

IOWAY-OTOE personal narratives

Wórage -- Wékaⁿ

Wórage are stories of the People, that have occurred in a known time period and are based on historical facts. On occasion, a spiritual intercession and/ or aid is rendered by the Spirit World. Such stories have a novelistic style. They record local accounts of tribal or personal events, as seen in “Hiⁿkúñi (My Grandmother)”, and to recall the immediate past way of life, to inform and entertain one who has not heard the story. These *Wórage* may be told at anytime, not being restricted to the Autumn and Winter Seasons, as is the case with *Wéka*ⁿ.

*Wéka*ⁿ concern the distant past. The characters and heroes are holy immortal beings, although they may be killed temporarily. Some of these beings take on an appearance of human beings, who are also holy, as seen by their ability to communicate with animals. Some of these *wéka*ⁿ are sad, tragic, even brutal, but the majority are quite comical and all are quite entertaining having universal appeal to listeners of all ages. All *wéka*ⁿ end with the phrase: “*Aré gahéda hagú ke* (That’s when I started back [home])” These stories may only be told during the winter.

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Julia Small (Wa^p^sígeChéMi: Buffalo Person Woman) was Otoe-Missouria (Buffalo Clan)¹ married to a member of the Sac & Fox Nation of Missouri Band in Kansas & Nebraska, who in turn, was adopted into the Ioway Wolf Clan. Her husband, Robert Small (Kapâkechi= Sac Clan Name; MáñiHú= Wolf Clan Name), was a fluent speaker of Báxoje (Ioway language), and his own Sac language, as well as English. Julia did not speak English; she spoke only Jiwére - Ñút^achi (Otoe - Missouria language). As such, she spoke the language in a classical style of former days. In terms of literary standards, she exemplifies the fine narrative skills of the older monolingual speakers, who accentuated proper grammatical form with syntax variation to provide an eventful and explicit view of life from the traditional Báxoje-Jiwére-Ñút^achi perspective.

In classic Báxoje-Jiwére language, speech was customarily compounded and integrated into a single complex, as is evidenced in her excellent narration. Subsequent generations have tended to speak in a more simplified version of the language, with an ever more frequent use of English for most occasions, as was stressed to them in the government and missionary boarding school education.

Julia Small had spent most of her life among the Ioway near Perkins, Oklahoma. In 1936, when she told the following story of her grandmother (“Hinkúñi”), she was the last survivor of the Ioway Medicine Lodge. The story was dictated by her to Gordon Marsh, who dutifully transcribed it, and translated into English with the assistance of her husband, Robert Small.

This current transcription and retranslation with notes is taken from Julia Small’s original oral *Jiwére* dictated text in 1936 to Gordon Marsh. It is written in the current orthography being utilized for other text publications and manuscripts for contemporary use. The native narration style is kept in both the Otoe-Missouria and English texts by the retaining frequent introductory terms, sentence repetitions and custom evidential statements (“it seems,” “they said”). At the risk of burdening the reader with unnecessary verbage, it is hoped that a more accurate insight for the traditional oral rendering will be achieved. The story is formatted with indented lines to suggest the original oral rhythm of the narration.

¹ One Ioway Otoe member (RMJ) stated that Julia Small was of Owl Clan, as she had named her children, giving them “Owl Clan names”. This cannot be affirmed, however, there are known exceptions to the tradition of bestowing only the Clan names of one’s own clan, when elders of one Clan were asked to name members of another Clan, such as occurred for the individual above.

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Hiⁿkúñi

Watóhta págraⁿda gixrárañáshguⁿ.² Čhé kújarañáshguⁿ.³
Hiⁿkúñi miⁿtáwe hiⁿka ihúⁿ aré, Lhimiⁿiñeda wáruxašguⁿ.
Gixráⁿ wóyoge-ráwašguⁿ.⁴

Igráⁿ gratógre, nahéshge wogíshigu jínàñena wahíreñañe ki.⁵

T^ámàñiñañe⁶ ki. Ídare háhda agúñañe ki.

Hiⁿkúñi miⁿtáwe wáñe gratógre wahírewañe ki. Ná
waríthruⁿhuⁿ šhúñe, k^íⁿhiñena aré uyáⁿwáshguⁿ.

K^ówe xáⁿje ída agríñañe háhda agúñegi.

Wahíre íbúdharé t^áñáshguⁿ.

Náyiⁿjirána⁷ t^áⁿwena k^óweda ní újeráshguⁿ. K^ówe
uwárana ní níñáshguⁿ.

Ídare šhuⁿkéñi wakípa, é ki. “Dókeñe. Hiⁿ:: Ní irógreñe ga.

Píhi uwárašguⁿ. Aré ída ñúyu náñáshguⁿ.

Ídare hiⁿkúñi ída híašguⁿ. Ída hína ut^áⁿwáshguⁿ. Ní
ráhdáshguⁿ. Ní gíhdó ráhdáshguⁿ. Ídare ní ródadayáⁿshguⁿ.

Ídare háⁿwe thréje ní ródadayáⁿshguⁿ.

My Grandmother

The Otoes at the first went out hunting, it seems. They went to shoot buffalo, it seems. My grandmother, my father's mother, married when she was a girl, it seems. They joined the hunt, it seems.

She and her husband went with them when suddenly disease came and set in, and they were sick, they say.⁸

They were walking (as) dead, they said. And then, they (*decided to*) to come back, they said.

My grandmother (of) mine, her man together with him those two were sick, they say. Pulling poles the horses were and it is (*that*) they lay between them⁹, it seems.

They arrived at a big creek, they said, after they had started back.

The sick (*people*) they died of thirst, it seems.

She got up and started for the creek to go look for water, it seems. She went along the creek, (*but*) there was no water, it seems.

She met some dogs, she said. “They are wet. Well, they must have discovered some water.”

Again (*in turn*), she found it, it seems. And there, there was a pool of water, it seems.

And then, my grandmother got there, it seems. She arrived there, and jumped in, it seems. She drank water, it seems. She drank a lot of water, it seems. And then, she laid down in the water, it seems.

And then, all day she laid in the water, it seems.

² gixráⁿ (hunt) + ré (go) + ñe (they all) + áshguⁿ (it seems; it is said) It indicates a past action, that was heard about, but not witnessed.)

³ kúje (shoot) + ré + ñe + áshguⁿ.

⁴ w(a) >o (them) + uyúge (join together) + ré + wi (they two) + áshguⁿ.

⁵ ...gra (her own one) + tógre (together with)...jí (arrives) + nañe (sitting) + na (and); wahíre (be ill) + ñe + áñe (they say) + ki (Female ending to sentence).

⁶ t^á (dead) + máñi (walk) + ñe + áñe; ...[a + gu (start back) + ñe = (they start back)] + ñe + áñe.

⁷ náyiⁿ (standing up) + jí (arrive) + ré + na.

⁸ Most likely this was the small pox epidemic around the 1830's.

⁹ A travois.

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Ídare bí kúyidàⁿna^e ñuhíñašhguⁿ. Ídare gú nahéshge bróge gíxraⁿ agráñašhguⁿ. Ídare agráñechi dagúñiñe.

Ídare ída yáⁿšhguⁿ. Ída yáⁿna hérodagi gúàšhguⁿ.

Gú nahéshge Lhí réxrigé aré ída gríàšhguⁿ. Hérodagi agráñe hiⁿkúñi ída gríàšhguⁿ.

Jégixe uLhíñašhguⁿ. Dák^o šhóje hiádadañe nahéshge waⁿšhíge t^áñe. Ná jégixe épona hiáwawañe. Aré waⁿšhíge t^áñe aré wegrúhkijeñàšhguⁿ.¹⁰

Hédare hiⁿkúñi wádàšhguⁿ. Nahéshge tá wéhayiñe šhúⁿ tá ^šhúⁿ warúje dagúre nahé^šhuⁿ wagíwaxuⁿñe.

Ídare hiⁿkúñi wárudhàšhguⁿ warúje. Aréda warúje wak^íⁿna gúàšhguⁿ.

Gúnaṇa sigé Lhí réxrigé šhigéda gríàšhguⁿ. Waⁿšhíge t^áñe róhaⁿ Lh^àšhguⁿ.¹¹

Ídare gáreda ñiyuxòjena ídare mánuñàšhguⁿ. Wéñigreráshguⁿ. Máyaⁿ woLhéxi aré uwáshguⁿ.

Ídare warúje wégra^edhe xráñàšhguⁿ^e. Máñi graháshguⁿ.

Wayére^i wáⁿàšhguⁿ ^e. Hiⁿkúñi aré íródaⁿwe ré nahé^shguⁿ dagúhñiñe.

“Taⁿdá wanahék^are.” iráshguⁿ. Ashgíwèxa gíwaⁿ naháshguⁿ.

Ádare adáshguⁿ^e. Mató éwa náñàšhguⁿ. Hiⁿkuñi: “Járe éwa Lh^émi hñe ga.” ánahéške, hiⁿkúñi.

Mató náñe éwana.

“Hiñégo, Lh^éri šhkúñi hñe ke, Hiⁿyúñe.” é^àshguⁿ.

And then, about sundown, she got out of the water, it

¹⁰ w(a) >e (them) + gra (own ones) + (r)uhkije (tie something on) + ñe (they) + áshguⁿ (it seems).

¹¹ ch^e (die) + ásguⁿ. NOTE: 3pp = t^áñe (they die/ died).

seems. And then, she started back, when lo! All the hunt(ing party), they had went back home, it seems. And so, because they had went home, there was nothing.

And so, she lay down there, it seems. She stayed there and the next morning, she started out, it seems.

She started out and lo! She came to a camp site where they had stayed, it seems. In the morning, they had gone, (when) when my grandmother arrived there, it seems.

They camped by a lake, it seems. The fire smoked here and there, and lo! people had died. Trees were leaning out all along the lake. The people who had died, they tied their own ones on them, it seems.

And then it is, my grandmother saw them, it seems. And lo, there was dried meat, even meat, whatever food indeed, (that) they had poured out (sacrificed) for them (the dead).

And then, my grandmother took some, it seems, the food. It is then, she packed up the food and she started out, it seems.

She started and again she came to a camping site, it seems. People had died, a lot had died, it seems.

At that time it was foggy, and she got lost, it seems. She went wandering, it seems. The country was difficult that she came came through, it seems.

So then, she ate up all her food; she was hungry, it seems. She kept on going along towards home, it seems.

Someone, indeed, it called to her, it seems. My grandmother went toward it, nevertheless there was nothing.

“Where is it from,” she thought, it seems. The one calling was extremely close, it seems.

And then she saw it, apparently. A grizzly bear sitting down (there) was the one (saying it), it seems. My grandmother saying: “This is the one (that’s) surely to kill me.”

The Grizzly Bear was sitting there, she was saying.

“No, I will not kill you, my daughter,” he said, it seems.

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“Ho: Lhína taⁿdá waráhušhge¹² ída árigrañagri¹³ hñe ke.”

“Ho!, the town wherever you come from, I’m going to take you back.”

“Ho, Aré ríre rigráwaⁿ ke; hawáⁿ nahé^e. Ahó: Hiⁿyúne tórigi raLh^éda máyaⁿ jégi ígyuwaragri¹⁴ hñe ke.”

“Ho! It was you, I was calling to you, when I called. My Daughter, in the future when you die, you will come back to this country right here.

Ráñi híⁿna šhóje jirára híⁿ mínàšhguⁿ.

He was smoking tobacco and the smoke went up now and again (*as*) he sat puffing, it seems.

“Ho: **úⁿgraxre¹⁵ re.** Chína ritáwe ída híⁿgrí hñe ke,” éašhguⁿ. Náyiⁿ jirána máñi, gráshguⁿ. Ídare híⁿkúñi uxrégráshguⁿ. Arédare inúⁿ máñi gráshguⁿ ^a.

“**Ho! You follow me (your own one).** We will arrive back to your town,” he said, it seems. He got up and started walking back home, it seems. And then, my grandmother, she followed him, going back home, it seems. It was then, she walked with him, going back home, it seems.

Hiⁿkúñi x^áñiñe šhkúñáshguⁿ. Mató éwa^úⁿLhi.

My grandmother wasn’t tired, it seems. Because the grizzly bear was the one who caused this.

Xráñi šhkúñina ní gihdó ráhda šhkuñáshguⁿ. Ádare mató éwa^wáshguⁿ.¹⁶ Ídare náyiⁿna ugíLh^áshguⁿ.

She was not hungry nor drank a lot of water, it seems. It was the grizzly, he was the one who did it, it seems. And then, he stood up and it talked to her, it seems.

“**Ho: Hinyúñe,** gixráⁿ ná^uⁿ góshi hañaré ke. Aré uráweda ída ragrí hñe ke.”

“**Now, My Daughter,** there is the hunting path right over there (*that they are traveling on*). When you follow it, you will arrive back home there.

“Ho: Nat^úrigradaⁿ ke, Hiⁿyúñe. Aré waⁿshíge t^áñe ná^uⁿ uwáñe ke. Wiraweda ho, rígratogregi.”

“Now then, I take pity on you, My Daughter. There are (*some*) people (*who*) have died (*and*) they are going along the road. You must go around them, while I am with you, (*as you are*) my own one.”

“Wanáxi gihdó aré ke. Gixráⁿ ná^uⁿ uyú ke. Ho, aréLhi na^úⁿ rubríⁿ rígratogre ke.”

“There are a lot of spirits. They fill up the hunting road (*traveling*). Well! Because of it, I am together with you, my own one, on the wrong side of the road (*opposite them*).”

“Shína ritáwe gašhuⁿ ašhgi híⁿgrí ke. Áshgi híⁿgrí ke,” é^ašhguⁿ.

“We are arriving close to your village now. Near here, we are arriving back home,” he said, it seems.

“Hiⁿyúñe, gixráⁿ ná^uⁿ góshi hañaré ke. Ho: jehédaⁿ arígrañaji¹⁷ ke.”

“My Daughter, there is the hunting trail right there. Well now, I have brought you this far.”

¹² taⁿda (*where/ever*) + wa (*from*) + ra (*you*) + hu (*come*) + Ahge (*perchance*).

¹³ a - [há (*I*)] - + ri (*I - you*) + gra (*own one*) + ñ(i)>a (*have/ having*) + grí (*arrive home*). NOTE: How “añi” (*to have*) is distributed in the conjugation order.

¹⁴ ig(i>y)uwa (*right here- from*) + ra (*you*) + grí (*arrive home*).

¹⁵ u - [híⁿ (*me*) + gra (*own one*)] + - xre (*follow*). NOTE: “uxré” (*to follow*).

¹⁶ éwa (*he is the one who*) + ^uⁿ> ^w (*do/ did*) + áshguⁿ (*it seems*).

¹⁷ a [rí (*I - you*) + gra (*own one*) + ñ(i) >a (*have/ having*) + jí (*arrive here*).

NOTE: “añi” (*to have*).

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“Ho: Hiⁿyúŋe, Gixráⁿ na[^]úⁿ uwé šhkúñi ho.” Mató nahá éwana: hášhguⁿ.

“Ho: Hiⁿyúŋe, waⁿšhíge núwe na[^]úⁿ uwágrahé ke. Ho: Hiⁿyúŋe, Gixráⁿ na[^]úⁿ uwé šhkúñi ho. Na[^]úⁿ gixówo ho.”

“Ho, aré gašhuⁿ ke. regrí hñe ke.” Ádare hiⁿkúñi gú[^]ašhguⁿ ^e. Ádare háhda gráshguⁿ.

“Na[^]úⁿ arúwagwáshguⁿ gixráⁿ na[^]úⁿ. Mató nahá éwana: “Gixráⁿ na[^]úⁿ uwé šhkúⁿñi ho.” Hiⁿkúñi éwa[^]uⁿna gixráⁿ na[^]úⁿ uwáguháshguⁿ.

A gixráⁿ na[^]úⁿ uwágu. Nahéshge wanáxi núwe gixráⁿ na[^]úⁿ iwáguháshguⁿ.

Ádare hiⁿkúñi wanáxi wóxre grí[^]ašhguⁿ.

T[^]áwina aré wabéñena aré ix[^]áⁿwáshguⁿ.

Aré gúwašhguⁿ ^e. Ádare wóxre grína hiⁿkúñi éwana: “Wayé dírewi je.”

“Wach[^]éhiMi”

“Míⁿre ke. Míⁿsdaⁿ hagrí ki,” é[^]ašhguⁿ.

“Aré hiⁿgráwi ke.”

Hiⁿkúñi náyiⁿ jirána gráshguⁿ. Aré pí grijáshguⁿ. Briⁿrara šhkuñáshguⁿ.

Idáre ída Lhína gríashguⁿ ^a.

“Úda agútaŋe ¹⁸ ki.” Wégrakiparánašhguⁿ. ¹⁹ Wégragu ahíñáshguⁿ. ²⁰

Shúŋe [^]úⁿñena wégragwahíñašhguⁿ. ²¹ Idáre wáñagriñáshguⁿ ²² Lhínada. Dáhnahe bé agríñáshguⁿ, T[^]áñeLhi.

“My Daughter, don’t travel on the hunting road.” The Grizzly Bear was the one who was saying (*this*), it seems.

“My Daughter, there are two persons going along the road. Ho! My Daughter, don’t travel along in the hunting path. Go away from the path.”

“Well! You are about to arrive home now.” It is then, my grandmother started to come back, it seems. And then, he went back home (*the grizzly bear*), it seems.

She traveled along, it seems (*that*) hunting road. The Bear told her: “Do not travel in (*that*) hunting road.” My grandmother, she went and did it, she went along the hunting trail, it seems.

And so, (he told her, but) she went following along the hunting trail. And lo, two ghosts/ spirits were following along going back on the hunting trail, it seems.

And then, my grandmother over took the ghosts, it seems.

Those two had died, and they had put them away, and they came to life, it seems.

The two started going back, it seems. And then, she caught up with them, my grandmother, (*and*) she was saying: “Who are you?”

“Kills Them Woman.”

“It is I. Alone I come back home,” she said, it seems.

“We’re going home too.”

My grandmother got up and started back home (*again*), it seems. She was all right, it seems. She was not weak, it seems.

And then, she arrived back home there to the village, it seems.

“Somebody (*pl.*) is coming back.” They went to meet them, their own ones, it seems. They came for their own ones, and got them, it seems.

They used horses and went after them, it seems. Then they brought them back, their own ones, it seems, to the village. They left a good many of them, it seems, because they were dead.

¹⁸ agúñe (*they come back*); hagu(he) (*I am coming back*); agúta hñe (*they’re going to come back*);

¹⁹ w(a) > e(*them*) + gra (*own one*) + akípa (*meet*)+ ré (*go*)+ -ñe(*they*) + áshguⁿ (*it seems*).

²⁰ w(a) > e(*them*) + gr(a) (*own one*) + agú (*go after*) + ahíñ(e) (*they arrive*) + áshguⁿ.

²¹ w(a) > e + gr(a) + [gwa = agú + ahíñ(e)] + áshguⁿ.

²² w(a) + ańi (*have/ having*) + agríñ(e) (*they arrive home*) + áshguⁿ.

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Hiⁿkúñi mitáwe mató ixówañe ki. Aré hiⁿkúñi mitáwe ináxire mató inú naháshguⁿ. Ída ^úⁿpídahàshguⁿ.

A hiⁿkúñi ráñi gipí ki. Háⁿwe kirána.

Aré háⁿhedage ráñi hiⁿmína. Aré máto xáⁿje éwa gígúⁿdhàshguⁿ.

Aré hiⁿkúñi wašhwéhi ki. Aré háⁿwegi aré mákaré[^]shuⁿ aré wégra[^]uⁿ ki.

Aré háⁿwegi hiⁿkúñi mitáwe máka úⁿgrage aré wégra[^]uⁿ ki.

Aré háⁿwegi hiⁿkúñi mitáwe íx[^]aⁿhegragi ki. Háⁿwe hiⁿgíro šhkúñi ki.

Báñi grébraⁿ tháta ^shúdaⁿ hiⁿgráberè ki.

Aré háⁿwegi hegrá[^]thu ki.

Aré hiⁿkúñi mitáwe mató xáⁿje máyaⁿ taⁿdá nahéda aré ida inú nahé iháre ki.

Iháre é^e tórigi Wakáⁿdèyiñe igáñe máyaⁿ jégi aré t[^]áⁿwe jída hiⁿkúñi mitáwe é^e hiⁿgirudhesge iháre ki.

Há, Aré hiⁿkúñi mitáwe íx[^]aⁿhegragi íⁿgwahunàshguⁿ.²³

Aré waxwádaⁿ wíLh[^]are íⁿgraràshguⁿ.²⁴ Wanáxi.

Há, aré gahédix[^]aⁿhegragi[^]ashguⁿ.²⁵ Háⁿwegi haré gahédahàshguⁿ.²⁶

Waⁿ^sigeChéMi (Watóhta)

And it seems (*that*) my grandmother's spirit/ soul is with the bear. There is a way, it seems.

My grandmother liked to smoke tobacco. Every day.

Even during the night she sat puffing tobacco. It was the big grizzly who had taught her, it seems.

And my grandmother was a doctor. And today it is, the (*same*) medicines indeed (*she used*), I use them (*for*) my own ones.

And today, the medicines my grandmother told me about they are (*the ones*) I use them (*for*) my own.

Today, I got talking about my grandmother. It does not make me feel good (to)day.

It has been almost fifty years since she left me.

Today it is, I reminisce about her.

The country where the great grizzly is, I think my grandmother is there with him.

And I hope in the future, (*the one*) they call him God's son, that when he comes down to this land, I hope he takes my grandmother for me.

Há, my grandmother it is, I am telling about her, my own one. She knows me, her own one, it seems.

And pitifully I am speaking, (*for*) she thinks of me, (*her*) spirit, it seems.

That is the last (*as*) I am talking for myself. Today, that it is, it is the end, it seems.

Julia Small [Female Buffalo Person] (Otoe)

My grandmother had the spiritual power of the bear.²⁷

²³ hiⁿ-(*me*) + [i- + gra- (*own one*) + -wahun(e) = gwahun(e)] + ashguⁿ.

²⁴ w(a) (*something*) + ich[^](e) (*speak of*) + aré (*it is*); hiⁿ- + gra + ir(é) + ashguⁿ.

²⁵ gahédaⁿ (*the last*) + ix[^]aⁿh(i) (*be speaking about*) + (h)a >e (*I*) + gra + ki (*self*) + ashguⁿ.

²⁶ gahédaⁿ (*this far*) + ha- (*I*) + ashguⁿ.

²⁷ That is to say, that the Grizzly Bear People had blessed her with spiritual

powers.

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