

May 27, 1952

M.W. Stirling,
Director, Smithsonian Institution,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Director:

I have completed my manuscript on "Drummers and Dreamers" dealing with Smo-Wha-La of the Wanapums or Priest Rapids Indians, recorded by Lewis and Clark as the Sokulk. I am not too enthusiastic that it will be accepted.

In that connection I am pursuing my quest for photographic material, although I have a large collection.

I am enclosing a list, and if you can send me a memo of the price for these items, I shall send you a postal note so you may authorize their printing, and in the first mentioned case, a negative, which I may concentrate upon for the Smo-Wha-La individual.

My Indian sources are still holding out and I believe that I may obtain additional information on some of the characters in the Moorhouse collection, in which case, I shall impart the information to you. The information in these cases comes from relatives of the Indians concerned and I am sure will stand up under careful examination (as to blood and name.) My sources do not withhold information or cover up, even though the man may be a grandfather who was murdered, was a murderer or what not. The Priest Rapids people--there are nine left, have given me the Indian name of Now-Tow-Look. I know of no other instance that the Priest Rapids people have given a name to a white man. It is not an honorary title but a name by which they call me.

I have also completed a dictionary of the Wanapum language,

and geographic names, with Indian names and meanings for the Columbia River area, Wallula on the south to Ephrata on the North, 140 miles (roughly) the islands in the river, the islands on the Lower Snake river; names of Indians buried thereon etc.

It may be of interest to you, if you noted Life Magazine's pictures on Indian stone sculpture of several weeks ago, that the island opposite the last Wanapum village, an island on which part of their religion is based and "the origin" island of the Wanapums, contains some stone sculpture, deeply incised like suns on rocks so old they have crumbled apart although the island has only been under water twice in historic times; and carvings with eyes and diagonal lines forming the face, neck etc. Later I may have pictures to send you of some of these. The significance to me is this:

The Wanapums have legends dealing with Anhyi (Sun) Anh is the word for sun and Ch^hal-Wash- etc. (Abalone man) who lived on the islands. Abalone man (a one-legged man) killed the Sun; the world grew dark, ashes sprinkled down, sun went to the sky and Abalone man went to the ocean to live. (They do not know what an abalone is but brought out a piece of shell to show men. Then it was long after that before Speel-Yei or Coyote came by in their legends. Speel-Yei is, as you know, one of the earliest characters in other tribes. I am now working on the older legends.

I am sure that from the list of pictures I will obtain much additional information from some of my old Yakima contacts. The list is attached. Please let me know the estimated price, at convenience, so I may send you the money.

Sincerely

Route 3, box 149, Yakima, Wash.

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