

## Naikun

The long sandy point of Rose Spit, <sup>nearest</sup> closest point to the mainland, navigational hazard, has always been a place of importance in myth and in fact to the Haida and also the Tsimshian who sometimes raided them. The name means "house point" and applies to the point itself. No village was there within living memory, but it was an Eagle village (called Neekun) in early historic times, and before that, a famous traditional Raven village (called Naikun). <sup>pp. 84-5</sup> ~~The earlier Raven owners were the R-13~~ one of the main traditional centres of Raven dispersal on the islands.

The village is not mentioned by the early maritime fur traders, possibly because of the dangerous navigation in these waters but it is by the Hudson's Bay trading ships in the 1820's and 30's. Work's 1835 Diary for May 11 at Skidegate mentions "the Necoon tribe who reside at Point Rose, 60 miles to the northward of this,..." (p. 41). His census, for about 1841, shows "Necoon" as a small village with 5 houses and a population of 122 (Dawson thought he might have meant Hiellen). Captain McNeill's logs, of the Convoy in 1825 and Tally Ho in 1826, mention trading at "Nacoon", and its location seems to have been somewhat south of the point on the east side.

By the 1870's the site of the village had apparently been covered by drifting sand. Dawson and Chittenden did not see any-

thing there, but the latter mentioned: that a large village called "Ne-coon" was said by the Indians to have stood at the base of Rose Spit. Swanton said that the point is still growing outward, "...and the spot which was pointed out to me as the site of the ancient town is between one and two hundred feet back from the sea to the east, which it formerly fronted." (p. 85).

Harrison, in 1912, wrote that the site had once again become visible:

*Get "Ancient Warriors" written*

"...quite recently I have seen the ruins of this ancient village. When I first saw Rose Spit, no sign of any village could be seen, everything was covered with a broad-bladed grass growing on a sandy soil. The cattle having destroyed this grass exposed the bare sand again to the elements and the wind has now blown the sand farther inland, and thus laid bare again the remains of Ne-coon or Nekwun village" 1912, No. 4, Sept. 23

Traditionally, Naikun was a very important "story town" where five of the prominent Raven lineages are said to have originated. Here they lived in a village having five rows of houses (the usual number for a large Haida story town), until internal disputes caused them to scatter. One group went down the east coast to Gathlingskun, and eventually to Skidegate. The others spread to Masset and the northwest corner, displacing, to a degree, other groups who were moving to Alaska. (Swanton, pp. 84-88) The town itself is listed as belonging, in early times to R 13, the same Raven lineage that owned Gathlingskun. After it was deserted by the Ravens, ~~it~~ the site came under the control

of a branch of the Eagle division known as the Stastas (Swanton, p. 280), and rather than Naikun it is listed as Neecoon, which is probably the small village which was there until perhaps the 1840's.

Cop. No. ....

STATE LIBRARY  
COLUMBIA  
UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH  
MUSEUM OF VICTORIOLOGICAL