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HIGHLIGHTS:

- Lists the contents of the Lighter Staff Bundle.
- Tells how paint is made.

John: It is May 5, 1968, at the home of John Hellson, Cardston, Alta. Recordist is John Hellson. A Craig tape recorder, speed 3 .

I am interviewing Mr. Joe Gambler, an aged Blood Indian who is going to give information on lodge etiquette of the Blood Indians and the contents of the Lighter Staff Bundle of the Horn Society.

Joe Gambler: The first one that owned it was Far Off Seen. This Far Off Seen had it for quite a time. He was with it for 14 years then he gave it away. It's very old. The one that took, Plume also took it. He had it with him for seven years and that man that is named Old Wolf (Scraping White), he also took it. He had it with him for 10 years. And a man by the name of Bachelor with Supernatural Powers, he had it for 15 years. Okay. And a man by the name of Arrow Feathers, now he has it for 20 years. Okay, me, we took it. We've had it for a number of years. We've had it with us for eight years. The Lighter Staff. Okay, the one, this, this, this snake that we wore around the neck is a snake. It is beaded like a snake and a crescent is attached. It's stitched to its head and its tail, that is the necklace for it.

Okay, the headpiece for it is a plume and the garters are otter skins and then it is the chief staff at the circle encampment

when we set up two tipis together in the centre on. Nobody will light for himself. Everything they're going to smoke the owner will light for them, the burner. That is why it is called the Lighter Staff.

Okay, when they're going to eat, the lunches will just be put inside and the owner of the Lighter Staff will serve the lunch. That Lighter Staff, it is in six generations. That is how old it is now. The Lighter Staff is very old.

Okay, Sniff, the ah, the song to it; I'll sing it. Could it be sung now? I'll sing the song to it, the Lighter Staff. And the cane-shaped staffs, some of them have songs to them. And the Lighter Staff, the song to it is a Horn song and it is separate and the thing to it is sung to it.

"This night is holy. This day is holy." (Words in song)

Okay, this the song to it, the Lighter Staff. That is the way you told me how to tell you a story.

Diane Hellson: Yes. Is that all?

Joe: Okay, I am through telling the story of it.

Diane: When did you own it, the year?

Joe: There is a society that are called the Big Pierced Ears. Those are my friends and that brother of mine, his name is Old Wolf. He owned the Leader's Staff, the one that is called the White Staff. The Big Pierced Ears got together and we all owned the Lighter Staff; that is how I paid on it.

Diane: When did you own it?

Joe: I don't remember the number of years.

Diane: Yes. And what else? How many times have you joined the Horns?

Joe: I have joined them seven times. They're seven. Here the Lighter Staff and there is what is called the Arm Band. The Rider Staff, I had it twice. Then there is what we call the Blackfoot To-and-Fro Rider's Staff. I owned that too. Okay, and there is what is also called the Red Feather In Front. It's a medicine hat.

Okay, and there is another medicine hat. We call it the Quilted Feather. I owned that too. Okay, I also owned a bundle that is also at the back. It's a staff. We all have partners. My partner was Camoose. That's all. That make seven.

Nobody ever owned them that many. Myself, I owned seven of them. People will owned seven of them at the most.

Diane: At noon a man will go in, say that over again.

Joe: A man will go, he will visit the man that he takes for a relative. He will enter his tipi. The man will look at him and he will tell him, "Okay, walk to the back." The man will walk and he will sit on the left-hand side.

Diane: You said east direction.

Joe: It's ah.

Diane: Bee, bee.

Joe: Wait, napo.*

Diane: Yes.

*There is no such word in Blackfoot as Napo. Doesn't make sense.

Joe: Yes, that is the left-hand side.

Diane: Yes.

Joe: And this at the back is the right-hand side. That is where it is. These are puzzled sayings. Okay, then he will say to his wife, "Why are you just sitting there for you have seen him come in." The woman will jump up and she will start cooking for him and after she is through cooking for him then she will serve him. Then he will eat and eat. The man will be a Medicine Pipe owner. He will set his pipe down and the visitor will be humiliated. Like some people will take home their leftovers from their dish. He will tell the man, "I have my fill. I am full. I can't eat any more. Put them in something so I'll take them with me." The man will tell him, "You cannot take your leftovers out. You will count coups and then you will take them out." They count four coups. They'll tell a story of whatever they have gained. He will say, "To take my lunch out, at a certain place I stole a number of horses, and I killed a Cree and in another place I killed." He'll count four coups then he'll be able to go out with his lunch.

Diane: And you said this, "A man will go in and he will be asked, 'Please tell a story about your shield.'"

Joe: Yes, he will tell him that. A person will go in and he will go in. In the past tobacco is very scarce. He will walk there; the man will be sitting there. Then he'll tell him, "Okay, tell me a story about your shield. When it was shot, that is why I can." The man will know that he is desperate for a smoke, so he will put some in.

Diane: Carry on.

Joe: Now I don't know the song.

Diane: You was saying he will tell him, he will say he is

desperate for a smoke.

Joe: Yes, he will be smoking. He will be told by him he will, he will finish smoking. They will finish smoking. "There, there, there, smoke." He'll be full, then he'll go out and as he starts walking away, he'll start walking away and he'll stop and stand there and he will look back at the tipi.

He will be looking back at it and a person will come walking, "What are you looking at?" He'd say, "That there where I came out from, the tipi. I saw where the tipi poles are tied around that there, that." He will see the... He will say, "I saw where the poles are tied around that man. I was just stacking

myself up." This is the, the person, if he gets his fill, he will say, "I saw where his poles are tied around," and immediately he'll say "I was just stacking myself up," because he ate up right to his throat. That is what these are. Then he'll say, "Now I am eagerly looking back at the tipi where I went in. I was filled with what I ate and I was smoking. That is how good I was treated and he gave me some tobacco as I was going home." These are their sayings.

Diane: And when they were asked by him, when they are sitting in there, he was told by him, "Which one do you want to smoke from?" There is an Old Indian word.

Joe: Oh yes. Wait, I am losing some of my words. When a person is aged... Now you people, now you are young. When you are aged, at my age, you will not know your language. You will be talking nonsense. That is what it is like.

Diane: How do you say pipe in the old Indian way?

Joe: What kind of pipe?

Diane: Those.

Joe: That we smoke in?

Diane: That we smoke in.

Joe: They're just called pipes.

Diane: Something you said at noon, what they're called.

Joe: Oh yes. The tobacco pouches are called warmers. I made a mistake at that, I said it crossways when I told you the story. Pipes are kept in a beaded bag. Those are warmers; that is what they are called. I made a mistake. I spoke it crossways when I was telling you the story.

A wise person will listen to it. You will and this... in the way, us, our words are different. The Blackfoot is different, the North, the South Peigan is different. The songs of the Blackfoot are different and here their songs are different, and Montana. We'll sing and maybe the Blackfoots will say, "He

doesn't know the song that he is singing." And Montana, that is how they are. There are some places where we talk different.

Diane: Just the way you people talk the old Indian words.

Joe: I will tell you stories about those. The one that told me stories, his name is Pink Tipi Pole Owner. He tell me mysterious stories. Pink Tipi Pole Owner said, he told me at the river shore, "Look into that lake." I told him, "There is a lake." He said, "Look at it. Is there anything that you see besides it?" I said, "There is nothing else." He said, "It's got grass beside it, in it, all around." I told him, "That is grass." He said, "You don't know how things are." He said, "What you are looking at now, one of your eyes is there, around it." That is a strange story that he told me.

Okay, he also said, he also told me, "That buffalo trail, a buffalo trail, on the side of it there is a crosspiece of a travois. What is it?" I told him, "It's a wood." He said, "No it's not. It's a snake. It's a snake. It's a snake that is lying there, the crosspiece of a travois. There is a snake by that buffalo trail. I just gave it the nickname wood. You are seeing it; it will move it, will not remain there. It will go to a different place." These are the stories that were told to me.

Diane: Okay.

Joe: He said, "Do you see anything on the cut bank that is like a human being?" I told him, "There is someone standing on top." He said, "There is a human being. He is a bachelor. He is standing there with his robe over his head." And if you go to him and it's only a big sage brush what's on top. It's not a being. These are the stories that are told to me. That deceased man is very wise. He officiated everything. He knows the Medicine Pipe songs. He starts them and he also starts the Beaver Bundles and the Big Smoke, and what is called Ghost Dance. He starts them too. He is our wise man, the deceased man. Whoever is going to start something will call him. "I don't want no mistakes. Let me sing just the way you sing." Okay, I will ask him a question. The person that transferred the Beaver Bundle to him, did he think that he sang good?

Diane: You can turn if off he's through.

Joe: I've got a big ochre.

Diane: Wait, there is a real, real, real paint.

Joe: There are some that are called seven paint. There are two kinds that we take from the ground. These seven paints are on rocky places. They're already originally colored and we just scoop them out. The real paint looks like a yellow ochre. We soak them then we'll build a fire and then the ochre is put between two rocks. The rocks will get hot and they'll turn

into real paint.

Diane: Where do you get them?

Joe: It's a long way. We get them at a rocky place at the Swift Current River. It's all real paint.

Diane: You don't... you have to bake them right?

Joe: They're cooked.

Diane: They're cooked.

Joe: Yes.

Diane: Why do you consider the real paint holy, the real paint?

Joe: It's like this. They are included in every holy ceremony. It's all included. Prayers are said with it if a person is receiving a bundle. A song will be sung for the ochre and he'll be made holy with it. He is being made holy with it. If his face is not painted to what is transferred to him, it is not transferred to him.

Diane: Why do you consider them holy? Is that the reason why you consider them holy?

Joe: Yes, that is the reason why we consider them holy and also if a person is in a critical condition he will be treated and doctored with it and he will survive. That is what it is. And there is something that we burn the incense with. They're grass; there are two. We'll burn the incense with these grass and then the ochre is taken and it will be held over the smoke. It will be held over four times and then it will be untied and then we will paint our faces with it. That's what it is.

Diane: And the seven paint, where is it used?

Joe: The seven paint, each one of the Horn members paint their faces individually. They paint their faces with the seven paint. A few owned some.

Diane: Why do you call them a seven paint?

Joe: They are colored like lead. It's glossy when we paint our faces with it.

Diane: What does that mean?

Joe: Well, I don't know, I just hear it this way. They're exposed and the one that showed us said, "These are seven paints." They are not baked. They're on rocky places. We'll just pick them up and put them in a container and we'll go home with them and paint our faces with it. The real paints are very hard. They're cooked; that part is hard.

Diane: Yes, the seven, does that mean seven?

Joe: It's the same.

Diane: I wonder why they're called that? Yes, that way, those, that, uh...

Joe: Well, I don't know that. The ones that are old, I never inquired about that, why they called like that. I never inquired about that.

Diane: Yes.

Joe: These, the seven paint -- when the Horns perform their night ceremony they are painted with it on their faces in the morning and the sun is drawn on them. It is drawn on the seven paint. That is what it is.

Diane: Yes.

Joe: An old man will pick it up. He will hold it like this and on one side he'll draw a cross. This side, he'll draw it. He will also draw, he will like this. Like this half, it will be drawn like this.

Diane: It will be drawn halfway.

Joe: Yes, it will be drawn halfway and this will be just down in a circle and all what they pray with are all drawn on them. They are drawn like this. Here it is drawn in a circle and on the top it is drawn like this and then a dot is drawn here. Those are their prayers.

Diane: What does that mean?

Joe: They make a confession on it before that thing is drawn on. His thieving life. He will say, "Now I have let go of my thieving life."

Diane: What is the meaning of the half and the circle drawings?

Joe: The one that is on top, that is drawn on, it's the sun, the sun of the day. And the one that is drawn like this is the sun of the night. And the one that is cross down, we call that the morning star. That one, towards morning it starts to creep up and it will not be seen at daylight.

Diane: Yes.

Joe: That's what it is.

John: Mr. Joe Gambler has given some additional information on the quarrying and significance and function of real paint and seven paint. End of Recording.

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