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THE OOWEKEENO BAND.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Gives Indian names for certain geographical sites.
- Story of a frog-like creature which can both infect and cure a man.

NOTE: The Oowekeeno band name has a variety of other spellings: Owikeno, Oweekeeno and Oweekano. For the sake of consistency, Oowekeeno has been used to designate the band and the language, while Owikeno refers to the lake found in British Columbia.

Peter: ...but it's below the sun.

David: Oh I see, yeah.

Peter: See, you're looking at it.

Agnes: Oh, like sun beams from the sun.

Peter: Yeah, it's not straight, it's sort of...

David: Curved eh, like a rainbow?

Peter: Yeah, and no, it's sort of...

Agnes: Zigzagged?

Peter: Yeah, something like that. And it's sort of kind of bright, like, see, what you see in a lightning. It's not actually like that but it's something like it. It's sort of, I guess it's some kind of a symbol, you know, something, and he tell... The reason why I said it, your grandfather, we were, I don't know if we were at (inaudible). You remember his house?

Agnes: Yeah.

Peter: That big house? I think we were sitting outside there and we were sitting out there and he looked at the sun and he seen this, and he called his sister, your grand-auntie, told her, "(Indian)." I asked him, "What do you mean?" "That's means (Indian). That's what that means," he said. But there's a place if you go from... That's authentic, there, isn't it? Well, here we are (inaudible). I couldn't tell you.

David: Is there a place in between there where the people used to meet and trade, a big cave?

Peter: Yeah.

David: Whereabouts is that?

Peter: I don't know, it's close to here. It's just, here's where you pull the canoe over somewhere, it's not far from here.

David: The cave?

Peter: The... where we go up sort of rapids and it's a hard little place to go. It's a little, it's just one little place in the river there. You can go up in a canoe like this. And the you only follow one side on the mountain side, and you got to have nothing in the canoe to go up there. Once you pass there you're okay and then you put your stuff in and then you pull right up and you go to... And then that's where you go up and then you pass, get over there with the canoe. You drive it all the way up there right up and over -- it's quite a ways. And above there it's not too far. See, you pass this mountain and then you go -- it's flat. And then not far from there, see, this river on this side of that, what do you call that there? Is there a river there?

David: There's something they call...

Peter: Oh, this one here, yeah. There's a river here right close to the mountains there, and then it's all flat that way, you see. You just goes to this side of the mountain and then there's a trail right there to the... And there's... it's not

actually a cave, it's just a big overhang.

David: Yeah, yeah.

Peter: And that's where the people...

David: Where is it now?

Peter: It's over here somewhere.

David: Oh, it's way on this side?

Peter: Yeah, just towards the lake, more or less... it's not too far, it may be a quarter of the way or something, around there somewhere. And it's just a big overhang like this, it's not a cave.

David: Yeah.

Peter: And, you know, they used to walk over, you know, and they have a big potlatch in (Indian). What's the original name of that place, now? Oh, I guess the original name is (Indian). And that's where... shows you how strong you are, your toes, your fingers and your whole hand like this here. And way up here -- it's quite a ways -- you got to have a long pole. They had to get this guy down on a pole when he's coming down. We couldn't go up there, we tried to cheat, you know. We'd go up the... we had a little stick about this long; try to step on it to get around. That just shows you how strong they were, their fingers and their toes. And it's all marks -- how far some people go.

David: Yeah, yeah, Chris was saying that, yeah.

Peter: And (inaudible) somebody tried it. (laughs) No, we couldn't get by that... it looks so easy where they start, you

know, see the starting place, it's not like this -- it's just smooth and then you get to the crack, not cracks but lumps. He must have strong toes to hold himself up because it's like this, see. See, like that, and then you got to go up here. And it's quite a ways. It must have been all of, I'd say, sixteen to eighteen or something like twenty feet. Well, as long as the pole. They had to use a pole to get him down.

David: Oh, I see.

Peter: Yeah.

David: So he's climbing up like on an angle away from himself?

Peter: No, he's got to climb upside down, he's got to be facing up.

David: Yeah, yeah. It's quite something, eh?

Peter: Yeah, that was quite something. Now if you're going to copy this I might be able to remember things...

David: Well, we'll get it all on one map and then we'll...

Peter: Where's (Indian), now?

David: Right here.

Peter: Now the... it's not very far. You can see the top end of the valley. And lots of frogs there. Your dad and Simon, they thought they were rocks, just big lumps in the shallow, quiet water, you know, just below the slide. (laughs)

Well, you know, they hang together all right and they, you know, it's sort of underwater, jumping from rock to rock. (laughs) They managed to jump on them all right, they were frogs. And you know your dad and Jack, they're scared of that, you know. It's dangerous, you know, the frogs.

David: Why is there so much worry about the frogs? Was there some stories or...

Peter: Well, like my uncle, grand-uncle, the Chief Albert Harry... Which side was his face, was it his left or his right?

Agnes: Gee, I can't even remember.

Peter: There's one side anyway, the frog... This was in Drains when he was a kid, he was in his teens.

David: Oh yeah.

Peter: Went on his, you know, suck on his, suck on this part here.

David: On his ankle?

Peter: Yeah.

David: Yeah.

Peter: And he pulled it off on that, you know, inside of the mouth of the frog, just stick to the skin and they scraped it. That's when it sort of paralyzed one side of his body.

David: Oh, I see. So the word was that a frog might bite you?

Peter: It didn't bite you it just sucks in.

David: Oh yeah. So when they were afraid of them, that's why they were afraid, eh?

Peter: No, no, if it wants to do something to you they do it, like. And he used the same thing to cure himself -- the

frog. He put it on the side that was his face went like this, you know, and he put a frog on here. And he says it tasted ugly, what we call (Indian). Something just like that pepper but it tastes ugly. You know what I mean, (Indian)? Tastes ugly. And the frog is going like this and he have to hold on, the frog is sucking that stuff out, you know, what we call (Indian). And he take it out -- big string just hanging in the mouth of it.

David: Really?

Peter: And he only did it with three, he's supposed to do it with four. And that's why he talks funny when he's drunk. He's all right when he's not drunk. And he used (Indian) on the fourth one, but you know he was all right in the body but his tongue, you know, when he's drinking, that talk kind of funny, you know. Moses was the only one that understood him when he's real drunk. He's all right, you know, when he's not too drunk but when he gets real drunk you can't... But Moses is the only one that understood him, you know. They're always together, you know, drinking. Well, they were together when they were young and they was the craziest guys... (laughs) Yeah, that's why they're scared of, people are scared of, same thing as snake. If it... can't monkey with them...

David: There were lots of frogs up at (Indian), eh?

Peter: Yeah. (Indian).

Agnes: (Indian).

Peter: Yeah, that's the top end.

Agnes: Top end of the valley.

Peter: Yeah, that's where that frogs is. (Indian).

David: It makes a turn here and starts facing west, eh?

Peter: It's just to the mountain, I guess. There's no turn in it, it's just straight up the valley, that was all. It will be only a little ways. You can see the top end of the valley from (Indian).

David: Oh I see, yeah.

Agnes: And what does a (Indian) have to do?

Peter: Well, that means, it refers to the frogs. It doesn't mean, you know, that (Indian), you know, it's just a name for... on account of the frogs.

David: So it was the name of this place where the frogs were?

Peter: Yeah, (Indian). Now we get another name (laughs), but I couldn't explain the word (Indian). It has something to

do with, it's got a story of its own, too, about that (Indian).

David: Yeah, yeah, it has its own story too, eh?

Peter: Yeah, it's got another story to it too. About sasquatch.

David: Oh.

Agnes: What's the name? There's a valley here somewhere... What's his name? He was trying to log there.

Peter: Lot of places, there's names for them but I don't... it might come to me after, you see. Be just like now, you see.

David: Yeah. Well I'll bring you a map and I'll mark on it as much as I can of what we've already got.

Peter: Yeah.

David: And then you can keep it with you and when it comes to you, you can just add to it. And then I can come back and check with you, you know, see what else there is to put on it.

Peter: Yeah, sometimes, you know, I think about things, and then it comes to me. That place up here is (Indian).

Agnes: Whereabouts?

Peter: That big... that's where I was telling you where they hunt goats.

Agnes: Oh yeah.

Peter: (Indian) you know that falls there? Just below this (Indian).

Agnes: Oh yeah.

Peter: You remember that? It's sort of a flat like, valley like, and there's a mountain. They used to hunt bears there during the spring, and they used to hunt mountain goats there, too. Now, you see, I got that now.

David: Where is that now, that's up in here?

Peter: This side of... below that (Indian).

David: Oh, right in here, eh?

Peter: Yeah, see that creek there? Well, that's a falls, like, there. Well, there's sort of a "v" like this way and this way, and that's where they hunt (Indian). You've been up there, have you?

David: Oh yeah, I've been up in this area, yeah.

Peter: All right this (Indian) here, you see this mark here?

David: What, this little creek?

Peter: Yeah. It's not a creek.

David: Is it a waterfall?

Peter: It's a falls. Well, I don't know the Indian name for it, but one of the (inaudible) men called it Maidenhair Falls.

David: Maidenhair, eh?

Peter: Yeah. You know how it is it looks like, long hair, you know, the way it looks.

David: Yeah.

Peter: Jack tried to tell me the name of it, but that was in my teens. One of the (inaudible) called it Maidenhair Falls. Just the way it looks, you know.

David: Yeah, yeah.

Peter: Well, I may find something else sometime.

Agnes: Maybe next time we can do some of the... where some of the mountains are, eh, with the story.

David: Yeah.

Peter: Well, let me think for a while. I've got something else for you here. (Indian).

David: Oh, right here (Indian).

Peter: Yeah. (Indian). But I couldn't explain what it means. (laughs) That is the actual name.

David: (Indian).

Peter: Yeah.

Agnes: Maybe that's where they get (Indian).

Peter: Harry and -- I forget who -- Moses was there, and I forget the other one. And this little fellow was left behind to cook, you know. And they saw a deer on the beach there in that creek. And this little fellow, you know... Well, they were going to shoot it, you see, deer, you know. And this fellow, little fellow, I forget what his name was. I don't know if it was Bobby Green's father or another one; he was small anyway. But certainly he knew when they were getting

close to shooting range, you know. He got up on top of the... Well, they used to just tow a skiff with a sail on, small sail. And one of them had to... Oh, Charlie Edward was the one that had the boat. And they were towing this thing and he was good enough at cooking because it was fish, you know. When they seen this deer on the beach three of them went on a boat, start rowing towards the deer, you know. He gets up on the... he knew they were getting ready, getting close to shooting range and he starts shouting, "(Indian), there's bad people going towards you," you know. The deer, you know, he's like this and he saw these guys on the boat going toward him. And away he went and he went right to the bottom of the lake. His ears are going to pull off. They throw him overboard. (Inaudible) (laughs) You know, them people there, you know, never get mad at each other. They're, you know... You know, they all tease him because he was small, you know -- well, he paid them back, you see. (laughs) Oh, you have to set the back.

Agnes: Oh.

Peter: I don't know what Dr. Ray gave me, I think it's...
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