

QUILLAYUTE INDIAN TRADITION

The Quillayute, Hoh, Queets, and Quinault Indian tribes formed one confederacy, with each tribe managing its own tribal affairs. So great was the power of this league that it ruled practically all the tribes north as far as Cape Flattery and south as far as Grays Harbor. The league claimed all the hunting grounds from Cape Flattery east to the ridge of the Olympic Mountains, and running south to Grays Harbor. The Quillayute tribe had possession of the northern hunting grounds, the Hoh and Queets had the central portion and the Quinault tribe the southern section. The northern part of the hunting grounds was guarded to keep the Makah and Ozette tribes away. The Hohs and Queets kept the Clallam and Elwha Indians away from the central section. The Quinault tribe was in charge of the southern part to keep the Satsop and all Columbia river tribes away as much as they could. Each tribe was managed by a chief. There was a war chief in time of war and a tribal chief who took charge of the tribe during times of peace.

When the early explorers touched our coast they found the country inhabited by a race of people with copper colored skins, called Indians. These Indians went practically naked. Their clothing was of the simplest kind. The men wore a strip of deer skin from the shoulder to the knee, using a soft strong sinew to keep it tight to the body. Very often they wore almost nothing but a soft rabbit skin cut and sewed with a deer bone needle and sinew thread. This rabbit skin garment was worn around the waist and hung to the knee. It was used at home. Moccasins were worn on the feet when hunting and when there was snow on the ground. The moccasins were cut from the lower part of the leg on an elk skin. It was cut any length they would need, from a moccasin length to boot length, and then sewed to fit the shape of the foot.

The women wore a short skirt made of cedar bark which extended from the waist to the knee. In making the cedar bark skirt the cedar bark was pounded or rubbed until it was in fine fibers. It was held on a sinew belt from which the fibers hung very thickly. When they worked outside in cold weather they wore a rabbit skin cape and a spruce root cone-shaped hat. All these garments were made by the women.

The dwellings of many western Indians were made of cedar boards split and hewn down to two inches thick and about eighteen to twenty-four inches wide. They were built into a shed-like house

with a flat roof. The houses were built strong to withstand enemies. The frame-work consisted of six cedar posts, one in each corner and two posts in the middle. Sometimes these posts were three feet in diameter. Cross logs were put on the main posts with several poles on which to fasten the cedar boards. The boards were fastened down with cedar limb rope, which was similar to common manila rope. The side walls of the house were fixed in a similar way with saplings set up in the ground on which to fasten the boards.

For food the western Indians had fish from the river, lake, and sea. They hunted wild game such as wild fowls, gulls and other rock birds along the coast. For their eggs, they waited until spring and then gathered sea gull eggs from their nests among the rocks. Deer, bear, and elk made up their meat supplies. Fern roots, camas, and berries of all species were their other foods. They prepared the fern roots by drying them and storing away in a dry place. The camas or lacamas was gathered for either domestic use or to sell in small baskets to other tribes, or to trade for blankets. All meat was cut into strips, dried over fire or in the sun.

Sometimes in the summer they would go out in the ocean in their ocean canoes and kill whales, fur seals, hair seals, and sea lions. These whaling trips were made in canoes about thirty feet long with eight men in a canoe. Seven men managed the running of the canoe while the other man did the harpooning. It took several hours to kill a whale with the harpoon. The harpoon had a long line attached on which were hair seal skin buoys every few feet. When the whale is finally killed, three or four canoes tied to the harpoon line, tow it to the nearest beach. The buoys keep the whale from sinking when killed. After the whale was towed ashore the meat was cut up, each man taking his share of the fat or blubber. Each person of the tribe took as much meat as he could carry home.

The harpoon leader line was made out of whale sinew one and one-half inch thick and twenty feet long. The rest of the line (sometimes two hundred feet long) was made out of cedar limbs twisted together to form a rope about one and a half inches in diameter. This rope would stand much strain and could not be broken by the whale. When making the whale line the sinew was first dried then whipped on a large smooth rock until it split apart in small strands. After this the rope-maker began to twist it into a small line. This small line was twisted with others into a larger line and so on until the large one was finished. The finished line was about one and one-half inches through and fifteen to twenty feet long.

The whale meat was either dried out in the sun or smoked. The sun-dried meat is called "jerked" meat and will keep for months. It was cooked as needed. Sometimes it was pounded between stones before using or soaked in running water before cooking. The meat was cooked in a small dugout cottonwood tree about three feet long filled with water. They kept a pile of rocks heated close by and would put in the hot rocks until the water was hot enough to cook the meat. Many times the meat was cooked over an open fire on a framework of sticks.

The fire was made by using two pieces of cedar wood. One piece laying on the ground was flat and thin and had a hole in the center. The other was a piece with a sharp point on the end. This stick was twirled in the hole of the flat one. The revolving stick would make a dry dust because of the friction. As the heat became greater the dust caught on fire. A few dry fibers of cedar started a fire that would keep going. When the fire was going well enough they would put the rocks on it to heat. As fast as they became red hot they were put into the water to heat it. This was kept up until the meat was cooked.

In moving from place to place the Indian of the west traveled mostly in canoes. The canoes were made out of a cedar tree trunk. This was hollowed out by fire until a bone or flint chisel could be used to finish the work. The men worked on these dugout canoes until they were light enough to use.

The women worked hard planting potatoes, dressing skins, making clothing and other tasks. The braves made spears, harpoons, bows and arrows, and canoes. They had to hunt and fish besides fight in self-defense. When the boys and girls were able to run about they began to learn their respective work. The boys were taught to shoot bows and arrows, and to hunt and fish. They were taught how to make bows and arrows, too. The little girls learned to make baskets and were taught to work as their mothers did.

For amusement the young men ran foot races, practiced the running broad jump, wrestled and swam. A game they played which tested their skill and accuracy with bows and arrows was one in which they chose up sides and shot at a grass hoop rolling down hill. If a man missed his shot he lost his arrow. The one who hit the hoop won all the arrows.

The western Indians traveled from place to place by trail as well as by way of the rivers. They made long journeys for purposes of war or trade and had many well-defined trails. One great trail led

from the site of LaPush by way of Quillayute Prairie to what is now called Forks. From there on to the site of Port Angeles, up the Olympic mountains and along the ridge through the Sol Duc Hot Springs by the Sol Duc river. The trail went on to Lake Quinault, and then to the ocean beach known as Moclips. There were hundreds of such trails scattered throughout the country. The Indians always traveled in single file because the trails were narrow paths. There was not a single tree cut down in making these trails as they went around trees, rocks, and such obstacles. They forded the rivers and creeks. Often they followed the water course and natural grades. Many of the roads became the routes used by the white man for his roads.

Along the seaboard the Indians lived in villages, they also lived up along the Quillayute, Sol Duc, Bogachiel, and Kalawa rivers. From the mouth of the Quillayute river up the canyons in the mountain are many camp sites of Indian villages. They would go to these places to fish, hunt, and trap. One large village was on top of James Island.

James Island was named after a Quillayute Chief known as Chief James Howe, the only nephew of Chief Howeshatta Howeatle. Chief Howeshatta Howeatle was the chief who signed the treaty with the United States when Isaac I. Stevens was Governor. Chief Jimmie Howeshatta was known to the white men for many years as Chief Jimmie Howe. He died in the year 1895, at the age of 55. He was a tribe leader ever since he was old enough to take care of the duties of a chief. He was Chief of Police nearly all of his life. Before he died he told his people and several different tribes that he chose his nephew, Harry Hoebucket, to take his place as chief of the Quillayute tribe.

The Indians always had amusements such as dancing, playing football, and running root races. In winter days they took turns giving dancing parties. They gave parties on the return of the successful hunter. The hunter generally gave the dried meat to the members of the tribe. When they killed game such as elk they used every bit of it, they would dry the meat, take the hide home, use the horn for many purposes, such as making fish harpoons, needles, chisels, arrow heads, spear points and other needed articles. The meat was "jerked" to keep for months and was cooked as needed.

The Indians in this part of the coast believed in one true God. They believed everything had a soul or spirit. They worshipped the universe, their God who makes the sun rise and set. They would go

to a nearby stream to worship by sprinkling spring water on their heads, or taking a bath every morning. No one but God would know of their worship or hear their prayers. This was done before the sun rose. Before the sun went down they would stand by the stream and taking a handful of water in their mouths would blow it to the east where the sun rises. When they prayed they faced the rising sun in the east and said the prayer out loud. The braves prayed every day in certain places in the woods.

In the early days they had many fights. The last big battle took place at Grays Harbor mud flats, between the Quillayute tribe and the Satsop tribe. Once many Satsop braves came to the Quillayutes and intended to carry away men and women to make slaves of them. They were repulsed and one Satsop brave was killed by an arrow wound through his windpipe. The Quillayutes chased them clear down to Grays Harbor where the Satsops were reenforced by the Chinook tribe. The Quillayutes lost many men who were captured or killed when their war canoes became stuck in the mud flats after the tide went out. The Satsops and Chinooks also lost many men because they were fighting out in the open. The Quillayute tribe fought from behind their war canoes. When the tide came in to float the canoes they paddled down the river to the Pacific Ocean. They went along the rocky coast until they were home again, with several heads as trophies. This was the last Indian fight before the white people came here.

The first white people who visited the Indians were probably Spanish sailors who were shipwrecked near the Indian village, north of the mouth of the Quillayute River. The Indians not knowing where the white men came from thought they lived in ships and drifted on the ocean as their home because no white men were ever seen on the continent for generations back. The Indians gave a hearty welcome to the white men, or "Drifting White Race" as they called them. The "Drifting White Race" stayed with the Indians many years, but finally asked permission to leave the tribe. They took enough Indian food along to last them a while then went south along the coast. The Indians heard of them no more. The names of some of the Spaniards were Molloco, Arpanisha, Markisha, others being long ago forgotten. The shipwrecked sailors stayed with the Indians for a long enough time to learn the Indian language. A sister to the one wrecked north of the Quillayute River was wrecked near Ozette. The Ozette tribe welcomed the sailors and they stayed with the tribe for many years until they asked permission to leave in

search of their own people. The second wreck of the "Drifting White Race" was in front of the Quillayute tribe village several years after the Spaniards were gone. The boat was a big side-wheeler. Everyone on board was saved with the help of the Indians. This ship had a load of merchandise and food and several chests of gold coins. The captain let the Indians get anything they wanted off the ship when it washed up on land. Some of the sailors stayed on board the ship until it broke up. The captain and crews salvaged everything they could such as food and clothing. The captain left the chests of gold on the ship telling the Indians they might have it. At that time the Indians did not know what gold coins were for. The white men taught them to play with it by rolling it over the sand. They told by signs that gold was for nothing but to play with. The young folks had plenty of it in the houses to play with. The white people did not tell the Indians that gold was their treasure or money. They simply let it sink into the sand with other things from off the ship. The captain asked the Indians to get all the food off the ship that they liked. There was flour, sugar and dried fruits of all kinds. There was calico, beds and bedding of all kinds. The natives at that time did not know what sugar or flour was for. They just dumped it out on the ground to get the sacks for clothing. When the captain and crew settled down to live here they showed the Indians how to cook the white peoples' food. They had no stoves so had to cook over an open fire in the Indians' houses. They taught the Indians to make bread under the red hot sand so that ever since Indians bake bread that way. In the summer the present generation has a beach party and cook the bread in the manner showed them by the shipwrecked crew.

In 1928 the natives had a party celebrating the day of the wreck. There were many white people present from Port Angeles, Washington. Among the visitors was Judge Ralston of Port Angeles and his son who was home for a vacation from the State College. The judge and his son ate salmon and bread baked over the fire and in the sand. They had coffee and wild huckleberry pie for dessert. When the white chief was through eating with the Indians he gave thanks to them.

The shipwrecked crew were probably French people. The Captain and his wife with the other ladies lived with the chief of the tribe. The others lived with different families of the tribe. Two sailors married two daughters of the tribe and lived with them many years. One day when they saw a steamer going past to the south the

sailors climbed to the top of James Island to put up a flag as a signal. The flag was not seen by the steamer as it was too far out to sea. The men could only see the smoke from the steamer. Later on in the summer the men made known their plan to go south along the ocean. They believed there must be white people somewhere on the coast south of here as the passing steamer must be bound for some southern port. So the captain and crew traveled south along the beach with four of the Indian braves as guides. They led them down as far as the Hoh tribe and asked permission from the Hoh tribe to let the white men pass undisturbed. When the Hoh tribe saw that the white people were very gentle they told the guide that they would either kill the white men or make slaves out of them. The guides asked the Hoh Indians to leave the men alone because the French sailors can talk the Indian language plainly, but they were still unwilling to grant permission to cross the river. The Quillayutes told them that if they did not do as asked they would declare war on them. At this the Hoh Indians let the white men pass, the Indian guides staying to see that no harm came to their white brothers. This was the last seen of the French people. Today the Quillayute village is called LaPush from the French word "LaBoosche" meaning mouth. The French men left all their belongings to the Indians, including the gold that was dumped out on the sand. The natives, not making any use of the gold coins, dumped it out so they could use the copper-bound chests for a clothes chest.

The iron from the steamer that was wrecked near the mouth of the Quillayute River is still to be seen at certain times of the year when the tides and sand are just right. A big iron shaft can be seen when the sand is washed away by winter storms early in the spring. It lies in front of the present Coast Guard Station south of the mouth of the river.

When Washington became a Territory of the United States the Indians of the Quinault, Queets, Hoh, and Quillayute tribes signed a treaty with the United States in the year 1855 on July first. This treaty was made up at Quinault village and signed at Olympia, Washington, on January 5, 1856. It was ratified by the Senate on March 8, 1859, when James Buchanan was president of the United States. The treaty was made between the Indian tribes and Isaac I. Stevens, the Governor of the Territory of Washington. He was also the Superintendent of Indian Affairs of the Territory of Washington. At that time the Quillayute tribe occupied the land along the

Quillayute River valley, and the branch rivers, Sol Duc, Bogachiel, and Calawa, from the mouth of the Dickey-da-ach-ta-ta, a small river known only to a few wild Indians. From the mouth of the Dickey to the mountains were many villages. One village then was between J. E. L. James' place on the Quillayute River and W. F. Taylor's at Mora. One village was at Ray Maxfield's, one at Ferguson's, and another village at the Jerry Moriarity place on the Sol Duc. The last named was where Chief Howeshatta lived. There were others at various fishing places along the river. Farther up the Sol Duc at the Stanley Gaydeski place there was another Indian village. On the Calawa River were many fishing villages, one at the Dunning place near Forks Prairie. Tommy Payne was born and raised there and when the white people came he was very friendly with them. He is the only one of the Forks Indians living at the present time. These Indian villages were used only in the spring, summer, and Indian summer or autumn, for curing fish and elk meat or such food as was to be had at that season. During the winter months the villagers from up the river came down and stayed at the Quillayute village. Here they stayed and had a good time until spring came again. They would give war dance parties and depression was unknown to them at that time. There was not much sickness among them but the Indian doctors knew how to treat a patient with magic herbs from the forest. Tuberculosis was not known then. Indian spiritualism was used to cure a sick person in those days. The medicine doctors were paid well for their time. Sometimes he would get paid with a canoe, spear, blankets, a young maid, or other valuable gift.

The treaty with Isaac I. Stevens relinquished all the Indian land in Article one. Article two gives the Indians a reservation. Article three gives them the right to use the usual hunting grounds and the right to build temporary houses for curing their meat and other game, also the privilege of gathering berries, roots and such. In Article four the United States agreed to pay the Indians the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars. All of the articles have not been fulfilled.

Today the so-called Quillayute Indian Reservation is partly owned by several white people. W. W. Washburn owns a store on the Indian land where the old Indian school used to be. Harvey Smith has the place where the Indians used to have their garden years before. Several white parties own the northern boundary of the Quillayute Reservation. No money was ever paid the poor na-

tives for the land relinquished after they had owned it for so many years and had protected it from other tribes.

Not many years ago in the 90's Daniel (Dan) Pullen, Erickson, Baultch, and others were led by Pullen to destroy the Indian village while the Indians were away to the hop fields for the summer. They set fire to every house in the village in the year 1890. When the Indians returned from the hop fields in the White River Valley near Seattle they found their houses all burned to the ground. All their possessions were burned, too. They even found the remains of some of the older ones who were too old to go to work. The men who started the fire had guns to keep the Indians away so that they could not save their property. When the fire was out they cut many new growth trees and sticking them up on the site of the village made it look as if the site had been deserted years before. They then took a snap picture of the site which was sent to the land office saying that the land was vacant and there were no Indians living on the land. In order to get a homestead on the Indian land Pullen made the Indians tear down their houses that remained on the hill and take them down to the beach in front of the present school house. He made the Indians do as he said by holding six-shooters at their backs. The Quillayute Indians built their houses on the beach and lived there for many years. The beach south of the river was much longer at that time as the mouth of the river was north of the present channel. While they lived on the beach a tidal wave came one winter. It washed away several houses and destroyed many homes. Only one man was hurt and he suffered a broken leg. The Indians got so excited they did not know what to do. Many white people came to see the Indian village get ruined. One Boston tilacum, John Kearnes, came down to see the village torn down by the storm. He was at all times friendly to the Indians so he told them to make a report to the Indian agent at Neah Bay over fifty miles away. They made a petition to the United States Department of the Interior, Indian Field Service at Washington, D. C., to get the land back from Dan Pullen and Wesly Smith. Smith was a brother-in-law of Pullen's. Some time later a man came from Washington to see if the report was true. He saw several houses wrecked by the sea. Some had drifted out to sea at one place and had been washed ashore in another place.

Dan Pullen had to fight the law and tried to prove how he came by the Indian land that was set aside at the time of President James Buchanan in 1859. Pullen defended his case until all his money was

gone and every foot of his prairie land was sold to pay his attorneys. The Indians had the United States attorneys to defend them. They had Mr. Sutherland of Forks for their chief witness. They also had John Kearnes, a Quillayute River farmer, and Mr. Saul, a fur trader from Port Townsend. Mr. Saul was among the Indians long before any other white people came. He had a permit from Chief Howeshatta, a great grandfather of the writer, to erect a temporary shack near the village to buy such furs as mink, beaver, bear, elk, deer, land otter, and fur seal skins. Mr. Ollie Ford of Forks Prairie was also a witness for the Indians. Mr. Ford was the first white child to be born on Forks Prairie. The Pullen case went on several years until finally Pullen decided to give the land back to the Indians through the Superior Court at Tacoma and Olympia. During the Alaska gold rush Pullen left the Quillayute country and went to Alaska. There he became separated from his family and came back to the Quillayute country again. In the year 1909 he visited the Indian village after a good many years. He was surprised to see the village as it is because the houses were owned by the natives. They have modern houses, a hotel, and stores that belong to the natives. At the present time all the houses in the village are modern. There is one stucco house in the village. There is an automobile road that has been there for several years now. These same roads used to have Indian braves galloping down them on Indian ponies not so many years ago. Mr. Pullen died and was buried in the Quillayute cemetery. The other men who took Indian land quietly slipped through the government's Indian protection. They said they were here before any Indian came to this place. The new generation are not so brave as the old warriors who fought Pullen to get their land. Many acres of land on the reservation are owned by white people. This was taken at the time when Pullen captured the Indian village with a small party. When Dan Pullen died the funeral procession started for the Quillayute cemetery at a slow walk. An old chief, Kla-Kis-Ka-Are was watching when Joe Marsh, an old timer in this part, stepped out from the funeral march and said to the old man in Chinook, the trade language, "Klosh mika wawa Kappa sakala tyee Pullen Cladawa koppa sakala klosh ilahee." The old chief went saying in his own language, "Rattle his bones, over the stones. He's only a pauper nobody owns. Amen."

*The Burning of the LaPush Village on the
Quillayute Reservation*

A fiery death, a watery grave,
Sudden and fierce it came
A fallen spark, a village blaze
And then a devouring flame,
A final trip to the HooDoo land
And superstitious fear,
And all other things of like import,
You'll find recorded here.
And wisest he is in this whole land
Of hoarding till bent and gray,
For all you can hold in your cold dead hand
Is what you have given away.
'Tis then his noblest enemy
May prove his truest friend.

HARRY HOBUCKET