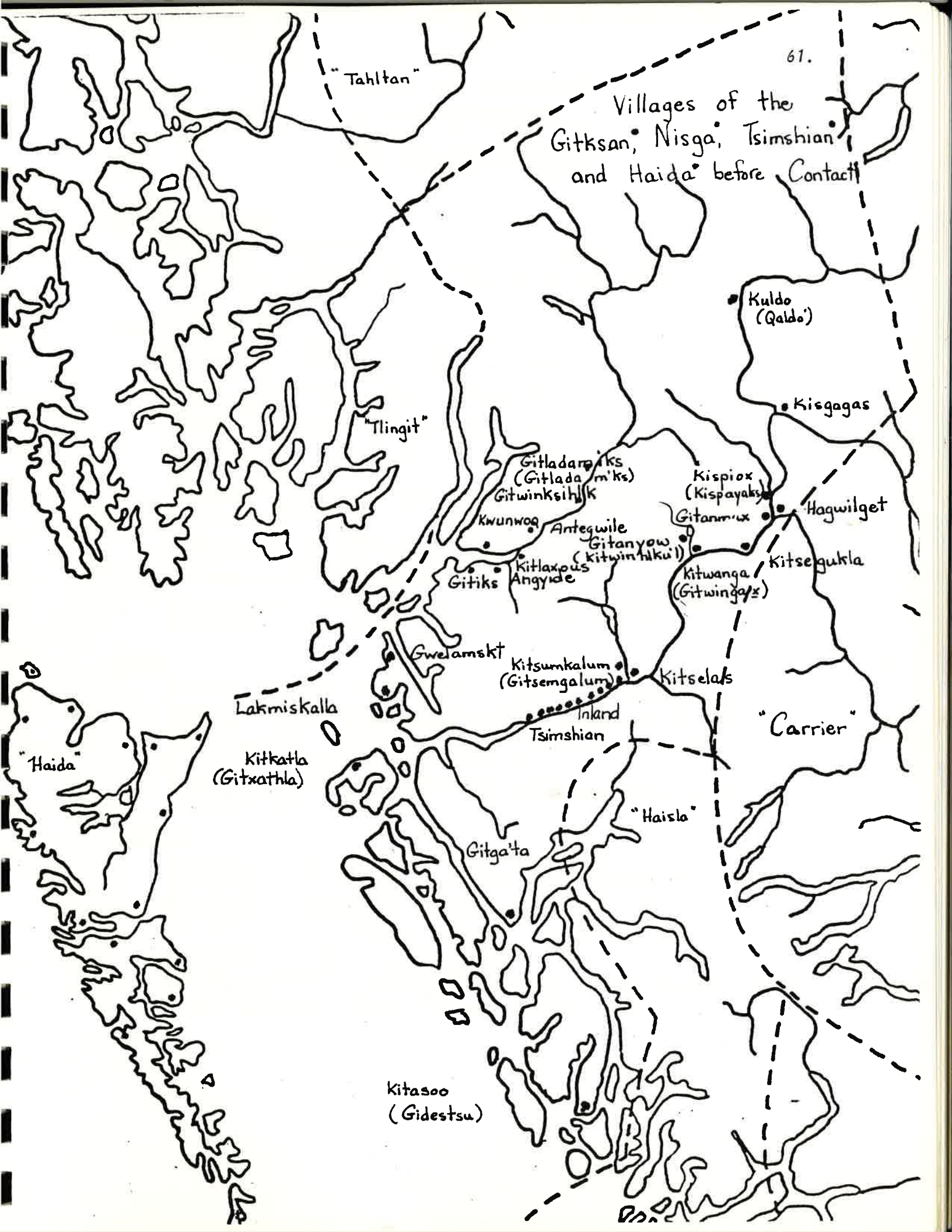


Villages of the
Gitksan, Nisga, Tsimshian
and Haida before Contact



"Tahltan"

"Tlingit"

Kuldo
(Qaldo)

Kisqagas

Gitladaniks
(Gitladan'iks)
Gitwinksihlik

Kispiox
(Kispayaks)

Hagwilget

Kwunwoq

Antegwile

Gitlanmox

Gitiks

Kitlaxous
(kitwinhku)

Gitanyow

Kitwanga
(Gitwingayz)

Kitseguikla

Angyide

Swelamskt

Kitsumkalum
(Gitsemgalum)

Kitselals

Lakmiskalla

Inland
Tsimshian

"Carrier"

"Haida"

Kitkatla
(Gitxathla)

Gitg'ata

"Haisla"

Kitasoo
(Gidestsu)

PRE-CONTACT & CONTEMPORARY
NATIVE COMMUNITIES

NAMES AND THEIR MEANINGS

COAST TSIMSHIAN

- Gidestsu - (Kitasoo) - ?
 Gitxathla - (Kitkatla) - People of the Channel
 Gitga'ta - (Hartley Bay) - People of the Ceremonial Cane

INLAND TSIMSHIAN

- *Gitwilgets - People of the kelp
 Gitzahlehl - People of the.....(name of a small bush)
 Gitsis - People of the salmon trap
 Ginaxangeek - People of the mosquitos
 Ginadoiks - People of the swift water
 Gitandah - People of the weirs
 Gispaxlahts - People of the elder berries
 Gitwilksebe - ?
 Gilodzau - People of the way inside (a canoe route)
 Gitlahn - People of the passing canoes (name of 2 mountains)
- * These ten villages moved to the coast in the fall and wintered together at Gwelamskt (now Port Simpson) and at Lakmiskalla (now Metlakatla).
- Gitsemgalum - (Kitsumkalum) - People of the plateau
 Gitselasa - (Kitselas) - People of the canyon

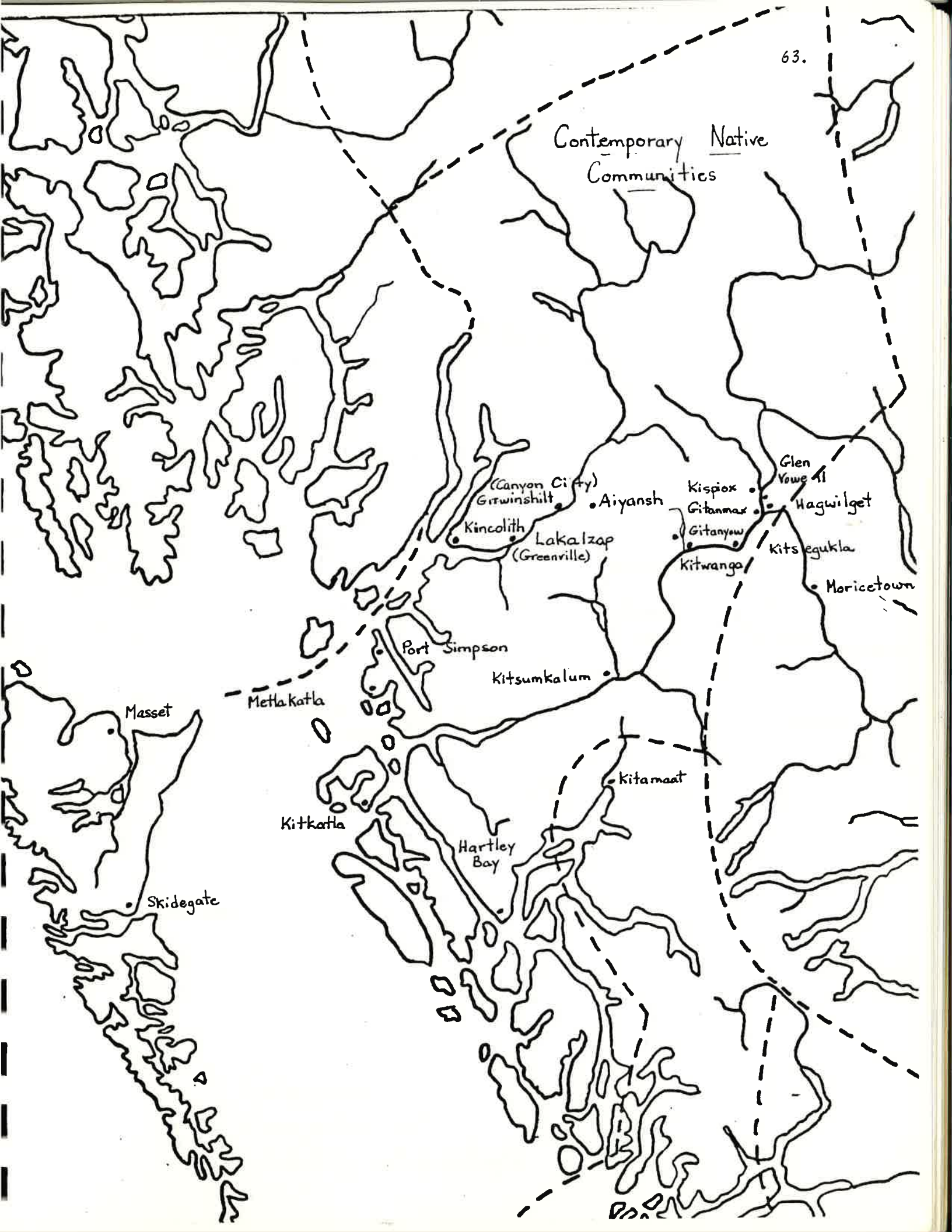
NISGA

- Gitiks - People of the tide
 Kwunwoq - Where people camp (sleep) when travelling
 Angyide - Where they catch oolichan with special rakes
 Gitwinksihlk - (Canyon City) - People of the place of lizards
 Kitlaxous - People of the sandbar
 Antegwile - Place of happiness
 Gitlaxda'mks - (Aiyansh) - People of the place of springs

GITKSAN

- Gitanmax - (Hazelton) - People where they fish by torch light
 Kitwingax - (Kitwanga) - People of the place of rabbits
 Kispayaks - (Kispiox) - People of the hiding place
 Kitsegukla - People of Segukla Mountain
 ("Sharp-pointed" in the Athabaskan language)
 Kisgagas - People of the seagulls (?)
 Qaldo' - (Kuldo) - Wilderness
 Kitwinhlku'l - (Kitwancool) - People of the narrow passage
 now Gitanyow - Place of many people

Contemporary Native Communities





Contemporary
Communities (not
including native villages)

(c) that some chiefs and their housegroups were more important than others, and the most important chief in a clan lived in the centre side by side with the most important chief of the other clan (the least important chiefs had their houses at the ends of the village).

(d) that houses varied in size within the village and from village to village - some housed as few as 40 people, some as many as 200.

(e) that the people in a housegroup were like a big family, doing many things together, like hunting, travelling, fishing, berry-picking etc.

(ix) For more information see Birds of the Ksan, Volume II, Page 56.

C) Material Culture

(i) Ask the students to imagine themselves with a group of friends suddenly isolated in a valley surrounded by mountains somewhere in our area.* Now ask them to think of some of the essential things they would need to make in order to survive, if they had to stay there for a long period of time.

*They have studied some flora and fauna in the fall section.

(ii) They should come up with items that can be categorized under the following items: tools, utensils, clothing, weapons, storage containers, shelter, hunting and fishing equipment, and possibly transportation.

(iii) Ask the students for suggestions as to what they could use to make some of these items: stone, wood, bone, skin, etc. You might want to take this exercise further by having each student invent a tool or other item and draw this exercise further by having each student invent a tool or other item and draw plans or describe how to make it.

(iv) Ask the students to look through Birds of the Ksan, Volume II and Gathering What the Great Nature Provided (and possibly the two books by Hilary Stewart - "Artifacts of the Northwest Coast Indians" and "Indian Fishing"). Have them look for the solutions native people discovered to the problems of material culture: bent boxes, cedar bark weaving, furs, cedar houses, canoes, etc.

- (v) You may simply wish to discuss this or you may want to have your class research the manufacture and use of one item per group.
- (vi) Make a list of the items they have researched or discussed on the board and have them classify these according to the basic material used for making them.
- (vii) If you have gathered cedar bark in the spring, you may want to do cedar bark weaving.

With a sharp knife separate the inner bark from its reddish outer layer. Give the students each a length of bark, about 4" or 5" by 2' and have them split it into strips about $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide the full length of the bark.

Group the students and have them weave a 2' square mat.

Or have each student make their own mat. They would then cut their bark strips in half and make a mat 1' square.

Leave about $\frac{3}{4}$ " unwoven on each side and tuck these ends back into the woven parts to finish the mats.

- (viii) Students may also make bent boxes. See instructions included here.
- (ix) If you are "into" weaving, strips, 1" wide, of white fake fur can be woven to make small blankets to simulate the way rabbit skin blankets were made.
- (x) Students may want to make some of the items - tools, weapons, utensils, etc. out of plasticene.
- (xi) Students may wish to make canoes out of paper (see instructions included here).

CANOES

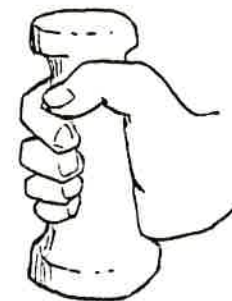
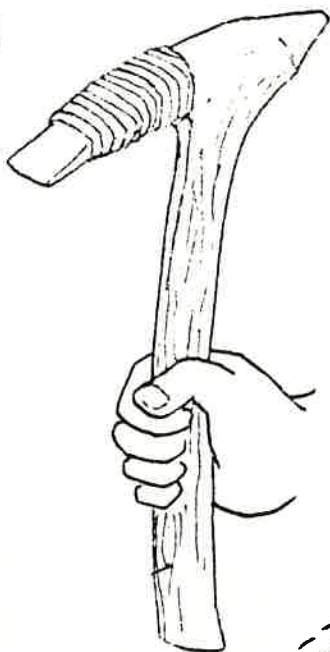
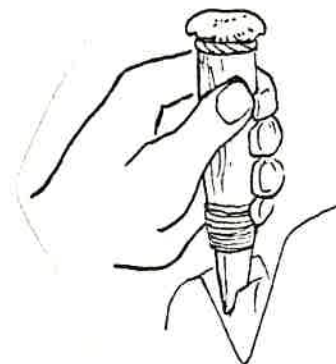
1. Using plasticene (or clay) make a long roll like a log.
2. Following the stages illustrated here and using a knife shape the keel (the bottom) and the top - Stage No. 1.
3. Then hollow out the inside (taking out slabs, one at a time) with the knife - Stage 2.
4. Then with your hands, spread the sides of the log apart - Stage 3.
5. Use small "sticks" of plasticene or small twigs as spreaders in 2 or 3 places along the canoe - Stage 4.
6. Look at the drawing in Birds of the Ksan, Volume II, Page 28 and make the bow (the front) and the stern (the back) pieces out of plasticene and add them to your canoe.
7. If your canoe is made out of clay, you may wish to try painting a design on it; if out of plasticene try etching a design.

MAKING A GREAT CEDAR CANOE

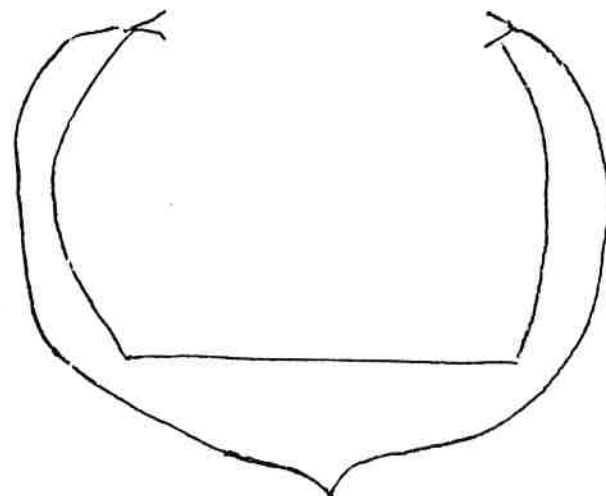
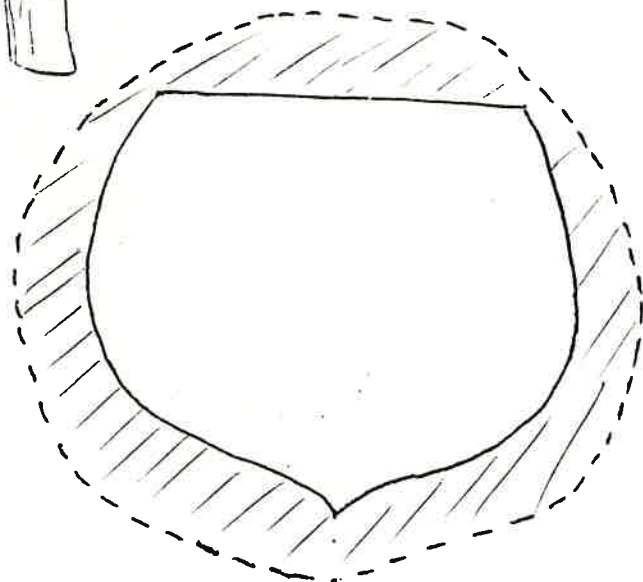
D-ADZE



ADZE

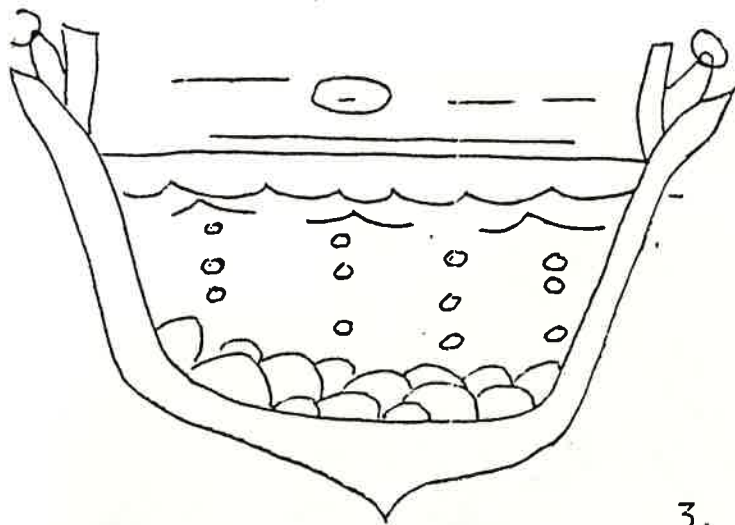
BONE
CHISEL

Tools used in making
a canoe.

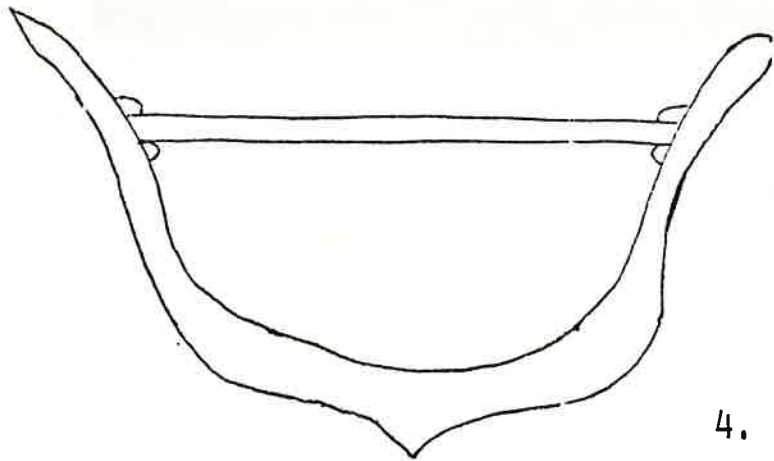


1. Shaping the canoe:
Dotted lines shows original log. The log is first roughly shaped with an adze.

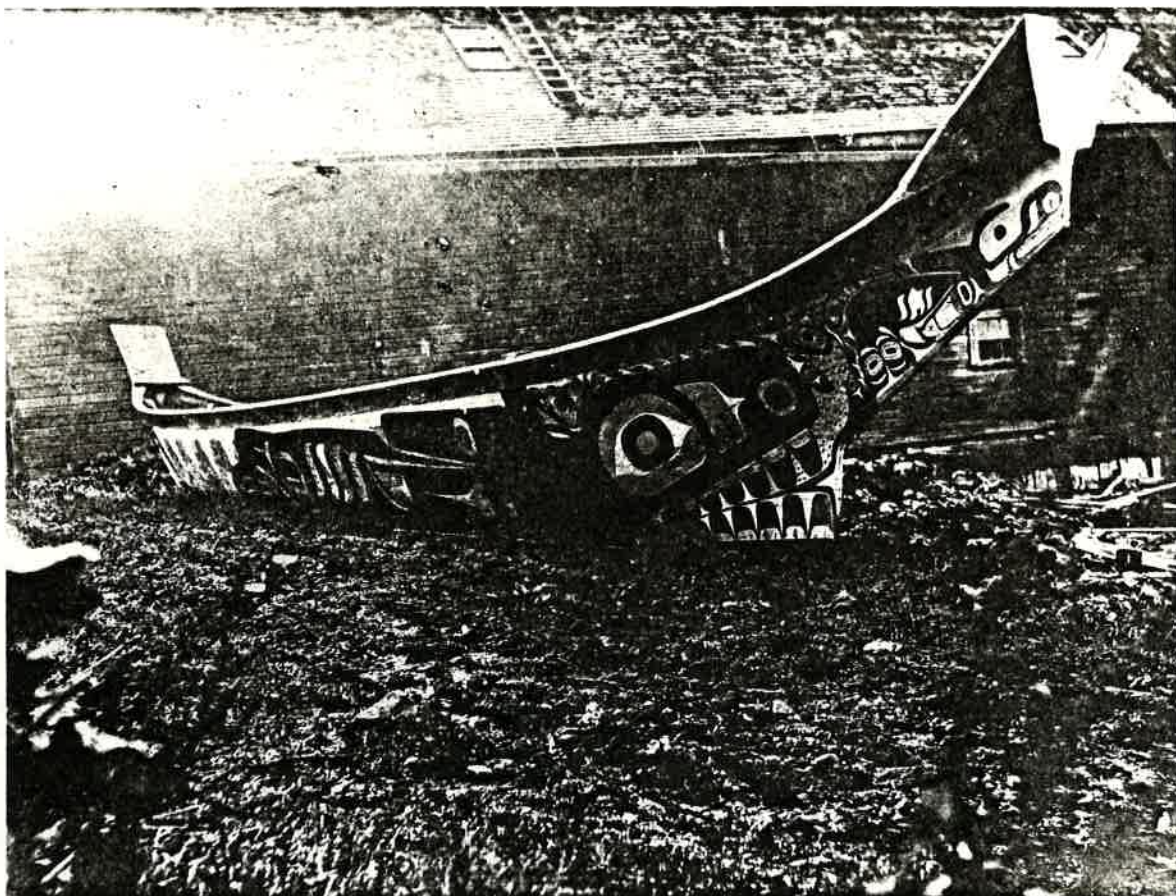
2. The centre is then hollowed out by burning and carving. The side walls are thin but the bottom is thick for protection from rocky shores.



3. The final shaping is done by steaming the wood with hot rocks in water to soften and thus bend the wood.

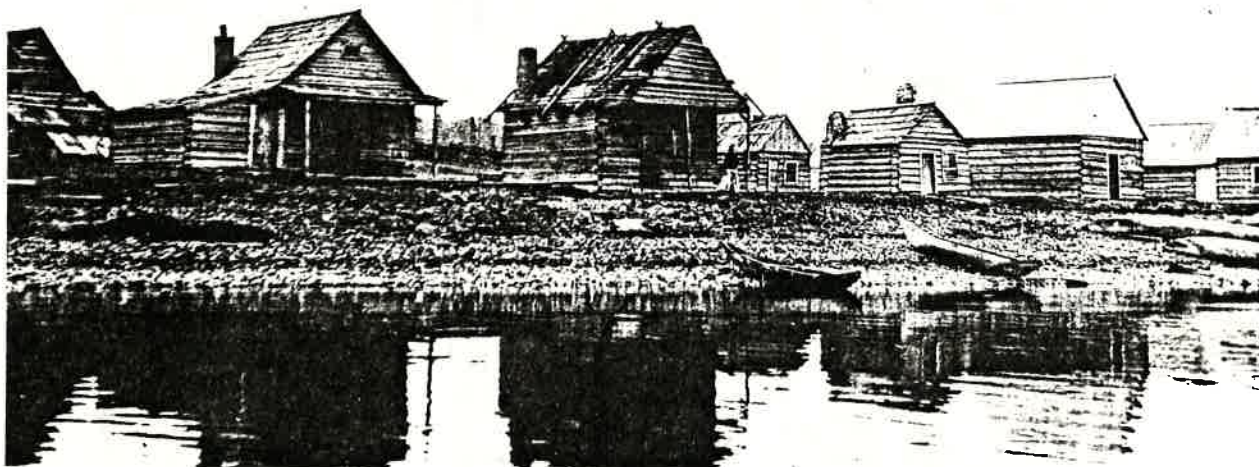


4. The finished canoe, ready to paint and launch.



A canoe made and painted with a killer-whale design by the Haida, photographed in Kitwancool in the early 1900's. These canoes were traded by the Haida, often for oolichan grease, and were a sign of great prestige among the Gitksan.

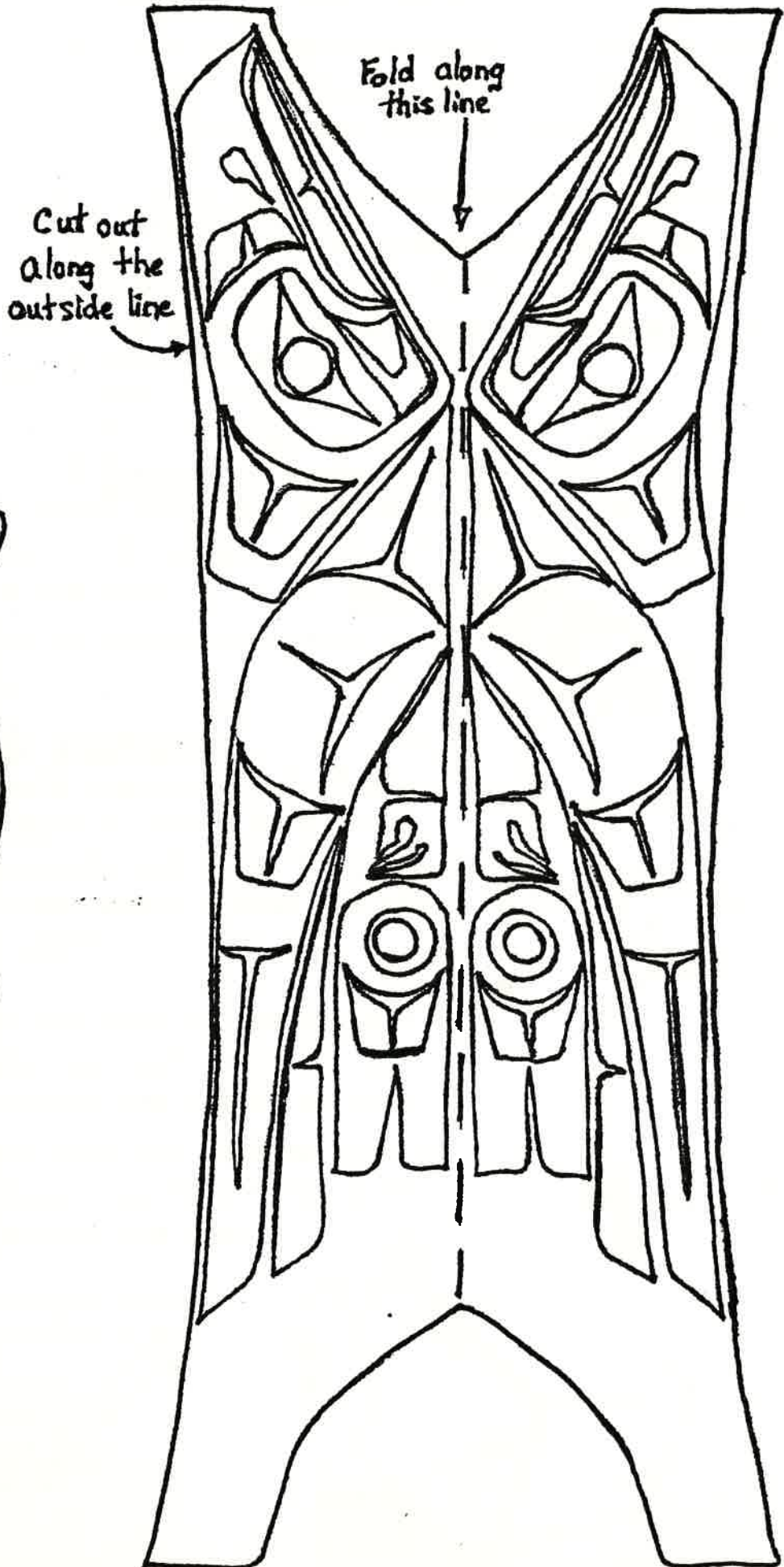
Photograph courtesy of the British Columbia Provincial Archives.



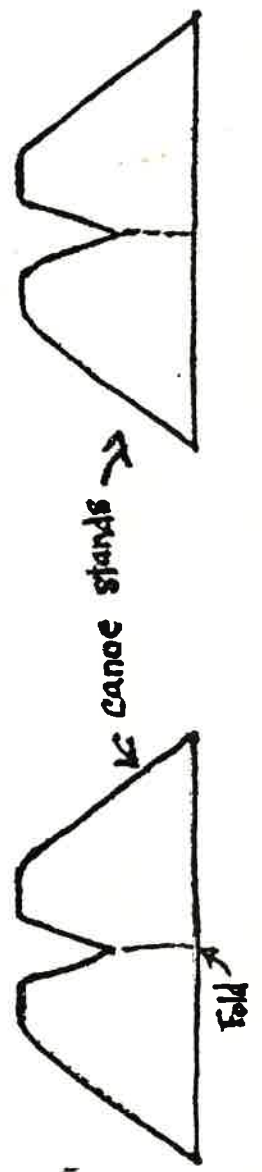
Canoes on the shores of Kitwanga.
These are cottonwood dugouts.

Photograph (early 1900's) courtesy of the
British Columbia Provincial Archives.

CANOE Cut Out.



paddles

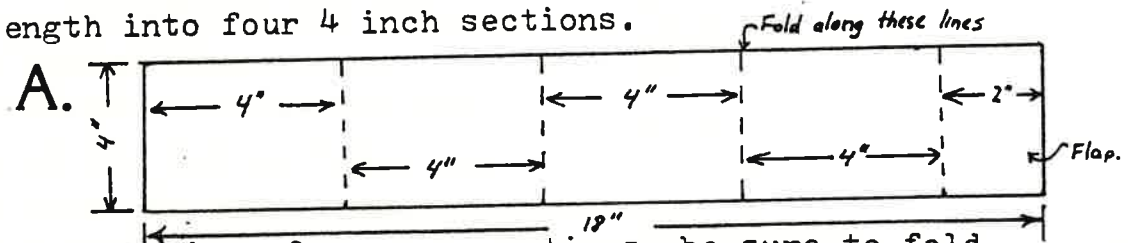


The Bent Box Model.

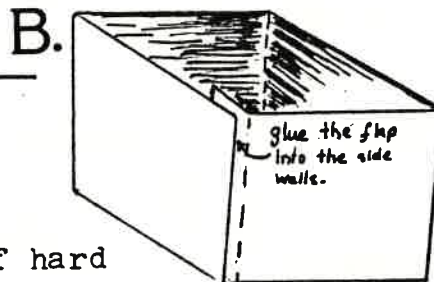
Now that we know a bit about the art of bent box making and its usefulness try making your own boxes out of hardboard paper, a wood coloured paper would be more suitable for this project.

— the sides —

1. First you take a good piece of hardboard paper 18 inches in length and 4 inches in width, then divide the length into four 4 inch sections.

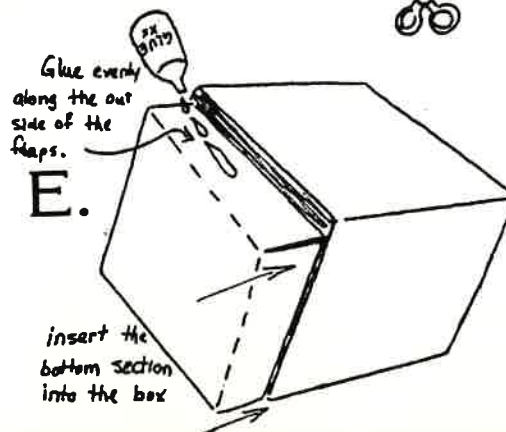
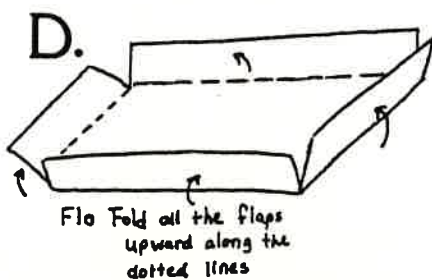
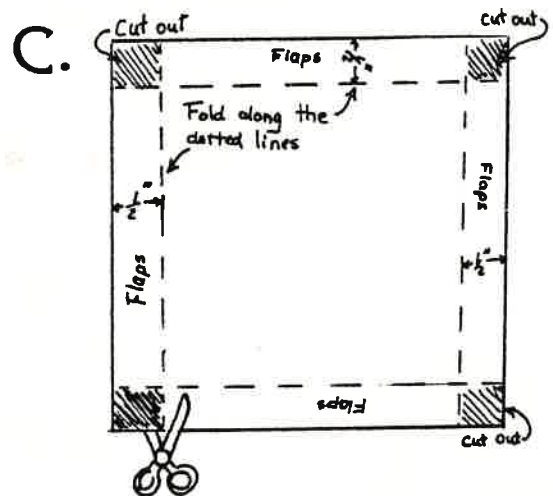


2. Fold the paper into four even sections, be sure to fold along the 4 inch lines. Glue the end flap onto the side walls of the box.



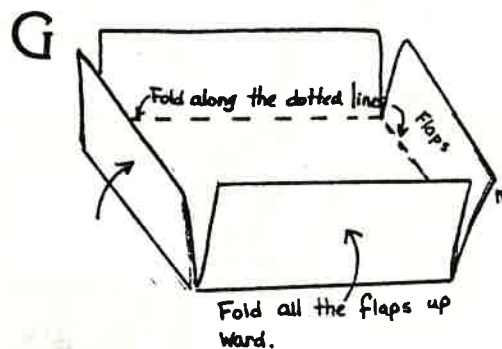
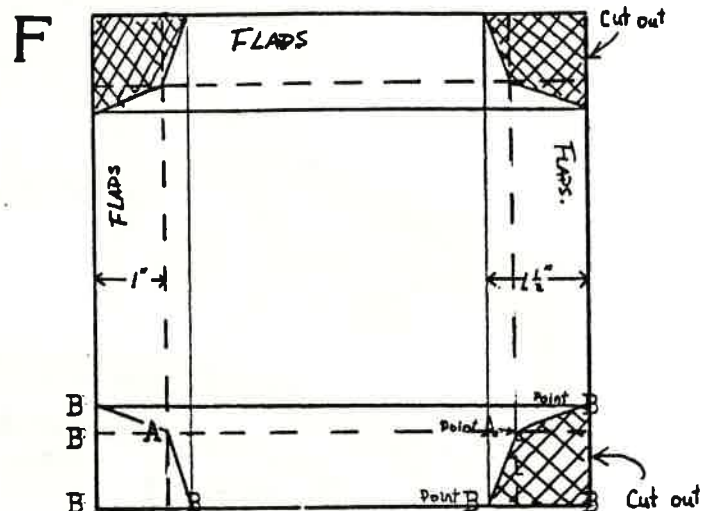
the bottom

3. Start with another piece of hard board paper 5 inches by 5 inch.
4. With a pencil and ruler draw 1/2 inch lines evenly around the edge of the paper.
5. Cut out all four of the shaded corners then fold the flaps upward to form the bottom section.
6. Put glue onto the outside part of the flaps, then insert the bottom section into the box.

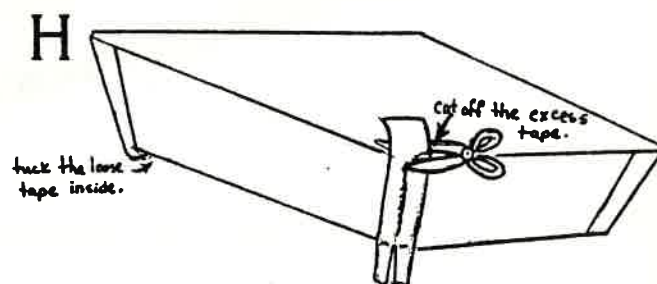


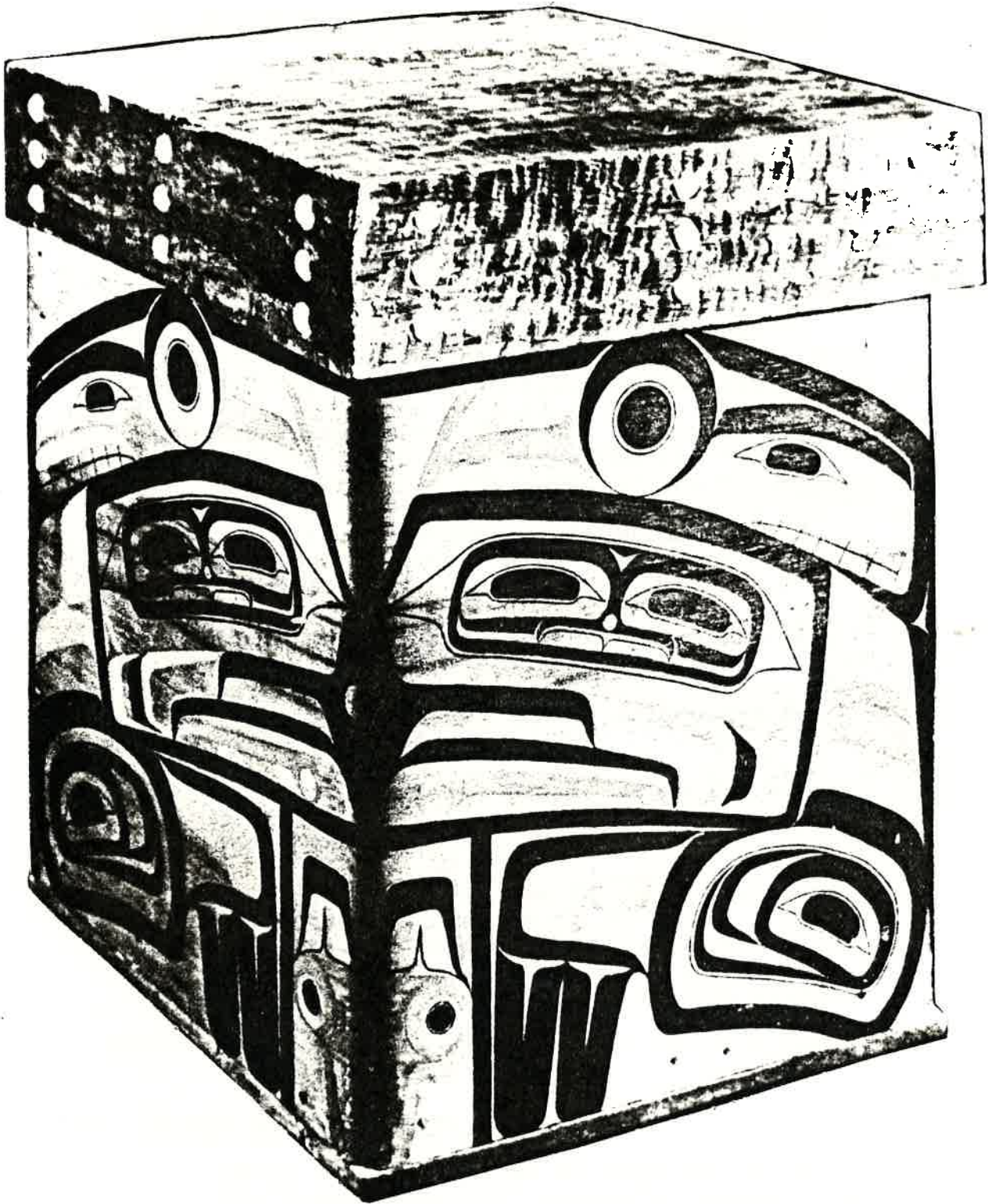
The Bent Box Lid

1. To start the top or lid of the bent box model you would first need a 7 inch by 7 inch hard board paper.
2. To start draw a 1 inch line around the edge of the lid. (the dotted line)
3. Draw another line around the edge of the lid but this time make it 1 1/2 inch. (the solid line)
4. On the corners connect points A to points B with straight lines.
5. Cut aout the shaded areas around all four corners.
6. On the dotted lines fold all the flaps upward evenly.



7. Tape up all the corners of the flaps evenly. Cut off all the excess tapes. Slice the centre of the tapes upward so that the hanging tape can be tucked neatly under and taped onto the inside of the Box Lid.





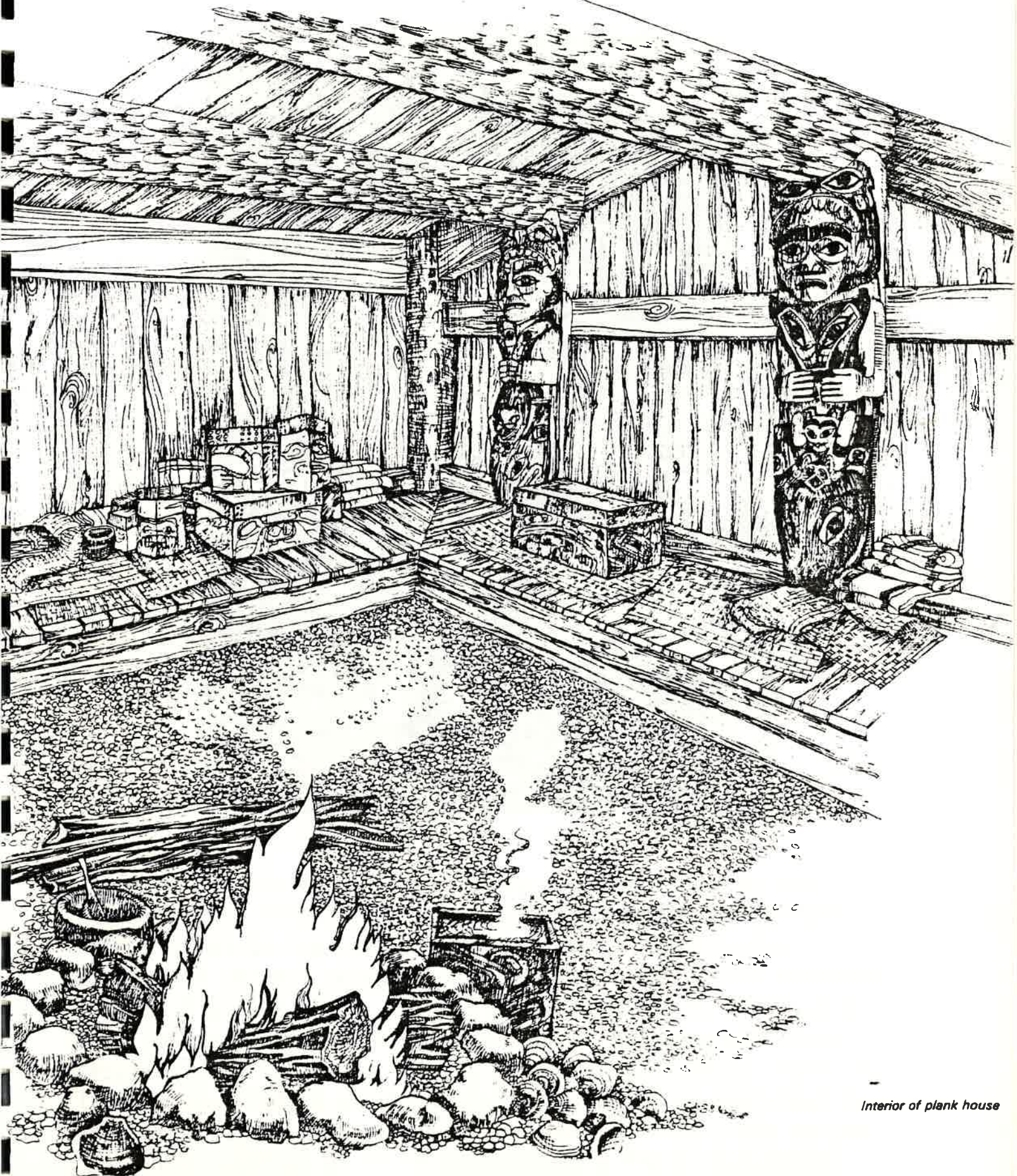
Modern bent wood cedar box, painted in traditional design. Note seamless edge.

D) The Interior of a Cedar House and Social Organization

- (i) On the blackboard reproduce the diagram on Page 56, Birds of the Ksan, Volume II. Leave out the captions. Have the students reproduce this diagram on 8½" x 11" paper, filling the whole paper.
- (ii) Show and discuss the various illustrations of the interior of a cedar house - Birds of the Ksan, Volume KK, Pages 10, 22 and 31 and illustrations included here. If any of the students have visited Ksan, ask them to describe it to the rest of the class. Read and discuss the descriptions on Pages 9 and 10.
- (iii) Returning to the diagram, point out the different sections along the platforms explaining that the chief of the housegroup lived with his family at the back of the house. The most important chiefs after him had the sections on either side closest to the back and so on.
- (iv) You might mention that the seats in the canoes were also assigned according to rank, as was the seating at feasts. You can also refer back to the ranking of housegroups already studied.
- (v) Point out that the platforms in the house were divided with sections by stacks of bent boxes, see Page 22.
- (vi) Have the children draw in these stacks of bent boxes, and a few of the items which they studied to show what the sleeping-sitting areas might have looked like in these cedar houses. (On their own plans.)
- (vii) Have a class discussion on the pros and cons of communal living.

E) Chiefs and Ceremonial Regalia

- (i) Using the information on Page 57, Birds of the Ksan, Volume II, either a) explain the role of the chief to the class or b) have each student find out one fact about the role of the chief from their own reading, then list and discuss these.
- (ii) Using the section on The Chief's Sacred Regalia on Pages 16, 17 and 18 in Birds of the Ksan, Volume II for background information, show the class the pictures of chiefs included here and the drawings on Page 16 and 18. Discuss the fact that each part of their



Interior of plank house



A chief from Kitwanga and his wife photographed in 1910. His ceremonial robe is unusual. The design resembles the bear with the hole in the stomach carved on one of the Kitwanga totem poles and may refer to the crest Bear's Den. The headdress is made of ermine skins, abalone shells with fur on fabric as a base. He is wearing moccasins and leather leggings with crest design painted on them. The woman is wearing a blanket which is traditional. Before contact with the white man it would have been woven of cedar bark mixed with feathers and rabbit fur strips.

Photo courtesy of the British Columbia Provincial Museum.



Mother and daughter, Kitwancool chiefs,
photographed in 1910 in their ceremonial regalia.
For details see section on The Chief's Sacred
Regalia in Birds of the Ksan, Volume II.

Photo courtesy of the British Columbia
Provincial Museum.



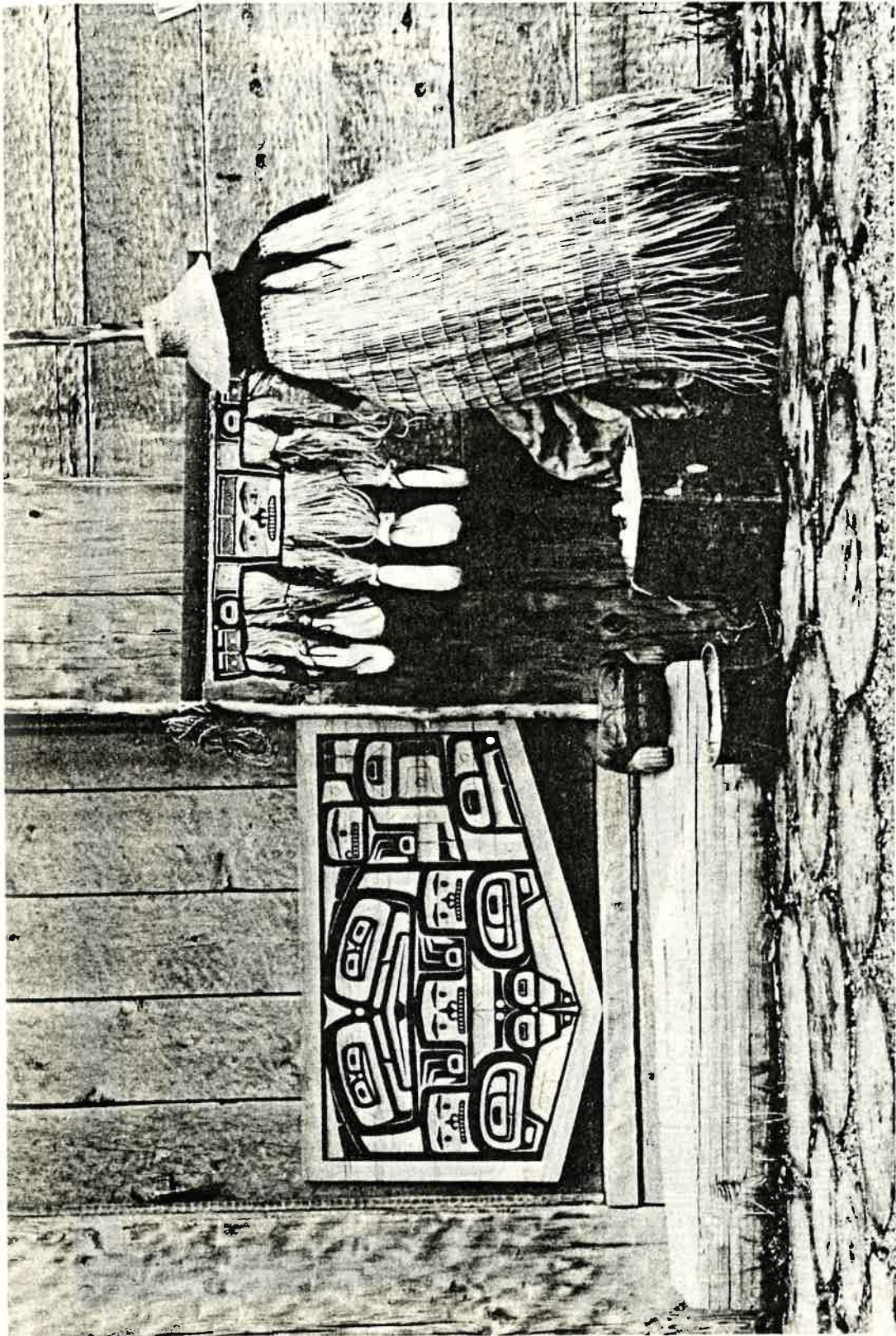
A chief of Kitwanga village wearing a button blanket decorated with ermine skin and mother of pearl buttons. His neck ring, and the long strips hanging from it, is made of cedar bark and ermine skin. His cloth apron appears to be decorated with animal teeth and mountain goat hoof tinklers. He wears cloth and button leggings and leather mocassins. On his head is a cedar bark ring.

Photo courtesy of the British Columbia Provincial Museum.

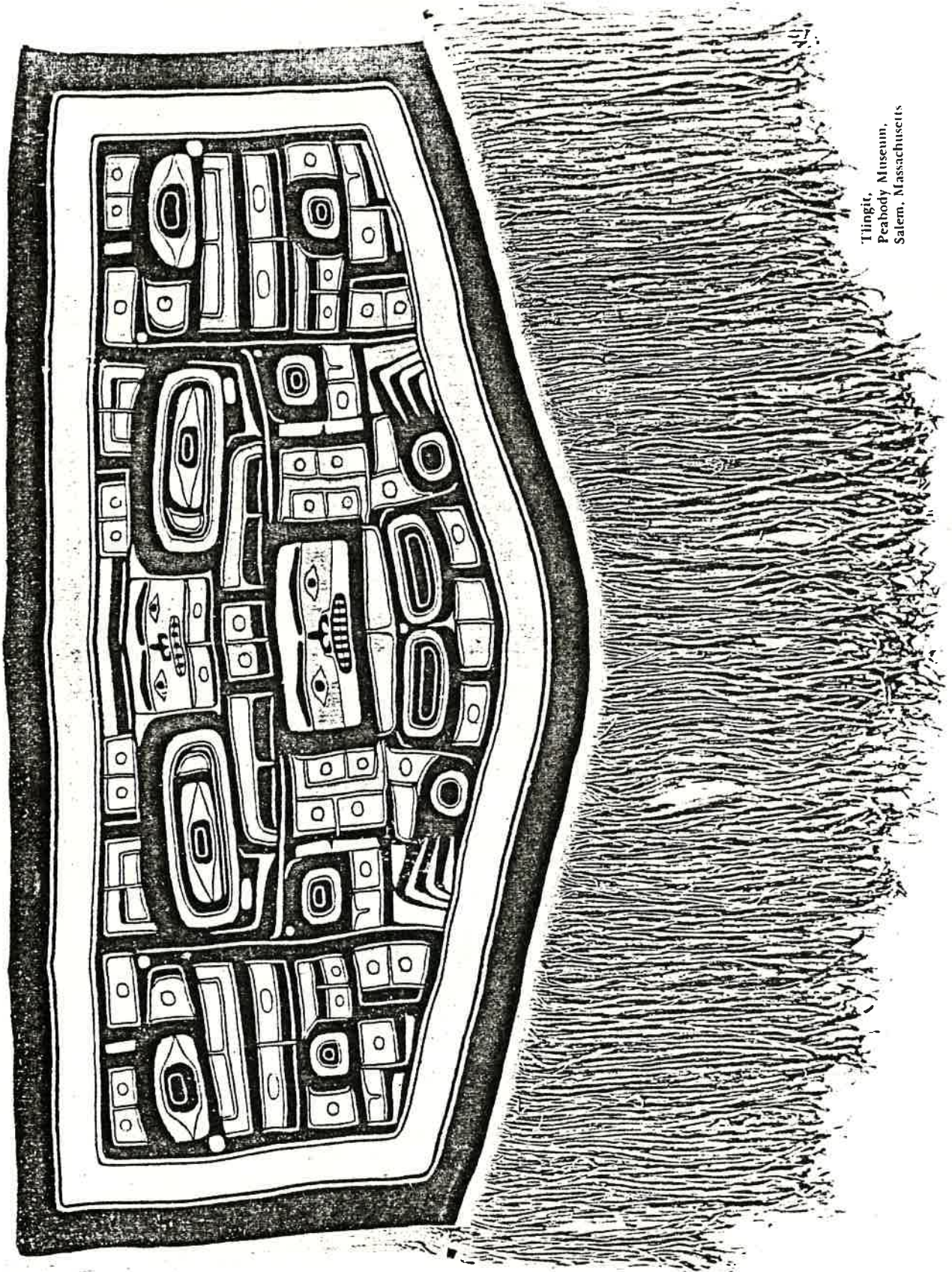


A Kitwanga chief dressed in his ceremonial regalia - Chilkat blanket, dance apron and headdress. The headdress is a dried bird skin and head, possibly of an eagle.

This photo was taken in the early 1900's in Kitwanga or in Hazelton.



Weaving a Chilkat Blanket from a
Pattern Board showing a Flying Frog
Design.

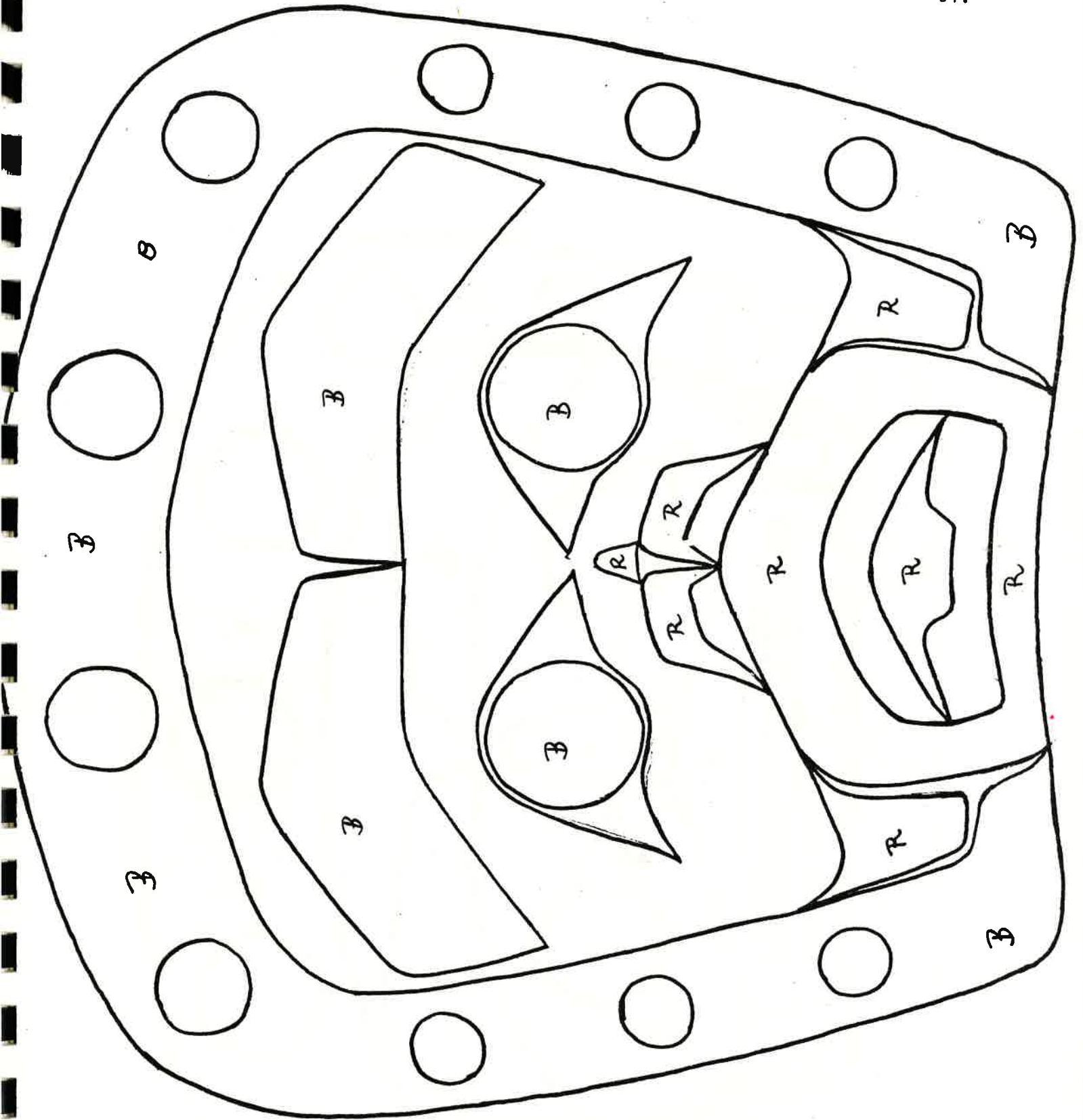


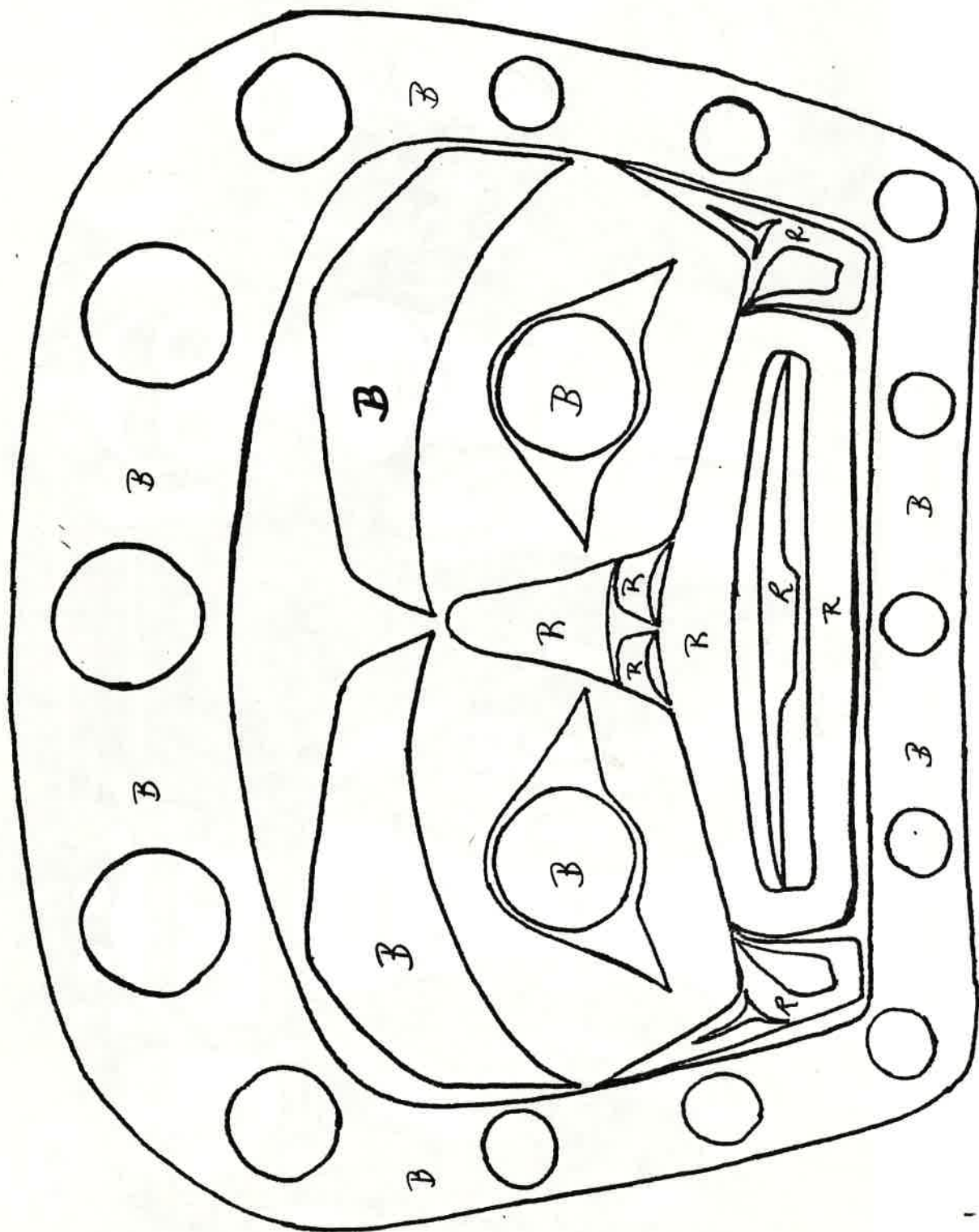
Tlingit,
Peabody Museum,
Salem, Massachusetts

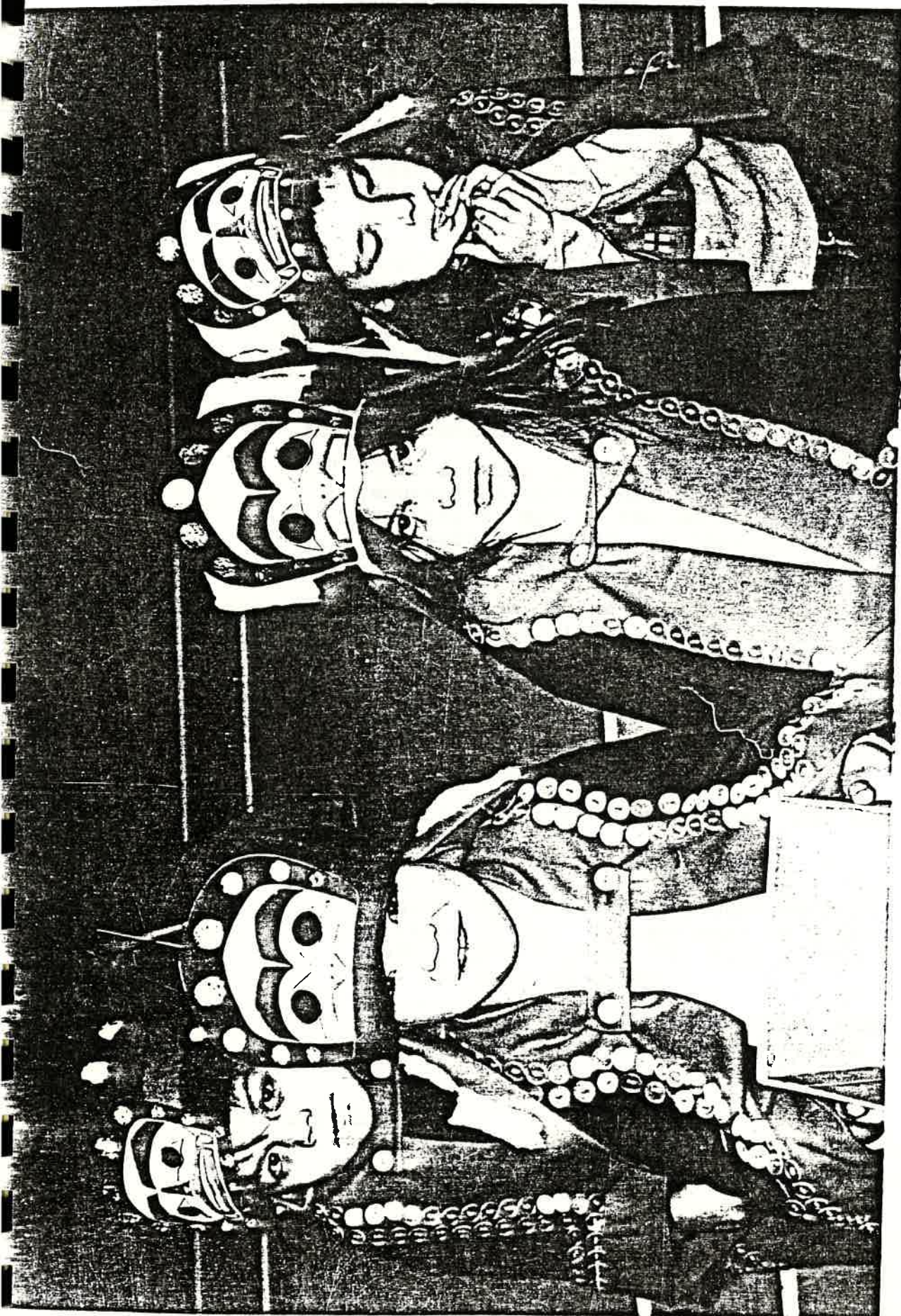
CHILKAT BLANKET

CHIEF'S AMHALAYT OR HEADDRESS

1. Have the students colour and cut out one of the frontlet designs included here. Silver paper can be used for abalone in the circles around the edge.
2. Make a wide headband of manilla tag (about 6 inches wide).
3. Cover this headband with red felt except at the front where you now attach the frontlet.
(Fake fur - brown or white, or cotton batten can also be used.)
4. A long piece of red felt about one foot wide and two and one half feet long can be hung from the bottom of the back of the frontlet if you can afford it.
5. Fake ermine skins of white fake fur or cotton batten are then attached to this long piece of felt in almost overlapping rows. Otherwise simply hang the fake ermine skins from the top of the frontlet at the sides and at the back. (See Page 17 and 59, Volume II, Birds of the Ksan).
6. Around the top attach wire or dried grass for the sea lion bristles.
7. Inside the crown use feathers (down) or small bits of cotton batten for eagle down.







Kitwanga Students Wearing Amhalayt (Headaddresses)

regalia showed their power as chiefs.

- (iii) The students may wish to make ceremonial headdresses of their own. (They can then wear them at your class feast). See instructions included here.

F) The Feast

- (i) Read or have the students read "The Robin Wife and the Merganser Wife" in Birds of the Ksan, Volume I.
- (ii) Have the students tell you what they know about feasts so far.
- (iii) Over 2 or 3 days, read and discuss the section on Feasting, Birds of the Ksan, Volume II, Pages 58-61.

G) The World of the Supernatural

- (i) This section is not necessary to the sequence of these lessons. Following after Feasting it may be too much for your students to absorb. However, it ties in well with the subject of feast performances and the education of children in the winter months, the subjects of the last lessons, and would be worthwhile with a mature class.
- (ii) Read or have the students read "The Hole in the Sky" in Birds of the Ksan, Volume I. You might want to review orally bows and arrows, cedar houses and chiefs' regalia as they come up in the story.
- (iii) Read or have the students read "The Ball of Light".
- (iv) Read and discuss over several days, the section "The World of the Supernatural" on Pages 10-16. You may want to start reading this between "The Hole in the Sky" and "The Ball of Light".
- (v) Emphasize the themes of education, masks and curing rituals and the role of feasts during your discussion.

H) Education

- (i) Children were educated in a number of ways:
 - (a) They underwent physical and spiritual training (see above).
 - (b) They were educated by their chief in the laws and history of theirhousegroup.



"WE KNOW WHAT THE ANIMALS DO, WHAT ARE THE NEEDS OF THE BEAVER, THE BEAR, THE SALMON, AND OTHER CREATURES, BECAUSE LONG AGO MEN MARRIED THEM AND ACQUIRED THIS KNOWLEDGE FROM THEIR ANIMAL WIVES. TODAY THE PRIESTS SAY THAT WE LIE, BUT WE KNOW BETTER. THE WHITE MAN HAS BEEN ONLY A SHORT TIME IN THIS COUNTRY AND KNOWS VERY LITTLE ABOUT THE ANIMALS. WE HAVE LIVED THERE THOUSANDS OF YEARS AND WERE TAUGHT LONG AGO BY THE ANIMALS THEMSELVES. THE WHITE MAN WRITES EVERYTHING DOWN IN A BOOK SO THAT IT WILL NOT BE FORGOTTEN. BUT OUR ANCESTORS MARRIED THE ANIMALS, LEARNED ALL THEIR WAYS, AND PASSED ON THE KNOWLEDGE FROM ONE GENERATION TO ANOTHER."

---- A WET'SUWET'EN ELDER, SPEAKING
IN 1924 ■

Throughout the winter, before dawn the chief woke the children and taught them acceptable behaviour, laws of respect, many stories of long ago and the consequences of poor behaviour.

(c) During the day they learned from their grandparents, their uncles and their parents by watching and helping. They learned how to live in and from the world of nature, gathering food, making things, learning about medicinal plants, etc.

(d) They also learned at feasts - spiritual matters, matters of business and trading, and the histories of other housegroups and nations.

(ii) Learning by watching: Have the students watch you perform a manipulative task 2 or 3 times without words. You may want to make a plasticene canoe following the instructions included here. You may be surprised which children learn best this way.

Point out that children learned skills this way long ago.

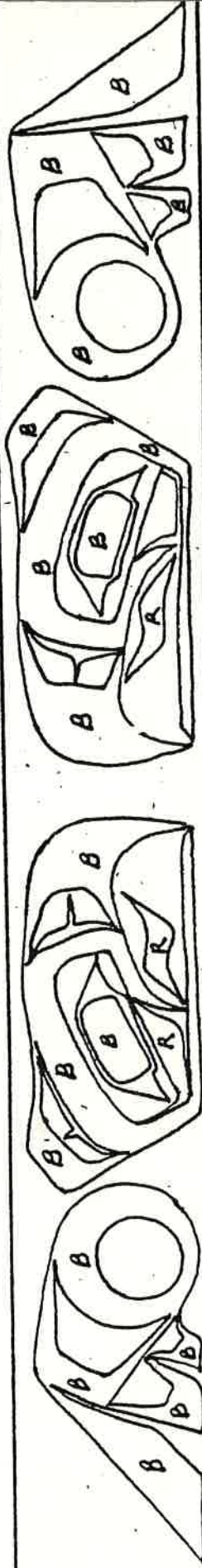
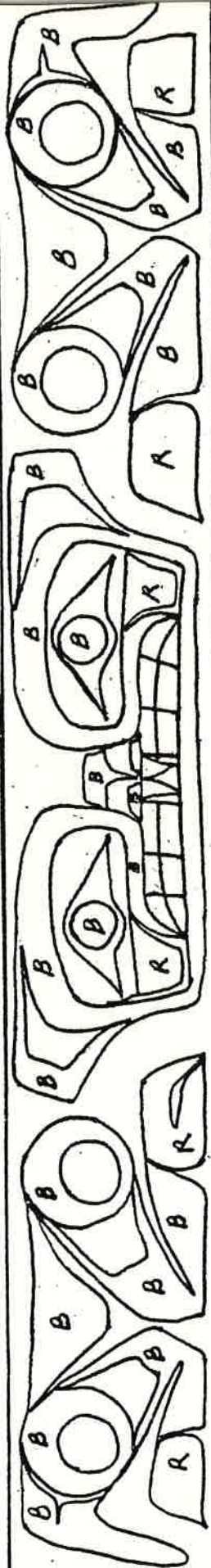
(iii) They also learned by helping. Ask each student to tell or write down what they have learned at home through helping their parents, grandparents, etc. They may be surprised at what they know how to do.

(iv) Children learned many rules of behaviour from listening to legends. Ask the students what laws they learned from reading "The Painted Goat" (and, if you have taught the summer section already, what laws they learned from the salmon stories). Ask them to apply these laws to their own lives. (Wasting food, for example.)

(v) You may want to extend this discussion to ecological rules in general. Perhaps the students would like to write a story teaching children not to litter. You may wish to wait until the "summer" section to do this, after they have read a few more stories of this type.

I) Feasting

- (i) This unit may be as elaborate or as simple as you wish. Your 'feast' may range from a simple shared meal of native foods with students arranged in clan groups, to an elaborate afternoon of speech-making, performances, eating and gift-giving.
- (ii) Review the section on feasting in Birds of the Ksan, Volume II, and read Page 67 starting "The Killer Whale clan...." as well as Page 50, starting "There was also Raven..." (about ceremonial house entrances); and Foods, Everyday Meals and Feasts, Page 30; and Page 8, beginning "Chiefs sometimes carried ceremonial...."
- (iii) Have the students remember what they can of feasting. What activities took place during a feast. List these:
 - entering by the special entrance
 - announcing and seating the guests in their clan groups
 - eating
 - making speeches
 - dancing and singing
 - telling stories
 - acting out stories
 - medicine men contests (halayt)
 - throwing the spirit to children who have come of age
 - gambling
 - performances of power
 - making peace after war
 - giving gifts
 - celebrating a marriage
 - inaugurating a new chief
 - etc.
- (iv) Have the student decide which activities they would like at their feast. Perhaps divide the class into planning committees. You may want to invite a guest from your village or neighbouring village to help you with this.
- (v) The students may wish to make headdresses or headbands to wear at their feast. Instructions included here.
- (vi) Any items they have made, like cedar bark mats, can be used or put on display.
- (vii) This is also a good time to invite in parents to see the culmination of this unit and your displays.



HEAPBANDS

