

Institution.” Washington: Government Printing Office, 1889, National Archives, Pacific Northwest Region, 613-4.

- ¹¹ *Extract from Report of Charles E. Roblin, Special Indian Agent, Jan. 31, 1919, On Non-Reservation Indians of Western Washington. Various Tribes*, National Archives, Pacific Northwest Region, unpaginated. William Haller, interview by Edwin

Coman or Helen Gibbs, typed notes, February 1948, Pope & Talbot Archives, Port Gamble.

Jan Eakins, an independent consultant in historic preservation, served as project historian for the recent HAER documentation on Port Gamble.

Photos courtesy Pope & Talbot Archives.

A Multicultural Melting Pot in Ketchikan, Alaska

Located in the City of Ketchikan in southern southeast Alaska, the Stedman-Thomas Historic District developed from the social segregation of American Indian and other ethnic groups from the rest of the village. Members of the Tlingit tribe established fishing camps at the mouth of the Ketchikan Creek to trap the abundant supply of salmon. In the 1880s, the salmon supply drew the first European Americans to Ketchikan. As the population grew, the whites lived to the north of Ketchikan Creek, while the American Indian population settled on the southern shore in what is currently known as the Stedman-Thomas Historic District.

By first decade of the 20th century, other groups migrated to Ketchikan, including Japanese, Chinese, and Filipinos, who settled in Indian Town. Later, they were joined by Koreans, Mexicans, South Americans, some European immigrants, and African Americans. Living in geographic isolation from the dominant white community, the groups coalesced in the area that became known as Stedman-Thomas, named for two businessmen. Although they lived in isolation from the rest of the village, many residents engaged in commercial and organizational

activities that would have been more unlikely in the lower 48 States.

By the mid-20th century, the social isolation eased; and the white and multicultural communities began to patronize each other's businesses. Gradually, ethnic minorities took up residence in other parts of town. Today, the buildings of Stedman-Thomas illuminate the diverse community that once inhabited the area. Many of the half-million tourists who visit Ketchikan annually travel through the neighborhood.



This c. 1925 view of the Stedman-Thomas community was taken during the height of the neighborhood's role as a multicultural melting pot. In February 1996, the Stedman-Thomas Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in recognition of its role in the history of commerce and ethnic groups in Ketchikan. Photo courtesy Tongass Historical Society.