## HAIDA OR TLINGIT

## **History**

The Tlingit of Alaska and the Haida of British Columbia had, since time immemorial, periodically conducted raiding expeditions against the Coast Salish peoples of the Puget Sound. The Salish were a source of slave labor. Northwest Coast native maritime technology was unsurpassed among First Nations peoples and raiding parties would travel in large dugout canoes at distances of up to a thousand miles. This included the treacherous unprotected waters north of Vancouver Island. The largest of these canoes could hold 100 warriors and their equipment. These raids continued even after the 1846 demarcation of the border between the United States and Canada, then controlled by the United Kingdom.



## **Ethnobotanical Gardens**

Native plant "starts" from Bonhoeffer Gardens (to your SW, by the I-5) illustrate 99 foods and materials available to the American peoples who lived here 10,000 years without the need to develop agriculture. Planter boxes contain:

Act circinatum (CI) Achiga rainfoldium (CI) Achiga rai

## **Legends & Lessons**

In 1857, a party of northern natives traveled by canoe into Puget Sound on a mission of vengeance. Following the death of one of their chiefs and 27 other tribal members in an attack by the USS Massachusetts the previous year, the party searched for a white Hyas Tyee (great chief) in retaliation. Knocking on Isaac Ebey's door on Whidbey Island, the natives called him out of the house, killed, and beheaded him. His wife and children fled to a blockhouse on the ridge.

There is question as to whether the raiders were Haida (as inscribed on a marker at Ebey's Landing) or Tlingits led by a female relative of the slain chief in the earlier *USS Massachusetts* attack. History is unclear because British authorities demurred on pursuing or attacking Russian Territory peoples as they passed through Victoria's British waters. Ebey's killers were never caught.

History belongs to those who write it. And "it" all happened 15 miles to the west of where you now stand. But the lesson remains, never answer a door unless you know and trust the person on the other side.