

SMITH, JOHN REDBIRD

INTERVIEW.

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JOHN REDBIRD SMITH
Route 1, Gore, Oklahoma
Interview - June 14, 1937
Jas. S. Buchanan, field worker
Indian-Pioneer History.

Since the beginning the Kee-Too-Wah society has been a religious organization. Its foundation, ritualistic work and teaching is of the Great Spirit, free of malice, hate, resentment or discrimination. Teaching only for the betterment of mankind and nothing that would not meet with favor in sight of the Great Spirit.

Back through the distant past Kee-Too-Wah was in doubt as to the divinity of Christ and not until 1936 at the Buffalo Council Fire did they accept Christ in faith, however some parts of the New Testament are yet in doubt within the minds of some that are inclined to hold to the ancient teaching of the one and only Great Spirit. The work of my father and revelations that came through his councils has enabled the present leaders of Kee-Too-Wah to see this light.

For the financial support of the Kee-Too-Wah Society each member gives 10 per cent of his earnings.

(2)

JOHN REDBIRD SMITH

The tithing was adopted after a revelation that came while in council with the Great Spirit in 1923.

It has been quoted by some writers that the Kee-Too-Wah society was organized in Georgia before the Cherokees came west. That, like many other things of which they write, they know nothing. The beginning of Kee-Too-Wah is far back in the distant past, beyond the knowledge of man. It is of legendary history of the Cherokees handed down from the ancient past that the beginning of Kee-Too-Wah was in the days of Atlantis.

Sequoyah was a very devout Kee-Too-Wah. He was a prophet and was gifted with great spiritual seance. Although he originated the Cherokee alphabet and did more than anyone of the tribe towards the education of his people, he resented the translation of the Bible into Cherokee^{an} account of the New Testament contradicting the belief of Kee-Too-Wah before the

(3)

JOHN REDBIRD SMITH

faith of Christ was accepted, the belief of one Great Spirit, and that alone they worshiped. All men on earth equal.

Sequoyah became very discouraged with the situation in the Cherokee Nation and in company of his son Os-No-Te (meaning the wind) and another Cherokee left this part of the country in search of a band of Cherokees that had gone west to the foot hills of the Rocky mountains. Several months later his son and his companion returned to the tribe and reported that the band of Cherokees that they were searching for was never located, and during their journey Sequoyah ^{had been} taken ill and they were in need of food. Through a spiritual seance Sequoyah directed them on a mission in search of corn that they needed for food. Os-No-Te and his companion went in search of the corn, leaving Sequoyah at their camp. When they left Sequoyah, he told them "if you are gone too long and I leave before you return, I will leave signs of my trail the direction I go". When they returned after

(4)

JOHN REDBIRD SMITH

finding corn, they found Sequoyah had gone, but as he had told them, he had left the signs of his trail.

They followed the trail for a long distance and eventually lost it. After all their efforts to find him had failed, they returned to the tribe and reported the facts to the Kee-Too-Wah.

From the account of the expedition given by his son and our best calculations, the end of Sequoyah's trail was in New Mexico or Arizona and there he perished. It has been written that he perished in old Mexico, but we do not accept that.