

A HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE YAKIMA WAR

(As Told By Alex Saluskin)

By

Catherine Arquette

Yakima Tribal School
School Year: 1988-89
Compiled by: Inez R. Strong

Dedicated to

A L E X S A L U S K I N

"Father" of the Yakima Indian Language

Under the direction of Alex Saluskin, Catherine Arquette, Lena Owens, and Amelia Schappy worked on teaching methods for a course in the Yakima Sahaptin Language. They developed a dictionary, methods of teaching the 39-character alphabet, and principles of grammar.

The language teaching materials were developed with the help of Dr. Bruce Rigsby, an Anthropologist at the University of New Mexico. Dr. Rigsby worked with Mr. Saluskin as early as 1966.

Mr. Saluskin attended a Linguistic Workshop in Spokane to prepare for this task. "The alphabet was an important step in preparing to teach Yakima," he said, "for with it, anyone can learn to read and write the previously unwritten language."

A goal of the teachers was to develop a history in the Yakima language. "The story of the Whitman Massacre should be told from the Indian viewpoint and in the Indian language," he said. He had written an account of the Yakima wars, and Dr. Rigsby had recorded legends and stories of Indian history.

The following is a historical account of the Yakima war as told by Alex Saluskin. This account has been in the possession of Catherine Arquette since that time, so long ago, that she worked with Mr. Saluskin, and it has always been her greatest dream to see this used as a teaching tool for the younger generation. It is a legacy she cherishes. Catherine strongly believes in the "Gift of Giving"--when something is given to you, you give in return. This historical account was a gift given to her by Alex Saluskin, and she, in turn, would like to pass it on to the future generations attending the Yakima Indian Language Class at the Yakima Tribal School.

A Historical Account of the Yakima War (as told by Alex Saluskin)

Miwi payánwiya Aláimama. Panáchika twinpaash. Kw'pénk patxtáimana
Long ago the Frenchmen arrived. They brought guns. Those things
they traded

apáxyau, luts'ayáyau ku yáxayau ku nuksháyau. Táaminwa panáchikxana
for furs, red fox and beaver and otter. They always brought

twinpaash ku taninsh, ktushxi látuxtux. Ku máknash ichi wá
guns and bullets, also powder. And I have, from that time,

látuxtuxpamá anén. Paniyaash ichi inmi paxyáxin. Nápu pawá áyatin.
a powder horn. They, my nieces, gave it to me. Two are women,

Anaktuk iwachá pátuxnat Txápnishpa, Áuxai ku penmink nápu
At this time, there was fighting at Txápnishpa (the slide at
White Swan), Auxai and his two

ishtin, Kwáhlchen ku Púlitkan, ktushxi áyatma, kwnáxi pawachá,
sons, Kwáhlchen and Púlitkan, and the women were there.

Panákwtkwaninxana tkwátat, taninsh ku látuxtux.
They took care of the food, bullets and powder.

Iwachá Tiyamiki anaktuk tl'áaxw Tiinma pausháchikxana piimytuk
It was in the Fall when all the Indians came to the camping places/

nishaiktpamayau. Palalái pawachá Tiinma--Kanáshk't ku penmink
campgrounds. There were many Indians--Kanáshk't and his

miyánashma ku ktushxi áwacha xáima ku taxnutwaima, paxyáxma ku
children and there also were his friends and relatives, aunts and

pítxma. Ku pawachá ttúsh anutaash wiimichan. Tl'áaxw pammán
uncles. And there, more upstream, winterframe longhouses. All over,

palalái pawachá sixsixma Tiinma anaktuk shapashukat iyánauya.
there were lots of good Indian people. Message came.

Miwi pápatiixwaxana ilkwshki. Áwiwacha patiiixwatpama.
Long ago they used to signal each other with fire.
Lots of signalling places.

Pashapáshukanma Tkwáywaichaashpa. Kwnák pawachá palalái Tiinma.
They let them know at Tkwáywaichaashpa. There were a lot of Indian people.

Sháakwen iwanikshana Cayuse Jack. Skáu iwacha awinsh. Nàxsh
His name was Cayuse Jack. He was a brave man. One

winsh iyanawima kw'áalk skw'ipa. Hliikw'i ku xaix iwinama Táalsnik.
man came early in the morning. All day, all night, from The Dalles.

"Au iwáikshamsh palalái stlchas, palalái k'úsima. Ttushmaami áwa
There are a lot of soldiers and lots of horses. And the rest are
kkáatnam meshmeshh. Páish pawá mehl ^{Du tiint dutaaptit.} nàxsh táusen. Ku áwa
long ears (mules). I guess there are one thousand. And they have

ench'inch'i twinpaash. Palalái pawá tkw'anati' ku pantu páish
big guns. There are a lot walking and they say maybe

payánawita métaatipa hlkw'ipa." Íkush inú.
they will be here on the third day." That's what he is saying.

"Áunam áshapashukata Áuxainan ku Tiyáyashnan ku Kanáshk'tnan. Ku
(We must) inform Áuxai and Tiyáyashnan and Kanáshk'tnan. And

uíknik pápashapashukata. Au Tiin Atánamknik ku Semk'íknik ku
from the start they will know. The Indians at Atánam and Semk'i and

Awátamknik miwi kwnák pawáiksh anakwnák áwa nisháikt Shkluumi ku
Awátam. They are already across there at his camp. Shkluumi and

Xananp'inmi ku Watatxanmi. Ku ktúktu nánamta tl'áaxw anamehlmash
Xanan and Watatxa. And hurry to bring all that you have;

wá winánpsh, wiyálpaas ku taninsh ku látuxtux, ku ktushxi anmehlmarsh
weapons, caps, bullets and powder, and bring as many

wá xtúxtuma áyatma ku ench'inch'i amiisma. Ku kwmá panákwtkwaninta
strong women and older boys. And they will take care of

k'úsima ku tkwátat ku tl'áaxw winánpsh. Ku wáshnaa áu kuhláu
horses and food and all weapons. We have only

líiptsimk'a hlkw'i ku ktúk iyanawimta stlchas. Ikwitamsh eshchétpa
two more days and then the soldiers will be here. They are coming from

Táalsknik íchen Asum'eshchétyau. Ku kwinkwink kētu pawínata Áuxai,
The Dalles on this Eel Trail. And therefore, they will hurry (come quick); Áuxai

Kanáshk't ku Tiyáyash. Ku ktúk kwnák paushashuwata piitl'iyawitash.
Kanáshk't and Tiyáyash. And there they will get ready for war.

Pátuxnat iwáta. Chaumishkin kunaa áshapa'ashemta niimiyau tiichámyau.
There will be war. We cannot let them into our land.

Au iyanawisha palalái Páshten. Kúnaa iunépanita niimi tiichám.
There are a lot of White people. And they will take our land.

Áumaa iyatnani aláx niimi Tiinama. Ku kwinkwink cháunan wiyat'ukta.
They have killed lots of our Indians. So therefore, we must not hesitate.

Wayálxwniaa wáta. Kímaa aw pátuwnata. Cháumishkin kunam wiy'aat'ukta.
We must be ready (willing.) We shall fight. We must not hold back (hesitate).

Ámash ktúktu áshapashukank."
So hurry and let them know."

Íchi náxsh xái Saluskenmi áshapashukatana Wápatukshkan anakwnák
One friend of Saluskin went to tell them at Wápatuksh where

panisháikshana Tiyáyash ku Sháwawai ku Kanáshk't ku piimink tl'áaxw
they were living, Tiyáyash and Sháwawai and Kanáshk't and all their

miyánashma, áyatma, ku awinshma. Kúuk pausháshuwana k'úsi. Panák'uka
children, their wives (women) and men. And they were getting the horses
ready. They

xtúxtu k'úsi ka'áuka'au. Ku úiknik pashapáshukana. Páshapawinana
gathered their fast horses. And then they told them. He sent

náxsh winsh, Auxainmiyau nishaiktyau. Íkush Tiin ipapatiixwana.
one man to Auxai's camp. That's the way the Indians signal.

Ku Auxai ku penmink nápu miyánashin awinshin, náxsh áwanikshana
And Auxai and his two sons, one named

Kwáhlchen ku náxsh Púlitkan, ku Auxainmi áyat ku Kwáhlchenmi áyat ku .,
Kwáhlchen and one named Púlitkan, and Auxai's wife and Kwáhlchen's wife and

tl'áaxw awinshma--ku pmák pawá twinpaashi ku wiyálpáasi. Ku
all the men--and those who have guns and caps.. And

áyatma ku amiisma panánama k'úsima ku shapáashapi tkwátat. Íkush
the women and boys brought horses and loaded with food. This is how

Tiin itxálk'uka piitl'iyawityau. Ku pawinama Náxchiishnik ku
the Indians alerted for war. And they came from Naches and

Tkwáiwaiachaashnik ku kúushxi Kawaxchenmaamiknik. Ku niiptipa
Tkáiwaiachaash and also Kawaxchenmaam (Moses Rock Island). And the second

hkw'ipa, ku tl'áaxw pi'itl'iyawihlá iuyánawiya Txápnishyau.
day, all the warriors came to Txápnish (Slide Mountain).

Ku ktuk sts'átpa iuyánawiya Auxai, Tl'áaxw penmink Tiinma
And then at night, they arrived, Auxai. All of his Indian people

pináwapawani anaktushknam pináwapawaxa ichi ikuk Páchwaiwitpa. Ku
were dressed up, the way you dress up now on Sundays. And

ikush áwacha k^{kt} tl'áaxw wapáwani. Ktushxi áyatma. Iwachá
So, too, all of their horses. And so were their women. He

ench'i miyáwax Auxai. Ku ktuk tl'áaxw awinsh anakw'pénk iwachá miwi
was a great chief, Auxai. And all the men who were already

kwnák pináwapawapa ku palst'ána ku Auxainan ku pasunknika. Pawalotáika
dressed up, met Auxai and they paraded around. They sang their

piimink k'úsipama walptáikaash. Anamtn patxaushxa kwnin súnkniktknikt,
song, the horseback parading songs. And when they finished parading around,

ku k'áu patxánana ench'inch'ima awinshma. Papak'una piitl'iyawitki.
(and) the old men gathered together. They counseled about the war.

Áwacha Auxainmi wat'uimá isht wiyáanch'i piitl'iyawitpa.
Auxai's oldest son was a leader (or chief) at war.

Ktuk Auxai isénwiya, "Áu inmima taxnutwaima ku xáima. Áupam
Auxai talked/spoke: "Now my sisters and brothers. Now

shtkanita inmi temná. Inmi miyánash Kwáhlchen ku táaminwa itk'ixsha
you will know my heart. My son, Kwáhlchen has always wanted

áu pawáta Páshtenma shapá'ati niimiknik tiichámknik. Ku kwyáam áunaa
all the White people put out from our country. It is true

ashenwái Páshtenma pakwinisha niimi áyatma miyánashma. Ku ktushxi
the Americans have poorly treated our young women and daughters. And, as well, w

áwa ánach'axi wiyákwstikt. Pa'iyatnanaya áyat ku ayatmiyánash ku
have another wrongdoing. They have killed the wife and his

iksiks ptwani miyánash Mushiilnan. Ichi, ikuk iwá ichna Mushiil. Ku
daughter and the baby in a board of Mushiil. Today he is right here, Mushiil. A

pinátamuna xaimaamiyau ku ktuk pawinanuna kumanák Páshtenmaaman
he told his friends, and then they went to these White people

sts'átpa. Ku pa'ayáxna ku anamtn papntna. Ku ktuk, Mushiil ku nápu
at night and they found them asleep. And then Mushiil and two of

xáyin pa'iyatnana kumanák Páshtenmaaman. Ku ánach'axi iuyánawiya
his friends, they killed those White people. And again this

náxsh ench'i Páshten (Agent Bolen). Kútash kwnémk Páshtenem
one big White man (Agent Bolen) came. And that White man

i'ilk'uka. Íkushtash i'èna, "Áupam wá imák Tiinma wiyakwstikhla threatened us. This is what he said: "You Indians are the wrongdoers

apamku áuyatnasha Páshtenmaaman. Kush mún tóxta inmiyau anakwnák when you killed White people. And when I go back home where

pawá súlchasma, ku kúuknam súlchasnem i'ishuuikta." Ku kwinkwink there are soldiers, and these soldiers will punish." And therefore,

cháupam wiyáat'ukta. Wayálxwnipam wáta. Winápsnhan shix kúta. don't hesitate. You must be willing. Put your weapons in good shape.

Ku áyatma anakwmák pawá ench'inch'i hlmamatú ku miyánash And the women, those who are old, and those with children and

kúushxi xusaatúma ku anakwmák awá chau xtu ku pawáta nákwini those old men, and those who are not strong, they are to be taken

wiyat chénik. Ku kwnák panichta tkwátat ku k'úsi ku winápsnsh. far away from here, and there they will put away food and horses and weapons.

Lá'aknaa kw'aash ikúta súlchasnem. Kúnaa ikwenk wishyát'ata Maybe they will defeat us, the soldiers. Then we can move

kwnakwnák ánach'axi ápatuxnata. Cháunaa namák áwatkwanuuta. Pénk around to place, we may kill again. We will not attack. He

iwátkwnashamsh niimiyau is invading our country. We will get ready. I

ánach'axi mish nátxnata. Áunaa yáanwa iwinanuushamsh súlchasnem will not say anymore. And indeed, we will prepare; the soldiers are coming

niimanák iyatnataash. Ku amatash kiukiulas nákwinitk. Kúnaa to kill us. You bring out the drums. And we

walptáikta. Ku kwmá anakwmák panákwtkwaninta k'úsima ku tkwátat, will sing. And those who are going to watch the horses and food

áu lewit chikúuk kúush pakúta. Chaumishkinaa wáta hlwái. should right now go ahead and do it. We cannot be slow. You

tún nákwtkwaninta shapáktuki." must do this quickly."

Ku chéma áyatma panákwini t'l'áaxwtún anakw'pénk áwacha kwnák And those women took away everything that was there

nisháiktpa mehlaamin Tiinmaami. Ku kúushxi anakwmák panáchika in the village of the Indians. And, as well, those who

tkwátat ku winánpsh ku ktuk panákwinana ikweníkwen anaktshk
stored the food and weapons, then took them different

kw'pénk wiyáanch'i pasapsikw'ana. Ichiyat iwá tiichám miimá iwaníksha
places as he/our leader showed them. This land from long ago was named

Mílmul ku chénik íchini pèt'xanukchan. Kwnák patamawinana pshwánan.
Bubbling Water, and from here to the mountains. There they piled rocks.

Pa'ik'uka anakushtín pèt'xanuk pa'ániya. Ku kwnák asht panícha
And they made them like mountains. And there inside they stored

tkwátat ku wiyálpas ku látuxtux. Kúushxi pa'ániya ánach'axi náxsh
food and caps and powder. As well, they made another one

ts'áa ikwen wánayau anakwísh xwíimichnik anakwnák istópnisha pèt'xanuk.
near to the iver where there are high bluffs.

Kwnák ánach'axi panícha tkwátat, wiyalpaas ku látuxtux.
and there again, they stored food, caps, and powder.

Ku Áuxainmi Tiyayashmi Tiinma paníchatana píimink tkwátat ku
And Áuxai's and Tiyayash's people went to store their food and

tl'áaxw winánpsh Semkw'iyau. Ichnyat anakúsh métaatipa tenxwténxwpa
all their weapons at Simcoe. There, in three different places,

ku kwá patxánana awínshma ku áyatma. Kúmayat awínshma ku áyatma
the men and women waited. Those men and women

panákwinaxana tkwátat ku chíish íkwent anakwnák patxáanuushana
took food and water to there, where they were waiting

súlchasmaaman. Íkushkat pinánakwtkwánina pénk píitl'iyawitpa Tiin.
for the soldiers. In this way, they took care of themselves at war.

(Original typed by Bruce Rigsby, 1/26/71 from notes recorded in 8/67.)
(Retyped by Inez R. Strong, 6/89.)