1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: **KAKE CANNERY**

Other Name/Site Number: SANBORN CUTTING COMPANY, SUNNY POINT PACKING COMPANY, ALASKA PACIFIC SALMON CORPORATION, P.E. HARRIS & COMPANY, KEKU CANNERY

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: One and a half miles south of Kake Not for publication: N/A

City/Town: Kake Vicinity: X

State: Alaska County: Wrangell-Petersburg Code: AK Zip Code: 99830

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership of Property		Category of Property	
Private:	X	Building(s):	___
Public-Local:	X	District:	X
Public-State:	X	Site:	___
Public-Federal:	X	Structure:	___
		Object:	___

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
15	1 buildings
___	___ sites
3	1 structures
___	___ objects
18	2 Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register: 0

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: N/A

Designated a NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK on

DEC 9 1997

by the Secretary of the Interior

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this _X_ nomination ____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register Criteria.

Signature of Certifying Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property ____ meets ____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting of Other Official Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is:

___ Entered in the National Register
___ Determined eligible for the National Register
___ Determined not eligible for the National Register
___ Removed from the National Register
___ Other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. FUNCTION OR USE

Historic: Commerce trade
Industry
Transportation

Sub: Warehouse
Manufacturing Facility; Processing site;
Water-related

Current: Commerce Trade
Vacant/ Storage

Sub: Warehouse

7. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: Other:
Early Twentieth Century Coastal Industrial

MATERIALS:
Foundation: Wood
Walls: Wood
Roof: Metal; Wood
Other:

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The Kake Cannery is located one and one-half miles south of Kake village in the northwestern corner of Kupreanof Island in the Alexander Archipelago, about ninety miles southeast of Juneau, Alaska. The village is home to the southern coastal Kake Tlingit (Keex'Kwaan). Indians who once lived throughout Frederick Sound and had permanent villages on Kuiu and Kupreanof Islands. Perched on a foundation of woodpile underpinnings, the cannery projects over the tidal waters of Keku Strait. It lies along a narrow rocky beach rich in shellfish and seaweed. The cannery's prominent gable roof profile sits against a backdrop of established stands of hemlock and Sitka spruce trees, and is the most distinctive collection of buildings and structures on the waterfront to the south of the village.

The eighteen buildings and structures that constitute the cannery historic district were constructed primarily between 1912 and 1940. They respond architecturally to the catching, processing, and canning of North Pacific salmon and to the housing of Alaska Native, Euro-American, Oriental, Filipino, Black, and other foreign labor employed at the Kake Cannery. One of 134 salmon canneries built in southeast Alaska between 1878 and 1949, the Kake Cannery retains outstanding architectural integrity, association with setting, and preservation of original machinery and equipment. Steady use maintained the sprawling warehouse-type buildings in good condition until 1977, when the cannery closed indefinitely for economic reasons after several years of poor salmon runs. At that time five original buildings, three of which had association with Chinese contract labor, were demolished. Since the late 1970s, neglect and lack of use have caused some of the buildings and adjoining docks to fall into disrepair.

An 1897 executive order excluded approximately 94 acres in and around the village of Kake from the Tongass National Forest. The Kake Cannery incorporates part of an early 1900s salmon saltery and is on the site of a traditional Tlingit summer camp. Before the cannery existed, Tlingit Indians would come to fish and preserve salmon. Until 1920, when a road was built through the middle of the village, the cannery was completely cut off from Kake by Lower Gunnuk Creek. The Kake Tribal Corporation cold storage plant is located directly south of the cannery. Looking east, the small tree-covered outcrops of the Keku Islands create a channel against the background of snow covered peaks. In the summer lush coastal underbrush of cow parsnip and salmon and thimble berries engulfs the open spaces between most of the smaller cannery buildings.

The cannery historic district includes the four principal cannery buildings and associated equipment and docks, all secondary buildings that date from the period of significance, and all existing worker housing. Worker housing exists in the forms of bunkhouses and individual houses assigned to specific position titles. An overlay of narrow wooden boardwalks connects the housing with the mess hall and other cannery buildings. These boardwalks convey scale, streetscape, and a sense that the cannery functioned as a cohesive self-contained district with defined boundaries. Historically, the cannery's sphere of influence included a cribbed log dam, a powerhouse, 3000 feet of water piping from Gunnuk Creek, additional buildings south of the cannery, and ten fish traps. These elements and associated lands are excluded because of loss of integrity and demolition.

The Kake Cannery was a self-contained, small industrial site where workers lived during the entire salmon season, which could span several months. This large industrial-style construction was characteristic of most salmon canneries erected in Alaska in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Kake Cannery escaped most of the hazards that devastated many southeast Alaska canneries, such as fire, financial ruin, consolidation, relocation, and destruction by neglect. Developed and modified over the years to accommodate new machinery, labor practices and mandates, and fishing technology, the cannery complex reflects the labyrinth of social and technological changes occurring in the first half of the 20th century. As the industry evolved, the cannery evolved to reflect these changes.

Cannery Buildings

The cannery has four main warehouses. They are the Main Cannery Building, Warehouse No. 1, Warehouse No. 2, and Warehouse No. 4. There is no mention of a building called Warehouse No. 3. These buildings, except for Warehouse No. 4, were built in 1912. The Main Cannery Building was the site of most salmon canning activity and it houses the associated machinery. Warehouse No. 1 was used as a store, office, and supply storage. In Warehouse No. 2 seiners stored and repaired their nets. Both Warehouse Nos. 1 and 2 also stored cases of canned salmon waiting shipment to Seattle markets. The Main Cannery Building and Warehouse Nos. 1 and 2 are two storied with frame construction. The Main Cannery Building and Warehouse No. 2 have truss-supported gable roofs while Warehouse No. 1 has a hip roof. The original roofs of these buildings were cedar shingles and are presently covered with corrugated aluminum roofing and fiberglass panels. Warehouse No. 4 was constructed in the late 1930s or early 1940s and although similar in appearance, construction of this metal sided building differs from the other main warehouses. Its second story loft supports a mechanized canning line that formed and fitted metal cans.

Approximately 500 creosote-covered wood posts with concrete pilings support the Main Cannery Building and the two adjoining warehouse buildings, Warehouse Nos. 1 and 2. Although most lumber was precut and barged to the site, local felled logs support the frame buildings along the beach. As storms and tides scoured the beach from under the buildings, cannery workers added rocks and fill to reanchor the buildings. Connected docks extend over the water to moor fishing boats, steamers, and supply ships. Historic photographs indicate that the Main Cannery Building and Warehouse Nos. 1 and 2 were at one time flush with the coast. Later modifications extend the Main Cannery Building's fish house further over the water.

The Main Cannery Building houses all the fish processing machinery, including two Iron Chinks, a partially intact canning line, and conveyors. The two Iron Chinks, both model GT-1927, are complete and operational with indexers, sliming tables, and connecting conveying systems to the filler bins. A one-pound American Can Company high speed canning line, one of two that once operated in the building, is partially intact. The line could process 240 cans per minute. Iron fixtures in the concrete floor indicate where the remaining part of the line once stood. Evidence of the second line is less apparent. Seven of the original nine single-door steam retorts remain in a separate section of the building. The long, cylindrical retorts held between five and seven retort car loads of canned salmon. A facility for labeling and casing is still intact, as are a Standard-Knapp gluing and compression unit. Behind the retorts

stand three brick and cast iron boilers. Of the three, the 125 horsepower Erie City Iron Works oil fired boiler is the newest, installed in 1942. The other two are a 100 horsepower Washington Iron Work red brick Casey Hedges boiler, described in 1949 as old, and a seventy-five horsepower Commercial Boiler Works Scotch Marine type boiler. Records note that in 1949 an old steam engine in the back of the boiler room was once used as a standby generator.

Foremost, the Kake Cannery responded to the sea, the fleet of fishing boats and scows that moored at its docks, and the salmon canning industry. Fish caught either by independent fishermen or in cannery-owned traps were brought to the cannery docks. In a flurry of activity, cannery crews, later with the aid of machinery, butchered the fish and filled on-site manufactured cans. Workers moved the fish away from the front of the Main Cannery Building and the water to the opposite end of the building where the filled cans were heated in a retort machine, sealed, labeled, and packed into crates. Once processed, workers moved cases of canned fish from the rear of the Main Cannery Building back to the water to await transport by steamer to Seattle.

Alterations

The original shape of the Main Cannery Building was similar in massing and size to the two adjoining warehouses, Warehouse Nos. 1 and 2. But as the cannery expanded, the owners extended the Main Cannery Building westward over the water to include a fish house with six wooden rectangular fish holding bins. These bins, set with iron tie rods, received sorted fish directly from the dock and appear to be similar to those described in trade journals of the day. The fish house is the brightest area in the building. The fish bins were painted a brilliant white color, a common practice to monitor cleanliness, and they reflect incoming sunlight from the first and second story windows. The raised foundations of two twenty foot in diameter and eight foot high wooden stave vats are evident in the concrete floor adjacent to the fish house. These brine-filled vats kept fish fresh until they were butchered. Other additions to the Main Cannery Building include a machine shop, boiler house, egg room, lunch room, lye wash area, a storeroom for parts for the fish dressing machine called the Iron Chink, and additional space for the retorts. The lye wash area was where cooked cans would be rinsed with lye to wash off fish particles. The exact chronological evolution of the Main Cannery Building is unclear, however, from examining enclosed roof lines, exterior walls, and overhangs, it appears that the warehouse section may be the oldest.

Contributing Buildings

1. Main Cannery Building: This wood frame, one and two story multi-section cannery and warehouse complex with board and batten wood siding was constructed in 1912, with the exception of some additions. The building consists of the following components: canning room, fish house with six wooden compartment bins and iron tie rods, pile dock, a processing addition and machine shop, and a retort section containing seven 54" diameter retort machines, and an overlooking loft. Other components include a boiler house addition with three boilers, a lye wash area, an electrical room, a warehouse, an Iron Chink machine parts storeroom, and a salmon sorting and brining egg room. At its widest and longest sections, the building measures 258' x 168'6" and has a total occupancy of nearly 35,000 square feet.

In the warehouse section there are eighteen twelve-light sash windows in the exterior walls with two 8'x7' and one 7'x7' sliding batten doors. The roof is cedar shingles covered with aluminum roofing.

A mural depicting the "Lucky Lady" is painted under one of the eaves of the southwest end of the Main Cannery Building. The mural, painted by noted Tlingit artist Charlie Gunnock, is based on a Tlingit story and is rendered in a traditional Pacific Northwest Indian style. The mural appears in a ca. 1920 photograph.

2. Warehouse No. 1: Constructed in 1912, Warehouse No. 1 is located directly south of the Main Cannery Building. This wood frame, board and batten sided, hip roofed, two story warehouse building measures 50' x 150' x 19' to eaves and contains 15,000 square feet. This building contained the company offices, store, a warehouse, and two cold storage spaces as well as storage for canned salmon. The second floor houses space for net repair and stringing. There are thirty twelve-light sash windows in the exterior walls with three 7'x7' and one 7'x10' sliding doors, and five panel doors. The roof is cedar shingles covered with aluminum roofing.

3. Warehouse No. 2: Warehouse No. 2 is a wood frame, 60' x 150' x 19' to eaves, wood frame, board and batten sided, gabled roofed, two story building located south of Warehouse No. 1. It was constructed in 1912. There is a can cooling area on the first floor and a net storage loft and pens for storing fishing gear on the second. The entire building has a volume of 18,000 square feet. A ship dock with small sheds extends across the fronts of Warehouse Nos. 1 and 2. There are twenty-four twelve-light sash windows in the perimeter walls with nine hinged and sliding batten doors. The roof is cedar shingles.

4. Warehouse No. 4: This building houses the can forming equipment. An elevated, covered 7' x 20' crossover bridge links Warehouse No. 4 to the Main Cannery Building loft and encloses the rails of a mechanized can track. Warehouse No. 4 was built in the late 1930s or early 1940s. It measures 60' x 25' x 10'8" to eaves and is located east of the Main Cannery Building and Warehouse Nos. 1 and 2. It is a wood frame, metal clad, gable roofed, warehouse building set on a concrete foundation with a retaining wall. The main floor of this building occupies 15,360 square feet. There are thirty-five twelve-light steel sash windows with four sliding doors and one hinged door.

5. Japanese and Filipino Bunkhouse: This bunkhouse housed the Japanese and Filipino workers employed at the Kake Cannery. It is a 24' x 40' x 16' two story, steep pitched, gabled roofed, wood frame building with a 24' x 31' x 16' two story addition on the its southern end. Clapboard sides the larger original portion while the addition has narrow T-1-11 siding. The building is situated south of Warehouse No. 4. It is difficult to determine the exact date of construction, but this building was built before 1940 and during the period of significance.

6. White Man's Bunkhouse: This two story building has fifteen rooms and a large social hall that accommodated thirty men. The White Man's Bunkhouse measures 30' x 60' x 18' to eaves with a 14' x 30' x 18' two story addition and a 7' x 42' attached porch. It is constructed

of wood frame, and it has a shingled gable roof, plywood lining, and a plain wood oil finish. The bunkhouse is located northeast of the Main Cannery Building and the warehouses. The original portion of the bunkhouse was constructed between 1912 and 1919 and the addition, completed in the early 1920s, was completed partially by Tlingit residents. The bunkhouse has twenty-five twelve-light sash windows with nineteen hinged doors. The roofing is metal over a shingle base.

7. White Man's Cookhouse: The original cookhouse consisted of three rooms, including a dining room and kitchen. It is situated north of the Main Cannery Building and faces Kenu Strait. It is difficult to determine the exact date of construction, but the building probably dates back to the 1930s. A 1949 inspection reported that the building was in poor condition and at that time usable for only one or two more seasons. In 1967 the cannery owners remodeled the mess hall, and additional modifications were completed in 1994. Despite these alterations, the building contributes to the landmark because of its scale, integrity of original location, continuity of use throughout the period of significance, and association with neighboring buildings.

8. Metalsmith Shop: This 20' x 20' x 8' to eaves wood frame, gable roofed building is set on a post foundation and is located between the White Man's Cookhouse and the Fishermen's Wash House, north of the Main Cannery Building. This building was built before 1940.

9. Dwelling No. 1, the Cook's House: This three room (plus bath) residence measures 14' x 24' x 8' with a 12' x 14' x 8' wing, a 14' x 12' storage room, and a 3' x 24' porch. It was built before 1940. The Cook's House is north of the White Man's Cookhouse and features a post and blocking foundation, frame walls, ship lap siding, a shingle roof, double hung sash windows, and hinged panel doors.

10. Dwelling No. 2: Dwelling No. 2 is an 18' x 22' x 7' single story, gable roofed, wood frame residence with a 4' x 18' covered porch and a 4' x 4' addition. Tongue and groove flooring and ceiling and wall lining run throughout the building. This house is located immediately north of the Cook's House and was built before 1940.

11. Dwelling No. 3: Dwelling No. 3 is a 14' x 24' x 8' two room and bath residence with a 14' x 12' addition and a 10' x 15' canopy connecting it to Dwelling No. 4. This dwelling was built before 1940. Construction features include a post and pier foundation, frame walls, and a shingle and composition roof.

12. Dwelling No. 4: Dwelling No. 4 is a 14' x 24' x 8' wood frame residence with a 12' x 18' x 8' wing and 8' x 14' lean-to wood shed constructed with a post foundation. Built before 1940, the original wood frame roof with cedar shingles was overlaid with composition materials in 1967.

13. Dwelling No. 5: Dwelling No. 5 is a 20' x 26' x 8' wood frame, three room house connected to an 18' x 26' x 8' two room building with a 10' x 10' x 8' addition having an attic bedroom. It is located north of Dwelling No. 4. The original three room dwelling was built

before 1940. The southern end of this house has been rehabilitated and is in fair to good condition. The other half remains in poor condition.

14. Superintendent's House: This distinctive white house is paneled throughout with dark wainscoting. It is a 26' x 36' x 8', one and one-half story gable roofed, wood frame residence with an 8' x 22' covered front porch. There is a later addition to this building consisting of a 14' x 20' x 8' single room with a cedar shingle gable roof. The Superintendent's House is located north of Dwelling No. 5. It is difficult to determine the exact date of construction, but it was before 1940 and falls within the period of significance.

15. Crude Oil Tank Building: This is a wood building that houses two 500 barrel wood tanks and sits on a wood foundation. It is located on the east side of the village road opposite Warehouse No. 4. A four-inch black iron pipe that ran from this building to the wharf to service ships may still exist underground.

Contributing Structures

16. Two Wooden Fish Scows: The scows are raised on wooden mooring and are located north of the Superintendent's House.

17. One Dock: This dock extends across the fronts of the Main Cannery Building and Warehouse Nos. 1 and 2. It was constructed in approximately 1912.

Noncontributing Resources

18. Fishermen's Wash House: This 1967 building has a hipped roof and was erected on a set pile foundation adjacent to the Blacksmith's Shop. It is a noncontributing building.

19. Generator Building: Built after 1945, this structure housed electrical equipment. It is a wood frame, metal clad, gable roofed structure erected on a concrete foundation and floor. It is a noncontributing structure.

Destroyed Resources

Most of the destroyed cannery buildings and docks occupied the southern end of the cannery property. They may have been destroyed because of their deteriorating conditions, changes in land ownership, or lack of use. These buildings are included here to convey the original size and functions of the cannery.

20. Chinese Workers House: Built on wooden pilings, this bunkhouse was located on the beach south of Warehouse No. 2. The wood frame building accommodated 75 men and included a cookhouse. This building was two stories and measured 26' x 120'.

21. Cable House: The single story Cable House was located at the east extremity of the cannery property and was destroyed after 1973. It measured 52' x 150' x 9' to eaves. It was of wood frame construction with a gable roof. Here cables could be received and sent out from the cannery management, the fishermen, and the cannery workers.

22. Carpenter Shop: Destroyed after 1973, the building was located between the Japanese and Filipino Bunkhouse and Warehouse No. 4. It was a single story and measured 30' square.

23. Oriental Boiler Room: This small building was located east of the Japanese and Filipino Bunkhouse

24. Oriental Bathhouse: This bathhouse was located north of the Japanese and Filipino Bunkhouse.

8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:
Nationally: X Statewide: __ Locally: __

Applicable National Register Criteria:	A X B __ C X D __
Criteria Considerations (Exceptions):	A __ B __ C __ D __ E __ F __ G __
NHL Criteria:	1 and 5
NHL Criteria Exclusions:	N/A
NHL Theme(s):	I. Peopling Places 3. Migration from Outside and Within V. Developing the American Economy 1. Extraction and Production 2. Distribution and Consumption 4. Workers and Culture
Areas of Significance:	Maritime History Industry Social History
Period(s) of Significance:	1912 - 1940
Significant Dates:	N/A
Significant Person(s):	N/A
Cultural Affiliation:	N/A
Architect/Builder:	Unknown
Historic Contexts:	XII Business B. Manufacturing Organizations 1. Food, Beverages, and Tobacco XXX. American Ways of Life E. Ethnic Communities (including Immigration) Labor History Theme Study

State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.

The Kake Cannery is nationally significant under National Historic Landmark Criteria 1 and 5 in the field of American Labor History. The period of significance commenced in 1912 when the Sanborn Cutting Company constructed the cannery buildings and salmon canning operations began. The cannery was sold within fifteen years to the Sunny Point Packing Company, and then soon again to the Alaska Pacific Salmon Corporation, a conglomerate of southeast canneries. During this period, conditions at the Kake Cannery emulated trends and technology in the labor practices of the Pacific salmon canning industry that are associated with contemporaneous broad national patterns of immigration and labor organization. Utilization of foreign contract labor, consisting primarily of Chinese, Japanese, Filipino and to a lesser extent, Korean, Mexican, and Black workers, propelled the salmon canning industry to its position as the largest Alaskan industry in the first half of the twentieth century. Until unionism became a dominant force, these workers dutifully provided inexpensive labor under conditions most Caucasian residents would not tolerate. Many Native Tlingits and Haidas fished for the cannery, unlike Natives at other Alaskan canneries who were typically relegated to low-skilled cannery work. The advent of the Iron Chink, a fish dressing machine, reduced the canneries' dependence on labor but did not improve working conditions. The Kake Cannery's organization of buildings, structures, and walkways is intact, expresses their purposes, and illustrates the use of foreign contract labor. Of Alaska's original canneries, very few remain; even fewer retain integrity of setting and architecture. The Kake Cannery is the best preserved Alaska salmon cannery in Southeast Alaska. It retains high architectural integrity, original worker housing, period machinery, association of setting and a very strong cultural link with the Tlingit Natives who fished and worked at the cannery contributing to its labor force. The period of significance extends through 1940. The P.E. Harris & Company purchased the cannery in 1941, precipitating a production decline.

History of the Canned Salmon Industry in Alaska

Southeast Alaska teems with salmon. Tall trees shelter a myriad of salmon streams that every year welcome their wayward offspring as they return from the ocean to spawn at their freshwater birth places. There are five species of salmon found in North America's Pacific waters. The largest is the chinook, popularly known as the king salmon. The most desirable of the species, prized for its bright red flesh and high oil content, is the sockeye, or red salmon. Second in desirability is the coho, or silver salmon. The last two species, the pink (or humpback) and chum (or dog) salmon, are highly suitable for drying and canning and are abundant in southeast Alaska, including Kake. Before the commercial salmon fishery arrived in southeast Alaska, Native Kake Tlingits, as well as the other Tlingit and Haida peoples in southeast Alaska, fished for this traditional subsistence and cultural mainstay for millennia. Russian entrepreneurs, who laid claim to the territory in the nineteenth century, built salteries along the coast and attempted to package salted salmon for export.

The United States' commercial fishing presence in Alaska commenced in the mid 1860s when American fishermen delivered Alaskan halibut, herring, and cod to west coast markets. By 1870 there were at least three salmon salteries in southeast Alaska, two of which hired local Native Tlingits and Haidas. Although they had sold salmon to the Russians and Americans,

this was the regional Natives' first contact with the commercial salmon industry. A comparison has been made between traditional Native fishing and the early commercial fishing industry:

> One of the interesting aspects of the early salteries is that the Tlingit and Haida accommodated themselves to their operations so easily. The salmon fishery itself was work they had been accustomed to since birth, and their preservation method of salting was also easily understood on account of the simplicity of the method. The fishery itself in no way interfered with the traditional salmon fishery for subsistence. . . . The saltery represented an industry that could have easily fitted into the Tlingit and Haida lifestyle without the major changes associated with the later canned salmon industry.[1]

The first salmon cannery was built along the Sacramento River in northern California in 1864 by Andrew Hapgood and G.W. and Andrew Hume, three Maine entrepreneurs. Cannery construction centered along the more productive Columbia River in Washington, which became home to more than fourteen canneries by 1873. The canneries based their operations on technology developed in the American fruit and vegetable canning industry.[2] By the 1870s, American business interests, quickly discovering the superabundance and the commercial value of Alaskan salmon, began to build canneries along the southeastern coast, in the same region as the Kake Cannery. The first two Alaskan salmon canneries were constructed in 1878 in southeast Alaska, one on the site of an old saltery. The first Alaskan pack, in 1878, was 8,159 cases.[3] The southeast market, with its geographic proximity to Seattle, appealed primarily to smaller canning operators. In the meantime, larger conglomerates, such as the Alaska Packers Association, had sufficient financial resources to take advantage of the enormous sockeye runs in remote western Alaska.

The 1880s were a period of rapid expansion in the cannery business. In 1880 two salmon canneries produced ten thousand cases of pack and employed thirty men.[4] In 1888 seventeen Alaskan canneries produced 412,000 cases and the following year thirty-seven canneries canned 714,000 cases.[5] In 1900 fifty canneries produced nearly one and a half million cases of salmon. Canneries in 1900 employed 8,570 workers - 3,060 Caucasians, 3,443 Chinese, and 2,067

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[1] Robert E. Price, *The Great Father in Alaska: The Case of the Tlingit and Haida Salmon Fishery* (Douglas, Alaska: First Street Press, 1990), 48.

[2] Dianne Newell, ed., *The Development of the Pacific Salmon-Canning Business: A Grown Man's Game* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 15.

[3] "Pack of Canned Salmon in Alaska, 1896 to 1947, by Species," *Pacific Fisherman Yearbook* (1948): 95. A case contains 48 pounds of salmon.

[4] Daniel B. DeLoach, *The Salmon Canning Industry* (Corvallis, OR: Oregon State College, 1939), 13.

[5] James Crutchfield and Giulio Pontecorvo, *The Pacific Salmon Fisheries: A Study of Irrational Conservation* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), 74.

Natives.[6] Although the small southeastern canneries contributed significantly to the territory's total pack, operations during this period were dominated by large conglomerates that owned canneries at numerous rivers.

Many budding cannery operations depended on a traditional Indian form of fishing, the salmon trap. Salmon, as they moved upstream to spawn, were lead into the traps' holding sections from which they could not escape. The fish then would be dipped out by net. Most traps were owned by southeast Alaska canneries.[7] Nine fish traps were included in the Kake Cannery's inventory at its 1949 sale to the Organized Village of Kake. Fish traps were an important impetus to the growth of the salmon canning industry because they allowed canneries to catch large numbers of fish with relative ease independently of a local fishing fleet. Additionally, because the salmon remained alive in the traps, they could be delivered to the cannery in consistently near-fresh condition.[8] The increased use of salmon traps was not without controversy, because many canneries came to prefer to use traps rather than purchase salmon from Native and Caucasian residents. These people saw the traps as a symbol of exploitation by "outside" west coast companies and an absentee government. People also argued that the traps' presence decreased their subsistence food source and would lead to extinction of the salmon resource.

Believing an inexhaustible supply of salmon existed, cannery owners were hesitant to voluntarily undertake conservation measures in the competitive fishing industry. The number of traps in southeast Alaska climbed rapidly, from nine in 1901 to a high of 575 by 1927, and by the late 1920s they captured over half the landings.[9] Conservation acts in 1889 and 1924 placed limitations on fishing, but neither outlawed traps. As a territory whose waterways were under the federal government's jurisdiction, there was little Alaska residents could do to control the resource, and the fisheries issue heightened the drive toward statehood. Attainment of statehood status in 1959 marked a dramatic shift in natural resources control from the national to the state level. The following year the state legislated fish traps out of existence.[10]

Up to the 1920s the United States was the largest producer of canned salmon in the world.[11] In 1910 rising salmon prices spurred another period of rapid cannery expansion. Output nearly doubled between 1910 and 1915. Prior to 1910, growth was accomplished by catching

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[6] Howard N. Kutchin, *Report on Salmon Fisheries of Alaska* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1901), 24-25.

[7] Crutchfield and Pontecorvo, 77-79.

[8] H.C. Scudder, *The Alaska Salmon Trap: Its Evolution, Conflicts, and Consequences* (Juneau: Alaska State Library Historical Monographs, 1970), 23.

[9] Crutchfield and Pontecorvo, 79.

[10] George W. Rogers, *Alaska in Transition: The Southeast Region* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1960), 106.

[11] Newell, 11.

increasing numbers of highly desirable sockeye salmon. During this latter period, growth was achieved by extending the catch to other species, such as silver, pink, and chum salmon. Between 1909 and 1918 the number of Alaskan salmon canneries tripled from forty-five to 135.[12] Expansion during this period was marked by the entry of smaller operations in southeast Alaska.

Development of the Kake Cannery

It was in this atmosphere that in 1912 one small independent operator, the Sanborn Cutting Company, built the Kake Cannery in southeast Alaska. The cannery was built on the site of the Kake Trading and Packing Company's mild cure station and dock, approximately one and one-half miles south of the village of Kake and about ninety miles southeast of Juneau. Sanborn's first cannery buildings may have incorporated several houses that were on the site of a Tlingit summer fishing camp. Many Kake residents participated in the construction of the cannery buildings. In 1917 the Kake Cannery produced 89,369 cases of salmon, consisting primarily of pink and chum salmon, although all five species were represented.[13]

In 1925 or 1926 the Sunny Point Packing Company, which already owned a cannery in Ketchikan, acquired the Sanborn Cutting Company at Kake as well as the Thlinket Packing Corporation at Funter.[14] During various times Sunny Point also owned canneries at Chomly, Funter, Kasaan, Ketchikan, Port Althorp, and Rose Inlet in southeast Alaska and Sand Point on the Alaska Peninsula. The 1926 Kake pack, at 93,480 cases, remained consistent with previous years.[15] In 1929 the number of Alaskan salmon canneries hit its peak at 159. That year the Kake Cannery packed 82,040 cases under new ownership by the Alaska Pacific Salmon Corporation.[16] Alaska Pacific led southeast canneries in total number of cases packed for 1930, 1931, and 1933, with production exceeding southeast competitors Libby, McNeill & Libby and the New England Fish Company.[17] For example in 1930, Alaska Pacific packed over 615,000 full cases while Libby, McNell & Libby packed less than half that number. Extending into the late 1930s, the Alaska Pacific Salmon Corporation maintained a significant portion of the market. Besting twenty-eight other conglomerates, in 1938 the company packed

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[12] Ernest Gruening, *The State of Alaska* (New York: Random House, 1954), 210.

[13] "1917 Southeast Alaska Canned Salmon Pack," *Pacific Fisherman Yearbook* (1918): 56.

[14] Two years of the *Pacific Fisherman Yearbook* mention this sale. "Canned Salmon Pack of 1925 Up to Average of Recent Years," *Pacific Fisherman Yearbook* (1926): 52 and "Canned Salmon Production in 1926 Approaches War-Time Record," *Pacific Fisherman Yearbook* (1927): 72.

[15] "1926 Southeast Alaska Canned Salmon Pack," *Pacific Fisherman Yearbook* (1927): 85.

[16] "1929 Canned Salmon Pack of Alaska Pacific Salmon Corporation," *Pacific Fisherman Yearbook* (1930): 84.

[17] "1930 Southeast Alaska Canned Salmon Pack," *Pacific Fisherman Yearbook* (1931): 76, "1931 Southeast Alaska Canned Salmon Pack," *Pacific Fisherman Yearbook* (1932), and "1933 Southeast Alaska Canned Salmon Pack," *Pacific Fisherman Yearbook* (1934).

nearly one-seventh of southeast Alaska's pack.[18] Nineteen forty was a banner year for the Kake Cannery, it packed 112,445 cases, leading the other southeast Alaska canneries owned by Alaska Pacific.[19]

The Kake Cannery, as well as neighboring canneries at Pillar Bay and Point Ellis, supported Native workers. Until their skills were in competition with the cannery-owned fish traps, Native men were the canneries' primary salmon suppliers.[20] Often entire families traveled between sites - the men fished using beach seines and sailboats, and the women (and sometimes children) worked on the canning lines. Much of the Native labor force was transient and traveled among a group of geographically close canneries. Southeast salmon runs through many streams and because of this, the Native southeast workers moved from stream to stream to maintain employment. Utilizing local labor at the different cannery sites was simpler than importing workers from the United States. Native workers were in demand, and a southeastern cannery representative commented that his company could not find enough Natives to employ, and that "[a]ny Indian who wishes to work, either in the cannery or fishing, does not need to be idle in the summer time."[21] In this respect, the early Native labor pattern in southeast Alaska was unlike that of other parts of the state. For example, in western Alaska, the higher paying fishing jobs were generally reserved for Caucasian workers.

The Use of Foreign Labor and the Contractor System

As the number of canneries and canned salmon production increased, the Kake Cannery became, as did many other Pacific Northwest canneries, dependent on labor from outside the village. Initially, Chinese workers were the primary source. Chinese workers had commercially fished salmon in California since the 1850s and the number of Chinese available for cannery work increased as work on the transcontinental railway withered in the 1860s.[22] Chinese workers became favored over Native help because they were perceived to be "more certain and easily controlled."[23] They were prized as skilled butchers to cut off the heads, tails, and fins. A butcher, on average, could clean three fish per minute over the course of a ten to twelve hour workday. To entice higher production in increasingly competitive markets, butchers were paid higher wages, sometimes nearly twice that of the less skilled labor.[24]

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[18] "1938 Southeast Alaska Canned Salmon Pack," *Pacific Fisherman Yearbook* (1939).

[19] "1940 Canned Salmon Pack of the Alaska Pacific Salmon Co.," *Pacific Fisherman Yearbook* (1941): 79.

[20] Price, 62.

[21] James Witten, *Report on the Agricultural Prospects, Natives, Salmon Fisheries, Coal Prospects and Development, and Timber and Lumber Interests of Alaska.* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904), 69.

[22] Jack Chen, *The Chinese in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), 97-98, 105.

[23] Jefferson F. Moser, *The Salmon and Salmon Fisheries of Alaska* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1899), 109-111.

[24] Patrick O'Bannon, "Technological Changes in the Pacific Coast Canned Salmon Industry, 1900-1925: A Case Study," *Agricultural History* 56, no. 1 (1982): 153.

Chinese also worked in the less skilled jobs, making them a participant in every step of the canning process, except fishing. Their other jobs included manufacturing the cans from sheet metal, sorting fish, packing cans, sealing, can lacquering, labeling, and packing the cans into crates for shipment.

The division of labor in the cannery was based on race, not ability. Generally, Caucasian workers were employed in positions that required responsibility, because they were believed to be the most trustworthy. These positions included foreman and mechanic. Not surprisingly, the Caucasian workers were the highest rewarded. In 1934 Chinese in lower skilled positions were paid $70 a month and could possibly save about $125 to take home after six or seven months work. By contrast, Caucasian cooks and foremen earned from $450 to $1000 a season.[25]

Through at least the mid 1930s, foreign cannery labor was usually hired through a contractor system. In the standard relationship the contractor, providing all labor, received a certain amount from the cannery for each case of salmon produced. The contractor was responsible for the transportation and feeding of hired workers. The system was beneficial to salmon canning, an industry characterized by a need of varying numbers of low-skilled workers for unpredictable lengths of time. Some canneries eagerly endorsed the system because it relieved them of dealing with employees. Others, however, viewed it with distrust. The system was ripe for abuse, and there are numerous accounts of contractors taking advantage of the non-English speaking Oriental workers - from skimping on food to charging exorbitant prices for low quality gear to absconding with pay at the end of the season.[26] One prominent critic commented that "serious abuses grew up under the system, which was filled with graft and corruption of every description."[27] Nevertheless, the system flourished and perpetuated itself as English-speaking Chinese, taking advantage of saved capital, established themselves as labor contractors.

Widespread national anti-immigration sentiments pushed through passage of the Chinese Exclusion Acts of 1882 and 1904, eventually prohibiting all Chinese immigration. The restrictions had two major ramifications in the salmon canning industry. First, it decreased the pool of skilled butchers and drove up the wages of cannery workers, increasing owners' production costs. These increases prompted owners to develop ways of automating the canning process to eliminate the need for expensive skilled labor. Second, as Chinese workers aged and could not be replaced, contractors began hiring young Japanese immigrants to meet labor demands. Japanese laborers were in ample supply in the mid 1880s, because the Japanese government encouraged emigration as an escape from domestic economic problems. By the early 1900s Japanese workers made up a substantial percentage of both Alaskan cannery laborers and labor contractors.

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[25] Chen, 107.

[26] John N. Cobb, *Pacific Salmon Fisheries, Appendix XIII to the Report of the Commissioner of Fisheries for 1930* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1930), 500-501.

[27] DeLoach, 59.

Filipinos made up the third influx of immigrants employed at Kake and other Pacific canneries. Further anti-immigration laws passed in 1921 and 1924 forbade Japanese and other Asian immigration, yet did not apply to Filipinos because the Filipinos were United States nationals.[28] Filipinos had been coming to the United States for some time as students who worked in the canneries during summer vacation. These laborers earned a good reputation as able workers, but as larger numbers of Filipinos began immigrating, they began experiencing the same xenophobia directed earlier toward the Chinese and Japanese.[29]

Filipinos were hired by Chinese and Japanese contractors. Disembarking boats at the United States, they were approached by the labor contractors who took advantage of their naiveté and eagerness to work. Accustomed to a relatively meager existence in the Philippines, they settled for the contractors' slim wages. Prospective Filipino workers were also contacted at hotels to persuade them to join the cannery gangs and there are reports of shanghaiing.[30] Because they resemble Orientals physically, Filipinos were automatically classified as cheap labor and given jobs requiring little skill. It is ironic that although they were believed to be Oriental, the Filipinos were discriminated against by the Chinese and Japanese contractors in wages and food. As Filipinos became savvy to the contractor system, they too entered the business and were not below manipulating other Filipinos workers in the style of their Chinese and Japanese predecessors.[31] Also within the cannery labor foree in smaller numbers were Korean, Mexican, and Black workers. The racial makeup of the 146 Alaskan canneries in 1918 was 16,000 Caucasians, 3,875 Natives, 2,770 Chinese, 1,507 Japanese, 1,578 Filipinos, and 1,891 Mexicans.[32] Many of these immigrants took on the attributes of the migrant worker, moving from seasonal industry to seasonal industry along the Pacific coast.

The presence of separate Native, Caucasian, Chinese, and Japanese and Filipino bunkhouses at the Kake Cannery indicates that the labor force was both multi-ethnic and segregated. There is no evidence of the exact racial makeup of the Kake Cannery workers. Native bunkhouses are located north of the cannery, and are isolated from the main buildings by a wooded area and Lower Gunnuk Creek. One Tlingit resident, Rebecca Rose, remembers that "[e]verybody used to have to move to those little shacks down by the cannery. . . . They used to call them 'company houses,' and that's where everybody moved. There was no road going down there. We all used to have to move by rowboats. There was no motors for the boats."[33] The Chinese

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[28] Chris Friday, *Organizing Asian American Labor: The Pacific Coast Canned-Salmon Industry, 1870-1942* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 126.

[29] Sue Ellen Liljeblad, *Filipino Alaska: A Heritage* (Anchorage: Alaska Historical Commission Studies in History, 1980), 49.

[30] Liljeblad, 76.

[31] Thelma Buchholdt, *Filipinos in Alaska: 1788-1958* (Anchorage: Aboriginal Press, 1996), 50.

[32] House Committee on the Merchant Marine and Fisheries, *Fisheries in Alaska: Hearings on H.R. 10427,* 67th Cong., 2nd sess., 1922, 61.

[33] Organized Village of Kake, *Keex'Kwaan: In Our Words: Interviews of Kake Elders* (Kake: Organized Village of Kake, 1989), 51. The U.S. Forest Service oversaw the construction of a road between the cannery and Kake in 1920.

and Japanese and Filipino Bunkhouses were located at the opposite end of the cannery. The White Man's Bunkhouse is centrally located adjacent to the Main Cannery Building and the warehouses.

Relations between the various races and local Native populations varied, although it has been noted that generally the outside racial groups shunned the Natives. Native fishermen argued that the canneries' presence reduced their subsistence food source. Foreign workers were not immune from shunning either. The cannery industry's prevailing sentiment toward the Chinese workers - not welcome but acknowledged as necessary - is summed up in the name "Iron Chink." For further insult this trade name, used to this day, is stamped on the machines, was used in advertisements, and was displayed on the company's letterhead.[34]

The use of local Native labor in southeast Alaska fluctuated, and there are no precise figures indicating Native involvement at the Kake Cannery between 1912 and 1940. The 1920 census notes that out of approximately 386 Kake villagers, approximately 106 were fishermen and about twenty-eight were cannery workers.[35] Typically, women worked in the cannery, cutting up and cleaning fish and filling cans, while men seined to supplement the company's fish traps.[36] This is a sharp increase in the number of fishermen listed in the previous census in which about sixty-one villagers are listed as fishermen.[37] This increase is logical because at the time of the 1910 census the cannery was not built, and by 1920 the Kake Cannery would have needed local fishermen. As discussed earlier, canneries in southeast Alaska used larger numbers of local Native fishermen than other Alaskan canneries But by the 1930s, the Organized Village of Kake (OVK) records indicate that the cannery employed very few Native fishermen, "perhaps only two to four," and few women "except during the peak of the salmon run." Perhaps by this time, when the cannery was packing an ever increasing number of cases, it was necessary to employ outside and foreign labor and for some reason, the cannery chose to use fewer local workers.

The decline in Native fishermen at Kake was due, in part, to the cannery's increased use of fish traps. The low number of resident workers in the 1930s may also have been related to a growing discrimination against local Alaskans on the part of Seattle-based unions which generally preferred to hire outside workers. The importance traditional Tlingit culture places upon wealth as a source of prestige fosters the idea that the Kake people would have eagerly

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[34] O'Bannon, 157.

[35] Kake, Alaska Census of Population, 1st Judicial District, Petersburg Recording District; **(National Archives Microfilm Publication, roll 2030);** Fourteenth Census of the United States, 1920; Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29; National Archives, Anchorage, Alaska.

[36] Frank Gordon, interview by Linda Cook, Kake, Alaska, 27 July 1993.

[37] Kake, Alaska Census of Population, 1st Judicial District, Petersburg Recording District, (National Archives Microfilm Publication, roll 1748); Thirteenth Census of the United States, 1910; Records of the Bureau of the Census, Record Group 29; National Archives, Anchorage, Alaska.

worked if labor was available. Albert Davis, a Kake resident, remembers the glory days of local fishermen prior to the exclusive use of traps and outside labor:

> And Kake fishermen were well known in a class by themselves, as the cannery provided many beautiful company boats, seine boats. . . . We had a huge fishing fleet, boats provided by the cannery. Ladies worked in the old style, slow-moving canning machine. . . . The cannery was the only means of work, jobs seasonal. But still, in those days, everything was plentiful. [38]

A tribute to the skill and fame of Kake's fisherman is found in a mural under the eaves of the southwest side of the main cannery building. This artwork, rendered in the Pacific Northwest Indian style, is attributed to Charlie Gunnock (Tlingit name Gu''n-wa'q), an acclaimed Kake silversmith. The painting depicts Tl'anaxeedakw, or "Lucky Lady," carrying her baby on her back. It was believed that whoever heard the child's cry would prosper and become rich.[39] In traditional Pacific Northwest Indian artwork, body parts are dissected and to increase emphasis, some features are distorted, exaggerated, and even eliminated. Individual body parts are outlined in black or red paint and are connected to each other by broader lines that have been called formlines.[40] The painting at the Kake Cannery has some characteristics of the traditional formline art of northern Northwest Indians. The dark lines outlining the animals and the woman's body parts are its most distinctive features.

Although the contractor system subjected cannery workers to abuses from its onset in the 1890s, it was not until the mid 1930s that an organized movement against it commenced. One reason why unionism was slow to spread is that despite the fact that different nationalities worked together on the cannery floor, after hours they were separated by bunk houses and mess halls. Ostensibly, this owner-imposed segregation reduced ethnic conflicts, but it also prevented workers from organizing. Additionally, the seasonal nature of cannery work in which workers migrated from port to port did not promote unionism. Believing that the Chinese and Japanese contractors did not satisfactorily represent their interests and locked them out of the labor contracting business, the Filipino workers organized into the Filipino Laborers Association in 1930. Passage of the 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) stimulated unionism by guaranteeing laborers the right to organize and collectively bargain. In 1933 the American Federation of Labor chartered the first cannery workers union, the Cannery Workers and Farm Laborers Union (CWFLU), Local 18257. Based in Seattle, the union heavily recruited Filipino workers.[41]

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[38] Organized Village of Kake, 34.

[39] Ruth Demmert, "Alaska Native Legend Relating to Painted Figure on Cannery at Kake, Alaska" (Organized Village of Kake, photocopy).

[40] George Thornton Emmons, *The Tlingit Indians,* ed. Frederica de Laguna (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), 199-200.

[41] Jack K. Masson and Donald L. Guimary, "Pilipinos and Unionization of the Alaskan Canned Salmon Industry," *Amerasia* 8, no. 2 (1981): 10.

The National Recovery Administration's Code of Fair Competition for the Salmon Industry (1934) outlawed the contractor system on paper, but contractors circumvented this by recruiting workers and paying their union dues. Despite scandals involving misuse of union funds and competing unions vying for labor contracts, the CWFLU maintained their status as the sole bargaining agency for the industry until 1937 when members voted to discontinue its affiliation with the AFL and become members of the Congress of Industrial Organizations' new cannery workers union, the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America.[42] There is no indication as to what extent workers at Kake were unionized. It is likely that Kake cannery workers joined the scattered unions, some of which, like the Fishermen's and Cannery Workers Industrial Union, were local to southeast Alaska, and others, like the Japanese Cannery Workers Association, represented certain nationalities of workers.

Appearance of New Technology in the Canned Salmon Industry

The problems associated with foreign workers and labor shortages, as the Chinese Exclusion Acts precluded aging workers from being replaced by younger ones, spurred new technologies in the salmon canning industry. A butchering machine introduced in 1903 by E. A. Smith, called the "Iron Chink" for the Oriental butchering gangs it replaced, could process about forty-three fish per minute and replaced about eighteen men.[43] Cannery owners were enthusiastic about the machine. One period canner noted that the machine allowed him to pack between 1,200 and 1,500 cases per day with ten workers when previously he required twenty-four, including twelve skilled butchers.[44] The Iron Chink increased production and decreased the amount of space needed for fish dressing activities, in addition to reducing the need for skilled Chinese butchers.

The Iron Chink, as well as other technological innovations during this period - such as gasoline powered fishing boats, purse seines, advanced fish traps, vacuum processing machines, advanced labeling and lacquering processes, and box-making factories - allowed canneries, including the Kake Cannery, to catch and process increasingly larger quantities of fish. Of these, the Iron Chink was the only innovation to originate in the canning industry. Mechanized filling machines and retorts were borrowed from the fruit and vegetable canning industry, and the vacuum closing machine originated in the coffee industry in the 1920s.[45]

To accurately measure the Iron Chink's productivity, species must be considered separately because of their differing weights. The Iron Chink was more beneficial to canneries, such as the Kake Cannery, that processed large quantities of pink salmon. Pinks weigh, on average, about four pounds, in contrast to sockeye that normally weigh twice as much. Approximately

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[42] Masson and Guimary, 12, 24.

[43] O'Bannon, 156-157.

[44] Duncan A. Stacey, "Technological Change in the Fraser River Salmon Canning Industry, 1871-1912" (master's thesis, University of British Columbia, 1977), 62.

[45] Newell, 15-16.

nineteen pinks, or a dozen sockeye, are required to produce one case of salmon. Because more fish are required to produce a case of pink salmon than sockeye salmon, it follows that more labor is also required. Therefore, canneries in southeast Alaska whose primary harvest was pink salmon, realized more advantages from the Iron Chink than those that processed mainly sockeye salmon.

The Chinese laborers were concerned that this new machine would replace them. In Port Townsend, Washington, a mechanic was threatened with death if he dared to operate one. But contractors endorsed the Iron Chink because it lowered their labor costs and prevented them from having to locate scarce skilled butchers.[46] One problem with early models of the Iron Chink was that they wasted large quantities of meat. This waste was considered acceptable during the large pre-1920 runs, but as catches dwindled in response to depleted runs and conservation legislation, cannery profits depended on using every ounce of fish. The Model G, introduced in 1922, addressed this new situation with head and fin knives designed to waste very little useable fish.[47] The Kake Cannery packed primarily pink and chum salmon and reportedly continued to use highly skilled Chinese butchers until it purchased a Model GT-1927 Iron Chink in the 1920s. There may have been an earlier version of the Iron Chink at Kake prior to the 1920s, but there are no known records for one. At some point another Iron Chink of this same model was purchased.[48]

Comparison of the Kake Cannery to NHL Canneries

The Kake Cannery is the only Alaskan cannery to be nominated as a National Historic Landmark under the labor theme study. There are no other Pacific Coast canneries, in Alaska or elsewhere, that are designated NHLs. The fact that there are no standing NHLs representative of this important industry demonstrates the importance of this nomination. The Kake Cannery, one of many canneries to operate in Alaska, is of high integrity and retains a great deal of its canning facilities and worker housing. Independently of this project, a theme study is being undertaken to identify other historic Alaskan salmon canneries and it is expected that other canneries suitable for NHL nomination will become evident.

It is difficult to compare the Kake Cannery with other properties that have the same context and history. Another property type associated with the salmon industry study is vessels that transported canning crews and canned salmon between Alaska and Washington state. There are four other properties related to the salmon industry that have been designated as NHLs and they are listed below. The Kake Cannery compliments these properties in that it is an actual site with existent structures.

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[46] O'Bannon, 161-162.

[47] O'Bannon, 165.

[48] A 1973 appraisal lists two GT-1927 Iron Chinks. Hugh A. Thompson and Associates, "Appraisal of Organized Valley of Kake, Kenu Canning Company, Kake, Alaska for United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs" (Redmond, Washington, 1973), 6.

- **First Pacific Coast Salmon Cannery Site, Sacramento, California**: This site on the Sacramento River marks the earliest efforts of the Pacific Coast salmon canning industry. On this site that Hapgood, Hume and Company began canning operations in 1864. Because the salmon runs along this river were unpredictable, the partners began to search for a better field of operation, leading them to construct canneries along Washington's Columbia River. Although overshadowed in production by the Columbia River canneries, this place is important as the first cannery site. Neither the worker housing nor the canning facilities survive.[49]

- **Elmore Cannery, Astoria, Oregon**: This cannery was destroyed by fire and has been dedesignated.

- **Sailing Ship *Balclutha*, San Francisco, California**: Built in 1886 in Glasgow, Scotland, the square rigged *Balclutha* was employed in the Alaska salmon trade from 1902 to 1930 by the Alaska Packers Association (APA). After chartering her for a couple of years to run fishermen, cannery crews, and supplies to its canneries in southwest Alaska, the APA purchased *Balclutha* in 1904 and renamed her *Star of Alaska*, in accordance with their policy of naming company vessels with a "star" prefix. During her career, *Balclutha* docked at Antwerp. London, Rangoon, Cape Town, Montevideo, Honolulu, Melbourne, San Francisco, and Chignik, Alaska. *Star of Alaska* was the APA's last sailing ship to be sent north, completing her final Alaskan trip in 1930.[50]

- ***Star of India*, San Diego, California**: The iron-hulled, three-masted bark *Star of India* was built in 1863. As *Euterpe*, *Star of India* sailed as a general trader to India and then for thirty-five years carried immigrants and cargo to New Zealand and Australia. In 1898 *Euterpe* was purchased by the Pacific Colonial Ship Company of San Francisco and delivered lumber from Puget Sound to Australia. The APA acquired the vessel in 1901. In 1906, by an act of Congress, the vessel's name was changed to *Star of India*. She carried cannery employees and fishermen to and from Alaska each year until 1923. *Balclutha* and *Star of India* are the last surviving vessels of the APA's great salmon fleet.[51]

The buildings and organization of the Kake Cannery reflect both the salmon canning process that provided the village's mainstay for more than fifty years as well as concurrent, broad labor issues. The cannery's simple frame structures reflect a utilitarian environment where, for the most part, architectural style bowed to a need to produce large quantities of preserved salmon in an expedient, sanitary manner. Artistic traces are present, however, at the main cannery building which is decorated with artwork in the Pacific Northwest Indian style by a local artist.

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[49] James Dillon, "First Pacific Coast Salmon Cannery Site." (September, 1975) National Historic Landmark Nomination Form, National Park Service.

[50] James P. Delgado, "Sailing Ship *Balclutha*." (December 30, 1983) National Historic Landmark Nomination Form, National Park Service.

[51] Patricia Heintzelman, original form by Charles Snell, "*Star of India*." (1965, 1978) National Historic Landmark Nomination Form, National Park Service.

Cursory examination of a cannery map not only reveals how salmon moved from the dock to the can, but also the number of races present. The races were kept separate by the labor contractors practically from the moment they were hired in San Francisco and Seattle. Bunkhouses belonging to Native, Caucasian, Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino workers are readily identifiable. It is easy to imagine the cannery fifty years ago, bristling with the different languages and cultures that lived and worked under its roofs. The fact that the bunkhouses lie practically as far from each other as possible reveals that the cannery managers wanted to minimize intermingling, both to prevent conflicts and to prevent workers from forming labor organizations.

Due to smaller fish populations and rising production costs in the 1930s, a large number of salmon canneries began to close. In 1941 P.E. Harris & Company bought the cannery from the Alaska Pacific Salmon Corporation. That year the cannery packed a high of 181,029 cases. Although successful in the first years of operation under new management, the cannery succumbed to many of the same setbacks experienced by other canneries. The next seven years show a steady decline in the amount of fish canned, plunging to 9,075 cases in 1948. In 1944 the cannery experienced its first gross loss - just over $10,000 - and by 1946 the yearly loss had climbed to $192,312,37. Production ceased at the end of the 1946 season.

Because the economic livelihood of the local community rests upon the fishing industry, this closure produced economic hardships for Kake. Realizing the importance of the cannery to the community, the Organized Village of Kake (OVK) considered purchasing the facility from P.E. Harris & Company, which was willing to sell the unprofitable business. It was hoped that purchase of the cannery would restore the community's economic backbone. The Natives of the community had fished most of their lives; they believed that owning a salmon cannery would provide an opportunity to rejuvenate their local economy with this important aspect of their lifestyle.

In 1934 Congress passed the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA), designed to assist Natives become self-supporting. The IRA provided economic assistance to Native corporations from a revolving loan fund, and Natives could use the money for various enterprises to aid in their economic development. Native ownership of the Kake Cannery fit well within the purposes of the IRA. An initial valuation of the cannery, including all necessary equipment, ran close to $640,000. In December 1949 representatives from the Interior Department and P.E. Harris signed an agreement for the sale of the Kake Cannery to the OVK for $362,360.49. The facility itself cost $300,000 and the equipment and inventories, including nine fish traps, cost $62,360.49. The Department of the Interior loaned the money to the village for a ten year term. The OVK renamed the cannery the "Keku Canning Company" after the Keku Straits near the Keku Islands in southeast Alaska.

Because the cannery had not been used since the 1946 season, inactivity had deteriorated some of the buildings and the 1950 pack of 25,653 cases was less than anticipated. The 1951 pack was more productive, consisting of 72,768 cases. But production fell the following year and a series of poor fishing seasons led to the cannery's closure in 1977. Since then the cannery has been used for storage.

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):
__ Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
__ Previously Listed in the National Register.
X Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register. (White Man's Bunkhouse)
__ Designated a National Historic Landmark.
__ Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: #
X Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: # AK 26

Primary Location of Additional Data:

__ State Historic Preservation Office
__ Other State Agency
__ Federal Agency
__ Local Government
__ University
X Other (Specify Repository): National Archives, Anchorage Branch

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage of Property: Approximately 12 acres

UTM References:

A zone 8, 565,574 easting, 6,314,023 northing

B zone 8, 565,640 easting, 6,313,757 northing

C zone 8, 565,337 easting, 6,313,682 northing

D zone 8, 565,209 easting, 6,314,014 northing

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundaries of the Kake Cannery National Historic Landmark are located approximately 1 ½ miles south of the Kake Townsite on western Kupreanof Island and are within the boundaries of U.S. Survey #963 plotted in 1898. The boundaries are shown on the accompanying site plan and are described as follows: Situated on a north/south axis beginning at Point A, the boundary begins at the southern end of Warehouse No. 2 and the adjoining dock. The boundary then follows the north edge of the gravel road heading east, circles around to include the Japanese and Filipino Bunkhouse, and then north back to the gravel road and then crosses Keku Road and extends 150 feet east from the road to Point B. From this point, the boundary continues north parallel to Keku Road until it bisects Lower Gunnuk Creek as it runs through a culvert at Point C. From this point on the east side of Keku Road, the boundary proceeds following the southern edge of Lower Gunnuk Creek to the low tide line at Point D. The boundary then follows the low tide line in a southerly direction and circling out into Keku Strait to include the Main Cannery Building and associated structures to the point of beginning at Point A.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary is drawn to include all extant resources that contribute to the historic cannery's labor history, including: the industrial, buildings, structures, and housing. The NHL boundary is slightly less acreage than the U.S. Survey #963 to include those areas that retain historic integrity.

11. FORM PREPARED BY

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