THE WAILAKI

WAILAKI is a Wintun word signifying "north language," and it is used by the central Wintun in the form Waíleka to designate the Wintun at the head of Sacramento river. The corresponding term for a tribe of alien speech would be Waíkehl ("north foreign language"), an appellation which does not exist. Furthermore, the Wailaki did not live north of any Wintun people, but west and southwest of such Wintun as knew them. It is evident therefore that the Wailaki are so called through misconception of the application of the term by their Wintun neighbors.

This Athapascan group included a number of loosely connected bands, and occupied the watershed of Eel river from Kekawaka creek, about where the river passes from Trinity into Humboldt county, nearly to Round valley, including the drainage of the North fork of Eel river. To the north, west, and southwest dwelt other Athapascans; southward and eastward were the Yuki; a little farther east and northeast were Wintun bands.

This territory is a region of pine-clad mountains; of gorges with streams swift-flowing through alders and cottonwoods; of long ridges and slopes diversified with groves of oak and madroña, thickets of manzanita, clumps of buckeye; of little brown valleys dotted with spreading oaks. As to the number of the early population, little or nothing is known. About two hundred survivors are quartered with the Yuki on Round Valley reservation.

As fish were an important part of their diet, the Wailaki built their permanent houses (which differed in no way from Kato houses) at favorite fishing stations, and there passed the winter months of rain and high water. During, the rest of the year they wandered far and wide over the hills, wherever the promise of game, roots, and seeds was most encouraging.

In the autumn, before the beginning of the rainy season and while the streams are low, the first salmon begin to come up from the sea. This species is called *kes* in Wailaki, and "black" salmon by those who speak English. It is probably the dog-salmon before alteration into the "hookbill." These fish are still taken with dip-nets and with spears, the net being used only at night and in connection with a weir made by driving stakes down into the bed of the stream, leaving an opening at

one margin. The bottom at that opening is covered with white pebbles, so that when a salmon glides through it can be seen readily against the white background and the net swiftly slipped over it. Spears are used at night in connection with pitchy torches, and also by day. The flesh of these "black" salmon was formerly cut up with obsidian or flint knives and smoked for storage. Salt was not used in preparing fish and meat, but for seasoning food it was obtained in trade from the Stony Creek Wintun.

After the rivers rise, the large black salmon are no longer caught, but the water is full of *hlok,* steelhead trout, which are caught in eddies with a dip-net, the mouth of which is held open by means of the bow-and-arrow device. This species also was formerly dried. The season lasts until about April. Then come *chin-hlók ("*food *hlok"),* the spring salmon, which are taken throughout the summer with net and spear. In summer many lampreys are caught in nets, or by torchlight with a gaff-hook made by lashing a deer-bone to a stick. Trout and suckers are caught in nets by men and women, who wade in the stream and drive the fish into the pools. Narcotization of fish also is practised, in the manner to be described in the chapter on the Yuki.

At the beginning of hot weather the Wailaki left their permanent villages and travelled from place to place among the mountains, camping in the open, gathering various roots and nuts, and hunting deer. Acorns, once the principal vegetal food, are still largely used. Five species were harvested, and stored separately. They were gathered from the ground, and were immediately shelled and stored in dry pits, which were lined with grass and leaves, and covered with the same material and dry earth. Sometimes a head-man had his dependents dig a large and fairly deep pit beside a perennial spring, and while he himself remained there to direct the business, his people gathered and brought in many basketfuls of black-oak acorns and threw them unshelled into the pit. When the pit was nearly full, the acorns were covered with rough slabs of driftwood, and there they remained all winter, with the water from the spring constantly running over them. By this process the bitter tannic acid was leached out. From time to time the chief would come to taste them, and in the summer when the process was complete he invited all the adjacent villagers to attend a great feast. His women then prepared many basketfuls of meal for soup, and quantities of venison and salmon were provided. After the feast the acorns

remaining from the store were divided among all the guests.

After acorns are crushed in the mortar, the resultant meal is sifted by shaking it over the edge of a tray basket, and the coarse residue is laid aside to be sent through the mortar again when the next lot is pounded. The fine meal is spread on a bed of sand and leached with a quantity of water, usually cold, which is poured on from time to time for several hours. Only when there is need of haste is hot water used. Occasionally bread was made by pounding up the coarse residue of black-oak acorns, mixing it with water, and baking on a hot stone; but a better bread was obtained by using tan-bark acorns which had been long submerged in water until they were not only rid of bitterness, but were actually moldy. Probably the mold fungus had somewhat the effect of yeast.

The meal of valley-oak acorns was prepared for making a very black bread by mixing with it a quantity of fine earth of no special kind, working up a stiff dough, and spreading it in a layer several inches thick and several feet square on a bed of leaves, preferably madroña, overlying a hearth of hot stones. Other leaves were then spread over the loaf, another layer of stones was added, and fire built over the whole. This bread was practically the only cooked food that was transported from one tribe or band to another. It was carried in hempen net-bags called *té'hle*. The valley acorn is not used for soup.

Next to acorns pinole was of prime importance. It was prepared from a great many species of small seeds, which were parched with live embers by shaking in a shallow basket, and then reduced to meal and so eaten. Pinole possesses a most appetizing flavor, and is still regarded somewhat as a luxury. The principal plants yielding seeds for pinole are tarweed, sunflower, and the wild oat (*chughékúlin*).

Deer were very plentiful, and were taken by the combined use of snares, ambush, and beaters. Fifteen to twenty men, who not infrequently were from different neighboring camps, joined in the enterprise, forming a large semicircle and driving the deer up the mountainside toward the ridge, where in the various deer trails they had set snares. Between each two snares a hunter lay in wait with bow and arrows; and if a deer avoided the snares and passed close enough to a hunter, an arrow felled it. If the animal became entangled in a snare, the nearest hunter killed it with a club or a stone, saving his arrows, and reset the snare. After the hunt women and children from the

camps flocked out to help butcher and transport the meat and skins. A drive was organized every two or three days, deer being so abundant that there was no necessity of drying the meat. The snare was a hemp rope about four yards long, one end of which was made fast to a resilient sapling, while a noose at the other end was suspended in the trail in such a way that a passing deer would entangle its horns or head in the snare. The manufacture of hemp rope was a laborious and tedious process, and from spring until fall, when the hemp stalks became too dry for use, the old men were busy gathering them and twisting rope. Occasionally deer were forced over a precipice or into a *cul de sac*.

Elk were not so frequently hunted, because they were harder to ensnare and generally were to be found only in the less accessible places. Snares were sometimes set in elk trails, and the openings in the undergrowth at the sides of the trail were blocked with broken branches and stumps. Two or three elk furnished more meat than a small community could consume in a few days, and the surplus was smoked. Sometimes an elk was run down after being persistently tracked by young men for a day or two.

Bears, even the inoffensive black species, were not regularly hunted. Sometimes, if a band of men happened upon one, they would shoot it, and not infrequently a bear was caught in a snare, and if found soon enough, before it had had time to use its teeth on the rope, it was killed with arrows.

Smaller animals, such as mink, otter, skunk, beaver, *et cetera,* were not intentionally hunted, but were on occasion taken casually.

Grouse in summer, and smaller birds such as quail, robins, and yellowhammers in winter, were taken in noose-snares baited with madroñaberries. Quail also were driven into a basketry fish-trap. On the rivers half-fledged ducklings were caught, but the Wailaki were unable to capture the adult birds. The greatest delicacy known was young swallows obtained in crevices along the river. According to old North Fork John, "a man would not give that food away even to his father-in-law." Doves and meadowlarks were killed with stones or sticks.

Meat and dried fish were cooked in just one way, that is, by laying it directly on the embers. Fresh fish was prepared in the same manner, or was baked in the ashes with no wrapping but its own skin. Dried meat and dried fish were frequently eaten without cooking.

Grasshoppers were caught by burning the fields and then gathering the roasted insects. Some were eaten as they were gathered, but most of them were thoroughly dried on hot stones and then pulverized. From the frequent burning of the country rattlesnakes were uncommon, and deer were easily followed because of the absence of undergrowth. One of the sorest grievances of northern California Indians, as well as of many white men, is that the Forest Service will not permit the burning of mountainsides. Indians declare that they cannot follow deer, and white men that they cannot graze cattle, because of the impenetrable thickets.

The larvæ of yellow-jackets were roasted and eaten, the swarm being well smoked with burning moss before the nest was opened. A mass of living worms, of a species fond of feeding on ash-leaves, was piled on a layer of leaves over a bed of hot stones, and a fire was built around them to roast them. Anyone would travel a long distance to obtain this delicacy. Earthworms also were prized.

Wailaki men wore nothing but a small deerskin apron with the hairy side exposed, and in cold weather or on special occasions a skin thrown over the shoulders and a piece of deerskin or bear-skin wrapped about the head. Women wore a deerskin skirt reaching from the waist to the knees, and in cold weather another skin about the shoulders. Clothing was quite without ornamentation. Neither sex used moccasins or leggings, and both men and women frequently went quite naked.

Men arranged the hair in a knot at the back of the head and confined it with a string, while women parted theirs in the middle and let the two twists hang behind or in front of the shoulders.

Not every person had the ears pierced. Those of either sex who could afford it wore pendants of dentalium shells on strings, and some had a straight bit of bone in the septum of the nose. Shell-bead necklaces were commonly worn by women, and at dances by men. Every girl had her nose, cheeks, and chin tattooed in curving lines, but men indulged in no body-markings except to blacken face and chest for the dance and for war.

Wailaki dwellings were exactly like those of the Kato, and the so-called sweat-house, which was primarily the public ceremonial house, differed only in having the main support in a pair of forked posts and a short connecting beam, instead of the single post of the Kato. The

construction of an assembly house was a public enterprise attended with considerable ceremony and formality, and went forward under the supervision of the principal shaman, who would later occupy and care for the structure. It was dedicated with dancing, singing, and feasting. As its colloquial name indicates, it was employed also for communal sweating. Men, women, and children assembled in it, and sat with bowed heads while a large fire filled the place with smoke. At intervals one of the men would fan the heat over them with a large deerskin, and after a profuse perspiration was induced, all ran out and bathed in the stream.

Such games as were played by the Wailaki were those most common to the region.

Tyínla, the so-called "grass game," was a guessing contest between two pairs of players, each of whom had a double-pointed bit of wood about the size of a finger. Each of two players of the side having its inning wrapped his stick in a twist of grass, and made another bunch of grass of the same size and appearance. Then, while singing with the aid of fifteen to twenty men grouped behind them, the two held their bunches of grass in separate, outstretched hands, and one of their opponents, with a vigorous, dramatic gesture, indicated which hands, in his opinion, held the sticks. If a player was "killed," he was out of the game for the remainder of that inning, while his partner continued to hide his stick and submit to the guesses of his opponents until he too was "killed," and then the inning passed to the others.

Kaídlte was played on exactly the same principle as*tyínla,* but the counter was a short, thick rod with a black mark encircling it, which was concealed in a bundle of unmarked rods of the same size. During the singing the bunch was divided into two parts, which were held in separate hands.

Neíltechat was played by four men, two on a side, each with a three-inch cylindrical bit of oak with a knob on one end. This was hurled to the ground in such a manner that it bounded away from the player, and the winner was he whose missile went farthest.

Contests of shooting wooden-pointed arrows for distance were carried on for wagers. Foot-races were not customary, but occasional wrestling matches were held. Women played no game of dice, but on rare occasions they would play the grass game among themselves. Apparently there were no organized games for children. They sometimes

amused themselves by giving chase to one another, by wading, swimming, throwing stones, and skipping flat stones on the water.

The Wailaki and the Yuki were excellent friends, and intertribal marriages were common. All the fighting of the Wailaki appears to have been against other Athapascans. Like the Kato, they beheaded their enemies and despoiled them as well of the skin from the back and sides of the neck, the shoulders, and even the upper part of the back.

Two typical affrays in which he participated are described by Nahlsé ("sitting idly"), otherwise North Fork John, who was born at Nétash ("rainy hill") on Eel river seven years before the great meteoric shower of 1833.

When Nahlsé was approaching middle age, probably about 1865, a few Mattole men came from the coast and shot a girl in the breast. A report reached his village that a neighboring settlement had been entirely destroyed, and almost immediately a party of six men, he one of them, started westward. Once in the enemy's country, they proceeded very stealthily through the brush on both sides of the trail, and after a while they saw three men and a woman approaching, evidently moving camp. The leader they at once recognized as a noted fighter and hunter. So they lay in the undergrowth on both sides of the trail, and as the four passed, they shot. Two men and the woman fell dead, but not the leader. He ran back, and encountered two of the Wailaki, both of whom he succeeded in wounding. As he stood there adjusting his wildcat-skin quiver, Nahlsé crept up and shot him in the chest. He fell, and began to cry out. Nahlsé ran to him and shot him again, and as the wounded man continued to scream, he exclaimed: "It must hurt you badly! But you have been going about killing old men and women, and you never thought how it would hurt them!" His uncle then arrived on the scene and removed the dead man's head. The bodies of the other two men and the woman they did not mutilate. With the leader's head they hurried back to the village of their friends whom report had exterminated, but found that not one had been killed. They danced with the trophy that night and the next morning, and after resting in the afternoon they began to dance again in the evening. This slain enemy, whose name was Chumíchekéchun ("among spruce growing out"), was a notorious fighter who had killed a great many of the coast Sinkyone, sometimes going about alone, sometimes with a few companions. After two nights of dancing with the scalp they called for a

man to carry it among the people against whom Chumíchekéchun had been constantly warring, so that they might rejoice at the sight of it, and, knowing him to be dead, feel greater security. A man who performed such duties was called *yisná-cho* ("yellow-jacket big").

A little later came another party of coast Mattole, but they were unable to find an opportunity for favorable attack. Nevertheless, when the Wailaki learned of the attempt, six men set out for the west. At night they found a camp near an occupied house. A single man lay beside the fire. Three men shot at the same instant. The sleeper was killed outright, and the Wailaki beat a hasty retreat.

Some of the Wailaki fighting-men are said to have disguised themselves as bears in order to deceive their enemies and obtain favorable opportunities to kill.

We have seen above that the villagers knew how to combine for common defense; nevertheless it cannot be said that there was a Wailaki tribe. Each village possessed its head-man and was a political unit. There were, to be sure, instances of an exceptional man being honored and deferred to in communities outside his own. Such a man was Kélai, whose influence, just before reservation days, extended over a considerable territory.

The only title of the Wailaki chief is *chéghankunes* ("haranguer"), which accurately indicates one of his principal duties, that of frequently addressing the community as the individuals sat quietly in or about their houses.

A chief was necessarily *tenékánte,* that is, a man well provided with house and possessions, and usually with two or three women. Not only that, but the richest *tenékánte* was the principal man of the village, if besides being wealthy he was also generous; on the other hand, a rich man who did not use his wealth partly for the public good had little influence. This emphasis on the virtue of wealth is a distinct touch of Northwest Coast culture. The headman was succeeded by his son, but if that son were not fitted for the position, the regard of the public shifted to some other rich man.

There were no social subdivisions except the family, and marriage was prohibited only between blood relatives.

At childbirth a woman was attended by old midwives, who administered neither medicine nor applications of heat, but, when the labor pains were most severe, rubbed the abdomen. After the infant

was born they cut off the navel-cord, bathed the child in cold water, rubbed it with ashes, and wrapped it in a piece of deerskin. The navel-cord was not preserved. The mother was very abstemious as to food until the following winter, eating little besides acorns and venison; but the father denied his appetite for only a few days. When the infant was a very few days old it received a name, which often was based upon something the father was detected eating or handling. Not infrequently it received the name of its native village.[1] At the age of about a year there was bestowed a name founded on some peculiarity, as of feature or action, and at three or four years the ears were pierced by some old person. Girls were tattooed a year or two before puberty.

When a girl experienced her first menstruation, a ceremony lasting until the end of the period was held. If her father was a man of means, the celebration took place in his house; in other cases she was sent to participate in the rites held for some wealthy girl in the same condition. At night all the adults, assembled in the house, sat in a circle with the girl or girls in the midst, and passed the greater part of the night in singing various songs, none of which contained significant words. The girl sat on the ground with her head and chest concealed beneath a draped deerskin. At dawn a certain song containing the word *kogholiine* ("daylight coming") was chanted, and the women danced slowly in a circle about the motionless girl. This dance finished, another song was sung by the women, who now stood in a circle, inside of which an old woman (the song-leader) and the girl, face to face and with hands on each other's shoulders, danced forward and back repeatedly. At the conclusion of this performance the people went to their homes.

The virgin remained in the house, covered by the deerskin, and during the entire course of the ceremony she practically renounced food and water. On this day and the succeeding days the hunters sallied forth to provide meat for the great feast that concluded the celebration. On each succeeding night the proceedings were exactly the same, and on the final morning the old song-leader led the girl out to bathe in running water, after which the feast was held.

Menstruating women were always abstemious in their eating, and they did not cook for others, though they did not retire to a secluded

1 This was regularly the case among the Kwakiutl.

hut, as many Indian women did.

Marriage was usually arranged by the fathers, either of whom would go to the other and propose that in view of their friendship their two children should be united. If they agreed, and the two young people were willing, the marriage took place at once; that is, the young man went to the girl's house and spent the night with her. The only public confirmation of the mating was in the exchange of presents - baskets, deerskins, beads, and food - between the two families. The couple lived at the young woman's house for a season and then divided their time between the two households. If, however, without any agreement between the fathers, the young man went secretly to the girl's house at night and remained with her, thus becoming her husband, he then took her at once to his parents. In such a case there was no exchange of gifts. The Wailaki were very careful that their daughters should not be despoiled, and when such a misfortune occurred, the man was expected to marry his lover. Failure to do so was reason for killing him.

Divorce was apparently not so common as among most tribes of this region. "When a man married a woman who for a long time had refused him," said an old man, "they never parted; but among those who married in haste there were many separations." A husband was privileged to abandon his wife on any pretext, but if a woman left her husband without good reason, his relatives might rightfully kill a member of her family. A woman is still living who lost a relative in this way. The children of separated parents generally remained with their mother, but after attaining maturity they usually associated with their father's people.

A man who proved to be a good provider and a kind husband commonly married also his wife's younger sister when she became of marriageable age. Very rarely three wives were thus taken. Sometimes a man found himself a widower before he had claimed his younger sister-in-law, but that did not prevent him, provided his record as a husband was good. On the other hand a widow's only option was to marry her deceased husband's brother, usually the younger brother, provided he desired her.

A man did not directly address or face his mother-in-law or his daughter-in-law. If either entered a house where he sat, he turned his face aside, and spoke to her only through the medium of his wife or his

son, as the case might be.

The dead were buried with the head to the east and at full length, in deep graves piled with heaps of stones to protect them from the depredations of coyotes. If all the blood relatives were at hand the burial took place almost immediately, but otherwise the body lay in the house in the midst of the usual activities until they had assembled. Sometimes this meant a delay of four or five days. The greater part of the personal possessions of the nearer relatives was broken up and thrown into the grave upon the body, and each of the others present thus sacrificed some object. The personal property of the dead person himself was not destroyed nor buried, but was used for repaying those unrelated persons who had so honored him. His dog, however, the most valuable of all possessions, was killed and buried with him. When the deceased was a person of prominence or a much-loved member of the family, mourning might continue for as long as two years, and whenever during that time any of the nearest relatives made new utensils or tools to replace those sacrificed at the grave, half of the new ones were likewise destroyed. Both men and women betokened great sorrow by cutting the hair and then smearing spruce-pitch thickly over the scalp. So long as a vestige of pitch remained, which might be two years, the period of mourning continued.

Two, three, or four years after the death of a prominent man, the entire population assembled at his grave and threw into a fire various articles of value, just as before they had cast other valuables into the grave. And as before, strangers from other communities who destroyed property were repaid by the relatives of the dead man. This ceremony terminated all grief.

The Wailaki say that the dead go to a very vaguely conceived place called Yo ("beyond"); thus exhibiting a restraint and perhaps a wisdom greater than some of our highly civilized folk.

In the spring the principal medicine-men selected from the youths of the village as many as fifteen, to be trained with a view of becoming shamans. Most of these were later rejected, and a few became either "sucking doctors" or dreamers. These were usually boys who by constant attendance at the places where shamans were at work had shown themselves to be interested in the profession, and when they requested to be initiated, they were not refused. A boy's parents never asked this for him.

As a preliminary the candidates and the two old shamans in charge, together with some laymen, went to hunt deer; and whatever they killed they roasted and ate on the spot in preparation for the long fast to be endured. That night they returned and entered the ceremonial house, and the period of training began.

The two initiators were the song-leaders. They began to sing, and the boys danced. When this sound was heard, men, women, and children, including also all the other shamans, crowded into the house, and standing around the boys, who now sat on the floor, they all participated in the singing and dancing. This continued at intervals during most of the night.

At sunrise the two shamans led the boys out into the wilds from place to place, choosing such as were considered dangerous, and especially those that were dangerous from the supposed presence of some fabulous monster. During this time they taught the initiates their secrets for curing disease. For example, they would cause one of the youths to become dizzy, and bid another practise on him, giving instruction from moment to moment and observing the pupil's conduct. Again, the candidates were told to try their strength from time to time by sucking blood from stones and trees. Probably they actually sucked blood from their own gums, a very easy thing to do. They returned then to the dance-house at dusk, and the events of the previous night were repeated.

Thus it went for six days, during which the two instructors and the candidates ate and drank very little. On the last morning the other shamans, not the two initiators, performed over the candidates in the presence of the public their singing, shaking of rattles, sucking, and blowing, and put into the youths' mouths something that caused them to spit blood. The two initiators supervised this operation very carefully. Then there was a feast, in which the candidates participated to the extent of eating a little acorn soup, pinole, and dried salmon, and the people dispersed, the visitors from a distance carrying away the remnants of food and leaving the local population with empty storage baskets. For the remainder of the year, that is, until the following winter, the initiates ate only acorn soup, pinole, and dried salmon. It was regarded as especially dangerous for them to eat yellow-jacket larvæ. They hunted like other young men, but ate nothing of their kill.

For some of the young candidates this might be the third, fourth,

or fifth season of training, and indeed they might already have put their knowledge to the test of practical use. If they had been successful, and felt that they needed no further instruction, they did not return to the ceremonial house for the next season's schooling. Those, however, who had either not learned enough to take charge of a patient, or had tried to cure and had failed, together with any new candidates, assembled in the ceremonial house in the following spring and received another six days of training. Sometimes these classes were held in the winter, but nearly always in the spring. Any youth who in the course of his instruction became discouraged, or for any reason desired to withdraw, had the privilege of simply not presenting himself at the opening of the next term.

When a man fell sick, he generally summoned a new shaman, who, after inquiring the locality of the pain, pretended to search the body from the abdomen up to the head; and having definitely placed the disease he put his mouth to the spot and alternately pressed it to the skin and raised it. In the intervals while his face was raised, he sang. Beside him sat two small but deep baskets, one containing water of which he took an occasional sip after spitting into the other. When he had finished, he exhibited some small, black or white, moving object, probably a worm, which he declared was the sickness. He covered it with the other hand and sang his song over it for perhaps a quarter of an hour, and then crushed it between his hands, dropped it into the basket into which he had been spitting, and carried the vessel out in order to burn the contents.

Each shaman had his own songs, but all were similar. There was a special song for the sucking and another for "killing the sickness." Payment in wampum, deerskins, arrows, or baskets was made after a cure was effected. If a young medicine-man was unable to cure his patient, he secured the assistance of an older member of the profession.

Those who showed a tendency to catalepsy, or perhaps those who deliberately simulated catalepsy, became *naitúhlghai,* whom the English-speaking Indians call dreamers. These also treated sickness by means of sucking, and differed from the others only in that they frequently had dreams in which they received songs for their professional use, beheld the places where game would be found, or foresaw events of interest to the people. Occasionally men without the usual training became dreamers. Nahlsé related this of his father-in-law:

"Tughultyáchun ("throw a hoop on the ground") went into the woods and burned down a cedar, and then burned off a short log, intending to make puncheons for a house. He drove his hemlock wedge into the end of the log with his stone hammer, but after great efforts, in which he broke is hammer, he could not split it. He made another wedge, and with a stone drove it into the log midway of its length. After repeated failures to split it he started home, but unable to endure the thought of that log, boasting, of its victory, he turned back and resumed his work. Stone after stone was broken on the wedges, but at length there was a rending sound as the slab began to split off . The log cried out, "What are you doing to me?" And Tughultyáchun fell to the ground unconscious. As he did not return at nightfall, his wife sent her father-in-law to look for him, and when the old man found his son he quickly secured the help of others and carried him home. The young man soon recovered consciousness without the aid of a shaman. Thereafter he himself was a medicine-man, and cured by means of sucking, for he had learned how to do this while he was unconscious."

Not rarely men became shamans in some such way as the foregoing, but they seldom related their experiences.

The Wailaki believed that fatal sickness was frequently caused by seeing some woodland creature and becoming so badly frightened that life could not be brought back. Sometimes the shamans took advantage of this belief to account for their failure to cure.

"My grandfather Tátiwó'kut ("torn mouth," so called because a bear had scratched his face) was one of a party of deer hunters. I also was there, shouting and driving the deer up the mountain. Without a word the old man lay down on the ground. The drive went on, and at the end he did not come for his share of the meat. He walked home with the rest of us, and without speaking dropped his net-bag of snares and lay down. A shaman was called, and after setting down his little basket of water he began to sing and suck. All at once he stopped and began to weep. He explained that the old man had been frightened by something, and was dead. He was still breathing, but it was not long before he died without speaking again."

Anyone who saw and was frightened by one of these creatures and then recovered became a shaman, and thereafter he was safe from

such dangers. No very clear description of these woodland dwellers can be obtained, possibly because this conception may have originated in the redwood forest belt and was only an acquired belief among the Wailaki.

The great-grandfather of Nahlsé told him that in his youth there was no dancing among the Wailaki, that the only songs then in use were those of the shamans, of the war-dance, and of the girl's puberty rites. It was during his manhood that there came from the south the dance now called Chúnuntash ("dance"), the so-called "feather dance." Only since the coming of white people have the Wailaki made their own costumes for this dance; previously they purchased them in the south, just as they had the wordless songs. The dance was generally held in autumn and winter, but sometimes in summer, and always at the instance of the head-man, who invited all the people from miles about. It usually lasted one night, sometimes two nights, and a great feast late in the morning concluded the meeting. Preparations for the festival were made by the people in common, the men providing venison, the women pinole and acorn soup.

The dance costume for women was the ordinary deerskin garment, with perhaps a shell necklace, and always with a band of white duck-feathers about the head, and at the back of this band a bunch of hawk-feathers projecting backward. The male costume was a deerskin apron, a bunch of hawk-feathers at the back of the head, a broad band of yellowhammer tail-feathers across the forehead, and a trailer of hawk-, eagle-, and owl-feathers hanging from the shoulders to the knees. When the people began to assemble, the song-leader started the "sittingdown song." Gradually other singers joined him, the people began to put on their costumes, and at length when all were ready the dancing began. Each singer wielded a split-elder stick for keeping the rhythm, and the drum, introduced from the south, was simply a board resting on two other boards placed on edge in a trench. On this stood the drummer, thumping it with a six-foot staff. The women stood in one place, moving up and down on their toes with a slight flexing of the knees in the usual fashion of Indian women dancers. The men tapped the ground three or four times with one foot and then with the other, moving slowly to and fro from side to side.

"The Wailaki"

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