

# Authentic Totems

## Iroquois

- **Mohawks:** Bear, wolf, and turtle.
- **Oneidas:** Bear, wolf, and turtle.
- **Onondagas:** Bear, wolf, turtle, deer, beaver, eel, snipe.
- **Cayugas:** Bear, wolf, turtle, deer, beaver, eel, snipe, hawk.
- **Senecas:** Bear, wolf, turtle, deer, beaver, heron, snipe, hawk.
- **Tuscaroras:** Bear, gray wolf, yellow wolf, great turtle, little turtle, beaver, eel, snipe.
- **Hurons or Wyandots:** Big turtle, little turtle, mud turtle, wolf, bear, beaver, deer, porcupine, striped turtle, prairie turtle, snake, hawk.

## Algonquin Tribes on the Atlantic

- **Delawares or Lenapes:** Wolf, bear, dog, possum, turtle, little turtle, mud turtle, great turtle, yellow eel, turkey, crane, chicken.
- **Mohicans:** Wolf, turtle, turkey, bear, dog, opossum, yellow eel, crane, chicken.
- **Abenakis (Maine):** Wolf, wild cat (black), bear, snake, spotted animal, beaver, caribou, sturgeon, muskrat, pigeon hawk, squirrel, spotted frog, crane, porcupine.
- **Hopi:** Horn-flute, mountain sheep, deer, antelope, elk, seed grass, ant, corn, rain cloud, rainbow, lightning, agave, rabbit-brush, duck, frog, tadpole, snake, puma, dove, cactus, marmot, skunk, raccoon, squash, crane, pigeon hawk, thistle, eagle, hawk, turkey, sun, star, chicken hawk, willow, parrot, cottonwood, macaw, corn, badger, butterfly, coyote, skeleton, hemlock, buck-grass, squash, yellow fox, gray fox, juniper, striped squirrel, lizard, spider, fir, oak, magpie, field mouse, porcupine, turkey buzzard.
- **Zunis:** Crane or pelican, evergreen oak, coyote, badger, antelope, sun, eagle, parrot-macaw, cotton-tail rabbit, tortoise, rouse, bear, maize plant, deer, turkey, toad or frog, rattle-snake, sunflower.
- **Scattered Tribes of the Pueblos:** Calabash, mountain lion, turquoise, granite, arrow, humming bird, blue bird, timber, gopher, pine, boulder goose.
- **Mohaves:** Moon, caterpillar, coyote, rain cloud, sun, beaver, mesquite.

## Mississippi Algonkin Tribes

### Pueblo Tribes

- **Miamis:** Wolf, loon, eagle, buzzard, panther, turkey, raccoon, snow, sun, water.
- **Sauks and Foxes:** Wolf, bear, deer, elk, hawk, eagle, fish, buffalo, thunder, pine, fox, sea, sturgeon, big tree.
- **Shawnees:** Wolf, loon, bear, buzzard, panther, owl, turkey, deer, raccoon,

turtle, snake, horse, rabbit.

• **Menomonis:** Bear, porcupine, turtle, crane, wolf, otter, sturgeon, sunfish, big thunder, golden eagle, fork-tail hawk, bald eagle, turkey-buzzard, winter hawk, red tail hawk, crow, raven, beaver, elk, pine squirrel, wolf, dog, deer, bald eagle, fish hawk, great heron, coot, marten, fisher.

• **Ojibways:** Crane, catfish, loon, bear, marten, reindeer, wolf, merman, pike, lynx, eagle, rattlesnake, moose, black duck or cormorant, goose, sucker, sturgeon, white fish, beaver, gull, hawk, mud turtle, snapping turtle, little turtle, snipe, duck, snake, muskrat, heron, hull-head or bull-pout, sparrow, hawk, water snake, forked tree, wildcat, otter, buffalo, birch-bark, white oak tree, grizzly bear, reindeer, pike.

• **Seminoles:** Wind, tiger or panther, otter, bird, deer, wolf, snake alligator.

• **Chickasaws:** Wildcat, bird, panther, fish, deer, raccoon, squirrel, alligator, wolf, blackbird.

• **Cherokees:** Wolf, holly, acorn, deer, bird, long prairie. **Pueblo Tribes**

• **Hopi:** Horn-flute, mountain sheep, deer, antelope, elk, seed grass, ant, corn, rain cloud, rainbow, lightning, agave, rabbit-brush, duck, frog, tadpole, snake, puma, dove, cactus, marmot, skunk, raccoon, squash, crane, pigeon hawk, thistle, eagle, hawk, turkey, sun, star, chicken hawk, willow, parrot, cottonwood, macaw, corn, badger, butterfly, coyote, skeleton, hemlock, buck-grass, squash, yellow fox, gray fox, juniper, striped squirrel, lizard, spider, fir, oak, magpie, field mouse, porcupine, turkey buzzard.

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### Pole from the Tlingit

## Northwest Indians

• **Tlingit:** Raven, frog, goose, sea lion, owl, salmon, beaver, codfish, skate, wolf, eagle, bear, killer-whale, shark, auk, gull, sparrow-hawk, thunder-bird.

• **Haidas:** Raven clan, killer-whale, black bear, loon, woodpecker, thunder-bird, hawk, wolf, dogfish, devilfish, owl, land otter, grizzly bear, sea lion, mountain goat, rainbow.

• **Eagle clan:** beaver, sculpin, frog, raven, dogfish, halibut, land otter, starfish, hummingbird, skate.

• **Tsimshian:** Raven, codfish, starfish, eagle, halibut, beaver, whale, wolf, crane,

grizzly bear, bear, killer whale, dolphin, sun, moon, grouse.

- **Omahas:** Male elk and deer, red maize, bear, turtle or tortoise, bird, white crane, verdigris, or green clay, deer head, buffalo head, white clay, buffalo tail, reptiles, thunder, black shoulder, wolf.



- **Poncas:** Thunder, fire, wind-makers, wildcat, bald elk, earth, medicine, dark buffalo, osage.
- **Iowas:** Black bear, wolf, white wolf, black wolf, gray wolf, coyote, eagle, thunder-being, golden eagle, gray eagle, spotted eagle, bald eagle, elk, beaver, pigeon, raccoon, grouse, buffalo, rattlesnake, owl.
- **Kansas or Kaw:** Deer, black eagle, prairie wolf, tent, bear, duck, turtle, thunder, buffalo, elk, earth, white eagle, raccoon, osage, black bear, ghost, gray hawk.
- **Osages:** Sun, comet, buffalo bull, black bear, elk, swan, bald eagle, turtle, fish, pond-lily.
- **Winnebagoes:** Wolf, elk, bear, deer, buffalo, snake, eagle, thunder.
- **Mandans:** Wolf, bear, prairie chicken, good knife, eagle, flathead, high village.
- **Crows:** Prairie dog, skunk, lost lodges, bear's paw, fish catchers, raven, antelope.
- **Creek Indians:** Wolf, bear, skunk, alligator, panther, mole, fish, hickory nut, beaver, snake, bear, deer, wind, fox, maize, salt, otter, bird, toad, raccoon, wildcat, buffalo.

**By Robert De Groat**

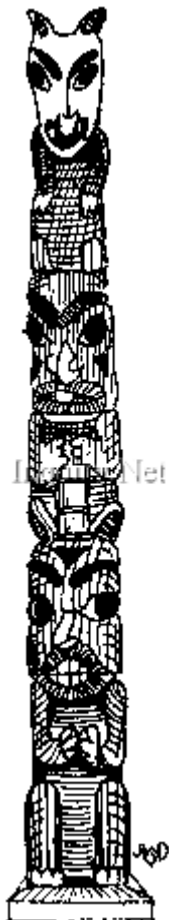
### Color Detail of Totem

Three crouching human figures with heads, part human, form the principle design of the wolf head totem, left.

The lower one has a broad nose, projecting front teeth, and animal ears.

The principle figure has upon its head one of those cylindrical objects of a blue color which are placed on dance hats, and against this leans the next figure, whose feet cannot be seen. It has a hooked nose turning into the mouth, and the ears of an animal.

The third figure is squatting with its arms and legs in a sitting position, and has a wolf's head.



In all three figures, arms, legs, mouth, face, nostrils, and ear-holes are scarlet. Eyebrows, eyeballs and edges of ears are black.

## **Meaning of Totem Pole Colors**

*WHITE:* This color is used, along with other light colors, as a background and predominating shade. As a rule it symbolized the skies and spacious heavens. It also stood for purity, peace, and death.

*Red:* Generally this color stands for blood, war or valor. Sometimes it is used as appears in nature, such as the crest of a red-headed woodpecker, the scarlet tanager or frequently the tongue of an animal.

*Blue:* This color was most commonly used as the symbol for the rivers, waters, and lakes, also the skies. Certain tribes even used it for mountains in the distance. It stands for sincerity and happiness. Berries formed a large portion of the natural materials for this color. Western clay and pigments of the canyons also lent varying hues to this effective color.

*Yellow:* The natural abundant materials made this color a very popular and predominating one. Clays, roots, and tannic barks furnished the natives with dyes. Yellow reflects the symbol of the sun, light and happiness. Yellow dye is readily made from tree moss.

*Green:* It may easily be realized that this color represents the earth, the hills, the trees, and mountains, so common in all Indian legends.

This color may be obtained by mixing two primary colors, yellow and blue, or it may be made from simple acid action on copper. In certain sections of the west and northwest copper was rather abundant. Other parts of the country used the juice of grasses.

*PURPLE:* Huckleberries give a very good substance for dyeing and the Indians used this commonly. Purple is an excellent color for recessed portions of the carving and for symbols of a reverent nature. It stood for mountains in the distance and general conventionalized signs.

*BLACK:* Mud from sulfur springs and other earth deposits made this color available to the Indian. As a rule it stood for power.

## **Painting the Totem**

After the pole or object of craftsmanship has been completed and the incised parts carefully cleaned out to give sharp, distinct markings and shadows, preparations for painting should start.

Where knots are conspicuous and when fairly unseasoned wood has been used, it is advisable to give them a coating of shellac to prevent the resin from running out and spoiling the finished effect.

Be sure the object is clean and that all particles of dust and dirt have been removed.

There are two common ways of painting the pole. One is while it is on the horses or on the ground, and the other method is to paint it after it is erected. If the pole is fairly short a better finished job can be accomplished after it has been erected, as nicks and rope rubs will be avoided.

Some people, however, prefer to paint even large poles after they are erected, contending that one can see the pole as it looks from a distance, and thus make improvements in color effects not realized or visualized in the rough preliminary studies and sketches. You can see in the illustration (Treasure Island Philadelphia Camp) that this Scout preferred to paint the pole after it was up and has used the steeplejack method of slinging a rope around and adjusting it as he painted.

## **Colors**

The Indians originally used pigments made from clay and roots. The colors were very bright and became subdued after the pole had weathered several winters. The symbolism of the colors changed a little in different parts of the United States. Therefore we have attempted to give only a general meaning to the prevalent shades.

## A Totem Speaks

The Totem am I.

I am the Symbol of the History and Traditions of the Pack.

In the long ago time I was found by the teepee and wigwam of my Indian friends.

Every Brave and Warrior had me in his mind.

In the dark ages I was the center of all important activities. Leaders stood by my side.

You can find my elder brothers, ancient and weather-beaten, in all parts of the great world.

I was much honored by Maya tribes, the Aztecs placed me in the highest rank.

Romans carried my brothers from shore to shore and land to land. Normans, Goths and Picts took them at all times.

From all time I have been known and at all times shall be found where there are leaders and led.

Now I come to the Little Brothers of the jungle, the Wolf Cubs.

I tell you that which I represent and when I am unveiled to your eyes you will see and learn and honor.

I am tall and when you shall attain my height you will have much wisdom.

I am upright and there encircles me all the Laws of the Scout.

My arms are the all-embracing ones of the great brotherhood and are the two Laws and Promises of the Cub, on them hang all your proficiencies. My arms are as the open ears and point upwards to the Great.

Out of the earth I grow like unto a tree.

Ever I point towards the Heavens through the rampant

Wolf your Totem head, happy bubbling vitality symbolizing the virility of your life and outlook.

Nature's green bands of verdant hues are round me traced continuous as life.

Lightness and darkness are my alternating colors from darkness ever into light.

My colored leafy branches are those of your Merit Badges for Character, Service, Handcraft, Health.

Many leaves have I and on them shall be writ the names of those of you who work and win.

Many other twigs have I, each one white, close to my heart, each one for a boy, each for the purity of aim and endeavor of those who have been made Cubs.

On me do you place your hand and attach your sign and you will be ever with me.

The circle of eternity at head is again encircled with the clearly-chased great fraternal brotherhood around the globe.

Above my twigs and branches are those limbs which support and teach, the Akelas are they, whose word is Law.

Gold am I at the Head for Golden are my records. See ye that they grow.

Long Creepers suspend from me that name the Pack my Life.

My eye of Silver bright will watch you play and I shall remain with you all time.

Many more things could I tell but these are secrets to be unfolded later.

I bid you honor me for I am the symbol of the traditions and honor of the Pack.

On me have you made the Promise.

Keep the Law!  
Do Your Best!  
Good Hunting!