

Indigo, Kyler, Sean and Fatimah

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HIST. 1120 - 01

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The Chilcotin War

We see these killings were a non traditional way, in modern standards of inciting war on grounds of invasion from the Tsilhqot'in people by the Europeans. Prior to this event, smallpox was introduced by a miner and that on to kill approximately 30,000 Indigenous people. The Tsilhqot'in heard of this incident and came to the realization that they had to defend themselves from the "white people" they assumed would give them this disease.

Analysis of the provided evidence shows that it was war in the sense that the Tsilhqot'in were defending their territory from invaders who posed a biological threat.

The following quote describes the reporting of the movement of smallpox through the European camps; "The disease was not contracted here in any of the cases, the men already having it on their arrival from the Upper Country, where I understand there have been several cases some of which have resulted fatally. The Indians are reported as suffering severely from Small Pox on the Bonaparte and in other localities"¹. Being a document written by officials this gives the document a sense of authority over a journal written by a traveler. Being recorded by officials this reduces biased opinions and perspectives. Because this is a correspondence between two colonial officials discussing the problem of smallpox, along with how it had been dispersed

¹ A.C Elliot to Young, December 10, 1862 in *Colonial Correspondence*

throughout the First Nations population. In another document, an interview by Terry Glavin talking with Eugene Williams, Williams states that one Donald McLean, who was hired by colonial authorities to help command a volunteer expeditionary force of white men who were going against the Tsilhqot'in for the killings of white men, was shot and killed by a Tsilhqot'in marksman. After Mclean was killed the force of 50 men turned around and headed back to Puntzi Lake, leaving McLean buried somewhere in the woods².

When choosing these documents, it is essential to be objective. Choosing an official document reduces biased opinions and also holds authority, whereas a journal entry displays the writers interpretations of the environment and his/her experience. Choosing documents from both the European's and Indigenous point of view allows for a balanced and equal view of the events.

Although the insight to the Tsilhqot'in war gave a better understanding of colonization, it 're-enforces our views and ideas regarding the conflict between Europeans and Indigenous people.

If we were to do this project or something similar again, we would discuss the topic prior to group work in class. We would also like to have focused our research to a specific set of dates.

Bibliography

"We Do Not Know His Name: Klatsassin and the Chilcotin War." Accessed October 25, 2016.

<http://www.canadianmysteries.ca/sites/klatsassin/home/indexen.html>.

²Eugene Williams, "A Tsilhqot'in Account of the Death of Donald McLean," *Nemiah: The Unconquered Country*