

T'aakú X'aka.aan

town at mouth of Taku:

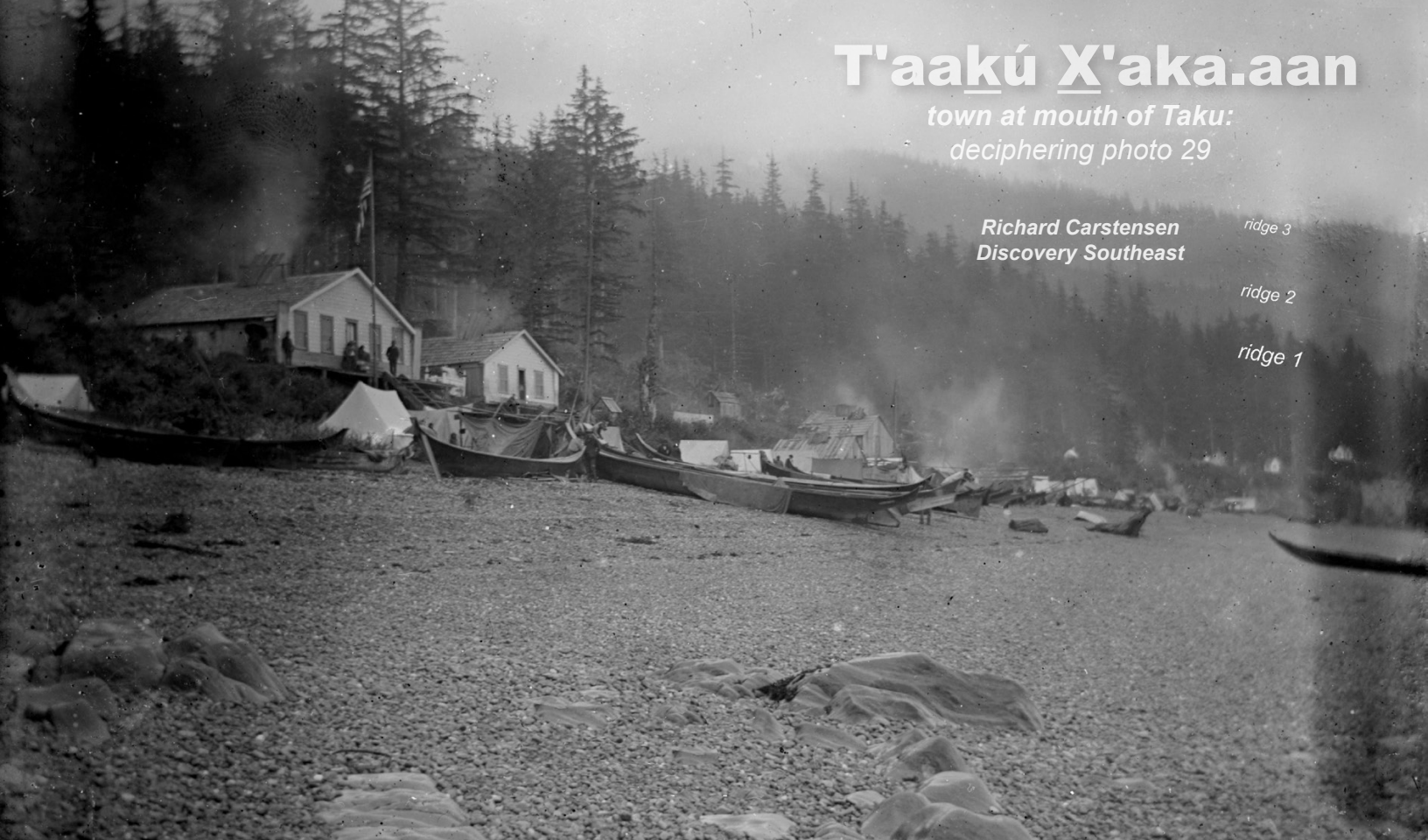
deciphering photo 29

*Richard Carstensen
Discovery Southeast*

ridge 3

ridge 2

ridge 1





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Alaska Shorezone, 20040605

Cover: The suddenly famous Waggoner mystery photo that launched this investigation. • **This photo:** Shorezone oblique of village beach.

Preface, March 2012 Liana Wallace, Myra Gilliam and I, working with digital scans of an unspecified “*Indian Village*” from Jim Simard, ASL, have been scratching our heads, trying to make them fit the beach at Auk Rec. Background ridges #1, 2 & 3 as labelled on preceding cover photo don’t resemble Auk Rec, and neither does the foreground beach. I sent the image to Juneau historian Jim Geraghty, who at first was as puzzled as the rest of us. At his office downtown, Jim and I compared it to our mental lists of known and suspected Tlingit villages, but none sounded to us like reasonable prospects.

This morning, however, Jim realized it might be the post-contact T’aaḱú village near Point Salisbury. Thornton & Martin (2012) map this—**although misplacing the dot**—as T’aaḱú X’aka.aan, *town at mouth of Taku*. I think Jim’s nailed it! Here’s a pre-field scoping collection of imagery, maps and supporting documents. We of course will need to follow up with a ground-truthing visit.

Sept, 2022: A decade later, I *still* haven’t been on the ground here! I’m tweaking this scoping document as part

Story of photo 29

Jim Simard ¹ provided us with a high-res digital version of photo #29, from the Waggoner Collection (reference scans on *vilda* are low-res). David Waggoner was a Presbyterian missionary and amateur photographer, but we don’t yet know if David took the picture, or simply

¹ Head of Historical Collections. 465-2926. james.simard@alaska.gov
² PS 2018: Liana worked extensively with his collections, including the Waggoner images.

of preparations for a Geol-393 course on *Landforms* with Cathy Connor, and for much-belated upload to *Juneau-Nature*. Meanwhile, important historical information on T’aaḱú, *flood of geese* (Taku River) cultural sites,

and the missionary couple William & Emma Corlies has been [assembled by Debbie Maas](#). Her research shows the Corlies summering far upriver in 1880(!), and at S’iknaḡsáank’i, *black bear town* (Taku Harbor) in much of 1882 to ‘84. But I no longer postulate school construction or residence by them in this ephemerally resurrected settlement at the mouth of Séet ka, *canyon channel* (Gastineau)

acquired it. Date is also unknown. Jim Geraghty hopes that by comparing the distinctive, left-leaning handwriting (“*An Indian Village, Alaska*”) to other annotated images in the Waggoner collection taken at better-known sites downtown, we can place tighter time-frame brackets around the work of this photographer couple. ²

² PS 2018: I subsequently downloaded a large reference collection of low-res Waggoner photos from the *vilda* site—90 out of a total archive of >1,000 images. Many are ‘painted’ (?) with this liquidy white,

Place names convention: In all my writing since publication of *Haa L’éelk’w Hás Aani Saax’ú: Our grandparents’ names on the land* (Thornton & Martin, eds. 2012), I’ve used Tlingit place names whenever available, followed by their translation *in italic*, and CN (colonial name) in parentheses. Euro-names, however regal or preemptive, were afterthoughts. Example: Kadigooni X’áat’, *island with spring water* (Spuhn Island).

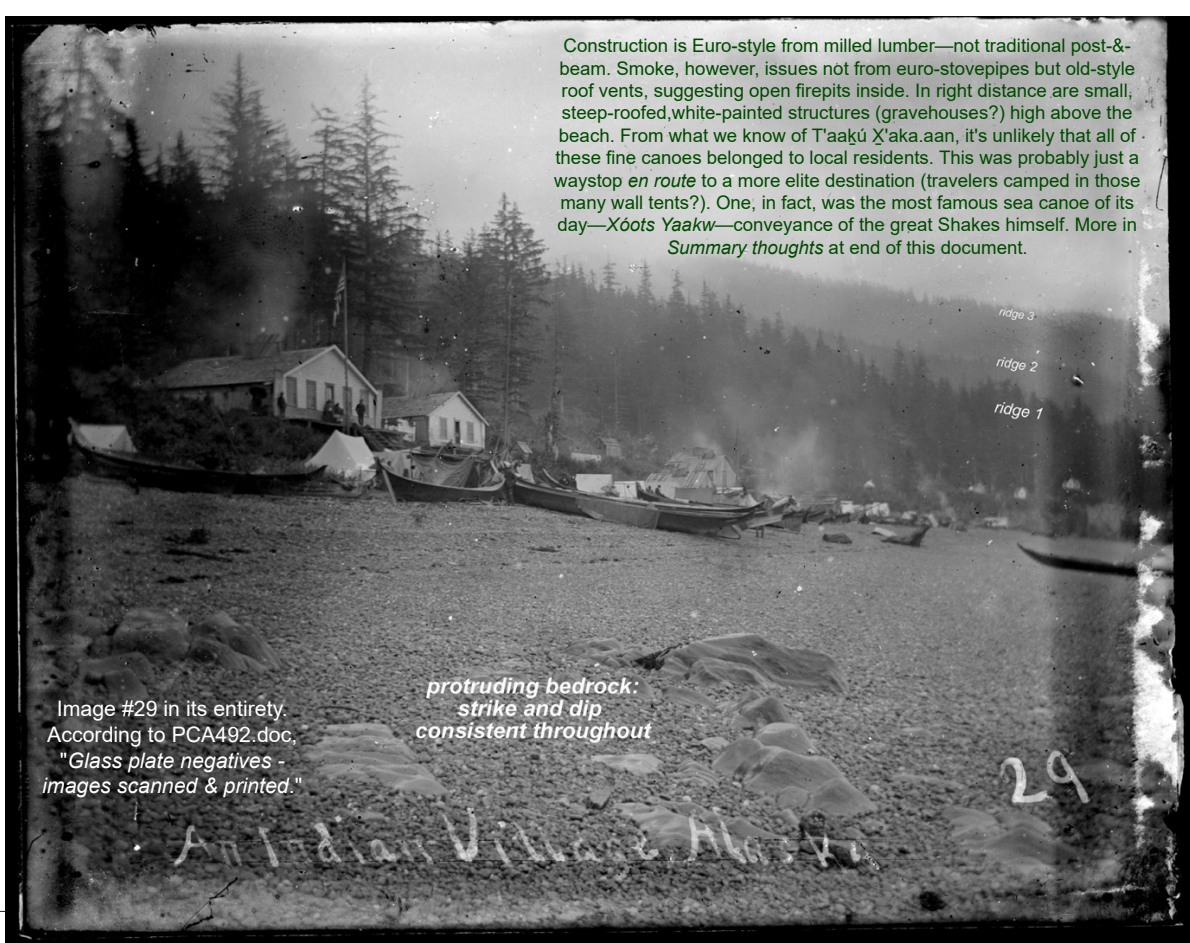
left-leaning annotation. Jim Simard's PCA 492 catalog paper for the Waggoner collection notes that David and Mary, Presbyterian missionaries, "lived and worked in Klawock from 1901 through 1914 when they were transferred to Juneau." They acquired their camera and some negatives from Doctor Chisom, a woman living in Klawock when they arrived (Can't find her first name). It's uncertain which of the images in the collection were Chisom's. This left-leaning white labelling style, apparently painted onto the glass plate, is probably David Waggoner's—but that doesn't guarantee he took the picture. In fact, it suggests he *didn't*, thus the geographic vagueness.

If #29 is by David and not Dr Chisom, judging from Jim Simard & Jacki Swearingen's Nov 2017 *Guide to Collection PCA 492*, earliest possible date for the photo would be 1901. (We needn't posit a date after the couple's transfer to Juneau in 1914, because like most missionaries they travelled widely and regularly throughout Southeast.) The state museum archives contain David's writings as well, so maybe there's a reference somewhere to this stop at the river mouth. See however, *Summary thoughts*.

Waggoners were not even in Southeast at time of this photo.

As for Jim G's idea, comparing Waggoner pics of known date, almost none of the left-leaning captions name the year, so only someone with Jim's fluency with J-town history could place photos within a year or 2. An exception is ASL-P492-II-231, showing steamship *Hating* bringing news of McKinley's death to Juneau, 19010917. If #231 was taken by DW, that'd have him visiting in the first year of his Klawock residency.

T'aakú X'aka.aan was apparently short-lived. By 1914 it was in ruins. A winter shot David numbered 102 is on the downtown Aak'w village's boardwalk, which was constructed sometime between 1900 and 1910, according to a Trevor Davis annotation).



Construction is Euro-style from milled lumber—not traditional post-&-beam. Smoke, however, issues not from euro-stovepipes but old-style roof vents, suggesting open firepits inside. In right distance are small, steep-roofed, white-painted structures (gravehouses?) high above the beach. From what we know of T'aakú X'aka.aan, it's unlikely that all of these fine canoes belonged to local residents. This was probably just a waystop *en route* to a more elite destination (travelers camped in those many wall tents?). One, in fact, was the most famous sea canoe of its day—*Xóots Yaakw*—conveyance of the great Shakes himself. More in *Summary thoughts* at end of this document.

ridge 3

ridge 2

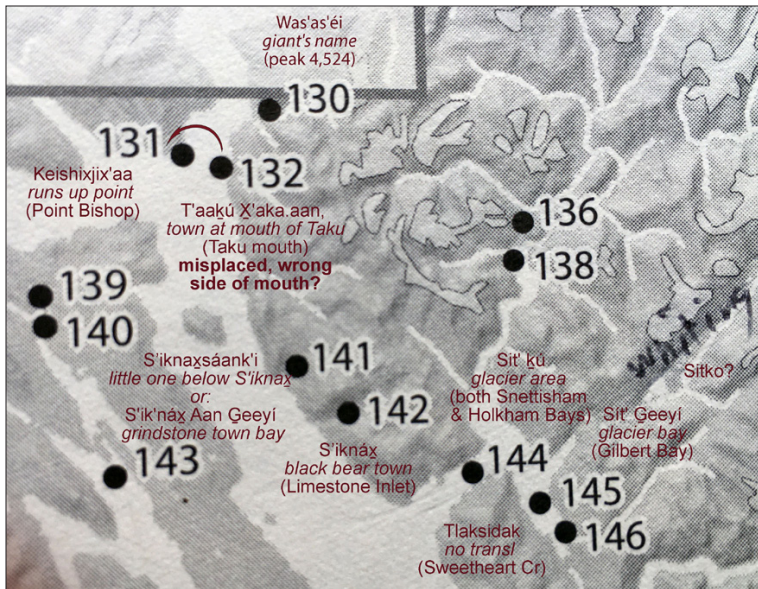
ridge 1

Image #29 in its entirety.
According to PCA492.doc,
"Glass plate negatives -
images scanned & printed."

protruding bedrock:
strike and dip
consistent throughout

29

An Indian Village Alaska



A misplaced dot?

2022: Turns out I've probably been misnaming this village for the entire decade since photo #29 brought it back to light. One reason is dizziness induced by pageflipping in the cultural atlas, with fingers holding 3 places, looking up numbered dots. ¹ But in this case, more importantly, the dot is

¹ I stand by my [initial feelings that T&M12](#) is the most important book ever written about our archipelago homeland. However, the more I use it, the more I hope to see a second edition with decent cartography, & maps scaled out enough to write 3 lines LN>trans/>(CN), as in my annotation above.

apparently in the wrong location! I've compared descriptions of the settlement from numerous sources and think we can rule out T&M's mismatched rocky, eastern, Pt Greely-side as anything more than occasional fish camp. Dot 132 should really be just a sliver *west* of 131; *ie* between today's points Bishop & Salisbury, at "Cherokee Beach."

Emmons on the inlet-mouth town

Here's how George Emmons reported the village's history, as quoted in Hope & Thornton (eds, 2000):

"Captain Richard Meade, in command of our naval forces in Alaska in 1869, mentions a stockaded village of 12 houses just eastward of Point Salisbury at the head of Stephens Passage, but by 1882 this had wholly disappeared, one fishing house alone marking the site.

*In 1888, those who lived about Juneau, together with some others from Inlet and River settlements and some connections from the Interior, found[ed?] the village of T'aaku Aan (Taku town) on the mainland shore just to the westward (sic; eastward?) of Point Salisbury. . . ."*²

² Boldface eastward & westward are mine. A village "westward" from Salisbury is improbable. Scanning westward from Salisbury on orthos and Shorezone obliques, there's only steep bedrock beaches. Probably this is a misprint, and Emmons (or the transcriber) really meant "eastward." Slightly dyslexic, I do this myself all the time. In other words, the new town was rebuilt on the site of the old. Emmons earlier stated that T'aakú Kwáan Yanyeidí . . . "founded the village of Sik'nax Aan Geeyi, (Grindstone Bay)" This places Yanyeidí eagles alongside S'ik'nax.ádi eagles in Taku Harbor. The S'ik'nax.ádi had come up from Shtax'héen, *water biting itself* (Stikine River), there adopting the name of this new home.

Thornton (2008, p 49) explained that Aan means *town* and Geeyi means *bay*. S'ik'nax translates as *whetstone place*, that part of the name being "conferred NW" from S'ik'nax (Limestone Inlet) of which Alexander Stevens told GH&K, "we used to get stones there for sharpening tools." Xunei dictionary gives gll'aa for *grindstone* and yayéinaa for *whetstone*; I don't see s'ik'nax listed.

Adding to my initial confusion about bay-entry & limeyness, miner-named "Grindstone Creek" flows onto the gravel crescent of "Cherokee Beach."—only a shallow indentation in the shoreline—far cry from a bay.

For that Grindstone Creek, Orth (1967) says "name first used in a mining location notice by J.G. Peterson and Chris Fuhr in 1890. The source of the name is not known." Is it mere coincidence that 1890 is my current best-guess date for Photo 29? Dropping bedrock geology units onto my arcmag project, I find small lenses of carbonate-rich Triassic slate and limestone upstream. So wash-down whetstones *could* probably be procured here, but pure-lime *whetstone place* to the southwest was far likelier.

The S'ik'nax.ádi³ were the principal element in this movement, but were followed by others who realized the inroads dissipation had

3 Oddly, the S'ik'nax.ádi are not included in Emmons' list of 8 T'aakú clans. Thornton (2008) links this clan to the Stikine area, and indeed they're listed *only* there on Andy Hope's map of K'wáans and clans (2003). Maybe the S'ik'nax.ádi were one of the last clans to converge on post-gold-discovery Juneau, explaining their lack of inclusion on lists of T'aakú clans.

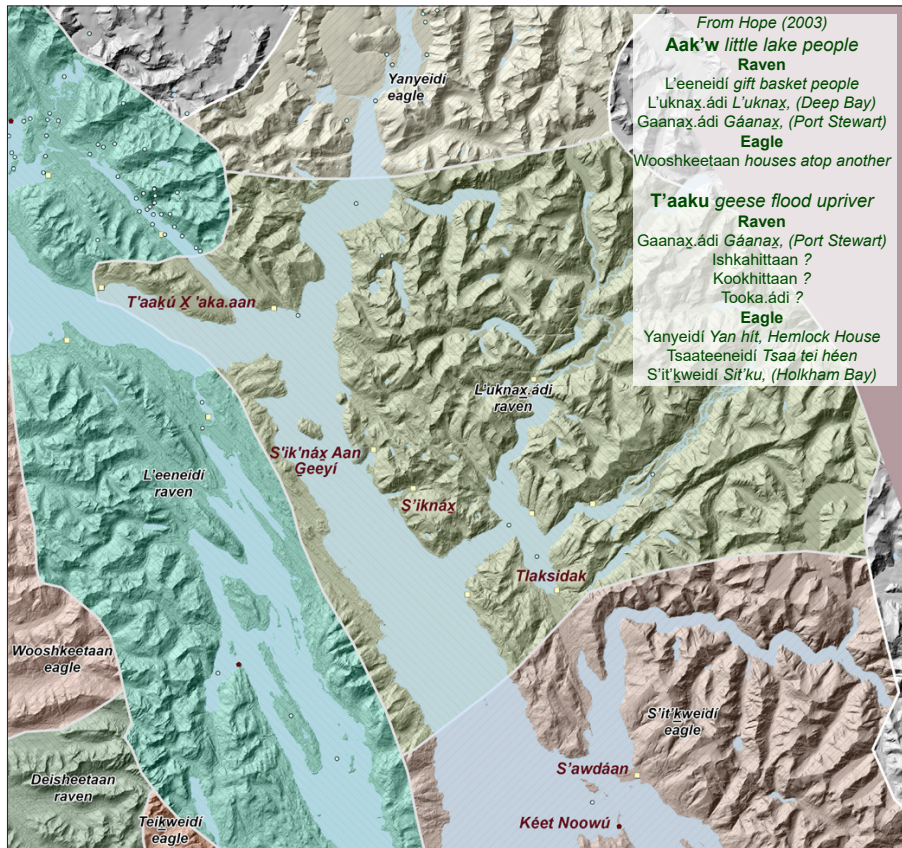
I include this map with trepidation, but "quote" it, in the possibly misguided faith that some information is better than none at all. It's a USFS polygon file for Tlingit & Haida clans, [downloaded from the Southeast Alaska GIS Library](#):

"Pubdate January 15, 2003. This dataset demonstrates Native American Clan boundaries within the Tongass National Forest. It reflects the info gathered depicting the 1900-1950 status of clan traditional territories."

Clans have generally migrated northward during and since the Little Ice Age. Most take their names from places to the south of their current centers of residence, and some—like the S'ik'nax.ádi—rename themselves according to these new centers. Any attempt to map clans is a snapshot in time, and also glosses subtleties like camps and villages claimed by other clans within these implied boundaries.

The S'ik'nax.ádi eagles are not mapped here (nor anywhere, on this USFS layer), nor are they listed on Andy Hope's 2003 tables with either Áak'w or T'aakú K'wáans. So their role in settlement of T'aakú X'aka.aan, S'ik'nax and S'ik'nax Aan G'eeyí may have been fairly brief, and geographically limited.

What most surprised me, on first displaying this layer, was the huge area claimed by raven L'uknax.ádi. This area is mostly T'aakú K'wáan, with whom they're not affiliated. They do have a strong presence in Áak'w Aaní, but I guess I assumed the eagle Yanyeidí claimed down to the mouth of T'aakú Kuna G'eeyí, glacier-bidding bay.



made on their ranks from living in close contact with mining camps. ⁴

From this comment by Emmons we may think of T'aakú X'aka.aan as their 'sobriety' village. Gold town karma was kinda bottoming out by 1888. Assuming a couple years for construction to reach the stage of Photo 29 dates it ~1890.

The Corlies

By way of backing up his hunch about Salisbury, Jim Geraghty sent me the following from *Report on Education in Alaska*, Volume 1886, Page 17:

"A few miles to the South [of Juneau], on the mainland, is the Taku Tribe, numbering 269. A summer school was held among them by Rev. and Mrs. W.H.R. Corlies, of Philadelphia. ⁵ In 1882, pressed by the importunities of the leading men of the tribe, he took up his abode among them, and erected school and residence buildings at Tsek-nuk-sank-y."

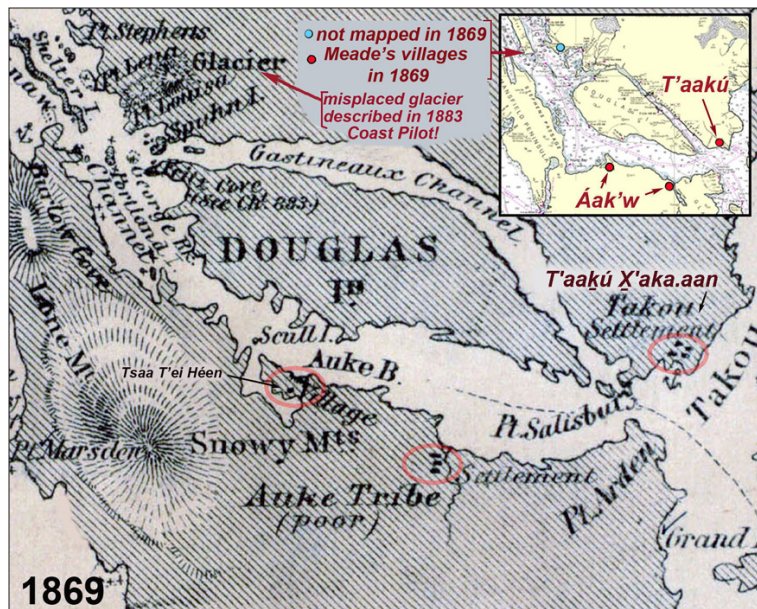
Tsek-nuk-sank-y is Emmons' fairly accurate phonetic rendering of S'iknaxsáank'i, *little one below S'iknax* (Taku Harbor). Debbie Maas' research has recently shown (2022) the Corlieses moving there between 1882 and '84. Jim and I originally speculated they played a central role in founding of T'aakú X'aka.aan—probably living and ministering there. They were doubtless supportive—William was a

⁴ So Emmons considered T'aakú Aan to be the name of the **post**-1880 village, and doesn't name the **pre**-gold village, known to him only from Meade's report

⁵ Several photos show earliest T'aakú settlement on steep colluvial toeslopes somewhere between our downtown library and Rock Dump. These T'aakú were soon displaced by Eurotown expansion, and moved cross-channel to Treadwell-Douglas shoreline..

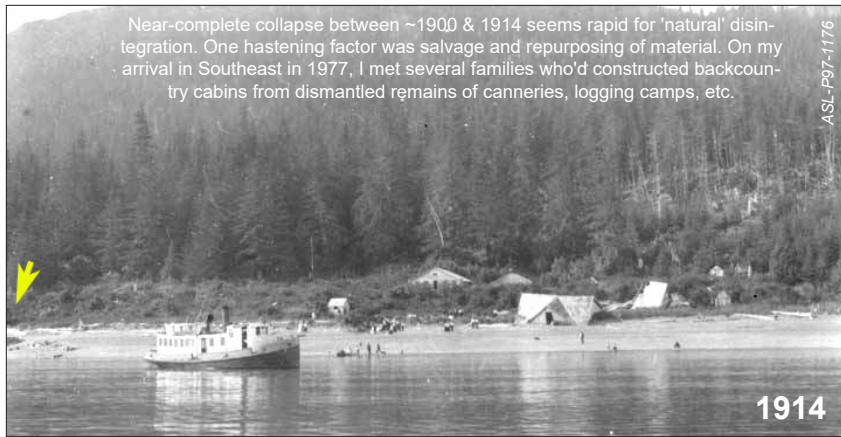
Excerpt from engraving by professional cartographers in reference to Meade's and others' sketchmaps and rough harbor charts. Comparison to modern mariner's chart (inset). On March 16, 1869, leaving Tsa'a T'ei Héén, Meade wrote:

"At 9.45 left Auke and ran through the passage between north end of Admiralty Island and Douglas Island. Passed a village to east of Point Salisbury, on the west point of the entrance to Takou Inlet: about a dozen houses stockaded in."



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More background on this chart and notes by Meade is in [Carstensen, ed. 2015](https://www.carstensen.com/), page 32. Chuck Smythe says it was uncommon to surround entire villages (as opposed to emergency fortifications) with stockades, but Meade unambiguously notes stockades for both of these Áak'w and T'aakú winter villages. Is it possible that word of the Kake bombardment spread so fast that these (and other?) Southeast villages erected log-forts around their perimeters in a futile attempt to protect themselves from post-transfer US terrorism?



Near-complete collapse between ~1900 & 1914 seems rapid for 'natural' disintegration. One hastening factor was salvage and repurposing of material. On my arrival in Southeast in 1977, I met several families who'd constructed backcountry cabins from dismantled remains of canneries, logging camps, etc.

ASL-P97-1176

1914

zealous campaigner against liquor—but I no longer think they were prime movers in T'aakú X 'aka.aan's creation. Their school was in S'iknaṣáank'i (Taku Harbor).

Goldschmidt, Haas & Kahklen (1998)

These names and sequences of inhabitation from Emmons don't correspond exactly to testimony of elders interviewed by GH&K in 1946. In the geographic summary descriptions for that document we find only this comment:

"There was . . . a village at Bishop Point⁶ called T'aak'ux'a Aan. [phonetically close to T'aakú X 'aka.aan] This village was flourishing prior to the discovery of gold at Juneau. It

6 The immediate vicinity of Keishixjix'aa, runs up point (Bishop Pt) is rocky, steep and unsuitable. Probably GH&K merely used this point as a general landmark, because it's more widely recognised than Point Salisbury. As for place-name origins, both points were assigned by George Vancouver to honor the Bishop of Salisbury, who never personally visited or cared about Aak'w or T'aakú country. As such they meet double qualifications as IWGNs (Important White Guy Names); not only were they named for someone who never saw or cared about this place, but by a person equally irrelevant to T'aakú Aanf.

Until photo #29 turned up, this 1914 view from the Trevor Davis collection was the only picture Jim Geraghty or I had seen of the village east of Point Salibury. It's a low res download from *vilda.alaska.edu*. Probably we can get a better copy from the Museum. Title is "*remains of old Taku village, 12 miles south of Juneau.*" By this time, most of the buildings were semi-collapsed. I can't match any to those in photo 29. But I suspect the bedrock (?yellow arrow?) matches that in Shorezone image 04, following.

later became depopulated as the Taku Natives accumulated in the city. Still later, however, one Native leader rebuilt the village, placing a tribal house at this site. The village is now [1946] no longer used (Mrs. Jenny Klaney, #26)

In the *Appendices* to the second edition (p118), Mrs. Jenny Klaney, T'aakú Yanyeidí, further stated:

*"Before the boundary was established, the Taku village was on the Canadian side, but later, it was moved to the mouth of the river.⁷ Taku village was called Gagukik.*⁸ . . . At the mouth of the Taku River; they used to have community houses, but these were all rotted away. There were 3 houses which belonged to the Gaanaxádi clan [raven], and 2 that belonged to the Yanyeidí [eagle]. . . The Yanyeidí people claim the river, and the others just come in there because they were married in or related. They would get all the fish they wanted, so they lived right there⁹. . .*

There was a village at Taku Inlet called Xatnoowú.¹⁰ There was another village at Bishop Point which was called T'aak'ux'a Aan. . . When Juneau

7 By "mouth of the river" Jenny likely meant T'aakú X 'aka.aan.

8 The asterisk signifies an unidentified place name in Walter Goldschmidt's original transcription. Maybe Gagukik was the name of the old village on the Canadian side? It'd make sense for the principle T'aakú village to be on tidewater. Does the older Canadian village possibly date back to blockage of the inlet by the glacier?

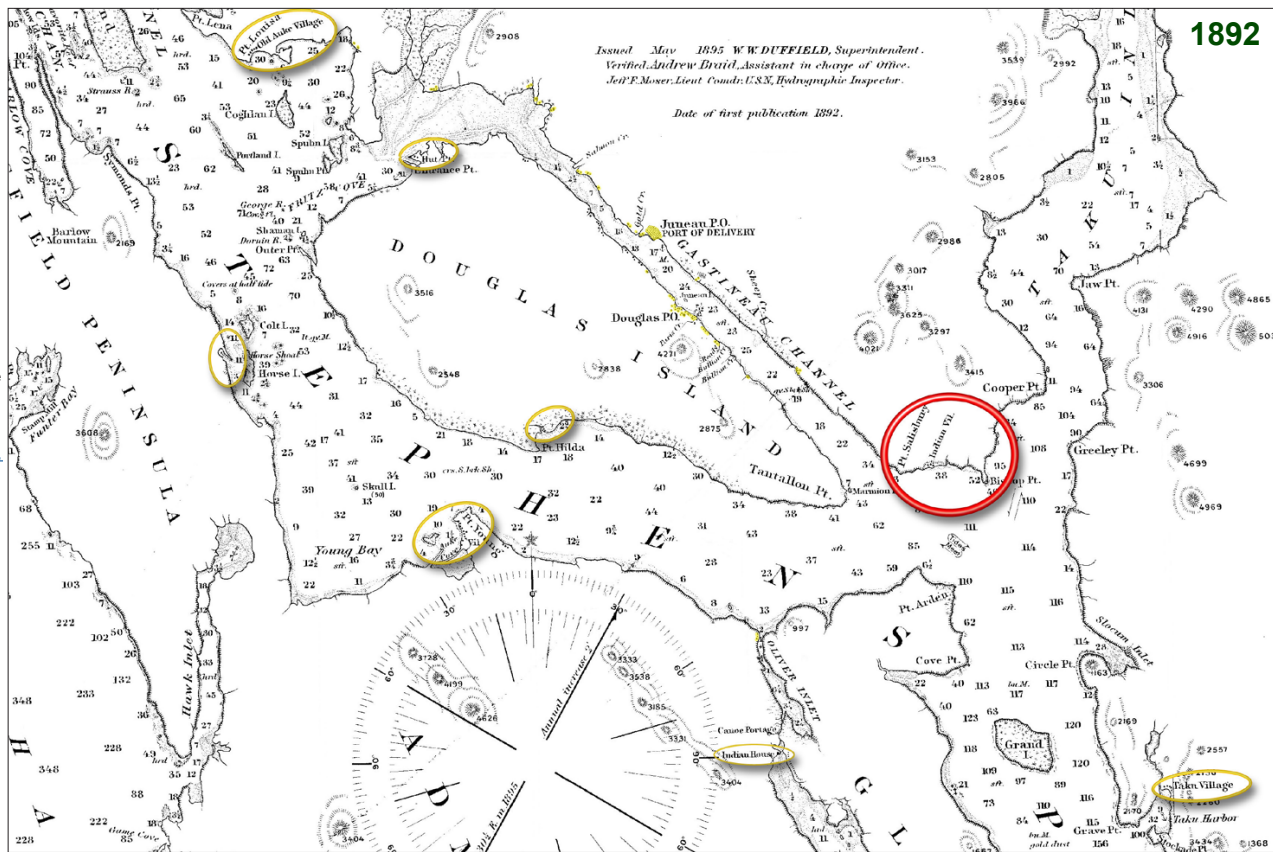
9 Jenny's following comment that the Point Bishop settlement was a summer village seems to fit this fish abundance. Remember, however, that Meade's visit to the pre-gold settlement there was in March of 1869.

10 I don't yet know the location of Xatnoowú. The name implies it was a fort.

was founded, most of the people left the village at Bishop Point, and it went down to almost nothing. My uncle rebuilt the village. ¹¹ In my memory, there has been just one tribal house there which belonged to the Yanyeidí, and it is gone now [1946]. This used to be a summer village.

11 Concurs with Emmons' sequence of departure & return. Maybe we can track down this uncle's name and clan. Liana and I unsuccessfully searched for Jenny Klaney on [Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian genealogy of Canada and Alaska](#), but she may be there under some other spelling. Was Jenny's uncle Sik'nax'ádi?

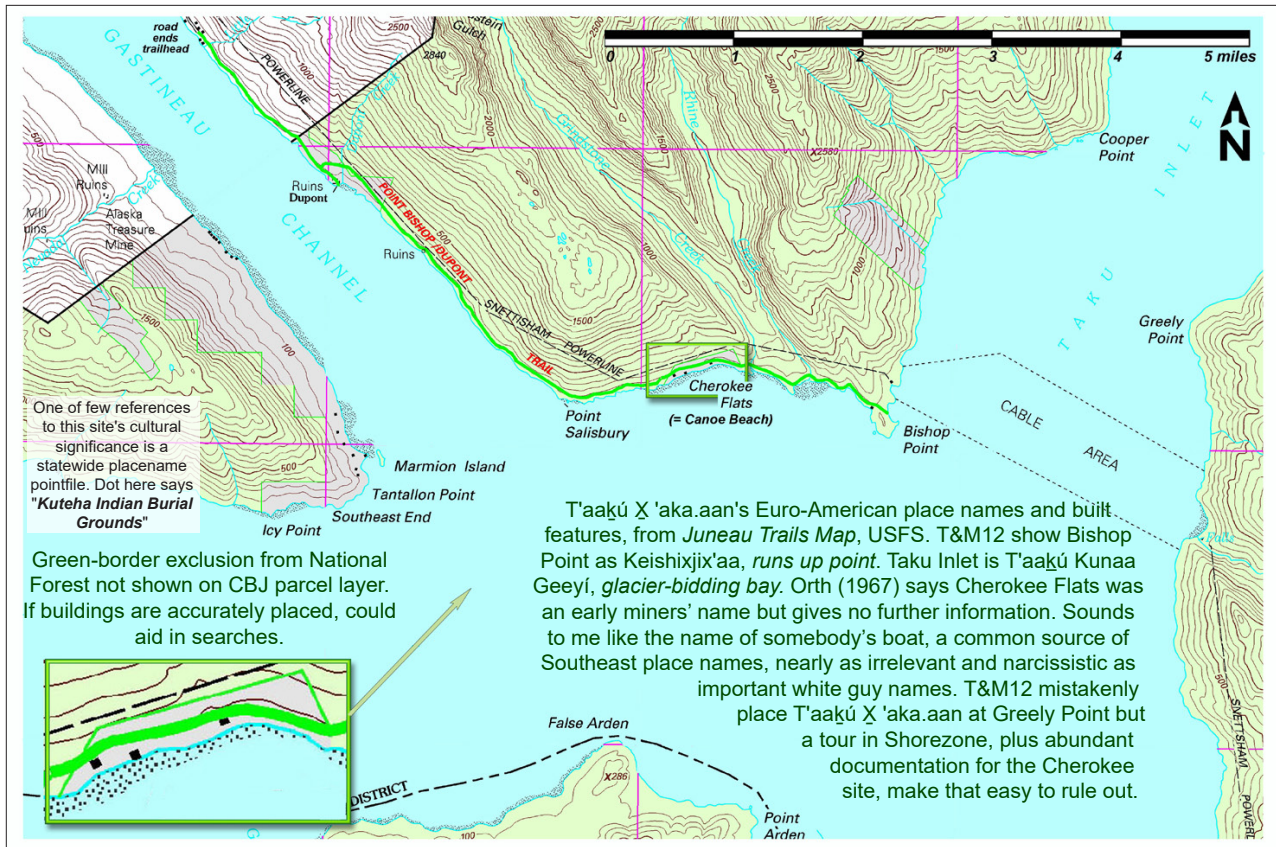
Duffield chart issued 1895, but settlements probably not updated since first publication in 1892. I've circled T'aakú X'aka.aan, in red, and other Tlingit settlements in yellow. Presumed Euro buildings are yellow tinted.



Ruling out Greely Point

T'aaḱú X'aka.aan has great southern exposure, an awesome canoe beach, and excellent defensive visibility. But in winter this beach at the confluence of 4 wind tunnels is about as violently exposed as any strip of shoreline on the Inside Passage. From a helicopter bucking southerlies in sub-zero temperatures (February, 1985) I saw the rocks at Point Arden [noTN?] caked in ice from salt spray up to about 50 feet above extreme high water. I'm not surprised Jenny stated Bishop Point was a "summer village."

Alexander Stevens, T'aaḱú Kwáan, was born in 1898. His statement to GH&K mentioned 2 villages in

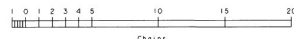
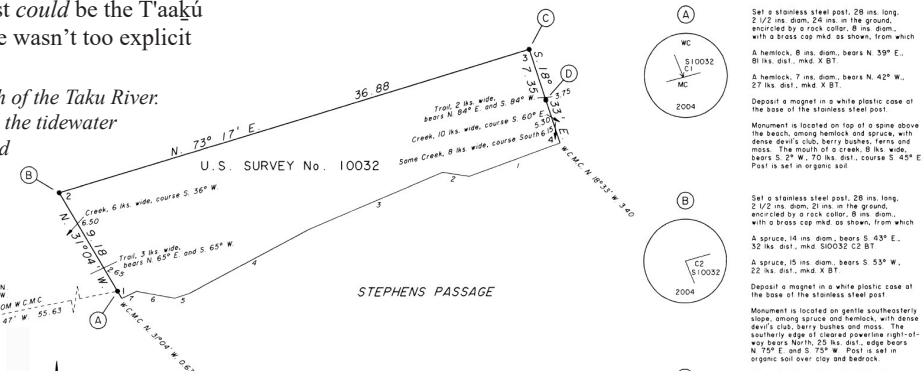


our area of interest. The first *could* be the T'aakú X'aka.aan settlement, but he wasn't too explicit geographically:

"One was on the flats south of the Taku River. The original village was at the tidewater mark on the Taku River, and the remains of the houses could be seen when I was young."

USS 10032

Most older BLM homestead surveys are multi-paged and full of useful comments about the claim, with drawings of buildings, trails, etc. But this single-page latter-day one is quite cryptic. I assume information is confidential—probably because of grave sites and other cultural significance. But we're not even told the past or current parcel owners of "Kuteha Indian Burial Grounds."



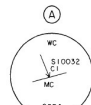
MEANDERS

- From the true point for corner No. 4, a meander corner, on the northerly shore of Stephens Passage, of the line of mean high tide, not monumented due to the liability of wave action.
- Thence with the meanders along a moderately sloping white rocky beach, of the line of mean high tide.
1. S. 70°11' W., 7.25 chs. At end of course, begin along broken bedrock and boulders.
 2. N. 81°35' W., 2.04 chs. At end of course, begin along a moderately sloping white rocky beach, with occasional outcrops of bedrock.
 3. S. 67°13' W., 10.81 chs. At end of course, begin along broken bedrock and boulders.
 4. S. 62°07' W., 10.25 chs. At end of course, begin along broken bedrock and boulders.
 5. S. 72°06' W., 1.14 chs. At end of course, the true point for corner No. 1, a meander corner, on the northerly shore of Stephens Passage, at the line of mean high tide, not monumented due to the liability of wave action.
 6. N. 80°08' W., 2.92 chs.
 7. S. 64°45' W., 1.21 chs.

Kristine Staffeldt Ogonowski, Alaska Registered Land Surveyor No. 8536, HEREBY CERTIFY, upon honor that in pursuance of Special Instructions dated June 30, 1988, and under Contract No. NAC400062, worded March 26, 2004, I have executed the survey depicted on this lot in strict conformity with said Special Instructions, the Manual of Instructions for the Survey of the Public Lands of the United States, 1923, and in the specific manner described on this plat.

March 30, 2006
Date

Kristine Staffeldt Ogonowski
Alaska Registered Land Surveyor



Set a stainless steel post, 28 ins. long, 2 1/2 ins. diam., 24 ins. in the ground, encircled by a rock collar, 8 ins. diam., with a brass cap m.d. as shown, from which a hemlock, 8 ins. diam., bears N. 39° E., 81 ins. dist., m.d. X BT.

A hemlock, 7 ins. diam., bears N. 42° W., 27 ins. dist., m.d. X BT.

Deposit a magnet in a white plastic cone of the base of the stainless steel post.

Monument is located on top of a spine above bedrock, among hemlock and spruce, with dense devil's club, berry bushes, ferns and moss. The mouth of a creek, 8 ins. wide, bears S. 27° W., 70 ins. dist., course S. 45° E. Post is set in organic soil.

Set a stainless steel post, 28 ins. long, 2 1/2 ins. diam., 21 ins. in the ground, encircled by a rock collar, 8 ins. diam., with a brass cap m.d. as shown, from which a spruce, 14 ins. diam., bears S. 43° E., 32 ins. dist., m.d. S10032 C2 BT.

A spruce, 15 ins. diam., bears S. 53° W., 22 ins. dist., m.d. X BT.

Deposit a magnet in a white plastic cone at the base of the stainless steel post.

Monument is located on gentle southerly slope, among spruce and hemlock, with dense devil's club, berry bushes, ferns and moss. The southerly edge of cleared powerline right-of-way bears North, 25 ins. dist., edge bears N. 70° E. and S. 75° W. Post is set in organic soil over clay and bedrock.

Set a stainless steel post, 28 ins. long, 2 1/2 ins. diam., 21 ins. in the ground, with a brass cap m.d. as shown, from which a hemlock, 24 ins. diam., bears S. 75° E., 37 ins. dist., m.d. X BT.

A hemlock, 10 ins. diam., bears S. 24° W., 28 ins. dist., m.d. S10032 C3 BT.

Deposit a magnet in a white plastic cone of the base of the stainless steel post.

Monument is located on steep southerly slope, among hemlock and spruce, with dense berry bushes, devil's club, ferns, deerhoar and moss. The southerly edge of cleared powerline right-of-way bears North, 40 ins. dist., edge bears N. 75° E. and S. 70° W. Post is set in organic soil over clay.

Set a stainless steel post, 28 ins. long, 2 1/2 ins. diam., 15 ins. in the ground, encircled by a rock collar, 24 ins. diam., with a brass cap m.d. as shown, from which a hemlock, 15 ins. diam., bears N. 43° E., 25 ins. dist., m.d. X BT.

A spruce, 11 ins. diam., bears N. 45° W., 64 ins. dist., m.d. X BT.

Deposit a magnet in a white plastic cone of the base of the stainless steel post.

Monument is located on gently rolling ground, among hemlock and spruce, with berry bushes, devil's club, skunk cabbage, deerhoar, ferns and moss. The center of a fast bridge, 6 ins. wide, 30 ins. long, bears S. 86° W., 33 ins. dist., bridge bears N. 62° E. and S. 62° W.; over a creek, 8 ins. wide, course S. 65° E. Post is set in organic soil and clay over bedrock.

Found a brass tablet, cemented on top of a cube-shaped boulder, m.d. as shown.

U. S. SURVEY No. 10032, ALASKA

This plat contains the entire survey record.

This survey was executed by Kristine Staffeldt Ogonowski, Alaska Registered Land Surveyor, No. 8536, for Sealaska Corporation, August 6 through August 10, 2004, in accordance with the specifications set forth in the Manual of Survey Instructions, 1923, and Special Instructions, dated June 30, 1988, approved October 3, 1991, Contract No. NAC400062, awarded March 26, 2004, and Notice to Proceed dated July 13, 2004.

Field Assistants were:

Richard L. Gaffey, LSIT, Party Chief
Tonner R.P. Gaffey, Survey Technician

Area: 29.43 Acres

The azimuth was determined by Global Positioning Systems using static relative positioning techniques, and refers to the true meridian. The direction of all lines are mean bearings.

The geographic position of the witness corner to corner No. 1, a meander corner, as determined by a direct tie to the US Coast and Geodetic Survey Triangulation Station "SALISBURY", using Global Positioning Systems is:

Latitude: 58° 12' 24.53" North NAD 27

Longitude: 134° 11' 47.10" West

The mean magnetic declination was obtained from direct field observations.

This survey is situated on the northerly shore of Stephens Passage, between Gastineau Channel and Toki Inlet, approximately 10 miles southerly to the city of Juneau, situated under the Equator, Range 69 East, Copper River Meridian, Alaska.

The land is generally rolling and steadily increases in elevation to the north. Line 2-3 profiles an existing and cleared powerline right-of-way.

Spruce dominates the forest near the water, giving way to hemlock inland, with an understory of berry bushes, false azalea, devil's club, deer hoar, skunk cabbage, ferns and moss.

Access to this survey was by boat.

Acceptance of this survey does not purport to transfer any interest in submerged lands to which the State of Alaska is entitled under the Equal Footing Doctrine and Section 6(m) of the Alaska Statehood Act, P.L. 85-508, notwithstanding the use, location, or absence of meander lines to depict water bodies.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Anchorage, Alaska

The survey represented by this plat, having been correctly executed in accordance with the requirements of law and the regulations of this Bureau, is hereby accepted.

For the Director

John Smith
Date

Deputy State Director for Cadastral Survey, Alaska

Certainly, tidal influence extends way up Taku Inlet, but the term “flats” does suggest T'aakú X'aka.aan. On topo maps, it's not at all obvious where Taku River ends and Taku Inlet begins.

“There was also a Taku village at Greely Point which was mostly a winter camp. I left there in my childhood, and there were 3 big community houses and almost 100 other houses there. This village was abandoned about 1912. I was there when I was about 6 years old.” [i.e. ~1904]

The sidebar reveals no place on the Greely side to squeeze 3 big clan houses, let alone pull up all the boats they'd need for access. I can only conclude that Stevens or the transcriber conflated points Bishop & Greely. (maybe names used only in conversation with white interviewers?) No other elders interviewed mentioned significant activity on the east side. And the abandonment date of 1912 fits well with what we know about T'aakú X'aka.aan. Stevens' "100 other houses" further strains credulity. That's a Klukwan-sized community, on a pretty 'fishcampy' stretch of beach.

Most believable sequence of inhabitation?

Taking together the preceding information on Corleis, plus the Emmons and GH&K quotes, we can piece together a tentative sequence of inhabitation for T'aakú X'aka.aan—the



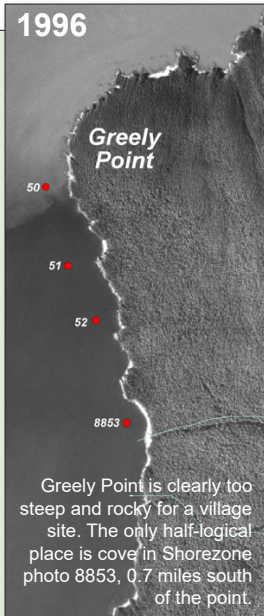
Obliques from Alaska Shorezone

The Alaska Shorezone Project is a collaboration of NOAA, Coastal & Ocean Resources, Inc, The Nature Conservancy, and other agencies and NGOs, offering high res oblique stills—index, right; example, above—as well as video (capture from video on Cherokee Flats follows). Some of the stills are so detailed that individual rocks can be identified on the beach. Shorezone is a wonderful resource for pre-field assessment of cultural sites. Founder John Harper has

used it to locate and map clam gardens in BC.

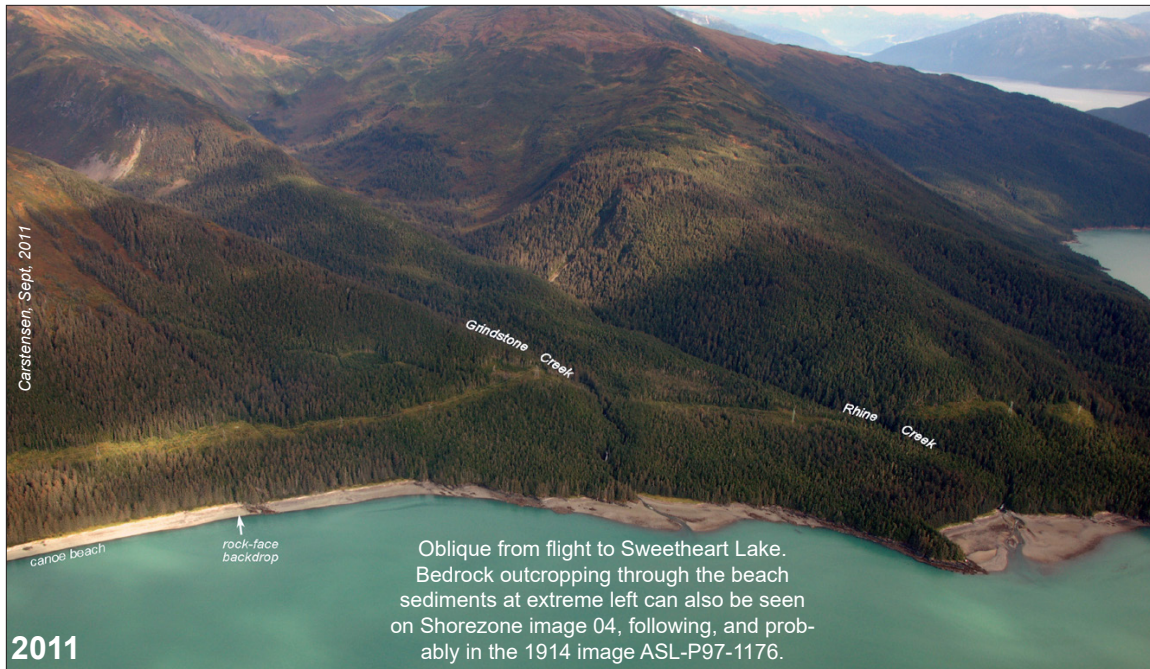
I've included several views in this document. The entire Shorezone collection can be viewed and downloaded from alaskafisheries.noaa.gov.

This is the only east-side stretch near Pt Greely where canoes might have been pulled up. No evidence of industrious boulder removal, as usually seen where longterm residence



incentivizes such labor.

Fish camp, maybe, but hardly inviting for multiple clan houses.



marvelous gravelly storm beach on left side of my photo here, and shown in better detail in Shorezone images 04 and 05.

First, it's unlikely there was any recognizable cultural site at T'aakú X'aka.aan in 1794. In August of that year, Joseph Whidbey passed by twice: once trying (and

failing) to enter Gastineau Channel; and later rowing up into Taku Inlet. On neither passage did he remark on fishcamps, burials or any other Tlingit structures, active or inactive. ¹ In

¹ By "he" I mean not Whidbey himself, but Vancouver & Menzies, who worked from his log, since lost, and from his verbal communications during the expedition. Vancouver & Menzies were both consistent about noting any evidence of villages

fact, no cultural observations of any kind were recorded in the entirety of what today is considered T'aakú Aani. My conclusion is that glacial blockage of the inlet only a few decades earlier, followed by impassable, inlet-choking icebergs, restricted T'aakú Kwáan to the interior, well into the early 1800s. This is supported in oral history ². By the time of Fort Durham in Taku Harbor in the 1840s, T'aakú Kwáan was a force to be reckoned with, boasting highest per-capita slave ratio of any Tlingit Kwáan. ³

According to Meade, Emmons and GH&K, by whatever name, there was a westside village sometime in the 1800s, which fell into disuse in the first years of explosive growth at Gold Creek and Treadwell. Later, in

or fish camps, and it seems unlikely either would omit mention of a cultural site at Sik'náx Aan Geeyí, Which Whidbey couldn't have missed on either pass-by.

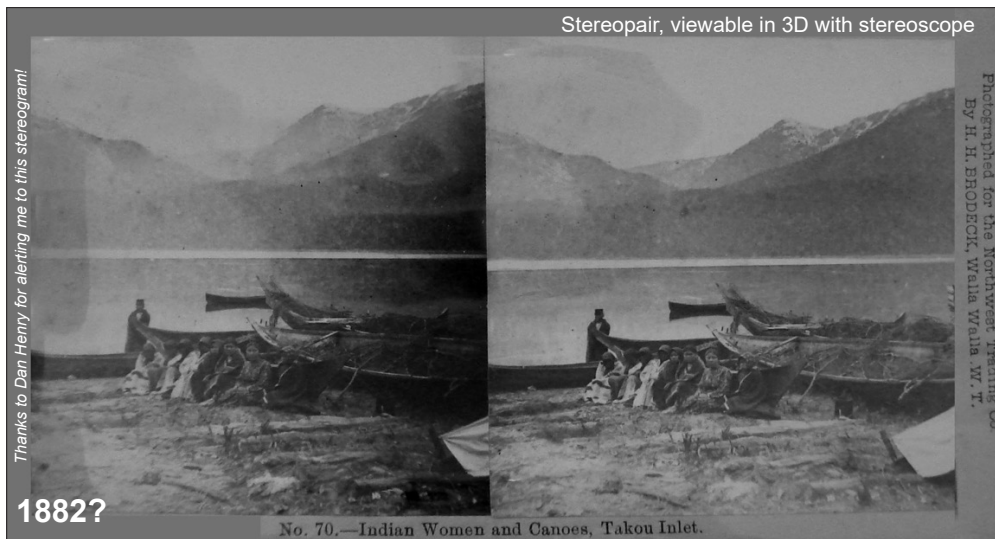
² Following sidebar from Nyman (1993) described subglacial traverse, and glacial melting that finally admitted T'aakú Kwáan, to the coast.

³ Hudson Bay Co census of 1839 distinguished free from slave. Table 5 in Emmons & DeLaguna (1991). Olson's (1994) records from the trading post at Taku Harbor graphically illustrated the abundance and expendability of slaves.

No date for this stereogram but according to the Library of Congress, Henry H. Brodeck has a series taken in Alaska c1881-82, printed for the NW Trading Company that would shortly destroy Aangóon. At this time, T'aakú Kwáan was still a trading power, not yet entirely subsumed by the spectre of gold at Dzantik'i Heeni. Because they were wealthy, these canoes are probably of cedar from southern Kwáans or Haida.

In Google Earth tip-down, I've scanned up and down Taku Inlet trying to replicate the background skyline (I also flipped it, with no better success). After crossing into Canada—in fact, well before then—the mountains look less and less coastal and the hillsides less plushly forested. It's unlikely they'd have risked these expensive canoes that far up the river, where more expendable cottonwood dugouts were preferred. Canadian reaches of the valley are also more hemmed in than this scene, which does match the width of lower T'aakú. It's possible the location in caption is incorrect.

In dress, hat and bearing, the man in background resembles Gaanax.ádi clan leader Aanyaalahaash, before his beard turned grey in the early 1900s.



Thanks to Dan Henry for alerting me to this stereogram!

1882?

No. 70.—Indian Women and Canoes, Takou Inlet.

Stereopair, viewable in 3D with stereoscope

Photographed for the Northwest Trading Co
By H. H. BRODECK, WAILA WAILA W. T.

the late 1880s—with some disagreement about exact timing—the town was re-established nearby, or right on top of the old one. Since prime canoe beaches are limited in this area, the latter scenario is more probable.

According to Emmons, the first, pre-gold, village was unnamed, and the re-established village was "T'aakú Aan." Jenny Klaney suggests the opposite: T'aak'ux'a Aan was the *earlier*, pre-gold, village. She didn't name the post-gold re-occupation, in which her uncle was a prime mover. GH&K98, in summarizing statements of Jenny and others, have "T'aak'ux'a Aan" as the original settlement that "*became depopulated.*" Although spellings differ slightly, it seems that pre- and post-gold settlements went by the same name.

Information provided by Emmons—together with clan-name tables from Thornton (2008)—identify leaders of the second, post-gold community at T'aakú X'aka.aan. The recently-arrived clan called Sik'nax.ádi instigated this movement away from the "*dissolution*" of Gold Town. Although Jenny was T'aakú Yanyeidí, I wonder if her uncle (paternal side, perhaps?) was Sik'nax.ádi. Here's how Thornton explained etymology:

clan: Sik'nax.ádi • *translation:* People of Sik'nax • *place affiliation:* Sik'nax (Limestone Inlet) • *translation:* whetstone place? • *kwáan distribution:* Shtax'heen⁴

⁴ T&M12, p69, include a sidebar on Andy Hope, Sik'nax.ádi, who explained their history in S'ik'nax Aan Geeyi, *grindstone town bay* (Taku Harbor), noting grindstone rocks at bay entry.

Alaska Shorezone
 stills 04 & 05
 bracket Waggoner
 photo 29, but
 skip over beach
 in foreground
 where bedrock
 protrudes through
 gravel. My red
 and yellow arrows
 show approximate
 centerpoints of
 stills & captured
 video frame.



How precise can we be about dates of depopulation and re-establishment? In Emmon's chronology the town had emptied to "one fishing house" by 1882, but was re-established around 1888. That seems a good fit for what we know about early years at Dzantik'i Héeni, *little flounder creek* (Gold Creek). In the rush to cash in on Euro-employment, about 2 years should have emptied out the channel-mouth town . . . then another 6 years or so to realize the costs of such proximity outweighed the gains.

Before leaving Thornton's tables (2008), to eliminate confusion, let's compare etymology for the Sik'nax.ádi's neighboring and similar-sounding Sit'kweidi, also eagle moiety:

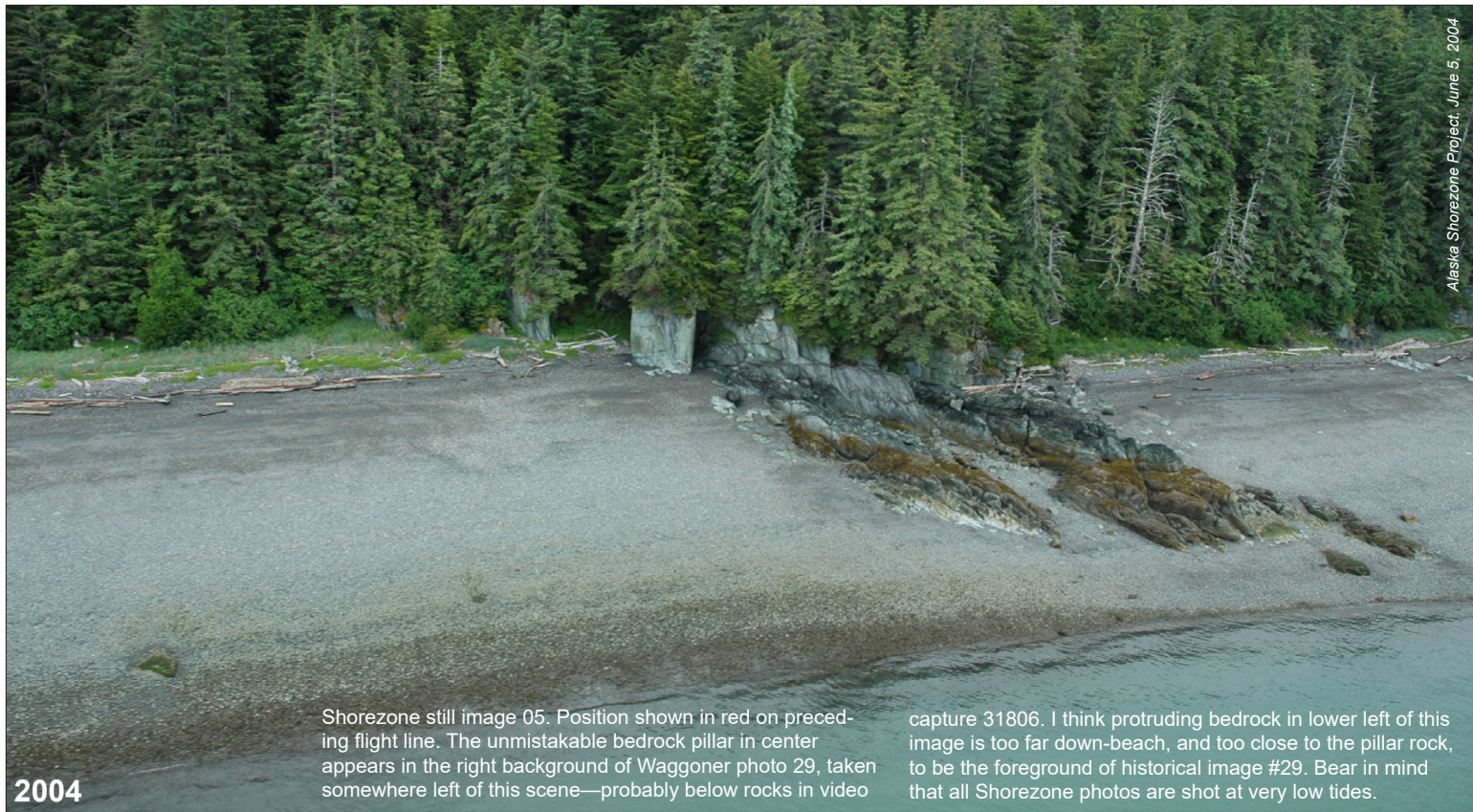
clan: Sit'kweidi • **translation:** People of Sit'koh • **place affiliation:** Sit'koh (Port Snettisham) • **translation:** glacier cove • **kwáan distribution:** S'awdaan, T'aakú

Although both Sik'nax.ádi and Sit'kweidí could obviously be traced to ancestors in more wide-spread clans, by time of the Little Ice Age, they'd settled in these uncontested 'iceboxes,' renaming themselves according to defining features of their adopted bays and fiords: for Sik'nax.ádi it was their bedrock, limestone, and for Sit'kweidí it was the ice that sculpted out that rock.

Right: Compare patches of protruding bedrock with those on extreme left of my 2011 oblique aerial. Compare also with rocks on extreme left of 1914 photo, ASL-P97-1176. ●
Inset: Captured frame from forward video shows dark patch in mid-beach that may be our Waggoner #29 photopoint rocks.



Shorezone still image 04. Position shown in red on flight line above. Almost all of these conifers are spruce, colonizing the village site. Counting whorls on the tallest suggests ages of about 50 to 60 years.



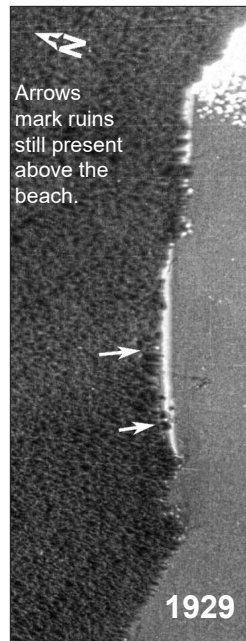
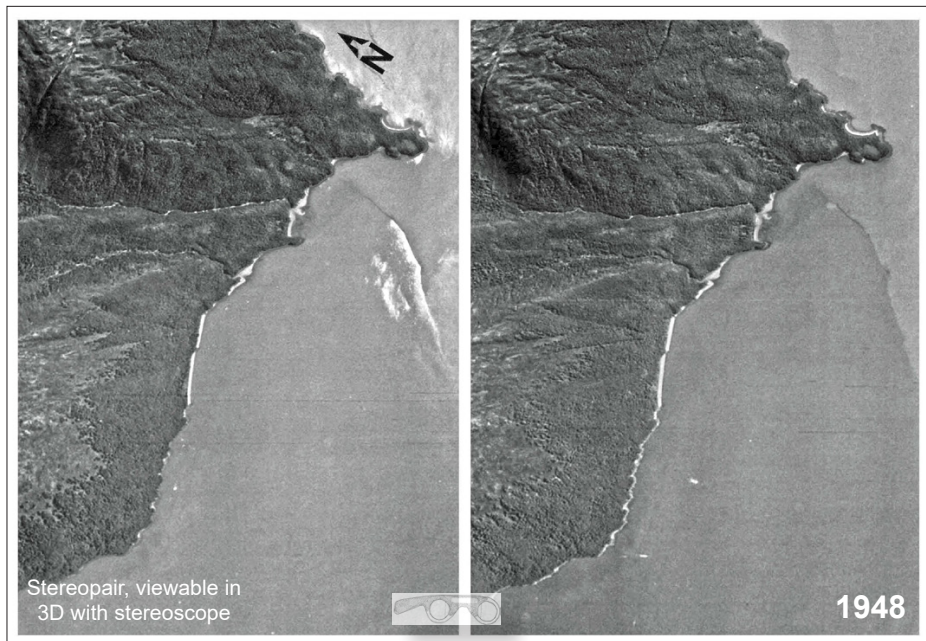
2004

Shorezone still image 05. Position shown in red on preceding flight line. The unmistakable bedrock pillar in center appears in the right background of Waggoner photo 29, taken somewhere left of this scene—probably below rocks in video

capture 31806. I think protruding bedrock in lower left of this image is too far down-beach, and too close to the pillar rock, to be the foreground of historical image #29. Bear in mind that all Shorezone photos are shot at very low tides.

Historical aerals

These views of 'canoe beach' are from the US Navy's first air-photo surveys, in 1929, and again in 1948. North is not up in these images; flight-line direction constrains the orientation of photo pairs to be viewed in stereo. On the 1929 aerial, one obvious building can be still seen in the old village site. Resolution in the 1948 pair is insufficient to detect cultural features; I include them for mountain topography above the village, and because this is approximately when the young spruces in Shorezone photo 04 began to shoot up, judging from my whorl count. A non-forested bench can barely be made out in this stereo pair.



Summary thoughts

T'aakú X'aka.aan was a no-brainer in terms of strategic position guarding the heart of T'aakú Aani. It would be virtually impossible for approaching enemies to surprise this village by sea.

Prior to coldest decades of the Little Ice Age, before T'aakú Kwáan Sít'i, *T'aakú people's glacier* (Taku) blocked the inlet, there was no doubt a succession of villages and seasonal camps here, occupied probably by musical-chairs replacement of human genetics and technologies. We should be alert to possibility

of ancient pre-neoglacial cultural remains (Thermal Optimum, or earlier Younger Dryas times), as well. ¹

¹ In reference to Shtax'héen, *water biting itself* (Stikine River) Cathy Connor has pointed out that in the early Holocene, with sea level hundreds of feet higher, Paleomarine skin-boat people could more easily have accessed the obsidian fields of Mt Edziza. Those highlands, south of today's Telegraph Creek, then fronted a deep 'marine,' fiord. Such would also have been the case in T'aakú valley, perhaps even subsuming Aa Tlein, *big lake* (Atlin). A corridor is a corridor, regardless of vehicle or 'road surface.'

Stephen Loring January 28, 20080128: <https://learninglab.si.edu/resources/view/277681#more-info>

Chief Shakes' canoe at Fort Wrangell. In background is Chief Shakes' house with two mortuary poles: Bear-Up-The-Mountain and Go-na-ka-dot (Guna.kade.t), a wealth-bringing water monster.

Chief Shakes' canoe was acquired for the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 and came to the Smithsonian after the Fair closed. The carved bears on the canoe—the watchman at the bow and a female emerging from the stern—gave the boat one of its names: "Brown Bear Canoe" Hootz York (*xóots yaakw?*). Elaborately painted for the Fair, the extreme bow had a pilot-fish, a small whale that the Tlingit believed helped herd seals towards killerwhales, and a large killerwhale was painted along the side. Chief Shakes' wife was Raven, depicted at the stern. In the Partridge photograph [either 1886 or 87], the boat lacks these designs along the side.

Demerjian (2006, p50) has another Partridge photo of Brown Bear Canoe taken probably on the same day, and notes "Wrangell Tlingit are working to repatriate the boat."

In order to search for features such as house foundation outlines, we should visit before vegetation obscures the ground. On portions of the site beneath closed-canopy young-growth spruce forest, that may not be an issue.

Although the video capture 31806 hints at bedrock in about the right location for our photopoint foreground, we shouldn't count on finding exposures here. Storm beaches change profile seasonally: steeper in winter, gentler in summer. It's possible these rocks are covered and uncovered annually.

Jim Simard points out that the Shakes Canoe is identifiable among the 9 or so canoes in photo #29 (crop on



right). Jim Geraghty notes that the year when it was sent away to a museum gives us a latest-possible date for photo #29. I searched on that and learned the **canoe left Alaska in 1893.**

That means that unless the Waggoners came to Southeast long before 1901,



as stated in PCA-249, they couldn't have taken the photo. If I'm correct that it's David's handwriting on the image, it means he labeled someone else's photo, maybe Dr Chisom's. This actually fits with the quite generic title, "An Indian Village." On reflection, it sounds like a label for a picture you don't know much about. If he'd been there to take the picture, he'd probably have been more geographically specific.

I remember Jim Simard hypothesizing that Waggoner (or whomever he got the picture from) might have been part of a well-known canoe expedition from Wrangell to Haines for a potlatch, in which the Shakes canoe participated. What was the date of that journey? These 2 examples on right are among the last potlatches given in Jilkaat Aani before the practise was banned by Euro fearful of "heathen" rites and threateningly large congregations. Both were far upriver. Canoes in foreground of lower image are rough dugouts, probably of cottonwood, more typical of utilitarian river craft than the redcedar masterworks. Perhaps the earlier potlatch was at more easily accessible Yandeist'akyé, where everything from afar drifts onshore (4-mile, Haines Highway).

PS 20180312: Just put out a question concerning implications of these dates to the '2 Jims,' Myra, Liana, & Rachel. Jim S also bounced the question

to Steve Brown. Here's my email followed by some of the erudite replies:

To Jim S. & the group: I'm updating my scoping paper on Waggoner photo #29, of the village near Pt Salisbury. I remember you speculating that since Chief Shakes canoe appears in the image, it may have been taken during a trip north from Wrangell to attend a potlatch in Chilkat country. Do you have the date and location of that potlatch? I can't find reference to one that fits some of the other information we have about this photo and its context.

One difficulty is that, according to your updated guide to PCA 492, the Waggoners didn't arrive in Klawock until 1901. Shakes canoe was removed to the Chicago exposition in 1893. You and Jacki note that it's unclear which of the photos in the collection are by Dr Chisom, from whom they acquired the camera and some of the negatives. I'm leaning toward this picture being taken by Chisom or some other photographer, but labeled much later by David Waggoner, in that distinctive gloppy white left-leaning handwriting. One reason for this suspicion is the rather generic title "An Indian Village," which would fit, if he didn't actually know where it was.

PCA-492 also says that "transcripts of writings of Mary and David Waggoner are also included in this collection". Is that downloadable from vilda, and does it include any photos of their letters or journals, from which we could compare handwriting style?



Two potlatch photos from Sheldon Museum. Top is Klukwan, 1900; Below at "Kluctoo," [Kaat'waaltú, rockslide (19-mile village)] ~1895, later wiped out by an avalanche. Neither are early enough for the Shakes canoe that was gone by 1893. Also, would they have taken such a precious canoe so far up the river?

From Jim G: Hi all, I believe the photo in question was documenting the completion of the school and residence that were paid for by a mission fund. "A few miles to the South, on the mainland, is the Taku Tribe, numbering 269. . . ." [RC: [rest of quote here](#)] I feel this photo is immediately after the completion because the two buildings still had "smoke holes" that no Euro-American could have tolerated. My guess is they were replaced when the next steamer brought stove pipe. The lady standing on the porch looks very much like Mrs. Corlies. This collection would be fantastic if it were annotated. ²

From Jim S: Hi Richard. I do not presume to even speculate on what is happening in this great photo. I do believe that it was shot by Waggoner in 1901. Steve Brown looked at it with me and agreed that Shakes' distinctive canoe is the one in the photo. But he says there were a few of those canoes at different times. I have copied Steve on this email, but you may need to forward the photo to him if you would like to have his take on it.

From Steve Brown: Mr. Carstensen has a point regarding the date of the photo and the fact that the canoe was collected from Wrangell for the 1893 world's fair, and later ended up in the Smithsonian. The question I have about the photo, if anyone cares to address it, is whether this site was a full-time village, or a seasonal camp of some kind, or a gathering that drew so many canoes including the Xootz Yakw for some event.

RC: Hopefully, Steve, this document will shed a little light on that. If I'm misremembering Jim S's comment about a Haines potlatch stopover, then perhaps T'aaḱú X'aka.aan (ps: or J-town as indicated below) was indeed the destination

² Jim and I first read this quote to mean that the school was built at the community in photo 29. After reading Debbie Maas' history of the Corleis, and correcting my name for the channel-mouth community from S'ik'nax Aan Geeyi to T'aaḱú X'aka.aan, I now think the school referred to was at Taku Harbor, where the Corleis family spent much more time.



Maas caption (2022): Anna, W.H.R., Emily, Briton, Edith, and Emily Corlies c. 1888²⁹

for these canoes. I suppose one tie to Wrangell could have been the importance of the Sik'nax, ádi there—a 'root' clan of the Shtax'héen eagle moiety, according to Ronald Olson.

PS 20210828: Searching our City Museum website for something else just now, I became distracted by a column title on predominantly euro-centric *digitalbob* (DeArmond):

[Large Indian Canoe Visits Harbor](#)

DeArmond's newspaper clippings from the 18951026 issue contain this interesting 2-sentence 'sighting':

"very large and fine specimen of the Indian canoe was seen in the harbor today. It is gracefully proportioned and the prow is ornamented by an elaborately carved bear's head"

Although not named as the Shakes canoe—or replica thereof (SB's "few of those canoes at different times") since October 1895 postdates the Smithsonian extraction of the original by 1893—the description fits. A bear's head was clan at.óow, sacred property, and few in 1895 would have risked the wrath of Shakes with a knock-off, nor had the wealth to commission a "very large" one.

If this harbor visit gives us a believable date for Waggoner image #29, then I guess we can no longer claim he took the photo, but rather annotated one that he acquired from a photographer such as Dr Chisom.

PS 20220910: Debbie Maas has just posted a history of the Corlies that has much new information about cultural sites extending upriver. Download

from homepage of takudebbie.com. The family portrait above is from her document. The leaning person in middle of porch, inset, may be female, but Jim's eyes must be better than mine. (or maybe he has a higher-res copy?)

Yan'yēidi

Some transboundary background from our Canadian neighbors:

Carcross-Tagish First Nation

Histories of Yan Yedi and Daklawēidi are closely linked. Both came from upper of Stikine and Taku Rivers, and origins may extend back to Yakutat on the Alaska Coast.

The name "Yan Yedi" has been interpreted as meaning "White Cedar People", "mainland people", or "place of hemlock people".

McClellan differentiates between "old" and "new" Yan yedi. Old Yan Yedi refer to themselves as "wolf wolves", while they call "New" Yan Yedi "wolf fish-hawks". "Old" Yan Yedi claim wolf as crest, while "New" Yan Yedi claim golden eagle.

"Old" Yan Yedi were likely pushed back up Taku River by "New" Yan Yedi moving in from the coast and Stikine area. One story quoted by McClellan suggests that a young Yan Yedi couple fled to the Nisutlin area after committing incest.

There are a number of Yan Yedi creation stories. One of the most powerful is one told by Mrs. Elizabeth Nyman from Atlin. In the story, she talks about two peoples separated by a glacier...

from Gagiwdu. Brought forth to reconfirm: legacy of the Taku River Tlingit clan:

Long ago a great glacier stretched to the mouth of Taku river. There were people to the south and north of this glacier, but neither knew that other people were on the other side.

One of the older men, leader of the northern people, lived at Kaxhtuk. His name was Xuts, *brown bear*. The northern people were making a house and Xuts's nephews and brother asked, "*what shall we make our house of?*" Xuts replied, "*well, how it would be, how about the hemlock growing over there?*" So they went over and chopped down the hemlock with their only adze.

A while later the people to the south heard some

noises coming from the other side of the glacier. The old man to the south, whose name was Nada.eya wondered "*How could it be that I hear something like a human voice?*" Little did he know that there was a people on the other side mourning the **loss of their only adze**,¹ by singing and dancing. It had been broken while chopping down hemlock.

Meanwhile, on the north side of the glacier the old man thought to himself "*let me find out about this*". Xuts put something together to float through the river, under the glacier. It was a knee high boat that he covered in pitch so it would be waterproof, then bundled it in wood so it would float. After it was put together he threw it in the river and watched it float away.

Some time passed when the old man from the south found something floating in the river. "*Something strange has floated down here. Run and jump in the canoe.*" Nada.eya said to his nephews. So his nephews went and grabbed the object in the water and brought it back to their uncle. "*Then there must be people on the other side of the glacier.*" He was curious who was over there so he got his slave and made a canoe. then the old man started walking across the glacier, while the slave pulled the canoe with some of those adzes to chip the ice where need be. When they reached the other side **they found a lake**.

Xuts, the old man from the north saw something on the glacier. He couldn't make out what it was. So he constantly watched the objects on the glacier "*look on the side of the glacier, there's something*

¹ On first reading i assumed this referred to an iron adze, probably salvage from asian vessel. But a stone adze would be more easily broken.

Also, Nyman does specify clan or kwaan of the southern leader. Because Aak'w stories also tell of this blood-melting, I'm now thinking this is not a counterpoint T'aakū-chief as hero version, but pretty much a confirmation of Phillip Joseph's story.

strange, something maybe and eagle or could that be a raven flying along there? It doesn't look like one to me though," he said. he waited a while still curiously watching that object on the glacier. He could vaguely make out the two figures and soon realized that it was two people hiking across the glacier, and they were walking towards him.

Then Nada.eya made it to the other side and put his canoe back into the water at a place called Goose Slough. He paddled to the shore where he saw the other old man. "Tlaxhwaye," he said to the man on the shore.

Tlaxhwaye", Xuts replied. They were saying hello. A short while after Nada.eya was told about the adze that was broken making the house. It just so happens that Nada.eya had some in his canoe, so he gave one to Xuts, who in return gave him a female slave.

Nada.eya and Xuts discussed how it was to be. During this discussion Nada.eya had an idea. "*I have been thinking about it, and this is what I'll do. There will be no glacier there.*" the next day Nada.eya and his male and female slave started their journey back to the south side. When they got to the glacier Nada.eya decapitated his male slave and dragged the body across the ice. They named the trail of blood Yakwdeyi (canoe path). Along this path of blood the ice started melting as if hot water was poured onto the glacier. And it just kept on melting the ice until there was a path right through the glacier. From then on the north and south people could travel back and forth to each other's villages. This is why there are some coastal people inland and inland people on the coast.

Finally they finished their hemlock house. "*Now how shall we name our people after it?*" said Xuts who had another name, which was Ltadutin. "*So that we will have a name to be called by, this is hemlock house. Therefore we are the Yan Yedi, the Hemlock House Clan*". The men are Yan Yedi, and the women are Yanyedisha.

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