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INDEX CARDS

Tribe-Alabama
Medicines and Herbs

TRIBAL HERB

An interview with Chili Barnett, age 52,
Alabama tribe (tulwa), Weleetka, Oklahoma

Billie Byrd, Field Worker
Indian-Pioneer History
7-20-87

In the Muskogee-Creek tribe there is an herb that is most used and necessary in all the tribal medicine. It is known by the name of Mek-ke Hone-cha meaning Wild King. There is a tradition known by and told by some of the older Indians that this herb was used long years ago. The tradition has it that it was even used in the days of Pilate and Christ. As it told in the 27th chapter and the 24th verse of St. Matthew, their beliefs are based, when Pilate took up the basin and washed his hands before the multitude. It is said that the water in the basin was red and that is why it is believed that this herb was one of the same species used in those days.

This particular herb now known as the "Wild King" did not always have that name. It was called by several different names but was eventually named after an old Alabama chief.

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As the story is told, there was a man whose name was Ko-hag-a-me, a chief once of the Alabama tribe (tulwa). Some of the older Alabama Indians have told and the story has been handed down that during the time that Ko-hag-a-me was leader and chief of the tribe, and in the time of battle or trouble, this chief would urge his warriors into the battle and sneak away and hide out every time so that he was nick named the "wild King."

The herb mentioned was used by the Alabama tribe of Indians during the days of Ko-hag-a-me and that herb received the name of "wild King" and has been known by that name ever since.

The herb is not found anywhere but there are only certain places that it is found. Only the roots are used and are very aromatic. After the medicine is prepared by the medicine man, the herb is placed in it and the finished product is very pleasant to the taste. It is used externally and internally.

There are other numerous uses for this herb for healing purposes but there are a few uses to which it

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it is often put and used as a charming or witching purpose to win the love and attention from man or woman, to cause separation of a man and his wife or cause a man or woman to leave their homes and leave their children. All manners of evil are practiced by some Indians who have a grudge against another, but all medicine men or women do not know how to fix it as the methods are known to a very few of the older people.

Of all the tribal towns that ever existed among the Indians of the Muskogee-Creek nation and although every tribal town has their own particular herbal medicines and medicine men, it has been believed that the Alabama town had the best medicine as they were strong in their practice and held to their beliefs very strictly.