

Indians of the Yakima country had an Easter celebration which antedated the coming of the white man to the portion of this country with their religious ceremonies in commemoration of the day and according to Mrs. A. J. Splawn, their manner of celebration and commemoration partook something of the character of the day as observed by the white man and something of his Thanksgiving day services.

For the information of those who are interested in the Indian and his customs, Mrs. Splawn has written something of the ceremonial. She says:

"Before the paleface set foot on his portion of the globe and brought with him his Easter Sunday, the red man kept sacred a day for thanksgiving which day occurred at the beginning of spring and was a most solemn occasion somewhat in the nature of a communion. In preparation for the day there went forth the salmon man of the tribe, whose duty it is to watch for the coming of the salmon and to catch some of them for the feast and notify the high priest or ceremonial master who in turn sends words to the tribe.

The squaws gather roots, the camas, kouse, pe-ah-e and sowicht, cook the salmon and make great preparations.

The ceremonial house is made of mats or reeds, the door always opening at the east end while at the top of the roof above the door are three flags. The center one is of blue, representing the sky. One is white for earthly light and the third is yellow for heavenly light of the spirit world. These are the sacred colors of the doctrine.

Seated at the head or west end of the room is the master, in ceremonial dress. He has inherited his honor from a long line of ancestors. Behind him stands his interpreter. On the left three drummers are seated with their pum-pums. Three young squaws,

wearing their native hats wait upon the table. The Indians are seated in a circle and before each one is a new mat, serving as a plate.

In words following the nature of a prayer the priest returns thanks to the Great Spirit for the warmth and light, for the passing of winter and for the return of spring. At a given signal he sips of the water and for all present do likewise.

He then talks again and the pum-pums are once again beaten, after which he tastes of the different roots and every one does the same.

This continues until the salmon and roots have all been sampled; then he signals to all to eat heartily; after which they dance.

This motion is a swaying from heel to toe, with one hand spread out fan-like.

During the dancing the participants chant. I caught this much and in our language it would read: "Our Father made our bodies, gave them a spirit and then moved." Another broke in with "Our Father put the salmon in the water for our use." Then the priest passes out, carrying two bells, one large and one small. The ceremony was repeated for each successive table full. Margaret C. Splawn, Yakima

Herald, April 10, 1912.

An unusually warm day had an appropriate hot ending at the Third avenue theater last night when the band of Yakima Indians now in the city appeared in a succession of acts intended to demonstrate some old tribal customs.

The participants in the entertainment that Mr. Russell offered to the curiously inclined are in the city primarily as witnesses for the government against people who are charged with the offence of selling firewater to the wards of the United States and incidentally to carry back to the reservation with them the odd change that may be picked up by the way of exhibitions such as were given last night.....

The beating was accompanied by a weird chant that suggested the delightful yarns of James Fenimore Cooper and the yellow-backed literature of Daniel Boone and Big Boot Wallace. The chief song participated in by the hiyu chiefs, Sklew and White Bone were backed up by a chorus of the whole, part of whom insisted upon keeping in sight and absorbing some of the attention. It was very unprofessional but nobody seemed to care. The numbers were announced by Charley Wannassay, the interpreter who would occasionally say, "These boys want a little rest for a change," and then the boys would rest.

As the programme wore on and the audience wore out the members of Mr. Wannassay's company would lay off an occasional garment or two, appearing principally in the charm with which nature had endowed them, with their legs, torsos and arms painted with all sorts of devices that were unquestionably native art.

The laying off of garments is quite as attractive to hear of as to see. When it is told that the gaudy raiment was principally a breech cloth and apron of cheese cloth the realism of some of the situations

can be imagined. In all cases it was either too much or too little clothing.

When the former it was furs , from which the performers would issue frothing and steaming afrom their exertions; when the latter it was always a dread that some part of the brief attire would give way under the strain of emulation of war times.

White Bone, the Indian who broke his gun over the head of Capt. Jack and arrested that notoriously bad Indian told of the Modoc battles in the lava beds.

He captured Capt. Jack's squaw, whom he exhibited last night, calmly telling his hearers that she was his slave. This while Mrs. Capt. Jack-White Bone wore a sash of Stars and Stripes, the emblem of the free. Mr. Bone also showed the gun with which he hit Capt. Jack and said that he would keep it to his dying day.

He was interpreted by Charlie Ike, a particularly intelligent Yakima.

There were love dances, slatz dances, rattle dances, ghost dances, war dances, Indian comedy pantomne and marches. These were carried out by Sklew and another by White Bone. There was paint and perspiration everywhere, all to the unceassing beat of the drum, and all of it was alike to a painful degree, the participants seeming to enjoy it asmuch as any one in the large and warm audience--Seattle Post-Intelligencer, May, 1897.

Yakima citizens and visitors from other places in the state are alike interested in the National Indian convention to be held next week on the state fair grounds.

The encampment of Indians is visited by many interested persons and the representatives of a great many tribes and Indian races contribute much to the entertainment.

Captain Eneas and other prominent chiefs of the Yakima and Western (copy) Washington tribes were instrumental in calling the convention and they have endeavored to make it national in its character...

They will give a grand exhibition of all the famous and favorite dances including the war dance, wedding dance, the medicine dance and last on the program the one held most sacred in the past, the dead man's feast.

While going thus far the Indians concluded to go all the way and give a full and complete exhibition of the greatest event with them in the way of dances, the sun dance. The government forbid this barbaric ceremony many years ago when its celebration was attended with gravest danger to the white people and special permission had to be secured from the Indian department for this occasion. This alone will be worth going many miles to see for it in all probability will never been seen again in the northwest. There are many of the oldest Indians who danced it when the ceremony was fuller of significance than it is now but to the younger braves the sight will be as novel as it is to the white spectators.

The festivities will be opened with a monster parade of Indians in native costumes. At the fairgrounds the Indians will live in tepees made of barks and skins..

The officers of the recently formed association are:
Eneas, president and treasurer; William Te-Yer-Fash, vice president;
Lancaster Spencer, secretary and manager; Charles Olney,
chief of police; Elick Wesley, interpreter; Charles E
Wesley, Elick Teio, Weyallup, Minineck, judges.

Among the widely known and prominent chiefs from distant
who will be here are Jack Rabbit, Flathead, Mont.; Standing Bear,
Fort Belknap; Red Cloud, Grand Ronde, Ore.; Joseph Jar,
Colville, Wash; Chap Lot, Colville, Wash; Peter Mox Mox, Lapwah;
Idaho; Hosses Mox Mox, Palouse, Wash; No Shitt, Pendleton;
George Leschi, Puyallup, Wash; John Highton, Puyallup,
Wash.; Ter-La-Pe-So-Yah, Kar -Ner-Poo, Columbia, Wash; Mer-Ter-
Ner, Warm Springs, Ore; Ter-Sha-Ner, Warm Springs; Ter-Sha-
Ne, Wishram, Columbia, Wash; Elick Teio, Whismam, Columbia, Wash.;
Mininock, Whismam, Columbia; Ennis, Yakima, William Te-Yer-Yash,
Yakima; Weyallup, Yakima; Charley Wesley, Yakima; Shaw-Wa-Y; Yakima;
Um-Te-Pee, Yakima; Satus, Yakima; White Swan, Klickitat;
Old Spencer, Klickitat; Tecumseh, Yakitowit, Klickitat--
The Yakima Herald, Oct. 4, 1905.

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Tom toms are booming in the tribal camp of the Yakimas today a mile south of White Swan where 400 aboriginal Americans are gathered for their annual 10-day summer encampment. Some 40 -odd tepees are ranged in a great circle around the long dance lodge like a Remington painting of the Old West. In the background the Toppenish hills rear their rough contours to the sky, the harsh baldness of their flanks softened by ever-changing shadows.

Visitors from all parts of the Columbia basin have been arriving the past few days to join in the celebration, pitching their white lodges next to the tepees of their hosts. Representatives of the Umatillas and Warm Springs have made the trek northward from Oregon and a band of Nez Perces from Idaho camped at Toppenish last night was due on the scene this morning to take part in the grand parade and the dances to follow this afternoon.

Yesterday was one of rest and preparation. Old men whose life span began before the white settlers swarmed into the valley dreamed in the shade of better times. Bucks, wrapped to the nose in bright blankets stalked from lodge to lodge paying social calls and others in scattered groups idled away the hours talking and jesting. Youngsters played beneath the aspens fringing the camp and dogs prowled aimlessly about in search of food scraps.

Chief Homer Watson entertained a few white visitors while his wife worked diligently beading a new dress. In several of the lodges squaws were busy unpacking finery, warbonnets, bead belts skin shirts and leggins or assisting their male consorts in the tedious task of rebraiding and oiling their hair. One aged buck spent a toilsome hour plucking hairs from his chin and cheeks preparatory to daubing his countenance with paint. Comfortably ensconced with their working materials at the rear of a

tepee a spectacled housewife plied nimble fingers weaving and ollalie basket.

Among the paleface visitors yesterday were Dr. E.O. Holland president of Washington State college; A.D. Bunn, stockman and O.D. Gibson, president of the Gibson Packing company. The sights were "old stuff" to the latter two but it was Dr. Holland's first visit to an Indian camp. His prefix "Dr." won him the instant regard of the head men, to whom he was introduced, they taking it for granted it was a doctor of medicine. After several hours at the camp the party drove on to Fort Simcoe where Dr. Holland inspected the old blockhouse and commandant's quarter and met Maj. Evan Estep, the Indian superintendent and his wife who were spending the weekend there--
The Yakima Republic, July 7, 1924.

For several days past Klickitat Indians have been gathering at the old camp at Tumwater in anticipation of the annual ghost dance in which honor is given to the departed warriors of their tribes says the Klickitat County Agricultur-
alist.

For an entire week during the latter part of this month the red-men will sway back and forth in their weird incantations , new dancers taking the places from time to time of those who become exhausted. In response to a neatly written invitation from Chief Spedis of the Klickitats , Prince Slockish of Wahkiacus has departed for the gathering.

Slockish is an expert as a leader of the chanters and is past master of the intricacies of the difficult moccasin dance. He will be on hand in full regalia and will do much to add to the picturesqueness of the scene.

Chief Spedis spent five years at the government Indian school at Fort Simcoe but on completion of his course saw no opening among the white men for his activities and so returned to the primitive ways of his people. He now lives the simple and uneventful life of the average Siwash giving no exterior signs of his superior education--The Yakima Republic, March 4, 1910.

The Indians at Wiskam, six miles above Goldendale, have been having their annual dance, celebrating the breaking up of winter and entreating the Great Spirit to send a big amount of Salmon with the first run , says a correspondent.

Martin Spedis, an Indian who received a good education in an Indian school was master of ceremonies assisted by an

Indian from Wah-ki-a-cus, on the Klickitat river. All the redskins from miles around gathered at the ancient village, Wiskam to participate in the revelry and religious dances that have been in progress for the last two weeks.

The Ghost Dance, the Salmon Dance, the Grass Dance and others have been participated in by at least 100 redmen and maidens. During the dancing several engagements were announced and a wedding celebrated, all without a word being uttered. Everything was done by sign.

The chief, Martin Spedis, is a very capable silversmith who does fine engraving on bracelets, necklaces and rings for the Indian brethren ~~and~~ in his own village as well as for the Yakimas, the Celilos and the Wascos. He hammers the article to be engraved from silver dollars or smaller denominations of coins then from his own designs which were very accurate and artistic in effect, makes the jewelry.

Many white men and women wear rings and bracelets that Spedis has made and are considered as good as those made by the best Navajo silversmith.

When questioned why he did not work in some city at his trade and live among white people Spedis replied with an accent of pathos: "Oh, I am only an Indian and no one would forget it so it would make no difference how hard I tried to be somebody it would be impossible for me to rise. I have a good education but I am only an Indian after all." Martin Spedis is a well respected Indian and among the few who do not indulge in firewater. He is a very industrious and has erected most of the dwellings occupied by the Indians at Wiskam besides is quite an agriculturist, having several acres in field and garden every year. -Yakima Republic, Feb. March 18, 1910.

6/10/56 . (Told during conversational lulls at wedding of Jeanette Wesley and Peter Smartlowit at Toppenish Long House by Jobe Charley, great-grandfather of bride, Thomas K. Yallup, 73 and Frank Schappy.

A Nea Perce chief wanted to marry into the Columbia River tribe to spread his influence. He sent out runners to the parents of Odoidid... chief, of a ~~Rook~~ girl at Wallula. They made a purchase offer.

The people arrived at the day of the wedding. The Nez Perce chief brought horses that had been agreed upon for the exchange .

After the questions they faced toward the east and they sang a song, it was a religious son. (Asked if this was one of the old preamer songs or one brought back from the d ad. Answer: It was a religious song.)

After that, and before they feasted on roots and things like that,

the women folks of the ~~girl's~~ man ~~girl's~~ went to the ~~00000~~ side of the long house. They spread out blankets and buckskins and made a nice place. Then the girl came there and took off the things she was wearing. She took off everything and they were given to members of the man's women's folks. They dressed her up in clothing they ~~man's~~ had brought along.

Then the ~~man's people~~ girl's people went to man's side, to the corner and spread out blankets and things. The man came and was undressed, piece by piece and his clothing given to the side of the house he had married into. He also was given clothing to wear.

After that the man's folks brought the ~~man's~~ purchase presents and they were given to the girl's people.

After that was done the mats were spread out and the food was served. Sometimes they danced after that or they just had a social time, played games and things like that.

Before they went home, the men's folks announced a date for the exchange. That was usually set about six months from the marriage.

The wedding feast usually lasted two days and on the third day everyone went home.. The girl accompanied her husband to her husband's village.

When the time approached for the exchange, runners went out and reminded everyone.

The day came and the women's folks came to the man's village. They brought food roots and things like that. The men's folks had brought food from their part of the country when they came for the wedding.

The man and his family had been busy assembling things for the exchange. When the feast was served everyone took all the dishes he was served with and things like that. Then the men's folks distributed the gifts, bags and buckskins, feathers and fans. These were given to

to the girl and her people and they should give them away to other friends if they ~~w d d d d~~ wanted to. Many things were given away then.

In another six months or so, sometimes longer, and if there was a baby, the girl's folks held another dinner and the men's folks came and were served food and there could be another exchange. Sometimes there was one more after that.

In that way the young people got things to start them out in life, things they needed.

If the baby was born, it was given a name from the man's side. His side had the honor of naming the baby, if the baby was a boy. But if the baby was a girl, the honor of naming it was kept by the woman's side.

In Jobe Charley's account, he was married at "ishram, when he was 22 and his ~~bridegroom~~ bride was "purchased " for eight horses.

In all accounts this "purchase " was construed as an honor upon the girl, a token of esteem in which she was held, not that she was being actually purchased for so many horses. This purchase and the exchange entered into a type of rivalry for each to show richness and a display of wealth, to show his family's ~~sxxx~~ social standing.

Chinook Dance
Winter 1880-81

...Conversing with Engineer Fostner of the Baker, he asked me if I had ever witnessed a Chinook dance. On ~~replying~~ receiving a negative reply, the gentleman said --

Well, I have and I'll tell you about it. During the last freeze-up we were moored just across the river there, where about 80 or 100 Indian camped. One day Capt. John Stump and myself, hearing there was to be a Chinook dance, concluded that we would go and see it. Arriving on the scene, we entered a large hut or wickiup lodge about 20x60 feet in size in which some 80 bucks and squaws were huddled in a promiscuous manner. There was scarcely any air, and the atmosphere was stifling.

Presently an old squaw arose and began jumping up and down in a spasmodic manner, at the same time weeping and moaning in the most heart-rending style. Soon another and still another squaw joined her until a row of 8 or 10 was formed, each placing her hands upon the one in front. At a signal by the chief the whole band set up the most doleful cries and moans, swaying the body back and forth and weeping copiously. Twenty minutes of this ceremony was suddenly succeeded by an awful silence, when from an obscure corner of the 'wickiup' appeared an old Indian, bowed and wrinkled with age - the 'medicine man' of the band.

With a small bundle of pine splinters and some leaden bullets in his hands he approached a smouldering fire in the centre of the lodge and laid the splinters one by one upon the flames, at the same time repeating a mournful chant. After dropping a number of the small bullets in the fire and allowing them to get hot he proceeded, in the most unconcerned manner, to swallow them. This was the signal for an-

other series of howls and moans, and under cover of the noise we decamped, nearly suffocated with foul air and smoke. This is their ceremony for raising a warm wind.

The next day the ice broke and we left for Celilo but the Chinook they had so successfully raised lasted but a few days. The river again closed and, in spite of their dance and the medicine man swallowing not less than a barrel of bullets, no Chinook came for nearly 2 weeks, when the big boom of logs at the mouth of the Yakima broke and the stock back in the hills began to die.

They let their ceremonies go by the board and set to work catching logs and securing hides. They have great faith in their medicine man but do not let their ceremonies interfere with their worldly interests.

-- The Dalles Times March 16, 1881

Indians

There are potlatches galore these days among the Indians; but at least one or two have been paid so far by the merchants.

A certain establishment in this city has furnished hundreds of yards of calico and many blankets for potlatches during the past six months; and the proprietors say they look upon themselves as they imagine, must an Indian who gives away his horses sheep, calico and money periodically.

The would be dispenser of gifts simply comes to Yakima, gets his goods on credit, has a hui potlatch--and the merchants pay the bills.

This is positive evidence that the Indians are becoming civilized--
Yakima Herald, March 7, 1895.

Indians

On Sunday last a large number of citizens visited the Indian camp below Union Gap where a pompom was being held to propitiate the good spirit and induce him to send a big run of salmon. Two hundred Indians took part in the incantations--Yakima Herald, June 1, 1893.

Homash (Homash) a prominent Yakima Indian living about ten or 12 miles from the fort was stricken with paralysis on the 8th inst. and died on Sunday. He was about 56 years of age and a leader among the farming and better class of Indians. His funeral was held in style, departing to the happy hunting grounds in a handsomely mounted casket--Yakima Herald, July 20, 1893.

Major Jay Lynch, ex-Indian agent of the Simcoe reservation, recently succeeded by Judge Erwin of South Bend, left Saturday for his home at Dayton. Those in position to know of the situation at the reservation compliment the major highly for his conscientious and businesslike management of affairs.

Indians

Potlatch

Toppenish, May 28--A funeral potlatch to honor the memory of the three Indian fishermen who were drowned Sunday when the platform at Sunnyside dam collapsed will be held on Saturday.

The body of Fred Andrews, part Hawaiian but a member of the tribe was recovered last evening about 7 o'clock. It had been carried 7 miles from the whirlpool into which the Indians were thrown when the platform gave way.

The bodies of the other two drowned, Charles Harrison and Jacob Emunot who gave his life in an effort to rescue the others, were found earlier in the week.

The funeral proper will be held tomorrow and the potlatch take place at the Harrison place just outside of Toppenish on the following day.

Maj. Evan Estep, superintendent of the Indian agency has given each widow \$75 to use in purchasing materials to use in the potlatch and relatives of the dead men have provided the usual blankets, baskets, trinkets and the like to use as gifts in honor of the dead. It is expected that the potlatch will continue all day-- Yakima Republic, May 28, 1925.

Indian Camp Meeting

Father Wilbur, Indian agent among the Yakima Indians at Ft. Simcoe, has written a letter to Rev. M.G. Mann in relation to a camp meeting which is to be held at that place during the latter part of June commencing on the 27th instant. Father Wilbur reports that several contiguous (CQ) tribes will join the Yakima Indians in their religious ceremonies. Several thousand natives will be brought together... It will be one of the great events of Eastern Washington during the present year...

-- Tacoma Herald, June 2, 18⁷7

Indians

A test of the tribal marriage ceremony of the Indians will be made at this term of the federal court if the serious charges brought against David Heemash, 17 year old Indian and his parents in a secret indictment are returned by the ~~grand~~ grand jury are brought to trial.

Heemash, who under the name of Perchese was sentenced to the reformatory yesterday in superior court for theft of an automobile was brought into federal court today with his parents by A.L. Dilley, deputy marshal. The indictment charges the son with carnal knowledge of a 13 year old girl, the father and mother, Mr and Mrs. George Heemash being charged with aiding and abetting the crime.

It is stated that the defense will be that the young man and girl were married with tribal ceremony with the parents of both the husband and wife giving consent.

The complaint alleges that the girls is not young Heemash's wife. Locally, validity of tribal marriages has been accepted but never in cases where the participants were so young. The actual question of the case is therefore validity under such conditions of rather extreme youth.

Mr. and Mrs. Heemash pleaded not guilty when arraigned before Judge J. Stanley Webster this afternoon and their bail was

fixed at \$350 each.--Yakima Republic, May 21, 1925.