

Mr. Robert A. Ruby, M.D.,  
426 W. Northshore Drive,  
Moses Lake, Wash.

April 13, 1964

Dear Bob:

Glad you enjoyed the feast, sorry I was kinda running around in circles and couldn't spend too much time with you, but I noticed you were getting along fine.

Alba was born at Parker, he is the grandson of Cotiahken, (spelled dozens of different ways) a contemporary of Smowhalla, and mentioned in Mooney's 14th annual Report of the IEA. One of his grandmother's came from the Priest Rapids country.

Jim Sohappy was the large man you asked about. He is not the Frank Sohappy direct relation. He is a Yakima and came from the George Sohappy family.

Bob Jim was formerly Yakima Tribal Council secretary. He married into the Harry Wyenna or Wynn (various ways) family. He is still a tribal council member following the council's reorganization and will be up for election in two years.

The white wing feathers distributed were wild swans. They are very old, having been handed down from Puckhyah Toot and they were very old when he first explained them to me. Frank Sohappy has them and they are kept in a special wooden box. The other beat up feathers for the women were Eagle feathers. They are also very old.

Little Smowhalla succeeded his father and Puck-Hyah-Toot succeeded Little Smowhalla, the son of Smowhalla.

Frank is the only one with apparent full knowledge of the ceremony although others, like Frank or even Rex could lead if necessary. Frank is the priest for the area, he being called to "officiate" at funerals, ceremonies etc. and he would be paid, in a way, for such services, and it would be his duty, too. Watson Totus is the Satus leader, and could lead such a ceremony. Johnny Billak of White Swan is the corresponding religious leader there. They have a term for such men, which escapes me for the moment and it is seldom used. It is a term for a religious man, like a term for a chief, yet he is not a chief. Think it is in D and D. It will come to me or I can dig it out one of these days.

Kouse is a kind of food root. It was the "bread root" of the Nez Perce, Umatillas etc. and comes from down in the Umatilla country. Choos was the word for water. The bulb shaped deal was the skokol of the Wanapums, comes from up by Waterville and down toward Priest Rapids. There were about a dozen kinds of "camas" and it was one of them, but the only oily flavored one.

Incidentally Choos is the "Wanapum W dialect for water. Yakimas say "Cheez." Na-Chez (Naches) is literally, QAnother Water."

Incidentally, too, the order of water is different with the Yakima, water was taken in reverse to salmon as to what it is at Priest Rapids. Some change in the order too of the food roots, which you noticed were placed in certain positions from the plate. And, the men were on the south side of the long house and the women on the north. On the Yakima Reservations, the women sit on the south side of the long house and the men on the north.

Hope you are in for some good reports from concerning "Moses."

The religious ceremony for which you stayed was the typical Washat. Whensuch Sunday services are held at Satus, Wapato, White Swan etc. they just swing their hands, don't have feathers or don't use them. This was the "washat dance" or Smowhalla, the religious service and the chants are sung in sequences of seven with your seven drummers, seven as you know being the religious number Power songs, as you know, among the Yakima, Umatilla etc. are sung in sequences of five. Incidentally the seven sequence as to religious numbers carries south into most of California.

Guess that about catches up on the questions. Rushed as usual. Ginny joins in sending regards.

the best

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