

STRONG MAN
TLINGIT

The Origin of Konakadet, according to the narrative recorded in English at Wrangell, Alaska, by J. R. Swanton (119a:165-73).

The two versions of this typical Tlingit myth, often illustrated among the Tlingits and the Haidas, published here, are too long to reproduce.

Origin of Gonaqadæt, p. 435, (a summary):

A certain woman disliked her son-in-law very much because he was lazy and fond of gambling. When the people went to camp, he split a tree in two, spread it apart, and caught a lake monster. He put on its skin and then began catching fish and sea animals, which he left where his mother-in-law could find them. She thought she was a shaman, and began prophesying what animal would be left next. One time the Raven called just as her son-in-law was coming out of the monster's skin in front of the village, and he died. When she found who had been bringing in the animals, his mother-in-law died of shame. After that the man's wife had his body and the skin carried back to the edge of the lake. There he came to life and carried her down into his house at the bottom. He became the Gonaqadæt, and their children are the women at the head of the creeks.

The Konakadet Myth, as reported by H. P. Corser.

A man married a high caste girl in another town. The man proved himself to be great gambler. This gave him a very bad reputation. His mother-in-law called him a "worthless fellow," and finally, for the sake of peace, he built himself a hut near a lake, back of the village. (Chief Shakes locates this lake as the one back of old Wrangell, but the legend probably came from a place much farther north.) The young man had heard of a monster that was back of the lake, and he took stone axes, split open a tree and made a dead-fall trap and with it killed the monster, and then crawled into its skin.

To his surprise he found now that he could swim about in the water like a fish. In the daytime he would do this and then when night came he would return home. He told his wife all about it and charged her not to tell his mother-in-law anything about his adventures.

Famine once took the village. The young man, in the skin of the monster, caught a salmon and left it next morning by his mother-in-law's house. She brought it in, in great glee, and claimed all the credit for having secured it. The next day the mother-in-law brought in two salmon, and then a halibut. All the time she claimed that she had brought the fish. The next night the young man told his wife that he was going to get a large whale, and, sure enough, the next morning he brought in the whale. The mother-in-law found it and claimed all the honor for having caught the fish. She asked to be honored as a great shaman, and the people granted her wish. The young man and his wife laughed all the more at her arrogance.

He had told his wife that he must always get home before the ravens called. If he did not come, she might know that he was dead. One morning, she heard the ravens call before he returned. She began to cry and her friends asked her why she was crying and she replied that she knew her husband was dead, because the ravens had called. They all went to the door then and saw on the beach two whales and the monster between them dead. The young man had attempted more than he was able to perform. The load had delayed him so that he could not get back by the time the ravens called. They found the young man in the skin of the monster. The people were surprised and supposed that he had been captured by the monster. Thereupon they called him "Konakadet." They took the body of the young man and placed it in a tree near the lake back of the village, and every evening the mother went there to weep. One night she saw a ripple of water and heard the voice of her husband calling to her, "Get on my back and hold on tight." She did so, and they went to the Konakadet's former home. This is the reason why it is considered good luck if one has seen the Konakadet, and his wife and wife's children, the "Daughters of the Creek," also bring good luck.

There are several other stories of the Konakadet.

The Konakadet Totem Poles, according to Edward L. Keithahn (62:128 and following).

Next to "Raven," the most popular subject for totem pole art was the Gonaqadet. Known also to the Haidas as "Wasgo," this monster is generally depicted as an aquatic wolf with some features of the Killer Whale.

There are many Gonakadet stories but the most popular one concern a high-born young man who was having mother-in-law trouble. Being the wife of a chief and used to having her own way, she seems to have despised him because she could not dominate him as she would have liked to, and especially was she irked by his gambling. After each meal she would order the slaves to put out the fire so that he could not cook anything for himself. When the gambler would come into the community house long after dark, the woman would remark, sarcastically, "My fine son-in-law has been cutting wood for me." A similar remark would be flung at him at every opportunity.

Although the young man had a kind and loving wife he found that he could not endure her mother's constant nagging forever. At some distance back of the village there was a lake in which the monster Gonakadet was reputed to dwell. Here at the lakeside he built himself a small cedar cabin where he lived alone. But he was not idle since it was his intention to try to trap the monster. First he felled a tall cedar tree into the lake and carefully stripped it of its branches. Then with fire-hardened hardwood wedges and stone maul he split the log nearly to the butt. Next he inserted long crosspieces which sprung the two halves wide apart and held them there at great tension.

When summer came and the villagers left for the fishing grounds the young man went with them and caught many salmon. These he took to his cabin and with them baited his trap. By letting the bright red salmon down into the water on a line the Gonakadet was finally lured into the space between the sprung three-halves, whereupon the monster knocked out the trigger and was trapped. For hours it thrashed out, at times dragging the tree completely under water, but eventually it gave up the struggle and died.

Now the young man removed the Gonakadet from the trap, skinned it and carefully dried the skin. When it was cured he got into the hide and went into the water. As he had hoped, dressed in the skin, he had all the powers of the Gonakadet itself. He explored the lake bottom, finding there a beautiful house which had been the home of Gonakadet.

The secret of his good fortune he kept from everybody but his wife. She was charged to reveal it to no one.

The following spring found all the people's dried salmon used up and the village was faced with a famine. Then the young man put on his Gonakadet skin and swam in the sea every night. Only his wife knew of his whereabouts. To her only he revealed the supernatural powers of his gift. "I will be back each morning before the raven calls," he said, "but if the raven calls before I return, do not look for me, for I shall be dead."

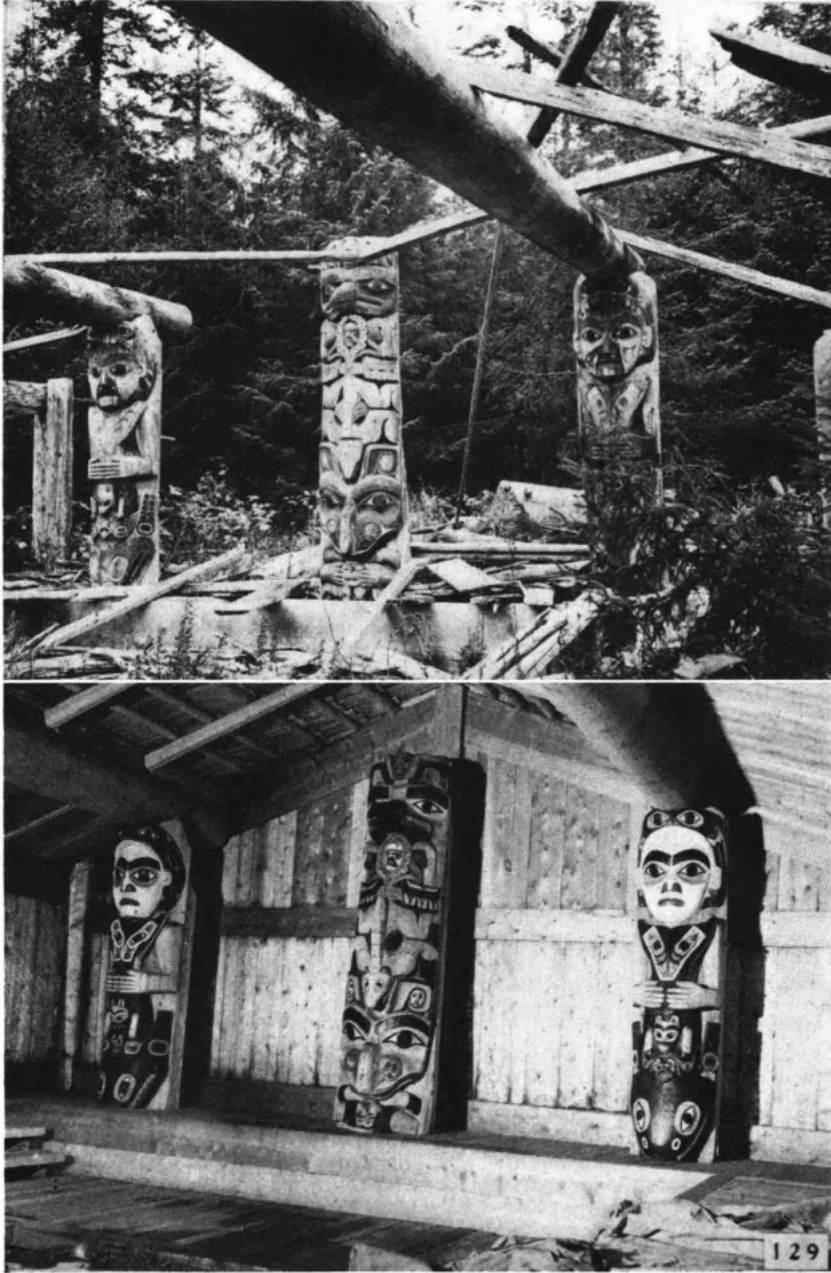
That night he caught a salmon. Before the raven called he brought it to the village and laid it on the sand in front of his mother-in-law's house. Rising early next morning this woman spied the salmon and concluded that it had drifted there with the tide. According to custom, the village was invited to partake of it.

The following night the young man caught two salmon and left them in the same place. When the mother-in-law found these she was overjoyed and wondered what it was that brought her this good fortune. "It must be a spirit," she thought.

The son-in-law now slept during the day, being tired from swimming in search of salmon all night. His mother-in-law would berate him soundly, saying, "Imagine men sleeping all day when there is a famine. If it were not for me going around picking up dead fish the whole village would starve!" His wife, however, knew who was providing the salmon.

The next morning the woman found a halibut before her door, and predicted two halibut would be there on the morrow. The young man, hearing her prediction, fulfilled it by catching two halibut. Then she told her husband, the chief, to forbid anyone to go on the beach until she had gone first, giving as her reason that "she had had a vision." This was only to make sure that she should get full credit for everything that was found. Then she predicted that she would find a seal. As she had foretold, a seal was there in the morning. The hair was singed off, the skin scrubbed white and the seal cooked whole for the benefit of the community.

People now began to regard her as a great shaman, and she did everything in her power to encourage such belief. She ordered a claw headdress made, such as shamans wear, a rattle and an apron decorated with puffin's beaks, and a mask which she named "Food-Finding Spirit." She continually talked about "her spirit" and sang songs about their power. High caste people paid much attention to her and praised her spirits. Popularity made her still more cruel to her son-in-law and she now spoke of him derisively as the "Sleeping Man."



Konakadet of the Kaigani-Haidas

As time went on she called for two seals, one seal lion, two sea lions, one whale. Now she was selling food to the villagers and had so much stored away in boxes that the people were awed by her great wealth.

Each night the task had been getting greater for the young man and he had barely gotten in with the whale before the raven called. To his wife he cautioned, "Do not take any of that food unless she offers it." And then he added, "If I am found dead in this skin, put me along with the skin in the place where I used to hide it, and you will get help."

Then the day came when the mother-in-law called for two whales. The young man caught them, but to bring them in exceeded the strength even of the Gonakadet. All night long he struggled to get them ashore but just as he reached the beach the raven called and he fell dead.

The mother-in-law went out as usual and found the two whales with a strange monster lying dead between them. All the villagers came down to see it. It had claws like copper and a big head with long upright ears. Two great fins stood up on its back and it had a long curling tail. The simple villagers thought it must be one of the shaman woman's spirits.

Just then they heard someone crying and upon looking in that direction saw the chief's daughter approaching, weeping bitterly. "Why does the chief's daughter call that monster her husband?" they asked each other.

When the girl reached the shore she turned on her mother angrily, saying, "Where are your spirits now? You lied! You said you had spirits when you had none. That is why this happened to my husband."

Everyone in the village now crowded about. "Mother, is this your Food-Finding Spirit? Why did your spirit die? Real spirits never die. If this is your spirit bring it to life again."

Then the girl requested the help of someone who was clean. He opened the monster's mouth revealing the body of her husband. "He must have been killed by that monster," said the villagers.

When the young woman and her helpers went to the lake to deposit the body according to the dead man's instructions, there they saw the trap and the tools he had made it with, and then for the first time they knew the truth. All the village went to see for themselves and to pay their respects to the man who had saved them from starving. That is, all but the mother-in-law, for her shame was more than she could bear and she died in convulsions, froth coming from her mouth.

Every evening the bereaved young woman went to the tree containing her husband's body and wept. But one evening she noticed a ripple on the waters of the lake and then she saw the Gonakadet rise. Then it said, "Get on my back and hold tight." She did, and down it plunged.

They still live there beneath the waters in a beautiful house and their children are the "Daughters of the Creek." They reside at the head of every stream and when they are seen or either of their spirit parents, they bring one good luck.

The Duk-toothl Memorial on Wrangell Island (*Tlingit*), as recorded by Edward L. Keithahn (62:126, 127 with an illustration).

Duk-toothl totem pole memorial tells the story of the weakling who became strong.

In old Tuxican, the ancient seat at the Klawak Tlingit, Galwet was a chief of the Takwanedi or "Winter People." Every day he bathed in the sea for strength and his people bathed with him. In the cold, grey mornings he would rise, run down to the sea, and rush in, followed by his clan. Then they would whip each other with switches until their blood ran hot. After that they would go to a certain tree where the Chief attempted to pull a branch out. Then they would go to another tree which the Chief tried to twist from top to bottom. He was testing his strength in preparation for an expedition against the sea lions.

Galwet's nephew was a great disappointment to the entire village. He was weak and cowardly and would lie abed when all the others were bathing for strength. They called him Duk-toothl or "Black-Skin" because he never bathed and was blackened with soot from sleeping close to the fire.¹ One day, however, his aunt took him in hand secretly, told him

¹ According to William Paul (Sr.), N.W. of Juneau, Alaska, this young man was so dirty in his habits that they called him Vomit (*kahaalise*) (M.B.).

how he was disgracing the clan, that they would lose caste when he became Chief. He promised her that he would make himself strong and worthy of the respect accorded a chief.

However, Duk-toothl continued to feign weakness, and though he continued to lie in bed when the others bathed, at night after all were asleep, he would steal off and do the same thing himself for hours and hours. He remained in so long that he had to float to rest his feet. On coming out he would throw water on the ashes of the fire so as to make it steam and lay his mat on top. That was the only bed he had. The people thought he was a low, dirty fellow, but in reality he kept himself pure and would not lie or steal. He did not say a



Konakadet house posts, at Old Kasaan

word when they made fun of him, though he was strong enough to have done almost anything to them if he had so desired. When they sent him after big pieces of firewood he acted as if they were very hard to lift, and they thought he was so lazy that they gave him very little to eat.

The people went on in this way, bathing every day with their chief, while Black-Skin bathed at night. After they were through, the village people would make a big fire, take breakfast and then go after wood. As soon as the people came up, Black-Skin moved into a corner and slept there.

One night, while Black-Skin was bathing, he heard a whistle that sounded to him like that of a loon. He thought, "Now that I am seen I had better let myself go." So he went toward the place where he heard it and saw a short, thick-set man standing on the beach

clothed in a bear skin. This man ran down toward him, picked him up, and threw him down upon the beach. Then he said, "You can't do it yet. Don't tell anyone about me. I am Strength. I have come to help you."

Toward morning Black-Skin came in feeling very happy, for he thought that he had seen something important. He kept thinking of Strength all the time. He could not forget him, but he was quieter than ever in his demeanor. When they were playing in the house he would pay no attention, and if they said mean things to him, he let them go unnoticed, although he was a member of the chief's family. Anything they wanted they asked him to get, and he got it.

In olden times the boys used to wrestle in the chief's house while their elders looked on, and they would try to get him to wrestle too. Sometimes the little boys would wrestle with him, and he pretended that they pushed him down. Then they would make fun of him, saying, "The idea of a great man like you being thrown by a child!"

The next time he went in bathing, Black-Skin felt very happy, for he knew that he had strength. Anything hard to do, when he looked at it, it appeared easy to him. That night he heard the whistle one more. He looked around and saw the same man, and the man said, "Come over this way. Come over to me." Then they seized one another, and as soon as the short man felt his grip, he said, "Don't throw me down. Now you have strength. You are not to go into the water again. Go from here right to that tree and try to pull the limb out." So he went to the tree and pulled it right out. Then he put it back again. After he had done so, the man told him to go the other tree. "Twist it right down to the roots," he said. So Black-Skin did. Afterward he untwisted it and made it look as before.

Just after he went to bed the people started in bathing. As they passed him the boys would pull his hair saying, "Come on and go in bathing, too." But he paid no attention. After they had bathed they went up to the limb as usual, and Galwet pulled it out with ease. Black-Skin lay in bed listening to the shouting they made over this great feat. Then Galwet ran to the other tree and twisted it down to the very roots. When they came home, they told the story to one another, saying, "Galwet pulled out that limb!" The chief himself felt very proud, and the people of the village were very happy that he had done so, especially his two wives. Then they tried to get Black-Skin out of bed. They laughed at him, saying, "Your chief has pulled out the limb. Why couldn't you? He has also twisted that tree. You sleep like a chief and let your chief go bathing in the morning." They laughed at him, saying, "He is sleeping in the morning because he has pulled out that limb and twisted that tree."

They had been bathing in order to hunt sea lions, so the young men said, "Tomorrow we are going after sea lions. I wonder which part of the canoe Black-Skin will sleep in. He is such a powerful fellow."

And one boy said, "Why, this Black-Skin will sit in the bow of the canoe so that he can land first. He will tear the sea lions in two."

Black-Skin listened to all this, but he paid no attention to them. The whole town was going all day long to see the place where the limb had been pulled off and the tree twisted down to the root. Those people almost lived on sea lion meat, but it was very scarce and only powerful people could get it. For this reason they picked out only the strongest fellows from among those who had been bathing with the chief, to go after them to the sea-lion island. This island was very slippery because the sea lions stayed there all of the time and very few could get up to the place where they were. That is why they went through such hardships to get at them.

The elder of the chief's two wives had had pity on Black-Skin, and would do little favors for him on the sly. So Black-Skin, after he had bathed secretly, came to his uncle's wife and said, "Will you give me a clean coat; it doesn't matter much what it is so long as it is clean, and something for my hair?"

"Are you asked to go?" she inquired.

He replied, "I am not asked, but I am going."

So she prepared food for him and put it in as small a package as she could. All prepared, they got into the canoe. Last of all came down Black-Skin, and, when they saw him, they said, "Don't let him come! Don't let him come!"

Seeing that he was determined to get in they began pushing the canoe out as fast as they could. Black-Skin then seized the canoe, and they struck his fingers to make him let go. It sounded like beating upon a board. Although all of them were shoving it out, he exerted a very little of his strength, pulled the canoe back, and jumped in.

Then the people talked very mean to him, but the chief said, "Oh, let him be! He will bail out the canoe for us on the way over."

So he sat in the place where one bails. The uncle might have suspected something after his nephew had pulled back the canoe, but he did not appear to. As they went rapidly out they said, "Black-Skin came along to tear the sea lions in two."

They asked him, "How many sea lions shall I skin for you?"

But Black-Skin said nothing.

The sea-lion island had very precipitous sides against which great waves came, so Galwet waited until the canoe was lifted upon the crest of a wave and then jumped ashore. He was a powerful fellow, and seizing a small sea lion by the tail, smashed its head to pieces on the rocks. Then he thought he would do the same thing to a large one. These large sea lions are called "men-of-the-islands." He went to the very largest of these and sat astride of his tail, intending to tear it in two, but the sea lion threw him up into the air, and when he came down he was smashed to pieces on the rocks.

Now, when Black-Skin saw what had happened to his uncle, he felt bad. Then he put his hand into his bundle of clothes, took out and put on his hair ornament and his clean coat while all watched him, and said, "I am the man who pulled out that limb, and I am the man that twisted that tree." He spoke as high-caste Indians did in those days, and all listened to him. He said to them, "Take the canoe closer to shore." Then he walked forward in the canoe, stepping on the seats which broke under his weight, precipitating their occupants to the bottom of the canoe. The young men that were sitting in his way he threw back as if they had been small birds. Then the people were frightened, thinking that he would revenge himself on them for their meanness, but he jumped ashore where his uncle had gone and walked straight up the cliff.

The small sea lions in his way he killed simply by hitting them on the head and by stepping on them. He looked only at the big one that had killed his uncle, for he did not want it to get away. When he came to it, he seized it and tore it in two. A few of the sea lions escaped, but he killed most of them and loaded the canoe down. When he was doing this, however, his companions, who were very much ashamed of themselves and very much frightened, paddled away and left him. They said to the people in the town, "It was Black-Skin who pulled out the limb and twisted the tree."

Then the town people were troubled and said, "Why did you leave him out there?" Why didn't you bring him in?"

Meanwhile Black-Skin took out the sea-lion intestines and dried them. He had nothing with which to make a fire and did not know what to do.

So he lay down and went to sleep, his head covered with his blanket. Then he heard something that sounded like the beating of sticks. Suddenly he was awakened by hearing someone say, "I have come after you." He looked around, but could not see anything except a black duck which was swimming about in front of him. Then he saw the black duck coming toward him, he said, "I have seen you already." It answered, "I was sent after you. Get on my back, but keep your eyes closed tight."

So he closed his eyes and then the duck said, "Now open your eyes."

He opened them and saw that he was in a fine house. It was the house of the sea lions.

It is through this story that the natives to the present day say that everything is like a human being. Each has its "way of living." Why do fish die on coming out of the water? It is because they have a "way of living" of their own down there.

Meanwhile the elder wife of the chief who had helped Black-Skin, was mourning for her husband and nephew. Her husband's body was still on that island. The older people were also saying to the people who had left him, "Why did you do it? A powerful fellow like that is scarce. We want such a fellow among us." Then the widow begged the young men to go back to the island and bring home her nephew and her husband's body but the younger

wife did not care. Finally some other people did go. They found the body there, but Black-Skin was gone. Then they took the body aboard, loaded the canoe with the bodies of the sea lions, and went home. When they heard of it, the wise people all said that something was wrong. The shamans said that he was not dead and that they would see him again. They said that he was off with some wild animal. This troubled the village people a great deal. They felt very bad to think that he had kept himself so very lowly before the low-caste people, and they feared that he was suffering somewhere again when he might just as well have occupied his uncle's place.

Black-Skin, however, continued to stay among the sea lions. To him they looked like human beings, but he knew who they really were. In the same house there was a boy crying all the time with pain. The sea-lion people could not see what ailed him. Black-Skin, however, knew that he had a barbed spear point in his side.

Then one of the sea lions spoke up, saying, "That shaman there knows what is the matter. He is saying, 'How is it that they cannot see the bone in the side of that child?'"

Then Black-Skin said, "I am not a shaman, but I can take it out."

So he cut it out and blood and matter came out with it. Then they gave him warm water to wash the wound, and since the young sea lion belonged to high-caste people, they said to him, "Anything that you want among us you can have."

So he asked for a box that always hung overhead. This box was a kind of medicine to bring any kind of wind wanted. The sea-lions would push the box up and down on the water, calling the wind to it like a dog, whistling and saying, "Come to this box. Come to this box."

So the natives now whistle for the winds and call them.

Then the sea-lion people told Black-Skin to get into it, and as soon as he did so, he saw that he was far out to sea. He began to call for the wind that blows shoreward, and it carried him ashore. Then he got out of the box and hung it out on the limb of a tree in a sheltered place. He did this because the sea-lion people had told him to take very good care of that box and not go near anything unclean with it.

Black-Skin had landed only a short distance from his own town, so he walked home, and his uncle's wife was very glad to see him, feeling as if his uncle had come back. The dried sea-lion entrails he wore around his head. Then he asked all of the town people to come together, and the people who had been cruel to him were very much ashamed, for they thought that he had gone for good. He looked very fine. He eyed his enemies angrily but thought, "If I had not made myself so humble, they might have not treated me that way." So he overlooked it. Some of the people that had left him on the sea island were so frightened that they ran away into the woods. Some of the old people and the goodhearted people were glad that he was back, but he could see that others hung their heads as if they were ashamed. Then he said, "Some of you know how cruel you were to me. You are ashamed of yourselves. But I can see that some of you feel good because you felt kindly toward me. People who are cruel to poor folk will be ashamed of it afterward."

They had thought that he would avenge himself on them, but he talked to them in a kindly manner saying, "Do not make fun of poor people as you did when my uncle was alive."

After this Black-Skin was known no longer by his nickname but by his true name, Ka-ha-si.

(Note: Ka-ha-si appears on many totem poles, always in the act of rending a sea lion in two, and generally with a headdress made of braided sea-lion intestines.)

The Konakadet House Post at Klukwan, Alaska, according to the photograph and information furnished by William L. Paul, of Juneau, and his mother.

This post, one of a pair (the other pole, that of the Raven and Bullhead, is described more fully elsewhere with some information applying to both), stands about ten feet high. It illustrates the tale of Konakadet of the Tlingits, retold elsewhere in this book. Konakadet is here shown capturing the Killer-Whale from behind and under, while biting its tail. The human figures above are presumably duplications of the same witch-like mythical personality, unless the top is that of his mother-in-law.



Duk-toothl in the Whale House, at Klukwan



Konakadet pole, in southern Alaska

the same Whale House of the Tlingit, are the Double-headed Dragon and the Maiden (or the Grubworm and the Girl); the culture hero, the Raven, cursing the Bullhead; and Konakadet (another native replica of Samson) capturing whales. /

The name of Duqtutl means "Black," and the nickname for the same mythical character is Kahadzi (Vomit).

It stands about ten feet high, is beautifully painted, and is shown here tearing a sea lion asunder.

At the bottom, a human-like face presumably alludes to the story of the Grubworm and the Girl (shown on another post in the same house), because of the Double-headed Monster in front of her mouth.

Konakadet and the Grizzly in front of Shaik's house at Wrangell, as recorded by Edward L. Keithahn (62:47, with an illustration).

The Gonakadet and the supernatural Grizzly Bear are the original mortuaries that stood before Shakes' house. Duplicates now stand in exact spot. Gonakadet pole on left held ashes of father and mother of Chief Shakes VI. Ashes of his younger brother were deposited in Grizzly Bear pole to right. (See text for stories of these poles).

The Duk-toohl Mortuary Pole, as described by Edward L. Keithahn (62:122, 123, with an illustration).

Rear view of Duk-toohl mortuary pole, showing cavities for receiving ashes of the dead. Only high caste Tlingits received this type of burial.

Black-Skin at Wrangell, Alaska, as described by Dr. J. R. Swanton, in "The Tlingit Indians" (119: Fig. 433. P. 434).

Figure 111 illustrates the story of Black-Skin or Kahasi. The hero is represented in the act of tearing a sea lion in two.

A Small Konakadet Pole by a Sitka craftsman, now owned by Mr. Edward Keithahn, curator of the Museum at Juneau, Alaska.

About 5 feet 5 inches, now standing in front of Mr. Keithahn's house. Secured from Harry Watson, who had bought it from a Sitka Indian. Restored and repainted by the present owner, it represents: 1. Raven (at the top); and 2. Konakadet, the Strong Man (or the Samson) of Tlingit mythology, tearing a large fish or sea mammal asunder.

The Duqtutl Post (Klukwan), carved and painted post in the Whale House at Klukwan (Tlingit), Alaska, as recorded and photographed by William L. Paul and his mother, of Juneau.

The Duqtutl, whose story is retold elsewhere in this book, is the Samson of Northwestern mythology. His companions, at the other corners within



Konakadet in front of Shaiks house, at Wrangell



Konakadet pole on Shaiks Island,
at Wrangell



Small Konakadet pole owned by
Edward Keithahn, Juneau

STRONG MAN
HAIDA

The Mother-in-law Staie, Totem pole from the village of Kayang or Kayan (near Massett). The following information was recorded by T. A. Joyce in "A Totem Pole in the British Museum," (61:90-95, with illustrations).

Description. The figures, as interpreted by the author, are from the top down:

1. The Halibut fisherman sitting in his canoe, paddle in hand, a conical hat with three cylinders on top; the bill of a bird, perhaps the Raven, seems to hang from his shoulders, down his chest. Mr. Joyce interprets this figure as "Yetl disguised as a chief with the fat (tadnskillik) and staff (tuskexiékina)";

2. The Raven whose face is shown without his bill (after having lost it on the hook of the fisherman);

3. The Mother-in-law here called Staie, with headdress, conjuring with round rattles of a witch in her hands; the chevron-like design from her elbows upward over her head is meant for the trap made out of a split tree by her son-in-law to capture whales;

4. The Whale, one of the whales captured by the son-in-law in his trap; its split tail is turned upwards on its stomach and held in its hands;

5. The Son-in-law, here in human form, who has been humiliated by his mother-in-law the witch;

6. The Son-in-law here in the guise of a Whale or a giant Frog, whose strength becomes so great in the whale or whale garment that he can capture whales;

7. The Whale caught by the Son-in-law is being hauled ashore to the house-front of his mother-in-law.

The pole is described by Mr. Joyce as follows: it "is 39 feet high, carved from a cedar trunk, and hollowed out at the back to reduce the weight. Unfortunately, it is somewhat weathered, and consequently all traces of the paint, with which it was probably covered, have disappeared." (It was probably never painted. — M.B.).

Myths of interpretation (here as quoted by Mr. Joyce from information furnished by Dr. C. F. Newcombe, who had collected the pole. It is one of the several variants available of this myth.)

Explanation of the Fisherman and the Raven at the top:

Although the Raven (Yetl) had been originally the creator of all things, yet in after times he often had great trouble in procuring enough to satisfy his personal wants, and frequently had to go hungry. On one of these occasions, he imitated a friend of his, a famous wizard, who was able to swim in the sea like a fish. He dived into the sea, and swam deep



Su'san grave pole of the Haidas,
at Skidegate

down until he reached the neighbourhood of a large village, where the inhabitants were fishing for halibut. Keeping himself well out of sight, Yetl commenced helping himself to the fish on the hooks as fast as they were caught. The fishermen became troubled at the constant loss, not only of their fish, but also of their hooks, which were of the ordinary type used for halibut, and at last one of them determined to try a hook of another shape, consisting of a straight wooden shank with a bone barb on each side. . . . It was baited with a piece of the arm of a devil-fish, and let down with a stone sinker. Soon there came a strong bite; when the line was pulled, great resistance was experienced, and the line was dragged hither and thither for a long time. Several other fishermen joined in, and by their united efforts dragged the hook up as far as the bottom of the canoe but no farther, since Yetl (for it was he who had been caught) was holding tight to the sea bed with his claws. Suddenly the line slackened, and the men fell back. When they pulled it in, they found on the hook the upper part of the Raven's beak, but none of them could guess what it was. Later, when the fishermen were sitting together, Yetl, taking human shape, entered the house, and seated himself among the wise men, taking care however to conceal the lower part of his face. Trying to speak, all he could say was "Kaguskunt," a word which is mere gibberish. Pretending not to know what the piece of beak was, he induced the wise men to let him have it, and keeping firm hold of it, replaced it. Directly it fitted, he flew away through the smoke-hole in the roof, and went to another village. Later, however, he again became hungry, so he concealed his nose, which had not yet healed, and once more took the shape of a man; then, armed with the chief's staff (Tuskexiekina), he sat down among the head men, and ate with them, and proved his wisdom by his talk.

Joyce refers to two other records of the same myth, one in Boas (112a:50), ("Txamsem seems identified with the Raven"); the other in Niblack's —78:323. Here the Raven is called *Hooyeh* and the Fisherman *Hooskana*.

Explanation of the other figures on the pole, from the Raven down:

Long ago, there lived in a large town a young man who was always gambling at Sin (the game played with a number of short sticks described by Niblack — 78:343). He soon lost all his property, and thought to improve his position by marrying the daughter of a wealthy chief. In this project he was successful, but as he continued to gamble he soon became as poor as before.

One night, coming home very hungry, he took up a piece of dried halibut and commenced tearing pieces off with his teeth. This made a peculiar ripping sound, and his wife's mother, who was not fond of him, put him to shame before the whole house by saying that he was splitting himself by his greediness, just as men split a piece of wood with a wedge when making canoe thwarts. The man choked with vexation, stopped eating, and nearly wept. Early next morning he went off into the forest alone and ate "devil's club" stems just as the Haida eat fireweed. After a prolonged course of this diet, he developed supernatural powers like a Shaman or S'haga. One night he went down to the beach and began to wish that a whale might come ashore, and soon this happened at the very place where he was sitting. He then rose up, cut a hole in the whale and got inside. The whale swam away and stranded opposite the centre of the town.

In the meantime, while this was happening, his wife's mother, who was herself a powerful Shaman, had a dream in which she saw a fine whale come ashore right opposite the village. In the morning she put on her Shaman's attire, took her magic rattles (*Klinugn*). She then called all her neighbours together, told them of her dream, and they all drank warm seawater. They then went to the beach and found the whale; but when they were about to divide it amongst them, the woman said, "Do not cut it up yet, we must first dance upon it." This they did, the woman using her rattles, the others drumming with sticks, and all singing. When the dance was over they cut the whale, just, as it happened, over the part where the man lay hid. He stood up so that all saw him, and his wife's mother was so ashamed that she cried. The others were glad and kept the story, which has been handed down to this day.

The interpretation of the two figures at the top was given somewhat differently by "Mr. Keen" as quoted by Joyce (p. 93), concerning two similar figures on a model totem pole collected at Massett. It runs as follows:

The top figure represents NEngKilstlas,¹ a mythical hero of the Haida, and nephew of a chief of the same name, who was the creator of all things. This young man could assume

¹ For legend of NEngKilstlas, see Boas. *Indianische Sagen von der Nord-Pacifischen Kuste Amerikas* p. 306.

any shape he liked, but his favourite form was that of the raven (hence the raven's head and wings), but he sometimes made himself appear as an old man with conjurer's hat and staff as here represented.

The fifth figure on the pole is that of a young man, name unknown, who married and lived with his wife's parents. One day his mother-in-law (the third figure, with labret, *Staiie*, and puffin-beak rattles) heard him eating dried salmon in bed and reproached him with laziness. He was much irritated by her reproaches, and next day took a stone adze, went to the shore of a lake in the woods, and cut down a red cedar so that it fell into the lake. He then returned to the village, caught one of a group of children and killed it. Coming back to the lake, he made a rope of cedar bark and tied it to the body of the child. Then he split open the head of the tree which overhung the lake and wedged it, thus constructing a large fork, between the prongs of which he dropped the body of the child. Before long this human bait was taken by a huge mouse; this he drew up, and then knocked out the wedge so that the fork closed upon his prey and killed it.

After skinning it, he dressed himself in the hide and went out into the sea hunting for whales, several of which he caught and killed.

Meanwhile his mother-in-law had become a conjurer, and one day she saw her son-in-law in his mouse shape, swimming ashore with a whale which he had caught. The people of the village were alarmed, but the woman said she knew the animal since she was a conjurer.

When the mouse came to land, out walked the man, and confronted his mother-in-law. In this way her false pretensions were exposed, and she was so overwhelmed with shame that she died.

The figure at the base of the pole represents the mouse; the second and fourth figures are the whales caught by the young man in the mouse's skin.

With that part of the legend which deals with the capture of the mouse, it is interesting to compare the story of the poor little boy, *Masemstiontse'etsku*, related by Boas. (112a:146 foll.) Here the hero is chased by a huge frog which comes out of the lake, and which he ultimately catches in a trap made of a tree split and wedged in the same fashion as that mentioned above. He then puts on the frog's skin, and catches fish in the lake, and later fish and whales in the sea. A similar trap is also mentioned in the story of *Ts'ak* (*ib.* p. 133).

Other information (furnished by Mr. Joyce)

This pole was acquired in 1898 by Rev. J. H. Keen, missionary at Massett, who furnished a very finely made and complete model of an Indian house with its totem pole carved and painted in approved fashion by a native workman. With the model, Mr. Keen also sent the story supposed to be represented by the figures on the pole. By a peculiar coincidence, the pole of this model is an exact facsimile of the more recently acquired and full-size pole from *Kayang*, with the exception of one small particular at the base. The difference is this. At the base of the large pole is the figure of an animal, of whose identity more anon, squatting on his haunches and holding in his mouth the tail of a whale, the head of which rests upon his two hind feet. In the model pole, immediately under the chin of this animal and cutting into his lower lip, is a circular hole forming the entrance to the house; there is no trace of a tail in his mouth, and between his hind feet appears the head of some small animal, somewhat similar to that of the frog (*Tlamkoston*).

Dr. Newcombe recorded, in 1903, one of the "legends" quoted above concerning this pole from "Chief Weah of Massett, through the medium of the Chinook language" (Chinook jargon).

An old photograph of this pole standing in front of a large abandoned potlatch house was found in the albums of the National Museum of Canada, with the mention that it is of "Masset Inlet, Indian Village" (Anthropological Division: VII. B. 65). Another pole, presumably older, is shown to have fallen nearly to the ground in front of the other pole. A tall flag pole stands to the right.

Strong-Man Su'san, given in brief by J. R. Swanton (97: 226).

A youth's mother-in-law said something that displeased him. So he went to a small lake behing the town of Gwaisku'n and caught a sea grizzly bear, which he skinned. Every morning after that he went out to sea in this skin, caught a fish or some sea-animal, and left it where his mother-in-law could find it. After a while she began to act as a shaman, and prophesied that her power would show itself on the following morning. Then all waited for it on the beach; but when the sea-bear had come to shore, the shaman's son-in-law walked out of it, and he died of shame.

Edensaw's Su'san at Kyusta (Haida), with its pole and house posts, described by J. R. Swanton (97: 125, 126. Pl. IV).

A model of a house at Kyusta belonging to Edensaw, chief of the Stastas family, the uncle and predecessor of the carver.

It was named Myth-House, and was originally intended for Edensaw's son when he should grow up. Later the builder changed his mind. At the time of its construction there was a great potlatch, to which all the Massett, West Coast, Skidegate, and Kaigani Haida were invited. After all were in, the chief had a big canoe brought up and broken over the fire for kindling wood.

All the figures on the main house-pole of this house, except the three watchmen at the top, illustrate the following story:—

There was once a youth at Gwais-kun, a town belonging to the Stastas, who lay in bed so many days, instead of going to work, that his mother-in-law made a remark which caused him to feel ashamed. Then he got up and went into the woods. In a lake back in the forest lived a lake-monster (*su'san*) similar to the Wasko, which used to go after black whales every night and bring them ashore. Assisted by Bird-in-the-Air, the hero split a cedar-tree in halves, fastened the two together at their ends, spread them apart at the centre by means of a cross-piece and laid them in the water just over where the *Su'san* lived. For bait he fastened two children to a rope attached to the end of a pole, and dropped them between. When the *Su'san* came up, the hero knocked out the cross-piece and caught it. After that he put on the *Su'san* skin and hunted fish of various sorts, which he left in front of his mother-in-law's house. Finding these things left there every morning, the woman persuaded herself that she was a shaman. When he finally showed himself, she was so overcome by shame that she died.

At the bottom of the pole is a black whale representing those which the *Su'san*, next figure, used to catch. Above the *Su'san* comes the mother-in-law of the hero; and above her, Bird-in-the-Air. Next is shown where the *Su'san*, or the man wearing its skin, caught a whale; and finally come the children that were used as bait.

Only the greatest chiefs are said to have had three watchmen at the top of their house-poles like this.

The figures on the corner posts of this house are the following, from bottom to top. The first two are, in order, a bull-head and a grizzly bear, the second of which is probably intended as a crest. The succeeding figures illustrate a favorite episode in the Raven story. This is where Raven, in the form



Su'san pole, at Skidegate



Kayang totem pole, Massett



Qagwaai, the Strong-Man, at Skedans

of a halibut, tried to steal bait from the hooks of Halibut-fisherman. Finally he was caught, pulled to the surface, and put over a fire. Then the skin began to shrink, and caused him so much pain that he thought, "I wish that every one would run over to one end of the town!" So all left him except the small boy who was watching him, whereupon Raven came out and flew away. In the design the beak is represented coming out from the halibut's side. In another attempt upon the fisherman's hooks,—which some say was made after the above, some before, — Raven's beak was pulled off, and Raven came back to the town holding his hand over his nose to conceal the deficiency. This has been represented in the final group.

The Myth of Qagwaai, the Six-fin-back Whale of the Haidas of Moresby Island, as told, in 1947, by Luke Watson, a wood carver of Skidegate, Queen Charlotte Islands.

Dzilaquns, the great lady, was living at the head of Cumshewa Lake with her small son. When he went out by himself one day, the little boy made a bow and arrows for his kit, and he tried to shoot small birds. Then he went home and said, "Mother, I have heard somebody calling me. I can give help

on the south side of this island. Don't you think I should go and see what it is about?" His mother answered, "Don't do that, son! You might go down there and never come back."

Next day the little boy went out again with his bow and arrows, after having said to his mother "Help is badly needed down there, I am going." He walked down to Skata Point when the tide was low, and as he sat under a tree, he looked out to sea. An eagle flew in front of him, landed on the beach, picked up something out of the lagoon, left it flopping on the beach, and flew away.

The boy looked at the fish which the eagle had dropped. It was flounder-like, a small halibut. Something grew to one side of the flounder's mouth, and inside the body he could see a gold strip. He shot an arrow at the fish, killed it, took it up the beach, and sat once more under the tree. Then he decided to skin the flounder, from the head down the body. A voice from the woods bade him, "Don't do that!" He looked around, but could see nobody. After a while, he tried to skin the fish, but this time from the tail up. He skinned it, without the voice interfering. When the skin had dried in the sun, he folded it and put it under his arm.

Then an idea occurred to him. He stretched the skin, made himself a garment of it, and put it on. Thus clad, he could swim like a flounder under the water, and he travelled in the direction of Cape St. James, at the southern end of the islands. It was from there that the voice had come, calling for help. Behind Ninstints Island was a large village from which a woman was crying for help. The boy approached her through the bush, without showing himself. He realized that those people were starving to death. Some Ninstints men embarked in a canoe and went some distance to get mussels. After having dug some up on a beach, they were returning when they found themselves pursued by six Finbacks (whales). Before they reached safety, they were overtaken by the Finbacks, devoured, and chewed up. That is why the voice of the woman again called for help. In a cradle she held a child, a boy, who was screaming from hunger. There was nothing to give it. The little boy with a bow and arrows followed them into the house, where only a few inmates were left. While the mother, distracted, was crying, the boy threw away the child, and placed himself in the cradle in its place. The mother mistook him for her own child, and he grew very quickly.

As the Ninstints were still starving, the boy from abroad decided to go to the rocks where the others had looked for shellfish. With his (supposed) mother and father, carrying his bow and arrows, he went to the beach. While they were gathering mussels, he took his bow and arrows, and with a blunt arrow he hit the side of a dug-out canoe like a drum, and cried out, "Qagwaay, Qagwaay!" twelve times. His mother looked down at him, and shook her head to him, "Don't say that!" clapping her hands each time. Both his father and mother, much excited, took the boy along and jumped into the canoe. They pulled away from the rocks, rowing backwards. When they turned their head they saw the real Qagwaay swimming after them, mouth wide open towards the rear of the canoe. The boy took an arrow and, when the sea monster came close enough, he poked at its head. It dived down, and they thought they had escaped . . . But the Qawgay reappeared and chased them. Once more it opened its large mouth, ready to gulp them down, canoe and all. The boy jumped into the mouth, and disappeared with the monster

into the deep. Inside, he grasped his bow and arrows, wished for his power, and managed to kill the monster by an arrow from within.

Cast up on a fine beach, Qagwaay came out of the Whale, skinned it, and dried the skin in the sun. Then he put it on himself, and in this way tried to swim out to sea. Now he possessed the same power as the monster and could go long distances.

From here he travelled southward, as far as Tasu Inlet. There he heard a voice coming from the shore: "Come in, and stay with me, to-night!" He went in with his fish skin on. There stood a big house, the door of which was opened. He walked in. The monster of the house gave him a large box to lay his head on. As soon as his head touched it, the box burst up. At this the host, becoming angry, cried out, "Stone Door, rock yourself, and Smoke Hole, toss yourself!" At once the house closed fast and locked itself. Qagwaay was entrapped, there to be killed while in the form of the Whale. He looked around, and wondered how to save himself. By and by he perceived a narrow opening at the bottom of the Stone Door. Then he remembered the halibut skin, very small, which he still had with him. He put it on, thus changing from a large and bulky whale to a small, flat halibut. No sooner was he transformed than he introduced his thin halibut tail in the crack under the Stone Door and gave it a big push. He smashed it to bits. Salt water started to rush in, enabling him to swim out.

From there he travelled past Tasu, went around the Island to the west side, and he arrived at Chathl Inlet, now with his Qagwaay skin on. He intended to swim into the Inlet, but the huge Crab Qostan stood at the entrance of Canoe Pass (at the west end of Skidegate Channel). He did not know how to pass it by. The Crab, aware of his approach, had already spread its long legs to capture him. He tried to rush through, but was caught fast. He could not move, let alone pull himself away. The Qostan was squeezing him to death, for he was already at the end of his powers. Just in time he remembered his halibut skin, and put it on while in the embrace of the monster. Reduced to a small size, he slipped between the long legs of the Crab and escaped, leaving the large whale skin in the trap.

After this narrow escape he swam under his halibut disguise to Skidegate. From here, with his halibut skin still on, he went to Lone-Hill Point or Flagstaff Point (*darhua*). There once more he heard voices ashore. The large Bullhead (*goat*) lay there in wait for him, his horns sticking out. "Don't come near me," he cried out challengingly, "or I'll fix you!" But with only his halibut skin on, he thought it best for the night to strike out for the deep sea.

Eventually he circled around, entered the bay of Skedans (*hlgai*), came ashore, took his halibut skin off, and hung it to dry on the limb of a tree. Then he sat down on a drift log. The rays of the sun warmed his back and he felt sleepy. Suddenly a sharp noise startled him. It was the Eagle stealing the precious skin from him. He tried to give chase to the bird, calling on the white Weasel for help as the Eagle remained pretty close to the ground. But the Weasel could do nothing, and Qagwaai felt badly about his loss. Wishing again, he called Tatlaqadelaw, a bird. Tatlaq . . . flew after the Eagle, took the halibut skin away, donned it, and went after the Eagle to attach it. But a voice came from the woods below: "Don't touch the Eagle! Your grandfather lent you this skin. Now it is being taken away from you."

So Qagwaay ended the chase and went back, a human as before, to his mother Dzilaquns. She gave him a new name: Crystal-Ribs (*gudangrhywat*).

This story is carved on totem poles.

Luke Watson, my informant, saw the Jelly-fish (*kyance*) totem pole, which illustrated an episode in this myth. It stood on Kongate Island on the east side of Ninstints at Anthony Island (at the southern end of Moresby Island). He had heard more parts of it but had forgotten them. At one point (omitted here) appeared Person-of-the-Water (*gitkun'aks*) — in Tsimsyan), a sleepy character with two little fellows, his nephews on each side of his face, ready to open his eyes for him, whenever there was food for him to eat.

Watson had a miniature pole, still unfinished in 1947, which he was carving to represent the Crab encounter of Qagwaay. At the bottom of this miniature is the Bear with a bird from the creek (called *kandeltsutsige*) in its mouth; above is the Kyange (Jelly-fish).

The Young Outcast, the Halibut Skin, the Killer-Whale, and the Monster Crab (in two versions, both in abbreviated form, in 1947, by "Captain" Andrew Brown, an Eagle clansman of the Eagles at Massett).

There used to be an Indian village, in Brown's camp. There lived a tribe of Indians, who ousted a boy and his granny from their tribe, for committing what his people considered treason.

The boy used to play in the water day after day. One day, an eagle dropped a small halibut by the boy. When the boy brought the halibut home, the granny was much pleased, but when she tried to cut the head off, the surrounding bushes began to chant, "Don't do it, don't do it!" When she tried to split it, the same thing happened. She finally started to split it from the tail, and the surrounding bushes showed their approval by their silence.

When the skin was dry, the reef outside Dawson Harbour, which was the chief of the district, came to him and asked him to do it, saying, "Go to Naden Harbour and destroy the monster crab that blocks the entrance to the harbour."

The boy immediately obeyed. He approached the monster in the shallow waters from its rear, bit it to pieces, and spewed its pieces into the harbour. To-day those pieces have been transformed into the crabs from which the Haida Indians still make a living, as prophesied by the chief Rock of Dawson Harbour.

The figure on the totem pole represents the Killer-Whales, which were once invited to a feast given by the Naden Harbour chief. The stories go on to say that the Killer-Whales made fun of the chief, and, in his anger, he ordered the crab monster to destroy all the Killer-Whales, except those that managed to escape over the narrow strip that forms a spit at the entrance.

When the boy returned from destroying the monster, he was playing on the beach. Then the eagle swooped down, and retrieved the halibut, saying, "Your grandfather only loaned you the halibut".