

THE WISHOM TRIBE.  
A STORY OF THEIR DIVISION AND SEPERATION.

"Wishram" is a very poor corruption of a truly poetic appellation. According to an intelligent member of this practically extinct tribe, Wish-hum, or Wish-hoom, is discriptive of the deep rumbling roar of the swirling, tumbling cataract of the Tumwater, near which they lived. Wish-h-h-h-u-u-u-m-m-m; is the manner in which this tribesman put it when explaining the significance of the name.

Tum-water, he interpreted as pertaining to the same element, thus: T-u-u-u-m-m-m-water; a "tumming" roar of falling, or rapid waters.

The Wascos called the Wishooms: ~~E-chah-liut~~ E-chah-liut; pertaining to a place or home; a people of a "different talk."

The story of a division of the Wishoom tribe in no remote times, and as told in a short manuscript among my other papers, was told me by Jobe Colwash, known as Jobe Charley of the Yakimas, is as follows.

Coyote's son traveled down the ~~Columbia~~ big river, the Columbia, to the ocean. He had sick eyes, and he made a sweat house where he sweat and nearly died.

Two ducks found him lying in the sweat house/ almost dead. They ~~came~~ came to the Wishooms and said:

"We found Coyote's son away down at the ocean. He was nearly dead. Maybe is dead now. We will go back and see and come back and tell you. If he is alive we will make the noise: ~~W-i-s w-i-s w-i-s w-i-s~~ 'W-i-s w-i-s w-i-s w-i-s w-i-s!' But if we come making no noise, say nothing to us. He will be dead."

The next morning the ducks come back. They are flying low. The Indians hear the noise which tell them that the son of Coyote is living. Coyote goes with his canoe and brings his son .

But the people quarrel about how the ducks make the noise heard.

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(Oct. 25-1934.)

THE LOST BAND OF THE WISHOM TRIBE.  
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Mourning Dove is authority for saying that the Nicola are descendants, or perpetuation of the Lost Wishom band which split off from that tribe domiciled at the Tumwater, Washington side of the Columbia River, as told by these Indians even to the present day. (See story in manuscript, middle drawer of fire- safe.) The Nicola is one of the four bands subdivisions of the Upper Ntlakypamuk in the interior of British Columbia. "Nicola Valley Indians."

(See page 69, 2nd Part Hand Book of American Indians.(Bureau of Ethnology) Washington, D. C.1910.

The particular Nicola refered to, are at Merrit, B. C., so declared by Mourning Dove.

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Some say that the ducks make the noise with their mouth. But no, others reply, the ducks would grow tired thus creating the noise. It was done by the two longest feathers of the wing; the wind fluttering through between these feathers. This would not cause the ducks to grow tired.

The people divided up, joining the two disputing sides. Finally they fight. Then one faction leaves, ~~eventually going into~~ Traveling towards the snow-land, they pass into(now)Canada, where they still remain. Members of this northern branch have been met bytheir southern cousins, and ~~conversed without~~ conversation carried on without trouble. But the rankor of the old feud still remains with them both. And all because of the mystery noise created by ducks in flight.