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St. Nicholas, May 98¹⁹⁰⁸

V. 35 No. 7.

No. 1590

ALASKA HISTORICAL
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St. Nicholas, Vol. 35, No. 7,

May, 1898. 1908

Famous Indian Chiefs.

By Major-General O.O. Howard

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FAMOUS INDIAN CHIEFS

NO. 1590.

BY MAJOR-GENERAL O. O. HOWARD

IX. ALASKA INDIAN CHIEFS: FERNANDESTE, SITKA JACK, AND ANAHOOTZ

ALASKA means great land, and, as you can all see on the map, it is a great land far west of Canada and north of the United States. It was discovered in 1728 by Vitus Bering, a Danish sailor in the Russian service, and it belonged to Russia till 1867 when the United States bought it for \$7,200,000. This country is so very far north that I am sure if I asked you who lived there you would say that the people must all be Eskimos, and you are quite right, for Eskimos do live there, but besides the Eskimos there are Indians who live there, too. They are not as wild and war-like as the red men further south, and are so willing to live as white men do that we have not needed to put them on reservations. Indeed, they would have given Uncle Sam no trouble at all but for the bad traders who would sell the Indians whisky, and no Indian is of much account when he begins to like "fire-water" better than anything else.

It was in 1875 that one of these Alaskan Indian chiefs, Fernandeste, was seized by some white men, made prisoner on board a steamer, and taken to Portland, Oregon. Some of the white men could talk Stickeen, the Indian language, and they frightened Fernandeste so much because he thought he would forever disgrace his people that he died before the ship reached land. Now the Indians loved this chief very much, and when the news came back his family was overcome with grief. All the Indians said they must make the white men give them a great present for this bad treatment of Fernandeste or they would be cowards, and whatever happened his body must be brought back to Alaska.

Now at this time Uncle Sam had sent me with a portion of the United States army, to take care of the northwestern part of our country, so when I heard the story of Fernandeste I decided to go to Alaska and tell his friends how sorry I was and try to make them happy. It was vacation time, so my children went along for a trip.

From Tacoma, on Puget Sound, we sailed to Victoria, the capital of British Columbia, and there went on board the steamer *California* for Alaska. What a glorious trip it was sailing between rough-faced mountain sides 3000 feet high, some snow-capped, some covered with feathery trees. Such a strange country, too, for the sun

stayed up all night and at ten o'clock I could read as well as at noon. My children did n't want to go to bed at all, and I remember what queer things we hung up at the windows to darken the rooms so the children could sleep.

At last one morning we anchored in a bay near an island and on that island was an army post called Fort Wrangel. There was a stockade around it made of the trunks of trees fifteen feet high, and there were heavy double gates made of logs fastened together. The commanding officer of the fort and Kalemste, sub-chief of the Wrangel Indians, came to meet us, and with them we went to the stockade. All the buildings of the fort were inside the stockade, and the officers and soldiers felt very safe when the gates were shut. Now some soldiers opened the gates for us to pass in. Kalemste and two other Indians were allowed to enter, but all others turned back to their homes on the other end of the island.

These Wrangel Indians do not live in tepees and wigwams as the Indians further south, but in long houses made of immense planks split from large trees. A whole family—children, parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts, and even some few friends live in one house. There is room enough in the middle on the ground to build fires and a small hole in the roof to let out some of the smoke. But the strangest thing of all were the totem poles. In front of each house was a pole ten to thirty feet high. Animals were carved on the top and sides of the poles, sometimes a bird, a bear, or a fox. These totems are the signs of a tribe or family—just as we have the United States eagle, the English lion, the Scotch thistle, or French lily, but they certainly do look very funny standing in front of all the houses. One totem pole belonged to the chief, Fernandeste, and showed the tribe he belonged to among the Stickeen Indians, and the carvings gave a short history of his tribe. There were groves where the Indians danced together, and places where they worked when tanning and decorating the skins of animals, and where the children practised with bows and arrows, and it was all very different from any Indian villages I had seen before.

After we had our lunch at the fort, chairs were taken out in front of the stockade and the Indians gathered for a council. Kalemste stepped out in front of the Indians, while his people crouched ready to listen. He told us the story

FAMOUS INDIAN CHIEFS

of Fernandeste and how he had been invited on the steamer where some dreadful white men, who were prisoners being taken to Portland,

chief back again. Now a good warning had come to me before I started, and I was ready with permission from Uncle Sam. At a word the soldiers went into the stockade and then slowly returned bearing the body of Fernandeste back to those who loved him, and a hundred army blankets for the tribe. A sudden change came over the faces of the Indians, and taking the body from the soldiers they returned to their homes satisfied.

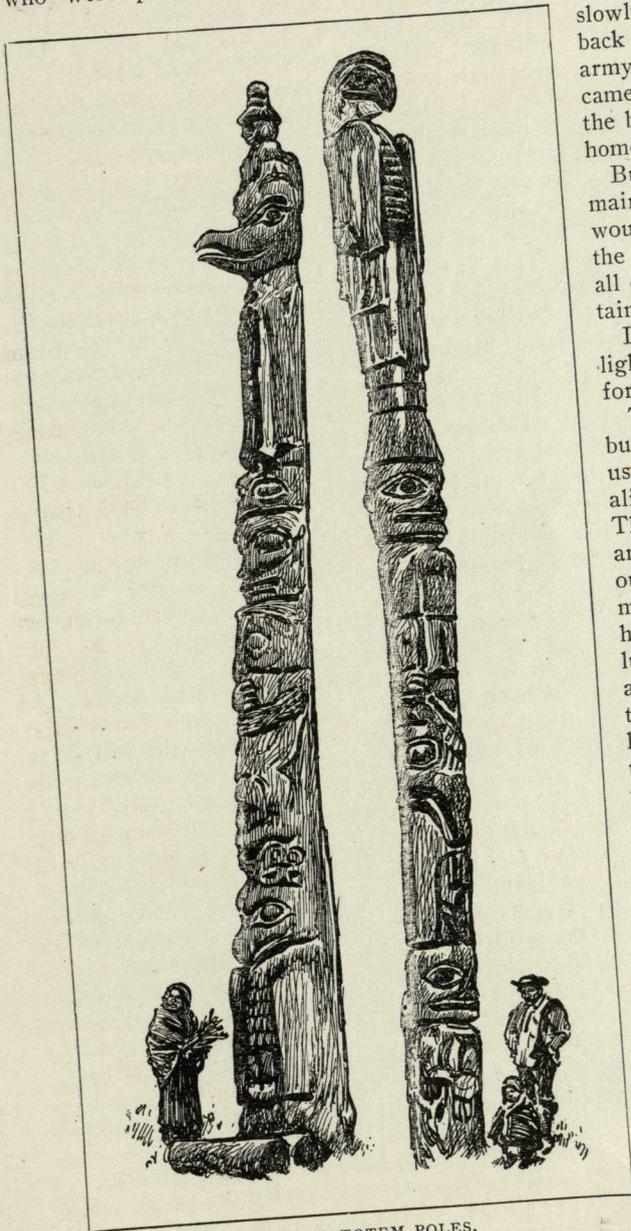
But Kalemste and a few of the leading men remained and asked if the chief of the white men would stay long enough to let him come early in the evening and give us a play. Indeed, we were all curious to see an Indian play, and as the captain of the ship could wait for us, I said yes.

In the evening we came together. The starlight was very bright and it was all still except for the washing of the sea on the shore.

The Indians came quietly, and without ado built a fire on the ground for a big torch to light us. The men were dressed fantastically, no two alike, and their arms and legs were painted. They gave first a dance of joy, which lasted over an hour. Then they showed in a rude way without speaking a word, simply by signs and motions, how Fernandeste went to the steamer, how he died, the crossing of the bar on the Columbia River, how his body was buried and taken again from the ground and the return of it by the steamer to Wrangel; then our coming, our lunch and the council, but all so plainly shown that everybody knew what it meant and clapped their hands in applause for this fine acting.

Then Kalemste begged me to send them a teacher. He said the officers and soldiers had taught them a little, but they wanted a real teacher. I promised, and the evening entertainment being over, we went on board our steamer and were soon sound asleep while the captain and crew watched and took us swiftly northward to Sitka.

When Alaska belonged to Russia they called Sitka New Archangel, after a city in Russia, but we have called it by the Indian name Sitka. There were two bands of Indians here, one under Sitka Jack, the other under Anahootz. Anahootz came to see me in a soldier's coat and hat with a bright handkerchief about it. My boys were much amused at his appearance, but he was as dignified as a king, and presented to me a number of well-folded sheets of paper on each of which was the statement that Anahootz was a good Indian, a friend of the white men and the Indians, and told the truth. I went to see him in his home and he sat on a bench and gave me his only arm-chair. He told me he had thought



ALASKA TOTEM POLES.

Oregon, for selling liquor to the Indians at Wrangel, kept the chief and frightened him so greatly that he died; and how his people wanted a potlash or present, so that the other Indians would not call them cowards. I asked what would satisfy them and he replied, one hundred good blankets, only they must have their dead

much and spent many a night wide awake thinking what would be good for the Indians. Now he understood. He wanted peace between white men and Indians, under a good commander such as Major Campbell, the military governor. I told him his people seemed poor, but I thought if they would make baskets and belts and moccasins visitors would buy them. This pleased him, but he told me that most of all he wanted me to promise to send a teacher to them; that if I sent a good teacher his Indians would build a house, better than his own, for him. Of course I promised, and once more we boarded the *California* and started north to the mouth of Chilcat Creek.

The Chilcat Indians lived much like those at Sitka and Wrangel, but they had seen few white men. Here we found a stone four or five feet long and three feet thick, which the Indians said came from the moon. I suppose it was a meteorite, but the Indians said a great white man had asked them to protect and keep it till he came again, which they were glad to do.

Just as we were returning to the steamer we

met Sitka Jack. He was the most famous chief-tain in this region. Now he was in a long canoe filled with men, every man having a paddle in his hand, and eight or ten on each side. Sitka Jack with eagle feathers in his hat and a belt crammed full of pistols round his waist sat in the stern steering, a small United States flag in his hand. He was a very bright man, and after a little encouragement we had a good talk together. He told me that not many miles inland, if you went through Sitka Pass northward, there was a good level country where everything would grow and where there were very many people.

This was long ago, but since then many of our people have found their way to this great land of Alaska and have given riches to the United States in gold found in the Klondike and Yukon country. Men and women have taken the long journey to teach the Indian children, and under the shadow of the totem poles now are many men and women who were boys and girls when I first went to Alaska to tell those Indians that Uncle Sam was their friend.

X. CAPTAIN JACK: CHIEF OF THE MODOC INDIANS

It was a queer country where the Modocs lived. Their land stretched along for sixty-five miles, measured on the straight line that separates Oregon from California, and it was thirty miles wide, some in Oregon and some in California.

In the year 1850 there was a general Indian war in Oregon and northern California. The white settlers, tradesmen, mechanics, farmers, and hunters, and rough men of the frontier, all came together led by a wild fellow called Ben Wright. Now Wright was not a good man, and he planned a surprise and made a dreadful attack upon forty-six Modoc Indians who were quietly sleeping in their tepees. But five of the Indians got away, and among them was one called Sconchin. He was only seven years old then, and almost all his father's family were killed.

This boy grew up to hate the white people. He was a tall, handsome Indian and belonged to a band of four hundred Modocs. Their chief was called Captain Jack by the white people, though his real name was Modicus. This chief was dark and brawny, and when he said a thing he would not change his mind. He called his tribe by their true Indian name, Maklaks (the people), and wanted to be known by all white men and Indians far and near as "*The very great all-time-Chieftain.*" But he and Sconchin did not always

agree, for Sconchin wanted to be war-chief and make war against the white people all the time, while Captain Jack liked peace best, though he kept a war-bonnet on hand to use if he needed it. A war-bonnet, as you know, is like a winter cap of red flannel worn well back on the head with a mass of eagle and hawk feathers strung together and hanging down the back to the waist. This is only for war times and Captain Jack kept one ready, but usually he wore an old soft gray hat with a cord round it, tassels peeping over the brim and a single eagle feather to show he was chief. He always carried a rifle and two pistols tucked in his belt, but he thought peace with the white men was best for him and for his people. He was a very strong man too, but he could not govern his Indians unless he did about what Sconchin wanted him to do.

In the year 1866 Mr. Meacham, superintendent of Indians for Oregon, sent word north and south to all the Indians to come to Fort Klamath and have a great talk. A good many Indians came and Mr. Meacham thought they really represented their tribes, but neither Captain Jack nor Sconchin was there. However, there was a great bargain, and the Indians agreed to take a small sum of money and go and live on the Klamath Reservation. This was just such a place as white people like to go to in the summer, but for