THE SKEEL OR LANEMRAIT CREST

The Taden Skeel of the Haidas (three human figures with tall hats) of the Haidas — their origin, according to James Deans (36:21).

On top of a number of columns is an image with a tall hat marked off into three or four divisions; on others, are two or three images with hats. The single one with the taden skeel, or long hat, is a chief or a person of two or three degrees standing, as is shown by his hat. When there are three images with taden skeel, this, in some instances, shows that the chief who built this house was succeeded by one or two brothers, as the case might be. According to the Hidery legends, these three images were adopted by an old chief, Skidegat, from a very old story, which runs thus: Long ago, Ne-kilst-lass, the raven god, turned himself into a beautiful woman and three men fell in love with her. The three men have been used by the descendants of the old chief who adopted them.

The Lanemrait of the Tsimsyans, Haidas, and Tlingits, as explained by Herbert Wallace, head-chief of the Gitsees tribe of the Coast Tsimsyans; William Beynon acting as interpreter, in 1915.

The Lanemrait crest belonged with varied number of cylinders to several high families of the Tsimsyans, for instance, Neeshlkemik (Gillodzar tribe), and Tseebasæ (Gitrhahla), both of the Gispewudwade phratry, who were at odds among themselves as to who had a right to it. They actually used it, in the detached form of ten cylinders woven out of split roots of spruce trees and in the form of hats with cylinders on their top called Lanemrait. These ceremonial hats bore the name of Big-Lanemrait (*wee'nakemrait*). Other families used somewhat smaller Lanemraits (with fewer cylinders) of their own, for instance, the "royal" Wolf family of Neeslaranows, whose hat displayed eight cylinders under the other name of Merely-Lanemrait (*ksahlanemrait*). Skagwait (Ginarhangeek), head-chief of the Gitandaw tribe, had his Lanemrait of five cylinders on top of his Sitting-Beaver chewing a maple branch, as seen on his monument at Port Simpson. Its name was Remnants-of-Maple (*kanem-kawrhs*). Head-chief Legyarh, head of the Gisparhlawts, claimed the same Lanemrait as Skagwait and displayed it in a *yœok* feast. Each chief had different explanations to justify his right to his own Lanemrait.

The Haidas, who used this crest even more extensively than the Tsimsyans, called it *skil.*

RIDICULE OR DISCREDIT POLES

HAIDA

The Imitation Copper-Money, 1832, on the pole of Jefferson at Skidegate, Queen Charlotte Islands, a few decades after 1832.

James Deans has the following story to tell about this odd totem pole, quite probably one of the earliest of the Haida village of Skidegate (36:1, 2,).

About 1832, a number of whaling ships used to winter, while on the North Pacific, at Skidegat. These whalers came chiefly from Boston or Maine. On one of these ships was a certain Captain Jefferson, who for some reason made up his mind to leave the sea and stay on shore amongst the Hidery. He seems to have had considerable means. On shore he made his home with a family, where he lived a number of years, and died in the latter thirties at the Indian's house, leaving all his money and effects to his host. According to the social laws of the Hidery, when anyone died, leaving his or her property to another, the one who inherited it had also to take the name of the donor. So this family took the name of Jefferson, by which they have been known ever since. Having thus acquired so much additional property, they became the wealthiest family in the village, excepting the chief. This induced him to build a new house with totem pole, showing higher social standing in the tribe. In order to find something to carve on his pole, he adopted a part of the coat of arms of the chief,

which he thought he had a right to, his wife being the chief's sister. As soon as the chief knew Jefferson's intentions, he told him that on no account would he allow his crest to be quartered. "Skidegat (the chief) won't allow me to take part of his crest, so I will have one of my own made and show him who is richest and at the same time leave no bare space like the poorer people." So when his pole was set up, it had three rows of the tau or copper cross money, one in front and one on each side, in addition to his family crests. When the chief died, Jefferson took down his imitation copper money pole, and in its place put up another with the late chief's coat of arms quartered, including the story connected with it.

The Police Magistrate (1870). The Haida pole at Skidegate belonging to Gathlans, representing the police magistrate of Victoria, and George Smith, clerk of the same town. Recorded by James Deans (36:16, 17).

On the tops of the two front corner posts, in a house belonging to one of the better class, whose name was Gathlans, in the above-mentioned village of Skidegat, a number of years ago, were two images, which could easily be recognized as other than Hidery. On the left of the observer, was one with a long hat and frock coat. The other, on the right, had on a cap with a peak in front. The first represented the police magistrate of this city, Victoria; the other represented George Smith, Clerk of the city. In or about the summer of 1870, this Gathlans left Skidegat, in order to have a few months sojourn in Victoria. While in Victoria, one day he got jolly drunk and in good fighting trim; the noise he made was such that it soon brought along the police, who quickly had him locked up. Next day, feeling sadly out of repair, he was up before the above-mentioned magistrate, Judge Pemberton, charged with being drunk and disorderly. After convition, he was fined $50, or six months imprisonment. Not having the money to pay his fine, he was locked up; after a few days, his friends, who had raised the money, came and paid his fine, which gave him his liberty. For the loss of so much money and the insult of his dignity, by being in prison, he was determined to have his revenge, and this is how he thought he had it. Smarting under his supposed insult, he took the earliest opportunity to get home, where he lost no time in setting a carver to make a couple of effigies of the judge and his clerk, which, when finished, were placed on his house-top, in hopes that every passer-by would jeer and mock the originals through their representations. By doing so he fancied he had his revenge. A few years afterwards I visited the village, and while there I saw the images and heard their story. When I returned to Victoria, I gave a short account of it in one of the local newspapers. Some time after, I met the Judge, who inquired if the story was true; when I told him it was, he thought it a capital joke.

The Debtor with his Head Down, (Deans) (36:21, 22).

The Hidery told me that their plan for collecting their just debts when due, was to ask for payment three times, and if still unpaid after that, the debtor was never again dunned. Although he was not again asked for payment, other means were employed for its recovery, as follows: seeing that nothing could be done by dunning, the creditor had a gayring erected in front of his house, on which was carved an image of the debtor with his head down, while on the column beside the image, in order the better to show who the debtor was, one or all of his crests were carved. The Hidery tell me that this scheme never failed; often, when the debtor saw what was being done, he came and paid all in order to save himself from the disgrace. All of the Indians are very proud and quickly resent an insult.

The Kidnapper. The Tlingit totem pole of the trader who had kidnapped two native children, formerly standing (about 1885) at the Kaigani (Haida) village at Skowl Bay, Prince of Wales Island, Alaska. Described by A. P. Niblack (78:326, 327. Pl. LV).

The top group represents the head of a European, with whitened face and long, black whiskers, flanked on either side by two figures representing children in sitting posture, wearing tall hats. These hats in Kaigani are called *Hat cachanda*, and each have four *skil*. The group represents the following legend, either commemorating an actual occurrence or else being a nursery tale originally invented to frighten refractory children, becoming in time, through repetition and misconception a veritable tradition. Many years ago the wife of a chief went out in a small fishing canoe, with her two children, near the summer camp to get the pine boughs, on which salmon spawn is collected. She drew up her canoe on the beach, and warned the children not to wander off. On her return they had disappeared. She called to them, and they answered her from the woods with voices of crows. Always when she sought them, two crows mocked her from the trees. The children never returned, and it was said that the white traders had kidnapped them and carried them off in their ship.

The face with the beard represents the trader, and the two figures, the kidnapped children. The figure next to the top, with the instrument in his claws across his breast, represents the crane (*he ko*), and the legend, or rather an incident in a legend, is roughly as follows: The crane was formerly an expert with tools, but they were stolen from him by a mischievous character (*T'skan-ahl*), and ever since he has been bewailing his fate. The cry which the crane now utters is, "I want my tools." The next figure below is *hoots*, the bear, holding between his paws the butterfly. At the creation, when the great [Yaihl], the benefactor of man, was looking for fair land for man to occupy, the butterfly hovered over his head as he flew. When he came to the country now occupied by the Haida, the butterfly pointed with his proboscis to the good lands, and said: "Where the bear is there are salmon, herbs, and good living." So that is how the Haida came to the Queen Charlotte Islands, and why bears are so abundant. This is similar to the story told Judge Swan by Edniso (Edensu] of Masset, British Columbia. The next figure is the giant spider sucking the blood and killing a man. One of the numerous adventures of *T'skan-ahl* was to kill the giant spider, which was such a mortal enemy to man. *T'skan-ahl* overcame the spider and threw him into the fire, but instead of burning he shrivelled up and escaped as a mosquito, carrying away with him a small coal of fire in his proboscis. Now instead of killing men he can only suck a little blood, but in revenge he leaves a coal of fire in the bite. My informant, a Kaigani, stated that it would take three days to relate all the adventures of *T'skan'ahl*. The lowest figure is *Koone*, the whole representing the totem of the owner of the column.

RIDICULE OR DISCREDIT POLES

TLINGIT

The Three Frogs of Shaiks Island. The ridicule pole on Chief Shaiks' Island, at Wrangell (Tlingit), Alaska, according to Edward L. Keithahn (62:49).

The best example of a Tlingit ridicule pole extant is the one recently reconstructed at Wrangell on Chief Shakes' Island. It consists of a T-shaped roost on which are perched three huge frogs. These are said to represent three Kiksadi women (whose totem is the Frog) who allegedly cohabited with three of Chief Shakes' slaves. After a time Shakes presented the Kiksadi chief with a bill for the keep of the three women who were living in his household. The Kiksadi chief would not pay, however, holding that the women had disgraced themselves by marrying beneath their station and had been ejected from the tribe, hence he was not responsible for them. Shakes was not satisfied, so, according to custom, he had the ridicule pole carved with the idea of forcing payment. Whether or not the debt was ever recognized and paid is unknown to-day. But when the pole was reconstructed from early drawings there was considerable feeling aroused and threats were made to destroy the carving before it could be erected. In other words, some of the natives took the attitude that a "note" once paid had been re-written and payment was again being demanded.

The Murderer. A Ridicule pole at Kake (Tlingit) to show contempt for a Russian murderer, mentioned by Edward L. Keithahn (62:49, 50).

Kake village had a ridicule pole erected to show contempt for a Russian that had killed one of the tribesmen. The Russian was carved realistically at the top of the pole, and beneath it was a raven attacking a halibut. The halibut represents the white man and the two figures no doubt conveyed the threat (or promise) that the deed would be avenged.

The Robber Woodpecker. A Ridicule totem pole at Sitka (Tlingit) to shame a white trader, mentioned by Edward L. Keithahn (62:49).

It is said that at Sitka a ridicule pole was once erected to shame a white trader who had been "adopted" into the Raven phratry with considerable ceremony and had been given presents. According to custom he should have given a potlatch in due time, repaying his benefactors with interest. Failing in this, a pole was constructed, at the top of which was the white man in the form of a raven, and beneath this was the robber woodpecker angrily protesting that the white man was a bigger thief than he was.

THE WHITE MAN

TLINGIT

The Abraham Lincoln Poles of the Tlingits at Tongas (Eifert); the Tongas pole was seen and photographed by the author at the abandoned village of Tongas, in 1927.

Abraham Lincoln totem pole, at Tongas

The following information is found in an article by Virginia S. Eifert (Editor, Illinois State Museum), in *Natural History*, Feb. 1947: "Lincoln on a Totem Pole — the strange story of how the Tlingit Indians honoured the man who freed the slaves."

A 50-foot pole, illustrated: "Abraham Lincoln as commemorated by the Raven clan, on his high perch on a small Alaskan Island."

This story goes back to 1867. It is a story of rivalry and feud between the Ravens and the Eagles. The Eagles were aggressive; they had grown rich in the Indian slave trade. When the news of the freedom of the slaves in

Abraham Lincoln carving being removed by U.S. Forestry Service

Captain Swanson's Tlingit wife, at Ketchikan

the United States was spread to Alaska by a U.S. Revenue cutter, the Ravens decided to make the best of it, to the detriment of their rivals the Eagles. They erected at the time more than one memorial in honour of Lincoln, and preserved the tradition within the clan. No one knows (according to Virginia S. Eifert) what happened to the original Lincoln pole. Three of the old Lincoln totems are still known to exist, one at the Museum at Juneau, one at Saxman, and one, in the Illinois State Museum, shown in the *Natural History* articles.

(M.B.) The Lincoln figure at the top of the Tongas pole was recently removed to the Museum at Juneau, and photographed here by the author. It is about 5 feet 6 inches high. The label describing it is: "The Lincoln totem pole was erected at Tongas village about 1870 by Tlingit Indians of the Raven phratry. Abraham Lincoln, whose emancipation proclamation produced the 13th Amendment abolishing slavery, was thus honored by Indians who, in 1867, came under its provisions and were freed from slavery suffered at the hands of other aggressive tribes. The figure of Lincoln was cut from its 50-foot pedestal and presented to the Museum by the U.S. Forestry Service, under whose direction a duplicate of the original was erected at Saxman in 1940."

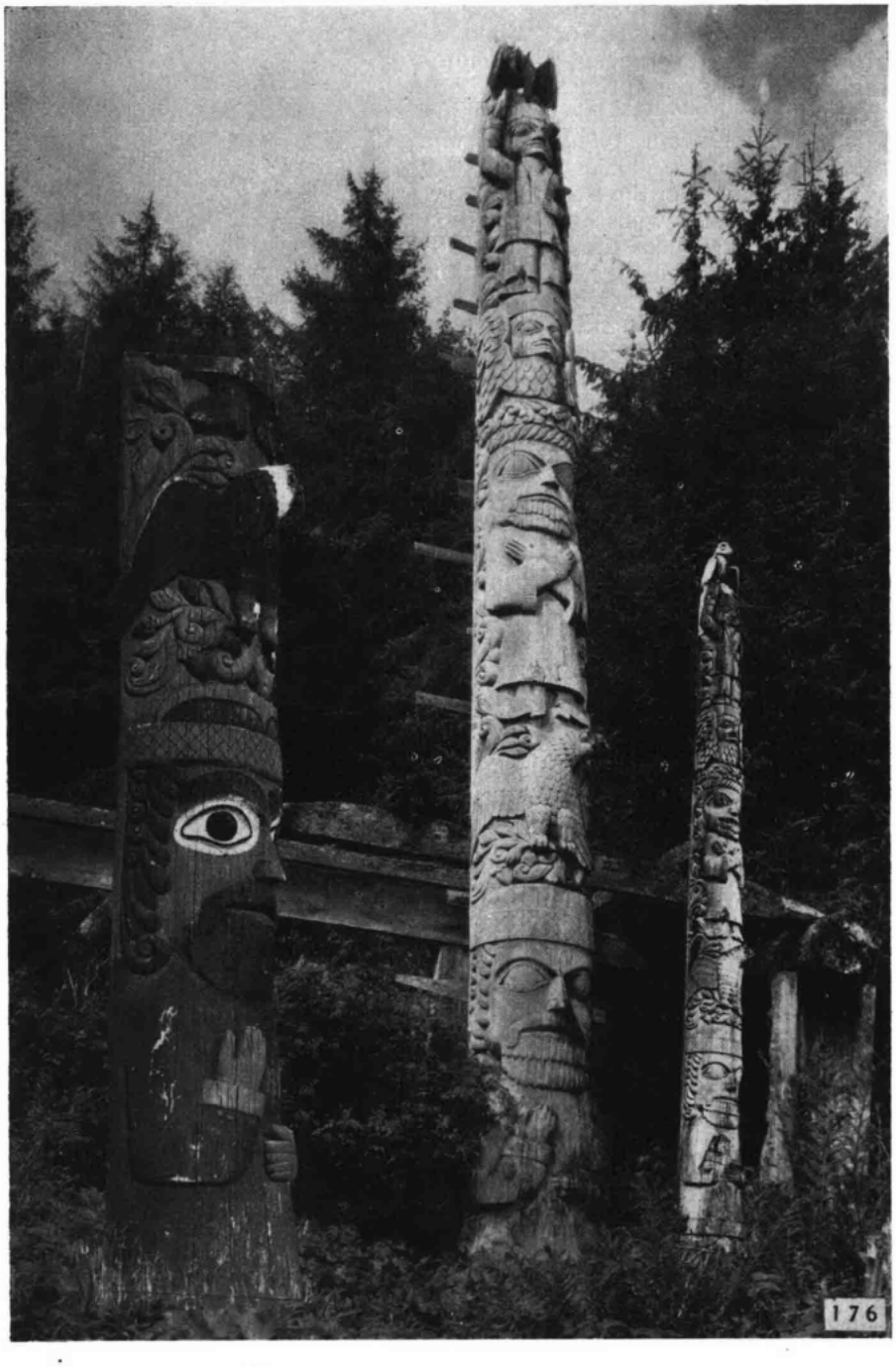
Chief Skoolka's Gratitude, at the Haida village of Howkan, Prince of Wales Island, Southern Alaska, as reported by Lieut. George T. Emmons (American Anthropologist, Jan.–March, 1914, p. 66, 67. figure 7).

In the Haida village of Howkan, on Prince of Wales island, is still preserved the totem pole of Chief Skoolka, upon which is represented the uniformed figure, with a long beard, of a military official of Sitka who had extended some kindness to a former member of this family (figure 7). The beard and uniform identify the white man and the official. No attempt at a likeness could have been attempted, as the artist, who lived at a later period, could hardly have seen his subject.

Chief Skowl's Russian Priests, at the Kasa-an village of the Haidas, Prince of Wales Island, Alaska, as represented by A. P. Niblack, (78:327, 378).

Totem poles of Chief Skoolka, a Kaigani-Haida

There are two classes of poles: (1), commemorative proper, and (2), mortuary. It has been explained, in the description of Fig. 292, that the upper group of figures commemorates a real or supposed incident in the kidnapping of two Indian children by the white traders. It is the generally accepted opinion that these columns are in no sense historical, but purely ancestral or totemic. This claim is entirely too sweeping. Fig. 293 shows the details of a column erected in front of the feast house of the famous Kaigani Chief Skowl at Kasa-an. This is in the rear of the living house, on the back street, so to speak. In front of the latter is his totemic column, a tall, slender, finely carved one, surmounted by Skowl's crest, the eagle. Just below it is carved figure of a [white man, perhaps a priest] man with right hand uplifted and index finger pointing to the sky. It signifies that in the heavens God dwells — the God of the white man. Below this is the representation of an angel as conceived by the



The totem pole of Chief Skowl, at Kasaan

Indians from the description of the whites, and then comes a large figure intended to picture a Russian missionary with hands piously folded across the breast. This group of the figure with uplifted hand, the angel, and the missionary, commemorates the failure of the Russian priests to convert Skowl's people to their faith, and was erected in ridicule and derision of the religion of the white man. Below this group is a magnificent carving of a spread eagle, and at the bottom of the column a figure intended to represent one of the early traders on the coast. Skowl was always an enemy to the missionary and resisted their encroachments to the last, being remarkable for his wealth, obesity, and intemperate habits. He weighed at the time of his death, in the winter of 1882-83, considerably over 300 pounds. As a young man, his physical prowess, wealth, and family influence, made his tyrannical rule at Kasa-an one long to be remembered, as he did much to keep his people to the old faith and to preserve amongst them the manners and customs of his forefathers.

Chief Skowl's Totem Pole, according to Edward L. Keithahn (62: 148, 149).

The Chief Skowl totem pole which so plainly shows European influence, was erected by the great Haida chief, Skowl, at Kasaan in the early 80's and has since been removed to Ketchikan's city park. It was ordered carved to commemorate the baptism of the chief and his family in the Greco-Russian Church at New Archangel (Sitka). The unusual art style is derived from that on cards picturing saints, cherubs, and so forth, given to Skowl by the Russian bishop.

The eagle surmounting the pole is Chief Skowl's totem. Beneath it is the figure of a Russian saint. The third figure, apparently emerging from the clouds, is the face of the Archangel Michael, and beneath it the Russian bishop. Next comes another eagle, beneath which is the figure of Skowl's son-in-law, Vincent Baranovich, an Austrian by birth, hailing from Trieste, Dalmatia. Baranovich was an English subject, and, together with Skowl, held in contempt the "Yankee Government"; so it is unlikely the lower eagle represents the United States which had recently purchased Alaska.

Skowl's daughter, Mrs. Vincent Baranovich, largely financed the carving, and it was no doubt for her sake that her husband's figure was included. He died in 1879, and Skowl in the winter of 1882–83.

The Greek Orthodox Church Certificate at Kasa-an (Haida), southern Alaska, reported on by William Beynon, of Port Simpson, in 1927.

A Kasa-an pole with scroll fretwork was said by an old Indian woman to have been carved by her uncle, who wanted to display on it a Greek Orthodox church certificate in his possession, of which he was inordinately proud. Beynon's informant still possessed this certificate. The pole since has disappeared.

Captain Swanson's Tlingit Wife, now standing in the park at Ketchikan, recorded in 1939.

A totem pole, now in the park at Ketchikan, Alaska, is supposed to stand for Captain Cook, who made landfalls on the North Pacific Coast in 1778–1779. Other poles in the neighbourhood are surmounted by carvings representing white men in overcoats, top hats, and long trousers, one of these being a sailor at a steering wheel. Native chiefs in paraphernalia and conical hats, standing or sitting on Haida chests, are numerous particularly among the Tlingits.

The native memorial to Captain Cook challenges attention only because of its historical portent, for in itself it is not an important piece of craftsmanship. Small and merely affixed to a thick-set mast, it consists of the upper half of a human figure facing forward and resting on a boat placed sideways and dotted with portholes. The accuracy of this local ascription to Captain Cook is at first sight questionable, as the carving lacks stylistic authenticity.

Captain Cook never touched the Alaskan seacoast except in the Eskimo area within Bering Sea far to the north. The figure itself is decidedly that of a woman, whose delicate hands are clasped in front. The close-fitting bodice is buttoned in the middle; it ends at the neck with a collar and at the wrists with narrow cuffs and trimmings. The long hair is parted near the centre and smoothly combed sideways.

No Tlingit ever saw Captain Cook, possibly no other British seaman, before the coming of Captain Green in 1792, and in the following year, of Captain George Vancouver. While making a careful survey of the coast Vancouver sailed with his ship within the wide inland waters now known under the name of Portland Canal. There he brushed past the estuary of the Nass River and encountered a party of Tsimsyans who may not have seen white man before. While on his way from the Nass northwards through the islands and canals to the present site of Wrangell, where he missed the mouth of the Stikine, he probably came across the southern Tlingits, who do not seem to have remembered his passage, as the Niskæs do in a tradition which I have recorded among them. All told, there is no more reason to ascribe the memorial now at Ketchikan to Vancouver than to Cook.

This intriguing carving has a better chance of portraying Captain Swanson's Tlingit wife, about whom old Mrs. Tamery, of Wrangell, in 1939, had the following story to tell the author:

"The first white sailor ever seen, ["remembered" would be a better word], in this country, landed at Tongas, on the present seacoast border between Alaska and British Columbia. There he took to wife a young woman of the Ganarhadee tribe, who bore a child by him. Yet he soon went away without her. Afterwards she married Hahskap, a chief, who adopted her girl child as his own.

"This daughter of the white sailor grew up and became a beautiful young woman, whose complexion was like that of her father's people. Her name was Huyhta. After her mother died, one day Captain Swanson anchored his ship in front of the village and came ashore. As soon as he saw her he wanted to take her aboard, just as the earlier white man had taken her mother. The adopted father refused at first to give her away, because he still remembered how her mother had been forsaken. To gain her, Captain Swanson promised to bring her to Victoria and marry her there, as a white man would. This was enough for him to win her, and she went away with him. This foreigner was different from the first, for he treated her as a grand lady. She always travelled with him on board ship, and everybody knew her as Mrs. Swanson. She came back to this country with her husband and her two children, a son and a daughter. As she was famous, I often heard of her, and once when I was young I met her, at Metlakatla, Alaska. She looked like a very old woman, quite small, but still graceful, and the people said that she was nearly a hundred years of age. For a time she lived abroad with her daughter, but was far from happy there, because she always longed to return to her tribe at Ketchikan, and one day after she had become feeble minded, she came back to die with her mother's people."

In this light the feminine figure on the Ketchikan pole lends itself to reinterpretation. It may have been meant to commemorate the passing of Mrs. Swanson. Unlike the dusky "pillow mates" of sailors, she was not forsaken by her white husband, who remained fond of her to the end of his career at sea.

The John Swanson Pole at Ketchikan, Alaska, according to John Hix, Hollywood, California, in a letter to the author, dated October 2, 1942.

. . . I came across an interesting item concerning [a] totem pole erected in honor of a white man. I understand that the totem, which still stands, was erected many years ago at Ketchikan, Alaska, to the memory of John Swanson, a trader for the Hudson's Bay Company. Swanson married an Indian bride, and the clothes worn by the trader on his wedding day are nailed to the pole, which is crested by an eagle and adorned by carvings of the clan to which his wife belonged.

THE WHITE MAN

HAIDA

The Leaf-and-Flower Pole of the Haidas of Yan opposite Massett, on the Queen Charlotte Islands, as described, in 1939, by Alfred Adams, of Massett.

Description. This pole, about 25 feet high, contains the following figures: 1. The Eagle, at the top; 2. two stems with leaves and flowers in low relief rising in curvilines, about one third of the length of the whole pole; 3. two Grizzly Bears sitting erect, one above the other. A hollow-back pole.

This pole belonged to chief Gayaw, a member of the Stlinlanaws clan of the Ravens, formerly of the Tiyan tribe on the northwest coast. Yan means "true" or "real". These flowers and leaves, represented in low-relief carving in the upper half of the pole, were called Valuable-Leaves (*rhilkwaiyas*), and belonged as a crest to Gayaw and his family.

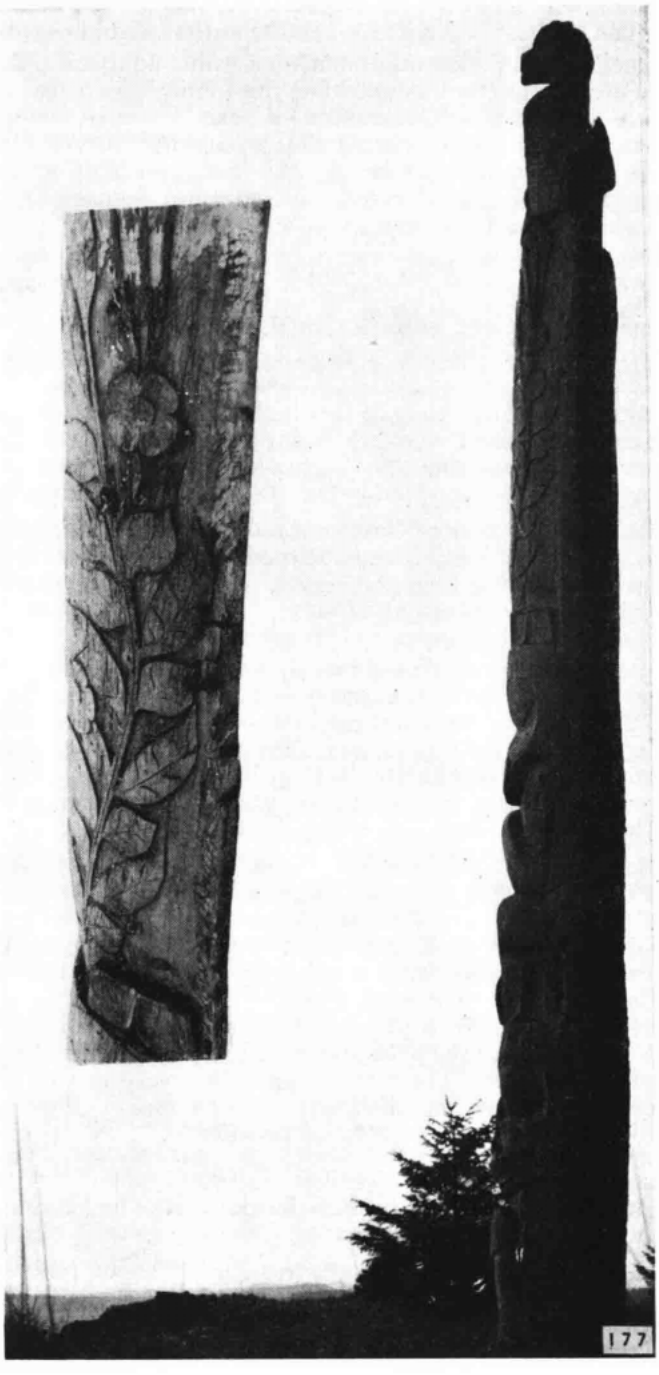
Long after Victoria was established, the Haidas of the Tiyan tribe, particularly the family of Gayaw, journeyed several times by dug-out canoe to Victoria, and acquired wealth there (because of the sea-otter trade, Tiyan village being located in the best area for sea-otter hunting). These people greatly admired the garden flowers in the white man's town, and when they came home, were the first to adopt them as a family emblem and have them carved on their totem pole.

This pole, during World War II, was cut down without permission by members of the Royal Canadian Air Force (who then occupied a military air field across the channel near Old Massett), and removed to their station. Later on, the withdrawal of military forces from the Queen Charlotte Islands, this pole, together with another from Yan, was taken to Prince Rupert along with military equipment, and was about to be removed privately by a member of the Air Force when the Indian Agent at Prince Rupert objected, and had the poles removed to the grounds of the Municipal Library at Prince Rupert. There they were to be reerected, in 1947. Unfortunately these were previously disfigured by a coating of gaudy store paint. They seem never to have been coloured previously.

"BARBECUE" POLES

The "Barbecue" Raven, pole of the deserted Tlingit village of Auk, about ten miles from Juneau, Alaska.

This totem pole, *circa* 50 feet tall, was carved about ten years ago by Tlingit craftsmen under the WPA plan for Alaska, and erected for the U.S. Forest Service. Because it was made for the white people and bears no real meaning for the Tlingit, it is humorously designated by them with the name "Barbecue Raven".

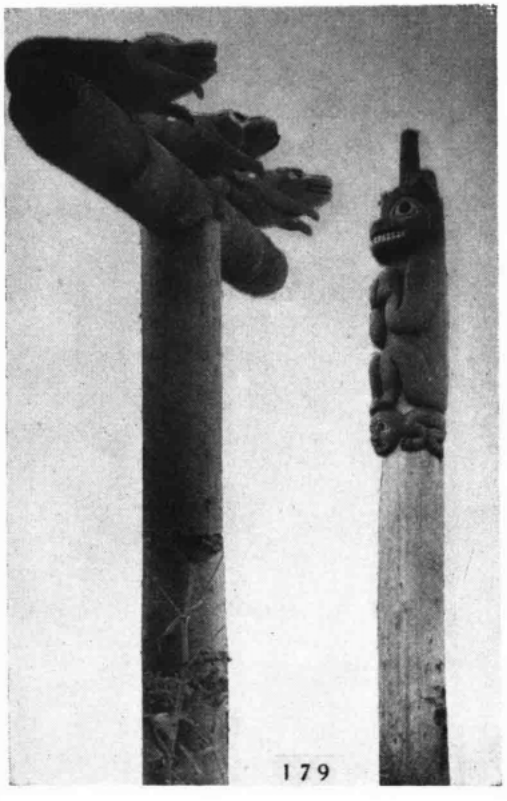


The Leaf and Flower totem pole of Yan

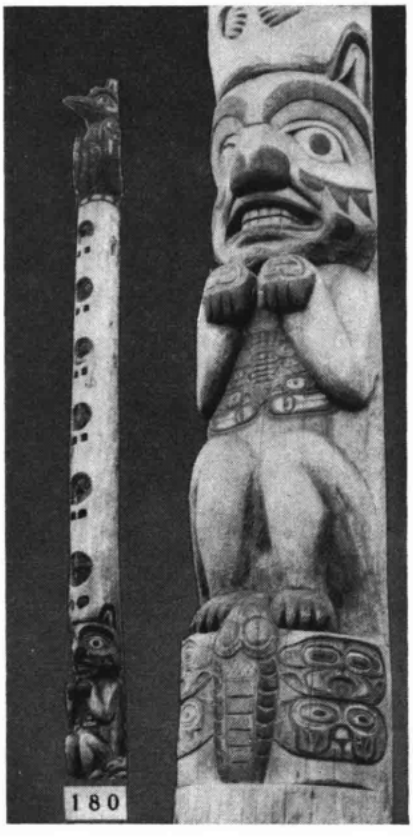
Its figures (from the top down) are: 1. Raven, 2. two Dragonflies; 3. Six small bird figures in insets down the long shaft; 4. A human figure (at the bottom).

According to Mrs. William Paul of Juneau (in 1947), this pole is an imitation of one belonging to the Crophy (Jake) family, the "Blanket People" (*ktlinaide*), one of the leading groups in the Raven phratry. Frank Sinclair, a Tlingit of the Huna tribe who carved it for the Forestry Service, would say "That's the White-man's totem pole. It means nothing to us". The story of the Crophy family was recorded by Mr. Linn Forest, of the Forestry Service. The bird figures down the pole represent: Robin, Chikadee, Blue Jay, Owl . . . They illustrate a myth already recorded by Lieut. G. T. Emmons (in "The Whale House"), and by Dr. Swanton. The Raven, according to the Tlingit myth, had gathered the salmon and many small animals about him. At his request, they brought fresh leaves to him, but he said, "Not the right kind of leaves!" and sent them farther and farther away . . . The human figure at the bottom of the pole represents the Big Dipper (eight stars) called Yarhtæ.

A new totem pole of Wrangell

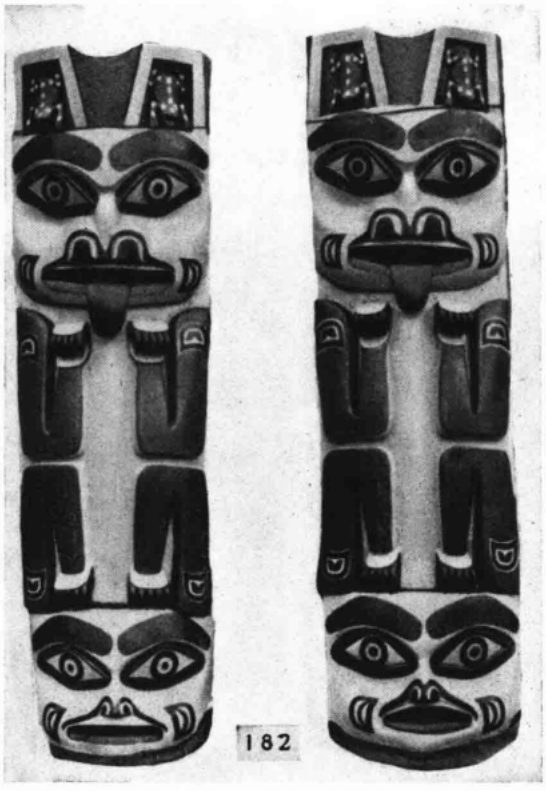


The new Frogs, at Shaiks Island, Wrangell

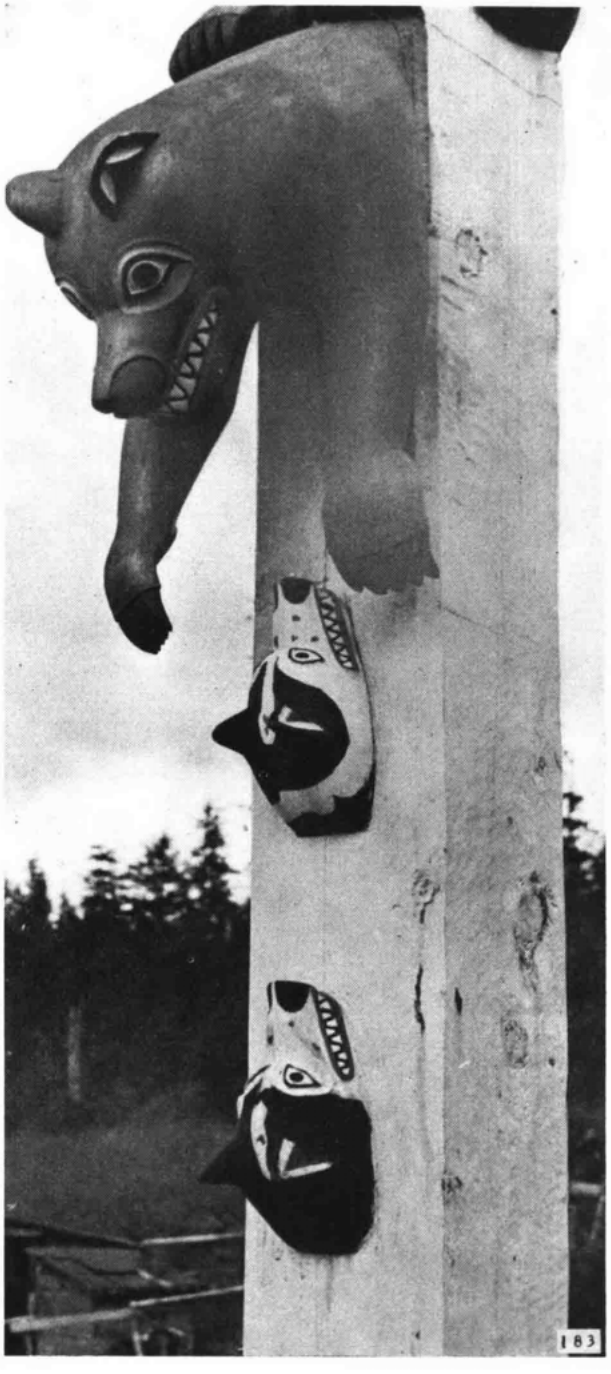


The "Barbecue" Raven of Auk

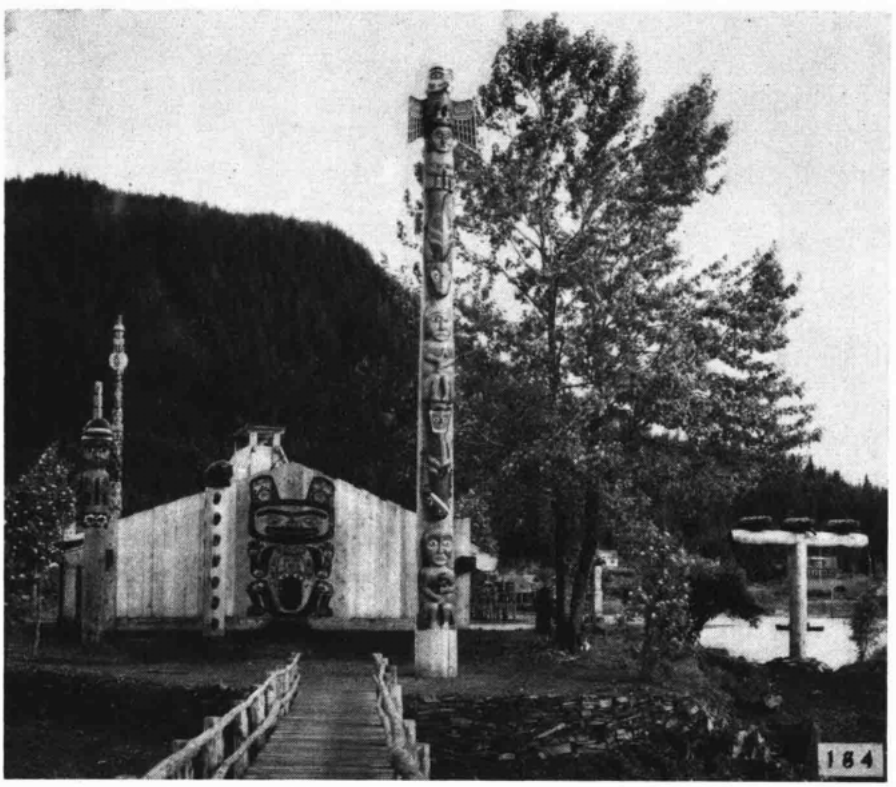
The Dook-tul pole, at Klawock



Grizzly Bear of the Kaigani-Haidas

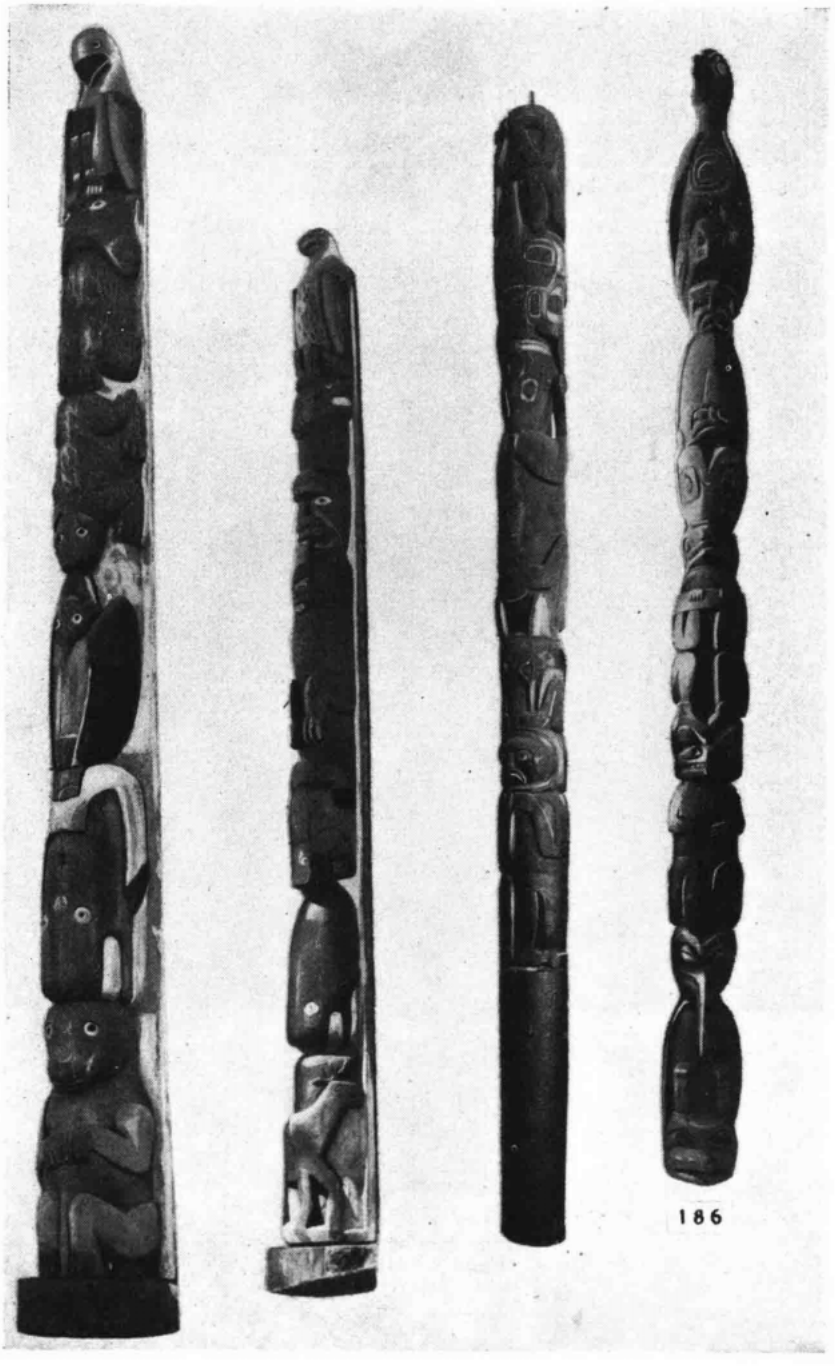


Bear Mother and Cubs, at Klawock



The new house front and totem poles on Shaiks Island, Wrangell

Bear Mother, at the Colorado Museum, Denver



Grotesque poles carved for sale