Tribal Distribution and Settlements of the Fuegians, Comprising
Nomenclature, Etymology, Philology, and Populations

Charles Wellington Furlong


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TRIBAL DISTRIBUTION AND SETTLEMENTS OF THE FUEGIANS
Comprising Nomenclature, Etymology, Philology, and Populations

By CHARLES WELLINGTON FURLONG, F.R.G.S.

We have already delved a little into the mists enshrouding the history of the peoples of Patagonia and the Fuegian archipelago.¹ We have seen the foot peoples, clad in furry guanaco skins, make the long journeys south over the wind-swept pampas of what is now Patagonia and into northern and southeastern Tierra del Fuego, the men with lances and long bows skyward pointing and boleadores coiled for the march about their waists, the women in the vanguard bearing back-burdens of folded tents or babes in the neck folds of their capas (skin cloaks), with older children following at their sides. With no domestic animals, save perhaps a dog, they have followed the road where the foothills meet the plains, the tag ends of their skin garments and their long black hair blown in the pampas winds.

We have seen the canoe peoples, stark naked to the wet and freezing blasts or, at most, clothed in a couple of scant otter skins flung over their powerful shoulders, work their way south through the long, tortuous channels of the west coast clear to Cape Horn, the southernmost habitat of man. We have watched their slow progress; the men in the fore part of the canoes ever ready to spear their prey; the women paddling astern; the eternal-fire smoke rising from the sod amidships—fire for cooking, for warmth, or for perpetuation during their voyages.

Today we find them divided into four distinct tribes, each occupying a definite habitat. It is the purpose of this article to define more clearly the territories occupied by these Fuegian tribes, to touch on their nomenclature and philology, to consider their decrease and its causes, and to

¹ See the article by the writer on "Some Effects of Environment on the Fuegian Tribes" in the January Review.
Fig. 1—Mapuches (Auracanians) in thatched reed, or native house.

These people, descendants of the proud, indomitable Auracanians, are today degenerated and have an infusion of white blood. They are dealt with more fully in the writer's previous article (January Review, pp. 5-6).
describe and locate their principal settlements before they are obliterated. The region which these tribes occupy—the archipelago lying south of the Strait of Magellan—I have defined as Fuegia. The largest island is Tierra del Fuego, triangular in shape and about as large in area as New Hampshire and Vermont combined. West and south of it are thousands of smaller islands and intricate waterways, but Tierra del Fuego itself contains about two-thirds of the land area of the archipelago, which lies between 52° 28' and 56° S., i. e. in a corresponding latitude to southern Labrador. Politically, Argentina claims the eastern half, Chile the western.

The nomenclature of Fuegia comprises two divisions, those names given by the intrusive European element and those given by its autochthonous inhabitants. Perhaps the place-names of no territory in the world portray the history of a region as do those of Fuegia:—Magellan Strait, Useless Bay, Beagle Channel, Mount Darwin, Port Famine, Thieves Bay, Desolation Island, etc. Those of Indian origin are mostly limited to the principal native settlements, headlands, channels, etc., of which they are generally geographically descriptive. For instance, Ushuaia (Oo-shoo-wy' yä) means, in the Yahgan language, "Mouth of the Bay"; Yahga-Ashaga means "Mountain Valley Channel."

It is said that when Magellan sailed through the strait now bearing his name he was so impressed by the blue smoke of the numerous camp and signal fires rising against the dank, dark mountain sides that he named this region Tierra del Huomo (Land of Smoke.) When his lone ship returned to Spain the king was advised of this. "Tierra del Huomo?" queried His Majesty. "No, Tierra del Fuego; where there is smoke there must be fire." The name, however, was undoubtedly given by Magellan to the lands bordering both sides of the strait.

Prior to venturing through the stormy strait Magellan's fleet wintered in little San Julian Bay, on whose shores his crews one morning discovered exceptionally large human footprints; hence the Spanish term Pata-gones (the big-footed) was applied to the inhabitants. From this word was later derived "Patagonia," which term even on recent maps has been applied not only to the pampas reaches to the north of the strait, but to the more open country of the northern half of Tierra del Fuego, of which they are a continuation. 2 It must be remembered that for nearly a century after Magellan discovered the strait Tierra del Fuego was considered as the northern extremity of another continent reaching still farther south. Subsequent explorers or mariners have applied the term "Patagonian" indiscriminately to natives, both foot and canoe, inhabiting both sides of the strait, thus confusing not only the Onas with the Tehuelches, but even the canoe peoples with the foot peoples. Even the observant

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2 "Patagonia" is also applied to the southwestern Chilean coast. For a discussion of the application of the name see H. Steffen: Viajes de Exploración i Estudio en la Patagonia Occidental. 1892-1902, Vol. 1. 1902, pp. 3-9. Santiago, 1909.—EDIT. NOTE.
Darwin made no distinction between some of the foot people of south-eastern Tierra del Fuego (probably Haush) and the Yahgans, while Fitzroy and others, without sufficient foundation, have classified the canoe peoples into a number of different tribes, such as—to retain the original spelling—the Yapoo Tekeenica, Alikhoolip, Chups, Yacana-kunny, Key-yus, Schnau-kunny, Zapallo, Tekeenica, Pecherais, Huemul, Poy-yus, Yamana, Aonik, Aona, Yacanas, Yacana.

Thus it may be seen how a confusion of geographical names caused and still causes grave errors in the reports on tribes inhabiting these lands. Consequently, great discrimination should be observed in the use of Fuegian data gathered from records of mariners and others, because of the confusion of geographical and tribal names as well as on account of the observers’ limited association with the natives.

After careful consideration, I have adopted and would recommend the following nomenclature as applied to the Fuegian tribal names, territory, and language, each of which will later be considered in detail. (For the territorial distribution of the tribes see the map, Figure 2, in the previous article.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tribe</th>
<th>Territory</th>
<th>Language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yahgan (Yăh'gan)</td>
<td>Yahgana (Yăh'gă-na)</td>
<td>Yahganan (Yăh'gă-nan)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ona (O'na)</td>
<td>Onia (O-ne'e'a)</td>
<td>Onan (O'na)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaculoof (Al'a-cooloo')</td>
<td>Alaculoofa (Ala-cooloo'ą)</td>
<td>Alaculoofan (Ala-cooloo'än)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hush, or Aush (Howsh)</td>
<td>Hausha (Howsh'ą)</td>
<td>Haushan (Howsh'än)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Alaculoof Tribe

The name of this tribe has been spelled in various ways, Alacooloo, Alacaloof, Alacaluf, Alacooluf, Alacaluf, Alcaluf, Alikhoolip (Fitzroy, 1836), Alaculoof (Hatcher, 1901), Alookooloo (Skottsberg, 1908), Alukukup (the same, 1913). 3 Bridges, an early missionary, to whom more detailed reference will be made shortly, spelled it Alaculoof. As I consider Bridges by far the greatest authority on the canoe peoples, I have adopted his spelling. The name seems to be the one applied to them by the Yahgans, who probably derived it from the Alaculoofs themselves.

Alaculoofa, their territory, adjoined Yahgana and may be said to have reached from the vicinity of Brecknock Peninsula west and north, possibly well up the Patagonian channels, with a slight overlapping around Brecknock Peninsula into Yahgana, and an occasional extension south and east as far as Murray Narrows off Beagle Channel. The Alaculoofs were canoe Indians: the mountainous, damp, and densely wooded islands, unfavorable for pasture or tillage, turned them to dependence on the sea for their main food supply. Such an existence necessitated a roving life; so their time was spent cruising the tortuous channels and innumerable bays of their habitat, camping on the edges of its many islands. Today many of

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Fig. 2. A Tehuelche camp, southern Patagonia.

Toldos (tents) are made of guanaco skins, fur out, and are always pitched back to the west, from which come the prevailing winds. Note undulating pampas country. (The Tehuelches are dealt with in the writer’s previous article, in the January Review, pp. 23.)

Fig. 3—Types of Yahgans, Rio Douglas. Note primitive beech-bough wigwam and mourning face-painting of woman standing. (Photo copyright by Charles Wellington Purlong.)

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their kitchen-middens are found on the most protected and desirable camp sites.

The Alaculoofs, though slightly superior to the Yahgans, resembled them in general appearance, customs, and character, but less is known of these people than of the other Fuegan tribes. Skottsberg states\(^4\) that the canoe Indians, as they are called by the English, call themselves "Alookooloop" and that they live in "the channels between the Magellan Straits and the Peñas Gulf." But it must not be taken for granted that all the canoe people of the Patagonian archipelago are Alaculoofs. No adequate linguistic studies have been made nor ever can be made unless some well-trained ethnologist of an adventurous nature is willing in the very near future to isolate himself for an extended period of time among these people. About 1884, the Rev. Thomas Bridges and his son Despard compiled an Anglo-Alaculoof dictionary which seems to have disappeared. While at Rio Douglas at the camp of a solitary missionary, Mr. John Williams, I saw a manuscript dictionary, by Bridges, in his possession. While this dictionary seemed to comprise mainly Yahganan, part of it may have been devoted to Alaculoofan, and it may be the missing dictionary. One of the leading authorities, and perhaps the foremost authority of this country, on the linguistics of the Fuegan tribes is the Rev. John Cooper of Washington. He has informed me of a manuscript book of prayers in Alaculoofan recently compiled by Brother Juan Xikora of Dawson Island Mission. Announcement has been made that this book is to be published.

Skottsberg, in his interesting report on the Swedish Magellan Expedition,\(^4\) says: "It is very astonishing that two tribes having the same aspect and customs, living in the same region and not separated by any natural obstacles, should have their languages so entirely different as the Yahgans and Alookooloops, not one word being the same." I must take exception to two statements in the above: first, Brecknock Peninsula was a tremendous barrier to intercommunication between these two tribes. With an annual record of "three hundred days of rain and storm and the other sixty-five not pleasant," rounding in frail canoes the weather side of the frowning cliffs of Brecknock Peninsula was something which only the most daring or hard-pressed undertook. And it was impossible for these canoe men to pass over its barren, unexplored mountain heights. It seems well established that the Yahgan language extended (1876) to Brecknock Pass, where Alaculoofan began. Second, while it is my opinion that Alaculoofan and Yahganan are absolutely different, Skottsberg's statement would advisedly have been made with greater reserve. Such a comparative statement cannot justifiably be made until one has mastered to an appreciable extent both these languages. With due respect to Dr. Skottsberg's con-

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scientious and valuable work in those regions, his data were based at the most on but a few weeks’ contact with these people. Bridges took a lifetime to compile his Anglo-Yahgan dictionary and grammar.

An idea of the decrease of the Alaculoofs and the other Fuegian tribes may be obtained from the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ALACULOOPS</th>
<th>YAHGANS</th>
<th>ONAS</th>
<th>HAUSH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1836</td>
<td>500 (Fitzroy)</td>
<td>400 (Fitzroy)</td>
<td>3500 (Furlong)</td>
<td>200 to 300 (Furlong)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>1500? (Martial)</td>
<td>2800 (Bridges)</td>
<td>3000 (Denuec)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>3000 (Bridges)</td>
<td>2500 (Bridges)</td>
<td>3600+ (Bridges)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>1000 (Martial)</td>
<td>945 (Bridges)</td>
<td>2000 (Barclay through Bridges)</td>
<td>100 about (Furlong)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>900 (Hyades and Deniker)</td>
<td></td>
<td>800 (Barclay through Bridges)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>200 (Barclay through Bridges)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>800 (Skottsberg)</td>
<td>175 (Furlong)</td>
<td>600 (Furlong)</td>
<td>2 (Furlong)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>300 or more (Lehmann, Nitsche)</td>
<td>175— (Furlong)</td>
<td>600— (Furlong)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>60 (Lucas Bridges)</td>
<td>100—? (Furlong)</td>
<td>800—? (Furlong)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>200? (Furlong) .....</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 or 6 (Lucas Bridges)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question marks indicate theoretical estimates.

The Alaculoofs have been decimated through rum and disease, the effect of contact with ships’ crews, with whom they barter skins for clothing, tobacco, and liquor. They have practically disappeared from Fuegia, only a few individuals being found in Yahgan territory. An occasional canoe or two is seen at the western end of the Strait of Magellan. More are found, however, in the Patagonian channels between the strait and the Gulf of Penas. Within the last eight years some of these people have been definitely located in the region of Last Hope Inlet, Port Grappler, Cape Tamar, and the vicinity of Shell Bay, Dawson Island, Beagle Channel, Murray Narrows, and elsewhere.

There is good reason to believe that some of the Alaculoofs occasionally worked eastward from Admiralty Sound overland to Lake Cami (Fagnano) in Tierra del Fuego; consequently I include the shores of that lake in Alaculoofa. Skottsberg counted some eighty of these canoe people between the Strait of Magellan and the Gulf of Penas. Judging by those occasionally reported, it would seem that between the regions of Last Hope Inlet and Beagle Channel they number from one to two hundred. But should the bulk of these people have retreated into the intricate maze of the Fuegan and Patagonian archipelagoes, it is possible that several
hundred of the tribe may still exist. I incline to the lower estimate. Much scientific work is still to be accomplished along the entire length of the Patagonian channels between 41° 30' and 50° 30' S., as well as in the little-known regions south of the strait and back of and about Hoste, Clarence, Santa Ines, and Desolation Islands.

THE YAHGAN TRIBE

The name of this tribe has also been spelled Yaghan and Yagan.

To Bridges belongs the credit of the first proper linguistic classification of the four Fuegian tribes. The canoe people inhabiting the Cape Horn and Beagle Channel districts spoke a common language, calling themselves just ya’mana (man) and their language, ya’man’hah’sha (man’s voice). The central and main thoroughfare connecting these two districts is a narrow channel known as Murray Narrows, called by these natives Yah’ga-Asha’ga, meaning “Mountain Valley Channel,”’ all the district round about being known as Yah’ga. To distinguish this tribe from the others west, north, and east, Bridges called them “Yahgan,” wisely adopting, in the case of a tribe, a custom applied by them to individuals, for their names mostly are taken from the place of birth. For instance, a Yahgan of my expedition was from this group and from Yahga, as his name, Yahga-Ashagan, indicated. Bridges also states that they called their language yatigan, but for consistency’s sake I have adhered to “Yahganan,” the term used in the synopsis (p. 172).

Mr. Bridges was a man of keen observation, excellent education, and a strong scientific trend. His Anglo-Yahgan dictionary and grammar, which is based, with certain modifications, on the Ellis phonetic system, is one of the most comprehensive and valuable works on a primitive language. It comprises practically the entire Yahgan language and shows an amazingly large vocabulary—about forty thousand words—for so primitive and isolated a people. This is due in great part to their forced lack of gregariousness, and hence undeveloped classification of objects and ideas: their terms are specific; they compound verbs and adverbs almost indefinitely and have innumerable modifying affixes. In strong contrast to the cultural tongue of the Onas, their language abounds in the vowels and consonants of our own language and their speaking voice is pleasing and soft. Although numerous names have been applied indifferently to various groups of Yahgans, sealers, explorers, and missionaries often defining them by the names of their settlements, there seem to have been among them four principal groups. These are the Beagle Channel and Murray Narrows group, who are the best formed; the Lennox Islanders, big-headed, ugly, powerful men; the Southwesterns, about Hoste Island, the most warlike

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5 The relation of the subsequent peregrinations of this dictionary, and of its acquisition by Dr. Frederick A. Cook, when a member of the Belgica Antarctic Expedition, is a story in itself. But let it be unqualifiedly understood that no person other than the Rev. Thomas Bridges can morally or legally claim any credit whatsoever for this superb work.
and murderously inclined; and the Wollaston Islands group, the most wretched and most dwarfish. The last bear out specifically, in the case of a group, the migratory principle that I advanced in the previous article in the case of the southern South American tribes, i.e. the weaker are forced south. Through decimation, social instinct, and the necessity for wives, these groups have mingled to a considerable extent, particularly the last

![Map of Tierra del Fuego](image)

**Fig. 4**—Map of Tierra del Fuego showing some Ona, Yahgan, and Haush settlement sites. Scale, 1:4,500,000. **Note:** The site at Cape San Pablo is an Ona site and should be represented by a triangle.

Names have been given to these sites whenever possible. All are aboriginal names except the following: Gente Grande, Rio Fuego, Haberton, Cambersers, Banner Cove, Rio Douglas, Mussels Bay, Button Island. The exact location of Lushoof is doubtful. Cuchawulauf is the name applied to the island and probably to its principal camp site. There are many other settlement sites not shown here. Some of those shown have been abandoned. With one or two exceptions these are or have been important settlements, supporting a fluctuating population, varying from a few families to perhaps over three hundred in case of the Yahgans, to perhaps one hundred in case of the Onas, but usually only small groups in the case of the Haush. Note the center of Yahgan population in Yahga and vicinity.

three, who now have their principal rendezvous at Rio Douglas (Navarin Island) and on Tekenika Island in the Wollaston group. Today the Beagle Channel groups also intermingle to a considerable extent, and even an occasional Alaculuf is found among them.

Their principal camp sites and settlements may be readily located by the kitchen-middens found along their coasts. These mounds mark the old resorts of the tribes and are composed of mussel and limpet shells and bones and refuse thrown out from their wigwams. They also served, at
least to some extent, as graves in which they buried their dead. It must have taken many centuries to bring about some of these vast accumulations. The study of these kitchen-middens might throw light on the early history of these people, and an important systematic study should be made of the shell heaps before their contents have rotted away. This must be done soon, for those abandoned in even comparatively recent times are overgrown with shrubs and trees.

Although families have camped on the coasts of almost every inlet, bay, and channel of Yahgana there have been a number of principal settlements. These are indicated on Figure 4. Undoubtedly the largest settlement was that of the Beagle Channel group at Ushuaia ("Mouth of the Bay"), now the site of an Argentine penal colony and the southernmost town in the world. There is a record of one occasion when the temporary Yahgan population there reached over three hundred. About one hundred and fifty was the usual number, while in the course of a year fifteen hundred canoe people sometimes visited this place to barter skins.

With the possible exception of the Yahga region, Woolyia (Woo-ly'ya) on Navarin Island was the principal settlement of the Murray Narrows region. Today the bare poles of a lone abandoned wigwam, from which a few dry leaves still flutter in the wind, are all one finds of this former settlement. For centuries the theater of considerable primitive activity, the scene, too, of the massacre of the ill-fated officers and crew of the Allen Gardiner,⁶ over whose shallow grave I erected a rough-hewn tablet.

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⁶ See the volumes of the South American Missionary Magazine.
the Woolyia site is now devoted to the horticultural efforts of an adventurous Austrian.\(^7\) I viewed it from an elevation at the northern end. Its general appearance suggested the old irregular palings left by a mining dredge, now overgrown somewhat with moss, short grass, and in a few instances with caliphate bushes.

![Diagram of Woolyia site](image)

**Fig. 6**—Approximate plan of Woolyia, an important Yahgan settlement site on Navarin Island, Tierra del Fuego. Scale, approximately 400 feet to 1 inch (1:4,800). *Note:* The unnamed island in the northern part of Allen Gardiner Bay should be designated Cole Island.

This map was drawn from a hasty plan, sketched on the spot by the writer during his expedition of 1907-08, and may be regarded as a typical Yahgan settlement, being second in importance only to Ushuaia. Location, 58° 3' 0" S. and 68° 9' 30" W. Stripped areas represent kitchen-middens and ground covered with their débris. Islands are low promontories, or hills, practically all being very rocky and wooded. Compare with photograph (Fig. 5) taken from point A. In the past, the settlement varied from a few Yahgan shelters to probably sixty or seventy; its population varying sometimes from a few families to over two hundred natives. B represents canoe runways, cleared of stones; C, what may have been fish traps, though possibly runways (those on the opposite, southern, side of the point, which are left unlettered on the map, should be included); D, the expedition's chartered 35-foot sloop *Garibaldi*; E, the grave of white men of the ill-fated *Allen Gardiner* expedition, who were massacred by Woolyians (here the writer placed a wooden tablet with an inscription); small dotted rectangles at F, dwelling of an Austrian settler, Antonio Vraslovich, who came here in 1896; large dotted areas at F, fencing; G, small mill and straightened stream, forming its raceway.

In absence of charted names of the bay and islands, the writer has named them as follows: Allen Gardiner Bay, after the mission vessel; Garibaldi Island, after the sloop of the expedition; Yescoose Island, which Vraslovich said the Yahgans called it; Fell and Phillips Islands, after Captain Fell and Mr. Phillips, victims of the Woolyian massacre; and Cole Island, after the cook who was aboard the schooner and escaped in a small boat past this island and by taking to the woods on the opposite point.

Perhaps no more ideal settlement site exists than Woolyia, and I shall take it as a type (Figs. 5 and 6). At the head of a large sound (Ponsonby), on the canoe routes between the Wollaston Islands and Beagle Channel, and protected by islands, it possesses the most ideal topographic and climatic elements from the Yahgan point of view. It is situated along

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\(^7\) See the review of the *Anuario Hidrográfico de la Marina de Chile* for 1915 in the *November Review* (Vol. 2, p. 391). The report states that the Austrian had been settled there for sixteen years; presumably his enterprise is successful.
the west coast of Navarin Island, on a little bay protected by a peninsula from the south and southwest gales. In the bay, from a hundred to perhaps a few hundred yards off shore, are about a half dozen small islands, varying in length from a few yards to possibly an eighth of a mile. They afford protection from the west and northwest gales and also form a splendid little haven with an entrance at either end.

The village extended several hundred yards from a point north to beyond the peninsula on its south, and from high-water mark back about one hundred yards to what may have been originally the wood line they had cleared about the village. Edging the clearing of the settlement itself are the dense woods whence the Yahgans obtained their supplies of firewood and moss for kindling, a few meager berries, scurvy grass, wild celery, and edible fungi, beech boughs for their wigwams, bark for their canoes, wood for their spear shafts, etc. A number of fresh-water streams pass through the camp site, while remnants of stone fish traps and canoe runways, cleared of stones, can be seen at low tide. A few small marshy tracts covered with balsam bog alternate with the groups of kitchen-middens. One of these marshy tracts, I presume, may have supplied them with the *carex* used in the weaving of their reed baskets. Other advantages of this site were the abundance of mussels and the favorable conditions for gathering them. This important food is secured to a great extent by the women, who dive for it into the icy brine. The comparatively quiet water necessary was here secured by the island shelter before mentioned.

The mussel heaps of the village site are scattered not only the entire length of the shore of the bay, but are on the landward side of the largest islands. Some of these shell heaps to the north are at least eight feet high, possibly ten, and could be circumscribed by a circle thirty-five or forty feet in diameter. A very large midden at least ten and possibly twelve feet high is noticeable on the large island opposite the peninsula to the south end of the village. In excavating the shell débris of these middens I found bones of whale, guanaco, and birds, and some implements. A cranium, with its lower jaw, found in a shell heap in the central part of the village, with finds of like nature and other data gathered, indicates that the occupants buried their dead in these middens.

Most important of my finds was one of the so-called "morning star" stones. This perforated stone, about four inches in diameter, has knobby projections around its rim, and was probably the head of a primitive war club. It is now in the American Museum of Natural History, recording the southernmost of these stones yet found (55° 0' 3" S.). It may help in establishing the fact of certain trade relations and communications between the ancestors of these people and tribes of the Chilean coast, as far north as the country of the Mapuches—perhaps to northern Peru.

At the mouth of Rio Douglas and at frequent intervals on both sides up river for a mile or more I also found large groups of kitchen-middens,
some of them overgrown and hidden with weeds, bushes, and trees. Another large site was at Tekenica in the Wollaston Islands and Mussels Bay in Beagle Channel. This latter is still occupied by Yahgans, as is also their camp site at Laui (Lao'we).

From the dim past the Yahgan has fought a winning fight against the onslaughts of the elements, combating them with all the dogged aggressiveness of his powerful frame, but the contact with "civilization," though slight, has proved more fatal than nature. Clothes and hair cuts have produced catarrhal affictions, pleurisy, phthisis, pneumonia, scrofula, and consumption; clothes, those catch-alls of germs, have introduced measles, whooping cough, and smallpox, while unscrupulous adventurers with their rotten rum and more rotten morals have left in their wake some of the white men's vices, syphilis and other virulent forms of venereal diseases, more fatal than his bullets. A little less than half a century ago there were probably 2,500 Yahgans. In 1907 and 1908 I estimated the total population at 175. In 1910 it had decreased slightly. Today possibly not more than 100 remain. Yet this remnant maintains its independence in the very face of extinction, even continuing its blood feuds, increased by the necessity of greater community life and the fight for wives. Further ethnological work should be done and done quickly among these people before the last of them disappear. Their shell heaps should be plotted and portions of them systematically excavated and studied before they are overgrown with brush.

The Haush Tribe

The Onas speak of themselves as Shilk'evnum or as Ch'on (Tchon; o prolonged), their word for "men" in general. But the tribe dwelling in the southeast corner of Tierra del Fuego they call Haush or Aush. This word has no other significance in Ona. The Yahgans call the Haush Etulum Ona (eastern Ona). In Yahganan the word haush means "kelp," the long-stemmed, flat-leaved seaweed abounding along their coasts, in Ona ch'ish.

The Haush were not a strong foot people, nor a canoe people, though there seems to be some evidence that during the quieter season of the year some of them used canoes. Driven as they were to this extremity of Tierra del Fuego they were forced to subsist on the meager products of their coast, mainly on the shell fish and creatures living in and about the kelp, while they clung, like the kelp itself, to the coastal fringe. It is not improbable that the Yahgans, who are adept at nicknaming and seeing similes, should have drawn an analogy between these people and the coastal weed and have applied the word haush to this tribe as an appellation of contempt, just as today the white people of the Patagonian mainland speak of the Falkland Islanders a bit contemptuously as "kelpers."

The Haush were intermediary, so to speak, between the Onas and
Yahgans, and it was only along Haush territory in times past that the Ona met and traded with the Yahgan. May it not be reasonable to suppose that through these meetings the Yahgans in speaking to the Onas contemptuously referred to the inferior eastern tribe as Haush (kelp), and that this word thus became incorporated in the Ona language as the name of these people?

A point in favor of this verbal adoption theory lies in the fact that all of the Ona people were named by the Onas according to locality or conditions of locality under which they lived, such as Parek u Chon (Forest People) or Coj u Chon (Beach People), while “Haush,” having no other significance in Onan, indicates that it might be a word borrowed from Yahganan, in which language it has a definite significance applicable to the Haush tribe.

The history of the Haush may be said to have begun with Darwin’s meeting with some members of the tribe in Good Success Bay in December, 1832, but he seemed to make no distinction between them and the Yahgan tribe. The next record of contact with them is made by Bridges at Good Success Bay in 1878. He was the first man to give to science the name of this tribe. Linguistically the Haush differed from the other tribes; a few words evidently were in common use between them and the Onas, and in respect of its harsh and guttural nature the Haushan resembled the Onan tongue. Bridges incorporated between five and six hundred words of Haush in the manuscript of his Anglo-Yahgan dictionary and grammar under the heading of “Eastern Ona.”

The Haush were divided into family groups averaging perhaps five or six to a family and were scattered mostly along the coasts from Good Success Bay to Cape San Pablo: at times they may have worked their way as far east as Sloggett Bay or farther. Their principal settlements undoubtedly were Good Success Bay, Cape San Diego, Thetis Bay, False Cove, Policarpo Cove, and here and there along the coasts between that cove and the vicinity of Cape San Pablo. These people were evidently similar in customs and social organization to the Onas, though at an inferior stage of development.

When on the south coast of Tierra del Fuego in 1908 I found only two Haush living: a man, Pelota by name, probably about sixty years old, at Haberton, and his son, a sickly youth about twenty-two, living among some Onas at Najmish to the north. In 1912 I was informed by Lucas Bridges that there were about five Haush living. But it is quite possible that in his estimate of the five Haush Mr. Bridges not only included the two Yahgan wives of old Pelota, but the Ona woman or wife the younger Haush may have acquired; this would tally with his estimate. The son was evidently a half-blood, so the older man, if still living, is the last pure-blood member of the Haush tribe.
The Ona Tribe

Onia, the territory of the Onas, formerly extended over the most desirable portions of Tierra del Fuego. Now driven south by white men, the Onas occupy the greater portion of the southern half of their island, forested and mountainous. Had it been like the northern half, the world might now look upon the hunting grounds of an extinct race.

Although Magellan undoubtedly saw the smoke of the Onas' camp fires along the strait, he evidently never came in contact with any of this tribe; even centuries after Magellan's time their island was a *terra incognita*, and some parts of it still are. The history of the Ona in northern Tierra del Fuego practically begins with certain Argentine expeditions and the establishment of the first sheep ranch at Gente Grande (Big Men) about the early eighties. Since then we have received numerous fragmentary reports of these "chunkies," as they were called by the ranchers, whose closest analysis of this splendid tribe was too often along the sights of a Winchester or Remington.

While ethnic work has been done by an occasional scientist or explorer* along the coasts, it fell to my lot to be the first to pass through certain interior sections of their country alone with Onas and to travel, hunt, and live in their wigwams for the purpose of ethnological study.†

The origin or meaning of the word "Ona" is a somewhat mooted question. The Onas, as has been said, call themselves *Shilk'e'num* or *Shelk'enan*, meaning "men." *Os'isn* they call the land over which they roam. *Hanni* in Yahganan means "north wind," but *Onan* means the same; the Yahgans may have come to use the latter as signifying the wind from the Onas' land, which lies to the north of their territory. The Yahgans speak of the northern Ona as *Ingulum Ona*, and of the Haush, as we have seen, as *Etulum Ona* (eastern Ona). The Yahgans of Beagle Channel and Woolyia spoke of the Onas as *Ō'wen* or, on learning the English word for men, *Ō'wens men*, or *Oensmen*.

The Onas called Yahgan men *Wō'wun*. This may have been another form of the Ona word for men, *Chō'wun*. As the Yahgans had but one word in their language for men, *yamana*, they may have considered that the Onas too had but one word for men, *wōwun*, and consequently applied it to themselves, deriving from it the Yahgan word *Ō'wun*, *Ōen*, or *O'wen*.

The Ona word *Chō'n* (Tchō-n) or *Chō'wun*, meaning men or people, might have been corrupted by way of the Haush to *Ona*, as the *ch* is a sort of click and but slightly audible. But I am inclined to believe that from

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*For accounts of scientific expeditions to these regions, see Lautaro Navarro Aráia: *Censo Jeneral del Territorio del Magallanes, Punta Arenas*, 1908, Vol. 2, pp. 503-507.

† Results of this expedition consist of collections in the American Museum of Natural History; Peabody Museum, Harvard University; Peabody Museum, Salem, Mass.; Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, New York. Other important collections are to be found in the Salesian Mission Museum, Punta Arenas, Chile; Museo de la Plata, La Plata, Argentina; Museo de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina, and small collections in the National Museum in Washington, in the British Museum, and in Paris.
Cho’n the Yahgans derived their word ơ’wun, ơ’wen, by which they long signified the Onas. There is a possibility of Ona having been derived from Ts-ôn’aca, which the Tehueleches called themselves, the corruption of the two central and emphasized syllables of the word having come to the Yahgans by way of the Alaculoofs as the name of the foot people of the strait region.

However, the word “Ona” was accepted by Bridges, who not only knew the Yahgans better than any one else, but, in 1875, was practically the first white man to get into friendly touch with a few of them.

There may be slight dialectic differences among some of the main Ona groups, but Onan is distinct from the other Fuegian languages. Unlike the Yahgans, the Onas do not take their names from their birthplaces, except in the case of their jî’ho’n (medicine men). Their speech is indescribably guttural, unmusical, and full of clicks similar to those of the Zulus, the sh and ch sounds being prominent.

The most desirable hunting grounds of Onia, those over which the guanaco roamed in countless thousands, lay in the northern half of Tierra del Fuego. To a limited degree they extended into the southern half, but this section consists mostly of bog lands, screened by thick woods and in many places by impenetrable forest, while range upon range of impassable snow-capped mountains swing nearly clear across its southern length from west to east. Some Onas undoubtedly frequented the eastern end of the large interior lake called by them Cami (Lago Fagnano). About its shores they found fair hunting and undoubtedly came in occasional contact with a few Alaculoofs who had worked in from Admiralty Sound and who may be considered the discoverers and first explorers of this sixty-mile-long body of water. Except at the extreme eastern end of Tierra del Fuego there was but one pass over the mountains. This was south of the eastern end of Cami: it reached the coast in the vicinity of Gable Island in Beagle Channel. Here there was some contact with Yahgans, who, I am convinced, conveyed hunting parties of Onas across to Navarin Island, so that Onia may be said to extend south of Tierra del Fuego.

South of the Rio Grande the Onas, not counting the Haush, today number perhaps a little over 800 people. These people in the early days spoke of the thickly populated north and of the many men and their great size. A fair estimate would place their numbers, including the western Onas, at a little over 2,000, making a former total Ona population of perhaps slightly over 3,000.

Thirty years ago the Onas could undoubtedly be found in certain favored camping places in communities of a hundred or more. They had approached nearer the clan stage than the Yahgans, giving greater recognition to certain men as leaders, a circumstance due to the fact that the northern part of their country permitted greater gregariousness and community life. However, after being driven south by the white man into
the forested mountainous regions food became more scarce and the hunt more difficult. Of necessity they split up into subdivisions or family groups, so that today rarely more than thirty or forty individuals are found together, while frequently two or even single families are found passing a great part of their existence in pristine isolation.

FIG. 7—Map of Tierra del Fuego showing present approximate territorial clan divisions of the Ona tribe. Scale, 1:4,500,000.

The names are those of the recognized heads of the respective clans or family groups, and spaces within dotted lines represent the approximate location and area of hunting grounds occupied by the respective clans. The Haush territory is also shown, and the two mission stations are marked “Mixed.” That to the west is Dawson Island Mission, the other is the Salesian Mission just north of Rio Grande. At both stations are representatives of various clans, and at Dawson Island are representatives of the Ona, Yahgran, and Alaculoo tribes. There are undoubtedly numerous territorial subdivisions which might be made, and the present divisions might be modified somewhat. Those of Tinink and Aanikin occupy territory on Navarin Island, where these clans overlap and trespass on adjoining territory, having been pushed south; they represent the southernmost limit of the Onas.

While, roughly speaking, the Onas north of the Rio Grande may be considered as northerns, those in the vicinity of Admiralty Sound and the south shores of Useless Bay as westerns, and those south of Rio Grande as southern and the Haush as eastern Onas, yet many of these were interrelated by marriage and were subdivided by themselves into groups named according to their locality. Among the Onas each coast headland of every large lake has a name. The forest Onas of the south speak of the northwesterns as Parek u Chon (camp men); the western Onas as Kenenica
Chon (western men); men from Cape Penas as Joije u Chon; men from Lake Hyeuin as Hyeuin u Chon. The men in the mountainous forested region of Lake Cami they would speak of as Cami u Chon (Cami men); Hische u Chon (forest men), or Gooiyin u Chon (men of the mountains); but the clan of an Ona, Tapelt by name, from the head of the Rio Grande in the interior and north of Cami, was also Gooiyin u Chon.

The beach, or coast, Onas were Coj u Chon (men from the beach); men of Olte (vicinity of Cape San Pablo), Olte u Chon; extreme eastern people, Hausk or Aush; Yahgan men, Wo-wun, Yahgan women, Aiilan; Alacuoloof, Aiirru; Ona, Shulkenum; civilized man, Coliot, or Haliot, or Holist.

Today these clans have been subdivided and to some extent redistributed. The accompanying map (Fig. 7)\(^1\) will give the approximate distribution by clan as it exists at the present time, the names in each case being those of the headmen of the respective clans, while the following is a list\(^1\) of Ona names whose bearers more or less represent the various family groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pechas</th>
<th>Oretush</th>
<th>Hochil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conioth</td>
<td>Sha-chilen</td>
<td>Cosheten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doth’couken</td>
<td>Hilshoat</td>
<td>Hinnika</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tapelt</td>
<td>Halimink</td>
<td>Sasiot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tecolkø</td>
<td>Aanikin (dead)</td>
<td>Halitas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cauve’chemot</td>
<td>Tininsk</td>
<td>Tins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cautemkel</td>
<td>Talikioat or Halimioat</td>
<td>Parren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ishtíon</td>
<td>Caichina</td>
<td>!C’yanin (c is clicked)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hochó</td>
<td>Chikioth</td>
<td>Doiyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kileheen</td>
<td>Minkoth</td>
<td>Met’e-ten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dolal</td>
<td>Caucoat</td>
<td>Kel’kel’ke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>!’C’woon (c is clicked)</td>
<td>Chalshoat</td>
<td>Hinkioth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>!’C’ton (c is clicked)</td>
<td>Pupup</td>
<td>Yosi ‘alpe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chor-che</td>
<td>Otrhshoal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ishíten</td>
<td>Aneikin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The aggression of the white man has forced the Ona into the forest and mountain retreats of southern Tierra del Fuego. Thus his food supply (guanaco) is limited. This condition has naturally brought about feuds and interneceine strife. However, the curtailment of territory has brought about a more general distribution, with a jealous guard maintained by each clan over its own area, and this contrariwise has made for a population increase.

Hence, despite the fact that at the first touch of civilization the Onas were quickly reduced from about 3,000 to about 600, those who retreated unconquered into the southern mountainous country or had formerly occupied part of it, even under the disadvantage of limited food supply,

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10 Compiled with the kind assistance of Mr. Lucas Bridges.
11 Compiled with the kind assistance of Mr. William Bridges.
have slightly increased in the last few years. This very increase, however, but hastens the time when the food supply will be insufficient for the demand, when the balance of nature between guanaco and Ona will be upset. The guanaco are fast disappearing; then contact with the white man will be the Ona's sole choice, and civilization will quickly get in its deadly work.

At present the only necessary contact of this remnant with the white man is with the Bridges brothers at their ranches on the east and south coasts. To them the Argentine government and all who hold a true interest in the Indian peoples owe a debt of gratitude for the toleration, sympathy, and understanding shown in their dealings with the members of the splendid tribe with whom they have come in touch. 12

There is one dim hope for the Onas; it lies in the magnanimity of the republics of Chile and Argentina, particularly in that of the latter. The first step would be to set aside in perpetuity for the Onas' sole use at least the smaller and less desirable part of their birthright that has been taken from them—say, all the territory of the island south of the line of 53° 40' 51" S., except that occupied on Beagle Channel by settlers—with a mile-wide neutral strip north of it.

It was my privilege to bring this matter to the attention of the two respective governments in 1908 and again to register my plea at the Second Pan-American Congress held in Washington in 1916. As occasion demands, their territory should be restocked with young guanaco, easily obtained from the pampas of the Patagonian mainland. Thus could justice, spiced with Christianity and common sense, be meted out to a splendid aboriginal tribe. Such a course would redound to the everlasting credit of Chile and Argentina, and thus would this tribe be preserved before its little remnant takes up the last "great trek."

12 On Argentine interest in the native problem see the note entitled "Indian Reservations in Argentina" in this number of the Review.