves with clothing...<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>257</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 1 April 1945. I do not think this was an April Fool’s joke.

<sup>258</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 21 and 22 May 1922.

<sup>259</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 18 May 1941, entry; and “Ivujivik,” Nunavik Tourism Association, accessed 15 May 2017, <http://www.nunavik-tourism.com/Ivujivik.aspx>.

<sup>260</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 31 May 1941.

A good trade year had come to be defined not only by Wolstenholme's success, but by the personal financial success and physical health of the Inuit community. A good year was one in which foxes were plentiful enough for the HBC to make its money and for Inuit families to eat well, affording the modern tools and foodstuffs that they had come to consider necessities. As in earlier years, the post manager showed himself to be well acquainted with the Inuit locals, specifically recording the death of a woman that he'd known to be suffering from tuberculosis for some time.

The exchange of personal, non-trade-related news also characterized community at Wolstenholme. Post staff not only listened to Inuit news—they recorded it. Evidently, the Wolstenholme men's relationship with locals was such that they thought the latter's goings-on and circumstances worth preserving. For example, one recorded that a man named Angnamatshat's "wife died last Saturday & he says he is now very lonely."<sup>261</sup> That he recorded this news shows that it was meaningful to him. His mention of Angnamatshat's loneliness also shows sympathy; he might have stopped at noting the death but chose to say more about the bereaved trapper. On another occasion, post man Albert T. Swaffield went to Ivujivik to confirm the veracity of a "rumour" going around: "Apparently some of the natives maintain that Ooshoakjoke's adopted child died by ill-treatment...whereas the causes given were flu., and probably kidney trouble." The writer thought the tale "absurd," but potent enough to warrant investigation. A few days later, he was

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<sup>261</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 13 February 1924.

happy to report that the rumor was false and that locals were “taking steps, to...[see] who started it.”<sup>262</sup> Another post man wrote that one Mark had gone to his mother’s aid and to “kick up a row,” because “her husband ha[d] left her for a young girl, Mukkegeuks daughter.” Living alone, without a husband to procure food, Mark’s mother would have been in dire need of assistance. The writer seems to have understood the predicament. His tone was supportive, and he does not seem to have made any effort to dissuade Mark.<sup>263</sup> The quick travel of personal news is ubiquitous in small communities. Wolstenholme was no exception. The white post men were plugged into Inuit news networks. The exchange of news was not idle chatter, however. The recording of news in the post journals and Swaffield’s hurried journey to Ivujivik shows that the post men were committed to maintaining peace and well-being in their community. Even if upholding peace and looking after others was a matter of convenience, whites and Inuit at the post were transformed into a tight-knit community in the process.

Another marker of community cohesion at Wolstenholme was white acculturation to Inuit values. As discussed earlier, some of the Wolstenholme men’s Labrador backgrounds meant that they came to the North with a degree of Inuit cultural knowledge, particularly in terms of subsistence skills. At the post, however, many people experienced additional acculturation. Labradorians (to say nothing of other HBC whites) did not necessarily speak Inuktitut on arriving in the North, but in the Arctic, knowledge of Inuktitut was essential to communication and

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<sup>262</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 29 April and 1 May 1939.

<sup>263</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 15 January 1924.

trade. Inuit were not expected to speak English or culturally accommodate HBC men, outnumbering whites as they did. From the first year of the post's existence, Ralph Parsons recommended hiring people who spoke "the language" in some capacity.<sup>264</sup> This advice resulted in the presence of interpreters like James Palliser and John Edmunds at the post. Despite their presence, there was still an expectation that whites would learn some "Eskimo." When he traded with locals for the first time in 1934, Bruce Campbell experienced a kind of light hazing at the hands of the trappers. They requested items in Inuktitut without pointing at them and waited for him to grab the correct one. Though this was done in good fun—when it was over Campbell felt that "the ice had been broken" and that he had passed their test for friendship—it articulated a ground rule.<sup>265</sup> Whites were to deal with Inuit on their own terms, which included speaking Inuktitut. It is worth noting that when he initiated Bruce in trade, his boss was already proficient in the language. He "said something to Enowalik and Koopygoalook," that Campbell did not understand.<sup>266</sup>

The Wolstenholme men seem to have met this expectation of partial assimilation. Inuktitut expressions and phrases made their way into the men's writings, showing that they learned the language to some degree, even if they did not achieve fluency. In the entry for January 18, 1924, for example, the post manager reported that "Aoudlak, Pootoolik & Jardine" had lost their rifles and some

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<sup>264</sup> "General Remarks & Suggestions," Wolstenholme Post Report, 1909.

<sup>265</sup> Campbell, 9-10.

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

darts on the sea ice: “it is a sorry business but as the Eskimos say, I-ona-mut.” Having no proficiency in Inuktitut, I can only guess at the phrase’s meaning, but the manager evidently expected future post men looking over the journals to be familiar with it, as he was.<sup>267</sup> Another man noted that an Inuk brought some poor-quality “muktuk” to trade. The writer’s choice of the Inuit term to describe whale meat shows a degree of acculturation and Inuktitut language acquisition.<sup>268</sup> In his story, “Walrus Hunt,” Bob M. May similarly made use of Inuktitut words, and Campbell included list of “Eskimo Words and Numbers” to help readers through his book.<sup>269</sup>

In the process of living and trading in the Arctic, Wolstenholme whites also took on another Inuit characteristic: Inuit attire. Though men of Labrador stock likely came to Wolstenholme already accustomed to Inuit forms of travel, seasonality, and foods like seal and whale meat, they did not tend to dress like Inuit. At the post, however, there is evidence that people preferred Inuit clothing. On his boss’s suggestion, for example, Bruce Campbell asked one of the local women employed by the post, Peeshooktook, to make him an attige (cloth summer parka) and a winter fur parka.<sup>270</sup> Among several articles of clothing, Bob May packed sealskin pants, “winter boots with sealskin tops and moose-hide bottoms,

Figure 4: "Winter Dress P.I."  
[J.W. Nichols at Pond Inlet].  
HBCA, John William Nichols  
fonds, HBCA 2000-19-001,  
[1924-1926]. Nichols worked at  
Wolstenholme from 1913-1921.

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<sup>267</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 18 January 1924.

<sup>268</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 6 June 1939. Muktuk refers to beluga whale meat and blubber.

<sup>269</sup> May, “Walrus Hunt,” 38 and 39; and Campbell, vi.

<sup>270</sup> Campbell, 55-57.

deerskin mitts, and my deerskin [caribou] parka” in preparation for a caribou hunt.<sup>271</sup> Likely, Wolstenholme men wore Inuit clothing due to its unparalleled



Figure 3: [Seven unidentified men in front of a building in western and Inuit dress with a dog team in the foreground]. HBCA, John William Nichols Fonds, HBCA 2000-19-011, [1921-1926].



warmth, but there seems to have been more to the choice. It was quite possible to survive an arctic winter in Western winter wear. In the photograph below (fig. 3), taken between 1921 and 1926, one of the men did just that, wearing a Western parka despite being the odd man out. Wolstenholme and other whites in the arctic seem to have dressed more like John W. Nichols (fig. 4), if their writings and photographs are any indication. While they returned to “whiter” dress at ship time, possibly to make a good impression with other whites, that many post men spent the better part of the year in Inuit clothing shows a surprising degree of acculturation and community cohesion.

Beyond understanding at least some Inuktitut and dressing more like locals, Euro-Inuit relations at Wolstenholme exhibited a deeper cross-cultural

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<sup>271</sup> May, “Caribou Hunt,” 31.

understanding. In July of 1933, for example, the post manager reported the following incident:

The natives were unable to trap constantly as they were terrorized by one – Ooshuajuke – who went crazy late in the fall. Of the innumerable things that he did and said the most outstanding was his constant threatening of the natives with his rifle. His wish being that, when he had sufficient cartridges, he would shoot everyone. In February he shot at some of the men and soon after informed all that he intended killing all of them during the following night. Worked up by these incidents and almost ill with constant worry and fear for the safety of their wives and children some of the men tried to shoot him – but were unable to do it. Next morning three natives – Solomonie, Puvvik and Thoomasie – shot him dead outside his igloo. This is a very regrettable incident but one can realise the state of mind of the natives after having this man amongst them for a greater part of the winter and one can appreciate their thoughts for the safety of their families and their reasoning that one life taken would in all probability save many others.<sup>272</sup>

This post manager's words express more than mere sympathy for his Inuit acquaintances in their decision to execute a deranged member of their community. He seems to have understood the way that law functioned in Inuit communities and the limits of menacing behavior. He never contemplated meddling in the affair or involving other authorities (though it is unsettling that he recorded the incident in the post journal). The decision made sense to him and he accepted it. About a decade before, there had been a similar incident culminating in the death one David, who "was running wild" and not letting people leave their homes. The manager had not been critical on this occasion, either. Indeed, he noted that "This

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<sup>272</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 24 July 1933. Elder Sarah Qualingo (b. 1912) recalled this incident. "[W]e had a frightening experience that lasted whole winter, until the man [Usuarjuk] died...we had a large igloo and almost all the people of Pujjunaq stayed with us...men, with guns, kept watch at nights in the porch" until the community executed him. See Sarah Qualingo oral account, quoted in Lofthouse, 68-69.

person was always giving us a certain amt. of trouble and minding everybodys business more than his own.”<sup>273</sup> Such reactions were unique to the cross-cultural community of Wolstenholme and perhaps other remote eastern Arctic posts. The ensuing decades would see the Canadian government trying to force modern Western law on Inuit communities, as in the infamous case of Kikkik, a woman who was charged with murder and child neglect in 1958, though she was eventually acquitted.<sup>274</sup> Kikkik’s case shows that cross-cultural intelligibility was not a given in Euro-Inuit interaction.

## **Conclusion**

Euro-Inuit relations at Wolstenholme were characterized by the formation of a tight community of personal bonds across cultures. Mutual food sharing, trade, and coexistence produced familiarity and then intimacy. Wolstenholme men came to know everyone in the area by name and character, beginning with the trappers they did business with. This familiarity gave way to intimacy in the form of non-business-related visiting and news exchange. The post’s community was also marked by whites’ acculturation to Inuit ways, especially learning some Inuktitut and dressing like locals. Though not discussed in this study, the hiring of Inuks as permanent post servants, such as Hullingo (Qalingo) and Palliser, who were

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<sup>273</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 12 November 1924.

<sup>274</sup> “Kikkik Inuit – When Justice Was Done,” *Mysteries of Canada*, accessed 13 April 2018, <https://www.mysteriesofcanada.com/nunavut/kikkik>. For another case of legal government interference in Inuit affairs, see Shelagh Grant, *Arctic Justice: On Trial for Murder, Pond Inlet, 1923* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2002).

trusted employees, was another distinctive trait. When James Tusaajiapik Palliser died of tuberculosis in 1924,<sup>275</sup> a long obituary for him appeared in *The Beaver*:

It is with regret that we chronicle the death of James Pallisser, Eskimo interpreter at Wolstenholme post...Jim was a hard worker, and served the Company faithfully for the past two years...He is survived by a wife and four children. His father, Joseph Pallisser, whom he had not seen for fifteen years, is employed at Lake Harbour post, and would not hear of the sad event until the supply ship arrived in the summer at that post. All the post managers whom he has served under will feel sorry to learn of his death, and will recall many difficulties he assisted in overcoming in the outside work.<sup>276</sup>

Palliser was clearly a beloved coworker to many, and one whose life and circumstances were no mystery to the people who worked with him every day. Prior to this public announcement, the post manager had also noted his death “with deep regret.” At the post, a coffin was immediately built for Palliser, and though the ground was very hard, “there was plenty of help” digging his grave.<sup>277</sup> Though he was not Tarramiut but from Labrador, Palliser’s example is evidence of the kinds of relationships that whites and Inuit were building at Wolstenholme. Years of mutual toil had forged ties of intimacy. Neither was his an isolated case, as the mention of his father shows.

Euro-Inuit relations at Wolstenholme were not always rosy, and they were perpetually marred by the potential for the HBC to abuse its trading partners in its quest to maximize profits. Even so, whites and Inuks achieved a remarkable degree of intimacy and friendship in daily life. Since the post closed in 1946, we

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<sup>275</sup> Lofthouse, 48.

<sup>276</sup> L.A. Ewing, “Wolstenholme Post,” *The Beaver*, September 1925, 212.

<sup>277</sup> Wolstenholme Post Journal, 16 and 17 November 1924 entries.

cannot know with any certainty how relations between the traders and trappers would have evolved over time. The post-World War II period, especially from 1945 to the 1950s is an important missing link because it marked the fur market's final contraction, with fox fur prices declining by 80 percent.<sup>278</sup> Indeed, the downturn in prices probably forced the post's closure. Historian Arthur Ray concluded that, in the central Arctic, the "mutually beneficial partnership" between the HBC and indigenous peoples crumbled after World War II due to government conservation programs and the invasion of white trappers, the latter facilitated by the advent of bush planes.<sup>279</sup> Historian Toby Morantz's findings in the southeastern Hudson Bay were similar: The Canadian state's interference in subarctic native lives and encroachment on their lands arrived only after World War II, but the 1940s and 50s saw increasing distance between whites and Inuit.<sup>280</sup>

Though there was no threat of white trappers in the eastern Arctic, palpable government intervention in Inuit lives did come in the late-1940s and 1950s. Inuit movement into permanent settlements, mostly between the 1950s and the 1970s, followed the decline of the fur trade. Ivujivik, the nearby Inuit camp based around Catholic missionaries, itself became a permanent settlement in the late-1940s.<sup>281</sup> It follows that the trend of deteriorating white-native relations, made increasingly distant by government interlopers, would have applied to Wolstenholme had it remained in operation beyond the mid-1940s. On the other hand, it is possible that

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<sup>278</sup> Morantz, *Ungava Bay*, 150. Also, Lofthouse, 70.

<sup>279</sup> Ray, 199-200.

<sup>280</sup> Morantz, *Southeastern Hudson Bay*, 111-112 and 97-98.

<sup>281</sup> Vicks-Westgate, 28 and 38. Also, Morantz, *Ungava Bay*, chap. 4

community lingered in the wake of Wolstenholme's closure. In 1949, Mrs. W. Buhr published a story called "Komatik Trip" in the HBC's *Moccasin Telegraph*. Some years after the post's closure, she and her husband had journeyed from Sugluk to Wolstenholme to temporarily reopen the post for trade: "All the natives arrived that afternoon and Wally was busy looking after them. They all had a big confab that evening and then all the next day and part of Saturday was spent in trading with them."<sup>282</sup> Though the market could no longer support a post at Wolstenholme, the Company had not abandoned its trading partners there. In briefly reopening the post for trade and food sharing, the community that had cohered around Wolstenholme was resurrected. As the mention of a "big confab" shows, the ties of intimacy that had taken hold between HBC whites and local Inuit did not dissipate with the market's decline. There was community at Wolstenholme yet, even if the ties were enervated by distance.

Regardless of what the Wolstenholme community's fate may have been, it is remarkable to uncover white-indigenous intimacy and community in the modern age, and characterized by the indigenous economic might and cross-cultural exchange of earlier periods no less. The twentieth-century Euro-Inuit community at the HBC's Wolstenholme post is a fact that should make historians think carefully before assigning sweeping markers of defeat to entire centuries in North American indigenous history.

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<sup>282</sup> Mrs. W. Buhr, 3.

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