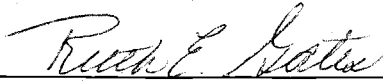


AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

Sharol Lind Otness for the degree of Master of Science
in Clothing, Textiles, and Related Arts presented on August 10, 1979

Title: The Tlingit Button Blanket

Abstract approved: _____



Ruth E. Gates

The Tlingit Button Blanket was developed on the Northwest Coast of North America in the early 19th century as a result of the introduction of foreign materials brought by European explorers and traders in the late 18th century. The Tlingit Indians substituted trade items for indigenous materials and integrated the resulting blanket into their society as a ceremonial robe.

The purpose of this study was twofold. One purpose was to examine historic (pre-1930) and contemporary (post-1930) Button Blankets for form, materials used, and methods of construction. Comparisons were made as to similarities and differences between the two periods. It was concluded that the Tlingit Button Blanket as a whole has maintained its traditional character over time, even though the materials and methods used for construction have changed.

The second purpose of this study was to determine if similarities exist between contemporary usage of the Button Blanket and its historic uses. It was found that the Tlingit Button Blanket is still utilized in its original context, basically associated with socio-religious rites, but usage has diversified and become more secularized.

The Tlingit Button Blanket

by

Sharol Lind Otness

A THESIS

submitted to

Oregon State University

in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the
degree of

Master of Science

Completed August 1979

Commencement June 1980

APPROVED:

Ruth E. Gates

Associate Professor of Clothing, Textiles, and Related Arts
in charge of major

Ruth E. Gates

Acting Head of Department of Clothing, Textiles, and Related Arts

John B. ...

Dean of Graduate School

Date thesis is presented August 10, 1979

Typed by Kathryn Miller for Sharol Lind Otness

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express sincere appreciation to all those who assisted with this thesis. Deep gratitude is extended to Dr. Ruth Gates, Associate Professor of Clothing, Textiles, and Related Arts, for her keen interest, encouragement, and superior guidance throughout the study.

Dr. Tom Hogg, Head, Department of Anthropology, is thanked for his excellent assistance in the preparation of this paper.

Appreciation is expressed to Marie James for her time and effort on the writer's behalf. Thanks go to the other Tlingit people who generously allowed examination of their Button Blankets and/or offered their time to talk about their heritage, and especially to: Lillian Hammond, Celia Hawkins, Horace Marks, Cyrus Peck, Raymond Peck, and Mildred Sparks.

A very special thanks is extended to Bill Holm, curator of Northwest Coast Indian Art at the Thomas Burke Memorial Washington State Museum in Seattle, Washington. His encouragement and advice were invaluable.

To officials and employees at the several museums involved in this study go thanks for permitting close examination of museum items, and for giving generously of their time.

To my parents and close friends, very special appreciation and deepest gratitude are expressed for their interest, encouragement, assistance and understanding throughout the duration of my graduate program and this study. Above, all, deepest thanks to my husband, Alan, whose encouragement and subtle insistence finally paid off.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Page</u>
I INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of Problem	5
Justification	5
Hypotheses	7
Assumptions	8
Limitations	8
Definitions of Terms Used in the Study	9
II REVIEW OF LITERATURE	13
Physical Setting	13
Economy Before Contact	16
Social Structure	18
Religion	21
Native Art	24
Ceremonies at Contact	27
Native Clothing	30
Ornaments at Contact	34
Construction Tools and Techniques Related to Clothing	37
The Period of Contact	40
Trade Goods Used for Clothing and Personal Adornment	45
Ceremonial Garments in Flux	59
Historic Development of the Button Blanket	60
Summary	67
III RESEARCH DESIGN	68
Method	68
Analysis Sheet	68
Selection of Blankets	70
Informants	71
Supplementary Information	72
Summary	73
IV FINDINGS	74
Style Types	75
Materials Used for Historic Button Blankets	77
Background Fabric	77
Size	80
Border	81
Neck Binding	84
Closures	85
Applique	86
Buttons	87
Other Materials	88
Materials Used for Contemporary Button Blankets	89
Background Fabric	90
Size	90
Border	90

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Cont.)

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Page</u>
Neck Binding	91
Closures	91
Applique	91
Buttons	92
Other Materials	92
Construction of a Button Blanket:	
Historic and Contemporary	93
The Maker	93
Source of Design	94
Source of Materials	95
Historic Methods of Button Blanket Construction	96
Contemporary Methods of Button Blanket Construction	101
The Wearing of Button Blankets	104
The Use of the Button Blanket	105
Line of Descent	108
Additional Findings	108
V. CONCLUSIONS	111
Hypothesis I	111
Hypothesis II	119
General Discussion	120
VI. RECOMMENDATIONS	123
Use of the Present Study	123
Improvement of the Present Study	123
Further Study	124
VII. SUMMARY	125
Purpose of Study	125
Justification of Study	126
Assumptions	126
Hypotheses	126
Limitations	127
Procedure	127
Findings	128
Historic Button Blanket Materials	128
Contemporary Button Blanket Materials	129
Construction of a Button Blanket	129
Use of the Button Blanket	130
Conclusions	130
Recommendations	131
Use of Present Study	131
Improvement of Present Study	131
Further Study	131
BIBLIOGRAPHY	132

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Cont.)

Page

APPENDICES

A. American Fur Company Order to A. & S. Henry & Co., Leeds, England for Trade Cloth	139
B. Hudson's Bay Company Requisition for Goods from England	140
C. American Fur Company Order to A. & S. Henry & Co., Leeds, England for Point Blankets	141
D. Analysis Sheet for the Examination of Button Blankets	142
E. Button Blanket Styles	147
F. Information on Button Blanket Samples	149
G. Historic Photographs	152

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>
1 Plain Button Blanket	76
2 Crest Button Blanket	76
3 Four Stripe Button Blanket	76
4 Tahltan Button Blanket	76
5 Decorative use of saved list	83
6 Single opposing button flaps	85
7 Actual size copper blanket decoration	88
8 Construction of border corners on Button Blankets	97
9 Methods of applying Button Blanket Borders	98
10 Methods of attaching buttons in series	100
11 Contemporary border attachment	102
12 One style of border button arrangement	109

Plate

1 Button Blankets	6
2 Map of Northern Northwest Coast	15
3 Sizes of Hudson's Bay Company point blankets	54

Table

1 Ownership and age classification of Button Blanket samples	75
2 Style and age classification of Button Blanket samples	77
3 Background materials for historic Button Blankets	78
4 Size averages of Button Blanket sample	82
5 Historic and contemporary uses of the Button Blanket	107

THE TLINGIT BUTTON BLANKET

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

The Pacific Coast of North America from the Bering Strait on the north to the Strait of Juan de Fuca on the south consists of a broken coastline with countless islands off the mainland. The Canadian Rockies isolate the coastal strip from the interior (Averkiewa, 1971, p. 317). The mild climate and extremely heavy precipitation make this area abundant with vegetation. The presence of rich and varied animal life, land and sea mammals as well as fish and fowl, enabled a coast-oriented culture to develop (Drucker, 1955, p. 11).

A number of Indian groups with similar cultural traits lived along the shores of this area. One of these groups is the Tlingit. The name "Tlingit" (pronounced cling'-kit), by which the natives call themselves, refers to the specific places they inhabit along the coast. William Paul says it is a "contraction of a phrase which means 'from-place-of-tidal-waters-people'" (Oberg, 1973, p. ix), while Cyrus Peck simply shortens it to the "Tides People" (Peck, 1975, p. 3). The Russians called them "Kalushka," "Kolosh," or "Koloshi" for a time; this name originated with the Aleut hunters who traveled with the Russian fur traders. It means "a little trough," and refers to the great labrets worn by elderly women when contact between the peoples first occurred (Dall, 1882, p. 5).

Physically, the Tlingit resemble their nearest Northwest Coast neighbors, the Haida and Tsimshian. Their brown eyes are set far apart,

their faces are more round than long, and they have long thick black hair which seldom grays (Gunther, 1972, p. 158). The lightness of their yellow-brown skin color was often cause for comment among explorers. At 173 cm, the men are taller on the average than any other coastal people (Oberg, 1973, p. 6). They are lightly built but strong. The Tlingit used to harden their bodies by daily bathing in the sea, even in winter. Infant mortality was high, but those who survived were strong and healthy and often lived a great length of time (Krause, 1956, p. 103).

The Tlingit speak a language believed to be related to their interior neighbors, the Athapascans. "Linguistic evidence together with suggestions from Tlingit origin myths and tales suggest that the Tlingit moved from the interior to the coast at some time in the past." (Stanley, 1965, p. 13)

The culture of this area, at contact, can be classified as a "hunting-and-gathering" type, completely without agriculture and with no domestic animals other than the dog (Drucker, 1955, p. 1). The Tlingit were an anomaly, however, among hunting-and-gathering societies; they were wealthy and had a highly stratified society.

By the time Europeans first arrived in the region, the Tlingit lived in permanent winter villages of large wood-plank communal houses, migrated to fishing and berry picking sites during the summer, and had well-established trade routes with other Indian groups. Following the intensive periods of seasonal activity, mainly during the fish runs when harvesting and preserving fish was a full time activity, there were periods of relaxation and leisure (Anderson, 1965, p. 15).

Fundamental food gathering activities were performed collectively by house groups, while handicrafts were individual pursuits (Oberg, 1973, p. 30). In the winter people returned to the villages from their group activities and utilized leisure time for the private development of art and ceremonialism.

The Tlingit showed active imagination and great care in the development of art during their leisure hours (Krause, 1956, p. 118). When Europeans first came to the Northwest Coast they were amazed to find so much expert sculpture and painting created by a nation of hunters (Gunther, 1966, p. 15). The highly standardized designs were adapted to cover innumerable objects, all of which were functional (Drucker, 1955, p. 179; Inverarity, 1950, p. 47). The art style itself was intimately linked with social organization, rank and status, and mythology as well as with the ceremonial patterns of the Tlingit (Inverarity, 1950, p. 4). The Tlingit were fond of "parade and display" and strictly observed ceremonial etiquette (Niblack, 1970, p. 238).

Social scientists generally accept the fact that, over a period of time, no pattern of society remains unchanged. When exposure to extreme cultural differences occurs in a relatively short period of time the resulting variations in pattern can be quite conspicuous (Kroeber, 1948, p. 425). One of the most visible symbols of the intermingling of different cultures is the clothing worn in a society.

A natural process of acculturation was begun when the Tlingit were exposed to the customs and material goods brought by a crush of European explorers and traders in the late 18th century. Probably the single most important item of cultural contact on the Northwest Coast

in relation to clothing was the woolen trade blanket. As fur cloaks were traded away they were quickly replaced by woolen blankets worn as mantles; these plain blankets became a virtual uniform for all Indians in this area in the early 19th century. These blankets became so significant in the culture of the Tlingit they were adapted until they became part of the ceremonial aspect of the society as well.

The ceremonial robe known as the Button Blanket can be generally described as a rectangular mantle of dark wool background, with a brightly colored (usually red) wool border on three sides and a unique design in the center outlined with white mother-of-pearl buttons. These buttons are also placed in series around the inner edge of the border. The result is a striking contrast in color and texture that leaves a powerful image with the viewer. The Button Blanket was produced most prolifically during the mid- and late 19th century.

The rapid development of the fur trade in the years immediately following 1778 brought all coastal Indians great wealth as well as new tools and technological skills. Tlingit society as a whole achieved new heights while maintaining its basic integrity. When the fur trade went into a decline the Tlingit, along with their southern Nootkan neighbors, experienced a period of economic decline as well. Later mining, industrial development of fishing and lumbering, missionary activity, and the growth of white settlement caused continuance of this cultural decay (de Laguna, 1949, p. 3). Art was so intimately tied to the social structure that when traditional Tlingit society became disorganized through acculturation to white customs, "the art lost all motivation" (Gunther, 1966, p. 2).

In recent years there has been a new emphasis on the revival of the crafts and ceremonials of native peoples in general. The Tlingit people are participating in this cultural reawakening. Throughout the ebb and flow of Tlingit society the ceremonial Button Blanket has remained an integral part of that society, and is the subject of this paper. (See Plate 1.)

Statement of Problem

Along the Northwest Coast the Button Blanket developed sequentially as a result of substitution of foreign materials for indigenous ones. This new and unique ceremonial object was widely accepted and integrated into Tlingit society. A person with an interest in these blankets can find no single reference containing information on their historic development, significance, and use. With their sharp contrasts in colors and textures and the frequent inclusion of crest designs, they appear to be an art form as well as a type of wearing apparel. Answers to two questions may help clarify and define certain aspects of the Tlingit Button Blanket. To what extent has the basic form of the Button Blanket changed since its inception? Has its cultural significance and use changed with the passage of time? To answer the above questions is the purpose of this investigation.

Justification

Around 1880 to 1820 people such as Jacobsen, Emmons, and Shotridge were collecting objects from the Tlingit specifically for museums. Because Button Blankets were so obviously made of trade materials the



Plate 1. Button Blankets worn for a contemporary dance ceremony.
Photo: R. Gates

collectors apparently did not consider them of any real significance. When the collections were examined, cataloged and consequently explained, there was a distinct lack of information about Button Blankets. Later collectors began to include Button Blankets, but the majority of collectors were not anthropologists or ethnographers and they gathered little information beyond the actual object itself, ignoring the cultural context.

The Tlingit themselves did not have a written language until recent years. This obviously means there were no physical records among the Tlingit documenting and describing any aspect of their civilization as it was, and how it changed over time.

A person desiring information on the Button Blankets of any of the Northwest Coast Indians therefore would be unable to find any single reference that details both physical and cultural information on this ceremonial garment. Primary sources of information available include written materials such as journals of traders and explorers, trading company records, extant Button Blankets, Tlingits with knowledge of Button Blankets, and historic photographs. By utilizing these sources the present study should begin to fill the existing void.

Hypotheses

(I) A comparison of historic and contemporary Tlingit Button Blankets will show recognizable common traits which make them identifiable as Button Blankets, although there are differences in materials and methods used for construction.

(II) The Tlingit Button Blanket still is utilized in its original context, basically associated with socio-religious rites, but its usage has diversified and has become more secularized.

Assumptions

In order to proceed with field research certain assumptions were made.

- (1) Information for this study came from two main sources: research of printed historical materials, and informant interviews. As is generally the case, validity of data received from informants might be more suspect than that of printed data. In some cases informant data were conflicting, and additional information was sought to resolve the conflict. On the basis of the extensive consistency of information from both main sources, it is assumed that informant data are correct.
- (2) No special selection factors operated on the sample of Button Blankets available in the Pacific Northwest.
- (3) Museum holdings with a Tlingit tribe listed on the collection card were accepted as correct. Some blankets labeled "thought to be Tlingit" in the Thomas Burke Memorial Museum were identified by a noted authority on Northwest Coast culture, Bill Holm, and were included on the basis of this expert testimony.

Limitations

There are several considerations to bear in mind regarding this study.

- (1) Selection of blankets to examine was determined by their availability to the author.
- (2) In most cases extensive historical information was unavailable for the examined blankets.
- (3) The Tlingit sometimes differ among themselves as to interpretation of symbols and significance of individual Button Blanket features.
- (4) Persons who had the knowledge to contribute to the investigation were not always willing to cooperate.
- (5) Fiber content of the fabrics was determined by external characteristics only; samples were not available for laboratory testing.
- (6) Yarn count was difficult to determine because of fabric fulling.
- (7) The author is not a Tlingit; therefore, the cultural significance of the Button Blanket and its symbolism is not assessed from the native viewpoint.

Definitions of Terms Used in the Study

Acculturation - the changes produced in a culture by the influence of another culture which result in an increased similarity of the two.

This process tends to be gradual rather than abrupt.

Adze - a cutting tool having an arching blade set at right angles to the handle. Tlingit used sharpened antler or stone for the cutting edge, wood for the handle.

Assimilate - a change that is often an extension of acculturation. To be incorporated or absorbed into the cultural tradition of another population or group is generally a lengthy process.

Awl - a pointed instrument for piercing small holes.

Baleen - whalebone.

Beaded Collar - an accessory shaped much like a bib, generally made of felt and beaded with clan crests. Worn under a ceremonial blanket to disguise the common shirt collar.

Button Blanket - a ceremonial garment (and its forerunners of trade goods) generally made of a dark colored wool trade blanket; this is trimmed across the top and down two sides with bright red wool cloth. Pearl buttons decorate the background in a row or rows next to the border, and often are also attached in the center in the form of a lineage crest.

Clan (sib) - a formal, named, exogamic societal unit whose members trace their relationship from a legendary common ancestor.

Coppers - shield-shaped sheets of hammered copper used as symbols of wealth and greatness, originally averaging two or three feet in height.

Crest objects - manifestations in material form of the totemic entities, and therefore representations of the clan, its ancestors and their descendants.

Crest "ownership" - implies the right to symbolize totemic manifestations in a variety of ways for public display.

Dentalium - highly valued small tusk-shaped shells dredged from a few beds off British Columbia and widely traded along the Northwest Coast.

Exogamy - marriage outside of a specific group required by custom or law.

House group - a body of male kin of the same clan and moiety, their wives and female children who live together.

Kwan - contiguous territories with fairly well defined borders but with no one tribal head.

Lineage - a unilateral group, consisting of a nucleus of men related maternally.

Matrilineal - a type of societal organization in which social position and worldly goods come to each person from his mother and her side of the family.

Moiety (phratry) - one of two basic tribal complimentary subdivisions.

Native - descendants of any of those tribes inhabiting the Northwest Coast of North America when it was first discovered by Europeans.

Nootkan - an inhabitant of Nootka Sound on what is now Vancouver Island, Canada.

Olachen (candle-fish) - a small fish of the smelt family used primarily for oil, but also for food.

Patrilineal - a type of societal organization in which social position and worldly goods come to each person from his father and his side of the family.

Potlatch - a series of events including feasting and dancing and the giving of gifts.

Shaman - a medicine man.

"Tinklers" - a variety of small objects (bells, copper pieces, shells) sewn on ceremonial costumes for the purposes of making pleasant noises during dances.

Tlingit Indians (pronounced cling'-kit) - the people who inhabit the Pacific Northwest coast from latitude 54°40' to about latitude 60° north and who speak a common language of Athapascan stock, or a dialect of that language.

Totem - a type of object symbolizing direct descent from a land, air, or sea creature of supernatural origin.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There is a wealth of information available on the Indians of the Northwest Coast of North America, and on the Tlingit in particular. To grasp the total cultural fit of the Button Blanket, the whole of Tlingit society needs to be examined. The history and origin of the trade goods that were involved in the evolution of the Button Blanket are especially vital to the understanding of selection processes that occurred in progress towards the principle forms of the Button Blanket.

This review is organized to include the following areas: (1) Physical Setting, (2) Economy, (3) Social Structure, (4) Religion, (5) Native Art, (6) Ceremonies at Contact, (7) Native Clothing and Ornamentation, (8) Construction Tools and Techniques Related to Clothing, (9) The Period of Contact, (10) Trade Goods Used for Clothing and Personal Adornment, (11) Ceremonial Garments in Flux, (12) Historic Development of the Button Blanket, and (13) Summary.

Physical Setting

As noted in the introduction, the Northwest Coast area is geographically isolated. The high, rugged Coast Range generally comes right to the water's edge. Narrow inlets that wind and twist inland through these mountains universally end with a glacier, a glacier-fed river, or a cold alpine stream. A broad belt of islands runs parallel to the mainland, some islands containing thousands of square miles, and some being minute. The islands are generally mountainous and heavily

forested. Tremendous tidal fluctuation in the entire area causes many of the straits, sounds, and passages to be treacherous for navigation. The Tlingit peoples occupied this area from latitude $54^{\circ}40'$ to latitude 60° north, living on both the islands and the mainland foothills (Oberg, 1972, p. 3) (see Plate 2).

The offshore Japanese Current in this area moderates the climate so that temperatures are seldom extreme even in the higher latitudes. This same ocean flow causes vast amounts of released water vapor which is carried onshore by prevailing winds (Drucker, 1955, p. 4). The climate can be summed up in two words, mild and wet.

Natural vegetation is abundant, but consists mainly of evergreen trees, and non-food undergrowth. The Tlingit did make use of the various berries growing in the area, such as huckleberry, salmonberry, currant, and high and low bush cranberry. They also harvested wild rice, wild celery, wild rhubarb, clover, and various roots, although they were not known to cultivate them (Oberg, 1973, p. 8).

Animals abound in the lush forest. The most common ones used by the Tlingit were deer, mountain goat, black bear, porcupine, and snowshoe rabbit. In addition, the mainland Tlingit would often hunt moose, brown bear, bighorn sheep, and caribou. Small fur-bearing animals in good variety were also present, and became a much more important resource when European traders arrived.

Birds of the forest such as blue and willow grouse, spruce hen, and ptarmigan were hunted, as were varieties of migratory wild duck and the Canadian goose.

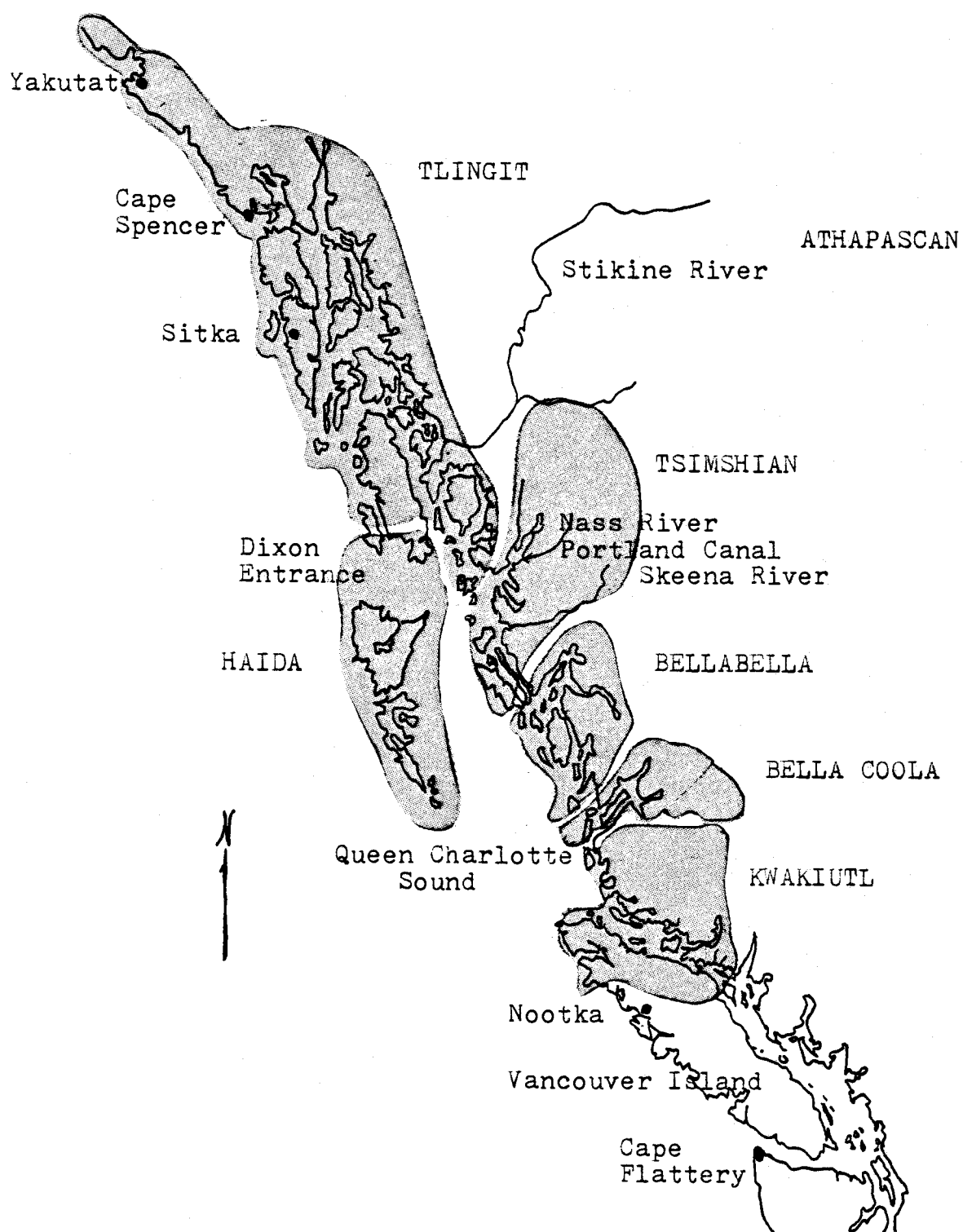


Plate 2. Peoples of the Northern Northwest Coast, and specific areas of interest to the study (adapted from Holm, 1965).

It was from the sea that the Tlingit got the majority of their life-sustaining resources. Fish were of primary importance (Oberg, 1973, p. 7). The five salmon types present were most highly valued, but the Tlingit also consumed great quantities of cod, halibut, and herring. The small, fat eulachon was especially important for making oil. Sea mammals such as the fur and hair seal, sea otter, and sea lion were hunted for both skins and meat. Shellfish such as clams, mussels, and sea urchins were abundant and easy to obtain, as were various types of algae and seaweed.

Resources other than for food were limited in scope. However, there was a tremendous amount of wood available, and this was used for housing (including furnishing and utensils), clothing, and transportation. "The essential tools of the Tlingit were the knife, chisel, wedge, adze and hammer." (Oberg, 1973, p. 8) These were made from stone, shell, antler, sinew, and wood. Hunting and fishing implements were also fashioned out of the same materials (Oberg, 1973, p. 9).

Economy Before Contact

The wealth of resources available enabled a "hunting-and-gathering" type of civilization to develop. As Drucker (1955, p. 3) points out, there was "... a surplus of foodstuffs so great that even a dense population had an abundance of leisure to devote to the improvement and elaboration of its cultural heritage."

The Tlingit lived in permanent winter villages in large communal houses. These houses were "from thirty to fifty feet square, six feet high at the eaves and about fourteen feet high at the ridge." (Oberg,

1973, p. 10) The ingeniously simple method of construction, including notched corner posts and horizontal planks, enabled the Tlingit to literally take the house apart and move it with him when he moved to the summer fishing and berry grounds. The great abundance of fish-producing streams and the Tlingit system of rights and privileges to these areas meant that the summer "camps" were small, sometimes consisting of only one or two families. The intense period of harvesting over, in late October the people would again converge on the winter village site to relax and enjoy their ceremonials (Oberg, 1973, p. 74).

The rugged configuration of the land made travel by foot difficult in almost all areas. Water travel was universal in this area where natural harbors abound. Northwest Coast peoples made excellent large wooden canoes for trading, war, and general transportation purposes.

Most explorers noted the Tlingit were shrewd traders, and this seemed to surprise them. Cook decided that the peoples he dealt with had trade routes covering great distances (Ledyard, 1783, p. 77). LaPerouse concluded the Tlingit had been trading with Russians far to the north (Bancroft, 1959, p. 258), and Meares (1791, p. 192) could not understand the seeming disappearance of all the European articles the Nootkans had received, and deduced they must have been traded away.

When the Russians appeared it seems "... probable that the Tlingit were slowly pushing westward ..., and would ultimately have reached the Aleutian chain or the Yukon delta." (Swanton, 1970, p. 414) De Laguna, who has done major archaeological work in Southeastern Alaska, makes a strong statement about very early cultural contacts, which must have included trade.

From the archaeological point of view there was probably a long period of cultural exchanges between the Southwestern Alaskan Eskimos and the Northwest Coast Indians, some of these antedating the formation of the specialized and distinctive culture of southeastern Alaska. About a millenium ago, these contacts became intensified, bringing to the Indians strong influences from the Asiatic side of the North Pacific. These influences were among the factors stimulating the growth of Northwest Coast culture. (de Laguna, 1949, p. 1)

Oberg (1973, p. 105) offers evidence that voyages of a thousand miles to the south, to Puget Sound, occurred.

Trade was important not only for the goods exchanged, but for the new ideas and technology that the Tlingit used to expand and strengthen their culture. These established routes and contacts proved to be of vital importance following the arrival of Europeans.

Social Structure

The traditional social organization of the Tlingit was very complicated; a complete, in-depth study of its structure is beyond the scope of this paper. Kalervo Oberg (1973) did an exemplary job of describing Tlingit social structure in The Social Economy of the Tlingit Indians. His writings, together with the foreword containing comments by William Paul, provide a more complete picture.

Each Tlingit was born into one of two moieties, the Raven or the Eagle/Wolf.¹ Moieties, or "halves" (Drucker, 1955, p. 109), were also called phratries. These divisions were exogamous and matrilineal, resulting in the fact that a man and his own children were in the

¹Informants and the literature did not agree. All informants stated the two moieties are Raven and Eagle; all authors in the literature stated that the two moieties were Raven and Wolf.

opposite moieties (Drucker, 1955, p. 109; de Laguna, 1972, p. 450; Leacock, 1971, p. 326). Oberg (1973, p. 48) says the moieties had no organized function, meaning the members "do not act as an association," but they did claim blood relationship with each other. Membership in each moiety defined marriage prohibitions, ceremonial labor, and ritual procedure.

The next smaller social division was the clan, or sib. Clans were independent of geographic location, and were composed of those who used a common name and a number of common crests, and who believed in a common local origin. The entire clan acted as a unit only on rare occasion. "The clan, as a whole, has no chief and no common territory. The clan crests or emblems are often identified with the local division only." (Oberg, 1973, p. 38)

Local clan segments, or lineages, were the next division in the social structure. Clan segments enjoyed their share of clan possessions and prerogatives, plus others to which they had exclusive claims (de Laguna, 1972, p. 451). They possessed territories for hunting, fishing, and berry picking as well as house sites in the villages. This unit was ordinarily politically independent, and stood together against all external infringements (Oberg, 1972, p. 40).

A further division included those living together in a single house, consisting of a "close body of male kin of the same lineage, clan and phratry. The bonds holding these individuals together was of the strongest possible nature." (Oberg, 1973, p. 29) Common property included the house itself, important ceremonial objects, and large canoes. The most important food gathering activities were carried on

jointly by a house group, and consumption of food was in common. Ceremonially, this was the primary unit.

There was no over-all Tlingit governmental system. However, another way of classifying Tlingit was used in addition to the moiety-clan method described above. Based on territorial occupation only, it had three parts. The first part included the entire population, all those of Tlingit speech. Next were kwans, contiguous territories with fairly well-defined borders but with no one tribal head (Emmons, 1916, p. 10). Finally there were the individual villages with each house having its own leader. Immediately after white contact there were 13 or 14 kwans, each containing anywhere from one to six villages (Stanley, 1965, p. 2).

Social ranking in Tlingit society was supremely important; Durlack (1928, p. 34) went so far as to say, "Rank is everything." Again, it is a complicated issue. There was individual family ranking that stratified the people in villages into groups, much like the old European class system (Shotridge and Shotridge, 1913, p. 83). These groups have been identified in various ways, with Shotridge and Shotridge giving six strata and Oberg simplifying it to only three. Maintenance of individual rank was insured by the proper marriage.

There was also ranking among the clans in each village. Each clan in each village always had one house of highest rank, with the rest being graded down to the lowest (Oberg, 1973, p. 40).

The rank of the local clan division depends upon the value of its crests. This value is shared by all the clan members.... The rank of a house within the local clan division depends upon the potlatches it has initiated. The values of the crests are created at a potlatch when the giver displays the crest while making the presentations. (Oberg, 1973, p. 126)

Rank, then, was measured in terms of wealth, as well as birth. This dual system meant that any judgement of the social worth of a group was relative, and usually did not go unchallenged (de Laguna, 1972, p. 451).

Inheritance of property was contingent upon whether it was originally owned by the house group or the individual. House-group property, such as ceremonial objects, crests, and coppers, passed from uncle to nephew and did not leave the house-group. Individual wealth was inherited along matrilineal lines. Drucker (1955, p. 110) notes that the Tlingit did not disregard paternity any more than white culture disregards maternal rights and relationships, despite the fact that it insists on transmission of the paternal surname.

Chieftancy was to a certain extent hereditary, but wealth and respect were also factors (Niblack, 1970, p. 372). The more influential families in two sibs of opposite moieties tended to intermarry so the chiefs of their respective houses were father and son, or perhaps paternal uncle and nephew (de Laguna, 1960, p. 24).

The migration of groups of Tlingit and the resulting establishment of new villages, clans, and names tended to complicate inheritance lines and is the subject of an excellent study by Garfield (1947).

Religion

Along the Northwest Coast there was no overall, carefully defined set of religious beliefs. There were basic principles common to all groups, however, and Drucker (1955, p. 151) defines them as:

- a "vague" notion of a Supreme Being or Beings,
- belief of immortality of certain animal species,
- possibility of lifelong assistance by a personal guardian spirit.

Animals were such an important and integral part of Tlingit life that they were endowed with human characteristics (Inverarity, 1950, p. 29). A series of ritual practices to ensure the return of economically important species, such as the salmon, accompanied the beliefs about the immortality of such creatures. The concept of an individual guardian spirit who assisted one throughout life also was important in a Tlingit's concept of himself and the universe. Myths and legends became the basis for family crests. These grew out of adventures with the supernatural spirits, and were accepted as part of the beliefs of each lineage.

Religious belief played an important part in everyday life. In preparing for a fishing or hunting expedition, special rites and observances and an appeal to one's guardian spirit were as important as preparation of the actual gear. This also applied to preparations for a potlatch or a war party (Drucker, 1955, p. 151).

The Tlingit traditionally believed that there was a form of existence after death, and cremation was necessary for the soul of the dead to be comfortable in the spirit world (Niblack, 1970, p. 353). Shamen burials were the only ones to exclude cremation. Ancestors were not worshipped, but the dead were highly respected (Keithahn, 1963, p. 80). After death, as a sign of such respect, important lineage members were allowed to "lie in state," surrounded by all their most important possessions.

Totemism was involved as a feature of all religious observances. Technically, a totem is a "type or class of object symbolizing the owner's belief that his lineage was descended in blood line from a land, air, or sea creature of supernatural origin." (Wherry, 1964, p. 60) Totemism was, then, a form of heraldry, simply the serious practice of employing totems. From the native point of view, crests were the most important feature of the sib or lineage because these were acquired in the remote (mythical) past by their ancestors and determined the "nature and destiny of their descendants." (de Laguna, 1972, p. 462) Lineage members felt they were human embodiments of the totemic beings.

Crest objects were the display in material form of these same entities and represented the sib, its ancestors, and descendants. Besides a major crest, each clan had one or more emblems of lesser value. Certain symbols identified the phratry, others the clan, and still others the house group (Oberg, 1973, p. 44). "Ownership" of a particular crest gave one the right to symbolize it in a variety of ways (Barbeau, 1912, p. 87). These ranged from a house screen to a feast dish, or a blanket, and there were both traditional and specially composed songs that accompanied the public display of these objects. The right to the crest (to display it) required constant validation at the potlatch; without this the objects were worthless. The more often a crest object was exhibited, or a song was sung, the more precious it became (de Laguna, 1972, p. 457).

In the Raven phratry every clan may use the raven crest, which is given the highest symbolic form in the ceremonial hat. The raven hat of each local clan division is considered a separate entity, and if a clan division has more than one raven hat these are considered separate and unequal in value. (Oberg, 1973, p. 458)

The same followed for other crest objects; for example, there was only one true Coho Salmon Screen, Mt. St. Elias Blanket, Crane Canoe, etc. Old crest objects were replaced by new and called by the same name. These were not necessarily duplicates, only "symbolic equivalents." (de Laguna, 1972, p. 458)

Although moiety crests and some others were shared by several sibs, the most important factor was the different emphasis each group gave the common emblem (Oberg, 1973, p. 46).

Native Art

The art form prevalent along the Northwest Coast is unique and easily recognizable; as with the other areas of traditional Tlingit life, it is complicated as well. An overview of Tlingit art is presented here, but for in-depth study the reader is referred to Primitive Art by Franz Boas (1955), Art in the Life of the Northwest Coast Indians by Erna Gunther (1966), and Northwest Coast Indian Art by Bill Holm (1965).

The art of the Tlingit pervaded their culture. Art was represented in all aspects of daily life, on the prows of canoes, on the fronts of houses, on the posts supporting the houses, on the clothing worn, and on utensils used (Emmons, 1930, p. 289). Rank and social position were intimately related to art forms, the visual forms as well as music and dance (Boas, 1955, p. 280). It should be noted again that this strong and complex art system was already present at initial European contact.

We must always remember that the main canons of Northwest Coast art are common to all the northern Northwest Coast tribes, even though each tribe had its own artistic conventions and achievements. It is impossible to define these with accuracy because of the wide-spread exchange of decorated objects, the too-often inadequate information accompanying museum collections, and the fact that individual artists developed their own distinctive styles. (Holm, 1965, p. 20)

The characteristics of Northwest Coast art included the following elements. The first concern of the artist was that the object be useful, "design was subordinate to function." (Inverarity, 1950, p. 47) Animal symbols as representations of specific crests were used almost exclusively in all forms of art. The majority of animals used were present in the coastal ecology, but certain mythological creatures were also represented (Haberland, 1968, p. 61).

The Northwest Coast artists seldom reproduced an object in total realism, preferring to use it only as a starting point (Boas, 1955, p. 13). From highly abstract styles to those of considerable realism, the animals were depicted with specific and distinctive identifying marks (such as large teeth and a cross-hatched tail for a beaver), which were recognizable to those knowledgeable about the culture (Haberland, 1968, p. 59). Many of these characteristics were limited to the heads of the animals, and the bodies were not always necessary, or used, in designs (Gunther, 1966, p. 8).

Both two- and three-dimensional work was produced by the Northwest Coast artist. Several methods were employed to represent the essential features of a three-dimensional animal on a flat surface. One method was to split the animal from head to tail, and lay it out flat in both directions so it appeared like two profiles placed side by side (Boas,

1900, p. 13). A second method included leaving the head as seen in front view, with the body again split and spread as above. The third method was to emphasize certain areas of interest to the artist, and to minimize the features of less importance (Drucker, 1955, p. 182).

As objects to be decorated had different shapes, the artist had to be aware "of the total space and the effect on that space of any element he introduce[d] to it." (Holm, 1965, p. 17) Symmetry was important, and repetition of shapes was often used to produce a feeling of balance.

There is also a tendency to cover the entire surface with design elements, avoiding vacant places (Boas, 1955, p. 251). The unique eye-like elements used at joints and as space fillers, as well as in the actual eye area, are a distinguishing feature of Northwest Coast art. "They sometimes have no obvious meaning or relationship to the object portrayed other than a design value." (Inverarity, 1950, p. 45)

The colors used most frequently by the Indian artists were red, black, blue-green, and yellow, and their placement was also formalized (Holm, 1965, p. 92). The pigments were made from charcoal, fungus, moss, berries, and other naturally occurring compounds.

Drucker (1955, p. 186) notes that only certain men learned the principles of the art style, and applied them to painting and carving. These people were recognized as professionals, and acknowledged by having their services requested by others (Gunther, 1966, p. 13). The vast majority of artists were men. Women did the actual weaving of items such as Chilkat blankets, but followed patterns drawn by males.

Individual Tlingit artists added their own singular touches to their work. Boas (1900, p. 13) mentioned that the more clever a person was in being unique while still following all the necessary conventions, the more successful he was considered. At times the artist would "obscure his meaning in order to keep the significance of his design from profane eyes." (Boas, 1900, p. 14) Because of the variety of symbols represented on objects of art, and the numerous myths of the Indian groups, it is understandable that the meaning of such designs may be interpreted variously by different viewers.

Ceremonies at Contact

Niblack (1970, p. 238) described the Tlingit as "fond of parade and display" and "scrupulous observers" of ceremony and etiquette. The seasonal nature of their economy provided ample time for celebrations of various types. The three main categories of ceremonialism were feasts, peacemaking, and the potlatch (McClellan, 1954, p. 77).

Feasting was an automatic part of potlatches, marriages, and public gatherings of many kinds. A house-group or an individual was free to give a feast on any private occasion. "The most common occasions for feasting are those connected with success in hunting, fishing, and the return of a successful expedition." (Oberg, 1973, p. 96) Guests were usually the nearest relatives of a house group. Great quantities of food were consumed by the hosts and guests alike.

Peacemaking, or the "Deer" ceremony, was celebrated after the satisfactory settlement of a dispute involving bodily injury or death. These disputes were between opposite sibs and an agreement was most

often negotiated by a person acceptable to both sides (McClellan, 1954, p. 77).

The word "potlatch" is derived from the Nootka "patshatl" or "to give." (Grunfeld, 1969, p. 32) The institution itself has been described in many ways: a "stylish way of disposing of a lot of things in a hurry" (Grunfeld, 1969, p. 32); a cycle of rituals to mourn the death of a chief (Drucker, 1955, p. 133); "a time for pridefully recounting heritage, celebrating clan or tribal independence, of confirmation, introduction, of commencement upon new responsibilities, recognition and memorial day." (Wherry, 1964, p. 119)

Material wealth was important, but possession of certain intangibles was a fundamental part of Tlingit culture. Among these highly valued things were legends, songs, dances, and house and personal names (Olson, 1967, p. 38). Validating the right to use these prerogatives was secured through their display and the distribution of gifts at a potlatch. Since throughout the life cycle the services of one moiety were rendered during crisis times only to the opposite moiety, repayments generally took place at the potlatch. The primary purpose of a Tlingit potlatch was to honor the dead (Drucker, 1955, p. 134; de Laguna, 1972, p. 612).

The general procedure for giving a potlatch was as follows. A house leader proposed a potlatch for a specific purpose, and received permission from all other local house-groups of his clan. "While one house is actually the sponsor and takes the responsibilities involved, each house is supposed to contribute its share of the property given away." (Oberg, 1973, p. 40) A potlatch took four days (Oberg, 1973,

p. 122). The first day involved speeches by both hosts and guests, feasting, and dancing by the hosts. The second day the feasting continued and the visitors performed their clan dances. The next day began with an eating contest between both sides, and went on with "theatricals" and other contests. The last day was devoted to the presentation of gifts (Oberg, 1973, p. 123).

Before white contact the only major potlatch goods were slaves and coppers. (These were replaced by woolen blankets and other trade goods as these became available.) "These goods are never used for economic purposes and must be clearly distinguished, on the one hand from the economic goods in everyday use, and on the other, from the totemic crests and emblems to which they give value." (Oberg, 1973, p. 118) Chilkat blankets were always worn at potlatches, but were not considered potlatch goods unless they were cut in strips and distributed as a sign of disregard of great wealth. These pieces were greatly esteemed and were often incorporated as part of other articles of dress (Emmons, 1907, p. 345).

"Coppers," seemingly the most common term, were also called Tinnah (Oberg, 1973, p. 117) and Tows (Andrews, 1937, p. 12). These special ceremonial objects were shield-shaped and were divided into two sections by a narrow "waist." The upper section is rounded at the top and contains a painted or etched totemic design (Gunther, 1966, p. 111). The sizes varied from six feet tall to hand size (Oberg, 1973, p. 117) but the average seemed to be two or three feet in height (Lisiansky, 1968, p. 150). (See picture, Appendix G.) These were first made of placer copper from the Copper and Stikine Rivers (Jacobsen, 1977, p.

20). This copper was pounded into flat sheets by the Athapascans and traded to the Tlingit who then shaped and ornamented them (Keim, 1972, p. 2). (After contact with Indians many traders mentioned the Tlingit fondness for copper sheets in trade.)

The value of a copper was symbolic of what was given in exchange for it. Age did not make a difference, but native copper was more valuable than trade (Lisiansky, 1968, p. 150). If a copper was broken, again as a symbol of disregard of wealth, it was more valuable (Goldenweiser, 1921, p. 60). The copper was used only as evidence of wealth and greatness.

The important feature of the potlatch was that the richest presents were given to a man's wealthiest guests (Averkiewa, 1971, p. 335).

Native Clothing

Clothing worn by native Northwest Coast peoples before European contact was essentially made of two types of materials, animal skins and wood products. A third type of material was a rare textile (the Chilkat Blanket) made from a wood product and animal hair.

Of the skin garments used along the coast, the majority seemed to be untanned. James Cook (1784, p. 271) and Samwell (1967, p. 1100) mentioned garments of various skins in their native shape, while Gassner (1969, p. 39), Jewitt (1815, p. 21), and Meares (1791, p. 178) specifically referred only to sea-otter skin cloaks. Oberg (1973, p. 116) lists a tremendous variety of animals whose skins were sewn into blanket form, and Gunther (1966, p. 55) says that even "... squirrel skins were cut into oblongs that were sewed together to make a

sizeable blanket which could serve as a bed cover as well as wearing apparel."

Peoples living in this area of heavy rainfall did not find tanned skin garments too practical. They dried slowly and became very stiff. The most northern Tlingit, who lived adjacent to the Athapascans, more frequently adopted tanned skin garments from their neighbors who lived in a colder, drier climate where these were more effective.

Although less tanned leather was used by the coastal groups than by interior tribes, coastal peoples did possess knowledge of the tanning process. They produced "Metamelth," a tanned moose hide highly prized for war dress because of its thickness (Jewitt in McFeat, 1966, p. 13); it was also used as a decoration on fur cloaks (Swanton, 1905, p. 143) and as dance aprons and leggings (Siebert, 1967, p. 98). Nearly all coastal groups went about barefoot, but most had moccasins of tanned skin for long mountainous journeys (Anderson, 1965, p. 69). Many times a mixture of red ochre and grease was used to symbolically decorate these skin articles.

Garments woven of cedar bark represented the majority of Tlingit clothing. Explorers and traders took special note of this unique product. James Cook (1784, p. 271) remarked on a "... sort of clothing made of the bark of a tree, or some plant like hemp...." Most writers correctly identified the material source as cedar, but some felt it was straw, or from the pine tree. Samwell, a member of Cook's crew, compared this product to what he had seen previously. He stated that it was made "... in the same manner as New Zealand Ahoo." (Samwell, 1967, p. 1099) Cedar bark garments were often edged with fur (Gunther, 1966, p. 56).

An item of wearing apparel using another wood product was the cuirass, or war armor. Short flat rods of wood were joined by sewing with sinew or skin strips. This armor was worn suspended from straps over the shoulders, and fit closely around the body from under the arms to the upper thigh (Drucker, 1955, p. 97).

The most colorful and artistically unique garments present in Tlingit culture before white contact were the woven "Chilkat" blankets and dance shirts. They represent the third material type. Gunther (1972, p. 124) quotes one of the earliest visitors as saying "... people wore woolen mantles, white background beautifully patterned with fancy figures in green, yellow, red, black and dark brown...." These garments were so meaningful to the Tlingit that many traders found they would not part with them at any price. A tremendous amount of work was required to produce one of these textiles. Wool yarn was manufactured from the hair of the mountain goat, some of it dyed, and then this was twined around woolen warps with a core of cedarbark. An excellent source on the exact method of manufacture is the thesis by Mona Horn (1972).

Garments made of the above products were arrayed on the body in different manners. Among the Tlingit in the southern region, the costume of the men was "scanty," and on warm days consisted of no clothing whatever (Anderson, 1965, p. 54). Most of the time the single garment worn by all Tlingit men was the cedarbark cape. It reached below the knees and was worn either over the shoulders and back being tied at the neck, or as described by James Cook (1784, p. 304) "... under the left arm, and tied over the right shoulder, by a string before, and one

behind, near its middle; by which means both arms are left free."

Jewitt (1815, p. 105) mentions that these garments, called mantles, cloaks, or kutsacks, could be tied over either shoulder, and were often worn with a belt. The belt could be of various materials, but "is in general more highly ornamented, and serves them to wear their daggers and knives in." (Jewitt, 1815, p. 106)

Although Ledyard (1783, p. 72) said all clothing was "mantle like," and made no distinction between male and female dress, several other visitors described definite differences. Gunther (1972, p. 255) notes that women wore the man's cedarbark cape wrapped around the waist as a skirt, with a short waist-length cape of the same material. Meares (1791, p. 253) remarked that women's dress was "in the form of a shift, without sleeves, which falls to the ankle" [sic]; Jewitt (1815, p. 144) basically agreed but added that "... it has also loose sleeves, which reach to the elbows." A belt or girdle was also worn over this garment. For added protection in rainy weather, both male and female wore double-thickness cedarbark capes over their upper bodies. These sometimes had a front opening, but many were of a flaring, conical shape with only a circular opening for the head (Gunther, 1972, p. 255). Head coverings were also important during rain. "A rain hat, woven either of red cedarbark or of spruce root, and having the shape of a rather blunt, or truncated cone, with convex sides and inner fitted band, was usually worn by both men and women." (Anderson, 1965, p. 56)

As mentioned previously, the most northern Tlingit adopted some clothing from their Athapascan neighbors, which was more suited to colder weather. This clothing was generally more body conforming (Drucker, 1955, p. 81), and thus fit the body in a different manner.

Ornaments at Contact

Ornaments worn with the above clothing consisted chiefly of earrings, necklaces, bracelets, rings for fingers and ankles, and nose jewels. These ornaments were made of similar materials, and the following discussion is organized according to substances used.

Dried berries as ornaments were noted by two early visitors. Edward Bell (1915, p. 3) was with Vancouver and saw necklaces of black berries combined with shells. Dixon observed dried berries on skin dancing capes used to rattle against bird beaks (Gunther, 1972, p. 122).

Beads were also made of certain types of stone, although no specific mention was made as to how holes for stringing were accomplished. Obsidian (Birket-Smith, 1938, p. 59) and "beads of rock" (Davydov, 1977, p. 3) were probably the most ordinary. "Jet" beads were made of oil shale, and could be polished (de Laguna, 1936, p. 273). De Laguna (1960, p. 119) located beads of tan shale and white marble in Southeastern Alaska archeological sites. Farther north the people of Kodiak prized yellow amber above all other stones for personal decoration (Davydov, 1977, p. 149).

Various parts of animals and birds were used for personal ornamentation as well. Small bird bones were cut and worn as beads (de Laguna, 1960, p. 119). Teeth of the beaver and seal were also used for beads (Birket-Smith, 1938, p. 62). Porcupine quills were used for a type of embroidery.

Puffin beaks traded from the north were used to ornament skin capes and shirts (Gassner, 1969, p. 39). Besides their aesthetic

appearance, when attached to the ends of fringe, they made distinctive sounds while dancing. Deer hoofs and dew claws were also used for the same purpose.

James Cook (1784, p. 305) described bracelets that included a "broad black shining horny substance." He may have been describing baleen, which could easily have been traded from the Nootkans who were whalers.

Shells of many types were easily available to the Tlingit, but the two that were most scarce (abalone and dentalium), were the most highly prized for decoration. Holm (1975, item #61) and Leechman (1942, p. 161) concur that abalone was used by the Tlingit for buttons, earrings, and inlay on carved objects because of its iridescent inner surface. It was generally cut in rectangles for clothing decoration. The pre-contact worth of abalone to the Indians was described by Jones (1914, p. 70) as the same as "diamonds are to the white people." There is some disagreement as to the actual type of abalone used before contact, but one type that has silvery white iridescence grows off the coast of British Columbia (Leechman, 1942, p. 161).

Dentalium was also used in bracelets and earrings as well as in decorations for hair braids during festivals (Birket-Smith, 1938, p. 60). These were some of the most valued objects in society (Niblack, 1970, p. 266), and were occasionally used in trade as "money." (Jewitt, 1815, p. 115) Dentalium indianorum is approximately three inches long and is sometimes called a tooth-shell because it is slightly curved, hollow, and gradually tapers to a point (Birket-Smith, 1938, p. 395). The worm bearing this shell grows mainly off Vancouver and Queen

Charlotte Islands, and harvesting them was very time consuming.

Nootkans called these shells Ife-waw, and Jewitt (1815, p. 116) describes the "fishing" of them as follows:

To one end of a pole is fastened a piece of plank, in which a considerable number of pine pegs are inserted, made sharp at the ends; above the plank, in order to sink it, a stone or some weight is tied, and the other end of the pole suspended to a long rope; this is let down perpendicularly by the Ife-waw fishers in those places where that substance is found, which are usually from fifty to sixty fathoms deep. On finding the bottom, they raise the pole up a few feet and let it fall; this they repeat a number of times, as if sounding, when they draw it up and take off the Ife-waw which is found adhering to the points ... they seldom take more than two or three of these shells at a time, and frequently none.

Davydov (1977, p. 2) claims they were harvested by lowering the body of a dead slave into the water for a long enough period of time to allow the worms to adhere there to begin growing.

Clams and other common shells such as operculum were used in general clothing decoration, and as buttons (Heizer, 1940, p. 399). Gray (1857, p. 81) and Davydov (1977, p. 149) both mention the use of "pearls" in clothing decoration, but a more exact description is unavailable.

Coral was employed in earrings, nose ornaments, and other general ornamentation (Davydov, 1977, p. 149). This was probably harvested by accident in the course of deep-sea fishing.

Bits of native copper were worn as nose rings as well as for other personal ornamentation (Samwell, 1967, p. 1099). Bent into tubular shapes, copper was used as "tinklers" on aprons and capes (Bell, 1915, p. 22).

Construction Tools and Techniques Related to Clothing

Even though most Tlingit wore loose garments at contact, many explorers remarked that clothing was well made and contained fine stitching. What was the level of technology that permitted rapid production of the Button Blanket upon the introduction of trade goods?

Traditional sewing equipment used by the Northwest Coast Indians included an awl for punching holes in the skin garments. Many types of skin were prepared by beating or chewing the edges to soften them, facilitating use of the awl (Birket-Smith, 1938, p. 96). The sinews of animals were drawn back and forth through these resulting holes, and acted as thread (Anderson, 1965, p. 48).

Bone was seemingly the universal material for making an awl, and various sizes were used. De Laguna found evidence of awls of unsplit bird bone and polished bone (1960, p. 118). Chisels made of beaver incisors were also used for cutting holes or slots (de Laguna, 1960, p. 118).

Needles were also made of bone, some with eyes, and some without. Archeological evidence of pre-contact eyeless needles was found by both de Laguna (1956, p. 187) and Ackerman (1968, p. 65). "Instead of an eye for the thread, an encircling groove was made around the proximal end of the needle." (Ackerman, 1968, p. 65)

Needles with eyes were also present before white contact. Birket-Smith (1938, p. 425) states that eyed needles were found in pre-Columbian sites in British Columbia, and de Laguna (1956, p. 187) found them in Prince William Sound archeological sites. Eyed needles were

generally of bone, but de Laguna (1956, p. 187) was told that "ordinary" sewing was done with needles of native copper. Eyes were formed with a hand drill (Lisiansky, 1968, p. 207) or by making fine slits with a knife.

In 1745, Russians introduced the European sewing needle, along with thimbles, to the Kodiak people (Bancroft, 1959, p. 104). The existing trade routes rapidly diffused them along the Alaskan coast.

Gunther (1972) states that thread was made of split spruce root, but most other authors referred to various types of sinew. Sinew thread could be prepared by the Tlingit, but Birket-Smith (1938, p. 424) and Oberg (1973, p. 108) found that most of it was acquired through trade with the Athapascans. Animals used as sources for sinew included caribou, moose, mountain goat, whale, porpoise, and porcupine.

Sinew was removed from the animal by twisting it onto a stick. It was then washed, dried, straightened, and split. Two or three strands were twisted together "between the fingers and on the thigh" before use in sewing (de Laguna, 1972, p. 426).

Many authors discuss the fact that iron was already present in Tlingit society at first contact, although in very small quantity. Iron was extremely important since it improved the quality and length of life in cutting-type tools. When the Russians first landed in Western Alaska in 1741 they found iron, and they also discovered it was already highly prized as a trade item. The exact source of this pre-contact iron is not known. Drucker (1955, p. 201) notes iron in a St. Lawrence Island site dating 1000 AD, and speculates that it was traded along the coast to the south. He also mentions the popular

theory that pieces of shipwrecked vessels washed up on the coast and provided a non-trade source.

By the time Perez, LaPerouse, Cook, and Vancouver arrived in Southeastern Alaska they found many hatchets and knives among the Tlingit, and assumed that this substantiated evidence of trading with the Russians (Bancroft, 1959, p. 258). In any case, the demand for iron items which could be fashioned into sharp cutting tools was fulfilled and caused a great change in the tools available for the manufacture of clothing and accessories (Cook, 1973, p. 94).

The making of certain decorative items to attach to clothing, as well as preparation of the base materials, required specialized technology.

Various types of hides were tanned for clothing. Jewitt (1815, p. 13) describes the process as "dressing it in warm water, scraping off the hair and what flesh adheres to it carefully with sharp musselshells, and spreading it out in the sun to dry, on a wooden frame, so as to preserve the shape." Hides were decorated with basically the same paints used on their persons. These were prepared with ochre and grease (McFeat, 1966, p. 78).

It was the inner bark of the cedar tree, or that which lay between the outer bark and the wood itself, that was used for the ordinary native dress (Anderson, 1965, p. 48). This was separated out, soaked, and beaten with a special wooden implement until it separated into fine strands. These were then twined in the same manner as for the Chilkat blanket (Gunther, 1972, p. 77).

A high level of skill was necessary in making the garments known

as Chilkat blankets. Wool was gathered from mountain goats, made into yarn, and some of it was dyed. The warp was made by preparing cedar bark for the core, and twisting the woolen yarns around it. These were then hung from a simple loom of two uprights and a crossbar. Technique was of utmost importance when weaving the distinctive designs from the pattern boards drawn by men (Cook, 1784, p. 325).

Tools used for accessory production before contact included those for cutting and drilling shell for buttons and beads (Glubok, 1975, p. 30). The Tlingit also had measuring sticks for making wood boxes (Drucker, 1955, p. 77), so it is logical that they used similar sticks for garment construction. Wooden ornaments were worn, and these were shaped with an adze (Gunther, 1972, p. 51).

The tools available for garment and accessory construction were few in number, but the technological use of these tools was so precise that products were of consistently high quality.

The Period of Contact

The time when explorers and traders entered the coastal area of Alaska is referred to as the period of contact. As early as 1582 the Spaniard, Francisco Gali, spotted the Northwest Coast, near present-day Sitka, but apparently had no contact with the people (Oswalt, 1973, p. 351). The first Europeans to really see the coast, and note the presence of civilization there, were the Russian crew of Vitus Bering in 1741. In 1774 Juan Perez, another Spaniard, briefly contacted natives in the Nootka Sound area (Drucker, 1955, p. 28). The following year Juan de la Bodega landed near Sitka, but his stay was short due to Indian hostilities.

"The first really important European contact occurred in 1778 on Captain James Cook's third voyage of exploration." (Drucker, 1955, p. 28) In Nootka Sound Cook obtained sea otter skins from the Indians by trade. LaPerouse followed in 1786 and set up a small camp in Lituya Bay.

The very earliest contacts had little effect on the Indian way of life, but things were rapidly altered. On Bering's return voyage he was shipwrecked and forced to winter on an island off Kamchatka. Bering died, but members of his crew eventually returned to Russia, bringing sea mammal pelts with them (Oswalt, 1955, p. 351). This "discovery" led to quickly organized hunting expeditions to the Aleutian Islands. Trading with the Aleuts became an important facet in procuring furs for the eager Russian market (Bancroft, 1959, p. 88).

Upon reaching China, Cook's crew found the sea otter pelts they had obtained were highly prized there; the Chinese offered tremendous prices for them (Drucker, 1955, p. 28). When this news reached England, and later America, trading companies were formed and many adventurers set out to make their fortunes.

Before any land-based companies were established, many traders made the long journey to the Northwest Coast only once. Often they cared little about relations with the Indians, intending to get the furs they desired by any means possible. Occasionally the Indians retaliated for an act of robbery or injustice by attacking the next trading vessel to appear "... for in their view all white men were of one tribe." (Drucker, 1955, p. 31)

Relations improved with the establishment of trading posts by

Europeans. In 1793 the first Russian settlement was founded on Hinchinbrook Island. Until 1799, when the Russian American Co. was granted a monopoly, there was intense competition between trading companies (de Laguna, 1956, p. 10). This rivalry caused the Europeans to be somewhat more judicious in their treatment of the Indians, because they wanted to be assured of return trade. The Russians traded mainly on the northern Northwest Coast while the southern area was dominated by the Spanish and the English. Competition between these two countries in the Nootka Sound area created an awkward situation which nearly resulted in a European war (Anderson, 1965, p. 35). The Indians were known to try to use the tension to their trade advantage.

Fort Archangel was established in 1799 at Sitka, and in 1821 the Hudson's Bay and the Northwest companies merged and began building a string of trading posts up to Portland Canal, the southernmost Russian boundary (Drucker, 1955, p. 32).

As mentioned above, the Indians bartered extensively among themselves long before the Europeans arrived. Many captains, including James Cook (1784, p. 271) and Meares (1791, p. 228), noted with some surprise that the Indians were shrewd traders. Due to their cultural belief in strong territorial rights, Indians could not trade directly with a ship in another clan's district. They were observed trading with each other around the ships, and after exhausting the immediate supply of skins would disappear for a few days, to return with a fresh supply (Cook, 1784, p. 228).

Inverarity (1950, p. 21) stated that an estimated 48,500 skins were taken from the Northwest Coast during 1799-1802. Americans and the

English had begun trading in firearms in 1792, ostensibly to increase the yield in furs (Cook, 1973, p. 341). This tremendous hunting pressure diminished the sea-otter population, and drove up the price on those skins (Bancroft, 1959, p. 563). Trade in land-animal furs was built up as a consequence, with the mainland Tlingit monopolizing the role of middlemen between the whites and the actual suppliers of the furs, the Athapascans (McClellan, 1965, p. 5).

The character of the goods available for trade was determined by the European economy. Trading goods available did not set the actual price paid for furs, only the minimum which would produce a profit for the traders (Wike, 1958, p. 1090). The faddism in what was acceptable to the Indians caused consternation among the traders. What was the priority trade item on one trip could be completely unacceptable on the next. "Europeans were half-way around the world with cargos of trade goods which could not be stored or taken home." (Wike, 1958, p. 1091) Because of competition between countries, as well as individual traders, the Indians eventually forced the exchange rates up.

Exchange of ideas and technology, as well as goods, took place from the very first contacts of the Europeans with the Northwest Coast Indians. The process of acculturation took place at a variable pace.

Some seldom considered facts in Tlingit acculturation should also be examined. George Quimby (1948, p. 253) studied the cultural mix of the crews on the trading vessels and found substantial numbers of Chinese, Hawaiians, Negroes, and natives of the Philippines. Japanese were also present on the Northwest Coast. The many European nationalities present also added to the very mixed cultural impact on the Tlingit.

Marius Barbeau (1958, p. 101) mentions that Jacob Astor, as well as other traders, would use native crews of Haida and probably Tlingit, because they were far superior to the Europeans in the hunting of seal. Some natives, such as the Nootkan Comekela, actually lived in Hawaii and/or China for a time before returning to their own villages (Meares, 1791, p. 174). By living with them on a daily basis these natives certainly received a different view of Europeans and Asians from those who merely traded with them. Also, by constant observation and use they must have been able to learn the actual workings of complicated tools new to them.

In 1840 the Russian American Co. and the Hudson's Bay Co. reached agreement allowing the English to expand trade north from Portland Canal up to Cape Spencer (Ackerman, 1968, p. 13). Thirty-six trading stations were established by the Hudson's Bay Co. in this area by 1849. Until the purchase of Alaska by the United States in 1867, the Hudson's Bay Co. was a major force in the fur trade, and thus in acculturation.

The official Hudson's Bay Co. policy was minimum interference with the natives and their cultures (Drucker, 1955, p. 33). The employees observed and recorded Indian life but did not attempt to change it (Murray, 1961, p. 26). The only authority the company directors allowed the trading post managers to exercise was to protect

... anyone on his way to trade, while he was inside the walls of the trading posts, and while he was on his return journey from a trading expedition. It punished crimes of theft, violence, or murder against any white man, even its own enemies. Otherwise, it left the Indian to his own devices. (Murray, 1961, p. 25)

Trade Goods Used for Clothing and Personal Adornment

With initial white contact on the Northwest Coast, the natives there were exposed to objects that were not a previous part of their culture. Many of these items were accepted by the natives and used for personal adornment. There was a multitude of types of beads used in trade along the Northwest Coast. The acceptance of beads varied according to what other items the traders had available, but a few years after the fur trade began, beads were seen being used over the entire area.

There is scattered evidence of trade-type (non-native manufacture) beads being present in this area before white contact. Both Bering and Cook found trade beads at their first contact (Bancroft, 1959, p. 84). De Laguna (1947, p. 11) and Ackerman (1968, p. 32) found beads in archaeological digs pre-dating contact.

Most of the earliest traders had beads as part of their goods. These were given away when Indians were first met in person, and many times were left as tokens of friendship in villages that had hastily emptied upon a ship's arrival.

The types and origins of beads used in the fur trade were many and varied, but unfortunately, poorly documented. Russian trade beads had a high value because they were exceptionally large and clear (Keim, 1972, p. 2). Chinese beads were well accepted because of the characters that were painted on them (DeArmond, 1978, p. 70). The Hudson's Bay Co. traded many different types of beads, among them were: the "Cornaline d' Aleppo" bead which was irregular and barrel shaped and varied from white to pink (Ackerman, 1968, p. 94), some Mandrel wound

beads in purple and blue, tubular beads in greens and blues, and one faceted type that was purple over a light blue core (Ackerman, 1968, p. 32).

Journal writers noticed trade beads worn as earrings, in necklaces and bracelets, and as nose ornaments (Davydov, 1977, p. 149). The larger trade beads were seen on garments as substitutes for native beads of bone and shell; they were especially effective on dance aprons in the fringe (Gunther, 1966, p. 205). Later they were an important part of crest blankets in some areas. One of the most unusual uses of trade beads was noticed in Aleut territory, where transparent blue beads were sought to decorate dogs (Gunther, 1972, p. 198). Meares (1791, p. 183) used beads to pay native workers for building housing for his crew in 1788, but this practice did not seem to spread.

"Buttons" for decorations were an established part of Northwest Coast culture before the period of contact. The bright yellow metal uniform buttons on the first white to arrive so impressed the natives that they were specifically mentioned in the folk stories told about sighting the first ships (Bancroft, 1959, p. 145). The eagerness of the natives to acquire the metal buttons is mentioned by nearly every journal writer. Captains found themselves and their crew without all buttons except those absolutely necessary. The Indians took metal buttons from any source, and when they could not get as many as they needed, they fashioned their own from sheet brass (Ackerman, 1968, p. 33).

The unexpected popularity of buttons caused traders from many nations to bring a large variety of types and sizes of them on

subsequent voyages. When traders introduced mother-of-pearl buttons, already perfectly formed and drilled, the Indians became extremely fond of them. Here was an object much like what they were already using, but the time-consuming task of making them was no longer necessary. These buttons were especially effective in catching and reflecting light from fires, and they must have been striking on garments worn at evening ceremonials (Denver Art Museum, 1962).

Buttons were measured by "lines." One line equals 1/40 of an inch or 0.635 mm, according to Webster. The size of buttons most easily available varied from 8 to 50 lines. There were two and four hole types, and they were sold to the traders by the gross.

The actual sources of buttons are obscure. Many journal writers referred to large Russian buttons on garments, the Hudson's Bay Co. ordered their trade buttons from England, and American traders could get them from United States suppliers.

In 1871 the Hudson's Bay Co. ordered 300 gross mother-of-pearl shirt buttons, 40 gross vest (20 lines) mother-of-pearl buttons and 12 gross "samples," which were to be shipped to Vancouver Island (Hudson's Bay Co. Archives).

For pearl buttons in America, Philadelphia was the leader in manufacturing. The pearl used in the making of buttons there came from East India and China, as well as Panama and the Gulf of Mexico. They made "superior" buttons that were "... not unfrequently sold ... as imported French or English." (Freedley, 1859, p. 404) It is probable that some of these buttons entered the Northwest Coast trade.

Buttons were used in various ways by the natives. Generally the metal ones were used as jewelry, and then as clothing decoration somewhat in imitation of the Europeans. Buttons on ceremonial clothing were primarily mother-of-pearl.

Other less-known items introduced by the traders appealed to the natives. Some of these were in great demand for short periods of time. Coins of all types were exhibited as bodily decoration, but they were not used as currency. In 1778 Samwell (1967, p. 1096) mentioned the delight of Nootkans with copper half-pence. Spanish, Russian, and American coins were all drilled in some manner, then tied to native garments such as capes, blankets, and dance aprons; they were also used in many forms of jewelry (Gormly, 1971, p. 161). Chinese coins, with their square holes in the center, were particularly popular (DeArmond, 1978, p. 70).

Hawk's bells were very small spheres with a free pellet in each. (Europeans often used bells of this type to attach to hawk's legs during training.) Northwest Coast Indians thought them an excellent substitute for puffin beaks on dance aprons. Jewitt (1815, p. 39) described a mantle of cloth with many of these attached; its wearer was greatly admired by other natives.

Thimbles were originally brought as trade items to be used for sewing. The coastal natives adapted them as "tinklers" for their ceremonial gear instead (Gunther, 1972, p. 51).

When Perez first came to Nootka in 1774 he traded items including shells from Monterey. Other traders in the early 1790s also mention using shells for barter (Heizer, 1940, p. 399). The Northwest Coast

people must have been familiar with abalone shells and their use before the Spanish traders arrived, because they seemed to know exactly what they were when they were first offered to them (Leechman, 1942, p. 161). The natives even suggested that "... the meat be not extracted by heating the shells, as this process damages the enamel, but that it should be done with a knife." (Heizer, 1940, p. 401) Abalone from the California area have thicker shells and a greater depth of green iridescence than those that grow off British Columbia.

Pieces of these shells were used for inlay in carving, as ornaments for earrings and necklaces, and as "buttons" on ceremonial clothing (Jones, 1914, p. 70).

When Europeans first arrived on the Northwest Coast the natives there showed very little interest in cloth or blankets. Cook (1874, p. 271) stated that "... cloth of every sort they rejected." Later, as the natives traded away their fur mantles they were given blankets to cover their nakedness. Because blankets required no preparation before their wearing as capes, they began to replace ones of native manufacture (Codere, 1950, p. 95). The acceptance of blankets and cloth increased with their ready availability during the expansion of the coastal fur trade.

There is no conclusive evidence as to who traded the very first blanket or piece of cloth along the Northwest Coast. Some of the earliest references include Bering's leaving cloth on Kayak Island in 1741 (de Laguna, 1972, p. 108), Russians giving away cloth in 1745, Indians in Bucarelli Bay in 1775 trading fish for blankets (Gormly, 1971, p. 166), Meares (1791, p. 181) giving Nootkans blankets and cloth

as gifts, and Vancouver giving cloth and blankets away in 1792 (Newcombe, 1923, p. 118).

There are several types of cloth used in trading, the most common being stroud and duffle. Fur company orders occasionally included wool flannel in red and other colors, but most wool trade cloth was stroud or similar heavy wool cloth with a distinctive "list" or selvage. The common "saved list" was a white selvage, averaging about 1 1/4 inches wide, left in dyeing the cloth. This cloth was about 54 inches wide and ordered in pieces 20 yards long (American Fur Company Papers). (An American Fur Company order for English cloth in 1841 is included in Appendix A.)

Duffle was a coarse wool cloth with a thick nap, usually made six or seven quarters wide (a quarter being nine inches). It was sold in pieces of 40 yards (Plummer, 1934, p. 100). Another measure used in the selling of cloth was an "ell" (Miller, 1967, p. 150). Webster defines an ell as "an English unit of length chiefly for cloth equal to 45 inches."

One reference to felted cloth was made in Rich (1941, p. 164). The fabric, made by the House of Henry and Co. of Leeds, England, was of insufficient quality, so McLoughlin cancelled the order.

Red and dark blue proved to be the most popular colors in woolen trade cloth on the Northwest Coast (Gunther, 1966, p. 82). Later in the fur trade calico was introduced, but was not as popular.

The origin of trade cloth is elusive. It is assumed that the countries of origin of the trading expeditions supplied the necessary cloth. Warren Cook (1973, p. 391) mentioned that the Spanish had some

of their textiles made in Mexico, and the Americans did order woven goods from England, as mentioned above. The Tlingit were able to buy red woolen cloth from the Russian American Co. in 1836, but the Russian source is uncertain (Tikhomenev, 1978, p. 431).

The Tlingit used trade cloth in various ways, but mostly as mantles, ceremonial dance shirts, and as trim for Button Blankets.

Although fashions changed, the most popular colors in trade blankets were blue and white. There were several colors available, but when traders took on supplies for a voyage "... quantities of the colored blankets were always much less than the white ones." (Hanson, 1976, p. 7)

The European value of trade blankets fluctuated with the trader and the trading location. Boas (1966, p. 78) noted one blanket's worth as 50 cents along the southern coast, and Niblack quoted \$1.50 for each in Tlingit territory. As the fur trade went into its decline, more blankets were needed to purchase each skin. By 1882 Wood (1882, p. 333) set the value of a single blanket at \$4.00.

Before 1850 most blankets were made by individuals on home looms, and each weaver put a distinctive mark ("point") on his product to show size and weight. "These 'points' were in coloured wools and usually about one inch long." (MacKay, 1935, p. 47) When traders began to require quantities of blankets, they contracted out their weaving and the Hudson's Bay Co. started what later became the standard point system. Short dark lines about 4.5 inches long woven near one corner of a blanket "... were originally intended to signify the price in 'made beaver,' a price unit representing one good full-size beaver skin."

(Hanson, 1976, p. 5) The quality of all blankets made under one contract was generally the same, so the point marks also denoted size and weight, the purpose they serve today.

Blankets available to traders varied considerably in actual dimensions (Hanson, 1976, p. 6). Although weavers were limited by the size of their home looms as far as width, almost any length could be produced. Competitors of the Hudson's Bay Co. adopted their own versions of the point system. Contract specifications were not coordinated, except by individual companies, and the resulting jumble of trade blanket sizes must have been confusing indeed for all those involved with them. The Indians along the Northwest Coast dealt directly with the ships and land-based traders of many nations, and a complete list of sources for the blankets they received in trade would be impossible to construct. English blankets traded by the Hudson's Bay Co. were clearly the most numerous in this area (Bancroft, 1959, p. 635), but American-made blankets were present as well.

The Indians preferred the large and heavy blankets supplied by the English. Because of the extensive trade network of the Hudson's Bay Co., their blankets were widely known, and because of their quality, they were later used as currency (Niblack, 1970, p. 334).

Before 1689 the Hudson's Bay Co. had not really shipped quantities of blankets for trade, and had not begun the "point" system or the distinctive colored stripes. They had not settled on one manufacturer, but most were made by John Rasen or Raysen of Whitney (Rich, 1958, p. 255). The earliest recorded transaction regarding point blankets is in 1779 (MacKay, 1935, p. 47). These were made by Thomas Empson of Witney,

England, and they have since been manufactured there continuously. Leeds and Manchester were also important weaving centers for point blankets (Hanson, 1976, p. 8).

The softness, warmth, and strength of the point blankets were the result of standardized procedure. Blankets were made of long staple wool that was fiber-dyed and twill-woven, and finished blankets were milled to prevent shrinkage (MacKay, 1935, p. 45). Point blankets were made and sold in pairs. They could be separated by making an initial small cut and tearing the two pieces apart. The edges of these blankets were not bound or sewn in any way (Hanson, 1976, p. 8). The relationship of the nap of the blanket surface to the position of points has changed. Around 1810 it was suggested that the points be in the "proper corner" of the blanket. To determine this one should "... take the blanket by the borders, hold it up with the points up and down - if the points are on the left hand side they are properly placed - it is very material that the wool be dressed downward with the points, which are worn next to the ground, the borders up and down, to shed rain the better." (Hanson, 1976, p. 9) Today the corner where points are placed varies with the manufacturer.

All blankets made for the Hudson's Bay Co. were to be the same thickness, so difference in weight was due to difference in size only. Plate 3 shows the sizes of point blankets made by the Hudson's Bay Co.

The consistent quality of the Hudson's Bay point blanket was important to the company, but some of their own traders desired goods which would give them a higher profit margin. Governor Simpson wrote to the Committee in London in 1884 that he felt the Indians would be happy

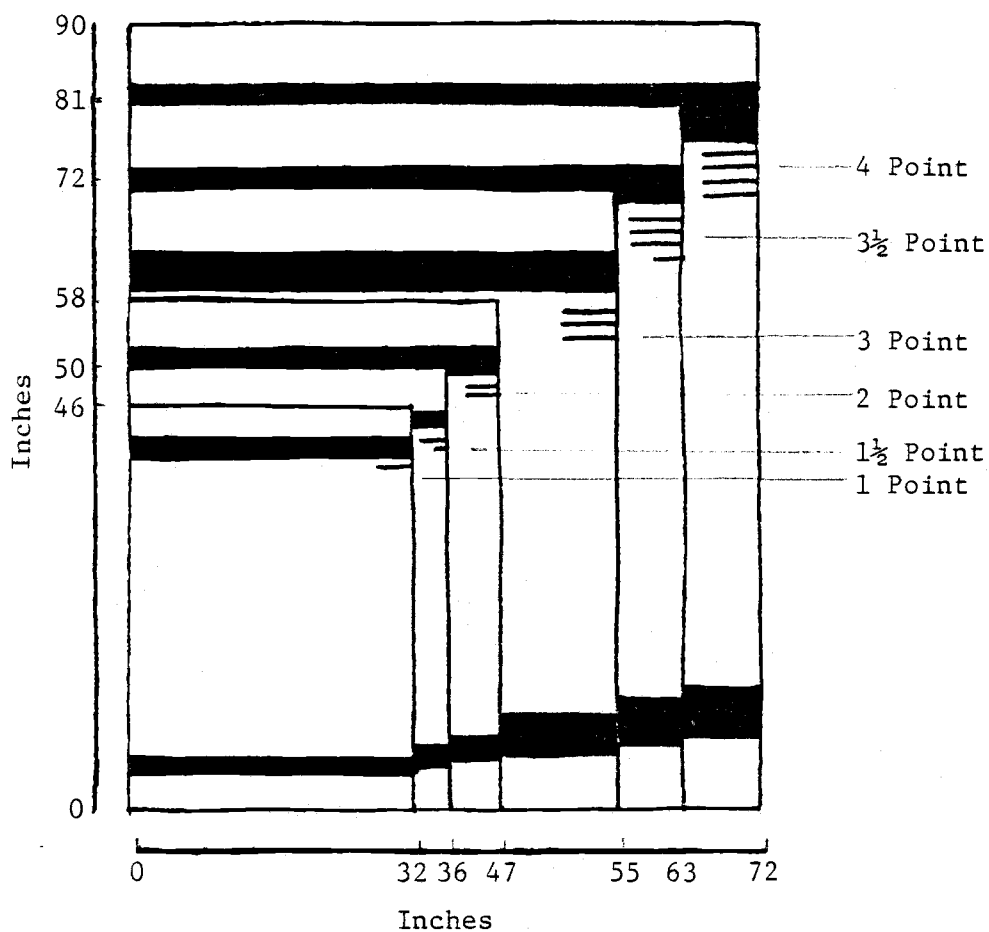


Plate 3. Sizes of Hudson's Bay Co. point blankets. Adapted from MacKay (1935).

"with an article up to 20% lighter" (Rich, 1959, p. 490), but he was concerned that the quality remain high. Later, he requested a sample shipment of inferior blankets to be traded at a reduced price because prices had risen so much. John McLoughlin, who managed trading on the Northwest Coast from Fort Vancouver, wrote in reply to this suggestion,

... I beg to recommend, that no reduction be allowed in the quality of our Goods, as these Indians prefer to give a higher price for a good article, than to purchase an Inferior, at a cheaper rate.... (Rich, 1941, p. 212)

McLoughlin did send London samples of American blankets which were more "gaudy" in color, and requested that he be sent some good quality blankets "fully equal" because the Indians preferred those colors (Rich, 1941, p. 172).

An 1871 order for trade goods for Vancouver Island from the Hudson's Bay Co. included a great variety of point blankets. This order is included in Appendix B. With ships traveling around the Horn to carry both mailed orders and the goods themselves, it took a long time for blankets ordered from England to arrive on the west coast of the United States. American traders wanted cheaper goods than those imported, and settlers along the Pacific coast created a new demand for basic goods such as blankets. These factors encouraged the growth of an American blanket industry.

New England manufacturers tried very hard to make suitable woolen blankets, but it was difficult for them to equal the quality of British products. The American Fur Co. apparently felt John Mesmeth of Lowell, Massachusetts made an acceptable product, for they ordered a total of 1,550 pairs of white trade blankets for one delivery in 1840. The most

common size in this order was 52 x 66 inches (American Fur Company Papers, Nov. 5, 1840).

John W. Mansur, Lowell, Massachusetts wrote the American Fur Co. in New York February 8, 1842 that he had available 1,700 pairs of 3-point blankets of varying qualities from 8 to 8 1/2 pounds per pair, all 60 x 72 inches, at prices from \$5.31 1/4 to \$5.66 2/3 per pair. He also had 125 pairs of 2 1/2-point blankets, weighing 6 1/2 pounds, at \$4.55.

... [W]e think of arranging to put a part of another mill on blankets in a few weeks and are desirous of ascertaining what stock we shall have on hand before determining to increase our work. Our goods for the government are coming off very well & I have no doubt will prove satisfactory this time.
(American Fur Company Papers)

The Mission Woolen Mills near the old Mission Dolores in San Francisco, California was in business before 1868. A visitor to those mills remarked, "At the Mission Mills I examined finer, softer, heavier woolen blankets than I ever saw elsewhere." (Richardson, 1869, p. 451) He also specifically stated they were superior to those made on the Atlantic coast.

A contract between the Mission Woolen Mills and the Superintendent of Indian Affairs for California in 1869 calls for 1,200 pairs of blankets of good quality weighing "not less than six pounds to the pair," with a short bar as a "private mark." The size ordered was 54 x 78 inches (National Archives Contract, 1869).

In 1895 a blanket weaving mill was brought into operation in Pendleton, Oregon. They produced brightly colored blankets of good quality. After Jacquard equipment was added in 1900, they hired a designer who studied the Indians' preference in color and design in

order to develop a product "specifically suited to Indian tastes."

(Pendleton Woolen Mills, 1971, p. 32)

Episcopal missionary William Duncan founded an Indian settlement at Metlakatla, Alaska. Among the buildings erected there was a "mill" where they wove blankets and common flannel on a machine obtained from the Mission Mills in San Francisco. This mill supplied some blankets for a U.S. Indian Bureau contract (Morris, 1879, p. 72).

The varying sources for trade blankets was further confused by the fact that many traders used more than one supplier. McLoughlin noted that American traders were using goods procured from the same manufacturers as those of the Hudson's Bay Co. (Rich, 1941, p. 187). A typical order of English blankets from the American Fur Co. is in Appendix C. The Russians also had both English and American blankets in their trading posts in Alaska (Khlebnikov, 1976, p. 72).

When the United States purchased Alaska in 1867, stringent duties were imposed on blankets of English manufacture if they were used in trade. As means of enforcing these laws were insufficient, a good deal of smuggling of blankets took place. Much of this was done by small traders in the more remote trading posts. A statement by James G. Swan further expands this.

The mistaken policy of the military at Sitka, and the stringent regulations the government lays on the traders, drives all this lucrative trade in the hands of the Hudson Bay Company, and the blankets they receive in exchange for their furs are smuggled into Alaska without the faintest hope of the customs officers at Tongass being able to prevent it. (Morris, 1879, p. 145)

The Tlingit used the blankets they received in trade for two main purposes, as wearing apparel and as a purely economic commodity. There is a dispute as to whether the Indians' use of woolen blankets for wearing apparel was good for them. Smith (1940, p. 309) says the new textiles were unsuitable for a people living mostly outdoors in a moist climate. Cedarbark clothing had allowed the rain to follow each strand and then drip to the ground leaving the wearer almost dry. The new textiles "clung sodden and cold to the backs" of the natives. On the other hand, traders pointed out that napped blankets and duffle shed rain fairly well, were warmer than cedarbark, and dried in their original condition, as opposed to leather goods which stiffened and cracked after getting wet (Hanson, 1976, p. 9).

By 1869 Northwest Coast Indians were measuring their fortunes in blankets rather than the goods used prior to contact (Bancroft, 1959, p. 635). Tlingit were known to substitute blankets for their previous form of currency, dentalium (Krause, 1956, p. 42).

Later, wages were paid in blankets rather than money by some businesses. Blankets for potlatching and use as "currency" were kept in boxes and stacked in the sleeping areas of the communal houses (Jacobsen, 1977, p. 10). Blankets used in potlatching as a unit of value were cheap white woolen ones from various sources. Boas (1895, p. 319) noted that they had a single dark bar at each end. An 1871 order for the Western Department Outfit of the Hudson's Bay Co. shows 2,000 pairs of "Common White Blankets" of 2 1/2 points in addition to much lesser quantities of other blankets (Hudson's Bay Co., PAC Reel No. 380). These blankets were piled in certain orders at potlatches,

with those for the chiefs on the top (Blackman, 1973, p. 5). The Chilkats were considered the richest of the Tlingit because there were two entire houses full of blankets in one of their villages (Gerrish, 1887, p. 371).

Ceremonial Garments in Flux

"The art and sophisticated taste of the Tlingit are shown in their ceremonial garb with its decoration and ornament more than in their ordinary clothing." (Krause, 1956, p. 139) Because ceremonial clothing was a visual display of wealth and social position, it was more susceptible to the pressures and changes instituted by white contact. Such a great variety of new goods was available to the artist that talents could be expressed more creatively than in the past. Trade goods appeared in an irregular pattern along the coast, and an initial period of confusion and over-ornamentation resulted. After a short time, the Tlingit began trading for specific goods for their ceremonial garb (Gunther, 1966, p. 73). A certain amount of standardization occurred, and efforts were then concentrated on ingenuity and excellence within the new forms.

The majority of pre-contact ceremonial garments have been discussed above. Included in a house-leader's chest for special occasions could have been a painted, tanned skin robe, a fur robe with skin borders, a cape of skin "trimmed with sea otter and dentalium" (de Laguna, 1972, p. 464), a Chilkat blanket and dance shirt, and skin dance apron, and leggings of tanned skin or Chilkat-type weaving. These items were trimmed in various ways with quill embroidery, dried berries, puffin

beaks, dew claws of deer, beads of small bird bones and animal teeth, dentalium, and pieces of abalone shell. The garments would be highlighted upon ceremonial wearing by various masks, headdresses, and rattles.

The only major developments in ceremonial clothing worn by the Tlingit after white contact were the Button Blanket, button or beaded dance shirt, and beaded collar (Anderson, 1965, p. 85). These garments were used in a manner consistent with previous ceremonial clothing.

Historic Development of the Button Blanket

European explorers and traders could not communicate very well with the Indians of the Northwest Coast, but in their journals they described what they saw, and at times included sketches of native peoples. Most of what they observed in relation to wearing apparel was ceremonial clothing. Those natives who approached the ships were dressed in some of their finest garments in honor of the rare occasion (Gunther, 1972, p. 104). By examining what was worn ceremonially before trade goods were widely available, and comparing this apparel to the Button Blanket after it became "standardized," certain conclusions regarding the origin and development of the Button Blanket can be drawn.

David Samwell (1967, p. 1089), a member of Cook's expedition, described a dancer wearing "... a fine, large wolfe Skin with Hair outwards and a neat border worked around its edges...." Ledyard (1783, p. 72), also with Cook, mentions that their richest skin blankets were edged with "wampum" (dentalium). A sketch made in 1791 and described

by Gunther (1972, p. 153) shows a male in a blanket that reached to mid-calf made of "... small skins sewed together with black tassels sewed into the seams...." Emmons (1911, p. 43) says that the women's finer blankets had borders of caribou skin which was often embroidered with quills or beads. Blanket borders of skin with painted designs were of special interest to Swanton (1905, p. 143). He stated that these each had a story and could be "read" in the same manner as totem poles. One piece in the Rasmussen Collection is described by Gunther (1966, p. 75) as "derived from a more ancient form" and is made of pieces of caribou hide joined into a blanket-sized unit. Fringing was done before sewing, and the resulting seams were naturally decorated. This piece was also painted with a totemic design.

European clothing held a great attraction for the native peoples. As early as 1791 it was found by traders that the only way to get prime sea otter skins was to trade pieces of European clothing for them. Since most ships were not supplied with these for trading, they often used all extras provided for the crew (Krause, 1956, p. 23). Howay (1941, p. 222) not only found that clothing was the principle item desired in trade, but that in one case two European crew members were killed and robbed of their clothing. Another trader noted that the clothing wanted by the natives had to be blue, and preferably with metal buttons (Bell, 1915, p. 3). After discovering this, one enterprising American Captain put his crew to work "... sewing up garments of bright blue cloth, garnished with shiny buttons." (Miller, 1967, p. 108)

Traders eventually began to carry clothing specifically for trading, and used it to sway delicate negotiations (DeArmond, 1978, p. 70). It was also used as gifts to maintain agreeable trading arrangements (Lisiansky, 1968, p. 156).

As a result of these practices, journal writers began to note Northwest Coast Indians dressed in "woolens." When both Vancouver and Bodega y Quadra were at Nootka the entire "royal family" was wearing English woolens (Gunther, 1966, p. 73). Meares (1791, p. 174) described the dress of Comekela (the brother of a chief) as he was preparing to disembark at home in Nootka after visiting China. He had taken a scarlet uniform coat and decorated it so heavily with brass buttons and pieces of copper that it "... could not fail of procuring him the most profound respect of his countrymen, and render him an object of the first desire among the Nootka damsels." Other notes were made of natives wearing European clothing during trading and at weddings and additional ceremonies.

Evidence of experimentation with new materials and styles is also shown in other examples. In 1787 Dixon documented the making of a coat out of "Sandwich Island cloth" (tapa) by a native chief. The chief had been given the cloth as a gift, and had it sewn in the form of the "skin coats" the Indians were wearing upon Dixon's arrival (Quimby, 1948, p. 252). When the Tlingit at Sitka noticed that the style of a Russian captain's uniform was different than what they had seen previously, the chiefs "did not rest until they had imitated him." (Krause, 1956, p. 41) In the late 1790s, Puget was met by a chief wearing a greatcoat decorated with brass buttons "along the seams and wherever

else they would show well." (Gunther, 1972, p. 75) At about the same time Thompson, the sailmaker who was held captive along with Jewitt, made a garment for a Nootkan chief. Jewitt (1815, p. 90) describes it as a mantle

... a fathom square, made entirely of European vest patterns of the gayest colors. These were sewed together, in a manner to make the best show, and bound with a deep trimming of the finest otter skin ... while the bottom was farther embellished with five or six rows of gilt buttons, placed as near as possible to each other.

The chief was extremely proud of his new coat, and the admiration it brought him.

Capes and blankets underwent changes as well. Plain trade blankets were worn as mantles all along the coast, but the addition of native materials and trade goods made them noteworthy to journal writers. Cloth capes bordered with fur and painted leather edges were mentioned by many. The additions also included Chinese coins, hawk's bells, thimbles, abalone shells, beads, as well as buttons. Blankets were decorated with figures cut from trade cloth, and then outlined with pieces of shell (Glubok, 1975, p. 30).

A ceremonial dance apron of "blue jean" was noticed, symmetrically decorated with quantities of metal buttons (Gunther, 1972, p. 108).

The sporadic arrival of trading ships on the Northwest Coast resulted in changes in goods desirable to the natives. The people were left alone long enough to fashion the previous trade goods into styles of their own. They began asking for blankets, cloth, and separate buttons to enable them to construct garments according to their own taste (Gunther, 1966, p. 73). Indians were wearing Button Blankets all along the coast in the early 1800s (Appendix G).

Some authors noticed the use of both mother-of-pearl buttons and other decorative items on these blankets. Holmberg (1974) saw buttons of tin, Petroff (1884, p. 167) saw brass buttons, and beads were observed by Teichman (1925, p. 195). Strips of Chilkat blanket were also occasionally added to a Button Blanket.

All of the basic styles of Button Blankets that resulted were listed by only one author. De Laguna (1972, p. 442) ranks them from the most- to the least-important as (1) Crest Blanket, (2) "Crosswise over the shoulders," (3) "Four Stripe," (4) Plain. (These will be more clearly defined in the section on Findings.) Both Emmons (1911, p. 44) and Knapp (1896, p. 115) referred to rank when they stated that only the wealthy and well-born wore Button Blankets.

There is little information as to who actually wore the Button Blankets. De Laguna (1972, p. 442) says chiefs, house-heads, and "immediate members of their families" could wear Chilkat or Crest Blankets. Others, mostly women and young girls, wore the Plain Button Blankets.

There were several methods of draping these blankets about the body. The most common method described was over the back and shoulders, fastened at the throat, allowing the edges to hang straight down the front. This centered the design of the Chilkat and Crest Blankets on the back for optimum effect (Emmons, 1908, p. 66). At times blankets were worn over one shoulder only or under both arms (de Laguna, 1972, p. 441).

The right to display a crest by wearing it on a Button Blanket requires validation at a potlatch. At the first potlatch in which a

blanket is displayed, the maker (who is of the opposite moiety) is paid, as are all other guests present of the opposite moiety. This is for the service of "listening" to the story about the crest design, and for witnessing its display in visible form (de Laguna, 1972, p. 457). After the initial "coming out" without continued public compensation of some kind to the owner at each "showing" of the blanket, it would lose its value.

As the Button Blanket became an accepted part of Tlingit ceremonies, its uses paralleled those of the Chilkat blanket. It was worn at feasts, potlatches, and peacemaking ceremonies, as well as when welcoming distinguished visitors to the villages, traders and Indians alike (Oberg, 1973, p. 119). The bride gift payment was made using only potlatch goods, which could have included Button Blankets (Oberg, 1973, p. 129).

During the height of Tlingit culture after contact (early 19th century) there were distinct costumes for separate events (Gunther, 1966, p. 69). Then great new economic pressures caused many Tlingit to move out of the villages and into white settlements and the "routine of wage earning prevented many people from devoting time and energy to the making of ceremonial regalia and caring for it, so that often the same costumes were used for quite separate occasions." (Gunther, 1966, p. 69)

The Tlingit population was reduced by disease and intermarriage, and this meant there were too few people to assume all the previous ceremonial responsibilities. This caused formerly separate ceremonial occasions to be combined (Gunther, 1966, p. 70).

Traditional inheritance patterns for ceremonial paraphernalia have been tremendously affected by other cultural changes. "Nowhere among unlettered peoples in North America was there so clear a recording of property ownership as among these people" (Goldschmidt, 1946, p. 17). The house-group, being the primary economic unit, was something like a western society corporation, with the lineage chief of that group being responsible for administering all common property. A good deal of common gear was burned with the corpse of the lineage chief or hung on the outside of the grave house in his honor (Emmons, 1908, p. 69). The remaining items stayed with the communal house, or were inherited matrilineally.

The factors most responsible for the reigning confusion in inheritance of ceremonial objects were missionaries with their abhorrence of cremation, the industrial development that allowed individuals to become economically independent of their house-group, intermarriage with whites, and the United States assertion of authority and legislation (de Laguna, 1949, p. 3).

American legislation regarding inheritance is patrilineal, and this enables any Tlingit who does not wish to follow traditional inheritance patterns to get support from the larger society (Stanley, 1965, p. 6). Instances have occurred where fathers with traditional tendencies have conferred names and symbols on their sons that properly would have gone to nephews (Keithahn, 1963, p. 67). It is not clear how this is done, but it does clear the way for patrilineal inheritance of crest objects.

Today ceremonial gear is to "be held in perpetual trust," but again the exact means are unclear. Some leaders apparently have destroyed those heirlooms rather than have them be acquired by a museum, or worse, by another sib (McClellan, 1954, p. 88).

Summary

When Europeans first arrived on the Northwest Coast they found a thriving area of civilization. A natural abundance of foodstuffs had enabled the Indians living there to develop a unique and complex culture that emphasized art and ceremonialism.

Explorers and traders found that the Indians eagerly accepted most of the trade goods offered. After their desire for iron to make tools was satisfied, the Indians turned their attention to items that could be used for personal ornamentation.

The structure of Indian society encouraged the display of wealth and rank through material expression. Possession of abundant food, elegant clothing, slaves, and ceremonial objects were concrete demonstrations of wealth, and the chiefs of these Indian groups were the ultimate symbols of this wealth.

The distinctive ceremonial garments called Button Blankets are a direct result of the new European trade goods available on the Northwest Coast. These new goods and influences from European clothing combined with traditional ceremonial garment styles and the rich cultural heritage of the coastal Indians to produce a new garment that became distributed regionally.

Chapter III

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is a combination of historical research and ethnographic field research, which was conducted over a period of nearly four years, 1975 to 1979.

Method

To address the historic aspect of this study, written works describing the Button Blanket from its inception to the present were perused. Extant blankets in museums and in personal possession were analyzed and historic photographs were examined. This examination of the Button Blanket over the period of time from the late 18th century to the present was made in order to assess changes both in its physical and artistic characteristics, and in its usage.

Analysis Sheet

An analysis sheet for the examination of Button Blankets was developed. It included information on physical aspects such as size, color, fabric type, border location, decorations present, and button type and size, as well as social data on history of ownership, line of descent, symbol interpretation, and use.

Physical aspects to be studied were chosen with respect to data which would be useful in providing a definitive description of Tlingit Button Blankets at this point in time, and which would also provide a basis for ascertaining commonality of traits.

A comparison of materials used was necessary to establish changes in character of appearance between historic and contemporary blankets. Fiber and fabric construction of background and border fabric could influence general appearance, drapability, and fluidity during wearing, and also the care and life-expectancy of the blanket.

Materials used for decoration of the basic blanket were of interest for two reasons: for tracing trends and/or changes in utilization of specific decorative items, and as a measure of change in the quality of visual impact. Information on button material was pertinent because different substances catch and reflect light in varying degrees, and since the Button Blankets were generally worn in low-light conditions the button material could affect the appearance of the entire blanket. The actual sizes of the buttons used were relevant because smaller buttons permit the construction of a more refined design, and sizes present could also lead to inferences regarding length of time necessary to construct a blanket, and perhaps, therefore, its value.

Position of borders was studied primarily to define style, and size of borders was studied to determine if border width varied among different styles.

Color data on all elements present in a Button Blanket was important because of visual impact, and the significance of establishing color combinations used by the Tlingit.

Usage of the Button Blanket in Tlingit society over time was of interest. This area was approached by including a direct question on current use, and also by asking for information about those with the right to wear each Button Blanket. Overall size of the blankets was

also pertinent in regard to usage. Button Blankets were ceremonial dance blankets, and as such needed to be large enough to drape about the human figure, but not so large as to impede movement. If historic blankets were found to be similar in size, and if contemporary blankets were found to vary a great deal (either larger or smaller) from the historic average, then speculation as to change in use would be in order.

Social data on the analysis sheet were included primarily for the purpose of establishing a detailed history of each Button Blanket. The historic aspects were important to determine year of manufacture, and provide a basis for classification as either an "historic" or a "contemporary" blanket. A history of ownership was sought to determine any descent patterns in ownership.

The analysis sheet was tested on a sample from the Rasmussen Collection in the Portland Art Museum and a subsequent revision was made. A copy is included in Appendix D.

The analysis sheets were usually completed in the presence of the owners of the blankets, or museum personnel. The majority of owners allowed photographing of the Button Blankets.

Selection of Blankets

Museums in the geographical area from Portland, Oregon to Anchorage, Alaska were contacted by letter to determine the size of their holdings. The number of Button Blankets in museums was found to be small. From previous personal observations and from contacts with Tlingit people in Southeastern Alaska, the number of Button Blankets in private hands had

been estimated to be substantial.

The original plan was to include Tlingit Button Blankets from all contacted museums that it was feasible to visit, as well as every privately held blanket that the author could obtain permission to examine.

Finding informants who would allow examination of their personally held blankets proved much more difficult than anticipated. Several recent occurrences in Southeastern Alaska relating to Tlingit ceremonial objects have been viewed as exploitive by many Tlingit. The resulting suspicion of researchers in general effectively eliminated the majority of privately held blankets from this study.

At the outset of the study the plan was to analyze all available blankets. However, from study of the first children's blankets it became apparent that size and quality varied so greatly that it seemed wise to exclude them from the detailed study. Analysis sheets were therefore not completed for children's blankets. However, it seemed that their existence should be acknowledged, and some information might provide a starting point for subsequent research. Data recorded for children's blankets (color, style, materials, general construction methods) are reported under additional findings.

Informants

The most successful method for locating informants proved to be through museum staff members in Southeastern Alaska. Museums were contacted by mail to arrange appointments for blanket examination, and to elicit their assistance in locating private holdings. Staff in each of the communities visited provided names, set up interviews, and in

some cases, gathered information that would otherwise have been unavailable.

Other informants were found through Tlingit friends and acquaintances of the investigator, who was born and raised in Southeast Alaska. Each person on each initial list was contacted. In some cases these people gave additional names as possible informants, and they were also asked to participate in the study. Many times people suggested by museum staff and by personal contacts were the same.

Informants with supplementary data were also valuable. These included people who did not own Button Blankets, those not in immediate possession of their own, and those who had made them in the past. They were able to discuss techniques used presently in the making of blankets, sources of materials, and some informants supplied information on historical methods of making Button Blankets.

In one village one person suggested payment for information. She said many researchers came in, asked the Tlingit for cultural information, and then made a fortune publishing a book. Many others made similar suggestions but did not directly ask to be paid. Paid informants were not used in this study.

Supplementary Information

Historic photographs supplied a great deal of information on past cultural usage, styles, and methods of wearing the Button Blankets. The photographic collections viewed are contained in the Alaska State Historical Library and the Alaska State Museum in Juneau, and the Northwest Collection, Suzzallo Library, University of Washington, Seattle.

Summary

After the initial preparation, testing, and revision of an analysis sheet and estimation of the potential Button Blanket sample, the field study was begun. Unexpected difficulties caused some modification in size and composition of the study sample. Informants were found through museum staff personnel and Tlingit people. Historic photographs provided supplementary information.

Chapter IV

FINDINGS

The findings of this study on Tlingit Button Blankets came from two main sources. The majority of information gathered concerning materials used and methods of construction came from the analysis sheets completed on historic and contemporary blankets available to the author. Other knowledge was obtained from informants. These people had knowledge of contemporary materials and procedures for the making of Button Blankets. Supplementary information was derived from historic photographs. Data from these sources are combined in the following presentation.

Forty-five Tlingit Button Blankets were examined. These blankets were all adult size and were selected as described in "Procedure." The blankets can be categorized by ownership and by age. (Some detailed information on all samples is available in Appendix F.)

It was fairly easy to draw the line between what was to be called historic and what was to be contemporary in the blankets available for this study. A series of crushing influences on Tlingit society, including the legal termination of potlatching, caused the virtual cessation of the making of Tlingit art objects for a period of several years.

The span of time represented by the historic blankets in this study is estimated as approximately 50 to 60 years. On the basis of data from an informant at least one of the historic blankets is estimated to have been produced in the 1880s. The latest of the historic blankets in this study were reported as having been made in the early 1930s. In the 1960s a cultural awakening began and a few people started

to make Button Blankets again. Not until the mid-1970s was there a real effort to encourage the youth to learn their traditions and crafts. Technically one of the easiest crafts to learn is the making of a Button Blanket, and quite a number of them currently are being made. This generalized 30-year gap made a quite clear dividing line between the historic and the contemporary (Table 1).

Table 1. Ownership and age classification of Button Blanket samples.

	<u>Age Classification</u>		<u>Total</u>
	<u>Historic</u>	<u>Contemporary</u>	
Museum-held	22	1	23
Privately-held	6	16	22
Total	28	17	45

Style Types

There is more than one type of Tlingit Button Blanket; there are four discernable styles. All of these styles were called Button Blankets by both informants and museum personnel. One Tlingit informant said there are separate Tlingit terms for each of these types, but that they do not translate meaningfully into English. De Laguna (1972, p. 442) gives some Tlingit terms and their English translations for Buttons Blankets, and these will be noted below. The specific titles employed in this paper are those most commonly used by informants in describing these four types of blankets.

The "Plain" Button Blanket has a dark background, a border of red cloth on the top and two sides, and rows of buttons sewn on the background next to the inner edges of the border. De Laguna calls this "xai Kawut xu."

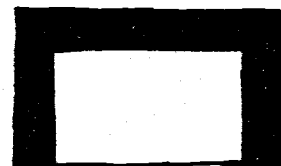


Figure 1. Plain Button Blanket.

The "Crest" Button Blanket is the Plain Blanket with the addition of a totemic crest worked in buttons on the central part of the background. Cloth applique is sometimes a part of this crest.



Figure 2. Crest Button Blanket.

The next type de Laguna called "Four Stripe" Blanket or "daxundati." No specific name was given these blankets by any informant. This type is the Plain Blanket with two additional vertical stripes of red cloth inside the side borders.



Figure 3. Four Stripe Button Blanket.

The "Tahltan" Button Blanket is similar in design to the Four Stripe Blanket, with another cross stripe of red cloth near the top, making three red-outlined squares on the upper part of the blanket. De Laguna calls this "tl' ícaki táxè" or "Crosswise over the Shoulders." Names given this style by informants include, "Box Blanket," "One with High Honors," and "All Tribes Blanket." (For photographs of the above styles see Appendix E).



Figure 4. Tahltan Button Blanket

Of the 28 historic Tlingit Button Blankets examined in this study there were seven Plain, twelve Crest, two Four Stripe, and seven Tahltan. The 17 contemporary blankets were of two styles: four were Plain and thirteen were Crest (Table 2).

Table 2. Style and age classification of Button Blanket samples.

Age Classification	Style of Button Blanket by Number Examined			
	Plain	Crest	Four Stripe	Tahltan
Historic	7	12	2	7
Contemporary	4	13	0	0

These styles of Tlingit Button Blankets are of unequal rank. Informants were unanimous in assigning the Tahltan the most prestige. The Four Stripe seems to be quite rare and those who owned one, or knew of the style, ranked it directly under the Tahltan. The next most important is the Crest Blanket, and the least admired is the Plain Blanket. As mentioned in the Review of Literature, de Laguna (1972, p. 442) positioned them differently, with the Crest Blanket receiving the highest rank.

Materials Used for Historic Button Blankets

Background Fabric

The historic Tlingit Button Blankets were made using a background of either a trade blanket or trade cloth (yardage). Since all of the Tahltan style were of yardage and 17 of the 21 of the other three styles were of blankets, the discussion of background fabric will be divided, with the Tahltan style treated separately (Table 3).

All of the blankets used for Button Blankets of the Plain, Crest, and Four Stripe styles were woolen. The lengthwise grain of the blankets was worn going across the shoulders, so the selvages were on the top and bottom edges of the finished Button Blanket. One Crest

Table 3. Background materials for historic Button Blankets.

Background Material	Style of Button Blanket by Number Examined			
	Plain	Crest	Four Stripe	Tahltan
Blanket	6	9	2	0
Yardage	1	3	0	7

Blanket had machine overcasting all the way around. None of the others had any type of edge finish.

Ten of the blankets in this study were "point" blankets, with nine being 3-point, and the remaining one a 2 1/2-point. Each full point mark was worked in black wool and was 1/4 inch wide. The length varied from 3 1/2 inches to 4 1/2 inches, with the majority being 4 1/2 inches. The half point mark differed only in length, being 3 inches. The location of these points on the finished Button Blanket varied little. Seven blankets had the points in the upper left-hand corner and two in the upper right-hand corner, with the result that all were concealed by the added border. Only one blanket left the points exposed in the lower left-hand corner.

Thirteen blankets contained stripes woven in the crosswise grain at each end of the pieces. All stripes were black, and 11 had single stripes averaging 3 1/2 inches wide. Two blankets had unique systems; one had three stripes--one thick flanked by two thin--taking up a total of six inches. The most unusual group of stripes included a series of nine bands of two widths within five inches.

One blanket was made with a 2/2 basket weave, but all the others were a 2/1 twill. The thread count varied considerably. The basket weave had only 14 x 14 threads/square inch. The twills ranged from 20 x 20 threads/square inch to 26 x 32 threads/square inch as follows:

20 x 20	-	1
20 x 24	-	1
24 x 16	-	3
24 x 24	-	4
24 x 28	-	3
24 x 32	-	2
26 x 26	-	1
26 x 32	-	1

It was nearly impossible to tell the original direction of the nap of the blankets. Wear, felting, and storage conditions caused many blankets to look completely matted.

The color of the blankets was predominantly dark with 13 being dark navy blue, two dark gray, one dark royal blue, and one deep red.

The four historic Button Blankets made from yardage were also of woolen fabric. The selvages ran along the top and bottom on three of the samples; the fourth sample seemed to have no selvages present at all, but its worn condition made visual examination of the blanket difficult.

The weave and thread count of the fabrics were as follows:

Plain:	52 x 60 threads/square inch
Plain:	56 x 56 threads/square inch
2/1 Twill:	56 x 48 threads/square inch
2/2 Twill:	18 x 18 threads/square inch

The colors of yardage used for blanket backgrounds were: two black, one dark royal blue, and one bright red. These colors are consistent with the predominantly dark theme noted above.

The seven Tahltan style Button Blankets had yardage backgrounds. The yardage was all wool, but because of the sectionalized method of construction selvages were either absent or present in such a wide variety of places that no pattern was apparent.

There was also a wide variety of weaves in this sample. One background fabric was felt, and the woven fabrics were as follows:

Plain: 40 x 40 threads/square inch
 Plain: 48 x 48 threads/square inch
 Plain: not available
 2/1 Twill: 20 x 32 threads/square inch
 2/1 Twill: 48 x 48 threads/square inch
 Satin: 48 x 48 threads/square inch

The colors were again mostly dark with one black, one dark navy, and five dark royal blue.

Size

To compute the size averages, the Tahltan was again separated from the other three styles. The number of Tahltan blankets was small compared to the combination of other styles (7 vs. 21) but the results were quite similar. The measurement across the top of the blanket (the part worn over the shoulders) was different from the measurement across the bottom in almost every sample. The sides were at variance as well, so in analysis the four edges of the blanket were treated individually.

The range in size for the top and bottom was not as great for the Tahltan as the others. Comparison of the mean yields the Tahltan top at 69.75 inches and Plain, etc. at 69.53 inches, the Tahltan bottom at 69.13 inches and Plain, etc. at 70.31 inches. There was no mode for the top of the Tahltan style; mode for the Plain, etc. styles was 68.75 inches. Modes were similar for the bottom measurement with 68.00

inches for the Tahltan and 69.50 inches for Plain, Crest, and Four Stripe. It is interesting to note that three of the foundation blankets had additions hidden under their side borders to make them wider.

The sides were also similar in mean. The mean for the right side of the Tahltan was 55.04 inches, which was not markedly different from the mean for that side of the other styles (55.51). The left side had even less difference with a mean of 55.68 inches for Tahltan and 55.63 inches for the other styles. There was no definite mode for the sides of the Tahltan style, probably because of the limited sample; mode for Plain, etc. right side was 53.50 inches, and 53.00 inches for the left side. For a complete chart of measurements see Table 4.

Border

In the definition of the four styles of Button Blankets the locations of the border fabric were sketched. The typical Button Blanket had borders on the top and two sides, and the Four Stripe and Tahltan had additional lines of trim on the inner area. All of the styles were trimmed with red wool trade cloth, with the following exceptions: one blanket with olive green wool, one with skin borders, and one with both skin and Chilkat Blanket strips. On the majority of the blankets in this sample the borders stopped short of the bottom edge of the blanket anywhere from one to seven inches. The average distance was four inches short of the bottom edge.

The red border wool was of several types, and nine samples had white "saved list" (the undyed selvage) used in a decorative manner. There was no uniform pattern, but the white selvage was always placed

Table 4. Size averages of Button Blanket sample (in inches).

Styles	Measure- ment	Sizes of Button Blankets				Border Widths	
		Top	Bottom	Right	Left	Side	Inner
Historic: Plain, Crest, Four Stripe (21)	Range	65.50-78.50	66.00-78.50	51.25-62.50	50.25-62.00	2.50-8.50	-
	Mean	69.53	70.31	55.51	55.63	5.35	-
	Mode	68.75	69.50	53.50	53.00	5.50	-
Historic: Tahltan (7)	Range	68.25-75.50	67.00-71.75	49.25-60.25	49.75-60.25	3.50-4.50	3.50-4.50
	Mean	69.75	69.13	55.04	55.68	4.15	4.12
	Mode	-	68.00	-	-	4.50	4.50
Contemporary: Plain, Crest (17)	Range	64.00-71.25	64.00-71.25	51.00-53.50	51.00-53.00	3.50-5.75	-
	Mean	68.10	67.08	52.29	52.21	4.91	-
	Mode	65.50	64.25	53.00	53.00	5.50	-

symmetrically. There was a good deal of piecing of fabric to make the borders on all styles, but the decorative use of this selvage was confined to the Plain, Crest, and Four Stripe Blankets. Figure 5 illustrates three methods of displaying this selvage.

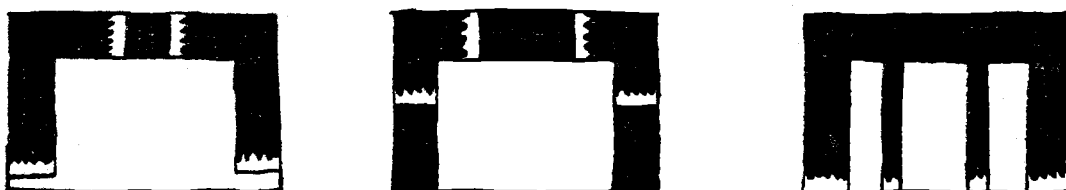


Figure 5. Decorative use of saved list. Uncolored border portions indicated saved list.

The area in the center of the top border could be called the neck edge. On eight of the samples in this study this area was pieced with fabric different from that of the border, and was probably a replacement to compensate for wear. Four were replaced in red wool differing in type from the border, and four were done in print cotton fabric.

Generally the trade cloth used for borders was very tightly woven. After wear and felting it was extremely difficult to count threads on most of the borders. Twenty-two of the borders were plain weave fabric with the thread count per square inch distributed as follows:

64 x 64	-	4
64 x 48	-	2
64 x 32	-	1
56 x 56	-	8
56 x 50	-	2
48 x 48	-	1
40 x 40	-	1
32 x 28	-	1
22 x 16	-	1
Undetermined	-	1

The one olive-green border was plain weave with a count per square inch

of 64 x 64 threads. The back side of this green fabric looked black; the non-standard green color may have resulted from fading and aging. There were also two borders of felt and one of a 2/1 twill with a thread count of 40 x 40 threads per square inch.

The width of the borders varied. For the Plain, Crest, and Four Stripe, the mode for the outside border was 5.50 inches. For the Tahltan the mode for both the outside and inner borders was 4.50 inches. For a more complete description of size see Table 4.

Neck Binding

As mentioned above, the neck area of a Button Blanket receives considerable wear. Several blankets previously mentioned had had the entire affected border section replaced after the area had weakened. In contrast to replaced borders, three of the blankets in this sample had some type of extra reinforcement in this area.

One Button Blanket made of yardage had the entire top edge turned under 1 1/4 inches. This was the selvage edge, and with the addition of the border with its seam allowance turned under as well, the whole top edge had four layers of fabric which resulted in remarkable stability. Very little wear was observed in the neck area of this particular blanket.

Two blankets had areas of cotton fabric about two inches wide rolled over the neck edge after the border had been applied. These were neatly stitched down, with small seam allowances turned under. This treatment also seemed to retard wear.

It should be noted that the reinforced and replaced areas are not seen when the Button Blanket is worn. It is covered by the hair or headdress of the wearer.

Closures

The materials used to fasten the Button Blanket on the body were varied. Both the literature and informants stated that leather thongs were used historically. Four of the samples in this study did have two leather strips, each averaging 1/2 inch wide and 12 inches long.

The most frequent type of closure was a small flap with a single hand-worked buttonhole paired with a button sewn directly on the border of the other side of the neck area. This flap was made of different types of fabric, most often a scrap of the border fabric on the front and a cotton fabric as backing. These flaps were generally one inch wide and varied from one to two inches in length depending on the size button it had to accommodate. There were six blankets with single button flap closures in this study. The same idea was enlarged to use three, four, and six buttons. There were 3 three-button flaps and one each of the four- and six-button flaps. Another variation was seen on two blankets. There were two single opposing button flaps, one on each side. Figure 6 shows how they look when closed.

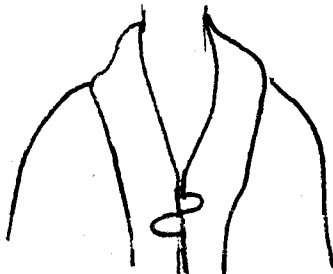


Figure 6. Single opposing button flaps, closed.

Six blankets used ribbon or strips of cotton fabric as ties. One sample had cotton ties hidden under two flaps which had six buttons sewn on each side. These buttons were still attached to thin strips of cardboard, presumably the cards on which the buttons were sold.

One blanket was fastened with a plain large black metal hook and eye. On the historic blankets only one had a large tab of felt (2 x 4 inches) with decorative beadwork to cover metal hooks and eyes. There were three samples with no closures at all.

Applique

Ten of the historic blankets contained applique as part of the crest. Five of these appliques used only red wool, and three of those had the same weave and thread count as that of the blanket's border fabric. The other two red wool fabrics matched in weave and thread count types of fabric found on other historic blanket borders.

Red wool or previously mentioned border-type fabrics was combined with a yellow felt on one blanket, and with a navy wool on another. The navy fabric was a 36 x 36 threads per square inch 2/1 twill. One historic blanket had a small piece of hot pink felt used as a three-dimensional tongue on a wolf.

The same olive-green wool used as a border on one blanket was used for applique there as well. There was one other blanket that had this identical fabric used as part of an applique only. As described earlier the back side of the fabric appeared to be black.

Buttons

There was a vast array of types of buttons included on these historic Button Blankets. The great majority of buttons were machine-made mother-of-pearl, with a very few hand-made abalone and other shell buttons present. All of the buttons were white, with the exception of one black one used as an eye in a Crest design, and a few pale gray ones used on two separate blankets.

Sizes of buttons on the Plain, Crest, and Four Stripe Blankets ranged from 3/16 inch to 1 1/2 inches, the most numerous being 3/8 inch and 1/2 inch. Button sizes on the Tahltan Blankets varied only from 5/16 to 1/2 inch with the majority being 3/8 inch.

Most of the larger buttons had shanks attached. There were two types, those with the shanks attached only to the back, and those where the metal part of the shank went through the button to the top. The 1/2 inch size was the only one where the shank showed through. Four-hole buttons were more than twice as frequent as the two-hole variety.

Looking only at the Plain, Crest, and Four Stripe styles there were up to four different sizes of buttons used on the same blanket. Three blankets had four sizes, four blankets used three sizes, five blankets employed two sizes, and only one size was used on eight different blankets. One blanket, probably the oldest in the sample, had no buttons, but had skin and Chilkat Blanket borders.

De Laguna (1972, p. 442) stated that the older buttons seemed to be generally larger than the ones used later in the trade. The larger buttons in this sample do tend to be on the oldest blankets.

Other Materials

Very few additional materials were used on the historic blankets in this sample. The Tahltan Blankets contained no materials other than those previously discussed.

Of the Plain blankets, one was trimmed with painted skin across the top and strips of a Chilkat Blanket down the side. Another blanket had 51 small coppers (ceremonial objects to denote wealth and greatness) added following the button border (see Figure 7). The owner of the blanket said they were new, but were made to replace the same number of identically sized old ones that had deteriorated and/or been lost.

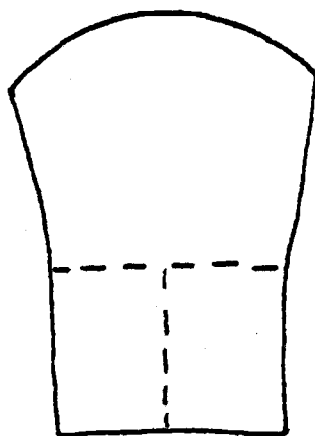


Figure 7. Actual size copper blanket decoration.

Four of the Crest Blankets had very small "seed" beads worked in along with the buttons. Only one sample included very many beads, and this blanket contained a few sequins as well. Bead colors used were predominantly white, yellow, blue-green, and black. One sample had chain-stitching worked in yellow wool yarn in a small eye area.

Materials Used in Contemporary Button Blankets

The sample for this study included no contemporary blankets made in the Four Stripe or Tahltan Styles. There were four adult Plain and 13 adult Crest Blankets.

Background

Only a single contemporary sample was made on a blanket background; the remaining 16 blankets were of yardage. The blanket was dark navy wool, a plain weave with 20 x 20 threads per square inch. Any binding that may have been on it originally had been removed, and there was no machine overcasting present. The selvage edges were on the top and bottom as with the historic samples. There were no points on the blanket.

Of the yardage samples, one was woven and the others were felt. The woven sample was navy blue and appeared to be a wool blend. It was a plain weave of only 10 x 10 threads per square inch. One selvage edge was on the bottom, and the top was a cut edge.

The felt backgrounds had no selvage edges. The fiber content was impossible to determine without laboratory testing. The investigator looked at felt yardage for sale in several retail outlets and found that what is available for sale presently is 40% wool and 60% rayon. It is 60 inches wide.

Colors used were again predominantly dark with twelve black, two navy, two red, and one turquoise. The informant who made and owned the turquoise one said that availability of felt was variable, and that

when she made her blanket, that fabric was the closest she could come to a dark blue color.

Size

Sizes of contemporary blankets were similar to the historic. Range for the Plain and Crest styles was 64.00 to 71.50 inches on both top and bottom edges. The top mean was 68.10 inches, and the bottom was 67.08 inches. Mode for the two styles was 65.50 inches for the top, and 64.25 inches for the bottom.

Side measurements ranged from 51.00 to 53.50 inches on the right, and 51.00 to 53.00 inches on the left. The right side mean was 52.29 inches, and the left side mean was 52.21 inches. The mode for each side was the same at 53.00 inches (Table 4). Overall, contemporary blankets are just slightly smaller than the same historic styles.

Border

All contemporary samples were trimmed with felt. All the black and navy samples were bordered with red, and the red blankets were bordered with black. The turquoise blanket was trimmed in maroon, the color nearest to red available at the time. All of the upper borders were continuous and showed no signs of repair or replacement. The side borders ran all the way to the bottom edge on all but two of the blankets. These two had three and four inches left uncovered at the bottom. The border width ranged in size from 3.50 to 5.75 inches. Averages were similar to the historic, with the mean being 4.91 inches, and the mode at 5.50 inches.

Neck Binding

None of the samples had any reinforcing material present. Two of the samples did have 1 1/2 inches of the backing felt turned under all along the top edge, presumably for reinforcement.

Closures

As with the historic, the methods of holding the blanket together at the throat were quite varied in the contemporary samples. Seven blankets had small rectangles of felt with beaded designs sewn permanently to one side. The under side of the closure held either snaps or hooks to fasten it to the other side of the blanket. Two blankets had strips of tanned hide as ties, three of them had ribbon ties, two had ties made from bias tape, and on two blankets strips of felt were used for tied closures, but it was obvious they were going to need to be replaced because of wear. Only one blanket had a button flap arrangement; this was made of felt backed with cotton for strength, and was for a single button. Two blankets had a second tied closure in the waist area: one was of shoe string and one was of ribbon. The additional ties were to hold the front edges more closely together and were completely hidden when the blanket was worn.

Applique

Thirteen of the contemporary blankets contained Crest designs, and 11 of those had some applique. Most of these 11 used two or three colors in the design. Only one blanket did not use the border color as

one of the crest applique colors. Four of the blankets used only the border color. The applique fabric in all cases was felt.

Buttons

Buttons on the contemporary blankets in this sample were almost all plastic. One blanket had all mother-of-pearl buttons taken from an old blanket, and three blankets incorporated a small number of abalone buttons in important places in the crest designs, such as the eyes.

Although the majority of the buttons were white, there was more variation in button color on the contemporary blankets. The buttons on the inside edges of the borders were uniformly white, but colored buttons were used in five crest designs to highlight various areas of importance. Colors used included yellow, red, blue, and a very few green.

Size of the buttons varied from 3/8 inch to 7/8 inch, with the majority being 3/8 inch. The vast majority of buttons used were two-hole. One informant discussed how long it took to find enough of the correct size buttons with only two holes. She stated that four-hole buttons did not "look right," which was why she would not use them. No shank buttons were observed.

Other Materials

The most frequently used additional material was beads. The majority of these were the uniformly small "seed" beads, and a full range of colors was employed. Seven blankets had beaded crest designs,

and used no buttons other than those around the border edges.

Two of the contemporary blankets used sequins in addition to the beads. One blanket had only a few silver sequins in the crest design, and the other had colored sequins used exclusively instead of buttons in the design, as well as around the border. Buttons were unavailable to the maker at the time of making the blanket. One of the blankets with sequins also had a small amount of chain stitch embroidery used in the crest area.

Construction of a Button Blanket: Historic and Contemporary

This section will present combined historic and contemporary details of the process involved up to the point of actually constructing a Button Blanket. At that point discussion of the historic and contemporary methods will again be separated.

The Maker

The women of the Tlingit tribe were, and are, the makers of Button Blankets. Nothing in the literature spoke of the person who actually constructed the Button Blankets, but all informants were adamant and united when they stated that it was a woman's task historically, and that it still is today.

To be accepted as a true part of the ceremonial regalia of a lineage, the Button Blanket must "come out" and go through the crest validation process. As discussed in the Review of Literature, this must be done at a potlatch and all the rituals of storytelling, display, and payment must be followed. A few informants mentioned the naming of a

Button Blanket as part of a validation ceremony. One historic blanket, a Tahltan, did have the name "Sea Lion Blanket" as part of the description on the museum collection card. It is probable that names were associated with stories told during the validation ceremony.

Historically, the maker of any ceremonial object had to be a person of the moiety opposite to the prospective "owner," a procedure still preferred by most Tlingit elders who were informants. A contemporary practice that seems to be acceptable is for the "owner's" mother to construct the blanket, even though she is of the same moiety. If the proper "coming out" procedure is followed the blanket can be accepted.

Source of Design

In planning construction of a Button Blanket, the style chosen from the four possibilities (Plain, Crest, Four Stripe, Tahltan) must be appropriate to the prospective owner's rank in the Tlingit community. If the crest style is chosen, the actual design must be selected and prepared. The literature did not directly address this point, and there were two different opinions among the informants.

A slight majority of informants (including all the males) stated that historically a man would draw the actual design. Three informants stated that many Tlingit men were clever artists and that any of them could draw an appropriate design. McClellan (1954, p. 94) stated that only high class men were supposed to be familiar enough with all the crests to be able to interpret them. Many other authors pointed out that men prepared the pattern boards for the women's use in Chilkat Blanket weaving. Some informants were of the opinion that only men

had been tribal artists, and that these artists produced all the designs for crest objects, including Button Blankets. One person further limited the designer to one of the opposite moiety of the prospective owner.

Other informants felt that the women who constructed the Button Blankets were perfectly capable of producing the design. Two people said the future owner would draw his or her own design and give it to the maker.

Regardless of who drew the design, informants said the artist, as well as the blanket maker, was compensated at the "coming out" of the blanket.

Crest designs for contemporary blankets come from a variety of sources, and both men and women create these designs. Very few blankets are currently being produced with the intention of having them "come out" at a potlatch. Only one informant described the production of a recent Crest Blanket where a male tribal artist had been commissioned to do a new design. Most designs produced recently seem to be direct copies or adaptations of designs on other ceremonial objects. Each informant emphasized that artists were expected to individualize their work. One elder spoke sadly of over-individualization, saying that "... the designs are becoming so modified, very few people know what a traditional design is."

Source of Materials

Possible sources of materials for the historic Button Blankets were discussed in the Review of Literature. Materials for contemporary

blankets come from a variety of places.

Nearly all the adult blankets in this study were made on backgrounds of felt yardage, which can be purchased at a variety of retail outlets. Most blankets produced today are of synthetic fibers which do not have the appearance or hand of the traditional trade blankets or cloth. The source of the one blanket background in this study is unknown, but one informant who has made many children's blankets has gotten wool blankets from sporting goods catalogs. The Hudson's Bay Co. does still make point blankets and wool duffle cloth which could be used, but these materials were not used for any blanket in this study.

Borders were made only of felt, which is available as mentioned above. Woven wools and the Hudson's Bay Co. duffle cloth are available, but were not used in these blankets.

Buttons used on these samples were mainly purchased at local retail stores. Some of the mother-of-pearl buttons used came from old ceremonial garments. One enterprising informant purchased second-hand clothing in various thrift shops and stripped the buttons off of them for a supply for blanket making. One outlet in Seattle, Washington sells buttons of abalone shell, and a few of these were used on one blanket. One informant had made his own abalone shell buttons for a blanket his wife constructed.

Historic Methods of Button Blanket Construction

The Plain and Crest styles are similar in construction and will be discussed together.

The size of the background of these styles was basically determined by making them consistent with the size of trade blankets most commonly used for wearing. The evidence of selvage at both top and bottom of all samples means the length (from neck to bottom edge) was not altered. Two blankets had small additions hidden under side borders to make the blanket wider. Of the four blankets of Plain and Crest styles that were made of yardage, two were nearly identical in size to the average blanket, and two were only a few inches wider and longer. The measurements of standard trade blankets (approximately 55 x 72 inches) obviously became the acceptable size, no matter what the background material.

The border fabric was cut on grain, even if it had to be pieced in several places. Fabric borders on 13 of the blankets were worked with mitered corners (Figure 8a). Six blankets had borders with trimmed corner seam allowances, and seven were untrimmed with the excess turned to the top. Nine of these blankets had top stitching along the miter seam. Two of the blankets had the side pieces running all the way up to the top with a straight seam where they met the top border (Figure 8b), and two had the top border running continuously across the blanket (Figure 8c). These types were not top stitched.

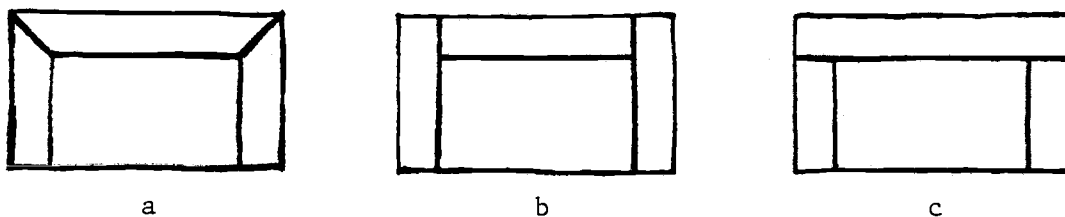


Figure 8. Construction of border corners on Button Blankets

All borders but one were attached by hand. Type of stitching varied with the skill of the seamstress. The most common method for attaching the border was to place the right side of the border fabric against the right side of the base fabric approximately the border's width from the edge, and then fasten with a running stitch (Figure 9a₁). The border fabric was then turned to the back where the raw edge was whip stitched (Figure 9a₂). This method was used on 13 of the samples. One sample had the above procedure done almost in reverse, with the outer edge sewn first, and the inner border edge turned and sewn second (Figure 9b). One blanket border had the raw edge turned under on both top and bottom (Figure 9c), and two blankets had borders with raw edges directly applied to the base fabric (Figure 9d).

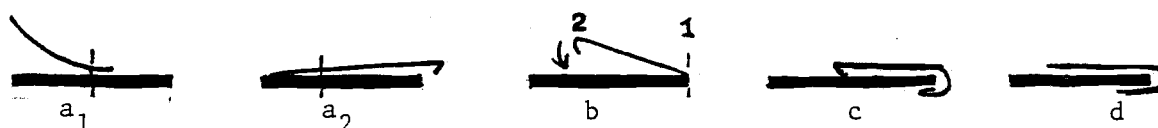


Figure 9. Methods of applying Button Blanket borders.

The amount turned to the back of the blanket varied only from 1/8 inch to 1/2 inch, with the most common width being 1/4 inch. Width of the border itself was discussed on page 84.

The skin borders were attached in different ways. The blanket with both skin and Chilkat Blanket strips had these materials laid directly on it and whip stitched by hand on both sides. The blanket with only side borders of painted skin had these sewn on with very small seam allowances on the outer edge of the yardage.

It was not possible to tell the method for marking the placement of the Crest design on the historic blankets from observing the samples. Informants said that designs were either basted first in sinew thread or drawn on with chalk or the edge of a soft shell.

Pieces of fabric for applique were sewn on by hand, with the raw edges left unturned except in one case in which the shapes were large and the curves gentle so the maker turned the raw edge under 1/4 inch. On one blanket small pieces of fabric were placed behind the central eye button in the design. This fabric was held only by the thread attaching the button to the blanket.

The samples of the Four Stripe style were constructed in the same manner as the Plain Blanket described above with the addition of the two inner borders. One blanket had the raw edges of the border fabric turned under, the other did not.

The Tahltan style is quite complicated, and none of the informants could describe how it was made. All samples were of yardage background. From examining them it appears that they were made in two major pieces, top and bottom. The top contained three panels. The central panel was bordered on all four sides, and was placed over the top of the side pieces which had had borders sewn on the three outer edges (——). In five of the blankets the bottom half was also made of three pieces, but these were put together in different ways. The most common method was to attach borders to all four sides of the side panels, then attach a plain central panel underneath (———). Two blankets had two additional border stripes on the bottom half and they involved two more panels of background fabric as well.

The remaining step in a Tahltan blanket was to attach the upper and lower parts. The upper part was placed on top of the lower and the seam was usually hidden along the inner border line of the top piece. As can be seen in Table 4 the overall size was similar to that of a trade blanket.

Buttons on all styles were generally attached in series, and not sewn individually. Despite the fact that the majority of buttons on the historic blankets had four holes, only five samples had thread going through all the holes. This gave a distinct pattern of thread on the back of the blanket. Of the historic blankets 17 of the 28 had thread running through two holes only, even if the buttons had four holes. Button attachment was done in two manners, as illustrated in Figure 10. The backstitch was the most common.



Figure 10. Methods of attaching buttons in series.

Shank buttons were attached by pushing the shank through the fabric and running heavy thread, cording, fabric strips, or in one case, twigs through the shanks in series.

On all styles of Button Blankets the closures were applied last. They were all stitched to the inside edge, with various amounts of underlap. Only ten of the samples with closures had them equidistant from the ends. Most of the others were approximately equal, leading the investigator to believe the position was determined by placing the blanket on a person and using individual preference as a guide to how near the neck to attach the fasteners.

Contemporary Methods of Button Blanket Construction

Contemporary Button Blankets are constructed somewhat differently from the historic ones. No evidence of a pattern or set of instructions to guide the modern seamstress was found. Informants reported three different methods of obtaining knowledge on how to make a Button Blanket; "always knowing" (oral instruction over time), carefully studying an older sample, or knowing what one should look like and using their own methods to obtain the effect.

The one contemporary sample with a blanket background was not altered from the manufactured size. Background size of the other Button Blankets could have been determined in a number of ways. De Laguna (1972, p. 442) was told that two yards of cloth were used to make an adult Button Blanket. Several informants told the author the same thing. Three informants said that size was determined by taking the amount of fabric available, placing it on the prospective owner and "cutting to fit." According to one woman the bottom edge should come to the ankle. The width varies with the individual body proportion of the original owner.

Mean border width on the contemporary blankets was approximately five inches. This is similar to the historic. Only one informant suggested a specific width (four inches), and this is based on having 1/4 yard of border fabric available. Other informants said width is determined by personal preference and sense of proportion. If a crest design is to contain applique, often the border will be narrower because available fabric would have to be allocated for two uses instead of one.

The investigator attempted to determine why the border fabric stopped short of the full length of the background in seven blankets, and not in the others. Reasons given by informants for the shorter length were so there is a place to hold on to while dancing that is not so thick, so if the garment drags in the mud the border will not be soiled, and because of the width of fabric usually available. Borders the entire length of the background were explained by "It looks better."

All contemporary blankets had at least one step of applying the border sewn by sewing machine. Five samples used the most common historic method (Figure 9a), simply substituting machine stitching for hand stitching on the inner border edge, then folding the border fabric over and fastening to the back. The average amount of excess on the back was 1/2 inch and this was hand stitched. On one blanket the above procedure was followed except that the border edge was cut even with the background and glued in place. On eight samples machine stitching was used along the outer edge, with the right side of the border fabric placed on the wrong side of the backing. This was then turned, resulting in the seam allowance being enclosed as in Figure 11. In five cases the inner border edge was formed by turning under a small amount and stitching by hand, and on three blankets the raw edge was simply glued. Machine top stitching on both raw edges was the method used on three blankets.

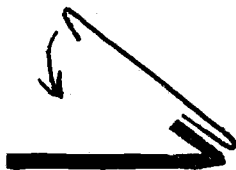


Figure 11. Contemporary border attachment.

Fourteen of the blankets had mitered corners, all with the excess trimmed. Those blankets with glue used for applying one edge of the border had glue used for the corner seam as well; the other miter seams were hand stitched. The three blankets with machine stitching on both sides of the border edges had the top border running from edge to edge, overlapping the side borders as in Figure 8c.

Thirteen blankets had crest designs. Seven crests were entirely beaded, and six had mostly buttons. The beaded designs were worked on felt, then attached as a unit to the background. Some Tlingit use pencil or pen marks on the felt as guides for beading; others use no guides aside from a marking for the outer edge of the design.

Four of the crests with buttons were done in the same manner as the beads; the crest was completed separately, then attached to the background by hand. The remaining crest blankets were made in the historic manner, i.e., sewing the crest design fabric pieces to the background by hand, and then adding buttons to the background itself.

Four-hole buttons that were sewn on had thread only through two holes with the majority of the samples employing the backstitch method (Figure 10b). Most used a double strand of thread. Three blankets had both crest and border buttons glued on only; buttons on another blanket were sewn after gluing. No shank buttons were used.

The final step in construction was the addition of the closure. Methods of attachment varied with the type of material used, and positioning them equidistant from the blanket ends occurred in five samples. In the other cases measurements from each end to each closure were not equal, but were similar.

The Wearing of Button Blankets

Informants were not unanimous in their description of who had the right to wear which style of Button Blanket. There were few Plain Blankets in the sample, and informants specified that these can be worn by any person, but are usually worn by lower class women and children.

Crest Blankets must be worn by members of the correct moiety and lineage. Many Tlingit informants said these are worn by some men and higher class women and children. Personal observation confirms that the Crest Blanket is the most numerous type of blanket used today by men, women, and children.

There was some discrepancy in informant views on the Tahltan style. One informant said only men could wear it, one said only women could wear it, and two said either could wear this style. Historic photographs show people of both sexes wearing the Tahltan style during dances and celebrations.

The most common way to wear all styles of the Button Blanket is draped over both shoulders and fastened at the throat. This places any crest design on the back of the wearer. Especially when entering an area to dance it is important to show the crest to its best advantage; often this is done by coming in backwards. Dancing can cause some small modifications in the free-hanging style. Pictures and informants both indicated the wearing of belts to hold up the lower edge of blankets and allow more free use of arms during dances. This was done by belting the lower blanket edge to the waist of the wearer. The central and upper parts of the blanket were not affected, thus not disturbing

any crest design. One woman said today many people use a safety pin to secure the lower blanket corners to the waist area, again to free the arms.

A number of other methods of wearing all of the different styles were seen in photographs. One way was under one arm and up over the other shoulder. It was held there by a knot or by slipping the ends through a ring. One informant said this is not done now, but was possibly an imitation of the Athapascan people; the reader is reminded that this was the general way cedarbark capes were worn. Other Tlingit are pictured wearing blankets under both arms; the method of fastening them was not readily apparent.

In many historic photographs Crest Blankets were worn with the crest across the chest. This was possibly only for the benefit of the photographer. No evidence was found that any Button Blanket was worn in this manner during traditional ceremonies.

Use of the Button Blanket

The Button Blanket was at one time a most important ceremonial garment to the Tlingit. It ranked second only to the Chilkat Blanket. Button Blankets were worn by all who could acquire them. Historically, Button Blankets were worn only on ceremonial occasions; they were never part of daily dress. Almost all ceremonies involved dancing, and the Button Blanket was known as a dance blanket even though it was most often worn during an entire ceremony and not exclusively for dancing.

As a measure of reverence and respect, Button Blankets were often draped over the body of a deceased chief as he lay in state, and

frequently were cremated along with the deceased during the "funeral." After missionary influence halted cremation, Button Blankets were sometimes draped over a casket and buried with the deceased, or the blanket was hung outside the grave house as a monument.

Dedicating a new clan house and the raising of a totem pole were also times when Button Blankets were donned.

The potlatch was the supreme occasion for wearing a Button Blanket, and the potlatch included dancing, feasting, speech-making, and storytelling. Button Blankets were also worn during smaller scale feasts, parties, and dancing occasions in the villages. An example of a local event often important enough for wearing ceremonial apparel was the celebration given when a pubescent girl was brought out of seclusion and given the name of one of her ancestors.

With the banning of the potlatch, the decimation of the Tlingit population, and the movement out of the villages and into "white" communities, the occasions for wearing and use of the Button Blanket became quite limited. Today, with the reinstatement of the potlatch and the general cultural awakening of the Tlingit people, the wearing of these blankets is on the increase.

Contemporary use of the Button Blanket has been expanded as Tlingit people have become more involved in affairs that originated with non-Indians. The right to wear a blanket for participation in authentic Tlingit culture observances, however, is very strictly observed in the historic manner. For all other occasions the Button Blanket has become a robe symbolizing general cultural identification. Also, the significance of family crests has diminished, and they are being used by the Indian and the non-Indian alike.

Some contemporary occasions for use closely parallel historic events for use--dedicating a clan house vs. dedicating a public building such as a bank or office building. Other examples of more secular uses include wearing Button Blankets in various parades, and special public appearances of Tlingit officials. Button Blankets are also used as a tool to teach about Tlingit customs, and some blankets are used as examples of how to actually make a Button Blanket.

Many Button Blankets have been sold or donated to museums, and some privately owned blankets are stored in museums. Many other Button Blankets are privately stored, and have not been used for many years.

The following chart (Table 5) on use of the Button Blanket is compiled from all informational sources available to the investigator. The distinction between historic and contemporary use is made along the same time line as for the blankets studied.

Table 5. Historic and contemporary uses of the Button Blanket.

Use	Historic	Contemporary
Lying in state	X	
Funeral	X	
Grave monument	X	
Dedicating a clan house	X	
Totem Pole raising	X	
Potlatch	X	X
Feast/party	X	X
Dancing/show	X	X
Giving of a name	X	X
Dedicating a public building		X
Teaching Indian customs and crafts		X
Parades		X
Museum display		X
Storage		X

Line of Descent

Both traditional (matrilineal) and non-traditional (patrilineal) inheritance patterns were discussed in the Review of Literature. Informants owning blankets showed few clear decisions as to which they were intending to follow. Only two informants with historic blankets had made legal documents relating to the disposition of their Indian ceremonial items, and both of these were passing things on "the Indian way." The other informants had not yet decided which course to take.

Additional Findings

During the course of this investigation, additional areas of interest emerged which were not anticipated when the study was planned. These areas concern significance of the arrangement of buttons near the borders of Button Blankets, and Children's Button Blankets.

Buttons placed in rows near the inner edge of the border fabric proved to have more significance than just physical beauty; the number of rows of buttons indicates wealth and social status. Each row of buttons signifies a formal presentation of the blanket in a large potlatch. One informant said that theoretically the entire blanket could become covered with buttons, if the owning lineage was active in traditional Tlingit affairs. The maximum number of rows was set at three by one other informant, and this was the maximum observed by the author.

The legal end to potlatching must certainly have had an effect on the number of rows of border buttons on the historic blankets. Most makers of contemporary blankets said they put on one or two rows,

depending on the number of buttons they could afford, and that they did not follow the potlatch rule any longer because there were so few of them.

Many borders stopped short of the lower edge of the blankets, and generally the rows of buttons stopped at that point as well. On five blankets, however, the rows continued across to the sides; historic photos showed this as well. The investigator was unable to determine if this has any significance.

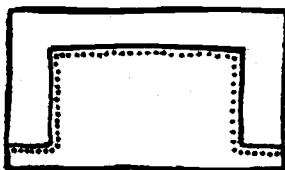


Figure 12. One style of border button arrangement.

Two informants mentioned that the tribes to the south (Haida and Kwakiutl) typically sewed buttons in designs on the border fabric itself, but that the Tlingit did not. Historic photos, when reliably labeled as to location, tend to substantiate this. No blankets in this study included any internal border design.

Children's Button Blankets differ from the adult in more than just size, and there is a myriad of sizes. The investigator was told that there was no specific age at which a child could begin to wear a Button Blanket. The determining factors were that the child be interested in the culture, learn some of the traditional ways, and be "ready."

Blankets made for children by traditional-minded Tlingit are the same in style as the adult, except they are worn upside down until the child has "earned" the right to wear it right side up.

At present at least 80% of blankets for children are being made by the children themselves, usually as a part of special Indian Education Programs through the local schools. Alaska Indian Arts, Inc. is an enterprise in Haines, Alaska that specializes in the production of native art objects. They hold many public demonstrations of traditional Tlingit dancing per year, and have made many Button Blankets to wear for this purpose. The majority of blankets made in schools and at AIA are not made with quality workmanship, or traditional methods. The overall effect of a traditional blanket is the goal, and any method at all that helps reach that goal seems to be acceptable. The purpose is to transmit ideas of a culture, and they seem to succeed well in that.

Chapter V

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The Tlingit Button Blanket evolved after white contact and the introduction of trade goods along the Northwest Coast of North America. This ceremonial garment actually became a ranked series of four very similar robes that were closely tied to all aspects of Tlingit culture.

The conclusions presented deal with hypotheses drawn relating to change over time in materials, construction methods, and use of these Button Blankets.

Hypothesis I

A comparison of historic and contemporary Tlingit Button Blankets will show recognizable common traits which make them identifiable as Button Blankets although there are differences in materials and methods used for construction.

The first hypothesis can be accepted. The character of a Tlingit Button Blanket is expressed by the presence of a generally dark, rectangular background trimmed on the left, upper, and right hand sides by a bright colored border. At the inner edge of this border the foundation fabric is decorated by a row, or rows, of white buttons. Two main additions can be made to this basic pattern, a totemic crest design, and/or specific arrangements of supplemental inner borders. With two exceptions, all of the blankets in this study, both historic and contemporary, contain at least three of the five above elements. The exceptions are very old samples considered as transitional from

pre-contact native ceremonial clothing form to the more standardized form.

The materials used for construction of the Tlingit Button Blanket have changed because advances in world technology have altered what is available to the blanket makers. Tlingit people received trade blankets from a variety of sources, but these blankets exhibited great similarity. The majority of blankets used for the historic ceremonial robe were a 2/1 twill weave of long-fiber wool, had no bound edges, and were similarly sized by the point system. The four blankets made on backgrounds of wool trade cloth generally were of the same types of cloth used for border trim. These were of tight plain weave.

In recent years the Tlingit have found wool blankets extremely difficult to locate and very expensive. The ready availability of wide felt yardage when the Tlingit cultural resurgence began has led to the virtual standardization of its use for Button Blankets. Several years ago the majority of woven wool and wool blend yardage available to the consumer was in 45-inch widths, which would not have been large enough to cover an adult from neck to mid-calf or lower. In recent years woven wools have been produced in 60-inch widths, which are long enough. This, plus the fact that felt is becoming increasingly expensive, leads to the prediction that in the future Button Blanket backgrounds may again be made of woven wool.

There is a striking similarity in size of background fabric used in the historic and the contemporary blankets. This is most probably a result of the fact that Button Blankets became totally integrated into Tlingit culture before the breakdown of that society. As blankets

for ceremonial robes were so similar in size, the manner in which they covered the body when worn must have developed a standard "visual fit." This impression was not changed as the modern Tlingit began to construct them out of available yard goods. By coincidence fabric is sold by the yard, and a two yard length is extremely close to what was the width (actually the lengthwise grain) of a trade blanket. This allows the seamstress to cut only the lower edge (as worn) to adjust the length as appropriate. With both historic and contemporary samples there were a few blankets of larger size, presumably made so those persons of more ample proportions could have the same "visual fit" as the more average body type.

The Tahltan style, although not made of a blanket background, is again very similar to the other styles in size. The author concludes this is also a result of striving for the same "visual fit," and possibly of simply measuring against a trade blanket.

Measurements of all four edges of these blankets were taken, and the majority of the samples did not have both sides or top and bottom edges that matched in length. Because of the nature of wool fabric, and the fact that these blankets were heavy, and undoubtedly worn in the rain, it is concluded that the diversity in measurements was mainly caused by stretching, shrinking, and uneven wear, rather than by poor construction methods.

Border fabric was also available to the early Tlingit from a wide variety of sources, and there was a greater variability in count and weave in blanket border fabric than in the blankets themselves. Cultural preference designated the most popular fabric as a plain

closely woven wool. The "saved list" or the white selvage edge on dyed goods seemed to have special significance, or appeal, as it was incorporated into the border design each time it was present.

Modern blanket makers do have access to wool fabrics similar to those historically used in borders; however, all contemporary samples were bordered with felt. The investigator concludes that the use of felt borders began as a matter of availability as well as harmony with the background fabric. Its use has probably continued because of ease of construction; there are no edges to fray and thus need finishing. If blanket backgrounds are again made of woven wool, the use of woven wool for borders may also be resumed.

Color of the trade blankets and cloth brought to the Tlingit was limited. From the available supply, the Tlingit chose to standardize their new ceremonial garment with a dark navy blue or black background and bright red border trim. There are two blankets in the sample in which this color scheme is reversed, most likely in an effort to be unique while still following the basic canons relating to Button Blankets.

The occasional addition of binding in the neck area was not handled in any consistent manner. It seems probable that this was a reaction to wear stress and as it was hidden by hair or a head-dress when the blanket was donned, any form or method was acceptable.

Any applique present on the historic samples was done with cloth identical, or nearly so, to that of the border. For contemporary blankets some felt the same color as the border is generally used, but on most blankets additional colors are used as well.

Buttons used on the historic samples were almost universally white mother-of-pearl, the exceptions being hand-made ones of abalone and other shells. Contemporary blankets generally have plastic buttons in white and several colors for decoration. The material difference is due to availability, but there are also differences in size and type. The older blankets had generally larger buttons and more variety of button sizes than the later historic blankets. Buttons on contemporary blankets have a smaller range of sizes. The investigator suggests this is due more to further standardization of the Button Blanket than to availability of various sizes of buttons. The switch from more four-hole buttons in the historic to more two-hole buttons on the contemporary blankets may be a result of convenience in construction rather than availability. The colored buttons, as well as colored applique felt, are probably an expression of artistic individualism as well as part of a trend toward more realism in designs.

Aside from the basic materials, very few other objects were present on Button Blankets. These objects were basically used as an individual touch, and were not copied by subsequent blanket makers. The only object appearing with any regularity was the small seed bead, and its use is increasing on contemporary blankets.

De Laguna (1972, p. 441) remarked that Beaded Crest blankets were seemingly a new development in the Yakutat (see Plate 2, p. 15) area. The only historic blanket in this sample containing any quantity of beads is also originally from Yakutat. Contemporary blankets made all over Southeastern Alaska are including beads as part of crests, and, more frequently beads make up the entire crest.

The Yakutat area is the upper edge of the pure Tlingit culture range. Because of their location, Eskimo, Aleut, and Athapascan influence was greater on these people than it was on other Tlingit. Beads were used with great frequency by these other cultures, and the Yakutat Tlingit began to adopt them for use also. The incorporation of beads seems to have slowly worked its way south. When the modern Tlingit cultural revitalization began, one of the first things taught in classes was beadwork, and this has become so popular that it has gone past the fad stage and has become a newly established part of the culture.

There is evidence that some natives now believe that to be Tlingit, a Button Blanket must have a totally beaded crest and buttons around the border only. They say those blankets with all button crests are Haida. Other Tlingit elders dispute this. There may be several reasons for the increasing popularity of beads relating to Button Blankets. Beads are more easily available, and less expensive than quantities of buttons. Although a tremendous amount of work is required to bead a crest design, it is much less bulky to work a design on a small area of felt than to have to spread out two yards of fabric and sew buttons on it in a design. The nature of beading allows much more realism in design, whereas buttons require more knowledge of the historic elements of Tlingit art.

Closures varied in material more than any other aspect of Button Blankets. The investigator concludes that, especially on the historic samples, these closures needed frequent replacement because of the great weight of the blanket supported, and that few were original. This

would mean that when one set of closures gave out, whatever was available and expedient was used as a replacement. The modern seamstress does seem to have learned that felt, except when heavily reinforced, does not make a good closure. The beaded felt rectangles (referred to in Findings, p. 91) that are becoming so popular today are at least double thickness and often have additional strengthening fabric as well.

The key to material used for contemporary Button Blankets is local availability. So much effort and time is required simply to gather the materials most like the historic ones that all but the most tenacious people do not wish to try to make an historic type Button Blanket.

Construction methods for the contemporary Button Blankets do differ from those used for the historic. It must be remembered that no evidence was found of contemporary construction of the Four Stripe or Tahltan styles, so the following discussion on changes in method refers only to Plain and Crest styles.

The size of the background was discussed above. When the modern seamstress uses a felt background, the cut edges do not ravel, and no edge finishes are needed. The historic seamstress could get away with leaving a raw cut edge only if the blanket or trade cloth was of exceptional quality and very closely woven.

Border application was revolutionized by the sewing machine. With a sewing machine it is easier to stitch a small (1/2 inch) seam than one the width of the border (5 inches), so most modern blanket makers are attaching the outer edge first. This is in contrast to historic procedure. The ease of stitching by machine has also led to many other shortcuts that leave lines of thread visible on the outside in the

manner of top stitching on many of the newer blankets, whereas stitches were all hidden on the older ones. Felt, not needing small hand stitches or turning the edge under to prevent fraying as with the historic woven wool borders, can be glued in place as well. This lacks strength in addition to stiffening all areas where it is used.

Applique fabric is sometimes glued as well. The felt can be attached without need for small edge stitches to prevent raveling; consequently most people have used a minimum number of stitches. The modern tendency to complete the crest before its attachment leads to the possibility of using the crest on other garments, and has also led to the use of large stitches that are more easily removed.

The general conclusion reached regarding border and applique attachment methods is that the modern Button Blanket maker does not take as much time and does not do work of as good a quality as the historic seamstress. There are exceptions, of course.

Method of button attachment has not changed over time; the same two basic methods (Figure 10, p. 100) are used. What has changed is the number of and spacing between buttons. Recent blankets use fewer rows of buttons, usually only one, and the buttons have open spaces between them. On historic blankets the buttons were generally edge to edge, or had only a very slight space between them. The conclusion drawn here is that there are fewer rows because of fewer traditional pot-latches, and fewer buttons generally because of cost and local availability of buttons.

Hypothesis II

The Tlingit Button Blanket still is utilized in its original context, basically associated with socio-religious rites, but its usage has diversified and has become more secularized.

This hypothesis can also be accepted. The research has shown that where traditional Tlingit ceremonies occur, the Button Blanket is still used as it was historically. In addition, modern Tlingit use the Button Blanket in many ways unknown to their forebearers in an attempt to share parts of their culture with others.

From the use chart in "Findings" there may be the impression that some of the old uses for Button Blankets have simply been abandoned in favor of the same number of new uses for them. This is not the case. No attempt was made to document the number of times a blanket was used for traditional purposes versus the number of times it was used for "new" occasions. The sheer number of blankets that informants said were not used in any true traditional ceremonies, plus all of those stored in museums and thus not used ceremonially, leads to the conclusion that new, secular uses far outnumber the traditional.

The use chart category "teaching Indian culture and crafts" should be further explained. Along with teaching often goes actual participation in the construction of traditional Tlingit culture objects. Many white children and adults have made their own Button Blankets as part of the educational process without being formally adopted by a Tlingit family. These factors lead to many uses that are non-traditional.

General Discussion

Since the change-over-time relationships have already been discussed under the appropriate hypotheses, this discussion will be confined to possible interpretations and implications of the findings as a whole.

There is ample evidence of great cultural conservatism among the Tlingit until the recent past. There may not have been many Tlingit practicing the traditional ways, but those that did were tenacious about it. When the Alaska Native Land Claims Bill was debated, and finally settled, many non-Tlingit people began to realize what a unique culture the Tlingit possess. There also came the realization that money could be made by producing or re-producing native art objects.

The entire Tlingit culture may well be at a turning point. The elders who really know the culture in all its aspects generally do not seem to want to share it except with their families; unfortunately most of those family members are too busy living and working in the white culture to take the time to learn. Some of those who have learned have used the knowledge in ways the elders do not approve. Some people of other cultures have been entrusted with Tlingit cultural information and have abused it, mostly by commercializing it. A very large problem of mistrust exists at the present. If this is not quickly resolved, a good deal more than the Button Blanket will be changed and/or forgotten.

As stated in "Findings," the Button Blanket to be used for traditional purposes has not changed much, nor has its maker. However, the

Button Blanket to be used in secular and non-traditional Tlingit rites is made by a wide variety of people, most of whom have had only minimal instruction. Adult teaching programs in Southeastern Alaska seem to have good success and produce quality blankets, but groups are small and teachers are few. The teachers give instruction orally, and there are no texts. The majority of blankets made today are made by children and young adults, and their products are quite poor in comparison to the historic ones. There are many reasons for this, including lack of time and expense of materials.

The sources of crest designs for blankets are changing, from a few people steeped in tradition and taught art elements with care to almost anyone who can trace or sketch. Traditionally realism was not of much concern to the Tlingit. Currently, many people have an interest in Tlingit art, but lack the time or inclination to study its many fine points. These people are producing designs for Crest Blankets and other objects that express far more realism than was traditional.

Materials for blankets are available to any person with the purchase price, instead of just to those of the higher classes as in historic times.

The recent trend toward beadwork and the use of totally beaded crests seems to have almost established a fifth separate type of Button Blanket.

Consequences of the above changes are that only Plain and Crest styles of Button Blankets have been produced recently, and these generally lack the quality of historic blankets. The Beaded Crest Blanket could become a separate style of Button Blanket with a rank of

its own, separate from that of the Button Crest Blanket, or it could possibly replace the Button Crest Blanket entirely.

The lack of quality in contemporary Button Blankets made by children and young adults has implications for the future. As they mature, are these children going to be satisfied with anything that looks remotely like a Button Blanket? Are they going to accept the short-term use, disposable type attitude toward these as well as toward the other garments in our society? If they do, will this affect, and possibly change the form of the Button Blanket?

The investigator concludes that if the Button Blanket is to maintain its basic qualities, some effort must be made to standardize materials acceptable and to write down a pattern or method for construction that will be shared with all of those interested. If this is not accomplished, resulting Button Blankets will be so varied that soon even the basic elements may change.

This cultural crossroads has been reached by many other societies, and the Tlingit are no different in the decisions they must make. What is unique is that they are in the process now, at a time when much of the rest of the world has seen so much cultural mingling that it has turned the other direction and is now seeming to stress a certain amount of ethnicity. The precarious situation of the traditional Button Blanket seems to parallel the position of the Tlingit culture as a whole.

Chapter VI

RECOMMENDATIONS

Use of the Present Study

This research will expand information available about the ceremonial garments of the Tlingit Indian. Prior to this study the only detailed information obtained was on the Chilkat Blanket.

Those involved in education may find this study helpful in understanding another aspect of Tlingit heritage. Those specifically involved in teaching about Tlingit culture may be enabled to help students create Button Blankets closely patterned on the historic method.

Those Tlingit interested in their own heritage may find the literature cited, hypotheses posed, and conclusions drawn, aids to understanding the evolution of their culture.

Persons interested in the study of other Northwest Coast Indian ceremonial garments may find this study of value as a basis for further research. Evidence from this research indicated that Button Blankets are on the verge of a possible evolution in form. By establishing the position of the Button Blanket at this point in time the present study may serve as a basis of comparison for future research on Button Blanket form and use.

Improvement of the Present Study

The analysis sheet used for this study could be revised in some areas and expanded to include additional information, such as the specific lineage of each informant. Data collection involved travel

to many cities and villages; it would be helpful if several weeks could be spent at each location. With increased time perhaps more blankets would be available for study. A researcher with the ability to speak Tlingit could probably gain valuable information not available to this investigator. Inclusion of a separate Rank and Use questionnaire distributed to blanket owners and non-owners alike would possibly give a clearer picture of the contemporary "cultural fit" of the Button Blanket.

Further Study

In-depth research of related ceremonial garments (especially the similar dance shirts and aprons, and the beaded collar) could follow this investigation.

It would be of value to know if any differences in basic form exist among the other groups of Northwest Coast peoples (Haida, Tsimshian, Kwakiutl, etc.) who use Button Blankets.

An analysis of the crests as portrayed in buttons on the historic versus the contemporary blankets would be useful to test for evolution in this form of totemism. A comparison between the traditional Tlingit art forms in button crests and in beaded crests could further trace trends in modification.

Vests with beaded crests and other designs seem to be a modern phenomenon. It would be valuable to document their history, meaning, and use.

Very recent regional availability of a quantity of mother-of-pearl buttons like those used for historic ceremonial garments may have an effect on the type of Button Blankets produced in the future. Research as to the end use and impact of these buttons could be significant.

Chapter VII

SUMMARY

Purpose of the Study

The geographically isolated Northwest Coast area of North America was the traditional home of the Tlingit. This rugged coastal land provided a wealth of edible resources and enabled hunting-and-gathering types of civilization to develop.

When Europeans first arrived on the Northwest Coast they found a thriving area of civilization; Indians there had developed complex cultures that emphasized art and ceremonialism.

Before white contact native Northwest Coast peoples wore garments of animal skins and/or a textile woven of cedarbark for daily dress. Ornaments were chiefly of stone, bone, and shell. Dentalium and abalone shells were the most highly prized objects for decoration.

A variety of goods was brought to the area by early explorers. Trade goods used by the Tlingit for personal adornment included beads, buttons from European uniforms, coins, hawk's bells, thimbles, abalone shell, and later, mother-of-pearl buttons. Trade blankets were not used by the Tlingit as bedding, but as robes to replace the skin robes they were trading away.

The Button Blanket was developed in the late 18th century by the people on the Northwest Coast as a result of this introduction of foreign materials. Tlingit Indians substituted trade items for indigenous materials and integrated the resulting blanket into their society as a ceremonial garment.

This study was undertaken for the purpose of:

- (1) Describing the historic Button Blanket and the contemporary Button Blanket and then comparing the two to determine if the basic form had changed with time.
- (2) Determining if the uses of the Button Blanket, and its cultural significance, had changed with time.

Justification of the Study

Little is known about the Tlingit Button Blanket outside the Tlingit culture itself. A person with an interest in Button Blankets would not be able to locate more than short, inadequate references to them in general works detailing the Northwest Coast cultures.

Assumptions

In order to proceed with field research certain assumptions were made: no special selection factors affected the Tlingit Button Blankets available for study in the Pacific Northwest; museum classification of the tribe of origin of Button Blankets was accurate; informant data were correct.

Hypotheses

Two hypotheses were drawn relating to change over time in the form and use of the Button Blanket in Tlingit society:

- (1) A comparison of historic and contemporary Tlingit Button Blankets will show recognizable common traits which make them identifiable as Button Blankets although there are differences in materials and methods used for construction.

- (2) The Tlingit Button Blanket still is utilized in its original context, basically associated with socio-religious rites, but this usage has diversified and has become more secularized.

Limitations

The conclusions of this study should be considered in light of the following limitations:

- (1) Only blankets specifically identified as Tlingit were included in the study.
- (2) Blanket samples were selected only by availability to the investigator.
- (3) Historic background information was unavailable for many blankets in the study.
- (4) Differing opinions sometimes exist among the Tlingit as to the significance of some blanket features.
- (5) Fiber content and yarn count were not determined under laboratory conditions.
- (6) The investigator is not Tlingit.

Procedure

Data were collected from the literature, historic photographs, personal interviews, and observation and analysis of existing Button Blankets. The analysis sheet for Button Blankets included information both on physical characteristics and social use.

The analysis sheets were used with blankets held by museums in Alaska, Washington, and Oregon, and with blankets in private ownership

in Southeastern Alaska. Unexpected difficulties caused some modification in size and composition of the study sample; however, a total of 45 Button Blankets were included in the study.

Information from the analysis sheets was compiled on a master chart, and comparisons of physical characteristics were made. Informant data were compared to the literature detailing use and social significance.

Findings

Historic Button Blanket Materials

The historic Button Blankets were made using a background of either a wool trade blanket or woolen trade cloth. The color of these background fabrics was predominantly dark, most often navy blue. All styles were similar in size, approximately 55 x 72 inches.

The border fabric was generally of red wool trade cloth, and this was present on the top and two sides of a blanket worn with the lengthwise grain across the back and shoulders. Width of the borders varied with the style of the Button Blanket, most often 4.5 to 5.5 inches.

Materials used to fasten the Button Blanket at the neck of the wearer were varied in material and style. Many closures appeared to be replacements for the original.

Buttons were mostly white mother-of-pearl, with a very few hand-made shell buttons present. Sizes and styles of buttons varied with the 3/8-inch, four-hole button the most prevalent. Very few additional materials were used to trim historic Button Blankets.

Contemporary Button Blanket Materials

All of the contemporary blankets fit the definition criteria for a Button Blanket by having at least three of the five elements: a generally dark rectangular background, bright trim on the left, upper, and right sides, white buttons on the inner edge of the border, a totem crest design, and supplemental inner borders.

The majority of contemporary Button Blankets were constructed using felt yardage for the background. Colors were again predominantly dark, and size was similar to the historic blankets.

Felt was used exclusively for border trim, and the color was mostly red. Border size of the contemporary blanket was similar to that of the historic blanket.

Closures were again quite variable as to material and style. A small rectangle of felt beaded with a crest design appears to be a recent development in fasteners.

Buttons were generally white, but colored ones were frequently present in the crest area. The vast majority of buttons were plastic. Most usual size was the same as the historic--3/8 inch; however, they were two- rather than four-hole buttons.

Construction of a Button Blanket

Women of the Tlingit tribe were, and are, the makers of Button Blankets. Possible sources for a crest design are more varied now than in historic times. Materials used both historically and in contemporary times are dependent on local availability of items.

Contemporary Button Blankets are constructed somewhat differently from the historic ones. One of the main differences in construction was some use of a sewing machine on all modern blankets. No evidence of a pattern or set of instructions was found.

Use of the Button Blanket

Historic Button Blankets were used strictly in formal ceremonials such as the potlatch. When properly validated they were worn at ceremonials while dancing and singing, telling stories, and making speeches. They were also used to drape over the deceased during funeral rites.

Today the right to wear any Button Blanket for participation in authentic Tlingit culture observances is very strictly observed in the history manner; however, the Button Blanket has many modern secular uses with no historic parallels.

Conclusions

From the data it was concluded that both of the following hypotheses could be accepted:

- (1) A comparison of historic and contemporary Tlingit Button Blankets will show recognizable common traits which make them identifiable as Button Blankets although there are differences in materials and methods used for construction.
- (2) The Tlingit Button Blanket still is utilized in its original context, basically associated with socio-religious rites, but its usage has diversified and has become more secularized.

Recommendations

Use of Present Study

This research expands information available about the ceremonial garments of the Tlingit Indian, and has possible application in the education of both Tlingit students and their instructors. It could also serve as a basis of comparison for future research.

Improvement of Present Study

A revision of the analysis sheet and the addition of a separate Rank and Use questionnaire could expand information needed. With increased time at each field location more blankets may be available for study.

Further Study

Several areas worthy of possible research interest were encountered during the course of this study. They are:

- (1) Ceremonial garments similar to the Button Blanket such as dance shirts and aprons.
- (2) Form comparison of the Tlingit Button Blankets with the Button Blankets of other Northwest Coast cultures.
- (3) Crest analysis between contemporary and history Button Blankets.
- (4) Recent beaded vests, their significance and use.
- (5) The effect on contemporary ceremonial garments of recent availability of mother-of-pearl buttons in Southeastern Alaska.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ackerman, Robert E. The Archeology of the Glacier Bay Region, Southeast Alaska. Pullman: Washington State University Laboratory of Anthropology Report of Investigations #44, 1968.
- American Fur Company Papers. Orders Outward Volume I (New Company). New York: New York Historical Society. N.D.
- Anderson, Beverly J. Cultural Change as Reflected in the Dress and Accessories of the Indian Tribes of the Pacific Northwest Coast. Unpublished Masters Thesis, Oregon State University, 1965.
- Andrews, Clarence. Wrangell and the Gold of the Cassiar. Seattle: Luke Tinker, 1937.
- Averkiewa, Julia. "The Tlingit Indians," In North American Indians in Historical Perspective, pp. 317-342. Edited by Eleanor B. Leacock and Nancy O. Lurie. New York: Random House, 1971.
- Bancroft, Hubert Howe. History of Alaska 1730-1885. New York: Antiquarian Press Ltd., 1959.
- Barbeau, Charles M. "The Bearing of the Heraldry of the Indians of the Northwest Coast of America upon their Social Organization." *Man*, Vol. 12, 1912, pp. 83-90.
- Barbeau, Marius. Pathfinders in the North Pacific. Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1958.
- Bell, Edward. A New Vancouver Journal. Edited by Edmond Meany. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1915.
- Birket-Smith, Kaj, and de Laguna, Frederica. The Eyak Indians of the Copper River Delta, Alaska. Copenhagen, Denmark: Levin and Munksgaard, 1938.
- Blackman, Margaret B. Blankets, Bracelets and Boas - The Potlatch in Photographs. A Paper Presented at the 72nd Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association. New Orleans: (Nov. 28-Dec. 2, 1973).
- Boas, Franz. The Social Organization and the Secret Societies of the Kwakiutl Indians. Report of U.S. National Museum, 1895.
- _____. Primitive Art. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1955.
- _____. Kwakiutl Ethnography. Edited by Helen Codere. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966.

- _____, ed. *Memoirs of American Museum of Natural History*, Vol. 2. New York: Jesup North Pacific Expedition, 1900.
- Codere, Helen. *Fighting With Property*. New York: J. J. Augustin, 1950.
- Cook, James. *A voyage to the Pacific Ocean undertaken by the command of His Majesty , for making discoveries in the Northern Hemisphere*, Vol. 2. London: W & A Strahan, 1784.
- Cook, Warren L. *Flood Tide of Empire, Spain and the Pacific Northwest, 1543-1819*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973.
- Dall, William H. "On Masks, Labrets, and Certain Aboriginal Customs." *Third Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology*, 1881-1882.
- Davydov, G. I. *Two Voyages to Russian America, 1802-1807*. Translated by Colin Bearne. Kingston, Ontario, Canada: The Limestone Press, 1977.
- DeArmond, Robert. *Early Visitors to Southeastern Alaska*. Anchorage: Alaska Northwest Publishing Co., 1978.
- de Laguna, Frederica. "The Prehistory of Northern North America as Seen from the Yukon." *Memoirs of the Society for American Archaeology* #3. Menasha, Wisconsin: 1947.
- _____. "An Anthropological Survey of the Northern Tlingit." Paper, Bryn Mawr College, 1949.
- _____. *Chugach Prehistory, the Archaeology of Prince William Sound, Alaska*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1956.
- _____. *The Story of a Tlingit Community*. Smithsonian Institution Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 172, 1960.
- _____. *Under Mount Saint Elias: The History and Culture of the Yakutat Tlingit*. Smithsonian Contributions to Anthropology, Vol. 7 (3 parts). City of Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1972.
- Denver Art Museum. *Indian Art of the Northwest Coast*. Denver: Denver Art Museum Winter Quarterly, 1962.
- Drucker, Philip. *Indians of the Northwest Coast*. New York: Natural History Press, 1955.
- Durlach, Theresa M. "The Relationship Systems of the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian." *Publications of the American Ethnological Society*, Vol. XI. New York: 1928.
- Emmons, George T. "The Use of the Chilcat Blanket." *The American Museum Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 5, 1908, pp. 65-70.

- _____. "The Tahltan Indians." University of Pennsylvania Anthropological Publications, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1911.
- _____. "The Whale House of the Chilcat." Anthropological Papers, American Museum of Natural History, Vol. 19, 1916, pp. 1-35.
- Emmons, George T., and Boas, Franz. "The Chilkat Blanket, with Notes on the Blanket Designs." Memoirs, American Museum of Natural History, Vol. 3, Part 4, 1907.
- Freedley, Edwin T. Philadelphia and its Manufactures. Philadelphia: Edward Young, 1859.
- Garfield, Viola. "Tlingit Clans in Angoon, Alaska." American Anthropologist, Vol. 49, 1947, pp. 438-452.
- Gassner, Julius. Voyages and Adventures of La Perouse. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1969.
- Gerrish, Theodore. Life in the World's Wonderland. Biddeford, Maine: Biddeford Journal Press, 1887.
- Glubok, Shirley. The Art of the Northwest Coast Indians. New York: Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc., 1975.
- Goldenweiser, Alexander A. Early Civilization. London: George G. Harrop & Co., Ltd., 1921.
- Goldschmidt, Dr. Walter R., and Haas, Theodore H. "Possessory Rights of the Natives of Southeastern Alaska," A Report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Washington, D.C.: 1946. (Mimeographed.)
- Gormly, Mary. "Tlingits of Bucareli Bay, Alaska (1774-1792)," Northwest Anthropological Research Notes, Vol. 5, No. 2, 1971, pp. 157-180.
- Gray, Nicholas. The Russian Orthodox Church in Russian America by Ivan Veniaminof. 1857. (Typewritten.)
- Grunfeld, Frederic V. "Potlatch, Views on a Curious and Exemplary Custom," The Beaver, Winter 1969, pp. 32,33.
- Gunther, Erna. Art in the Life of the Northwest Coast Indians. Portland, Oregon: Portland Art Museum, 1966.
- _____. Indian Life on the Northwest Coast of North America. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972.
- Haberland, Wolfgang. The Art of North America. Translated by Wayne Dynes. New York: Greystone Press, 1968.
- Hanson, Charles E. "The Point Blanket." Museum of the Fur Trade Quarterly, Vol. 12, No. 1, Spring 1976, pp. 5-10.

- Heizer, Robert F. "The Introduction of Monterey Shells to the Indians of the Northwest Coast." *The Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No. 4, 1940, pp. 399-402.
- Holm, Bill. *Northwest Coast Indian Art*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1965.
- Holm, Bill, and Reid, Bill. *Indian Art of the Northwest Coast*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1975.
- Holmberg, Johann H. *Ethnographic Sketches of the Peoples of Russian America*. Translated by Richard A. Pierce. Juneau, Alaska Division of State Libraries, 1974.
- Horn, Mona. *The Kwakiutl Version of the Chilkat Blanket*. Unpublished Masters Thesis, Oregon State University, 1972.
- Howay, Frederic W. *Voyages of the Columbia to the Northwest Coast, 1787-1790 and 1790-1793*. New York: Da Capo Press, 1941.
- Hudson's Bay Company Archives. Ottawa: HBC PAC Reel No. 380, A.28/143, pp. 1-11. N.D.
- Inverarity, Robert Bruce. *Art of the Northwest Coast Indian*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1950.
- Jacobsen, Johan Adrian. *Alaskan Voyage 1881-1883*. Translated by Erna Gunther from German Text of Adrian Woldt. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977.
- Jewitt, John R. *Narrative of the Adventures and Sufferings of John R. Jewitt, only survivor of the Ship Boston, during a captivity of nearly three years among the savages of Nootka Sound; with an account of the manners, mode of living, and religious opinions of the natives*. Middletown, New York: Loomis and Richards, 1815.
- Jones, Livingston F. *A Study of the Thlingits of Alaska*. New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1914.
- Keim, Gay. *Alaskan Ornamentation*. Fairbanks: University of Alaska Museum, 1972.
- Keithahan, Edward L. *Monuments in Cedar*. Seattle: Superior Publishing Company, 1963.
- Khlebnikov, Kyrill T. *Colonial Russian America, Kyrill T. Khlebnikov's Reports, 1817, 1832*. Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1976.
- Knapp, Frances, and Childe, Rheta L. *The Thlingits of Southeastern Alaska*. Chicago: Stone & Kimball, 1896.

- Krause, Aurel. *The Tlingit Indians: Results of a Trip to the Northwest Coast of America and the Bering Straights*. Translated by Erna Gunther. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1956.
- Kroeber, A. L. *Anthropology*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1948.
- Lantis, Margared. *Ethnohistory in Southwestern Alaska and the Southern Yukon*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1970.
- Leacock, Eleanor B., and Lurie, Nancy O., ed. *North American Indians in Historical Perspective*. New York: Random House, 1971.
- Ledyard, John. *A Journal of Captain Cook's Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean, and in Quest of a North-West Passage Between Asia and America*. Hartford: Nathaniel Pattern, 1783.
- Leechman, Douglas. "Abalone Shells from Monterey." *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 44, 1942. pp. 159-162.
- Lisiansky, Urey. *Voyage Round the World in the Years 1803, 1804, 1805, and 1806*. New York: Da Capo Press, 1968.
- McKay, Douglas. "Blanket Coverage." *The Beaver*, Outfit 266, No. 1, 1935, pp. 45-53.
- McClellan, Catharine. "Culture Contacts in the Early Historic Period in Northwestern North America." *Arctic Anthropology*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1965, pp. 3-15.
- _____. "The Interrelations of Social Structure with Northern Tlingit Ceremonialism." *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1954, pp. 75-96.
- McFeat, Tom, ed. *Indians of the North Pacific Coast*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966.
- Meares, John. *Voyages made in the Years 1788 and 1789 from China to the Northwest Coast of America*. London: Lographic Press, 1791.
- Miller, Polly, and Miller, Leon G. *Lost Heritage of Alaska: The Adventure and Art of the Alaskan Coastal Indians*. New York: The World Publishing Co., 1967.
- Morris, William G. *Report Upon the Customs District, Public Service, and Resources of Alaska Territory*. Washington, D.C., 1879.
- Murray, Keith A. "The Role of the Hudson's Bay Company in Pacific Northwest History." *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, Vol. 52, No. 1, 1961, pp. 24-31.

- National Archives. Contract between B. C. Whiting, Supt. Indian Affairs for California and Donald M. Lennan, Manager for Mission & Pacific Woolen Mills Consolidation, 1869.
- Newcombe, C. F. Menzie's Journal of Vancouver's Voyage. Archives of British Columbia, Memoir No. 5, 1923.
- Niblack, Albert P. The Coast Indians of Southern Alaska and Northern British Columbia. New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970.
- Oberg, Kalervo. The Social Economy of the Tlingit Indians. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1973.
- Olson, R. L. Social Structure and Social Life of the Tlingit in Alaska. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967.
- Oswalt, Wendell H. This Land was Theirs. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1973.
- Peck, Cyrus E., Sr. The Tides People, Tlingit Indians of Southeastern Alaska. Juneau: City and Borough of Juneau, Alaska, 1975.
- Pendleton Woolen Mills. The Wool Story. Portland, Oregon: Pendleton Woolen Mills, 1971.
- Petroff, Ivan. "Population, Industries, and Resources of Alaska." Report to the Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 1884.
- Plummer, Alfred. The Whitney Blanket Industry. London: George Routledge and Sons, Inc., 1934.
- Quimby, George I. "Culture Contact on the Northwest Coast, 1785-1795." American Anthropologist, Vol. 50, 1948, pp. 247-255.
- Rich, E. E. The History of the Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1870. London: Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1958.
- _____. The Letters of John McLoughlin from Fort Vancouver to the Governor and Committee. London: Champlain Society for Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1914.
- Richardson, Albert D. Beyond the Mississippi: From the Great River to the Great Ocean. Hartford, Conn.: American Publishing Co., 1968.
- Samwell, David. The Voyage of the Resolution and Discovery, 1776-1780. Edited by J. C. Beaglehole. Cambridge: The University Press, 1967.
- Shotridge, Louis, and Shotridge, Florence. Shotridge Papers on Tlingit Ethnology. Philadelphia: University Museum, 1913..
- Siebert, Erna and Forman, Werner. North American Indian Art. Printed in Czechoslovakia, 1967.

Smith, Marian W. The Puyallup-Nisqually. New York: Columbia University Press, 1940.

Stanley, Samuel. "Changes in Tlingit Social Organization." Los Angeles State College, 1965. (Typescript.)

Swanton, John R. "Contributions to the Ethnology of the Haida." Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History. New York: G. E. Stechart, 1905.

_____. Social Condition, Beliefs, and Linguistic Relationship of the Tlingit Indians. New York: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1970.

Teichman, Emil. A Journey to Alaska in the Year 1868. Edited by Oskar Teichman. Kensington: Coyne Press, 1925.

Tikhomenev, P. A. A History of the Russian American Company. Seattle: University of Washington, 1978.

Webster's New International Dictionary of the English Language. Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam Co., 1961.

Wherry, Joseph H. The Totem Pole Indians. New York: Wilfred Funk, Inc., 1964.

Wike, Joyce. "Problems in Fur Trade Analysis: The Northwest Coast." American Anthropologist, Vol. 60, 1958, pp. 1086-1101.

Wood, C. E. S. "Among the Thlingits in Alaska," The Century Magazine, Vol. 24, No. 3, 1882, pp. 333-339.

APPENDICES

Appendix A. American Fur Company Order to A. & S. Henry & Co., Leeds, England for Trade Cloth.

50	pieces	Indigo	Blue	Strouds	Broad Cord to cost 50/for piece of 20 yds cord very white								
40	"	"	"	Cloth	Saved White List 1 inch wide @ 2/9 per yard								
40	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	- 3/	"	"
40	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	- 3/3	"	"
20	"	"	"	"	"	Grey	"	"	"	"	- 3/	"	"
20	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	- 3/3	"	"
20	"	Bright	Scarlet	"	"	White	"	"	"	"	- 3/3	"	"
20	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	"	- 3/4 to		
											3/8	"	"

each piece to contain about 20 yards and to be as near 54 inches wide as can be obtained for the prices named Lists very bright. (American Fur Company Papers, Orders Outward Vol. I New Company. New York Historical Society, N.Y.)

Appendix B. Hudson's Bay Company Requisition for Goods from England
for the Trade of the Western Department Outfit 1871.

(Block)	^a 150	each	broad scarlet	worsted Belts					
	100	each	middling	"	"	"			
(Henry)	100	each	white rose	Blankets	4 pts.	7/0			
	100	"	fine white Witney	do		12/6			
	100	"	Indigo blue	do	4 pts.	black bars	9/7		
	100	"	"	do	3½ pts.	"	"	8/-	
	250	"	"	do	3	"	"	6/8	
	150	"	Gentian blue	do	3	"	"	6/4	
	250	"	"	do	2½	"	"	5/4	
	500	"	Indigo	do	2½	"	"	5/2	
	300	"	Green	do	4	"	"	8/5	
	1000	"	" (1 Pair stript)	do	3	"	"	5/	
	500	"	"	do	2½	"	"	4/2	
(Atkinson)	200	"	Scarlet	do	4	"	"	10/-	
	100	"	"	do	3½	"	"	8/-	
	350	"	"	do	3	"	"	7/-	
	500	"	"	do	2½	"	"	5/9	
(Henry)	200	"	H.B.Striped	do	3	"	"	7/5	
(Collier)	250	"	Plain White	do	4	"	blue bar best	9/-	
	100	"	"	do	3½	"	"	7/5	
	50	"	"	do	1	"	"	2/3	

Note - The above blankets to be of the usual standard weight and measure.

(Henry) 2000 each (8 pairs stript) Common White Blankets 2½ pt.
blue bar 3/9

NOTE - The last lot of Blankets to be similar to the common White

Blankets received ex "Princess Royal" in 1870

^aThe names in parentheses in the margin are those of suppliers.

Appendix C. American Fur Company Order to A. & S. Henry & Co., Leeds, England for Point Blankets.

30	pairs	4	point	Indigo	Blue Blankets	
30	"	3½	"	"	"	"
90	"	3	"	"	"	"
120	"	3	"	Bright	Green	"
120	"	3	"	Scarlet		"
200	"	2	"	White		"
250	"	1½	"	"		"
250	"	1	"	"		"

(American Fur Company Papers, Orders Outward Vol. 1 New Company. New York Historical Society, N.Y.)

Appendix D. Analysis Sheet for the Examination of Button Blankets.

Blanket Number _____

Date _____

Where Viewed _____

BUTTON BLANKET ANALYSIS

1. Respondent

Name: _____

Address: _____

2. Present possessor of Blanket

Name: _____

Address: _____

3. Owner of Blanket

Name: _____

Address: _____

4. Maker of Blanket

Name: _____

Village: _____

5. Year of manufacture: _____

6. Year of collection: _____

7. History of Ownership:

8. Blanket Line of Decendency:

9. Current Uses:

Number _____

10. Symbol interpretation by respondent:

11. Who has the right to wear this blanket? (Respondent)

12. Symbol description of author:

13. Who has the right to wear this blanket? (Author)

Number _____

14. Size:

- a. top _____
- b. bottom _____
- c. right side _____
- d. left side _____

15. Background:

- a. color _____
 - b. location of selvage _____
 - c. blanket _____
yardage _____
 - d. presence of points:
location _____
size _____
color _____
 - f. fiber content _____
 - g. type of weave _____
 - h. yarn count _____
- _____
- _____

16. Border:

- a. color _____
- b. location _____
- c. width _____
- d. method of turning corners _____
- e. method of attachment to background _____
- f. fiber content _____
- g. type of weave _____
- h. thread count _____

Number _____

17. Top Binding:

- a. color _____
- b. width _____
- c. location of closures _____
- d. size of closures _____
- e. closure fabric _____
- f. binding fabric _____
- g. binding fiber content _____
- h. type of weave _____
- i. thread count _____

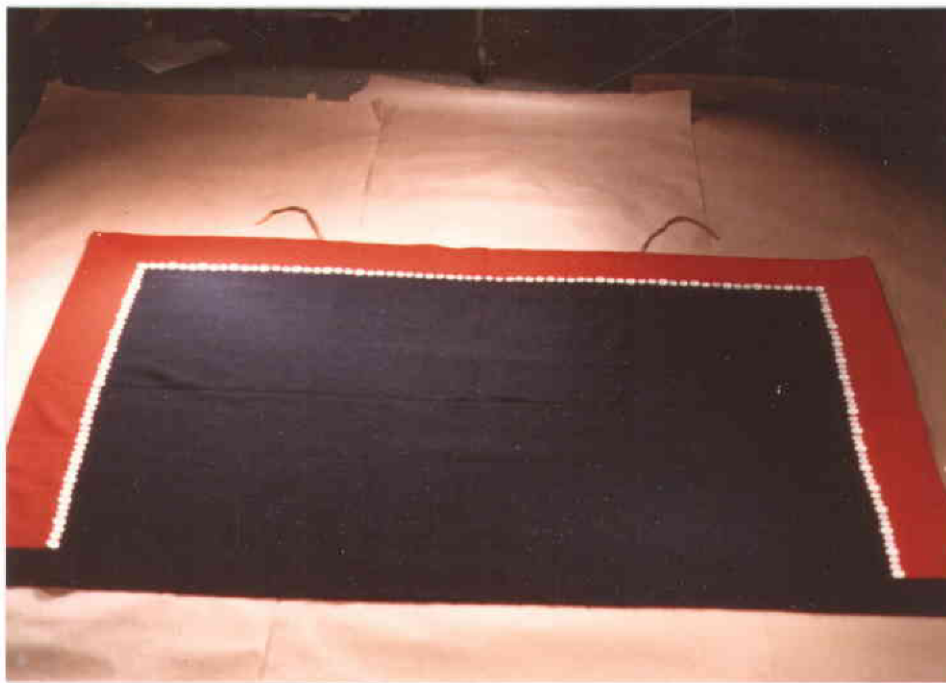
18. Decoration

- a. applique: present _____, not present _____
 - 1. color _____
 - 2. fabric _____
 - 3. type of weave _____
 - 4. thread count _____
 - 5. method of attachment to background _____
- b. buttons: number _____
 - 1. material _____
 - 2. color _____
 - 3. sizes and type _____
- c. other material present _____
- d. method of attachment of buttons, etc. _____

Number _____

19. Condition of Blanket _____
_____20. Comments _____

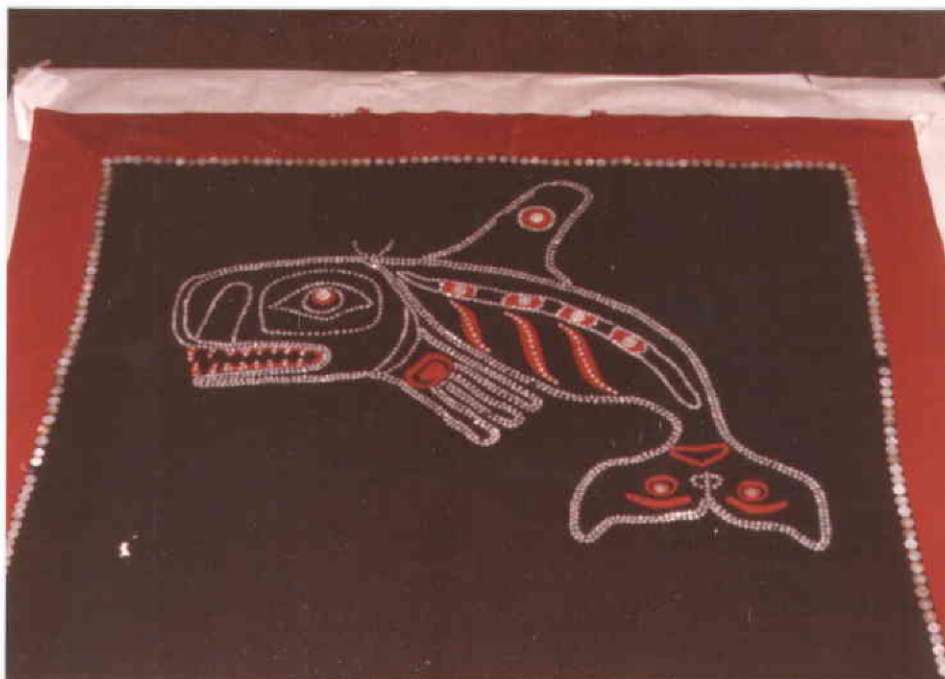
Appendix E. Button Blanket Styles.



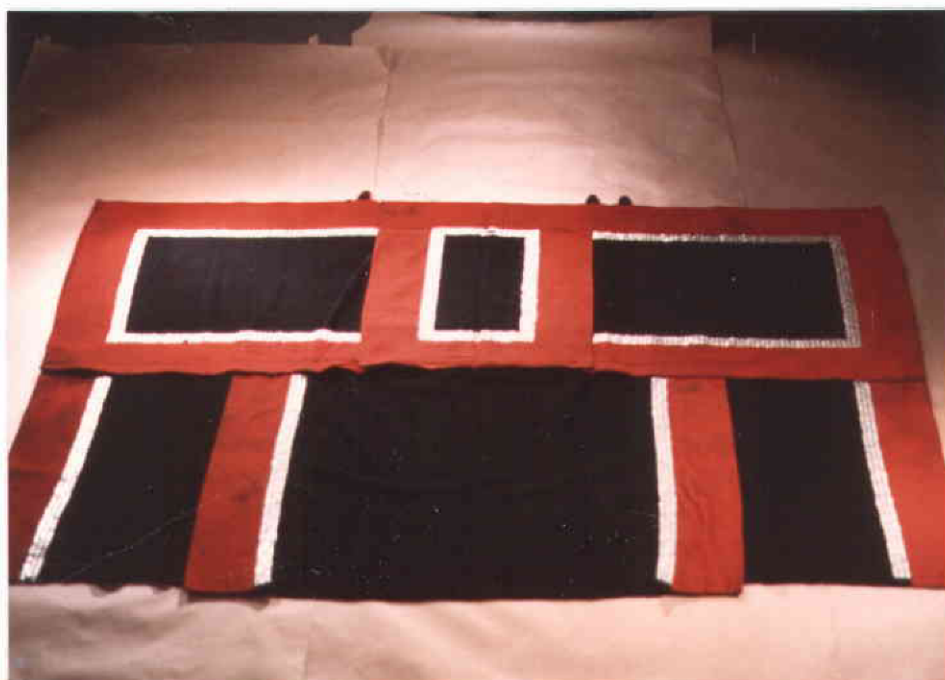
Plain Button Blanket: Alaska State Museum Collection



Crest Button Blanket: Alaska State Museum Collection
Some buttons missing, and others apparently removed.














Crest Button Blanket with Applique: Thomas Burke
Memorial Washington State Museum Collection



Tahltan Style Button Blanket: Alaska State Museum Collection

Appendix F. Information on Button Blanket Samples in the Study.

Blanket Age	Number	Owner ¹	Style ²	Color	Type ³	Background							Color	Border			Buttons			Other Materials	Special Notes
						Weave	Points	Size (in.)				Weave		Size (in.)	Color	Sizes(in.)	Number ⁴				
								Top	Bottom	Left	Right							Sides	Inner		
H I S T O R I C	1	M	P	Dark Gray	B	Twill	-	65.5	69.2	54.5	53.5	-*	Twin- ing	5.5	-	-	-		-		*Top-Skin Border, Sides-Chilkat Blanket Strips; Transitional
	2	P	P	Navy	B	Twill	3	67.2	69.0	56.0	55.5	Red	Felt	8.5	-	White	$\frac{3}{8}$		51 small coppers		Oldest example of felt See text for sketch of coppers (p. 88)
	3	M	P	Navy	B	Twill	3	68.5	69.5	55.5	57.0	Red	Plain	7.0	-	White	$\frac{3}{16}$		-		Saved list
	4	P	P	Navy	B	Twill	2½	71.0*	75.0*	50.2	51.2	Red	Plain	5.7	-	White	$\frac{3}{8}$		-		*Extra fabric added under border; Saved list
	5	M	P	Navy	B	Twill	3	68.7	69.7	56.5	56.0	Red	Plain	5.7	-	White	$\frac{1}{2} \frac{5}{8}$		-		Possibly unfinished
	6	M	P	Royal Blue	Y	Twill	-	67.2	69.0	55.7	55.2	Red	Plain	5.5	-	White	$\frac{5}{16}$		-		Saved list
	7	M	P	Navy	B	Twill	-	65.5	67.2	53.5	53.0	Red	Plain	5.5	-	White Pale Gray	$\frac{3}{8}$		-		Saved list
	8	P	C	Navy	B	Basket	-	78.5	78.5	62.0	62.5	Red	Felt	5.5	-	White	$\frac{1}{2} \frac{5}{8}$		Beads Sequins Pink Felt		Oldest blanket with quite a few beads; very different blanket - jumbo
	9	M	C	Navy	B	Twill	-	68.7	70.0	59.0	57.7	Red	Plain	5.5	-	White Pale Gray	$\frac{3}{8} \frac{1}{2}$		-		Saved list
	10	M	C	Navy	B	Twill	-	68.0	68.0	55.0	55.0	Red	Plain	3.7	-	White	$\frac{1}{2} \frac{3}{8}$		-		Saved list
	11	M	C	Red	Y	Plain	-	76.2	72.2	57.0	58.2	-*	-	5.7	-	White	$\frac{1}{2}$		Blue, White Yellow beads		*Painted skin side borders

¹Ownership:
M, Museum
P, Private


















²Style types:
P, Plain
C, Crest
F, Four Stripe
T, Tahltan

³Type of background:
B, Blanket
Y, Yardage


















⁴Approximate number:
☐ 0 ☐ 1001-1500
☐ 1-500 ☐ 1501-2000
☐ 501-1000

*See note at right

Continued

Blanket Age	Number	Owner	Style ²	Color	Type ³	Weave	Points	Background				Color	Border			Buttons			Number ⁴	Other Materials	Special Notes		
								Size (in.)					Weave	Size (in.)		Color	Sizes(in.)						
								Top	Bottom	Left	Right			Sides	Inner								
H I S T O R I C	12	M	C	Red	B	Twill	3	70.2	71.5	56.0	57.0	Olive	Plain	3.2	-	White	$\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{7}{8}$	$\frac{1}{4}$		-	Twigs to hold shank buttons	
	13	M	C	Navy	B	Twill	3	66.2	68.7	53.5	53.0	Red	Plain	5.5	-	White	$\frac{3}{8}$	$\frac{7}{8}$	$\frac{1}{2}$		-	Superb work	
	14	M	C	Black	Y	Plain	-	66.5	66.0	56.5	56.5	Red	Plain	7.5	-	White	$\frac{3}{8}$	$\frac{5}{16}$			Few beads Multi-color	Pencil lines for beading	
	15	M	C	Navy	B	Twill	3	69.7	69.5	56.2	56.0	Red	Plain	5.7	-	White	$\frac{5}{16}$	$\frac{7}{8}$	$\frac{3}{4}$		-	Poor work, saved list, hand-made buttons	
	16	M	C	Navy	B	Twill	-	72.7*	72.5*	52.5	52.5	Red	Plain	4.5	-	White	$\frac{3}{8}$	$\frac{1}{2}$			-	*Extra fabric added; Saved list	
	17	M	C	Black	Y	Twill	-	73.2	73.2	57.5	58.0	Red	Plain	3.7	-	White	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{3}{4}$			-	3 abalone buttons	
	18	M	C	Royal Blue	B	Twill	-	68.7	69.5	53.0	53.0	Red	Plain	2.5	-	White	$\frac{3}{8}$				-	2 abalone buttons	
	19	M	C	Navy	B	Twill	3	73.0	71.5	53.5	52.5	Red	Twill	5.0	-	White	$\frac{3}{8}$	$\frac{5}{8}$	$\frac{7}{8}$	$\frac{1}{2}$		-	Rare stripe system on blanket, cloth strips to hold shank buttons
	20	P	F	Navy	B	Twill	3	66.7	67.0	55.5	54.7	Red	Plain	6.0	5.7	White	$\frac{3}{8}$				-	Saved list added for effect	
	21	M	F	Dark Gray	B	Twill	3	68.0	70.0	58.0	58.0	Red	Plain	5.0	5.0	White 1 Black	$\frac{3}{8}$	$\frac{5}{8}$	$\frac{3}{4}$		White beads	Whale designs don't match	
	22	M	T	Royal Blue	Y	Plain	-	70.5	71.7	60.2	60.2	Red	Plain	4.5	4.5	White	$\frac{3}{8}$				-	Set of extra borders	
	23	P	T	Royal Blue	Y	Plain	-	68.2	68.0	54.5	55.0	Red	Plain	3.5	3.5	White	$\frac{3}{8}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{5}{16}$		-	All 2-hole buttons	
	24	M	T	Blue	Y	Plain	-	68.5	68.0	56.2	56.5	Red	Plain	4.0	3.7	White	$\frac{3}{8}$				-	-	
	25	M	T	Blue	Y	Twill	-	69.2	67.0	54.0	52.7	Red	Plain	4.2	4.5	White	$\frac{3}{8}$				-	-	
	26	M	T	Black	Y	Satin	-	67.7	67.7	49.2	49.7	Red	Plain	4.5	4.5	White	$\frac{5}{16}$				-	Buttons attached to fabric strip	
	27	P	T	Blue	Y	Twill	-	68.7	70.7	57.7	53.7	Red	Plain	3.7	3.7	White	$\frac{3}{8}$				-	Set of extra borders	
	28	M	T	Navy	Y	Felt	-	75.5	71.2	58.0	57.5	Red	Plain	4.7	4.5	White	$\frac{5}{16}$	$\frac{3}{8}$	$\frac{1}{2}$		-	-	

Continued

Blanket Age	Number	Owner ¹	Style ²	Color	Type ³	Weave	Points	Background				Color	Border			Buttons			Number ⁴	Other Materials	Special Notes
								Size (in.)					Weave	Size (in.)		Color	Sizes(in.)				
								Top	Bottom	Left	Right			Sides	Inner						
C O N T E M P O R A R Y	29	P	P	Navy	Y	Felt	-	71.2	68.7	51.0	51.7	Red	Felt	5.7	-	White	$\frac{3}{4} \frac{7}{8}$		-	-	
	30	P	P	Navy	B	Plain	-	68.2	64.2	53.0	53.0	Red	Felt	5.5	-	White	$\frac{3}{8} \frac{3}{4}$		-	-	
	31	P	P	Black	Y	Felt	-	65.5	65.0	51.5	51.0	Red	Felt	5.2	-	White	$\frac{3}{8}$		-	-	
	32	P	P	Black	Y	Felt	-	69.2	69.0	52.5	52.2	Red	Felt	5.0	-	White	$\frac{3}{8} \frac{3}{4} \frac{7}{8}$		-	-	
	33	M	C	Black	Y	Felt	-	71.2	68.7	51.0	51.7	Red	Felt	3.5	-	Yellow White	$\frac{3}{8} \frac{5}{8}$		Sequins Chain Stitch	-	
	34	P	C	Turq	Y	Felt	-	64.0	64.0	53.0	52.7	Maroon	Felt	5.5	-	-	-		Sequins only	Top edge turned under	
	35	P	C	Black	Y	Felt	-	65.5	64.2	52.0	53.0	Red	Felt	5.5	-	Multi	$\frac{3}{8}$		-	-	
	36	P	C	Black	Y	Plain	-	70.2	70.2	51.7	51.2	Red	Felt	4.2	-	White	$\frac{3}{8} \frac{1}{2}$		All beaded crest	Very realistic design	
	37	P	C	Black	Y	Felt	-	68.5	68.5	52.5	52.0	Red	Felt	5.0	-	Yellow Red White	$\frac{1}{2} \frac{5}{8}$		-	No applique	
	38	P	C	Black	Y	Felt	-	71.0	70.0	53.0	53.5	Red	Felt	4.2	-	White	$\frac{3}{8}$		All beaded crest	Border stops short of bottom	
	39	P	C	Red	Y	Felt	-	65.5	64.2	51.7	52.5	Black	Felt	5.2	-	White	$\frac{1}{2}$		All beaded crest	Fantastic amount of beads	
	40	P	C	Black	Y	Felt	-	69.0	69.0	51.5	51.7	Red	Felt	4.7	-	White	$\frac{1}{2}$		All beaded crest	-	
	41	P	C	Black	Y	Felt	-	68.5	67.0	53.0	52.2	Red	Felt	4.0	-	Blue Yellow White	$\frac{3}{8} \frac{1}{2}$		-	No applique	
	42	P	C	Black	Y	Felt	-	69.0	68.5	52.2	52.7	Red	Felt	4.0	-	White	$\frac{3}{8}$		All beaded crest	Poor construction	
	43	P	C	Red	Y	Felt	-	65.5	64.2	52.3	53.0	Black	Felt	4.7	-	White	$\frac{3}{8} \frac{5}{8}$		All beaded crest	Border stops short of bottom	
	44	P	C	Black	Y	Felt	-	65.5	65.2	52.3	53.0	Red	Felt	5.5	-	Multi	$\frac{3}{8} \frac{3}{4}$		-	Top edge turned under	
	45	P	C	Black	Y	Felt	-	70.0	69.5	53.0	52.0	Red	Felt	5.7	-	White	$\frac{3}{8}$		All beaded crest	-	

Appendix G. Historic Photographs.



A chief wearing a Button Blanket with rectangles of abalone shell in the throat area. He is holding a Copper. Photo: American Museum of Natural History.



(a)

(b)

Hoonah Tlingit dressed for a ceremonial occasion. Figure (a) is wearing a blanket with border strips that were once part of a Chilkat Blanket. Figure (b) appears to be wearing a Tahltan style Button Blanket. Photo: American Museum of Natural History.



(a)

(b)

Two men wearing transitional styles of Button Blanket. Figure (a) is wearing a blanket with an applique crest design, possibly cut from another blanket. Figure (b) has a blanket with side borders of Chilkat Blanket-type weaving. It appears these strips were specially made for this blanket. Photo: Merrill, Alaska Historical Library.

Chilkat chiefs dressed ceremonially. Figure (a) is wearing a Chilkat Blanket and Dance Apron. Figure (b) has on a robe possibly made before contact. Figure (c) is wearing a Button Blanket on his body in an unusual manner. Photo: Provincial Museum, Victoria, B.C., Canada.



(a)

(b)

(c)

Tlingit people in dance regalia. Figure (a) has on a "Button" Dance Shirt with abalone and dentalium. Figure (b) has on a fur robe with painted skin borders. Figures (c), (d), and (e) have Chilkat Blankets. Figure (f) is wearing a Crest Button Blanket. Figure (g) has a trade blanket with painted skin borders. Photo: Alaska Historical Library.



(a)

(b)

(c)

(d)

(e)

(f)

(g)

Tlingits dressed for a ceremonial occasion. Several Button Blankets are being worn, including one by the small child in the front row.
Photo: Provincial Museum, Victoria, B.C., Canada.

