

The Bear and Anitsatnas on a carved house post of the Clayoquot Nootkas, collected in 1905 by Dr. C. F. Newcombe for the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago (No. 87326).

On the label, in 1910, was recorded: "The pole represents another ancestral Anitsatnas, whose power and wealth in sea otter skins is typified by the lower figure, the Bear."

Quatsino Totem Pole at the National Museum of Canada (In storage. No. E 365).

It formed part of the Aaronson Collection acquired in Vancouver. Its catalogue entry reads, as follows: "Represents on top the crane with its head down, an owl holding onto a salmon, a bear with a snake and a chief's head, who is holding a copper plate shield in his hands, showing that he belonged to a class that worshipped the snake."

Like two other poles in the Aaronson collection, it lacks quality, perhaps authenticity. It may, however, represent the rather spurious imitation of northern totems among a people, the Nootkas, who never adopted the crest or totem system. Not illustrated here.

The Skate Painting of Alberni, Vancouver Island, as recorded by Dr. Edward Sapir for the National Museum of Canada in 1910.

The head chief (Natch.) had the Skate painted over his door (Nan. had two at the sides). He "made up" the Skate when he built the house for his slave's grandson. He had no carved post.

Inside-House Poles at Sarita, Barkley Sound, according to W. A. Newcombe (76: C10, Plate VII, Figure 1).

This was the only form of totem pole commonly used by the Nootkas.

Welcome Poles at Ohiat, Barkley Sound, according to W. A. Newcombe (76: C10, Plate VII, Figure 2).

These two potlatch figures known as "welcome poles" (P.M. Nos. 2102 and 2103) are the only two large specimens I have information on in my Nootkan records, though small carvings like these were commonly used by the Kwakiutl.

SALISHES

Totem Poles and Posts among the Salish tribes south of Powell River, according to Lt. G. Barnett of the University of Oregon (16: 384-386).

The Kwakiutl system of privileges and its concrete expressions were flagrantly misunderstood by the Homalco, the Klahuse, and others to the south of them. Among these Indians anyone who could afford it could have a carving or a painting made, usually by an inferior (and doubtless contemptuous) Kwakiutl artist. In consequence, there was a rather brief proliferation and decadence of a few bleak and unæsthetic crest patterns among some of the more aggressive and aspiring Homalco, Klahuse, and Slaiamon families.

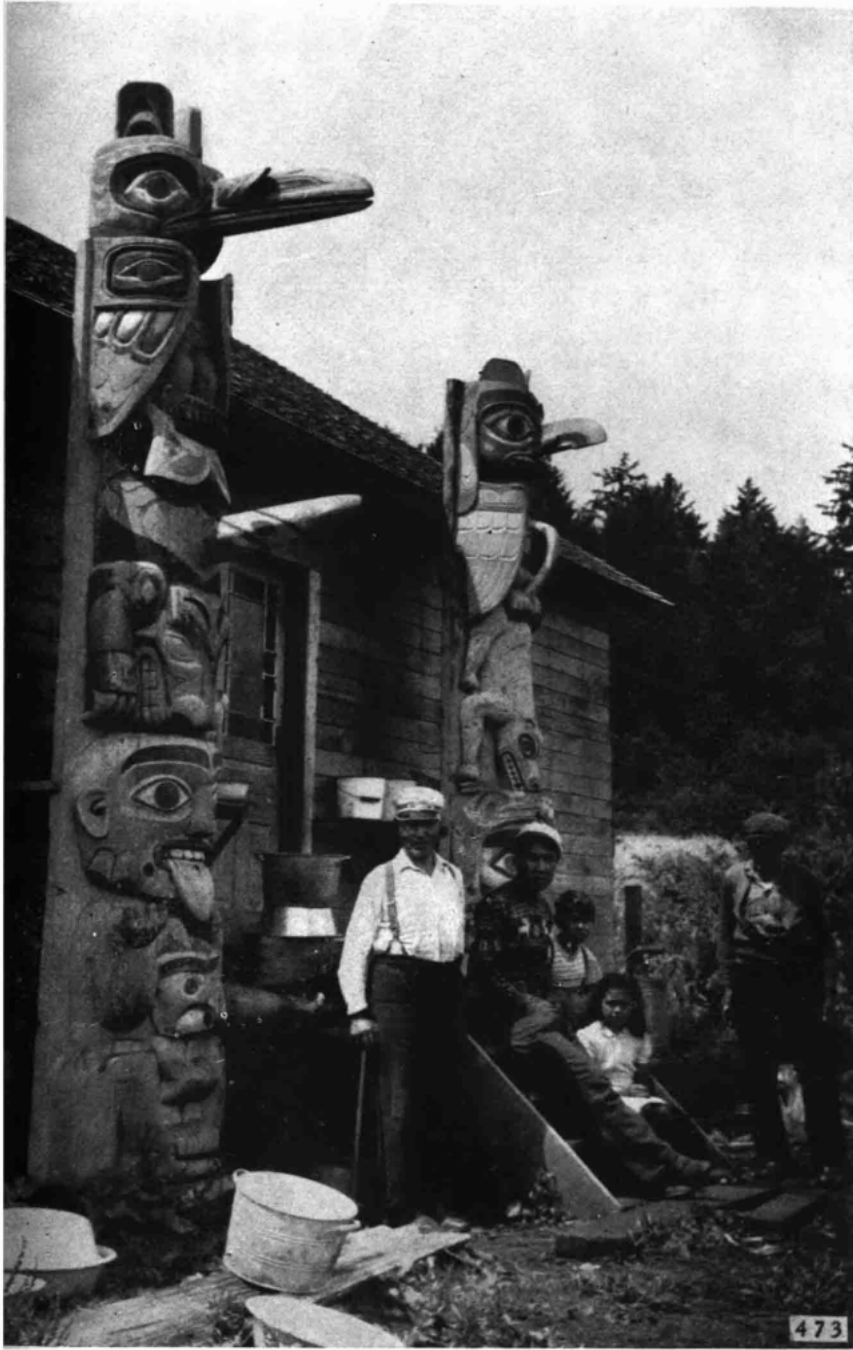
Of the four big house owners at Salmon Bay (Klahuse) around the year 1800, one was a "quiet tyhee man;" but on the beach outside his house stood a human figure with its hands on its hips. Another important lineage head had the four corner posts of his house carved in the likeness of women, his front ridge-pole support like a man pointing to the seats in welcome, and his ridge-pole and projecting beam-ends in the forms of sea-lion and seal heads. This was the most important man among the Klahuse. He had married a Kwakiutl



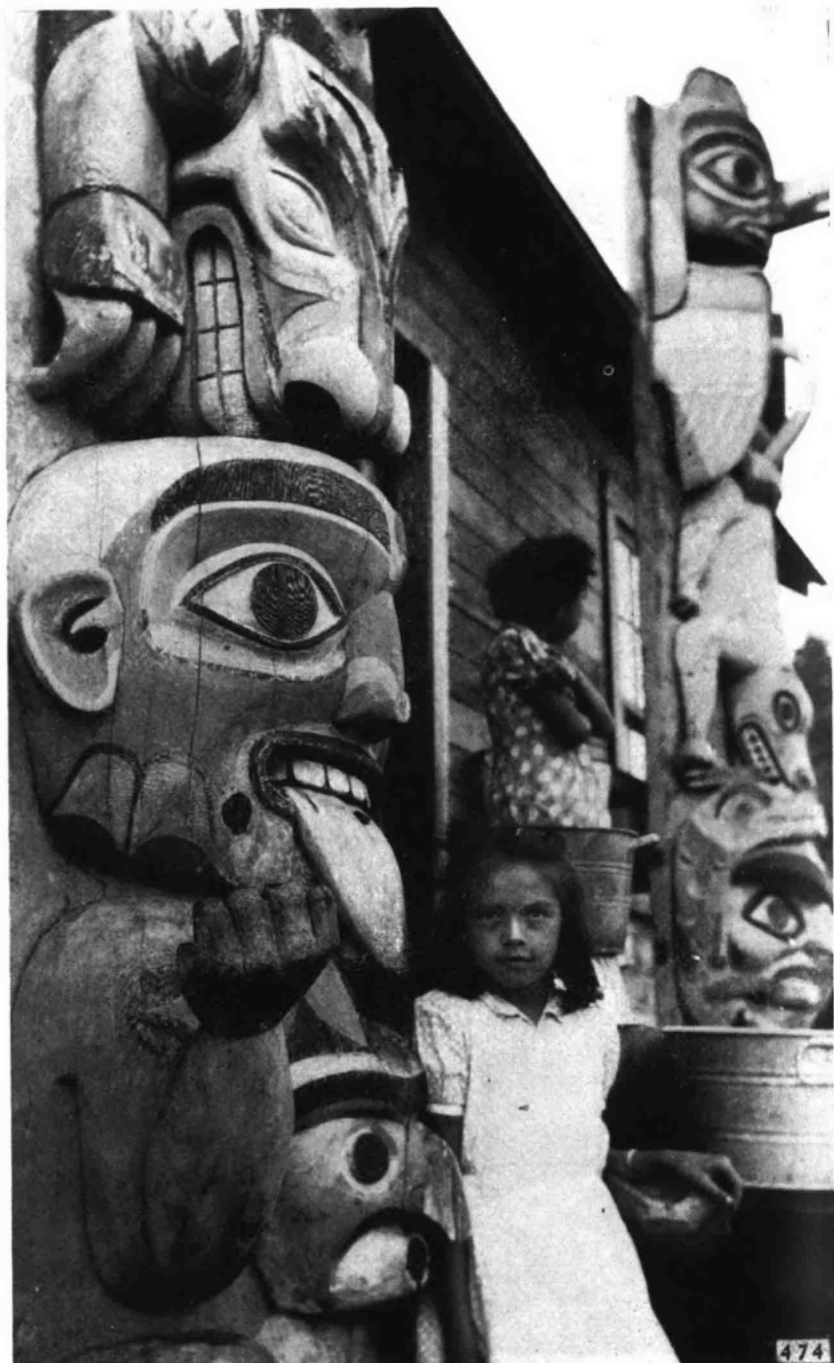
Nootka totem at Ehatisaht
or Zeballos



Nootka post from Ahousaht
village. At the Peabody
Museum, Harvard



Two Nootka poles in front of Maquinna's house



At Friendly Cove



Totem at Zeballos, Nootka



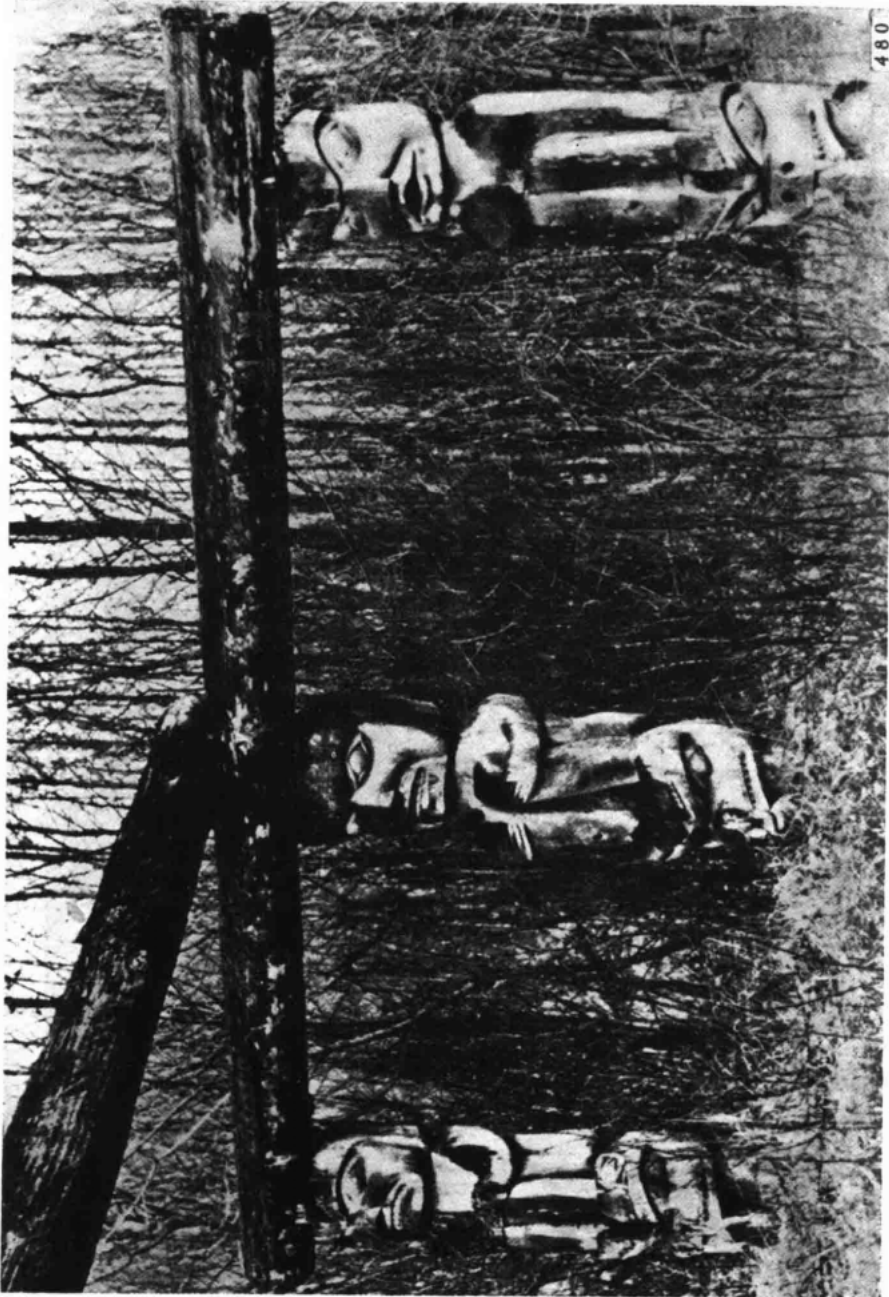
Carved post at Sarita, Barkley Sound



Carved posts at Salmon River



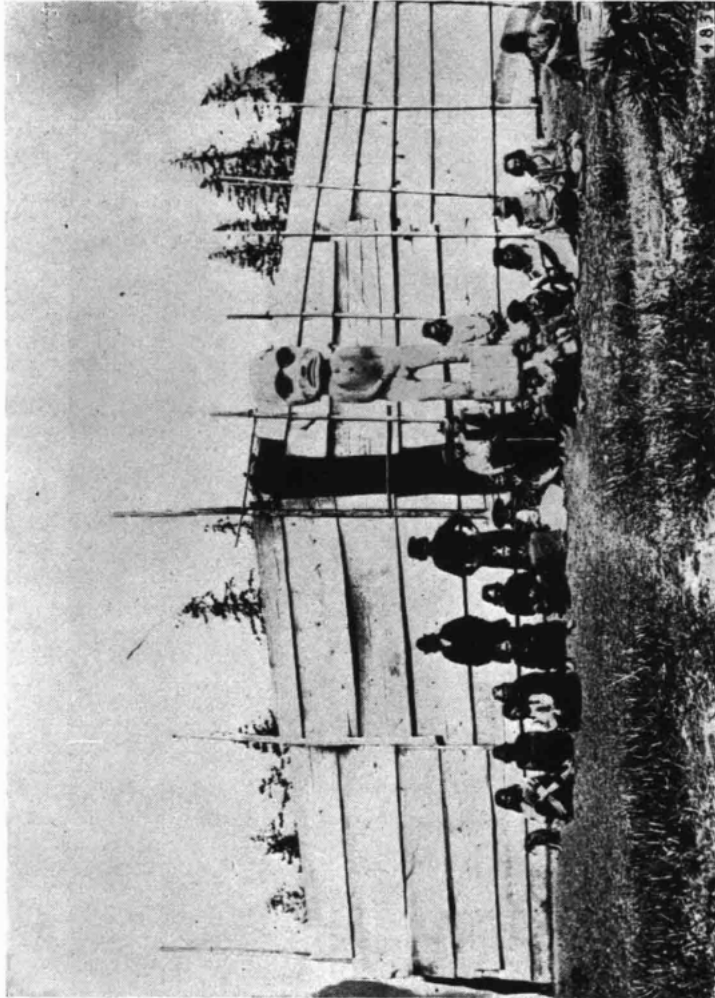
Carved post of the Nootkas



Tsawati house posts, Kwakwaka'wakw



Carved posts, Kwakiutl



Salish house and carved post

741



Salish posts



Salish posts in Thunderbird Park



Salish painting of a human face. (Right) Carving from Comox



Salish inside posts

woman, and very likely some of his crests came with her. The third man had five posts in his house, carved in the same way as the second, and, in addition, a central post representing a "greedy man." This figure was symbolic of plenty, and at feasts it was bathed in oil, so that it oozed and drooled the precious liquid. The same individual also painted a whale on the front of his house. From all reports he was a self-made man (his father had nothing) and he bought these figures, simply paying a mercenary Kwakiutl to do them for him. The fourth important Klahuse man had no decorations on his house; he was a "quiet chief" like the first.

Totem poles in commemoration of the dead were raised at the cemetery or in front of the houses in this northeastern region, but they were few and stereotyped. In 1936 the oldest informant among the Klahuse remembered these poles as "about forty feet" high with a human figure sitting at the top, one standing at the base, and a plain slender shaft connecting the two. He had seen two of these at Salmon Bay and four at Grace Harbour. He insisted, however, that they and the rest of the crests were late acquisitions, taken over by the Klahuse after they began to come out of Toba Inlet and were able, because of the white man's intercession, to meet the Kwakiutl on friendly terms.

As this testimony indicates, the Slaiamon, at least after they began to assemble with their northern neighbours at Grace Harbour, were acquainted with the kind of totem pole described. More characteristic were paintings and carvings on Slaiamon houses themselves. All of the six large houses owned by prominent lineages had some of these decorative features, but there was little variation among them. Sea-lion heads appeared on the projecting ridge-poles of three houses; painted thunderbirds on the gables of four; anthropomorphic posts in two; a painted mask and an eagle on the front of one. One of these householders had eagles carved on the ends of the vertical shafts which held the wall planks in place and projected upward beyond the roof. Finally, one man claimed the privilege of erecting, in front of his house, the familiar figure of a man with his hands on his hips and his mouth open, "calling the people."

[Among the Sechelt], who formerly congregated and built their permanent dwellings at Pender Harbour, there was even less of a display of privileges of the character under discussion. There were no free-standing posts or poles at all. One house displayed eagles carved on the projecting wall-binders as in the Slaiamon instance above; another had a sea-lion head at the end of its ridge-pole; two others had painted thunderbirds on the gable. Most distinctive was the painted figure of a man straddling the doorway of one house, and carved posts in the shapes of seals, sea-lions, and blackfish in another.

The Squamish informants, in 1936, were vague about carvings and paintings. It was said that the projecting wall-binders were sometimes carved into a man's head (a "watchman") at the top, and that the beam-ends looked like "some kind of animal," just what was not remembered. There was uncertainty about the house posts, too, but a recollection of at least one representing a man and a grizzly bear.

The Musquam, with their village on Point Grey, were better situated to benefit from streams of cultural influence from all directions, and it is not unlikely that they were affected by an impulse of crest-carving. Anthropomorphic house posts they did have, and at least



Salish posts from Comox



Salish grave post

488



489

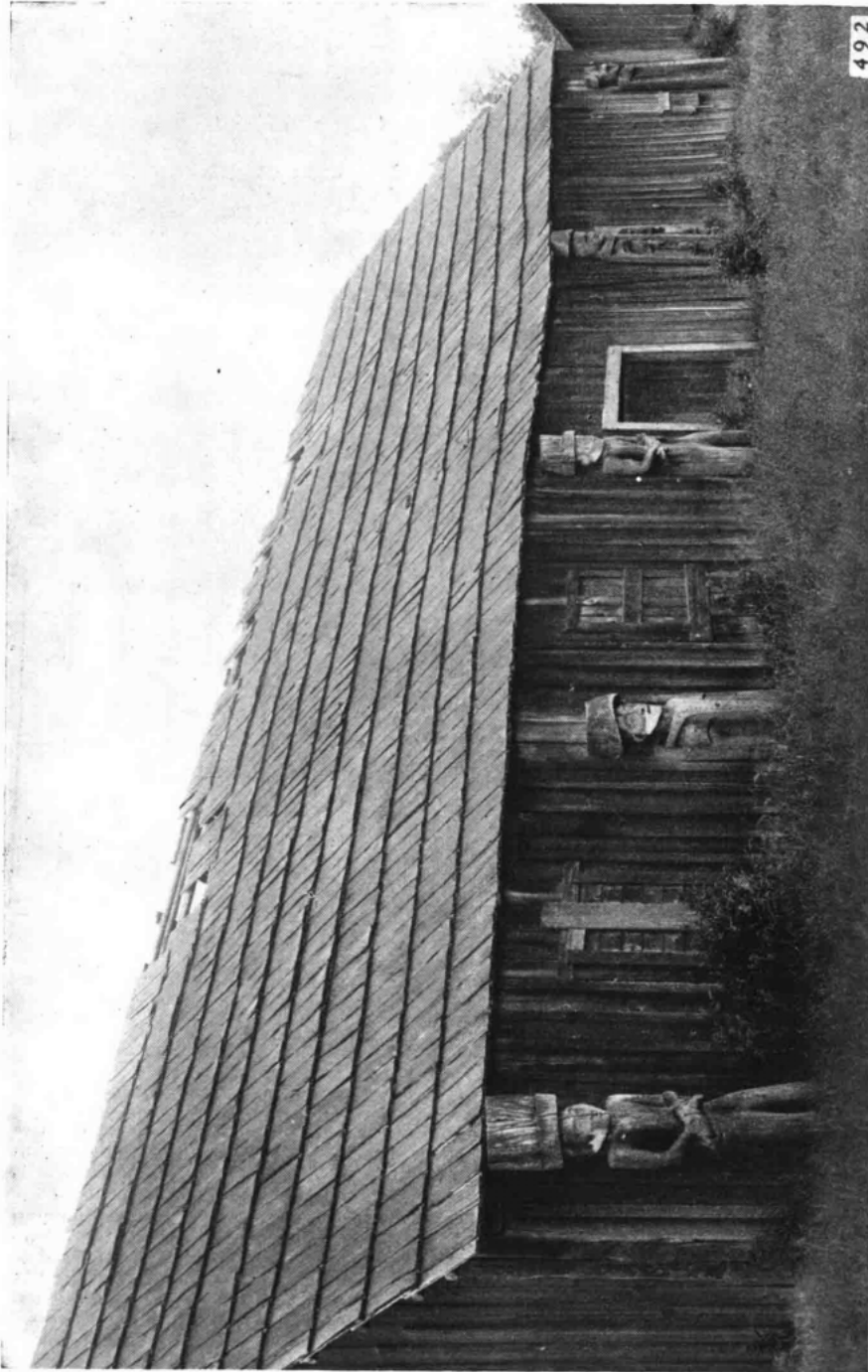
Salish inside pole, now
at Victoria



Heraldic column from Xumta'spe

one of these commemorated a legendary event involving an ancestor of the houseowner. It signaled the control over grizzly bears possessed by the original owner and his descendants and showed a man standing on a bear and shaking a rattle.¹ This is certainly more in line with northern ideas on the subject, but other Musquiam representations were not. House paintings and commemorative grave markers, for example, were contrived at will by an individual in accordance with his estimation of himself or of his immediate relatives. In part, at least, these were ideographic representations symbolizing the talents of the owner. One family, for instance, raised a slender grave-pole with a thunderbird at the top and a cross-plank a little lower down. On one arm of this plank was pictured a fish, and on the other was a human figure drawing a bow. These paintings were intended to signalize the owner's fishing and hunting abilities.

¹ The original and the first reproduction of this post no longer exist, but the informant said that the second copy, which was made for his grandfather, is at the University of British Columbia.



492

Carved house posts of the Coast Salish



Carved Salish house posts at Quamichan



Salish house posts at Quamichan



Salish house posts at Quamichan.



Graveyard carving, Salish



Graveyard figures of the Coast Salish

South of Deep Bay. Carved posts and paintings south of Deep Bay on Vancouver Island, according to Lt. G. Barnett (16: 382, 383).

[Totem poles and house paintings] did not extend south of Deep Bay. Where they appear they are recent, that is, subsequent to the establishment of the Hudson's Bay post at Victoria in 1843, and in every authentic case their existence is attributed by trustworthy Indians to some immediate connection with the Comox and others to the north. At Nanaimo, for example, there was one house painted with a Thunderbird and a mythical serpent on the front, but this belonged to a man whose father came from Deep Bay. His mother was a Nanaimo woman, and when his father died he moved to Nanaimo and built the house. The father of another individual, still living in 1936, painted the posts in his house and had one carved to represent a man holding a rattle and standing on a slave's head; but this was because he was related by marriage to a family at Comox. Totem poles and even these few house decorations were not native to Nanaimo; and this despite the fact that a local Indian carved the pole now standing in the public square of that city. Another of his carvings is to be found in the yard of his brother-in-law at an old village location near Point Roberts.

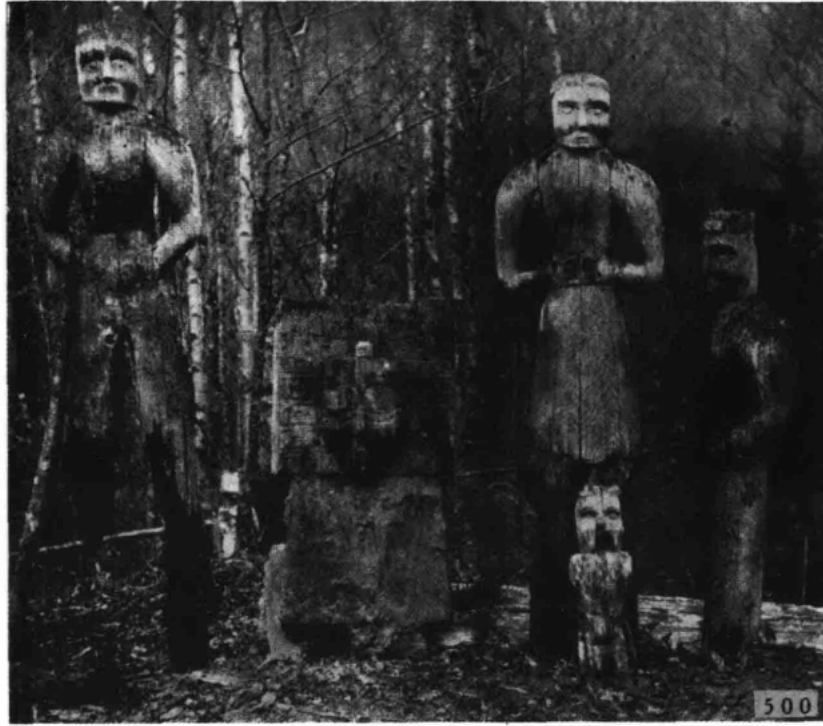
The same conclusions hold for villages farther south at Cowichan Bay and on Saanich Peninsula. At the village of the West Sanetch, near Brentwood, one house contained a central supporting post carved into a series of bulges and constrictions. That was all. More recently, some of the Sanetch people as well as the Cowichans undertook the carving of anthropomorphic house posts with indifferent success. At the village of Quamichan, near



Salish grave representing the Sea Otter



Graveyard figures of the Coast Salish



Grave figures of the Coast Salish at Ruby Creek

Duncan, five of these stand to-day along the outside of a dilapidated building. They were made as interior roof supports of a house now gone. Curtis¹ has a picture of these, and they need not be described here except to say that they reveal the characteristic style of all such carvings of a recent date from this restricted area. Conservative Indians to-day repudiate them and regard their display as pretentious and unwarranted by the social backgrounds of the parvenus who erected them.

Thus, from the detailed accounts of living Indians it appears certain there was a decided cultural difference between the native groups on the northern and the southern parts of Vancouver Island. There is, in addition, a fragment or two of documentary evidence for this cleavage. Certainly part of it dates as far back as the time of Vancouver, if we accept the conclusion that the people on Cape Mudge in 1792 were Comox,² for Menzies saw dwellings there "with large boards some of which were ornamented with rude paintings particularly those on the fronts of the houses."³

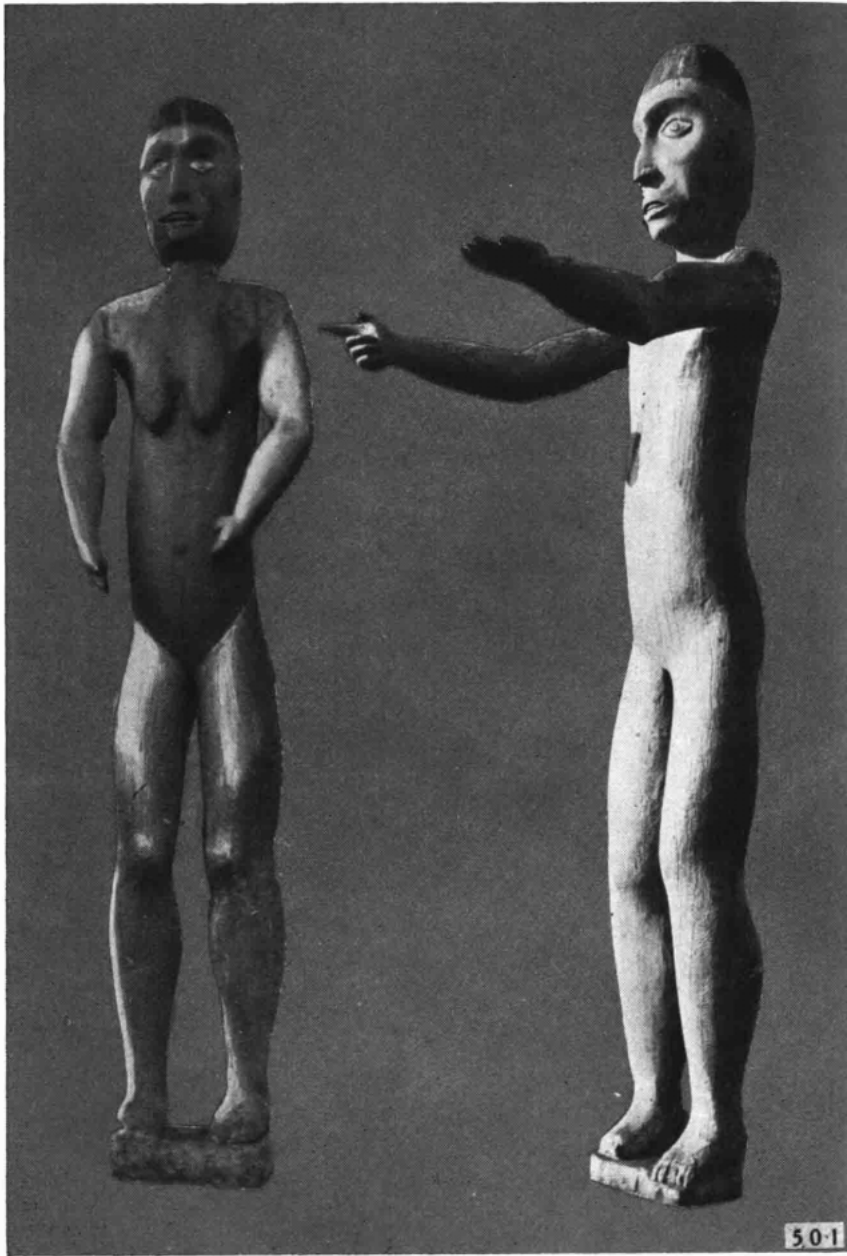
House Post at Comox, reproduced in Lieut. G. T. Emmons' article on "The Art of the Northwest Coast Indians" (47: 282).

Shows a house post with the figures, unexplained, and from the top down, of the Beaver; the Thunderbird in human form or a man whose hooked nose is symbolic of the Thunderbird holding in his hand and in front of him another man, upside down; the Sun or Moon with a human face inside.

¹ Edward S. Curtis, *The Northern American Indian*, IX (Cambridge, Mass.), 1913, opposite p. 46.

² Compare Archibald Menzies, *Menzies' Journal of Vancouver's Voyage*, April to October, 1792, ed. by C. F. Newcombe (*Archives of British Columbia, Memoir No. V*, Victoria, B.C., 1923), 84.

³ *Ibid.*, 82; for "Flea Village," *ibid.*, 68.



Salish carvings in Thunderbird Park



Salish house posts in Thunderbird Park



Salish house posts in Thunderbird Park



Salish house posts in Thunderbird Park

Salish Inside-house Poles, according to W. A. Newcombe (76: p. C 10, Plate IX, figure 2).

Few Salish houses had carved house poles. The greatest number have been recorded from Comox, V.I., and Musquiam, at the mouth of the Fraser; only one or two pairs were found in the Songhee village, Victoria, and five in an old house at Quamichan (a modern house at the latter village has six). Comox was the only Salish village, according to the earliest information available, to have outside totem poles; a custom they probably acquired from the Kwakiutl. The type of pole being similar to that shown in Plate V.

Inside-house Pole, presumably from Comox, now at the Provincial Museum, Victoria (P.M. No. 2355), as described by W. A. Newcombe (76: C 10. Plate IX, figure 2).

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Comox Totem Poles and Paintings, according to M. G. Barnett (16: 380,382).

The Comox, and also the Pentlach, who lived near what is to-day Courtenay, had a few crude totem poles and other heraldic carvings and paintings.¹ In 1936, well-informed Indians, describing the situation as of approximately 1850, could give very little specific data on totem poles. The only precise recollection was that one Comox family had the right to raise a pole with a carved grizzly at the bottom and the figure of a man, a "watchman," at the top, pointing seaward with one hand and shading his eyes with the other. At the same time it was well remembered that interior house posts and the projecting ends of ridge-poles and horizontal beams were carved into hereditary crest figures. Specifically, the latter took the forms of Sea-Lion and Raven heads, the former of various anthropomorphic figures. One Comox headman owned a central supporting post showing a boastful ancestor standing with his arms akimbo. The same individual had another house post intended to represent a slave his grandfather had captured from a despised neighbouring village.

¹ The information upon which this summary is based was obtained in the course of an ethnographic study of this area made in 1935 and 1936.

Another family enjoyed the privilege of erecting a corner or center post in the form of a large-bellied being with deep-set eyes and a round protruding mouth, a monstrous conception borrowed from the Kwakiutl.

Whales, painted but not carved, occurred on the front gables of the houses of one large and prominent Comox family. Doors were usually rectangular, but some privileged lineages had the right to make more elaborate entrances with paintings around and above them to represent human beings, animals, or other crest forms; one was made round to form a Moon; another was shaped like a "copper;" still another was made in the likeness of a Raven's beak, which opened and closed under the tread of the ceremonial visitor.

Grave Posts from Ruby Creek, southern British Columbia, according to W. A. Newcombe (76: C 10, Plate IX, figure 3).

Grave figures such as these, often called "totem poles," have been photographed in many localities in southern British Columbia.



◀ Salish house post at the University of British Columbia



Salish house post at the University of British Columbia



Carved post of the Quileutes, Clallam County, Washington