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Miss Donna Laffin,
Box 82, Warner, N.H.

Jan. 4, 1965

Dear Miss Laffin:

Your letter, of Dec. 28, is interesting, although not specific or complete enough for me to give more than an informal comment.

But if you have reason to believe you are of Kamiakin ancestry, this is evident:

First, you should be able to obtain from some relative your birthplace and as you know births are recorded. Then contact the county recorder and obtain a photostatic copy of your birth which will give the name of your mother and your father. Then you can trace back on their birth places. Papers may be lost in moving, but all counties are required to keep birth records, which in turn are forwarded to the state capitols in the states.

It was not the usual custom for Yakimas (Kamiakin was of that blood) to "adopt" although in very old days this was sometimes done.

Kamiakin was the war chief of the Confederated Yakima Indian Nation representing 14 tribes and bands at a Treaty Council at Walla Walla in 1855. A war ensued, he was defeated, the Yakimas subjugated and the treaty was validated in 1859. The Treaty established the Yakima Indian Reservation of some 1,200,000 acres. The Yakima Indian Agency is located at Toppenish, Washington and the Yakima Tribal Office is located in the agency. There is an enrollment committee, since in later years, those of one-fourth degree of Yakima Indian blood, any of the 14 original tribes and bands, is entitled to enrollment. The enrollment committee knows the ancestry of all, have records and trace them if proof can be given of parentage.

There are many of one-fourth degree "Yakima" blood now enrolled, even blondes, red heads, and very fair complexioned. There are some 5,200 enrolled Yakimas. Many of lesser degree blood are attempting to be enrolled and cannot be accepted. The reason for this is enrollment entitles a Yakima to share and share alike in per capita payments (this year two payments of \$60 each I understand), and in an equal share, share and share alike, of the tribe's 500,000 acres of timber etc.

The Klamath Indians in Oregon were terminated two years ago and the individual Klamath holdings amounted to a sizeable amount. The Yakimas are not terminated, although at some future year laws maybe passed that they are and the reservations split up. So you see it is very complex and it is very difficult to "become" an Indian unless proof can be shown. In years past it was considered "ill-bred" to be of Indian ancestry, but now many look upon it as a heritage to be proud of.

If you were ever given the name, it would be given in Indian, and it would certainly be known if names of the mother and father were known.

Names are given by relatives, at public ceremonies in long houses on the Yakima Reservation.

You did not say where your twin was buried to have a "beautiful Indian funeral." This would have been given by Indians who knew the family, and especially by relatives. Relatives give the funerals, follow up with a big dinner, etc. There is very little about Indians that the Indians themselves do not know, that is as relates to relatives of others in the same tribe. There are hundreds of Kamiakin relatives living on or near the Yakima Indian Reservation, and on the Colville Reservation in northern Washington, 120 miles distant.

The Yakima tribe published a 600 page booklet, "Strangers on the Land" over a year ago which I wrote for them. It contains 64,000 words and gives tribal history etc. Since it was a tribal publication it sells for \$2.25 a copy, and not too many copies are left. I could send you one but if you send for it, any postal note etc. should and must be made out to The Yakima Tribe.

You could ask your library, to obtain on inter-library loan the book, Kamiakin, by Splawn. This tells his story. The book has been republished and should be obtained on library loan easily. Also it is possible Strangers on the Land could be obtained on library loan through your library. An earlier book I wrote, "Drummers and Dreamers" is very scarce now and could possibly be obtained on library loan since it had a good sale several years ago. I have one copy. I understand rare book dealers ask \$12 to \$22.50 for it when they have a copy.

I think that is about all I can do in the way of suggestions. But unless you have a way to "prove" your ancestry, and it is definitely of one-fourth degree of one of the 14 tribes and bands making up the Yakima Nation, it would be quite difficult to qualify for enrollment. I know of many who have attempted but fall short by being only one-eighty eighth or less degree of blood requirements. And you can understand why with so much financial potential and benefits. The enrollment committee, if a person qualifies, places the name on tribal rolls subject to approval of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. An enrollment card is issued, bearing name, degree of Indian blood etc. But this is all a matter of tribal affairs.

I hope what I have written is of some help to you. ~~Kamiakin~~ Kamiakin was regarded as a hero by many and as being responsible for a useless war and ~~xxxxxxx~~ of being responsible for bringing on a war resulting in death to many non-Indians and Indians by others. But I have never felt that it was any disgrace to be of Kamiakin ancestry and neither do many others.

I will be interested to hear of progress in your quest.

Sincerely

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