The Kohklux Map

Yukon Historical & Museums Association

Photos of Tlingit people in the booklet include their clan affiliation as follows: Kaagwaantaan, Gaanaxteedi, Daklweidi, Lukaxadi, and Luknaadì.

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Yukon Historical & Museums Association
3126 Third Avenue (mail to Box 4357)
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**The Kohklux Map**
Yukon Historical & Museums Association
in association with
Klukwan Village Council, Council for Yukon Indians,
Yukon Archives and Aboriginal Language Services

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*Lake along the trail*

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Many of the place names mentioned in this report were found with a variety of different spellings. Wherever possible, we have used the spelling as it was on the original map and in Davidson's article. This means that, for instance, Kusawa Lake will be spelt as Koo-see-wagh or Koo-soo-Wagh or Kusawa, as appropriate.

Bold numbers on the maps and photographs refer to the place names as found on the annotated Kohlux map, featured on pages 18-19. These numbers also appear in the reproduction of Davidson's article, pages 14-24.
INTRODUCTION

The First Nations people who travelled in the Yukon did not carry maps or compasses. For ages, they navigated over hundreds of miles by memory. Sometimes, when travellers needed to describe a place to someone, they drew maps in the dirt to show the way. One such traveller was the chief of the Tlingit Chilkat, Kohklux. He and his people travelled far into the interior of the Yukon from their home on the coast to trade with the people of the interior. When asked by George Davidson, a visiting scientist, about his travels, Kohklux and his two wives were able to draw a map for him, although they had never used paper or pencils. It is the earliest known map of the southern Yukon and the first known map to be committed to paper by a First Nations person in this part of the world.

The map is a valuable resource for historians, ethnographers and researchers in many fields. Perhaps its greatest importance, however, is as a tangible symbol of the cultural links among the Tlingit of the coast, and the Tagish and Tutchone people of the interior.

These are relationships that existed long before European or American traders ever ventured into the area. As a linguistic resource, it shows the Tlingit names for various features along their trading trails before Euroamerican explorers applied their own titles to the landscape. Finally, it exists as a somewhat mysterious artefact, a gift given to an outsider that revealed a knowledge of places closely guarded by the Tlingits until that time.

Back row: Joleen Hotch, Kaagwaantaan (partially hidden); Kim Strong, Kaagwaantaan, Deatra Marcell, Kaagwaantaan. Front row: Christopher Hotch, Kaagwaantaan; Jeffrey Klanott, Gaanagteidi; Joshua Hotch, Kaagwaantaan
I think of the map in many ways, but the most outstanding thought is how we bring our children up. Our Tlingit people have never really thought about ourselves...they always thought about their children and grandchildren. This is why it means so much to me, you folks have shown us a map, we have seen it in the past but now we'll discuss it.

Our elders in the past always said, "Where your child and your grandchild will walk, pay attention to it so that child or grandchild will not have a hard time when they come to that place."

Something that was done a hundred and some years ago is the same map that we will continue to walk with from now until your children and grandchildren come to age.

Joe Hotch, Klukwan Village Council President

I come from two great clans. I come from the Tagish clan and the Tlingit. These are two great nations. We talked about the meeting of tribes. We in Tagish were there to meet the Tlingits when they came in... And from that meeting, I am the result...and my children, and my great grandchildren.

It was mentioned earlier that we should not only look at our grandchildren and our children but we should look behind us. Where did we come from? How are we going to know where we are going if we don't know where we came from? This map really means a lot to us because it shows us the trail that our ancestors used to come into the Yukon. It's a map that I have been quite familiar with for many years because this map is in our classrooms. Right now, today, our children are learning about the history of the Tlingits coming to the Yukon. It really makes me proud because when Linda Johnson and the YHMA decided to reprint this map, it really made us happy because now we have something really concrete to show the children. You know, now we don't rely on legends only, but actually have the map.

Clara Schinkel, Tagish Elder
THE MAP IS FOUND

Linda Johnson was sure that it still existed somewhere. She began her job at the Yukon Archives in the early 1970s. While reviewing material in the Archives, she became fascinated by Davidson’s 1901 article in Mazama (see pages 14-23) about the Kohklux map. She recognized its importance and felt it likely the original map existed somewhere.

Linda began to ask people in other archives and university libraries if they knew where the map might be. The search extended to Alaska, California, New York—in fact, to any repository she knew of that had materials on the North. Though Linda could not find any trace of the map, she remained fascinated with the idea of a map drawn before any non-natives had travelled in the southern Yukon.

Finally, Linda got a lead from the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. The George Davidson collection was at the Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. She wrote to them and asked if they had the map. The response was that, though there were many maps in the Davidson collection, they did not have the Kohklux map.

In 1984, a holiday visit took Linda to California. She spent a couple of days at the Bancroft Library exploring the George Davidson collection which includes many Yukon sources. After two days of searching, however, she still had not found the Kohklux map.

On her last day, in desperation, she checked with the map specialist who found it funny she should ask. They had just received two maps from the bookseller who had originally sold the George Davidson collection to the library in the 1940s. For some reason, the two maps had been in a trunk which was left behind when the original manuscripts were sold to the Bancroft Library. The Kohklux maps were found!

In 1987, the Bancroft Library agreed to loan the original maps for display at the Yukon Historical & Museums Association conference in Whitehorse. The maps had returned home to the North.

Linda Johnson holding a life-sized copy of the map
SETTING THE STAGE

After the Americans purchased Alaska in 1867, they began settling a land that was virtually unknown to them. Of course, Alaska was not unpopulated, having been occupied by First Nations people since at least the last ice age, some twelve to twenty-four thousand years ago.

The Chilkat Tlingit people on the coast of southeast Alaska took much of their living from the sea. As rich as these resources were there were still some items they lacked, such as hides and copper. They obtained these in trade from the First Nations to the south and the people of the Yukon interior. When Russian traders began trading in Alaska, the Chilkat acted as intermediaries between them and the people of the Yukon—a role that proved very profitable.

As the American traders moved in to replace the departing Russians, the lives of the Tlingit began to change. There was increased pressure on the sea animals that provided coastal people with their livelihood. As more people moved north, permanent settlements were established on lands traditionally held by the Chilkat and other coastal people. This led to some friction, especially where the trade of alcohol was involved. American soldiers were based in Sitka, Alaska to establish control over their new acquisition and to keep order, using the superior firepower of gun ships when necessary. Along the southeast coast, where the story of the Kohklux map begins, there had been conflicts between natives and non-natives, including fatal shootings.

Into this uneasy situation came George Davidson, an American scientist who had surveyed in the area in 1867. It happened that a total solar eclipse was to occur on August 7th of 1869. On Davidson’s previous visit, he calculated that the Chilkat village of Kukwan would be the perfect place from which to observe the eclipse. A coast survey party, led by Davidson, travelled to Sitka to make arrangements for the trip to Kukwan. General Jefferson C. Davis, on Davidson’s behalf, had invited the chief of the
Chilkat village to Sitka to make arrangements for the scientific party’s visit. This was the man called Kohklux, considered to be “the greatest warrior and diplomat of all the tribes north and west of the Stak-heen.” He accepted the general’s invitation and travelled to Sitka. When Kohklux arrived, General Davis arrested him and some of his people, and put them in jail for “some petty offence”, as Davidson termed it. Some members of his village tried to escape and were shot. These were the unhappy circumstances under which Davidson met Kohklux.

Davidson described the chief of the Chilkats as “a man of commanding presence, nearly six feet high, broad chest, and a well-formed head that measured twenty-four inches in circumference. He carried a bullet-hole in his cheek.” Davidson also described him as “truthful and absolutely honest.”

In return for the release of his people, Kohklux agreed to provide assistance and protection for Davidson and his party wherever they chose to establish their observation station. Davidson seemed particularly impressed with the honesty Kohklux displayed. He wrote that “…he fulfilled in spirit and letter every promise, and our every wish was attended to.”

Indeed, Kohklux seems to have made the scientific party most welcome. Davidson travelled to the village of Kukwban a few days later where Kohklux received them in his house and provided them with food during their stay.

It is important to note that the accounts we have of Davidson’s visit to Kukwban, and indeed the whole story of the map, are recounted to us by Davidson and the journalists that travelled with him. Although Davidson spoke a “Chinook” trade jargon, he was by no means fluent in Tlingit. There was, therefore, a language barrier which likely affected understanding between the two cultures. No oral account of the incident appears to have survived among the Tlingits, so we are left with a rather one-sided version of what transpired. One should read Davidson’s accounts with this in mind.
It seemed to Davidson and the journalists who travelled to Klukwan, that the people of Klukwan were awed and frightened by the eclipse Davidson had come to observe. At the time of the total eclipse, they hid in their houses and came out only when the sunlight had returned. The people of Klukwan were convinced that the observation party had made the sun sick and were responsible for its temporary disappearance. This seemed like very strong magic and Davidson, as leader of the coast survey party, appeared to be the chief magician. Kohklux was anxious to learn how Davidson had made the sun disappear and seemed willing to give him anything in return. “So one day upon his own suggestion Kohklux undertook to draw upon a small sheet of paper his route from Klukwan to Fort Selkirk and his return trail.”

Katherine Hotch, Kaagwaantaan (left); Lani Hotch, Kaagwaantaan
How did Kohklux know the route to a place far from the coastal waters of his home?

For generations, the coastal Tlingit had traded with the interior people of the Yukon as part of a vast trading network that extended throughout Alaska and the Yukon and far to the south. The Chilkat traded fish oils, dried seaweed, dentalia shells and other sea products, which they produced themselves, along with goods they obtained in trade with the southern people. From the Tutchone and Tagish people of the Yukon interior, they received meat, hides, clothing, copper, and furs from beaver, marten and other small game. Some goods were then retraded to people further along the network. After white traders began trading along the coast, and the demand for furs increased dramatically, the Chilkat’ intermediary role became very lucrative.

The Chilkat guarded the few mountain passes that gave access to the interior. The people of the Yukon were not allowed to come to the coast except under very special circumstances. Even then, a high price was extracted for the privilege and the visitors were watched very closely. Similarly, traders on the coast were not allowed access to the interior where they could trade directly for furs, thus bypassing the Chilkat. In the 1840s, however, the Hudson’s Bay Company had reached the Yukon interior by pushing northeast up the Liard River and into the Yukon River basin.

In 1848, Hudson’s Bay Company trader Robert Campbell journeyed to the confluence of the Pelly and Yukon rivers to establish a trading post. Although he had not travelled through one of the Tlingit passes, this was considered an intrusion into the trade between the Chilkat and the Northern Tutchone people of the Fort Selkirk area. In fact, Campbell built the post on a traditional meeting and trading site. The Northern Tutchone could now trade their furs directly to the Hudson’s Bay Company for guns, cloth, beads, tea, tobacco and sugar without paying the Chilkat intermediaries.
Angered by this infringement on their trade, Kohklux’s father and a party of warriors, including Kohklux himself, made the long trek from Klukwan to Fort Selkirk in August, 1852. Upon their arrival on August 21, the Tlingit ransacked the post, took all the goods they could carry, and destroyed the rest. Amazingly, no lives were lost. Campbell escaped and made a long trek of his own, all the way to Lachine, Quebec, to report the assault and to seek company support in re-establishing the post. But the Hudson’s Bay Company did not think the venture was worth the risk and did not rebuild at Fort Selkirk for over 55 years. Thus Kohklux and the Chilkat had won a great victory and forced the white traders from their territory.

Eventually, the Chilkat were overwhelmed by the weaponry and sheer volume of outsiders seeking access to their trading area. But, when Davidson arrived in Klukwan in 1869, trade was still carried out in the traditional manner of value for value and honour for honour. Kohklux still had a secret to trade.
Drawing the Map

Trade between Tlingit groups such as the Chilkat, or with other coastal people, was carried out on an individual basis. Trade with the people of the interior, however, was a hereditary right given to certain Tlingit chiefs. Kohklux was one such chief. Why he decided to gift Davidson with the map to the interior is a matter of speculation but it seems likely he wished to present something of value equal to the secret of the solar eclipse.

Kohklux had been to the interior of the Yukon, not just as a raider of the Hudson's Bay Company post at Fort Selkirk, but as a trader as well. The coastal people made the trip to the interior of the Yukon to trade at prearranged sites. The ordinary trip consumed about one month each direction and was undertaken two or three times in a year. Canoes and rafts were used on the rivers but most of the route was overland and trade goods had to be carried by people and pack dogs.

All Tlingits were trained to pack from a very early age. Women not only packed but played a key role in trading. A man counted on his wife's judgment in trading and she had an equal voice in the partnership. There are numerous accounts of deals with Chilkat men falling through because their wives did not approve. Women also had a role in planning trading expeditions and their advice and opinions were never ignored.10

So it was that Kohklux had assistance from his wives in drawing his map. In fact, he actually drew two maps. The first map was small and did not provide adequate room to display the route to his satisfaction. Davidson said Kohklux drew this one alone. For the second map, Davidson provided the chief with the back of a chart measuring 43 x 27 inches. Using pencils, and without benefit of erasers, Kohklux and his two wives drew a map of the land between the Lynn
First draft of the Kohklux map
Canal and Fort Selkirk (King George's Fort) that displayed a considerable amount of territory.

The trio took three days to complete their task. This is the earliest known recording of the southwestern Yukon. It is remarkable in that it portrays three-dimensional views of mountain masses along rivers and lakes that are clearly recognizable. The map is scaled, not in distance, but in the number of days of travel between points. It covers a broad area and contains more information than just geographical features. Caches, villages, events and details about living conditions are scattered across the map indicating quite an extensive knowledge of the land and the people who lived in it. This knowledge was likely pooled from several sources making it all the more remarkable that information passed down though oral tradition could be so accurately depicted on paper.

When they brought the map to Davidson, Kohkluix and his wives told him the Tlingit names of the many places they had drawn. Davidson wrote the names for over 100 rivers, lakes, glaciers, mountains and villages on the map. While he reports that he impressed Kohkluix by reading back these Tlingit names from the map, few of the names are recognizable to modern Tlingit speakers.11
Davidson's additions to the Kohklux map seem to have been done in pencil originally and were later inked over to make them more permanent. These show quite clearly on the second Kohklux map now in the Bancroft Library collection. Many of the notations, however, were left in pencil and are harder to decipher. This includes poignant comments like, "No salmon, many die from want."

In Davidson's article on the map, he follows Kohklux and his wives and warriors from Klukwan to the Tat-sae-heen'-a, below Fort Selkirk. The map that he used to illustrate the article (see page 15) is very different from the original Kohklux maps.

By the time Davidson's article was printed, he had added non-native names to many of the features in the narrative. This adds another dimension to the map as it is now the Kohklux map as interpreted by Davidson. It is a retelling of the story with Davidson's translations and interpretations. Between the time that Davidson talked to Kohklux and the time his article and map came out in 1901, several American, Canadian and European explorers had been through the southern Yukon. The map in Davidson's 1901 article shows the influence of these later explorers in the English naming of many features and the imposition of a map grid over the area showing longitude and latitude. Many of the interesting notations that appeared on the Kohklux map were not included. It is an abridged version with European mapping conventions introduced, and the most current geographical information provided from recent explorers.

To keep as close to Davidson's interpretation of the map as possible, we have used his narrative to describe the journey made by Kohklux. In our own attempt to make the Kohklux map more comprehensible to readers, we have provided a modern map (page 4) and text notations throughout Davidson's article that are keyed to the annotated version of the Kohklux map (pages 18-19). (The numbers are meant to help orient the reader.)
Explanation of an Indian Map
OF THE RIVERS, LAKES, TRAILS AND MOUNTAINS
FROM THE CHILKAHT TO THE YUKON
DRAWN BY THE CHILKAHT CHIEF, KOHKLUX, IN 1869.

GEORGE DAVIDSON, Ph. D., Sc. D.
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.

Fifteen years ago that region of Alaska and Canada lying between the coast, under the St. Elias and Yakutat ranges, and the Yukon River; and between the Chilkaht and Lewes Rivers on the east, and the White River on the west, was a terra incognita. It covered an area of about 50,000 square miles, and was drained by unknown tributaries of the White, Yukon and Lewes Rivers; by the Chilkaht and the All-segh'; and the large Katch-kwae-wugh' and the Kaskar Wurich. It contained numerous large lakes first made known to us in 1869.

At a location on the north bend of the All-segh', where the line of Indian travel was comparatively easy towards the west, north, east and southeast, a yearly meeting of different tribes took place for purposes of traffic between the interior Indians and the Chilkahts, who were strong enough to control the coast traffic.

A very large part of the above territory is drained into the Pacific by the river known on the coast as the All-segh', which breaks through the St. Elias and Yakutat ranges about fifty-five miles east of Yakutat Bay, with a maximum current of ten miles.

As a matter of fact, the whole area of Alaska and the Northwest Territory of Canada was unknown except along the river courses; and even these were very imperfectly laid down. We have now partial reports and maps from modern travellers, as Raymond, Dall, Russell, McGrath, Turner, Allen, Abercrombie, Krause, Schwatka, Wells, Glave and others; and from Dawson, Ogilvie, McConnell and others, for the Canadian Government. Of those who earlier struck into the unknown region we have mentioned were Wells and Glave, but they were not properly outfitted with instrumental means for geographical determinations.

It happened that upon our second trip to Alaska we obtained material that was important in laying down two routes from our station on the Chilkaht to Fort Selkirk, at the junction of
the Pelly and Lewes, where they form the Yukon, and we now propose to present an abstract of what we then learned, and collate it with later investigations. It will reconcile names, and point to an interesting region for exploration.

In 1869 we made the trip up the Chilkait to observe the total solar eclipse of August 7. At Sitka, through the kind offices of the military commander, General Jefferson C. Davis, we were brought face to face with Kohklux, the famous chief of the Chilkaitis, then held in durance for
some petty offence. He certainly was not in a friendly mood, because some of his people had been shot down by the guard when trying to escape from custody. This chief was a man of commanding presence, nearly six feet high, broad chest, and a well-formed head that measured twenty-four inches in circumference. He carried a bullet-hole in his cheek. He was held to be the greatest warrior and diplomat of all the tribes north and west of the Stak-heen. In our future relations we found him truthful and absolutely honest. With all the instruments, tools, camp equipage, stores, carried and handled by his people, we never lost a single article during our stay at his strong village. For the release of his people by General Davis he promised us assistance and protection wherever we chose a station; and he fulfilled in spirit and letter every promise, and our every wish was attended to.

We selected the village of Klu-kwan, in 59 deg. 25 min., for the observations, and, fortunately, we were enabled to use our Chinook jargon with the two wives of Kohklux; and in our interviews we learned that he had projected and carried out the destruction of the Hudson’s Bay Company’s station at Fort Selkirk on the 21st of August, 1852, because they had dared to interfere with his traffic with the Tahk-heesh and other interior Indians. This fact was unknown to the Canadians until we communicated it to Land Commissioner Ogilvie, in 1897.

At his own suggestion Kohklux proposed to draw upon paper his route to and from Fort Selkirk. The second attempt was upon a large sheet, 43x27 inches. The operation cost him and his two wives two or three days’ labor with pencil and no rubber. It lacked names and days of travel on the different parts of the route to and the second route from Selkirk. It began at Point Seduction, in Lynn Canal, with islands, streams and lakes; and with mountains in profile. Under their direction we applied the names to all important positions and objects, and they number over 100. They were subsequently verified; and it was a great astonishment to them that we could announce to them the names they had given, and he begged to know how we did it.

*Bold, superscript numbers that follow the place names refer to the numbers on the Kohklux map, pages 18-19.*
With these few preliminary remarks of an interesting experience, we propose to follow Kohklux, his wives and warriors, from Klukwan¹ to the Tat-sae-heen'-a,² below Fort Selkirk; premising that een, eena, heen, heen-a, or any other form with een, refers to a freshwater stream.

In July the party started along the main Chilkahlt, or Yagh-heen'-a,³ and continued for about fifteen miles northward to the first large tributary coming in from the northeastward. They followed this stream three days to the falls or rapids, Yough-ya-koon,⁴ thence two days to the glacier⁵ in the divide of the Kotusk Mountains. He gives details of tributaries and mountains.

The great glacier which he crossed comes in from the eastward, between two large mountain masses. The eastern mountain is double-peaked, and named Tchu'-kit'-lee.⁶ Beyond the glacier to the northeastward he starts a stream that flows northeast and then northwest,⁷ with several small lakes on its course, and finally enters the Lake Arkell, beyond the Gull-egg⁸ Islands. He names the river Ta-gish'⁹ (hard "g"). At its mouth he marks a cache and an Indian trail towards the east.⁺ He did not follow this stream, but the one that leads to Lake Maud from another glacier, or a branch of the large one. He was two days crossing the glacier region, and apparently followed the east shore of Lake Maud, or Sur-guae-ae-ta'.¹⁰ He notes small tributaries and lakes; and on the east marks a great snow mountain, Hoo-tchae-siti.¹¹ He was one day following the Sur-kwik-ae-waht-heen-a,¹² that connects Lake Maud with Lake Arkell a few miles north of its southern extremity. Lake Arkell he names Koo-see-wagh¹³ or Koo-soo-wagh', and it required three days to traverse. He notes and names the Gull-egg Islets,⁷ and the cache⁶ he left at the mouth of the Ta-gish',⁹ or Hahk-heesh, on the eastern shore. The eastern branch of this stream Kohklux locates in a glacier or valley, Ka-tuwa-kaegh',¹³ lying towards the west arm of Lake Bennett; and into this eastern branch he flows a stream from the north-northwest. It is by these streams that the Indian trail from Arkell leads to Bennett, to be reached in two days.
(places found in 1865)

Kukkuauw village of Kohkllus where U.S.S. party observed total solar eclipse of August 7 1869
Chilkat River Alaska

This map was drawn by Kohkllus in 1869 at his village. It is the first time he ever used a pencil. He and his wife drew it after two or three days labor and then I put in their names and afterwards verified them especially as they came to me to settle some questions of names as doubts had arisen in one of their minds. Kohkllus as a young man accompanied his father on a journey to Fort Selkirk and his father burnt that fort. Subsequently he went there in 30 days by boat & came back over the snow as indicated by the four tracks. He also went over to Atlaya Bay or Bay of 5 Rivers on the Coast. The drawing commences at the Davidson Glacier at the head of Chatham Strait and goes to Fort Selkirk as you see by the houses.

- The Chilkat rises in a great glacier 5 days travel from Kat-Kaghosta & the headwaters of the branch of the Yukon rise in the same glacier & flow northward. It took 1 day to cross the glacier.
- The figures indicate the days journeys on any special part of the long journey.
- It will be seen that he gives the views of the mountains as seen on his journey.

Oct 5/83 Geo Davidson
Reproduction of second Kohklux map.
Transcriptions by Peter Long and Wynne Krangle.
From the foot of Lake Arkell he entered the Kow-waht-heen’-a, usually called the Tahkheena River, that enters the Lewes in latitude 60 deg. 50 min., about fifteen miles below the White Horse Rapids. He marks the rapids on the Kow-waht-heen-a, also the Kow-ae-teen-a, or Mendenhall tributary of the left bank, and the lake, Yut-tae-ghat, at its head. He does not note the tributary coming in from the right bank, which Ogilvie has designated with a lake at its head.

About a dozen miles below the W[K]ot-waht-heen-a, the Lewes discharges into Lake Labarge; but three or four miles before the latter is reached, Kohklux has a stream coming in from the left bank, called the Ka-hat-tee-kee-tee-heen. It appears to come from the westward, through a narrow gorge in the mountains, and further from a narrow grass valley, called the Tchu-kam-see-tee, which lies at right angles and northward of the gorge. This valley appears to head northward towards the Lake Me-tagh-ko of his return route.

Kohklux designates the Lewes between the mouth of the Kow-waht-heen-a and Lake Marsh to the southeast, as the Sish-sha’ Kow-waht-heen-a, and names Lake Marsh Ta-gish-sha (hard “g”), with a village of Tak-heesh at the northeast angle, where the river debouches. Professor Dawson says the Tagish name of this lake is Ta-gish-ai, or the Tagischa of Krause.

Kohklux, has a native village at the southeast point of Lake Labarge. He was one day running down this lake, which is thirty-one miles in length, nearly north and south. It is about 1,960 feet above the sea. Kohklux places the higher mountains on the west side. He names the lake Kluk-tak-sy’-ee, or Kluk-tak-sy’-a. (Sy-ah in Chinook means far away, or long distance.) Schwatka named it Labarge, after a well-known pioneer, Michael Labarge, but reported the Indian name, Kluk-tas-si. Dr. Dawson says the Tagish name is Tluo-tal-sai, and remarks that Krase called it the Tahiniwud, “which is evidently the name given to me as that of the Lewes River, or the Tah-hini-wat.

At the northern extremity of Lake Labarge, Kohklux built a raft for the navigation of the river hence to Fort Selkirk. He names the river below the lake Tah-heen-ae (Salmon River), and notes that there are no mountains below this lake.

On this trip down the Lewes, or Tah-heen-ae, the map of Kohklux is quite important, and we are able to locate the relative positions of the several large tributaries by their native names.
Fifteen to twenty miles below Lake Labarge the River Newberry, or Tess-el-heena, of Schwatka, enters the right bank. This is the Hootalin’qua of the miners, and the Tes-s’l Heena of Kohklux. Dr. Dawson says the Tagish Indians gave him the name Teslinton; Ogilvie calls it the Tes-lin-tou. It drains the great Lake Tes-leen, which is about 110 miles to the southeastward; and the Indians report it to be the largest of the lakes of this region, and Ogilvie gives it, and the line of lakes at its head, at 125 miles.

The width of the Tes-s’l heena is 575 feet at its mouth, with a velocity of less than three miles, while the Lewes has a width of 420 feet, and a velocity of nearly six miles per hour.

Thirty-three miles below the Tes-s’l heena, the Big Salmon of the miners, or the D’Abbadié of Schwatka, enters the right bank from the southeast. It is the Tat’len-heena of Kohklux, and Dawson says it is the Ta-tlin-hi-ni of the Tagish Indians. It is a long river, and has a lake at each head of its two main tributaries.

Thence the main direction of the Lewes to the Yukon is northwest for ninety miles, as the crow flies.

Some distance below the Tes-s’l heena, Kohklux has a small stream entering the right bank. It has the long name Ghluk-kok-kwen-heen’a. Ogilvie has a stream entering four or five miles down the river from the Big Salmon, but without a name. Kohklux was six days in reaching this stream from Lake Labarge.

About thirty-six miles below the Big Salmon, the Little Salmon enters the right bank of the Lewes. It is the Tsak-heen-a of Kohklux; and just below it is a native village of “Sticks,” to which Kohklux gives the name Ghluk-sae.

In the southern bend of the Lewes, eight miles below the Little Salmon, Schwatka has located an isolated rocky hill, about 500 feet elevation, which he names the “Eaglenest Butte,” from the Chilkah name. He says the Tagish call it the Otter-tail. Kohklux has drawn it as a sugarloaf, and named it Glugh-sae-shah. He has a small stream entering at the upper, or southern, side, and so has Ogilvie.
On the left bank of the Lewes, not far below the Eagle-nest Butte, Kohklux had upon his first sketch a small stream named Tagh-lah-chik'-wa, probably the same that Ogilvie places in 60 deg. 3 min. latitude.

In latitude 62 deg. 9 min., Schwatka places the mouth of the Nordenskjold, or the NaN-sundun, coming in on the left bank. Dalton calls it the Nats-un-dum; Kohklux names it the Nats-un-tun'.

This is an important point on Kohklux' map, because here, on his return from Fort Selkirk, he left the Lewes and followed up this river. It is the northern terminus of the Dalton east trail.

Thirteen miles in a direct line north of the Nats-un-tun', in latitude 62 deg. 20 min., the Tatchun of Schwatka enters the right bank of the Lewes, from the east-northeast. It is the Ta-tchun' of Kohklux, who has a lake at its head. Dawson calls it the Tatshun River. Kohklux was six days going down the Lewes from Ghluk-kok-kwan-heena to the Ta-tchun'. Two miles before reaching the Ta-tchun' occur the "Five-Finger Rapids" of the miners, or the Rink Rapid's of Schwatka. Kohklux called them the Yaelh-kot-sae, and verbally described them.

From the Ta-tchun the distance to the Pelly River is fifty-nine miles according to Ogilvie, who adds no side streams of any importance; nevertheless, Kohklux has on the right bank a stream and two villages, and a stream on the left bank, with their names.

When Kohklux reached the Pelly River he named it the Gho's'-heena, and Fort Selkirk "King George's House," which is the Chinook name for a Hudson's Bay establishment. Far up the Pelly he has drawn a large lake, into which a large fall is pouring its waters; this, perhaps, from native reports to him. Kohklux continued his voyage down the Yukon to secure the support of the Indians of that region in his intended raid. On the left bank of the Yukon he places a stream coming in, which he names the Tal-sae-heena, which he reached in eleven days from Ta-tchun. We have had no means of identifying this stream; it is probably the Selwyn. His itinerary to the Yukon covered thirty days. After the burning of Fort Selkirk, Kohklux returned up the Lewes, and left it at the mouth of the Tats-un-tun'. Thence he followed a snow-shoe trail along the right bank of the river to its lowest right-bank tributary coming from the south; followed this, and turned to the westward at the head of the lake feeding that stream, with a smaller lake a little farther south. He gives no names. Near where this tributary debouches, and to the northward and westward of the Nats-un-tun, he places an unnamed and disconnected lake.

Kohklux avoided the direct trail to Hoo-tchye'-ee Lake and village, crossed the hills on the east through a depression running north and south, and came out at the southern head of the Hoot-chye'-ee series.

Kohklux does not connect these lakes with the Yut-tae-ghat Lake, at the head of the Mendenhall River, although he has a small stream leading from this latter lake towards and close to the Hoo-tchye-ee Lakes, all of which he names.

The Hoot-chye'-ee is doubtless the Hooth-eye of Glave, who named it from report only; the Hootchi'-i of Ogilvie and Dalton, and the Hutshi of the Canadian map of 1898. It is about 2,600 feet above the sea.

Beyond the low hills that lie to the eastward of the Hoo-tchye-ee system, Kohklux has laid down and named three other lakes that are continued southward from that one which he rounded at the head of the tributary of the Tats-un-tun. He does not connect this eastern series by water-course, but they point southeasterly to the headwaters of one or other of the streams that run south into the left bank of the Kow-wat-heen-a, perhaps the Klokhok.
To the east of the divide where Kohklux passed the head of the Hoo-tchy-ee series, he has drawn a deep valley, running east to the other series of lakes; but we have no space for details.

Going back for a few moments to the Hoo-tchy-ee, we note that Kohklux has drawn two detached lakes to the westward, but without river connections. The nearest is named the Ta-ku-ten-ny'-ee,45 with a native village on the north.46 It is probably the I-she-ik of the tribe there. To Kohklux it may have been the Salmon River (Tah-ku) of the Ten-nai. The westernmost lake is very large,47 with two arms to the northeast, on the northern of which we have written “to Yukon”48 from Kohklux’ dictation. Schwatka says the Indians call the White River the Yu-ko-kon-heen-a: The size, direction, and legend of the lake point to it as the great lake Tloo-arney of Glave, and the Klu-ah-ne on the Canadian map of 1898; and it is doubtless connected with the White River by its tributary the Donjek, or a branch of the Klu-an-tu of the Coast Survey. Glave says it is seven miles wide at the south end, and “stretches like a sea away to the north as far as the eye can reach.” The Indians reported that they could reach the Yukon in “five sleeps” from their village. Glave got into confusion hereabouts, but it is clear this lake does not drain into the Kaskar Wurlch, which heads in a great glacier to the southwest of it. The natives on the lake call the White River the “Eark Heene,” which Glave gives as Erkheenee on his map. (Irk means copper.)

From the divide Kohklux continued southward on the easterly slope of high hills, with Lake Yut-tae-ghat47 on the east, which drains into the Kow-ae-teenae,16 and thence into the Kow-watleen-a.14 Thence he reached the great northeast bend of the Katch-kwae-wugh49 which drains the Lake Tots-an-tee-ash'.50 From this bend the great river swings to the west, receives the waters of
the Ai-she-hik Lake, which heads in latitude 62 deg.; and farther down the great river it receives the waters of a river which Glave followed, and soon after joins the Kashar Wurlich below the Grand Canôn of the latter.

From the great bend, Kohklux continued up the right bank of the river and the Lake Tots-an-teee-ash\textsuperscript{50} to its head; thence along the east side of the Lake Kluk-shugh\textsuperscript{1},\textsuperscript{51} with a notable pyramidal peak to the westward. But he deviated southeastwardly from the Una-heen,\textsuperscript{52} across the great valley Sha-kwat\textsuperscript{53} (Glave's Shawkak), and the small stream Tahk-heen-a\textsuperscript{54} from the east, and then struck northwest along the All-segh\textsuperscript{55} River to the annual trading station, Nes-ka-ta-heen,\textsuperscript{56} at the northerly bend, 2,500 feet above the sea. This station is west of and close to the mouth of the Una-leen,\textsuperscript{52} which drains Kluk-shugh.\textsuperscript{51} Here he mentions that on another trip down this river to the Pacific, he encountered the rapids, Tchu-kan-nagh\textsuperscript{1},\textsuperscript{57} a log hut on the right bank (built in the style of the Russian log huts of Port Mulgrave—with a legend thereto), with the name, and other villages of “Sticks”;\textsuperscript{58} hence to its junction with the Kaskar Wurlich. Recent Canadian maps connect Lake Kluk-shugh\textsuperscript{51} with the Tots-un-teee-ash,\textsuperscript{50} or Dassar-dee-ash, but Kohklux does not. If they were connected, it would form a remarkable system. He left this place and followed the All-segh\textsuperscript{55} upstream towards the divide, at 3,100 feet elevation, and thence down the eastern flanks, of the hills and mountains, and around the western side of the great snow mountain, Ah-klen.\textsuperscript{59} Continuing southward, he soon reached the lake at the head of the Ghlu-heen-a,\textsuperscript{59} which is the northern part of the Tklae-heen-a,\textsuperscript{61} that empties into the Chilkah\textsuperscript{2} just northwest of his village, Klu-kwan.\textsuperscript{5} Every lake and stream in this region he names. He was thirty days making his return trip.

This is a brief and perhaps unsatisfactory account of a double line of exploration. The return line is mainly the Dalton trail. We have not the space to collate the names of Kohklux with later investigators or traders. We staid long enough with the Chilkah\textsuperscript{2} to get the proper pronunciation of their names; and having gained the friendship of Kohklux, he was ready to carry us to a location where, he averred, the coal was as good as that used on our steamers.

We may add that Ta or Tah is salmon; een, eena, etc., is a freshwater stream; ik or irk is copper; una is flint; tlen, large, siti, the ice mass of a glacier; shagh, mountains.
PLACE NAMES

First Nations people travelled this country long before there were maps or charts. While there were well-established trails, these were not always plainly visible, especially high in the mountains on rock and snow. There were also lakes and rivers to traverse and navigate where there were no paths or signs. Travellers relied on their memories and the memories of those who had gone before to guide them. As the trip from Klukwan to Fort Selkirk took one month of steady travel, this required careful attention to detail and a good memory.

My mother took me up on her back when I was 8 months old and she told me to keep my little eyes open and see everything around me; then, many years later, during World War II, I was working up there for the army and I was walking behind a cat (bulldozer) and I recognized it. I’ve been here before. The landscape was in my memory. This was the pass from Klehini to Dalton Post.

- Albert Paddy

Often, place names were not just labels but descriptions of features that would enable travellers to orient themselves. The mountain now known as the Three Guardsmen is called Nanda dūyakhachye in Tlingit—“facing North the wind is to your back.” Sometimes, the name was a description of what to do at that point in the trip. Jájí šidakū, for example, is a place at the foot of a waterfall that means “get rid of snowshoes.” This was the point in the east Chilkat Pass where, on the trip south, early travellers took off their snowshoes to travel by boat. (Yough-ya-koon on the map).

It may be that place names changed over time because different people described places in different ways. This could account for many names on the Kohklux map being unrecognizable to modern Tlingit speakers. Like many travellers and explorers, the Tlingit gave their own names to places. Thus the Koo-see-wah on the Kohklux map became the modern Kusawa Lake. The lake is in Southern Tutchone territory, however, and they name it Naku’ Mān. Where different language groups used the same territory, there were often many different names for the same place. For example, Davidson noted that the lake which the American explorer, Frederick
Schwatka called Labarge, was known by the Indian name of Kluk-tas-i. Dr. Dawson noted the Tagish name was Tlooo-tal-sai, while the explorer Krause called it Tahiniwud. Modern Southern Tutchone speakers call the lake Tāan Mān and it is Tāaan Mān in the Northern Tutchone language.

Most of the people living in the area shown on the Kohklux map were Athapaskan speakers. This is not one but a family of similar languages. When the Tlingit speakers heard an Athapaskan name, they may have modified it to suit their own tongue. Davidson may have heard an Athapaskan name, said in Tlingit, which he then spoke and wrote out in sounds that he could understand. Between the first map and the second map there were changes in the spelling of some place names that may have reflected yet another modification for the English ear.

The name Teslin is, perhaps a case in point. In his paper “Kaska Place Names”, Patrick Moore points out that the name Tae-sleen-a appears at the bottom of the first Kohklux map, referring to the modern Teslin River. Later, Davidson wrote this as Tes-sli-heen-a, apparently in an attempt to make it sound more like other Tlingit place names that use heen-a or hini, meaning “stream.” Moore points out that the original spelling was probably closer to the real meaning which likely came from the Kaska or Tagish root word Deslin, -lin meaning “flowing.”

A similar modification nearly obscured the meaning of a very significant name. On the first Kohklux map, the modern Pelly River was called Has-en-a which is nearly identical to the name Tlingit speaker Lucy Wren gave to Ross River Xas Hmî or Buffalo River. The Ross River flows into the Pelly and Kohklux may have given the waters between Ross River and the Yukon River the
same name. Davidson later modified the name on the map to Ghoś-Heena, shifting it away from its original sound and meaning. This name tells us something significant about the history of trade between the Tlingit and Northern Tutchone people. The wood bison disappeared from this area some two hundred years ago, long before the first white traders came into the territory in the 1840s. As Moore points out, this shows that Tlingit trade to the Pelly River region predated the disappearance of the wood bison and shows how history can be preserved in a place name. 

*Tyler Spud, Kaagwaantaan (left); Joshua Hotch, Kaagwaantaan*
DAVIDSON AND KOHKLUX

Davidson and Kohklux were both travellers and seekers of knowledge. They seem to have recognized a kindred spirit in one another and formed a positive relationship in which gifts of great value were exchanged. In return for the map, Davidson drew some details of the solar eclipse on a board. The red and black drawing was carefully preserved in one of Klukwan's clan houses for many years.¹⁹

Davidson left Klukwan and returned to his life in San Francisco where he eventually became director of the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey on the West Coast. He remained fascinated with the north and kept track of scientists and explorers journeying there. The explorations of Krause, Schwatka, Dawson, Ogilvie, and Glave proved that the Alaska and Yukon river drainages were just as Kohklux and his wives had drawn them.

Davidson never did travel into the Yukon to verify the Kohklux map. It was not until 1901, well after these other explorers had published their accounts, that Davidson chose to print his article in Mazama magazine. It may have been, as Linda Johnson speculates, that he was unwilling to print a map that he had not personally substantiated.

The Chilkat people experienced enormous changes in the time of Kohklux. Explorers, prospectors and missionaries pushed northward in increasing numbers. They brought new ideas, new technology, disease, alcohol and a great pressure for access to the interior over the passes that the Tlingit had guarded so closely. Kohklux did his best to lead his people through these tumultuous times. He was considered a great diplomat and became friendly with many military personnel and politicians sent
to Alaska. Kohklux even received a personal gift from the Secretary of State, William Seward, who had negotiated the purchase of Alaska. Upon meeting the Secretary, Kohklux wanted to have Seward’s name tattooed on his arm. Seward sent Kohklux a fur robe inscribed, “To Chief Shatritch From His Friend William H. Seward.”

![Pyramid Harbour, Chilkat Inlet](image)

Pyramid Harbour, Chilkat Inlet (Chilkat Indian canoe in the foreground)

Not all meetings between Americans and Chilkat were so friendly. In particular, the trade and consumption of alcohol was the source of violence among the Chilkat on the coast. After a particularly bloody fracas in 1880, Kohklux asked Commander Beardslee of the U.S. Navy for assistance in stopping the troubles. Possibly in payment for this help in keeping the peace, Beardslee was able to persuade the Tlingit chiefs to allow prospectors to enter the interior over the Chilkoot Pass. This was the beginning of the great stream of prospectors that would peak during the Klondike gold rush of 1897-98.

Kohklux also helped other newcomers to get established in his country. In 1879, he met Presbyterian minister S. Hall Young and helped him start a mission school for Chilkat children. He wanted his people to learn the ways of the outsiders. Although Kohklux had been part of the raiding party that drove out the Hudson’s Bay Company traders from Fort Selkirk in 1852, he apparently came to realize that this new wave of outsiders would not be driven away. He worked, therefore, on creating a place for his people in the new order and gained a reputation as a peace maker. Kohklux died in 1889 at the age of 70. Seven years later, an Oklahoma cowboy named Jack Dalton was using the Chilkat trail as his own, packing supplies and driving cattle north to the Klondike gold fields. Both Chilkat and Chilkoot found greater profit in packing supplies over the passes than in their traditional trade with the Athapaskan people of the interior.
The Kohklux map is more than a relic of early American exploration. It is in active use today as a key to the heritage of First Nations. Tagish, Tlingit and Tutchone people are studying their history through the place names on the map. The Tutchone people are locating villages and meeting places that were marked as “sticks” on the map, Kohklux’ name for the interior people. The names of places are also a key to the heritage of the Tagish. As Tagish elder Clara Schinkel, points out, “you will know who you are and where you came from if you know your name.”

The places inland were in the lands of the Tagish, Southern Tutchone and Northern Tutchone people. When the Tlingit traded in the Yukon, the language of trade was often Tlingit. The Tagish developed such strong ties with the Tlingit that the Tagish place names were overshadowed by Tlingit names.

Today, interest in the map is drawing Yukon and Alaskan people together. Old trade and family ties between the coastal and interior people are being renewed and new friendships built. In the summer of 1994, a gathering of Tutchone, Tagish and Tlingit people was held at Klukwan to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the map. Another gathering at Fort Selkirk is planned for 1995. The story of the map is a reminder of their common heritage and documentary evidence of their oral traditions.
**MYSTERIES STILL UNSOLVED**

Despite the remarkable correspondence between the Kohklux map and modern charts, there is still a great deal of ambiguity. On the following pages, parts of the Kohklux map have been reproduced along with sections of satellite pictures of approximately the same area. Try using the rivers and Davidson's article to trace the route taken by the early traders and travellers.

Some features mentioned in Davidson's article are easily found on a modern map. Others are vague references to creeks, small lakes and valleys which are not readily apparent. There are also intriguing references to villages, caches and meeting places that may no longer exist, save as archaeological sites or stories, but which likely held great significance 100 years ago.

The reader should be aware of inconsistencies in spellings. Davidson was not a linguist. He used phonetic spellings for the names he learned. Davidson wrote notes on the map in 1883, fourteen years after the meeting with Kohklux and didn't publish his article until 1901, using information from meetings and correspondence with early white explorers. This could explain the inconsistencies. A list of books on First Nations place names is provided in the Endnotes.\(^2\)

![Outlet of Lake Kluktass](image)

*Outlet of Lake Kluktass\(^2\)
*Terminal Butte of the Hancock Hills (on the right)*

Kohklux was a chief who led his people through great changes. He strove for peace and asked the newcomers for help in keeping it. He also sought knowledge, both for himself and his people. In the Chilkat way, he was most scrupulous in trading evenly: favour for favour, knowledge for knowledge. If we consider the Kohklux map as a symbol of his role as a diplomat and revealer of mysteries, then the Kohklux spirit is very much alive and active today. Through his map, people are once again meeting to exchange knowledge and establish bonds of friendship.
Area south of Kusawa Lake to Chilkat Lake from the Kohklux map
Area from Dezadeash Lake and Kusawa Lake to Lake Laberge from the Kohklux map
Area around confluence of Pelly and Yukon rivers down to confluence of Nordenskiold and Yukon rivers from the Kohklux map
ENDNOTES

1. Kohklux was known also as Chartrich, Shatritch, Shotridge, X sa 'txieix, X Sa 'txieix and numerous other spellings. His name is thought to be derived from Klate Sharto-which, meaning “never hit a shark with a club.” From The Tlingit Indians. George Thornton Emmons, Frederica de Laguna, ed. Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver, 1991, page 117.

2. “Explanation of an Indian map of the rivers, lakes, trails and mountains from the Chilkah to the Yukon drawn by the Chilkah Chief, Kohklux, in 1869,” by George Davidson. Reprinted from Mazama, April 1901, page 76.

3. Davidson, page 76.

4. Davidson, page 76.


6. Linda Johnson, quoting from an unpublished manuscript of Davidson Mazama article in George Davidson Collection, The Bancroft Library.

7. The Tlingit Indians, pages 54-55.

8. It is thought the raid was led by the father of Kohklux, Campbell to Anderson, November 4, 1852 from Lew Johnson, “Introduction to Fort Selkirk, the challenges.” Unpublished typescript.


11. Davidson, page 76.


14. Tlen.


17. Moore.


19. Linda Johnson.

20. Linda Johnson.

21. Linda Johnson.


Kluane Southern Tutchone Glossary. Occasional Papers of the Northern Research Institute, Monograph #1, by Daniel L. Tlen, Whitehorse: Yukon College, 1993. ISSN 1188-8067.

My summer in Alaska, by Fredrick Schwatka. J.W. Henry, St. Louis, Mo., 1894.


