

The Indian's Search for the White Man's Bible

From the *Diary and Correspondence of Joseph S. Elkinton*, 1913, pp. 355-357.

[1896.] Tenth month 10. Called on a man who had made considerable research in Indian history, and he told me of an incident of a tribe of Indians in the west, who, hearing that the white men, east, had a great book that told of the works of the Great Spirit, and the way to be happy with Him after leaving this world, they deputed four of their old men to go east and get that book. They proceeded as far as St. Louis and asked for the book, as they were instructed to get it. They applied to some of the officials who, being Roman Catholics, put them off. They waited a considerable time and two of their number died and were buried. The commander of the fort, or chief officer of the place, made them some presents, and when they were about to send the two remaining ones of the deputation off to the home of their tribe, one of them let it be known that he was not quite prepared to go until he should be allowed to speak. The following is the address on behalf of the Flat Head Indians to General Clark at St. Louis, Mo. :

“ I came to you over a trail of many moons from the Setting Sun. You were the friend of my fathers who have all gone the long way. I came with one eye partly opened for more light for my people who sit in darkness. I go back with both eyes closed ; how can I go back blind to my people ? I made my way to you with strong arms through many enemies and strange lands, that I might carry back much to them. I go back with both arms broken and empty. The two fathers who came with us, the braves of many winters and wars, we leave asleep here by your great water and wigwam. My people sent to get the white man's Book of Heaven. You took me where you allow your women to dance, as we do not ours, and the Book was not there. You took me where they worship the Great Spirit with candles and the Book was not there. You showed me the images of good spirits and pictures of the good land beyond, but the Book was not among them to tell the way. I am going back the long sad trail to my people in the dark land. You make my feet heavy with the burden of gifts, and my moccasins will grow old in carrying them, but the Book is not among them. When I will tell my people after one more snow in the big council that I did not bring the Book, no word will be spoken by our old men, nor by our young braves. One by one they will rise up and go out in silence. My people will die in darkness, and they will go in the long path to the other hunting grounds. No white man will go with them and no white man's Book will make the way plain. I have no more words.”

The government clerk who had wrote down this speech was met some time afterwards by a man who had heard the story, but said he did not believe it, as he had traveled some distance in company with the two surviving Indians referred to, and they did not say anything about it. The government clerk said it was true, and he had the record with him, which he drew out of his pocket. This so affected the man that was inclined to doubt it that he said it ought to be given to the world, and the account of it reaching Massachusetts it is said was the occasion of missionaries being sent into the north west.

Elizabeth Webb

THE contradictory statements respecting the name of the husband of Elizabeth Webb and several events of her life, which appeared in THE JOURNAL, x. 123, have brought the following from one of America's foremost genealogists, Gilbert Cope, of West Chester, Pa.

Richard Webb and family arrived in Pennsylvania in the year 1700, from the city of Gloucester, England, bringing a certificate from Friends of the Quarterly Meeting held at Nailsworth for the county of Gloucester, 6 Mo. 27, 1700. At this same meeting John Webb, of the city of Gloucester, received a similar certificate; as did also John Lea and wife Hannah, formerly wife of Joseph Webb, of the city of Gloucester. John and Joseph were doubtless brothers to Richard Webb, beside which two unmarried sisters, Mary and Rachel, came then or subsequently to Pennsylvania.

The above certificates were presented to Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, from the records of which it appears that Elizabeth Webb, wife of *Richard*, had come over previously on a religious visit, bringing a certificate from the Quarterly Meeting held at Tetbury in the county of Gloucester, 6 Mo. (Aug.) 31, 1697.

By deed of April 25, 1702, John Hoskins, sheriff of Chester County, conveyed to Richard Webb a tract of 415 acres of land in Birmingham Township, which had been surveyed to one Daniel Smith of Marlborough, in Wiltshire, England, September 24, 1688, in part of a purchase of 2,000 acres. A patent was granted to Richard Webb for the 415 acres, dated September 11, 1702, and he may have settled thereon the same year. This was within the limits of Concord Monthly Meeting, from the minutes of which the following extracts are taken:

3 Mo. 8, 1704: "Elizabeth Webb requested of this meeting to give her a few Lines of her conversation since shee have been Amongst us, for the seventh dayes meeting of ministring friends att Philadelphia, and according to her Request it was Granted."

8 Mo. 9, 1704: "John Bennett and Elizabeth Webb in the behalf of friends, Inhabitants of the uper part of burmingham and brandiwine