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~~MINES AND GEOLOGY BRANCH~~

A. C. M. Boshear

DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND RESOURCES

OTTAWA, CANADA

Jan. 12/45

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Preparations were now being made for the erection of the second pole. This was the Jamhada pole of Gaxsgabax. There is considerable feeling this morning and Xengwax sent out his wife to convey a messenger to ~~the~~ hoxpaqwitk, who is the man that is directing everything in connection with these ceremonies, and she is to convey to him that so far Gaxsgabax had not as yet complied with his Xengwax request that he chop the Jiquis in dispute off his totem pole, as he said he would do, when at Kitwangax. She returned to the house with this information. "Gaxsgabax is not going to change the totem pole, but he is going to change the name of it and it in no way, had anything to do with the pole of nexg, part of the Xengwax group at Gitwongax."

Xengwax, said to his wife, "He is lying in matter what he may call it, he has made it known that he is going to erect whatever he wants and is going to have no regard for my feelings."

Tawa'losk, laxsik chief of Gitwongax came in and spoke to Xengwax. "Let these people do as they wish if they do anything that will not be proper or not correct and usurp the rights of anybody, it will become

known at once. So chief Kengwar, I ask of you not to interfere in any way. We all will know when they do anything wrong. If you but say the word we will immediately leave here and return to Gitwongax, but this will bring ridicule upon us all. They will say we are jealous and afraid, but if you so wish we can all return to our homes at once. It is they that have broken their promise to you, but as I said, we will be called many names. If they do anything that is wrong, our brothers from Gitwontkai will know and they are wise people and will know what to say.

So Kengwar replied. "I will do as you wish I will stay, but in to-days festivities I will not take any part. I was to assist Gaxgabax in his feast to-day, but I will not attend as something maybe said that will anger me and cause me to say or do something which I may regret and will bring shame and ridicule on you all. So I will heed your wise counselling and abide by your wishes."

Gaxgabax had in the morning, just before daybreak, gone around the village and sang his dirge song he was accompanied by others of his group and continued singing until they had made a complete tour of the village. By this the people knew that Gaxgabax was about to give a yarak feast.

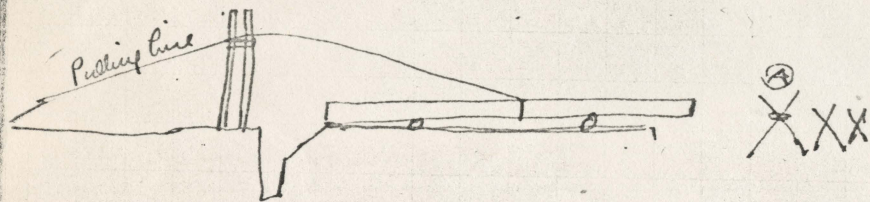
A messenger came about noon inviting the assistance of all in the house, to assist his chief gaxsgabar to erect his totem pole.

Each individual in the house was asked with the exception of those of the same clan or phratry as gaxsgabar, who in this case was tengwax, gitongwax and his niece, hālus and the owner of the house in which I stayed was also a gaxhada he was not invited but his wife and children were. and then all made preparations to go.

The same procedure as that in the case of wiséks pole erection was followed. A long line attached to about the middle of the pole and three lashed ^(A) pronged sticks to raise the end. The actual direction of the work was under the paternal side of the house. In this case was the gissahést house of hoxpogwótkⁿ. The guests lined up in a long row and all women with men and children all pulled and men raised the end.

Just previous to the pole being raised gaxsgabar together with other men of gidzagútk^a who were hoxpogwótkⁿ and wiséks came to the base of the pole and there they sang the diigo. (afterwards I learned it was the diigo of the pole of nexga.)

The pole itself was made by féin, largibi of git'anméks, (Abel Oaks) and the length of it was (42) forty two feet above ground, six feet in the ground. After the pole was erected the hauling



rope was cut up into six foot lengths and given to each of the people that had helped in erecting it.

There was no further ceremonies and all returned to their abodes.

About three in the afternoon messengers came to all the houses and in the same manner by ~~the~~ touching the ground in front of the invited person and announcing that when the bugle sounded they were to come and to bring a drinking cup.

I omitted giving a description of the pole. The pole as I said was forty two feet in length and the name, which will be announced at the feast to-night was ganugét. meaning "pole of people." It represents the logs that nexg had used in defending the t'sotop at gitwongax and these were rolled down upon the people attacking when they came up the slopes of the t'sotop, thus killing them.

The figures on the pole were, bottom. 1^o The warrior nexg, wearing a head dress. Above this were three ^{human} figures on the pole representing the victims of the pole, when used at the t'sotop. These differ from those on the original pole of nexg. As the figures were up and down two heads up and the middle figure inverted. In this case the figures are cross ways on the pole.

haswólget duf. ratne-n - lafibu

Sam'ogit'femle gis'ehst

The shaft of the pole was next and then a figure with a laumgait representing the warrior néxg. on top of this was a háisk.

Iwens told that actually this was an eagle and had been taken from the git'amet's by conquest and owing to the fact that it was an eagle symbol of the laxskik phratry they named it the midzoks, while actually it was an eagle.

At the summit of the bupke all the guests came and were seated in their regular places with the exception of the ganhadas of all the visiting tribes and the Gi'zagukla people. These were in the background, but did not take their places as guests but rather assisted in many ways the host.

Just as the people came in gaxsgabaxs was in the hall attired in his dancing robes. and when all had come in he went out as did all of the others of his immediate nephews. Just as soon as all had come in, a spokesman for the git'wont'kai' people got up and said. "Although it may seem not quite proper, but because we are now in a new age I am asking the kindness of my brother, that he grant us a small portion of the time in which to wipe out, an incident that has brought a smudge of ridicule upon gam'nax'yetka and wixé, and now you

⊗ This was the incident in which this man came in more or less drunk and otherwise made a fool of himself during one of the bedais.

The attendants who watched the guests had waited and then went out and looked for the tardy guest. When he was brought in, the Kitwankool people were very embarrassed.

⊗ Runners was of or cloth about 2 feet wide

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will remember when our chief wixstinson made some mistakes and tonight he wishes to again look upon his fellow chiefs without shame. "⊗"

So the gitwantkui people arose and sang a drinking song and then they got up and passed around cigarettes a package to every person and also, ten boxes of paper was passed around. Thus the incident was forgotten. No body spoke.

Then the feast of gaxgabax went on with all the food was brought in and all this was piled in the center of the hall and then runners[⊗] was spread lengthwise in front of the guests and the length of the hall. Then food was placed on these. There was no table but the runners was spread on the floor and then the food served on these. Only tea and bread was consumed and great portions of beef was placed in front of the visiting and guest chiefs and smaller portions to the other guests. Then other foods was distributed when all had finished eating. The paternal origin of gaxgabax then called out. "Come in my son. Come in and look upon your fellow chiefs. You have been outside long enough. Come in cease your crying and fulfil your responsibilities to your fellow chiefs." The man that called out was spok of git'améks, Jun whose house this man gaxgabax originated.

④. ha'wil is literally means - spear weapon
used in combat.

⑤. ^{'andam} ~~ha~~ = with 'naks = marriage
" marriage tribute."

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Then gaxsgabax came in attired in his gwashedet
and dancing hat and in his hand was a bag
and he put this bag into a large pan in the
middle of the hall in full view of all and
emptied the contents into the pan amounting
to \$300⁰⁰. Then he was followed in by his nephews
'wist'is who came in with \$200⁰⁰, then others came
in with amounts of \$100⁰⁰ and 50⁰⁰. Then the
chief took the raven rattle and danced, then
all of those of raven ^mpalernal origin came forward
and then gave their donations this was called
ha'wil^④. Then came those that were married
to raven spouses men and women. First came
those that were closely related to the raven house
of gaxsgabax, that is those that had marriage
connection with the house. These came in and
were met by the singers at the doorway who sang
a drinking ^{"g'aw"} song and those that came in
acted as if they were drunk. The first to come
in was a man married to the niece of gaxsgabax
and he came in as if intoxicated, then women
came in and acted in similar manner. When
they came to the collection box they took off their
head dress which was decorated with currency
and threw these into the collection and the
amounts were announced. When all of these
had finished, then those that were among the
spectators who had raven spouses went
forward and gave their donations. This was
called ~~ha'wil~~^⑤. It was as explained
'andam'naks.

⊗ ha'naks, the gift of a suitor to the father of a bride to be. and also to the uncle. It was a non-returnable gift.

to the ruler in ancient times within the power of the chief to take away from their respective spouses any that fails to make his tribute. It was done in full view of all so that any failing to contribute would be seen, by all of the others. So it was a tribute that was very compulsory, as any that had spouses and did not recognize this tribute were deemed cheap and did not value their spouses. But then only those that had given a ha'naks ⊗ could in the case of a man, contribute to the 'andom'naks tribute.

When all contributions were in and then a man from the paternal origin of garsgabax was called to count the amount. This was called, "domt da'pt haiyetsk" -
"will he break copper shield"

This ceremony in older days would mean that this person would have to break up the chief's copper shield and distribute it to those who were to receive it.

Then while the counting of the money was in progress, the git'songax group then all sang a taunting song not directed at anybody but the git'wankai group, who had sung a song of a similar nature the day before. Some reference was made to the Hageltin group, in that they were now gamko'we (white people.)

When the counting was finished then it was announced that there was \$4,000 in the chief money box which would be used for benefit of the chiefs. Then the gwink gift (presents) was distributed by which every person got an equal portion, with the exception of the reigning head chiefs who got more. It was also announced that these ceremonies would take a long time and that mo'txon was going to make a final sa'vix^o proclamation, at the finish of gaxsgabax feast.

When the money ^{gifts} was finally ^{gifts} returned and then distributed in the same manner as was done in the case of the first feast of wis-ks. The exception being that only the ganhad's were omitted and did not sit in their places as guests, but in many instances assisted the house of gaxsgabax.

The amounts given to each of the guests was very much the same in amount & rank was shown by the various amounts given.

When all of money gifts had been given out then gaxsgabax arose and said to all of the guests.

"Chief, chiefs, Puma's, and people from all of the Ksain villages. First I want to thank all of you for at this

sa'vix : sa = make 'vix = rule.
"proclamation".

I have completed something which has had me worried for many years. This was something that I worried over, and now I can rest satisfied that through your help I have been able to complete all my responsibilities. You have seen to-day, that I have been able to erect my totem pole, and the story of which I am going to relate. It may seem strange to many of you why I have seemed to erect a pole which in every way resembles that of our brother nexga's pole at gitwongax.

This is the reason and in doing so I have not taken anything that I did not have the right to take, but rather I have shown to you all, the rights of my house and to whom they may go and who their connections are in other tribes and as to how they got the right to use what may seem to be the crests of other clans, and the story is thus.

he'xga, the great warrior was married to a woman of the house of ho'xpagwo'tk at gidzagukla and he had then come from his home on the do'top at gitwongax and made a home at gidzagukla. Ho'xpagwo'tk was very pleased at his new addition and he set aside an area in the vicinity of the sagukla mountains to be the territory of this man nexga, who now was establishing himself among the gidzagukla people. In the course of time, the nexga

new hunting ground

(myth)

⊙.we'in = origin of crest
fisher. a member of the
marten family, only a much
more better furred & larger.

then discovered a series of eight lakes in
back of the mountain to the other side of the
territory that his "pogwoth" had given him.
and at one of the lakes he came upon a huge
grizzly bear emerging from the lakes and
he at once took this to be his *nax-nix* he
could not use it as a crest, but he was going
to use it as a war armor and war dress.
He went on to the next lake and here he
found hanging from the limbs of one of the
trees a ⊙.we'in hat. (Fisher). around the edges
of this hat was ~~atoloni~~ & *bolhá* = abalone pearl.
and this he also took, but this he took to be
one of his crests. When he returned to his new
home at *gidzagúkla* and ~~the~~ the new things
he had found he showed to his people explaining
to them why he took them and where he got
them from and who may use them. Then
it was that his nephews lost much of these
new possessions. In the course of their
gambling, they began to lose much of their newly
acquired territory and in anger *ne-gu* went
away to seek new conquests. He went ~~to~~
to his territories which he had ^{newly} found and
now had lost and went over the adjoining hills
and with the company of a few of his nephews
he went on until they came to the vicinity of
the *Kitamat* village. Here he wanted to
see how many people were in the *Kitamat*
village and he also wanted to see how he and

best approach it, so he took his bearskin war
 garment. (x's'ok") and wore it and crossed
 over to the shore and walked about as a
 bear in daylight and completely fooled the
 Kitamat's who were unsuspecting of what they
 thought was a bear and as soon nexga got
 close to the village he had seen all he wanted to.
 So he returned to where his companions were
 and they made ready to attack, just when all
 the git'amats were asleep nexga and his
 followers attacked and so complete was the surprise
 attack that they overcame the Kitamat and took
 many captives among whom was the Kitamat
 Princess whom nexga took as his wife and she
 came with other ^{of his} followers to his house. When
 they had taken the Kitamat village, it was here that
 nexga took a crest from the eagle house at
 Kitamat, it was the eagle crest. But when he
 acquired this crest it was on the eagle pole at
 Kitamat so, knowing that if he took it and
 called it an eagle it would antagonize the
 feelings of the eagle clan on the So he
 called this acquired eagle crest, by another name
 although he explained it in his feast as to
 what it was and from whom he had taken it
 from in conquest. So thus when nexga
 returned to git'wongax he erected his Totem
 pole and as one of the nephews who came
 on and returned to git'zag'niklai and here
 he was privileged to use the same crest.

and names as his uncle as he was now
 rebuilding the house his uncle nexga had
 built on the gidzagakla jump. Thus he
 also had used as his front house painting the
 same as what was used at ~~the~~ git'wongax. The
 pole erected at git'wongax, had as a billow figure
 a human like figure depicting nexga. The
 warrior was wearing his grizzly war
 armour and with a grizzly head. The figures
 of small human beings, represented the
 Kitamat victims and the figure of a bird
 which he called 'm'odziks, = hawk. While in
 relating it he told how he acquired it, and the
 people knew it to represent the eagle. Now
 gaxgabax also had the right to erect a similar
 pole here, thus showing he had been with his
 uncle when he came from Gidzagakla and
 went to Kitamat on his invasion of that place.

So in a short while after he had returned from
 his Kitamat conquests he (nexga) then had
 lost his Kitamat wife who had escaped by
 cutting a large in half and going down the
 Skeena river, where she secured refuge from
 the gitsolás. Nexga then began to wander
 and he in this way got many new hunting
 territories this time he went up the Skeena
 and came to gispa'yaks and with him
 went his mother and while at Kispo'yaks
 he founded the house of kagai. Nexga stayed
 here until his mother's death and then went

⊗ This no doubt is a direct thrust
at Xengwax of git'wongax, who had
protectors

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over to Txémsom river and at many points
he established contacts which are recognized
even to this day. Then again in quest of
new hunting grounds he went to gissagáac
and when he got there he was forced to leave
and he then went back to Txémsom and
there he established himself and to this day
there is the house of lútxiá'sk, at gixá'dámk
and these may also use the crest of nexg'.

Then nexg' went from the habskúer and
went to the hagswó'et people and from
there he returned to git'wongax and came back
at times to gidzafukla where the jump was
maintained at all times some times under the
leadership of 'wist'is or gaxsgabáx, and
these houses at all times and to this day
recognize this and the right to use in common
the crest belonging to nexg'.

"This narrative that I am telling you
you, was narrated to me by my uncles and
I grew up in their midst. I do not have
to go to any court to determine my own
rights and ~~you~~ now you chiefs in ~~law~~
whether what I say is true or whether I am
doing something that I have no right to
do. I will leave this to you. Why do we
have to go to any Indian Agent to find
out what I should do. But I come to
you, as you are wise in all these matters

and I am now this day exhibiting to you, that which is my inheritance. I have not stolen anything that belongs to somebody else. So you have this day helped me to take my place among you and I have now fulfilled my obligations and shown to you the privileges belonging to our house."

Immed. after this wiséks of gidzagukla arose and said.

"Yes chief garsgabax what you have said is true, I myself attended a former feast of your uncle where he narrated the same story that you now tell and everything is as you said. And you have done the proper thing in showing this to your fellow chiefs, who know that what you say is true. I have been to the Nass River and have been to the coast (saltwater) and those people have knowledge of what you say. You will hear what other chiefs who are here at your invitation, you will hear what they have to say in the matter. I have heard the songs of which I heard you sing when you just erected the totem pole in memory of your uncles and also it may well be a monument for yourself when you are gone, as I have done in my own case."

① referred to as larmin. on-salt.

lut'kudzias of git'wonga (Hazelton) spoke.
 "What you have said and done my brother
 is just as you state it to be. There is much
 more you have left out, this is the fourth
 pole that has been erected by the house of
 gaxgabax and the jump at git'wonga is
 about extinct and the rights and property
 have been absorbed into other gaxgaba groups.
 This is done because we are now in another
 age and do not follow the ways of our pre-
 fathers. What should have been done, waste
 came to git'wonga and taken a number
 of your things and re-established the new
 jump at git'wonga. This would have been
 done in olden times, but as we are now in
 a different age and have adopted any method
 they choose. But what you say is true.
 You have shown us your guests that which
 belongs to you."

There was no speaker from git'wonga
 and gwa'astan, a'it'wontkut spoke.
 "Yes chief gaxgabax, we have heard
 what you said. What you have said is just
 what I myself know. I am now an old
 man and I am glad to be one that can
 declare to my children, to whom everything
 is strange and new and who profess to be in
 the same status as white men, therefore they
 are not qualified to express an opinion

⊗ Richard Douse.

There are in reality only a few of us left who really know. So I do not feel afraid to affirm everything that you have said.

You grew up in your uncle's house and were taught all your future responsibilities and duties and thus you have shown us to-day.

And you may now feel satisfied that you have done all your obligations to your position and no one may say anything to you that you have left anything undone. You may now sleep and feel rested that you may now take your place among your fellow chiefs and only thoughtless people may or will say anything, as they do not know what they talk of, in the same manner that winds spring up and do damage, not knowing why it does so, such is the manner and way of careless speakers, they are like a bad wind that damage rather than do good.

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Motxon, qan hada of gidzagukla was the last speaker:—

"Chief qarsqabax, I am glad that while I'm alive, you have done what you have done to-day. You have shown to your fellow chiefs and their people, that which belongs to you. You have narrated only that tradition which is your inheritance. You have not used

a false narrative but only that which is your own inheritance. This I am able to affirm as my uncles house and your uncles house stood side by side and each shared each others grief and joys and where one went the other always knew of it. My uncles, my grandfathers always whispered into my ears all about your group, in that we must stand by each other, so I'm happy now that I have almost reached the end of my road in this life. I have heard you narrate to your fellow chiefs, the traditions belonging to your house, and these are just as my uncles told me. I am glad you have done this while I am yet alive and able to confirm what you have said. Who is there here that can say you have right to do what you have done. Who are the white men who can give you the right to declare your own inheritance and to show to your fellow chiefs the rights of your uncles. Why should you go to them when they know nothing about you or your rights. So in this I am thankful that my life has been spared to see you assume the full rights and to be able to affirm your rights. You are not interfering with the rights of anybody else, nor are you taking anything that does not belong to you. It is so easy in these days to make false traditions and myths, as in basis of

① mólxon : is recognized as the
head chief of the Raven group.
at Gidjapukia and at present
the position is held by a woman
but at all times she is addressed as
a man and as sam'ogio.
(Mr. Joe Brown)
mólxon

② Arthur McDames

many of our young people have even neglected
assume their own names and know nothing
of themselves. I dread at times to think of what
the future of these young people will be. So
do not be afraid to take your position and
your proper seat in the councils of your
fellow chiefs. You have much wisdom and
you will have the respect of your people.
"So the people who have come to our village
and are the guests of my brother. I am glad
that you have honored us by your presence
and even though you are undergoing all
kinds of discomforts you have respected our
riches and have come to witness the many
important things that have been done and will
be done in our humble village. We are not an
important people we are nothing compared
to you but you have honored us greatly, my
friends. Your words too have been most kind
and your co-operation in our attempt to
entertain you, has been most wonderful. We
thank you all."

This terminated the ceremonies as far as
gaxsgabar was concerned and then a spokesman
"hoxpogwotk" spoke : "The chief mólxon
now wishes to take the rest of the evening and
will ask the chief to be patient. The next will
be a very important ceremony which mólxon