

The Taku form a somewhat distinct branch of the Tahl-tan, though ^{Taku Indians.} they speak the same dialect. They are evidently the people referred to by Dall as the Täh'-ko-tin'-neh.* They claim the whole drainage-basin of the Taku River, together with the upper portions of the streams which flow northward to the Lewes; while on the east their hunting-grounds extend to the Upper Liard River, and include the valleys of the tributary streams which join that river from the westward. They are thus bounded to the south by the Tahl-tan, to the west by the coast Taku (Thlinkit), to the north-west by the Tagish, and to the east by the Kaska.

The territorial claims of the Tahl-tan and Stikine Coast Indians ^{Rights of coast and inland tribes.} (Thlinkit) overlapped in a very remarkable manner, for while, as above stated, the former hunt down the Stikine valley as far as the Iskoot, and even beyond that point, the latter claimed the salmon-fishery and berry-gathering grounds on all the streams which enter the Stikine between Shäk's Creek (four miles below Glenora) and Telegraph Creek, excepting the First South Fork, where there is no fishery. Their claim did not include Telegraph Creek nor any part of the main river; nor did it extend to the Clearwater River or to any of the tributaries lower down. In whatever manner the claim to these streams may have been acquired, the actual importance of them to the Coast Indians lay in the fact that the arid climate found immediately to the east of the Coast Ranges enabled them to dry salmon and berries for winter provision, which is scarcely possible in the humid atmosphere of the coast region.

The strict ideas entertained by the Indians here with respect to territorial rights is evidenced by the fact that the Indians from the mouth of the Nass, who have been in the habit of late years of coming in summer to work in the gold mines near Dease Lake, though they may kill beaver for food, are obliged to make over the skins of these animals to the local Indians. Thus, while no objection is made to either whites or foreign Indians killing game while travelling, trapping or hunting for skins is resented. In 1880 or 1881 two white men went down the Liard River some distance to spend the winter in trapping, but were never again seen, and there is strong circumstantial evidence to show that they were murdered by the local Indians there.

On the Stikine, as in the case of other rivers and passes forming ^{Trade between coast and interior.} routes between the coast and the interior, the Coast tribes assumed the part of middle-men in trade, before the incursion of the miners broke up the old arrangements. The Stikine Indians allowed the Tahl-tan to trade only with them, receiving furs in exchange for goods obtained on the coast from the whites. The Tahl-tan, in turn, carried on a

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