

Between that time and 1945, the Kitsegukla erected ten new ones and restored three of the old ones. Five of these were erected in January, 1945, when several families cooperated as the hosts of a week-long potlatch gathering. No more have been raised since that time, however, and the constant toll of weather and decay has reduced them to about a dozen of the newest poles.

*15, incl. flagpole and 2 Angle Ironweeds.*

June

The fire of 1872, which destroyed the older village and its totems, was caused by the carelessness of some white men travelling up the river. They camped just above the village, and neglected to put out their campfire when they left. Eleven houses, 13 totem poles and ten canoes of the Kitsegukla were destroyed. The Indians were so angry that they lined up along both sides of the river with their guns and stopped all traffic, either up or down. It took the threat of a visit of a man-of-war to persuade them to allow normal traffic to resume. *HMS "Scout", bearing the Lt Gov & Att Gen came to the mouth of the Skeena, met a delegation of Indians, and \$600 recompense distributed to them.*

## 18. Kitanmaks

The "people where they fish by torch-light" were not originally a very large tribe. However their village was at a very <sup>important</sup> strategic location, which was to become the town of Hazelton, the main centre of population in the area. People were <sup>joined them</sup> attracted from the surrounding villages, and it was not long before this became the largest band <sup>of</sup> among the Gitksan.

<sup>was in the angle between the Bulkley and Skeena, facing</sup>  
Their old village <sup>confluence with the Skeena</sup> faced on the Bulkley River less than a mile from its mouth. The bank of the Skeena itself was only a few hundred yards behind the village, and it was there, in the late 1860's, that the small white settlement of Skeena Forks or Hazelton was started. The Omenica gold rush, which <sup>began</sup> started in 1871, turned Hazelton into a busy ~~little~~ centre, and the Indians were in much demand as packers. People moved in from other villages, especially from Kispiox and Kitsegukla. About 1879 the <sup>Indian</sup> village was moved to the high bank of the Skeena just above the little town. In that year G.M. Dawson described it as follows: "...there is an Indian village of about half-a-dozen barn-like buildings, each accommodating several families. The Indian village is quite new, and there are no carved posts, though the people speak of erecting some soon. The old village, where carved posts are still standing, is about a quarter of a mile further down stream" (GSC 1879-80 Report of Progress, p. 16B). In 1890 Indian Agent Loring <sup>recorded its</sup> gave it a population of 233, but added in his report that only 61 of these were actually members of the Kitanmaks tribe. The village continued to grow, and

by 1959 had a population of 526.

The territories of the tribe included the Skeena valley for a few miles above and below the village, the Suskwa River, and the lower part of the Bulkley. <sup>up to and including Porphyry Creek</sup> Within this area was the site of the traditional homeland Temlaham, the imposing Rocher Deboulé Mountain, and at its foot the spectacular Bulkley Canyon. In earlier times the Kitanmaks were the sole owners of the canyon, but now they <sup>recently</sup> have shared it with the Carrier's <sup>whom</sup> group which they call Hagwilgate "nice gentle people". About 1820 there occurred the fall of rock which was to give the mountain its name, blocking the canyon just below the bridge, and preventing the salmon from running up the Bulkley. The Carriers, who <sup>had</sup> gathered to fish near the present site of Moricetown, moved down <sup>river</sup> to fish below the slide, and they have had <sup>a</sup> their village at the canyon ever since.

The Kitanmaks consisted of families of two phratries, Frog and Wolf. <sup>The Foxwood families are recent additions, and really belong to Kispiox and Kiteg</sup> The Frog chief Gitengaldau held the highest rank. Most of the Frog families claim a Temlaham origin, but the Wolves claim a variety of other origins. According to Barbeau 5 totem poles were standing in the recent village in 1924; another three were lying on the ground, two of these on the old village site. Since that time three of standing poles <sup>have been</sup> moved to the baseball park, <sup>where they stand</sup> in a row with two new poles and a restored Kispiox pole. <sup>①</sup> In 1960 the last pole from the village was moved down into the town and erected beside the Skeena Treasure House museum.

① One had fallen by 1962

## 19. Kispiox

R The name Kispiox is said to be a shortened form of an older name Gitspakyakw "people of the hiding place". Back in the times when the people lived at Temlaham, it is said, a murderer named Yael hid here. Later, when the people dispersed, some of them came and settled at Anspakyakw "hiding place".

The village was on the west bank of the Skeena just above the mouth of the Kispiox. A few totem poles still stand facing the river, looking rather forlorn and neglected as the new village has spread out behind them, back on the flat. Although some of the families have traditions of earlier homes up the Kispiox River, the tribe have lived at the present site for a long time. The village was almost completely destroyed by fire, perhaps about 1850. At that time the Tsimshian chief Legaic held a monopoly of trade along the Skeena, and he wanted to punish the Kispiox for trading with some <sup>or</sup> other tribe. He is said to have lulled their fears of attack by displaying a marvellous new device - ~~a-white-man's~~ an umbrella- before attacking and burning the village. The Kispiox rebuilt, and have lived there ever since.

Kispiox territories (Map ) included a long section of the Skeena valley, Shegunia Creek, and the entire Kispiox valley except for the <sup>parts of</sup> upper portion which was claimed by related Wolf families of Kitwancool.

All three of the Gitksan phratries are well represented in this tribe; of the 15 old houses remembered by an informant in 1952, six belonged to the Fireweeds, five to the Frogs, and four to the Wolves. Traditionally, most of the Fireweed and all of the Frog families came from Temlaham; the Wolves came mostly from Kitwancool. This has always been one of the largest Gitksan tribes. The decline caused by people moving down to Hazelton and Glen Vowell was partly offset by others moving in from Kisgegas and Kuldo. It is now a growing community of about 350 people.

332 + 71 = 403

Kispiox formerly had a most impressive array of totem poles. Barbeau illustrated the 22 which were standing in 1924. Since that time four more have been erected, one of these by a Kuldo woman, and two <sup>of the old ones</sup> have been restored, one of these being moved to Hazelton. But by 1960 only 9 poles remained standing in the village and 6 more still lay where they had fallen.

1962      11 standing      1 down but around      others lying on ground

Native informants do not all agree on what the name Kisgegas means. Most of them say it means "people of the sea-gulls", and originated when the people first found this place, and saw a great number of sea-gulls there. Others maintain it does not refer to the gull (geywen), but to a different bird (ayai). The village was on the north bank of Babine River about six miles from the Skeena (on IR 1). A bridge of native construction crossed the Babine at this point. Two or three miles below, on the north side, (almost to the west boundary of IR 1) was the site of another old village, Anlagasemdek, whose people moved to Kisgegas about 1880. This small group could have been considered a separate tribe, but we shall consider them as part of the Kisgegas.

*Downie 1859 mentioned  
Allagasomeda as though  
separate.*

This was a relatively large tribe; for a short period around 1893 it had the distinction of being the largest Gitksan band, with 289 people. For many years they remained remote and old-fashioned, spending most of their time in their extensive hunting territories to the north and east. Then they began to move to Hazelton, Kispiox and Glen Vowell, slowly at first, then more rapidly in the 1920's. 1939 was the last year in which the tribe was enumerated separately, and by then it was down to 25 members. The village has been abandoned since about that time.

*Amalgamated with Hazelton band*

The Kisgegas claimed as their hunting and trapping territories Damdochax (Blackwater) Lake and the entire headwaters of the Skeena,

including Sustut River and Bear Lake. In the latter region their claims overlapped with those of the Sekani, and in earlier years the two tribes often fought when they met. *There are traditions of wars east on the people who wintered at Bear Lake.*

After 1826, when Fort Connelly was established on Bear Lake as a trading centre for the nomadic Sekani, some of the Kisgegas built houses there and only seldom visited their home village. About 1890<sup>2</sup>, the Hudson's Bay Company moved its post from there to Fort Grahame, and most of the Sekani shifted east. Some, however, continued to use Bear Lake as their headquarters, and these were *combined with* joined by the resident Kisgegas to form the mixed "Bear Lake Tribe". (see pp. ).

The chief of highest rank in Kisgegas was Malooliq of the Frog phratry. Traditionally, it was his family who built and maintained the bridge across the Babine. An earlier Malooliq was the founder of a village at the mouth of Shedin Creek, and from there the tribe moved upriver to found the recent village. In addition to the large Frog group, the tribe contained an almost equal number of <sup>Wolves</sup> ~~Wolf~~-families, and a few Fireweeds. As is the case at Kuldo, all the Wolf families and some of the Frogs trace their origin to an ancient Gitksan village farther up the Skeena called Gitangass "people of the place of wild rice". Its exact location is not clear, but it seems to have been on Sustut River near its junction with the Skeena. An informant told Dr. Barbeau that the clearing and cache pits could still be seen. The existence of

such a village is evidence of long Gitksan occupancy of the Skeena headwaters.

Barbeau listed only two totem poles standing at Kisgegas about 1924.

## 21. Kuldo

This was the smallest and most remote of the Gitksan tribes. It entered the historic period sadly weakened by war and disease, and dwindled away completely by the 1920's. The name means "out beyond", or "wilderness". The village, at the time ~~when~~ the reserve (IR 1) was surveyed in 1898, was on the east bank of the Skeena a few miles above Kuldo Creek.<sup>1</sup> About six miles farther up the Skeena, on the west bank, was another place marked as Kuldo on some maps, and this was doubtless the site of the earlier village, Old Kuldo.

The band numbered 46 in 1890, it dwindled to 6 in 1929 and nothing thereafter. Even during those years the village was deserted most of the time. In 1915 the Indian Agent said they spent most of their time fishing and trapping, as far north as the Stikine River. "They plant potatoes before they start off in the spring and then come back late in the fall" (Evidence, p. 134). More and more of them moved down to Kispiox, abandoning their own village except for occasional visits. *Amalgamated with Kispiox band.*

Kuldo traditions dwell mainly on wars. They exchanged raid after raid with the "Tsetsaut" to the north - nomadic Athapaskans of the Stikine country who they say did not eat fish, and had who underground winter houses - and these left the tribe much reduced

1. The surveyor's notebook also shows a row of ten buildings, possibly smokehouses, directly across the river on top of the bank.

in numbers. Then the Niska, armed with flintlocks, raided and burned the village. Most of the Kuldo took refuge in Kispiox and Hazelton, until a peace ceremony between the Gitksan and the Niska about 1875 put an end to the raiding. ~~Perhaps-it-was-then-that~~ they

The tribe consisted of several families of the Wolf phratry, a smaller number of Frog families, and a single family of Fireweeds. All the Wolf and most of the Frog families traced their origin to the ancient Gitksan village of Gitangass, farther up the Skeena (see p. ). The leading Wolf chief was Koluget. Kuldo territories (Map ) comprised the adjacent sections of the Skeena valley, Kuldo Creek, and the upper headwaters of the Nass. The village had little in the way of totem poles; in 1924 Diamond Jenness found only two houseposts and one fallen pole.

*Amalgamated with Kispiox band.*

## Mission Villages

Protestant missionaries have laboured among the Gitksan since about 1880, ~~when Archdeacon W.H. Collison founded an Anglican mission at Hazelton.~~ By the time of the first census, in 1890, 127 <sup>of 1409</sup> could be counted as Christians. However many of the Indians were reluctant to be converted, even as late as 1916 (the last year for which detailed censuses were published) there were 142 pagans listed along with the 522 Anglicans, 364 Methodists, and 203 of "other Christian beliefs" (Salvation Army). Of recent years the Pentecostal Church has found many <sup>willing</sup> enthusiastic converts in the area.

As a first step, the missionaries usually <sup>often moved</sup> ~~attempted to move~~ the people out of the old totem-pole villages with their drafty old lodges crowded close together, and establish new villages where the converts could live modern and Christian lives. The Methodist New Kitsegukla, for example, was started in 1890 about eight miles <sup>on IR 2 below Carnaby Station</sup> above the old village, and had a separate existence until the old village was completely converted and rebuilt, by which time they had all moved back. In most cases the new village grew up <sup>adjacent to</sup> near the old one, and the transition was gradual. In three cases, however, completely new Christian communities were founded at some distance from the old villages. These new Indian communities were Glen Vowell, Andimaul, and Meanskinisht.

<sup>on IR 2</sup> half way between Kispiox and Hazelton, <sup>Named after the surveyor who laid it out</sup> Glen Vowell, is the only one which still exists. It was built <sup>about 1898 or 1900 by 52 "Salvationists" from Kispiox and a Salvation Army mission was</sup> ~~in 1900 by a Salvation Army missionary and 52 of his converts from~~ <sup>established</sup> ~~Kispiox.~~ The mission in Kispiox itself was Methodist. The community drew p

unity also drew people from Kisgegas and Kuldo, by 1905 it had a population of 80, and this has grown slowly to 144 in 1959.

Andimaul "where they fish with hand lines" was another Salvation Army settlement established about 1897 six miles above Kitwanga. It drew most of its people from Kitsegukla, and attained a population of 86 in 1910. By 1954, however, it had declined to one single inhabitant, and it is now deserted.

Meanskinisht "at the base of the big mountain" (Seven Sisters) *independent non-sectarian* was ~~Anglican~~, founded by the Rev. R. Tomlinson in 1889, several miles below Kitwanga, across from Cedarvale <sup>Station</sup>. It is said to have drawn about 50 people from Kitwanga and Kitwancool by 1897, ~~but it did not persist as a separate community into recent years.~~

*Page 26 in 1952 (Indian Office)*

4. Frogs, Wolves, and Fireweeds:

It was important to every Gitksan family to know who its relatives were, in the other tribes <sup>just as</sup> as well as <sup>in</sup> their own. They recognized as kinfolk not only the families to whom they could trace an actual blood relationship (through the maternal line), but also families <sup>who were</sup> they presumed to be related because they shared similar histories and crests. <sup>was carried</sup> They carried this principle of kinship grouping so far that all the Gitksan families formed just three large groups, super-families in a sense, which the anthropologist calls phratries<sup>1</sup>. Members of the same phratry, even though they lived in different villages, were not permitted to intermarry, because that would be like marrying <sup>in a sense</sup> within the family. They were expected to help each other with their feasts and potlatches, and in other ways. From the main crests used by the families which comprised them, we may call the three phratries Frog, Wolf, and Fireweed.

The Frog or Frog-Raven phratry, which the Gitksan call Laksail or Ganhada, was definitely the largest. It was the only one represented in all seven tribes, was the most numerous in four of these, and was accorded the highest social status in two, Kisgegas and Kitanmaks. The Wolves (Lakgiboo "on wolf") were second in numbers, represented in six of the tribes, and of

1. Except at Kitwanga, where there was a fourth phratry (see below)

highest rank in two, Kitwancool and Kuldo. The Fireweeds (Gisgahast "people of the fireweed") were almost as numerous as the Wolves and were of highest rank at Kispiox and Kitsegukla, but in the rest of the tribes they were few or absent.

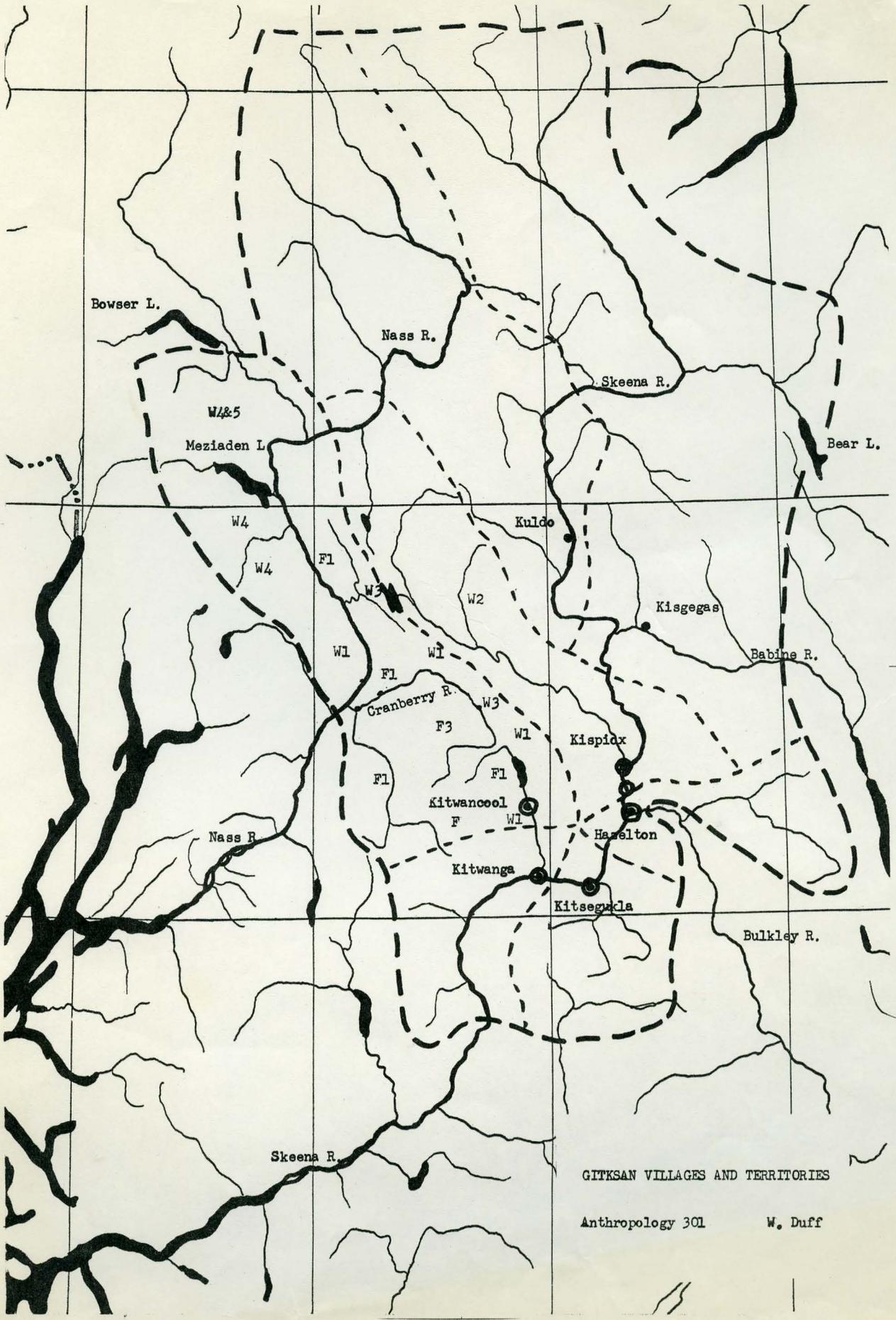
A fourth phratry, Eagle (Lakskeek "on eagle"), was present only at Kitwanga, where it had diffused upriver from the Tsimshian. Although the Eagles were outnumbered by Frogs in this tribe, they held the highest rank.

<sup>commonest</sup>  
The usual pattern was for a tribe to consist of roughly equal numbers <sup>of families</sup> from two of the phratries. A small number from the third phratry often lived at the village, but they seldom owned any of the tribe's territories, and actually had much closer ties with their relatives in one of the other tribes. Kispiox was the only tribe in which the three phratries were of <sup>approx</sup> about equal numbers.

<sup>Constructed</sup>  
The building blocks out of which the tribes were made were the family lines or "houses". Each "house" took its name from its chief; for example Wilpsweeget "house of Weeget", and each had its own names, dances, crests, totem poles, and territories. <sup>Usually own dwelling in village when chief an household</sup>  
*For most purposes, each house was an independent unit and conducted its own affairs.*  
Within the tribe the houses were ranked in their social standing, and ideally, this ranking was expressed in the arrangement of their dwellings in the village. The ideal was apparently realized in the old Kitsegukla village, where the Frog <sup>dwellings</sup> houses extended one

way from the centre, in decreasing order of rank, and the Fireweed dwellings extended the other way, <sup>almost reached at Kitwsneool</sup> but in the other villages it was somewhat obscured. The chief of the highest ranking "house" ~~of-the-tribe~~ was for certain social purposes regarded as the chief of the tribe, but actually he had little real authority over the other houses, especially those in the other phratries. The Gitksan, unlike the Metlakatla Tsimshian, did not <sup>recognize</sup> have <sup>true</sup> real tribal chiefs.

The house chiefs and other persons bearing noble names also had their own individual ranking within the tribe, which was expressed in the seating arrangements at formal gatherings, and in the order in which they were given their gifts at potlatches, and the value of the gifts. The class system was less strongly developed than among the Metlakatla Tsimshian, in that there was no "royal" class.



GITKSAN VILLAGES AND TERRITORIES

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