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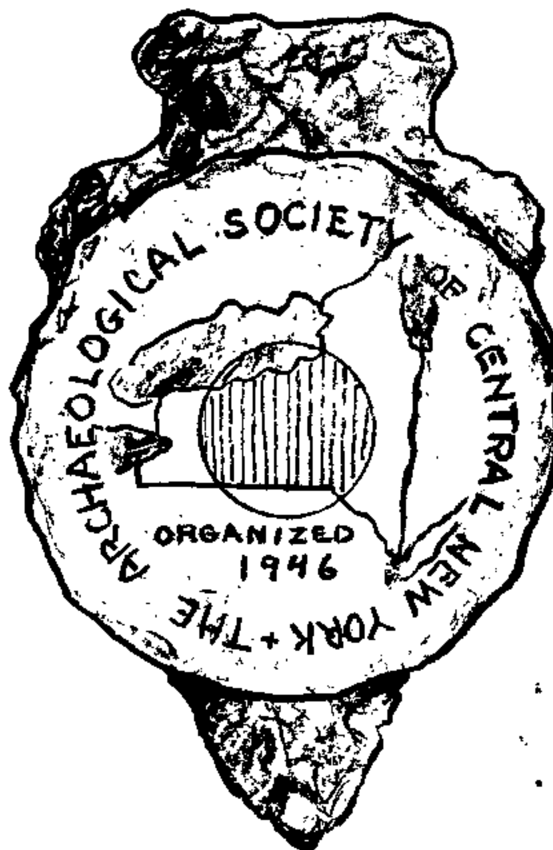
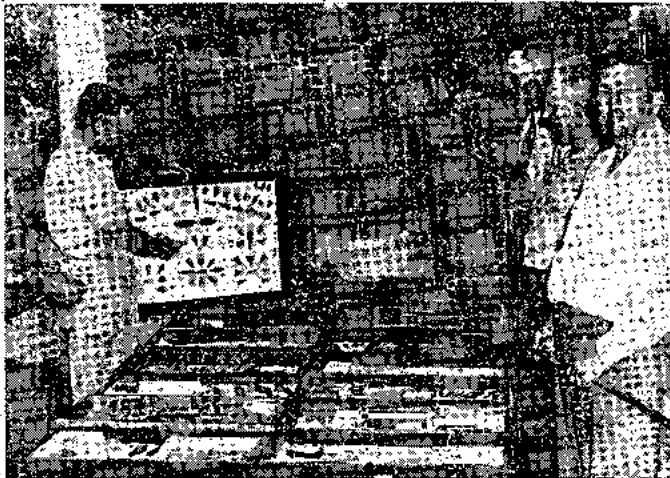


Cayuga Museum of History and Art
Auburn, N.Y.

THE ROVING REPORTER

A Supplement to the Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Central New York No. 1



I called recently on Mr. Arthur J. Seelye of Wolcott, N. Y. to admire and study his large collection of Indian artifacts, collected mainly from a number of sites in Central New York. But, I must confess, that my chief interest in this call was to see the Folsom Points, examine and photograph the location on his farm where the points were discovered. This I understand is the best descriptive word in this case, for I was told that the points were neither uncovered or excavated; they were practically a surface find.

The two photographs above help in identifying the points and the spot where they were found. Before we go any further, it would be a good thing to identify the persons in the photographs. They are; from left to right, Floyd H. Johnston, Geneva; Newton E. Farwell, Geneva; [illegible]ing the Folsom Points in the collection; Arthur J. Seelye, Wolcott; owner of the points and the farm; John H. Phillips, Geneva; Frank Seelye, North Rose, brother of Arthur, and possessor of a Folsom Point from the same region himself. All of the above are active members of the Archaeological Society of Central New York.

Within the last two years bones and tusks of the Mastodon have been uncovered on the Colgan farm, near Venice Center, and on the Albert Reed farm, near Clifton Springs. Therefore, a great deal of interest and speculation in an old and very enthralling question in paleo-archaeology has been revived within the circle of some of the members of our society. What is the connection between the Folsom Points, the Mastodons and the migration of the American Indian into New York State? We cannot answer this question by archaeology alone. We must seek the aid of geology and anthropology, they together, may supply the answer. For the present, all we can do is to speculate.

In The Archaeological History of N. Y., State Bulletin No. 235, Arthur C. Parker states; "In Western New York we have found several strange sites where the artifacts were crude and all osseous matter completely absent. The presence of carbonized material in the pits, however, proved that fire had been used." p. 40. This is almost the identical description of the spot of Mr. Seelye's Folsom Points.

But, what is a Folsom Point? At present, since a number of these points within the last thirty years have been found practically throughout most of the United States, we can no longer speak loosely of specific "Folsom Points" and apply the term to all such points found. The more serious students of this question now prefer to speak of "generalized Folsom," "Flooted Points," "Grooved Points," and "Folsom-like." The fact remains at present, that all so called Folsom Points are not all confined exactly to the same description. See article "Grooved Spearheads, Edgar B. Howard, The Penna. Archaeologist, vol.3 No. 6.

(PLEASE turn the page.)

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THE STORY OF ITHACA
From "Ithaca, Past and Present" by Virginia W. Mayer
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The valley at the end of Cayuga Lake had no permanent village before the white man came but only campsites used by the Indians for temporary quarters. The Indians had cleared and cultivated the land and planted orchards and gardens around the temporary villages. The woods were full of game and it was a land of plenty.

Describing the valley at the end of Cayuga Lake as it looked in 1750, a Moravian missionary wrote: "We went in the plain through the high grass and crossed a creek----The creek is named Nochewaio (now Cayuga Inlet)----We crossed two other creeks; the first is named Notantakto (Six Mile Creek) and the second Nogaene (Fall Creek)----All these creeks flow into one lake. We saw the last creek after rushing on wildly, fall perpendicularly from a height of ninety feet. It was indeed an interesting and thrilling sight---Beyond the lake there is a particularly large creek, named Tchosnioke (Taughannock) which is the Gajuka (Cayuga) and another Indian told us, falls over the rock from a height of 150 feet, and empties into the lake."

The first white settlers on the present site of Ithaca came from two towns bearing the same name, Kingston in Pennsylvania and Kingston in New York. Early in the spring of 1788, the Woodworth family moved from Kingston, Pennsylvania to a place on the Chemung River. In June of that year, Mr. Woodworth, his father, brother Charles, and five other men, started an expedition to explore the head of Cayuga Lake. They followed Sullivan's old route as far as Peach Orchard on the east side of Seneca Lake. From there they travelled east and struck Taughannock Creek in the eastern part of what is now the town of Hector. They followed the stream down to Cayuga Lake and camped for the night on the north side of the Point.

The following morning one of the party went up the ravine and discovered the falls. Leaving Taughannock Point they came into the Inlet Valley and camped near the Buttermilk Falls. The party explored the vicinity for two days then returned to the Chemung River.

Because of its cleared fields, water power, location favorable for lake travel, and scenic beauty, the land at the foot of Cayuga Lake attracted these men.

In the same year an exploring party of eleven men came from Kingston, New York to the Cayuga Valley. These men decided to make it their home and returned the next year to the present site of Ithaca, accompanied by the younger brother of one of the men. The men planted corn in the fields that had been cleared by the Indians and selected places to build their cabins. Then, leaving one of the men behind, they returned to Kingston for their families.

There is evidence to show that in the previous year Mr. Robert McDowell, who was a member of the exploration party from Kingston, Pennsylvania, returned with his daughter and began work on his cabin. In 1790 the entire McDowell family was living in Ithaca. McDowell was soon followed by other members of his party and by 1795, there were over one hundred people scattered throughout the valley at the end of the lake. At this time the growing settlement was called by several names, Cayuga City, The City, Sodom, Markle's Flats, or just the Flats.

The first homes to be built were rough, one-room cabins. Most of what is now downtown Ithaca was at that time swampy lowlands. This has since been filled in both naturally and artificially.

The first "industry" to be built in most frontier communities was a grist mill. The nearest mill to the new settlement was at Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, 125 miles away. The first year, the men walked this distance to have their corn ground. It was even more difficult to get the necessary seed for crops. During the first year, one of the men, John Yaple, walked 320 miles to the Delaware River and back to purchase three pecks of seed potatoes. Mr. Yaple decided to make use of the water power of Cascadilla Creek to grind grain and during the second year of the settlement built a small mill which was often referred to as the Little Pepper Mill. This mill, which has been described picturesquely as being little larger than a hog pen, could grind twenty-five bushels of corn a day.

The settlers from Kingston, New York were not able to remain long in The Flats. This land was included in the Military Tract and when drawings took place in 1791, it legally became the property of Revolutionary War soldiers. The Yaples and two other families were considered to be squatters and therefore did not have a right to remain on the land unless they paid for it. By 1795 all three of these families had left Ithaca. Because McDowell had served in the army, he took part in the drawings and received 640 acres of land.

Yaple's grist mill was discontinued when he was forced to leave, but in 1794 it was replaced by a larger mill which was built by Joseph Sidney on Fall Creek.

Instead of settling on the land which they obtained in the drawings of 1791, many of the Revolutionary soldiers sold their property to land speculators, who bought it hoping to re-sell the land at a profit. In this way Simeon DeWitt, a man who was to be important to Ithaca, obtained his land.

DeWitt was the Surveyor-General of New York State when he bought much of the land near The Flats in 1797. Thrilled with the beauty of the place when he came to survey the land several years later, he decided that rather than sell his land, he would make The Flats his home. Because it was located in the town of Ulysses, he named it Ithaca. According to Greek mythology, with which DeWitt was familiar, Ithaca was the home of the hero Ulysses. Although the old names were slow to die out, the village became Ithaca officially in 1806. Simeon DeWitt spent as much time in Ithaca as his business would allow and when he retired he came to Ithaca to live.

The first frame house in Ithaca was constructed in 1800. Until this time the houses were all log cabins. This house, standing on Linn Street near University Ave., was torn down this past winter. It was the summer home of Simeon DeWitt and the first tavern in Ithaca. For several years it was used as a store.

The first tavern in Ithaca in the Linn Street house was operated by Archer Green until 1805 when Luther Gere built his tavern on the southeast corner of Aurora and Seneca Streets. There are records to show that Simeon DeWitt was a guest at Gere's first tavern.

These taverns were different from taverns today. In them the weary traveller or temporary visitor could find lodging and board. They were meeting places for the men of the village and they served in place of newspapers as dispensers of the latest news.

Once begun, the business of building and operating inns and taverns grew rapidly. Jacob Vrooman built an inn on the northwest corner of the same intersection as Gere's tavern and named it the Ithaca Hotel. In 1809 when Vrooman changed the name of his hotel to the Tompkins House, Gere took the name, Ithaca Hotel, for his new three-story building at the corner of Owego and Aurora Streets. Owego was the early name for what is now State Street. The original Ithaca Hotel was destroyed by fire in 1871 and the present structure was built the following year. Gere built a third hotel, the Columbian Inn, on the northwest corner of Owego and Cayuga Streets.

The Clinton House was finished in 1831 and was more luxurious than the other inns. It was built by Henry Ackley, Henry Hibbard, and Jeremiah S. Beebe and was a stagecoach stop on the famous Catskill Turnpike. It was the center of village life for many years. Its basement was used to house the village jail and the fire bell hung in its tower.

Only three years after the first settlers had to clear their own road through the wilderness from Owego to Ithaca, the New York Legislature authorized the building of the first road into Ithaca, a highway connecting Oxford with Cayuga Lake. These early "highways" were not what we think of as highways today. They were often just dirt roads cleared through the woods and underbrush and at best they were plank or corduroy roads. Covered bridges, now almost gone, were common sights on the early roads. In 1804 the Bath to Jericho or the famous Catskill Turnpike was chartered. This road, which went through Caroline, Ithaca, Enfield, and Hector, entered Ithaca on what is now East State Street. Because this was one of the major routes across the state, it brought many travellers to Ithaca and contributed greatly to the growth of inns and hotels.

Three years later, the Ithaca to Owego Turnpike was chartered and in 1811 it was completed. This road was especially important because it cut the costs of transporting goods to and from the Susquehanna River. In 1811, a turnpike to Geneva was also built.

The early turnpikes were so named because pikes or poles were placed across the road at intervals. When the traveller paid his toll, the pike was turned aside, allowing him to pass.

(to be continued)

THE NATIVE ARTS OF ALASKA
by Paul W. Gordon
*****

The natives of Alaska have retained, though in a modified form, the essentials of the arts and crafts of their forefathers. In Southeastern Alaska the men, through expressive carvings, sometimes bold, othertimes delicate, in wood, slate and bone, testify to a sensitive interpretation of the mythology of the Tlingits and Haidas, rich in totemic symbolism.

Modern baskets both woven and coiled produced by the woman from the shredded inner bark of the cedar or from split spruce roots, because of their fineness, continue to hold for the Alaska Natives a high place in the basket-makers art. The highest honor, of course, still goes to the residents of Attu, Atka and Akutan with their justly famous wild rye grass, Attu basket. But while the Attu art is fast becoming lost, the Tlingits and Haidas continue to produce baskets of fine texture and with simple, effective decoration in merchantable quantities.

Baskets are likewise produced by many Eskimo villages. But the Eskimos are better represented in the art field by carvings in ivory, executed with fidelity to a style set centuries ago by a cultural era now passed, a style often compared with the impressionistic, palaeolithic drawings of the caves of Southern France.

The art impulses of the Alaska Native are translated for the most part into articles of commerce. Totem poles, a heraldic device identifying clans and families, once were carved from towering cedars and were to be seen in front of the owner's dwelling. Today when marriage and inheritance customs have crossed clan lines and life is molded after the European pattern, totem poles are produced in miniature, potlatch bowls covered in relief with ravens, killerwhales, sharks or other totemic or cult forms stylistically interpreted become trays for every conceivable use. The Chilkat blanket, pride of the weaver's art, once a dress garment, becomes a wall piece. Horn spoons with handles delicately carved in the totemic manner, together with baskets have lost much of their utility in competition with iron and tin and have become purely decorative pieces, but decorative pieces of merit because of the deftness and the patience with which they are produced.

The Eskimos have utilized the walrus and the excavated mammoth tusks for the manufacture of beads, cigarette holders and trays, cribbage boards, paperweights, animal miniatures and paper knives. A variety of color and effect is secured by the use of the several shades and colors of ivory possible to secure from the veritable mines of ivory which have been preserved for centuries by the frozen earth. Articles of size are decorated with pictograph etchings portraying representative hunting or household experiences. The articles are uniquely fashioned, carefully polished and are decorated with such skill that their popularity has caused a number of imitations to find their way on the market.

Aside from the articles mentioned above, totem poles of any size for parks and gardens, graceful Northwest Coast dugout canoes for camps, moccasins for house wear, snow shoes, dog sledges, fur garments, artic footwear and sleeping bags for the local northern trade occupy the time and skill of many craftsmen. Thus the natives of Alaska have contributed uniquely to the arts and crafts of the indigenous races of America. The future of their work remains to be seen, but the extent to which the public comes to appreciate the conventionalized symbolism of the Indians of Southeastern Alaska, the painstaking skill displayed by the Alaskan basketmaker and the aptitude of the Eskimo carver in the graphic arts will, to a large extent, determine the life of the Native Arts of Alaska.

INDIAN PATRIOTISM
from Arthur C. Parker Notes
*****

America never had better or more sincere friends than the American Indian. Our New York Indians saved this region, the middle Atlantic area, for an English-speaking people. They were the friends of the English, even though they liked the French. It was Iroquois resistance in colonial times that turned the tide. In the revolutionary war one of LaFayette's most trusted lieutenants was Nicholas Cusick, a Tuscarora. Over half the warriors of the Iroquois Confederacy fought for the United Colonies under Washington, Clinton and LaFayette. All of the Hudson River tribes were in the Patriot Army. One of their Captains, Chief David Ninham fought three British Companies of regulars and did not give up until his last seventeen men were slain. Then he capitulated to death, falling from his horse. The forefront of shock troops in the battle of White Plains were Stockbridge Indians from near Poughkeepsie. So far as that goes, the first man slain in the Boston Massacre was a Rhode Island Indian.

History says that the Indian received the rawest of raw deals after the war, but true patriotism is not easily quenched. Since the Revolution our Iroquois Indians have never stooped to revenge or reprisal. They are a patient, peaceful people. They gave the Civil War its prize troops, they provided a Brigadier General and other officers and one of the Senecas was General Grant's military Secretary. In the World War 1, every New York Indian who joined the colors was a volunteer. Not one was drafted. Democracy meant a lot to them and they came back with honor.

Some people have an idea that the Indians were always the enemies of the settlers — that they fought pretty hard. But they were our friends during Colonial and Revolutionary times. General Washington once said, "Never have I had cause to regret the trust I have placed in my Indian friends."

This area was not only the battleground of the Colonial period but also that of the American Revolution. The figures of stalwart red men stalk across the horizons of history and romantic Colonial characters rise to our vision.

AUBURN IN SONG AND STORY
by Henry M. Allen
*****

That Auburn, situated as it is in the beautiful lake country of central New York and surrounded by picturesque hills and valleys, should be a theme of literature is not surprising. But when we also consider the fine historical background afforded by the long and bloody Indian wars, one would naturally expect writers of some ability to treat of such a subject.

Nor have we to look in vain. Though Auburn is very young compared with cities of many foreign lands, we already have an historical tale and an epic poem. In 1856 was printed "The Twin Brothers," a "Romance of the Forest" from the pen of Chaplain Tuttle and Frederick Prince and in 1840 Peter Hamilton Myers published the poem "Ensenore".

The scene of this romance is laid in the Revolutionary times and treats of the adventures of a party of Americans, among whom are a young naval officer and a beautiful girl, Estelle Griffith. Leaving Albany they penetrate the great forest as far as Owasco Lake and pitch their camp within the rude Indian ramparts of Fort Hill. While there they are attacked by a hostile tribe but repulse them, killing many.

Among the slain is a young Indian upon whom Estelle finds a sort of charm or amulet. She further discovers that he is only stunned and is able to revive him. Upon recovering consciousness, he leaps to his feet and speeds away like a deer into the forest.

Ere long the band returning, greatly enforced, captured the whole party and sentenced them to a death at the stake. They are rescued however, through the intervention of a white man who has long dwelt among a near-by tribe. He proves to be Estelle's father of whom they are in search.

The young native whose life has been saved by Estelle is the adopted son of the chief, and upon her returning the amulet to him, it is discovered that he is the twin brother of the captain.

Many years before, the twins with their mother had been taken off a wreck, but soon after the mother died from exposure. In infancy each boy had been given a copper plate with his name engraved upon it. On reaching manhood one had entered the navy, while the other had accompanied Griffith on a hunting expedition into the wilderness. Becoming separated from the boy, Griffith had not dared to return to the settlement. An Indian, however, had found him, and as the chief had lately lost his son he had been adopted.

The Indians, feeling balked of their prey, during the absence of their chieftain again made the white men prisoners, but this time they were released by a company of French soldiers. The young Indian and the French lieutenant fell desperately in love with the fair Estelle and fight a duel in which the Frenchman is wounded.

Later the French are cleverly ambushed by the Indians and massacred. The Americans, however, through the influence of the dusky twin, are spared, and Estelle consents to be his wife. Thus at last reunited they return to their home in Connecticut.

The poem "Ensenore" is written in a style similar to Scott's Lady of the Lake and develops a plot of much interest. The historical background is the burning of Schenectady by the Hurons. Kathreen, a beautiful girl, is carried a prisoner to their hunting grounds on the shores of Owasco Lake and is fated to be the chieftain's wife. Her lover Ensenore, however, disguised as a chief of the tribe, tracks the marauders and, entering the camp of the Hurons, is their guest. By a trick he reveals his identity to Kathreen.

That night a banquet is given in his honor and when the dusky warriors are sunk in deep sleep, the lovers steal from the camp. Undaunted, Ensenore swims with Kathreen from it. Their flight is soon discovered and a wild pursuit takes place upon the waters of the lake. They succeed in outwitting their implacable foes and the intrepid Ensenore conducts Kathreen in safety back to civilization. The poem is vivid and fairly stirring in parts, while there is a fine sweep to many of the lines.

AN IROQUOIS LEGEND
*****

One of the Iroquois legends professed to give the reason for the abnormal ferocity and the preterhuman powers of Atotarho. He was already noted as a chief and warrior, when he had the misfortune to kill a peculiar bird, resembling a sea-gull, which is reputed to possess poisonous qualities of singular virulence. By his contact with the dead bird his mind was affected. He became morose and cruel, and at the same time obtained the power of destroying men and other creatures at a distance. Three sons of Hiawatha were among his victims. He attended the councils which were held, and made confusion in them, and brought all the people into disturbance and terror. His bodily appearance was changed at the same time, and his aspect became so terrible that the story spread, and was believed, that his head was encircled by living snakes.

Indian history relates that by the request of this formidable Iroquois chief, wampum, or Indian money, was placed on his head, instead of the serpents, and in another narrative it is stated that Hiawatha "combed the snakes out." The origin of the use of wampum was ascribed to Hiawatha and through his policy the fierce temper of Atotarho became placable and his ambitions were appeased.

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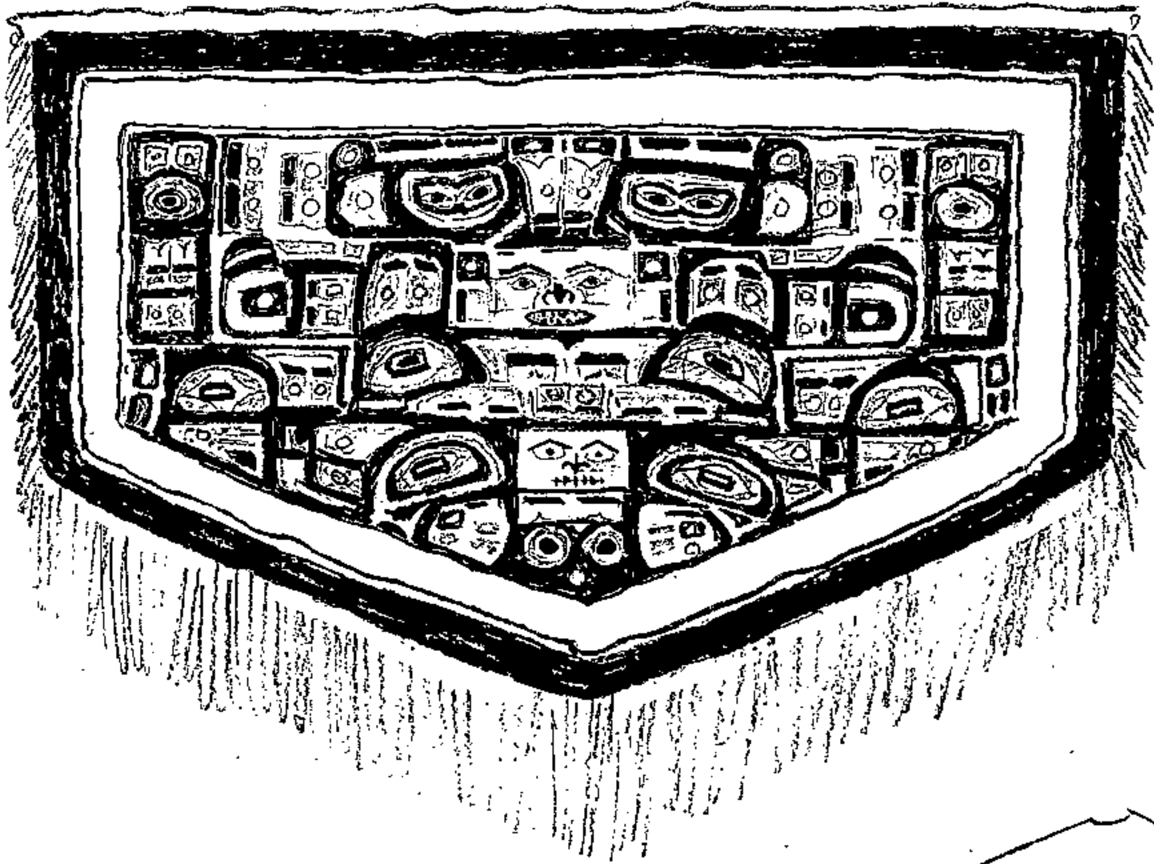
The Indian healing mask has a lengendary name which means "He-who-defends-them." It is believed to be a representation of a pre-human wind spirit whose services were enlisted by Haweniu (the Great Good Voice) for the service of mankind.

The Chilkat weavers, women weavers from one of the divisions of the Tlinkit tribe, weave the famous type of Cermonial Blankets, illustrated below, considered one of the four great types of American Indian weaving. These are made with the wool from the mountain goat. The foundation threads are made of cedar bark wrapped in wool. Their standard colors are yellow made from wolf moss, blue-green made from copper, black is made from hemlock bark. The men create the designs. The women are permitted to design only the abstract motifs. Living creatures are designed by the men.



10" LADLE ALASKAN
MUSEUM COLLECTION