

HARNEY COUNTY HISTORY PROJECT

AV-Oral History #195 - Sides A/B

Subject: Marion Louie

Place: Burns, Oregon

Date: June 6, 1974

Interviewer: Pauline Braymen

PAULINE BRAYMEN: You're going to tell about Captain Louie.

MARION LOUIE: From beginning?

PAULINE: Uh huh. Can you tell me about Captain Louie?

MARION: Yes. Well, this is what I know about him. From beginning, up at this old ... story about him. How he used to do, way back time. And it took quite a while from back, that I know

--- Do I have to tell from beginning how he living all through his young child life?

PAULINE: Yes, if you can.

MARION: Well, this story I got from Old Tabby, used to tell. And Blind Jimmy, setting and telling a story about way back time, about how they used to live. There was a man, real witch doctor here in the valley, when the valley was full of our tribe. And he must be lost his wife, and he had a grown young son. They were living out to around in an eagle flat, where we used to dig. And his father told him to go out and get those woodpeckers, little birds, in the nest. You know how they have their nest on a juniper and make a hole.

So the boy went out to get some young, a woodpecker to eat. And the boy went out looking for all the juniper, till he found a nest, a tree hole. And the little bird were in there. So the boy climbed up in the tree. Then he reached in when the little bird was

sounding. He reached his hand into that hole. There were a snake in there with the little birds. So he, snake suck his hand, bit him, and the boy's hand would just swell up in the nest of the birds. And he was, must be hanging down in there when his hand swell up.

PAULINE: He couldn't get his hand out?

MARION: He couldn't get his hand out. Then his father miss him for quite a few days and he look around, what happened to his boy. He was looking around. Finally he find his son were hanging up in a tree, all dead. So he just get angry and cried all summer long. Cried, and cried, and he blame on his own tribe because he should blame himself for he send the boy out. And he blame all these other Indians here in the valley. He just cried his head off all summer long.

He said to his, he's cried, "Now I'm going to destroy my whole people, that I lost my son." In the going of Fall where they gathering this seed around in Malheur Lake, people were all gathered in the Fall, to gather all this seed, what they going to eat, to live on winter. So he come there and he cried, and he make his people, I guess he prayed or something, because he was a real, a witch doctor. And people were just laying up in their beds and dying off, children and all. He destroyed a lot of his own people. People didn't even realize what was happen to him. Because he heard it anyway, that he was soon dead.

And second year, same thing, he never forget his son. And he said ... I'm going to destroy the rest. So do the same thing. That time Captain Louie's mother and daddy were both dead in that. And he had a sister, and he had a brother, three were left when he was a little boy. He was still a little boy, baby boy. And when his mother dead, he didn't know mother was dead. He was still sucking on the milk. And they lost their parents. And finally people decided to destroy that witch doctor man. His name was "Catawa". (sp.?) The great witch doctor man.

PAULINE: "Catawa."

MARION: "Catawa." Then from there his sister, because she was old, taking her brothers to grow. And all her life she was taking up two brothers, raised them up after that. Way back time that was coming to this. He was with his sister, and on other side Malheur Cave, around other side. When he was a boy, and a man came after him, he must be his cousin. He asked his sister that she could take him, with him to look out, and take her to look after his horses. So he took this boy, Captain Louie, when he was a little boy. On to other side where Indian calls, "Honos", (sp.?) that's Indian center or something, he called it.

PAULINE: Can you say that word again?

MARION: "Honos." And he was there doing in the winter, around must be January, and there were quite a bunch Indians there, and the man took him there with him. And these people, they went on other side to look, see if any antelope around on other way, to kill and to have eat in the winter. So there were two of them went. Went to see, see if any around there. So they went, and they saw the grass, must be just like, foggy on top of this, a big band of antelopes. They saw that.

So they came from there, they came toward their home and they saw a tracks. There are tracks, a horse tracks, they have horses with horseshoe, and they were there and they figured out what was it. And they said, they must be soldiers. And the stick were pointed towards the Indians on top of the sagebrush. And they heard these people, the sound was just plan when they heard it, you know, how it sounds way off when it's cold. So they came home from there. They came to that band of this people there. After they eat something in the evening, the brave man when they told him, he calling his people together, and he's going to tell all what these two men saw. So he called everybody in one place, tell the women to carry lot of wood into where they going to have

a meeting. The brave man his name was "Tonatpa" (sp.?).

PAULINE: Now will you say it one more time?

MARION: "Tonatpa." Then they have meeting there. These two men were explain what they saw first. They saw lot of these antelopes. From there they came to the north around to their home. They saw a tracks. They must be soldiers around there. To listen what the Indians, their noise is, and where they at. And they point a stick toward the noise. So must be turn back. He telling all about that.

And one old lady was in the meeting. She was wounded by a gun and she fell on the ground, and she made a big noise just like somebody shot her. After she got up she said, "It's the truth, there is soldier." Here I am making a big noise just like I am shot with a gun, and be telling the truth, that's a soldier. And he got up and warned these people, this old lady. And this brave man tried to tell his people to go ahead to that shelter, they must be a little ways from their shelter where they call, where they used to hide. They must be a little farther away from that.

So after meeting, trying to tell his people and he must let them be a brave man. Everybody go to their, where they sleep. And they went to bed. 'Course some of them don't believe it. I don't think they will do anything to us. Maybe just the stick was just pointed toward us. So the brave man says, "Well go to your homes and sleep." So everybody went.

And this Captain Louie when he was just a boy, he got nobody to sleep with. He had sleep with two men, between these two men. Those two they have a big rabbit quilt, one underneath, and they must have one apiece, these two men, for their own. And he was sleeping between them.

So this brave man, he was getting wise all night. After the meeting he didn't go to sleep. Keep on his mind, what was that. So early in the morning he got up, and he

listened. Toward morning, and he heard the noise of the horse, 'cause the noise was sound just like something coming. You know how noise when wagon roll on the snow in this cold, it makes funny sound. But the horse he gets the sound just the same. He listen, and when it comes closer, then he said, "Who is so early in the morning, going after horses and driving this way?" I heard a big horse sound coming. And pretty soon he just make a noise, hollering to everybody trying to get up. And some might be still sleeping, 'cause children are pretty hard to wake up in those days.

These two men what Captain Louie was sleeping with, one leave her moccasins out, and one had put her moccasin underneath of her blanket. And there was big fire, the ashes had just hot, and still the coal was, you know --- and he was grab his own shoes. I guess he put it under hot blanket too. But this other one trying to grab her ... moccasin, and they were just grabbing this moccasin which was not frozen. They were saying to one another, that's mine! No, this is mine! And the other one said, "This is mine." Pretty soon he find his own moccasins were all frozen too, just like wood, real frozen. He just stick it into the ashes trying to un-thaw the moccasin.

So Captain Louie, he wasn't listen. He just grab his moccasin and he run. These two guys were still getting ready. He just run toward the hill when he heard this gun. They surround his people, surround them, and he heard the guns sounding, just running towards the hill without no shoes. He just carrying his shoes. And all this snow is kind of sharp when the snow is packed hard, and cutting up his leg. He went around up, and he come to where is no brush, sagebrush. He hid there and he just take some the sagebrush branches and put it around him to hide. And he was looking toward where he come from when daylight comes. There was somewhere he saw a burning, where they staying, the families. And he saw, he was looking down.

And pretty soon a man were coming toward him, and there was two of them

soldiers trying to shoot him. The man come in front of them. He had this rabbit quilt on, and he was trying shot him. He keep walking and he went over the hill and he thought he must be kill him because these two were back, walking back and they were laughing. He looking at them, and pretty soon he saw again there were two of them coming, following his tracks. They coming near and they stop, and pretty soon they look around, and step along, following his track. And one coming to near him, and one was coming a little farther away from walking toward head.

PAULINE: The soldiers were looking for him?

MARION: Right. The soldiers were looking for the ones is hiding, 'cause they seen the track. And one came to him near, and he look down, he found him, he was sitting there. He turned to point his finger at him, and trying to get up. He didn't, they were just keep on looking at him. Pretty soon he just make this gun noise, you know, how sounds like ready to shoot you. Then this boy got up, he stand up and he called the other one, was going by, his friend. And he came to him, and they were checking him that he was a boy. And he told the other one, he said a boy, and shaking his head like that, and point at the camp where it look like they burning, make him. They must be telling him go back and warm up, trying to show him how to warm.

PAULINE: Uh huh.

MARION: So he had his moccasin on, all his leg was bleeding from the ice cut on his leg. So he walked down and these two still looking around to see if they see any more hiding around. So he went down to the crowd where he left, and there was a man laying, the one was sleeping with this boy. He got shot; he was bleeding on the top there, snow.

Then lot of these people were just burning up in their families, children and all. He just walked to the fire where some of the women, or girls, a few of them were standing around the fire. And there were a lot of soldiers killed too, because this great man was

fighting with his spear, alone. And after awhile there was a thread, or some kind of a cord from deer, must be work out, when the blood is soaked, soaked it. It came off of the arrow and the, then they got, get hold of him.

PAULINE: Then they killed him with his arrow, when his spear point ...

MARION: Uh huh. They got that stick away from him, was breaking in two. And the one soldier came around and showed these women they must be broken in half and showed to them, here we are, broke your great man spirit. And he showed to them around. Then they get a hold of him. They tied him up; they tied him onto a mule. And the mule just dragged him around and kicked him, around and around, and they still, they catch the horse and feel his heart, see if he still alive. I guess he was still alive when they feel his heart is beating, it must be moving. And they took another big gray horse for the second. They tied the person onto that gray horse, then turned the horse loose. The horse do same thing. Drag him and just kick him in the air. Course he got a sharp pointed shoe on. Just kicked him until his face --- then they killed that man.

PAULINE: This was the brave man.

MARION: The brave man name's "Tonatpa". Then they turned him loose. And gather all these young womens in the places, and there was soldiers, what he kill. They put the brush, sagebrush on top the snow and lay them on top of it. Start a fire. But he didn't tell how they bury them or kick them; 'cause there was several men, soldier men he kill. But all these others Indians were destroyed with the fire in their own place, where they gather in the families. Just save a few of them.

PAULINE: They just shot them there, and then they set the camp on fire?

MARION: Uh huh. They burned, 'cause the sagebrush it burns quickly, and from there they took this ones they capture, and they make them ride on a horse, children and all. They took them and he was one of them.

PAULINE: Captain Louie was one of the ones ---

MARION: Captain one of them, when he was a boy. And he ran on, on toward East, I don't know how many days they went, but they cross the Owyhee River somewhere. That was, must be toward spring, I don't know. Anyway, you know how the ice when they came to the river, just a big ice flowing. And they went across there and they stayed across the river for quite a while, with all these youngsters. But when they were taking these women and the girls, the soldiers were just playing with them. You know what I mean. All the way through.

And when there, he tried to run off. He thought he was going cross the river back where he was thinking, but he couldn't make it. He went back to the camp again. They don't know it, that he tried to run away. So they went on to Boise, for captured and punishment. There was some, lot of people there already, captured, in punishment. And he was one of them. And another man that he meet, his name was --- he was here before, he was staying around here before, after he grew up. He was here, he must be, belong here. But he was there when he was a young guy also, and he meet him. They kept there, I don't know how long, how many years. After a while they turn the others loose, and give them a rations or something to take it home to where they from. But this Captain Louie was kept there. They didn't let him go. And another man, his name was Louis. His Indian name is "Seecushua" (sp.?). From there, they came back when everybody was gone to their places. They came; soldiers took them from there around these west side, on to the California. That's why he land into this scout of this Modoc War, against Captain Jacks Crow.

PAULINE: Now this was Captain Louie, or the other man that was---

MARION: Both of them.

PAULINE: They were both scouts ---



MARION: Captain Louie and that other guy. They were there with the soldiers.

PAULINE: Uh huh. They were scouts for the soldiers during the Modoc War.

MARION: Yeah. And he went to the finish. He tells about all these what was doing around there in the fight, of his work. How he come out of it. And that's why the beginning we had little people here. He found it somewhere from this old beginning, how he was in the war, scout against Captain Louie's bands. How much soldiers that they destroy with their own guns. Take their own guns away from them and kill them, the soldiers with it. And he was one of them in there, all through fighting against Modoc.

He tells a lot of these other stories that I heard when they were setting here. Explained to the others how he was made out in a scout. This one time they were out of bullets so the Captain sent him to go get some more, where the headquarters must be. So he took a mule, and packing things on a mule to get some bullets for the army begun. So he took it. And they told him that if you closer to the soldier, you put this white rag on top of the stick and you carry it on top of your head so they know that you are, belong to us. So he went after some 'cause they were out.

And all the Modoc was, get the best of the soldiers, 'cause they got the guns. So they make, he meet another guy of Warm Spring he called Donald McKie. They were three friends together then, Captain Louie, and this Louis, and Donald McKie. They were three, they were friends together. So he went around about before noon. He got there, he was coming to closer, and when they saw him, all they got the guns ready toward him. Then he put up this white flag so they know, they put the guns down. So he went and he got the note to give them.

So they give him lunch and they loading up the guns and bullets. Loaded on the mule to take him back. So they did. So he took the mule back with the load, on back to where he come from, the other soldiers.

On this way he was passing the ... of Captain Jacks. And they were some there when he passed, and there was a creek, all tule on both side. And when he crossing, somebody just, you know how the mud is when horse or anything cross, they were sloppy, and things like that. It wasn't nice place to cross. So he went across there. The mule didn't go across because the road was, the creek was bad. And he just go around and whip that mule. Finally he went across, also him.

And a little ways after there could see, they saw him. They were shot him from quite a ways and he said he must be touch his horse on his leg. And the horse make a noise and kick around and the mule just keep going toward where he was going. Then they didn't do anything, just shot him longs ways, but they didn't touch him. So he took the mule to the place where he come from.

They said they call for more soldiers from somewhere out in, toward West. He said something about five hundred or some, or five hundred soldiers transferred to there and -- - but the war wasn't, kind of slowed down, you know. After they gave up, given up early in the morning the soldiers surround their center. After the hour went toward hideaway, and there were none minutes after. And they look around and the center was empty.

And they look around and there were two old people were hiding on the hill behind the cherry tree in the rough. There were two old folks sitting there. They find them, him and another soldier. And the soldier told him; you go down and get their head. And he don't want to do it, 'cause this old people, they were setting there blind. He told him, hurry up and get their head. So he had to do, and give it to that soldier, and he put it in his, you know, the back of the saddle.

PAULINE: The saddlebags.

MARION: Uh huh. Wrapped up in something and put it in there. He said terrible things like that. They searching all over, but the horses were there in some kind of place, look

like a corral. The horses were there and all their --- they picking out the horse and let them run out through the open there, where the door supposed to be, with the rocks or something. They turn the horses loose. After awhile the ones left there, all this, they were picking out those Indians, not the soldiers, Indians, picking out these Modoc's horses. They divided among themselves to keep for their own. And he pick one palomino horse, and they took it away from him. That was after, you see, war was all over, or slow down.

From there he just stay around there for how many years, he married around there. And he have children by woman, two boys. And he left them there with the women, and come over here. He come over here, and he stay around here. And he got married to their grandma, Jeannie.

PAULINE: Jeannie, oh ---

MARION: Jimmie Louie's mother. They had a girl and a boy. But this Jeannie, girls dead long ago. From Daddy, these people call him Captain Louie. He was the head of these Indians here all his life, till he passed away.

PAULINE: Was the boy, then was ---

MARION: Jimmie Louie was living, the one I married to.

PAULINE: The one you married. Do you remember what year Captain Louie died?

MARION: 1935 --- '34.

MINERVA: 1935.

MARION: 1935, he died. He was pretty old.

MINERVA: I've got a paper out there ... his pictures ---

PAULINE: In the old Burns Times-Herald. Uh huh. I'll look that up, up at the library. I wondered when he died, because I've always heard so much about him, and I never knew whether I'd actually ever seen him or not. Of course he died before I was born.

MARION: Yeah.

PAULINE: But you know how it is when you hear about someone, you feel like you almost knew him. Do you know about how old he was when he came back here to be, and was the Chief of the Indians here?

MARION: He was a growing man, I guess.

PAULINE: He was a grown man.

MARION: 'Cause he was down there all his young life. Then he came over here to Harney County and get married to Jeannie. And

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PAULINE: Was he a tall man?

MARION: No, kinda short old man. We got his picture standing by the tepee.

PAULINE: Uh huh.

MARION: And all his life helping this Indians here, and how to do. And all this town people know him, that he knows that he been in scout for a long time. And he came over here and take care of his people here. And they used to treat him good when Fourth of July come. They --- what's that man's name --- the one man gives him a pig on Fourth of July?

MINERVA: Was it Mr. Hanley?

PAULINE: William Hanley? Bill Hanley.

MINERVA: Yeah, that's the man.

MARION: Yeah, that's --- he real know him, and treat him real good.

PAULINE: And what did they give him on the Fourth of July?

MARION: A pig, a live one so they can butcher it themselves.

SIDE B

PAULINE: They tried to move them three times from here?

MARION: Tried to move these people to someplace, to Klamath or to the West somewhere. And he do not want to be --- leave his country here, where he real belongs. So they gave up. Twice they gets to Klamath Falls, all these Indians, Charlie Ocho and some others from ... tried to, Indian to move them there, and to West somewhere, so they won't go. Him and another head man here, his name was Joe Petty.

PAULINE: Jewel?

MARION: Joe Petty.

PAULINE: Joe Petty.

MARION: Uh huh. Him and Captain Louie, they don't want to go nowhere. 'Cause they want to keep this Harney Valley for their living place, hunt and fish, all that. 'Cause there is a lot of old, any kind of food here to live on. That's why they don't want to move to any other place, and kept this place. Finally they given up their lands here in valley. They got lands, some of them, 160 acres for their land.

PAULINE: I was listening to the tape that you did with Marcus this morning, and you said that you grew up in the Drewsey area.

MARION: Yeah, first town I ever know. Drewsey was the town I know before I knew this Burns and Harney. 'Cause I was around there. My birth ground is where, right north of Nigger Flat, on July 3. When everybody comes here to, fun on the Fourth of July ... we were born twins.

PAULINE: What was your sister's name?

MARION: Mabel Beers.

PAULINE: Mabel Beers. Is she still alive?

MARION: She is dead, 1936. And all her children are, some living, growing.

PAULINE: And your mother was ---

MARION: My mother was Eda ---

PAULINE: Smoke ---

MARION: Eda Smoke, father is Smoke. And Eda Capp when she died. Johnny Capp was her husband. And my father was before. Buckaroo Jim was first husband.

PAULINE: Buckaroo Jim was your father?

MARION: He was our father. Only two of us still living. Not, three of us, three. One is at nursing home, real old lady. She just lay in bed now.

PAULINE: The older man, the Indian man that's living at the nursing home that I see up there ---

MARION: Johnny Jimmy.

PAULINE: Is that ---

MARION: Johnny Jimmy.

PAULINE: Johnny Jimmy. He seems to get around very well still.

MARION: Yeah, he is kind of getting old, kind of nervous.

PAULINE: Would he be able to talk to me, and tell me stories? Is he able to ---

MARION: I don't know what he remembers.

PAULINE: Uh huh.

MARION: You might try some these day.

PAULINE: Well, I've been thinking about it. I visited, you know, just visited with him a little bit when I've been up there to see my grandmother. And he and my little boy talked together once in awhile, when we're up there. But I, you know, sometimes with older people, you don't know whether they'll be able to understand what it is you want them to tell or not.

MARION: That's my old full sister there, laying now in the nursing home now.

PAULINE: What is her name?

MARION: Her name must be Annie Smoke. And this colored guy that you saw him, colored guy there, old man. He claiming that he is her husband, but he is not.

PAULINE: He's not.

MARION: Always talk about ---

PAULINE: Is she older than you?

MARION: That, my sister?

PAULINE: Uh huh, Annie.

MARION: She's great old, I guess. She was the first child. And Davey Jim is the second. He is still living, Davey Jim. Just three of us.

PAULINE: He is not in the nursing home though?

MARION: No.

PAULINE: No. Do I see him?

MARION: Yeah, he walks around, to see his grandchildren, and goes down ---

PAULINE: Yeah, I think I know who he is. I see him walking down the street.

MARION: Most the time you see him around in Tillers.

PAULINE: Well, I'm going to have to go now.

(END OF TAPE)

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