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THE HISTORY OF THE EARLY KISPAKLOOTS TRIBE

A great many years before Legax was the royal chief of the tribe. Waxhed was the original Chief, whose ancestor was formerly lived at Tumlaxam, which means (on good and beautiful land) before the story of an overwhelming flood, which came and submerged all the land, and spread death and destruction all around. The name of his clan, in the Timshean language, are Kispawitweda, which represented symbolically, by the grizzly bear on the land, second the finback whale in the sea, third the owl in the air, and rainbow in the heavens. Tumlaxam or beautiful land was located on the left side of the Guseyan or Skeens River on the side of the Neas River B.C. A long time before flood. This original chief and his family leave the good land, and moved down Kitsjalasue now canyon. Here the Kispaxloots tribe agree to give him a position of chief, which he accepted. He carried on his duty of chief until he die. His fame was little known and found that he had been chief, but a short time. He with his people build a villages on both sides of the Skeens River known as Lax'-ena-max-ltha-qualy, and Jolth-wa-eealt. Before this Chief die; he assigned his Chieftainship to Ne-yes-ewa-mak, who belong to Lax-sgeak or eagle clan; which represented symbolically by eagle on the air, beaver on the land, shark in the water, and halabut.

This new chief made another village known as Kitause (people of the sand) and Tsim-He-awe. This villages was a

History
former chief
waxhed

Villages

fishing places during the summer time or season; Here they gathered berries and salmon, which was growing in abundance along both banks of Skeena River. They dried them for winter used, as well as for trading purpose, is secured.

The salmon caught was curing by smoking and drying it for winter used. The people of this tribe was a busy people. At the closed of the summer season, they all go up to the mountains to hount mountain sheep in great number and cure them in the same way as they cure salmon, some of them go to the vallies and Triputrais that flows into Skeena River for hunting bears, beavers and all kinds of fur animals. These furs, which, before the white people came, they used to cover their nakedness with; the Chiefs and Princes and principal men wore marten furs and some other softest furs that was found in all the Skeena vallies. Any other furs wore by common people. The Chiefs, princes, and principal men who lives on the sea coast wore sea otter furs and some other soft furs, that suit them. In winter time. Neys-ewa-mak moved to his winter residence. The long winter months were mostly devoted to fun and frolic, feasts and gambling, giving away property or (potlatches) dances, and medicine work. Sometimes during the feast days. One of these Chiefs invite all their fellow Chiefs to show his supernatural power, and to convinced the people of his power to perform a miracle. When all these chiefs came togetherd with a multitude of people from the diffrent tribes to see a

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wonderful display, which will be performed by the chief with his prominent men from the different tribes to assist him. These men were skillful in devising the most cunning and wonderful work. A favourite way of showing his power to perform a miracle, was to put a chief in a wooden kittle to be boiled alive till his whole body be cooked.

His assistance brought a wooden kittle box in, about eight feet long two feet wide. In the presence of spectators, they put the stones on the big fire, and when the stones came into hot red. They put the sufficient water in it, and then dropped in red hot stones, so as to make the water boil, after they had put the lid on again. More red hot stones dropped again. When it was boiling, they open the box and the steam poured out. Then they caught chief, and lifted him up, and threw him into the box, and put the lid on again. Each one of the spectators heard the chief's voice inside the box, crying with pain, first very strongly, and then a little weaker, and still weaker, till they could hardly hear it at all. Then it ceased altogether. The assistance of the chief now waited quite a while, so that the chief would be boiled very thoroughly. Then they started to open the lid, when, suddenly, the chief's voice was heard, very strongly and distinctly, coming from the forest, away back of the house. When the box was opened, there was no chief there, the box was turned over and a great mass of eagle's feathers, poured out which was

scattered all around the house. Nor was there any water or stones in the box but eagle's feathers. In few minutes, the chief came in through the door, and did not look as if he had been perboiled at all.

This chief who displayed his wonderful manifestation is belong to the tribe known as Kitsgees, name was Galcussug.

There is nothing supernatural in this world as we understand it now a days. There many things which at first sight appear to be supernatural, but on examinging these things we find that they are not supernatural at all. Only our inability to comprehend them - or our ignorance of the principles involved - makes these things appear to belong to the supernatural realm. God is the only one who could manifest his power by creating the heavens and the earth. and no one else besides him. It is used by our old men after they converted to Christianity, that each chief in the different tribes had his counsellors. It was part of the official business of the latter to instruct the new chief in the secrets of the family.

Here is another celebration of "ya-que", mean giving away property, which means in Chinook language as (Potlatch). This celebration had been going on from time immemorial without ceasing, till after the Gospel was preached among the natives. The potlatch are performed as follows: When a chief died. His elder sister's elder son succeeded him.

Potlatch

The dead chief's property all descended to him. So did the widow, whom he should be marry her according to rule. Whether he had a wife already or not. If he did not want to marry her, he must give her an indemnity, or to give her enough wealth to give her going during her widowhood, or until she could marry someone else. If the young chief would marry the widow as the Tsimshean law requires the nephew to marry the widow, although the wise men add, that a young man and an old wife, and an old man and a young wife, should ever be the rule, because then, in both cases, there is at least one wise person in the house. In the time of celebrating this potlatch. First of all. We have a "Lega-kat". a man of higher birth and greater wealth than the rest. There are few of them among the tribes. These Le-ga-gekat were required to bring in their contributions first to chief's house. Which they did. They brought in their contributions in a great many, that the people who saw it were admired of his wealth, such as costly copper, slaves, and wealth. The more display that can be made, and the more property can be given to the chief by the people of the tribe. The greater glory is reflected on the tribe. Therefore, all the members of the village present to him for days all they could give. The common people of the tribe gives guns, blankets, furs of all kinds, elk skins and blankets in a big bundle are carried along the beach by carriers walking in single file

A high ranked woman is required to do as the high ranked

men does. A day before the great potlatch, they exhibit their gifts publicly. Hundrends of yards of calico and cotton goods are flapping in the breeze, proceeded from the house of where the high ranked women live to house of the chief, and unrolled to its full length; the farther away from the chief's house the better, a bearer is then secured for about every five yards, and it is carried in triumph to chief's house. When the contributions are all in. On the next day. The nephew heir called a meeting of his counsellors, and his wife, who has the memo sticks of her deceased husband which had been given away before he dies. The memo sticks is posted on all his gifts. For the chief never gives away anything which he is not sure to get back with interest at the next potlatch which that chief gives. This heir and his counsellors spend a good deal of their time in keeping track of what the decease have received from each chief at every potlatch, and calculating what they shall give to each in order to return and equivalent, and a little more. He also count how many other chiefs still owing to his deceased uncle. At the end of the meeting, they count the wealth. They spread the mat, and on it, they spread the blankets elk skins and other things and keep on piling, till the end of the pile reach the center part of the roof, while costly coppers, slaves standing along side of the house, also guns. Canoes was not taken in but represented by small sticks. When they equal devided among

those chiefs who are to be his guests on the morrow. The great day comes, and with it the chiefs and the leading men of the other tribes, and of other distant settlements. How many blankets, elk skins, and other articles will be given to each chief is represented by a stick. So they made many bundle of memorandum-sticks. A herald announces the articles. The chief, who continuously consults a bundle of memorandum-sticks in his hand announces the name of the recipient, and with great pomp the gift is delivered. The own property of the chief with the contributions of the tribe such as slaves, canoes and coppers were all gone. Though the next morning the chief is as poor as when he came into the world, the fact does not bother him a bit, for he has experienced the glory of a potlatch, which will be spoken of for many moons.

This is the Tsimshian way of banking and the life insurance, moulded into one. He is never gives away anything which he is not sure to get back with interest at the next potlatch which that chief gives.

The home of the Indian chief is not a convenient place to keep potted wealth in, so he sets the ball rolling. Some of it here, and some there; but as time goes on it comes back with more, sometimes one half. Now from this chief, and then again from another, till all the chiefs made Potlatch. It is the same way as the white people does of banking their money. His deposit in the bank is cashed out in smaller amounts, as needs it, and a little interest

added for the use of it. So it is with the natives. It is not a foolishness, nor a lavish presents, or gift, as the white people thought. What more can be required?

As to this proceeding being in the nature of a life insurance as well, let the following indicate: The chief dies, but his wife has the memo sticks, and is posted on all his gifts, and as to who is owing him, and how much, and no chief will dare to slight the nephew heir, fail to invite him, or to make him the suitable gift due to his ancestor, for he well knows that the widow keeps a strict account, and as she has married the heir, she can keep him posted. Woe to the chief who failed to return the gift he owed. Songs would be made about him, "shaming" him, and he just as well seek death at once. Life would be unendurable after such a deed. He has been guilty of the unpardonable sin, that is all.

It is even suggested that it is in order to enable the heir to keep tract of those valuable claims, that the Tsimshean law requires the nephew to marry the widow because she keep the memo sticks. All through the winter season was one continuous round of feasting.

In the month of March is the close season of Potlatch and all the dances, of the different clubs, feasts and gambling. Then turn their attentions for work, such as fishing pupose, diging clams, making canoes.

THE FISHING SEASON IN NAAS BAY

In the early part of march. The Tsimsheans of the different tribes at Max-lthig-gxathah left their homes, and came with families to their ancient fishing grounds on the banks of the Naas Bay, forty miles or so farther North, where the waters of the great river tumble over the sand bar into Portland Canal. They know that the time is very near for the oolaken fish would run up the river. The oolaken fish is a wonderful sweet fish to eat when freshly caught, is in appearance a good deal like a smelt, and contain more oil than any other known fish. In the flying pan it will melt away like a lump of butter, when fried and provided with a wick, it will burn like a candle. Between the 16th and 20 of March, each year, you could see them coming by the millions or by billions, up through the Portland Canal, and hustle over the bar of Naas River, their great stamping ground. At the time we are now interested in, their coming furnished a great sight. On the banks of the river, and in hundreds of canoes near and on the bar, from five to eight thousand natives, all crying and yelling as they attempt to fill their canoes with the shining silver fish. They are very careful how to handle them, or what to use to catch them. The natives named this fish "saviour" because this fish is come first before the old food which had been stored for winter used is nearly exhausted. To they take a good care how to caught them.

The Tsimsheans believe that their fish is just as sensitive as they are as to any offense to its dignity. The rake was used from time immemorial, and they are still retain to use it. If they would used any other then rake, the fish is "shamed" and may refuse to come back to its usual haunts. The rake is made out of hemlock tree. They made it plain, smooth and thin, one side were bore a small holes which enough for thirity or more teeth of hart part of hemlock tree, about two inches long. Before insert them. The spruce gum is melted and dip the end of each tooth that the body of rake would firm hold the teeth. Later part of the season, it was allowed to use dip net.

In those early days. Some of the Tsimsheans had understood the ways of the heavenly bodies, such as the sun and moon. They could fortell the exact day in which this fish comes. So before the set time comes. Several canoes went farther down the river, where these fish was always show up first. As soon as the canoes goes little shoals, jabbering and chattering, moving back and forth, up and down. Little further down, a lurking the cunning hair seals, watching their chance; and still further down, you could see the spouting of large, finback whales, which follow the seals. These monsters indicate where the colanken fish comes out the surface. The canoes goes where the gulls and whales was. They filled the canoes with in a short time. They came to the camp with a sharp, long yelling, that the shoals of fish may follow them up the river, and also a sign to the

camp that the canoes were loaded with fish. The people of the camps ready to get all the fish he wanted. Those who are in the canoes filled several baskets with small fish and threw them on the beach in every front of each camp. The people rush and tumbling over others to get the fish. Some of them got many others less while still others have none. The canoes landed from camp to camp with sharp long yelling.

THE METHOD OF COOKING THE FIRST FISH

The manner of cooking the first coming fish is as follows: The house holder selected some one among them, and dressed him with a heavy warm cloths or cape made out of mountain sheep's wool. They bent a green willow into oval shape, spaced enough to lay the fish in cross wise. The chosen man put it over the fire to be roasted, when one side turn brown. They spread a matt, made of ceder bark an which the fish to lay when turned over. When roaster turned the fish on the matt. Every one in the house wouthed "lah waaa." They turn the brown side up, and let the one side will be cooked again, when became brown; the roaster turned on the matt again. They all shout again. "Lah Waaa." The house holder distribute the fish to every one in the house. If the fish is too few. The house holder divided the fish in two, that all may have it. The shout of "Lah Waaa" was heard from every houses in every camps. It is said: That if these fish cooked in otherwise than roasted; these fish may not come back as used. When it comes in great quentites. They boil them in a wooden kittle by the aid of red hot stones, and eat it with wooden spoon.

Later part of the season. They bent the fish into the shape of a hook, and the sharp end of a stick pierced the center of the hooked formed fish, and pushed it down into the lower ind of the stick; it keep on doing till the stick filled to the top end, and let it stand on the fire side untill cook. This is the superstitions of the Tsimsheans from way back to a remote age, and very strict in observing it. There were many

stranges from a distant tribe, who mixed up among the Tsimshean people who are carelessly cook the fish and carelessly handle them; The next year not one of these fish return as used. All those who were exhusted with food are perish with hunger.

THE STORY OF KITJALASUE

The Kitsjalasue people related the story about the
stranges who use knife and boiled the spring salmon in an iron
kittle, and at night the thunder peals and lightings flashes
and heavy wind and rain. Other story was related by the
people of Naas River. If the salmon was dishonored. It will
not return as usual. or something will sudden happened. Some
boys at Naax River ill treat the salmon. They caught them,
cut a slit close their fin and put gravel and stones in wound
so that they could not use their fins, and then let them out
in the stream again. These poor fellows wriggled and
suffered, and could not swim with sand and gravel down their
back. While others treated the same way and put or insert a
peles of gum wood in the slits and burned; while burning and
returned into the stream again and swim with the light on
their backs. This made the god of the mountain angry with
the people whose children had ill treated the salmon, and
he spewed fire so that it ran down the mountainside, woods,
water and stones, are burned together, and way down into a
river where the fire sputtered all around.

The fire forced futher down the river. The fire melting
the rock into a liquit form and run down stream as water. But
a god of another mountain, near by, thought it was too bad, so
he move out his part, and stop the stream. and the fire was
put out. You could go where the fire had licked the forest, and
you will find out that this story is true. This story lead the
minds of every one to belivee that the fish just as sensitive

as they are. So they were very strickly to their superstition. When the fire was ceased, The people then came together to consult about what should be done to propitiate the irate the mountain god, and the salmon as well, so he would not "go back" on them, and they came to the conclusion that the naughty children had to be killed. But when the mothers heard this, they raise a rumpus, and would not allow the sacrifice. The people then comepromised by agreeing, instead, to kill the dogs of the village, which were thereupon all sacrificed and burned as a peace offering to the salmon.

When this fish comes futher up the Naas River, outside every camps. They all set out and fishing with rake; they fill the canoes with in a short while. The sea gulls, by thousands, swinging above them jabbering and chattering, moving back and forth, up and down, all day long. The yells of eight thousand fish men with the voice of sea guls was heard without ceasing during the day. Their fishing business continue for a month or more. Thousands and thousands of bushels of this little fish are landed.

THE CARICATURE OF LEGAX AT GALA DISE

A little more than ten days since the greatest feast was given by Legax. He called another meeting. Just the principal men of his tribe were invited in this gathering. After feasting them. He addressed them as follows: "My honorable men, men in whom I trusted in years passed, present and the future years to come. You all knew what was happened in the passed few days which lead my mind what shall be done in the future, that the succeeding generations may know how many coppers were given away. You all knew that our invitators were repulsed by my great wealth which I had given away one third of it; and two third is now left in my possession. All the ceremonial coppers were gone. Now at present. What shall we do that the succeeding generations may not forget the number of ceremonial coppers which I had given away? This question I ask you to discuss." Those wise men talk among themselves but they do not quite understand what the their chief have in his mind. One of them stood up and spoke to the chief. "Legax, chief, tell us what has been formed in your mind, make it plain to us and we shall be able to lay a best plan for your future." Then he said: "This plan popped up in my mind is this. Which one of these our neighboring mountains is fit to paint my face one, with the ceremonial coppers?" One of his man spoke. "Legax, chief, I am quite agree with your plan. I chose one of the highest mountains in Skeena River because all the Tsimshian tribes passed that way in early spring and fall." Legax answered him said: "Yes it does, but only the Tsimshian tribes. Though

THE METHOD OF COOKING THE OOLAKEN FISH TO TAKE OIL
OUT OF THEM.

When the fishing season were ended. The people begain to cut wood in a great quantity enough to burned all through the boiling season. The Tsimshean people had been kept in their poission a wooden kittle, which they used in many years passed, for boiling fish to take the oil out. The size of this kittle is 4 x 8 ft. wide. One third of it was filled with water; and put 8 or more baskets of fish in it. They made to boil by red hot stones dropped into the receptacles. The allow these hot stones to remain in the kettle for an hour or more. After an hour passed, they take the stones out from the wooden kettle, by the aid of big wooden spoon with two or more holes in the bottom of a large spoon enough to drain the liquit form of the boiling fish, and enough to hold two or more hot stones at a time. This spoon has a long handle about six feet. When the wooden spoon brought the hot sones on the surface of the kettle a woman or a boy pour cool water on the hot stones, to lessened the hot of the stones, he take it and plunged into cool water which keep in a good size a box long side of a large wooden kittle, and threw them along side of the fire.

The fire keep going from dawn till late at night to keep the stone hot. The grease of the boiling fish floats on top. More water was pouring in the kettle till nearly full. Hot stones were put in again and boiled for another hour. An hour passed; the stones were takant out the same way as before.

Then another four hot stones were put in, one in each corner of the wooden kettle to keep it boile. When the boiling of the kettle graduly down. The grease floats on top clear. Then they skimmed it and pouring into a good size a box to be boiled again by the hot stones until the grease is clear as crystal. When the grease is well cooked you could see the bottom of the box which contain it. From this, to another box which had been prepared to kept the grease for a long time. All the four corners of this said box were puttyed. It takes a month or more of incessant boiling to finish the job. Some families make from fifty or more boxes. They cured these fish by sun drying; So they remained in their camps for another few days to wait till gets tryed.

THE END OF THE FISHING SEASON AT NAAS BAY

When the fishing season is over, the grease so obtained. The Tsimshian now return to their homes at Maxlthagaxltha, from where, during the early summer months, the halibut banks lure the fishermen to obtain a further supply from the ocean's store house. They caught halibut of from seventy five to two hundred and fifty pounds greedily snap at their rudely constructed wooden hooks, usually baited with a herring, and colakan and table fish. They curing the halibut caught, by smoking and sun drying it for winter use, and trading purpose. The seaweed was gathered and dried by the sun. When gets dry, they made into a squier form, and press together; they pile the stones on the top of the box to make it hard; it hard as a plug of tobacco. The herring eggs also gathered, and also dried by the sun. All kinds of salt water food were gathered and well cured both by smoking and sun dried. Here, in a few weeks, not only all necessary for immediate use, but a full supply for the remainder of the year, as well as for trading purposes, is secured, When July comes, it is off again, this time to the old fishing villages on the Skeena River, where their ancestors for centuries, have exercised the privilege of catching the red salmon, as it is wriggling its way up to its breeding ground, to deposit spawn.

THE KISBAXLOOTS TRIBE'S FISHING VILLAGES IN SKEENA RIVER

There are four fishing villages of the Kisbaxlotts people in Skeena River. One name Jolthweealt; Enamaxlthaqualy; Hee-out, and Kitoush. These four fishing stations are very busy all through the summer season, because the red salmon or sakeye comes up here on the middle of July.

Villages

So the people of this tribe are busy of catching salmon by using dip net. During the long summer season. These people make all they wanted. They cured by the same old way of smoking them. The salmon heads were smoked, and also their tails too. These red salmon was not only necessary for immediate use, but a full supply for the remainder of the year, as well as for trading purposes, is secured, and the whole famel now turns its attentions towards picking and drying the wild berries growing in abundance along the banks of the river.

One morning, in Negaswamak's Camp. Many women are gathered to pick, and asked the young sister of Chief Neyaswambk to go with them to pick berries. The girl was agree to go with them. They all set out in a bounch; they climp futher up the mountain and found a place where lots of berries. They scatterd all over this place. Much better berries grows farther up the mountains then that on the of river.

Before this time. A young woman die at Kitquengar, she's the daughter of the chief, and not many day after the cremation of this young girl. Her young brother came in to his father's

Story of one
gandamart
(Kitwanga)

house with his few friends and talk them and some times laugh; their laugh increased the sorry of his father and mother, so his father spoke to him as fellow: "My son, it is too early to forgot the dead of your loving sister. You must be quite for little while longer. His son went out without a word and went up into the forest, away back of the house. He set down for a great while, to think upon what he shall do to avoid his sorew; he feel that he has unable to kill himself, then he come the conclusion to climp up to the mountain till reach the summit and go as far as he go or as long as he has life in him. He start to ascent at once till he reach the summit. He went down toward the down stream. He always kept in sighted the river, and did not take with him a bit of food. He allowed himself to die in starvation, or killed by any wild animal or whatever be fall on him. At night he sleep under big tree. In the morning. He traveling from summit to summit until one fine summer morning, he saw the smoke farther down the river; he keep his eye on, and go toward it, until he sighted clearly.

He sighted many villages and camps. He went on farther down till he heard some voices calling each other resemblinge the voices of a women, he crawl farther distance; He found the place where the grass had been trampled, the bushes berries crushed aside. With great caution he advanced farther on till he glimps a young girl picting berries alone among the buches not far beyond rock. He take off his garment, and suddenly