

#

Swan had on his mind even another mystery of Africa-in-the-North-Pacific.

~~mind.~~ Back at Kioosta, ^{he} Swan had noticed among the carved column figures a creature with a rolled-up snout. Except for the lack of tusks, it looked for all the world like the head of an elephant.

Beginning to wonder about the pachydermic enthusiasms of the Haidas,

Swan at last questioned Edinso and was enlightened

when the chief pointed toward a flutter on a nearby bush. The carved

creature was a colossal butterfly, the snout its proboscis. ~~Swan~~

~~for the legend.~~ ^{asked for the legend, Edinso of course} He said that when the Hooyeh or raven was a man, he lived in a country beyond California, that he got angry with his uncle and

lit down on his head and split it open. Then fearing his relatives he

changed to a bird and flew to Queen Charlotte Islands where he was told

good land could be found. The butterfly, a creature as big as a house

accompanied him and would fly up in the air and when he saw any good

land he would unfold his proboscis and point with it. # Just the way,

Edinso drove the point home, ^{with a tap of mockery,} Johnny was going with me showing me places.

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Day seventy

Recited from Swan's Queen Charlotte, pages, a legend, a belief,
and a technique:

4#
Towats was a great hunter, and once while hunting he found the
house of the king of the bears. The king bear was not there but his
wife was, and Towats made love to her. Arriving home to a much disordered
house, the king bear charged his wife with unfaithfulness. She denied
all. But the king bear noticed that at a certain hour each day
she went out to fetch wood and water, and was gone long. ~~By~~ One
day he tied a thread to her dress. By following the thread through
the forest, he came upon his wife in the arms of Towats. The king of
the bears slew the hunter by tearing out his heart.

4#
pocket diary, July 12

Called on Kive-ges-lines this PM to see her twins which
were born on the 10th. They are pretty babies but the
Indians are sure to kill one. Next day:

(Jul 13, Friday) One of the twins died during the night
as I predicted. The Indian who told me said..."It died
from want of breath" which I think very probable. These
Haidas like the Makahs have a superstition that twins bring
ill luck...

4#

Old Stingess...came to my house and...

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I asked her to tell me about tattooing and when the Haidahs first commenced tattooing. She said it was always practiced as long as she can remember and as long ago as the most ancient legends make any mention. Formerly the Indians procured the wool of the mountain sheep which was spun into fine threads which were stained with some black pigment either pulverized charcoal and water, or with lignite ground in water on a stone, as at present, then with needles made of copper procured from the Sitka Indians, these fine threads were drawn under the skin producing indelible marks. When white men came they learned the art of tattooing with steel needles from sailors on board the vessels, and have adopted that plan since....Here the old woman became tired and went home.

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How elliptical--literally--the past becomes. Stingess culls from what may have been an evening-long legend an answer for Swan. He chooses as much of it as he thinks worth cramming into his diary pages. At a hundred years' remove, I select lines from his and frame them in trios of editing dots. If the process continues on from my ellipses, the logical end is for the tale of Haida tattooing to come down to something like a single magical speck, maybe the period after the news that Stingess has got tired of it all and gone home. But I've heard it offered that a period is simply the shorthand for an ellipse; that stories do not end, only pause. So this does not complete it either, the transit from Stingess to Swan to me to whomever is above this page.

Day seventy-one

I flip the month on the photo calendar above my desk, and the room fills with lumberjacks. The calendar came as a gift, a dozen scenes from the glass plates of a photographer who roved the ^{Peninsula} ~~the~~ lumber camps in the first years of this century, and I've paid ^{no} ~~little~~ attention to the scenery atop the days: January a simple stand of trees, February a few dodgy sawyers off in the distance from the camera. But March's four loggers, spanned across the cut they are making in a cedar tree as big in diameter as this room, hover in as if estimating the board footage my desktop would yield.

The logger at the left stands on a springboard, his axe held extended in his left hand and resting almost tenderly ~~on~~ against the gash in the cedar. He is like a man casually fishing from off a bridge beam.

The next man is seated in the cut. ~~in the~~ A small shark's grin of spikes is made by the bottoms of his caulked boots. His arms are folded easily across his middle; he has trimly rolled his pant-legs and sleeves; is handsome and dark-browed with a lady-killing lock of hair down the right side of his forehead.

The woodman beside him is similarly seated, arms also crossed, but is flap-eared, broad-hipped, mustached. Surely he ^{is} ~~was~~ the Swede of the crew, wherever he ^{is} ~~was~~ from.

The final logger, on the right edge of the photo, is a long-faced giant. As he stands atop a log with his right foot propped on the cut, left hand hooked into a suspender strap where it meets his pants, there is tremendous length to his ^{stretched} body. ~~His shirt is work-~~ The others must call him Highpockets--or Percival, if that is what he prefers. His shirt is work-

soiled, his eyes ~~hard~~. Unlike his mate across the tree, he clenches his axe a third of the way up the handle, as if having tomahawked it into the tree just over the left jug-ear of the Swede.

Down the middle of the picture, between the seated sawyers, stands their glinting crosscut saw. If the giant is six and a half feet tall

as he seems to be, the saw is ten. Under it are piled the chips from the cut; the men ⁱⁿ ~~have~~ ^{not much more than} just started, and already ~~it~~ ^{on the great cedar,} they ~~make a~~ respectable woodpile ^{is considerable.}

Twenty-one days until spring in the company of these timber
topplers, and by-god forceful company they are going to be. I want
all at once to see the Peninsula woods that drew whackers like these,
if only to reassure myself that they're not out there now leveling
daylight into whatever green is left. Late tomorrow, Carol will be
finished with her week's classes. We will head for the Hoh rain forest.

4#

Swan at Kioosta, his forty-eighth day in the Queen Charlotte islands:

Very disagreeable morning, thick with misty rain. He decides to sit
tight and do such diary matters as ruminating on the blessed total absence of
fleas and other annoying insects so common and universal in Indian
camps and villages...Edinso says that formerly fleas were very numerous,
and ~~was~~ at Masset they were so plentiful as the sand on the beach and
they remained as long as the Indians dressed in otter skins and bark
robes, but when the white men came with other kind of clothing and
bought all the old fur dresses, the fleas began to disappear. At last
the Indians all went to Victoria, and on their return they found that
the fleas had entirely left...Edinso said perhaps the world turned over
and all the fleas hopped off.

Day seventy-six

Monday, the twentieth of August, 1883. As Swan packed his ^{tin bins} specimens of fish for the retreat to Masset, I heard the report of a gun, and...an Indian named Kanow arrived....He has come to hunt sea otter and will return to Masset as soon as he kills any.

Double luck had just blown in. Kanow agreed to take Swan's specimens back in his canoe, and with one last northwest gust the wind and rain whirled away. Swan sat ^{under} in sunshine for the first time in a couple of hundred hours and began to write the reversal of ^{the}

Queen Charlottes'
his defeat of him.

Aug. 20 letterbk, Kanow's arrival:

This unexpected arrival and the relieving of our canoe of the weight of the case of specimens which weighs as much as a barrel of beef will make our canoe much lighter and as the Indians have been at work repairing her today, I hope we can make a start tomorrow early if the wind is fair. I have told Johnny to cook enough this evening so that we shall not have to go ashore tomorrow until we camp for the night.

Broke camp and started at 5:20 AM, the twenty-first of August.

South towards Skidegate Channel.

This day's journey is a series of notations of shoreline points and rock formations, much seen but little investigated. Swan ^{had his mind on} was out for speed, ^{mended} and the ^{glided} canoe went on and on until at sundown we landed on Hippa Island.

Swan and Deans after a hearty supper plopped,

They went to bed with the assurance from Edinso that they were the first white men ever to sleep on the island.

Deans could have ^{foregone} ~~done without~~ the honor. The ⁱⁿ tents had been pitched in a patch of cow parsnips, ^{by morning} and the odor sickened him. However a cup of strong coffee made him feel better, and Swan rapidly had the group

^{into} ~~underway~~ in the canoe again. They had very nearly ^{paddled to} ~~made it to~~ Skidegate ^{Inlet,} in late morning, when ~~the~~ mist shut down thick and the rain commenced...

Edinso knowing of a camping ground at a place called Tchuwa, we pulled and paddled, now against wind and tide and finally made a

landing at 1 P.M. on a pebbly beach composed of paving stones and shingle and so steep that one could hardly climb to the top which from the landing to the summit is at least a hundred feet. Struggling to the top, they

found a ~~six~~ tent site under large evergreens, a perfect picnic ground

in any Country but such a rainy one. ⁴ Swan sought out a small dry cave,

sat down and wrote my diary in pencil, to be copied into my journal.

There was progress to report to himself:
pocket diary, Aug. 22 at Hippa, after "wrote these notes"

...did pretty well today... But

That night, a severe attack of neuralgia in my head which induced me
to retire after taking my 9 o'clock meteorological readings....

He slept until seven the next morning, which approached ^{mid-afternoon} noon in

his habits, and arose refreshed and feeling unusually bright which I
attributed to the healthful influence of the ~~wood~~ fragrant spruce boughs
which formed the groundwork of my couch. Good health seemed rampant:

Deans was unnauseated, and Edinso's back was better. ~~the chief was so~~ Indeed,
the chief was so jovial that he related

many anecdotes and incidents of his early life. His main tale of the
day was of how he had found one gold--white stones--which set off

the Gold on the west coast of Moresby Island in 1849.

Delegate Swan would learn that Edinso's historic prospecting
had been performed by another Haida. A Munchausenism, he edits into
Edinso's fable.)

The weather grabbed them again. The twenty-fourth of August:

Friday Aug. 24

The rain beat through the tent in a fine mist like an umbrella under an eave gutter...while a small brooklet found

its way under my bed.

soggy canoe party
As they sat out the hours around the campfire, a stone exploded in the blaze with a smart report. Swan guessed the ^{detonation} explosion caused by water in a cavity of the stone which converted into steam. Not so the Edinso version: ...it was the Spirits who were angry and had made the recent bad weather. He then threw a quantity of grease and some tobacco in the fire as a sort of peace offering.

Swan made an offertory of his own by stenciling a marker displaying the following legend. "James G. Swan U.S. National Museum & U.S. Fish

James G Swan US National Museum & US Fish Commission
Washington DC with James Deans Indian Department Victoria BC
Camped here Aug 23. 24. 25. 1883 Edinso chief of Massett
~~Captain~~
Edinso chief of Massett Captain of canoe
Johnny Kit Elswa Skilla Tsatl Kundai Hanow
SelaKootKung crew of canoe

I nailed this board to a tree where it will be a conspicuous object on landing, to any one who may be so unfortunate as to camp at this place hereafter.

Day ~~seventy-six~~

only a matter of
Now ~~a few~~ hours from ~~finishing the~~ Skidegate Channel, Swan and party made a late start the ^{next} morning, of August ~~twenty-fifth~~, 7 o'clock instead of 5 which we should have done...

no 4 on Swan's part. Luckily we found the water smooth, and the canoe slid ^{easily} ~~smoothly~~.

no 4 5/11 Johnny had collected some spruce gum yesterday, and ~~every one in~~ all hands the canoe took a piece, and soon the jaws of the whole party were in

motion... We found the gum an excellent thing to chew before breakfast, cleaning the mouth, strengthening the stomach and aiding the appetite.

Chawing along in the improved weather, the paddlers idled more than Swan wanted, and stopped at one point to shoot at seals. ~~In the~~

...After a delay of three quarters of an hour without killing any we again started and lazily proceeded. In

As the pace of paddling drooped, Swan's temper went up. By now had come

letrbk, Aug 25

...a light wind from the SW which was fair. I asked why sail was not set. The reply was, "by and by," and the Indians stopped to light their pipes. Swan erupted to Edinso that I would not pay for any more time to be thrown away... Finally the men took to their oars of their own accord, and having set two sails, for the first time since leaving Massett, we began to advance...

✓

Swan may have won the skirmish, but Edinso took the day. The canoeists entered Skidegate Channel so late they met the ebb tide, ^{were forced} and had to put to shore for the night.

letrbk, Aug 25

~~on~~ Idled away too much time, ~~for~~ Swan grumps to his diary that evening. The better news ^{is} was that delay ^{is all} was the worst he had ^{is} suffered.

Sat., Aug. 25

I feel thankful that I am so near my journey, and in good health and that no accident has happened to us.

The next morning, Swan ^{determinedly} had everyone ^{before daybreak,} ^{half past eight,} ^{were pulling} in the canoe ~~by five,~~ and by ~~6:30~~ they pulled in at the Skidegate Oil ^{what} ^{marking}

Works^{...} and were very kindly received by Mr. William Sterling the Superintendent, who at once ordered a nice breakfast for us... and Mr. Alexander ^{Mc}Gregor his partner who offered me a room in his

house to write in and ^{to} spread my bedding making me more comfortable than

I have been at any time since leaving Masset.

Swan's mood now,

After the watery three weeks of exploration, Swan's mood now is a mix of triumph and relief,

Swan's mood was relief, ~~I was~~ glad that I have ended this tedious

and perilous journey from Masset to this place without accident. Old

Edinso has purposely delayed our travel, as he told Johnny "The more

days the more pay!" but I felt safe with the old fellow as he is very

skillful in handling a canoe.

not

In the mellowness of the moment, Swan allowed ~~Edinso~~ ^{his} to use ~~my~~

tent and ^{tells} ~~told~~ Johnny ~~Kit~~ Elswa to give the Indians the balance of the

rice which was enough for a good meal, a lot of biscuit, tea, sugar

and some bacon.

By the time Edinso sets off up the coast to Masset, however, Swan

is back to inscribing him in the diary as the biggest old fraud I

have ever have had dealings with and ^{has} been told by Johnny

letrbk and pocket diary combined, Aug 28

Johnny told me this evening that when Edinso was about

leaving he stole one of the stone water jugs I had bought

at Massett....Johnny asked him what ~~the~~ he meant by taking

it, and the old villain said I gave it to him. Johnny took

took it away...He also told me that at one of the camps, the

men threatened to leave and walk back to Massett if Edinso

did not start. He told them that the more days they could

add to the trip the more money they would get. They say the

old man's lame back was all sham.

With Edinso out of his system, ~~Swan~~

Swan next hurries a letter off to Baird at the Smithsonian...20 days

on the trip...head winds and rain all the time...With the exception of

the temperature being mild--54° the weather has been like the winter

weather off Cape ~~Flat~~ Flattery....The steamer Princess Louise, taking

on ^a cargo of dogfish oil at the Skidegate refinery, will convey ^{Swan's} the

mail to Victoria. ^{His} The fish ^{tantas} specimens delivered to Masset by the

providential otter hunter will be shipped from there by the Hudson's Bay Company; a fishing crew of Indians has been sent ~~sent~~ off for ~~some~~ black cod, ~~which~~ ~~Swan~~ ~~needs~~ the last specimen Swan needs. The summer's final task is to garner more art from the Haidas, and here as at Neah Bay, the Indian children turn out to be Swan's ambassadors to their elders.

no #

^{morning of the} It is the twenty-eighth of August when Rev. Mr. Robinson the

Methodist Missionary came from Skidegate village ^{...} this morning with Ellswarsh and

his wife, Sam his dumb boy and Ellen his youngest girl a child of about
seven years....Two years ago this family with an elder daughter Soodatl

were in Port Townsend and occupied a room near my office where Ellswarsh
worked making silver bracelets and other articles of jewelry. The

children were very fond of me and came to my office every day and they

had not forgotten the kind treatment they received from me. Ellswarsh

Swan needs!

Then the words of reward: Ellswarsh invited me to go to his house at Skidegate village where ^{he} had some things to show me.

After breakfast, the first of September, Johnny rowed me to Skidegate village. The distance is about two miles. On landing I found Sam, Ellswarsh's boy waiting on the beach and dancing for joy. He took my coat and drawing book to the house where I found Ellswarsh and wife, Soodatl and her husband and little Ellen who jumped in my lap with every demonstration of delight. She is a full blood Indian child very pretty and interesting.

#... As soon as our salutations were over, a mat was spread on the floor and two chairs placed, one for me and one for Johnny. Then clean water in a wash bowl with soap and a clean towel to wash our hands and faces. By the time we had finished, the Indians began to come in with

things to sell....

letrbk and
pocket diary, Sept 1

The Swan's diary becomes a *brief* blizzard of buying:

dance skirt and leggings...carved spoon...scana mask...crow mask...Embroidered dance shirt of blue blanket, red figure, very fine...

but as it was Saturday and

I wanted to look around the village I concluded to defer other purchases

till Monday.

One matter Swan decided he had deferred long enough: his feelings toward Deans. Throughout the journey along the western shore, Swan's ^{notations} diary entries on his companion remained polite. Suspiciously polite, though as if the diarist did not want any commotion if ~~the~~ wrong eyes found the pages. But now that Swan ^{he is finished sharing} doesn't have to share canoe and campfire with Deans, Swan unloads ^{several weeks of} his wrath:

letrbk Sept 1

I find that Mr James Deans who accompanied me from Masset and represented that he is in the employ of Dr Powell has proved himself a great nuisance by interfering with my Indian trade and purchase of curiosities. He represented to parties here that he was in my employ and made bargains with Indians to take me about in canoes which I repudiated. He is filthy in his habits, and untruthful to a degree.

I have not suffered him to go with me since I arrived here, and wish I never had seen the man. That wish will be multiplied

in a month or so when Swan discovers that Powell's Indian Department will not reimburse him for any of the expenses of the free-lancing Deans.

Sept. 2, '83, pocket diary

A Sunday, the second of September, the Indians ^{dispatched} ~~he had sent~~ for black cod ~~XXXX~~ returned with 25 of the fish. Specimens they may ^{be} have been, but I had the tongues cut out and fried, and a chowder made of the heads, and roes and livers fried. They were all first rate...

Monday, the first of September, brings

Monday also brought ^{a new} another bargain, ~~with~~ Ellswarsh to come tomorrow

morning and take me in his large canoe to Skedanse villages, Cumshewas,

Laskeek and other places along the eastern shores of the Queen Charlottes.

On Ch 58:

I noticed one of the great slimy slugs, so common on the North West coast, crawling on the floor near my bed, and on throwing it into the fire, Ellswarsh asked me if white men eat slugs. I said no, we do not...

He said, ~~that~~ ^{did not} "Indians ~~don't~~ eat them, but ~~that~~ ^{do...} chinamen eat them." He was at Fort

Essington last year, at the cannery at Skeena mouth. The chinamen who

worked at the cannery made a soup of the slugs and crows which were

boiled together in a big iron kettle. ^{Those} The chinamen, said he, are

different people from Indians, we don't eat slugs and crows, they would

make us sick ^{...} but the chinamen like em, they eat all the crows and slugs

and all the soup, and scrape the kettle with their spoons, chinamen no

good.

This is a new kind of a mess and I make note of it as slugs and crows

may yet find a place on the bill of fare at the Driard House in Victoria,

or Delmonico's in New York.

the eighth of September,

After dinner young Kitkune showed me the place where the remains

of his Uncle Kitkune lie....The remains are in a box elaborately

carved, and decorated with abalone shell. This box which appeared

to be four feet long, three feet wide and three feet high, is placed

on the back of a carving representing a beaver of enormous dimensions....

On a sort of a table at the right of the beaver as we looked at it...

two old guns, ammunition boxes and various paraphernalia of the old

Chief among which was his Taska or carved stick which he held in his

hand when distributing presents...

Swan was not easily startled, but in the burial house ~~noticed~~ ^{was taken aback by}

some singular carvings representing a person with the eyes pulled out

and resting on the knees and connected with the eye sockets by a

ligature painted red and presenting a revolting appearance. 9 Eyes

sitting out on knees; the first carving of the kind I have noticed....

On asking Ellswarsh the meaning he told me that it represents the

sea Anemone or Se-ape which is supposed to be the eye of the mythical

marine being who has the power of extending its eyes and withdrawing

them at pleasure. A sort of argus eyed monster with millions of eyes

all over the coast...

Swan intended to have made a colored sketch of the ~~Seape~~ ^{anemone} carving,
but a sudden favorable wind decided the expedition to return at once ^{up the coast}

to Skedans village.

supper time at Skedans ^{finds} found Swan pensive--

(59) I would have been willing to have passed several days at Laskeek
as there is more of interest there than at any village I have seen.

but the people are not anxious to sell their curiosities, as they have
not yet come under missionary influence, but keep up their tomanawas
ceremonies in ancient style which I would much like to witness.

^{Sunday.}
Ninth of September Gale of wind and torrents of rain all night
and this morning. The sabbath produced ^S an odd little ^{sectarian} wrangle. Old
Ellswarsh thought I ought to trade, but I told him I did not trade
on Sundays. I was anxious to get back to Skidegate and although it
rained the wind was fair and if we had started at 6 oclock as I
wanted to we could have made the distance easily, but he said he
would not travel on Sunday as the missionary had told him not to
work on the Sabbath, so we remained in the dismal old house all day.

upst-
wells

The tug-of-wills between the collector who wouldn't collect and the canoeist who wouldn't canoe was forgotten the next morning as Swan and Ellswarsh readied to return to Skidegate. The Haidas took it as the moment to bargain. ~~Indian life, the Haidas~~ began to bring their things for sale and I bought quite a lot. One purchase threatened to unravel. Young Kitkune wanted to back out from the sale he made to me at Laskeek, being influenced by his mother and an old man to whom, the dancing masks I had ^{bought} ~~purchased~~ had a sacred meaning and he disliked to have the emblem^s of their secret performances sold to a white man^{...} but I was determined to have the whole lot.... ^{finally} ~~Finally~~ young Kitkune let me have the ^{articles} ~~lot~~.

At ten in the morning, I closed my trade and got off in my canoe from Skedans village. The day was pleasant but the wind was ahead and the Indians had to row which they did with a will. ~~At~~ Just before noon, they canoe pulled past a point where there is a cave which looks like a nostril hence the name Koon-helas, or nose hole ~~is~~...

Early afternoon, wind S.S.E. light, and the sail was hoisted. ~~Soon~~ before dark, the canoe scraped ashore at the village of Skidegate.

Swan's 00 days of unveiling the Queen Charlottes ended. The ~~royal~~ refinery manager told him a supply steamer would depart for Victoria in a matter of days....

Swan's ~~60~~ ^{weeks, months,} days of unveiling the Queen Charlottes had ended. I

have had a rough time since I left Masset but have gained in health

and knowledge and leave the Islands with regret. The refinery

superintendent told him the supply steamer Skidegate would depart

for Victoria in a matter of days.

Victoria in a few days. So I began to prepare to go on her as there
will not be another steamer here till next spring and although I
would like to remain all winter to see the medicine dances and masquerade
performances I cannot remain but must avail myself of this opportunity

to return to civilization.