SOCIETY AND THE INDIVIDUAL

The records of customs associated with the crisis periods represent the richest of the ethnological data furnished to Dr. Boas by his informant, Charles Cultee.[1] The material is far too compact and extensive to permit either quotation or résumé. It must be utilized in order to obtain the fullest picture of the life cycle. Such reference is also necessary because my information and that of Dr. Boas are not in full accord at certain points; at other points the material is supplementary.

GENEALOGIES AND NAMES

In the accompanying tables (Tables 2-7) are presented genealogies and names for practically all of the families yet living (all at Bay Center except kəlɩ'p) with a marked Chinook component in the ancestry. I have not attempted to analyze these since they represent, for the most part, the period of breakdown occasioned by white contact. Yet they furnish examples of village intermarriage, succession of chieftainship, intermarriage with slaves, and other data of considerable importance. In addition I have included the genealogy of one non-Chinook family of Bay Center for comparative purposes. The various lines are, of course, quite incompletely represented but the individuals that have figured most prominently in recent Chinook history are all included.

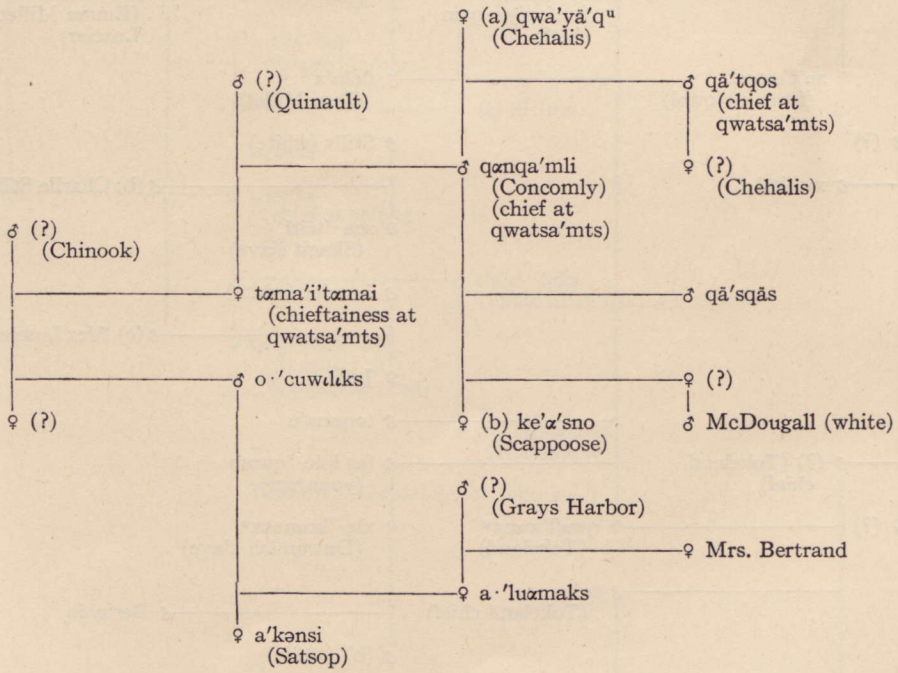

TABLE 2. Genealogy of Concomly and Mrs. Bertrand.

[1]Boas, *Chinook Texts*, pp. 238-58.

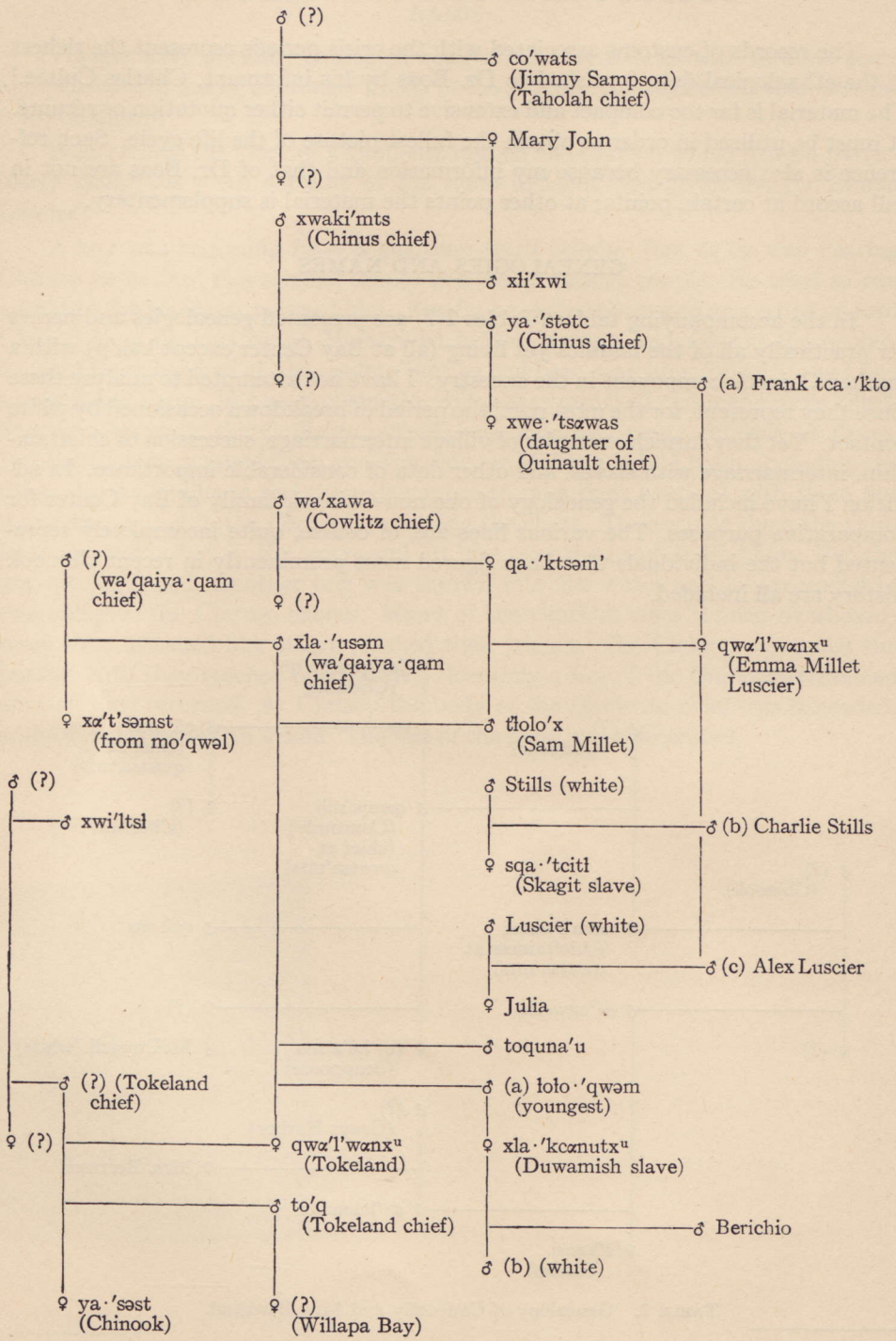

TABLE 3. Genealogy of Emma Millet Luscier.

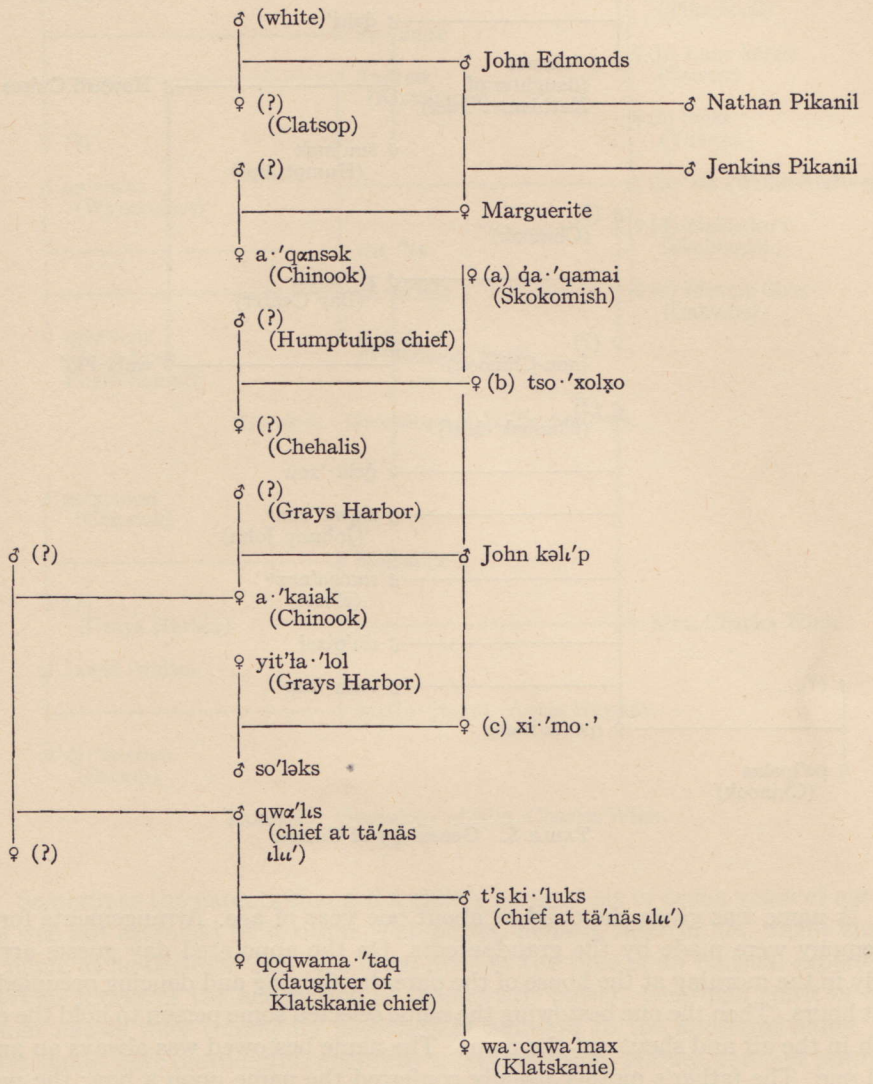

TABLE 4. Genealogy of John kəlι'p.

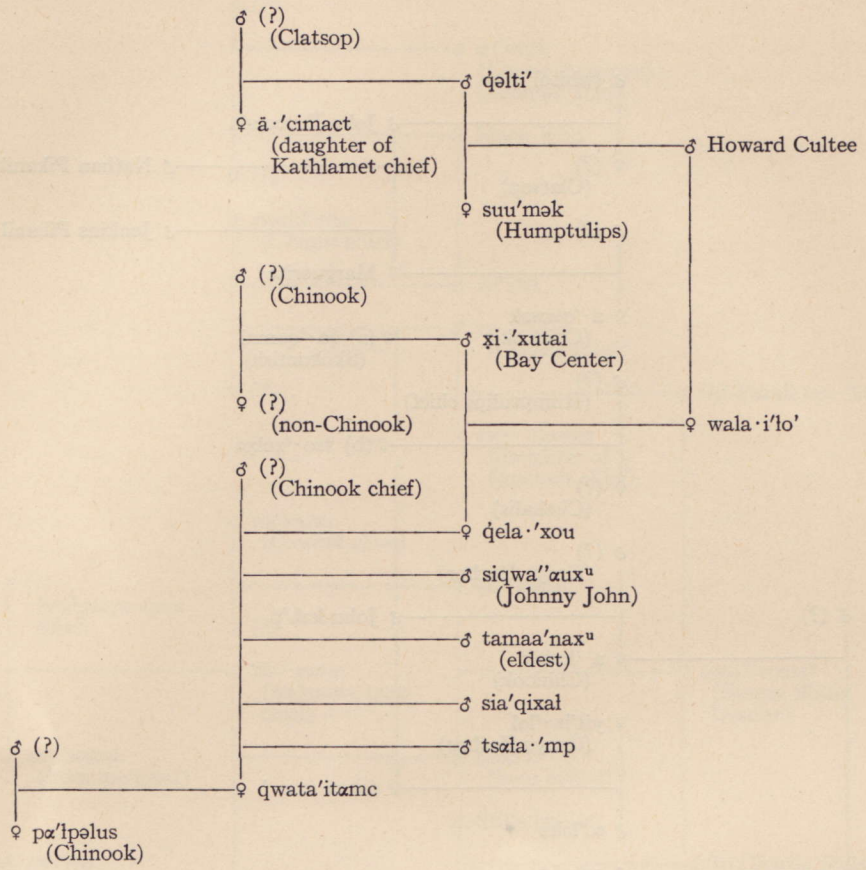

TABLE 5. Genealogy of Cultee.

A name was given the child at about one year of age. Arrangements for the ceremony were made by the grandparents. On the appointed day guests arrived early in the morning at the house of the parents. Singing and dancing occupied the first hours. Then the one bestowing the name selected some person to hold the child high in the air and shout out the name. The name bestowed was always an ancestral one. The father's mother usually conferred the name upon a boy; the mother's mother upon a girl. This was a coveted opportunity and a grandmother was always pleased to have a grandchild of the same sex as the parent on her side of the family.

The one holding the child also proclaimed who it was that bestowed the name and to whom it had formerly belonged. The latter was then eulogized and good wishes for the child's future were expressed. Others spoke in a similar vein, followed by more singing and dancing. Presents were then distributed and last of all, a feast was held. This was concluded early in the evening and the ceremony was over.

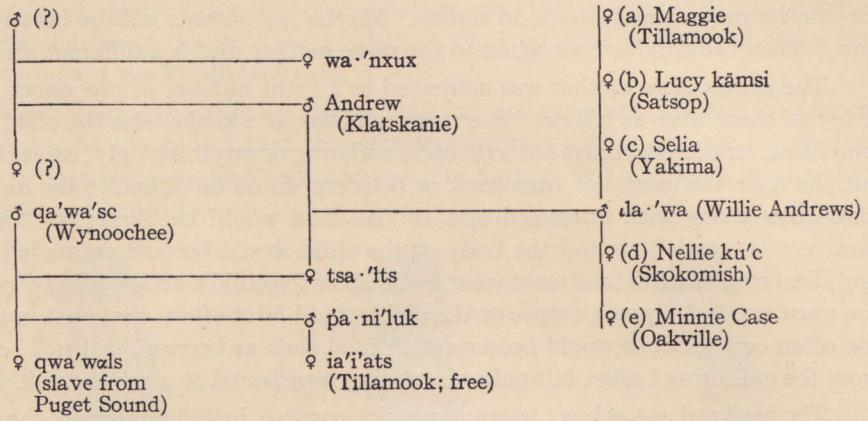

TABLE 6. Genealogy of Willie Andrews.

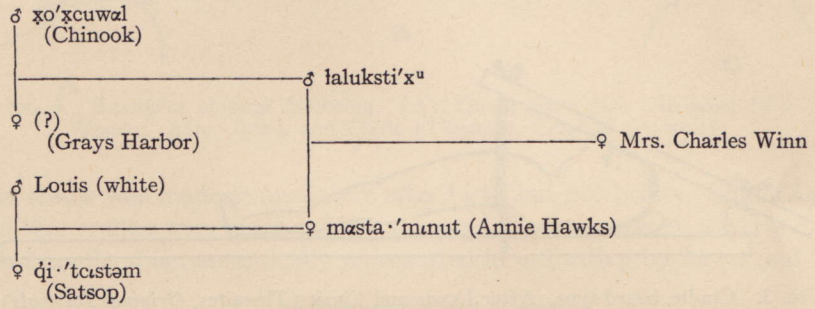

TABLE 7. Genealogy of Mrs. Charles Winn.

Sometimes the parents changed a child's name at six or seven years of age but this was not attended by a ritual. The person himself, later in life, might change his name as he desired. This was often done at the time of an unusual experience, a serious illness or the acquisition of shamanistic power. Guardian spirit or ceremonial names were commonly possessed in addition to the ancestral name. The spirit names were meaningful; ancestral names were not. Names were not bestowed until many years after the previous bearer had died.

PREGNANCY AND BIRTH[2]

Infants were believed to live a quite definite existence even before conception. Mrs. Luscier's exact phrasing will convey the ideas with least distortion: "The baby's home is the sun before being born. All children come from the daylight. That is their home. If their parents do not take good care of them they think,

[2]Cf. Boas, *op. cit.*, pp. 241-43.

'Well, I'd better go back.' Then they get sick and die. Later, a child may take pity on its parents and decide to return. 'Maybe my parents will be better to me now,' Then the child is born again to the same mother, but is a different sex."

The prospective mother was subjected to a great number of pregnancy tabus. A few of these were as follows: She must not look at a snake, else the child would look like a reptile; she must not look upon suffering or anything ugly; after starting out the door she must not turn back or delivery would be difficult; she must not look upon a dog with unopened eyes or the child would be blind; the tumpline must not be carried around the body or the child would become entangled in the umbilical cord at birth; she must wear no beads or the child's neck would be twisted; she must not look upon a corpse or the child would faint often; she must not bathe too often or her bones would become stiff; food such as berries must not be eaten from the gathering basket but only after being transferred to a mat or dish.

The husband was subject to many restrictions also, including some of the above.

Some persons were reputed to have the power of predicting the sex and longevity of the child before birth. These were not necessarily shamans.

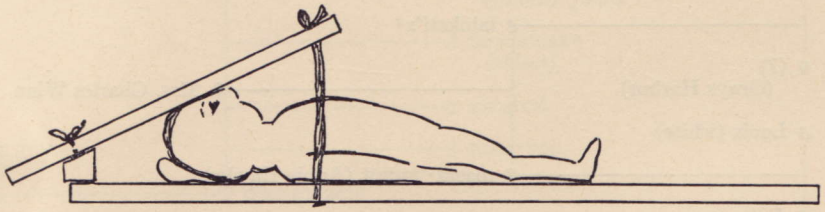

FIG. 3. Cradle, board type. After Lewis and Clark (Thwaites, *Original Journals*).

The mother was secluded before delivery in a hut or a partitioned corner of the house. A midwife was called to assist at birth. Shamanistic assistance was sought only if delivery could not be accomplished otherwise. The midwife was a woman "who knew the right kind of medicines to give." She was sometimes a relative but more often a professional, with whom arrangements were made in advance. Her duties included attending to both the woman and the child. While the mother held to two upright posts the midwife supported her from the rear. The woman held a stick or the corner of a blanket in her mouth to avoid crying out. The child was delivered on mats covered with shredded cedar bark. The midwife cut the umbilical cord and tied it with a piece of elk sinew. The child was immediately washed in a wooden dish with warm water. Its mouth was washed out and the body rubbed with bear oil. It was then wrapped in blankets of beaver or raccoon skin. Attention was then turned to the mother. Heated rocks were placed around her bed and water poured on to produce steam. This was to make sure that all the afterbirth would pass. Her breasts were massaged, rubbed with bear grease and heated with hot

rocks or steamed. Her abdomen was bound with cedar bark which was later burned. The afterbirth, which was called grandmother, was turned over if it were desired to reverse the sex of the next child. Then it was immediately disposed of by the midwife where it would not be found.

For five days after delivery the mother was not supposed to sleep for fear of hemorrhage. At the end of that time she was washed with medicinal water. For five more days she remained secluded and ate nothing but fish soup so that her milk might be plentiful.

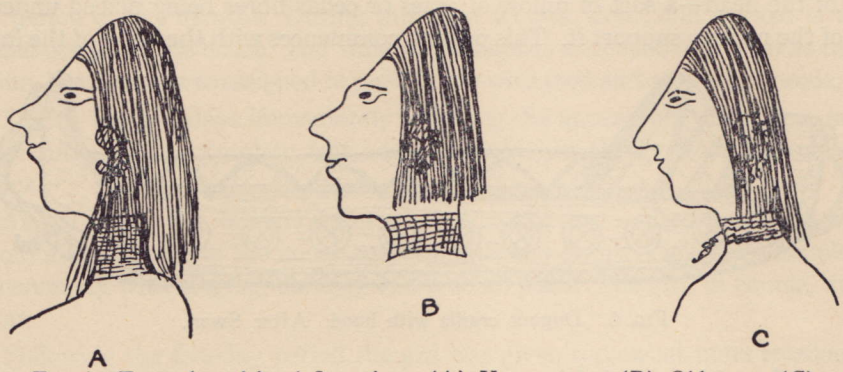

FIG. 4. Examples of head flattening. (A) Young man; (B) Old man; (C) Woman. After Lewis and Clark (Thwaites, *Original Journals*).

The cradle was made immediately after birth but not before. Emma Luscier declared that cradles were made only by shamans. Two types were used; one was a flat board cradle, diagrammatically represented in a drawing by Lewis and Clark

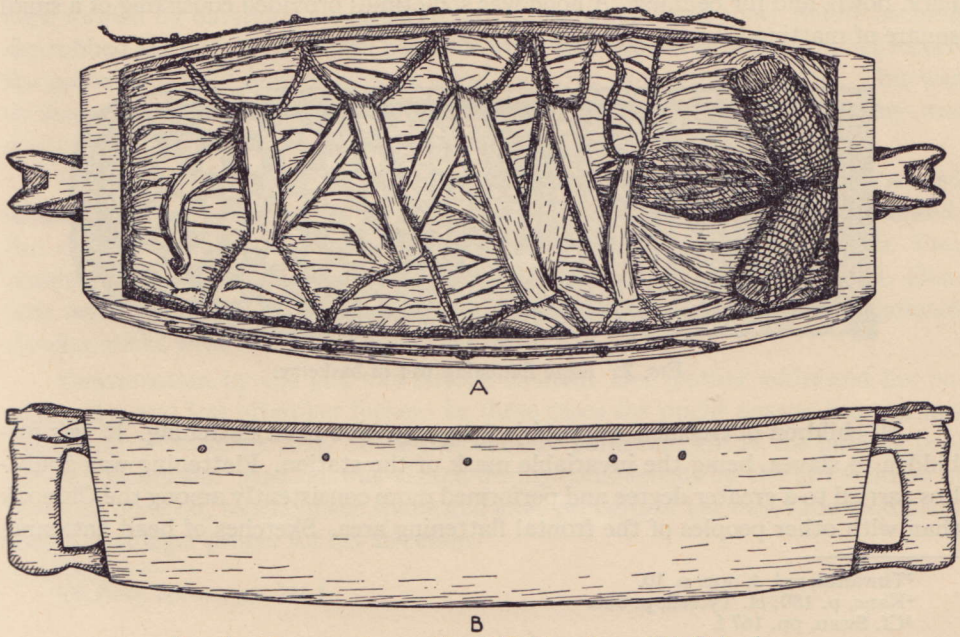

FIG. 5. Dugout cedar cradle. (A) Top view; (B) Side view.

(see Figure 3)[3] and in a portrait by Paul Kane (Plate 1.) This type of cradle was provided with a hinged flattening board which held a pad firmly against the child's head, adjustable by thongs attached to the lower part of the cradle (note: the flattening board is loosened and raised in the Kane portrait). Kane describes the cradle as follows: "Infants [are] strapped to a piece of board covered with moss or loose fibres of cedar bark, and in order to flatten the head they place a pad on the infant's forehead, on the top of which is laid a piece of smooth bark, bound by a leather band passing through holes in the board on either side, and kept tightly pressed across the front of the head—a sort of pillow of grass or cedar fibres being placed under the back of the neck to support it. This process commences with the birth of the infant,

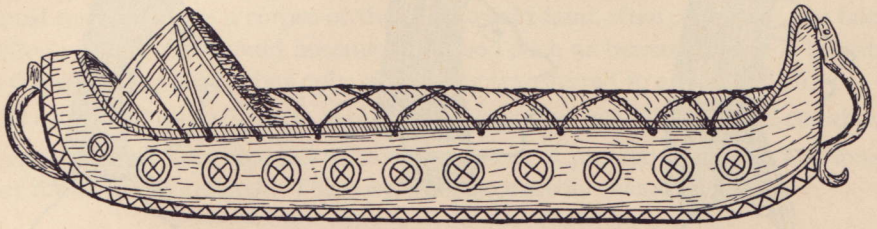

FIG. 6. Dugout cradle with hood. After Swan.

and is continued for a period from eight to twelve months. . . ."[4] The second type was a dugout cradle, usually of cedar. This is illustrated in Figures 5 and 6. With this cradle two basketry pads filled with thin cedar bark (Figure 7) were used to produce flattening. Their position is shown in the illustration. The pads were firmly bound in place with thongs to the side of the cradle. An openwork matting was used on the inside bottom of the dugout cradle, covered with finely shredded cedar bark, down, and fur bedding. A hood was sometimes provided consisting of a small square of matting.[5]

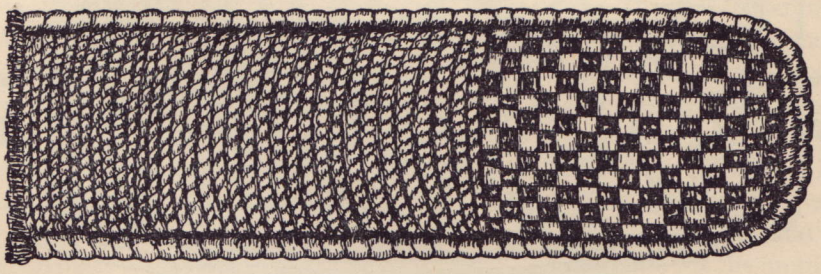

FIG. 7. Head flattening pad of basketry.

All children of freemen were subject to extensive head flattening. It was forbidden to slaves, being the invariable mark of the station. Flattening was doubtless carried to a greater degree and performed more consistently among the Chinook than with other peoples of the frontal flattening area. Sketches of head flattening

[3]Thwaites, vol. 4, opp. p. 10.
[4]Kane, p. 180; cf. Tyrrell, p. 506.
[5]Cf. Swan, pp. 167 f.

by Lewis and Clark are shown in Figure 4. The portrait by Kane (Plate 1) of a Cowlitz (?) woman shows typical flattening. An excellent photograph showing flattening is that of Charles Cultee in Boas' *Chinook Texts* (frontispiece).

A child was kept in its cradle until it was able to walk. Nursing continued for two or three years, sometimes longer.

PUBERTY[6]

At the time of puberty the girl was restricted and regulated in her activities for a period of five months. During this time she ate, slept, and worked in a partitioned corner of the house. Her time was occupied with such activities as basket-making, but a slave was assigned to provide her with food and attend her needs.

During the five days immediately following the appearance of the first menses the girl observed a complete fast and remained completely isolated from other persons.

At the same time the girl's mother or grandmother invited many old women and old men to come to the house and celebrate the event. This was a simple one-day ceremony with singing, dancing and a small feast. The girl, of course, did not appear.

Following the five-day period the girl was given somewhat more freedom and was allowed a little dried salmon and grease to eat. Thereafter her food allowance was increased until she ate two regular meals each day, a small amount early in the morning and a larger quantity in the evening, but at no time was she given fresh food of any kind. If she ate anything fresh the person who had obtained the food would have been unable again to procure such articles.

At daybreak each morning the girl left the house and bathed in a pool which had been formed by damming a nearby stream at some protected spot. Before bathing she rubbed her body with rotten hemlock wood and boughs of cedar. On her return she gathered a large load of bark or wood, carrying as much as possible. This was to insure future strength and regular occurrence of the menses. If bathing was omitted a single time during the five months the period was extended.

During isolation the girl wore only cedar bark clothing. Each day she painted her face and hands with a solid covering of red. The part of the hair was also painted. But she was not allowed to comb her hair. This was done by an old woman. Two braids were plaited and fastened in a tight knot at the back of the girl's head. Dentalia were sometimes inserted in the hair. She was provided with two pointed wooden sticks with which to scratch her head.

Conversation by the girl was strictly limited. Her mother addressed her occasionally, and less often her father. In these cases she might answer but she was not permitted to speak first. If she met another pubescent girl at the bathing pool the two conversed. Also she was visited during confinement by the girl children of the neighborhood, to whom she spoke and gave presents of her own childhood playthings, no longer proper for her to retain.

[6]Cf. Boas, *op. cit.*, pp. 246 f.

If the parents travelled the girl was allowed to accompany them but her activities were highly restricted. She was supposed to keep her eyes closed; an elderly woman guided her actions. If the girl had looked at the sky it would have caused rain. To glance at a child would have caused it to become ill; or to look upon an ailing person would have magnified his illness.

At the end of the five-month period another ceremony was held, similar to the first but more elaborate. At this time the girl made her appearance and took part in the dancing and singing.

Food restrictions were not entirely lifted with this ceremony. Fresh food was avoided for a full year.

At any time after seclusion was ended the girl might avail herself of the formal mechanism for announcing her desires regarding marriage. While in the presence of older women she might sing "love songs" in which the name of the man was inserted.

Swan comments on the puberty observances as follows:

> When a young girl reaches womanhood, she has to go through a process of purification, which lasts a *moon*, or month. This is simply by bathing several times a day, and rubbing the body with rotten wood procured from the hemlock-tree. They are not allowed, during this period, to eat anything that is in season, either salmon, sturgeon, shell-fish, or berries, as it is believed that, in such cases, the fish would disappear, the shell-fish would make them sick, and the berries would fall off the bushes without ripening. And should there be a southeast wind, with signs of rain, they must on no pretense, go out of the house, for *Too-lux*, the south wind, is so offended if one of these girls goes out of doors, that he sends *Hah-ness'*, the thunder-bird, who shakes his wings, and causes the roaring thunder, his eyes, the meanwhile, sending forth flashes of lightning. I never knew a thunder storm occur while I resided in the Territory but what was attributed to some girl going out during her season of purification.[7]

At each subsequent menstrual period the girl was isolated for a five-day period in the partitioned corner or in a small hut on the outside. Face painting and activities were similar to the initial period. Food tabus, however, included only fresh products.

There was no formal recognition of the puberty period in boys. It was immediately preceding puberty, however, that the most intensive searches were made for guardian spirits.

MARRIAGE[8]

Soon after a boy passed puberty his parents turned their attention to the accumulation of sufficient property so that his marriage might be arranged. Relatives were called to assist, for the amount of goods transferred was a direct reflection of the family's social position. When the amassed property was judged sufficient the boy's parents discussed the available girls of proper social rank and decided whom should be asked. The boy was sometimes consulted.

Two messengers were then dispatched to the girl's parents carrying initial presents with them. These were offered to the girl's parents together with an enum-

[7]Swan, p. 171.
[8]Cf. Boas, *op. cit.*, pp. 251 f.

eration of the further gifts if the offer be accepted. The messengers received the answer and returned. If they returned with the presents the boy's people knew the offer had been refused. Sometimes the messengers were sent back to offer even more. As soon as an affirmative answer was received immediate preparations for the wedding were made. The boy's people loaded the remaining presents in canoes, and together with the boy and many relatives, embarked for the girl's house.

A short distance from the destination, camp was made and the messengers were sent ahead to the girl's house. The party remained at the camp until the emissaries returned the next day or perhaps even later. Then the group formally approached and entered the girl's house, carrying the presents. Here they remained for two or three days, feasting, singing and dancing.

When the visitors departed the groom and bride accompanied them. Immediately thereafter the recipients of the presents called in their relatives and the presents were redistributed. The guests made their own choices, with the woman's relatives preceding the man's.

Residence was uniformly patrilocal. The next formal relations between parents of the bride and groom occurred a year later. At that time the girl's family visited the boy's, bringing with them quantities of food which they had been engaged in accumulating throughout the intervening year. An interchange of presents between the two families was made but the great bulk of food was not matched. Dancing and feasting, similar to that at the marriage ceremony, occupied two or three days, after which the guests departed.

At the time of first pregnancy, the girl was returned to her own parent's home where she remained until the child was born. Shortly afterward the mother and her child were returned to the husband's home together with another great quantity of food. Again the feast was held, the last of the three invariably accompanying marriage and the establishment of a new family.

Polygyny was practiced both by upper and lower classes. The levirate and sororate were strictly observed. Infant betrothals sometimes occurred, with the exchange of a few presents to bind the bargain.

Divorce was optional only to the husband. It was not accompanied by return of presents.

A wife's punishment for adultery was the loss of her ears or the end of her nose. The husband inflicted this punishment upon his erring wife and was privileged to kill the paramour if the case were unquestionable. According to Emma Luscier, however, the male transgressor almost always avoided the penalty by lavish gifts to the husband. The wife was sometimes sent back to her own people as a result of adultery. In such a case her relatives often carried many gifts to her husband as an inducement to take his wife back. When he acceded to this request "he knew that his wife could be trusted after that," Mrs. Luscier declared, "because her relatives had spent so much wealth on her."

DEATH AND INTERMENT[9]

When a freeman died his corpse was placed in a prominent position on the bed platform where it lay in state while relatives visited and funeral arrangements were made. For an upperclassman these preparations occupied five days, for commoners a somewhat shorter time. Relatives and fellow villagers gathered as soon as news of the death was received, bringing with them gifts to be interred with the corpse and others to be presented to the chief mourners after the funeral.

During the five days all conduct was governed strictly by formal ritual. Before the arrival of the guests the corpse was washed, wrapped in blankets or furs, and placed in position. This work was delegated to young men (or women) who later were well paid. As relatives and visitors appeared they walked to the bier, looked upon the corpse, and began to wail. Chief mourners blackened their faces, wore their oldest clothing, and refrained from all routine activity. Conversation was conducted scarcely above a whisper.

At daylight each morning formal wailing commenced, all persons participating, including slaves. The wail was a monotonous chant, at times accompanied by words.[10] After a short session a slave was sent for water and a cedar bark towel. Each person washed away his tears and wiped his face with the towel. A messenger was then dispatched to a neighboring house to order the preparation of food. Meals were never prepared in the presence of the corpse. When the breakfast was ready the mourners, except for a few, left for the other house. Later they returned but wailing was not resumed until the afternoon. It was continued from that time until sunset, but never later lest misfortune result.

At any early moment the hair of close relatives of the deceased was ceremonially cut. This was done by some close blood relative of the mourner but not a member of the immediate family. The hair was cut at the level of the lobe of the ear.

The names of all chief mourners were changed at this time,[11] accompanied by public announcement. The new names continued in use for a year or longer, sometimes indefinitely. Also all words phonetically similar to the name of the deceased were dropped. Synonyms served in lieu of the abjured terms for a long period following, ideally until the name was bestowed upon a descendent.[12] Following are

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[9]Cf. Boas, *op. cit.*, pp. 256-58.

[10]Swan (p. 189) presents the following as typical: "Oh, our mother! why did you go and leave us so sad? We can scarcely see by reason of the water that falls from our eyes.

"Many years have you lived with us, and taught us the words of wisdom.

"You were not poor, neither are we poor; neither were you weak, but your heart and limbs were strong.

"You should have lived with us many years, and told us more of the deeds of ancient times."

Swan states that the lamentations were not begun until after the funeral but this is contradicted by explicit statements of my informants.

[11]Compare Swan (p. 189): "On these occasions they always change their own names, as they think the spirits of the dead will come back if they hear the same name called that they were accustomed to hear before death. Toke, who had lost a daughter just previous . . . called himself Chehait. Heyalma, whose brother died at Russell's, called himself Cletheas. Tomhays changed his to Senequa, and Tomanawos his to Winasie. Yancumux, a brother of Tomanawos, changed his to Yakowilk."

Scouler (p. 187) writes that Concomly changed his name to Madsu when his son died.

[12]See genealogies and names.

examples of the substitutions: t'łolo'x died, t'łu'x ("cold") was replaced by pama's; xa'wal^{ux} died, xa'wal^{ux} ("loud") was given up for t'ła'xł; la'qwask died, la'qwasək ("dance") was dropped for wa'tsyəkəm. Needless to say, the name of the deceased was never mentioned.

Early on the fifth morning the corpse was prepared for interment by wrapping it, in extended position, with cattail mats and binding to it the pole with which it was to be carried. The personal possessions of the deceased and presents brought by the guests were sometimes placed alongside the body before wrapping; in other cases they were carried by the mourners to the place of interment and laid near the corpse. A few wall planks were taken out for the removal of the corpse. Two pall bearers carried the burden to the burial grounds when possible, while all the others travelled by canoe. When the corpse was transported in a canoe it was necessary to destroy the vessel. Graveyards were located on islands by preference but when this was not possible a plot bordering on the water was set aside at some distance from the village. Each village possessed its own burial ground.

Interment was invariably above the surface for all but the slaves. Two forms were known, canoe burial (Plate 3) and box burial (Figure 8). Canoes were the more commonly employed but the use of boxes was not a post-white adoption. This is proved by the first white observations. Broughton writes: "The body was rolled up in deer skins, after them with mats, and then laid at full length in a wooden box, which exactly fitted it."[13]

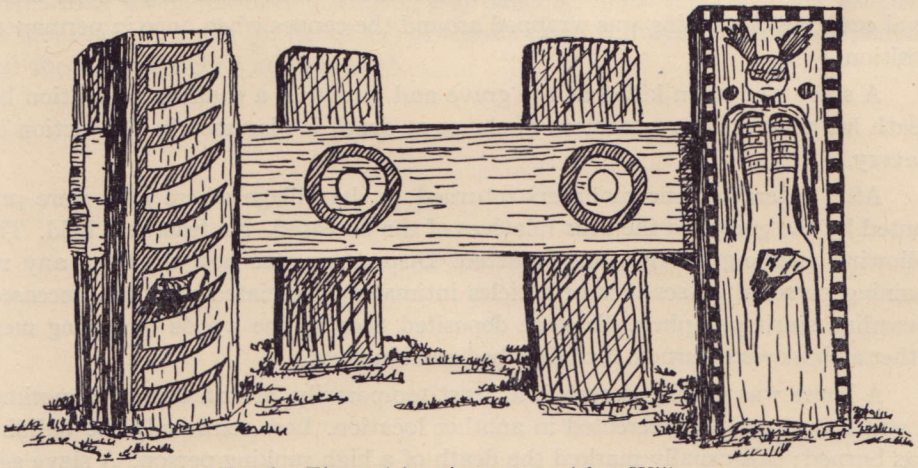

FIG. 8. Elevated box interment. After Wilkes.

Canoes or boxes were made ready prior to the arrival of the funeral party. Oftimes a single canoe served but preferably two were employed and occasionally three. The value and number of the canoes reflected the wealth and rank of the deceased. The vessels were scrubbed clean and sometimes repainted. They were not, apparently, made anew for the purpose. Many holes were pierced in the bottom so that rain water might escape and so that the canoe would be unfit for further

[13]Vancouver, vol. 2, p. 54.

service. Ordinarily a burial canoe or box was raised above the ground about six feet on a staging; less commonly the lower limbs of a tree served as a support. But Henry mentions surface burial as well: "Some [were] lying on the ground covered with mats and a canoe over all; others, again, raised on stages, covered with mats, and then a canoe over the whole."[14] Those on the ground may have fallen. The staging was prepared alike for either a canoe or box. Four posts of split cedar were erected by digging holes in the ground. They were placed in pairs, separated by the width of the box or canoe, at distance determined by the length of the container. A mortise was made near the top of each post through which horizontal beams were passed connecting the pairs. Sometimes these beams were supported by trees, if conveniently located, rather than posts.

In some cases the larger of two canoes was used as the depository, the other as a cover; or this arrangement might be reversed. If three canoes were available the corpse was placed in a small one, this in a larger, and the third served as a cover. The protection for a single canoe consisted of cedar planks. The container was not raised to position until the body was placed inside. With the corpse were deposited all objects brought by the mourners. Often these were broken or damaged at the time. Large articles, particularly baskets and bags, were hung on the canoe and staging. A man's power stick or board was either placed with the body or erected outside. No food was deposited at any time.

The canoe was lifted to the platform with poles placed underneath; direct contact with the coffin after the corpse lay inside was avoided as far as possible. But a final covering of matting was wrapped around the canoes when once in permanent position.

A slave was often killed at the grave and buried in a shallow excavation beneath his master. The treatment of slaves at death is discussed in the section on slavery.

After interment the mourners returned to the village where gifts were presented by the guests to the near relatives of the deceased. No feast was held. The following morning the visitors departed. Disposition was now made of any remaining personal possessions or articles intimately associated with the deceased. Guardian spirit paraphernalia were deposited deep in the woods by young men. Other articles were burned, including bed and blankets.

A house was usually deserted, at least temporarily, after a death. Sometimes it was torn down and reerected in another location. Less commonly the building was burned; this usually marked the death of a high ranking person. A slave suffering mortal illness was removed from a house so that death might not occur within.

Formal mourning continued for a year.[15] This consisted of a brief period of wailing in the early morning and another just before sunset each day. Wailing was performed, not in the house, but at some distance in the woods. Paid wailers were not employed but slaves were included. For ten days mourners did not go near the

[14]Coues, p. 754.

[15]This had been reduced to a month in Swan's time (Swan, p. 189).

water, lest a storm arise. Food tabus, observed for a month, included the principal sea products and fresh foods generally. For a year or longer bathing was abjured and the poorest of clothing worn.

The end of a widow's period of mourning was marked by a ritual which is described in highly embroidered terms by Wilkes:

> At Astoria we saw one day, when there was quite a crowd of Indians at the encampment, several squaws, all dressed in their best attire. These were all more than usually attentive to their personal appearance. The principal among them was a widow, whose time of mourning for the death of her husband had just expired. Her object was to notify her friends that she was ready to receive the addresses of anyone who was in want of a wife.[16] To give such notification was, as I found on inquiry, a common custom among the Chinooks.
>
> The widow . . . was attended by seven others . . . and all evidently accompanied her to do honor to the occasion. Every half hour they would arrange themselves in a row, and the widow at the head, affecting a modest downcast look, would commence a chant, informing the bystanders that her period of mourning was out, that she had forgotten her deceased husband, given her grief to the winds, and was now ready to espouse another. The chant was accompanied by a small movement of the feet and body, which, with the guttural song and consequent excitement of such an exhibition, caused the fair ones to wax so warm that perspiration rolled down their painted cheeks. . . .[17]

The remains of an upperclassman were reburied a year or more after death. A new canoe was made ready and guests were invited. Well paid helpers transferred the bones and raised the new container. In lieu of a new canoe the old one was sometimes repainted. Wailing accompanied these observances but a feast followed which was given over to singing and dancing. Since this ceremony usually was sponsored by a son (or daughter) of the deceased it frequently was postponed until the latter reached adulthood.[18]

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[16]This is somewhat incompatible with the statements of informants that the levirate was strictly observed.

[17]Wilkes, vol. 5, pp. 117 f.

[18]Cf. Thwaites, vol. 3, pp. 326 f.; *idem*, vol. 4, p. 198; Swan, pp. 185-89, 191 f., 212; Franchere, pp. 250, 256 f.; Scouler, pp. 167, 176; Dunn, pp. 119 f.; Gibbs, *Tribes of Western Washington*, pp. 203 f.