

The splendid wall of sculpture

To John (Sea of Mountains) 1876 at night in moonlight

p24 From the center of every house, and also at a little distance out in front and in rear of many of them, rose heavy carved pillars ranging from thirty to sixty feet high standing out in relief against the sky high above the houses. . . . The houses themselves were partially lost to view in the shadow of the hills, but the ascending columns in their varying heights rose clear above them in the moonlight, and gave the village the appearance of an Eastern city with innumerable minarets.

Next morning at dawn went ashore again.

p27 The village consists of about forty houses, . . . built in one continuous line, some little distance above high water mark. . . . that which attracts the eye and seizes the attention at once is the array of carved cedar pillars and erected monuments that rise in profusion throughout the length of the village.

In the center of the front face of every house was an upright pillar of cedar, generally about forty feet high and from two to three feet in diameter. From base to top these pillars had been made to take the forms of animals and birds, and huge grotesque human figures, resembling somewhat the colossal figures recovered by the excavation at Nineveh. . . . The carvings were in some places elaborate, and in many places coloured. Some of the pillars, a few yards in front of the houses, were surmounted by life-size representations of birds or animals, the token of the family, coloured in a fanciful manner.

.... The main and tallest pillars, however, were those of which one formed the centre of each house, and through which entrance was had into the interior.

p30 I can hardly exaggerate the surprise which was generally felt at this unexpected spectacle ... an Indian town of such indisputable age, with such evidences of dexterity in a branch of art, and still more strange the associations which one felt excited between what we now saw and that which, in the older world, had been lost for centuries, gave rise to endless wonderment and surprise. Again and again it was asked where did the Hydras obtain the models from which they have copied, since they never could have seen what they have carved about their dwellings. One of the party purchased a walking-stick - - -

OC1 little known until recently - - tried to buy a pole, no deal.