

## PREHISTORIC SPOKANE—AN INDIAN LEGEND.

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The original manuscript of this legend, recorded by Major R. D. Gwydir, formerly United States Indian Agent of the Colville Reservation, is in the possession of Mrs. Caroline L. Hathaway, of the Spokane Public Library. It was copied and forwarded by Will J. Trimble, one of the editors of this Quarterly.—[Editor.]

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Yes, some of the traditions of the Indians go back in the past far beyond the discovery of this country by the white race.

As for the truthfulness of their narratives I can only vouch for the veracity of the old Indian chief who related them to me.

Whis-tel-po-sum (Lot), chief of one of the three Spokane tribes of Indians, one of the best and most truthful Indians that I have ever met with, gave me, amongst others, a traditional history of Spokane and the country surrounding it, which, as well as I can remember, was as follows:

Centuries ago, long before the paleface was known on this continent, where Spokane is now situated and for many days' travel east of it, was an immense and beautiful lake, with many islands resting on its surface. The country swarmed with game and the lake abounded with fish—veritably a hunter's paradise. Many well-populated villages lay along the shores of the lake.

One summer morning the entire population were startled by the rumbling and shaking of the earth. The waters of the lake began raising, and pitching, and tossed into mountainous waves, which threatened to engulf the entire country. To add to the horrors of the situation, the sun became obscured by an eclipse, and darkness added its horrors to the scene.

The terror-stricken inhabitants fled to the hills for safety. The shaking of the earth continued for two days, when a rain of ashes began to fall, and so heavy was the fall of them that there was little difference between day and night. The fall of ashes continued for several weeks. The game abandoned the country, the waters of the lake receded and dry land filled its

place, and desolation spread over the entire country. The Indians died by thousands from starvation. The remnant who escaped starvation followed the course of the receding waters until they arrived at the Falls (now Spokane).

Their first village was located in the neighborhood of where the Galland-Burke brewery now stands. The bay north of Bridge Avenue and between Post and Monroe Streets was their swimming or bathing pool.

The tradition further states that the devil, in the form of a coyote, gave them a great deal of trouble, but finally they snared him and all the Indians were in at the killing, after which they divided the carcass among the people of the different tribes. After this prosperity smiled upon them and continued to do so until the coming of the palefaced race, whom they could not snare, and who proved the worst devil of the two, for he left them nothing—their present condition.

R. D. GWYDIR.