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Yakima, Wash.

TOKENS, TALES AND TIPIS

In a time so long ago even legends have become obscured by the years, a race of giants could have lived in the Yakima Valley.

They were cannibal women, who by their viciousness excluded the First People from the valley, a part of which is now the 1,200,000 acre Yakima Indian Reservation.

These First People were birds and animals endowed with human characteristics of speech and reason. They lived in communal villages, following the common pursuits of the later-to-come Indians.

These First People were also bewitched or blessed by the powers of parenthood, love, hate, wisdom. They knew and practiced deceit and honor; bravery and cowardice.

Grandfather day stories tell of two sisters who lived in these time-dimmed years. Their home was in the Satus. This was on the eastern slopes of the Cascade Mountains which uplift gradually westwardly along Toppenish Ridge and the Simcoe Mountains for sixty miles to Mt. Adams. This mountain was called Pahtoe by the Yakimas and was the volcano active wife of Sun Man, an ethnic hero who once dwelled on earth.

From a scarcity of archaeological findings high in the mountains it is evident the Indians of Eastern and Central Washington were lowland dwellers, shunning the highlands. They travelled to lower mountain meadows and hillslopes only on their food quests which were ceaseless. When necessary for trade, and rarely for war, they traversed the Cascades crossing by a few known and long used passes through somber corridors of forests and avenues of columnar basalt where lurked prankish little people who were not to be trusted.

Long lines of families toiled up hillside trails into the backcountry each spring, as they do now on the reservation. They journeyed to the

camas and other root digging meadows. There they obtained the Creator given foods to which their bodies had long been accustomed and where now alone they can find them to use in their ceremonial religious feasts, because all of the other land is overrun. Their food journeys also led to sun-swept huckleberry fields in late July and the drying-out days of August. But none of these places were at extreme elevations.

^{Other}
~~The~~ well established and better-known trails led north and south, skirting the eastern footings of the mountains and following from valley to valley. At the richest-laden food gathering places they mingled with other tribes, the women working while the men raced horses and played palyowit, the stick and bone gambling game. Their sedentary villages were along the rivers and in the valleys. Indians were not mountaineers.

They had an inherent fear of the numerous strange spirits which occupied the higher country, spirits alien to their own guardian powers, an indication that long before the coming of the white man they believed in a spirit world and life after death.

Before the near extinction of the grizzly bear, still inhabiting a few isolated regions high in the reservation, they avoided the regions dominated by the great silver tips which were fearless and tolerated no companionship.

A story about the Cannibal Women, who lived in the ancient days long before there was a reservation, is one of several kindred stories which evolved after the glacial ages and preceded the advent of the horse period.

This horse period ethnologists place at 1690-1740 in the Northwest.

This was followed by the historic or written period. Even in this era are many doubts because sometimes there is no deep understanding of a people whose culture is older than that of the Anglo Saxon.

There is more than doubt about the horse period now because fossils have been found in Central and Eastern Washington of an Almost Horse. This animal was as large as the modern horse and so near like him only

one highly trained in such studies can determine the difference. The Almost Horse, it is also known, became extinct before the New World was discovered. But whether the Indian ever mastered the horse, and what caused its extinction, no one knows.

The ancient stories existed among Indians of various linguistic stock, unknown to one another in the long ago, frequently related by flood and marriage relationships now.

One was the Sahaptian stock of which the Yakimas were allied. Another was the Salishan, reaching into the Colville country far to the north and eastwardly into the old Flathead country before it was wrested from those people and they were shoved northward on less fertile land.

Whatever their origin these stories concerned what became proprietary shrines of later years and live on through the now-dying generation of long braids, the believers in ~~the~~ old ways.

So deep-seated was the feeling for these places, hallowed in ancient memory, younger Indians even now respect them as monuments. But their beginnings remain too deep buried in the prehistoric past to be explained other than it is part of the culture.

The now dead Ich-pal-pal, a full blood Yakima and historian of his people who wore his hair in braids, told about the two Cannibal Sisters as only the old-timers would do, when he visited the actual place, the shrine.

This is close to Highway 97 on Satus Pass south of Toppenish, along the ^{Cq} Cariboo Trail cutting through the Yakima Reservation on its way from Alaska to Mexico.

"They lived here, these bad sisters. They guarded the valley. They fenced out The First People, keeping them from the ~~the~~ roots, and ~~from~~ the salmon which came up from the Columbia each spring and fall, following out the small streams to their end. They only ate human flesh, those women.

"They were the last of their tribe, all giants, who lived in the valley, eating each other up until only these two were left.

"Sometimes they would creep up to the fisheries on the ~~river~~ big river and grab the First People, take them home and eat them."

Ich-pach-pal took off his tall, ~~black~~ black hat banded with a bright ribbon and adorned with a tuft of eagle down. He stood looking northward across the valley, seeing through the misty years, remembering the story his grandfather had told him.

"One of the women was called Wa-la-thla-lea, the Big One. The other was Twa-cumit, just a name, so old no one remembered what it meant. ^(-khe La?)

This place where they lived we call it Tane-ches-pum, Place of the Giants.

"One time, it was told me by the Old Man, the bad sisters went to Celilo, near The Dalles. The bird and animal people were getting their fish at that place. They fought, chasing the two women back.

"Raven, who had strong medicine power ran faster than the others and was not afraid of the women. He chased them across Satus Pass. He caught them at the gap near Dry Creek. Then he struck one of them, the Big One, with his black (obsidian) flint knife, like that. (Ich-pach-pal thrust hard, twisting his arm). She fell, her arms outstretched. (and he spread his arms wide). You can see the outline there." He pointed.

"This place is Sha-bak-ha-nikes. It means Where She Lay.

"The other woman was scared, no more fight left. She ran toward Satus Creek, down there."

He pointed a mile away toward Satus Creek.

"But Raven caught her. He used his medicine power and turned her into a stone. You can see her there now. She is thirty-feet high.

"This place has been the same since the Indians came. Nothing grows here. Look."

Sagebrush and greasewood and wheatgrass outlined a giant form on the hillside. None grew inside the outline.

"Here is the heart where Raven struck with his knife."

Ich-pach-pal lifted a rock gently. Beneath was a depression. In it

were a few bright buttons, two beads, a few small coins.

Nearby along the highway an automobile roared up the grade. He waited until it had passed. Then he took a ~~xxx~~ quarter from a small, round purse, dropped it into the depository and replaced the stone. He closed his eyes, muttering some words. He fingered the rock. He smiled.

And he explained.

From time immemorial it was the custom of those passing to and from the fisheries to stop and leave tokens or offerings and make wishes. In later years the offerings were coins, beads, bits of buckskin~~x~~. They were intended to bring good luck or bring about cure of an ailment, if the "heart ~~xxxx~~right of the one making the request was right."

If the heart stone was warm to the touch it was a sign the man was honest and good and the wish would be granted or the fishing or hunting trip would be successful.

It was bad luck to molest any offering.

"Did not three young men from Toppenish come here one night in their car, take a hand full of coins from beneath the stone and then lose control of their car when they drove downhill, home? You remember? It was in the papers that two of them were killed."

The token-leaving Place of the Giants has been set aside by the Yakima Tribal Council as a monument to be protected.

There is another place of giants on Toppenish Ridge at the Summit of the old Eel Trail, south of Fort Simcoe, also on the reservation. That place is called Ho-Sat Twa-Lee, Woman Doctor. It is a curative place.

Here, too, is a stone beneath which tokens are deposited by the afflicted. And here the one seeking a cure knows his prayer will be granted if his heart is good and the stone is warm to the touch.

East of the Eel Trail, atop Toppenish Ridge, is another token-leaving place where hunters and others stop to leave their small tokens, make their small requests and then go on their way, feeling secure.

This is one place that yet remains to them. This place no other culture has overran.

Another ancient marker was along Chinook Pass, Highway 410, at Horseshoe Bend, west of Naches. Here was a large split rock. Tokens were dropped into the deep crack by travelers. But this ancient marker was destroyed twenty-five years ago when someone took a tractor and pulled the rock apart to obtain the trinkets.

Something must have happened to the tractor man. The Indians didn't know. This was not on the reservation.

One hundred and thirty miles to the north, on the pass between the Kettle River Valley and the Okanogan River, is an ancient token place, called the Hee ~~Stem~~ Hee Stone in later years but once called Amtoos. This stone had its origin in ancient days, according to legend, with a girl, Amtoos by name. She was coveted by five mountains, Chopaka, Baldy, Moses, Nekotea and ~~Ben~~ Bonapart. They quarreled over her affections and in their jealous violence their bodies were torn and twisted. The fickle girl was turned into stone because of her insincerity and may be found near Cheesaw, a place named for a Chinese man in pioneer days.

Hee Hee also has curative powers, especially for rheumatism.

And although many Indians in the Okanogan country succumbed to the labors of Father Etienne de Rouge, a missionary priest, the belief in the stone has lived on.

Ill luck was the fate of anyone molesting the Hee Hee Stone's tokens.

The elders tell how a white man, whose horse, frightened by the wind blowing bits of cloth left there, ran away. The man gathered up the fluttering bits of cloth so the horse would not be frightened when passing there again. And when the man returned to his cabin, he found it had been destroyed by fire.

And there are other token-leaving places in that northern region of peoples speaking another language.

In the Montana country are medicine trees, token_leaving places where the Flathead Indians stopped during their journeyings and left tokens and said prayers. One, the Ram 's Horn Tree is along the East Fork of the Bitterroot River, near Darby.

This tree was known as a sacred place. It was held in respect by the people in the days of the conflict between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Company over the fur trade. It was known to Peter Skene Ogden in 1825. His Journals of 1824-25 tell of a ram 'shead and horns imbedded in a large pine tree at that location. It is now a historic site.

George Gibbs, an interpreter during the explorations with Isaac I. Stevens, Washington's territorial governor, recounted a legend of ancient, wicked women who lived in the upper Yakima and Chief Moses country. He wrote about it in a report to Capt. George B. McClellan^{Cq} (later General of the Army), of the Railway Survey party, dated March 4, 1854.

These women of an ancient race, he called the Elipt Tillicum, ravaged Indians who prayed for their destruction. Their pleas were answered and the women were killed by a giant bird and they were turned to stones, left as witnesses of what had been done for the Indians.

The story was told to the interpreter by Owhi, one of the Kamiakin family, a Yakima chief, as he guided the explorers along the Columbia River in what is now Kittitas County.

One of the petroglyphs on the basalt bluffs near Vantage was of two large figures, dangling a small figure by the hair.

This is one of the rock paintings which has been removed to save it from flooding by creation of Wanapum Lake by Wanapum Dam near Vantage. It is preserved at the Ginkgo Petrified Forest State Park.

There were also other known token-leaving places along this upper region of the Columbia, but they are now covered by the man-made lake.

Farther afield than the Northwest were there also token places held in reverence by tribesmen speaking various tongues yet calling each other brother. These existed in Oregon, and in California where they are mostly no more.

The origin of these ancient monuments, the real motivation of their beginning is long lost. Their part in migration, and the aboriginal population of the continent, is growing fainter, like the heart beats of the long braids.

The now dead grandfathers like Ich-pach-pal who lived near White Swan; Chief Kuni, the Wyampum from Celilo Falls near the Dalles, his home in life and death and known to white men as Chief Tommy Thompson; Billy Curlew, close kin to Chief Moses, a Kawachkin; and Puck-Hyah-Toot of Priest Rapids, direct descendant of Smowhalla, the Last Prophet, knew of these sacred places and passed their knowledge on to others.

Some of the venerables knew, too, of a sacred medicine tree, a token place where non-Indians are not allowed on the Yakima Reservation, a tree which never changes its ~~size~~ size by growth as it lives, undying through the ages.

And this knowledge of the old days the now departed knew has been passed on to some yet living, like Frank Sohapp, Comanawash, Alba Shawaway, Watson Totus, Joe Meninick, Robert Jim and Alex Saluskin.

And the reservation the long braids held sacred, the few lingering who refuse to cut their hair, and the short haired younger men, still hold sacred as their home.

Tokens and Legends.

In a time so long ago even legends about ~~it~~^{them} are obscured by the years, a race of giants ^{could have} lived in the Yakima Valley.

They were cannibal women who ^{by their viciousness} excluded the ^{First People} Indians from the Valley, where the 1,200,000 acre Yakima Ind Res. now spreads.

Grandfather day stories tell of two sisters ~~in particular~~ who lived in the Satus ^{this was} on the eastern slopes of the Cascades ^{which} uplifting gradually westwardly along Toppenish Ridge and the Simcoe mountains, Sixty miles ^{west} east of Mt. Adams ^{the peaks of the Yakimas.}

From a scarcity of archaeological findings high in the mountains it is

~~it may be suspected that~~ ^{evident} Indians of Eastern and Central Washington

were lowland dwellers, ^{shunning the higher mountains.} They travelled only to lower mountain meadows and lower hillslopes on their food quests ^{except when necessary for trade, food and rarely for war} They traversed the Cascades

from East to West, crossing by a few known passes ^{and long used} and they travelled ^{through similar corridors of} ~~and they travelled~~ ^{forest and crones of forest} ~~columnar basalt.~~

~~north and south in following seasonal food quests, or to trade, and~~

~~rarely when at war.~~ ^{led them} ^{Some of these} food journeys ^{to} huckleberry fields, ^{then sweep}

^{which were not at extreme elevations.} ^{their well established trails, north & south on the} ^{along the east slopes of the cascades were on food quests and} ^{from valley to valley where} ^{Indians had an inherent fear of} ^{the spirits of the higher country, and}

^{Before the near extinction of the grizzly bear they avoided the regions}

inhabited by the great ^{animals} bear which was fearless and tolerated no ^{neighbors or companions} interference.

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~~the~~ story about the Cannibal Giantesses is one of several similar stories which evolved after the glacial ages and preceded the advent of the horse period ^{the horse period} (roughly 1690-1740 ^{in the Northwest}) and the ^{written records} ~~remain only of~~ later -to-come historic period. ^{almost none is due to written, only oral history} ~~These~~ ^{ancient} stories existed among Indians of different linguistic stock, the Sahaptian of which the Yakimas were allied, ~~and~~ the Salishan of Okanogan and Colville, and ^{also} eastwardly ^{into} the old Flathead country in Montana. ^{these stories centered about} Whatever their origin, ~~they became~~ propitiary shrines in later years and ^{are existing} ~~have existed as such~~ through the now-dying generation of longbraids, the believers in the ~~old~~ old ways. ~~and~~ so deep-seated was the feeling for these places, hallowed in ancient ~~memory~~ memory, younger Indians respect them as monuments. ^{their beginnings} ~~their origins~~ are so ~~obscure~~ deep buried in the prehistoric past little remains in the still uncertain field of archaeological explorations and findings, ~~rock paintings and a handful of still persistent stories.~~

~~The two Cannibal Sisters of the Yakima country~~ ~~lived~~ The now-dead Jim Looney or Ich-Pal-pal, a historian of his people who wore his hair ^{about the two Cannibal Sisters of the Yakima country} in braids told about when he visited the shrine, close by Highway 97 on Satus Pass.

They lived on the northern approach to Satus Pass, effectively

guarding the entrance into the Valley and preventing the ~~Indians~~ ^{First People} from travelling there to gather food roots and fish in the streams ^{up} which salmon runs from the Columbia followed ~~upward~~ in seasonal migrations.

The two were the ^{last} ~~survivors~~ of their race, giants who inhabited the entire Valley, ^{until only the two were left} preying on each other, ^{they visited} and sometimes ~~visiting~~ the fisheries along the Columbia River where they seized and carried off the ~~Indians~~ ^{the First People}, the birds and animals which lived before the Indians came, ^{doing as the Indians did in later years.} One, was called by the Indians, La-th-lea, The Big One, and the ^{of the First women} other was called Twa-cumit. Their ~~home~~ ^{home} was called Tane-ches_pum, Place of the Giants, and so it is still ~~called~~ ^{named}.

But on one of the raids to the fishery at Celilo, upstream from

The Dalles, ^{where} the bird and animal people ^{were gathered in the spring} ~~fought~~ ^{gathered} to fish for ^{chinook} salmon, fought the Giant Women, ^{they} ~~They~~ ^{pursuing them over the mts northwards} pursued them northward and Raven, possessed of strong medicine power, ^{outdistanced the others} ~~followed them~~ ^{He followed the Giants} across Satus Pass, ^{catching them at} ~~to~~ ^{Raven} the gap near Dry Creek. ~~He~~ struck one of them, The Big One, ^{in the heart} with his black ^{flint} obsidian knife ^{to} and she fell, arms outstretched, and

the place is called Sha-bak-ha-nikes, Where She Lay, to this day.

The other ^{ran} ~~fled~~ toward Satus ~~at~~ ^{by his medicine power} Creek, a mile ~~or so~~ away, and Raven pursued her and turned her into a pillar of stone ^{30-foot} and she remains there, beside the creek.

When the days of the birds and animal people who spoke and lived as humans passed, ~~and~~ ^{and} The Indians came ~~they~~ found the place where the wicked ~~and~~ Giant Cannibal woman had fallen, arms outstretched, still marked on the hillside. Sagebrush and greasewood refused to grow on the spot, leaving the figure outlined on the hillslope. A ^{flat} rock marked the heart where Raven 's flint knife had struck. ^{Beneath it was a shallow hole.}

From time immemorial it was the custom of people passing to and from the fisheries and the Valley to stop and leave tokens ^{as offerings} ~~as offerings~~ and in later years ^{there were} small coins, beads, bits of buckskin ^{the} ~~as~~ offerings were ^{intended} ~~to~~ to bring good luck on their food ^{quests} ~~quests~~. ^{tragedy} ~~and~~ ~~and all~~ luck befell anyone molesting the offerings.

If the heart stone was warm to the touch it was the sign ~~that~~ the person depositing the token would receive his wish , or his fishing or hunting trip would be successful.

It was ill luck to molest any of the offerings.

Jim Looney told ^{why} ~~that too~~ ^{ff}. Did not three young men from Top enish who drove to the place one night and ^{took} ~~picked up~~ a hand full of coins from beneath the stone overturn in their car which went out of control on the grade leading down to the valley. And were not two of them killed?

Farther afield than the Northwest were there also token ~~leaving~~ places held in reverence by tribesmen speaking ^{various} other tongues, but calling each other brothers. The origin of these ancient monuments, the ^{Real} But there has apparently been no concentrated study of these ancient ^{motivation of their beginning} monuments. ~~So their origin~~ is long lost, ~~and~~ Their part in migration, and the aboriginal population of the American continent, is growing fainter, like the heart beats of the long braid Indians.

^{Some of these} These venerables know of a sacred medicine tree, a token leaving and guarding questing place, which never changes growth as it lives, undying through the ages on the reservation.

And the reservation, the long braids and the short haired younger Indians hold sacred as their home.

The now dead venerables like Ich-pach-pal, who lived at White Swan; Chief Kuni, the Wyampum from Celilo ^{Falls} near Falls, his home; the Dalles, his home in life and death; the later day Routas Jim; Billy Aurlow, then Close Kow to Chief Moses, a Kawichkin; and pack-Hyah-Zoot of Priest Rapids, direct descendant of Smowkalla, the last prophet, knew of these ~~places~~ sacred places and passed their knowledge on to others. And this to is the ^{now retained} knowledge of some yet living, ~~the~~ Frank Sohappy, Tomawash, ~~the~~ Robert Jim, Watson Totus, Joe ~~meninick~~ meninick and Alex Saluskin

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