

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: JOE GAMBLER  
HISTORY OF SHAGGY COVERED  
AND ARAPAHOE MEDICINE PIPE  
AND RING SMOKE CEREMONY  
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: CARDSTON, ALBERTA  
BLOOD RESERVE  
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BLOOD RESERVE  
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INTERVIEWER: J.C. HELLSON  
INTERPRETER: DAVE MELTING TALLOW  
TRANSCRIBER: JOANNE GREENWOOD  
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HIGHLIGHTS:

- Legend of the Shaggy Pipe.
- The Arapahoe Medicine Pipe.
- Big Smoke Dance.

John: Introduction: October 11, 1968, John Hellson's residence. Recorder, John Hellson; recorder, Craig model; speed, 3 3/4; informant, Joe Gambler; subject, variety material covering Medicine Pipes and Big Smoke.

Joe: Is it time for to start telling?

Diane: Go ahead.

Joe: A man loved his wife. He lived with her and the woman had a baby boy. The man's wife died. The man kept the little boy and the little boy was lonesome. The little boy's father was disappointed.

The man went to his relative. He told his relative, "Take care of my boy for a while. I am going after my wife." So he went. He went to the big sand hills. He sat on a hill. He sat on a hill of the big sand hills in the evening. He heard someone inviting him so he went in the direction where the call was coming from. When he got there a voice said from inside, "Why are you standing there? Just come in." So he judged where the

door would be, so he went in.

The voice told him, "Come around this way and sit beside me." So he sat on the bare ground. The voice told him, he sat there. The voice told him, "We will smoke four times and then you will see us." As he sat there the voice told him, "Now look." As he looked, he saw their feet were around in a circle.

He saw the pipe going around slowly; they were smoking. After they had smoked four times, the voice told him, "Now look." And as he looked he was in a huge tipi and people sat all around. The man told him, "You don't have to tell me the reason why you came. I know what you came for." The ghost man told a man, "Go the other side of the camps. His wife is there." The man went and got to the tipi where the woman was staying. His wife came in and told him, "I am just as lonesome as you." His wife walked up to him and kissed him and she sat beside him. Her body was normal, just the way she was when she was still alive. The man told him, "You cannot go home with her now. You will see her now and you'll spend four days here and you will go home with her." And the man told him, "You will eat." A woman came in with something wrapped. It was a pemmican and he was fed with the pemmican. So he ate, and the man told him, "You will smoke, too." So he smoked and the man told him, "You two will sleep on that side." The man told him, "You will not stay with your wife for four nights."

Diane: Keep on talking.

Joe: He told him... the man told, "There is a pipe that is opened now you are chosen for it."

Diane: Keep on talking.

Joe: So he stayed there. Suddenly there was whooping at the tipi. People had surrounded the tipi and they started to pull out the pegs and the tipi was dislodged. The people took all what is inside.

The man was lifted and carried to the place with what he was captured for and he was taken into the tipi, and when he was taken into the tipi the pipe ceremony went into full swing and they had a dance and the pipe was transferred to him. They all... it was all transferred to him. He was told, "The songs for the pipe are also transferred to you will all know them. The tipi that you was captured in and all that was in it are all your payments and their tipi is given to you in the transferal and the beddings and utensils." That is how the pipe is transferred. The man that was captured with the pipe was given the White Nose. The transferal was over and he was given the tipi and beddings. Then he told the man that owned the tipi where he was captured in, "I was captured with your tipi. Now you can have this tipi that is given to me." After the four nights were up, the man told him, "Your wife will pack your pipe on her back. There are four ridges that you will climb and when you stop, sit down facing away from your wife

and she will set up the tripods and she hang your pipe on the tripods and she will sit at your back and don't look at her. On the fourth, you will be sitting on the ridge and your home beyond."

So he started off. He sat down and smoked. He started off again. He could feel his wife walking behind him. When they came up to the fourth ridge, the camps were neat in a circle. A man said, "Somebody run up there and find out who they are." So someone went up to them.

The man told him, before the scout got any closer, "Stop right there. Don't up to me." He told the scout, "Tell my relatives to build a sweat lodge and the sweat lodge is ready, tell them to give me a holler." And when the sweat lodge was completed, he was given a holler; his sweat lodge was ready. His wife packed the pipe on her back again and walked on with it and she laid it on top of the sweat lodge. The woman sat outside at the back. The husband went into the sweat lodge and he had a sweat bath. His tipi was erected while he was having a sweat bath. After his sweat bath the pipe was taken home and it was brought into the tipi and hung up. People feared the pipe because it was a mystic thing. It is called the Shaggy Pipe.

It's all trimmed with feathers. It's not made like the Medicine Pipes. It's all trimmed with feathers.

He had his pipe for a long time then he said, "Now I am going to capture somebody with my pipe. I am going to capture somebody with my pipe. I'll capture that man." So he captured the man. So he... that is how it is done. The tipi and everything is taken.

The recipient made payments on the pipe and he also kept it. After he had kept it for a long time, he also captured a man with it. Now three men had owned it. The fourth man that was captured didn't have it long and the other person owned the pipe. Now four men owned the pipe, the ones that owned it the Indian way, the Indians that owned it.

The fourth man also captured a man with it. The one he captured said, "I will not take it. It's a ghost pipe. I will not take it." The owner told the man, "Don't make any payments on it, just take it." "No, I will not take it." "Yes," the owner told him, "I will have a dance with the pipe and after the dance you can treasure your horses and your property."

So they had a dance with the pipe and after they had danced with it, the pipe was wrapped up and hung up. Night came and it was night again. And the third night, now there are three nights. And on the fourth night as it got dark the man that refused the pipe got itchy all over his body. He got itchy all over and he scratched the place where he got itchy.

As the people of the past are always in anxiety to doctor a person, shamans had gathered all into his tipi. His body had a reddish colour and with pimples. As it got late into the

night, blue feathers started to grow on him, just like a duck. He died when feathers had grown all over him. The people said, "Since it is a bad pipe, we will dispose of it." When the man that cursed with the pipe died, he was buried with the pipe. It is called the Shaggy Pipe.

The pipe wasn't here very long. Four men owned it. The first one was the one that brought it here, and he transferred it to these other men, and they got scared of it and they put a stop to it. If we refuse the pipe the same thing will happen to us. So that is how I made my story brief about this Shaggy Pipe.

The woman died again. The woman died first and she was taken to the burial place with the pipe and later the man died and he was taken to the burial place too. So the pipe went back to the ghosts. This Shaggy Pipe, as it was a dangerous pipe, the men said we should dispose of it. So it was disposed of. So that is how the story was told.

(Information of the Shaggy ended)

Boats Old Man gave me the arm bands and the cowrie shell. They were transferred to me at the house of Akayawa. I paid two horses on them. I got them as a gift in Montana and I paid him the horses. One was a brown mare and the other was a bay horse, also a mare.

I never gave away the arm bands and the cowrie shell, I kept them. There is a boy that is asking for them. I said, "No, I will not give them to you," and they are still at my home. I heard about the reason why the pipe is danced around the camps but I never heard how it got here. What I know is, it will be opened and each one of the participants will be given one bird or an animal pelt and they will dance in a single file. They will dance in a single file. They will dance with them on the outside of the camps. Anybody that wants to dance will join in and there will be a long chain of dancers around the outside of the camps. There is a man that is deceased, his name is Iron Necklace, asked for the pipe and it was transferred to him. He kept it for a length of time and then Yellow Tail Feathers asked for it and he also owned it.

There is a man who is deceased; his name is White Quiver, a Montana Indian. He was a former owner of the pipe. He said, "I will go and get my pipe back." So he also asked for it and it was given back to the South Peigans. Later White Quiver died and a man -- he is the same kind as that white man (John Hellson) -- he said, "I will own the pipe."

The white man that owned the pipe always brings it back every summer to open his pipe and put up a dance with it. The white man, the owner of the pipe, takes the lead in the dance with the pipe and the rest join in. Now the white man that owns the pipe takes the lead in the dance with his pipe. That is how it is danced around with and that is why it is called To Dance Around With (The Arapahoe Pipe) and that white man must be

still keeping that pipe and he believes in the pipe. That is how it is. The owner of a Medicine Pipe will make a full payment for the pipe when it is transferred to him. After it is transferred to him the pipe is his very own and he will make his own judgements on his pipe. When the owner is going to open his pipe, all he does is buy some grub and some tobacco and he will just feed the ones that he invited and he will give them some tobacco too.

The ceremonialist is the only one that is paid and the drummers. At this point the owner of the pipe will not be told what to do. That is his pipe. He will spend anything on his pipe at this point. The only time he'll spend on his pipe is at the time it is transferred to him. The reason why I don't interfere with the plans is because people say he (John Hellson) is going to open his pipe and he will all pay us. He has paid on it when it was transferred to him. Now whenever he (John Hellson) wants to open his pipe all he'll spend on is the grub and tobacco and he'll pay the one that is going to open his pipe and the drummer.

The ones that he invited will dance with the pipe. They will not dance for nothing. They will take out some money and if they want to give it to him (John Hellson) they will give the money to him as a gift. So he will get paid for his pipe; that is how it is. I laugh at people when they say he (John Hellson) is going to open his pipe and we will get paid again. The one that is going to open the pipe cannot tell a Medicine Pipe owner, "You will give me that much money." He will not tell him that. The owner of the pipe will pay whatever he wants.

Now the ones that come and ask for a permission to open the pipe will say, "Give me so many hundred dollars (\$100.00) and I will open your pipe." That is how this is. The only time they pay on a Medicine Pipe is at the time it is transferred to them. When a Medicine Pipe is transferred to the recipients, blankets will be spread out on the ground and around the inside of the Medicine Pipe tipi. The recipients will dance on them; these are dry goods. The one that transferred his pipe will take all what is spread out on the ground. The recipient will pay for being made to get up and dance and he pays for the plumes that are stuck in the ground. He will pay for everything. And incense burning place is colored with real paint on one side and black ochre on the other side. The scraped around is painted the way as the robe. That is how they are. It's not right that a pipe owner to be spending and to be spending all the time on his pipe. There are a lot of these people that are crazier. They ask to be given this and that. People that are going to sing will not ask for anything. They'll not say, "Give me that much money." They cannot say that.

That man (Bob Black Plume) that is really short said to be given one hundred and seventy dollars (\$170.00) and to give so much to his wife and his son to participate. A Medicine Pipe owner will sit by his bundle. He (Bob Black Plume) was saying,

"My son will be doing the gesturing."

Diane: Is that all?

Joe: Yes.

(Information of the Arapahoe Medicine Pipe ended)

Diane: I will ask you a question about the Big Smoke dance and you will give me an answer.

Joe: I will tell him the story of the Ghost Dance that they talk about.

Diane: Yes.

Joe: I know that also.

Diane: Yes, but we will talk about the other subject first.

Joe: Yes.

Diane: What do call it in Blackfoot?

Joe: Big Smoke.

Diane: Big Smoke.

Joe: Yes.

Diane: Why do you put up a dance with it? Why do put up a Big Smoke?

Joe: People will make a vow to it; they think it is holy. A person that is going to die will say, "I will put up a Big Smoke so that I may survive." And he will not be sick very long and he will get better.

Diane: And who are the ones that could participate? Will anyone participate?

Joe: A person that had many sacred bundles transferred to him will participate and a person who didn't got through many transferals will be shy and he will not attend. That is how they are.

Diane: Anybody will not participate?

Joe: A person that didn't have many bundles transferred to him will not participate. Only the ones that participate are the two boys that are orderlies. They give out the pipes for smoking, they burn the incense and they make fire and when it is lunchtime they serve the lunch; that is why they participate. The only one that also participates is the one that cuts the tobacco and gives out the smokes and the one that gives out the pipes. And on the south side there are four persons; they are called Who Laid It Down. And on the opposite side there is a man that counts coups for the tobacco to be

cut. The ones that I mentioned all sang. The only ones that didn't sing are the orderlies and the one that cuts the tobacco, three of them. The rest will all sing. That is how it is.

Diane: Who is the boss?

Joe: There are a lot of people that will officiate them. There is one that officiates them. Wrapped Up (Albert Chief Calf) officiates them, the one that I come in will, and Brown officiates the Ghost Dances and that person who's name is Wolf Old Man (Scraping White) and Skunk (Bob Black Plume). There are four people that are shaman of the Ghost Dance. When people are going to make vows they will say, "One of the four men will officiate my Ghost Dance so that my sick relative may reserve." So he will go to him and he will tell him, "Pray for my child so that he or she may get better. I will treat you very good." That is what it is.

Diane: Why do they call on those four persons?

Joe: Well these four persons are the only ones that will sing the laying down songs in the Big Smokers. That man that sat on the opposite will tell about the four offerings that he made on the article that he made a confession or on the article that offerings were given up to heaven. Now the other man will count four coups about his war exploits for the cutting of the tobacco. This is to cut the pipe. That is what they are. This is a complicated thing. Any ordinary person will not know then and will be unable to sing the songs. The ones that officiate them are very wise to them. That is what it is.

Diane: And the... ah!... the incense burning place that is drawn.

Joe: There won't be anything mysterious about it. The ground will be just scraped and earth will be added to it on top and at one end something will put which is shaped like a pillow and piece of manure will be laid on it. The little pipe is laid on this piece of manure and there is another large piece of manure on which some pipes are laid. When these four men are going to sing, two pipes will be given away. They will pray with them and then they will sing. The other one with a pipe, the ceremonialist, will make the plans. He is the only one that will speak. He will say, "We will sing four songs. We will sing four songs completely and the others will sing three songs." The men that are going to sing three songs will sing twelve songs in three rounds and the men that are going to sing

four songs will sing sixteen songs in four rounds.\* One person will sing sixteen songs; that is how they sing.

Diane: What do you call the tipis that they are going to sit in?

Joe: They will sit in all various kinds of tipis.

Diane: There don't have to be those that are drawn on them, what we call the, the drawings on a tipi?

Joe: Yes, there don't have to be. Big Smokes are held at my house. They have their Big Smokes in any place where they will sit in conveniently as long as there is a stove in the house as we use the hot charcoals for burning the incense. They will not use a place where they cannot have anything to burn the incense.

Diane: Is there another story that you will tell besides?

Joe: I am telling you that I am going to tell some more stories. The one that made the vow and that prepared the berry soup will sit with the ceremonialist; he will sit with him. When the facial painting is about to start the one that made the vow will take his shirt off and he will be painted on the face and body with the ochre. The ceremonialist will look after him. He will take the pipe that is to be handed out first and he will give it to the ceremonialist. The one that made the vow will give a smoke to the ceremonialist and the ceremonialist will pray for him in return for the pipe. The ceremonialist will pray for him in return; that is how they are. Okay, this ah... the one that prepared the berry soup will not sing. He will just be sitting at the back. He will be called the holy sitter; he will be just sitting at the back. The time will come for the first start of the ceremony. After the ceremonialist is through with his facial paintings he will take the rattles and he will rattle them four times and then he will hand them to the four men that sat there. They will be all given each one rattle. The first man will then start. He will be praying; he will not sing. When he gets through praying then he will sing. He will say, "I made an offering at such a place, that is why I sang." He will give his accounts, four tunes. The one that sat next to him will start singing. He will also sing four songs and the man that sat next to the second man will also sing four songs and the one that sat next to the third man will also sing four songs. Then their singing will conclude. The rattle will be returned to the chief of the

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\*A person will sing three songs. He will repeat every song four times over, which will add the three songs to twelve songs. The same with the person that will sing four songs. He will also repeat every song four times over, which will also add up his four songs to sixteen songs in four rounds.

ceremony. He will take the rattles and he will burn the incense again. He will hold the rattles over the incense again and he will rattle over the incense again and he will rattle them again and he will throw them to the participants and he will take the rattle from the four men that sat there who sang first. The four men will sing about what they think is the major sacred bundle that was transferred to them. They will

sing of a sacred bundle that they depend on. That is how the participants will complete their singing in a round. After they will they sing twice. There are eight songs. They'll sing high\* at this point. Then after they will sing of the miscellaneous bundle that were transferred to them like tipis, they first of the Horn Society. Then they will sing of the Medicine Pipes. If a person owns a Beaver Bundle he'll sing of his Water Pipe Bundle. They also sing of their tipi designs and Sundance necklace and hair lock necklace, weasel tail suits and their medicine hats and their All Brave Dog Society. They'll sing all of their miscellaneous bundle that were transferred to them. That is how the singing takes so long.

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\*Singing high means a participant will sing a song of a major sacred bundle that was transferred to him like of a Horn Society bundle, Medicine Pipe Bundle or a Sundance Bundle.

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