

HOONAH HISTORY

In the beginning the Huna Indians were located in Glacier Bay. Many of them lived at different places but the majority of them lived at Berg Bay and Gustavus Point. The Indians had to move from the Glacier Bay area because the glacier Sit-e-tee-gee was moving in on them. It wasn't a big glacier, it consisted mostly of mud, sand and rock. The story the Indians tell of why the glacier started to move in on them goes like this: "When a young girl arrives at maturity she is considered unclean. Everything she comes in contact with and even the sky she looks upon, is considered unclean. She is therefore thought to be unfit for the sun to shine upon and is confined in a small hut from 3 months to a year. Only the girls mother is allowed to approach her and she only to bring her food." Two girls who had reached maturity were put behind a curtain in isolation. But one of the girls left from behind the curtain and called to the glacier, to come down.



Then the glacier started to move down into the area where the Huna Indians lived and when it got close the Indians decided to move and search for a new village site. They started packing their belongings into canoes, they packed only what was absolutely necessary. When it was time to go they discovered that an old lady named Kasteen was not packed. Her family begged her to come with them but she refused. She told them, "I am old, I have no use in life anymore. I will only be taking up

room in the canoe which the young ones could be using." So when they finally realized that she meant to stay they stocked her up with food. As the years went by the glacier moved over Kasteen and she died.

The Indians lived at many different places, like Spasski and Ground Hog Bay while they searched for the most ideal location for the new village. After about a year and a half of searching they decided that Brown Bear Bay was the best location for a village, because the seal and otter hunting was good, the berries were abundant and there were many fish creeks nearby.

Many tribes began settling there, the Chookaneidee, the Tak deintaan, the Wooshkeetaan, the Kaagwantaan and the Luknaxadee. For a time Brown Bear Bay was named after a slave whom the Chookaneidee drowned there before the white man came and named it Port Fredrick. The slave was a female named S'eil. Thus the bay was known as Ku S'eil. The purpose of the slave sacrifice was to add importance and weight to the occasion and to the place to make future children proud of the occasion and proud to live

¹Rev. Sheldon Jackson, D. O. Alaska and Missions of the North Coast. *Cont. on*
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