

May 20, 1966. Field interview with Noc Noc Woods, simply Noc Noc, at Yakima Indian fishery, Ah-Wah-Tum or Sunnyside Dam, 7 to 9 p.m. at old camp site. Occasion, preparation for Salmon Feast to be held in family tradition, but this year at Wapato Long House because of facilities for cooking and serving, on Sunday, May 22.

Interpreter, Alex Saluskin, nephew.

Mid-season of Chinook spring run. Few salmon trying to leap falls, water low, warm. Fishermen on stands, waiting, few being caught, mostly waiting. Some fishing with "plugs"; catching three and four pound suckers, few carp, up to 23 inches long. Children, picnics, inspecting fish, dead suckers left on shore. Waiting for salmon, waiting in early evening, few curious onlookers, visitors, Yakimas from Coast and elsewhere; other Indians, guests, not fishing. Yakima Indian police car on patrol.

Pictures of Saluskin, who before name taking was called Joe Woods, Noc Noc's son; and Chief Weowist, who was Alex Saluskin, Noc Noc's nephew.

Little boy fishing from platform with angle worms, Barney Tullee.

Fisherman who caught salmon in dip net was J. Charley. Little boys who posed with salmon were Douglas Charley, 4 and Michael, 2.

Little kids, first boy and then girl, who held large sucker were Douglas and Jeanette ~~Bonnie~~ Pimms.

Orville Olney, Toppenish Police chief fishing with rod and reel for salmon, caught large carp, suckers

Women who posed in outfits, basket hats, on left, Josephine Saluskin, at right, Nina Woods, Joe's sister.

Seated under old lean-to shelter at fishery, she with opened steamer trunk containing heirlooms and possessions of the family which she handled carefully, affectionately as they awakened memories.

A blue modern shirt, presented to me, others presented to other men present.

Then pointing, with a sweeping gesture to Joe Woods, he is Saluskin, this name we have passed down to him. And pointing to Alex Saluskin, he is called Chief <sup>Wesley</sup> ~~Wesley~~, that name has been passed down through the family and rests with him, that is the way we have always done it, that is the way it has been with my people and they way they have taught me.

She was dressed in a long print dress and long sleeves. Her long braids were doubled, yet ~~had~~ rested on her shoulders. Her eyes were almost squinty with the weight of years. Her gestures graceful and easy, fingers and hands, pantomime...the natural accompanying talk with the soft flow of Indian words, soft spoken words which seemed a little afraid to step out into the world that has grown up about them...



The long dress came down and over the tops of plain, high moccasins worn by Indian women...and she sat and talked.

Her name as most people know her is Mamie, but it is Noc Noc Woods. Her real name is just Noc Noc.

I am about the last living daughter of the late Chief Saluskin. He was about 90 years old when he died. He died in 1918.

I live on my allotment, which is between Parker and Wapato. I am 84 years old and was born at the home place. My mother's allotment was right here. I was born up by the canal. At one time we had a nice home here.

I was the sister of Chief Weowicht (Alex Saluskin) OO's father. My father, Chief Saluskin also took the name of Chief Weowicht,... Weowicht Saluskin, ~~the~~ who died in 1918. Around 1911 and 1912 he went to Washington for his tribe, four times he went to Washington, always fighting for the rights of his people.

Before the Treaty Council of Walla Walla which the Indians were compelled to attend and sign away their homes, there was a chief who lived at Kow Why Uhas, which you call Cowiche. It means Foot Bridge Place. This was up by the homestead of Jack Splawn (A.J. Splawn, father of ~~the~~ Homer Splawn) His way of life was around Cowiche and

Naches, and down through Wide Hollow, and here along the river where the fishery taking place called Ah-Wa-<sup>4</sup>um was located.

This was one of the chiefs of the whole country and he was Chief Weowicht. This chief lived in the days of Chief Moses' father, Half Son and he was an old man when the Indians were gathered at Walla Walla and was too old and feeble to go to the council, where Kamiakin seized upon the opportunity to present himself and act for the people because he was inclined to be that way. But Kamiakin did not come from this part of the country.

Now that I have told you some of this I will tell you other things which are important and should be written down.

As far as I can remember, back to my childhood ~~they~~ <sup>we</sup> held an annual salmon ceremonial and my father and mother sponsored these feasts at Ah Wa<sup>4</sup>um, and all their children were required to take part in the ceremonies, and this duty has been gifted to me in the manner of our people, and it is required of my younger descendants that they shall help with ~~the ceremony~~ this ceremony.

The purpose of holding this ceremony has a religious significance that is closely tied in with worshipping, giving blessing to early roots and the new run of salmon, the first ones caught, and ~~these~~ this was



The Creator created the people. God had created first water and He also created fish for food and game and roots, for all of the food roots and berries, combined with the salmon at one thanksgiving feast, called the roots feast and new caught salmon feast, called in our language ~~cowe-it~~ cow-we-it cow'e-it.

The salmon were caught from time immemorial and from time immemorial salmon were a sacred food and the people treated them in this manner, never catching more than they needed for food, never catching them for amusement.

I remember the first pioneers who settled in the Valley, people named Sawyer and others who came here after Billy Parker for whom Parker and Parker Bottom is named; after ~~xxxxxxx~~ where the cattleman named Ben Snipes took over the land for his cattle grazing

Our people took fish and game to these new settlers, they gave a friendly welcome to the newcomers, and these early pioneers and their children remembered the kindness of our people and they never made laws against ~~one~~ another like they make laws today. When an Indian goes fishing now he is arrested under these later made laws which disregard the Indian religion, denying the sacred ceremony of the salmon.

I remember these old times before there were obstacles made by men later. obstructions. irrigation canals and dams. These have had

a serious effect on the salmon run and we now realize salmon were depleted in the early days by these ~~can~~ irrigation canals and dams.

These I believe have had a serious effect on the salmon run and now we realize salmon were depleted in the early days. Long ago salmon came up the river without obstructions and spawned in their natural way and the young went back to the ocean to repeat another run and thus continue their way of life, giving food and ~~economic~~ religion to the people.

I feel bad today to see these obstacles and see no more salmon like I once saw here, salmon so plentiful they fed the Indians and they fed the early pioneers.

This place where we now are is ~~allotted~~ was allotted to my mother, and where my family had their home. The allotments were not made long ago. When the entire area was not allotted to anyone. It was the white man's idea that one of these allotments was my mother's. She died in 1938, when she was nearly 100 years old. ~~One~~ Her home was near the intake for the ~~Howard~~ Erwin Canal.

In those days before allotment everyone rode horseback or some went by wagon. There were no patrolmen, chasing them and asking for license, or arresting them on some fictitious citation. Our people are harassed by the patrol, ~~chasing~~ following them to their homes. I feel bad about this because some day someone may get killed by a gun.



Saluskin, who put on a buckskin jacket and headdress to have his picture taken is a religious man, he is what you call a Shaker and it is against his religion to wear a headdress. It is against his religion to drink or smoke.

He will be learned, taught by Chief Weowicht, such as in the old days the men hunters taught young men how to hunt and fishermen taught boys how to fish; and the older women taught girls how to dig roots and do things like that. They were busyteaching these things and the young people were kept busylearning how to do them.

We believe the Creator is watching all of us, the Indian and the non-Indian, and we believe that when we die there is some place where we will go. The Creator knows these things, we do not.

When the first salmon were caught, they were caught for religious purposes. After that everyone who fished could catch salmon. The Indians ate every part of the salmon, including the head, no part of it was descreated, none was thrown out to the dogs or thrown around carelessly. The salmon was split down the back a certain way and roasted by the fire. When the bones were cooked, the backbones were disjointed and the liquor or juice inside them was eaten. The bones that were not cooked enough to eat,

like the backbones, were ~~po000~~ cleaned and polished and worn as necklaces, especially at worship times. The part of the male salmon was cut out and roasted like the rest of the salmon.

When the spring came and the people started gathering at the salmon fisheries, like here, they listened for the doves. When they started to coo ~~they~~ ~~know~~ they knew the salmon were getting ready to come up the stream, and the other birds came. Seven fishermen watched when it happened and they caught the first salmon. No others could fish. Seven men were sent out to get deer, and no others could go out and hunt them until after the feast. Seven women went out after roots, wearing these hats like ~~to~~ ~~no~~ ~~one~~ ~~of~~ ~~these~~ this one my ~~mo~~ ~~ther~~ mother made and the older women taught their daughters how to make root digging sticks and the proper kind of baskets. I have been a head root gatherer for a long time.

The seven men who caught the salmon prepared them and cooked them and served them to the other people. The hunters prepared and booked and served the deer and the women root gatherers prepared and cooked and served the roots. While the people were gathered waiting for the fishermen to come with the fish, the hunters to bring back the deer and the women to bring back the food roots, there was religious singing in preparation for the ceremony.



I remember how it was in the old days. No one was allowed to catch fish for salmon on Sunday, hunt or dig roots. That was one of the ways they allowed the salmon to continue up stream and spawn, providing salmon for those who were to come later. This was their way of conservation. This was why there was always an abundance of salmon to feed all the Indians. The runs never diminished like they did after people started to fish for them every day of the week. And I think it would help the few remaining salmon if the people did not fish for them every day. But when they don't do that, other people with rods and reels fish up and down the river and take the salmon. I think it would be good if when the people were to be like the old days when it was against our religion to fish on Sunday. Our religion went many ways, and conservation was a part of our religion..."

She stopped talking. She explained that I wasn't there when she distributed gifts at the name giving and presented me with a blue shirt. She brought out a baked half of a long salmon, cleanly wrapped in foil, and asked me to take it home. She asked me to come to the Sunday feast at the Wapato Long House, the feast of the Ah-Wa-Tum where she said it would be publicly announced of the name change.