

# Chapter 4

## Documents

Many of the research topics in Indigenous land rights projects are historical. As a result you will spend considerable time looking for documentary evidence (written and graphic accounts stored in libraries, government offices, museums and archives). This chapter outlines the main sources of documentary evidence used for research of Indigenous land issues in BC. The federal and provincial governments created many of the records listed here for the purposes of administering and regulating Indigenous lands and resources. If you are using these documents to research the history of your reserves see Chapter 5: Basic Reserve Research. If you are researching other topics in your traditional territory you can use this chapter as a general reference guide. It will help you identify written records that are available and isolate specific issues you may want to consider for your project.

The chapter is organized as a series of entries on different kinds of written records. Each entry discusses what the document is, what kind of information it contains and where to find it. Unless noted in the entry, you can find contact information for the resources institutions in Chapter 3: Resource Institutions.

### Colonial Records

#### Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) Records

HBC records include all the books, letters, ledgers, ship logs, pictures, photographs, maps, and reports produced by officials in the course of trading with Indigenous People and exploring and settling the area that later became BC.

##### ***What information can I get from HBC records?***

HBC records can be a valuable source of information on the encounters between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people prior to the mid-1800s. The records yield information on HBC officials' observations of human and natural history of the area, Indigenous land use and occupancy, trade patterns, and non-Indigenous settlement.

##### ***Where can I find HBC Records?***

HBC records are stored in the HBC Archives, a branch of the Manitoba Archives. Documents are available on microfilm through **inter-library loan**. Library and Archives Canada (LAC) also has microfilm copies of HBC records.

## Colonial Correspondence

The Colonial Correspondence collection includes all the written communication between the representatives of the colonial government and Britain during the pre-confederation period (1849-1871) in BC.

### ***What information can I get from Colonial Correspondence?***

The documents in the collection provide information on all aspects of Indian land policy, from the creation of Douglas treaties in the 1850s to the reduction of reserves under Joseph Trutch between 1864 and 1871. You can use the materials to find information about reserves that were created, search for details about Indigenous land use and occupancy, or look for evidence of Indigenous protest against colonial policy.

### ***Where can I find Colonial Correspondence?***

- The original records are stored at the BC Archives Colonial Correspondence Collection. The maps in the Collection have been removed and are now available as part of the BC Archives map collection.
- Microfilm copies of many of the documents in the Collection are available at the BC Archives, the UBC Koerner Library, and the UBCIC Resource Centre. There is also an index for the Collection at all of these locations that, though only partially complete, can serve as a useful aid to help you find records.
- The BC Surveyor General Branch has copies of surveys and maps of the Douglas reserves from the Collection. They also have the original Royal Engineers' field books from this time period in the Map Vault.

It is also a good idea to look for other records produced in this period. The BC Archives has a number of other record groups relating to the colonial period, including records of the Colonial Office in Great Britain. See Chapter 15: Pre-Confederation Reserves for more information on using these records for research.

## Papers Connected with the Indian Land Question: 1850-1875

*Papers Connected with the Indian Land Question: 1850-1875* is a collection of colonial government records regarding the administration of Indigenous lands and resources in the colonial period.

### ***What information can I get from Papers Connected with the Indian Land Question?***

If your band had a Vancouver Island treaty or a Douglas reserve you can use *Papers Connected* to find copies of the treaty or correspondence regarding the size, features, and locations of the reserve allotments. *Papers Connected* also includes a copy of the 1871 Indian reserve schedule.

### ***Where can I find copies of Papers Connected with the Indian Land Question?***

*Papers Connected* is available at the UBCIC Resource Centre and many university and public

libraries throughout the province. The full citation is: *Papers Connected with the Indian Land Question* (Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1875).

## Records from Indian Reserve Commissions

### Joint/Indian Reserve Commissions (J/IRC), 1876 – 1910

Officials involved in the Joint Indian Reserve Commission (1876-1878) and the Indian Reserve Commission (1878-1910) created a large collection of materials to document their findings and decisions regarding the allotment of reserves and resource rights. Most information is included in the **minutes of decision** (MOD) and accompanying correspondence and survey sketches. The MOD are the official record of reserve allotments as set out by the commissioners. They served as instructions to the surveyors who followed behind the Indian Reserve Commissioners, physically marking out the boundaries of the reserves.

#### ***What information can I get from J/IRC records?***

MOD and accompanying documents provide information on official visits to Indigenous communities, and the details and circumstances surrounding the allotment and surveying of reserves. They include discussions of land use and occupancy and rights to resources prior to the establishment of reserves and any information about the land and acreage of the reserve being allotted. In the later years (1878 – 1908), the Indian Reserve Commissioner generally wrote a **field minute** (covering letter) to his superior, the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs in Ottawa, explaining his allotment decisions and enclosing the individual minutes and sketches.

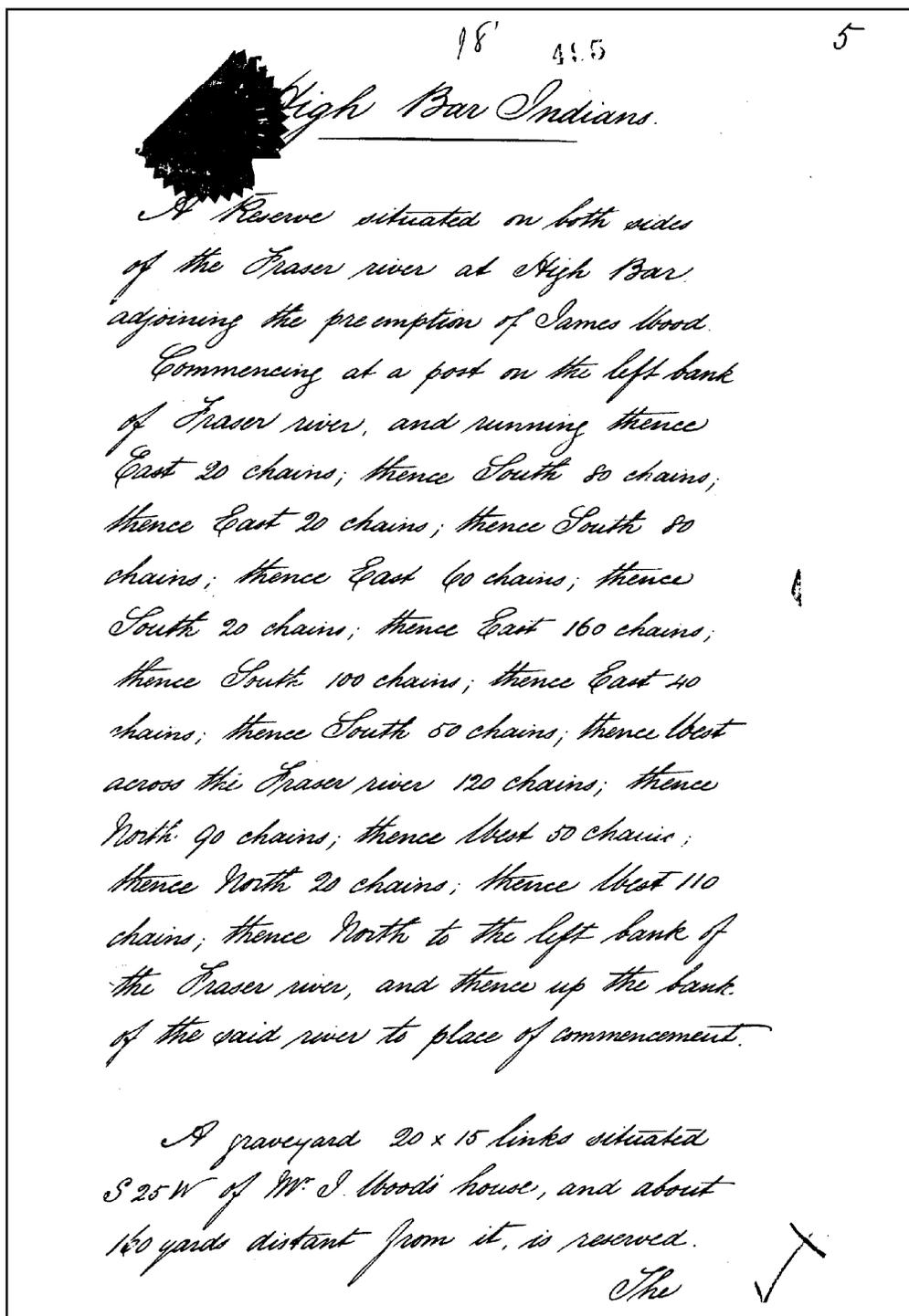
#### ***Where can I find copies of J/IRC records?***

Both the federal and provincial government commissioners created MOD and accompanying documents so you will need to check both versions and investigate any discrepancies between them. Check the following locations:

- The original federal and provincial MOD and accompanying correspondence are stored at Library and Archives Canada (LAC).
- The UBCIC Resource Centre has complete sets of copies of the federal and provincial MOD, including sketches.
- Copies of the federal MOD are available at Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) Land and Trust Services and Specific Claims West Resource Centre. They are also available at the Legal Surveys Division of Natural Resources Canada.
- Copies of the provincial MOD and accompanying correspondence are available at BC Archives. See finding aid GR 2982.
- MOD were also reproduced in the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA) Annual Report for the year the reserve was allotted. When searching for MOD in the annual reports it is helpful to know the agency to which your band belonged in the year the allotment took place. It is a good

idea to compare the annual report entry to the copies of original MOD to determine if errors or omissions occurred.

There are other J/IRC records stored elsewhere. Archived Indian Affairs (RG10) files contain correspondence, reports and other documentation from the J/IRC. BC Archives also has government records that provide information on the J/IRC.



## **Royal Commission on Indian Affairs in the Province of BC (the McKenna-McBride Commission), 1913-1916**

McKenna-McBride Commission records include all the documents commissioners collected in the process of reviewing reserves created by the earlier Indian Reserve Commissions and in making final allotments and/or cut-offs. The most valuable among these are the transcripts of oral testimony from the Commission's meetings and the official reports.

### ***What information can I get from McKenna-McBride Commission records?***

1. Transcripts of oral testimony. Indigenous people, their non-Indigenous neighbours, and local Indian agents testified before the Commission on a variety of matters pertaining to reserves and resource rights. The testimony provides rare oral accounts from Indigenous people explaining the way they used their land, the amount of land they needed for survival, and any disputes they had with Indian agents, non-Indigenous neighbours, or the Commission's decisions. It also includes any information provided by commissioners or Indian agents regarding cut-offs.
2. Official Documents. The Commission's final documents include all the information available on official decisions, including statements on alterations to the location or size of reserves or the rights associated with the reserves. The final documents are:
  - The 1916 four-volume *Report of the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs in the Province of British Columbia Final Report*. The report includes the 98 interim reports and five progress reports of the Commission. It also includes the detailed reports for each Indian agency, including map, tables, reserve confirmations, reductions and cut-offs, minutes of decision, and water and fishing rights. It was approved by British Columbia Order-in-Council 911 (July 26, 1923) and Canada Order-in-Council 1265 (July 19, 1924).
  - *The Confidential Report of the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs in the Province of British Columbia*.
  - *The Royal Commission's Memorandum and Evidence on Fishing Rights and Privileges of Indians in BC*.
  - *The Internal Minutes of the Proceedings and Sitzings of the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs in BC (McKenna-McBride) 1913 – 1916*.
  - Reserve schedules (the 1923 reserve schedule is appended to provincial OIC 911 and the 1924 reserve schedule).

### ***Where can I find copies of McKenna-McBride Commission records?***

UBCIC has compiled many of the key documents so the Resource Centre is a good place to start your research. Some of this material is available in digital form on the UBCIC website. The material is organized under "Our Homes Are Bleeding" at [www.ubcic.bc.ca/resources/ourhomesare](http://www.ubcic.bc.ca/resources/ourhomesare).

Original records are available as part of the Indian Affairs Records on RG 10 at LAC (see finding aid 10-52). You can obtain microfilm copies at the records at the UBCIC Resource Centre, the BC Archives (see finding aids for GR 1995, 123, 672, 931, 1303, 1967, 1995 & 2043 and Add. MSS 1056), and at INAC's Lands and Trusts Services Library and

Specific Claims West Resource Centre. The above institutions also have hardcopies of the transcripts and final reports.

Depending on your research needs, you may also wish to review:

- McKenna-McBride documents held in the BC Surveyor General Branch collection ("old" Indian agency files and general Indian Affairs file No.026076).
- The BC Lands files at BC Archives. GR 868 contains some information on disallowed Indian reserves.

| MINUTES OF DECISION—LYTTON AGENCY   | 538 |
|---|-----|
| <p>(7), Township Eight (8), Range Twenty-five (25), West of 6th Meridian, for general Reserve purposes, it was</p> <p>ORDERED: That there be allowed under this Application and established and constituted a Reserve for the use and benefit of the applicant Spuzzum Tribe, that certain tract or parcel of Railway Belt land described in the Application, containing an area of One Hundred (100) acres, more or less.</p> <p>Victoria, B.C., June 28th, 1916.</p> <p>CERTIFIED CORRECT,<br/>C. H. GIBBONS, <i>Secretary</i>.</p>   |     |
| <p><b>Lytton Agency—High Bar Tribe</b></p>  |     |
| <p>ORDERED: That High Bar Indian Reserve No. One (1) of the High Bar Tribe or Band, of the Lytton Agency, described in the Official Schedule of Indian Reserves, 1913, at Page 88 thereof, BE CONFIRMED as now fixed and determined and shewn on the Official Plan of Survey, viz.:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">"No. 1—High Bar, 2,924.00 acres."</p> <p>Victoria, B.C., March 13th, 1915.</p> <p>CERTIFIED CORRECT,<br/>C. H. GIBBONS, <i>Secretary</i>.</p>  |     |
| <p>The Commission having under consideration Lytton Agency Application No. 32, of the High Bar Tribe, for improved land of Indians approximately One-quarter (<math>\frac{1}{4}</math>) mile South of the Reserve, for Farming Purposes, it was</p> <p>ORDERED: That there be allowed under this Application and established and constituted a Reserve for the use and benefit of the applicant High Bar Tribe a certain tract or parcel of land containing an area of Forty (40) acres, more or less, subject to survey, East of Lot No. 2999 and lying between the said Lot No. 2999 and the Fraser River, as per sketch plan of Ashdown H. Green, B.C.L.S., numbered in accordance herewith and filed in duplicate with the Governments of Canada and of British Columbia.</p> |     |
| <p>The Commission having under consideration Lytton Agency Application No. 33, of the High Bar Tribe, for certain land improved by Indian Fenton, for Farming purposes, it was</p> <p>ORDERED: That there be allowed under this Application and established and constituted a Reserve for the use and benefit of the applicant High Bar Tribe, a certain tract or parcel of land lying immediately South of the land contained in Pre-emption Record No. 2730, to the East of Pre-emption Record No. 1752 and to the West of Pre-emption Record No. 2987, containing an area of Forty (40) acres, more or less, subject to survey, as per sketch plan of Ashdown H.</p>   |     |

Royal Commission on  
Indian Affairs in BC  
(McKenna- McBride  
Commission) Minutes of  
Decision.<sup>2</sup>

## Ditchburn-Clark Commission, 1920-1923

The Ditchburn-Clark Commission records include information created by Commissioners in the course of reviewing the McKenna-McBride decisions on reserve allotments and resource rights. The final decisions are documented in two orders in council: Provincial Order-in-Council 911 and Federal Order-in-Council 1265, and in Indian Affairs correspondence.

### *What information can I get from Ditchburn-Clark records?*

1. Provincial Order-in-Council 911, 1923, (the provincial Ditchburn-Clark reserve schedule) approved all of the changes to reserve lands recommended by the McKenna-McBride Commission. This schedule confirms the McKenna-McBride cut-offs in the Railway Belt that were subsequently rejected by the federal government.
2. Federal Order-in-Council 1265, 1924 (the federal Ditchburn-Clark reserve schedule) rejected any cut-offs on federally controlled lands in the Railway Belt. This means that, despite being listed in the Final Report, the McKenna-McBride cut-offs in the Railway Belt did not take effect. However, all other cut-off lands were lost.

### *Where can I find copies of Ditchburn-Clark records?*

The UBCIC Resource Centre, INAC's Lands and Trusts Services Library and Specific Claims West Resource Centre, and the BC Archives all have copies of the orders in council and the correspondence from LAC's RG 10 collection regarding the Commission's decisions. Also, Ditchburn-Clark documents are included in the BC Surveyor General Branch's collection (see "old" Indian agency files and General Indian Affairs File No.026076). The BC Lands files at BC Archives also have information regarding the Commission. For example, GR 868 contains some information on disallowed Indian reserves.

## Instruments

An **instrument** is a legal document authorizing transactions between parties. It provides all the relevant information regarding a transaction, including the details of any specific adjustments to reserve lands that were made and the legal duties of one party to another. There are several different types of instruments. Instruments for Indigenous lands research include:

- **Band Council Resolutions (BCRs)**. BCRs are records of council decisions made by a quorum of the councilors of a band at a meeting of the council.
- **Leases**. A lease is a legal document giving individuals exclusive possession of property on an Indian reserve for a particular period of time in return for rent.
- **Letters Patent**. These are records by which the federal government grants Crown lands to individuals.
- **Certificates of Possession (CPs)**. CPs are records by which the federal

government recognizes an individual band member's right to use a particular parcel of reserve land on a permanent basis (under the *Indian Act*). CPs are considered to be a higher form of entitlement than Certificates of Occupation, which allow the use of reserve land on a conditional or temporary basis, and Notices of Entitlement, which are less formal certificates. Older forms of individual land holdings, such as location tickets (pre-1951), have been updated by Indian Affairs to CP status. See the *Indian Act* sections relating to possession of lands in reserves.

- **Surrenders.** Surrenders are documents by which a band extinguishes its interest in reserve lands and disposes of the lands to non-Indians. See Chapter 17: Surrenders for more details.
- **Crown Grants:** See the listing under "Other Government Records" section of this chapter.

### ***Where do I find Instruments?***

You can find a list of the instruments for your reserve and view electronic copies of many of these instruments on the Indian Lands Registry System (ILRS) database. The ILRS is an INAC database of instruments relating to reserve lands. It is available on the INAC website.

Follow this four-step process to view the electronic instruments on the database:

1. Click on "Indian Land Registry System." This will lead you to the introductory page. You will need a password to login. You can obtain a password by calling the helpdesk number at the bottom of the screen.
2. After logging on to the ILRS, click on "Instrument Enquiry" from the main screen. From there, you can generate a general report of all instruments by entering the reserve name. You can view and print electronic copies of these documents from the database.
3. For many instruments, you can click on the registration number to gain access to an electronic copy of the instrument. This step will create an Instrument Management Report.
4. On the Instrument Management Report click on this symbol to access the document itself: 

A note on searching for CPs: In some circumstances, there may not be documents corresponding to a particular parcel of band land. In these cases, you may run across the INAC notations cardex holding or NETI, which means that there has been no paperwork submitted to prove that title exists.

### **Instrument: Order in Council, Federal (Privy Council Order in Council)**

An order in council is an instrument that serves notice of a decision taken by the executive arm of the federal government (the federal cabinet). They are sometimes called "Privy Council orders in council" (PCOC or OCPC).

***What information can I get from federal orders in council?***

Examples of orders in council include appointments of authorities and legal actions taken with regard to Indian lands such as the approval of a right-of-way, or the exchange or surrender of land.

***Where can I find federal orders in council?***

- LAC has Record Group 2 (RG 2), Records of the Privy Council Office 1867-1986. This record group is the best place to start. You can look for these on the LAC online research consultation tool, ArchiviaNet.
- You may also be able to get copies of orders in council at your local library or a university library.
- You can also locate federal orders in council through the Privy Council Office (from 1990 forward only):  
Privy Council Office <http://www.pco-bcp.gc.ca>  
General Enquiries, Room 1000, 85 Sparks Street, Ottawa K1A 0A3  
Ph: 613-957-5153 Fax: 613-957-5043

**Instrument: Order in Council, Provincial**

A provincial order in council (POIC) is an instrument that serves notice of a decision made by the executive arm of the provincial government (the provincial cabinet).

***What information can I get from provincial orders in council?***

Examples of POICs include appointments and instructions to authorities, and legal actions taken with regard to Indian lands. One of the most important OICs for Indigenous lands research is OIC 1036, an order passed by the BC government on July 29, 1938. It transfers the title of Indian reserves outside the Railway Belt and Peace River Block from the provincial government to the federal government with certain conditions, including the right to resume (expropriate) up to one-twentieth of reserve lands for roads and other public works without compensation. A 1938 reserve schedule accompanies the OIC. It is important to find out if any of your community's reserve lands were affected by OIC 1036.

***Where can I find provincial orders in council?***

- The BC Archives is the best place to find POIC. The following finding aids might be helpful: GR 1995 Indexes to Orders in Council, 1872 – 1984; GR 0113 Orders in Council, 1872-1994; or GRs 1512, 1541, and 1664.
- You may also be able to get copies of POICs at your local library or a university library.
- If you are still having trouble tracking down a POIC, contact the BC Government's Order in Council Office at:  
PO Box 9226 STN PROV GOVT, Victoria, BC V8W 9J1  
Ph: 250-387-4376 Fax: 250-387-4349

## Indian Affairs Records

### Reserve Schedules

Reserve schedules are listings of Indian reserves that were officially recognized in a particular area as of a specific date. The listings are grouped into categories called "Indian agencies," which are the administrative units of Indian Affairs within specific jurisdictional boundaries. They give official descriptions of Indian reserves.

#### ***What information can I get from reserve schedules?***

Reserve schedules often provide information about the establishment of individual reserves such as date of allotment, size and location. They can also provide specific information on water allotments, licenses and rights-of-way. The most recent reserve schedule is a good place to start your research. This schedule will provide information regarding the current status of your band's reserve holdings as well as a list of the official names assigned to the reserves by INAC. Note that the reserve schedules are not complete with respect to pre-1871 reserves.

#### ***Where do I find reserve schedules?***

Agency boundaries changed over time, so a reserve may have been included in different agencies at different times. A useful tool to identify the agencies that included your reserve is Paula Caird's *RG 10 Finding Aid, Guide to Indian Agencies in British Columbia, 1875-1990* (Ottawa: National Archives of Canada, 1996). The schedules from 1902 to 1990 have been digitized

| District/Agency: <u>Thompson River</u> |          |               |   |             |   |
|--|----------|---------------|---|-------------|---|
| No.                                    | Name     | Tribe or Band | Where situated  | Area -Acres | Remarks   |
| 1                                      | High Bar | High Bar      | Lillooet District. On banks of Fraser River between Barney Creek and Indian Creek. (Ref. Map 24B, B. C. Map 3K)                               | 2868.40     | Allotted by Commissioner O'Reilly, July 25, 1881.<br>Original Survey 1883. Plan 80 2924.00<br>Title, Provincial Order in Council #1036, July 29, 1938 2924.00<br>Right of Way Fraser River Rd., preliminary 55.60 |
| 1A                                     | High Bar | do.           | Lillooet District. Designated Lot 5289. Adjoining High Bar Reserve #1 on the South (Ref. Map 27C, B. C. Map 3K)                               | 123.00      | Allotted by Commissioner O'Reilly, Original Survey 1925. Plan 326 123.00<br>Title, Provincial Order in Council #1036, July 29, 1938 123.00  |
| 2                                      | High Bar | do.           | Lillooet District. Designated Lot 5290. On right bank of Fraser River opposite the confluence with Barney Creek. (Ref. Map 24B, B. C. Map 3K) | 675.00      | Allotted by Commissioner O'Reilly, Original Survey 1925. Plan 326 675.00<br>Title, Provincial Order in Council #1036, July 29, 1938 675.00  |

Example of a Reserve Schedule.<sup>3</sup>

and are part of the Indian Affairs Annual Reports collection. They can be viewed online at: <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/indianaffairs>. You will find most of the reserve schedules at the INAC regional office in Vancouver. As well, some district offices, UBCIC, and Specific Claims West Resource Centres in Vancouver have these schedules. Some of the schedules can also be found in the government collections at university or public libraries, bound with the Sessional Papers or Department of Indian Affairs materials.

## Reserve General Abstract Reports

Reserve General Abstract Reports (RGAR) record all documents and transactions that affect a reserve. They can be used as finding tools to identify relevant documents. There is one RGAR per reserve. Electronic copies of the documents listed on the RGAR can be viewed and printed from the Indian Lands Registry System (ILRS).

### ***What information can I get from Reserve General Abstract Reports?***

- Details about the formal allotment of the reserve including the name of the official who allotted it, the date it was established, its size and location.
- Details of the reserve surveys such as the size (acreage) of the reserve upon first survey, date of the first survey, and the plan number of the first official survey.
- Lists of instruments authorizing changes to reserve land such as surrenders, orders in council and band council resolutions.

### ***Where can I find Reserve General Abstract Reports?***

Electronic copies of Reserve General Abstract Reports can be obtained on the Indian Lands Registry System (ILRS) database. The ILRS is an INAC database of instruments relating to reserve lands. The web address is: [http://pse-esd.ainc-inac.gc.ca/esd-pse/index\\_all\\_e.asp](http://pse-esd.ainc-inac.gc.ca/esd-pse/index_all_e.asp). Once you enter the site:

1. Click on “Indian Land Registry System.” This will lead you to the introductory page. You will need a password to login. You can obtain a password by calling the helpdesk number at the bottom of the screen.
2. Once you are logged on to the system, click on “Report Management” and choose “Reserve General Abstract Report.” From there you will be asked to enter the reserve name and/or number to generate a report.
3. For many instruments, you can click on the “Registration Number” to access an electronic copy of the instrument. This step will lead to an “Instrument Management Report.” From the report, you can view and print a copy of the electronic document in most cases.



| INDIAN LANDS REGISTER                                      |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Reserve General Abstract Report                            |                                 |
| DIAND / MAIN   | Printed: 2005/May/06 1:54:38 PM |
| <b>Reserve:</b>  | <b>07295 - HIGH BAR NO. 1</b>   |
| Region/Province:   | BRITISH COLUMBIA                |
| Band(s):   | 703 - High Bar                  |
| <b>MINUTES OF DECISION</b>                                 |                                 |
| Instrument Date: 1882/Jun/01                               |                                 |
| Registration Number: 9211-310                              |                                 |
| Registration Date: 1971/Nov/05                             |                                 |
| Land Affected: AS DESCRIBED BU METES & BOUNDS SKETCH ATT'D |                                 |
| Grantor(s): COMMISSIONER O'REILLY                          |                                 |
| Grantee(s): BAND   |                                 |
| Remarks: ALLOTMENT PAGE 30                                 |                                 |
| <b>MINUTES OF DECISION</b>                                 |                                 |
| Instrument Date: 1915/Mar/13                               |                                 |
| Registration Number: 112954                                |                                 |
| Registration Date: 1987/Jul/20                             |                                 |
| Area: 2,924.000 Acres                                      |                                 |
| Land Affected: AS DESCRIBED IN DOCUMENT                    |                                 |
| Grantor(s): ROYAL COMMISSION                               |                                 |
| Grantee(s): BAND   |                                 |
| Remarks: PG 538 ALSO PAGE 503 CONFIRMS RESERVE             |                                 |
| <b>PROV OC</b>   |                                 |
| Instrument Date: 1923/Jul/26                               |                                 |
| Registration Number: 92925                                 |                                 |
| Registration Date: 1984/Feb/20                             |                                 |
| Area: 2,924.000 Acres                                      |                                 |
| Land Affected: AS DESCRIBED IN DOCUMENT                    |                                 |
| Grantor(s): CROWN BRITISH COLUMBIA                         |                                 |
| Remarks: OC#911 CONFIRMS RES ACCEPTS MIN OF DEC REG#112954 |                                 |

Example of a Reserve General Abstract Report.<sup>4</sup>

## Annual Reports

Like other federal and provincial government departments and ministries, Indian Affairs published annual reports that summarize their activities for that year.

### ***What information can I get from annual reports?***

Annual reports contain useful information on government policy, the views of Indian agents and other government officials as well as historical and statistical information.

***Where can I find annual reports?***

- Most university and public libraries, the BC Archives, the Specific Claims West Resource Centre, and the UBCIC Resource Centre all have copies.
- The INAC website has the annual reports on an electronic database, which allows you to do keyword computer searches. The web address is <http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/indianaffairs>.

**Active Indian Affairs Records**

Active Indian Affairs records are the government records that are still in the possession of INAC. These are files that have not yet been transferred to LAC and catalogued in RG 10. Though these records are considered to be “current,” they may contain information dating back decades.

***What information can I get from active Indian Affairs records?***

Active Indian Affairs records contain a wide variety of materials about the activities, policies, and goals of Indian Affairs. You can use these materials, especially correspondence, to learn about many aspects of government regulation of Indigenous land and resources across the country.

***Where can I find active Indian Affairs records?***

Active Indian Affairs files are in the custody of INAC, either at the BC Regional Office (in Burnaby) or at the headquarters in Québec. To identify active files that may be useful to your project, you will want to contact the Records Office within INAC’s BC Regional Office. They can also provide information about headquarters files.

**Archived Indian Affairs Records (RG 10)**

RG 10 (short for Record Group 10) is the term commonly used to refer to archived Indian Affairs records. RG 10 is the archival classification for all Indian Affairs records created in the course of government business. It refers to all the records that have survived and been transferred to LAC. Those records that have not been transferred are considered active Indian Affairs records, as is described in the above entry.

***What information can I get from RG 10 records?***

RG 10 is a very important resource for researchers investigating any aspect of the history of their community. It includes files, correspondence, letters, and transcripts created by officials in Indian Affairs headquarters and field offices across Canada on all aspects of administration of Indigenous lands and peoples. The wide variety of topics includes band membership, finances, lands, resources, government, politics, social assistance, health, education, and community development.

***What are the challenges of using RG 10 records for research?***

Looking for documents in this collection can be challenging. The records have been gathered from many different offices of Indian Affairs over more than a century. Also, Indian Affairs

has changed filing systems many times over the years and file numbers have changed with each new filing system. You may find yourself looking for a file that has had several different file numbers in its life cycle, and have to track the file numbers over time in order to locate the file. Another challenge is that RG 10 documents are stored in different locations and some are microfilmed, while others are only available in their original. Lastly, some files are incomplete, missing, or improperly catalogued.

You may have to look in many places within RG 10 to find the files and documents you need. You will need a lot of time and patience. Most importantly, you will need to seek the assistance of librarians and other people who have experience doing RG 10 research. If you put in the time and stay organized, your efforts will be rewarded. Be creative in your search terms. For example, use all of the community names and their many spellings, Indian agency names, specific place names, and subject headings. Be sure to keep an ongoing list of where you searched and what search terms you used.

### ***Are RG 10 records accessible to community researchers?***

Most RG 10 records are publicly accessible. However, some records are protected under federal privacy legislation so you will need to obtain authorization before you can obtain copies. See Chapter 3: Resource Institutions for more information on the *Access to Information Act* and the *Privacy Act*.

### ***How do I find RG 10 records?***

There are three tools you can use to find specific records in RG 10:

1. **RG 10 Inventory:** The RG 10 Inventory will be one of your most important tools. It is the most general list of files, and gives an overview of the complete holdings that constitute RG 10. It is available at all the institutions that hold RG 10 records and on LAC's online research tool, ArchiviaNet.
2. **Finding Aids:** The RG 10 Inventory will refer you to specific finding aids. Finding aids are detailed file lists prepared by archivists when records are being added to the permanent collection. The finding aids will give you more detail about the contents of the files and help you identify specific collections to research.
3. **Subject Databases:** These are computerized lists and subject indexes that allow you to search by key words and terms. The two most useful databases are listed below. It is a good idea to always search both of them.
  - The UBCIC Resource Centre has a subject index for its collection of RG 10 materials. It is one of the most accessible and user-friendly databases available. UBCIC's library staff is very familiar with the RG 10 and they are very helpful. The index is available at the Resource Centre and on the website under "holdings" and "RG 10."
  - LAC's ArchiviaNet will help you identify relevant records. If you are looking for information on this site you can isolate your search to just RG 10 records by following the "Government of Canada Files" link and limiting your search to "Indian Affairs RG 10 records."

### ***How are RG 10 records organized?***

It is important to know something about the systems of organizing RG 10 records so you can navigate the collection. RG 10 records are organized into two broad categories: pre-confederation records and post-confederation records. The post-confederation records make up a larger part of RG 10 and are further divided into sections. Within these larger sections of records are series. You can use the RG 10 Inventory mentioned for more detailed information about the series.

- The **Black Series** is a group of headquarters records dating from 1872-1923. Its records are mainly about communities in western Canada. The Black Series contains information on a wide range of subjects, from land to general administration, schools to roads and railways.
- The Central Registry Files are records from headquarters dealing with all aspects of administration in Canada from the early 1900s to the 1970s.
- The Field Office records have agency and district files. These records may provide valuable information and should be consulted as part of your research process.
- The School Files records document many aspects of Indian school operations across Canada from 1879-1969.

### ***Where can I find RG 10 Records?***

You will most likely gain access to RG 10 records on microfilm. You can also view original and digital files. Information on access is summarized below.

- Microfilm copies of RG 10: Microfilm copies of many of the BC regional files are available at the UBCIC Resource Centre. The BC Archives, Specific Claims West, the Secwepemc Library and most university libraries also have copies of parts of the collection. If the RG 10 records you wish to consult are available on microfilm and you cannot find them or gain access to them at the above locations you may be able to borrow the microfilm from LAC. They will lend to any institution that has a microfilm reader. Your local public library or genealogy research centre may borrow on your behalf. For more information about borrowing microfilm you can contact the Reference Services Division of LAC.
- Original RG 10 Records: You will have to visit an office of LAC to consult original RG 10 records. Most records are available at the office in Ottawa. However, if the record you need is listed as an **accession** (an unprocessed record) it is likely stored at the regional Federal Records Centre for BC in Burnaby.
- Digitized RG 10 Records: LAC is attempting to digitize more of its collections. It is a good idea to check their searchable database to see which documents they may have made available over the Internet.

### ***Where can I learn more about RG 10 files?***

See the following published sources for additional information on RG 10:

- P. Gillis, *No. 1 – Records Relating to Indian Affairs (RG 10)* (Ottawa: Public



Archives Canada, Public Records Division, General Inventory Series, 1975).

- Paula Caird, *RG 10 Finding Aid, Guide to Indian Agencies in British Columbia* (National Archives of Canada, 1996)
- Bill Russell, *Records of the Federal Department of Indian Affairs at the National Archives of Canada: A source for genealogical research* (Toronto: The Ontario Genealogical Society, 1998).

## Survey Plans and Field Books

### Legal Survey Plans

Legal survey plans are documents outlining the size, boundaries and features of specific parcels of land.

#### ***What information can I get from legal survey plans?***

Legal survey plans provide information about all natural and human-made features on a reserve. They can be a useful record if you are examining changes to reserve land over time such as erosion, road construction, or development. Survey products will not give a complete picture and should therefore be carefully reviewed alongside other historical documents. See Chapter 10: Maps and Surveys for more information.

#### ***Where can I find legal survey plans?***

There are many different sources for surveys and survey products. The most commonly used collections are:

- The Legal Surveys Division of Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) has band booklets that contain photos showing the location of a band's reserves. They also have a searchable database of official Indian Affairs Survey Records (IASR) and Canada Lands Survey Records (CLSR). The IASR and CLSR include copies of surveys, re-surveys, subdivision plans, field notes, photomaps and reference plans. Many of the documents are available from their website. From the main page, select "plan search" and enter the plan number, or search by the reserve name and/or number. The documents that are not available online can be reviewed or purchased at the NRCan office.
- You can also find survey maps attached to the Indian Reserve Commissions' Minutes of Decision. See the section on records for the Indian Reserve Commissions for more information.
- If you are looking for information on pre-confederation reserve surveys see Chapter 15: Pre-Confederation Reserves.

## Field Books

Field books are surveyor's notes of a survey. Surveyors used their notes to draft Indian reserve survey plans after completing the survey.

### ***What information can I get from field books?***

Field books document a surveyor's technical findings and record features such as buildings, gardens, and fishing stations. As with surveys, researchers can use these to find information on a reserve at a specific time or search for changes over time.

### ***Where can I find field books?***

Field books are available in the same locations as legal survey plans. See the above entry for complete information.

## Other Key Government Records

### Archived BC Lands Files

The BC Archives collection of lands files contains the internal and external correspondence of the BC Department of Lands under its various names and authorities.

### ***What information can I get from BC Lands files?***

The correspondence in the collection relates to pre-emption of land, the availability of land, water rights, forestry matters, surveys, Crown lands, government reserves, and public works. It includes BC Land District Registers showing which individuals first alienated particular district lots and what under terms, original pre-emption records, and archived BC lands files relating to activities on specific district lots.

### ***How do I find BC Lands files?***

The provincial ministry responsible for lands in BC changed names many times over the years and blocks of records have been transferred to the BC Archives at different times. As a result, this collection can be difficult to search. However, there is a helpful research guide titled *Quick Guide to Land Records* (Victoria: BC Archives, 2004) that describes the structure of the BC Lands collection and provides tips for research. It is available on-site or on the BC Archives website under "Research Visit" and "Research Guides." This is a very important document that will help you get started on your research. You can also start by reviewing some of the many lands-related finding aids on-site or on the website. See also the following publications for additional help:

- Terry Ann Young, *Researching the History of Aboriginal Peoples in British Columbia, A Guide to Resources at the British Columbia Archives and Records Service and B.C. Lands* (Victoria: Queen's Printer, 1995). This is available at the reference desk at BC Archives and at the UBCIC Resource Centre.

- John Pritchard, *An Index to Indian-Related Correspondence in the British Columbia Lands and Works Files, 1871-1912* (Victoria: Provincial Archives of British Columbia, Treaties and Historical Research Centre, Comprehensive Claims Branch, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1989). This is available at the UBCIC Resource Centre and BC Archives.

## Pre-emption Records

Pre-emption was a process that allowed individuals to claim land for settlement and agriculture. Pre-emption records are the documentation of this process and they identify parcels of Crown land claimed by non-Indigenous settlers.

### ***What information can I get from pre-emption records?***

Pre-emption records contain details about the pre-emptor, the date of pre-emption, legal and geographic descriptions of the land, and a sketch of the land. In some cases there will be maps included that show the location of Indian reserves and/or settlements in relation to the pre-emption. Settlers also acquired land through a process called homesteading. The two blocks of land where homesteading occurred in BC between 1884 and 1930 are called the Railway Belt and the Dominion Peace River Block. The process for searching for homesteading records is the same as for pre-emption records.

### ***Where can I find pre-emption records?***

The BC Archives has originals and copies of all surviving pre-emption records. For information on how to find them see their Pre-emption and Homestead Claims guide. From the homepage, click on “Research Visit” and then look under the heading of “Research Guides.”

## Crown Grants

Crown grants are the legal instrument by which lands are transferred from the provincial Crown to private individuals or companies.

### ***What information can I get from Crown grants?***

Crown grants list the name of the Crown grantee, the legal description of the land, the pre-emption and certificate of improvement numbers (if the land was not purchased outright), the acreage, the class of land, any relevant BC Lands file numbers and the effective date. They also have a sketch of the land attached. It is not uncommon for additional related documents (certificate of improvement, application to purchase or estate information) to be attached to Crown grants.

### ***Where can I find Crown grants?***

The BC Surveyor General is the repository for all Crown grants issued in the province of BC. A complete set of microfiche copies is located in the Registers Vault at the BC Surveyor General Branch. The BC Archives has microfilm copies of all provincial Crown grants

issued between 1851 and 1930. See the pre-emptions and homesteads guides listed in the previous entry for more information.

## **BC Lands Files at the BC Surveyor General Branch**

The BC Surveyor General Branch has active BC Lands Files and a wealth of historic land-related documents. Some types of lands and mapping-related materials are only available there, most notably the Royal Engineers' field books, some surveyors' diaries and information on mineral claims and special timber licenses.

### ***What information can I get from the BC Lands Files at the Surveyor General Branch?***

The BC Lands Files relate to a variety of survey and boundary issues. These include boundary disputes and determinations, land ownership and changes in ownership, size and shape of land parcels, location, natural features and resources. The records are organized in the following vaults:

- The Registers Vault: Old Land Registers, Townsite Registers, Reverted Land Registers, Mineral Claims Registers, Railway Belt Registers, Peace River Block Register, Ministry of Lands Annual Reports, BC orders in council relating to lands, Crown grants.
- The File Vault: Original volumes of Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works correspondence.
- The Crown Grants Vault: Original Crown grants and Hudson's Bay Company grants.
- The Map Vault: Field books, maps and field notes, surveys, rights-of-way plans, material related to mineral claims and well sites.

### ***Where can I find the BC Lands Files at the Surveyor General Branch?***

The BC Surveyor General Branch is located in the Land Title and Survey Authority of BC office in Victoria. See Chapter 3: Resource Institutions for contact information.

## **Land Title Records**

Land title records are the legal documents demonstrating ownership of land.

### ***What information can I get from land title records?***

The records include all information about the legal title of property including: the registered owner(s) names, historical title information, and encumbrances such as mortgages and easements.

### ***Where can I find land title records?***

The BC Surveyor General Branch is the repository for original surveys of provincial, or Crown lands. Plans of subsequent surveys or subdivisions can be found at Land Title Offices throughout BC. You may be able to get the information that you require without going to



a Land Title Office. The BC Online website allows you to search both BC Assessment and the Land Title Registry databases for a fee (<http://www.bconline.gov.bc.ca>). Searching land title records can be an expensive process. It is reasonable to request a land title record showing current information but you probably won't be able to request a full historic search of the property you are researching.

## Census Records

See Chapter 7: Genealogy Resources for information on census records.

## Legislative Journals and Gazettes

### Journals of the Colonial Legislature of the Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, 1851-1871

*Journals of the Colonial Legislature* is a five-volume set of journals covering the official proceedings of the colonial government during the pre-confederation era in what is now the Province of British Columbia. The *Journals* are based on the minutes of the Council, Executive Council, Legislative Council, and General Assembly of the colony of Vancouver Island, as well as the Executive Council and the Legislative Council of the colony of Vancouver Island.

#### ***What information can I get from Journals of the Colonial Legislatures?***

The *Journals* are well-indexed source of information about the changes that took place in law and policy between 1851 and 1871.

#### ***Where can I find Journals of the Colonial Legislatures?***

Most university and larger public libraries have copies of the *Journals*. The BC Archives and some specialized collections also have them.

### Journals of the Legislative Assembly

The *Journals of the Legislative Assembly* provide information on the daily proceedings of the BC Provincial Legislature, starting in 1872.

#### ***What information can I get from the Journals of the Legislative Assembly?***

The *Journals* are a good source of information regarding the changes to provincial law and policy.

#### ***Where can I find the Journals of the Legislative Assembly?***

The *Journals* are available at the BC Archives and the Legislative Library in Victoria. The Vancouver Public Library and some university libraries also have them.

## Sessional Papers (BC)

The B.C. Sessional Papers contain papers and annual reports for the various provincial ministries and departments.

### ***What information can I get from Sessional Papers?***

The Sessional Papers contain a wealth of specific information. You could, for example, find out details about the nature and cost of repairs to a certain section of a particular provincial road in a given year's *Department of Public Works Annual Report*, or find out when a specific area of the province was first surveyed in a *Department of Lands and Works Annual Report*.

### ***Where can I find Sessional Papers?***

You can find Sessional Papers in the government documents section of university and larger public libraries.

## Sessional Papers (Canada)

The Sessional Papers of Canada contain papers and annual reports for the various federal government departments.

### ***What information can I get from Sessional Papers?***

Certain types of Sessional Papers are particularly relevant to land research. These include the reports on Indian reserves, papers relating to Indian lands, annual reports for departments like Lands or Public Works and Grazing Commissioners reports (after World War I). These particular sessional papers contain material about timber resources, water rights, mining, hunting, and fishing.

### ***Where can I find Sessional Papers?***

You will find Sessional Papers of Canada at the BC Archives, universities and larger public libraries. The published Sessional Papers range from 1868 to about 1925 (when the volumes began getting too large and started to be published individually as annual reports). It is important to note that not all Canada Sessional Papers were published. Those that were not are accessible on microfilm. Use the consolidated *General Index to the Journals of the House of Commons of Canada and of the Sessional Papers of Parliament* to find the volume you need. Also, the UBCIC Resource Centre has a useful finding aid, written by Fred Isaac, called *References to Aboriginal Affairs in the Sessional Papers 1867 – 1925* (National Indian Brotherhood, 1973).

## The British Columbia Gazette

The BC Gazette is produced in two parts. The *Gazette: Part I* has been published weekly by the government of BC since 1863. It contains legal notices from different ministries within

the Government of BC, including: notices to creditors; notices of restorations, incorporations, and dissolutions; public tenders; and order in council notices. The *Gazette: Part II* is published every second week and contains all regulations that are made under an Act of the Legislative Assembly.

***What information can I get from the British Columbia Gazette?***

The Gazette includes information on a variety of topics. For example, you may find notices for road construction, lands reserved from pre-emption, construction projects, and information about surveys in your area. You can also find information about the designation of reserves, as well as the establishment or cancellation of “government” reserves, gold commissioner notices, provincial orders in council, applications for timber licenses, applications for sale of BC lands, proposals for mines or forestry developments, or for commercial development of Crown lands.

***Where can I find the British Columbia Gazette?***

The Gazette is available at the BC Archives, the BC Surveyor General Branch and the Legislative Library, the Vancouver Public Library, university libraries, and the BC Courthouse Library. For more information see <http://www.publications.gov.bc.ca>. You may also want to consult other publications that ran government notices. There are many of these available at the BC Archives. They are: *Vancouver Island Gazette*, *Government Gazette for the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia*, and the *Government Gazette: Vancouver Island*. The Government Gazette was printed in the *British Columbian* newspaper in 1861/62.

**The Canada Gazette**

The Canada Gazette, published since 1841, is a federal government publication; it is the “official newspaper” of the Government of Canada. It includes new statutes and regulations, proposed regulations, decisions of administrative boards as well as an assortment of government notices. There are also private sector notices required by statute to be published.

***What information can I get from the Canada Gazette?***

Part I is published weekly and contains all public notices, official appointments and proposed regulations from the federal government, as well as miscellaneous public notices from the private sector. Part II is published every second week and contains all federal regulations that are enacted, as well as other classes of statutory instruments such as orders in council, orders and proclamations. Only federal government departments and agencies publish in Part II. Part III contains the most recent public acts of Parliament and their enactment proclamations.

***Where can I find the Canada Gazette?***

Issues of the Canada Gazette, published between 1998 and 2005 are available at this website: <http://canadagazette.gc.ca>. Issues of the Canada Gazette published prior to 1998 are available in most public libraries or through Library and Archives Canada.

## Hansard

Hansard is the record of everything said in the House of Commons or the provincial legislature. The Canadian House of Commons has had a full Hansard report since 1880. Until 1970, B.C. had only the *Journals of the House*. These remain the official record of what motions were debated and passed.

### ***What information can I get from Hansard?***

Before legislation is passed, the meaning, purpose and potential impact of the legislation is debated in the legislature. The Minister then summarizes the government's objectives when introducing the legislation. The debates will provide you with a wealth of information. They may also tell you if alternative legislation or wording was considered. The Parliamentary Internet, maintained jointly by the Senate, the House of Commons, and the Library of Parliament is a good site for locating debates, bills, minutes and proceedings of parliamentary committees, and Status of House Business.

### ***Where can I find Hansard?***

To view federal Hansard from the current session, go to the Parliament's website: <http://www.parl.gc.ca>. For Hansard from earlier sessions, consult your local library. To view BC legislative debates or Committee meetings go to: <http://www.leg.bc.ca> or contact your local library.

## Other Sources

### **Newspapers**

Newspapers often provide helpful information on local events including births and deaths, public announcements, and specific issues relating to Indigenous lands and resource use. Newspapers will also give you a good sense of what was happening in the time period you are researching, and may point to other sources to research.

### ***Where can I find copies of historical newspapers?***

There are a wide variety of newspapers to consult, from national papers to papers published by your own community. You may need to request the help of local librarians or museum staff to determine which newspapers you should consult for your project. There are some general resources that will help you search historic newspapers:

- The BC Archives has the most complete historic newspaper collection in the province. You can search their collection by clicking on the entry titled "BC Newspapers on Microfilm" on their website: <http://www.bcarchives.gov.bc.ca/library/newspapr/newspapr.htm>.
- The Vancouver Public Library, the UBCIC Resource Centre, and some university libraries also have historic newspaper collections. Most of these

institutions also have newspaper clippings files for certain publications and time periods.

- Library and Archives Canada has a substantial number of historical newspapers. A listing of its newspapers on microform is available online at: <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/8/18>
- The *Sessional Clipping Book* contains newspaper clippings on subjects discussed in the Legislature from 1890-1972. The original is at the Legislative library. The University of British Columbia Library has a microfilmed version.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> “Department of Indian Affairs 1881, P. O’Reilly Indian Reserve Commission Correspondence relating to allotment of Indian reserves in BC.” UBCIC CD of Volume 8, Minutes of Decision, Correspondence, and Sketches - P. O’Reilly. File 29858, Vol. No. 2, Page 5.

<sup>2</sup> McKenna, J.A. and Richard McBride. “Minutes of Decision - Lytton Agency, High Bar Tribe.” In *Report of the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of British Columbia*. Victoria: Acme Press, 1916.

<sup>3</sup> Government of Canada. Thompson River District. Schedule of Indian Reserves. Ottawa: Department of Indian Affairs, 1970. Page 527.

<sup>4</sup> Government of Canada. *Reserve General Abstract Report: High Bar No. 1. Indian Lands Register*. Ottawa: Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 2005. Page 1 of 3.)