

The informant states that when he was a boy at Port Simpson, he watched a performance of initiation. He saw Skagwayt (Alfred Dudoward) initiated into the Rhkyædet *halait* group. This initiation took place after the arrival of Wm. Duncan, the missionary. Dudoward had been one of Duncan's assistants. Being ambitious, he decided to become a cannibal *halait* to outdo Legyærh, who had become a Rhæsem *halait*; these *halaits* used dogs for initiations. For this lapse, Dudoward was expelled from Duncan's church. After he had been expelled, the Rhkyædet *halait* initiations ceased to take place, and Dudoward went south to Victoria. His mother, who was married to a Government official, had acquired a high standing in the councils of the Methodist church. So Dudoward and his mother induced these dignitaries of the church to come to Port Simpson. There this church was soon to establish its Mission. His uncle (a former Git'iks, the informant's uncle) was one of the guests, and he came along as a young boy. Skagwayt was a young man. He married, and among the guests at the ceremony was the chief woman called 'Maws. She had come all the way from Hartley Bay. (She is still living—Mrs. Heber Clifton herself.) She still remembers much of the initiation ceremony, when the initiated was being led around in front of the village, looking for some victim to bite. The initiated was in a frenzy and trying to break away from those who had him under control. It was then that the woman came forward, baring her arm. She called out, "Come, great *halait*! Satisfy your hunger." 'Maws was of the Rhkyædet *halait* rank herself, and only one of her standing could have offered herself as a subject to satisfy the yearnings of the Rhkyædet *halait* "initiated one". This woman had done this same thing at several similar initiation ceremonies, so the informant has since heard, in fact all of those taking part, with the exception of Sarh'sarht, who was also a Rhkyædet *halait*, were either from Kit'amat or Wudstæ (Bella Bella.) These places were recognized as the chief ones of all the various *halait* groups.

Continuing with the Gitrhawn people, they often went to the Haida and were also recognized there, to this day, for their relationship with the Niskæ branch of the clan. This is often spoken of among the different tribal connections; that is, Niskæ, Tsimcyan, Gitsalas, Git'amat, Gitka'ta, and Haida (Gitgyæ'yu).

THE EAGLE "FUGITIVES" FROM THE NORTH, LED BY NEES'WAMAK

(Recorded by William Beynon in 1950 from Robert Ridley, a Tsimcyan of Ketchikan, Alaska.)

The Larhskeek (Eagle) clan dwelt mostly at Na'a (now Loring, Alaska). Here they lived together with the Larhkibu (Wolf) clan. These two groups intermarried and stayed very close together, each having its own village.

The Wolf people were the more numerous and had been the first to establish themselves there. Each had their own fishing sites and made their own weirs to catch salmon. When the Eagle group arrived, it chose its own fishing sites. These happened to yield more than those of the Wolves. For this reason, a feeling of jealousy prevailed among the two groups. Relations were strained, because the Wolves resented the newcomers catching more salmon than they did, and they endeavoured to cut off the supply of their rivals.

A princess of the Wolves had married into the Eagle clan's royal household. She and her husband lived in the Wolf village. She had been much sought in marriage by pioneers of many villages. Her Eagle husband was a great hunter, who went away to his hunting grounds for long periods and returned with much game and furs. She had for a long while been carrying on a secret affair with another prince of the Eagles. Whenever her husband was away, her lover would go over to her house, and they would stay together. The hunter returned unexpectedly one night and found another man sleeping with his wife. He killed both of them and then returned to his own village.

Next day, the Wolf clan people discovered that their princess had been murdered. Even though her lover had been killed alongside her, they now wanted to be avenged for the murder. The young warriors wanted an immediate attack on the Eagles, but the older men counselled them to wait and massacre the entire Eagle group. So they made secret preparations.

One night, an Eagle woman, the wife of one of the Wolf warriors, went over to the Eagle village. Entering her uncle's house, she told Nees'wamak that the Wolf people were planning to massacre them all, for the murder of their princess. "As they are too numerous for you to resist, it would be well to flee for your lives and escape. They intend to slay all and then take possession of your fishing sites, also of your hunting territories."

Nees'wamak, hearing this, gathered his folk together and said, "Let us escape this night, for to-morrow night the Wolf people plan to massacre us. They are too many for us, and it is well that we escape. We will go on to Larhsayle, where a great many of our relatives are living. We will join with them." So they gathered their belongings, and while the Wolf people were asleep, the Eagles set out. They travelled very quietly and were a long distance away next day when the Wolves failed to see smoke rising from the Eagles' houses. So they went over and found only a deserted village. No one knew where the fugitives had gone. Some of them were for pursuing them. But as the Eagle people had vanished, they were not pursued.

Among the Eagle fugitives were Rhup, his brother Nees'awælp, and his nephews Kao'alæ and Spawrhs. These were warriors and spokesmen for the Eagle chief Nees'wamak.

After a few days travelling, they arrived at Larhsayle. Here stood a large village of the Kanhada, the Larhkibu (Wolves), and the Eagles. Though they lived as one group, they all had separate villages. The fleeing Eagles made new houses among their fellow Eagles.

The Eagles here were also outnumbered. Again strife arose regarding the fishing sites of the Eagles, who were also catching more salmon here than the other clans. Although the three clans intermarried, feelings were once more strained.

A young Eagle Prince soon fell in love with the Kanhada Princess who was the wife of a Wolf chief. This chief was also a great hunter and spent much of his time hunting in a distant territory. When he was away, the Eagle lover would secretly meet with his beloved, and this happened every night until the hunter's return was expected. Then the Eagle Prince would go back to his own village.

This had been going on for a long time, until the Wolf hunter began to wonder why he was not able to capture any game. His snares would be set off, but the game would escape, and he no longer had his former success. He said to himself, "My wife must be unfaithful. Let me try to catch her at fault." Among hunters and fishermen, when they could not catch any game or fish, especially halibut, it was a sign there was unfaithfulness in the home or a sign of the death of either one or the other. For the hunter, there were always traces of plenty of game, but none could be captured.

Everything seemed according to the rules of life. After his purification rites, once more he set out from home for his hunting grounds, saying, "I'll be gone many days. I am taking ample provisions and will return when the moon is full." He then went away, and he had not been gone long when the lover came over and met his love. Again they stayed with each other.

The hunter, who had suspected the wrong, proceeded only a short distance, and he and his nephews, who were his companions, took their canoes into the woods, and there they hid for a few days. One night, he returned to his village and went directly to his house. Listening outside, beside his sleeping place, he heard the voice of his wife and a strange voice which he could not recognize. Very angry, he stepped in and found his wife and her lover asleep. He took his hunting knife, killed the interloper, and cut off his head. He hung it over the inside of the door on the fish-drying racks. Then he lay down with his wife.

The young Prince of the Eagles now had been gone some time, and his folk began secretly to search for him. They sent slaves to every house in the villages of the other two clans to try and find out what had happened to their Prince. Meanwhile the young man had been dead for some time, and his head was being dried in the Wolf chief's house.

Finally, one day, a slave woman from the Eagle chief's house entered the Wolf house. She wanted to borrow some trivial thing for her master.

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While here she looked all around, and glancing up above as she sat down, she saw her master's head drying on the racks above. She did not show any feeling but lingered longer to make very sure that it was her master's head. When she was absolutely certain, she got up and walked slowly away. She went back to her village on the other side. She went slowly without excitement, so that the Wolves were almost certain that she had not discovered the drying head.

As soon as the slave entered her chief's house she began to weep, and she said, "I have seen my master's head. They have killed him, and his head is on a drying rack in the Larhkibu chief's house." At the news, all in the house began to weep.



5. Helmet: Whale carrying two people to the other world.

Upon hearing the weeping, the Wolf clan folk were aware that the Eagles knew that they had found out what had happened to their Prince. The Eagle warriors, especially the young men, wanted to go to attack at once, without warning, but the wise men said, "No, we must be careful; we must pretend we know nothing of what has happened. Before we make a surprise attack, we must know whether the Kanhada will help the Wolves. Perhaps they will, as they also covet our fishing sites, which are better than theirs. Let us also prepare for instant flight. Before we attack, we must put all our belongings into our canoes, and then we will rush upon the Wolves. Should they be too strong for us, we will return and escape in our canoes. All the women and children will be there, so that we will have a head start on them. We will go in the direction of the Rain Wind (Southeast), and we will try to seek a still more plenteous land there."

That night, they secretly landed their canoes and packed their belongings into them. They also put the women and children in these. Then they crossed over, and entering the Wolf Chief's house they attacked in retaliation for the killing of their Prince. They killed many and set the village on fire. Then they escaped to their canoes and set out. The sudden attack upon the Wolf people left them in great confusion. But when everything was cleared up, they started in pursuit of the fleeing Eagles, who had escaped unharmed with all their belongings.

The Eagles had now travelled some distance. They decided to anchor their canoes and take a rest, as there was a great distance ahead for them to travel. They had heard of a river which was much larger than the Stikine and where there was a great supply of food and salmon. So they meant to find this new place.

When they left Na'a to go to Larsayle, they took with them two stone eagles, their crest. One of these was large, and the other small. On reaching a sheltered bay, they took their two stone eagles, and making an anchor of these, they dropped it. Then they rested. The Wolf clan, now joined by the Kanhada clan, had paddled on through the night, and they were now in sight of the fleeing Eagles, who were anchored and mostly resting asleep. One of the Eagles awoke, and seeing the many canoes approaching he gave the alarm. Hurriedly the Eagles awoke, and as the pursuing Wolves were close to them, they did not have time to raise their stone eagle anchor, but cut it free. They paddled away. Soon outdistancing their pursuers, they travelled through many channels and escaped.

One night, Nees'wamak said, "We will not make a camp before we find that great river we have heard of. Until then, we shall rest in our canoes." So they anchored, and this time they used copper shields for anchors. Feeling that they were quite safe now, they slept in their canoes. They had not been sleeping long and it was just breaking day, when one of the Eagle fugitives who had been keeping watch saw a great number of canoes approaching, "Wake up, all of you," he cried. "Our enemies are close at hand!" As the awakened Eagles saw the canoes approaching rapidly, they did not take time to pull in the copper-shield anchors but cut the ropes and then hustled away through many islands. They kept on going, always on the alert.

At long last, they arrived at the mouth of a big river. A Tsimshyan woman among them said "This is 'Klusems (Nass), not Ksi'yæn (Skeena); where you want to go. This is where the people fish the oolichan. It also is a plenteous country."

For a time, Nees'wamak was undecided as to what to do. Then he said, "We set out for Ksi'yæn and there we must go. Should any here want to go to 'Klusems, let them do so now."

Only one group separated from the others and paddled up the river (Nass). This was led by Menæsk and Sagau'wan. This group was very

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numerous. As they came to the mouth of this river, they saw on the sand bank high and dry, a huge monster. It was lifeless and had many human faces on its fins. It was larger than a whale.



6. Helmet: Whale carrying two people to the other world.

As they approached it, they heard a voice chanting a dirge. This they knew to be a supernatural being, and they called it *Awremgyibelk* (Decayed Gyibelk—a monster). Nees'wamak and his people saw this, and he said, "I will take this as my crest. It shall be the property of my household." As he said this, the being sank down into the sand. They had only gone a short distance when Nees'wamak said, "Let us rest here a while, and we will try to

get some halibut." So they all fished halibut. Soon one of Nees'wamak's nephews pulled up his line, and behold, there was a monster Halibut, having many live human beings on its back and tail and in its fins.¹ As it came up, Nees'wamak saw that it was not hooked, but it was holding the halibut hook (*'nu*); and a dirge song was being chanted. He heard this, and he knew that these beings were given him to be adopted as crests. So he said, "I will take this Halibut, and it shall be known as Narhnarom Thrao (supernatural Halibut). It shall be another crest belonging to my household."

They travelled on southwards until they reached the mouth of a large river; this they knew to be the river they were looking for. They came to a big village. There they recognized some of their own people who had married into the Tsimshyan. They were the Gisparhlots tribe, and their chief at this time was Læ'et, of the Gispewudwade clan.

Nees'wamak was a great leader. He soon became the head chief of the Gisparhlots tribe. His brother Gulrhærh, a great warrior, moved over to the Git'andaw tribe, who were the neighbours of the Gisparhlots. Their chief at this time was Gyehhuk, who had married the sister of Gulrhærh. He, in turn, urged Gulrhærh to come over to his tribe with his own household. Lutkutsemti,² who was one of the younger nephews of Nees'wamak next to the Gitrhahla people (of Porcher Island), became also one of the warrior leaders. These Eagles were great warriors and a warlike group. Soon Nees'wamak became a head chief of the Gisparhlots; Gulrhærh rose to be the head chief of the Git'andaw tribe. As this Eagle group had come from a long way off in the North, they were wealthy and traded by going up the Ksi'yæn [Skeena] river. There they traded their products with the Gitksan and the Hagwelgyet tribes. This up-the-river trading was proclaimed by Nees'wamak as his own privilege, and no one else could go up the Upper Ksi'yæn to trade. He established his village on the Ksi'yæn, at the mouth of the Ksamrawt River. This was situated on the Ksi'yæn, so as to show his control of the river. Many attacks were made on the different villages by various tribes. The Git'amat people often raided the Tsimshyan villages.

At a time when chief Nees'wamak was away trading with the upper villages of the Ksi'yæn at Hagwelgyet, a Git'amat raiding party came to the Gisparhlots village, and without much effort, as there were only women and children and a few aged men there, they took many captives. Among them was a niece of Nees'wamak, a beautiful young woman. The Git'amat chief took her as his wife, and she stayed with him a while. Soon after, she was taken as captive by a Wudstæ (a tribe to the South), and she became the wife of the Wudstæ chief, who grew very fond of her. She gave birth to two sons, in the Wudstæ chief's house. The elder of these children was a very

¹The part immediately under the gill of the fish.

²In full, *Lutkutsemtihl nawaelpi stsawit*: In-around-lightning the house (of) Beaver; i.e., it is as bright as lightning in the house of Beaver.

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bright and clever boy, much more so than any of the other boys of the village. He was very much hated, but fearing the Wudstæ the mother did not say anything, until one day the young boys were competing with one another in weight throwing. The young Tsimsyan boy overcame all the others in these games, and the Wudstæ youths were much embarrassed. One of them said, "I hate these boys of unknown origin. They have no uncles or grandfathers. Yet they are so proud of themselves, as if they were our equals."

The young men heard this and felt hurt. The older, Legyærh, a name given him by his father (it being a name belonging to him), went to his mother, and said, "The other boys have said that I am of unknown origin, that I have no grandfather. Why do they say this, while our father is one of the chiefs of this village?"

"What they say is true," the mother answered. "You have many uncles, and your grandfather is chief of one of the most powerful tribes far away to the North Wind. We must go back there. After that, you will assume your own rank. We must tell your father."

So when the Wudstæ returned to his village, his Tsimsyan wife said, "Your sons have been ridiculed by your young people. They have been told that they are of no rank and have no uncles or grandfathers, that they have just drifted into this country. They feel very embarrassed, so now we must go back to our own land, or they will be subjected here to repeated taunts. I ask that you send us back to our people."

The Wudstæ chief did not speak for a long while, then finally he said, "I am going to train my sons first; then they shall return to their own country. It is not far from here. I will give them many things that are strange to your people, also much wealth so that they will not return as though they had been slaves here."

He took his sons and his wife, and they went away to a camping place, so as to be away from all the other Wudstæ folk. There he taught his sons the art of hunting and the use of the various war weapons. In the meantime, they were gathering a great quantity of food, which the chief stored away. Also he had plenty of furs. He got his large canoe ready. This they would use to reach the Haida. It was a huge one. He began to make preparations, as if he were going on a long journey. When all was ready, he took ten slaves and put them in the canoe. Among these was a Tsimsyan who had been taken as a captive. The Wudstæ chief said, "You will guide this canoe back to the country of my children's uncle, and you may go back to your own people." To his sons the chief said, "You and your mother are returning to your own people. There you shall assume your own positions among your people. The contents of the canoe you will use to give to your uncles. The slaves are yours. Your mother is wise, and she will tell you what to do." So now everything was loaded into the large canoe, and they set out. During the

night, they paddled; when daylight came they rested, as they did not want to meet any war-raiding parties who might be travelling about.

Soon they came to Hartley Bay, which was the home of the Gitrha'ta. Here they rested in the village and then travelled on until they came to Metlakatla. When they arrived at Nees'wamak's village, here the people were surprised. The niece of Nees'wamak, who had been thought dead now entered her uncle's house. "It is I. These are your two grandchildren. Their father was Hæmtseet. Before sending us back to you, he gave his name to my oldest son. This name is Legyærh. He also gave you this canoeload of many valuable things. Some of the *narhnorhs* are to be the property of Legyærh. The ten slaves who manned the canoe are to be your property, and the man who was our guide is to return to his own Gitwilgyawts tribe. The Wudstæ treated us very kindly. Only the boys ridiculed Legyærh, because he was much more clever than they. They were very jealous of him. So their father sent us to you."

The gifts and the slave men were placed in front of Nees'wamak. "It is well that you should have come. It is your wisdom that has brought you back to us. Now that your eldest son has arrived, he will be my successor, as he seems to be a good leader. I will show him to all my fellow chiefs among all the Tsimssyan, inviting them to a feast at which I am going to present my nephews, the eldest being Legyærh and the youngest Neespelæs, as well as my niece who is Belham-næ'erh [Mother-of-Pearl, black fish].

Nees'wamak announced that his successor would be Legyærh. When Legyærh did finally succeed his uncle, he retained his Wudstæ name of Legyærh, and, being a warlike leader, he soon became head-chief of all the Tsimssyan. This is the narrative of the Fugitive (Gwenhoot) Eagles.

THE CORMORANT HEAD-DRESS OF SEN'ARHAET

(This narrative was recently recorded by William Beynon from Mrs. Helen Clifton and Mrs. Robinson, of Hartley Bay. Sen'arhæt was the 'royal' Eagle chief of Kit'amat.)

The members of the Eagle clan are all connected: those among the Haida, the Git'amat, the Gitsalas, and the Niskæ—those of the Gitrhawn group. This is their myth of origin.

The Haida lived at a village known as Tsigwa, and there a great chief and his people lived. One day, his nephew, together with four companions, set out to fish trout some distance from the village, and they intended staying there overnight. As they were travelling along, the man sitting in the bow of the canoe looked into the water, and behold a beautiful head-dress appeared in the water. It looked like a live cormorant. He took his pole,