

REGIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN STORIES & ORAL LITERATURE

Historical Paper No. 25



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Introduction

The following paper provides sources of English translations, as well as some Lushootseed recordings and transcriptions, of the oral literature of Lushootseed speaking Coast Salish peoples of Puget Sound. The literature is described variously as myth, legend, folktale, song and story. However it may be described, it is a significant, but too little known and appreciated, aspect of the culture of the First Peoples of King County and the Puget Sound Region.

The works of Skagit Elder, and Washington State Heritage Treasure, Vi Hilbert that are listed below are especially recommended as providing one of the best introductions to the literature, language and cultural tradition of which she is an integral part. Her works, as well as those of individuals and groups who have worked with her, yield invaluable insights into the ways of the First Peoples, as well as the meanings of the stories themselves. She has been known as “Mother of Her People” by members of many area Tribes, and has been honored, locally, regionally and nationally.

Notes have been added to indicate the intended audience, and the Tribal affiliation of some of the storytellers, when known. The story content of these publications as well as the specific treatment by the editors or transcribers varies widely, from the scholarly to popular, juvenile and primary grade levels. While many of the stories may be enjoyed by youthful readers or listeners, the contents of most of them reflect aspects of the cultural life of the Peoples who tell them. They reflect on matters of religious belief, social structure, life ways and material culture. Even seemingly simple stories may yield significant meanings and should be approached from a respectful appreciation of the storytellers’ backgrounds. Several of the publications listed below provide resources for the contextual study of regional Native American story, legend, myth and folktale.

Among the Tribal affiliations of storytellers represented in these collections of stories are those of Chehalis, Clallam (Klallam or S’Klallam), Duwamish, Lummi, Muckleshoot, Nisqually, Puyallup, Sauk, Skagit, Skokomish, Snohomish, Snoqualmie, Stillaguamish, Suiattle, Suquamish, Swinomish, and Tulalip. It should be noted, however, that while certain stories are recorded only locally from members of these groups, many of the stories often had wider circulation and may be known and told in variants found throughout the region or beyond. *Moon the Transformer*, a story that has been adapted to the Snoqualmie Valley, is a story that is known and told beyond the region. It, like a number of the stories, is interpreted through art, including a sculpture by Dudley Carter at Marymoor County Park near Redmond.

RESOURCES

Adamson, Thelma, *Folk-Tales of the Coast Salish*, 1934, New York, American Folklore Society. For a scholarly to general audience.

Bagley, Clarence, *History of King County Washington*, 1929, Chicago, S.J. Clarke. Volume 1 contains several stories, including “S’Be-ow”, “The Twana Thunderbird”, Legend of the Stick-Pan”, “Legend of the First Frog”, and “Snoqualm and the Blue Jay” on pp. 149-157. For a general audience.

-----, *Indian Myths of the Northwest*, 1930, Seattle, Lowman & Hanford, reprinted, 1971, Seattle, Shorey Bookstore. For a general audience.

Ballard, Arthur C., *Some Tales of the Southern Puget Sound Salish*, University of Washington Publications in Anthropology Vol. 2 No. 3, December, 1927, pp. 57-81. It is also incorporated in the University of Washington Libraries’ *The American Indians of the Pacific Northwest Digital Collection*, on-line at <http://content.lib.washington.edu/aipnw/>. For a scholarly to general audience.

-----, *Mythology of Southern Puget Sound*, University of Washington Publications in Anthropology, Vol. 3 No. 2, December, 1929, pp. 31-150, reprinted, 1999, Snoqualmie Valley Historical Museum, with new material by Kenneth (Greg) Watson. It is also incorporated in the University of Washington Libraries’ *The American Indians of the Pacific Northwest Digital Collection*.

Barr, Clarence and Ernest, *Skunk: A Muckleshoot Legend*, Indian Reading Series, Level 1 Book 19, 1977, Portland, Pacific Northwest Indian Regional Educational Laboratory. For primary grades. Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

Barr, Clarence, *Thunder and Mosquito: A Muckleshoot Legend*, Indian Reading Series, Level 2 Book 2, 1981, Portland, Pacific Northwest Indian Regional Educational Laboratory. For primary grades. Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

Bates, Ann M., *Tulalip History and Culture: Supplemental Class Materials*, ESEA Chapter 2, 1993, Marysville, The Tulalip Tribes and Marysville School District #25. This document includes a series of nine stories told by Raymond Moses, Wayne Williams, Grace Goedel, and Harriet Shelton Dover. Copy on file at 4Culture. For a primary school audience.

Bierwert, Crisca, *Lushootseed Texts: An Introduction to Puget Salish Narrative Aesthetics*, 1996, University of Nebraska Press in association with American Indian Studies Research Institute, University of Indiana. A scholarly treatment in Lushootseed and English.

Bruseth, Nels, *Indian Stories and Legends of the Stillaguamish, Sauks and Allied Tribes*, 1926, Arlington, reprinted 1977, Ye Galleon Press. For a general audience.

Burke Museum, *Native Northwest Coast Storytelling*, Pacific Voices Museum/Classroom Curriculum Project, 1998-99 King County Heritage Cultural Education Grant Project, 2000, Seattle, by the Museum. These curriculum materials include several Puget Sound stories drawn from collections published by Ella Clark and William Shelton. Copy on file at 4Culture.

Carpenter, Cecilia Svinth, ed., *Where the Waters Begin: Traditional Nisqually Indian History of Mount Rainier*, 1994, Seattle Northwest Interpretive Association. For a general audience, edited by a member of the Sequatchew Nisqually Tribe. It contains 22 stories, including those recorded by Wickersham and others.

Clark, Ella E., *Indian Legends of the Pacific Northwest*, 1953, Berkeley, University of California Press. For a general audience. Includes stories from storytellers associated with the Snoqualmie, Snohomish, Puyallup, Nisqually, Skagit, Lummi and Samish.

Coast Area Planning Committee, *Skokomish Baskets and Canoes*, Indian Reading Series, Level IV Book 20, 1981, Portland, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. A tale told by the Skokomish, for primary grades. Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

Cook, Jim, *The Good Hunter and Fisherman*, Indian Reading Series, Level III Book 14, 1978, Portland, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. A tale told by the Jamestown Clallam, for primary grades. Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

Corliss, Margaret McKibben, *Fall City in the Valley of the Moon*, 1972, by the Author. Contains *The Origin of Mount Si and the Forests: An Indian Legend* from an unnamed source. For a general audience.

Costello, James, *The Siwash: Their Life, Legends and Tales*, 1895, Seattle, Calvert Co., reprinted 1974, Everett, The Printers. Despite the unfortunate title, it contains several stories. For a general audience.

Elmendorf, William, *Skokomish and Other Coast Salish Tales*, Washington State University Research Studies 29, 1961, Pullman, Washington State University. A scholarly treatment.

-----, *Twana Narratives: Native Historical Accounts of a Coast Salish Culture*, 1993, Seattle University of Washington Press. A scholarly treatment.

Griffin, Arthur, *Ah Mo: Washington Indian Fables*, 1968, by the Griffin family. In English; but originally recorded in both Chinook Jargon and English by Judge Arthur Griffin, a jurist and an attorney for Puget Sound Tribes, as edited by his great grandson. For a juvenile to general audience.

-----, Griffin, Trenholme, ed., *Ah Mo*, 1990, Hancock House. In English; originally recorded in both Chinook Jargon and English by Judge Arthur Griffin, a jurist and an attorney for Puget Sound Tribes. For a juvenile to general audience.

-----, Griffin, Trenholme, ed., *More Ah Mo*, 1993, Hancock House. In English; originally recorded in both Chinook Jargon and English by Judge Arthur Griffin, a jurist and an attorney for Puget Sound Tribes. For a juvenile to general audience.

Gunther, Erna, "Indian Folk Tales," *Seattle Star*, 1923, a series of 40 folktales. Gunther's versions of many tales also exist in manuscript in the Erna Gunther Papers at the University of Washington Allen Library. Despite some editing error on the part of the newspaper, the collection is useful and the published tales preserve some of the notations of storytellers and/or provenience. For a general audience.

-----, *Klallam Folk Tales*, University of Washington Publications in Anthropology, Vol. 1 No. 4, 1925, Seattle, University of Washington, available in reprint, Coyote Press at www.coyotepress.com.

Haerberlin, Hermann, "Mythology of Puget Sound," *Journal of American Folklore*, 37, 1924. An excellent resource, with some provenience notes. For a scholarly to general audience.

Hess, Thom, *Lushootseed Reader: With Introductory Grammar*, 1995, Missoula, University of Montana Occasional Papers in Linguistics Nos. 11 and 14 (2 vols. with cassettes). For a scholarly audience.

Hilbert, Vi, *Yehaw: Lushootseed Literature in English*, 1979, by the Author, reprinted 1996, Lushootseed Press. An excellent bilingual source book, used by classes at the University of Washington and republished for a general audience.

-----, *Huboo: Lushootseed Literature in English*, 1980, by the Author, reprinted 1996 Lushootseed Press. An excellent bilingual source book, used by classes at the University of Washington and republished for a general audience.

-----, *Haboo: Native American Stories from Puget Sound*, 1985, Seattle University of Washington Press. Excellent bilingual treatment with an introduction and full bibliography.

-----, *A Star Descendant Tells the Story of Her People, Landmarks*, Vol. IV, Nos. 3 and 4, pp 13-14, includes a version of the "Star Husband" tale reprinted from *University Week*, a University of Washington Staff publication. For a general audience.

-----, *Coyote and Rock*, audio cassette recording, 1992, Parabola Books and Harper Collins.

-----, *Loon and Deer Were Traveling: A Story of the Upper Skagit of Puget Sound*, 1992, Chicago, Children's Press. For children.

-----, "Gram" Ruth Sehome Shelton: *The Wisdom of a Tulalip Elder*, 1995, Seattle, Lushootseed Press. Includes the story *Mink and Whale*. For a general audience.

-----, *Aunt Susie Sampson Peter: The Wisdom of a Skagit Elder*, 1995, Seattle, Lushootseed Press. Includes the *Starchild* story. For a general audience.

-----, *The Cedar and the Salmon*, audio recording with transcription on-line at www.turtleislandstorytellers.net/tis_washington.html.

Hilbert, Vi and Crisca Bierwert Russell, et al., *Sharing Legends at Upper Skagit*, video recording, 1985, Seattle, Lushootseed Research. For a general audience.

Hilbert, Vi and Zalmai Zahir, transcribers, *A Grandmother's History of the First People* (Grandmother's Video Project), 2002, Seattle, Lushootseed Research. This is the companion transcription to a set of four videotapes. Copies on file at 4culture. Stories are told by Hilbert and Zahir. For a general to scholarly audience.

Horsley, David, *Lunar Monitions, Lessons and Laws*, 1992, by the Author. Synthesizes the various regional stories of Transformer and recasts them into an epic myth cycle. The author has worked with the Snoqualmie Tribe. For a general audience.

Indian Women's Service League, *Indian Legends*, Seattle n.d. For a general audience. Contains both Puget Sound and non-regional stories.

Jacobs, Melville, *Texts in Chinook Jargon*, University of Washington Publications in Anthropology, 1936, Seattle, University of Washington. Contains a text by Jack Stillman, a Snoqualmie, "Chipmunk and His Mother." In English and Chinook. For a general to scholarly audience.

Jennings, Kate, prod./dir., *Huchoosedah: Traditions of the Heart*, video recording, 1995, Seattle, KCTS Television & BBC Wales. A feature of the video is discussion by and about Vi Hilbert. For a general audience.

Jerry, Eva, *Basket Woman*, Indian Reading Series, Level IV Book 3, 1981, Portland, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. A tale told by the Muckleshoot, for primary grades.

Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

Matson, Emerson, *Longhouse Legends*, 1968, Camden (NJ) Thomas Nelson & Sons. Includes stories as told by Chief William Shelton, a photograph of whom appears as the frontispiece. For a general audience.

-----, *Legends of the Great Chiefs*, 1972, Tacoma, Storypole Press. Includes tales from Paul Leschi, William Shelton and Martin J. Sampson. For a general audience.

Miller, Bruce, *The Great Flood*, Indian Reading Series, Level II Book 9, 1978, Portland, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. A tale told by the Skokomish, for primary grades.

Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

-----, *The Man Who Loved Shell Money*, Indian Reading Series, Level III Book 17, 1978, Portland, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. A tale told by the Skokomish, for primary grades. Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

Miller, Emily, *Raven Helps the Indians*, Indian Reading Series, Level I Book 20, 1977, Portland, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. A tale told by the Skokomish, for primary grades.

Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

-----, *How Daylight Came to Be*, Indian Reading Series, Level I Book 17, 1978, Portland, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. A tale told by the Skokomish, for primary grades.

Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

Miller, Georgia, *Why Bluejay Hops*, Indian Reading Series, Level I Book 6, 1977, Portland, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. A tale told by the Skokomish, for primary grades.

Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

-----, *Why the Codfish Has a Red Face*, Indian Reading Series, Level II Book 3, 1978, Portland, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. A tale told by the Skokomish, for primary grades.

Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

Muckleshoot Curriculum Committee, *Tsapah Talks of Pheasant*, Indian Reading Series, Level VI Story 1, 1982, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. A tale told by the Muckleshoot, for primary grades. Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

Muckleshoot Curriculum Committee, *Moon*, Indian Reading Series, Level VI Story 2, 1982, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. A tale told by the Muckleshoot, for primary grades. Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

Niatum, Duane and Linda Rickman, writers, Leighanne Harris and Willard Bill, eds., *The History and Culture of the Indians of Washington State – A Curriculum Guide*, 1990, Olympia, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. See especially the chapter “Legends and Stories,” pp. 30-63. For a primary school audience.

Noel, Patricia, ed., *North Wind and Storm Wind: An Indian Legend*, 1980, Auburn, Auburn School District. For primary school students.

-----, *Moon the Transformer: An Indian Legend*, 1980, Auburn, Auburn School District. For primary school students.

-----, *Indian Legends for the Classroom*, 1980, Auburn, Auburn School District. For primary school students.

Payton, Charles, *Index of Indian Folktales by Erna Gunther*. Copy on file at 4Culture. An index to the 40 folktales published by Gunther in the *Seattle Star* newspaper in 1923, together with some background and analysis. For a general to scholarly audience.

Sampson, Martin, *Indians of Skagit County*, 1972, Mount Vernon, Skagit County Historical Society. Includes several stories. For a general audience.

-----, *The Swinomish Totem Pole, Tribal Legends, as Told to Rosalie Whitney*, 1938, Bellingham, Union Printing. For a general audience, by a Chief of the Swinomish.

Shelton, William, 1923, *The Story of the Totem Pole: Early Indian Legends as Handed Down from Generation to Generation*, 1932, Everett, Kane & Harcus. For a general audience, as told by a Chief of the Tulalip Tribes.

Simms, Laura, “A Voiceless Blowing Sound: An Interview with Vi Hilbert,” *Parabola*, Fall 2000, pp. 65-73.

Skokomish Tribe, *Sun’s Daughter*, Indian Reading Series, Level VI Story 12, 1982, Portland, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. A tale told by the Skokomish, for primary grades. Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

Skokomish Tribe, *In the Land of the Salmon*, Indian Reading Series, Level VI Story 13, 1982, Portland, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. A tale told by the Skokomish, for primary grades. Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

Snyder, Warren A., *Southern Puget Sound Salish: Texts, Place Names and Dictionary*, Fall 1968, Sacramento, Sacramento Anthropological Society. Includes seventeen tales, including those told by Jerry Kanim, Lucy Mulholland and Amelia Sneatlum. For a scholarly audience.

Spenser, Robert E., prod. / dir., *Stories from the Muckleshoot*, video recording, 1988, Seattle, King County Library System Media Services.

Suquamish Tribe of the Port Madison Reservation, *Snail Woman at Sqza'le*, Indian Reading Series, Level IV Book 2, 1981, Portland, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. A tale told by the Suquamish, for primary grades. Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

Ten Wolves Publishing, *Kwiat Syaya: Sacred Friendships*, Vol. 1, Bremerton, Ten Wolves. This compact disk recording features Vi Hilbert. See <http://10wolves.com/wb/>.

-----, *Kwiat Syaya: Journey on the River*, Vol. 2, Bremerton, Ten Wolves, This compact disk recording features Vi Hilbert. See <http://10wolves.com/wb/>. For a general audience.

-----, *From the Time of Our Ancestors*, Vols. 1 & 2, Bremerton, Ten Wolves. This compact disk recording features Skokomish Tribal member Bruce Miller and the group ShabB3sh. See <http://10wolves.com/wb/>. For a general audience.

-----, *When Humans Thought They Were People*, Bremerton, Ten Wolves. This compact disk recording features Vi Hilbert and Johnny Moses. See <http://10wolves.com/wb/>. For a general audience.

Wilbur, Ollie, *Blue Jay – Star Child*, Indian Reading Series, Level IV Book 3, 1981, Portland, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. A tale told by the Muckleshoot, for primary grades. Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

Williams, Charlotte, Muckleshoot Curriculum Committee, *A Fishing Excursion*, Indian Reading Series, Level V Book 8, 1981, Portland, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. A tale told by the Muckleshoot, for primary grades. Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

Williams, Elizabeth, Muckleshoot Curriculum Committee, *Stories of an Indian Boy*, Indian Reading Series, Level V Book 18, 1981, Portland, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. A tale told by the Muckleshoot, for primary grades. Document on-line at www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/.

On-Line Resources

American Indians of the Pacific Northwest Digital Collection / University of Washington Libraries

<http://content.lib.washington.edu/aipnw/>

EldrBarry's Raven Tales (includes several stories by Vi Hilbert)

www.eldrbarry.net/rabb/rvn/rvn.htm

Lushootseed Language Network

www.lushootseed.net

Indian Reading Series / Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

www.nwrel.org/indianed/indianreading/

Vi Hilbert & Northwest Stories

www.kstrom.net/isk/stories/NWmyths.html

Tulalip Cultural Resources Stories / Lady Louse Tale told by Lizzie Krise

www.tttculturalresources.org/language/stories.asp

Tulalip Elementary School (Lushootseed Language and culture, including 9 stories told by Martha Lamont, William Shelton, Agnes James, Charley Anderson, Susie Sampson Peter, and Lizzie Krise)

www.msvl.k12.wa.us/elementary/tulalip/home.asp

Turtle Island Storytellers Network Washington Storytellers

www.turtleislandstorytellers.net/tis_washington.html

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