

WRANGELL
and the
GOLD of the CASSIAR



THE BEAR MOTHER
Haida Slate Carving

WRANGELL
and the
GOLD Of The CASSIAR

A Tale of Fur and Gold in Alaska

By

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The Story of Sitka

and

The Story of Alaska



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Land Otter Totem Gravestone
Pursued by weird visions even to the grave.

WRANGELL and the GOLD Of The CASSIAR

WRANGELL BY THE STIKINE RIVER

Wrangell lies on a little bay in the intriguing wilds of South-eastern Alaska, first called Etolin harbor in Wrangell Island. Around it the eddies and currents of the past hundred years have run, washing up on its shores vast deposits of fur and gold. After many changes it was named for Baron Ferdinand Von Wrangell, explorer, and one time chief manager of the Russian-American Company.

Nearly fifty years ago I landed at the old trading post at the mouth of the Stikine River. A soft September sun slanted over the blending colors of the weather-beaten houses along the shores, and the blue hills were bluer than were their wont. A lazy haze hung over all, smoothing the outlines of the bushes on

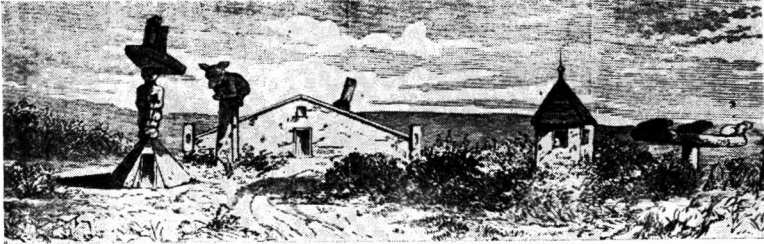


Wolf Totem and "Keet" or Whale Totem

the point across the bay, and lent charm to the strange old tribal houses with their weird histories of pagan days. I passed up the wharf. The wolf totem on the parade ground in the stockade of the army barracks grinned at me with fierce fangs. There was a path that accommodated itself to the curves of the shore,

and it ended at a bridge that led to where the old Hudson's Bay Company fort once stood.

The stubs of the stockade stood in a row just above the tide line. A barge for the mill was building at one side. Beyond it were Indian houses. Among the piles of lumber were the totems of Kadashan,* incongruous among the surroundings. To the south, along the sandspit was the house of Chief Shakes, whose heraldic crest was Hootz, the great brown bear. Shakes



House and Totems of Chief Shakes, 1869
Totem of Three Frogs

sat at the front of his ancestral home and welcomed me. From the top of a column at one side the family emblem looked down, regretfully.** On the sides of the column were the foot-prints ascending to the top. I looked in at the symbolic carvings that decorated the interior, but had not the time to enter. I knew that many reminders of **ankutty** days, when slaves paddled the war canoe, were stored there, and Shakes would talk to me of them at another time. I went to the ruins of the old fort to muse on its story. The Spirits of the Past walked with me.

I looked out to the northwest, through the harbor mouth and fancy carried me back nearly sixty years to a summer day of 1833. I saw the Russian brig "Chichagof" lying at anchor, under command of Lieutenant Dionysius Zarembo. A boat was lowered away and sturdy oarsmen dipped their paddles as it

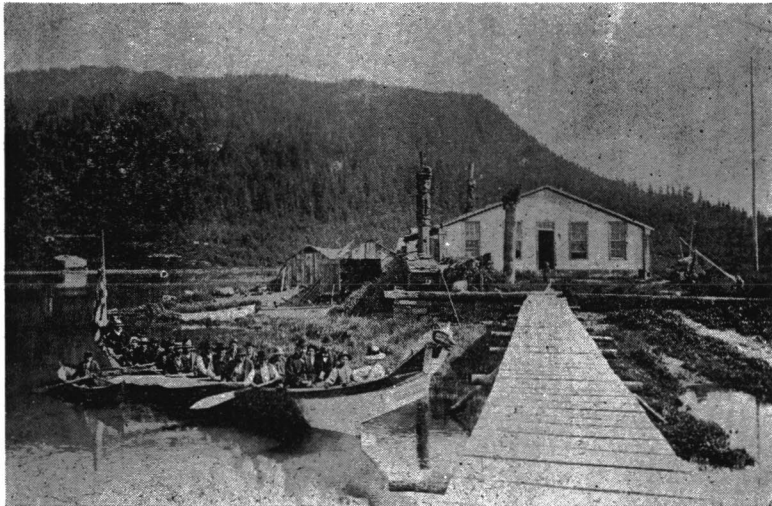
*Kadashan's totems are quite old, but not the oldest in Wrangell. There is a photograph, made about 1887, showing them standing in front of the new house being built. They were probably in front of a former house of Thlingit construction, which was removed to make way for a more modern one. They are now removed to the hillside.

**The totems of Shakes are the oldest remaining poles in Wrangell. An engraving in a report to the government in 1870, shows them to have been in place in 1869. At the west of the house was another, with three frogs in a row. (Ex. Doc. No. 68. 41st Cong. 1st Sess.)

The young Shakes totem, now spoken of as the Raven Totem, was formerly at the side of the house of George Shakes on the ridge above the shore. It is said to have been carved by Toyatt, the "last of the Totem Carvers," to record the union of the Kadashan and the Shakes families. (The Totems of Alaska. Winter and Pond, Juneau, 1909), See also, Corser, Totem Lore 2nd Ed., and 8th Ed.)

headed shoreward. I saw the inspection and survey of the haven, the bringing in of the ship and the landing of the supplies. Then the axe-men went to the forest standing thick on the shore and the echoing strokes rang out on the still air of the primeval wilderness. The spruce and hemlock stood to the very edge of the tide-line, for the Indian village was then at Old Wrangell, or Kotzlitzan, twelve miles to the south.

The trees crashed before the biting blades. Day after day they toiled, cutting the posts for the stockade, hewing the beams for the buildings, and laying the foundations for the fortifications. Into the harbor came the high prowed Thlingit and Hydah canoes, the **eyakh otlan**, the war canoe of the Hydahs, that would



Shakes Canoe. Brown Bear, Bear Totem Figurehead

carry as many as sixty paddlers, not for war, but bringing beaver and otter skins till a thousand choice peltries were stored between the decks of the "Chichagof."* Then the anchor was raised and the brig set sail for **Novo Arkangelsk**, leaving the unfinished buildings, "in the care of the toyons," until another year.

The next spring the "Chichagof" again dropped anchor in the harbor. Soon the completed factory stood ready. Over it was hoisted the flag of the Russian American Company, and it was christened Redoubt St. Dionysius. The Song of Baranof was

*"Founded the redoubt and brought back over one thousand furs of river beavers and otters, not including others."

Report Chief Manager R. A. Co., April 28, 1834. Translated in the **Alaska Boundary Tribunal**, Case of the U. S. pages 265-268.)

sung. The guns boomed out a salute, and the tide of the Russian in his Possessions in America had reached its flood. This was the key to an immense fur region lying back of the coast, between the mainland shore and the mountains. It guarded the waterway to the vast region of the interior where the Stikine had its source in the lofty summits of the Rocky Mountains. In that wilderness stirring scenes were to transpire in coming years. Russian posts were the widest flung of all their time in America. St. Michael, on the Bering Sea marked the northern limit of posts, and Fort Ross in California, was the southernmost settlement that floated the flag of the Czar.

It was a wild, untamed land, and the clansmen of the totems were as wild and fierce and bloody as the whalekillers whose carven images adorned their ancestral columns. The war canoes rippled the waters of the bay with their prows. Brawny slaves, whose lives depended on the doing their master's will, dipped the painted paddles in unison till the craft rose and fell like a living creature. Some of the slaves had been taken in forays on the neighboring clans, but many had been bought from the marauding Hydahs of the Queen Charlottee Islands, who in turn had gathered them from far and near, some even from far off California, or from the coast tribes of Oregon and Washington. The "black-birders" of the Guinea Coast of Africa were not the only slavers in those days. Every one of the bondsmen knew that their lives were held lightly by their pitiless masters, and might be sacrificed without warning in a burst of anger, or on a capricious whim.

The Stikines were one of the tribes of the powerful Thlingit people who held the country from Dixon's Entrance to Yakutat Bay. The Thlingits numbered over eight thousand souls, at that time, and of these about 1500 were Stikines, according to the Russian records, before they were decimated by the terrible plague of the smallpox that swept the coast as far as the mouth of the Yukon in 1832, and again in 1838.*

It was not in peace and security that the Russian Promishleniks held the redoubt by the mouth of the Stikine. The fierce tribesmen cherished undisguised intentions of destroying these palisaded walls, seizing the stores of coveted goods, retaking the rich furs that they had bartered, and covering them into the fur warehouses of the Hudson's Bay Company at Port Simpson, on Portland Canal. They talked long and often over their projects and reviewed the story of the capture of Old Sitka, where

*Father Veniaminof estimated them at 1,500 in 1835. **Works of Veniaminof (Innokentius)**, Vol. 3, p. 575.

In 1860, the Russian estimate was 697. **Tikhmenef's Historical Sketch**, Pt. 2, p. 341.)

their Thlingit countrymen had taken a leading part, and had won rich booty.

The holding of the trading post was a part of the game that the men in the fur trade were playing. Fifty men were in the garrison. These Russian traders had held their ground for more than a quarter of a century in this wilderness since they had met that disaster at Sitka. They patrolled their beats night and day, sometimes at the point of starvation, always in danger, not daring to seek game in the forest or fish on the sea because of the ever watchful and warlike Thlingit. The facing of these perils had become a part of their nature. The trade went on at the portholes, one or two Indians only being admitted when the gate was opened.

The fort stood on a sandbar in the bay, which was an island at high tide. A foot bridge connected it with the shore. Across this bridge the water for the fort was brought from the small stream that fell into the bay at the eastern side where later a dam was placed which made a reservoir that was connected with the fort by a pipeline. This dam is still in the gully at the east side of the bay, but the reservoir has long been filled by the wash of the rivulet.

At Fort Dionysius the Russians traded for the land otter and lynx of the upper Stikine, for the beaver of the tributaries of the inland rivers, for the mink and the martin, and the shaggy pelt of Hootz, the great brown bear. The competition was keen between the two powerful companies.

The Honourable, The Hudson's Bay Company, was organized in England in 1670 by Prince Rupert and his gay cavaliers, and was chartered by Charles the Second. They had crossed the Atlantic, had traced the trails of the American Continent from their posts on Hudson's Bay to the Pacific Ocean, and had reached the Arctic Ocean in the North. Their fur brigades searched the forests and plains for peltry, from San Francisco in the south to LaPierre House in the Arctic.

The Russian American Company, founded in the Siberian city of Irkutsk, chartered by the Czar of all the Russias, kept its head office in St. Petersburg, on the banks of the Neva, and carried its trade in a fleet that sailed round the world. It had reached across Siberia, had crossed the Pacific, and was gathering the harvest of soft, rich pelts for the markets of China and Russia, and of New York, for to all of these it sent its product. In this borderland, in what is now Alaska, it had met the outposts of its rival who had come around the globe from the east and they were sparring for the vantage points. The West had met the East.

They were in the midst of a vast wilderness, where with only a step from the beach of the sea and they were hidden in a for-

est of almost tropical luxuriance, through which watercourses wound, their sources unknown to all except the savage tribesmen by whom they were surrounded. In the recesses of this forest, in the gloomy shades of the giant cedars and hemlocks, where the green mosses lay deep and soft on the rocks, were hiding-places where the vengeful Thlinglet lurked and watched. The shore of every stream was a natural ground of an ambushade. The deep, dark forests, with swift streams foaming between rockbound walls; vast gleaming glaciers flowing between sombre phalanxes of dark-green hemlock that covered granite mountains, were everywhere present. Strange denizens frequented the forests and waters, and waked in the minds of the Indian dwellers grotesque images to which they gave expression in their structures, as another people did when they raised the gargoyles on the walls of Notre Dame.

DISCOVERY OF WRANGELL AND THE STIKINE

The earliest known visitor to the vicinity of Wrangell was the great navigator George Vancouver, when he made his surveys among the passages of the islands in 1793, but, notwithstanding his painstaking work he missed the mouth of the Stikine River. The discovery has been credited to the ship "Atahualpa" in 1802, but this does not seem a certainty. The Journal of the ship says; "I had some conversation with Cou (evidently a chief) respecting some tribes of natives who inhabit the inland country back of Stikeen; he had his information from Cockshoo the Stikeen chief, who has repeatedly been among them for purposes of trade."*

Captain Cleveland, in the ship "Caroline," visited the "Village of Steeken" on April 16, 1799, but does not mention the existence of the river. He lay at anchor off the village for two or three days, trading with the natives when the weather was fair, but complains of the downpour and says that the natives would sit, "crouched up in their canoes, looking at us for hours together, without altering their position, while it rained without cessation." The picture that he gives of them sitting there, immovable, heedless of the pouring rain, their black eyes riveted for hours on the ship, is a weird vision.

The fur trade in those years was a profitable business. Cap-

* (Note; **Journal kept on board Ship Atahualpa**** August 25th 1802, Massachusetts Hist. Soc., Boston, Mass.)

tain Cleveland left on his cruise in September 1797, in a "packet of thirty eight tons burden," he tells us, sold it at the Cape of Good Hope, to purchase a cutter of 50 tons which he renamed the "Caroline," in which he sailed to the Northwest coast, then went to China where he disposed of his furs. The results of the sale were sixty thousand dollars which were invested in Chinese goods, which, according to his statement, netted him in Europe; "upwards of one hundred thousand dollars; and the two thousand dollars, the amount of my property on leaving Europe, together with my commissions, wages, and half profits, amounted to about forty five thousand dollars." Alaska has been the source of many tidy fortunes in the past, and has millions for the future venturer.*

THE TRIBESMEN OF THE STIKINE

The tribesmen of the Stikine are of the Thlingit people. They are called Kolosh, by the Russians, heavily built, with broad, strong shoulders, powerful backs with bulging muscles, legs rather underdeveloped from much sitting in the canoes while paddling, wide faces, stiff black hair, keen black eyes, and a dark skin which is tanned by continual exposure to wind and storm. They have the cruelty of the Indian of the south, and many other similar traits, yet they are much different from the tribes of the United States, even those of the Puget Sound. In their relations with the Russians, and with the Yankee traders of the coast, "Boston Men" as they were usually called, they were treacherous, and their movements were to be viewed with suspicion. They were accustomed to deal with other tribes who sought for advantage in deception and surprise. It was a safe policy with the white strangers, for those who came were there for a selfish purpose, and while they perhaps sought it in a less brutal manner, the final result was no less effective, they used foul and fair methods, and the sailors of those days were not to be esteemed as saints.

The Thlingits are democratic in their customs, yet they acknowledged tribal leadership. The inheritance of property, honors, and position, as of the chief, was through the mother's side, matriarchal it might be termed, possibly with a sense of the greater certainty of establishing the blood line through the mother. Every one belonged to a totem family, traced through the mother, the child being of the totem of its mother. Two of the same totem must not marry, being considered as related by blood.

*Narrative of Voyages, by Richard J. Cleveland, Cambridge, 1842.

One of the bear totem must marry a wolf, a whale, or other of the numerous families. The totems were grouped into phratries, or kwans, as the kokwantans and the Keeksitties, at Sitka. Perhaps no one not a native Thlingit has ever fully understood these divisions.

This totemic relation, or bond, was similar to that which held the Six Nations of the Iroquois together. Among them were the totems of the Bear, the Wolf and other. A traveling Thlingit, on coming to a village, looked for the totem of his family, at that house he was a guest and a brother, although he may never have known of them before.

There was a wealth of imagery in the totems that was born of their living so close to nature in the wild land that they inhabited. The dark, gloomy forests, dripping with moisture. The deep, soft cushions of moss that covered the rocks that formed the framework of every knoll and mountain, in between which seeped pools and rivulets of water that oozed out under foot, or into which one sank to the knees as he stepped. The tumbling streams that plunged down from the glaciers between walls of slate or granite into the arms of the sea. The deep gorges with green waters that mirrored the crags which fell perpendicularly into the depths, left an impress on his mind. The blue-green masses of ice that floated past on the tides were bergs calved from the mountain glacier that over-reached the deeply-carved canyon, and cast its fragments into the chasm with a muffled roar. These caused the hunters who sought their prey among those depths to call it Soom-Doom. All this fired their imagination to people the waters with creatures more eerie, if possible, than were the real denizens.

There were strange and terrifying birds, animals, and fishes, in those forests and sea depths with which they were closely associated, and with which they must contend. The fierce and powerful **Hootz**, the brown bear, with its gleaming fangs and its long clawed paws that hung down as it reared to look over the wide leaves of the devil's club; the terrible killer whale, the **Keet**, with serrated rows of teeth in its powerful jaws and the high, long, pointed fin on its back that cut the water as it searched to and fro for its prey. The loathsome octopus, the devil-fish, to which even the pen of Victor Hugo can scarcely give enough of chilling ghastliness; the misshapen halibut, with its distorted eyes staring from the top of its head was there. The beaver, with its sharp, cutting teeth that could fell the forest trees and build them into houses or construct dams with uncanny intelligence, all these were displayed in their totemic carvings, and were depicted in their tapestries.

They seized upon the salient points and conventionalized them. They enlarged upon them until they stared out from the

walls, peered down from the tall ancestral columns that stood before their homes, or rose above the graves where ashes of their forefathers rested in the bowl-shaped cavities in the back of the mortuary monuments.

Those grim, implacable surroundings had put their stamp on the lives of the tribesmen of the Stikine, until they had become almost as inflexible, as savage, as the eagle, the keet, or the shaggy **hootz**, that they met in their daily search for food. The mystery of the gloomy depths of fjord and forest crept into their natures, and made them superstitious and cruel. Their imagination peopled the vast unexplored recesses of mountain and sea with strange demons, and these were invoked by the **ekhts** (shamans or medicine men) in their demoniacal ceremonies over the diseased of body who fell into their clutches.

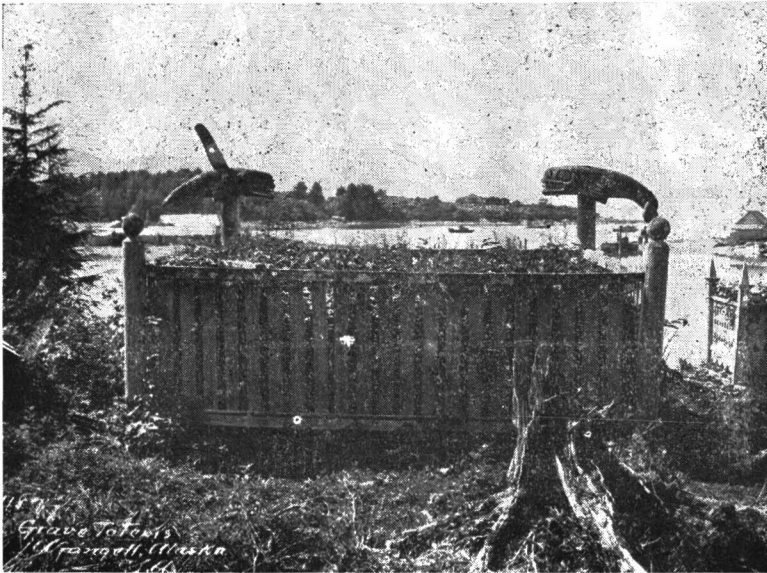
They believed in the power of certain men to take on the form of certain animals, and on the contrary they believed that certain animals, as **hootz**, understood the speech of the Stikine, and that it could assume the human form at will. A mythical tale is told among them, of a chief's daughter, who spoke disrespectfully of the "sign" of a bear that she saw in the forest while out berrying with her companions. After that, every time she went into the berry patches, if she left her basket of fruit with no one by it, the basket would be upset and the berries spilled. Finally, one evening she fell behind the other girls on her homeward way, and was overtaken by the bear in the form of a young man whom she very much liked, and it took her to its den and there kept her and made her its wife, then resumed the form of the bear and kept her in captivity. The bear was later killed by her tribesmen and she was rescued, but the Thlingit women are very careful not to say anything disrespectful about **hootz** when they are in its haunts.*

They were scrupulous about observing "caste", as are the orientals. The old families prized their rank highly, and especially the purity of blood, unmixed by alliances other than between the families of high standing, and especially those in whom there was no slave blood. In this they differed from other slave-holding people who considered it no transgression for a master to have children by his bond woman, in which case the offspring were only slaves.

There was one chief of a powerful family of the Stikines who married his slave. He would have been punished by death

*The legend is found in Niblack's **Coast Indians of Southern Alaska and Northern British Columbia**, Natl. Museum Pub. Wn. D. C. p. 322. The carving is in black slate. The design formerly was sculptured on the interior of the house post at the east side of the door of the house of Shakes, the Bear Mother and her child.

for his transgression, had it not been that he was too powerful and was above the reach of his tribe. He portioned off a certain creek for his slave wife and her descendants, who were many in number, and there they lived, but were always ostracised and held to be of low caste.



Keet or Whale Killer Totems

The totemic emblems were exhibited in many ways, on the house columns or posts, on the tall shaft in front of the tribal houses or were painted or carved on the front of the house. The family totem of the owner was at the top, and lower came carvings denoting the rank and affiliations of the family, or perhaps some story affecting them, depicted in symbolical figures.

Besides the house pole there were also grave totems, usually a carving of the emblem of the family of the deceased. On the dishes of wood, or of the carved slate from the Queen Charlotte Islands; on the spoons made from the horn of the mountain goat, or the mountain sheep; on the dresses for the tribal dances, on the Chilkat blanket, or on any other article which the owner saw fit to decorate, the symbol might appear. It was not an object of worship and it had no religious significance.

An intricate and weird mythology pervaded the Thlingit's idea of the Universe, and chief among the objects that figured in his fantastic system was the raven, **Yelth**. Possibly the almost uncanny intelligence of this arch marauder was one of the reasons

for this belief. Even the sounds of the Thlingit language seems to have in part been borrowed from the gurglings and clucks of that "stately bird of yore." His inspiration is almost as eerie as is that of Poe. The raven was the creator who brought order out of chaos, and dispersed light over the world as well as gave fire to the people. Neither the full significance of the totemic system, nor the proper interpretation of the mythology of the Thlingit people has yet been fully understood by the white man, although many have discoursed at length upon it. There are mysteries about it which they seem not to be able to penetrate, and which the Thlingit has not yet confided to those not of his race. In fact the younger ones have not retained it, so, much of it is irretrievably lost.

Their language is rich in folk lore stories of various kinds, of which many have been collected and some have been published.* Tales of jealous uncles who destroyed or attempted to kill their sister's children are common among them, and it is told that Yelth, in his boyhood narrowly escaped that fate.

Slavery was prevalent and was at its height at the time of the coming of the Russians. The trade was from the south to the north, and from the coast to the inland tribes. They were called **kalgi**, a term found among the **Kolosh** (Thlingits), and by the Russians were designated as **rabui**. According to Veniaminof most of them came from the Columbia River Indians. Coyney, in his Narrative of Voyages on the North Pacific, says the trade was engaged in by the American traders. The practice was discouraged by the Russians. They especially endeavored to eradicate the custom of sacrificing slaves at the great celebrations on the erection of a tribal house, when they were killed and placed under the columns as a part of the foundation as an exhibition of wealth by some powerful chief, who could thus show his disregard of property values. When a wealthy man died, sacrifices were made in order that the souls of his subjects might accompany him as servants in the Spirit Land.**

***Thlingit Myths and Texts**, Swanton, Bull. 39. Amer. Eth.

**The Report of the Chief Manager of the Russ. Am. Co. for 1828 says; "There has lately been brought on the brig "Action" from Stikine, a Kolosh boy, four years of age, who was designated by the Koloshes for assassination at the funeral ceremonies which were to be held last January. The Stikine Chief Quatkay, however, yielded to our advice and Christian desire to prevent, as far as possible the murder which is usually committed by the Koloshes at funeral services and showed himself to be the first example, as yet heard of among the Sitka natives, and in lieu of assassinating his slaves, released them, and among them the above mentioned boy"

For this Quatkay received a silver badge engraved; "Allies of Russia," and the infant Kolosh was baptized under the rites of the Greek-Russian Church, under the name of Michael.

The manager of the Russ. Am. Co., ransomed certain ones condemned to death and liberated them in 1847. See Report for that year.

The value of the slaves was rated in blankets, or by plates of copper brought from the Copper River country, beaten into sheets, carved with totemic figures, and called **tows** or **toes**. These were highly prized and only the wealthy were able to possess them.

The Hudson's Bay Co. found slavery still prevalent in 1840, when they founded Fort Durham (Taku), and at that time male slaves were valued at thirty blankets, or the same number of beaver skins. They say that some of the captives were brought from as far south as Cape Mendocino, California.*

After the Territory came under the rule of the United States the trade declined, although the price was raised to two hundred blankets valued at \$3.00 each. It was not completely extinguished until comparatively recent years, as is shown by the sacrifice of a slave girl at Dyea, by Chief Shartrich, in 1887, and the case of Ea-how at Sitka, in 1896.**

Head hunting has been mentioned by some as being prevalent among the Thlingits and Hydahs, but actual records do not appear to justify it. Some of the Russians killed at Sitka at the destruction of the old town were beheaded, and the heads were taken away. The head of Collector Ebey, of Port Townsend, was taken by the Kake Indians, but the practice does not seem to have been universal, or that the hunt was made for the purpose of getting heads. The head of Sir William Wallace was put over the gate of the City of London, but it does not follow that the English were considered as "head hunters".

Witchcraft prevailed, and possibly the belief is not yet extinct. In some of the outlying villages, even in the suburbs of the Capitol, might be found those who whisper to each other of the witches flying to the graveyards on their ghostly missions. In this belief the **Ekht**, or medicine man, takes the lead. He is generally a man of above ordinary intelligence, sometimes chosen as a successor by an older member of the cult who initiated him into the mysteries which he has penetrated and the deceptions that he practiced. All of them claimed familiarity with the spirits of the air, and invoked them in their incantations. The fee was a necessary part of the practice. Only this is all a thing of the past.***

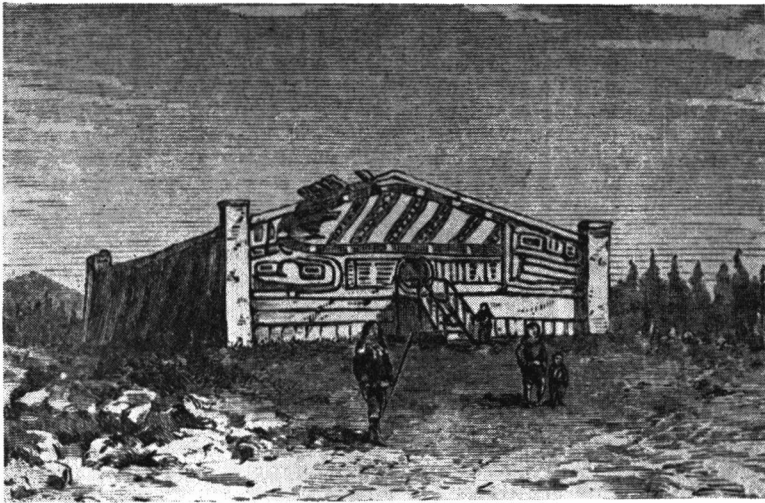
*See the **Journal of Sir James Douglas**, in MS; **Journal of Roderick Finlayson**, MS, both in Bancroft Library, Berkeley, California.

****Report Captain Beardslee**, U. S. N., 1880, p. 3; The Counter Case of the U. S. in the **Boundary Case**, p. 236; and the **Sitka Alaskan**, March 31, 1896.

***See, Veniaminof, **Zapiski ob Koloshi** (Letters about the Kolosh in Works of Innokentius); **Hall Young of Alaska**, Autobiography; **Totem Lore**, by Dr. H. F. Corser: **A Study of the Thlingets of Alaska**, by Jones.

The belief in the efficacy of training of human endurance of physical pain and hardship in the upbuilding of manhood was strong among them. They tell of their heroes enduring cold and storm, and their young men often went in the salt sea water in freezing weather and scourged each other with rods to toughen the fibers of their bodies.

Their houses were large, wooden structures, tribal or community dwellings, built of timber hewn in the forests by primitive axes, before the white men brought tools of steel and iron. First, huge logs were cut and hewn with patient labor, each row of chippings in careful alignment, and a framework was raised, over which a roof of split shakes was placed. Walls of thick, hand-wrought planks stood straight upright to the eaves. In the center was an excavation of some sixteen by twenty feet or more in size, and of three feet or more in depth, around which benches were placed for seats, and the earth made a floor on which the fire was built. A hole was left in the roof of some six feet or more square, with a moveable windshield which could be changed to suit the direction of the wind, and balanced on the



House of Widow of Skillat a Wrangell Chief, 1869

ridgepole. The door was an oval hole, two or three feet from the ground, large enough to admit one man only at a time, for they lived in almost continual feud and danger of attack from enemies. At some houses the entrance was through a hole in the totem pole in front.

The house of Shustaks, the chief who lived on the point op-

posite the town, was forty feet square. The large interior posts were about thirty inches wide, half round, and hollowed at the back. On top of these, running lengthwise of the building were logs of about the same diameter, round, and smoothed by most uniform chipping and painstaking labor. The house was about 8 feet to the overhead beams, and when I was first there it had most of the side slabs still standing, but the front had been changed to the construction of the white man, with weatherboarding, and with glass windows. The roof was of slabs from 12 inches to 20 inches wide and about 8 feet in length, split and hand smoothed with the adze.

Potlatches, or great parties, were made by the wealthy chiefs, at which thousands of dollars of presents, consisting of property valuable in the eyes of the Thlingit were given away to friends and relatives, and a great feast was had. Among these was the death feast given by the heir to the chieftainship on his succes-



Interior of Indian House, Wrangell, 1869

sion to the honors. The chieftainship descended to the nephew, and the young man invited the phratries of his people from far and near, furs and blankets were given, slaves were killed, and the heir took the name and position of the deceased. He might spend from two to five thousand dollars, according to his wealth, and his future standing depended largely on his liberality.

The word potlatch has the primary meaning of a gift-making, and it is from the Chinook Jargon, a trade language of the Northwest coast of America, used from southern Oregon to south-



Chief and Son In Dancing Costume

east Alaska. A **cultus** potlatch is a little gift, too small to mention, allied in meaning to the Spanish; "**No hay de que.**" The Thlingit name for some of these feasts was **K'kastashi** of others **K'khatkanagi**.

The Stikines never came to the point of trying their strength in prolonged war against the white man, either Russian, British or American, but outbreaks, feuds, and tribal enmities were common enough to give them a taste for the engrossing pursuit. Between them and the Sitkas long existed a state of hostility, and as it was in the famous case of Helen of Troy, a woman was the cause. All the stories agree on this, but as is usual in such cases there is a difference in the details. At Sitka they say that a Stikine took the wife of a Sitka Kokwantan, and when her return was demanded, with due requital for the dishonor, it was refused. A war party of Kokwantans went to avenge the insult, but was ambushed by the Stikines and many men were killed. Veniaminof says the scene was on a small island near Wrangell.

The Kokwantans carried hatred in their hearts, and years afterward, about 1852, there grew up in Sitka a young man of wonderful strength and activity who devoted himself to all kinds of athletic exercises to make himself powerful and he planned for revenge. The Stikines were invited to a great potlatch at Sitka, in one of the tribal houses of the village. When they came, and when all were in the midst of the festivities the strong man entered with his spear, attacked them, and with the help of his clansmen killed more than forty men, only a few escaping to their homes.

A few years later the Stikines retaliated by an attack on the Ozerskoi Redoubt, near Sitka, destroyed buildings, killed some of the people, and carried away two or three youths into captivity and slavery. These captives were afterward released through the medium of the Hudson's Bay Company at the solicitation of the Russian American Company.*

The feud existed for more than half a century and was finally brought to an end in 1918 by a treaty between the tribes.

The morals of the Stikine were probably no worse than those of the white race before the tempter came to their shores with allurements of gaudy cloths, shining beads, bright blankets, and, not the least, strong drink. First the slave women were brought for barter to procure coveted articles, and later, when barriers were more leveled, some of them brought wives and daughters to exchange their service for the goods and the strong potions of the bearded strangers from beyond the seas.

*Letters are in the Russian Archives in the State Dept. at Washington concerning the captives. Veniaminof tells of the battle near Wrangell, Works, Vol 3, p. 639; Tikhmenef's Hist. Sketch Vol. 2, p. 207; H. P. Corser, in Totem Lore, gives the Stikine story; I had it from Shakheesh, a Yakutat Thlingit living in Sitka, in the Kokwantan version.

The tribesman's ideas of the spiritual world were somewhat of the same nature as our own, a belief in awful and dominating powers, which he attributed to Yelth and his opposing evil spirits, and he was influenced by the same obsessions as we were in our early history, when the witches were burned in the market places. One does not have to search far for strange fears of the Evil Eye, even today.

The ideas of law conceived by the Thlingit, were those of the ancient Israelite, as expressed in the teaching of "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth". He had the germ of the modern conception of compensation for injury or death, and of our law on the liability of employers, for even his blood lust could be quenched by the payment of blankets. In short he was a very typical human being.

When he came to the time to join his forefathers, in the Realm of Yelth, he was laid out in state, with all the paraphernalia of his rank about him. In his primitive life cremation was practiced, he was burned on a funeral pyre, his ashes were



Old Chief Shakes Lying in State

deposited in a cavity in the back of a mortuary totem column, or in a burial chest and a bodyguard of slaves were killed to bear him company in the misty distance of the Land Beyond. It may be, notwithstanding his weird beliefs and his shortcomings which are so evident to us now, that he may balance up in the scale of humanity as well as some of our distinguished forebears, such as William the Conqueror, Napoleon, and others, or even some of our notorious contemporaries.

Veniaminof and His Work

Veniaminof, the greatest of the teachers and priests of the Russians in the Colonies, came to Sitka in the Autumn of 1834. He had, for over ten years, been carrying on the work at Unalaska, now was sent to a new field and people among the Indians of the southeast coast, called by the Russians, **Kolosh**. Both the country and the natives presented wide differences. The Unalaska country, with green grass-covered slopes rising to volcanic peaks, was a strong contrast to the rugged, forest-clad islands of the Sitkan Archipelago. The mild, peaceful Aleuts, with spirits broken by nearly a hundred years of the rule of the conscienceless Promyshleniks, were as different from the fierce Kolosh, as were the smooth hills of the Aleutian Islands from the rugged forest clad faces of the Sitka Mountains.

The first winter of his arrival he was prevented by other duties from becoming acquainted with his new charges. In summer they went out to their hunting and fishing camps in distant bays and coves to prepare food for winter. They had been permitted to return to their ancestral village in 1821, located under the walls of Fort New Archangel, from which they had been ejected in 1804 on the return of the Russians after the massacre of old Sitka. They still looked on the Russian as their ancestral enemy, and the older people of the tribe were implacable, teaching hatred and enmity with the very food they gave their families. This was a **bar to the reception** of the teachings of Veniaminof, and he says it might have continued but for the coming of the smallpox to the natives. This dread scourge devastated the whole coast from California to the Arctic Ocean during the years from 1830 to 1840, and is said to have taken ten thousand people in southern Alaska, including half of the Kolosh people.

When the pestilence came upon them, the natives resorted to their Ekhts who invoked their familiar spirits of the air in whom they believed, put ice and snow on those burning with the fever, with disastrous results, and who in consequence perished by hundreds. At first neither the priest nor the doctor of the Russians dared to go among the sufferers, for the Ekhts would at once have attributed the disease to their coming and they would have been killed as witches. As time passed the Thlingits saw that none of the Russians suffered while their misery increased, then they came for vaccination and this was freely given. "The plague died away, the faith of the savage was shaken in his shamanism, and they began to believe in the broader knowledge and power of those they had considered their enemies."*

(Note* **Works of Veniaminof**, Book 2, pp. 15 to 18.)

When Veniaminof went to them, to use his words; "it was already less difficult to convince them of the truth. They received me, not as an enemy to them, wishing to do them evil, but as a man who knew their best and worst, and they heard me with attention."

Two years later the Priest went to Fort Dionysius, to carry his teachings to the Stikines. Of it he says; "I performed the Liturgy at the fort, and on my invitation the Kolosh collected to the number of 1500, surrounding the place of the Holy Act, and looked on with great attention and descency, worthy of one not a savage."

During the ceremony two of the Kolosh came singing through the woods, not knowing of the meeting being held. The chief sent out a messenger to them commanding silence, and his order was at once obeyed. On his closing the service he spoke to them of the Evangelical Faith before he bid them farewell. One of the chiefs asked; "What would be there, at death, to those people, who here do good." The Father says; "At such a question, from these savages, I greatly rejoiced."

There was no chapel at the Fort, and at this time special permission had to be given by the Chief Manager at Sitka, for any meetings of the kind to be held, or for any number of the Kolosh to be admitted at the gates of the fort, while strict military rule prevailed in the fort at all times.

It must have been an impressive scene. The wild, savage Thlingit, filled with the joy of pomp and ceremony, thrilled by the strange fascination of the solemn ritual of the Holy Greek Catholic Church as it was performed by the tall, powerful Priest, clad in his ecclesiastical robes. The weird paraphernalia of the shaman paled to insignificance when compared with the rich vestments of the church dignitary, and the spirits of the air invoked by the Ekht were vague and powerless against the greater God of the stately Russian. They looked on with awe, while the mysteries of the Church were performed before their eyes with the impressive symbols. It was a glimpse into the sacred secrets of the strangers who came among them with the coveted creations of civilization and they marveled.

This time was, as their great teacher says; "An epoch in the history of the Kolosh, a limit where their rude ignorance and savagery ended, and where began their growth of enlightenment."*

***Tvorenia Innokentia Metropolita Moskovskaya (Works of Innocent Metropolit of Moscow)** Moscow, 1886, Book 2, pp. 15-20; Book 3, pp. 573 et seq.)

The Hudson's Bay Company Discover The Stikine

The Hudson's Bay Company, always seeking for new grounds on which to gather peltry, were pushing west and north into the wild lands. In 1793 Sir Alexander Mackenzie had reached the Pacific waters near Bella Bella. In 1808 Simon Fraser, of the North West Company went down the Fraser River, thus opening this part of British Columbia to the fur traders. In 1813 this company secured possession of Astoria, and with it the Oregon fur trade. The two companies, the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company, combined in 1821.

The combined companies under the name of the Hudson's Bay Company, then turned toward the northwest, to reach out for the fur of the Russian American Company.

In 1836 Robert Campbell was at Fort Simpson, where the Liard River joins the Mackenzie. He received a letter from Sir George Simpson, who was the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Co., over the fur business in the northwest, telling him that "your conduct and service will be appreciated and meet their reward." He was one of their trusted men.

Chief Trader J. M. McLeod had discovered Dease Lake during the previous winter. Mr. Hutchinson had been instructed to establish a post at the lake. He started to fulfill the commission but did not get far when he heard that "hundreds of Russian Indians were advancing on the camp to murder them all." Panic stricken, the command jumped into their canoes and fled, down to Ft. Simpson.

Mr. Campbell volunteered to carry out the instructions so abruptly abandoned. It was not a welcome task. Those were the Thlingit Indians from Wrangell who claimed the right to the trade of all their interior country, for the fur to carry to the trading post at Fort Stikine. They had the reputation of being "tough customers." There was trouble in getting men for the party. The panic of the previous year had made them fearful, Campbell finally filled his command, assuring them that he would protect them to the best of his ability, but any sign of insubordination would be at the peril of life.

In May 1837 Campbell started with his party. When they reached "Hell's Gates," the spring flood was on. No boat could stem the current that boiled through the canyon from "The Devil's Portage" full of rapids and whirlpools, between perpendicular walls of rock from 200 to 300 feet in height. The delay frightened the men. They grew nervous, tried to mutiny and turn back, but the leader drove them out of it and in three days they passed the rapids. The party reached the scene of the stampede of the year before. Here they wintered.

Sir George wrote another letter. It arrived in the spring with more supplies. It said;

“Robert Campbell is not the man I take him to be unless in due time he plants the H. B. standard on the shores of the Pacific.” (Dated Norway House, 4th July, 1837.)

Governor Simpson specially mentioned “pushing the trade across the mountains and down the Pelly River.” He meant the Stikine for the sources of the two rivers were yet in doubt.

The first part of July Campbell reached Dease Lake. He left men to build a fort, and went on with a white man and two Indians to cross the divide toward the Pacific slope. With light packs in two days they left the lake and passed the divide, and the waters ran toward the ocean. This was called by the Indians the Tooya River. Across it was an Indian bridge named by McLeod the “Terror Bridge,” when he supposed that he had reached the Pelly headwaters. Here they met Indians and found that they were on the Stikine.

These Indians were of the “Stick” tribes, a name used by the Thlingits and other coast tribes for the people of the interior. They warned Campbell that the great Chief Shakes was near, and would kill him for coming into his country. They tried to stop him saying “Shakes will kill you.” Hoole, the white man was afraid. He was left, with instructions, “If not back in five days, cut down the bridge and go back to the fort.

The Indians, Lapie and Kitz, with tears in their eyes vowed to go with Campbell to die if necessary. Their father told them if they deserted they need never come back.

They reached the great camp. “Such a concourse of Indians I had never before seen assembled. They were from all parts of the Pacific Slope of the Rockies and from all along the Pacific coast. They camped here for weeks, living on salmon which could be caught by the thousands in the Stikine by gaffing and spearing.”

Campbell met Shakes. “Tall and strongly built, he ruled despotically over an immense band of Indians of different tribes. He came to the Stikine every year, with boats and goods, to the splendid rendezvous where I met him.” The Nahannie Indians, of the interior, were friendly to Campbell. They said they would protect him. They said, “If white chief is killed there will be plenty blood spilled here.”

Some of the Indians had heard of Dr. John McLoughlin. Campbell wrote a note for the Doctor and gave it to Shakes. It was delivered to him, Campbell heard later. Finally he got away from Shakes, which was, as he says, “More than I expect-

ed when I went among them." He hoisted the H. B. Co. flag and took possession of the country for the Company.

Later in a drunken riot among the Indians, the "Chieftainness of the Nahannies" saved Campbell's life. He says, "To the kindness and influence of this chieftainness, we owed much on more than one occasion, in fact in all probability we owed our lives to her more than once."

After spending a winter under great hardships at Dease Lake Campbell returned to report his success in the discovery of the headwaters of the Stikine River. The game seemed to have deserted the country in winter and the party nearly perished from starvation. (MS Campbell's Journal 1808-1851.) Copy in Andrews Collection.

The War for the Furs of the Stikine

Fort Dionysius was built to prevent the Hudson's Bay Company gathering the fur harvest of the Stikine Valley. The Stikine people were as friendly toward the Russians or more so than they were toward the British Company, whose post was at Nass River on Portland Canal, yet this friendship was not strong enough to keep their cupidity in leash, and of this the Russians were fully aware. Fifty men were in the garrison. The sentries walked their beats knowing that keen eyes searched every day for a weak spot in the eighteen foot palisade and calculated the chance of the raking fire from the bastions at the angles in case they spied a place to scale the wall.

These fierce eyed, heavy jawed Thlingits were a different people from the mild little men along the Aleutian Islands, and they lived in a land of ambuscades and secret paths instead of on the open shores and grassy hills of Unalaska. There an **odinochka** with a Russian trader and a couple of native boys to do the drudgery were enough to garner the fur harvest, here armed sentries stood guard day and night and every party that ventured beyond the walls must be strong enough to protect itself against attack by land or sea. The Indians had fine guns from the trade with the "Boston Men" and the "King George Men" who sailed their ships to this coast.

Before the British Company pushed their post to the Nass, the only competitors were the ships that sailed along the shores. Now the aggressors, ever keen for new fur regions, planned a trading station in the hinter-land that would control all the trade of the "Stick Indians", as those of the interior were known.

The Russians who held Fort Dionysius and Sitka felt that the profits of the trade of the soft furred denizens of the forests of that part of the world belonged to them. This ownership also extended to the dark-skinned people who gathered the furry harvest. The King George men who traded at Nass Post on the Portland Canal felt the same way about it, with only the difference of opinion as to who was the owner. In one other matter they were agreed, that was to put the close trading Yankees who came around the Horn each year, out of the game of fur buying. During the ten years between 1830 and 1840 their policy succeeded so well that but few of the old time captains, with their "Bucko" mates, came into the harbors of the coast.

Killing out the third party left the rivalry keener between the ones who still sat in the game, the two great rivals, the greatest fur companies that have ever existed in the trade. The strong

and resourceful Hudson's Bay Company, having a few years before settled their war with the Northwest Company, felt in need of new fields and set their wits to work to invade that enticing region in the valleys far back in the Rocky Mountains. The parties of traders from the East had explored the headwaters of the streams, but the cost of transport and the hostility of the Stikines almost prohibited the trade.

The Hudson's Bay Company had already examined the mouth of the river, with the view of sending a boat into it, before Fort Dionysius was established. Their decision was, that it was navigable, and as, under the treaty of 1824, they had the right to the use of navigable streams, they planned to take a small vessel loaded with supplies up the stream to establish a trading post above the boundary, and thus cut off the source of supply of furs from the interior to the Russian Post.

One fine June day of 1834, the brig "Dryad", from Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River, sailed up the straits between the islands. Peter Skeen Ogden, a notable man in the history of the West, one of the most venturesome of the Hudson's Bay Company traders, one whose fame is linked with many expeditions in the Rocky mountains, and whose name is perpetuated in one of the thriving cities of Utah, was in command. With him were eighty-four servants of the Company, and eight officers, with a full stock of supplies and trading goods for the establishment of the post on the river.

The "Dryad" scarcely came abreast of Point Highfield, off the Russian post, before a tall Russian officer, in naval uniform, Lieutenant Zarembo, boarded her, and forbade the entry into the Stikine River. The Russian brig "Chichagof," mounted with 14 guns, lay at anchor under the fort to assist in enforcing the prohibition. A parley was held. The British protested the hindrance, urging the right of free navigation of the stream. This was forwarded to Sitka, appealing to Baron Von Wrangell, Chief Manager of the Colonies. Wrangell was absent from Sitka but the Assistant Manager, Captain Etolin, firmly supported the position of Zarembo, and sent a six oared boat with a crew to reinforce the garrison, while the schooner "Chilkat" was at once ordered to Fort Dionysius.

Ogden was loth to return without accomplishing his mission. He was willing to test his strength against the Russians, but the Indians stepped in. The Stikines, believing they had a right to be heard, went on board the British boat and stated that any one going up the Stikine to trade with the interior tribes, the Sticks, was infringing on their ancient rights of the exclusive trade in that region. They presented that they were ready to

make war on any one attempting to interfere.*

Finding so much opposition, Ogden sailed down to Nass Factory, closed it, transferred the establishment to Fort Simpson, at the mouth of Portland Canal, then went to Vancouver, on the Columbia River, where he laid the case before Dr. John McLoughlin, who has been called by some, the "Emperor of the West," and who was at that time in charge of all the posts of the Hudson's Bay Company on the shores of the Pacific. The Russians held the trade of the Stikine. They had won the first battle for the commercial control of the river.

The long white mane of Dr. McLoughlin fairly bristled with anger as he prepared a claim for his company to present for reparation by the Russian Government. The damages were placed at the tidy sum of 21,150 pounds, 10 sh., 11 d., Sterling, to be exact, as a canny Scotsman must be, and the Hudson's Bay factors were nearly all Scotsmen. This claim was duly presented through the British Minister at St. Petersburg, and the scene of the battle for the Stikine shifted half way round the world.

In the correspondence relating to the controversy we find the names of men high in the commercial and political world in Europe, Lord Durham and Lord Milbanke, for the British Government; Sir George Simpson for the Hudson's Bay Company; Count Nesselrode and Count Kankreen for the Russian Government; and Baron Von Wrangell for the Russian American Company. A meeting was arranged at Hamburg, Germany, where a hearing was held, and a settlement was arrived at in 1839, by which the Hudson's Bay Company withdrew their claim for damages, and a lease was made by the Russian American Company to them of the mainland from Portland Canal to Cape Spencer for a term of ten years, in consideration of the payment of 2000 land otter skins each year. It also covered other conditions, as the furnishing foodstuffs for the Russian Colonies by the farms at Fort Vancouver and Fort Nisqually.

Thus ended the second battle of the war for the fur of the Stikine. The British Lion gained the ascendancy, without bloodshed, over the Russian Bear, and it was one of the first steps toward the vacation of the Territory now called Alaska, when the Russians signed the agreement. Another chapter was opening in the story of Wrangell.

*The Chilkats, under a similar claim of the trade of the "grease" trail over the passes to the Yukon, destroyed the Hudson's Bay Co.'s post at Fort Selkirk in 1852. Dawson, *Yukon Ter.* p. 349.

The Reign of The Hudson's Bay Company

At old Fort Vancouver, on the Columbia, there was great preparation in the spring of 1840. Down the river came the overland brigade from across the continent, on a fleet of bateaux, the head boat carrying the commanding officer. All were dressed in gala attire, colors were flying, the Indians decked in their finery, the Canadian Voyageurs and Iroquois boatmen lustily rolling out their rondelays, familiar to the **Coueurs de Bois** of the West; "**Roulong ma boule roulong.**"

In the boats was a party, sent from Montreal across the continent to go to the North to occupy the post granted to the Company by the agreement of Hamburg. Dr. John McLoughlin, with his long white locks flowing over his shoulders, stood at the edge of the water to greet the newcomers. It was his custom to do so, and too, was not this the climax of the protest that he had sent, years before, against the acts of the powerful Russian American Company? A feast followed in the dining-rooms of the Fort, good Hudson's Bay Rum, as well as the choicest of Scotch, helped the merry makers to do honor to the coming invasion of the Russian domain.

An expedition was organized. James Douglas, afterward Sir James, was in command. He was accompanied by Roderick Finlayson, W. G. Rae, Dr. John Kennedy, John McLoughlin, Jr., son of the Chief Factor at Vancouver, and eighty men. They went up the Cowlitz River, on which they traveled in a fleet of boats, carrying bales of Hudson's Bay blankets, gaudy beads, bright prints, Queen Anne muskets, English fowling pieces, every article that their long experience in trading among these people had taught them was dear to the heart of the Indian. They followed the river to the head, portaged over the divide and journeyed on horseback down to Fort Nisqually on Puget Sound.

Here, at Nisqually, lay the side-wheeled steamer "Beaver," the first steam craft to leave a wake in the waters of the Pacific Ocean. She was built at Blackwall, on the Thames, England, was launched August 29, 1835, came round the Horn and arrived at Astoria, April 4th, 1836.* On her party embarked for the voyage through the inland waters of the Coast of British Columbia to what is now Alaska.

On Saturday, May 30th, 1840, the "Beaver" reached Fort Dionysius at 5:00 o'clock. Monday morning, to a salute of seven guns, the Russian ensign was lowered, the British flag was thrown

*The "Beaver" was 101 1/3 feet long, 108 1/8 tons burden, and carried 5 nine pound guns. She was manned by a crew of 26 men. Her first northern trip was to Fort Simpson in August 1837, and the next was to Sitka in 1840. **History of the SS. "Beaver,"** by Chas. W. McCain, 1894, p. 19.

to the breeze, the fort passed into the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company, and was renamed as Fort Stikine. John McLoughlin, Jr., was made the commander, a garrison of eighteen men was left to gather the furs and to defend the fort, while the Russian brig set her sails for Sitka, and the retreat of the Russian from his " Possessions in America," had begun.

"You cannot hold the fort with so few men," said Lieutenant Zarembo, as he prepared to go, and he described the fierce tribesmen of the Stikine. Douglas thought otherwise. The Company was in the business for profit. Economy is said to be a virtue of the Scotch, and he was a Douglas. The garrison was but eighteen men.

Fort Stikine was one of a chain of forts that extended from Nisqually, at the head of Puget Sound, to Fort Durham on Taku Harbor, the most northerly of the list, and which was established soon after Fort Stikine. The northern posts came as one of the results of the agreement under the treaty with the Russians for the coastline that controlled the trade of the inland rivers.*

The Hudson's Bay Company, like the Russian American Company, depended almost entirely upon the Indian for the collection of the fur. There were few white men in the land. It was dangerous for even the traders to go outside of the stockade to any distance, alone, not to speak of running a trap line in the forest or along a stream. Chief Trader Roderick Finlayson tells of an experience he had with the Indians when he was stationed at Fort Durham for the Company in 1840; "A warrior of the tribe attempted to force his way in at the gate, where a number of others were watching the gatekeeper. A Sandwich Islander did all he could to keep the man out, but failed, when I went to the rescue, having a pistol in my belt, and forced the fellow out. In doing so I was struck by a bludgeon, and in the heat of passion, I went outside the gate, where I was laid hold of by a party of the wild savages and forced away to a distance from the gate, when I called out to open fire from blank cartridges from the carronades in the bastion to frighten them. In the meantime I managed to get my back to a tree, drew my pistol from my belt and threatened to kill the first man who laid hands on me. My face was covered with blood, and I was otherwise badly hurt. The firing from the bastion frightened the fellows off, so I was enabled to return to the fort. After this we were besieged for several days, prepared for action, and the na-

*Fort Durham was established on Taku Harbor, June 26, 1840, and was abandoned in 1843. It was an enclosure of 150 yards square, with a stockade 18 feet high, and was near the head of the harbor, close to the little salmon stream. **MS. Journal of Sir James Douglas; MS of Roderick Finlayson**, both in Bancroft Library, Berkeley, California, Copies in Andrews Coll.

tives finding trade suspended ceased further hostilities.’’*

Soon after the transfer of Fort Stikine to the British, the Indians, seeing that the garrison was much smaller than it was under the Russians, considered that the time had come to capture it. Stealthily they sought to scale the wall of palisades, but were surprised by the fire of the sentinels in the bastions, which drove them away, with a few wounded. The Company did not wish to kill the fur gatherers, and thus gain the ill-will of the tribe. A peace was made and the trade again went on.

The tribesmen were not yet satisfied with the result of their battle with the garrison, they had not suffered enough to quench their desire for booty, so, after Mr. Rae was succeeded by Mr. Finlayson, they made another attack. Half naked devils, with painted faces and wooden masks in which grinned the hideous teeth of the whale killer, the **keet**; or of the wolf, **Gooch**, peered from behind tree trunks on the shore or were lifted above the protecting banks along the beach. By night the tom-toms boomed and the **Ekhts** made strong medicine. The King George men were too vigilant for any surprise. The savage could not get close enough to fire the defenses. They sought to starve the garrison by cutting the water supply that was across the bridge from the shore, but the men dug a shallow well where they got enough brackish water to exist. The British captured a chief, and held him as a hostage in the fort. Their captive was permitted to see all the operations, the getting of water, the men under arms continually, the strict discipline and continual watchfulness. Finally the captive chief called to his warriors outside and told them that it was useless for them to further attempt the capture, then peace was the second time proclaimed.

Wrangell was then a great trading-place. Here the tribesmen gathered from the vast valley of the Stikine, from the fjords of the Taku and Lynn Canal, from the islands where the Hydahs and the Kyganes dwelt, from the south as far as Dixon's Entrance. A wild and untamed multitude, with their slaves, their great canoes filled with their household goods, and with peltries for barter. They came for the trinkets and blankets of the White Man, and beyond all else, for the deadly firewater, in exchange for their wealth of sea otter and martin skins, for mink and beaver.

These years seem to have been a pandemonium of riotous debauchery, according to the descriptions in the records of the time. Finlayson tells us that, about this time, the spring of 1843; "we managed, by co-operating with the Russian American Fur Company, at Sitka, to drive other fur traders off the coast so that we had entire control of the trade. As already mentioned

***Biography of Roderick Finlayson, Oregon Hist. Mag.**

we could not succeed well in doing so, except by opposing them by means of the article they themselves dealt in to a large extent, that is liquor, which we had been dealing out to Indians also, so much so that it was dangerous for any of us to go any distance beyond our forts without an armed escort." (Biog. Finlayson, op. Cit.)

Eloise McLoughlin Rae, the wife of one of the officers of the post, says of the time that she spent at the fort; "The Indians were very troublesome. They never opened the gate to receive more than one Indian at a time. When the Indians got drunk or in a bad humor they would destroy the trough so that we could not get water. It was a terrible place. But they got plenty of beaver. Of liquor a big hogshead four feet high was emptied in one day."*

Sir George Simpson, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, came up the coast on the Str. "Beaver" in 1841 on his way to Sitka, making a visit to Wrangell on the way. He mentions two chiefs, Shakes, and Quatkay. He says the first was noted for his cruelty to his slaves, sacrificing five of them at a housewarming at his latest residence on a recent occasion.

Simpson saw the result of the Hudson's Bay rum, and made an agreement with Chief Manager Etolin, of the Russian American Co., to discontinue the sale of intoxicants to the Indians before the last day of 1843. The sale would have been stopped sooner but it was considered well to strengthen the posts before compulsorily enforcing prohibition on the unwilling savages.

The approaching cessation of the trade of intoxicants did not prevent a tragedy at Fort Stikine. On the night of the 20th of April of the next year, in a drunken debauch, John McLoughlin, Jr., the commander of the post, was shot by one of his own men, named Urbain Heroux. The Stikines, hearing of the murder, considered it an opportune time to accomplish their long cherished design of capturing the fort. They sent messengers to bring in reinforcements from the surrounding tribes. The warriors came from far and near to the number of about two thousand. Fortunately, before they made their attack a Russian steamer arrived, with Governor Simpson on board and with a British vessel in tow. Governor Simpson was from the Sandwich Islands and on his way across to Siberia on his return to London.** This unexpected arrival destroyed the hopes of the tribesmen and they dispersed among the islands of the coast.

Mr. Dodd, chief mate of the "Cowlitz", was placed in com-

*Mrs. Daniel Harvey, nee Eloise McLoughlin, MS in Banc. Lib.

**Narrative, *Journey Round the World*, by Sir George Simpson, 1847 Vol. 2, pp. 181-9. (Ermatinger, in N.W. Hist. Qrty., July 1914, pp. 198-200.)

mand at Fort Stikine, and Governor Simpson returned to Sitka.

The murderer was given no more severe sentence than to be taken to Sitka, exiled among the Russians. The event, however, embittered the last days of Dr. John McLoughlin, one of the best and greatest of the men of the West of that time.

The liquor traffic, pursuant to the compact of the two companies, ceased in the latter part of 1843, much to the disgust of the natives. To induce the traders to sell them more of the much craved drink, the Stikines assembled in front of the Fort, spread the skins of sea-otter, silver foxes, beavers and other of their much prized furs, like a carpet, on the ground for trade, without result. They then gathered up their peltry, threatened to make the traders prisoners within their own walls, and later they repaired to Sitka where they fared no better. After some delay they accepted the decree, with better intelligence than the modern generation, and resumed trade.*

For more than twenty years the lease continued to the fur lands. The Company brought other ships, the "Otter" in 1853, and in 1859, the "Labouchere". It is not at all certain that the Hudson's Bay Company confined themselves to their own territory, for there is a letter from Mr. Etolin, complaining of encroachments on the Russian rights, and on August 2, 1862, the "Labouchere", while trading at Hoonah harbor, on Russian lands was attacked by the natives, the quarter deck captured and held for several hours.** A parley was held and the vessel released when she at once left the harbor.

The savagery of the Thlingit had been tamed to a marked degree by contact with Russian, American, and Briton. He had become somewhat dependent on the stranger within his gates for the necessities of his new life, and had found that he could not with impunity destroy him. There were no more massacres, such as marked the capture of the ship of the Astor party under Captain Thorn, or as are revealed by the record of the destruction of Old Sitka.

The organization of the Hudson's Bay Company was thorough and complete, its training was severe and exacting. It produced men fit for the business. Young men were sought, many of them from Scotland. The first year they were paid 20 pounds sterling; the 2nd year, 25; the 3rd year 30; the 4th year 40; the 5th year 50; then, if they were satisfactory they were paid 75 pounds, per annum, for three years. This was again

*The Russian Records, in Report of the Chief Manager for 1846 and for 1847 show that the ship "Nilolai" had to be sent to Fort Stikine to quell uprising of the Stikines against the English, in both those years.

**George Davidson, *The Alaskan Boundary*, p. 115; Lewis & Dryden, *Marine History*, 1895, p. 82-3.

increased to 100 pounds, the employe was considered to be a finished clerk, competent to take charge of a post, to be head accountant, or other responsible position. On merit he might be made a chief trader at 300 pounds or later be given 500.* The system was a marvel of efficiency, and their methods of handling goods for the frontier trade were the best in all the West or North. During the Klondike rush, the Hudson's Bay goods might be known at sight by the superior packing. The quality of their goods was unsurpassed. The blanket of the Company was known from California to Alaska as a standard value next after the beaver skin, and was graded as 3 point or 4 point according to size. Every Indian in the West knew the 4 point Hudson's Bay blanket.

The position of the Company, and their long occupation of the country gave rise to amusing stories, among them being the one of the new comer, the chee chahko, who asked what H. B. C. meant.

"Here Before Christ!" was the ready and convincing answer.

The calm, even tenor of the fur trading post could not continue indefinitely. New interests were soon to break into the business of gathering the skins of the wild things. Much as the great fur companies wished to keep the land a wilderness, where the gathering of peltries was the only industry, it was not possible, for civilization was bound to encroach on the wild, unpeopled reaches.

The search for gold, the attractive, elusive, trouble breeding yellow metal so much desired of mankind was the first to break into the vast solitudes of the North.**

*MS. Roderick Finlayson, op. Cit.

***"Miners have brought gold dust here in small quantities, which have took out at the rate of about \$1.00 a day. Some of the miners have been in this section about five years." *The Alaska Times*, May 7, 1869, page 3, Col. 1.

Stikine Gold

The Indians were the first discoverers of gold in Washington and British Columbia. The natives brought the metal into Kamloops as early as 1852, and the 5th of April, 1858, Governor Douglas wrote that the natives had; "washed out almost all the gold, about 800 ounces, thus far exported from the country," and that they were; "extremely jealous of the whites digging for gold." (Bancroft's Hist. of Brit. Col. p. 353.)

A tale of gold is to the people of the west as a spark of fire to a train of powder. When the story of a strike reached the California mining country thousands dropped pick and shovel in the headwaters of the Sacramento River and rushed to San Francisco to take ship for the Fraser river in British Columbia in 1858. Between thirty and forty thousand persons are estimated to have arrived in the lower British Columbia by 1859. From Victoria they went by small boats across the Gulf of Georgia, threading the island passages and fierce currents of the passes and making their way up the treacherous rapids of the Fraser where many of them died in the swirling pools. Some of them had left an ounce a day diggings in California, others abandoned ditches and tunnels that had cost months of labor to finish.

Men from northern California took horses and packmules to go overland, crossing Oregon and Washington on the way north. They made their way up the Columbia and the Okanogan, fighting the Indians who were filled with jealous hatred toward the bands of men who invaded their lands, killed their game, and perhaps inflicted other injury. The miners, burning with the lust for gold that filled their hearts till they thought of nothing else, inured to brawls and shooting, quick on trigger, with tempers raw from the chafing of obstacles of the way, were always ready for a fight. They buried their dead, put the wounded on horseback, carried them along, and the survivors hurried on to the gold fields.

These restless adventurers mined the bars of the Fraser, and went on up to the placers of the Caribou and the Omineca. A few of them even went to the far Stikine.

"Buck" Choquette was the first to find the Stikine gold in 1861. He had been a trader for the Hudson's Bay Company, and when the prospectors came along, he too, went with pick and pan to the bars of the upper river. He filed a claim on what was afterward known as Buck's Bar, and started a trading post for himself on the opposite side of the Stikine, just above the Ice Mountain, where he traded blankets and booze for furs, at his own free will for many years.

Some hundreds of gold seekers came in the next year. The usual conflicts with the natives ensued. It was reported that an Englishman or more were killed. In September 1862, the Br. Sloop of War "Devastation," came from Victoria to inquire concerning it. The Russian brig "Alexander II" under Captain Lemasheffsky was ordered to the Stikine to protect the British and to bring the Indians to terms.

A summer day of that year a little steamer commanded by Captain William Moore came puffing into Stikine Village, as the prospectors called it. They did not like the name Fort Dionysius of the Russians, neither did they fancy Fort Stikine, and to them it was Stikine Village. It had a barge loaded with freight for the mines pushing in front and 125 prospectors on deck. The Steamer was the "Flying Dutchman," bound for the Stikine Mines. This was the pioneer steam vessel in these waters and Moore was the first of the swift-water captains. Seven miles up the river he tied up to the bank, cut a supply of wood, filled his boilers with fresh water and prepared for the struggle with the rocks and rapids of a stream never before adventured by steam craft. Feeling his way over the shallows by the sounding pole, reading the water of the riffles, lining the worst rapids, trying channels only to back down and try another, after three days he landed on a bar, among the rockers of the miners, at a place he called Shakesville, after old Shakes, the **hyas tyee** of the Stikines.

The Indians rioted because the steamer came on the river, with its hissing steam, its churning paddles, its unearthly screeches, worse than any shaman of the witch-craft days. They said it would drive away their salmon and moose. A big meeting was had with the tribesmen by Capt. Moore, speeches were made, two hundred dollars in value of Hudson's Bay Company blankets soothed their fears and restored peace.

The Captain made two or three more trips that season, then, as winter came near he took a load of disappointed miners and departed for Victoria.*

Another strange visitor dropped anchor at Fort Stikine in May 1862. It was the Corvette "Rynda" of the Russian Navy, which was at Hakodate, Japan, when the Russian Government heard of the gold of the Stikine and sent orders for her to make a survey of the river. The commander's gig, under Lieutenant Pereleshin, with an engineer, six Russian sailors, and an American geologist, Prof. W. P. Blake, of California, set out to make

*The barge was named the "J. W. Moore," for the son of the Captain. It was afterward fitted with boilers and twin screws, then was sold to Grenon and Craney of Utsalady, and was finally wrecked in Deception Pass. **MS.** Capt. William Domingo Moore, (Capt. "Bill") Andrews Collection.

the survey. They found the garnets like those sold in Wrangell today. They tracked and lined the rapids, stemmed the current and made the first map of the river as far as the Little Canyon. At this point, in a dangerous rapid a seaman named Sergayef, while lining up the swift water, was swept from his feet and drowned. This accident caused the return of the party, and the place since has been known as Sergayef's Rapid.*

The deposit of gold was not extensive.** Most of the miners went south with the coming of winter but there were sixty men who are said to have wintered near the mouth of the Clitchatanoo River.

Some of the miners remained, took their wives from the native people and settled on the river. They had a bank to draw upon in the claim on the bar, there was game in the forest, and fish swam in the streams. Their gardens grew luxuriously in the alluvial soil of the warm shores, what more could a man need. The dark eyed women made them happy, the little half blood children thrived in the warm summer sunshine, their eyes sparkled and their cheeks were rosy in the crisp, clear air of the northern winter. These men were known in after years as the "'61 men."

Collins was one of these '61 men, and his claim was on Collins' Bar. He lived there for so many years that people forgot what his other name was, and so to them he was just "Collins."

"Buckskin Miller" was another who came with the gold seekers. No one knew any other name for him. He mined, traded for fur of the Indians, keeping a little stock of goods for which he each year made the trip to Wrangell. His claim was about four miles above Glenora, there he mined until the gold craze took him to the Cassiar, and finally on to the Yukon.

Quiet days again came. The Indians paddled their canoes up to the landing at Wrangell, traded their furs for blankets and powder, then disappeared into the maze of waterways that reached out into the wilderness of islands. Potlatches were held in the great tribal houses, and witches were tortured in the cave-like holes under the floors, or were left with their heels tied back to their hair in fiendish cruelty by the **Ekhts** or Indian Doctors.

Again the outer world burst in on the little trading post and brought surprise to the village. One day in 1866 the Str. "George S. Wright" steamed into the harbor and unloaded telegraph wire, blankets, food supplies, and men on the shore. Every-

*An island at the mouth of the river was named for him. See Geographic Dict. of Alaska, Wn. D. C. 1906; Blake's Report, Doc. 177, appendix. p. 13, map attached.

**One claim of 200 feet square yielded \$2000. Davidson, Alaskan Coast Pilot, 1869, p. 85.

one was wild with curiosity. Only the H. B. Co. steamers were expected in this secluded anchorage. It was the supply ship of the Western Union Telegraph Company, working on their overland line through Russian territory by Bering Strait to cross to Asia and Europe. The Str. "Mumford" was to take the material up the Stikine to Telegraph Creek, where the line crossed the river. For a year lively interest centered in this work, then the successful laying of the Atlantic telegraph put an end to progress on the Russian line.*

*Dall, **Alaska and its Resources**; Whympers, **Travel and Adventure in Alaska**; MS. Captain William Moore, Univ. Library, Wn. 33,000 pounds of telegraph wire were reshipped to Victoria, B. C., on the Brit. Str. "Otter." **Customs Records, Alaska.**



Army Barracks and Guardhouse, Fort Wrangell, Alaska
Note the Old Whale Totem Under the Tree

nesses of the mountains. They were brave, venturesome men, unafraid of the wilderness, and they preferred that primitive life to the restraints of civilization. It was a far, strange land at that time, the buffalo were still roaming the western plains by the thousands, and the first transcontinental railway was being constructed.

Of these hardy men, A. Choquette, known as "Buck," was one of the Hudson's Bay traders in the interior and is credited with the discovery of the gold in 1861, where he located the claim known as "Buck's Bar." He lost his situation as trader for the Hudson's Bay Company, not for selling whiskey to the Indians, but perhaps for acknowledging that he did it.

Collins was still there, about 140 miles from Wrangell, and there he had a flume about a mile in length down which he brought the water to wash up the gold. He had a little store, and when he was not washing gold he was selling goods to the Indians.

"Buckskin" Miller still sluiced on his ground, but went to the Yukon in 1887 and there his trail is lost in the tundras of the interior valleys.

The Thlingits had changed from the wild men they were when Fort Dionysius was founded. They wanted to be like the

white man. They loved the things the white man sold them, but they had no help to throw off the old superstitions and beliefs that rode them down. The most of the white men cared for nothing except to use them in some way. The Indian women gained the name of being immoral. They became demoralized, but in the beginning the testimony of the fairest of those men who have left a record is, that they were not in the same grade of degradation as were some of the sailors, miners, and traders who came among them, and who made them immoral by persuasion or purchase, or used force and threats when other means failed. The Indian women were always willing to marry with the white men, trying to obey the dictates of their women's nature that bids them mate with the best they could find, but in accepting some white men they were sadly deceived and disappointed.

The army troops, much like those at Sitka, were like a pestilence to the Stikines. The most of the soldiers who remained in the ranks after the Civil War were a hard lot. The better men returned to civil life. In 1869 Hon. Vincent Colyer, Special Indian Commissioner, visited Alaska. He was present at the house of the old chief of the Tongas Indians when the chief went out to meet the officers of the ship. The Chief's daughters warned him; "If you go out with the Boston Men, do not drink any whiskey." He noted that, from the U. S. Qr. Master steamer "Newbern" there was landed at Wrangell, for the post sutler's supplies; "ten barrels of ale, and five barrels of whiskey," with rum, brandy and porter, all marked "for the use of the officers." Intoxicating liquors were prohibited and it was presumed to be Indian country. There were four officers at the post.*

Colyer says: "There are thirty two houses in the village, and five hundred and eight inhabitants." The natives up the Stikine he mentions, quoting Mr. Williams, who had been up to the mines; "They are far more honest than the same number of white men under the same circumstances would be." Leon Smith, post trader says in a letter to him; "Since my arrival here, the 1st of March, 1869, I have found them to be quiet, and they seem well disposed toward the whites."**

There was a company of soldiers at the post, fresh from the brutalities and license of war. There was no court, no law, no church, no school, no restraining influences except military regulations. An army surgeon reported; "A greater mistake could not have been committed than stationing troops in their midst.

*Colyer's Report to Secy. Int. Exec. Doc. No. 1, 41 "Cong. 2" Sess., p. 975.

**Id. App. B. p. 1006 and 1009.

They mutually debauch each other, and sink into that degree of degradation in which it is impossible to reach either through moral or religious influences. In fact the principal examples they are receiving is that drunkenness and debauchery are held by us, not as criminal and unbecoming a christian people, but as an indication of our advanced and superior civilization.”*

The garrison was hardly settled in their new quarters before trouble arose with the Indians. Christmas night 1869, two professed miners procured liquor, ostensibly for their own use, and promptly made drunk an Indian, named Lowan, and his wife. Possibly the desire for the favors of the woman were the cause of the liberality with the refreshments. Following the distribution of the cheering beverages Lowan wandered away from his house, and in a fit of maudlin inebriety bit off the finger of the post laundress. After perpetrating this bit of pleasantry he went back home to the “Ranche,” to sleep off the effects of the debauch .

On the complaint of the injured woman a file of soldiers went to arrest Lowan. On their return they brought his corpse and sent his brother Esteen to the hospital with a bullet through his shoulder. This was like a firebrand to the inflammable temper of the proud Stikines. They became riotous, got out their old Hudson’s Bay muskets and long bladed knives, began moulding bullets and filling powder-horns while those without ammunition and arms ran to the post trader’s store to purchase them. Pandemonium broke loose. All night long it bubbled, until it boiled over. All the old grievances were gone over and bitter dregs came up from the depths.

Leon Smith, trader, portly, dark-complexioned, easy tempered, was used to the ways of the Stikine. He had passed through the same before, so he closed his doors, put on his hat, and went down toward the Ranche to see old Shakes, or some other prominent chief, hoping to smooth out matters, for this unpleasantness was not profitable for business. He was the partner of the Post Trader, Wm. King Lear, and he felt sure enough of his position to believe that he could safely pass through. It was a mistake of judgment.

About 10 a. m., a gunshot was heard from toward the Ranche, and word was brought that Trader Smith had been shot. A detachment of soldiers went down under a flag of truce, for men were certainly not safe among the enraged Stikines. Smith was found at the side of the walk, riddled with buckshot, mortally wounded. The evidence on an inquiry pointed to Scutdoo, a medicine man of the Ranche, although no Stikine would say who did the deed.

*App. E. Colyer’s Report, p. 1023.

The officers issued an ultimatum to the chiefs, Shakes, Toyatte, Shonta, Quamnasty and others, notifying them to produce Scutdoo, or the big guns of the fort would tear the Rancho to bits. Noon came and no Scutdoo. The Stikine men still carried their arms, the women were conveying their babies and their bundles of valuables to the woods. At 2 p. m. Scutdoo had not been brought. The cannon opened with solid shot and the balls went ripping through the old hewed planks, splintering and tear-



Very Old Whale Killer Totem, Near South End of the Bay
The Old Village of 1869 Stood Where the Old Posts are Seen in Distance

ing away the roofs and walls of the village homes. The Stikines stood their ground, firing with their old Queen Anne muskets and sending balls at the fort, but without serious damage. Some of them mounted the hill back of the village and fired down from that vantage point. A few charges of canister drove them from the position. The cannon sent shot after shot into the village until it became too dark for it to be effective. With morning the battle continued. Shells were fired from the howitzers. Two shells burst in front of the houses. Two balls passed through Shakes' house, standing below where the old fort had stood. Terror struck even the hearts of the warlike Stikines. Chief Shakes, with a flag of truce, approached the fort and the firing ceased.

Shakes wanted to talk. He was told; "Talk is useless! Bring Scutdoo."

Other chiefs came, bringing Scutdoo. He struggled and broke away.

Again the ultimatum was issued; "Bring Scutdoo, and with him his mother, and the sub-chief of his tribe."

In the evening all these were dragged in and delivered at the fort.

The morning of December 27th, before the officers of Fort Wrangell, not before a jury, but before a court martial, Scutdoo was taken. The proceeding was short and decisive. He was found guilty. At 12:30 p. m., Scutdoo swung from the scaffold in full view of the Ranche, and with the chiefs of the tribe as compulsory witnesses.*

So ended the battle of Fort Wrangell, the death roll was two Stikines, one white trader, one white woman and one Indian wounded, and all for a bottle of booze.

Fort Wrangell was a typical army post of the West after the Civil War, and one of the farthest removed. With few of the white people on whom to indulge their passions, the Indian was the recipient of their attention. The result was disastrous to the Red Man as it has always been. Captain Moore, the old frontiersman who ran the first steamer up the Stikine, said, in

*Senate Ex. Doc. No. 67. 41st Cong. 2nd Sess. pp. 2-5.

Page 44. The Battle of Wrangell is recorded in **Sen. Ex. Doc. 67, Jan. 13, 1870**, by Lieutenant Borrowe. It begins with the statement that; "On the morning of the 16th Ult., J. C. Parker, of the village of Sitka, shot an Indian under circumstances which I thought unjustifiable.** In order to get at the facts in the case I ordered a board of officers to assemble and investigate it thoroughly.** This is the second Indian that Parker has killed within the past year. The killing in both cases was pronounced unjustifiable by the board of officers who investigated them."

There seems to have been one law for the Indian and another for the white. The Indian was hung. The white man was released. The Stikines appear to have resented this.

the Seventies when he again came to those waters, that there were not more than half the number that there were in Sixty Two. It confirmed the old frontier adage, that the "Army was more deadly to the Indian in barracks than in battle."

In 1871 the post was abandoned by the military forces and the buildings were bid in by William King Lear, the old post sutler, for the sum of \$600.00.*

The Stikines had expressed themselves as being satisfied with the hanging of Scutdoo in 1869. They were in a position where they could not well be otherwise. Those shells bursting around their ears were strong arguments. As soon as the soldiers were gone down the strait taking with them the howitzer, they changed their minds.

In May the revenue cutter "Lincoln" steamed into the harbor on her way to make an inspection of the various stations, and found William King Lear, his clerk, and the customs officer at the port, William Flannery, "cooped up in the stockade" where they had been for over a week while the Stikines had been holding their war-dances in the village. They had not dared to show themselves outside of their fortifications for the tribesmen were reviewing the case of the U. S. vs. Lowan and its attending events.

The coming of the cutter was an opportune circumstance for it was evident that the Government had not entirely forgotten its citizens and still had the power to punish attacks on them. It probably averted a frontier tragedy in this far away land.**

Of the characters who came with the troop in 1868, William King Lear was the outstanding one. Somewhere beyond forty years of age, weazened and wiry of figure, and experienced in soldier life, he had a big heart. If a miner was stranded up the river and word came to him of it, he was the first to send out some one with a grub-stake to bring the unlucky wanderer into camp. His first store building was between the fort and the Ranche and here he traded with white or red without distinction. He was generally prosperous, took care of his money, had sense enough to let whiskey remain in its proper packages until he sold it, but was infatuated with the ladies pictures on the pasteboards, to the profit of some of the garrison officers who were experts at the old game of army poker.***

Casey, whose other name has been lost from the record, was another of the soldier characters of the place. He deserted from

*Report No. 764, 45th Cong. 3rd Sess.

**Customs Records of Alaska. Reports of May 27, 1871.

***Moore MS; Lear had been a noncommissioned officer of the 3rd U. S. Artillery. Customs Records, Alaska, Report June 10th, 1871.

the post, went up the Stikine and found a home with a buxom Indian lass on the British side, where he was safe from arrest by a platoon of soldiers.

“Berry’s” Bar was located as a mining claim by another man who came about this time and he found an unpoetic death at his claim from the smallpox. He was buried on the Bar where he had worked and died and thus it received the name.

The Gold of the Cassiar

In the autumn of 1872, just before the ice closed the Stikine River, two trail-worn prospectors landed from an Indian canoe at Fort Wrangell, bringing a buckskin poke of yellow gold from Dease Lake, in the country that was to be called the Cassiar, or "Casheahr," as some spoke it.

Their names were Henry Thibert, and . . . McCullough, whose first name has not been brought down in the records of their story. Two years before, they had left St. Paul, made their way toward the northwest across the prairies with a miner's outfit of the pick, pan and shovel, the indispensable rifle, ammunition etc., and trailed out across the rolling plains, intending to "live on the country." They carried their outfit in a Red River cart, which was drawn by one horse.

Thibert was young and life was good to him on general principles and at any place. McCullough had spent years in the Fraser River and Caribou mines, and in the mill towns of Puget Sound. Now he wanted to trace the "Run of Gold" as the miners called it, in the mountains of the farther Northwest.

Their first winter was spent at Fort Edmonton, where Thibert, being young, spent his time making love to, and dancing with the bright-eyed Indian girls. McCullough, in his cabin, studied the maps and figured on the unknown spaces ahead. In the spring they went to the Mission on the Athabaska River, where they abandoned their horse and cart for a boat, went down to Great Slave Lake, wintered, then worked their way back toward the mountains, going down the Mackenzie and up the Liard, the old route of Campbell on his trading ventures. The Liard was a swift mountain stream and was ascended with pole and line, testing the bars as they went along, but with no success. Six weeks they toiled through the canyons, and portaged the rapids. It is told that at one time they had to boil the skin of their buffalo robe to fill their stomachs. Finally, in what was to them an unknown region among the mountains, on a bright September day they came out on Dease Lake, a beautiful sheet of water twenty five miles long. Scanning its shores they saw smoke curling from a camp fire. For weeks they had seen neither white man nor red. The Indian woman at the camp, knowing the habits of some white men, promptly fled into the forest as she saw them coming. The husband, on his return welcomed them, fed them, and told them in the mixed vocabulary of sign, English, and Indian, that there were "Boston Men" on the Stikine "**tenas siah**," a few suns travel over the mountains.

McCullough caught white-fish for the journey, while Thibert

searched the creeks for gold. On one creek was found what he thought was "pay" near the mouth, and he panned a few ounces. He wanted to dig more, but the Indian said, "No! You go with me—you go now."

After four days they reached the cabins of some of the '61 men on the Stikine, and from there ran the river to Wrangell in a canoe.

McCullough went to Victoria to try to enlist the Provincial Government in building a pack trail to the new diggings, but his showing did not interest them enough for them to incur the outlay.

The spring of 1873 there were but three white men in Wrangell; the Customs officer of the U. S., Wm. King Lear, the old Post trader; and Chas. Brown, trader.*

The H. B. Str. "Otter" came in. The captain looked cautiously around to see that no whiskey smuggling schooner was there peddling rum, for it did not conduce to quiet and safety for them to be in port. The Thlingit had mellowed by his contact with miners, soldiers and traders, but like some of those, he was not to be depended upon when "red likker" was involved. He liked to "shoot up" things when he got full, to express his particular style of humor, and sometimes it was the steamer. The officers piled bales of blankets round the pilot house as a precaution, for there were bullet marks on nearly all the old boats on the run. Captains McNeil, Lewis, and Swanson had been long on the route and knew its peculiarities.

McCullough and Thibert were on board. A new man, McGregor, came with McCullough, as a partner. With Thibert came two Frenchmen, Tifair, and Loozon. Also came Captain William Moore, an old pioneer of the West who had prospected from California northward, and with him were his three sons, Henry, J. W., and Wm. D. In another party were George and Bill Rath, Bill Waldron, and Bill and Dick Lyons.

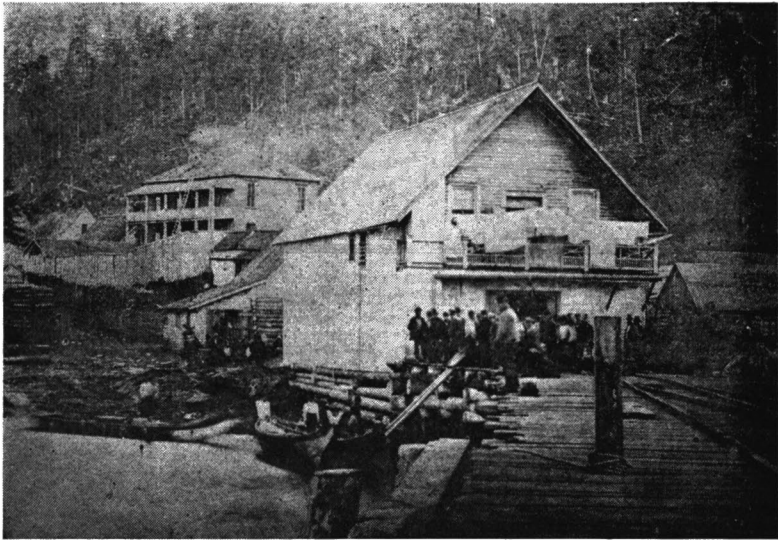
McCullough, full of hope, took the lead going up the river on the ice. At a bend of the river called the "desert" he was caught in one of the bitter storms that sometimes sweep down the canyons. His strength was not equal to his courage. He was no longer young. In the smothering whirl of the eddying winds he gave out and before his partner got him to the protection of the timber he was so badly frozen that he died that night. His partner took his body back to Wrangell for burial.

Moore and the other parties followed after the river opened, poling and lining a scow up against the current. At Telegraph

*Charles Brown was one of the '61 men. He went to Juneau with the gold rush to that town and died there in 1889. **Juneau City Mining Record**, Sept. 5, 1889.

Creek they took to the hills, crossed the First North Fork on an Indian bridge, but at the second North Fork, at what is likely the "Terror Bridge" of the Hudson's Bay Company explorer Robert Campbell, they were afraid to trust the flimsy structure so they built one for themselves a little farther up.*

At Dease Lake every one was busy, feverishly busy. Some of the '61 men had joined the stampede as Thibert went in, and all were on the ground. Everyone staked a claim as he came. Thibert and his partner had a rocker working and were taking



Thlingit Canoes Landing Machinery for the "Lady of the Lake"
The First Steamer on Dease Lake

out from three to six ounces a day to the man. William Rath was elected as recorder. Another creek was found and named Dease Creek. The first one was Thibert Creek. Thibert sickened and died. No one knew his ailment. All feared the scurvy, the dread of the miner and sailor. There was little of medicine of any kind in the camp. The September snows were beginning

*The "Terror Bridge" was where the trader of the Hudson's Bay Company, J. McLeod, turned back in 1834. It was a suspension bridge across the stream called the "Tooya" by the natives.

"A rude, rickety structure of pine poles spliced together with withes, and stretched high above the foaming torrent; the ends of the poles were loaded down with stones to prevent the bridge from collapsing." It was a trade trail of the Indians, a "Grease trail," as they were called because oolachan oil was packed over it to trade with the "stick" Indians.

(Campbell's Journal, MS. Copy Andrews Coll.)

to fall, so each one took a little flour and bacon on his back, abandoned tents and tools, and started back for Wrangell. On the divide was six inches of snow. At Buck's Bar were sixty or seventy men who had come too late in the season, on their way to stake claims.

That winter Wrangell boomed. New ocean boats came from Victoria. Others from San Francisco or from California. There were the "Olympia," the "California," and the "Otter," slipping in beside the wharf of Wm. King Lear to unload their cargoes of outfits for the mines. New buildings rose out in the brush. Lear opened a dance hall in one of the fort buildings. Indian canoes loaded at the wharf with miner's goods, sailed and paddled up to the ice of the Stikine to unload their cargoes. A town was founded at Dease Lake, known as Lake City.

Men dragging sleds straggled up the river, "necking" it to the "pot of gold at the Rainbow's end." The pokes of yellow dust brought by the miners had set them crazy. At night they camped in the snow under the trees, perhaps a "fly" of drilling or canvas stretched over a pole for a shelter. How many dropped through the thin places where the current cut away the ice was never known.

With the spring Moore came back with a contract to build a pack-trail from Telegraph Creek to Dease Lake, under charter from the Provincial Government at Victoria, he won what McCullough failed upon.

Three hundred men came on the "Otter" one trip, two hundred and fifty came on the "California." The Customs Collector was busy between freight and liquor. Of the latter 3000 gallons came on one ship. The records show that over three thousand people made a temporary call at Wrangell as they passed. Dance halls multiplied, and white material being scarce, they were filled with native girls gathered from Chilkat to Howkan.

Interesting characters, later known all over Alaska, traveled that trail. One of these was Nellie Cashman, who was the first white woman to break trail to the Cassiar. She is said to have come from Arizona, and she was certainly capable of caring for herself when she arrived. She left Wrangell with no ado, and went up the river over the winter trail. The post commander, hearing of her going, and fearing she would perish of hardship, sent a detail of soldiers to bring her back. They overtook her with difficulty, she served them a warm meal at her camp thanked them for their kindness, sent them back, then went on. She is known in nearly every northern camp from that time on.

A. T. Whitford, pioneer merchant of Sitka, came with the throng, he did not bring luck with him and is said to have lost on the venture. Bill Rath, elected the first recorder of the new

camp, came back each winter to Sitka, where he was associated in a romance in which a comely Thlingit maiden figures, and on whom he lavished the gold he won in the placers of Thibert Creek.

Wm. King Lear built a new wharf to accommodate the shipping. A man named Dooley shipped 26 head of steers to Glenora, packed each with 300 pounds of freight for which he charged 50c a pound to Dease Lake, then sold their meat at from 60c to 75c per pound. Old Jim Turk, long known in southeastern Alaska, had a packtrain on the trail. Mike Burke was there, he is said to have come with the Western Union Telegraph Company in 1866.

The gold poured out from the Cassiar made Wrangell merrier than ever it was in the old riotous fur gathering days. Thousands of miners, with the gains of a season of work in the rich placers, their muscles hardened by labor in the free air, were relaxing and seeking an outlet for their surplus vitality. They turned the old fur-trading post into a metropolis of riotous sport, and prosperity reigned. Gamblers and ladies of leisure came from Victoria, the roulette wheels whirled and the dance-halls flourished. White women were so few that the Indian girls were lured with drink to fill the needs. Their native modesty and timidity revolted at first, but they were told;

“Why! that’s the way to become a lady. Don’t you see those white ladies over there—that’s the way they do—see what nice clothes they wear—and how pretty they are.”

Soon they were inside and robbed of what modesty they had in their native wilds.

A character of the time was Dick Willoughby. He had mined in the Caribou, he was the discoverer of Lowhee Gulch, one of the richest spots of that camp, so they say, and took out a fortune which soon passed over the gaming tables. He drifted to Wrangell and with Bill Latham, “Dancing Bill,” started a dance hall. Each could scrape a few tunes on the fiddle, the “Maid of Monterey,” Old Dan Tucker,” “The Girl I Left Behind Me” and a few others, so they rented a hall and started business. They gathered gold all winter, for miners who toiled in summer, “danced winter away.” Thus they got compensation for their hardships.

A well dressed man from the East wandered into Willoughby’s place. He was astonished and shocked. He asked for the manager.

“There, over by the bar.”

The stranger went over.

“Don’t you know it’s a shame to keep a place like this? He said to Dick.

“What are you talking about, Mister?” Said Dick. “Come

along with me. Now do you see that girl? Ain't she elegant? An air like a Princess, Not over four nights ago she came in here looking like a scare crow. See! she has nice white stockings and a fine calico dress. When she came here she looked like that poor girl there, no shoes, no stockings, no dress, nothing but a blanket. That girl will start dancing tonight and in a week you'd hardly know her. Why! Just look at the walk of the girls who have been here a week or two, I feel proud of them. This is the greatest civilizer on earth, Mister. Call again."

The visitor shook his head sadly and went out into the night.

Dancing Bill finally took sick, lingered for a while, steadily grew worse until he knew that the King of Terrors was staring him in the face. His last words were.

"I'm only sorry to have to die before Dick does."

The Indians got the worst of the deal. It was "Lo! The Poor Indian." The white man sold them "Forty Rod" whiskey, then taught them to manufacture "Hooch." They were instructed in this art by a discharged soldier named Doyle, who went to Hootznahoo, showed them how to distill a villianous compound from molasses, yeast, berries, sugar, or other compounds. It was first so called from the village, "Hootznahoo" paraphrased as "Hoochinoo," then shortened to "Hooch," and the name lives even until this day.

The steamboat business increased. Captain Moore and his sons took out about a hundred thousand dollars in gold from their claims. The Captain had been in the steamboat trade on the Frazer River, with one of the earliest boats. He and his boys put a line on the Stikine. They built the "Gertrude," and ran it to Telegraph Creek, fifteen miles above Glenora, where the Irving boats ran. The Irving interests and the Moore interests had a war. Captain Moore then bought the "Glenora." The str. "Gem" and the "Minnie" came on the run in 1875. The Am. Str. "Beaver" came up from the Columbia in 1877, the next year she struck a rock and became a total loss. The old boat "Nellie," came from the Puget Sound in 1878, and the "Cas-siar" owned by the old smuggler W. J. Stevens, came into the game in 1879.

On the ocean run, the "Olympia" was brought by the H. B. Co., and was changed to the "Princess Louise." Moore bought the "Grappler" to run from Victoria in connection with his river boats, and also ran the "Western Slope" from Victoria to the boundary on the Stikine, to evade the U. S. Customs. The Br. Str. "Sardonyx" came in 1880 as the trade was declining.

The owners unfortunately did not get all the money that came out of the traffic. An old time captain told me of a purser on a boat. The craft was loaded every trip. It took in as high

as \$15,000 on one voyage, and yet the result at the end of the season showed a loss.

“The Purser went to the States and started a bank that winter, and it wasn't a sand bank either,” my informant added.

In the fall of 1877, there was trouble in a dance hall. A man named Boyd killed another. Whiskey and a woman some say was the cause. A miner's meeting was held, for there was no court in the Territory. A judge was chosen, a sheriff appointed, counsel appeared for both the prosecution and defence, and a trial was had. Boyd was found guilty, sentenced, and he was hanged at 2:30 P. M.

Some say he died like a coward, some say like a man. One witness says that the Indians admired his courage and offered to pay the blood atonement in blankets if he was freed, which was not accepted.*

*The story is told in more detail in, Hall Young of Alaska, Biography, p. 163; Sheldon Jackson's Alaska, p. 223; and MS. W. D. Moore.

Wrangell of the Days of Gold

The golden stream still poured from the Cassiar Mountains. The lucky ones came down the river to spend their gains in Wrangell, or went further south for winter. The steamer "Pacific" which sailed from Victoria, November 4, 1875, was loaded with the unfortunate ones. It collided with the bark "Orpheus" and all but two went down with their treasure. The "Orpheus" sank with all on board.

The War Department heard of the reveling miners, Company "B" of the 21st Infantry, under Captain Stephen B. Joscelyn was sent to reoccupy the old post. Wm. King Lear and his dance-hall were ejected. The Captain was a man who tried to live up to his trust, and the rank and file had improved in morale. Major Joseph B. Campbell attempted to check the illegal traffic in strong liquors. He arrested a bootlegger named Waters and held him for the mail boat to take to Portland, the nearest Court of Justice. The monthly boat was late. When it reached its destination the offender was discharged on a technicality. He sued the officer and secured a verdict of \$3,500.00 damages under a law that, "no person apprehended by military force shall be detained longer than five days after arrest and before removal." (Morris' Report, p. 61.)

General Howard, U. S. A., in his report of inspection that year tells of Chief Fernandeste of the Stikines, arrested for some offense and being sent to Portland, was so frightened that he suicided. The Stikines demanded of General Howard indemnity for their chief, and it was paid in blankets. Perhaps it was the better way out of a deplorable situation. The tribe made a big dance, an interpretative presentation of the story from first to last, to entertain the General.

General Howard said of the situation,

"Good Civil Government as well as religious and secular teaching is nowhere in heathendom more needed than in Alaska: and yet to the present there is none."

(Report Gen. Howard.)

Isaac I. Dennis was the Collector of Customs for the port from June 23, 1875. He had served in the Civil War with courage and distinction, and he brought high ideals to his service. He was the only civil officer. He fought the lawless and vicious elements, both white and Indian. To quote his words; "We have white men here who are far worse than the Indians. A majority of the Indians here are law abiding, and will help me in preserving order."

"I am no coward, but I detest having revolvers drawn on me, for fools will sometimes shoot accidentally."

The white man had taught the red man to make "hooch." They lost their sense of right and wrong when they drank that villainous compound. Dennis raided the "Ranche" as the Indian Village was called. The result was, "21 stills, several gallons of 'Hootznahoo' and enough mash to demoralize all the Indians in Alaska." (letters Customs records, Alaska.)

A ruffian gang terrorized the Indian town, visited the house of an Indian woman, made her drunk, then left. Soon after the house was found to be on fire and the woman burned to death. Dennis hopefully records, "That the present Congress will legislate on Alaska, is my humble prayer." He fought the riotous ruffians for three years and then resigned, declaring, "I trust, however that Alaska's darkest days are past."*

Wrangell prospered. Four river steamers plied on the Stikine during the open season, feverishly hurrying to get the freight to the miners delving in the gravels of the Cassiar. Hundreds of Indians were employed in canoe transportation on the waterways. The harbor was filled with their craft. At the "Foreign Village" on the little cove at the north of the settlement were scores of canoes drawn up on the beach. Twelve hundred tons of freight passed through each season and the local needs required 1500 tons more. The trade was more than a quarter of a million dollars.

The pack mules from the trails were brought down to Farm Island at the mouth of the river, and there Jim Rosseter and his partner wintered them. There Jim gained his sobriquet of "Cayuse Jim." There he grew hay and vegetables and that was the first agricultural venture of the community.

The golden stream declined. Men departed for other fields. Some went to Schuck's Basin and Sum Dum Bay. About \$40,000 in gold was dug in that region in 1878. Later Juneau and the Silver Bow Basin was the attraction, but that is another story, as Kipling says.

In June of 1877 the troops again had marching orders and filed out from the barracks to board the ship. The Officer's Quarters became the Customs Office. King Lear lost his profitable tenant and the income on his investment, which, although it had not paid as well as he hoped, had netted him a reasonable profit.**

*Dennis resigned July 7, 1878. Rep. Morris, p. 122.

**The Post cost \$26,000 in 1868-1870. When the army vacated in 1871, Lear bought the buildings for \$600. In August 1875, when the troops returned Lear demanded \$225.00 a month in gold, rental, or a repurchase price of \$50,000.00. The Government refused the offer, occupied the buildings, paid Lear \$1,966.67 rental and declared the sale illegal and void. (Sen. Ex. Rep. No. 764, 45th Cong. 2nd Sess.) Lear's purchase money was returned. Wm. King Lear wandered away and his trail is lost in the labyrinth of the disappearing footprints of the pioneers of the vast land once known as the Northwest Coast of America.

The Coming of the Rule of Church and State

A more potent power was coming whose influence was beneficent and far reaching. It was ushered in by incidents some of which occurred before the close of the military occupation, and which were promoted by the personal influence of the officers.

Before the going of the troop, a soldier walked down the filthy path through the Ranche, so the story goes, and hearing a voice inside one of the Indian houses repeating over letters of the alphabet his curiosity was roused. He went in. There was a little Stikine girl of ten or twelve years, sitting on the floor of the big tribal house. Above her head was a totem of a woman nursing a young bear, the face distorted by pain. The girl was laboriously picking out letters from a fragment of newspaper. It touched him. He wrote a letter to General Howard, making an appeal for a mission to these people, saying; "I am not a church member, but am making this appeal for these poor people from the dictates of my heart." The letter was placed in the hands of Sheldon Jackson, the pioneer missionary of Alaska, who published it in the **Chicago Tribune** in 1877. Dr. Jackson secured the services of Mrs. A. R. McFarland, a missionary of Portland, Oregon, and on the 10th of August, 1877, the first mission teacher of the Presbyterian Church landed in Wrangell.*

Before this, in the spring of 1876, some Indians from the Methodist mission at Port Simpson, B. C., came to Wrangell to cut wood for the post. One of them, Clah, whose English name was Philip McKay, gathered together his Christian fellows for services on the sabbath. He found a friend and helper in Captain S. P. Joselyn, of the 21st Infantry, who was in command at the Fort. In September of the same year Rev. Crosby, of the Port Simpson Mission, visited Wrangell and held services. He took up a collection for a church and school building to which Stikines, Cassiar Indians, Hydahs, Tsimpsons, Klawaks, and Sitkas, all contributed money and blankets, the blankets being the Indian equivalent for cash at that time. They also agreed to do the work on the church. So began Christianity and education in Wrangell.**

The task was not an easy one to carry on in this community. The coming of Mrs. McFarland was welcomed joyfully. Another came to assist who is deserving of mention. Sarah Dickinson, the Indian wife of a trader, a Christian Tongas woman

***Alaska**, by Sheldon Jackson, pp. 135-140; **Rise and Progress Presbyterian Church in Alaska, 1886**, pp. 2-3.

****Alaska**, Jackson, pp. 132 et seq.

who had been taught at Port Simpson Mission, was up the Stikine River picking berries, when she heard of the arrival of the missionary. Joyously she bundled babies, berries and baskets into the canoe and paddled down the river to Wrangell hurrying to help in the good work.

Next, S. Hall Young came to join in the task and he has told the story of their struggles in the fight against witchcraft and shamanism in his interesting Autobiography, **Hall Young of Alaska**, so well that I shall leave it to him. Other denominations followed, the work went on, churches were built, the Government placed schools for the natives, territorial schools were established, both grammar and high, and today the Industrial School for the Natives is the last accomplishment in education for the community.

A summer day of 1879 there landed at Wrangell a bearded Scotchman, one of the best loved and most genial of all the western naturalists, and the greatest Alaskan enthusiast of his day. It was John Muir, the geologist and botanist. He took up his abode with John M. Vanderbilt, who was managing the business of Wm. King Lear, and he pursued his passionate quest of natural wonders in a new and unexplored region, among the mountains and glaciers of the Stikine.

Muir says; "The Wrangell village was a rough place. No mining hamlet in the placer gulches of California, nor any backwoods village I ever saw, approached it in picturesque, devil-may-care abandon. It was a lawless draggles of wooden huts, built in crooked lines, wrangling around the boggy shore of the island for a mile or so in the general form of the letter S, without the slightest subordination to the points of the compass or to building laws of any kind."*

One stormy night Muir thought that he could understand the Spirit of the Wild better in the open than within four walls, so he climbed the hill back of the town, built a fire and spent the night there. About midnight the Stikines discovered the glow from the fire reflected on the stormclouds and to their superstitious minds it was a portent in the Heavens. The white men thought a volcano was breaking out in their vicinity. The natives called the missionaries out to pray, but the coming morning explained the situation and dispelled the fears. Thereafter it was known as Muir's Mountain.

*John Muir, S. F. Bulletin, Sept. 6, 1879; **Travels in Alaska** p. 25.

Hall Young has written delightfully of those times in **Alaska Days with John Muir.**

Placer mines are soon exhausted. The golden stream from the Cassiar dwindled down. The Chinese relocated the abandoned claims or purchased them from the owners. They worked over the gravel tailings for what the white man missed. Finally even the Chinamen went away. The sluice boxes rotted by the deserted cabins. The moose browsed unscared by the broken rocker. The cabins stood lone and quiet. The roulette wheels were in the saloons but no one twirled the little ball or spun the wheel. The long pack trains no longer lined along the trails. The paddle wheels of the steamers were stilled and the salmon came back to the streams. The Cassiar was again in wilderness solitude where the few remaining degraded natives went back to meet the denizens of the wild in their native haunts and to again take



Army Hospital and Blockhouse, Fort Wrangell
Afterward U. S. Commissioners Office

up the course of primitive life. An occasional steamer plowed the waters of the Stikine. In 1888 I can find the record of but one: The Indian canoe was almost the only bearer of traffic on the beautiful, turbulent waters.

The story of the Cassiar is a rehearsal of the old tale of placer camps, no matter whether on the Yenesee, in Siberia, in Australia, or in California, the same from the Yuba to the Yukon.

Through the petitions of the miners, the work of the missionaries and the efforts of Sheldon Jackson, a meagre measure of Civil Government was grudgingly given to Alaska in 1884, and at last a local judge, a commissioner, appointed by the Division Judge, came to Wrangell.

Klondike Days in Wrangell

Quiet again brooded over Wrangell by the Stikine. The rollicking, money-spending miner had departed. The native dance hall girls had gone to their villages, and the hurdy-gurdy had closed its doors. Time flowed more smoothly, even though with not so strong a current, during the late Eighties and the early Nineties in the charming village on the harbor with the curving shores where stood the quaint old Indian houses and the grotesque, fascinating totems.

Then again a turbulent throng of goldseekers flooded the streets of the old mining center. The story of gold in the Klondike stirred the blood in men's veins and started them out on another stampede into the North to seek for the Golden Fleece. Thousands went up the Stikine to take the Teslin Trail, the All-Canadian Route to the Land of Promise. A railway, along the old survey of the Western Union Telegraph line, of 1866, was proposed by Mackenzie and Mann who began the shipment of materials, equipment, and men up the river.

A grant of land was made by the Canadian Government to help finance the venture. The strange scenes of the old gold days were reenacted in Wrangell. The dance-halls reopened. Soapy Smith and his gang looked in and visited the saloons with their shell-games and faro-cases. The hurrying crowd camped for a while on the old parade-ground of the Fort, and turned the open places into a tent city. Every kind of animal that could carry a pack or that could be turned into food in time of need, was unloaded at the dock to be taken up the river. A man brought a flock of goats and tied them to the piling under the wharf forgetting that a fifteen foot tide ebbed and flowed twice each twenty-four hours. He then went up to "do the town" and on his return found his flock securely tethered to the piling by their ropes, fast to the bottom and drowned.

In the first half of August 1896, there were ten boats from foreign ports that touched at the Wrangell wharves, laden with every article that a miner's fancy could conjure to carry to the gold camp. There were the Br. str. "Islander", the Am. str. "City of Topeka", the Br. str. "Tees", the Am. str. "Herald", the Br. str. "Danube", the Am. str. "Queen", the Br. str. "Norah", the Br. str. "Florence", the Am. str. "Rapid Transit", and the Am. str. "Geo. E. Starr".

River steamers again plowed the swift waters of the Stikine and frightened the moose and salmon. In 1898 there were the "Canadian", the "Columbian", the "Hamlin", the "Dawson", the "McCormick", the "Ogilvie", the "Monte Christo", the "Ramona", the "Caledonian", the "Stratchcona" and others, seventeen in all.

The Teslin Trail proved unsuited to the traffic, it was too far overland to the headwaters of the Yukon by that route. The shorter transfer was from tidewater to the head of navigation by the passes at the head of Lynn Canal and proved far more direct and convenient. The railway over the White Pass was built. Mackenzie and Mann ceased work on their project, gathered up their material and equipment, and moved to other fields. Some of the river steamers were taken to Skagway and there were dismantled and shipped over the railway for use on the Yukon.

Captain Sid Barrington, the dare-devil of the Yukon, who is said never to have drifted a bend with his steamer in his career, who was always the first to reach Dawson in the spring and the last to leave there in the fall, is running a line of boats on the Stikine, the most picturesque of all the waterways of the Northwest, the most thrilling stream of the swift water routes of the land, and is carrying sportsmen of all countries to one of the greatest of the game paradises of North America, the old Cassiar region.

The Old Timers of Wrangell

I woke from my reverie, and rubbed my eyes. There was the berry patch of old Judge Thomas, the patriarch of all the Old Timers, loaded with the luscious, ripe red raspberries, flooded with the mellow sunshine, and the Judge came out to talk of the old days. There was the hill where Muir kindled his "witch-fire," in the storm, and from which the Stikines poured balls into the fort from their old Queen Anne muskets. The ghosts of old Quatkay, and of the stentorian voiced Shustaks with his primitive philosophy and his devotion to his departed ancestors, faded away and the shades of the slaves who were sent to accompany them to the other world, grew faint. I looked at the remains of the old tribal houses and wondered if under each one of the huge posts there reposed, like a corner-stone, a slave who had been placed there in the dedicatory ceremonies of the structure in the old heathen days. More than a century had slipped by since Captain Cleveland lay in the channel before Kotzlitian, the Place of Trees, where a hundred slaves are said to have passed on at the founding.

I wandered down the street and sat down to talk with a grizzled old sea-captain. I wanted tales of the Cassiar, of packer Galbreath, of old Jim Turk, of Sylvester, the pioneer mill man,* of many others of whom he could tell. Most of all I wished to hear the story of the vast smuggling ring that operated in opium through the Northwest and whose tenacles reached out into the high places for a market in the products of their nefarious trade. They handled it by bringing the seductive compound from Victoria, B. C., to a saltery not distant from Wrangell, where it was packed in barrels of salted salmon bellies and shipped into the United States to be sold in all corners of the land. I knew the grizzled old Captain could tell me the whole story from the beginning to the climax in the seizure of nearly forty thousand dollars in value of the sticky dope, and which laid bare the plot, thus killing the trade. My quest was futile for the canny old Salt mused for a while, then sententiously remarked; "Better to let sleeping dogs lie."

I went away. I might get the story another day. Years passed. I returned. Judge Thomas was gone, Captain Lynch had sailed on his last voyage; Johnny Grant also, had moved on. I could get nothing more.

*When the old millman died, he left for his children of the half native blood, the sawmill, the lumber-yard full of sawed lumber, the mill-pond full of logs, thousands of dollars in the bank and no debts. A receiver was appointed, and at the end the money, the lumber, and the logs, had disappeared.

Wrangell had changed. I could find no trace of old Fort Dionysius, the house of Shustaks on the Point had disappeared, and huge oil tanks had taken their place. Kadashan's totems had been moved from his home in the mill-yard, to a site on the hillside. Chief Shakes and his wife were dead, and another lectured in the house where the old chief had so long sat among his treasures of the ancient Thlingit days. Young Shakes had been murdered by a vagabond white man, and there is a story about that.

A break-water reached out from Shustak's Point, (Shestiki, the surveyors called it.) New wharves pushed out for landings for ships and freight. Streets were being graded and surfaced. New business houses reared their heads. Strange old totems from far villages appealed to the tourists, new dwellings stood white on the hillside where the forest grew. A road reached around the shore to the south and toward and beyond the Thlingit burial-ground. The new school buildings of the United States Office of Education for the native people was a mile or so away. Wrangell was changed from the time when Muir told of its trails and paths conforming to no rules, "A lawless draggel of wooden huts." Those days had gone forever. Wrangell had come to be a modern town, a little city with a history.

I looked about me. I saw the fine wharves, the marts of trade, the schools and churches, the comfortable homes of the contented people.

All this had grown from the ground where the forest was hewn by the Russian axes. There was the stockade where the drunken rioters killed the son of Dr. John McLoughlin. Over at the other side was where the witches were tortured. Here was where Toyatte, the "Grand Old Roman", as he was named by John Muir in the Seventies, was killed trying to stop the brewing of the maddening and poisonous "Hootchinoo" in the "Foreign Village."

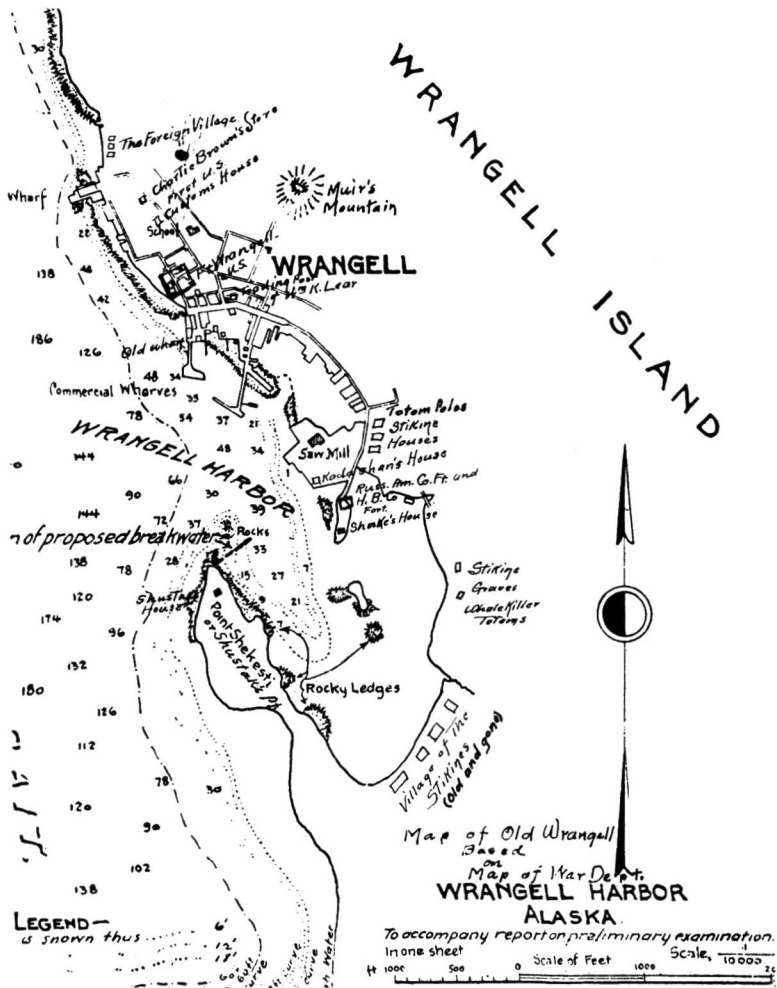
Around me stretched the vast forest areas, league on league of spruce and hemlock. I saw in the future, pulp mills grinding this into the paper pulp of commerce for the printing offices of the United States. Between the forest-clad islands wound miles on miles of beautiful channels, stocked with myriads of fish. A wealth of enchanting landscape was spread before me.

I looked into the future and saw still other thousands of happy homes nestled between these hills on little farms in the valleys, prospering as are the Norwegians along their coasts, away from the civil wars of the strikes, and the vices of the great cities.

This I saw, as Alaska comes to her own, and a strong, clean, sturdy northern race grows up beneath the Pole Star, just as

the peoples of Norway, Sweden, and Finland have grown and prospered. Ten millions of people are in those lands where they have made their homes for centuries past. **This is the Land of the Future.**

Down the river from the far Stikine hinterland swift steamers come laden with the trophies of the chase from the interior valleys and among the lofty mountains. Among these mountains are deposits of gold, silver, and other metals, as yet untouched, but which will yet be uncovered by the hand of labor. The gold of the Cassiar was not all taken out in the Seventies. Tonopah was not discovered for half a century after the Comstock Lode was in its opulent glory. Years from now, veins as rich as the Premier will be found between these snowy peaks.



BOOKS ON ALASKA

"Story of Sitka" historical and descriptive of the old Fur Factory of the Russian American Co., 1799 to 1920. The only book devoted to the fascinating story of the Russian Dominion at this interesting old sea-port. Price \$1.50, published 1921. Illustrated with map.

"Story of Alaska" historical and statistical narrative of The Last Frontier, the most northerly possession of the United States, the only complete account in print of the Territory. From Bering's Voyage of 1728 to 1930. Price \$3.50, published 1931. Illustrated with 11 plates.

"The Pioneers and Nuggets of Verse They Panned from the Gravels of the Past" Historical sketches illuminated by bits of verse written by eye-witnesses, in passing, of the West and North. Paper covers, price 50c, four illustrations. Published 1937.

"Wrangell and the Gold of the Cassiar" Historical and descriptive story of the old Russian trading post, Hudson's Bay Co. factory, and fort and village of the United States, from 1883 to recent years. Paper covers, illustrated with engravings of historical scenes and map. Published 1937.

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