

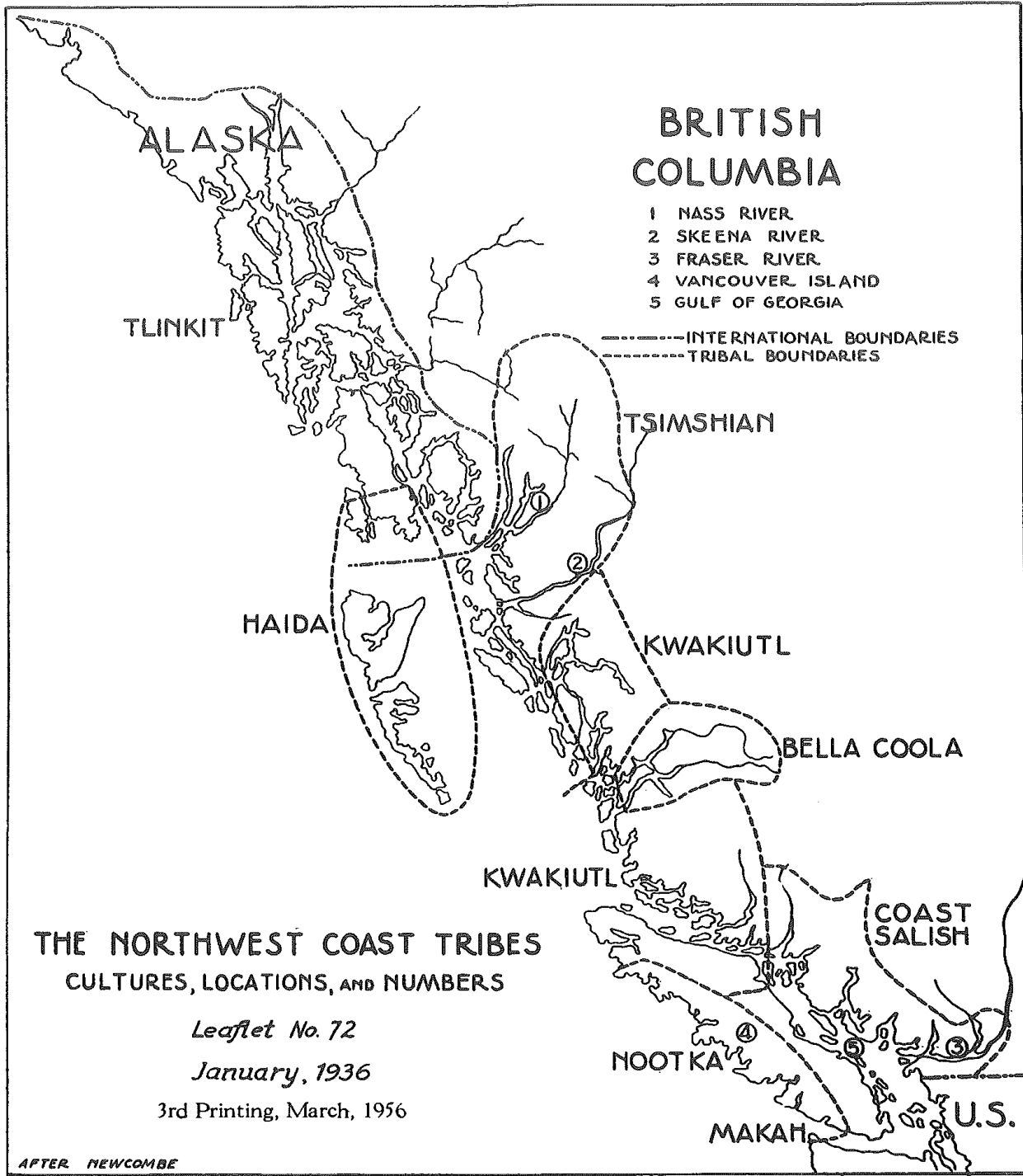
DENVER ART MUSEUM

1300 LOGAN STREET, DENVER, COLORADO

DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN ART

RICHARD G. CONN, CURATOR

FREDERIC H. DOUGLAS, EDITOR



1. **THE NORTHWEST COAST INDIANS** are the members of those tribes whose names and the extent of whose range are shown by the map on the cover.

2. **CULTURE.** The distinctive culture of these tribes is best summed up in the following quotations from "The American Indian"—Clark Wissler. "The great dependence upon sea food, some hunting on the mainland, large use of berries; dried fish, clams and berries are the staple food; cooking with hot stones in boxes and baskets; large rectangular gabled houses of upright cedar planks with carved posts and totem poles; travel chiefly by water in large, sea-going dug-out canoes, some of which had sails; no pottery nor stone vessels, except mortars; baskets in checker, those in twine reaching a high state of excellence among the Tlingit; coil basketry not made; mats of cedar bark and soft bags in abundance; the Chilkat, a Tlingit tribe, specialized in the weaving of a blanket of goat hair; there was no true loom, the warp hanging from a bar, and weaving with the fingers, downward; clothing rather scanty, chiefly of skin, a wide basket hat (the only one of its kind on the continent and apparently for rain protection); feet usually bare, but skin moccasins and leggings were occasionally made; for weapons the bow, club and a peculiar dagger, no lances; slat, rod and skin armor; wooden helmets, no shields; practically no chipped stone tools, but nephrite and green stone used; wood work highly developed, splitting and dressing of planks, peculiar bending for boxes, joining by securing with concealed stitches; high development of carving technic; work in copper may have been aboriginal, but, if so, very weakly developed; decorative art is conspicuous, tending to realism in carved totem poles, house posts, etc.; some geometric art on baskets, but woven blankets tend to be realistic; each family expresses its mythical origin in a carved or painted crest; the tribe of two exogamic divisions with maternal descent; society organized as chiefs, nobles, common people and slaves; a kind of barter system expressed in the potlatch ceremony in which the leading units of value are blankets and certain conventionalized copper plates; a complex ritualistic system by which individuals are initiated into the protection of their family guardian spirits, those so associated with the same spirit forming a kind of society; mythology characterized by the Raven legends."

The tribes in the southern part of the area, the Kwakiutl, Bella Coola and Nootka, display certain differences. "Use a hand stone hammer instead of a hafted one; practically no skin clothing, but twisted and loosely woven bark or wool; no coil or twined basketry, all checker work; have a tendency toward paternal descent for its exogamic groups; the crest system less in evidence, but the initiation groups very strong, particularly the cannibal cult, and far less associated with clans."

3. **LOCATION.** These tribes were in the locations shown on the map at the time of their exploration by Americans and Europeans in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. They have legends and traditions of migrations in not so very ancient times. Within their area the tribes traveled a great deal, but their homes were settled places to which they returned from the voyages. Certain groups have shifted their homes to some extent.

4. **VILLAGES.** Under aboriginal conditions these tribes lived in a number of permanent villages during the winter months and through the rest of the year lived in many small settlements in locations favorable for food gathering or the obtaining of raw materials for their industries. But with the coming of white influence there began a tendency, which has been steadily growing, to abandon their old villages and to move to the neighborhood of white towns. As a result of this, and because of the lack of up to date information, it is difficult to state in this leaflet just how many native villages are in active existence today. In the following table the number of existing villages of each tribe is given. But no guarantee can be given that this information is entirely accurate. Reference 5 discusses this point.

Tlinkit.....	about 30	Kwakiutl.....	about 20
Haida.....	about 5	Nootka.....	about 25
Tsimshian.....	About 12	Coast Salish.....	about 40
Bella Coola.....	2—one very small		

Besides these principal villages there is an undetermined number of small camp sites or tiny settlements. Even in the old days not all of the villages and settlements were occupied simultaneously and this condition still exists.

5. POPULATION CHANGES. From various estimates it appears that the tribes in question numbered about 50,000 to 60,000 toward the end of the 18th century. Epidemics of various kinds, especially smallpox, and to some extent, lack of food and intertribal wars rapidly reduced the population during the 19th century. Today the population seems to be somewhere in the neighborhood of 19,000. It appears that all these tribes but the Bella Coola have increased somewhat in the last 10 years.

6. TRIBE. This word is loosely used in this leaflet to denote groups speaking the same language or slightly different dialects of one tongue. Each of these is made up of small village units which, formerly at least, were largely independent of each other. The names of these subdivisions of stocks will be listed under each main heading.

7. LINGUISTIC STOCKS. According to the Powell classification the following distinct stocks were found on the Northwest coast; Koluschan, Skittagetan, Chimmesyan, Salishan and Wakashan. More recent studies indicate that these stocks are not all distinct and combine as follows with themselves or neighboring stocks: Salishan and Wakashan with Chimmakuan into a new group called Mosan; Koluschan and Skittagetan with Athabaskan into a group called Nadene; Chimmesyan with a large number of other stocks to the south into a stock called Penutian. The Mosan stock mentioned above is also combined with Algonkin and Kitunahan (Kootenay) in the Algonkin-Wakashan division proposed by Sapir (see reference 6). As not all of these combinations are generally accepted the old Powell terms will be used under the tribal headings to follow.

8. TLINKIT OR TLINGIT (Tling-kit). The name means "people". Koluschan linguistic stock. The population today is about 4,700, of whom 250 are in Canada and the rest in Alaska. The following subdivisions of the tribe are noted in various references; Auk, Chilkat, Henya, Huna, Hutsnuwu, Kake, Kiyu, Sanyakoan, Sitka, Stikine, Sumdum, Tagish, Taku, Tongas, Yakutat, Yagtag. The people formerly lived in some 50 villages scattered throughout their territory. For the modern villages see section 4.

9. HAIDA (High-dah). The name means "people". Skittagetan linguistic stock. Population today, about 1,350, 750 being on the Queen Charlotte Islands. That portion of the tribe which lives in Alaska, having moved there some 200 years ago, is called Kaigani. About 25 main villages were formerly occupied and a large number of small settlements. For the modern villages see section 4.

10. TSIMSHIAN OR TSIMSYAN (Tsim-she-an). The name means "people inside of the Skeena river". Chimmesyan linguistic stock. Recent censuses listed a population of about 4,440, of whom 850 are in Alaska. There are three main divisions of the tribe, the Tsimshian proper near the mouth of the Skeena river, the Gitksan or Kitksan inland on this river and the Niska or Nisrae of the Nass river valley. These groups formerly occupied about 3 dozen villages. For the modern villages see section 4.

11. BELLA COOLA (Bel-la Koo-la). The word is a corruption of the Kwakiutl name for this tribe. Its meaning is not known. The tribe has no name for itself as a whole. Salishan linguistic stock and its most northern branch. The tribe moved north from other branches of the stock and became isolated from them by tribes of other linguistic stocks. The population today is about 250. Formerly the tribe lived in several dozen villages on the Dean and Bella Coola rivers. Today there are but two, though nearly the whole tribe is in one of these.

12. KWAKIUTL (Kwah-kee-ootl). The word means "beach on the other side or north side of the river". Wakashan linguistic stock. A Canadian census listed about 2,150 members of the tribe in 1934. They are divided into three main divisions, each with several subdivisions, on the basis of language. The Haisla held about one quarter of the mainland area occupied by the nation, the Heiltsuk the center portion of the mainland area, and the Kwakiutl the southern part of the mainland area and the northeastern quarter of Vancouver Island. Formerly there were a large number of villages. For the modern villages see section 4.

13. **NOOTKA OR NUTKA (Noot-kah)**. The meaning of the word is not known. Wakashan linguistic stock. The 1934 population was about 1,600. They were formerly divided into about two dozen sub-tribes, of which 18 survive today. All live on Vancouver Island except the Makah, who are on Cape Flattery, the northwest corner of Washington, and numbered 370 in 1934. For the modern Nootka villages see section 4.

14. **COAST SALISH (Say-lish)**. The word means "people". The large number of small bands may be divided into three main groups; the Comox, occupying the coasts of the mainland and of Vancouver Island around the north end of the Gulf of Georgia; the Cowichan of the southeast side of Vancouver Island and the Fraser river delta on the mainland; and the Squawmish north of the city of Vancouver, on the mainland of British Columbia. The present population is about 4,600. For the modern villages see section 4.

Compiled by F. H. Douglas from the following sources:

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