

Field Trip to Priest Rapid's 4/7/51

To: Determine location of Wanapum "secret" burial ground with possibility of having ground set aside as tribal burial place for preservation. To: Gather field material on Wanapums, place names etc.

Present: H. Dean Guie, Click Relander, Johnny Buck, tribal leader; Johnny Tamanawash, one of last survivors of Wanapums; Jess Chapman, interpreter, Yakima, Nez Perce and Umatilla. He described himself as a "Duke's Mixture."

Indians were waiting at George Genessee Demarais hop ranch beyond Moxee, Saturday morning at 9 o'clock. "We were to have been there at 8. They were anxious to go because they had to return to Wapato to attend annual "First Roots" feast. Saturday night and Sunday.

"We drove out the Moxee-Hanford highway, rolling hilly-land, flanked to south and north by higher mountains as we drove east.

Query: What does word Moxee mean?

Answer by Johnny T: Mook-Dee, explanation, true pronunciation.

Talk..talk..finally determined: Moxee is ~~place name for area at Palah~~ ^{Zillah} ~~gap, not for the gap~~ but for low land along river there where women came to gather roots for basket making. The name is the name for the roots. Plant description: Not like cattail or tule, but something like them. White people later used name Moxee for the country eastward.

Query: Where did old road go.

Answer and parts pointed out, to south, also trails came in from north, depending on whether they were coming in From Priest Rapids or from White Bluffs. Trip, by horseback, took two days (one night)

Query: Where did you hunt Yamish (deer)

Answer: In mountains, both sides, mostly to the north. About 15 miles from Demarais place, mountain side to north pointed out as "place where deer lay down." 10 miles further, valley pointed out to the southeast.. big valley, no particular name. No names for any mountains on first stage of trip.

As we approached the Hanford barrier mountain in distance across river was pointed out as Otter mountain or Nook-Sai . "Just where he laid down and died." No particular story for this incident. Subsequent queries for stories indicated the time was not right to tell stories, although names and other facts related by Indians definitely indicated they have legends connected with them.

Application made at gate for permission to photograph gate or barrier with Indians standing in front. Application processed through communications system, cleared by one agency and passed up to AEC office but because of delay, continued trip.

Swung off main road onto another oil road, left, leading northward.

Conversation in automobile before barrier approached brought out following:

Wallula..Wanapum word for place going down to river.

Walla Walla..Wanapum word for where several little rivers run. A place of several streams.

Wahluke.."birds flying up."

Soaring bird sighted to north, close to highway. Banded wings. Indians said it was an eagle.

Queries brought out: Eagles plentiful in that country. Indians used to catch them by digging a hole deep enough to hide in. Covered it with brush . Put out bait;..any kind of meat like rabbit or fish. When eagle came , Indian grabbed eagle by leg. Did not use snare. Usually did not kill eagle. Just pulled out feathers. Wanted tail feathers. Made it hard for eagle to fly afterwards but didn't kill him.

Jackrabbits killed in road by automobiles, noted several. Asked about rabbits in old-old days.

They were killed for food and for fur. Hides were torn in strips and woven into blankets. Meat was dried as well as cooked.

Reached river. Turned upstream (left bank facing ~~down~~ upstream) passed Richmond ferry, Vernita, Midway (Bonneville plant)

Came onto band of sheep, ewes and lambs..about 300 to 400..
shepherd with five or six cans strung on wire loop, used to
"move" sheep in hurry up; dogs and herder cleared way.

Road close to river, steep basalt formation to left..railroad
tracks running parallel with river.

"fifteen miles back #Saddle Mountain had been pointed out." Name given
in Indian to Guie. Name in Wanapum. Indian name means Saddle.
Explained it had always been called that as far as they knew.
Explained guess white man used name "Saddle Mountain."

Pillaged graves pointed out short distance upstream from
marker on railroad, "Hanford" ? Stopped for survey and photos.
Graves were rock burials, it was explained. Group of seven opened
graves in one place, few scattered elsewhere. Many "boards," looked like
old warped boards. Explained: These were kinda canoe in which
the people were buried. Explained: These pillaged years ago, maybe
15 or 20 years or more than that. Explained: These were very old burials,
but Wanapums. White swan seen walking in flat near river. Low growing
sunflowers abundant, not patches but individually spaced. Steams peeled
-dried and eaten raw.)Slip-peeled) Indian name given.

Continued trip less than half a mile , explained that rock formation
jutting out in river was "Coyote's Canoe." Photos taken. Explained
Coyote's fishing place in river was passed where rock basalt formation
first close to road and river, several miles back. There's the place
where he hung his neck when he stopped, fishing and went away.
On return trip, car stopped and net pointed out , hanging high on
cliff, whitish discoloration in rock, larger on top, smaller at
bottom, 30 or 40 feet long maybe, appearance, net hanging up to dry,
"just as he tossed it there."

Explained: Coyote fished in river here. No rocks or rapids evident
with river fairly low. Indians fished on river, mostly on other side,
mostly at night with torches and speared salmon here from canoes at night.

Mile further perhaps came to left jog in road, several houses there. Buck pointed out two cellars where things were stored, showed padlocked door, padlock broken, things taken he said. Empty trunk in one, fruit jars, old bits of harness. Very cool inside. Explained: salmon ..dried..other foods, stored here to keep.

Continued to present camp site. Stopped. Inspected and photographed long house, poles standing. Mats stored several old buildings, also old dugout canoe perhaps 30-40 feet long. Turned upside down. Patched with tin on prow. Buck said it would take six men to lift it and carry it.. usually took it to the river in "truck."

Small net hanging in shed explained as being white fish net. Will use it later in the Yakima river. Buck busied himself around place, picking up rags, putting them in sack and then tucking under tub, picking up cans, cleaned up a little around the place.

Explained: Poles to long house were from drift wood in river. Were not named. Long house smaller than even few years ago. Entrance facing river, think it was southeast. It was boarded entrance to "keep cows out. Rest of long house poles were close enough together and with wires strung at bottom to prohibit entrance of cattle. Center: smooth pounded space, six or eight feet wide, 10 to 12 feet long, framed by poles set on ground, almost flush to ground.

Nearby intact "tent" made of poles, covered with canvas and mats.

Continued trip about 2 miles, road getting rougher all the time, turned up hill on old road (not filey road previously passed) Explained didn't know of Filey road. Said he didn't know Filey who was first white man to live at Priest Rapids. Explained that the road did go over hill and come out at East Delah.

Crossed wash, evidence of water certain seasons of year. This about a mile and a half above present camp. Across from present camp small islands, can hear "roar" or rapids and see white water across behind islands.

Started to climb, rather dubious looking road..told to stop here.
Turned around,headed down hill.

Walked up through swales on bluff, gradually climbing, steep but not too steep for nearly half a mile. Upstream in distance could see gap through which Columbia flows. Indian name given. Estimated distance "at least five miles.." could have been more, doubtful if less.
Buck, oldest, led way, outdistancing rest. Everyone spread out. Indians did not follow each others course. Faint sign of wagon road which ran out different ways in tangents. Explained: Bodies were brought up on wagons, part-way. Then left so "not to leave tracks."

Buck swung down toward river a bit. I kept higher up, Guie and Johnny T. and interpreter came up, Small swale, clear of rocks pointed out as burial place...secret..but no signs of burial evident. At head was basalt formation, eight or 10 feet high. Area about 400 feet long, 150 to 75 feet across. Explained: Lots of people there, laid closed together, almost on top of each other. Rocks on each side of area. Use basalt formation like building about mile and a half at 35 degrees from gap in river, facing the gap. Location about 150 yards from sheer bluff dropping down couple hundred feet to railroad track.

Talk-talk..pictures taken to "show" army or others interested "This is the place." Explained: This is the place shown to McHorter. No others but Indians seen. Now only few people left: Johnny B said he would be buried there; Johnny T. said he would be buried there, then others, then no more. "ant preserved so will never be moved. Don't know whether area is above water level if Priest Rapids is built, but at least 400 feet higher than river, maybe 600 feet. Larger sage growing there and along river than the smaller sage seen on way to Priest's rapids. explained this had another name. Explained it had always grown there as had sage in plains on way to barrier. Explained: Good for cough and demonstrated by picking sage from bush and stuffing in nostrils and inhaling.

Names of sage given to Dean.

Buck wants graveyard area marked as graveyard area. Said it was here that Mc"horter wanted to put up monument.

This graveyard had no name like the pillage burial place which had a name (given to Dean) Talk-talk. Decided it should be named for the Wanapums' as it was their last resting place and would contain the last of the Wanapums. Decided it should be called Wanapum Statza... (Wapapum graveyard or burial place) in honor of the Wanapums and the last of them and we were asked that white people know it by that name and that it be marked, in time, on maps and designated that way to perpetuate it for all time.

Asked: "How did they come to establish this graveyard?"

Explained: White people were coming into the country. About 60 years ago, maybe a little longer, a man had a wife Islooklakalal, who used to come up this way and liked this place and wanted to be buried there. When she died, she was buried there and then others were buried there until it became Wanapum graveyard and as years came and inquisitive white poked into rock slide burials for relics, it was decided to keep this place secret from the whites. Explained that now it should be known so it would be kept forever free from desecration and pillaging. Asked if there were maybe 20 or 30 persons. Talk-talk, look around, count here, there. Answer, 200, maybe more, explained again, "they thick" side by side. Graveyard now nearly filled. Said room enough for last of the Wanapums.

Asked if Yo-Yo-Yuni buried here: Answer, both: Yes, yes, pointing and brightening up. (Yo-Yo-Youni Smohalla Second. or Young Smohalla as Indians called him. But they mostly, called him Yo-Yo-Youni excepting when necessary to explain who he was to whites.

Small low bushes on low ridge overlooking it in bloom..masses of purple flowers like wild sweep williams. Did not know name. Said not good for medicine or anything like that. Indian name given to Dean.

Dean walked around to gulch on other side, steep, water in season, signs of scooped out places.

Explained: This was also the secret hiding place where Wanapums hid treasures when they packed up to move out on fishing, hunting or berrying trips and intended to stay some time. These were evidently the good caches where heavy things were placed that they wanted to be sure and keep and was said to be old-old place, used as long as they knew and had been told, long before they were born, for hiding place.

Buck pointed out freshest graves at lower end of yard, closest to river. By careful inspection you could see green grass growing heavier there and burials placed some foot or two feet apart, all running same way. Explained: They all run that way and were buried facing east "So they could see the sun when it first came up in the morning." They were buried with their possessions. Burials were made horizontal.

"How deep/"

Answer "About this deep.." motioning with hands about three feet.

It was later explained that all over the mountains when you usually dug down you dug into rocks but here, in this place, they had found where it was all good dirt and easy to dig without running into rocks; also, it was secluded and would be hard to find; it was in a good location overlooking the Columbia and on old-old tribal ground or range.

On way back party scattered again, Indians setting out different ways. Johnny T. Walked over to edge of bluff and looked down 300 feet to railway tracks below. Was asked to point out So-Happy's burial place. It had been explained at the graveyard that So-Happy was not buried there but was buried lower down and when railway came along "they dug him up." The Indians were there and the railroad men buried him again, about half a mile below or down-river.

Johnny T. Explained that people...old old people were buried all up and down the bluffs, the railroad and whites and their projects dug up

many of them

most of them people they didn't know...old...old people, buried like the pillaged slide burials or rock burials with canoes lower down.. old...old...old...long before white men.

Was told that at White Bluffs, above "iehl's old ferry landing on bluff, overlooking river and on point where river turns or makes bend, there are two old burials with many, many people in them. Some of these maybe dug up these in the AEC now. Down below on the river was a white man's house who had lived there a long time. Was told too, by Johnny T. that on the island there are also burials and burials across river, both from where we were and downstreams, but the ones across the river were old, old.

Back at the car we decided we were hungry and suggested we eat. Duck wanted to go down to the camp "for water," so boarded car and downstreams took speedometer marking at railroad crossing just after leaving.

Took later speedometer readings. Reading at home ...99.86.

Reading at start ^{Return Trip} ~~99.86~~ -----.

Reached camp, inquired about old sweat houses. Above camp on way, just short distance, shown site of old camp, also cellars for storage, old sweat houses located here (Johnny said later when asked) Decided to continue to sweat house short distance below camp, around half a mile.

It was built for permanency, like large mud-covered bee-hive, room just for one man, door about three feet high, two feet wide, facing downstream, toward east. Shed affair adjoining with bench to sit on, built of lean-toos and tin with back to mountain or road. Stack of rocks behind house, smaller stack and fire pit in front. Johnny said he took last good sweat last winter. Ate lunch, talked, took pictures of Johnny on rocks with river in background, about 30 yards from sweat house and just above ordinary high water line. Dean found coon tracks, name, uses of coons etc. not gone into.

Talk-talk. Long mountain ridge running parallel into river, forming basalt at lower end, swinging back several miles from river at upper end, ridge maybe ^{five} ~~three~~ miles long, spot of snow on upper end or highest end. Ridge had no name in Indian.

Highest part of mountain called "Sal-hal-pqhan-nai," means sitting next a bank...it's where women go to gather roots. Explained that they didn't go up on one day trip, went up and stayed several days then came back. Questions as to "Did they have to get back before dark" repeated several times didn't register. Whites like Sisk and others who had lived close to Indians many in years past frequently noted that Indian women coming back from root gathering had to be in before dark.

(Referring back to burial ground site--caches where secret things and treasures were hidden was called wa-wik-puma.

Purplish or lavender flowers in bunches were called ka-loch-maiches.) ?

Returned, past houses and ~~seeing~~ dog ..dog silent this time, barked furiously at us on way up. ~~Shaded out too~~

Toward lower end of islands in river pointed out fishing place.. best fishing place..where water narrowed and ran between rocks.. it is called p'na or "fish trap." Explained that this was where fish trap was but this was sun's fishing place. (Johnny gestured toward sun before getting into car) Said there was no story..just where Sun fished. He got lots of salmon. There is a kind of scooped out place in the ~~wood~~ rock, made there long, long ago, "by sun I guess." Salmon leaping upstream through "hole or holes" in rock landed on place and all you had to do was pick them up and kill them..lots of fish. They were dried on banks here on racks, previously told at home interview.

Volunteered information, as much of it was: Large lake across the river, back over there..large lake, where they got tules for making mats, where they got fish, lots of ducks etc. ~~Many~~ Indians caught ducks when they were too young to fly. Ate duck eggs too by cooking them.

Explained: Sun fished here, "got his fish here," Coyote got his fish downstream about a mile where he hung up his net and quit fishing... they both went away I guess. Just quit and went away. Johnny stopped to point out where coyote hung up his net..had to explain to interpreter first, pointing high up on cliff, perhaps 700 feet up basalt formation.. more evident as net more you looked at it.

Trip continued, left river and headed toward barrier. Broached subject of Smohalla's flag, the five pointed star on flag in Mooney, told again star had six points, book or flag there was wrong asked repeatedly if points had meaning..point not conveyed.

Reverted to Sun's fishing place "where he got his fish."

Explained: drum used in religious dances like heart--like heart beat--bell sounding, ting, ting, ting, like heart, like heart beat. Drum used old days before bell, now both bell and drum.

Asked about gao "big " number three. First said didn't know, then thought it over and explained that seven was a big number, but three was a bigger number because Sun, Moon and Stars. Sun was life. Moon was heart beating. Stars were like body. Took all three to make life, make man. Explained, or indicated, that was Smohalla's teaching, meaning of some of flag.

The pillaged burials were upstream some 150 y ards from three finger-like pillars. They had no place names so Johnny said, but they were three in number and brought up point of "big " numbers by Mean. These rocks too distinctive formation not to have name or place name.

Reached barrier and found that permission had been given for picture "providing no" building could ~~been~~ be seen in distance. took picture of Johnny B. and Johnny T. standing in roadway before barrier. Continued and letter brought out from AEC granting camping and wood gathering rights, ~~Explained~~ at Richmond ferry area. Explained by Buck that when they had gone there guards had come and tried to run them out. "anted picture taken sent to guards so they would know who

were dealing with.

Headed back in face of growing wind which had started rippling up river when we had lunch and was uncomfortably strong by time we had finished and was raising small waves on river. Saw dust storms ^{down - 17th} off up ends of rolling canyons.

Brought up subject of Smohalla's calendar. Explained that seven was a big number, seven days in week and Indians had seven and seven days in week period long before they knew white man, also knew when feast ~~days came~~ or religious days came.

Buck told interpreter that he thought he had explained that before but he guessed I didn't understand. Long talk, names of "months" mentioned. Finally got around to first month, it was long one, five weeks, starting late in January and winter feast came at shortest day in the year, about "middle of the period." Others named and explained, some had meaning, some not, one was "when things start to grow, " "First roots and things, everything changes." Another ~~spoke~~ spoke of a gnat or fly, not mosquito, didn't bite but flew in swarms. Dean took down names and interpretations. Went on through six of them, told that was all. Explained that from last one there was long period until cold weather and first one started season of year off again. Told that this was Smohalla's own system.

Asked about small black book in which record is kept by Buck of his family only, ages, etc. (dots, small circles etc.) Note: See Monney's reference to Smohalla's book. Asked if Smohalla taught him this system, or did he dream it. Told..don't know how he learned it, just knows. Previous conversations indicated strongly that he was taught this by Smohalla as part of things Smohalla taught him to keep "secret."

But , so far in conversation, he has ~~declined~~ not declined to answer any question about Smohalla or his teachings, if he thoroughly understands the question.

Asked about Kamiakin's son who was Smohalla type-religion before S. Said he didn't know him (logical since Buck just a boy when Smohalla going strong, hence predecessor would have passed from picture before Buck was born. Was told he was Palouse and "in that country."

Asked if he, Buck, was any relation to ~~him~~ Kamiakin. "old he was an "in-law," but type of in-law not explained.

wind increasing by 3 o'clock, running into scurrying dust. Heavier dust, ^{smothered out} ~~covered~~ highway, unable to see 10 feet in front for spaces of 50 yards on highway, between Desmaris place and experiment station. New land coming into cultivation, concrete pipes, freshly plowed land but dry as powder, some green showing, green hillsides where Buck and T. said there were many wild horses in old days.

home and arranged to meet Buck following "ednesday to make head.

B,ts of info. forgotten till now:

Rock paintings. "You passed one back there," Back there being upstream a half mile or so from place where Coyote quit fishing. Described merely as painting down by the river on rocks.

Horses--Had four..someone shot them last year. They were just running around.

Desire--"to have land from camp site to burial place and including gulch with old cache sites, place to fish along river. Has never owned land but always used it and their families before. "hite men who "own papers" on land have always been good to them but have been growing increasingly worried with Priest Rapids dam reports, army, AEC etc. closing in, no place to bury, afraid of wher now buried, relic hunters along all the time, getting closer, afraid will find place and dig up relatives.

Coyote story--"two coyotes, argument about who is coyote, bet, "there goes another one" origin as to tribe unknown, heard all over, but words for "there goes another one" wamapum words.

Springs--On way to and fro, pointed out. First, about 10 miles before barrier, to north, pointed out as camping place on trips to Yakima country. Another, toward south, on road to Status, which passed through fairly low place in small mountain range, then south, about 10 miles toward Yakima from Sunnyside turnoff. Another, hot spring, pointed out at foot of bluff back of power house. Said it was just hot spring, not used for anything particular.

Impressions--Interpreter eager to show ability to read. Good interpreter, anxious to correctly interpret and to carefully interpret. Slender man, scar across bridge of nose, no distinctive features..

"white man ." *(C Lowrey - months later said - Soldier - Chapman paid woman to make baby (2 Gen Boke)*

Mine pocked holes in bluffs along river, some fairly high up, kalus.

Scarcity of trees..dead wood, driftwood along bank, concentrated at places, showing various stages of high water marks. Johnny said on two occasions camp had been washed out and things lost..last time "they bought tent."

Mrs. "hite at Desmaris camp came out said "Where you are going I have a family there..children." No explanation from interpreter asked for clarification, found she referred to people buried in graveyard.

Arrival of railroad. Called train "making fire," Indian word given Dean.

Blueback salmon..good place to catch them opposite camp site and below, in islands, in rapids. Had name for blueback but generally referred to salmon name nau-sook. Run came when water rose late in spring.

Scenic and atmospheric impressions: River, murky, running through desert wasteland of dead land, land that had never been occupied. Railroad track out place, any modern house of place, shack-types

like squatters or homesteaders...lonely two by four cigar box cabin on flat near river..wonder.wonder who would live there, so alone.. decay..decay of wood, carts, broken down wagons...end of irrigation flume of heavy-hand made timbers, jagged along roadside. Towering bluffs and mountains, folded hills, folded gently with shadows shadows softening the creases..green ..life in a wasteland of dirt that had the heavy dry feeling of sand beneath it, tons and miles of sand underfoot, ^{dusty GREEN} starting to show on the hillsides and dimming to a pastel tint in the distance , clogged with soft wind whipped dust..

River, boiling and gushing through rock islands in midstream... moving soft and gentle, moving deep, close to shore..volcanic shapes of fantastic type, rearing from muddy icy water, murky with snow runoff..water that seemed to have slipped from the hills carrying the accumulated dust of a summer with it..water in midstream whipped by a shifting wind, now buffeting you and closing your ears, whipping trouser legs ...clothes flapping wind like hung on a clothes line.. lapping against the shore..clean shore, sand beaches, small, drifting sand , clean and untracked.

Downstream, basalt cliffs, rocks stacked by big men playing with hunks of rocks for toys. Meadowlarks skimming from broken down wire fence into the sagebrush--sparse sagebrush, no shelter for animal life, no haven for birds from the wind..shelter of a hillside, protected from the wind that ebbs and flows like it is turned off and on by a giant hand..everything big..the whole outdoors spread out and cut by a mighty river that is lost in its vastness..wide in places, narrows in places..slow moving , so slow it is almost like a lake and then speeding and dashing through restricting rocks built close to the ground..a river cutting deeper, bit by bit for year after year through rolling sand-laden hills tied down by tufts of sagebrush..a lonely cottonwood tree standing on an old homestead homestead..curious @ white faced cows, just a small

yard full of them turned loose out of doors..rising slowly, twisted backs and bodies stretching kinks..dust rolling up from the roadway a narrow wound on the hillside, jagged rocks jutting up from the wheel tracks...an automobile on a wagon road.

The old Filey road taking off through a gently rising slope toward a big mountain, a massive mountain, banded here and there by a strata of rocks.

Broken bits of volcanic rock, burned like by a kiln, dusty and slightly red..black and gray rocks

The gap, far upstream, sometimes fogged by dust and sand swirling miles across the coulee-like canyon..how far distant..a barrier cut wide open, straight up and down leaving a big hole for a tiny river to pass through..big bends in the river, little bends, big and little bends in the narrow road..climbing over an incline over almost nothing but man -broken rocks, then settling down into a sandy-dusty flat..walking softly across the sand..grinding and grating on the roadway and rocks on the hillside...

The gap again, the buttes on each side standing like sentinels guarding downstream, guarding upstream--watching..there for ever. Always drawing the eyes upstream..something quite and majestic about them..holding the secrets of Indians and all..just standing there talking back and forth across the river..whispering the secrets they hold of so long, long ago it is like looking off into the distance of a milky way on a clear night..long..long ago that only the rocks and sand have been there since the beginning and the river hurries by to get away from the desolation..Here could one forget the entire world, because here seems to be the entire world and it seems to fade off on all sides into an even more desolate waste than close to the banks of the river which is moving and alive and friendly in the land of stillness....just once in a while, at some bends..there is

of thousands of little tiny roars, rising and swelling with the wind..
 here and there a glimpse through the islands of ^{scattered} ~~movement~~ ^{Flat - streaming out dashing}..the river
 little white caps splashing and falling back and shooting downstream..
 roaring..and here and there a sand spit, standing before the river,
 but ready to sink before you look again..across the river, hills
 of grey-green, wisps of dust and sand rising..here and there
 sand spilled out of a sugar bowl..^{SUN GLARE}brownish, light colored sand,
 spilled in a long narrow heap that fans out until the river tears away
 the bottom..and the gap again, dust-misty, drawing your eyes back,
 squinting against the side-rays of a hot sun..the wind again and a
 deep breath of something pleasant and sweet, a reminder of life
 from the hillsides, mounds tufted with sage..a few bits of
 dark green leaves, bright yellow sunflowers looking sun-beaten and wind
 standing low against the wind..years to make them grow that low..only
 the hardy have survived the wind..it comes up every afternoon..

flowing in spurts and gusts downstream..blowing occasional flocks
 small clouds of dust that grimes into your face but somehow doesn't
 make it feel dirty..~~Hardly a desert~~ A country going back to the
 desert with no one to care but the Indians..a wide panorama of
 distance a small stream winding its way through, still hurrying to
 get by and reach shade..someplace