

Benton City, Wash.

May 26, 1956.

Mr. Click Relander,

Yakima, Wash.

Dear Sir:

I read with interest your recent comment as to the origin of the slogan, "Keep your eye on Pasco". I think I can state definitely the originator of that expression. In 1898--a long time ago, eh?--I was a member of the party locating the route of the White Pass & Yukon R.R. from Skagway, Alaska to Whitehorse, Y.T. A.B. Lewis was chief of the party, and one of the rod men--"back flag"-- was a rolling stone named H. B. LeFevre, who, previous to going North was editor of the paper in Pasco, and I heard him tell, many times during that time that he was author of that slogan.

No doubt you know that there were two "Smohallas", as the name originally was spelled, being derived from Shmoqualla--"preacher"--the first, the originator of the Dreamer religion being born around 1820, called "Old Smohalla" and a younger Smohalla, his son, I believe. I met "Young Smohalla" at one time. Later I was told that he froze to death in Northern Washington.

Yours sincerely,

*C. B. Gwin*

C. B. Gwin.

(Not much on typing, am I? But what can you expect from a sourdough who went North in '98?



Benton City, Wash.

Sept. 10, 1956.

Mr. Click Relander,

Yakima, Wash.

Dear Mr. Relander:

It was with real sorrow and regret that I saw the news recently of the illness of our ankutty tillicum, Puck Hyah Toot, in the Herald. I went up the next day to see him, but as I am very hard of hearing and Johnny's voice was always so soft I could not hear anything he said. I am not sure that he even recognized me, as his face had such a blank look. One of the Indian Women in the room--there were several there-- said he was speaking in the Indian language, which would indicate that probably his mind was in the past.

After leaving the hospital I called at the Herald office, but the girl there said you had just left for the day.

I do not remember a little incident that occurred in 1930. Maybe I have already told you; if I have, overlook an old man's wanderings, but if I haven't told you I want you to know it, as it gives such a good insight into Johnny's character. In 1930,

when the Government was handing out "them thar modesties", as an old hill-billy here called the commodities being distributed, Dick Reiersen, the merchant having charge of the commodities being distributed by the Red Cross, knowing that I was a warm and familiar friend of every member of the Wanapum told me to contact all the heads of families at the Rapids and tell them that if they would go down to his store he would give each of them a sack of flour. So I went up to the Indian camp, and when I drove in, Johnny, with most of the other men came out to meet me. So after a little visiting I said "Johnny, the 'store man' at White Bluffs said to tell you for all you married men to come down and he would give each of you a sack of flour", Says Johnny "give um?2 "Yes, give um". "No pay?" "No pay". "No pay, ever?" "No pay, ever." He thought a minute and then said "No, we pay for what we get!" And that, when the superior whites were falling all over themselves for fear someone else might get a little more than they did.

I appreciate your suggestion that I might help to spark the formation of a Historical society here, but you overlook the fact that I am, as the Indian say, "ole man", and while some seem to think I have led a rather eventful life, to me it seems very prosaic.

I am affiliated with the Sourdoughs, but so far as I know I am the only one of that ilk hereabouts. Most of the now so-called Sourdoughs date back to from 1910 to 1920--mere children! ( I wish this dang typewriter would behave! I hit a letter and the next time I look for it it has moved out and some other letter is there.) I appreciate your invitation to go on the book tour, but I fear that I should be only ornamental, and not that to any great extent.

You mentioned my old friend, Johnny Tomanawash's mishap. I had heard of it with regret. One time he was riding with me from White Bluffs to the Rapids, and he began telling me a piece of Indian lore, brought to mind by the sight of some rocks in the river. It had to do with a coyote god; the day was mild and sunny, and he seemed to drift off almost in a dream, and he was soon talking entirely in his native language, apparently entirely oblivious to the white man sitting by his side. I would have given anything to have been able to understand him, but I was afraid to break the spell by asking him to talk English. I feel that I might have heard myths that few whites were privileged to hear. But "no soap."

Lord, how these old gaffers do run on! But there is one favor I wish to ask of you. Johnny Buck's youngest son, Rex, I have known since he was about 4 years old. He is now 30 or 31, married, with a nice wife and 3 kids. Ever since the Priest Rapids dam has become an assured fact he has looked forward to getting a job on it. He is



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a good, steady fellow and a good worker, but in these days of organized labor I am afraid that he will be shunted around and put off until he will lose out. He needs the work and wants it pretty bad, but as he can do only common labor, or so I believe, it seems to come slowly. He lives in Granger, just where I do not know, but he has a box in the postoffice. I haven't the number at hand, but a letter just to the office there will reach him. It will be a real service to him if you can do anything you can to get him on. Where the Indians are more less dispossed from the locality where Johnny Tomanawash once told me "my fathers always lived here", it seems little to get one of them a job there if possible, and I know you will do it if it can be done.

But enough of these vaporings. With best wishes,

Yours truly,

O. B. Gwin

We will be away from about Sept. 15 to Oct. 10.

O.B.Gwin