

90-06-284_SIDE_A

Elders in Residence Collection. Jimmie and Mabel Toolie are interviewed in Fairbanks, Alaska.

Keywords: Folklore: marriage story, crow story, polar bear story, good runners, making kids strong, earning reindeer, basketball, a broken leg, trading coats and mukluks, hats, walrus hide, skin boats, blubber, traditional healing, sickness and health of population

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Summarized by: Cecilie R. Ebsen

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Length of recording A: 00.47.16

Length of recording B: 00.35.02

Jimmie Toolie

00:00:53.65

Jimmie learned stories from the old people and he would like to share some of them with the class. One time his grandmother asked him to come to the beach and to bring a stick. A knife cut down the middle of the stick and he walked on. He asks where his stick is [Not really clear what the meaning is here, he is translating directly from Siberian Yup'ik]. He found a fishtail that they call mukluk, even though other people use that word for boats. He cut it in the middle and ate it. Then he walked on. He found a walrus with big tusk. He cut it down the middle and he ate it. Then he walked on. He found a beluga [whale?]. He cut it and ate it. Then he walked again. He found a big wheel [whale?]. He cut it in the middle again and swallowed it. Then it was time to go home. When he got to his house he called his grandmother. She asked him to come in her house, but he could not enter because he was so big. He tried to fit in a hole, but he was too big. The grandmother asked him to lie outside the door.

Jimmie Toolie

00:11:59.80

He brought some caribou home and cut and dried the meat. The next day they saw a man coming to the beach. They had never seen him before. They gave him some meat. A few days later five boys came and they all feasted. The girls wanted to take the boys as their husbands. Those couples had babies who would get married when they grew up.

Jimmie Toolie

00:16:23.54

[Translates a story for his wife Mabel] It is a story about a crow and a raven and which one is the bigger bird.

Students

00:20:32.44

Asks Jimmie if he has any bear stories?

Jimmie Toolie

00:21:15.32

When a man saw a polar bear he went after it right away. When the man tried to kill the polar bear it tried to leave. The bear said he should probably go home. The polar bear said that if he went home, the man would see all his brothers. He should not be scared because they won't bite him. So the man followed the bear. They saw lots of polar bears coming towards them. The bear told the man not to be scared. They all looked at the man, but they didn't scare each other. The man stayed with the bears in a tent. He got polar bear skin and he took a polar bear wife [correct interpretation?]. An older polar bear told a story of a man that had two legs and was dangerous because he killed polar bears. The polar bear tried to kill the man, but he couldn't catch him. They got tired and lied down.

Jimmie Toolie

00:26:56.46

On the fourth of July, when Jimmie was a little boy, two men played with spears. One got hit with a spear with his neck down. They were playing. [Not clear if someone was hurt or if there was some other point to this story].

Jimmie Toolie

00:29:36.31

They watch the young boys to see if they can become good runners. They make them exercise for days to test their skills. One time a boy told Jimmie he was stupid, because he wasn't very strong. So Jimmie started exercising and became strong.

Jimmie Toolie

00:33:15.01

A man named Unaro [sp.?] was the best runner Jimmie has ever known. [Talks some more about running]

Jimmie Toolie

00:43:04.10

Exercise is called Olappa [sp?]

Jimmie Toolie

00:44:34.79

Boys come from Savoonga to Gambell to play basketball. One time his grandson was playing basketball and another boy hit him so he fell down and broke his leg. His boy Marty is a good player.

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Jimmie Toolie

00:00:49.97

Jimmie talks about how Siberian Eskimos would come in boats to Gambell to trade. They wanted walrus hide and gave deer skin in return.

Jimmie Toolie

00:02:40.04

Female walrus hide is best for skin boats while other hides are used for houses.

Jimmie Toolie

00:03:05.13

Hunters never sleep when they go hunting. The young boys fall asleep and they are yelled at to wake up.

Jimmie Toolie

00:04:21.18

They bring dry meat to eat while they hunt.

Jimmie Toolie

00:05:21.92

Jimmie explains the Yup'ik names for walrus hide and walrus meat.

Students

00:06:29.68

A student asks how much oil one seal gives.

Jimmie Toolie

00:06:52.59

Jimmie says that it is a lot [does not give quantities]

Students

00:08:22.52

Who was the doctor in the village?

Jimmie Toolie

00:08:33.76

There were no doctors.

Teacher (Theresa John)

00:11:11.11

There are different types of blood that are good for curing different things and there are people who handle those kinds of cures in the village. This is called bleeding.

Students

00:13:12.71

Is there much sickness? Have Jimmie ever been sick?

Jimmie Toolie

00:13:26.95

Yes he has. His appendix [correct interpretation?] and his eye.

Jimmie Toolie

00:14:43.76

Jimmie knew one man who was a good friend. A man, named Theodor, living 20 miles from Savoonga. A man wanted to walk to Savoonga and Theodor wanted to walk with him. But the man wanted to walk alone. Theodor knew a good way to go. [This story is not clear in meaning]. It was the same when Theodor went flying.

Jimmie Toolie

00:19:49.44

Jimmie talks about Eskimo dancing.

Teacher (Theresa John)

00:21:38.00

A long time ago, who helped the women when they had babies?

Mabel Toolie

00:21:47.11

Some ladies helped. Mabel didn't help though. When she had her youngest she almost died from blood loss.

Jimmie Toolie

00:22:38.08

She was very sick. There was a nurse who didn't sleep for three days. She watched Mabel the whole time. The army gave her some blood. It was a Russian pilot who dropped it of.

Students

00:23:58.74

Would Mabel have had more kids if it didn't happen?

Mabel Toolie

00:24:11.58

No, that was enough.

Jimmie Toolie

00:25:47.89

They have six boys and three girls.

Students

00:28:24.62

Asks if they like a rock'n'roll song?

Jimmie Toolie

00:28:39.14

Jimmie does. [He sings a Yup'ik song, not clear if this is the rock'n'roll song, but it does include those words]

Jimmie Toolie

00:32:55.65

IF boys cried they where punished.

Teacher (Theresa John)

00:33:12.07

Did they punish the girls too?

Mabel Toolie

00:33:23.81

They would make them stay home all day. That was their punishment.