

WHERE SMOKE GOT ITS POWER TO SUFFOCATE

The following interesting story by Wallace Hatch shows that the smoke got its power from a recognized source:

Once there were two brothers, Good Hunter and Lazy Boy. All of their people had died from being suffocated by the skunk. A chief in a neighboring village knew the boys' people and took them into his home to rear. The chief knew they would hunt for the skunk until they found him and killed him. He warned the boys to be careful when they went out, as many Indians had been killed by the skunk.

Good Hunter went out one day and Lazy Boy would go the next. Good Hunter hunted diligently for the skunk, but Lazy Boy would go some place and sleep. Once and awhile he would catch a grouse or quail that he ran across.

One day Lazy Boy went to sleep while hunting and he slept too long. While in slumber along came the skunk and blew a breath on Lazy Boy that caused him to continue sleeping.

That evening Good Hunter, expecting his brother's return, prepared a good meal. He waited for him by a nice fire. Finally he fell asleep and dreamed of killing the skunk and of the people rejoicing over his death.

Morning came and Lazy Boy had not returned. Good Hunter prepared for the search of his brother. He took with him a companion to help in the search.

It was a beautiful day, a day that would be good for hunting. Good Hunter paid little attention to this, for his heart was heavy with anxiety. Good Hunter tracked his brother but later saw other tracks than his brother's. He knew they were the tracks of the skunk. His mind was full of hatred for the skunk and he often muttered aloud, "You awful dirty thing." He made up his mind to be very alert for fear of meeting the skunk.

He finally tracked Lazy Boy to the place where he turned to the beach, and followed the trail along the bank. When Good Hunter and his companion had traveled some distance along the bank they saw the skunk coming.

Near them leaned a tree out over the water. They climbed up the trunk of the tree and hid in the branches. Along passed the skunk, not seeing them. Good Hunter with his companion then went on tracking Lazy Boy. They found him, but he was unable to speak. Good Hunter and his friend carried him back to the village. Lazy Boy was now dead. The people all gathered, but not for the dead, but because they were sorry for Good Hunter, who was the last one of his people left. Good Hunter was so good and so kind that it hurt his tribe for him to be left alone.

As the service of singing and mourning for the dead was carried on word came that the skunk was approaching. All the people ran to the Polatch (meeting) house. The door was barred and all cracks plugged and all kept as still as death.

"Where is everybody?" asked the skunk, who had seen them as he rounded the point. The skunk yelled and was answered from the Polatch. The skunk then went around looking for a place to get in, but he could find none and so he climbed to the top and jumped down through the hole left open for the smoke to escape. He jumped right into the fire and burned to death. All of his body was burned to ashes, but his mouth and the most of his smell went up in smoke.

Today the skunk is a small animal and can not kill people with his smell, but even today smoke causes people to choke, gag, and tears come to their eyes because the skunk's deathly odors went up in smoke, and if shut in with smoke it still has the old skunk's power to kill one.

THE BEAVER'S TAIL

Jacob Atkins tells how the beaver came to wiggle a flat tail, as follows:

Under the western skies there lies a meadow and within are two ponds a few hundred yards apart. One was built by the beavers and kept nicely, and the other one was formed by nature and there the muskrat made its home.

One bright morning the muskrat was swimming near the shore; a log fell on its tail and flattened it and for many hours he suffered and almost gave up hope for his life.

The good old beaver was having his little walk looking for food. On his trip he discovered the pond and on the opposite side he saw water splashing near a log. He hurried over by swimming across the pond and as he got on the log he saw the poor muskrat battling for life.

Mr. Beaver knew that his help was needed, so without delay he cut the log in two and saved the muskrat's life.

As the muskrat got out with his flat tail, the beaver wanted it because it was nice and flat, so the poor old muskrat had to do what the beaver wanted because the beaver had saved his life. So he gave the beaver his tail. From that day to the present, the beaver has had a flat tail.

Work on our new dining hall for students is progressing nicely. Supervisor Bradley has a large force of workmen on the job early and late, rain or shine, and they are making their presence felt. This structure when completed will be another monument to the glory of Chemawa.