THE CHIMAKUM AND THE QUILLIUTE

THE Chimakum and the Quilliute, separated by the full width of the Olympic peninsula, were the only representatives of the so-called Chimakuan linguistic stock. The former, now extinct, inhabited the peninsula between Hoods canal and Port Discovery, their villages in the main being situated on Port Townsend and Port Ludlow. Never numerous, they were of so pugnacious a character that by constant wars with their more powerful neighbors, particularly the Clallam, they were reduced until in 1855 they were estimated by Gibbs to number only ninety souls. One of their disastrous encounters with the Suquamish, occurring about the year 1850, is thus described by Wahélchu, a member of the latter tribe.

The Suquamish learned that a certain Chimakum medicine-man had been accusing them of interfering with the food supply of the Chimakum by keeping the salmon from running and the camas from growing plentifully, and had been speaking harshly of them as being obnoxious and generally bad. This greatly incensed the Suquamish. They had long disliked the Chimakum anyway, and this false accusation aroused them to decree a war of extermination that should begin as soon as some immediate provocation was offered. This came in the death of Tulébot, an old warrior whom the Suquamish highly respected. It was contended that the Chimakum medicine-man by sorcery had taken away the life of Tulébot. Another pretext of war was afforded by an act of the Clallam, who, believing that a certain Suquamish medicine-man had caused the death of a Clallam child, plotted his death. Inviting him to visit their village, ostensibly to treat a sick man, they received him with a show of friendship. As he sat eating beside a blazing beach fire, a man suddenly leaped upon him, caught him by the hair, and fatally stabbed him. Then the assassin's son, whose mother was a Chimakum woman, cut off the medicine-man's head, reviled it, and perpetrated nameless indignities upon it. For this the Suquamish declared vengeance against the Chimakum; they dared not attack the powerful Clallam. Furthermore Sqúbiuks, a Clallam with a private grievance against the Chimakum, presented one

of his daughters to the son of the chief Síahl,[1] with the understanding that the Suquamish would fight the Chimakum.

Two Clallam chiefs, Sqúbiuks and Qaiúkub, brought reinforcements, and fifteen canoes with an average crew of ten warriors proceeded northward to participate in the final slaughter of the Chimakum. Ktsap being dead, his cousin Síahl had become the undisputed leader of the Suquamish and commanded the expedition. Wahélchu, a young man of twenty, joined the party to avenge the death of Tulébot, his grandfather.

The Chimakum were then confined to one principal village at the mouth of Tsqai (Chimakum creek). A heavy stockade protected the settlement. The Suquamish arrived at night, but passed on northward before they disembarked and hid their canoes in the brush. At daybreak scouts began to watch the movements of the Chimakum, waiting for an opportune moment. But before their expected shout gave to the lurking warriors the signal for attack, the very medicine-man whom they blamed for the death of Tulébot embarked with his family and started northward for the clam-beds, passing close to the secreted Suquamish. The instant he was recognized, a volley of bullets was poured in upon him. At the first report the Chimakum swarmed out of their barricade to the beach, and unaware of the force that lay in the woods they rushed to the assistance of the stricken man and his family. At the same moment the Suquamish warriors hastened through the woods to enter the stockade from behind. A force sufficient to hold it was soon inside, and fire was opened on the Chimakum right and left. Completely taken by surprise and with few weapons in hand, the villagers found resistance futile and escape almost impossible. The rapid rain of bullets mowed them down. Inside the barricade women and children were captured and thrust into a small house, and when the raiders with their prisoners paddled away from the smoking remains of the village, the greater part of the Chimakum had been slaughtered or captured. The survivors, including the chief, who had gone up stream

1 The chief for whom the city of Seattle is named. The common belief that he was of the Dwamish tribe is only partially true; his mother was a Dwamish, but he was born and reared among the Suquamish, and inherited his father's rank among that people.

in the early morning to spear fish, subsequently joined the Twana on their reservation at the head of Hoods canal.

Among the few Suquamish who fell in this engagement was the eldest son of Síahl. The Quilliute (Qiliyútk) properly speaking are the inhabitants of the village Qiliyút (now called Lapush, Washington) at the mouth of Quillayute river; but the application of the term has been extended to include all the kindred people of the small communities that formerly were scattered along the lower course of that river and on the ocean littoral immediately south of it.

Though never a large tribe, the Quilliute were stubborn fighters when attacked, and aided by the inaccessible character of their oceanwashed, mountain-girt home they successfully maintained their integrity against the frequent attacks of their enemies. When threatened or attacked by overwhelming numbers, the villagers at the mouth of Quillayute river possessed an impregnable refuge in James island, a lofty, perpendicular rock close to the mainland, from which it is separated by water except for a short time at ebb tide. A single difficult trail leads to the top, where a few acres of land are now cultivated as gardens. Here was one of the Quilliute villages, to which the people of the mainland retreated in time of stress, and the fear of being received by rolling bowlders deterred the enemy from following.

The Quilliute have fought with almost every salt-water tribe between the Columbia river and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, but the most of their encounters were with the Makah, and particularly with the Ozette branch of that tribe. These affairs were more often defensive on the part of the Quilliute. Hostilities with these northern neighbors have occurred within the memory of men born as late as 1863, and two men who used frequently to conceal themselves in the woods near Ozette waiting for a victim have died since the year 1900. The usual method of attack was to lie in ambush in the woods or on the beach and cut off the unwary, killing men and carrying off women and children. The heads of slain enemies were displayed as trophies on stakes before the houses of the victors. A typical raid occurred about 1845, when several canoes of Makah and Ozette warriors, seeking revenge for slain relatives, came south under the leadership of a man of Quilliute and Makah parentage, and lay through the night in a small cove south of the river. It was midsummer, and in the morning a number of Quilliute canoes put out as usual to troll for salmon.

When they were well out from shore, the Makah canoes darted from behind the point to intercept the fishermen. Some of these turned and headed for the shore, others made for James island. Some abandoned their canoes and got into others, so that with four paddles instead of two they might make better speed. One canoe went straight out to sea and so escaped. Four men were killed and one was taken prisoner, the latter being subsequently traded to the Nisqualli and later freed by the Government, dying on Nisqualli reservation about 1910.

The native account of an affair of about the year 1850 is instructive not only as regards intertribal relations, but as showing the rapid growth of the mythical element of traditional history. The narrative relates that when a party of Makah came down in a canoe to visit the Quilliute, some boys threw stones at them, and at night while the visitors were in a house some young men stood the canoe on end. It remained so until morning, when the Makah saw it. This of course was an insult, as it exposed them to quiet ridicule, none the less galling because it was wordless. At the end of their visit they asked seven of the leading men to go back to Díya (Neah bay) with them, promising valuable presents such as slaves and guns. So the Quilliute and their wives embarked in a large canoe and accompanied them. At Díya they were led into a chief's house, and after the usual feast there was a dance. While the Quilliute danced, Makah warriors suddenly entered, and each of the visitors was covered with a gun. All were shot down except Kihlabúhlup, who seized his gun and fired; then throwing the weapon aside, he drew his knife and leaped among the Makah, stabbing right and left. They broke and fled through the doorway, and Kihlabúhlup remained alone in the house.

After a while the Makah sent one of their number inside with his gun cocked, ready to shoot. Kihlabúhlup however had dug a hole at one side of the doorway, and after the Makah had passed him, he leaped out and cut him down. He dug another hole on the other side, and in like manner killed the next man who entered. Then they contented themselves with merely watching the house, and Kihlabúhlup perceived that he must die sooner or later if he did not make a sortie. So he rushed out and passed around the house, intending to reach the beach; but he found himself entrapped in a corner where two houses met, and the Makah fell upon him and killed him. They removed his blanket to find out why they had been unable to kill him, and they

found marks on his body where the bullets had flattened themselves against his flesh, as if they had been shot against a stone. Then they cut him open and found that his heart was covered with hair, and his intestines, which were very short, were striped. They cut off his head and set it up on a pole with the others, and they buried his body on the beach with the other bodies. One night they heard a band of howling timber wolves come down to the beach and gather about the graves, and in the morning the people went to see what had been done. They saw that the wolves had not disturbed any bodies except that of Kihlabúhlup, and this they had carried away; for Kihlabúhlup had obtained the supernatural power of the wolves while tracking elk, and thus possessed strength to fight, although he had never been known as a warrior.

The principal trade relations of the Quilliute were with their immediate neighbors on the north and south. The Makah and Ozette brought to them dentalium shells and blankets of the Hudson's Bay Company in exchange for camas, whale oil, and dried whale flesh, which in turn they carried northward to Vancouver island. The shells and blankets were taken southward by the Quilliute to the Quinault and exchanged for the highly prized salmon of that tribe.

In the permanent winter villages the people remained during the early spring, the only fishing at that season being for cod and bass. In June and July the pursuit of the "winter whale" was carried on by a few, and in August the " summer whale" was taken. In June some of the men practiced pelagic sealing, while parties of women, children, and slaves went up the river for camas, camping on the meadows in mat wickiups. July was the month when the hunters, of whom there were a few, went into the mountains for elk, which at that season are in prime condition; while other people remained at the village fishing for cod, bass, smelts, and red snappers, and drying them in the smoke of their houses. When the hunters returned there was a short season of feasting. In September and October the people were scattered along the streams, catching and drying salmon.

The Quilliute were one of the few tribes in the United States that practised whaling, an art in which they were only less adept than the Makah, who carried it to the highest pinnacle of refinement. More than most aboriginal industries, whaling was invested with a sacred, ceremonial character. Yáhatub, who was born about 1835, is the only

surviving whaler, and he speaks as follows of the obsolete art:

"My uncle Hiksuwí, the whaler, was pulling out logs on the beach at high tide, and getting into a log jam he broke his leg just above the knee. This is why he told me to take his place as whaler, and to use his outfit. I said I was willing to do it, and he instructed me how I was to do. In the beginning of winter I was to begin bathing, going into the sea at some isolated place and rubbing my body vigorously with seaweed and hemlock. When the moon was growing this was to be done at night, but when it was waning, in the daytime. This I did every day until about June, when it was time to go for whales. While bathing I would pray to Tsikáti [the Universe], asking that he help me take a whale. During the season for bathing as well as the season of whaling, which ended in October, I kept away from all women. We began washing early in the winter in order that we might get supernatural power at the changing year, for that is the most favorable time. When summer approached, the Sun, some night as I slept, would show me that I would get a whale the next day, and when that vision came I would start out.

"The night before going whaling, the leader did not sleep, lest he dream of some evil thing, but he remained outside and at daylight he went about the village to notify his crew that it was time. Eight manned a canoe, the leader sitting in the bow with his harpoon and the paddlers in three pairs amidships, while the steersman occupied the stern. Several canoes, perhaps four or five, went together. When a whale was sighted, the canoes would race toward it, each trying to be the first, and when they were within a short distance they would creep in quietly. As soon as the whale was struck, the other canoemen would come and throw their harpoons into it and help kill it, but the whale belonged to the crew that struck it first. Sometimes several whales were taken in one day, but again we might spend several days in a fruitless search. They were usually found out of sight of land. When more than one day was spent at sea, the leader watched at night while his men slept. The harpoon consisted of a Musselshell point and a yew shaft. The head was attached to a cedar-withe rope four fathoms long, at the end of which was a float consisting of an inflated hairseal skin. Then came ten fathoms more of a heavier rope and another float, then a rope of thirty fathoms and a third skin, and a rope of fifty fathoms with a fourth float. This was the gear attached to the first harpoon cast,

but the others subsequently used were provided with only one float and four fathoms of rope.

"Sometimes the wounded whale travelled in a circle, and again it might make straight out to sea. It sometimes continued the fight for half a day. When it was dead, a hole was cut through the upper and the lower lip, and the mouth was thus bound shut so that water could not enter and sink the body. A tow-line was made fast to the rope that closed the mouth, and the whale was then towed ashore at the nearest point, regardless of the location of the village. There we would butcher the whale and load the flesh and the blubber into the canoes. Once a party was driven by a north wind and landed at Kpels [Copalis, a promontory sixty miles south of Quillayute river], because they were unwilling to abandon the whale and lose their harpoons.

"The owner of the whale, that is the man who cast the first harpoon, took the best portion, namely, the hump, and according to the order in which they came to his assistance the others received their portions. The share which each in order received was established by rules. The blubber was hung up to let the oil drip out, and then the remaining oil was boiled out and put into the bladder of a sea-lion. After being rendered, the blubber was dried and smoked, and laid away for the winter. The flesh was cut into sheets like halibut steaks and dried in the sun or the smoke. "I have killed about forty whales, and helped to take many others. Sometimes a whaler would fail to take a whale during the whole season, and it was then believed that he had been irregular in his bathing, or had held intercourse with a woman. I used to take a skull from a coffin, tie it to one end of a rope with the other end about my waist, and then drag it along into the water and dive repeatedly, coming up blowing like a whale. Few others did this, and that is why I got more whales than others, sometimes taking three in one season. – The largest I killed measured five fathoms from the blow-hole to a point just behind the hump. My uncle killed the largest ever taken here: six fathoms from blow-hole to hump. We never measured the full length of the whale." Pelagic sealing, which formerly was carried on by means of harpoons or arrows, has recently been revived with the substitution of the rifle. The change has resulted in a greater slaughter of the animals without a corresponding increase in the number actually taken, for a seal wounded by a bullet is lost, while one pierced by a harpoon or an arrow can almost always be recovered.

About the first of June the fur-seal appear off the coast on their annual migration from the South Pacific to the rookeries in Bering sea, and the Quilliute, charring and smoothing the outside of their canoes as in primitive days, set off before dawn to come upon the animals asleep. They paddle or sail as much as twenty-five miles from shore and return about mid-afternoon with an average of one seal to each canoe.

The Quilliute house was built over a rectangular excavation about two feet deep. The wall-boards were horizontal, and the overlapping roofboards extended across the slope of the single-slant roof. A structure of the largest size had a frontage of fourteen fathoms (seventy feet) and a depth of eight fathoms, and sheltered about twenty people. The interior arrangements were not different from those of similar houses already described in this volume. Many years ago the underground sudatory was used by the sick. In their arts and industries the Quilliute differed very little from their Salish neighbors.

Their games, besides contests with arrows and spears, were shinny *(kíyuqa),* which was played by men on the beach, and the hoop-and-pole game. The latter was called *tsatsá'wats* ("rolling"), and was played thus: A man standing at the top of an incline rolled a small hoop of splints wrapped with grass down between two rows of players, four on each side standing side by side with several feet of space between each two. The first player on each side shot an arrow at the hoop as it passed, and if it rolled on, the next two shot, and so until the hoop was checked or all had shot in vain at it. Each hit scored a point. Strangely enough, the well-nigh universal handgambling game is new among the Quilliute.

The more recent mortuary customs are identical with those of the Salish who expose the dead in canoes; but long ago, it is said, the corpse was wrapped in skins and pushed, head foremost, into a hollow log, so that it lay on the back with the head toward the east.

Society comprised three classes: the chiefs, the common people, and the slaves. Descent is reckoned in the male line, but there is no evidence of a gentile system.

In accord with the general custom of the region, girls at puberty were secluded for a period of five days, and required to observe a partial fast, to abstain from food then in season, to avoid the fire, to scratch the head only with a stick, and at the end of her period to submerge her body in a stream. Boys did not seek supernatural power until they

had reached puberty, and then only of their own volition.

The winter was devoted to the singing of medicine-songs and the declaration of new claimants of supernatural power. The ceremony was almost exactly the one common to the Salish tribes, yet strangely it bore the name of the Makah winter ceremony, *tlúqali*, which outwardly it did not at all resemble. So far as can now be determined the only point of marked difference between the Quilliute and the Salish ceremony is that in the former some of the dancers thrust bone skewers under the skin of their arms.

Supplications were addressed to one's own particular guardian spirits, and all persons prayed to the Sun and to Tsikáti (the Universe), asking for long life and for success in any contemplated undertaking. Some would utter these prayers from a hilltop, others standing in a stream or in the sea at a secluded place. Yulláu ("dead") is the underground world of all the dead, where earthly conditions exist in ideal form. It is reached through a hole in the ground, and certain shamans who know the location of this passage have the power to bring back to earth souls that have been enticed away by spirits of the dead.

The earth is believed to be flat and limitless. The sun, which at night sinks into the water and passes under the earth, is accounted for by a variation of a myth common along the Pacific coast. A long time ago, says the myth, the earth was in darkness, the sun and the moon being kept concealed by a certain old man. Qáti, the creator and transformer, intending to be taken captive by this person, so that he might steal the sun, appeared as a young boy before the daughter of the owner of the sun as she was gathering wood, and told her he was a slave. She took him home. They had chitons for supper, and he liked them; so the next day the old man said they would gather more of the shellfish. He took with him the box containing the sun and the moon, so that he would be able to see. Arriving at the place where the chitons were found, he got out on a rock, leaving the boy in the canoe with the box, the lid of which was slightly raised so that a dim light was given out Qáti began to pray for a north wind, and it came and blew the canoe away from the rock. When the old man noticed this, he cried out, "Take your paddle and come back!" Qáti grasped the paddle and pretended to use all his strength on it, but really he was putting it into the water edgewise. And the wind continued to blow him away until

finally he was out of sight of the old man. Then he opened the box and took out the sun, which he tossed into the sky in the east, saying: " Hereafter you will be the sun. You will rise there every morning and come up rapidly, but when you are overhead you will go more slowly." Next he threw the moon into the sky in the east, but a little farther toward the south, and said, "You will follow the sun, and the people will call you the night sun."

Thunder is believed to be the clapping of the wings of Tístilal, a huge bird, and lightning is the flash of the yellow feathers under his wings. This bird catches whales in his talons. A folktale describes how a man once saw it alight in Beaver prairie with a whale to rest, and watched it fly away without the whale. Some people from Qiliyút found the whale and butchered it, but when the flesh was all cut up a great hail-storm arose.

Huge hailstones killed the people, and their bodies and the whale were turned into stones, which are now pointed out on the prairie as proof of the event.

The Quilliute possess a fragmentary deluge myth, the motive of which is that of the Kwakiutl myth. Taken with the fact that no such story is found in the lore of the Salish tribes, this seems to indicate that it came to the Quilliute from the Makah. According to the tale the people began to notice that when the sun neared the western horizon it passed behind something that extended as far as the eye could reach, like an opaque wall, and the sun was hidden. What this was they did not know.

It proved to be a great wall of water coming in from the ocean, and it swept toward the land. The people got into canoes with their possessions, and bound the craft together as if they were making ready to tow them in a long line. The lead line they fastened to the top of a tall tree, just as the earth was being covered with the water. The flood constantly rose, but there was no current. A portion of the line of canoes broke loose from the others, and when the waters began to subside it settled back to the ground at Chíbukub (Chimakum). The others, still moored to the tree, came to the ground at the place from which they had started, that is, at the mouth of Quillayute river. Thus it was that the people were separated into two tribes with one language.

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From
The North American Indian: Volume 9
by Edwards S. Curtis