

ARAPAHO SOCIETIES : WATER DRIPPERS AND MYSTERY LODGE

(This Hawkan, you said he was the priest of the Arapaho ceremony--?)

Yeah, all of them, The Sun Dance, the Tomahawk, and Belt Girdlers and Crazy Lodge and the Dog Soldiers--all those lodges (the Arapahoes had a system of age-graded military societies for men--jj). He was the priest of all of them. But however, too of the highest orders had already been extinct. That's the Water Drippers--the Sweat Lodge--where they fast in there four days and four nights and sit in one position. My grandpa went through that. He wasn't a priest of that because that was already extinct. The old priests had all died off. And the highest order was what they called the Mystery Lodge. That's when they could light a pipe--through ceremonial process. They could light a pipe without a match or without a flint or anything like that. It came a fire itself. That's a mystery. They could heal just by the tobacco--remains of the pipe ashes. They could heal any sore. All those things they could do. Even they put it in eyes. They could heal them.--Eye trouble. Mouth trouble. Ear trouble. That was extinct in 1874. And the Sweat Lodge (the Water Drippers) was extinct. The last one--was my grandfather's went through it in 1878.

(So that's what you call the Water Drippers?)

Yeah, Water Drippers. They pour cold water on hot stones. They had a circle--a willow lodge, about big round as this room. Maybe not quite as big--about that round, and low. They sit around in there. The old priests sit around in there. They had pegs fixed up and they put a buffalo hide over them, and they sit in there four days and four nights before they could go out. Stretch out when they come in and there'd always be a pit inside that lodge about that big around. About that deep, and they'd put water in there and that steam would go up. They said you couldn't stand it. You